



**Durham** Castle  
and Cathedral



**unesco**

World Heritage site

# Management Plan 2025-2035



The Revd Charlie Allen and the *Peace Doves* installation in the Cathedral nave (2024)

## Foreword

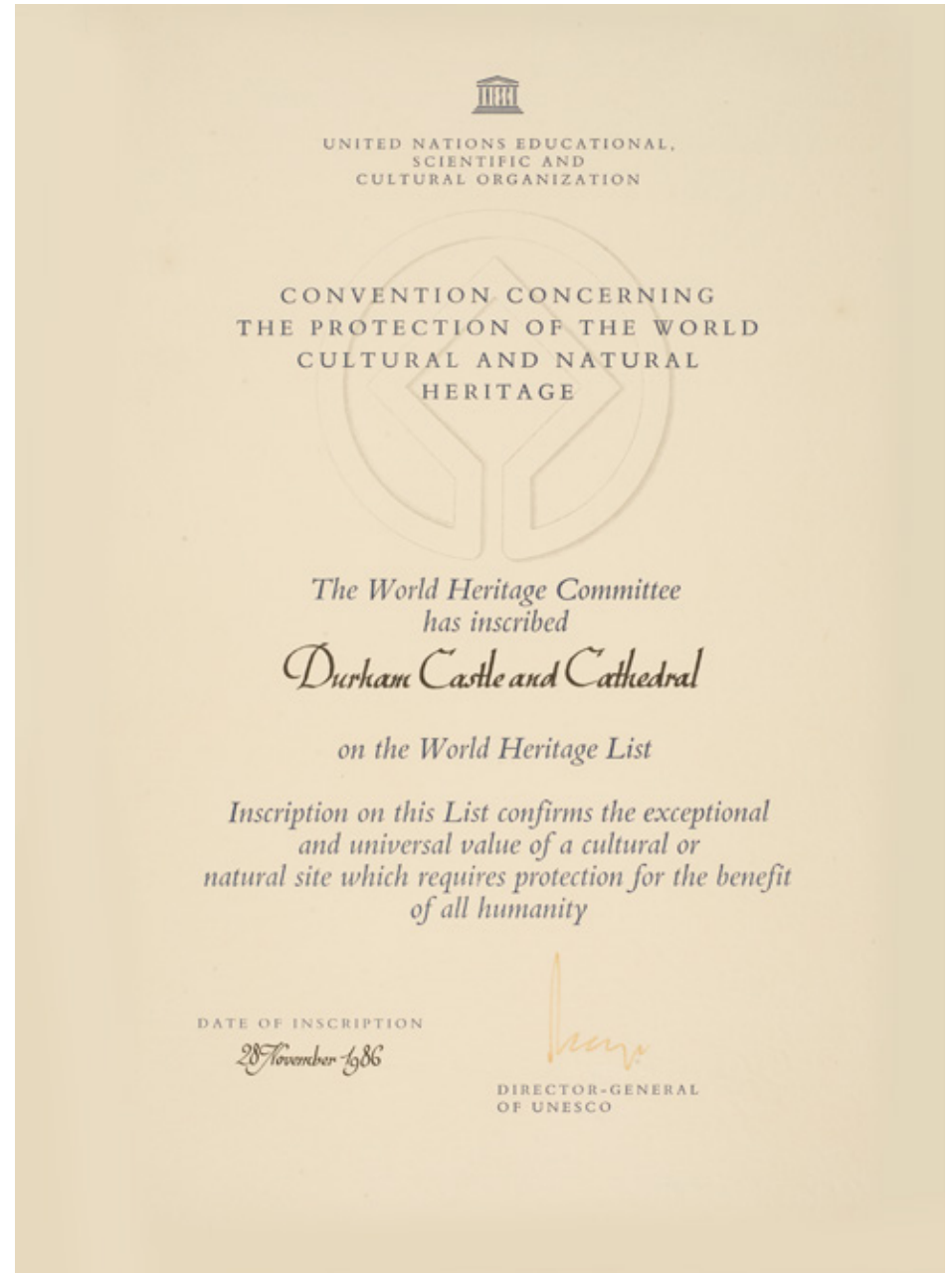
Visible from afar, the extraordinary silhouette of Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site, set high on a peninsula of the River Wear, is a beacon in the landscape. This remarkable place attracts people to visit and to stay here to live and to learn. The Durham diaspora (those who identify with Durham but live elsewhere) is spread around the world. Built by the Normans as the powerbase for the Prince Bishops of Durham and embodied in Saint Cuthbert, the patron Saint of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Northumbria and the Venerable Bede, the Father of English History, this extraordinary place has been a centre of faith and scholarship for 1000 years.

2026 marks the 40th anniversary of inscription of Durham Castle and Cathedral on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In this Plan the Partners that own and manage the site - Durham Cathedral, Durham University, St John's College, Durham County Council and the City of Durham Trust - explain how they collectively steward the exceptional and universal value of this cultural heritage site for the benefit of all humanity.

**“Our joint mission is to conserve, share and regenerate this globally significant castle and cathedral, the awe-inspiring beacon for Durham as a place of learning and worship for the next millennium.”**

### **The Revd Charlie Allen,**

Canon Chancellor, Durham Cathedral  
Chair, Durham Castle and Cathedral UNESCO World Heritage Site  
Strategic Partnership Board





Durham Cathedral Tower and Cloister taken during *Lux Muralis* sound and light installation in 2024

# Vision

Our collective vision for Durham Castle and Cathedral UNESCO World Heritage Site for the period 2025-2035 is for it to flourish and be:

- conserved and enhanced, protecting the special values of the site and its setting for current and future generations and continuing in use as an international centre of faith and learning
- loved and valued by communities of place, worship, and learning, where people of all ages and backgrounds want to be involved and become ambassadors
- a place of sanctuary to which visitors and residents are drawn to dwell and enjoy the site, the gardens, designed landscape and the wider setting.
- presented, interpreted and animated in a contemporary way that engages people in learning and increases intercultural understanding and awareness of world heritage underpinned by UNESCO values and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- known by the world heritage community for its innovation and application of heritage research and conservation practice using the world heritage site as a 'living laboratory'

**In so doing we will uphold UNESCO's vision to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture.**



The Mayor opening a new gate on Observatory Hill, an ancient public right of way leading to the Cathedral.

“ Being a World Heritage Site is a bit like having a Michelin star. It recognises Durham Castle and Cathedral as one of the cultural heritage wonders of the world alongside the Egyptian pyramids. Durham was the first cultural site in the UK added to the list in 1986. It is much loved and is a source of pride locally. This plan gives a glimpse behind the scenes into the hard work and substantial investment that enables it to flourish for the benefit of current and future generations.”

**Councillor Gary Hutchinson,  
The Right Worshipful The Mayor of Durham**

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# 1 Introduction

**Durham Castle and Cathedral was one of the first UK cultural properties to be successfully inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986.**

**The inscription of the site on the World Heritage List recognises the remarkable and innovative Norman (Romanesque) architecture and the survival and continuity of this place as a centre for learning and worship for over 1000 years founded on the relics of the Northumbrian Saints Cuthbert and Bede.**

**The Management Plan is the central instrument for the protection and management of the Property and sets out how the site owners conserve and safeguard what makes this place special (known as its Outstanding Universal Value) for future generations. The Plan covers the period up to 2035. Progress is reported annually and the plan will be refreshed after 5 years.**

The format of the Management Plan follows guidance set out by Historic England. Chapter 1 introduces the site, the partners and the World Heritage Convention. It explains the production process and purpose of the Plan in more detail and sets the Plan in the context of other plans and strategies at local and regional level.

Chapters 2-3 define the property boundary, the surrounding setting and the site's Outstanding Universal Value in more detail using the technical language of the Convention. Chapter 4 explains how the site is managed today. After an analysis of factors affecting the site Chapter 5 assesses risks and evaluates the current state of conservation, Chapter 6 then sets out the Vision and Objectives for the period 2025-2035 organised around three themes **conserve, share** and **regenerate**. References and links to additional information are embedded throughout to avoid unnecessary repetition and sources are listed in the appendices.

The Plan covers the period up to 2035. Progress is reported annually and the plan will be refreshed after 5 years.

**“ The Parish Council wishes to commend the World Heritage Site Partnership Board for working so tirelessly with partners, experts and our community to bring this plan to life. This commitment to collaboration and community engagement has ensured that this document reflects not only the technical requirements of UNESCO, but also the voices, values and aspirations of the people of Durham.”**

**Adam Shanley,  
Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council**

# 1.1 World Heritage Convention

**Headquartered in Paris, the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) was founded in London after World War II, with the purpose of fostering peace and security through mutual understanding.**

UNESCO passed the World Heritage Convention for the protection of both cultural and natural heritage in 1972 creating the World Heritage List. Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site (the Property) was one of the first properties to be successfully nominated by the UK State Party (Department of Culture, Media and Sport advised by Historic England). It was inscribed on the List in 1986 (World Heritage List number 370) because it met the following UNESCO criteria for inclusion:-

## **Criterion (ii)**

**To be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.**

Durham Cathedral is the largest and most perfect monument of 'Norman' style architecture in England. The small castral (castle) chapel for its part marks a turning point in the evolution of 11th century Romanesque sculpture.

## **Criterion (iv)**

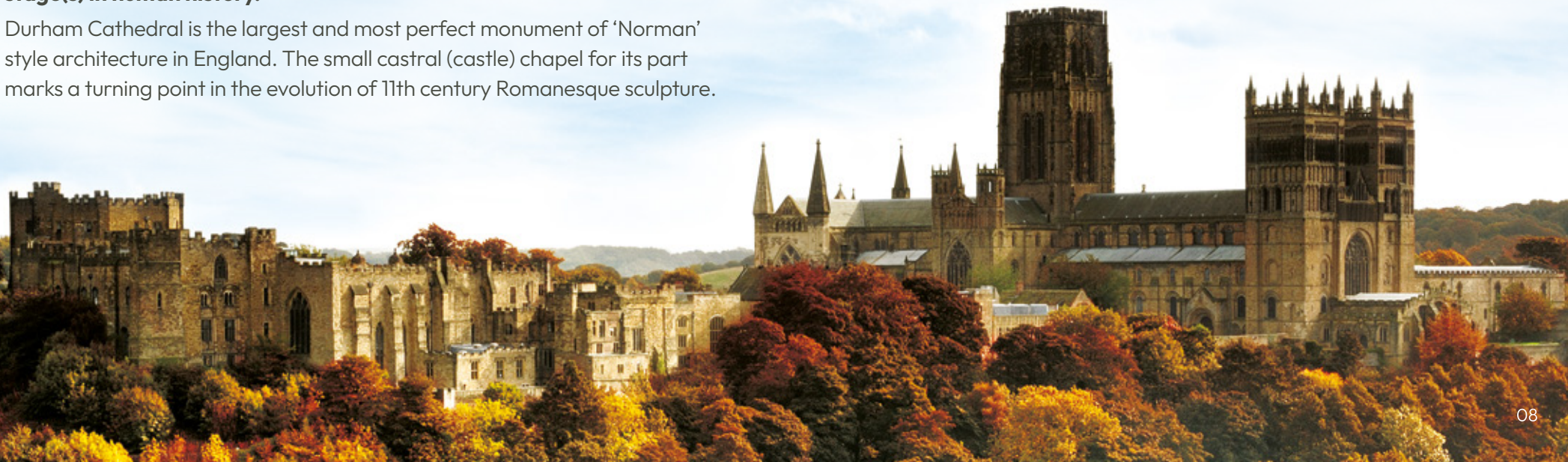
**To exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.**

Though some wrongly considered Durham Cathedral to be the first 'Gothic' monument, this building, owing to the innovative audacity of its vaulting, constitutes a type of experimental model which was far ahead of its time.

## **Criterion (vi)**

**To be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.**

Around the relics of Cuthbert and Bede, Durham crystallized the memory of the evangelising of Northumbria and of primitive Benedictine monastic life.



**What makes the site exceptional, the Property's Outstanding Universal Value (its OUV) encompasses the dramatic romantic landscape setting of the site dominating the city, its exceptional Romanesque architecture – a symbol of Norman power, the continuity of use as a place of learning and worship for over 1000 years and the material culture and relics of the Saints Cuthbert, Bede and Oswald.**



The numbered Attributes that describe the site's OUV are summarised here and are used throughout the Plan to show how these are being protected. The Attributes are described in more detail in **Chapter 3**.

1. The property has exceptional architecture demonstrating architectural innovation;
2. The visual drama of the Cathedral and Castle on the peninsula and the associations of the site with notions of romantic beauty;
3. The physical expression of the spiritual and secular powers of the medieval Bishops Palatine that the defended complex provides;
4. The relics and material culture of the three saints buried at the site;
5. The continuity of use and ownership of the site over the past 1000 years as a place of religious worship, learning and residence;
6. The site's role as a political statement of Norman power imposed upon a subjugate nation, as one of the country's most powerful symbols of the Norman Conquest of Britain;
7. The importance of the site's archaeological remains, which are directly related to the site's history and continuity of use over the past 1000 years;
8. The cultural and religious traditions and historical memories associated with the relics of St Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede, and with the continuity of use and ownership of the site over the past millennium.

Daughter and father inside the Norman chapel in Durham Castle, the oldest building in Durham city.

## 1.2 World Heritage Property

**The site was founded on the Anglo-Saxon church and City of Dunholm. Dating from the 1070s, Durham Castle is the oldest standing building in the City and predates the construction of the Cathedral in 1093-1133.**

Consecutive Prince Bishops added to the site from its Norman foundation until the last Prince Bishop Van Mildert gifted use of the Castle and buildings on Palace Green at the founding of Durham University as a joint venture with Durham Cathedral Dean and Chapter (1832-1837).

The Castle and Cathedral survive in the same use today because successive leaders have always been innovative. The continued protection of this place for the benefit of all humanity, as described in the UNESCO inscription, therefore relies upon understanding and continuously adapting to new local and global challenges and opportunities.

An introductory film produced in 2023 describes the World Heritage Site as it is today. It combines a living and working Cathedral church and precinct (since 1093), a choral school (since 1414), Durham Castle (home to University College since 1832) and St John's College which trains church leaders (since 1909).

It has chapels, colleges, museums, libraries, laboratories and lecture theatres, a school, a theatre, offices, residential accommodation and restaurants. These are all linked by historic streets and spaces. It is an archaeological site as well as an architectural marvel, the most perfect symbol of Norman power in England.

The Norman chapel in the castle marks a turning point in the evolution of 11th century Romanesque sculpture and the innovative vaulting of the Cathedral was far ahead of its time.

Founded on the relics of the Northumbrian Saints Cuthbert and Bede, this has been a place of pilgrimage for 1000 years. It serves a community of half a million people in County Durham and welcomes students and visitors from around the world - 4.6 million people in 2024.

The beautiful 18th-century romantic designed landscape setting on the River Wear is a popular public urban green space and natural heritage asset. Prebends Bridge continues to provide a dramatic vantage point and a vital traffic-free connection to the city through the last extant historic gateway in the castle curtilage.

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The UK National Commission for UNESCO explains more about the role of UNESCO designations in the UK.

Readers not familiar with the technical terminology used in this Plan may wish to refer to Historic England's World Heritage Glossary.



Aerial view of Durham Peninsula with Prebends Bridge in the foreground.  
Photo: Graeme Hall

## 1.3 Protection and management requirements

UNESCO's World Heritage Committee meets annually and oversees the implementation of the World Heritage Convention through Operational Guidelines (updated in 2025) to deliver the strategic objectives known as the 5 Cs of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention: credibility, conservation, capacity-building, communication and communities. The Convention gives the UK State Party (Department of Culture Media and Sport advised by Historic England) responsibility for the protection of the Property.

In practice on a day-to-day basis the World Heritage Site is managed by the principal landowners: Durham Cathedral (legal name The Cathedral Church of Christ, Blessed Mary the Virgin and St Cuthbert of Durham) and Durham University.

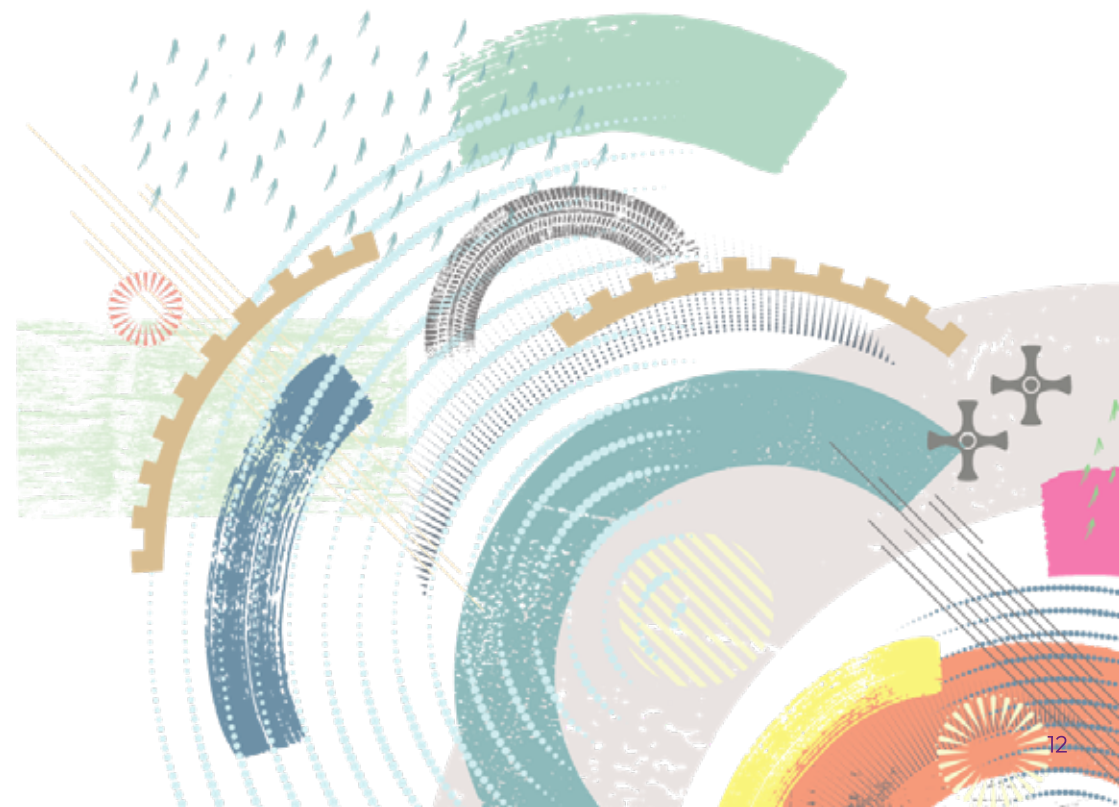
Following a merger in 2021, Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation now leases the former Chorister School buildings in the Cathedral College.

The independent St John's College manages (on long-term leases) the area within the boundary but outside the Cathedral precinct on South Bailey, including Cranmer Hall and the land on which the Learning Resource Centre, the newest building on the site, was constructed in 2019. The Chapel of St Mary-the-Less, part of the Parish of St Oswald, has served as St John's College Chapel since 1910.

St Cuthbert's Society (part of Durham University) has 13 South Bailey and the Georgian 'Wendy House' set in a garden hidden behind a listed section of the historic castle walls and intact wall walk next to the Water Gate.

Durham County Council maintain the adopted roads which give access to the site on North and South Bailey, Owengate and Dun Cow Lane and public rights of way including Windy Gap and Moatside Lane which connect the riverbanks and the historic city centre. Prebends Bridge is owned by the Cathedral and is a permissive route.

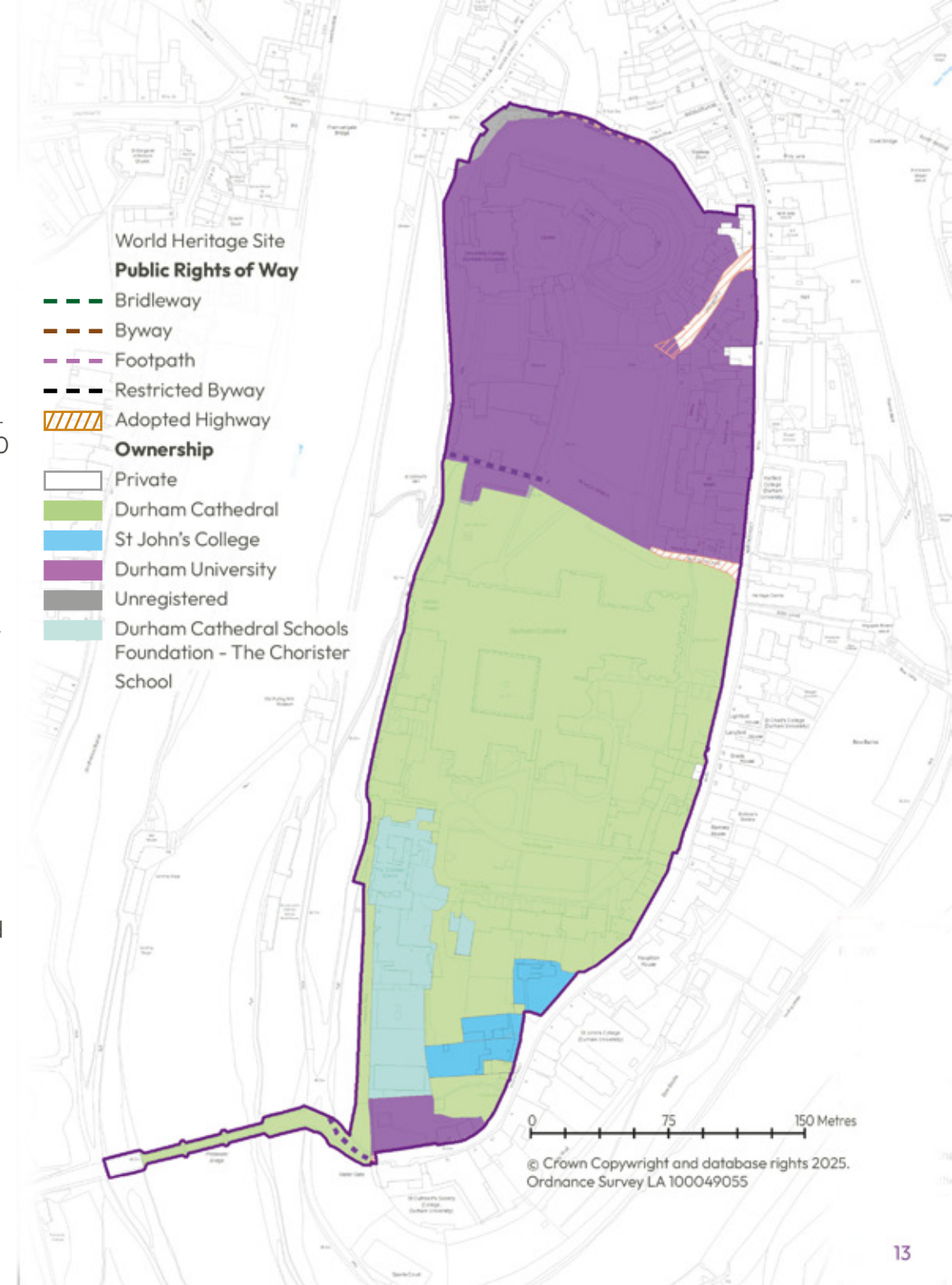
The principal landowners collectively employ a World Heritage Site Manager who reports to the Partnership Board and submits Property reports and plans to UNESCO for review via the UK State Party. Since 1994 it has been UK government policy for all UK World Heritage properties to have a Management Plan in place.



## UNESCO also requires Periodic Reports every 8 years.

The most recent cycle of Periodic Reporting in 2023 flagged factors affecting the Property and actions to be addressed in the new Management Plan including an outstanding response to the UK State Party on the 2021 UNESCO World Heritage Committee Decision 44 COM 8B.59 in respect of the application submitted to UNESCO in January 2020 for a minor boundary modification to include the whole peninsula, the river and the riverbanks.

The process of developing the Plan is allowing partners to develop their views on whether to resubmit the proposal to extend the World Heritage Site Boundary. New information from a detailed setting analysis together with alternative management measures afforded through Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan (which establishes a Peninsula Conservation Area), together with the policies of the adopted County Durham Plan (2020) and Durham City Neighbourhood Plan (2021), and the listing of Durham Peninsula riverbanks on the adopted County Durham Local List of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes (2020) protect the area outside of the boundary. Retaining the current boundary maintains the focus on the iconic Castle and Cathedral and is cohesive and readily identifiable. It delineates the Cathedral precinct and inner bailey.



## 1.4 Purpose and status of the Management Plan

The Management Plan is the central instrument for the protection and management of the Property and sets out how the Property's inscribed Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) will be conserved and safeguarded for the future. The first two management plans 2002-2016 and 2017-2023 established the conservation management framework for the site. Management practices are now well-established.

This is the third management plan for the World Heritage Site. It responds to factors affecting the Property identified in the Third Cycle of Periodic Review (2024) and follows on from the latest Progress Report (2023) and Management Plan Prospectus (2024). The Plan has been through several drafts and has been reviewed internally through partners' committee structures. It draws on UNESCO toolkits and new Historic England guidance.

The Plan is a tool to guide management daily and sets out a strategic framework organised around three core themes which the management partners are committed to delivering, namely to continue to **conserve**, **share** and **regenerate** the site for posterity.

**Our ethos to be “collaborative, people-centred and research-led” is central to our decisions and actions.**

The Plan guides decision-making regarding developments with the potential to affect the site's OUV. It formalises the use of Heritage Impact Assessments following the methodology set out in UNESCO's Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context (2022).

Following technical review by UNESCO Advisory Bodies and adoption by the partner organisations' governing bodies (Durham University Council, Durham Cathedral Chapter, St John's College Council and Durham County Council Cabinet) the adopted Plan will become a material consideration in the planning process informing future planning policy and development management.



## 1.5 Engagement in the Management Planning Process

Producing the Management Plan has been a joint venture co-ordinated in-house by the World Heritage Site Senior Manager with colleagues in planning and conservation at Durham County Council.

The process has been overseen by the Strategic Partnership Board (formerly known as the Co-ordinating Committee, currently chaired by Durham Cathedral) which brings together the principal landowners and representatives from Historic England, the City of Durham Trust and the UNESCO chair at Durham University.

Durham Castle and Cathedral survive in use because people love and have a sense of ownership of this place. Strengthening people's connection to the Durham story and fostering enduring relationships with individuals and communities will build a pipeline of future stewards. Managing the site is a collective endeavour, which extends beyond current ownership to the communities that created it.

**“It is important to underline a fundamental principle of UNESCO, to the effect that the cultural heritage of each is the cultural heritage of all. Responsibility for cultural heritage and the management of it belongs, in the first place, to the cultural community that has generated it, and subsequently to that which cares for it.”**

Nara Document on Authenticity, 1994, Article 8.

Youth Ambassadors

UNESCO, ICCROM and ICOMOS all advocate for people-centred approaches to the conservation and management of cultural heritage. ICCROM identified three communities:

### **Communities of place**

people who live within or near to heritage

### **Communities of interest**

those who feel a connection to or are interested in heritage

### **Communities of practice**

those who work in heritage

Durham also has distinct communities of worship and communities of learning. Individuals often belong to more than one community. The University has a global diaspora of alumni and Durham Cathedral has a Global Community of Prayer.



## 1.6 Communities involved in the World Heritage Site

<b>Communities of place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents and residents' groups</li> <li>• City of Durham Parish Council</li> <li>• Cathedral clergy, Cathedral congregations</li> <li>• University and Bailey colleges</li> <li>• Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation</li> <li>• City of Sanctuary</li> </ul>
<b>Communities of interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cathedral and visitor centre volunteers</li> <li>• Castle guides</li> <li>• City of Durham Trust</li> <li>• Durham Cathedral Friends</li> <li>• Durham Miners' Association</li> <li>• Durham Pointers</li> <li>• Heritage Volunteering Group North East</li> <li>• Durham Museum</li> <li>• Visitors, including educational groups</li> <li>• Youth ambassadors, local heritage groups</li> </ul>
<b>Communities of practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee</li> <li>• University research groups</li> <li>• Visitor services, education, museums, libraries &amp; archives staff</li> <li>• Planning and conservation officers</li> <li>• Stonemasons, specialist trades and crafts</li> <li>• Blue Badge guides</li> <li>• The Story at Mount Oswald</li> <li>• UK National Commission for UNESCO, World Heritage UK, ICOMOS, UK UNESCO designations</li> </ul>

<b>Communities of learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cranmer Hall</li> <li>• Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation</li> <li>• University College, St John's College, St Cuthbert's Society</li> <li>• Academic departments: Durham University Music School, History and Classics, the Institute of Advanced Study and the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies</li> <li>• Visiting scholars</li> <li>• Durham University alumni community</li> <li>• Union Society</li> <li>• Cathedral Museum and the Museum of Archaeology</li> <li>• Libraries and special collections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Palace Green Library (law and local collections), Priory Library</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Departments historically based on the peninsula: Archaeology and Law</li> <li>• The UNESCO Chair in Archaeological Ethics and Practice in Cultural Heritage</li> </ul>
<b>Communities of worship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parishioners of the Diocese of Durham</li> <li>• Parish of St Oswald's Church</li> <li>• Pilgrims to the Cathedral</li> <li>• College chapels</li> <li>• Cathedral global community of prayer</li> </ul>

## These various communities, together with other stakeholders listed in section 4.0, have been involved in developing the Management Plan through a range of engagement modes.

The Plan has emerged from a year-long iterative review and collaborative discussion with many stakeholders and the wider public via the City of Durham Trust, Durham Area Action Partnership (now Local Network) and the City of Durham Parish Council.

The process of developing the Management Plan commenced in October 2023 with a 'Collaborative Conversation' hosted at Durham Cathedral with more than 40 invited individuals and stakeholder organisations from the City and region. Groups explored three themes: world heritage for all, sustainability and being world-class.

The take-away messages from this session were that **people are the primary asset**, that we needed to **get off the hill and into the community** and address the question **where is the world in Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site?**

Responding to that call to be both local and global in outlook and to foster a greater sense of belonging, partners co-created a short [webfilm](#) explaining what happens behind often closed doors. In the first quarter of 2024 we embarked on a series of workshops at community centres with Durham Area Action Partnership (AAP) to share the film and stimulate discussion about what the WHS means to Durham residents. Overall, people love the Cathedral but feel excluded from the Castle. They want more access and improved visitor facilities.

The People's Story, World Heritage Day at Durham Castle, 2026

Public talks at Palace Green Library and presentations to visitor services staff, volunteers and the City of Durham Trust stimulated discussion and ideas.

Two priorities emerged:

1. improving the riverbanks, paths and viewpoints; and
2. curating and sharing Durham's social history.

In July 2024 a round table with the Social History Society explored 'public history' and the need to cede control to allow new voices and interpretations. Much of the discussion centred on the importance of giving voice to young people and the role of citizen-led research.



## 1.7 Related plans

The World Heritage Site Management Plan links directly to the [Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan](#) (expected to be adopted Summer 2026). The CAMP incorporates Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site Setting Guidance as an appendix to the Strategic Overview document, while the WHS also forms a major component of the new Peninsula and Riverbanks Conservation Area. These documents, and ongoing work, will contribute to advancing the understanding of the significance and setting of the WHS in relation to its OUV. This will ensure the site's active management and conservation moving forwards.

The Management Plan is part of a hierarchy of conservation and management plans, building appraisals and condition surveys covering the World Heritage Site and its Setting: Durham Castle, Palace Green, Durham Cathedral, the riverbanks and the walls of the historic castle curtilage supported by quinquennial inspections of the Cathedral and the chapel of St Mary-the-Less. These are internal documents used by estates and facilities departments to prioritise repairs and provide an overarching framework for day-to-day management.

Various national, regional and local strategies and plans also address aspects of the management of the site.

**“Durham Cathedral is both a unique and priceless heritage asset and the mother church of the Diocese of Durham which continues to provide a focal point for local communities.”**

Anne Allen, World Heritage Site Manager

## Durham Cathedral

Under the [Cathedrals Measure](#) (2021) the objectives of the Cathedral are both to advance the Christian religion and to care for and conserve the fabric and structure of the Cathedral church building.

Published in 2025, the Cathedral's strategy [Vision 2033](#) aims for Durham Cathedral to be known locally and internationally as a welcoming and engaging place for people to encounter God and a leading destination for pilgrimage, learning and debate with enabling priorities around empowering people, care of fabric and collections and growing resources. The Cathedral has recently recruited a Director to establish the Cuthbert Centre for Pilgrimage and Prayer and is planning for further investment in the Northern Saints' Trails and Camino Inglés.

The Cathedral grew a global online community of prayer. It also welcomes every school child in County Durham, has a vibrant volunteering programme with an active [Cathedral Friends](#) organisation and a Cathedral Institute that stimulates open debate on issues of social action and justice among young people.

Through church choirs and [Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation](#), the Cathedral continues a 1000-year long tradition of music, liturgy and religious practice. In-house craftspeople hand on specialist heritage skills that have been passed down from generation to generation since construction started in 1093.

Despite a difficult financial landscape reported in 2024, the Cathedral plans to invest £60 million in fabric and collections conservation in the period up to 2033. The Cathedral's financial strategy is to grow the yield from its investments and to increase donations. It is committed to a policy of entry by voluntary donation for visitors and increasing commercial income. The building is open daily and attracts 400,000 day visitors and tourists in addition to worship and events.



Space was the theme of the Lux Muralis sound and light show in 2024.

## St John's College

Located opposite the Abbey gateway on South Bailey, St John's College is home to 800 students and 100 staff. A recognised college of Durham University founded in 1909 it incorporates [Cranmer Hall](#) at 16, South Bailey, a grade II listed building within the Property boundary, one of 10 residential colleges recognised by the [Church of England](#) for ministerial training, teaching and research. Students come from around the world and serve in churches and chaplaincies throughout the region.

The College's historic estate on South Bailey includes the Chapel of St Mary-the-Less founded in the 12th century and acquired as the College chapel in 1910. This is part of the Parish of St Oswald in the Diocese of Durham and is managed through a [Quinquennial Report](#). The College participates in World Heritage Day and Heritage Open Days, and visitors are welcomed to St Mary-the-Less. Students are actively involved as stewards. The College has a commitment to peacebuilding and social impact and hosts the World Heritage Site Youth Ambassadors.

## Durham University

The [Durham University Annual Report](#) July 2023 flags the University's role both as a steward of world heritage and in delivering the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The [Durham University Estate Masterplan 2017-27](#) includes a commitment to the conservation and enhancement of its heritage assets, ensuring long-term sustainability by promoting re-use and adaptation of buildings. Durham Castle is integral to the University's brand identity and the University has invested substantially over the last period in conserving the Norman Chapel and buildings on Palace Green. The University have

prepared a detailed Conservation Management Plan (in three volumes) for Durham Castle with support from external consultants and a task group is developing a new case for support for investment.

The [Durham University Strategy 2017-2027](#) includes a priority around civic and regional partnership, collaboration with Durham County Council to develop and promote culture and £50m investment in technology infrastructure and accessible digital environments and a strategic investment fund to grow heritage research.

## County Durham Plan

The World Heritage Site is threaded through the [County Durham Plan](#) and Policy 45 (pp 207-210) provides a framework to ensure that developments within or affecting the site and its setting are required to sustain and enhance its significance, having regard to the adopted World Heritage Site Management Plan and Statement of Outstanding Universal Value.

## County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy

The [Delivery Plan](#) includes an objective 4.4.5 (page 48) to increase and enhance the cultural infrastructure and offer of the World Heritage Site to support culture-led regeneration and place shaping to improve vibrancy and pride of place and to support heritage sector growth and innovation.

## Durham City Strategic Place Plan

Durham City is the largest urban centre and capital of County Durham. In 2024 the local authority, Durham County Council, consulted on the development of a new place-based [Durham City Strategic Place Plan](#).

A retail gap study will support the development of an investment plan. Significantly, the red line boundary for the plan includes the historic city centre including the World Heritage Site. This means that public capital investment may support infrastructure projects on the World Heritage Site.

The County Council recently completed public realm renewal on the Baileys, improving accessibility and the quality of the visitor experience. The works form part of wider proposal to encourage active travel.

Durham City is growing. Nearly 25,000 additional houses are planned for the county by 2035, including large developments in and around Durham City. The World Heritage Site is partnering with The National Trust which is developing a Green Corridor to connect suburban communities with the city centre.

The Story at Mount Oswald, a new £23m gateway to the history (and archives) of Durham opened in 2024. Approved plans for the redevelopment of the Prince Bishops shopping centre, off the Market Place, for residential and independent retail will increase the retail offer and vitality of the city centre.

## Regional Visitor Economy

In May 2024 a new mayoral North-East Combined Authority was established to champion the North-East region with a commitment to be fairer, greener, connected, international and successful. The Devolution Deal promised £4.2 billion of investment over the next 30 years. Although central government budget cuts may reduce this figure, the return to regional self-determination in investment decisions across the 7 local authorities in North-East England is significant.

The World Heritage Site is a partner in the [Destination North East England Regenerative Visitor Economy Framework \(2024\)](#) which aims to double the value of the visitor economy in 10 years in sustainable ways by decarbonising and adapting, supporting local business, investing in people, connecting people and communities and restoring nature, landscape and cultural heritage

Visitor figures, expenditure and the number of tourism-related jobs in Durham City are on an upward trend. Footfall on the peninsula exceeds half a million in the busiest month of July.

## Durham Global City of Learning Strategy

### In 2025 lifelong learning partners across Durham came together to apply to join UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities.

Heritage is by definition the stuff that is important enough to pass on. We foster intergenerational and interactive learning through exhibitions, placements, work experience and community outreach. The nascent Learning City Team, championed by Durham City Mayor, seeks to foster collaboration, share facilities, access resources and harness new opportunities through the UK Lifelong Learning Entitlement. This embryonic initiative has grown out of stakeholder engagement led by the World Heritage Site and includes:

- Alington House Community Association,
- City of Durham Trust,
- County Durham Cultural Education Partnership,
- Cultura Trust,
- Durham Business Improvement District,
- Durham Cathedral Institute,
- Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation,
- Durham City of Sanctuary,
- Durham Community Action,
- Durham Fringe Festival,
- Durham Libraries,
- Durham Learning Alliance,
- Durham Sixth Form Centre,
- Durham University,
- East Durham College,
- National Trust and Durham County Council Green Corridor,
- NCFE,
- New College Durham,
- Redhills,
- Seven Stories,
- The Story at Mount Oswald.
- WEA

The World Heritage Site regularly hosts educational visits and inputs into architectural conservation, planning and heritage management courses.



A father and son view the Peace Doves in Durham Cathedral.

## 1.8 Lifespan and review schedule

The management planning process has involved self-assessment using tools from the [2023 Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit 2.0](#).

To align with the County Durham Plan and the Integrated Economic Strategy, the World Heritage Site Strategic Partnership Board (described in section 4.0) agreed that the Management Plan should cover a 10-year period up to 2035 with annual progress monitoring, refreshed after five years. Following adoption the Management Plan will be available to download on the [UNESCO World Heritage website](#) as an accessible pdf with links to supporting resources. These will be updated annually to maintain currency.

The World Heritage Site Manager co-ordinates with operational managers to review progress against the Management Plan annually and publishes a report online, most recently in [2023](#). This document develops from the [Management Plan Prospectus](#). Written for a general audience, the Prospectus highlighted key milestones from the last plan, introduced our underpinning ethos (to be collaborative, people-centred and research-led) and outlined emerging new projects organised under three core themes of conserve, share and regenerate. The Prospectus was published for public comment alongside the phase 1 Durham City Strategic Place Plan and Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan consultation in autumn 2024.

Partners periodically review and update underpinning frameworks and conservation management plans. The following are due for review in the next phase:

- Palace Green Framework Conservation Management Plan (Durham University)
- World Heritage Site Research Framework (Durham University)
- Durham Cathedral Framework Conservation Management Plan (Durham Cathedral)
- Heritage Woodlands and Riverbanks Management and Maintenance Plan (Durham Cathedral)
- Durham Castle Walls Conservation Management Plan

The adoption of the new Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan and the introduction of Heritage Impact Assessments will improve the protection for the site and its setting. To aid developers the County Council is preparing a technical document covering the setting of the World Heritage Site and the use of Heritage Impact Assessments to support the implementation of policies within the County Durham Plan.

The World Heritage Site is also currently participating in two external studies that will measure the impact of designation on both the place and the people. The UK National Commission for UNESCO, in partnership with the [Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre](#), is commissioning research to measure the economic and non-economic value of the UK's UNESCO sites. This will report in 2026 and will be another source of evidence of the positive impact of designation in heritage-led regeneration, supporting UN Sustainable Development Goals and UNESCO values. The Property is also participating in the World Heritage UK project '[Realising the Benefits to Communities](#)' a 2 year project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop new tools and frameworks that all sites can use to demonstrate their social, cultural, educational and economic value to communities.

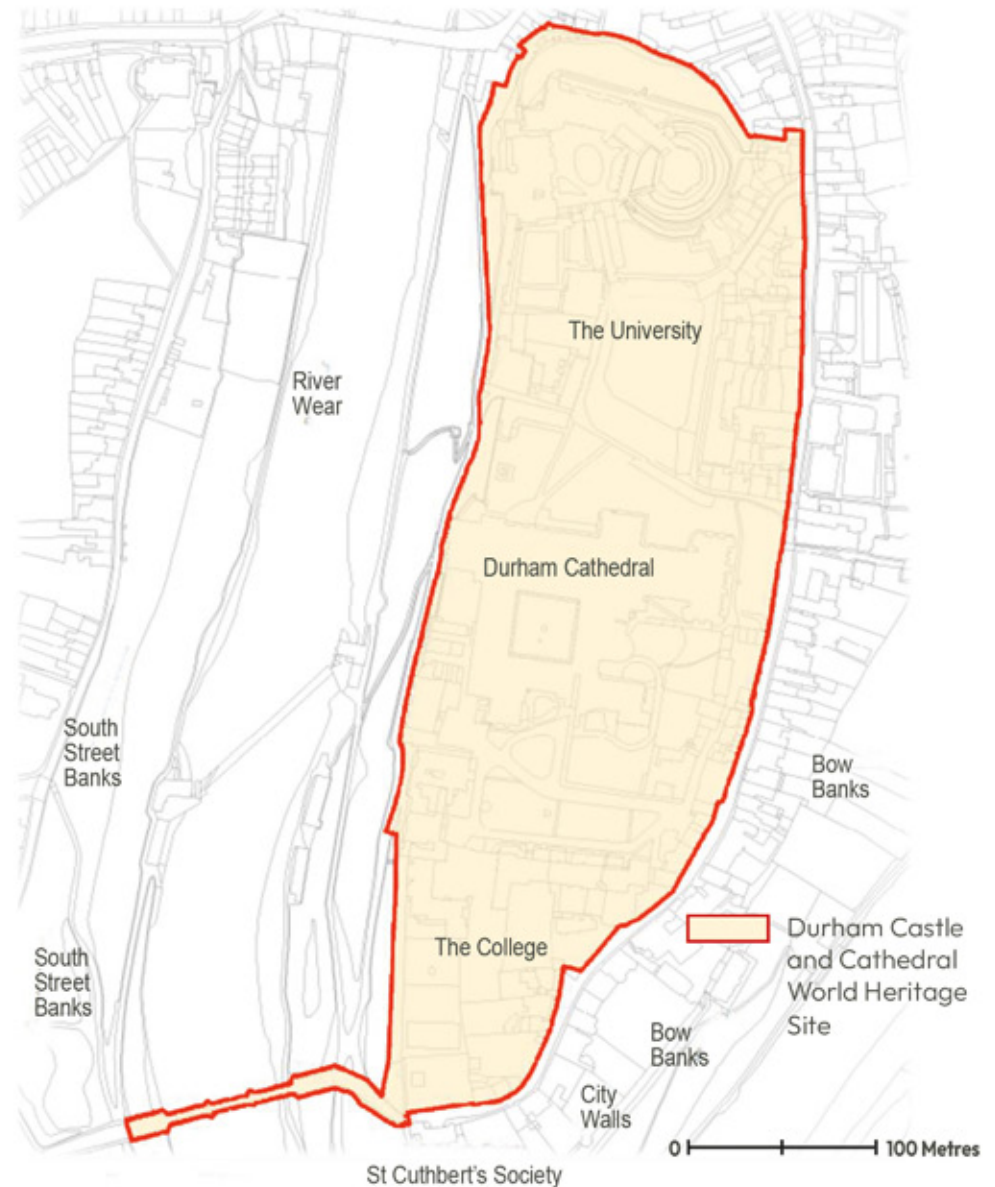
## 2 Property Boundaries and Setting

This chapter defines the boundaries of the World Heritage Site as inscribed on the World Heritage List and considers the wider setting of the site. This has been informed by new research which introduces the idea of different 'experience zones' in and around the city.

### 2.1 Property boundary

The designated area of the World Heritage Site (the Property) is defined by a red line boundary (see plan). It includes Durham Castle and buildings on Palace Green and Owengate (mainly in the care of Durham University, as well as some in private ownership), the Cathedral precinct including the Cathedral Church, the Cloister, The College and Chorister School (owned by the Dean and Chapter), buildings on the west side of the Bailey including the Chapel of St Mary-the-Less (part of St John's College) and Prebends Bridge (owned by Durham Cathedral).

The boundary encloses the Cathedral Precinct and Castle's historic inner bailey. It is easily defined and describes the area that has retained its original use. It follows the extant Castle inner bailey and Cathedral precinct walls, Moatside Lane and the west side of Saddler Street, North and South Baileys. The once private houses (now Colleges) on North and South Bailey and the Peninsula (Bailey) Gardens and Riverbanks are outside of the red line boundary. These areas have local and national historical, communal and aesthetic value within the site's setting.



## 2.2 Buffer zone and setting

The [World Heritage Committee Decision 44 COM 8B.59](#) recommended that “The State Party give consideration to creating a buffer zone, based on the existing conservation area, in order to protect all the “key views to and from the Castle, Cathedral and town”. The hilly topography and complex townscape of Durham ensures that the visibility of the World Heritage Site is constantly changing. A buffer zone could only broadly capture this and so a ‘setting study’ is preferred to deal with the complex visual relationship of the WHS and its surroundings

A buffer zone would not add to the protection to the Property and to seek to establish one now would cause confusion. Instead, as outlined below our approach has been to more clearly define the setting of the site and the contribution that setting makes to the site’s [OUV](#), to enhance protection through Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan, to implement Heritage Impact Assessments and to develop a technical document [Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site Setting. Guidance on Understanding and Assessing Impacts \(2026\)](#) on the setting of the World Heritage Site as part of the Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan. The document covers the characteristics of the setting of the WHS and how these relate to the site’s OUV, together with a toolkit to aid property owners and developers preparing development proposals that may fall within the setting of the site.

Settings do not have a recognised spatial boundary and are not fixed. They comprise the surroundings in which the heritage values of the heritage asset are experienced, understood and appreciated which can include visual impressions or experiences as well as non-visual elements such as noise, smell, activity and historic relationships, as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

**If it is brought into force, section 102 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act will make it a statutory duty to preserve or enhance both World Heritage sites and their settings.**

In 2023 Durham County Council, the Cathedral, Durham University, the City of Durham Parish Council and Historic England co-funded a setting study analysis for the World Heritage Site. Its purpose was to provide a robust evidence-base to articulate the role that setting plays in the Outstanding Universal Value ([OUV](#)) of the site, to inform planning decisions, local plan making, estate planning and the design of developments in the city and beyond. Discussion papers reviewed the WHS boundary as well as the need for a buffer zone.

There are a range of characteristics which impact the understanding and appreciation of setting. These include natural variations, such as the time of year, season, day or night, as well as man-made interventions, such as designed viewpoints and pilgrimage routes, and vegetation management. To help understand and define the setting of the World Heritage Site, the emerging technical document being produced by Durham County Council has identified a range of ‘experience zones.’ These are geographical areas sharing similar townscape and landscape character and types of visual experiences of the WHS including expressions of attributes of OUV. These experience zones include a broad range of characteristics, including riverside, historic townscape, inner rural landscape and wider rural and urban landscape.

However, each experience zone contains its own distinct combination of these characteristics and within each there is a distinctive experience of the setting of the World Heritage Site.

The evidence base explains that the setting contributes primarily to OUV through Attributes 2, 3 and 6 relating to the expression of Norman dominance and to the Romantic notions of the Sublime, the Beautiful and the Picturesque as expressed in the deliberate framing of the World Heritage Site in the 18th and 19th centuries by a treed landscape and designed views (illustrated in earlier research by the City of Durham Trust). It also contributes to Attributes 5,7,8 in relation to the continuity of use and ownership of the site over the past millennium and its archaeological potential.

## **A key outcome from the work undertaken on setting is a recognition that what constitutes setting has evolved.**

Setting is now appreciated as being experiential and multisensory not just visual, and fluid not static. In the next phase we will develop this further building on an earlier Sound Portrait of a Cathedral City recording by Douglas Pocock, City of Durham Trust – to record for posterity the peals of the Cathedral and church bells, spoken and sung liturgy, music practice, student matriculation, choristers playing, rowing on the river, the Miners’ Gala – as well as nature’s chorus of bird song and the river.

The emerging Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) proposes to subdivide the existing large city-wide conservation area into 7 smaller areas (see map), each with their own special qualities, character, challenges and opportunities.

This includes designating a new Peninsula and Riverbanks Conservation Area, with the Property at its core, the boundary encompassing the loop of the River Wear gorge around the peninsula between Milburngate road bridge and New Elvet road bridge.

The CAMP Strategic Overview document describes the Setting of the seven new conservation areas including a map showing how they constitute the inner townscape and landscape setting to the Property and a digital viewshed modelling where the Cathedral is visible from across the City. The Peninsula and Riverbanks conservation area character appraisal explains the Property setting in more detail and identifies key viewpoints, important historic routes, paths and green spaces that contribute to the experience.

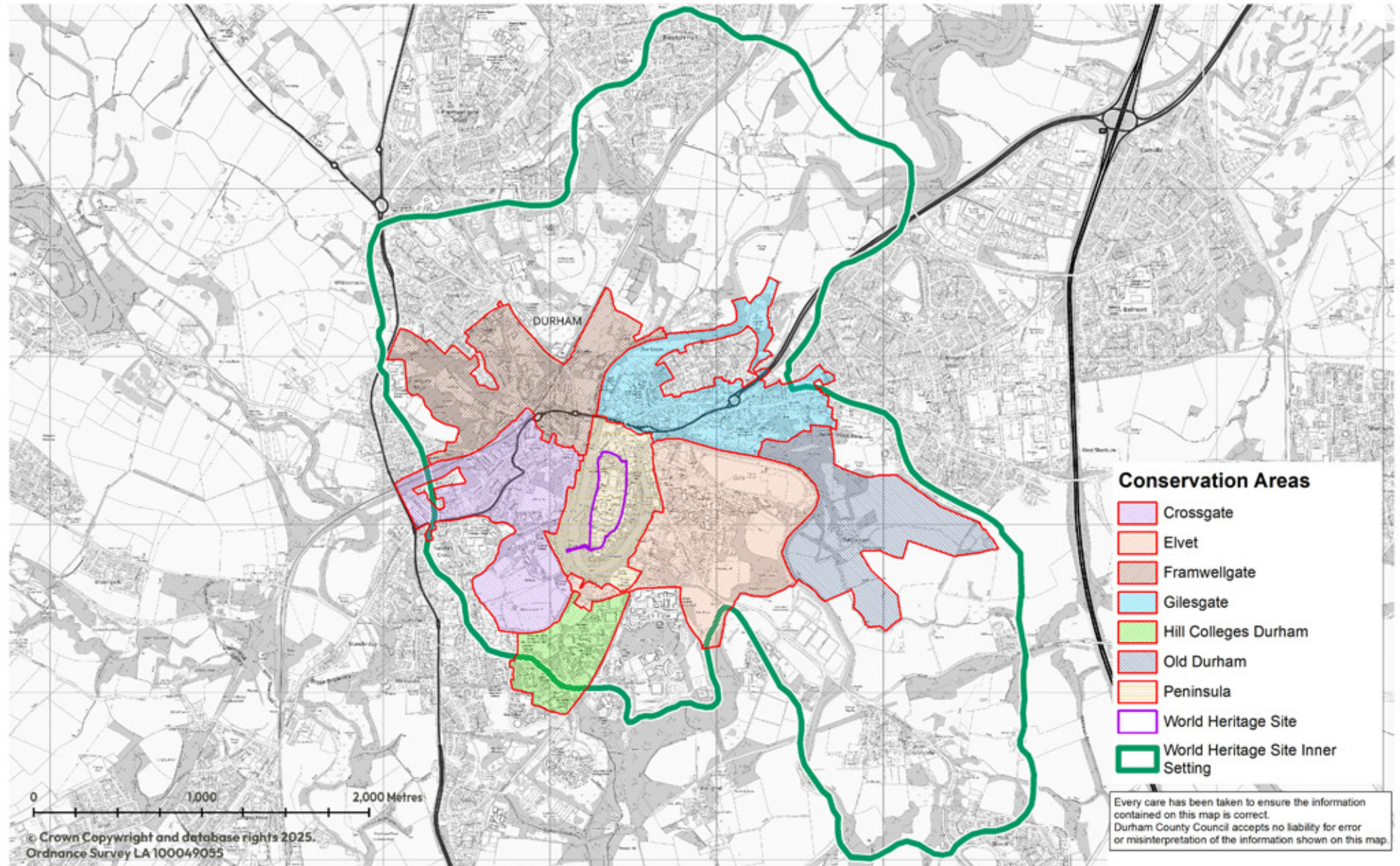
The CAMP documents are designed to provide an understanding of significance and setting to ensure delivery of positive change, both protecting and enhancing the special interest, character, appearance, and quality of the place.

The CAMP also identifies the riverbanks as an area requiring improvement. South Street Corn Mill, the Count’s House and the Fulling Mill together with two sections of the castle walls on North Bailey, St Cuthbert’s Well and the river weirs are identified as local heritage at risk and all lie within the immediate setting of the Property.

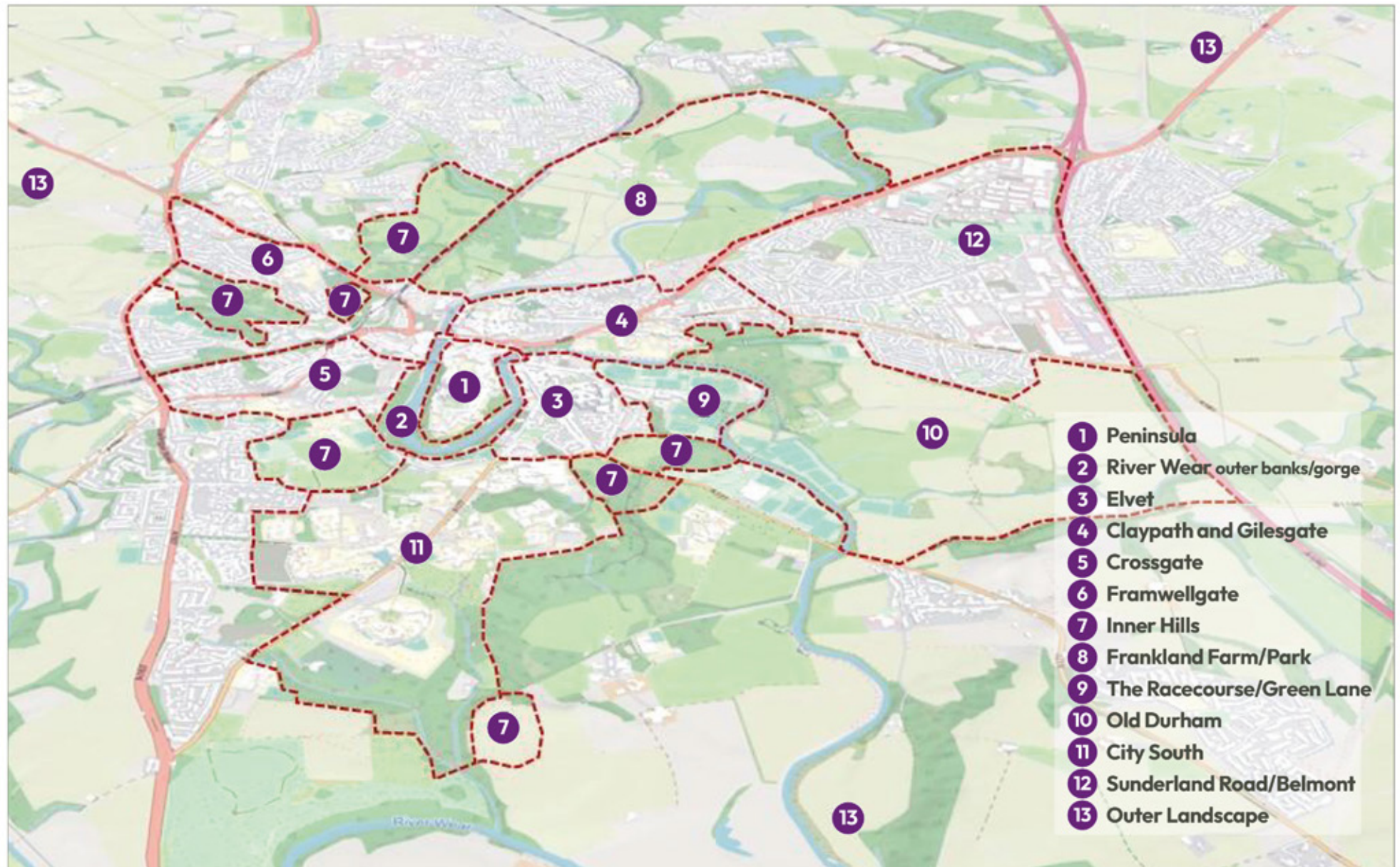


The racecourse riverbanks. The Caste and Cathedral are visible in the background.

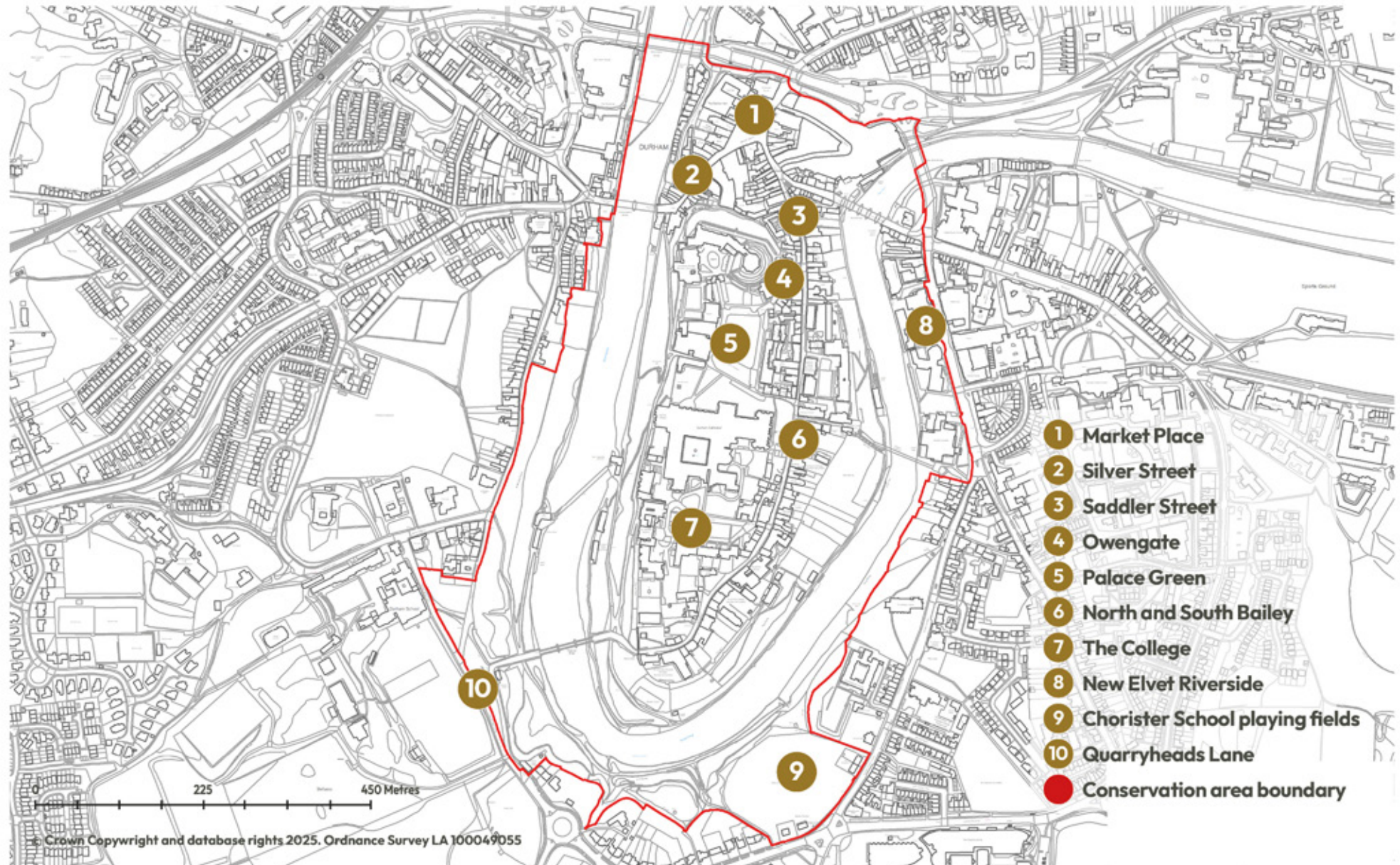
# World Heritage Site boundary and proposed conservation areas, after Conservation Area Management Plan, 2025



## Setting 'Experience Zones'



## Durham City Peninsula conservation area, after Conservation Area Management Plan, 2025



## 3 Significance and Outstanding Value

**This section begins with the official description of the site's outstanding universal value (as recognised by UNESCO). Local values that have been identified through working with stakeholders. A list of designated (legally protected) heritage assets is followed by an explanation of the legislative and planning framework and relevant UNESCO policy and guidance.**

### 3.1 Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV)

The Statement of OUV describes the global value of the World Heritage Site and the criteria under which it was inscribed. There are three pillars to establishing whether a site has Outstanding Universal Value:

- the site meets at least one of the ten UNESCO criteria for World Heritage inscription in UNESCO's Operational Guidelines (Paragraph 77). Durham Castle and Cathedral is inscribed as a Cultural Property. It meets three of the UNESCO criteria;
- the site has integrity (the site is sufficiently intact to demonstrate what makes it special) and authenticity (the site's cultural values are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of Attributes);
- the site has an adequate protection and management system in place.

A retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value was approved by the World Heritage Committee in June 2013 (Decision WHC - 13/37.COM/8E). The full inscription is fixed and remains as adopted by UNESCO.

### Brief synthesis

Durham Cathedral was built between the late 11th and early 12th century to house the bodies of St. Cuthbert (634–687 AD) (the evangeliser of Northumbria) and the Venerable Bede (672/3–735 AD). It attests to the importance of the early Benedictine monastic community and is the largest and finest example of Norman architecture in England. The innovative audacity of its vaulting foreshadowed Gothic architecture. The Cathedral lies within the precinct of Durham Castle, first constructed in the late eleventh century under the orders of William the Conqueror. The Castle was the stronghold and residence of the Prince-Bishops of Durham, who were given virtual autonomy in return for protecting the northern boundaries of England, and thus held both religious and secular power. Within the Castle precinct are later buildings of the Durham Palatinate, reflecting the Prince-Bishops' civic responsibilities and privileges. These include the Bishop's Court (now a library), almshouses, and schools. Palace Green, a large open space connecting the various buildings of the site once provided the Prince Bishops with a venue for processions and gatherings befitting their status and is now still a forum for public events.

The Cathedral and Castle are located on a peninsula formed by a bend in the River Wear with steep river banks constituting a natural line of defence. These were essential both for the community of St. Cuthbert, who came to Durham in the tenth century in search of a safe base (having suffered periodic Viking raids over the course of several centuries), and for the Prince-Bishops of Durham, protectors of the turbulent English frontier. The site is significant because of the exceptional architecture demonstrating architectural innovation and the visual drama of the Cathedral and Castle on the peninsula, and for the associations with notions of romantic beauty in tangible form.

The physical expression of the spiritual and secular powers of the medieval Bishops Palatinate is shown by the defended complex and by the importance of its archaeological remains, which are directly related to its history and continuity of use over the past 1000 years.

The relics and material culture of three saints, (Cuthbert, Bede, and Oswald) buried at the site and, in particular, the cultural and religious traditions and historical memories associated with the relics of St Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede, demonstrate the continuity of use and ownership over the past millennium as a place of religious worship, learning, and residence in tangible form. The Property demonstrates its role as a political statement of Norman power imposed on a subjugate nation and as one of the country's most powerful symbols of the Norman Conquest of Britain.

**Criterion (ii):** Durham Cathedral is the largest and most perfect monument of 'Norman' style architecture in England. The small castral (castle) chapel for its part marks a turning point in the evolution of 11th century Romanesque sculpture.

**Criterion (iv):** Though some wrongly considered Durham Cathedral to be the first 'Gothic' monument (the relationship between it and the churches built in the Île-de-France region in the 12th century is not obvious), this building, owing to the innovative audacity of its vaulting, constitutes, as do Spire [Speyer] and Cluny, a type of experimental model which was far ahead of its time.

**Criterion (vi):** Around the relics of Cuthbert and Bede, Durham crystallized the memory of the evangelising of Northumbria and of primitive Benedictine monastic life.

## **Integrity**

The physical integrity of the Property is well preserved. However, despite a minor modification of the Property's boundaries in 2008 to

unite the Castle and Cathedral sites, the current boundary does not fully encompass all the attributes and features that convey the Property's Outstanding Universal Value. The steep banks of the River Wear, an important component of the Property's defensive role, and the full extent of the Castle precinct still lie outside the Property boundary. There are no immediate threats to the Property or its attributes. The visual integrity of the Property relates to its prominent position high above a bend in the River Wear, and there is a need to protect key views to and from the Castle, Cathedral and town, that together portray one of the best-known medieval cityscapes of medieval Europe.

## **Authenticity**

The Property has remained continually in use as a place of worship, learning and residence. Durham Cathedral is a thriving religious institution with strong links to its surrounding community. The Castle is accessible through its use as part of the University of Durham, a centre of excellence for learning. A series of additions, reconstructions, embellishments, as well as restorations from the 11th century onward have not substantially altered the Norman structure of Durham Cathedral. The monastic buildings, grouped together to the south of the Cathedral comprise few pristine elements but together make up a diversified and coherent ensemble of medieval architecture, which 19th century restoration works, carried out substantially in the chapter house and cloister, did not destroy. The architectural evolution of the Castle has not obscured its Norman layout. Within the Castle, the castral chapel, with its groined vaults, is one of the most precious testimonies to Norman architecture circa 1080 AD. The slightly later Norman Gallery at the east end has retained its Norman decoration of a series of arches decorated with chevrons and zigzags. The siting of the Castle and Cathedral in relation to the surrounding city has been sustained, as has its setting above the wooded Wear valley, both of which allow an understanding of its medieval form.

## 3.2 Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value

Attributes explain the Outstanding Universal Value of the Property in more detail. Attributes can be both physical qualities and cultural practices. The attributes of Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site are unchanged from the last Management Plan 2017-2023.

### ATTRIBUTE 1

**The Site's exceptional architecture demonstrating architectural innovation.**

**The architectural design and construction techniques of the nave of Durham Cathedral.**

In architectural terms, Durham Cathedral reflects the ambitions of its patrons wishing to outshine the buildings of near contemporaries, to place the cult of St Cuthbert on a par with that of St Peter in Rome, and to incorporate exotic elements from afar in its construction.

**Durham Castle's Norman Chapel**

Durham Castle's Norman Chapel is an unusually well-preserved example of Norman architecture that provides an important reference for the form, design, and iconography of early Norman religious buildings in England.

### ATTRIBUTE 2

**The visual drama of the Cathedral and Castle on the peninsula and the associations with notions of romantic beauty.**

**The dramatic, dynamic skyline of Durham Cathedral and Castle.**

The Cathedral and Castle tower over the city, riverbanks and river, visually uncontested by more recent urban development.

**The Cathedral and Castle and their immediate setting.**

**The romantic setting:** The immediate setting is provided by the undeveloped stretch of river, the steep, forbidding, mature tree lined river banks, the remaining stretches of the Castle Walls and the way in which they have been partially covered by the vegetation and eroded by time, and Prebends' Bridge and the view it provides of this ensemble of nature and buildings.

**The scale of the Cathedral and Castle:** The massiveness of the Cathedral and Castle is appreciated in comparison to the fragmented nature of the surrounding landscape.

**The Pilgrimage Routes to the Cathedral:** The Cathedral's relationship to its surrounding fabric is unlikely to have changed much since the Middle Ages due to the Cathedral's physical dominance with regards to other buildings. The Cathedral towers appear and disappear depending on one's location along the limited number of routes leading to the building, and this must have been a significant feature for the large number of pilgrims who would have travelled from afar to get to Durham.

**Setting of the World Heritage Site**

The inner setting of the World Heritage Site is formed by an 'inner bowl' contained by nearby ridges and spurs incised by the meandering River Wear, and a more diffuse wider setting ('outer bowl') contained by more distant high ground including the limestone escarpment to the east and south, and higher spurs and ridges to the west. These form important horizons and skylines in the backdrop of many views of, from and within the WHS, and contain important vantage points from which the WHS is viewed.

### **The visual appeal of the site in its context:**

**Form, colour, and materials:** The honeycoloured stone of the Cathedral & Castle and Prebends' Bridge contrasts with the greenery of the trees and shrubs along the river; and the earthy river banks; and the reflection of these in the river.

**The patina of history:** This is expressed in the weathered, variegated quality of the Cathedral and Castle stonework.

**The site by night:** The visual presence of the Cathedral and Castle by night contrasts with the darkness of the river, riverbanks and sky.

**The site in changing climatic conditions:** The character of the site changes as weather and season impact on views.

**The routes to Palace Green and the visual unfolding of the site:** The relationship between the Castle, Cathedral and Palace Green on one hand, and the rest of the city on the other, offers a dynamic visual experience to the viewer.

**The visual relationship between the Cathedral and Castle and the surrounding landscape:** The sight of monumental historic buildings towering over the landscape and cityscape has inspired visual artists for centuries.

**The site's key views:** The views of the Castle and Cathedral are world-renowned not just in terms of the city, but in terms of the county as well.

## **ATTRIBUTE 3**

**The physical expression of the Spiritual and Secular Powers of the medieval Bishops Palatine that the defended complex provides.**

### **The scale of the spaces and buildings:**

The massive scale of both the Cathedral and the Castle, and the dwarfing effect they have says much about the status of the Prince Bishops.

### **The grandeur and richness of the spaces of the Property:**

The grandeur of the Cathedral's interior spaces contribute to the physical expression of the secular and spiritual powers of the Medieval Bishops Palatine. With respect to the Castle, its role as the Bishop's palace since the Norman period is reflected in the scale and decoration of spaces. Other interior spaces in the World Heritage Site combine architectural 'wealth' with the notion of cultural wealth, such as John Cosin's 17th century library.

### **Architectural symbols of power:**

There are also actual symbols of power, the most notable being the Cathedra (throne) constructed in the Cathedral by Bishop Hatfield in the 14th century.

### **The quality of the workmanship and the status and reputation of the craftsmen commissioned by the Prince Bishops:**

The level of architectural patronage and the long history of the Prince Bishops commissioning work from nationally renowned craftsmen and designers is indicative of the Bishops' role in society at a national level.

### **The range of buildings reflecting the different powers and responsibilities of the Prince Bishops:**

The combination of historic religious buildings, grand residential buildings, defensive buildings and structures and administrative buildings, and the fact that they have not been overshadowed by modern construction and development, reflects the pre-eminence of the princebishopric as the most important position in Durham's history.

### **Buildings intended to dominate the landscape:**

Apart from the visual pre-eminence of the Cathedral and Castle, the fact that they were designed to dominate the landscape is evident through the views to and from them.



"Reader, looke not on his picture  
but his booke"

Ben Jonson

Bishop Cosin's Library, now part of Palace Green Library which is open to the public. The display an exhibition of Shakespeare's First Folio, published in 1623, one of 4400 17th-century books, all recently conserved in the library

### **The defensive nature of the site:**

The River Wear was the Castle's initial line of defence. The Peninsula, with its steep river banks was well chosen, and the construction of the Cathedral within the Castle precinct would have been especially significant for the community of St. Cuthbert, whose history until the 10th century was one of persecution at the hands of Viking raiders.

### **The economic value and significance of some of the bishops' constructions:**

The two medieval bridges (Framwellgate and Elvet) are reminders of the economic dimension of the medieval bishops' power. As key points used to control access to the city centre, they would have also been used for the imposition of tolls. Moreover, the fact that Elvet Bridge was lined with shops (of which some still remain) meant that it constituted a commercial street over water, reflecting the fact that the Bishopric was not just a religious, or a political establishment, but an economic one as well.

The 15th century chancery and exchequer building on Palace Green dealt with legal issues related to the Bishops' property, and managed his revenues. The Bishop's Mint was another of the Bishop's income-generating institutions, and stayed in operation until it was shut down by Henry VIII.

### **The site's intellectual importance across the ages:**

The Cathedral Library and Bishop John Cosin's Library are physical manifestations of the intellectual importance of Durham. The Cathedral archives and Library represent the largest medieval collection in the country still in its original location.

Durham's importance as a place of learning dates to at least the 11th century with the founding of the Benedictine Monastery by Bishop William of St. Calais. Durham's links with other educational establishments were strong from an early age, both to other religious establishments, as well as to centres of learning, like Oxford University, where the Durham monks founded Durham Hall in 1291, now part of Trinity College.

## **ATTRIBUTE 4**

### **The relics and material culture of the three saints, (Cuthbert, Bede, and Oswald) buried at the site.**

#### **St Cuthbert's Shrine & Relics:**

The sanctity of St Cuthbert's Shrine is emphasised by the combination of its elevated position above the floor level of the Chapel of the Nine Altars and the side aisles; the historic building fabric and objects, as well as by the modern furnishings of the well-maintained shrine emphasising the continued importance of St Cuthbert. The continued existence of many of St Cuthbert's relics in Durham Cathedral is notable. The sense of ownership of St Cuthbert by local people is a remarkable and significant element of the Cathedral's life.

#### **The Tomb of the Venerable Bede:**

The importance afforded to Bede's tomb is emphasised through the combination of the Frosterley marble cenotaph, the epigraphic sculpture about Christ the Rising Star, the candelabra, the pew with its cushion produced by the Cathedral broderers, and the careful creation of an implicit curtillage area around the cenotaph itself.

## **ATTRIBUTE 5**

### **The Continuity of use and ownership over the past 1000 years as a place of religious worship, learning and residence**

#### **The continued function of the Cathedral and Norman Chapel as religious establishments:**

The Cathedral's role as the seat of the Bishop and centre of the Diocese of Durham, and as one of the most important centres for Christian worship in Britain, through dedicated regular congregations, and civic and diocesan services. Durham Castle's Norman Chapel also continues in use as a place of worship to the present day.



Detail of the carved decoration on the coffin of Saint Cuthbert (dating to AD 698)  
on display in Durham Cathedral Museum.

**The use of the buildings (old and new) of the World Heritage Site by Durham University and Durham Cathedral for the purposes of learning, scholarship and education:**

These uses are extensive, and integral to the life of the site. They include the use of the Castle as a Durham University college, the use of Cosin's Library and its annexes as a university library, the use of Cosin's grammar school as an academic department (music), the use of part of Cosin's almshouse/educational complex as a lecture room/study space and the use of Divinity House as the Department of Theology. Also children have been educated on the site for at least 600 years, currently expressed in the existence of the Cathedral Chorister School, and the continued tradition of musical education and performance. There are also the Cathedral and University Library departments, both located on the site, and responsible for educational outreach to both children and adults.

**The use of the buildings of the World Heritage Site for residential purposes:**

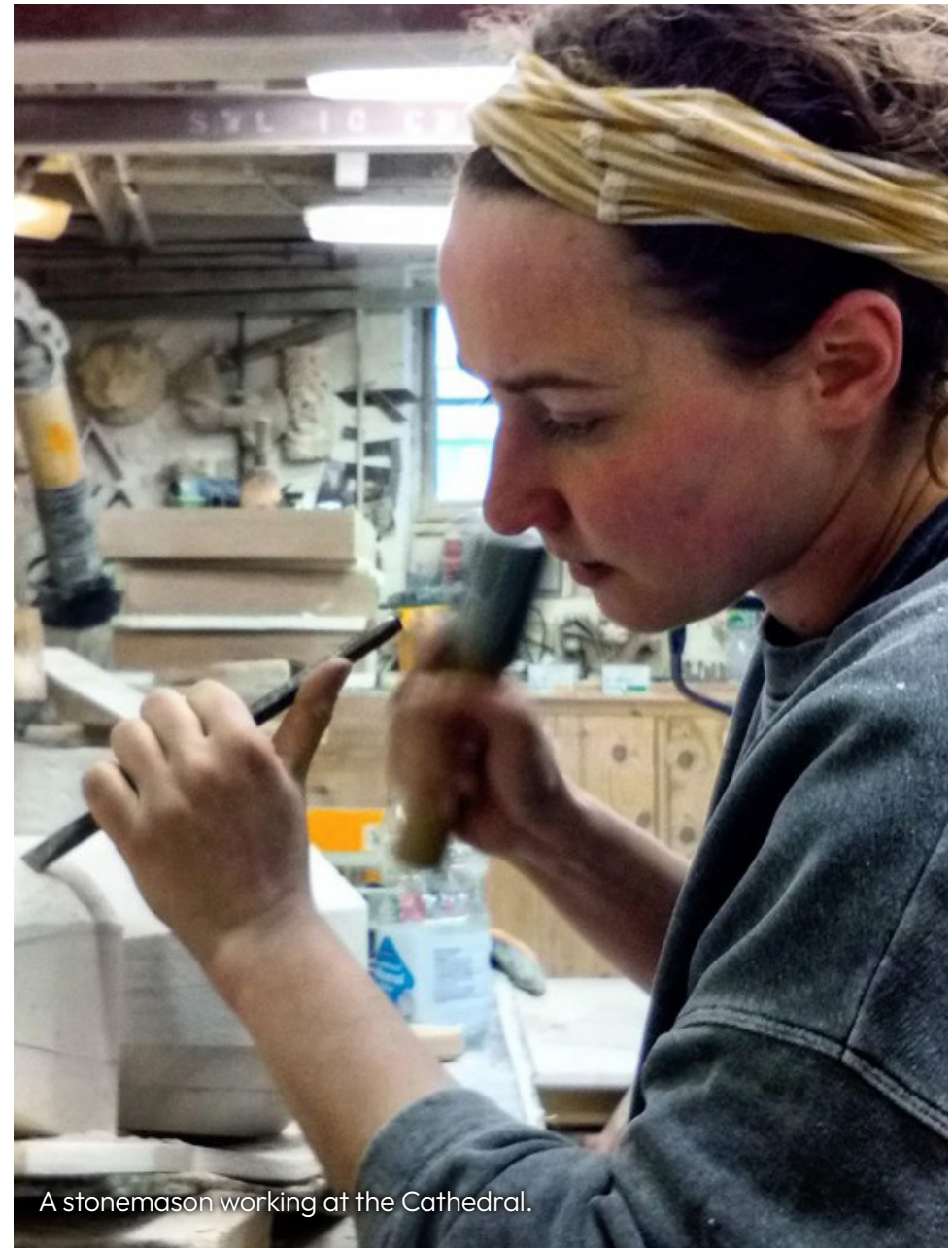
Demonstrated by use of the Castle and buildings on Owengate and North Bailey for student accommodation. The houses within the Cathedral College remain in use for residential purposes and most of the residents are associated with/employed by the Cathedral.

**The use of the buildings of the site for administrative purposes:**

The Cathedral Office on the site, continues the running the Cathedral's affairs from the site, as has been the case at least since the late eleventh century.

**The continued existence of building-related trades and crafts on the site:**

Craftsmen with traditional skills such as stonemasonry and joinery are still employed by and on the site on a permanent basis and are integral to the maintenance and preservation of the historic building fabric. The Cathedral and University each have a stonemasons' yard, and building traditions are passed on from one generation to the next through the traditional system of apprenticeship.



A stonemason working at the Cathedral.

### **The records documenting the use of the site across the ages:**

Extensive documentary evidence in the Cathedral and University archives chronicles the use of the site, works undertaken, people associated with it, activities and events.

## **ATTRIBUTE 6**

**The Site's role as a political statement of Norman power imposed upon a subjugate nation, as one of the country's most powerful symbols of the Norman Conquest of Britain**

**The Cathedral and Castle as a monumental ensemble whose original functions are immediately recognisable, even from a distance:**

The view of the massive ensemble of the Cathedral and Castle, especially from the west, and the way in which they tower over the city, river and landscape is an uncontested symbol of power.

## **ATTRIBUTE 7**

**The importance of the Site's archaeological remains, which are directly related to its history and continuity of use over the past 1000 years**

**The continuum of significant archaeological/historical information offered by the site:**

Durham is especially fortunate to have extensive archival material which contributes greatly to shedding light on the social, political, religious, cultural and economic context that shaped its buildings.

The existence of Durham University's Archaeology Department and the fact that Durham Cathedral has a resident archaeologist on its staff also means that on-site archaeological work, research and analysis is ongoing.

## **ATTRIBUTE 8**

**The cultural and religious traditions and historical memories associated with the relics of St Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede, and with the continuity of use and ownership over the past millennium. The continued veneration of Cuthbert and Bede.**

This is expressed in the continuity of local, site-specific traditions developed over time by the Cathedral community and clergy, by the University, and by community groups such as miners' lodges, school groups and others.

**The site's importance as cornerstone of community identity and as a rite of passage:**

This includes the use of the Cathedral for services and events and Durham Castle for important University and civic functions. The processional route into the Cathedral is of continued importance and the presence of community memorials acts as focus for community identity.

**The site's multi-functionalism and adaptability of use:**

The primary use of the buildings of the World Heritage Site for a multitude of non-tourist-related functions and their ability to continue to serve their community while remaining important visitor attractions says much about their versatility.

**The continuity of ownership:**

The ownership of the site by institutions that evolved from the original community of St Cuthbert, such as the Chapter of Durham Cathedral and, in turn, Durham University and its independent colleges, demonstrates an evolving, yet unbroken chain of ownership over the ages.

## 3.3 Values of the property

UNESCO recognises that, in addition to OUV, World Heritage Sites have many other values.

**“These other values are part of the natural and cultural richness of the Property, and the harmonious protection, conservation and management of all values is an objective of good conservation practice. Understanding local values means consulting local people... Local people are a primary source of information about local values”.**

UNESCO 2011. Resource Manual. [Preparing World Heritage Nominations](#)

In February 2024 the [UNESCO chair on Refugee Integration through Education, Language and Arts](#) at Glasgow University facilitated a workshop on ‘Co-Creating the Values of World Heritage’ with an intergenerational group drawn from our Youth Ambassadors, University staff, students and local residents. This workshop (which was filmed) helped to distinguish OUV and local values and provided an opportunity to promote intercultural understanding “to foster dialogue, inclusion and people-centred approaches” (UKNC, 2021).

The following seven local values were identified through the workshop, through vox pop interviews with visitors to the site and a survey of current students: -

**Aesthetic** Local people love the World Heritage Site, especially the Cathedral, for its beauty, its awe-inspiring architecture and the views of it and from it.

**Communal** The site is valued as a place of congregation, for special events, acts of remembrance and demonstration.

**Environmental** The gardens and designed landscape setting of the River Wear and riverbanks is valued as an urban green space and area for recreation, providing access to nature and a safe, accessible green corridor connecting residential communities with the historic city centre.

**Evidential** People value the archaeology, local history, museum collections, archives and special collections.

**Historical** People feel a connection to their past. The War Memorial on Palace Green, the Miners’ Memorial and the Durham Light Infantry chapel in the Cathedral draw intergenerational family groups to pass on their heritage.

**Formational** As a centre for learning where people live together in college communities, this is a place where people find their own identity and vocation.

**Spiritual** For people of faith this is a holy place, where God’s presence is felt. It is valued as a special place, set apart, a safe space and a place of sanctuary.

Since the last Management Plan an assessment of the significance of the gardens and designed landscapes of the World Heritage Site ([Green, 2019](#) pp145-174) and its Setting concluded that these green spaces have group value with the World Heritage Site and are of regional and national significance for their aesthetic value, historical value, rarity and communal value.

Durham County Council adopted them on to the Local List of Non-Designated Heritage Assets in 2020 as part of the adoption of the County Durham Plan.



University matriculation is an annual event, traditionally marked with the banging of pots and pans as new students return to University College (Castle) from the Cathedral

## 3.4 Designated assets

A full list of designated sites is included in Appendix C. Locally listed buildings and new lists of non-designated heritage assets are identified in the individual conservation area character appraisals in the Durham City CAMP. Both designated and non-designated sites are a material consideration in planning decisions under Policy 44 of the County Durham Plan.

The Water Gate on South Bailey, the last extant gateway in the historic castle curtilage is a Scheduled Monument on the National Heritage List for England number [1322920](#).

Prebends Bridge is a Grade I listed structure and a Scheduled Monument on the National Heritage List for England, [List numbers 1121354](#) and [1002337](#). The bridge is on Historic England's [Heritage at Risk Register](#). The River Wear and the riverbanks are part of the setting of Prebends Bridge. Any decisions where listed buildings and their settings and conservation areas are a factor must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see in particular sections 16, 66 and 72) as well as applying the relevant policies in the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## 3.5 Legislative and planning system

### Examples of UK Legislative Framework

[Care of Cathedrals Measure \(2011\)](#)

[Planning Act 2008](#)

[Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#)

[Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) Act 1990](#)

provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest

[Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979](#)

provides specific protection for monuments of national interest

[Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023](#)

If it is brought into force this will afford protection to World Heritage Sites and their settings (see section 2.2)

The main UK legislation under which the World Heritage Site is protected is outlined above. The primary legislation is the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In addition to the normal planning framework set out in this Act, the historic environment is managed by using the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

The Cathedral church and Chapel of St Mary the Less are exempt from the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Internal development proposals are scrutinised by the Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee which determines if consent is required from the Cathedral Fabric Commission for England in addition to any necessary consents from the Secretary of State (for scheduled monuments), the Planning Authority (for change of use and listed buildings) and the Diocese of Durham (for the chapel and curtilage of St Mary-the-Less).

## National Planning Policy Framework

Updated in 2024/25, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied in favour of sustainable development. Section 16 deals with 'conserving and enhancing the historic environment' and provides policy against which to measure proposals that affect heritage assets. It states that great weight be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, the greatest weight being given to those of highest importance - such as World Heritage Sites. Substantial harm or loss of significance to a designated heritage asset (including World Heritage Sites) should be wholly exceptional.

### **"Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements"**

[NPPF, Page 4, paragraph 2](#)

## Planning and Archaeology

The [Durham World Heritage Site Research Framework](#) published in 2015 focuses on archaeological investigations. The report is part of a national network of [Research Frameworks](#) collated by Historic England which sets the research agenda used by local authorities and archaeological contractors. The Framework informs archaeological conditions on planning consents which require reports to be lodged with the local Historic Environment Record (HER) for public release in the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) Library using a system called [OASIS](#).

The following local plans and policies add to the framework for local decision-making about change that may impact Durham Castle and Cathedral:

## Policy 45 [County Durham Plan \(2020\)](#)

### **Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site**

Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site is a designated asset of the highest significance. Development within or affecting the World Heritage Site and its setting will be required to:

- a. sustain and enhance the significance of the designated asset;
- b. be based on an understanding of the Outstanding Universal Value of the site, having regard to the adopted World Heritage Site Management Plan and Statement of Outstanding Universal Value
- c. protect and enhance the Outstanding Universal Value, the immediate and wider setting and important views across, out of, and into the site.

Development that would result in harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site or its setting will not be permitted other than in wholly exceptional circumstances.

## Policy 44 Historic Environment

### **provides for:**

- the adoption of conservation area character appraisals and management proposals for all conservation areas
- targeting areas and properties which are identified through character appraisals and seeking to influence change in a proactive way
- supporting the improved condition of Heritage at Risk through identifying and facilitating works, resources and providing advice and where appropriate using powers of enforcement and repair
- taking considered and timely enforcement action to protect designated heritage assets where unauthorised works have taken place

- managing, promoting and delivering an annual partnership programme of Heritage Open Days
- contributing to the revised Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site Management Plan
- improved curation and accessibility of the county’s Historic Environment Record (see also Policies 29 and 37)
- ongoing partnership working
- community engagement including cultural activities
- public realm investment
- tackling heritage crime; and
- local listing of parks and gardens.

## Durham City Neighbourhood Plan (2021) Policy H1

### Protection and Enhancement of the World Heritage Site

Development proposals within the Durham Cathedral and Castle World Heritage Site should **sustain, conserve, and enhance** its Outstanding Universal Value and support the current adopted management plan. Development proposals within the World Heritage Site should sustain, conserve and enhance the World Heritage Site by:

- demonstrating account has been taken of both the historical and present uses of the World Heritage Site; and
- proposing high quality design which contributes to the quality and significance of the World Heritage Site; and
- using materials and finishes appropriate to the vernacular, context and setting; and
- seeking balance in terms of scale, density, massing, form, layout, landscaping and open spaces.

Development proposals throughout Our Neighbourhood should be shown to sustain, conserve and enhance the setting of the World Heritage Site where appropriate by:

- carrying out an assessment of how the development will affect the setting of the World Heritage Site, including views to and from the World Heritage Site; and
- protecting important views; and
- taking opportunities to open up lost views and create new views and vistas.

## Policy H2: The Conservation Areas

### Durham City Conservation Area

Development proposals within or affecting the setting of the Durham City Conservation Area should sustain and enhance its significance as identified within the Conservation Area Appraisals. Development proposals within and affecting the Durham City Conservation Area should take into account, and meet where relevant, the following requirements, by:

- sustaining and enhancing the historic and architectural qualities of buildings, and
- sustaining and enhancing continuous frontages, street patterns, boundary treatments, floorscapes and roofscapes; and
- respecting historic boundaries and curtilages; and
- avoiding demolition of assets of historic and/or architectural interest which contribute to the character and appearance of the area; and
- avoiding loss of, or harm to, an element of an asset which makes a positive contribution to its individual significance and that of the surrounding area; and

- f. avoiding loss of open space that contributes to the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
- g. protecting important views of the Durham City Conservation Area from viewpoints within and outside the Conservation Area; and
- h. taking opportunities to open up lost views and create new views and vistas; and
- i. having appropriate scale, density, massing, form, layout, landscaping, and open spaces; and
- j. having materials, detailing and lighting appropriate to the vernacular, context and setting; and
- k. using high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness, and to the immediate landscape; and
- l. avoiding adding to the cumulative impact of development schemes which dominate either by their scale, massing or uniform design

The peninsula woodlands are designated as a Local Green Space under Policy G2 of the Neighbourhood Plan and all the gardens and designed landscape setting of the World Heritage Site are locally listed in the [County Durham Local List of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes \(2020\)](#).

Historic England’s advice note ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) is also relevant to development proposals.

Durham County Council is currently undertaking work which may see the production of a new technical document relating to the setting of the Property. This will likely provide guidance on achieving well designed, sustainable development and a toolkit to support the Heritage Impact Assessment process specific to the World Heritage Site.

## Durham City Conservation Area

A new Conservation Area Management Plan is being produced for Durham City as a guide to proactive conservation and sensitive development in line with the [UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape](#). This includes a detailed document that comprises a strategic overview which deals with the city on a holistic basis. There are seven highly detailed character appraisals, each including an analysis of strengths and weakness, opportunities and threats including proposals for potential future development sites.

The World Heritage Site lies entirely within the peninsula character area of the current Durham City Conservation Area. If the CAMP is adopted the peninsula will become a new conservation area along with 6 other new areas created from the existing designated area. This will improve management and increase the ability to better assess the impact of new development. This brings extra planning controls to preserve or enhance the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the area, including its buildings, land and vegetation.

**“The overall aim of the CAMP is ambitious, yet it acts as an important mechanism to help address such issues formed within the limits of what is realistically deliverable. It is designed to help bring about tangible positive change in the city and to the lives of the people who live, work, and visit Durham.”**

Draft CAMP Strategic Overview and Management Strategy

**The designation of a conservation area under the Town and County Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 gives the Local Planning Authority (LPA) certain statutory and general duties:**

**s69(1)** requires the LPA to designate from time to time any areas which they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest as conservation areas,

**s69(2)** requires the LPA to review such designations from time to time,

**s71(1)** requires the LPA to formulate, prepare and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas from time to time,

**s72(1)** requires that when assessing applications for development in conservation areas, the LPA must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation areas.

**Aims of the Conservation Area Management Plan**

- Establish, define and capture in time the special interest, and character of the Durham City Conservation Areas and identify the elements that contribute positively.
- Identify, assess and define, the issues, problems, and potential threats to that special interest and character.
- Provide a deliverable overarching management strategy with clear aims and actions to ensure that the special interest and character of the conservation areas is preserved.
- Identify clear potential opportunities for regeneration, improvement and enhancement within the conservation areas

**The CAMP** sets out in detail the intrinsic historical, intangible, physical, spatial and visual interrelationships between the proposed seven individual conservation areas, including townscape, river corridor, and landscape contexts and how they are experienced, understood and appreciated. It supports wider regeneration aims to help deliver positive change within the city to:

1. Tackle the economic challenges
2. Attract inward investment
3. Focus and co-ordinate positive regeneration activity
4. Unlock the City's cultural, economic and community potential
5. Create a better place to live, work, study and visit for all
6. Improve health and wellbeing.

Sites, spaces and places are identified for potential opportunity, regeneration and improvement. Some of these are already earmarked for potential redevelopment and/or have extant planning permission. The management strategy which is the final section of the CAMP considers selected sites in more detail to bring about a proactive approach to change management.

## 3.6 UNESCO Policy and Guidance

The site is managed in accordance with the [Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention](#) (see also section 1.3). Paragraphs 110 and 118bis require impact assessments for proposed interventions within or around a World Heritage property.

Durham County Council Planning Authority ensures that all planning applications for development within the World Heritage Site or its Setting are accompanied by an **Impact Assessment** following the [Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context 2022](#) and associated [Historic England Briefing Note](#). This is a comprehensive resource developed by UNESCO and its advisory bodies.

The Appendices contain 3 tools which can be used during an impact assessment at a World Heritage property. The application for development of the Prince Bishops Shopping Centre is a recent example of this being implemented [Prince Bishops HIA](#) (Durham County Council Planning Portal reference: [DM/24/00705/FPA March 2024](#)).

### **Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011)**

Approaches advocated in UNESCO 's Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011) are being applied to the management of the World Heritage Site enhancing the city as a place to live and work, supporting the regeneration of the high street and fostering social cohesion.

### **UNESCO Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention (2015)**

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are integral to the North East England Regenerative Visitor Economy Framework developed with the [Global Destination Sustainability Movement](#). The site is a partner in the framework which has five key pathways: decarbonising the industry and adapting to climate change, fostering thriving local businesses through innovation and sustainable supply chains; investing in people to create inclusive employment opportunities and skills development; connecting people and communities with improved, inclusive infrastructure for enhanced and active mobility, and digital access; and restoring nature, landscapes, culture, and heritage by investing in recovery and revitalisation projects, reducing pollution, and managing access, as well as creating innovative products and experiences.

World Heritage Sites are specifically referenced in [UN Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities](#). The Property contributes to [targets and indicators nos 11.2, 11.3 11.4, 11.7 and 11a](#).

Following the UK government's ratification in 2024 of the **UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)**, DCMS and the UK National Commission for UNESCO have begun to develop a shared Inventory of Living Heritage in the UK and the City of Durham Trust has offered to lead a community participatory project to capture the Living Heritage connected to Durham Castle and Cathedral.



Cathedral installations such as Luke Jerram's Gaia in 2023 and programmes of activities for schools encourage visitors to engage with the Sustainable Development Goals.

## 4 Current Management

**This section explains the ownership, governance and day-to-day management of the World Heritage Site. Durham Castle and Cathedral is perhaps unusual in that although it is both a visitor attraction and an historic monument these are neither the primary purposes, nor its main sources of income. The site remains in use as a cathedral church, a school and a university. This is a much-loved place with a worldwide alumni community.**



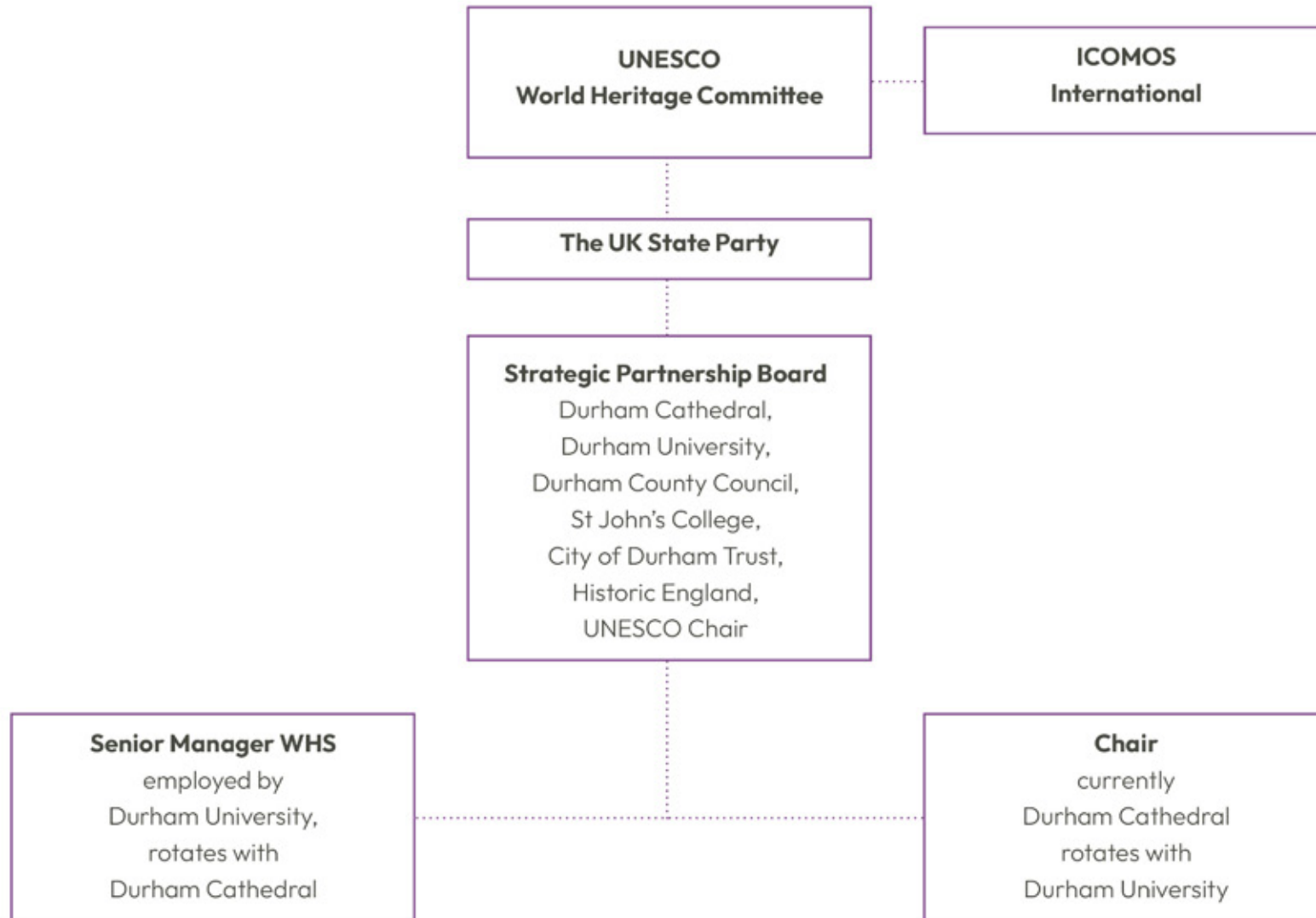
### 4.1 Ownership

The ownership is outlined and illustrated in section 1.3. Most of the site is owned by the Cathedral and Durham University. St John's College has an area outside of the Cathedral precinct. Durham County Council has responsibility for the adopted highways and public rights of way. There are some privately owned properties on Saddler Street and Owengate.

The Bishop is the legal Visitor to Durham Cathedral and retains jurisdiction. The Bishop is also the legal Visitor (Ordinance 15) to Durham University. From its construction until 1837 the Bishop lived in the Castle. (The main residence moved to the Bishop's Palace at Bishop Auckland. This is now a visitor attraction telling the story of the Bishops of Durham). After the establishment of Durham University as a joint venture by Act of Parliament in 1832 the Castle and buildings on Palace Green were endowed to the University, but the Bishop still retains some rights and privileges.

## Organisational chart

The Strategic Partnership Board reports to UNESCO via The UK State Party.  
This is the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (political), the Permanent Delegation to UNESCO (diplomatic) and Historic England (technical).



## 4.2 Governance

Historically the combined secular and ecclesiastical seat of power for the Prince Bishops of Durham, today Durham Castle and Palace Green are governed by the University Council of Durham University and the Cathedral Church and precinct by the Chapter and the College of Canons. The Dean of **Durham Cathedral** chairs the Chapter and is an ex-officio lay member of Durham University Council.

The World Heritage Site Strategic Partnership Board (formerly known as the Co-ordinating Committee) is Advisory. Executive decisions are made by member organisations' executive bodies. The landowners share a Memorandum of Understanding. The Board's Terms of Reference are included in Appendix G.

The University is represented by the Director of University Libraries and Collections. The Cathedral is represented by the Canon Chancellor and chairs the Strategic Partnership Board in rotation with Durham University. There is reciprocal representation between University Council and St John's College Council, an independent, recognised college of the University, registered charity and Theological Education Institution of the Church of England. St John's College Council is represented on the Strategic Partnership Board by the nominated College Officer.

**Durham County Council** is the local government authority and the Planning Authority responsible for planning and conservation, highways and traffic management, economic development, education and tourism and is represented on the WHS Strategic Partnership Board by a senior executive in the Regeneration, Economy and Growth Directorate. The Council and University agreed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2017 (updated in 2022).

Durham University **UNESCO Chair on Archaeological Ethics and Practice in Cultural Heritage** brings a UNESCO perspective to the Board insert (but does not formally represent UNESCO). The team leader for Development Advice from the regional office of Historic England attends as a statutory consultee and technical adviser to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (the UK State Party).

City of Durham Parish Council and the Local Network (formerly Durham Area Action Partnership) receive Board papers and may attend. This provides a route for residents, private landowners and the local businesses to get involved.

### Independent role of the City of Durham Trust

**The City of Durham Trust (represented by the Chair) brings the voice of civic society to the Board.**

A membership organisation with around 400 members, the Trust is a consultee on planning and listed building applications, scrutinises development proposals and has commented on the Conservation Area Management Plan.

In 2025 volunteers assisted in updating the city's list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets supporting the City of Durham Parish Council and Durham County Council.

The Trust was closely involved in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and has organised lectures, supported workshops and contributed to writing this Plan.

Four current trustees have received the City of Durham Parish Council 'Citizen of the Year' award for services to conservation and the environment.

**Table 1 Governance**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Specific role, mandate and responsibilities to manage the property</b>	<b>Key instruments and powers at the managers' disposal to implement mandate</b>
Durham University	Director of University Libraries & Collections (Chair of Board in rotation with Durham Cathedral)	Mandate from University Libraries & Collections Committee, sub-committee of University Executive
Durham University	UNESCO Chair Archaeological Ethics	Recommended by UK National Commission for UNESCO
Durham Cathedral	Canon Chancellor (Chair of Board, in rotation with Durham University)	Mandate from Cathedral Extended Leadership Team
Durham Cathedral	Director of Development Fundraising and donor relations	Reports to Cathedral Chief Operating Officer
Durham County Council	Head of Inclusive Growth and Partnerships Regeneration team	Reports to Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth
City of Durham Trust	Chair of Trust	Civic society
Durham University/ Durham Cathedral in rotation	World Heritage Site Senior Manager Relationship manager	UNESCO Convening authority

## 4.3 Other stakeholders

The WHS Managerworks collaboratively with other UNESCO designations through stakeholder groups:

- [World Heritage UK \(WHUK\)](#)
- [United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO \(UKNC\)](#)
- [ICOMOS-UK](#)

The number of thematic sub committees that previously existed has been reduced and a more agile project- and needs-driven approach established. This brings in expertise from a wide range of external partners and organisations including Durham Wildlife Trust, English Heritage and the National Trust.



The bus service is vital for people with limited mobility

The University has established an internal **WHS Steering Group** to support information-sharing. Durham County Council convenes a **Peninsula Traffic Group** to oversee issues related to event management, access and road safety. A **Protect and Prepare Group** has oversight of security and counter-terrorism measures.

### The Church of England

Durham Cathedral continues to be the seat of the Bishop of Durham and provides a focus for the life and work of the Church of England in the Durham Diocese. The Church Commissioners for England provide some financial support and advice towards ministry.

The Cathedral (legally the Cathedral Church of Christ, Blessed Mary the Virgin and St Cuthbert of Durham) is governed by the Dean (appointed by the King) and Chapter and is a [registered charity](#). The Cathedral estates extend beyond the Cathedral precinct and include property elsewhere in the city and outside Durham.

The Cathedral's governance structure is explained in the revised [Constitution](#) and [Statutes](#) which were updated in 2023 following [The Cathedrals Measure 2021](#) and the [Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011](#) (updated in 2020) legislation. Under the latter the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England (CFCE) advises Chapter and Fabric Advisory Committee on the care, conservation and development of the Cathedral church.

The [Diocese of Durham](#) Chancellor has a statutory responsibility for advising on and permitting alterations to the Chapel of St Mary-the-Less which comes under the parish of St Oswald's Church.

## 4.4 Financial model

The four landowning partners co-fund the WHS Senior Manager. The contribution is based on organisational turnover: Durham University and Durham County Council each contribute 40% of the costs. Durham Cathedral and St John's College contribute 10% each. The post is employed in rotation by Durham University and Durham Cathedral.

The collective cost of maintaining the fabric of the buildings is significant – in excess of £5 million per annum. This cost is borne by the landowners supported by grants and donations.

The Cathedrals Measure provides a new statutory framework for the governance and regulation of cathedrals. This should facilitate the Cathedral to apply to grant-giving bodies who require a standalone object relating to heritage.

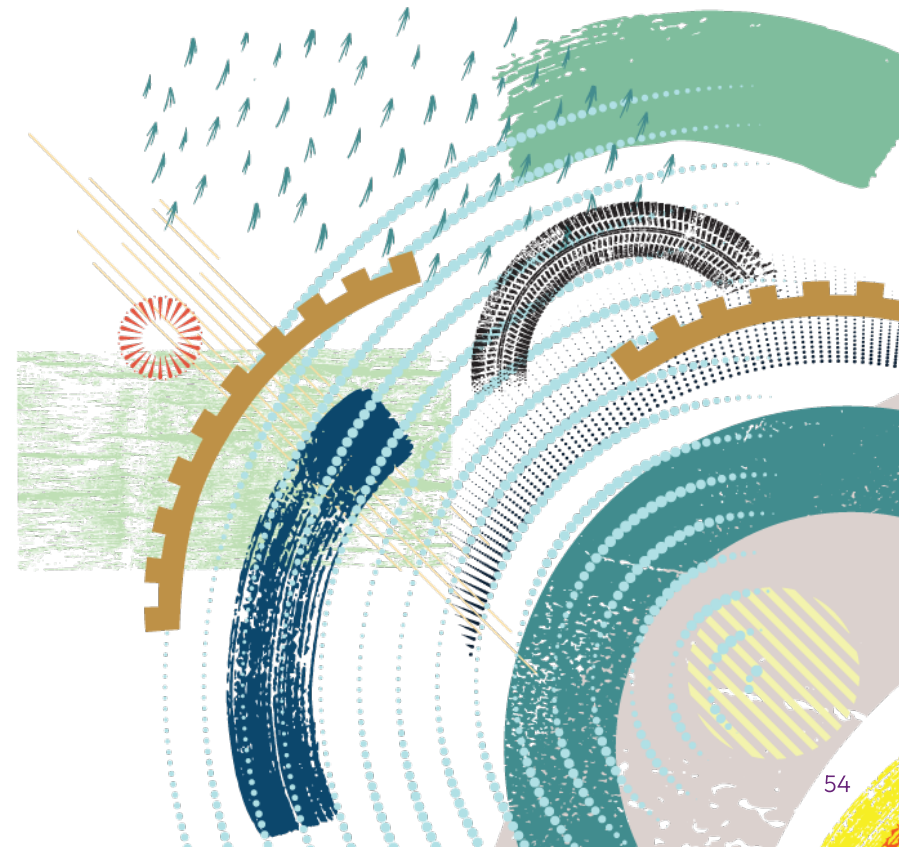
Both the University and Durham Cathedral have benefited from generous grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (then HLF for Open Treasure and the Exchequer Building on Palace Green). St John's College opened a new Learning Resource Centre on the World Heritage Site funded largely by Christian charitable organisations and alumni.

The Cathedral Friends are an important major donor to the Cathedral. Gifts from University College alumni are funding the Bishop's Garden project. The University, Cathedral, County Council and St John's College each has dedicated fundraising staff.

Durham County Council are the local highway authority with responsibility for the Baileys which skirts the boundary of the Property, Owengate and Dun Cow Lane, but not the access road between Quarryheads Lane and the Watergate across Prebends Bridge.

The Council financed the refurbishment of the Baileys with a grant from the government's 'Transforming Cities Fund'. This work was completed in March 2025. This has significantly enhanced the setting of the WHS.

New routes to external funding to support research, capacity building and community engagement are opening up through the National Trust, the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The WHS is collaborating with partners to bid for these funds. All appropriate funding sources for fabric consolidation and improvement and enhanced access will also be explored.



## 5 Current factors affecting the property

**This section refers to the list of factors affecting the OUV of World Heritage properties, adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2008 and the Property's Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting (2023).**

The site has a robust conservation management system in place and an ongoing programme of investment. As part of the Management Planning process, the partners have completed a self-assessment of the State of Conservation of attributes (see 5.2 table). The condition is either good or of low concern. This will continue to be monitored for the lifetime of the plan and the table will be updated annually including with progress against the management measures, as part of an annual progress report to the Board.



### 5.1 Summary of factors affecting the property

#### Building and development

Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site lies at the heart of a modern and growing city. There is no planned housing or commercial development within the World Heritage Site Boundary. Recent building/development projects within the setting are mostly on sites of pre-existing developments of a similar size and nature. These have provided positive socio-economic sustainability impacts, some negative impacts on pre-existing views, but counterbalanced by new views. Improved interpretation facilities have been provided in a relocated Visitor Centre, in the Cathedral Museum and University Library building on Palace Green. Both the Cathedral and the Museum have improved signage and interpretation and there is greater visibility of the World Heritage Site status.

#### Transportation infrastructure

The Peninsula Traffic Group monitors access to the Market Place and Baileys. There are charges for access for nonresidents between 10am and 2am to manage traffic levels. The cobbles, carriageway and public realm on the Baileys have been renewed.

The subsidised contract bus service that connects the World Heritage Site with the railway station and coach park has been renewed and extended to include a Sunday service.

Parking on the Property is limited to residents, Blue Badge holders and access for deliveries.

## Services infrastructure

The Church of England set a goal to achieve net zero by 2030 and the University and Durham County Council by 2035. Research by Durham Energy Institute recommends a hybrid solution to decarbonising the Cathedral. All partners have reduced energy consumption and converted to LED lighting. In 2021 the Cathedral reported a one-third reduction in energy consumption achieved in part through the installation of new internal glass lobbies in 2020 to support access and heat retention.

The Chapel of St Mary-The-Less has a five-yearly inspection published by the Durham Diocese and has secured consent to become the first building on the World Heritage Site to convert gas boilers to air source heat pumps.

The Cathedral is also bringing unused spaces back into use, retrofitting and insulating them to improve thermal performance, reduce energy consumption and improve physical access. Work is underway on the Chapel of the Holy Cross and the Deanery Undercroft to form the new St Cuthbert Centre for Pilgrimage with meeting spaces and facilities for prayer, choir and music rehearsal. This links to plans to further develop the Northern Saints' Trails and Camino Inglés. The College Gate and St Helen's Chapel are undergoing renovation. Heating and lighting systems in the Cathedral Church are becoming obsolete and research is underway to explore options for replacement, alongside improvements to technical infrastructure to facilitate live streaming, concerts and events.

Damaged drainage infrastructure has been repaired or replaced. IT cabling was upgraded before resurfacing works on the Baileys. Electrical infrastructure has sufficient capacity to meet predicted need but this may require investment if demand significantly increases.

## Pollution

Litter is an increasing problem. Volunteers from the Wear Rivers Trust litter pick the footpaths on the riverbanks. The Cathedral clears the weir at the Fulling Mill and the permissive access across Prebends' Bridge. University maintenance staff clean Palace Green.

## Local conditions affecting physical fabric

There is some local negative impact from wind cavitation of historic stonework. Local negative impact of relative humidity on the Norman Chapel has undergone a remedial project. Rainfall is challenging the rainwater runoff mechanisms of the Cathedral and is being addressed.

## Social/cultural uses of heritage

Traditional faith values remain at heart of the Property. Pilgrimage routes and the Camino Inglés have increased impact. The principal landowners are aware of risk of loss of traditional building skills and have apprenticeship/training programmes in place. Stakeholders are aware of need to balance/manage risks of increased tourist pressure/numbers with social/economic/environmental benefits of well-managed tourism to the local community/economy. The focus in this phase is on regenerative tourism.

## Other human activities

The WHS is one of the most high-profile locations with the highest levels of footfall within the City and County. The County Council co-ordinates a Prevent and Protect Group to manage security, disaster preparedness and counter-terrorism risk.

In 2024 there was an incident of civil unrest in Durham City but this was contained. Durham Cathedral, the County Council and University security collaborated to take precautionary measures. Congregations and demonstrations have been peaceful. The preparations for a visit by the King and Queen in 2025 involved a significant security operation.

## **Climate change and severe weather events**

Environmental impacts and severe weather events. The programme of works for Durham Castle is based on a condition survey (Purcell, 2023) and a three volume Conservation Management Plan (Purcell, 2025). Keeping the buildings wind-, water-tight and in use is a priority together with maintaining and improving drainage and the capacity of rainwater goods. A major capital project to underpin and control the environment in the Norman Chapel in Durham Castle is nearing completion.

A new project is underway to monitor for movement linked to environmental conditions. Researchers in structural engineering, geography and the humanities are collaborating on the [WRENCH research project](#) to monitor and model structural movement in the castle linked to environmental change. Sensors are located around the site and a baseline is being established from which to monitor change. The aim in the next phase is to secure further funding to develop a system that can be extended to other parts of the site. In addition, visual inspection of high-risk areas (such as the Norman Chapel) is now aided by sub-millimetric photogrammetry, repeated annually.

Durham Cathedral Framework Conservation Plan is supported by five-yearly inspection reports by the Cathedral Architect. Following major works to stabilise the curtain wall retaining the Monks' Garden in 2024, the most recent inspection highlighted the need for urgent works to the Cloister to repair roofs, improve drainage and increase the capacity of rainwater goods.

Roofing works are underway on buildings on Palace Green to prevent water ingress, repair stonework, prevent damage to collections and reuse vacant spaces. Once completed the Wolfson Gallery on the first floor of Palace Green Library will be redeveloped for the Museum of Archaeology.

Winter storms with high winds have impacted major outdoor events including Lumiere and the annual Christmas market. The peninsula riverbank footpaths have historically been prone to flooding with the risk of damage to Prebends Bridge, riverside buildings and associated weirs from debris when the river is in flood.

## **Sudden ecological or geological events**

In the last five years there have been two small landslips on the riverbanks connected with heavy rainfall and fallen trees.

## **Invasive alien species**

The riverbanks in the Setting are seeing an increased growth of indigenous trees, threatening views of the Castle and Cathedral and riverbank stability. The Wear Rivers Trust manages invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam which is increasing and has the potential to impact on views. Hogweed is a health risk and its spread is actively managed.

## **Management and institutional factors**

The Property has a well-established governance and management structure. County Durham Plan and City of Durham Neighbourhood Plan have been adopted since the previous Management Plan. All contributing stakeholders are experiencing increasing pressure on financial resources. The Property benefits from research resources from the University, Visit County Durham and the Destination Development Pilot.

## 5.2 State of conservation of attributes

Attribute	Indicators	Factors affecting the attribute	State of conservation	Trend	Management measures
<b>Attribute 1</b> The Site's exceptional architecture demonstrating architectural innovation	5-yearly condition survey	Local conditions affecting physical fabric	Low concern	Cathedral Chapel of Nine Altars – slow deterioration Cathedral cloister – slow deterioration Galilee chapel and medieval glass – slow deterioration Norman chapel – improving Norman towers, Bishop's suite, Senate suite – slow deterioration	Planned investment in conservation Ongoing environmental monitoring of Norman chapel Further research to identify conservation solutions
<b>Attribute 2</b> The visual drama of the Cathedral and Castle on the peninsula and the associations with notions of romantic beauty.	Maintenance of key views Buildings and structures on Heritage at Risk Register Conservation Area Management Plan SWOT analysis	Buildings and development Transportation and Services infrastructure Pollution Local conditions affecting physical fabric Climate change and extreme weather events Invasive/alien species	Low concern	Prebends Bridge – slow deterioration Riverbanks – stable	Research and investment required to remove Prebends Bridge from Heritage at Risk Register Planned investment in woodland management following public consultation Planned investment in gardens and designed landscape setting of the World Heritage Site Statutory Consents Development of technical guidance document as part of new County Durham Plan
<b>Attribute 3</b> The physical expression of the Spiritual and Secular Powers of the medieval Bishops Palatine that the defended complex provides.	5-yearly condition survey	Local conditions affecting physical fabric Climate change and extreme weather events	Low concern	Palace Green buildings - improving	Planned investment in woodland management following public consultation
<b>Attribute 4</b> The relics and material culture of the three saints, (Cuthbert, Bede, and Oswald) buried at the site	Maintain museum accreditation	Social/cultural uses of heritage	Low concern	Stable	Planned investment in gardens and designed landscape setting of the World Heritage Site

Attribute	Indicators	Factors affecting the attribute	State of conservation	Trend	Management measures
<p><b>Attribute 5</b> The Continuity of use and ownership over the past 1000 years as a place of religious worship, learning and residence</p>	<p>Number of vacant spaces Number of vacant spaces</p>	<p>Social/cultural uses of heritage</p>	<p>Low concern</p>	<p>Improving</p>	<p>Vacant spaces brought back into use Continuity of ownership and use</p>
<p><b>Attribute 6</b> The Site's role as a political statement of Norman power imposed upon a subjugate nation, as one of the country's most powerful symbols of the Norman Conquest of Britain</p>	<p>Visitor engagement and interpretation</p>	<p>Other human activities</p>	<p>Low concern</p>	<p>Improving</p>	<p>World Heritage Ambassadors training and development World Heritage site website development</p>
<p><b>Attribute 7</b> The importance of the Site's archaeological remains, which are directly related to its history and continuity of use over the past 1000 years.</p>	<p>Impact assessment, watching brief and fieldwork in advance of any works Publication of fieldwork Accredited museum status – Cathedral Museum and Museum of Archaeology</p>	<p>Building and development Social/cultural uses of heritage</p>	<p>Good  Low concern Good</p>	<p>Stable  Improving Stable</p>	<p>Archaeological investigations reported to Durham County Council Archaeology Section. Publication of new archaeological research synthesis and Research Framework Level of investment in archaeological research Exhibitions and lecture programme</p>
<p><b>Attribute 8</b> The cultural and religious traditions and historical memories associated with the relics of St Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede, and with the continuity of use and ownership over the past millennium. The continued veneration of Cuthbert and Bede.</p>	<p>Maintain Saints' Days and associated traditions</p>	<p>Social/cultural uses of heritage</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Improving</p>	<p>Cathedral Strategy – Development of Cuthbert Centre for Pilgrimage and Prayer Cathedral Strategy – Promotion of Northern Saints' Trails and Camino Inglés Exhibitions and lecture programme.</p>

## 6 Management vision and objectives

**2026 marks the 40th anniversary of inscription of the site on the World Heritage List. For this Plan we have refreshed our vision and objectives. Looking ahead to the next 40 years our collective vision is that this extraordinary place will flourish and be:**

- conserved and enhanced, protecting the special values of the site and its setting for current and future generations and continuing in use as an international centre of faith and learning.
- loved and valued by communities of place, worship, and learning, where people of all ages and backgrounds want to be involved and become ambassadors.
- a place of sanctuary where visitors and residents are invited to dwell and enjoy the site, the gardens, designed landscape and the wider setting.
- presented, interpreted and animated in a contemporary way that engages people in learning and increases intercultural understanding and awareness of world heritage underpinned by UNESCO values and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- known by the world heritage community for its innovation and application of heritage research and conservation practice using the world heritage site as a ‘living laboratory’.

Historic England Guidance recommends setting medium-term specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound SMART objectives that both underpin elements of the vision and address challenges and opportunities identified in [Section 5.0](#). Objectives for the next phase are set out here arranged by theme, showing the relationship to Outstanding Universal Value. The highlighted projects also directly respond to areas of public concern.

### **Conserve: OUV Attribute 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7**

A. Implement programme of works to conserve and enhance the site based on the State of Conservation and funding.

B. Develop and implement a public realm strategy in and around the World Heritage Site.

#### **Highlighted project: Conserving the Castle**

### **Share: OUV Attribute 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8**

C. Use the site as a resource for lifelong learning and foster intergenerational approaches.

D. Champion the Durham Story place brand to increase the profile of the World Heritage Site and promote a forward-looking, confident narrative.

E. Co-produce an animation programme to celebrate anniversaries.

#### **Highlighted project: European Year of the Normans**

### **Regenerate: OUV Attribute 2, 5, 8**

F. Improve the gardens and designed landscape setting on the peninsula.

#### **Highlighted project: Fellows’ Garden, Durham Castle**

### **Research: OUV Attribute 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8**

G. Develop the research capacity of the World Heritage Site.

#### **Highlighted project: Durham Green Corridor**

The biennial Lumiere festival brings light after dark during winter.



## 6.1 Conserve

This theme focuses on the protection and preservation of the buildings' architecture and history, both ecclesiastical and secular. The site seeks to maintain the highest standards of conservation practice investing in industry-recognised and accredited continuous professional development for staff and bringing in external expertise as required.

The conservation of the Cathedral is managed and monitored in-house by the Head of Works (a Fellow of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) and the Head of Library and Collections with advice from the Cathedral Architect, the Cathedral Archaeologist and an external Fabric Advisory Committee. The conservation of Durham Castle and Palace Green is overseen by the Director of University Estates and the Head of University Libraries and Collections who report to an internal World Heritage Site Steering Group. The University retains advice from external consultants including Hirst Conservation and Purcell. The fabric of the Cathedral Church and Chapel of St Mary-the-Less are reviewed every five years as part of their statutory quinquennial inspections.

### **Objective A: Implement programme of work to conserve and enhance the site based on the State of Conservation and funding**

The prioritisation of projects relies upon an understanding of significance and current state of conservation, balanced with the availability of funding, operational needs and organisational sustainability – in order to support the continuity of use and ownership of the site as a place of religious worship, learning and residence which is intrinsic to the site's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV 5).

Vacancy is the biggest threat to the long-term condition of historic buildings. Therefore our priority is to keep buildings in viable uses that are appropriate to their conservation. In the last phase as part of a new

Strategy for Managing our Historic Estate, University-owned property within the World Heritage Site boundary on North Bailey, Owengate and Dun Cow Lane was improved ensuring continued use for teaching and research. In this phase the establishment of the Cuthbert Centre for Prayer and Pilgrimage is bringing the Chapel of the Holy Cross and Deanery Undercroft back into use. Works are also underway to re-roof, repair and re-use Bishop Cosin's Almshouses on Palace Green.

Major conservation projects in the last period included the restoration of the Cathedral central tower (2016-19), the conservation of the Exchequer Building (2017-18) and Bishop Cosin's Library (2020-22) on Palace Green, the first phase of the Norman chapel (2022-24) in Durham Castle and underpinning the curtilage below the Monks' Garden.

Cathedral conservation plans for the next phase are set out in the Cathedral Quinquennial. Major projects include the Cathedral bells and organs, as well as conservation of the Cloister and the Chapel of the Nine Altars. The new Castle Conservation Management Plan sets out the prioritisation and sequencing for ongoing fabric repair and conservation.

Prebends Bridge has been in daily use since it opened in 1778. It is the iconic viewpoint of the World Heritage Site and provides a vital connection to the historic city centre. Research is needed to find a solution to arrest the water ingress that is causing deterioration of the fabric of this 18th century sandstone bridge, a grade I Listed Building number 1121354 and Scheduled Monument number 1002337. Further investigations and repairs will work towards removing the bridge from the Heritage at Risk Register.

The Cathedral gives free permissive access to pedestrians and cyclists. The Camino Inglés pilgrimage route (which connects Escomb Saxon Church, Auckland Palace, Durham Cathedral and Finchale Priory) crosses the bridge. The bridge also provides emergency vehicle access and is opened to vehicles occasionally to facilitate egress from the Bailey during key events and when road closures are in place. It plays a major role in events such as the Lumiere festival.



Prebends Bridge

### Highlighted project: Conserving the Castle

A major conservation project on the Norman Chapel in Durham Castle, the oldest standing building in Durham is ongoing.

New underpinning and groundworks have stabilised the foundations and are ventilating and drying-out saturated stonework. New 'tree root proof' drains have been installed and trees that were damaging the structure have been removed. New doors protect the environment and facilitate access. The drying-out process is expected to take 5 years. Environmental monitoring is ongoing, but results show that the new system is working.

On the back of this important conservation work funded by Durham University, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) awarded a year-long collaborative, interdisciplinary research network grant to bring together specialists from the arts and humanities, the archaeological, environmental, and conservation sciences, heritage management, and museum education to share practice and re-investigate the history and origins of the building.

Participants from academia, industry, and the third sector have uncovered the late 11th century footprint of the castle walls overlooking the city that formed the original bishop's household when Durham Cathedral was being built. The research is informing a new audio-visual installation in the Norman chapel in 2025. The Castle Research Group will continue this work in the next phase to understand and visualise (using augmented or virtual reality) the Norman towers for visitors. More Romanesque stonework has recently been revealed behind panelling in state rooms above the Norman chapel. Further study and detailed recording is ongoing. Mortar samples will be dated using optically stimulated luminescence (OSL)

Inspecting the condition of the Romanesque carved sandstone capitols.



## Objective B: Develop and implement a public realm strategy in and around the World Heritage Site

The Streets for All guidance produced by Historic England highlights the material impact that public realm has on the way historic places are perceived and its importance in place-making as well as enabling access. The public realm in and around the site has evolved over time and the Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan has identified several areas where low quality interventions and the use of inappropriate materials in the floor-scape, cluttered street furniture and traffic calming measures detract from the historic character of the area.

Work on the Baileys in the last phase (see image) has improved the site both aesthetically and practically, bettering access and public safety and establishing a high-quality environment in keeping with the site's significance.

The Public Realm Strategy will help to retain the authenticity and integrity of the historic streets and public spaces within and around the World Heritage Site. It will promote the better understanding, appreciation and care of the city's historic environment through a positive partnership approach to repair, conservation, or interpretation of historic elements such as surfaces, monuments and memorials, lighting, ironwork, gardens, signs and other street furniture. The Cathedral improved its signage and interpretation in the last phase and there is now a consistent approach within the Cathedral precinct. The aim in the next phase is to extend this to the riverbanks.



Refurbishment of the Baileys using traditional river cobbles

## 6.2 Share

This theme focuses on the site as resource for learning and explains how it is being brought to life in a way that is both authentic to its past and engaging and relevant to contemporary society. The activity bridges marketing and communications, education and learning, exhibitions and events and community archaeology.

From 2009 to 2025 the World Heritage Site took centre stage in the festival of light Lumière, a biennial event curated by Artichoke for Durham County Council. The Cathedral has been a giant art gallery for contemporary art installations, such as Luke Jerram's Museum of the Moon (2021), Gaia (2023) and has hosted Lux Muralis since 2022. This touring artistic collaboration creates an immersive sound and light installation projected inside the Cathedral: Life (2022), Science (2023) and Space (2024). Peace Doves in 2024 was a mass-produced artwork involving 15,000 people.

The same year Durham University added a Fringe event as part of Culture Durham's collaborative Into the Light. In summertime the colourful and lively annual Durham Fringe Festival animates Palace Green and in 2025 brought the UK Museum of the Year Beamish to Durham Castle.

The Cathedral takes a creative participative approach to cultural engagement and lifelong learning. For example, the giant Cathedral in Lego (and accompanying Lego animation films) took three years to build and 300,000 individually-placed bricks. The model is now on display in Durham Cathedral Museum.

The giant Cathedral model made with Lego.





Blessing of the banners ceremony at the annual Durham Miners' Gala.

### Objective C:

#### Use the site as a resource for lifelong learning

The Cathedral reaches every young person living in County Durham through engagement with schools and colleges. In 2023/4 241,719 people participated in cultural engagement activities through Durham University. Museum learning reached 21,661 school children from the city and beyond.

In 2025 the World Heritage Site supported an application for Durham City to join UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities. This builds on the work of [Durham Cathedral Institute](#) which was launched in 2022 to bring the public square to Durham Cathedral through an annual programme of debates with prominent invited speakers.

Public archaeology and history is championed through local societies and Durham County Council and is celebrated in an annual Archaeology Day, World Heritage Day and European Heritage Open Days.

The Youth Ambassadors programme brings together young people aged 12-24 from the local community and Durham University to share experience and co-create content for exhibitions and activities, so that they lead on the interpretation. Working behind the scenes with curators and archaeologists our Youth Ambassadors have created [Voices](#) audio stories of characters from Durham's past –including skeleton 22 discovered in a 17th-century mass grave of Scottish Soldiers at Palace Green Library.

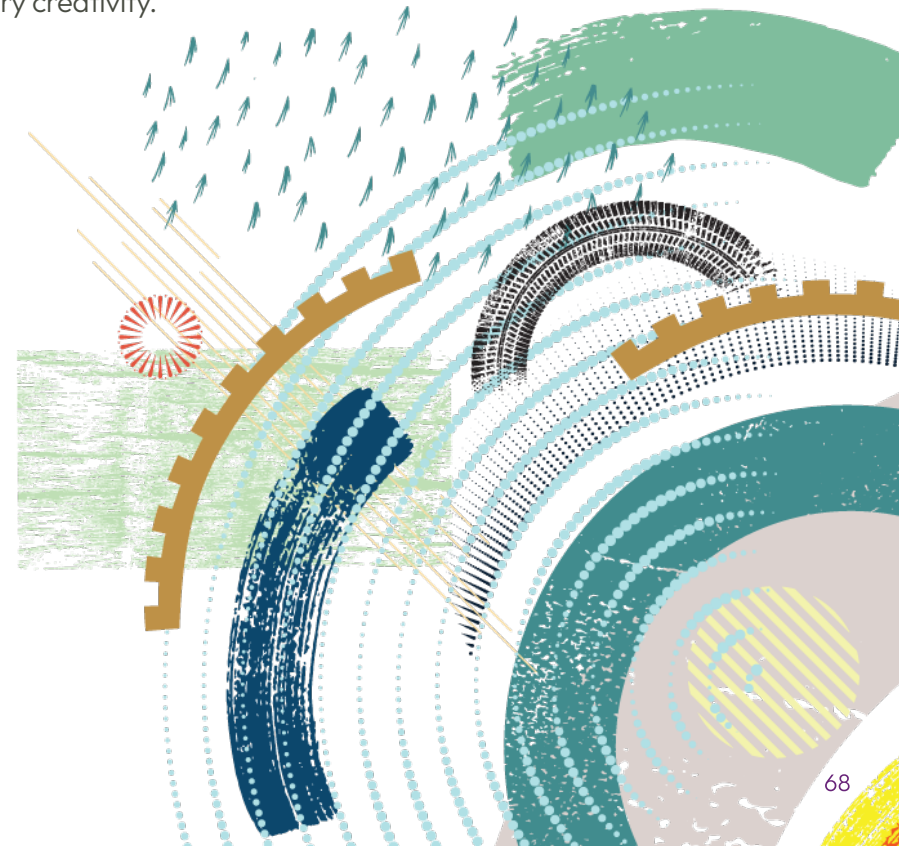
The 2025 cohort produced the exhibition [Under the Library](#) at St John's College ahead of the official publication in the Durham Archaeological Journal. The aim in the next phase is to develop this into an intergenerational programme and to bring together the mainly older members of local societies with young people, starting with a heritage fair showcasing their work in Durham Castle for World Heritage Day 2026.

### Objective D:

#### Champion the Durham Story place brand to increase the profile of the World Heritage Site and promote a forward-looking, confident narrative.

The World Heritage Site is a 'Durham champion' for the [Durham Story](#) which launched in 2025. This writes a new forward-looking, confident narrative describing an ambitious and innovative place of learning where the past is brought into the present. It describes Durham City '**a special City that attracts and radiates**' as the jewel in the crown of County Durham with the UNESCO World Heritage Site at its heart.

The brand fosters the idea of the city as a hub (and storyboard) for the wider county experience and emphasises finding new ways to animate heritage '**contemporising and connecting our culture**' and shining a light on our contemporary creativity.



people lived in  
and show that the site  
used since prehistoric  
much earlier than we  
ght.

the ages, trade and  
ion have shaped the  
many societies,  
hind the material  
at archaeologists

Today.

1450 - 1901 CE  
**Post Medieval**  
15th century metalwork, like keys  
and decorative pieces  
indicate that nobles and the clergy  
likely frequented the site.

1901 - PRESENT  
**Contemporary**  
St John's College established in 1908.  
Following the excavation, St John's  
College Library opened its  
doors in 2018.

This exhibition was created by  
Durham World Heritage Site Youth  
Ambassadors (YAMS) to reflect on their  
relationship with past and present, as told  
through material objects.

Through a combination of storytelling and  
creative expression, the YAMS  
explored St John's College's rich history,  
cultural value, and role in shaping local and  
global heritage.

Scan to visit the  
digital exhibition



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE



Youth Ambassadors' exhibition of archaeological discoveries found under the Library at St John's College.

## Objective E:

### Co-produce an animation programme to celebrate anniversaries

In 2025 to mark the 800th anniversary of its 1225 issue of the Magna Carta the Cathedral created Magna Carta and the North, an exhibition and art installation including a 'River of Words' crowd-sourced poetic imagining flowing through the nave of the Cathedral reinterpreting the spirit of the Magna Carta for today's world. Conceived in 1215 as a religious document, a promise made by the King of England to God, this Great Charter is the basis for English Law, the US Bill of Rights and influenced the Human Rights Act.

In 2026 to coincide with the 40th anniversary of inscription of the World Heritage Site we will launch a celebration of heritage that will run through 2027 (European Year of the Normans and Year of Pilgrimage).

In 2031 we will celebrate 1300 years of the Venerable Bede's 'Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum' (The Ecclesiastical History of the English People). The relics and material culture of Bede are part of the Property's OUV. The body of Bede was moved to Durham around 1022 from Jarrow (historically part of County Durham).

Bede was regarded as the foremost scholar in Europe during his life and his scholarship is known globally today. Referred to as the Father of English History, he wrote or translated around 40 books on religion, science, history, astronomy, mathematics and language. Many of Bede's manuscripts are now part of Durham University and Cathedral Library.

A celebration of Bede's legacy will lead into 2032 which is the bicentenary of Durham University. In 2033 Durham Cathedral will celebrate 900 years since completion.

A group on a guided tour of Durham Cathedral.  
©Visit County Durham/Peter Atkinson

## Highlighted project:

### European Year of the Normans

The return to the UK of the Bayeux Tapestry and the celebration of 'European Year of the Normans in 2027', marking 1000 years since the birth of William the Conqueror, is an opportunity to retell the story of the Norman Conquest with exhibitions, curated talks and podcasts linking with the Norman Castle at Newcastle and developing research and cultural links with Normandy and the University of Caen.



## 6.3 Regenerate

This theme focuses on how the site contributes to the wider area improving the place and people's lives and livelihoods. This activity is overseen by steering groups with regional partners. It promotes regenerative tourism, empowering local communities, celebrating both natural and cultural heritage, restoring ecosystems and the natural environment.

The launch of the [Camino Inglés](#) (in 2019) and the [Northern Saints Trails](#) in 2021 connected the Cathedral with other heritage sites across the region. This has laid the foundation for the expansion of pilgrimage and the establishment of the St Cuthbert Centre for Pilgrimage and Prayer.

The Durham City in [Blossom](#) collaboration with National Trust in 2024 and 2025 (following the Trust's acquisition of the historic Crook Hall Gardens property on the riverside in Durham in 2022) marked the beginning of a renewed focus on the gardens and designed landscape of the World Heritage Site and start of the [Green Corridor Project](#) (with Durham County Council).

Three-year funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council will triangulate academic research, public engagement and creative practice to improve public access to and enjoyment of the riverbanks.

### Objective F:

#### Improve access to the gardens and designed landscape setting

The gardens and designed landscapes of the peninsula were added to a [Local List of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes](#) in 2020. The spaces are highly valued locally in some cases (for example The College at the Cathedral) as secluded, tranquil green spaces and in others (for example Palace Green) as spaces for congregations and events whilst also providing the setting to numerous designated assets. In the next phase we will seek to improve these spaces and increase public access through a new public realm strategy.

At the heart of the site, Palace Green was created in the 12th century when Bishop Flambard cleared the marketplace and dwellings that lay between the Castle and Cathedral to create a large open area for processions and to escape the bustle of the city. In recent years it has become an important space for community events. The University has established a Palace Green Management Group to approve events and activities that take place on Palace Green.

Modest improvements have been made to the Castle's North Terrace creating an outdoor site for events. The terrace was originally built by Bishop Cosin from the redundant earthworks when he transformed the Castle from a fortress to a Palace after the English Civil Wars in the 17th century. The landscaped terraces and pathways around the Keep are now understood to be one of the few remaining examples of a 17th century Scholars' Garden, designed for contemplation as well as for the views out.

The Cathedral reopened the [Monks' Garden](#) in 2024 following completion of conservation work on the retaining walls.

It opens the Cloister Garth in the summer for picnicking and events and this area will be improved as part of conservation works to the Cloister. The Deanery Garden, currently private, will also open as a contemplative space connected to the new Cuthbert Centre for Pilgrimage and Prayer.

Durham is the only UK cathedral that maintains its own Cut Flower Garden to grow blooms for display within the Cathedral. Located on South Bailey this is a hidden gem in the heart of the historic medieval city. It now also features on the local list for Durham City

The riverbanks have been an important area for promenading since the 1730s. Today the riverbanks and ancient woodland that surround the cathedral provide a scenic escape for local people and visitors to the city. They also provide a haven for wildlife. Recent public consultation will inform the updating of the riverbank management plan and shape proposals to improve the footpaths, woodland and waterway with the help of Durham County Council, Durham Wildlife Trust and Wear Rivers Trust.

This work is expected to improve the setting of the site; provide safe access; increase nature and biodiversity; remove plastics from the river; control invasive species; and reduce pollution and flood risk downstream.

### **Highlighted project:**

#### **Fellows' (The Bishop's) Garden, Durham Castle**

This capital project will improve and increase usage of the 'hidden' former Bishop's Garden, now University College Fellows' Garden. Situated off the barbican and adjoining Palace Green Library, this space has previously been a closed space, reserved for University College and University staff and students.

The project involves landscaping to create an outdoor performance space with a purpose-built terrace/stage area for performing arts, power/data/cablings for sound and lighting equipment and constructing a lift and accessible toilet facility with level access off the barbican.

The project has been entirely funded through alumni donations and will open in October 2025 improving physical access and visitor facilities and an enhanced outdoor space for wellbeing and student enrichment.

During term time the garden will be primarily used by the University College community. During vacations the intention is to enable community access to support events such as Durham Book Festival and Durham Fringe Festival.



The Fellows' Garden

## 6.4 Research

The intergovernmental cultural heritage conservation organisation ICCROM, an advisory body to the World Heritage Committee, recognises the importance of research and the development of heritage science:

**Drawing on diverse humanities, sciences and engineering disciplines, heritage science is an umbrella term encompassing all forms of scientific inquiry... Heritage science focuses on enhancing the understanding, care, sustainable use and management of tangible and intangible heritage to enrich people's lives today and in the future.**

OUV 7 recognises the importance of archaeological remains and there is a research framework for the archaeology of the site. Recent archaeological excavations and fieldwork have revealed that occupation of the peninsula goes back not 1000 years, but 7000 years. There is more evidence for the Roman period and for settlement that pre-dated the Norman Cathedral.

A Visiting Research Scholarship has been awarded to publish a new synthesis of archaeological investigations from surveys, excavations, monitoring and borehole data around the Castle and Cathedral, collating information from the Historic Environment Record, Archaeological Data Service, the OASIS system available to heritage practitioners, Cathedral and Palace Green Library archives, contractors and other specialists to combine with existing material. Site reports and building records that exist only in paper form will be digitised to facilitate public access, providing a valuable accessible research resource.

Looking forward re-analysis of geophysical and Ground Penetrating Radar survey data of Palace Green is generating interest in a new public archaeology project at the heart of the site.

### **Objective G:**

#### **Develop the research capacity of the World Heritage Site**

In 2024 Durham University agreed to invest £2.8million from its Strategic Research Fund (SRF) to develop and nurture interdisciplinary research at the interface of cultural and natural heritage by bringing significant interdisciplinary expertise to Durham to work with existing colleagues in History, Modern Languages & Cultures, Archaeology, Geography, Chemistry, Biosciences, and Libraries & Collections.

Through Heritage 360 the World Heritage Site, buildings, designated museum collections, libraries and archives are a resource, 'a living laboratory', for research in a wide range of fields from cutting-edge heritage science analysis of Cathedral and University medieval manuscripts to modelling environmental impact and developing new scientific techniques and Artificial Intelligence to record and understand fabric and collections.

The Institute for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (IMEMS) also provides an academic hub for researchers and the UNESCO chair (based in the Department of Archaeology) leads research in world heritage cultural management globally. A new Castle Research Group has formed and is developing a research agenda for the site. This identifies research needs and recognises that complex problems require a multidisciplinary approach.

The Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee (FAC) has identified a long list of research areas linked to current needs including conservation science and managing rainwater.



## 7 Appendix A: Actions and implementation

Theme	Action	Output	Timescale	Lead delivery partner	Funding source
<b>MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING</b>	Partnership Board meetings	Minutes and action log, internal reports	Termly	WHS Manager and Chair of the Board	Partners
	Palace Green Management Group	Calendar of events and licences	Monthly and as required	Durham University & WHS Manager	Durham University
	University WHS Steering Group	Minutes and action log, internal reports	Termly	Durham University	Durham University
	Review progress against action plan	Internal report Published progress report	Annual Every 2 years	WHS Manager	Partners
	Monitor State of Conservation of OUV	Updated monitoring framework	Annual	WHS Manager	Partners
	Mid-point evaluation UNESCO Periodic Report	Management Plan Refreshed Self assessment, UK written report	2030 8 years - 2031	WHS Manager WHS Manager and DCMS	Partners
<b>CONSERVE</b> A. Implement programme of works to conserve and enhance the site based on the State of Conservation and funding	Complete conservation projects currently underway	St Helen's Chapel	2025-6	Durham Cathedral	Durham Cathedral and donations, grants and donations
		Deanery Undercroft			
		2 The College 12 The College			
	Implement recommendations of Quinquennial Inspections and conservation management plans	Senate Room, North Terrace, Norman Chapel, Durham Castle	2023-6	Durham University	Durham University, grants and donations
		Install air-source heat pumps in St Mary the Less	2025-6	St John's College	St John's College
	Prioritised programme of repair, maintenance and conservation including: Cathedral Church North Door and The Cloister	Ongoing, reviewed annually	Durham Cathedral	Property owners, grants and donations	
	Risk and Resilience Strategy to prioritise works on Durham Castle Great Hall, Bishop's Suite, Black stair and external repairs	2026	Durham University		

Theme	Action	Output	Timescale	Lead delivery partner	Funding source
B. Enhance the quality of public spaces in and around the World Heritage Site	Review and update underpinning Conservation Management Plans	Durham Castle Framework Conservation Management Plan	2025	Durham University	Durham University
		Durham Cathedral Framework Conservation Plan	2030	Durham Cathedral	Durham Cathedral
		Palace Green Framework Conservation Plan	2030	Durham University	Durham University
	Adopt Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan incorporating Setting Guidance on Understanding and Assessing Development Impacts	Adopted Plan	2026	Durham County Council	Durham County Council
	Preventative conservation to slow deterioration of Prebends Bridge and maintain permissive access	Netting and further technical investigations	2026-2028	Durham Cathedral	Durham University and external grants and fundraising
	Complete conservation works on Palace Green buildings and reinstate landscaping	External works complete Construction compounds and scaffold removed Resurfacing repairs complete Planting renewed New oak benches installed	2026	Durham University	Durham University
	Implement Lighting Improvements	Renewed LED lighting on riverbanks and castle floodlights	2026	Durham County Council	Durham County Council
	Address public realm issues identified in Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan	Remove unsightly commercial waste bins from North Bailey by constructing bin store	2026-7		
	Design and implement a public realm strategy covering and connecting the peninsula and Market Place	Guidance on design and materials Renewal of public realm where required	2028-30	Durham County Council	Secure external funding
			2030-35	Durham County Council	

Theme	Action	Output	Timescale	Lead delivery partner	Funding source
<b>SHARE</b> C. Use the site as a resource for lifelong learning and foster intergenerational approaches	Support bid to UNESCO Global City of Learning	Learning City Team and strategy	2026	World Heritage Site Manager, Durham University	Partner organisations
	Deliver YAMS programme	YAMS project outputs – exhibitions and interpretation Public events programme	Annual	World Heritage Site Manager	
	Deliver World Heritage Day, Heritage Open Days and public lecture Establish WHS Professor in Practice	Support public engagement	2026		Durham University
D. Champion the Durham Story place brand.	Implement Durham place-brand on communications	New photography Design and print of publications	Annual	Visit County Durham and Durham University	Partners
E. Co-produce an animation programme to celebrate anniversaries	Invite proposals for exhibitions and events Implement local access, education and learning plans	Annual programme of exhibitions and events, lecture series, Youth Ambassadors programme, schools' education and outreach, Cathedral Institute, history and heritage lecture programmes, World Heritage Day, Heritage Open Days Biennial Lumiere Palace Green programme	Annual cycle	Durham Cathedral and University Libraries and Collections Programming Panels City of Durham Trustees, local history and heritage societies	Partner organisations
	Develop city cultural events programme	European Year of the Normans Bede 1300 Durham University 200 Durham Cathedral 900	2025 Annual 2027 2031 2032 2033	Durham County Council Event Durham Durham University University & Cathedral Durham University Durham Cathedral	Partner organisations Durham Fringe, City of Durham Parish Council, Durham BID

Theme	Action	Output	Timescale	Lead delivery partner	Funding source
<b>REGENERATE</b> F. Improve access to the gardens and designed landscape setting	Increase use of Fellows Garden, Durham Castle	New accessible outdoor performance space	2025	Durham University	University College alumni
	Open access to Deanery Garden	Cuthbert Centre for Pilgrimage and Prayer	2026	Durham Cathedral	Durham Cathedral and Cathedral Friends
	Improve drainage in Cloister Garth	Summertime open space for public	2027	Durham Cathedral	Durham Cathedral and fundraising
	Maintain and improve Palace Green	Additional seating and reduced traffic	2026	Durham University	Durham University
	Improve Bowes Garden	Public open days and talks	Annual	St John's College	St John's College
	Wendy House Garden	Feasibility for access improvement	2027-2029	St Cuthbert's Society	St Cuthbert's Society alumni
	Update and implement Riverbanks Management Plan	Public consultation report	2025	Durham Cathedral	Durham Cathedral and Cathedral Friends
	Reinstate lost views	Licences for tree management to commence	2026		
Improve drainage and accessibility of footpaths	Renewed surfacing on Public Rights of Way	2028-2030	Durham County Council	Durham County Council and external funding	
<b>RESEARCH</b> G: Develop the research capacity of the World Heritage Site	Heritage 360 Recruit & develop programme	Increase research capacity and attract external funding	2025-2028	Durham University	Strategic Research Fund
	Green Corridors Mission Project	Research and activity programme, participation, evaluation and publications	2025-2028	Newcastle, Durham & Teesside universities and National Trust	Arts & Humanities Research Council
	Establish Castle Research Group	Research Agenda, mapping and funding bids	Annual	Durham University	External grant applications
	Award Research Fellowship	Publish Archaeology Synthesis Update Research Framework	2025-2026 2027	Research Fellow/ World Heritage Site Manager	Durham University

## Appendix B: Monitoring outputs and outcomes

The WHS manager monitors Factors Affecting the Site and the State of Conservation annually using the indicators defined in section 5.0 and completes the periodic report to UNESCO every 8 years. Project outputs are included in Appendix A. In addition, the following outputs and outcomes are monitored:

Theme	Outputs	Outcomes (long term results and benefits)	Indicators	Timescale	Monitoring Lead
<b>CONSERVE</b> A: Implement a programme of works to conserve and enhance the site based on the State of Conservation and funding  B. Develop and implement a public realm strategy in and around the World Heritage Site	Conservation completed	State of conservation maintained or improved	Vacancy rate Investment £	Annual	WHS Manager
	Quinquennial inspections, Condition survey reports Updated conservation plans	Follow conservation best practice		Ongoing	Durham University; Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee
	Technical reports	Prebends Bridge removed from Heritage at Risk Register		2033	Durham Cathedral
	Ground condition survey, flood management plan and environmental monitoring data	Benchmark to measure impact on fabric	Rate of change	Ongoing	Castle Research Group
	Public realm improvements	Coherent design and positive perceptions of place	Visitor survey	Annual	WHS Manager
<b>SHARE</b> C: Use the site as a resource for lifelong learning	UKNC endorsement (2025) and UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities decision (2026)	Durham City Lifelong Learning Strategy	Number of learning partners engaged	Termly meetings from 2026	Learning City Team
			Educational visits data and web statistics Number of volunteers	Annual Annual	Education and Learning Managers Volunteer managers
D: Champion the Durham Story place brand	Durham Story Brand applied in communications	Increased profile for Durham city	Press and PR reach and value	Quarterly meetings	Visit County Durham manager
E: Co-produce an animation programme to celebrate anniversaries	Animation programme – sales income, participation numbers	Increased awareness and enjoyment of World Heritage site Increased income invested into conservation	Visitor numbers and feedback	Annual	Event organisers and visitor services managers
<b>REGENERATE</b> F: Improve access to the gardens and designed landscape setting	Increased footfall	Positive economic and social impact locally	Placeinformatics footfall data	Annual	Durham County Council
	WHUK Realising the Benefits to Communities case study		Visitor STEAM data reports	2026	Visit County Durham WHUK
<b>RESEARCH</b> G: Develop the Research capacity of the World Heritage Site	Research reports and publications	Overheads contribution	Research income	Annual	Durham University
		Innovation in conservation practice	Rankings	Annual	WHS Manager, City of Durham Trust
		Increased public understanding	Participation	Annual	

# Appendix C: Designated assets



<b>List Entry</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade</b>
1120631	CASTLE WALL AROUND MOTTE ON WEST, NORTH AND EAST SIDES	I
1120653	GAS LAMP IN FRONT OF GARDEN WALL OF NUMBER 12	II
1120654	WATER HYDRANT NORTH OF NUMBER 12	II
1120655	THE DEANERY	I
1120656	16 AND 16A, THE COLLEGE	II*
1120657	STAFF ROOMS AND STORE ROOMS	II
1120658	MAINTENANCE SHED AND WORKSHOPS, AND ARCH ATTACHED TO NORTH	II
1120659	WATER PUMP	II
1120669	DUN COW COTTAGE	II
1120687	1 AND 2, THE COLLEGE	II
1120688	4, THE COLLEGE	II
1120689	DEPARTMENT OF PALAEOGRAPHY AND DIPLOMATIC	II
1120690	6, THE COLLEGE	II*
1120691	8, THE COLLEGE	I
1120692	WALL WITH ARCHWAY IN FRONT OF NUMBER 9	II
1120693	CHORISTER SCHOOL	II*
1120694	12-15, THE COLLEGE	I
1120695	WALLS ATTACHED TO NUMBERS 12 TO 15	I
1121334	WALL TO WEST OF NO.13	I
1121335	CHURCH OF ST MARY THE LESS	II
1121336	GARAGE AND BOUNDARY WALL WEST AND NORTH OF ST. MARY THE LESS	II
1121354	PREBENDS BRIDGE	II
1121377	3. OWENGATE	I
1121378	4. OWENGATE	II
1121379	6. OWENGATE	II

<b>List Entry</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade</b>
1121380	DURHAM LIGHT INFANTRY SOUTH AFRICAN WAR MEMORIAL	II
1121381	TOMB OF DEAN KITCHIN	II
1121382	COSIN'S LIBRARY (UNIVERSITY LIBRARY)	II*
1121383	THE CASTLE WEST RANGE	I
1121384	BISHOP COSIN'S HALL	II*
1121385	COSIN'S ALMSHOUSES	II
1121386	PEMBERTON BUILDINGS	II
1121387	ABBAY HOUSE (DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY)	II
1121388	CATHEDRAL CLOISTER EAST RANGE	I
1121389	CATHEDRAL CLOISTER WEST RANGE	I
1121432	WALL WITH ENTRANCE ARCH AND MOUNTING BLOCK, OPPOSITE TO NOS. 19-22A CONSECUTIVE	II
1121433	38, NORTH BAILEY	II
1121434	POST OFFICE	II
1159471	THE GATEHOUSE	I
1159478	3, THE COLLEGE	II
1159507	6A, THE COLLEGE	II
1159555	CHORISTER SCHOOL	I
1159577	WALL SOUTH OF NUMBER 9 (CHORISTER SCHOOL)	II
1159589	11, THE COLLEGE	II
1159727	NUMBER 17 AND WALL ATTACHED	II
1159734	CONDUIT HOUSE	II
1160359	WAR MEMORIAL TO EAST OF CATHEDRAL	II
1160375	46, NORTH BAILEY	II
1160796	OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL (UNIVERSITY MUSIC DEPARTMENT)	II*
1160838	FORMER EXCHEQUER BUILDING, NOW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	I

<b>List Entry</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade</b>
1160921	THE CASTLE NORTH RANGE	I
1160983	9 OWENGATE	II
1161005	FORMER WRITING AND PLAINSONG SCHOOL	II
1161023	CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST AND ST MARY THE VIRGIN	I
1161129	LAVATORIUM IN CENTRE OF CLOISTER GARTH	I
1161207	NO.50 (FORMER SUBSCRIPTION NEWS ROOM)	II
1161432	16, SOUTH BAILEY	II
1310115	CATHEDRAL PRECINCT WALL	II
1310117	13, SOUTH BAILEY	II
1310239	CATHEDRAL CLOISTER SOUTH RANGE	I
1310306	FORMER GRAMMAR SCHOOL (UNIVERSITY POLICE OFFICE)	II
1310414	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY	II
1310630	39, NORTH BAILEY	II
1310945	WALLS AND PIERS ATTACHED TO NUMBER 12	II
1311001	7, THE COLLEGE	II*
1322849	44 AND 45, NORTH BAILEY	II
1322850	49, NORTH BAILEY	II
1322865	BISHOP COSIN'S ALMHOUSES 7, OWENGATE	II
1322866	MUSIC LIBRARY	II
1322867	CASTLE GATEHOUSE, ENTRANCE GATEWAY, SIDE WALLS, LINKING WALLS AND FRONT WALL	I
1322868	THE KEEP (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE)	I
1322897	BASTION BEHIND NO. 50 AND WALL ATTACHED	I
1322903	2, OWENGATE	II
1322904	5, OWENGATE	II
1322920	WATER GATE	II*

<b>List Entry</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade</b>
1322921	STREET WALL, GATES AND RAILINGS NORTH OF NO. 13	II*
1323223	CHAPTER CLERK'S OFFICE AND CHAPTER ROOM	II
1323246	CASTLE TERRACE WALL	II
	CASTLE WALL BEHIND NOS 7-18 CONSECUTIVE	I
1323258	GARAGES NORTH OF NUMBER 15	II
1323259	PRIORY PRISON AND FORMER STABLES NORTH OF NUMBER 15	I
1323260	PRIOR'S KITCHEN (DEAN AND CHAPTER LIBRARY)	I
1323261	WALL SOUTH OF THE DEANERY	II
1323262	TIMBER LOFT	II

## Appendix D: Contributing communities

Artichoke (Lumiere organisers)  
Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland  
Arts and Humanities Research Council Hidden Heritage Project  
Arts Council England  
Auckland Project  
Bamburgh Castle and Bamburgh Archaeological Research Project  
Canterbury Christ Church University and World Heritage Site  
City of Durham Parish Council  
City of Durham Trust  
County Durham Forum for History and Heritage  
Durham Area Action Partnership  
Durham Business Improvement District  
Durham Cathedral – Archaeologist, Cathedral Institute, Cathedral Stewards, Chapter Clerk, Collections, Development, Fabric Advisory Committee, Education, Marketing, Visitor Services, Volunteers  
Durham Cathedral Friends  
Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation  
Durham City of Sanctuary  
Durham County Council - Planning & Conservation, Environment, Culture, Regeneration, The Story  
Durham Disability Forum  
Durham Fringe Festival  
Durham Markets  
Durham Miners' Association and Redhills  
Durham Museum / The Bow Trust  
Durham Pointers  
Durham University – Archaeology Department, Biodiversity Lead, Development and Alumni Relations, Durham Archaeological Services, Estates & Facilities, Event  
Durham, Hatfield College, History Dept, Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies, University College, University Libraries and Collections, WHS volunteers  
Durham Visual Support Group  
Durham Wildlife Trust  
Durham Youth Council  
Edinburgh University - Conservation course leader  
English Heritage - Head Properties Curator  
Environment Agency  
Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site  
Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site Co-ordinator  
Historic England - North East and Yorkshire Regions Group  
ICOMOS UK  
Jane Gibson (Former Durham World Heritage Site Co-ordinator)  
Lincoln Castle and Cathedral and Lincoln Revealed project  
Martin Boulton (former Durham City tourism officer)  
Martin Roberts (independent researcher)  
National Lottery Heritage Fund  
National Trust Green Corridor Project  
North East Cultural Partnership  
NE5 Universities Heritage Science Group  
Nautical Archaeology Society  
Newcastle Gateshead Initiative (NGI)  
Newcastle University – Architecture, Planning & Landscape and UNESCO chair  
New College Durham – Foundation Degree Tourism course leader  
Northumbria Blue Badge Guides  
Observatory Hill Residents Group  
Peninsula Traffic Group  
Protect and Prepare Group  
Raby Castle - CEO and Curator  
Seif El Rashidi (Former Durham WHS Co-ordinator)  
Social History Society  
St John's College  
St Margaret's Allotments  
Thinking Place consultants  
UK National Commission for UNESCO  
Visit Britain  
Visit County Durham  
Wear Rivers Trust  
World Heritage UK and Co-ordinators' Forum  
Youth Ambassadors

# Appendix E: References

## Published local reference documents

[City of Durham Trust](#)

<https://www.durhamworldheritagesite.com/>

[Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan](#)

[County Durham Plan \(Adopted 2020\)](#)

[Durham City Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2035 \(Adopted 2021\)](#)

[Local List of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes \(2020\)](#)

[Durham City Strategic Place Plan \(In development\)](#)

[Destination North East England Regenerative Visitor Economy Framework](#)

[County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy \(2022-2035 pp 36-38\)](#)

Petts, David, 2015 [Durham World Heritage Site Research Framework](#).

Durham University: Institute for Medieval and Early Modern Studies.

[St Mary-The-Less, St John's College Quinquennial Inspection](#)

## Internal (unpublished sources)

Alan Fentiman Film, 2024. Visitor vox pops video for workshop.

Chris Blandford Associates, 2024. Setting Study and Vantage Point Analysis. Baseline Report and Discussion papers.

Purcell, 2024. Durham Castle Conservation Management Plan (3 volumes)

Purcell, 2010. Durham Castle Walls Conservation Management Plan

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Purcell, 2014. Palace Green Framework Conservation Management Plan

Purcell, 2014. Durham Castle Historic Building Appraisal

Durham Cathedral, 2011. Heritage Woodlands and Riverbanks Chris Cotton, 2024, Durham Cathedral Quinquennial Inspection

Warren, John, 2005. Durham Castle Conservation Plan. University of Durham: Estates and Buildings. Palace Green Library Archives Ref UND/F1/C2/B26

## Useful Websites

[Durham Castle History](#)

[Durham Cathedral](#)

[World Heritage UK](#)

[ICOMOS-UK](#)

[UK National Commission](#)

## World Heritage references

Historic England, 2024, [World Heritage Glossary](#)

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ICCROM, 1994, [The Nara document on authenticity](#)

ICOMOS, 2020. [Resolution 20GA/19. People-centred approaches to cultural heritage.](#)

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UK National Commission for UNESCO Resources

UKNC, 2021. [Reducing inequalities and decolonising heritage practices: people-centred approaches.](#) Heritage and our Sustainable Future. Issue 4. ISSN 272-7025

## Appendix E: References

### UNESCO references

UNESCO Official entry on the [World Heritage List number 370](#)

[UNESCO Decision 44 COM 8B 59](#)

UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)

UNESCO [Preparing World Heritage Nominations](#) Resource Manual. (2011)

UNESCO Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention (2015)

UNESCO, 2022, [Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context](#).

UNESCO, 2023, [Enhancing our World Heritage Toolkit 2.0](#)

UNESCO World Heritage Convention [Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage \(11/2023\)](#)

UNESCO, 2025, [Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention](#)

## Appendix F: Acronyms

<b>ADS</b>	Archaeological Data Service
<b>AHRC</b>	Arts and Humanities Research Council
<b>BID</b>	Business Improvement District
<b>DCC</b>	Durham County Council
<b>DCMS</b>	UK government Department of Culture, Media and Sport
<b>FAC</b>	Durham Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee
<b>GPR</b>	Ground Penetrating Radar
<b>HER</b>	Historic Environment Record
<b>HIA</b>	Heritage Impact Assessment
<b>ICCROM</b>	the International Centre for the Study and Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
<b>ICOMOS</b>	International Council on Monuments and Sites
<b>NDHA</b>	Non-designated Heritage Assets (known as the Local List)
<b>NLHF</b>	National Lottery Heritage Fund (previously known as Heritage Lottery Fund)
<b>OUV</b>	Outstanding Universal Value
<b>PROW</b>	Public Rights of Way
<b>QI</b>	Quinquennial (5-yearly) inspection
<b>RDA</b>	Regional Development Agency
<b>SPD</b>	Supplementary Planning Document
<b>UKNC</b>	UK National Commission for UNESCO
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>WHS</b>	World Heritage Site
<b>WHUK</b>	World Heritage UK

## Appendix G: Terms of reference

### The remit of the Strategic Partnership Board (formerly known as the Co-ordinating Committee)

- a. safeguard the Outstanding Universal Values as ratified by UNESCO;
- b. ensure the WHS continues to flourish;
- c. act as the co-ordinating point for organisations with responsibility for the WHS;
- d. oversee the production, approval, delivery and regular review of the WHS Management Plan;
- e. co-ordinate, strengthen and promote the relationship between Durham WHS, other WHS in this country and UNESCO;
- f. advise, as appropriate, the landowners of the WHS on any matters relating to the WHS;
- g. act as a point of reference, guidance and support for the WHS Senior Manager and
- h. work with the landowners, stakeholders and community representatives in the provision of a programme of events that promotes knowledge of and visitors to the WHS.



Partners celebrate the opening of Fellows' Garden at Durham Castle in October 2025. From left to right: Robin Coningham (UNESCO Chair), Mike Collins (Historic England), Adam Shanley (City of Durham Parish Council), Mark Stamper (Durham County Council), Anne Allen (WHS Manager), John Lowe (City of Durham Trust), Wendy Powers (University College Principal), Helen Ross (University Libraries and Collections), Charlie Allen (Chair of the World Heritage Site Strategic Partnership Board)

