

Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday, 31 January 2024

Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan: draft for consultation

Executive/Routine
Wards

Executive
City Centre

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- 1.1.1 Approves for consultation the draft Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan 2024 - 2035 and associated Action Plan 2024 – 2026; and
 - 1.1.2 Notes that, if approved, an eight-week consultation on the draft plan will be held with the aim of bringing the final plan back to the Planning Committee for approval in summer 2024.

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Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan: draft for consultation

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Convention of World Heritage requires every World Heritage Site (WHS) to have a management system. The current five-year management plan for the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS has been reviewed.
- 2.2 A new plan (Appendix 1) for the next 10 years, with an accompanying two-year action plan (Appendix 2) is presented in draft for approval. It has been shaped by a programme of public and stakeholder engagement. The action plan will be reviewed every two years.
- 2.3 The main changes in this draft plan relate to the duration of the document from a five to a ten-year plan, the inclusion of the climate emergency as its own topic and separating out the action plan.
- 2.4 A range of consultative and promotional activity is planned with the public, community groups and organisations in February to April 2024, prior to finalising the plan for partners' approval by summer 2024.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh (ONTE) World Heritage Site was added to the UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites (WHS) in 1995. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee stated that the Edinburgh Old and New Towns "represent a remarkable blend of two urban phenomena: organic medieval growth and 18th and 19th century town planning".
- 3.2 The Site extends to some 4.5 square kilometres of the city centre. It includes the Old Town and New Town conservation areas and parts of five others. It is home to a range of institutions of national and civic significance including the Scottish Parliament, the Courts, National Galleries and the University of Edinburgh. It has retained its historic urban form and character to a remarkable extent and contains a wealth of buildings listed for their

architectural character or historic interest. It also has the highest concentration of Category A listed buildings in Scotland.

- 3.3 The UK currently has 33 WHS'; Scotland has six, including the most recently inscribed, the Forth Bridge. Each Site must demonstrate how it is meeting its obligations under the WH Convention, which requires every WHS to have a management plan which should set out how its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) will be protected. The United Kingdom (UK) Government is committed to ensuring management plans are produced for all UK World Heritage Sites and encourages local planning authorities to work with site managers, owners and other agencies to ensure management plans are in place.
- 3.4 The first ONTE WHS Management Plan ran from 2005-2010. The second and third covered the period from 2011-2022. It was not until the late 1990s/early 2000s that it became good practice in the UK to produce management plans and this explains the gap between the date of inscription (1995) and the first Management Plan (2005). In the interim, the ONTE WHS was managed by the New Town Conservation Committee and the Old Town Renewal Trust, who merged to form Edinburgh World Heritage Trust in 1999.
- 3.5 The Council has taken the lead role in preparing the Plan on behalf of the management partners of the WHS. The management partners include Historic Environment Scotland, the City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust. Representatives from each partnership organisation sit on the World Heritage Site Steering Group, which has overseen the preparation of this draft Plan.

4. Main report

- 4.1 A WHS Management Plan is a forward-looking strategic document which sets out the framework for the preservation and enhancement of a Site's cultural heritage. It contains a vision for the Site and objectives and delivery mechanisms for its achievement. It is prepared jointly by the World Heritage Site management partners.
- 4.2 A new 10-year Management Plan, which builds on the strengths of the existing plan, has been prepared along with a two-year Action Plan. These are presented in draft for approval for consultation at Appendices 1 and 2. The review leading to the draft plan has embraced the opportunity presented in updating how some of the issues/challenges facing the management of the Site are addressed.
- 4.3 The management partners have used varied and inclusive public and stakeholder engagement in drafting the Plan. This included stakeholder workshops, social media signposting, face-to-face engagement at events (such as Dumbiedykes Gala Day 2022, Greyfriars Kirkyard 'Big Draw' events,

library drop-ins and community council meetings). Online engagement took place via the Consultation Hub and focus groups were carried out. Events were structured around the Scottish Government [Place Standard](#) methodology. More than 350 on-line consultation responses were received, and people provided views on 14 themes including the level of care and maintenance of buildings and public spaces, the quality of new development in the city centre, the overall liveability of the WHS, and the impact of the climate emergency on the WHS.

- 4.4 The WHS designation should facilitate the delivery of the highest quality of environment in a living capital city centre. The draft management plan establishes an updated framework to achieve this, and for the preservation and enhancement of the Site's cultural heritage. Since 2005, when the first management plan was produced, the management partnership has worked together with communities, other agencies, institutions, and businesses on projects on the ground to deliver the core aims of the management plan.
- 4.5 Much of this activity is ongoing and Appendix C of the Management Plan details examples of achievements from the previous plan. Over the next 10 years, the partners are seeking to focus on addressing the five key themes that scored the lowest in the Place Standard exercise. These priority themes are:
- 4.5.1 **Awareness, appreciation and activity around WHS status:** Public engagement revealed that awareness of the WHS and its OUV varies through the city, its communities and its visitors and that the qualities that make the WHS unique remain unclear. To ensure that the WHS is looked after as well as possible, the OUV needs to be clearly understood by stakeholders, visitors and members of the public. It is recognised that the management partners must continue to work together to spread the message to as wide an audience as possible, including developing training.
- 4.5.2 **Climate emergency:** Public engagement highlighted that climate impacts are currently being witnessed, such as stronger winds and increased flooding and erosion to buildings and that there is concern and confusion over retrofitting of buildings to adapt them. Balancing the needs of the city to respond to the climate emergency and to protect its heritage is essential. The Action Plan seeks to address this by engaging with the work already underway in partnership in response to the climate emergency whilst safeguarding OUV. This includes emerging guidance on [Conservation and Adaptation](#) of historic properties.
- 4.5.3 **Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces:** Public engagement highlighted that more could be done for the general

state of repair and ongoing care and maintenance of historic buildings and the condition of road surfaces and drains. The Action Plan seeks to address this by promoting a range of initiatives to secure ongoing investment in the conservation of the Site and ensure the WHS is a baseline consideration for all Council plans and strategies within its boundary that include alterations to the historic built environment.

4.5.4 Control, guidance, and contribution of new developments to city centre: Policies are in place to ensure that new development is sensitive to historic character. Management partners have a role in raising awareness on how interventions can contribute to the Site's authenticity. Management partners also have a role in reflecting and interpreting the quality of its surroundings, responding to, and reinforcing distinctive patterns of development, townscape, views, landscape, scale, materials, and quality of the WHS. The Action Plan seeks to improve the tools available to sustain OUV, sustain effective partnerships that support the management of the WHS and ensure that development embraces the context of the WHS and is of the highest quality in terms of architecture, design and materials. A protocol is in place to ensure early consideration of OUV in the planning process and it is proposed to develop a protocol for the public realm. The attributes (features of interest or traditions) that convey the OUV will be published in the Management Plan.

4.5.5 Sustainable Visitor Management: Public engagement highlighted the importance of tourism to the city, but questioned the balance between meeting visitor needs versus community needs during peak times in the visitor calendar. The management partners recognise the need to support the operational systems in place to ensure that cleanliness of streets and spaces standards are maintained even during peak visitor times. This contributes to people's sense of pride and ownership of the city. It also creates a positive impression that visitors take home with them. The management partners also recognise the need to signpost good practice from other World Heritage cities where a Transient Visitor Levy is in place, and how this can benefit residents.

4.6 The remaining themes in the Management Plan are not disregarded. The management partners are working with other city stakeholders to ensure the concerns are addressed by other strategies. The scope of the plan includes:

- Explaining the special qualities and values of the WHS;
- Including the shared vision, long-term objectives and short-term actions to preserve the ONTE WHS's OUV;
- Providing information on threats and opportunities facing the WHS;

- Advocating existing protective policies;
 - Influencing day-to-day management issues; and
 - Providing a framework to monitor the condition of the built environment.
- 4.7 The Plan's main sections cover vision and aims; a site description; a summary of issues, challenges and opportunities; and proposals for implementation and an action plan.
- 4.8 The Plan is also related to other policies, plans and strategies: the Edinburgh City Plan 2030, Climate Ready Edinburgh, Edinburgh City Centre Transformation and City Mobility Plan, and the City Vision.
- 4.9 If approved for consultation, a series of engagement events are planned in the period from February to April 2024. It is proposed that the finalised Management Plan and Action Plan will be resubmitted to the WHS Steering Group and returned to Planning Committee for approval in summer 2024.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 It is the management partners' responsibility to clearly show the importance of the impact of public participation. Seeking to capture the biggest and widest audience, the management partners advocate a joined-up approach to consultation. Similar topics will be grouped to make the best use of people's time and contribute to better policy making.
- 5.2 A range of consultative and promotional activity is planned with the community and stakeholders in the period February to April 2024, if the draft Management Plan is approved for consultation.
- 5.3 Concurrently to the consultation period, there will be awareness-raising and promotion and stakeholder engagement events. This includes radio advertising, workshops, events on and around World Heritage Day in April and possible joint consultation with 'Climate Ready Edinburgh'. There will be a social media and communications programme throughout the consultation period to make sure it is inclusive, including British Sign Language (BSL) content.
- 5.4 The Management Plan will be updated with consideration of the results of the public consultation and return to Planning Committee for approval in summer 2024.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no direct financial impacts from the consultation draft and, when implemented, the Action Plan will draw on existing resource commitments

from the management partnership and from EWH grant funding programmes and project-based fund raising.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The WHS Management Plan aims to ensure that all citizens will benefit from its support of wider Council actions in response to the climate emergency, sustainable visitor management, conservation of buildings, monuments, graveyards, public spaces and streets, with a focus on supporting community and interest groups to affect improvement and change in their local area, supporting community engagement and promoting mixed communities. Intersectionality was identified as being of key importance to the delivery of the Plan through the benefit in engaging with communities which have intersections with other groups, as well as capitalising on partnership working.
- 7.2 The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process has commenced, and will be further developed through the consultation period, taking account of feedback emerging from the consultation and other engagement activity outlined above.
- 7.3 An [Interim IIA](#) has been completed.
- 7.4 A full IIA will be published when the final Plan is returned to Committee in summer 2024. Further IIAs may be carried out as appropriate as the Action Plan is reviewed every two years.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 UNESCO has declared that climate change has become one of the most significant and fastest growing threats to people and their heritage worldwide. The WHS management partners have a duty to respond to the climate emergency whilst safeguarding the OUV of the WHS. This can be achieved by ensuring that OUV is a baseline consideration in wider Council actions that need to be taken to continue to adapt the city to address the unavoidable impacts of our changing climate. The Management Plan will contribute to this by providing technical training, sharing best practice and supporting the delivery of Climate Ready Edinburgh, City Mobility Plan, etc. This also supports the Council's response to the Nature Emergency declared in 2023.
- 8.2 The Management Plan contributes to addressing the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in 2019 and to helping to meet the Council's target of net zero emissions by 2030 by supporting research, guidance and live projects to alleviate the challenges people face to making their properties more energy efficient. Issues relating to the climate emergency arguably impact on almost every other theme of action – conservation and maintenance through damage to buildings brought on by changes to the

weather, to loss of intangible heritage through displaced peoples and everything in between. This is why climate emergency is a new separate topic. It aligns with the Council's draft Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan by directly addressing some of the actions relating to reducing the vulnerability of our built environment to extreme weather events and reducing energy demand for heating in buildings.

- 8.3 This is a refresh of an existing Management Plan, and a previous iteration has been through a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA pre-screening for this draft Plan was carried out in November 2023.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The Management Plan has been developed considering the feedback from pre-draft engagement. The key themes that are presented as priorities for the management partners to address over the next 10 years are based on the findings of the pre-draft engagement and have directly informed the Action Plan. The finalised plan will be further informed by consultation planned in the period February to April 2024, if the draft Management Plan is approved. Stakeholders and the community have a significant role to play in implementing the Council's policy and guidance.
- 9.2 The management of the historic environment contributes directly to sustainability in several ways, including the unique quality of historic environments which provide a sense of identity and continuity. World Heritage is managed via the planning system in the UK. The Council's planning policy and guidance helps to create sustainable development.
- 9.3 There are no significant risks associated with approval of the report as recommended. However, the management strategy for the WHS acknowledges that challenges arise from the fact that the WHS is a thriving, living city centre, important for tourism, retail, business and government as well as having a large residential population. These are all positive factors, and the strength of the city's economy results in development proposals. Accordingly, the impact of such proposals for change must be assessed in terms of whether they add to, or detract from, the ability to understand what makes the WHS special.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [UNESCO World Heritage Centre - The World Heritage Convention](#)
- 10.2 [UNESCO World Heritage Centre - The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention](#)
- 10.3 [Management Plan 2017 - 2022.](#)

10.4 [Planning Committee 19 May 2021 - Item 5.1 - Business Bulletin](#)

10.5 [Atlas World Heritage](#)

10.6 [CVI Heritage](#)

10.7 [Scotland's Unesco Trail](#)

11. Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan 2024 –2035 for consultation.

11.2 Appendix 2 - Draft Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Action Plan 2024-2026 for consultation.

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Draft Management Plan 2024 - 2035



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Old and New Towns of
Edinburgh
Inscribed on the World
Heritage List in 1995

◆ **EDINBURGH** ◆
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA



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1.Introduction

1.1 What is World Heritage?

World Heritage captures the cultural and natural aspects of the global community that are the most significant, unique or best examples of their kind according to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). It is important because it promotes important cultural traditions and places as belonging to everyone.

There are over 1000 World Heritage Sites globally and UNESCO is the organisation responsible for adding to or removing from the [List](#). The list is intended to 'ensure as far as possible the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of the world's irreplaceable heritage'.

Each site must demonstrate that it is fulfilling its obligations in respect of UNESCO's requirements in implementing the [World Heritage Convention](#).

Extract from UNESCO's Vision for Peace

To strengthen bonds among all nations,
the preservation and protection of cultural heritage and the equal dignity of all cultures, on all continents, is fundamental.

UNESCO aims to promote sustainable development, protect culture and foster peace through its [lists and designations](#) around the world. UNESCO's vision for peace underlines its very existence, and the role the preservation of cultural heritage plays in this is an invaluable one.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to help achieve this by being a "shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future." The seventeen goals highlight priorities such as gender equality, affordable and clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, and climate action. **Throughout this plan, we will pinpoint which of the SDGs relate to the area in discussion.**



The World Heritage Convention's 'five Cs':
Credibility
Conservation
Capacity building
Communication
Communities

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh

Edinburgh has long been celebrated as a great city: an ancient capital, the medieval Old Town alongside the world renowned eighteenth century classical New Town, all situated in a spectacular landscape of hills and valleys beside the wide estuary of the Firth of Forth.

It is the recognition of these qualities that led to the city's inscription by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in December 1995.

All World Heritage Sites have an associated Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV), which explains the importance of the Site. The SOUV is the term UNESCO applies to the detailed description of what is unique about the Site.

World Heritage Properties in the United Kingdom

To date, there are [33 World Heritage Sites](#) in the United Kingdom – 28 cultural, 4 natural and 1 mixed. The five [other Scottish Sites](#) are New Lanark, St Kilda, the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (the Antonine Wall) and the Forth Bridge. Other urban centres in the UK with World Heritage Site status are Bath, Greenwich, Durham, and Westminster.

1.2 Scope and status of the plan

The geographical scope of the plan relates to the WHS itself. This is clarified in section [3.1 \(location\)](#).

The Plan is a partnership document. It represents the consensus view of the members of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Partners.

The Management Plan sets out what is significant about the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site, as a basis for understanding its important qualities, in order to determine the action necessary to protect and manage it.

The management plan:

- Includes the shared vision, long-term goals and shorter-term actions to preserve the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site's OUV
- Helps to explain the special qualities and values of the Site
- Advocates existing protective policies
- Influences the day-to-day management issues
- Provides supporting information on managing the opportunities and threats facing the Site
- Provides a framework to monitor the condition of the built environment

The Management Plan's success is dependent upon the achievement of its objectives which, in turn, depends on stakeholders across the Site making a commitment to the Action Plan. The careful coordination of partner organisations is possible through the World Heritage Site Steering Group. Through collective effort it will be possible to use resources to best effect. The remit and expertise of each partner adds a strength to this process that is greater than the sum of its parts.

The Management Plan works within the Local Development Plan of the City of Edinburgh, which sets out planning policies to guide development. The Management Plan is a material consideration in the

planning process and will continue to inform and respond to other policies and management proposals relating to the WHS area.

1.3 Planning and Policy Framework

Scottish Planning Policy and Environmental Assessment Regulations require planning authorities to take account of OUV both in their policies and decisions on cases.

Amongst other policies that serve to protect the historic environment such as conservation areas, listed buildings, designed landscapes and the city skyline, the Edinburgh City Plan 2030 includes Policy Env 9 to protect the OUV of the Site. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is a statutory consultee and engages with the planning process from the earliest stages through a Planning Protocol.

Where HES objects to a planning application, and the Council is minded to grant consent, Scottish Minister must be notified for them to determine if they wish to call-in the application for their decision.

PROPOSED CITY PLAN 2030 (draft text)

City Plan 2030 is currently at the examination stage and as part of this process, a Hearing took place on 26-27 September 2023. Details of the Hearing can be found on the [DPEAS's website](#).

City Plan 2030 sets out policies and proposals to guide development. Its policies are used to determine planning applications. The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is protected by City Plan 2030 policy Env 9 –World Heritage Sites:

“Development which would harm the qualities of World Heritage Sites and which justified the inscription of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and/or the Forth Bridge as World Heritage Sites or would have a detrimental impact on a Site’s setting, its Outstanding Universal Value, integrity, authenticity or significance will not be permitted”.

2050 Edinburgh City Vision: working towards a city that is **fair, pioneering, welcoming** and **thriving** – a city that belongs to all of us, and where we all belong.

1.4 The Management Partners (graphics to be added)

The City of Edinburgh Council

The City of Edinburgh Council is the Planning Authority. It implements the planning system in the city, which is the mechanism for managing World Heritage Sites in the UK. The Council is responsible for providing political leadership and governance for a comprehensive range of services across the city.

It is also responsible for the provision of a range of [public services](#) that affect day-to-day life within the World Heritage Site, including strengthening and supporting communities, providing jobs and ensuring its residents are well cared for.

Historic Environment Scotland

Historic Environment Scotland is a non-departmental public body. It is the lead public body established to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment. Its board is appointed by Scottish Ministers.

Historic Environment Scotland offer technical expertise, support and significant funding to the historic environment via in-house experts and various grants schemes, directly employing the highest number of traditional crafts staff in Scotland and actively fostering apprentice development. HES is also a statutory consultee in the planning process.

Edinburgh World Heritage

Edinburgh World Heritage is the independent charity dedicated to the city's proactive conservation. It provides the grants, advice and support required to enable a rolling programme of vital conservation work. It engages communities with their shared heritage, works to ensure heritage is embedded into the city's response to the climate emergency and acts as the city's independent, expert advisor.

Edinburgh World Heritage is formally charged by the City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Environment Scotland with facilitating the work of the World Heritage Steering Group and overseeing the implementation of the Management Plan since 1999.

Stakeholders

Management of the World Heritage Site also lies within its communities, ranging from individual property owners and tenants, businesses and institutions. It is proposed to strengthen the governance of the management plan delivery by setting up an Oversight Group to allow a more strategic discussion of the issues emerging from the delivery of the Management Plan and Action Plan. The Oversight Group will pursue issues through its members' own organisations.

Co-ordination

A World Heritage Site coordinator post was created in 2009 to bring a focus to World Heritage issues across the partnership. The post ensures effective liaison and co-ordination of activities between the partners.

(Insert partner logos)

1.5 Preparation and structure of the Plan

This is the fourth management plan for the ONTE WHS. The Steering Group has taken the lead role in shaping the Plan. It is divided into 5 chapters covering:

- The role of the plan
- Its vision and aims
- Key facts and figures and why the WHS is special
- Key challenges and objectives
- Implementation and monitoring

There is a separate Action Plan that will be updated every two years as part of the monitoring process.

This management plan relies on information gathered from a consultation process from October to December 2022 coupled with a series of pre-draft engagement events, including focus groups held between March to April 2023, that were the source of the actions. (draft wording – to be updated post-consultation)

2. Vision and aims

2.1 The Vision

We share an aspiration for the World Heritage Site to sustain its Outstanding Universal Value by safeguarding and enhancing its exceptional historic environment. This underpins a confident and thriving capital city centre, its communities, and its cultural and economic life.

2.2 Aims of the Management Plan

The main aims of the Management Plans are to proactively:

1. Promote a sustainable approach that integrates conservation with the needs of all communities and visitors to the site
2. Build and maintain strong partnerships between local, regional and national organisations to help deliver the actions of the plan
3. Interpret and present the history and significance of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh to the highest quality and promote equality of opportunity to access and enjoyment
4. Ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the Site and its setting is understood, protected and sustained

The ONTE WHS Management Plan links directly with the Council's high level aims to address climate change, eradicate poverty, promote sustainable economic growth and create great places.

3. Description of the Site

3.1 Location

The Old and New Towns are located in the centre of Edinburgh, which sits on the southern shore of the Firth of Forth. Edinburgh is Scotland's capital and second most populous city.



Figure 1: Map of the World Heritage Site boundary

The World Heritage property covers a total area of around 4.5 km². It comprises almost 4,500 individual buildings, of which over 75% are listed for their special architectural or historic interest.

3.2 The World Heritage Property

The World Heritage property encompasses both the Old Town and the New Town together with the ancient mill settlements of Bell's Mill, the village of Dean and part of Stockbridge on the Water of Leith, where it cuts through high ground to the northwest of the area.

It covers the very centre of the city, encompassing many institutions of national significance including museums and galleries, the Court of Session, and much of the city's public administration, along with its office-based activity and its retail core. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was the daily place of work for over 70,000 people and is home to around 23,500 residents (about 5% of the city's total population).

The World Heritage property has retained its historic urban form and character to a remarkable extent. In the New Town the integrity of the street layout is a key defining factor of its character, while in the Old Town, the 'spine and ribs' pattern of the High Street and its closes and wynds maintains the medieval street and its associated land holding pattern. Equally important is the overlaying of the Old Town in the late 18th and early 19th centuries with wide streets as a result of the City Improvement Acts and commercial ventures. There are many open spaces and graveyards throughout the property.

The urban landscape setting is formed by the ridges and valleys of ancient glacial terrain within the property that created the Old Town ridge and the glacial hollows that form the Grassmarket, Princes Street Gardens and the Waverley Valley. The North and Waverley Bridges and the Mound cross the Waverley Valley and link the Old and New Towns.

3.3 Key facts

(graphics to be added)

- UNESCO inscribed the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh as a World Heritage Site in 1995.
- The inscription recognised the striking contrast and quality in architecture between the medieval Old Town and the Georgian New Town. The medieval Old Town has retained its distinctive pattern of narrow passageways, known as closes and wynds. The New Towns, first designed in 1767, is the largest and best preserved example of Georgian town planning in the United Kingdom.
- Edinburgh is built on an extraordinary landscape of hills and valleys, formed millions of years ago by volcanoes and ice sheets. Together these factors have created a truly distinctive skyline and stunning views which are recognised around the world.
- The Site contains nearly 4,500 individual buildings, of which over 75% are listed for their special architectural or historic interest.
- The Site also contains Scheduled Monuments, the best-known being Edinburgh Castle.
- The Site has retained its historic urban form and character to a remarkable extent.
- The Site ‘represents a remarkable blend of two urban phenomena: the organic medieval growth of the Old Town and the eighteenth and nineteenth century town planning of the New Town’.
- In the New Town, the integrity of the street layout is a key defining factor in its character. In the Old Town the ‘spine and ribs’ pattern of the High Street and its closes and wynds maintains the medieval street pattern.
- The Old Town was overlaid in the nineteenth century by wide streets as a result of the City Improvement Acts.
- There are many open spaces and graveyards throughout the Site.
- The Old Town contains two twelfth century burghs with two early royal palaces (one within the castle), a medieval abbey, and a wealth of early buildings.
- The New Town contains a high concentration of remarkably intact world-class neo-classical buildings; best known being the Royal High School, Register House and Charlotte Square
- The Site contains the dramatic river valley of the Water of Leith. The valley includes the original mill settlements of Bell’s Mill, the village of Dean and part of Stockbridge

- The wealth and grandeur of Edinburgh in the 18th century is inseparable from slavery. Many of its citizens, including those linked with the Scottish Enlightenment had connections, and benefited directly or indirectly from the exploitation of enslaved people.

3.4 Key Figures

Key figures from the World Heritage Site

	Figures in 2011-2016	Figures in 2017-2022
Community heritage or education grants	38	n/a?
Properties improved by grants	134	44
Applicants in receipt of grants	354	Approx. 200
Events organised	351	66 – members events only Missing data: Traditional Skills, Climate Emergency events, CPDs, Graveyards, Interpro,
Buildings at Risk repaired	25	Including: City Observatory 2 x watchtowers (Old Calton, St John's)
Value of grants distributed	£4,145,830	

Impact to date of the World Heritage Site status

Please note: full figures from both EWH and CEC to follow

Infographic to be added to include up-to-date 'Edinburgh by Numbers' data on:

- **Breakdown of population data (resident population, working population, commuter data)**
- **Breakdown of visitor data (visitor numbers, average trip duration, top paying visitor attractions)**
- **Impact of COVID-19 pandemic**

2021-22

- Public realm – awarded £97,775; further investment £377,999
- Buildings – awarded £447,811 (HES and EWH combined); further investment £3,121,252

These figures are based on grants awarded and drawn down from HES but not all completed

2018-2021 – from evaluation report

- Public realm – awarded £400,281; further investment £600,421
- Buildings – awarded £1,924,410; further investment £3,421,173



Figure 2 from new EWH website

A listed buildings		1847
B listed buildings		1868
C listed buildings		340
Total for the World Heritage Site		4055
Scheduled ancient monuments	5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Edinburgh Castle 2. Edinburgh Town Wall, Flodden Wall, Johnston Terrace to Grassmarket 3. Edinburgh Town Wall, Flodden Wall and Telfer Wall, Heriot Place 4. Edinburgh Town Wall, Flodden Wall, Drummond Street to Pleasance 5. Holyrood Abbey, precinct and associated remains <p><i>Source: HES online portal</i></p>
Designed landscapes	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dean Cemetery 2. New Town Gardens 3. Palace of Holyrood House
Conservation areas	7	Coltbridge and Wester Coates (part) – Dean (part) – West End (part) - New Town (part) – Old Town (part) – South Side (part), Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield (part)
New listings since 2016	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dalhousie Land, University of Edinburgh, 15 St John Street, Edinburgh (Cat C - 2016) 2. Castle Terrace Car Park including external concrete steps and painted steel railings, Castle Terrace and King's Stables Road, Edinburgh (Cat B - 2019) 3. Hunter Building, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh College of Art, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh (Cat B - 2020) 4. Scottish Automobile Club Sign, on the corner of Lennox Street and Oxford Terrace, Edinburgh (Cat C - 2021)

Listed buildings and designated assets

(To be included in final design: Atlas maps: http://www.atlaswh.eu/files/publications/24_1.pdf)

4 Key challenges and objectives

4.1 Introduction to the pre-draft consultation

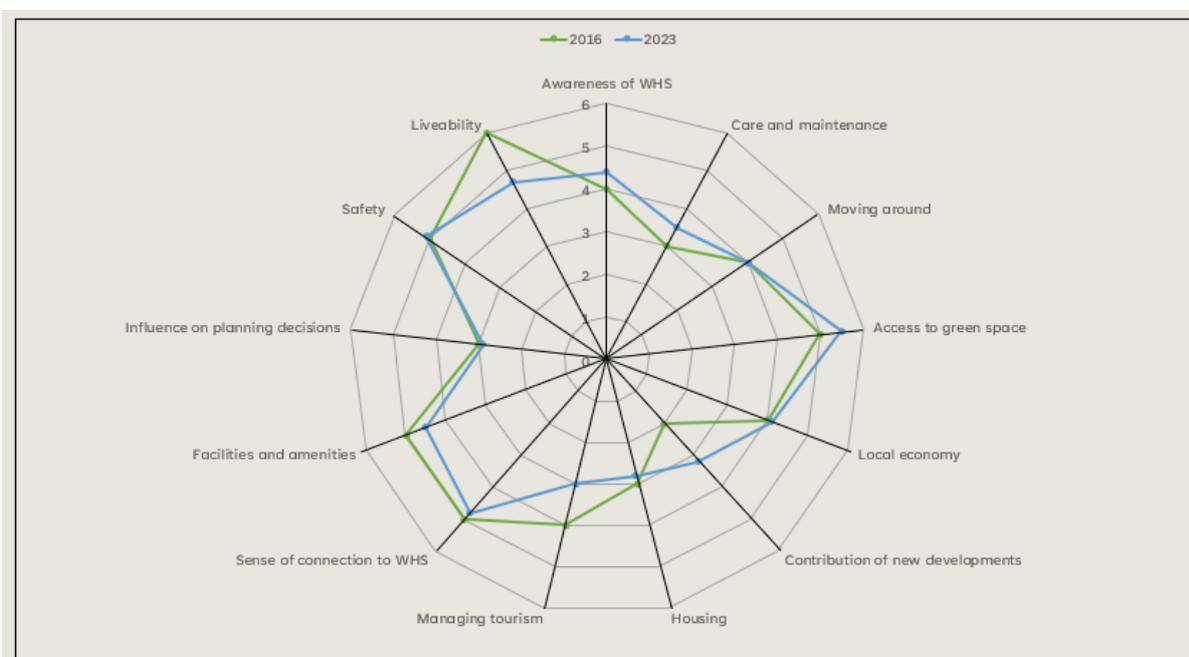
World Heritage Site designation is a celebration of heritage that is already preserved. The designation should facilitate the delivery of the highest quality of environment.

Sustaining a living capital city centre is a balance between protecting the environment, strengthening society, and supporting a vibrant cultural scene. It should allow uses to evolve and provide for places to live and work (and access to them), without damaging the outstanding universal value of the Site. However, the OUV of the WHS will, at times, be challenged by activity that has the potential to adversely impact on the unique qualities of the Site.

It is important that the Plan not only reflects the views of the key organisations involved in its management but those of its users, including residents, visitors to the city and broader stakeholders. With that in mind, an extensive programme of public consultation was carried out.

The online public consultation undertaken from October-December 2022 has informed the issues taken forward in this chapter; as have the discussions at various stakeholder workshops, community council meetings, social media signposting, face to face meetings in libraries, parks, graveyards and hairdressers, over the entire engagement strategy timeline from late-2021 to mid-2023. **See Appendix D.4 for more information.**

Each element of the public consultation was based on the Place Standard methodology. It consists of 14 questions which cover both the physical and social elements of a place. The questions were tailored to reflect the World Heritage issues. The same methodology was used in the previous plan, allowing for comparison of results:



Consultation results

Research consultants were employed to analyse the findings of the online consultation and the focus groups. This part of the project was delivered through City Centre Transformation funding to ensure cross-compatibility. The following summarises the key findings:

Overall, the research indicated that there is action needed by the WHS Partners in relation to all the key themes of the research. That said, there was also an indication that the priorities for locals are:

- A greater commitment shown by WHS Partners to tidying the city
- Specifically around climate change, the need to see more activity to ensure buildings within the WHS are maintained and retrofitted
- A regeneration plan for Princes Street - to give it more of a sense of value and appeal for locals and to enhance the sense of community within the WHS
- A tourist levy - with money being ringfenced to reduce the impact of tourism and to benefit locals
- Promotion of a clear plan in relation to mobility around the WHS- and through this, to give locals a sense of what the 'end goal' is and when this will be reached
- Finally, there needs to be a review of how planning decisions are made- to allow locals to feel more involved

Many ideas were expressed for how to address these themes for the improvement and progression of the World Heritage Site. These themes are cross-cutting. For example, tourism is an important activity in the Old and New Towns, it influences developments within the city centre, it is an important factor in considering the interpretation and understanding of the WHS and it has an impact on the operational management of the city. It is therefore critical that the actions in this plan allow room for this interrelationship.

Partnership working

The management partners now have over 25 years' experience in understanding the challenges that an urban World Heritage Site faces. The Management Plan's success will be dependent upon careful coordination of partner organisations to ensure that collective resources and objectives are aligned to pursue actions to the best effect. The management partners must convey the importance of the World Heritage Site to the right people who can influence how actions are delivered in order to safeguard OUV. This includes communicating and engaging with all sectors: climate; tourism; economy; and local government.

4.2 Five Key Challenges

The action plan seeks to address the issues that scored the lowest on the Place Standard "wheel" during pre-draft engagement.

Those five lowest-scoring themes are:

1. Awareness, appreciation and activity around World Heritage Site status
2. Climate emergency
3. Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces
4. Control, guidance, and contribution of new development to city centre
5. Sustainable visitor experience

The remaining themes from the Place Standard have not been disregarded. However, they extend beyond the scope of this Management Plan alone and are not addressed here. It is important to note that the previous theme of 'Influence and sense of control' has been embedded throughout the plan.

As stated in chapter 1.3, the management partners are working with other city stakeholders to ensure that the safeguarding of the World Heritage Site is a consideration in other city-wide strategies. Appendix B.2 sets this out, and this is addressed in more detail in chapter 4.4.

A new sixth theme concentrates on the increasing interaction between WHS partners and Edinburgh's universities. This research pipeline outlines opportunities for further collaboration to enhance our understanding of the site from multiple perspectives and via different disciplines. This will be discussed in chapter 4.5.

4.2.1 Awareness and value of World Heritage Site status

Objective 1: To coordinate the actions to ensure a broad level of understanding of the WHS and to widely transmit its value

Sustainable Development Goals:

- 4: Quality education
- 11: Sustainable cities and communities

Interpretation and engagement

Awareness of the World Heritage Site and its Outstanding Universal Value and wider cultural value to the city varies. Based on the engagement feedback, the qualities that make the Site unique – of “outstanding value” - appear to remain unclear: the concept of World Heritage Site status was known, but not necessarily understood. Yet, to ensure that we all look after the World Heritage Site as best as we can, the OUV needs to be clearly understood by stakeholders, residents and visitors.

Communication

The work undertaken under the World Heritage banner is exceptional. Achievements include innovative collaborative projects from the climate emergency to, providing grants for buildings in need of repair and sharing expertise internationally. This work should be more widely promoted.

The number of stakeholders, collaborators and different groups working under this banner is so widespread that the message can get diluted. It is recognised that to address this we must continue to work together and communicate what we do.

Consultation Feedback

When asked to think about the level of awareness of World Heritage Site status, the consultation feedback stated that the concept of World Heritage Site status was known, but not necessarily understood.

- **Limited understanding** of WHS status and its meaning. Edinburgh 'the brand' attracts tourism and boosts the local economy, but there is confusion over conservation and restrictions and associated funding.

- *“My understanding is it basically just means that Edinburgh’s buildings, like the castle or the old style buildings are protected...”*
- *“People, will be looking at all the UNESCO sites across the world and putting Edinburgh on their bucket list”.*
- *“I guess there’s a tension between preserving the WHS and actually living in the city.”*

- **Liveability predicated on appreciation of city’s history** – the character of the WHS evokes a sense of pride, but there is concern over housing and over-tourism, with both positive and negative feedback over transport links and access to amenities.

- *“Central Edinburgh is a unique and wonderful place, I fear for its future.”*
- *“I choose to live in the World Heritage Site because there are few better places to live within a reasonable budget and have a quality way of life to bring up a family.”*

- **A sense of belonging** to the WHS is both at the expense of, and enhanced by, tourism.

- *“Things like the fringe and the festivals actually make me feel like I belong a lot more, because I’m not originally from Edinburgh, so I like going down and seeing all the people that have come here.”*
- *“I feel pushed out of the city a little bit now. I don’t feel it is the same city it used to be. I’m not saying tourism is a bad thing – I certainly love the students coming in, and it can be a bit manic, but very exciting. But I just don’t think Edinburgh has the infrastructure to cope with it all.”*

- **Value of WHS not necessarily reflected by retail opportunities** – Princes Street no longer felt to be one of the world’s ‘great city streets’, but St James Quarter welcomed as a positive addition to the city centre.

- *“It’s a really common complaint in Edinburgh that Princes Street is just ugly and full of rubbish. It devalues living here as well as visiting.”*

- **City’s green spaces a significant strength of the WHS** – despite concerns over privatisation of public space, the green spaces in the WHS were considered to be one of its most valued assets.

- *“[Green space] is one of the undoubted strengths of the World Heritage Site.”*
- *“While there is a lot of GOOD natural space, so much of it is hijacked for events.”*

4.2.2 Climate emergency

Objective 2: to coordinate actions to ensure an appropriate response to the climate emergency whilst safeguarding OUV

Sustainable Development Goals:

- 11: Sustainable cities and communities
- 13: Climate action

Climate emergency

Issues relating to the climate emergency arguably impact on almost every other theme of action – conservation and maintenance through damage to buildings brought on by changes to the weather,

to loss of intangible heritage through displaced peoples and everything in between. However, we thought it important to separate this part of the discussion as we continue to refine how we embed our response to the climate emergency in our everyday lives. This is also evident in how we brought up the theme of the climate emergency in the consultation – we recognise how wide-ranging and multi-faceted the issues are, and how it cannot be easily summarised into a single question with an answer on a sliding scale.

We will continue to work closely with our partners to develop understanding of how we frame the issue of the climate emergency in the management of the World Heritage Site, including engagement with Climate Ready Edinburgh.

Consultation Feedback

When asked to think about the climate emergency in relation to the WHS, participants sought to have a greater understanding of its impacts and the tools available to mitigate damage.

Discussion centred on the following points:

- **Some effects of climate change are being witnessed**, including stronger winds, flooding and erosion to buildings, but the issue is not currently front-of-mind. This typically related to the perception that climate change is a long-term issue, and other priorities take precedence.

- *“The city has seen increases in flooding etc. Part of this many well be to do with the lack of drain clearing - some road drains are full of rubbish right to road level. It would appear that there isn't much action on areas which a repeatedly flooded.”*

- *“Obviously you're aware of the effects of climate change, but not specifically for how it impacted the world heritage site.”*

-
- **There is concern and confusion over retrofitting buildings and mitigating damage.** There is perceived high cost associated with maintenance and retrofitting, and confusion over best practice.

- *“Necessary adaptations to historic buildings/spaces may not always conform to desirable heritage best practice.”*

4.2.3 Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces

Objective 3: To ensure ongoing investment in the conservation of the Site

Objective 4: To work in collaboration with stakeholders to sustain the ‘state of conservation’* of the Site

*‘State of Conservation’ includes the physical condition of the WHS and the conservation measures in place to protect it.

Objective 5: To ensure the World Heritage Site is a baseline consideration for all Council plans and strategies within its boundary that include alterations to the historic built environment

Sustainable Development Goals:

- 11: Sustainable cities and communities
- 12: Responsible consumption and production

Grants

Edinburgh retains most of its significant buildings and spaces in good condition. More than 200 applicants (*final figures to follow*) received a grant in the lifetime of the previous management plan. However, this reflects investment in buildings rather than streets and public spaces, which explains the misstep in public perception. This is a decrease in the number of projects awarded funding from the previous plan which reflects the difficulty in delivering the grants programme during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Treatment of public spaces and public realm

The spaces between buildings, known as the ‘public realm’ make an essential contribution to the OUV of the WHS. This plan must provide the context to support the existing guidance.

City life happens in the spaces between the buildings. There is a high demand for public space use all year round. There needs to be a balance of use and greater transparency of decisions about the events and activities that take place in them.

The cleanliness of streets and spaces contributes to people’s sense of pride, ownership and safety of the city. It also creates the impression that visitors take home with them. It is vital that the management partners help to shape and support the systems in place to ensure that a suitable standard is maintained, even during peak visitor times.

Consultation Feedback

When asked to think about issues relating to the conservation and maintenance of the World Heritage Site, including safety, sense of upkeep of buildings and streets, and the impact of the climate emergency on the fabric of the site, respondents felt that there is still a lot to be done.

- **There is a sense that the city’s built environment is not well-maintained.** Maintenance is seen as a high cost, and there are concerns over poor quality of road surfaces and drains.
 - *“Generally, not very well (maintained), especially street and public spaces. The level of care is disappointing.”*
 - *“I would say some places are better cared for than others -- e.g. income from tourism keeps the Castle and Holyrood Palace and other major attractions keeps them well-cared-for. But Rose Street, Princes Street, and other parts of the city are either neglected or slowly becoming empty commercial spaces under the pressure of lack of funding.”*
- **Safety in the WHS is generally favourable**, however, concerns over untidiness (litter, graffiti) contributes to a feeling of “lawlessness.”
 - *“I feel safe. I am fortunate to live in an area of the New Town where streets, homes, and open spaces do not feel threatening.”*
 - *“The unchecked growth of graffiti in all parts of the city but especially the city centre has contributed to a general feeling of lawlessness and lack of safety. Street begging is a major issue, and inevitably makes visitors feel unsettled. Litter and bags of garbage on the street merely add to the uncared-for image, and I am sure visitors feel a lot less safe than I do.”*

4.2.4 Control, guidance, and contribution of new developments to city centre

Objective 6: to improve tools to sustain Outstanding Universal Value

Objective 7: To sustain effective partnerships that support the management of the WHS

Objective 8: To ensure that development embraces the context of the WHS and is of the highest quality in terms of architecture, design and materials

Sustainable Development Goals:

- 11: Sustainable cities and communities
- 12: Responsible consumption and production

Planning process

Managing change is a key priority for the Management Plan. To ensure that the OUV is safeguarded, the management partners must retain an overview of all the systems in place to make this happen.

Management partners have a role to play in raising awareness on how interventions can contribute to the Site's authenticity. Management partners also have a role in reflecting and interpreting the particular quality of its surroundings, responding to and reinforcing distinctive patterns of development, townscape, views, landscape, scale, materials and quality of the WHS. Is it the management partners' role to make sure these qualities (i.e. the OUV) are taken into account.

The WHS's skyline and setting are vulnerable to unsympathetic development. The city's topography and visual characteristics (landmarks, townscape characteristics) create a uniquely visible landscape setting for the city. A majority of key views from the 'Skyline Study' cut across the WHS; their protection is essential to the protection of the historic environment.

Interpretation and engagement

It is the management partner's responsibility to guarantee that all stakeholders understand the context to allow respectful change in line with the character of the area. Where harmful change occurs, the management partners have a statutory duty to make it clear that this is not acceptable.

There is advice and support for owners of historic homes in maintaining their building. It is essential that this advice is pulled together so that owners can navigate through and find what they need.

Advocacy

The city is a dynamic, thriving capital city. It will evolve over time with new trends. The management partners must ensure that they are engaged with the broadest range of activities and strategies within the city. This will ensure that they can participate in change and influence decision making in such a way that change sustains the OUV of the Site.

The management partners will also need to promote the maintenance of traditional skills. Historic buildings need a variety of crafts for their repair and conservation, from stonemasonry to metalwork, joinery and slating. With over 75% of all the buildings within the WHS being listed, maintaining these traditional skills is vital to the conservation of the city's built heritage.

Informing design quality

The vast majority of building stock in the WHS is traditionally constructed (often local sandstone under pitched roofs and covered with Scots slate). New materials should have the quality and integrity that befits this special context, and detailing should be carefully considered to ensure their long term visual success. Management partners have a role in raising awareness on how interventions can contribute to the Site's authenticity.

Influencing new development

Development within the WHS is expected and welcome. The management partners must influence the way in which this change can happen.

Consultation Feedback

Consultees discussed a number of issues relating to the management of the site and the contribution of new developments to the city centre. Topics included discussion over new developments such as St James Quarter, and the experience of engaging in the planning process.

- **Views on new developments are polarised.** There is a tension between understanding that Edinburgh needs to develop and evolve, whilst fearing that this will harm the city's historic fabric. There is, however, appetite for development of Princes Street to restore some of its former glory.

- *"The world is changing, even though we're trying to preserve the heritage, it's like giving a new lease of life, bringing something new."*

- *Hate hate hate all the bland developments being allowed that use mock sandstone and uniform windows. Hate any attempts at pastiche. If you're going to build new then build exciting - new materials, new shapes, which can coexist with heritage that tells a new story moving into the future?"*

- **Participation in the planning process is still seen as complicated and challenging.** There is also the feeling that becoming involved in the process is inconsequential to the result of the planning decision.

- *"We participate in endless surveys largely initiated by Edinburgh Council but rarely get any feedback."*

- *"I would probably go to the local councillors to take up any opinion I had, but other than that I genuinely have no idea how to get involved."*

4.2.5 Sustainable visitor experience

Objective 9: To improve understanding of the value of WHS status to tourism within the WHS and the city

Objective 10: To sustain effective partnerships to advocate for and secure sustainable tourism within the WHS and the city to safeguard OUV

Sustainable Development Goals:

- 10: Reduced inequalities
- 11: Sustainable cities and communities
- 12: Responsible consumption and production
- 15: Life on land

Tourism

Sustainable tourism continues to be a key concern and driver of action throughout the World Heritage Site. The management partners and tourism stakeholders have a role in helping to preserve the environmental and cultural integrity of the site and supporting the sustainable development of its communities.

Public engagement highlighted the importance of tourism to the city, but questioned the balance between meeting visitor needs versus community needs during peak times in the visitor calendar. The management partners recognise the need to support the operational systems in place as discussed under section 4.3.3 Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces. The management partners also recognise the need to signpost good practice from other World Heritage cities where a Transient Visitor Levy is in place, and how this can benefit residents.

Consultation feedback

Discussion over visitor management entered into almost every discussion during the consultation. Here, we have distilled some key points covering tourism's positive contribution to the city, the volume of visitors, the disconnect between residents and the pressures of accommodation in the city.

- **Tourism can be enhancing** by creating jobs and boosting the local economy. The WHS brings recognition to the city on a world stage.

- *"Tourism is definitely important to bring a recognition to the city, and ultimately money and industry."*

- **Too high a volume of tourists** was a concern, especially during the summer and winter festivals. From a care and maintenance standpoint, this adds to the wear and tear of city streets.

- *"Tourism is prioritised every time. We need roads that work and housing we can afford. A city centre that is not a version of Disneyland every season."*

- **Overwhelming sense that WHS businesses are solely for tourists** selling 'tartan tat' and souvenirs rather than providing amenities for local residents.

- *"Tourism needs to give back more to local council funding and services - A tourist tax has gone too long without implementation. Otherwise tourism is a positive, bringing investment and interest to the city."*

- **Demand for accommodation for tourists** puts pressure on local housing availability. Housing is being repurposed for short-term lets and is driving up the cost of living within the WHS.

- *"Tourism is great and should be supported. But the balance doesn't seem quite right. Too many short-term lets, too frequent closure of public space for "festivals" and tacky Christmas*

events. Tourism is only desirable (for everyone including tourists) if there is a thriving local community to support it."

4.3 Other challenges

Sustainable Development Goals:

- 3: Good health and wellbeing
- 10: Reduced inequalities
- 11: Sustainable cities and communities
- 12: Responsible consumption and production

The management partners will ensure that the consultation feedback on the nine remaining themes consultation that have not been discussed in detail here will be raised at an appropriate level to inform emerging plans and strategies across the partnership. A summary of the discussions is presented below:

Moving around	Discussion over transport concerns the relatively compact size of the WHS in terms of its walkability, but highlights issues with congestion and cycling.
Facilities and amenities	Amenities were considered to be generally accessible, with a good mix of leisure facilities. Everyday services were considered harder to access in the WHS, such as GPs and supermarkets.
Liveability	Discussion ranged from appreciation of the city's beauty and history, to concern over tourism and housing.
Identity and belonging	Discussion covered appreciation for the diversity of residents and visitors to the city and the sense of connection it brings, as well as concern for the city centre feeling like it caters solely to tourists.
Natural space	Discussion centred on the good provision of well-maintained green spaces which was considered to be one of the strengths of the WHS.
City centre economy	Discussion ranged from concern over Princes Street feeling generic and the sense that there is difficulty for new independent business to get started, as well as positivity surrounding the new St James Quarter as a positive addition to the city centre.
Feeling safe	Whilst this is connected to the theme of maintenance, it's a subject in its own right which is addressed elsewhere in the council. Discussion ranged from the sense that the WHS generally feels safe, but graffiti and the closes of the Old Town can contribute to a sense of discomfort.
Housing	Discussion over housing is entwined with concerns over short-term lets and student housing. There is concern over too few opportunities for affordable housing in the WHS, but an understanding that the current student housing stock supports the student population well.

Common areas of focus

As the management plan is not a generic city plan, there are inevitably issues raised which are not directly related to the Outstanding Universal Value of the site and are best addressed by other plans and strategies.

The ONTE WHS Management Plan shares common aspirations and will compliment a range of plans and strategies in managing the complex range of issues facing the city centre and thus, the World Heritage Site.

Council plans, policies and strategies relating to the city centre

Strategy	Opportunities to meet common goals
Waste and recycling strategy	“Edinburgh City Centre is a place where people live, as well as work, and a World Heritage Site. This presents particular challenges both in terms of balancing the competing priorities of the different stakeholders, and in terms of providing a comprehensive recycling service.” (p.11)
City Mobility Plan inc. Active travel	Multiple reference to WHS. “A walkable city centre core right at the heart of the World Heritage Site, enabled by a pedestrian priority zone and a network of connected, high quality, car-free streets;” “High-quality streets and public spaces where improvements allow for people to be inspired by the city’s unique heritage while they interact, relax or play;” (both p.46)
Tourism	Multiple references to WHS. Specific recommendation for tourism sector to engage with WHSMP (p.17)
Climate Ready Edinburgh	Multiple references to WHS. Clear cross-referencing.
Biodiversity Action Plan	No specific mention of WHS, but n.b. p.9 mention of importance of private gardens to Edinburgh’s biodiversity
Edinburgh 2050	No specific mention of WHS, but does mention skyline in Theme: Pioneering Edinburgh – in terms of architecture, culture and good quality of life
Princes Street Framework	Specific mention of WHSMP
Poverty	No specific mention of WHS/OUV, but potential for engagement via themes of connection and belonging, and wellbeing
Open space	Specific reference to EWH and graveyards conservation. Specific mention of WHSMP development (p.42). India Place Allotments case study references EWH grant (p.55). Specific reference to working with EWH to realise historical value of open space assets (p.58).
Flood risk management	Specific reference to WHS and the impact of flooding to it
Culture	Specific reference to WHS
Digital	No specific mention of WHS
City housing	No specific mention of WHS
People	No specific mention of WHS. Opportunity to engage via training
South East Locality Improvement Plan 2017-2022	ONTE WHS Management Plan 2017-22 referenced common themes with the Locality Improvement Plan. Opportunity exists to engage with the updated plan, this could include supporting engagement via heritage values in Dumbiedykes.

4.4 Research pipeline

Achieving best practice

The management of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is considered as an example of best practice internationally. People come from all over the world to research our practices. Research needs to be sustained to keep the management of the Site current and relevant to global trends and there are current knowledge gaps. Building on existing relationships with universities in Edinburgh and internationally will play a key role in bridging these gaps.

Such gaps include, but are not limited to the following opportunities:

- Understanding the World Heritage Site from multiple perspectives
 - [Hope Wang's research](#): Co-creating the values of World Heritage Sites with Refugees
 - Exploring the peripheries of heritage sites: their communities and values and how they relate to the WHS: [CUMET project](#) - Cultural Heritage in the Metropolitan Peripheries
- Fulfilling the recommendations of Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)
 - Management Partners/ University of Edinburgh / University of Seville
- Research into materials:
 - Understanding the materials used in new developments in the WHS
 - Understanding the historic materials used in the public realm
- Research into green spaces:
 - understanding impacts on green spaces via data gathering - anticipate future problems / landslides
- Understanding the condition of previous EWH grant-funded projects
 - Basic maintenance surveys of our 12 monuments and other past WH projects so we can find out what state they are in and push CEC to maintain.
 - Algorithm for learning what to look for in building at risk to reduce time spent surveying
- Monitoring the WHS from a macro view – what technology can we use for this?
 - o To allow EWH to target work and be proactive, rather than just being reactive to what grants are being applied for
 - o LIDAR scanning, AI, citizen science – multitude of approaches from University of Edinburgh to achieve the above
- Understand the WHS existing building stock: breaking the buildings into typologies to be able to better target people with specific maintenance advice, and to define best practice in relation to energy retrofit and climate change adaptation interventions
- Research into climate change – collecting baseline climate data for the WHS:
 - o Create tools to monitor the impacts of climate change on the WHS
 - o Collect and compile data on natural hazards (flooding, ground/slope instability) in the WHS
 - o Carry out a high-level risk and vulnerability assessment of the WHS in relation to urban heat island effect
 - o Carry out a high-level climate change risk and vulnerability assessment for parks, garden, green spaces, and natural setting in the WHS

- Collect and compile data on fauna and flora in the WHS to establish a baseline and propose solutions to protect and enhance it
- Map intangible heritage in/linked to the WHS and assess risk/vulnerability to climate change
- Based on data collected, pressing issues and gaps in knowledge, research specific climate change impacts on the WHS (per type and/or area in the WHS)

Research guidelines:

- Outline when partners get involved with research projects and provide clear guidance for how to engage with the results.
- Research should fulfil a specific outcome and contribute to our appreciation and understanding of the WHS, ideally filling a gap in knowledge that does not already exist
- Research should not take up an unreasonable amount of resource from the Management Partners
- Research should be conducted or supervised by appropriately qualified staff
- Research should align with the purpose of the Management Plan and should be shared and communicated to a wide audience.

4.5 The Actions

About the Actions

This Management Plan has a separate Action Plan. This allows for the actions to be more dynamic and for them to be updated as necessary during the 10-year life of the Management Plan. This sharpens the focus on what the Action Plan can deliver throughout the life of the Management Plan, without the need to refresh the Management Plan itself so frequently. This flexibility will aid the monitoring and delivery of the actions.

The actions reflect what can be achieved by the management partnership. Through the consultation process, they seek to amplify the voices of the local population, visitors and broader stakeholders, as well as the views and expertise of the management partners. They will focus their concentration on heritage and what makes the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh a World Heritage Site. However, a key strength of the Management Plan is that it is not constrained to land-use issues and can cover a broader spectrum of subject areas than a typical planning document, such as visitor management, education and interpretation and culture more broadly. The Place Standard Tool recognises the correlation between the quality of the built environment with health and wellbeing, so this can also be seen as a benefit of a well-managed WHS. The plan can be used as an advocacy tool to support the actions of other city partners. It can also be used to influence funding and political support.

Summary of objectives from the consultation process

The following phrases emerged repeatedly from the pre-consultation engagement across all five key challenges that are being taken forward in the plan:

community guidance
 promotion authenticity best-practice
 awareness-raising
 facilitation partnership-working
 advocacy

Below are the objectives from [sections 4.3.1-4.3.5](#) summarised in a table:

Objective	
1	To coordinate the actions to ensure a broad level of understanding of the WHS and to widely transmit its value
2	To coordinate actions to ensure an appropriate response to the climate emergency whilst safeguarding OUV
3	To ensure ongoing investment in the conservation of the Site
4	To work in collaboration with stakeholders to sustain the 'state of conservation' of the Site.
5	To ensure the World Heritage Site is a baseline consideration for all Council plans and strategies within its boundary that include alterations to the historic built environment
6	To improve tools to sustain Outstanding Universal Value
7	To sustain effective partnerships that support the management of the WHS
8	To ensure that development embraces the context of the WHS and is of the highest quality in terms of architecture, design and materials
9	To improve understanding of the value of WHS status to tourism within the WHS and the city
10	To sustain effective partnerships to advocate for and secure sustainable tourism within the WHS and the city to safeguard OUV

5 Implementation and monitoring

5.1 Monitoring

Monitoring is a responsibility of World Heritage Site inscription. This includes both monitoring the condition of the Site (State of conservation) and monitoring the implementation of the actions.

State of conservation report

UNESCO monitors the state of conservation of each World Heritage Site through its Periodic Reporting process. The [last Periodic Report](#) was completed in 2013, the most recent Periodic Report was completed in 2023 and awaits publishing. These reports are an important tool to gather information that identifies possible changes to the condition of a Site.

Action Plan Monitoring

Case studies in [Appendix C](#) reflect a number of the key actions delivered across the partnership through the previous plan. Their progress has been tracked by the Steering Group throughout.

5.2 Risk Preparedness

UNESCO Operating Guidelines (September 2023) recommend that risk assessment and response is a key tool in site management. Managing a site that covers the expanse of a city centre differs from that of an individual monument.

Physical risk - fire and flood risk, climate emergency, development pressure, pandemics.

Fire and flood risk

General risk responses for the city are provided by the fire and police services, and the Council's Emergency Planning Team. Individual buildings have their own strategies and insurance in place.

HES co-operates with Fire and Rescue Services in managing a Historic Buildings National Fire Database, which provides fire-fighting crews with information on the importance and value of category 'A' listed buildings.

Similarly, SEPA (Scottish Environment Protection Agency) is the lead body in dealing with flood emergencies. During the life cycle of previous plans, a flood prevention scheme for the Water of Leith was implemented; flooding poses a threat to a limited part of the World Heritage Site, principally around the Dean Village and Stockbridge. However, it is now also acknowledged that increased surface water is an impact of the climate emergency and there are more frequent and localised instances of flood damage. A flood map of the WHS has been produced and will influence mitigation.

Climate emergency

Understanding the physical impact of climate change and responses to it on the built and natural environments of the World Heritage Site is necessary. Known impacts of the climate emergency are affecting building fabric (for example, speeding up stone decay, increasing pressure on historic drainage systems) as well as creating pressure for the adaptation of buildings to reduce carbon emissions.

Energy efficiency programmes and research by the Site's management partners to change habits, address fuel poverty and to understand the sensitive adaptation of historic buildings remains a significant focus for the next ten years. Research projects such as the Climate Vulnerability Index and Climate Change Risk Assessment are informing next steps.

Development pressure

The success of the city and its World Heritage Site creates pressure for development. There is also pressure from the cumulative impacts of small-scale development. Development which undermines the Outstanding Universal Value and threatens World Heritage status is a risk. The risk is managed through planning policy and guidance. Development pressure and the effectiveness of the protective measures are subject to monitoring.

Pandemics

National and international health events can impact the World Heritage Site in a number of ways, including suspension of awareness-raising activities, events, and all but essential building and maintenance projects. Closure of public buildings might also impact their routine maintenance and upkeep, as well as the need for public services to remain in the city centre. Restrictions on travel could be at the detriment of the tourism industry yet could be a positive impact on the local community in terms of creating more space to meet freely outside. How space within the World Heritage Site is used might change, with parks and public realm being used for gathering whilst indoor venues remain closed.

Intellectual risk – apathy, lack of awareness/understanding

The delivery of several Partners' projects during the period of the last Management Plan, such as establishing World Heritage Day events and creating a social media presence to raise the profile of the World Heritage Site, has seen some of the risk associated with lack of awareness and understanding mitigated. It will be important to facilitate access to ONTE WHS documentation in order to maintain the narrative of its management.

Organisational risk – poor change management, lack of co-ordination, inadequate resourcing and lack of succession management around key staffing and economic risk locally and nationally.

The organisations and bodies that are focused on the management of the World Heritage Site require adequate funds to actively manage, effectively coordinate and carry out actions in relation to sustaining and enhancing the World Heritage Site.

APPENDIX A – OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE SITE

A.1 Description of the Site

[Pictures to be added throughout]

Topography

The City of Edinburgh possesses one of the most spectacular urban landscapes in the world. Its dramatically varied terrain rests on a complicated geological pattern of sediments, extinct volcanoes, lava flows and igneous intrusions. This pattern has been emphasised by the differential weathering of hard and soft rocks.

The city's topography is central to the character of the Site. It shaped the city's spectacular townscape and creates the dramatic views into, out of, and through the Site, including the key views out to the 'mountain' of Arthur's Seat; down to the Firth of Forth (the River Forth estuary); towards the green slopes within the city; to open countryside up to 30 kilometres beyond; and to views down from high vantage points onto roofscapes and open spaces.

Within the Site the landforms created the setting for the dramatic juxtaposition of the Old and New Towns across the green valley of Princes Street Gardens (the drained Nor' Loch). The Castle Rock and its geological 'tail' provided the perfect location for the original settlement of the medieval planned Burgh, shaping its subsequent development pattern of narrow property holdings on a single main street. Its steep, rocky slopes also ensured that a highly visible 'island' of natural landscape has been retained in the heart of the Site.

Archaeology

Edinburgh's World Heritage Site, particularly the Old Town, is an area of high archaeological significance and potential, containing a range of nationally important scheduled monuments and extensive areas of well-preserved archaeological deposits. The area was analysed in 1981 as part of the Scottish Burgh Survey (Turner et al. 1981).

Archaeological excavations have shown that Edinburgh's origins extend back into prehistory.

Edinburgh's Castle Rock was fortified from the late Bronze Age (around 900 BC) and is arguably the longest continuously occupied site in Scotland.

By the eleventh century, settlement had almost certainly begun to develop along the rocky ridge that later became the Royal Mile.

Every time there is a significant development in the Old Town, there is potential for undiscovered archaeology.

Architectural History

Edinburgh's architecture and its historical importance set it apart from most other cities of the world. The particular nature of Edinburgh's duality is unusual: on the one hand, on a high ridge is the ancient Old Town, while in contrast lying below and to the north, is the eighteenth and nineteenth century New Town (the name 'New Town' applies to the whole area developed in classical style between the 1760s and the 1870s).

The Old Town

The Old Town contains two planned twelfth century burghs with two early royal palaces (one within the Castle), a medieval abbey, and a wealth of early buildings. The tradition of building taller was regulated and limited to five storeys on main streets through by-laws in the seventeenth century but the tendency was predominantly vertical and the sloping nature of the Site allowed for the creation of tenements that must have been the world's tallest buildings of their age, some of them still to be seen.

The Old Town grew along the wide main street (the Royal Mile) stretching from the Castle on its rock through the Canongate to the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Edinburgh Castle dominates: a medieval military fortress extended as a Royal Palace within a square in Renaissance times but later re-classified as an army barracks and hugely extended as such from the mid eighteenth century. Of special interest are the twelfth century St Margaret's Chapel and the Great Hall of 1500. At the other end of the Royal Mile are Holyrood Abbey and the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

Along the Royal Mile is an array of architecturally and historically outstanding buildings. The Parliament House and High Court of Justiciary complex comprise the two-storey T-plan Parliament House, a key building of the Scottish Renaissance by Sir James Murray of Kilbaberton (1632-39) with neo-classical additions and extensions as a court of justice complex by Sir Robert Reid and others in the earlier nineteenth century. The City Chambers (formerly a multi-use complex with the Royal Exchange at its core and from 1811 the headquarters of the city council) on the High Street are the work of John and Robert Adam (1753); the plan is that of a private square protected from the Street by a single-storey rusticated screen. The Canongate Tolbooth c.1590 is identified by its powerful turreted steeple. Other notable public buildings within the Old Town include George Heriot's School (1628-60), built in the area 'outside' the town enclosed by the contemporary Telfer Wall, Surgeons' Hall (1829-32, Playfair), and the Old College of the University (1815-27, Robert Adam, completed by Playfair).

By the early seventeenth century, much of the wealth of the Scottish nation had come into the hands of the Edinburgh merchant elite, which resulted in considerable new building. The nobility also built high-quality town houses and all this activity came under the strict control of the municipal authorities. The heyday of the Old Town was the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

From the 1790s and especially after the development of the New Town, a slow social and economic decline began. During the later nineteenth century, the withdrawal of the middle classes from the Old Town began to be seen as a problem. In 1892 Sir Patrick Geddes proposed that the Old Town should be 'regenerated' by attracting back to it the university, the bourgeoisie, and the intelligentsia. The value of the pioneering efforts of Geddes in early restoration and new build housing infill, especially along the Royal Mile, was substantial both in terms of conservation and in maintaining the residential population of the area. These are exemplified at the theatrical red-roofed and half-timbered Ramsay Garden which was intended to reflect the character of the medieval town. Sir Patrick Geddes was also active in establishing community gardens or pocket parks in the Old Town during the early part of the 20th century. As part of his Civic Survey of Edinburgh in 1909, 75 open spaces in the Old Town were identified as having potential for community gardens. By 1911, nine of the gardens were 'in working order'. They are now represented by: Advocate's Close; the Patrick Geddes Memorial Garden on the south side of the West Port and the Scottish Wildlife Trust Garden which occupies a prominent position on the south side of Johnston Terrace, adjoining the Patrick Geddes Steps and the former Castlecliff Workshops.

The New Town

The New Town is important for two main reasons: its high concentration of world-class neoclassical buildings and the sheer extent of the area covered with classical ashlar-faced (highly finished stone) architecture, all consistent to a degree without parallel and, perhaps crucially, all now surviving remarkably intact.

The New Town consists of seven successive major developments, each different from, but closely related to, its predecessors, built in a continuous programme of construction from 1767, arguably until as late as 1890.

The First New Town originated in proposals published by Lord Provost Drummond in 1752. These were embodied in an Act of Parliament, which envisaged the development of the city's lands to the north of the Old Town, linked by an urban viaduct across the valley, the North Bridge. The rectangular layout of the first New Town was the competition-winning work of James Craig, redrawn in 1767 after consultation with John Adam. The second New Town followed from 1801, planned by Sir Robert Reid, and William Sibbald, and located to the north of the first, breaking away from the previous strictly rectangular plan by the incorporation of some curved terraces. The third New Town, the work of Robert Brown from 1813 onwards, essentially continues the approach of its predecessors.

The pattern of terraces and crescents changed with the fourth New Town, planned by William Henry Playfair. Instead of imposing a grid-iron upon the landscape, the buildings exploit the contours, view and trees of Calton Hill in a romantic manner. The fifth New Town, built from 1822 on the lands of the Earl of Moray to designs by James Gillespie Graham, cleverly links the first three New Towns as a unified scheme. It was intended as a self-contained enclave for aristocrats and professional gentry. The sixth New Town followed in the 1850s on Lord Provost Learmonth's Dean Estate, to the north of the Water of Leith, linked since 1831-32 by a spectacular bridge designed by Thomas Telford. The seventh and final New Town brought the hitherto detached Raeburn estate together with the rest, but building continued well into the later nineteenth century within the generally established precepts of the New Town ideal. Although the original idea was that the New Town should be a purely residential suburb, it rapidly proved to be attractive to business and government; drawing this element of the city away from the Old Town.

Most noteworthy for its planned ensembles rather than its individual buildings, the New Town has, however, a number of notable public buildings, including Register House (1774, Robert Adam), the Royal Scottish Academy (1822-36, W H Playfair), and the Royal High School (1829, Thomas Hamilton). The New Town was to become the location for some of the finest public and commercial monuments of the neo-classical revival in Europe.

Monuments symbolic of Scotland's past were grouped together on Calton Hill, in the aspiration to live up to the city's intellectual soubriquet, the 'Athens of the North'.

[Timeline to be added from the 2017 Plan]

Streetscape

Natural stone paving slabs, extensively used throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, have an uninterrupted smooth surface which complemented the design of buildings.

The slabs were laid with the same precision as the stone courses of adjacent buildings. Much of the remaining stone paving is carried through into private staircases, closes, and finally even into the

hallways, kitchens, bathrooms and cellars of the dwellings themselves. Many of the setted streets in Edinburgh are now more than 150 years old and this represents a remarkable survival. Footways in the New Town were made from various materials, from the horonized paths of Drummond Place, made of slivers of spoil from stone working, to the Hailes-flagstoned pavements of Dundas Street. The Old Town was largely repaved in the nineteenth century with high-quality Carmyllie or Hailes flagstones.

What is now referred to as the 'public realm' was constructed to an extremely high standard in Edinburgh, although this quality was eroded to some extent in the second half of the last century. Carriageways, kerbs, pavements, footpaths, closes and wynds, boundary walls, railings, gatepiers, street signs, lamp posts, some historic bollards, and police boxes and other street furniture were either there from the beginning or were, for the most part, sensitively added as the materials became available or circumstances demanded an intervention.

Local residents' initiatives have also made a contribution. For example, in many streets in the New Town, residents have reinstated original railing-mounted streetlamps.

Parks and Gardens

Edinburgh's parks and gardens are integral to the New Town's layout and architectural composition. In the Old Town the designed landscape at the Palace of Holyroodhouse covering the Palace Yard at Holyrood and the garden enclosed within the boundary wall were identified for their significance in Volume 5 of the first Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland (1987). The Old Town also contains gardens – early 'pocket parks' laid out by Sir Patrick Geddes – which are also significant for the part they played in the 'regeneration' of the Old Town and are essential in providing a pleasant environment.

Calton Hill is the most dominant 'designed' landscape within the Site due to its prominence and character. This never completed project attracted complementary schemes of commemoration to focus on Calton Hill, including the Nelson Monument, the Burns Monument and the Playfair Monument.

The most significant of the many designed gardens in the Site is Princes Street Gardens, a green space planned like Queen Street Gardens to offer uninterrupted garden views to one sided streets at each edge of the first New Town. Protected from 1752 as a pleasure ground in the 'proposals' document, the gardens were formally opened in 1821. East Princes Street Gardens was re-designed in 1840 to receive the Sir Walter Scott Monument, one of a number of elaborate Gothic episodes planned within the geometric layout of the New Town. Overlaying its historical role as private pleasure ground, Princes Street Gardens has an important collection of monuments and statuary.

Colour

The original stones of which the city was built were variations of yellow, which have now mellowed to grey. Edinburgh has, at certain times in its life, been colourful by modern standards. Windows have been painted white, green, brown and most other rich dark colours.

New Town railings were also painted in various vibrant shades. Venetian blinds and planted balconies added to the scene. At some point in its history, however, probably around the time of Lord Cockburn in the early nineteenth century, Edinburgh took on an architectural mantle of respectability, often severe. Ruskin noticed this, with dismay. A delayed architectural reaction came eventually in the form of Rowand Anderson's Gothic, red sandstone, National Portrait Gallery (1885-90), Well Court in Dean (1883) and, later in the Old Town, Geddes's white and red-walled, red-roofed, Ramsay Garden (1892-94) which re-visited the perceived architectural chaos and confusion

of the medieval town. Along with colour in the later nineteenth century Old Town came an interest in the romantic architectural effects of self-consciously random rubble construction. Layers of harling or limewash were often stripped from existing buildings, or new buildings designed to conform to this aesthetic. The colour issue has ebbed and flowed ever since, but the epoch of New Town conservation brought a renewed interest in 'sanity' and simplicity in keeping with the principles of modernism. The post-modern period revived colour and picturesque outline, notably at Ian Begg's Scandic Crown Hotel (now the Radisson SAS) and Richard Murphy's neo-Geddesian infills in the Canongate and off the High Street.

Materials

From 1674 even the most ordinary buildings were constructed of stone. The main formations used for building are the Upper Old Red Sandstone (Devonian) at Craigmillar, and the carboniferous system of the Craigleith, Ravelston, Hailes, Dunnet and Binny sandstones. The geological processes that formed Edinburgh's landscape also provided the materials for its buildings. Until the mid-nineteenth century the cost of imported building materials was prohibitive, and Edinburgh, situated amidst beds of local sandstone, used this high-quality local material as its main building and paving material. This, together with Scottish slate and the occasional use of high-quality imported stone, has contributed a vital ingredient to the essential character of the Site.

Looking at Rothiemay's famous 1647 map of Edinburgh we can see the important introduction of stone-fronted tenements which takes us to the very beginning of the use of stone in 'ordinary' dwellings. As early as 1550, the expatriate Scot Alexander Alesius wrote that Edinburgh's Royal Mile was 'lined with buildings not constructed from bricks, but natural and square stones, so that even private houses can be compared with great palaces'. What distinguishes Edinburgh from other European capitals is the consistent use of ashlar (dressed stone) in the 'show' parts of the facades: those parts of the building which are on public view. Only in a handful of early New Town houses was rubble-work, originally stuccoed to represent ashlar, adopted for front elevations.

Slate roofs also make an extremely important contribution to the Edinburgh townscape. Generally, roofs are finished in West Highland slate laid characteristically in random widths and diminishing courses with a deeply textured, uneven appearance. New Town roofs were not generally 'architectural' and were concealed behind a parapet in views from the street.

Nevertheless, the topography of the city is such that slate roofs become a dominant feature in distant views.

Conservation

From at least the sixteenth century – early in a European context – building control was enforced through a key burgh figure, the Dean of Guild, whose role was crucial for the direction of future planning in Edinburgh. The Dean's Court controlled, among other matters, new buildings and the role was successively consolidated throughout the coming centuries. For example, as a precaution against fire, all roofs had to be of tile or slate from 1621, and in 1674 this was extended to building facades, which had thenceforth to be of stone, although many timber-fronted examples survived well into the nineteenth century.

What was just as remarkable as the formal force of the grand plan for a new monumental city was the consistency with which it was carried out over the following decades, through increasingly restrictive development controls by the Town Council and the private landowners and trusts concerned. It was a unique formula, using Town Council speculation along with Dean of Guild and

feuing restrictions imposed by private speculators to protect the amenity of successive developments and therefore their value.

After the Second World War, habitation in the Old Town continued to decline. A similar pattern, if much less pronounced, was evident in the New Town where the need for conservation and restoration was first recognised in the late 1960s. A survey carried out by the Edinburgh Architectural Association was followed by an international conference in 1970, the outcome of which was the establishment of the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee.

The committee utilised Government and City Council aid to initiate a major programme of repair and rehabilitation. In 1980 the problems of the Old Town were again recognised by a small group of architects, resulting in the establishment of what was to become the Edinburgh Old Town Renewal Trust in 1985. In 1999 this organisation and the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee were merged to form the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust with a broad remit focused on the whole Site.

Recent Development

Over many hundreds of years the Site has proved itself capable of adaptation to new uses and new ways of living. However a very important feature of the Site's cultural history has been its self-referential devotion to the idea of an ordered city where heritage has been highly valued. Edinburgh's deeply ingrained culture of conservation has created the conditions for the City's remarkable survival.

A considerable amount of development has taken place since the Site was inscribed. Most of the major changes which have taken place are measurable under the existing monitoring arrangements. However, the nature of the Site is such that often very small changes can have a considerable incremental effect on its character and archaeology. The Site has a complex, multi-layered and very detailed significance. This requires, simultaneously, an overview related to setting, infill and development and a close attention to minute details of building fabric, streetscape and landscape design.

A.2 Justification for inscription

[Pictures to be added throughout]

Inscription on the list as a cultural site requires one or more of six criteria measuring Outstanding Universal Value to be met.

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh met two criteria (II), (IV)

Criterion (ii) – Have exerted great influence, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts, or town planning and landscape design.

The successive planned extensions of the New Town, and the high quality of its architecture, set standards for Scotland and beyond, and exerted a major influence on the development of urban architecture and town planning throughout Europe, in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Criterion (iv) - Be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

The Old and New Towns together form a dramatic reflection of significant changes in European urban planning, from the inward looking, defensive walled medieval city of royal palaces, abbeys and organically developed burgh plots in the Old Town, through the expansive formal Enlightenment planning of the 18th and 19th centuries in the New Town, to the 19th century rediscovery and revival of the Old Town with its adaptation of a distinctive Baronial style of architecture in an urban setting.

A.3 Integrity

[Pictures to be added throughout]

It is the exceptional quality and contrast in architecture and streetscape between the medieval Old Town and the Georgian New Town and its scale – it covers 4^{1/2} km² and over 75% of the building stock within the Site is listed for its architectural or historical importance which sets the baseline for gauging the integrity of the Site.

This clarity of the urban structure is what needs to be maintained to ensure integrity remains intact. The combination of the topography and the buildings upon it creates a spectacular urban landscape which is punctuated with church spires, steeples and monuments. The integrity of the Site is fragile as it relies on the legibility of the skyline. The cumulative effect of the mass, height, form, design and materials of a proposed development could potentially damage the skyline and surrounding townscape, impacting landmark buildings, features in the urban area, and the landscape setting of the city. Development that fails to respect the skyline could introduce a form that detracts from the spectacular views, panoramas and iconic skyline that give Edinburgh its integrity.

Irreversible change to the skyline has the potential to compromise the integrity of the site.

A.4 Authenticity

[Pictures to be added throughout]

The Site continues to retain its historic role as the administrative and cultural capital of Scotland, while remaining a vibrant economic centre.

High-quality workmanship is an aspect of Edinburgh's authenticity which is extremely important to maintain. The identification and support of sources of craft expertise and the necessary traditional materials needed for repair and restoration is a key challenge for the Management Plan.

Material authenticity extends beyond the fabric of buildings, to the patterns of urban form and the qualities of urban spaces.

Edinburgh's setting is an indispensable part of its character and is widely understood as being a key feature of the Site's authenticity. The need to maintain key aspects of the city's setting- such as the view out to Arthur's Seat or down to the Firth of Forth as well as many other key vistas and views that contribute to this quality cannot be over-emphasized.

The concern for maintaining these patterns is present everywhere. In the New Town, the integrity of the street layout is a key defining factor in maintain the New Town character. In the Old Town,

concern was for the ‘spine and ribs’ pattern of the High Street. The closes and wynds maintain the existing- and reinstated lost- relationships with the medieval street pattern.

APPENDIX B – MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

B.1 Governance

[Diagram Governance structure to be added – an update from the 2017 Plan]

World Heritage Sites are subject to local, national and international scrutiny.

Local

The day-to-day management of the World Heritage Site is overseen by a Steering Group that is made up of members from Historic Environment Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust. There is a communications sub-group of the Steering Group that manages communication of the key messages around the delivery of the Management Plan. This partnership must demonstrate that it is fulfilling its obligation in meeting the requirement of the World Heritage Convention.

To ensure a strong governance of the management plan, an Oversight Group will be set up to allow a more strategic discussion of issues emerging from the review. The Oversight Group will be made up of the convener and vice convener of the planning committee, representatives of the community councils within the Site, ICOMOS UK, the chamber of Commerce and the management partners.

It will consider the outputs of the Steering Group and check whether the reports and outputs provided have met the project objectives. The Oversight Group will pursue issues through its members’ own organisational arrangements to ensure that decisions are properly informed.

National

The UK Government ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1984. DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport) has overall responsibility for managing World Heritage Sites in the UK in complying with the World Heritage Convention. This is not devolved but Scottish Government has a role in ensuring DCMS meets the Convention. The management of the historic and natural environment in Scotland is a devolved matter, with responsibility sitting with Scottish Ministers. A concordat between DCMS and the Scottish Government means that Scottish Ministers are responsible for the proper management of the Scottish World Heritage Sites.

UNESCO membership is reserved to the UK Government. DCMS acts as the State Party to UNESCO and is also responsible for nominating sites in the UK for inscription under the Convention. Under the 1999 post-devolution concordat between the UK Government and Scottish Government, DCMS looks to Scottish Ministers to ensure compliance with the Convention in relation to Sites in Scotland, and to identify Scottish Sites that should be on the UK tentative list for possible nomination as World Heritage Sites. As lead public body for the historic environment, Historic Environment Scotland carries out these functions on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

International

UNESCO is the UN agency with global responsibility for protecting cultural heritage internationally. ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) are UNESCO's advisers on cultural world heritage sites.

The 1973 World Heritage Convention deals with the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world that is of outstanding value to all humanity. The WH Convention has now been ratified by 195 States Parties and, as of 2023, there are currently 1,199 properties on the WH List. There are 33 World Heritage Sites in the UK. Liverpool was delisted in 2021.

B.2 Planning, Policy and Legislative Framework

National

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is the national spatial strategy for Scotland. It was published in February 2023 and sets out the spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy.

NPF4 recognises the international importance of World Heritage Sites. It asserts that proposals affecting a World Heritage Site or its setting will only be supported where OUV is protected, and it notes that the beneficial outcomes for the historic environment asset or places should be secured early in the phasing of development.

This responds to the international importance of World Heritage Sites and the obligations associated with their inscription.

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019) and The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 provide a framework for local and regional planning policy and act as the principal pieces of primary legislation guiding planning and development in Scotland. Additionally, individual buildings, monuments and areas of special archaeological, architectural or historic interest are designated and protected under The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 and the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act.

Our Past Our Future, the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland, emphasises the need to understand the historic environment holistically, combining both intangible (those aspects we cannot see- stories, traditions and concepts) and tangible heritage (physical things).

Normal statutory controls for each of these designations still apply, and there are local plan policies seeking to protect them.

EIA

EIA is a process for identifying the environmental effects of development proposals. It aims to avoid, reduce and offset any adverse effects. Certain types of development, and development in environmentally sensitive areas, are more likely to require EIA.

UNESCO's guidelines state that 'Impact assessments for proposed interventions are essential for all World Heritage properties.' World Heritage Sites are specifically mentioned in the EIA regulations as a factor which might influence whether or not EIA is required.

The EIA process should address the impact of proposals on a Site's OUV and its specific attributes is available on the Scottish Government's website.

HIA

HIA is used to assess and evaluate both tangible and intangible impacts on OUV. This includes any effects on specific attributes, setting and underlying archaeology. The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) has produced Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments. UNESCO encourages assessors to refer to this and use it as a starting point in considering impacts.

When an EIA is required, this assessment should be incorporated into the process. When EIA is not a formal requirement, it is still essential to assess the impact of a proposal for change on the OUV of the World Heritage Site. The planning authority or conservation body may therefore request an HIA to show how proposals will affect OUV.

Local

OUV is also a material consideration in the planning process and City Plan 2030 policy Env 9 –World Heritage Sites - is in place to protect it. Policy Env 9 states:

“Development which would harm the qualities of World Heritage Sites and which justified the inscription of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and/or the Forth Bridge as World Heritage Sites or would have a detrimental impact on a Site's setting, its Outstanding Universal Value, integrity, authenticity or significance will not be permitted”.

City Plan 2030 sets out policies and proposals to guide development. It establishes the long term vision for land use in the city. It includes general policies focused on the city-wide built heritage as well as specific guidance regarding the World Heritage Site. These documents are the main source of reference in making decisions on planning applications.

In addition the Council's wider policies and guidance on the design of development provide detail on issues such as heights, massing, detailing and the appropriateness of materials. The Skyline policy plays an important role in protecting the setting of the World Heritage Site. This policy identifies key public viewpoints and is used in assessing proposals for high buildings. This is necessary to protect some of the city's most striking visual characteristics, the views available from many vantage points within the city and beyond, of landmark buildings, the city's historic skyline, undeveloped hillsides within the urban area and the hills, open countryside and the Firth of Forth which create a unique landscape setting for the city.

Local National Panels

The Urban Design Panel

The Edinburgh Urban Design Panel gives design advice. Its aim is to raise the quality of new buildings, streets and spaces in Edinburgh. It does this by reviewing schemes and giving reports on them. These reports help designers, developers and planners improve their plans.

The panel meets monthly and reviews between one and three schemes per meeting. As well as new developments, the Panel also reviews Council policy and guidance that has an impact on urban design.

Once a planning application is made Panel reports are put online. You can see these in the Panel's directory.

Who are the Panel members?

The members are drawn from a range of organisations including Architecture and Design Scotland, Edinburgh World Heritage, Historic Environment Scotland, The Cockburn Association, Police Scotland, the Royal Town Planning Institute.

APPENDIX C – CASE STUDIES

C. Case studies

(pictures to be added)

Key achievements of the previous management plan are set out below:

Care and maintenance

The bricks and mortar that makes up the physical fabric of our city needs constant care and attention. We achieve this in two ways: by providing grants, and by undertaking public realm projects.

Edinburgh World Heritage runs a Conservation Funding Programme, funded by Historic Environment Scotland, which provides grants to property owners and community groups to conserve and enhance buildings and public spaces in and around the World Heritage Site. As well as offering funding to carry out the works, the Conservation Funding Programme engages with owners and the local community, supporting traditional skills and materials, offering advice, and fostering a greater awareness for the importance of the site or building being conserved.

For our work in the public realm, we are at pains to ensure the importance of what makes the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site special and unique the world over – the Outstanding Universal Value – is included and celebrated in project discussions and outputs.

Twelve Closes project

The closes of the Old Town

Twelve Closes is an exciting and challenging urban renewal initiative to enhance and improve twelve of Edinburgh's historic pedestrian streets running off the [Royal Mile](#). The project, launched in 2015, puts the communities who live and work in the closes at the heart of the improvements. The project is being delivered in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh Napier University.

Edinburgh World Heritage receives part of its funding from [Historic Environment Scotland](#) which enables us to support our projects.

Why the closes?

The project was designed in response to the condition of many of the closes in the Old Town. These steep, narrow, alleyways are a critical feature of the city's character and inform the designation of Edinburgh's urban core as a World Heritage Site.

The medieval development of the city included the street pattern that can be observed today, one that is often described as resembling the bones of a fish, with the Royal Mile as the spine. These through-routes provide excellent pedestrian links across the Old Town. However, they are often

perceived as smelly, dirty and unsafe – and that is if they are known about. This project makes improvements to the closes to encourage awareness and exploration of the Old Town beyond the main street and create a sense of custodianship for the closes by local businesses and residents.

Small changes, big impact

The project aims to make the closes more interesting, attractive and visible, increasing footfall which will in turn will make feel them safer and less prone to anti-social activity.

Tangible solutions such as creative lighting, interpretation and artwork help to reveal the incredible history and fascinating stories contained within the closes. The project also identifies any management issues associated with each close, such as poor signage and waste management, and consider how any new interventions could help mitigate them.

Working together in partnership

We work with the School of Creative Industries from Edinburgh Napier University to deliver community workshops for each of the closes. These workshops generate debate about the current state of the close and what enhancement may be desirable to enhance the spaces. Participants are encouraged to think about the history and development of the close and how it could inspire lighting and artistic interventions. Edinburgh Napier University first draw up proposals, which are then developed and refined through consultation. Once the final design has been agreed, a schedule and specification is drawn up by the University.

The City of Edinburgh Council, as custodian of the public realm, is a crucial partner. They lead on the clean-up of the closes, the installation of any new features or artwork and will take responsibility for management and maintenance thereafter. The council's Street Lighting team help progress lighting specifications by designing the electrical circuits, procuring the fittings and installing the interventions in the closes.

Outcomes

The project intends to create a template for future co-design public realm projects, engaging people with the city's outstanding historic built environment and enabling them to have a say in how design is used to improve their local area. The design solutions must be attractive and understandable and enhance the essential character of the closes. This approach is critical to the successful management of the World Heritage Site.

Canongate Housing Project: Tackling a post-war building

The Canongate Housing Development is a post-war complex, designed by Sir Basil Spence and completed in 1969. The Category B-listed modernist development consists of three blocks of flats comprising of one- and two-bedroom flats, 30 in total, and 4 business units located on the [Royal Mile](#).

The project was funded through the [Scottish Government's Energy Efficiency Scotland programme](#), [SP Energy Network's Green Economy Fund](#), Edinburgh World Heritage's [Conservation Funding Programme](#) (funded by [Historic Environment Scotland](#)) and carried out in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council.

Work on site began in March 2020 with [John Gilbert Architects](#) and [Redpath Construction](#).

The complex occupies a critical and historically sensitive location in Edinburgh's Old Town, has a modern appearance but does not contradict with other buildings on the Canongate. Sir Basil Spence was one of Scotland's most accomplished and prolific 20th-century architects with a portfolio including Coventry Cathedral and the British Embassy in Rome.

Despite being listed for its architectural qualities, there was an opportunity to upgrade the complex to meet modern environmental standards. Doing so would reduce the cost of heating apartments, and ensure the building is wind and watertight. Edinburgh World Heritage consulted with residents to improve the [energy efficiency](#) of the Canongate Housing development, alongside undertaking vital conservation work on the buildings.

Through the project, we hoped to demonstrate how the core principles of conservation and sustainability are aligned. Research we conducted in 2016 found that a poorly maintained building can result in higher fuel bills – up to +15% in some cases. This in turn increases the building's carbon footprint.

This project was funded by the Scottish Government through SEEP – Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme and carried out in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. SEEP aims to encourage local authorities to find innovative ways to reduce emissions and tackle fuel poverty.

The project also received funding from Scottish Power Energy Networks Green Economy Fund to cover capital costs associated with energy efficiency measures. This support was crucial as it enabled us to comply with the SEEP requirement to match its funding and to finalise the project funding package. SP Energy Networks had committed to voluntarily contribute up to £20 million over a two year period to support initiatives that will benefit the people of Scotland and support Scotland's ambitious green energy plans and local economic growth.

Then Scottish Government Minister for Business, Energy and Innovation, Paul Wheelhouse, said: "This project will have a positive impact on people's lives, ensuring they have warm homes and businesses, while at the same time, through generating information on the performance of technology deployed, helping us develop strategies to address fuel poverty that can be rolled out in other buildings throughout Scotland.

"Finding the right sustainable solution for historic, listed buildings such as this will be invaluable to implementation of the national SEEP programme as a whole.

"This is one of a number of pilots being taken forward across Scotland, under the SEEP programme, that will help to identify optimal solutions for different building types and locations, which will then allow us to best direct investment to the right places to ensure we not only grow our renewable heat capabilities, but also fulfil our commitments to tackle fuel poverty."

[The Edinburgh Spyster Trail](#)

This story trail has been designed to make children more aware of traditional buildings in the city, get them involved in identifying simple signs of decay and neglect, and encourage a conversation about the importance of maintaining our buildings.

Written by children's author Vivian French together with Edinburgh World Heritage, this resource was supported by a grant from the Scottish Book Trust, and published as part of #BookWeekScotland2020.

Designed as an outdoor activity, the resource takes the form of a 'story trail' and is aimed at children in primaries 3 – 4 and their families, who are invited to help Moe the Magpie spy evidence of neglect on poorly maintained traditional buildings in Edinburgh.

Participants could submit their findings to Edinburgh World Heritage via email or post and received a special spyster badge from Moe as a reward.

Thank you to Vivian French, Annamaria Nizi, Scottish Book Trust and the children and staff of Lorne Primary School for their support in creating this resource.

Climate change and sustainability

Heritage and sustainability go hand in hand, and we have been working hard to solidify these connections in all that we do in order to protect the World Heritage Site for future generations. Most notable has been our involvement in the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Climate Vulnerability Index work.

Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA)

The Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) project was supported by the Place-Based Climate Action Network (P-CAN) and the Atlas World Heritage (Atlas.WH) project. It aimed to understand and define the challenges posed by climate change to the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh (ONTE) by extensively engaging with its communities to inform appropriate mitigation and adaptation solutions relevant to its international and local values. An extensive bottom-up approach was tested to identify the impacts of climate change on ONTE and its communities, using two climate change risk and vulnerability assessment methodologies - one methodology developed during the project, and the CVI process applied for the first time to an urban WHS during a specific workshop. The outcomes include a robust dataset of evidence that informed the draft ONTE Climate Action Plan, a replicable and integrated approach to climate change risk assessment, learnings dissemination and new research opportunities.

[Climate Vulnerability Index assessment \(CVI\)](#)

The CVI methodology is based on a risk assessment approach and builds on the vulnerability framework described by the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change. The CVI process enables a systematic evaluation of the threats of climate change. It comprises two distinct primary outcomes, assessing: 1) **OUV vulnerability**, evaluating potential impacts to the values and attributes for which the property has been internationally recognised; and 2) **Community vulnerability**, assessing the level of economic, social and cultural dependence that associated communities (local, national and international) have on the WH property.

Workshops were carried out in May/June 2021, involving site managers, researchers, community representatives, business owners, management agency representatives, and other stakeholders, to identify the climate stressors that present the greatest threat to The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh (ONTE). Both OUV and Community vulnerability were assessed as 'Moderate' overall, indicating loss or alteration to some key World Heritage values, but not leading to a significant decline in OUV, and acknowledging a moderate level of adaptive capacity within the community. As with the CCRA, the outcomes include a robust dataset of evidence that informed the draft ONTE Climate Action Plan, a replicable and integrated approach to climate change risk assessment, learnings dissemination and new research opportunities.

Highlight: [Climate emergency manifesto](#)

In September 2020, Edinburgh World Heritage published a manifesto which proposes key principles to address these challenges while stressing the importance of preserving the ‘heritage values’ of the Old and New Towns World Heritage Site.

The Edinburgh World Heritage climate manifesto calls for the historic environment to be at the heart of the city’s response to the climate emergency through a 10-point programme aimed at policymakers, experts and residents.

Published against a backdrop of changing weather patterns in Edinburgh, the manifesto points out ways in which Edinburgh’s traditional buildings – such as tenements, houses, shops and public buildings, can be sensitively improved to reduce energy consumption and better adapt to changing weather patterns.

Control and guidance

In cities like Edinburgh, there is a multitude of guidance, polities and strategies each working to manage and protect a different area of city life. We wanted to better understand how heritage is perceived as a means of management, and how it could be better integrated in management processes.

Mainstreaming heritage study

In late 2020 as part of the Atlas.WH project, Edinburgh World Heritage undertook a comprehensive study into barriers preventing the mainstreaming of heritage in city management to better understand how we can improve not only stakeholders’ sense of control in city management, but also local residents.

The main findings and recommendations within this report are based on three main sources:

- International comparisons and case studies, primarily drawing on two key publications from the Atlas.WH project: *The [Thematic Study of Common Challenges](#)* and the *[Diagnostic Study of Urban World Heritage Sites within the Atlantic Area](#)*.
- Interviews with heritage managers other UK local authorities, including Manchester, Durham, Stirling, and Inverness.
- Interviews with senior officers and politicians within City of Edinburgh Council.

The report has revealed four main barriers preventing the mainstreaming of heritage in Edinburgh:

1. Heritage is not viewed consistently as a key driver of urban renewal
2. There is an inconsistent interface between the World Heritage Site Management Plan and other city management systems, plans and processes
3. Heritage is often seen as an issue to be managed within the planning department, which can prevent it playing a broader role across diverse areas of city life
4. Resources dedicated to the management of the city’s heritage, both financial and organisational, are constrained

These barriers are not unsurmountable. We therefore recommend 10 interventions designed to realise this potential. Highlights from these new measures include:

- Comprehensive training, provided by Edinburgh World Heritage, across departments within City of Edinburgh Council and other institutions
- Integrated planning and governance for the World Heritage Site Management Plan, in line with recommendations from the AtlaS.WH partnership
- Providing additional expert resource to City of Edinburgh Council, via secondments, to address skills gaps
- Giving heritage a 'seat at the table' when key decisions are taken

We believe that mainstreaming heritage will result in a wide range of benefits to the city in areas as diverse as health and wellbeing, the provision of affordable housing, and the response to the climate emergency. More specifically, implementing these recommendations will lead to:

- More informed decision making across all areas of city life, including the crucial response to the climate emergency.
- Heritage will play a greater role in supporting people's well-being and mental health
- Staff working in city institutions will have a greater sense of ownership and understanding of the city's cultural heritage
- Money will be saved because heritage is considered at a project's outset, and therefore re-work is avoided.
- And the site becomes better protected for both current and future generations

Identifying and mapping attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site

Understanding the OUV and the attributes (features of interest or traditions) that convey the OUV is fundamental for the protection and management of the World Heritage Site. The identification of attributes and of related other values helps to better understand World Heritage property and its wider setting.

The Operational Guidelines (para 82, Annexe 5) suggests the following attributes might be considered to convey Outstanding Universal Value:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Form and design; | • Location and setting; |
| • Materials and substance; | • Language, and other forms of intangible heritage; |
| • Use and function; | • Spirit and feeling; and |
| • Traditions, techniques and management systems; | • Other internal and external factors |

The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, the original Nomination Document, the UNESCO Advisory Body evaluation and the WHS Management Plans were used to define the attributes.

Key themes were identified:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| • Conservation | • Enlightenment | • Quality of architecture |
| • Culture | • Green space | • Skyline |
| • Early origins | • Materials | |

- Status
- Topography
- Urban morphology

Within these key themes, 270 attributes were identified and many corresponding individual receptors. Vulnerability to change, likelihood of change and mitigation tools are also considered.

Contribution of new city centre developments

The success of the city and its World Heritage Site creates pressure for development. Approximately 1000 planning applications are determined in the WHS each year. A small number of those are major developments associated with the natural growth of a thriving and dynamic city centre.

Royal High School

The Site

The former Royal High School is a category A listed building (reference 27987, listed on 19 April 1966) in the New Town Conservation Area and ONTEWHS. It is an integral part of the landscape and setting of Calton Hill which itself is a national cultural asset and a SSSI. The building is acknowledged as an internationally important landmark in the evolution of European Neo-Classicism.

The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) owns the building. It ceased to operate as a school in 1968 and has been in a number of different uses since this time. It is currently unoccupied. In 2009 CEC initiated a procurement competition to find a new use for the building. The preferred bidder, Duddingston House Properties (later also including Urbanist Hotels) proposed a hotel use for the site.

Background

CEC Planning advice was given in 2010 raising concern over the scale of development and the interventions proposed to the listed building, detailing the following issues for consideration: the scale of development that can comfortably be accommodated without detrimental impact on the setting of a category A listed building of key importance in the WHS; and the impact any proposal would have on how the building, its setting and views are considered more widely as part of the landscape character of Calton Hill.

The pre-application process for the proposed development formally began in 2012 and applications were submitted in 2015 and 2017.

Decision

CEC refused planning permission and listed building consent for the proposed development, which was appealed by the developers. The appeals were heard at Public Local Inquiry (PLI) by Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) Reporters. CEC (as Planning Authority), Historic Environment Scotland (HES), Edinburgh World Heritage Trust (EWH), The Cockburn Association (the Edinburgh Civic Trust), and a number of other groups and organisations made representations against the proposals at the PLI (the New Town and Broughton Community Council; The Architectural Heritage Society for Scotland; the Royal High School Preservation Trust; The Regent, Royal and Carlton Terraces and Mews Associations)

The DPEA recommended refusal of all four appeals to Scottish Ministers, who upheld this recommendation, dismissed the following appeals and refused planning permission for the proposed development.

Managing heritage in a changing world online learning platform

Providing training to city managers to be better aware of the issues facing the World Heritage Site is a crucial means of managing development in the World Heritage Site. Over the last five years, the World Heritage Site management partners have provided hours of training to council officers, politicians, students, and heritage managers in various ways. Notably, as part of the AtlaS.WH project, a brand-new, free to access online training platform was developed as a lasting legacy of the project, to introduce learners to the fundamental concepts of managing World Heritage Sites, to its day-to-day implications here in Edinburgh. We hope that with greater

contextual awareness of the theory and practice of managing a World Heritage Site will continue to impact decisions on new developments throughout the city.

Over five modules, this training explores the key questions around how Edinburgh's World Heritage Site can be best managed in the context of our vibrant, fast-changing capital city.

This training is aimed at anyone who wants to understand how Edinburgh's world heritage site is managed within a living and breathing capital city. This may include heritage professionals, council officers of any department, developers, architects and students.

It covers the principles governing the management of an urban world heritage site in the UK, and enhance your learning with case studies and examples of best practice from Europe and the wider world. This course will help to inform your thinking about heritage and maximise the wider benefits it can bring to city management.

This online training course has been developed as part of the Interreg-funded AtlaS.WH project which is working towards sustainable heritage management in five European urban world heritage sites.

Awareness of WHS status

Awareness of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is always top of the list of ongoing actions and achievements. Having awareness of the World Heritage Site and what this means for Edinburgh underpins everything we do to care for and celebrate this beautiful corner of the world. We have held themed events for residents, promoted fascinating stories of local histories on our website resource and social media, adapted our offers during the Covid pandemic and strove to seek new and engaging ways to bring the World Heritage Site's relevance to the masses.

Making Lasting Impressions: Greyfriars Kirkyard Community Learning and Interpretation Project

During the summer of 2021, a holiday club led by Edinburgh World Heritage and Archaeology Scotland worked with young people from 6VT Youth Café and through a series of games and activities helped them learn about some of the beliefs, ideas and history that created Scotland's most famous graveyard.

As part of the National Lottery Heritage funded Making Lasting Impressions: Greyfriars Kirkyard Community Learning and Interpretation Project, the young people were also given the opportunity to develop graveyard games and a visitor survey which will be given to future project participants.

This invaluable feedback is being used to inform our understanding of the value of Greyfriars Kirkyard, which is owned by the City of Edinburgh Council, to people today, and will be part of efforts to manage the site in an inclusive, balanced and sustainable way.

The holiday club was part of the ongoing partnership between Edinburgh World Heritage and 6VT Youth Café, whose young people also designed the logo for the Making Lasting Impressions project and took part in its launch.

To coincide with Scottish Archaeology Month, Edinburgh World Heritage and Archaeology Scotland have made available activities to help more young people engage with the people, places, and events of Greyfriars Kirkyard.

Originally developed as part of the holiday club, the young people recommended that they be made available to the public.

The holiday club represents the first of many activities with young people that Edinburgh World Heritage will be delivering in partnership with Archaeology Scotland, who awarded Heritage Hero certificates to all the young people who took part in the holiday club.

Tron Exhibition – ‘Our World Heritage’

"Our World Heritage" - an exhibition that showcased the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, as well as Scotland's other five World Heritage Sites, attempted to capture the essence of the place through the voices and opinions of local people.

'Our World Heritage' exhibition opened at the historic Tron Kirk in Edinburgh on 26 July 2018. This exhibition showcased the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, as well as Scotland's other five World Heritage Sites. The exhibition, housed within the atmospheric 17th century former kirk, captured the essence of the World Heritage Site in Edinburgh through the voices and opinions of local people. The story was told in a series of videos, quotes, and specially commissioned portraits from award-winning Scottish photographer Alicia Bruce.

'Our World Heritage' explained what makes Edinburgh's heritage so special and internationally recognised as well as highlighting some of the issues associated with the World Heritage Site. A series of sections, with titles such as 'City of Contrasts', 'Survival Stories', and 'High and Mighty' set out the formal reasons for the city's UNESCO inscription, but also challenged residents and visitors to think differently about the city and consider some uncomfortable questions. These ranged from whether we are doing enough to conserve the authenticity of the site, the role of the transatlantic slave trade in funding the city's extraordinary 18th and early 19th century expansion, and the absence of women in the city's many grand statues and monuments.

[Go Auld Reekie handling box](#)

In October 2022, Historic Environment Scotland's World Heritage team launched a new teaching resource called 'Go Auld Reekie': an object handling box and teaching pack based on life in Edinburgh during the 18th century. A key aim was to make the resource inclusive, diverse and to give an honest depiction of this period. It includes direct reference to the fact that the growth and success of the city was a result of Edinburgh's links with Britain's colonial past and connections to the Atlantic Slave Trade. Individuals in the resource represent real people of the time, including those from under-represented groups who lived and worked in Edinburgh during this time. 'Go Auld Reekie' is one of the first diverse resources produced by HES and is timely in recognising Scotland's colonial history. It also helps fulfil a key recommendation from the 'Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review' undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Council by providing learning materials to fill a gap in respect to Scotland's role in slavery and colonialism.

Further information about can be found and downloaded free from the [HES website](#)

Visitor management

We have been hard at work behind the scenes inputting into Edinburgh's 2030 Tourism Strategy. The strategy, launched in January 2020 and commissioned by the Edinburgh Tourism Strategy Implementation Group, focuses on authenticity, people, and place, with an emphasis on managing growth more effectively. It asks such questions as, how can tourism work better for the city and enhance the quality of life for Edinburgh's residents? Unsurprisingly, conversations around short-term lets were high up on the agenda.

[UNESCO Trail](#)

Like UNESCO, Scotland is a country which is dedicated to making the world a more sustainable place. This begins by making Scotland a sustainable place to visit, and the UNESCO Trail is part of this important journey.

Sustainable tourism continues to be a key concern and driver of action throughout the World Heritage Site. We helped to shape a UNESCO National Trail for Scotland, a world first connecting Scotland's multiple sites of interest, promoting sustainable travel choices and responsible tourism year round.

We've tried to give you all the information you need to make responsible and sustainable choices when you are following Scotland's UNESCO Trail. This will help preserve the environmental and cultural integrity of the sites and support the sustainable development of the communities which care for them.

Influence and sense of control

We understand that the planning system can be complex to engage with for individuals or business owners in the WHS. The City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Environment Scotland have mechanisms in place for online consultation to support policy development and systems in place to engage with new development. Edinburgh World Heritage complements this by providing independent expert advice, acting as a bridge between interested parties, to help support communities to protect their heritage. The partnership as a whole wants to provide a more active role for stakeholders to participate in the process and feel a greater sense of influence and control in planning decisions.

Neighbourhood Focus

Edinburgh World Heritage launched a new neighbourhood focus approach targeting areas of the city that will benefit most from our grants and advice.

This new neighbourhood focus approach will build on our previous area-based work, and will maximise the community and public value of what we do.

Property or business owners in or around the Canongate, Cowgate, South Bridge, Lothian Road/Tollcross, or Forrest Road may be eligible for grants for conservation work, maintenance and energy efficiency improvements.

What are our Neighbourhood Focus aims? By supporting neighbourhood areas with grants and conservation work we hope to:

- Empower communities to connect with and protect their heritage
- Improve the condition of buildings and restore the historic character of the area
- Make buildings more energy efficient through sensitive, visually unobtrusive means
- Respond to local needs to make the area a better place to live and do business

From June 2022 we are offering the following support:

- Grants and expert advice for the external conservation and repair of tenements, shops, and places of heritage or community value
- Grants for building maintenance
- Grants and advice for community public realm work such as interpretation, streetscape materials, historic railings and monuments
- Grants and expert advice for sensitive energy efficiency and climate change adaptation improvements
- Support for generating action on key local matters raised by residents and businesses

APPENDIX D – FURTHER INFORMATION / PLANNING TOOLKIT

D.1 Conservation Areas

Map of the WHS with 7 conservation areas-

Link to all the 7 relevant conservation areas embed in the map

[Coltbridge and Wester Coates](#)

[Dean](#)

[Marchmont, Meadows & Bruntsfield](#)

[New Town](#)

[Old Town](#)

[South Side](#)

[West End](#)

Map to be added

D.2 Key View Policy

Diagram to be added

[Key Views – Centre](#)

D.3 Attributes

Annotated photos to be added, plus attributes table, and new setting diagram below

Diagram 1



Sources; GLVIA 3rd Edition. SNH Landscape Character Assessment Guidelines for England & Scotland. Managing Change in the Historic Environment Setting.

D.4 The Consultation Process

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS has been designated since 1995. The management partners have over 25 years of experience in understanding the threats to the health of the WHS.

A public, pre-draft consultation process was undertaken in December 2022. It was informed by discussions at stakeholder workshops, community council meetings, social media listening exercises, as well as face to face meetings in libraries, playgrounds, graveyards and hairdressers. The consultation was overseen by the WHS Steering Group.

The first steps

A review of the first and second plan was carried out to reflect the current context. Other similar national and international examples of Management Plans were looked at (Bath, Bruges, Vienna, Regensburg, Florence and Porto) for their good practice.

This international perspective was also bolstered by Edinburgh World Heritage's involvement in the AtlaS.WH project between 2018-2021 which explored participatory governance in the sustainable management of urban World Heritage Sites in the Atlantic Area, providing a strong basis for review and development of Edinburgh's management plan.

Building on best practice: a people-centred approach

The engagement strategy from the previous plan provided the benchmark for how to undertake the consultation for this plan. This chimes with the aims of the Management Plan which highlights a people-centred approach to the Site's various stakeholders, and balances protecting the built environment of the city with its intangible qualities.

When developing the engagement activities for the Management Plan and more widely through partnership activities, we aimed to engage with people with protected characteristics. This included newly arrived families and refugees, the D/deaf community, Edinburgh's Black and Caribbean communities, and LGBT+ communities.

However, we remain aware that our engagement can find itself speaking with the same audiences who are already engaged in their local heritage as members of community councils or local heritage groups. We want to continue to improve how we reach those from less traditional backgrounds.

Engagement activities

An aligned approach to consultation and engagement for the Management Plan was important to ensuring a level understanding of the connection with the City Centre Transformation strategy. The Management Plan must reflect the views not only of the organisations involved in its management, but also the users of the Site: those who live, work in and visit it. Extensive consultation activities to capture this wide range of stakeholders formed the engagement strategy which is summarised in the table below.

Tool / Event	Description
Professionally recruited focus group discussions (1)	Representative panels of residents across the city. Qualitative information on key threats and opportunities. Key finding: the Management Plan should consider what additional measures or provisions are needed to centre the experience of local people without compromising the touristic offer to the city.

	December 2021.
Professionally recruited focus group discussions (II)	<p>A further set of focus groups with residents within and outwith the World Heritage Site.</p> <p>The format was on the modified Place Standard Tool to allow for comparison across all engagement activities and would include a deep dive on key topics identified by pre-consultation, supported by Sustrans Places for Everyone funding scheme.</p> <p>March-April 2023.</p>
Online forums	<p>Two online forums were held in which a vast cross section of stakeholders were invited, including representatives from the community, local organisations and residents. This combines the community and expert workshops of the previous engagement plan.</p> <p>27 October 2022 and 10 November 2022.</p>
Individual group engagement and other community events	<p>Individual community councils and community groups participated in bespoke engagement activities following on from blanket call-out and subsequent follow-ups, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southside Community Council • Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG) • Edinburgh Urban Design Forum • Edinburgh Civic Forum • NTBCC (and India Street residents assoc.) • Dumbiedykes Gala Day • The Big Draw event at Greyfriars Kirkyard <p>September-December 2022.</p>
Online consultation	<p>Via CEC's online Consultation Hub. Alignment with City Centre Transformation and supported by social media engagement.</p> <p>October-December 2022.</p>
Social media engagement	<p>'Softer', self-selecting online engagement in the style of a weekly question/thematic poll promoted on Facebook and Twitter, based on the themes and prompts used for the wider community consultation e.g. 'Is it easy to live in the World Heritage Site?'</p> <p>October-December 2022.</p>

Place Standard Tool

Each of the engagement activities was based on the modified Place Standard Tool to ensure comparability. The Place Standard [methodology](#) consists of 14 questions which cover both the physical and social elements of a place. The questions were tailored to reflect the World Heritage issues.

Out of the 14 themes of the Place Standard, 9 were kept:

- Moving around (*Infographic*)
- Natural space (*Infographic*)
- Facilities and amenities (*Infographic*)
- Work and local economy (*Infographic*)

- Housing and community *(Infographic)*
- Identity and belonging *(Infographic)*
- Feeling safe *(Infographic)*
- Care and maintenance *(Infographic)*
- Influence and sense of control *(Infographic)*

And 5 “Outstanding Universal Value” related new ones were added:

- Awareness of World Heritage Site status *(Infographic)*
- Consciousness of climate change and its impacts *(new - needs infographic)*
- Contribution of new developments to the city centre *(Infographic)*
- Livability *(Infographic)*
- Visitor management *(Infographic)*

The public was asked what they think worked well, and where improvements could be made.

The online consultation gathered the views of 376 respondents.

The thought process: designing actions

Once we gathered these views through the use of a tailored Place Standard activities, we held a series of workshops to come up with deliverable actions to tackle the issues emerging from the consultation. These were based on the Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan Development Research report delivered by research consultancy JRS in May 2023. The Executive Summary is shared below.

These actions formed a separate Action Plan. This Action Plan is a live document which captures key information known at this stage. It is intended to be dynamic, and actions will need to be flexible. It will be reviewed and updated every two years as part of the Management Plan’s monitoring schedule.

Executive Summary of JRS Research report, May 2023

Introduction

Edinburgh’s World Heritage Site (WHS) partners commissioned the JRS Research Consortium to undertake two elements of research to support the development of the WHS Management Plan 2023. First, JRS analysed findings from the 376 responses to the WHS Partners’ consultation. JRS also undertook a series of 14 group discussions with a sample of people who live, work and / or regularly visit the WHS. The sample for the group discussions included a wide range of demographic subgroups and only involved individuals who stated they would not typically respond to a public consultation.

The WHS consultation ran from October 28th 2022 to December 12th 2022, and the group discussions were undertaken between 28th of March and the 5th of April 2023.

The objectives of the research were to explore attitudes to 14 themes identified as important to the WHS Management Plan. These themes, as outlined below ranged from ‘how safe people feel within the WHS’ to ‘attitudes towards housing provision in the WHS’.

This report provides the findings from the research undertaken by JRS.

Summary of Findings

Overall, most who live, work and / or regularly spend time in Edinburgh's WHS for leisure purposes are positive about and proud of their city. That said, there were issues or concerns expressed in relation to all of the themes explored within the research. A topline overview of key findings in relation to each theme, order as in the report are as follows:

Context

- Q1- is there good awareness of the WHS (Consultation Score 4.4/7; Groups Score 5/7 1 – *unaware*; 7 - *extremely aware*)
 - o While respondents recognised that it was good that many would be aware of Edinburgh's WHS status, concern was also expressed about the volume of tourism within the WHS at this time. As such, many felt it was important to be careful about the degree to which the WHS status is promoted
- Q10- feeling of connection to the WHS (Consultation Score 4.8/7; Groups Score 4.9/7 1 - *no sense of belonging*; 7 - *strong sense of belonging*)
 - o Generally respondents felt they did feel a sense of belonging to or in the WHS. That said, many also had concerns that the WHS was being 'taken away from them' and developed solely for the benefit of tourists
- Q14- easy to live, work and visit- the WHS (Consultation Score 4.7/7; Groups Score 4.9/7 1 *Not easy at all*; 7 *Very easy*)
 - o Respondents found this question too general and wide reaching to be answered easily or meaningfully. That said, most were positive about the quality of their lives in relation to Edinburgh although there were many challenges noted, including- with travel and with housing

Fundamental needs

- Q13- feeling safe (Consultation Score 5.1/7; Groups Score 5.3/7 1 - *feel extremely unsafe*; 7 - *feel extremely safe*)
 - o The WHS was felt to be broadly safe- with this being reflected in the positive scores received from the consultation and the groups. The only issues that were expressed related to either specific circumstances (such as times where lots of alcohol has been consumed), or specific 'hot spot' locations (such as the Meadows and the darker lanes of the old town)
- Q9- balance visitor vs local needs (Consultation Score 3.0/7; Groups Score 3.9/7 1 - *unhealthy balance*; 7 - *healthy balance*)
 - o The question relating to 'the balance of needs between locals and visitors' received amongst the most negative scores across the research. In simple terms it was widely felt that the WHS is being developed solely for the benefit of tourists and without any real consideration for the needs of locals in relation to issues such as retail offering, housing and movement
- Q8- housing (Consultation Score 2.8/7; Groups Score x2.8/7 1 - *fails to support community needs*; 7 - *exceeds community needs*)

- Housing also received negative scores with many respondents stating that they felt the housing situation in Edinburgh was at a crisis point. Specifically within the WHS it was felt that too many properties are being taken away from potential use by locals and used for short term lets or student accommodation. This, it was felt, has led to an imbalance in supply and demand which has resulted in very high property prices and often poor quality
- Q5- local economy (Consultation Score 4.1/7; Groups Score 4.0/7 1 - *very inactive*; 7 - *extremely active*)
 - The local economy, at least as it relates to retail, catering and leisure offerings within the WHS was not felt to be thriving. Princes Street in particular was felt to be evolving in a very disappointing way- with no sense of community
- Q11- facilities and amenities (Consultation Score 4.5/7; Groups Score 4.7/7 1 - *my needs are not met at all*; 7 - *my needs are met in every way*)
 - Generally respondents were relatively positive about the provision of facilities and amenities in the WHS. That said, most respondents appeared to answer this question in relation to amenities accessible within or from the WHS

Additional needs

- Q3- moving around the WHS (Consultation Score 4.0/7; Groups Score 4.6/7 1 - *extremely difficult*; 7 - *extremely easy*)
 - Scores from the question on 'ease of movement' around the WHS were within the middle of the range of scores. Positive scores typically related to the relative ease of walking around what is regarded as a relatively small area. Despite this, many or most respondents expressed concerns about at least one mode of travel within the WHS- e.g. road congestion that causes difficulties with use of public transport or private cars, or the ongoing risks of cycling
- Q4- access to green spaces (Consultation Score 5.5/7; Groups Score 5.3/7 1 *very little natural space*; 7 *a great deal of natural space*)
 - Respondents across the research felt positive about the WHS offering of green space- although it was noted that this included green space within or accessible from the WHS. The main issues expressed related to cleanliness, anti-social behaviour and occasional restrictions to access during festival periods

Care

- Q2- care and maintenance of buildings and streets (Consultation Score 3.5/7; Groups Score 4.0/7 1 - *poorly cared for*; 7 - *excellently cared for*)
 - Many had concerns about the care being shown to the WHS. The main issues related to the litter problem and the belief that buildings are not being cared for enough

- Q6- conscious of climate change (Consultation Score 4.8/7; Groups Score 3.4/7 1 - *I feel no impact of the effects of climate change in the World Heritage Site; 7 - I feel a great deal of impact of the effects of climate change in the World Heritage Site*)
 - o It should be noted that the question on climate change was interpreted in a variety of ways by respondents. That said, the main concerns around climate change were the need to see more activity to ensure buildings within the WHS are both maintained as a result of weather related erosion and retro-fitted to ensure they contribute to the efforts to reach net-zero targets. Both of these challenges, it was felt, would require significant ongoing public sector financial support

Control and input

- Q7- new development (Consultation Score 3.2/7; Groups Score 3.8/7 1 - *very negative contribution; 7 - very positive contribution*)
 - o Despite some respondents being positive about some developments (e.g. the St James Quarter) and feeling strongly that Edinburgh needs to keep evolving to ensure it remains a modern city, most had concerns about some recent developments, especially the St James Quarter and Haymarket Edinburgh). These developments were felt to not be in keeping with Edinburgh's historic heritage
- Q12- influence on planning and decision making (Consultation Score 2.9/7; Groups Score 2.3/7 1 - *do not feel able to participate in decision-making; 7 - feel able to participate in decision-making*)
 - o Overall, respondents did not feel they were able to participate in planning decision making within the WHS. This was due to either a lack of awareness of the process, the perceived complexity of the process or because it was felt that their contributions would not be listened to

Overall, the research indicated that there is action needed by the WHS Partners in relation to all the key themes of the research. That said, there was also an indication that the priorities for locals are:

- A greater commitment shown by WHS Partners to tidying the city
- A regeneration plan for Princes Street- to give it more of a sense of value and appeal for locals and to enhance the sense of community within the WHS
- A tourist levy- with money being ringfenced to reduce the impact of tourism and to benefit locals
- Promotion of a clear plan in relation to mobility around the WHS- and through this, to give locals a sense of what the 'end goal' is and when this will be reached
- Finally, there needs to be a review of how planning decisions are made- to allow locals to feel more involved

THE OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE SITE

DRAFT ACTION PLAN 2024 – 2026

This Action Plan sets out how the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan will be delivered and should be read in conjunction with the Management Plan.

This Action Plan is a live document which captures key information known at this stage. It is intended to be dynamic, and actions will need to be flexible. It will be reviewed and updated every two years as part of the Management Plan’s monitoring schedule.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is a responsibility of World Heritage Site inscription. This includes both monitoring the condition of the Site (State of Conservation) and monitoring the implementation of the actions.

State of conservation report

UNESCO monitors the state of conservation of each World Heritage Site through its Periodic Reporting process. The [last Periodic Report](#) was completed in 2013, the most recent Periodic Report was completed in 2023 and awaits publishing. These reports are an important tool to gather information that identifies possible changes to the condition of a Site.

Delivery and oversight

Actions will be delivered by the management partners. The remit and expertise of each partner adds a strength to this process that is greater than the sum of its parts. Monitoring will be carried out on a biennial basis with reports presented to the Steering Group and Planning Committee and/ or other relevant Council Committees.

Governance of the management plan will be further strengthened by the setting up of an oversight group which will meet annually to review its progress. The Oversight Group will pursue issues through its members’ own organisational arrangements to ensure that decisions are properly informed.

The Oversight Group will also be responsible for supporting project objectives and key tasks in response to changing circumstances as delivery of the management plan progresses.

Partnership working

The Management Plan’s success is dependent on people giving up their time to tell us what they think. In return, it is the management partners’ responsibility to clearly demonstrate the importance of the impact of this participation. A lead partner has been assigned to each action to ensure collaboration across the partnership.

Role of the partners**The City of Edinburgh Council**

The City of Edinburgh Council is the Planning Authority. It implements the planning system in the city, which is the mechanism for managing World Heritage Sites in the UK. The Council is responsible for providing political leadership and governance for a comprehensive range of services across the city beyond Planning that affects the World Heritage Site.

It is also responsible for the provision of a range of [public services](#) that affect day-to-day life within the World Heritage Site, including strengthening and supporting communities, providing jobs and ensuring its residents are well cared for.

Historic Environment Scotland

Historic Environment Scotland is a non-departmental public body. It is the lead public body established to investigate, care for and promote Scotland’s historic environment. Its board is appointed by Scottish Ministers.

Historic Environment Scotland offer technical expertise, support and significant funding to the historic environment via in-house experts and various grants schemes, directly employing the highest number of traditional crafts staff in Scotland and actively fostering apprentice development. HES is also a statutory consultee in the planning process.

Edinburgh World Heritage

Edinburgh World Heritage is the independent, expert charity dedicated to the proactive conservation of the World Heritage Site. It provides grants and advice to unlock a rolling programme of vital conservation work, engage all communities inclusively with their shared heritage, and works to ensure that heritage can play a key part in the solution to the climate emergency. EWH provides independent, expert advice on balanced historic city management to all, enabling a sense of ownership for the care and conservation of the WHS.

Co-ordination

A World Heritage Site coordinator post was created in 2009 to bring a focus to World Heritage issues across the partnership. The post ensures effective liaison and co-ordination of activities between the partners.

Action Plan Themes

During pre-draft engagement, members of the public were asked to rate the 14 themes of the Place Standard. The action plan seeks to address the issues that scored the lowest on the Place Standard “wheel”.

Those five themes are:

- [Awareness, appreciation and activity around World Heritage Site status](#)
- [Climate emergency](#)
- [Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces](#)
- [Control, guidance, and contribution of new development to city centre](#)
- [Sustainable visitor experience](#)

Many ideas were gathered in the consultation to support the conservation, improvement and progression of the World Heritage Site. The themes are cross-cutting. For example, tourism is an important activity in the Old and New Towns; it influences developments within the city centre, and it is an important factor that affects the interpretation and understanding of the WHS and it has an impact on the operational management of the city. It is therefore critical that the actions in this plan allow room for this interrelationship.

Awareness, appreciation of, and activity around World Heritage Site status				
Objective	Action	Lead delivery partner(s)	Resources	Monitoring
To co-ordinate actions to ensure a broad level of understanding of the WHS and to widely transmit its value	<p>Explain the qualities that make the World Heritage Site of Outstanding Universal Value and use as a tool to inform the understanding of the WHS. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing and promoting educational materials to reflect the site as a resource for learning and training for all ages and across all sectors. - Advocating for the WHS across different platforms and workstreams such as through dedicated technical training for decision-making staff in partnership and stakeholder organisations. This should include training for councillors to reflect how the WHS is a baseline consideration beyond just the Planning Committee. We want to do this to engender a sense of pride and ownership in the WHS to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for its protection and conservation for future generations. - Liaising with WHUK, UNESCO UK and other Scottish/UK World Heritage Sites to share knowledge and expertise on common issues. 	ALL	This is a core commitment of the management partnership. Funding will have to be found for individual projects within existing budget streams.	<p>Feedback loop</p> <p>Collate evaluation from individual projects</p>
	<p>Cross-promote both the tangible and intangible value of the World Heritage Site to ensure that it can be better representative of and meaningfully engaged with a diverse audience. This is not exhaustive, but through the life of this plan will include the following pipeline projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newly arrived families - LGBTQ+ communities - Socially under-represented groups outwith the WHS - Collaborating with the emerging Accessibility Commission and its findings and the Feminist City agenda. - Continued collaboration with the work of the Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Implementation Group 	EWH	NLHF project funding (tbc), cross-funded with HES?	Collate evaluation from individual projects

Climate emergency				
Objective	Action	Lead delivery partner(s)	Resources	Monitoring
To engage with the work undertaken by management partners in response to the climate emergency whilst safeguarding OUV	<p>The Management Partners' duty is to protect the WHS and therefore seek measures to support that commitment. National and council policy is emerging in response to the climate emergency across several areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adaptation - Green/Blue Network - Energy Retrofit - Future Streets Framework <p>The role of the partnership is to ensure OUV is a baseline consideration within these policies, to ensure harm is prevented, and to help find best practice methods to assist in this process. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging with existing projects in these areas - As above, technical training for decision-making staff to better embed WHS values into projects from the start - Cross-referencing where we are responsible for actions in Climate Ready Edinburgh 	CEC (with Scottish Water)	This is a core commitment of the management partnership. Funding will have to be found for individual projects within existing budget streams.	<p>Feedback loop</p> <p>Collate evaluation from individual projects</p>
	<p>Advise, develop, seek to fund and advocate for appropriate responses to the climate emergency energy retrofit and adaptation in historic buildings via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate emergency grant programme - Developing replicable responses from pilot projects dealing with different building typologies - Provide opportunities for advocacy and training on the climate emergency, such as through the emerging Climate Action Plan and Climate Ready Edinburgh - CEC policy work to shape the adaptation and conservation of historic buildings to meet the needs of Net Zero - Ensuring the historic environment is conserved and enhanced as part of these responses 	EWH, CEC	This is a core commitment of EWH, including the use of HES funding. Further funding will have to be found for individual projects within existing	<p>Feedback loop</p> <p>Collate evaluation from individual projects.</p> <p>Multiple overlapping CEC workstreams in this area</p>

			budget streams.	have existing monitoring in place that we will feed into.
	<p>Advise, develop and seek to fund and advocate for appropriate responses to the climate emergency in the public realm and green spaces via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring the maintenance of drainage system and green spaces (falling branches, diseases, etc.) across the WHS – as the first step to adaptation - Refining the understanding of flood risks in the Site for the public realm and green spaces - Developing sensitive adaptation interventions for the Site’s public realm and green spaces via pilot projects - Raising awareness and produce guidance for best practice climate change adaptation in the public realm and green spaces - Ensuring the historic environment is conserved and enhanced as part of these responses 	CEC, EWH	This is a core commitment of Management Partners. Funding will have to be found for individual projects within existing budget streams.	<p>Feedback loop.</p> <p>Collate evaluation from individual projects.</p> <p>Multiple overlapping CEC workstreams in this area have existing monitoring in place that we will feed into.</p>

Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces				
Objective		Lead delivery partner(s)	Resources	Monitoring
To ensure ongoing investment in the conservation of the Site	Continue delivering and promoting the repayable grants programme to ensure ongoing investment in and active conservation of the fabric of the World	EWH	HES funding	Feedback loop

	<p>Heritage Site. This will coincide with promoting maintenance awareness to public and private stakeholders through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collaboration with the Traditional Building Forum’s events • developing maintenance guidance • working with external partners to provide training and awareness-raising events 			Collate evaluation from each grant awarded and project undertaken
<p>To work in collaboration with stakeholders to sustain the “state of conservation” of the Site</p> <p>To ensure the World Heritage Site is a baseline consideration for all Council plans and strategies within its boundary that include alterations to the historic built environment</p>	<p>Ensuring OUV is conserved and enhanced during a significant period of change to the city centre through public realm projects. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engaging with strategies such as City Centre Transformation, City Mobility Plan, Active Travel Plan and the Future Streets Framework - Advocating for the use of high quality, appropriate interventions to sustain the authenticity and integrity of the Site - Signposting the potential negative impact of small scale, cumulative change on OUV 	CEC, EWH	HES funding	<p>Feedback loop</p> <p>Collate evaluation from each grant awarded and project undertaken</p>
	<p>Define a protocol for engagement in streetscape and public realm improvements. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - member of EWH staff seconded to CEC for two days a week - defining partners’ role in projects that impact on the public realm through a series of workshops with the relevant stakeholders - support the delivery of heritage statements and impact assessments for public realm projects in the Site. 	CEC, EWH	Staff time	Buy-in from stakeholders

Control, guidance and contribution of new development to the city centre				
Objective	Action	Lead delivery partner(s)	Resources	Monitoring
<p>To improve tools to sustain Outstanding Universal Value</p> <p>To sustain effective partnerships that support the management of the WHS</p> <p>To ensure that development embraces the context of the WHS and is of the highest quality in terms of architecture, design and materials</p>	<p>Ensure that all new CEC policy, plans and strategies safeguard the OUV of the WHS, with expert advice from EWH. Including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste and Recycling Strategy • Active Travel • Tourism Strategy • Climate Ready Edinburgh • Edinburgh Street Design Guidance 	CEC	Staff time	<p>Stakeholder buy-in</p> <p>Evaluation of influence</p>
	<p>Engage with development proposals in the WHS to ensure that the OUV is safeguarded, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early engagement in public realm changes (Placemaking and Mobility) • Maintain positives around early engagement in development management (Planning) • Signposting the potential negative impact of small scale, cumulative change on OUV from all development proposals. • Ensure heritage is robustly conserved in planning and public realm decision-making to sustain its vital economic, cultural, social and environmental role 	ALL	Staff time	<p>Stakeholder buy-in</p> <p>Evaluation of influence</p>
	<p>Proactively seek to build relationships and opportunities, including funding, to work across departments to ensure World Heritage becomes a baseline consideration in future plans and strategies in the city centre.</p>	ALL	Staff time	<p>Stakeholder buy-in</p> <p>Evaluation of influence</p>

Sustainable visitor experience				
Objective	Action	Lead delivery partner(s)	Resources	Monitoring
<p>To improve understanding of the value of WHS status to tourism within the WHS and the city</p> <p>To sustain effective partnerships to advocate for and secure sustainable tourism within the WHS and the city to safeguard OUV</p>	<p>To work with partners to influence decision-making on enhancing the experience of both visitors and residents to mitigate the risk tourism poses to WHS, as identified by UNESCO in their 50th anniversary convention. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presenting the wider benefits to the city of having a well-managed and maintained historic environment - Continuing to engage with Edinburgh Tourism Action Group and wider tourism stakeholders - Collaboratively develop and seek to secure at least one 'virtuous cycle' system with a responsible tourism/hospitality operator that secures sectoral investment and support for conservation (EWH) 	CEC, EWH	Staff time	<p>Stakeholder buy-in</p> <p>Evaluation of influence</p>
	<p>To advocate for securing sufficient allocation for the inclusion of conservation and maintenance of the WHS in the spending bid for the proposed Transient Visitor Levy. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing balanced, expert advice and signposting good practice from other WH cities or urban conservation sites which utilise a TVL, especially in how this can feed back to benefit residents (EWH) - Ensure CEC processes actively promote the need for TVL funding to be fed back into the historic environment 	CEC	Staff time	<p>Stakeholder buy-in</p> <p>Evaluation of influence</p>
	<p>To advocate for the consideration of the WHS in the operational management of the city and influence decision-making (e.g. the impact street cleanliness and road maintenance has on the perception of the quality and integrity of the WHS).</p>	EWH	Staff time	<p>Stakeholder buy-in</p> <p>Evaluation of influence</p>

Research pipeline				
Objective	Action	Lead delivery partner(s)	Resources	Monitoring
	<p>The research pipeline (Section 4.5 in the Management Plan) will play a key role in refining the management partners' understanding of the risks and impacts on the Site and the various aspects of the OUV and its vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Monitoring the state of conservation of the Site will also be critical in providing evidence to support the various themes of the Management Plan; refining this monitoring process will help increase the adaptative capacity of the management partners and their ability to preserve the Site and its OUV.</p> <p>We will do this by establishing a Research Development Working Group to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better engage with Edinburgh's educational institutions to manage the development of the research pipeline - Target priorities in areas of research 	ALL	Funding will have to be found for individual research projects in collaboration with the universities.	<p>Feedback loop.</p> <p>Collate evaluation from individual projects to ensure criteria from research guidelines is met.</p>