

Report of the

# Words4World Heritage Management

English Language & Communication Skills Training Course

4 – 15 May 2009



*It's good to meet and talk.*

Nasser Al-Rawahi, Libby Grundy, Isabell Bedu and Dawood Al-Farsi

**Words4World Heritage Management**  
**English Language & Communication Skills Training Course**

4 – 15 May 2009  
World Heritage City of Bath

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## 1 AIMS OF THIS REPORT

The aims of this report are simply to:

- provide a record for participants, contributors and sponsors
- inform other organisations with interests in the training of World Heritage professionals
- help the authors evaluate the experience and plan future courses

## 2 BACKGROUND

*Words4World Heritage* courses were devised by Nick Jones, of World Heritage Trails, and John Roberts, of Words4Work, both of whom are based in the World Heritage City of Bath.

Nick Jones is a consultant in education and the environment, and a tour guide with a particular interest in World Heritage Sites (WHS). His academic background is in architecture, conservation and education. He is a Mayor of Bath's Honorary Guide, and former director of urban studies centres in Bath Bristol.

John Roberts is a language trainer, facilitator and materials writer. His academic background is in Art History, Linguistics, Didactics, German and French Language and Literature.

Nick and John have collaborated for many years in the fields of language training, environmental education and cross-cultural learning. They believe that better international networking, communication and understanding will lead to better outcomes for World Heritage.

*Words4World Heritage* is the logical outcome.

## 3 THE COURSE

### 3.1 Aims and participants

*Words4World Heritage* courses are aimed at professionals who work in:

- the management of World Heritage Sites or conservation areas
- national or international heritage or conservation organisations
- national heritage tourism services, museums or visitor attractions

...and who often need English to:

- communicate with international colleagues or visitors
- write official reports, presentations or text to be published on websites
- participate in international conferences where they give and listen to presentations

*Words4World Heritage Management* was designed to meet the needs of two Omani professionals who have recently become responsible for the implementation of a World Heritage Site (WHS) Management Plan. The (draft) plan has been drawn up by Chris Blandford Associates. The participants were:

**Nasser Al – Rawahi**, Head of Section of Aflaj Inscribed in the World Heritage List  
Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources  
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

**Dawood Al – Farsi**, Head of Aflaj Maintenance Section  
Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources  
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

### 3.2 The programme

The programme was drawn up in consultation with the participants and UK world heritage professionals. The main features of the programme were:

- visits to four UK World Heritage Sites (and a site nominated for WHS status)
- meetings and discussions with UK WHS managers and policy advisors
- visits to museums, historic buildings and heritage regeneration sites
- language and communication skills training focused on participants' management issues

A copy of the programme is at Appendix 1.

### 3.3 Site visits and meetings

Site visits were an important part of the course. The sites, and the management issues they pose, provided authentic contexts for language development and cross-cultural learning. Visits included:

- City of Bath
- East Devon and Dorset ('Jurassic') Coast
- Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites
- Ironbridge Gorge
- Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Llangollen (2008 UK submission for WHS status)
- City of Bristol

Participants received briefing sheets for each site. These contained basic information about the site and some of its management issues in accessible language for discussion before the visit.

In the City of Bath, participants joined a walking tour of the City and Roman Baths led by Nick Jones. Participants were also taken to view points on the edge of the City. Later, a meeting was held with Tony Crouch, City of Bath WHS Manager.

At the East Devon and Dorset ('Jurassic') Coast, a meeting was held in Lyme Regis with Sam Rose, Jurassic Coast WHS Team Leader, followed by a site visit on the beach. This was followed by further visits to Golden Cap, highest viewpoint on the coast, and Charmouth Heritage Centre, led by Nick Jones.

The visit to Stonehenge included the Cursus, Durrington Walls and Woodhenge. Participants were led by Nick Jones and accompanied by Libby Grundy from the Government Office of the South West. Later, a meeting was held with Isabelle Bedu, Stonehenge WHS Co-ordinator, in Salisbury.

The visit to Pontcysyllte was planned on the advice of Chris Pound, world heritage consultant in based in Bath. This potential WHS involves issues of water resource management similar to Omani Aflaj Sites. Peter Birch, Heritage and Environment Manager for British Waterways, led a site visit which included Horseshoe Falls, Llangollen Wharf and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

The Ironbridge Gorge visit was brief, sufficient only to visit the bridge and an exhibition. A full day was spent exploring Bristol (Clifton, The Downs, Avon Gorge, Harbourside, City Museum and Art Gallery, St Nicholas Market, Cabot Circus). Both visits were led by Nick Jones.

The site visits illustrated a diversity of UK heritage management issues and processes, and in most case these formed the basis of discussions with UK world heritage professionals.

An example of a site briefing sheet is at Appendix 2.  
Photos of site visits and meetings are at Appendix 3.

### 3.4 Contact with UK World Heritage professionals

The role of the course tutors was, where possible, to facilitate contact between the participants and UK professionals. Tutors helped participants prepare for each meeting, acted as interpreters where necessary, and suggested lines of conversation that might be of mutual interest or benefit.

In addition to the site visits and meetings listed in 3.3 above, a meeting was held with Peter Marsden and Caity Marsh at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in London. Participants, who represent an Omani government ministry, found the overview of the Department's strategic role, and its work with UNESCO and other departments and agencies, particularly helpful.

Participants also found their meeting with Chris Pound (consultant), Peter Metcalfe and Jill Clarke of the Local Authorities World Heritage Forum (LAWHF) very helpful. The hosts were able to draw on a very wide range of experience of WHS in the UK and other countries. The role of LAWHF, and its benefits to local authority officers, partners and WHS management, was discussed.

Participants also met briefly with their UK consultant, Chris Blandford, who is drafting the Aflaj WHS Management Plan.

Contact details of contributing UK WH professionals are at Appendix 4.

### 3.5 Language and communications skills

Site visits and meetings with UK world heritage professionals were supported by English language and communications skills training. This aspect of the course was learner-centred and focused on the following:

- The communication and cross-cultural knowledge and skills the participants would need during the course [e.g. introducing themselves in a meeting; explaining their heritage role in Oman; discussing WHS management processes and issues].
- The concepts and language contained in the draft Management Plan being prepared for their particular WHS.
- Heritage management issues in the UK

Language and communications inputs included:

- meeting visitors to Bath
- introducing yourself at meetings
- active listening
- what do you do when you don't know the word in English?
- participating in discussions – language functions
- emails and emailing issues

Some inputs were based on original documents, including:

Various UK WHS Management Plans (City of Bath, Jurassic Coast, Stonehenge and Avebury)  
*Aflaj World Heritage Site Management Plan (draft)*, Chris Blandford Associates, 2009  
*A guide to producing park and green space management plans*, CABE SPACE (undated)  
*Heritage and Tourism*, by John Nurick, Locum Destination Review, 2:2000  
*Preparing a heritage management plan*, Natural England, 2008  
*The Conservation Management Planning Cycle*, English Heritage

For example, a discussion based on a glossary from the Natural England document, *Preparing a Heritage Management Plan*, explored the following terms:

- aims and objectives
- striking a balance between...
- baseline record
- compliance
- conditional exemption
- public access, rights of way
- conservation, preservation, restoration, repair, maintenance
- designated heritage property
- inheritance tax
- defects, decay, damage
- accident, neglect, weathering, wear and tear
- sustainability

Another exercise focused on using the past tense. Participants were asked to describe photographs taken by tutors during their visits to UK WHS – eg see/saw; walk/walked; talk/talked; explain/explained; meet/met; visit/visited; inscribe/inscribed; look/looked; spend/spent; take/took; discuss/discussed; find/found; read/read; eat/ate; build/built.

Examples of English language input materials are at Appendix 5

### 3.6 World Heritage Site management issues

This aspect of the course was based on the expressed needs and interests of the participants, and on comments made by UK World Heritage professionals. Meetings with those responsible for managing UK WHS were a particularly useful source of discussion topics.

**NB** It should be noted here that the role of the course tutors was to help the participants to understand specific language relating to heritage management, and to help them discuss topics or questions of interest or concern to them. The tutors explained to the participants that it was not their role to promote particular ideas or solutions in relation to heritage management.

Participants, in turn, explained that they preferred that their personal views and opinions about world heritage management should remain confidential.

Discussion topics and issues included:

- using tourism to fund conservation
- managing tourist numbers / impacts
- alternatives to tourism
- role of UK local authorities in managing WHS
- transcriptions of key Arabic words in the draft Aflaj WHS Management Plan
- potential of Aflaj communities for teaching traditional skills/knowledge
- tangible and intangible heritage
- 'presentation' of WHS
- management through local stakeholder groups
- end-product versus process
- small, achievable projects
- freedom of information
- UK government departments and agencies
- cultural landscape versus natural landscape
- legal frameworks to protect WHS
- maintaining traditional building construction / craft skills
- promoting WHS: "It's the only place you can ...(?)"
- protection versus erosion
- steering group / advisory forum
- trans-national sites
- Heritage Protection Bill (draft)
- conservation or development?
- issues of language, meaning and culture
- Local Authority World Heritage Forum

#### 4 COURSE REVIEW

The course included both formative review, to ensure participants' needs and preferences were met on a daily basis, and an end of course review. The end of course review focused on:

- the quality of course elements (visits, meetings, training etc)
- any important ideas participants would take away with them
- any further information/support required

In respect of the course elements:

- hotels were OK, comfortable or very comfortable
- site visits were OK, interesting or very interesting – the most interesting were Bath, London, Llangollen, Ironbridge Gorge and Bristol
- meetings were OK, helpful or very helpful – most helpful being with Peter Marsden and Chris Pound
- language training was 'excellent', and the WHS management content was useful or very useful
- the course was 'very good' value for money

The most important ideas participants said they would take away with them were:

- implementation of management plans should be flexible with time and funds
- organisation between the stakeholders is very important (team work)
- museums and visitor centres are very important for tourism
- WHS in the UK are very well taken care of by government and other authorities
- UK is a piece of Paradise!

#### 5 POST COURSE ACTIVITIES

Participants have been sent (by email) the contact details of those people they met during the course to help them write thank-you emails.

We offer our grateful thanks to all those who contributed:

Peter Marsden and Caity Marsh at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
Guy Janes at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Christopher Young, Isabelle Bedu and Amanda Chadburn at English Heritage  
Sam Rose at the Jurassic Coast  
Tony Crouch at the City of Bath  
Chris Pound, Jill Clark, Peter Metcalfe also in Bath  
Libby Grundy at the Government Office for the South West  
Peter Birch at British Waterways  
Chris Blandford and Elena Phyrillas at Chris Blandford Associates

One important conservation issue to emerge from the course is the need in Omani Aflaj communities to maintain traditional building / craft skills, in particular buildings made from mud (adobe; cob etc). This traditional material has been abandoned in favour of concrete and cement, and the associated skills are quickly disappearing. We have agreed to make some initial enquiries with organisations such as:

- Historic Environment Local Management (English Heritage) <http://www.helm.org.uk>
- Natural Building Resources <http://www.naturalbuildingresources.com>
- National Heritage Training Group <http://www.nhtg.org.uk>
- Devon Earth Building Association <http://www.devonearthbuilding.com>

**Nick Jones and John Roberts, May 2009**

## **APPENDIX 1: PROGRAMME**

### **MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup> CITY OF BATH WORLD HERITAGE SITE (WHS)**

AM

Course introduction: the programme and aims: what do we hope to achieve?

Guided walking tour of Bath

Language tasks: meeting tourists

PM

Discussion of Aflaj Management Plan: key points, issues and questions;

Language preview: Jurassic Coast briefing sheet

Language tasks: meeting and greeting

### **TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> DORSET AND EAST DEVON COAST ('JURASSIC' COAST) WHS**

AM

Travel to Lyme Regis

Meeting with Sam Rose, Jurassic Coast WHS Team Leader

Site visit Lyme Regis

PM

Site visits to Charmouth Heritage Centre and Golden Cap

Fossil hunting on the beach if weather/tide permits

### **WEDNESDAY 6<sup>th</sup> BATH (Hotel based)**

AM

Language work:

Meeting and lunch with Chris Pound WH Consultant, Peter Metcalfe and Jill Clark (LAWHF)

PM

Language work:

### **THURSDAY 7<sup>th</sup> STONEHENGE AND AVEBURY WHS**

AM

Travel to Stonehenge with Libby Grundy, Government Office of the South West

Visit Stonehenge, Cursus, Woodhenge and Durrington

PM

Salisbury Museum

Meeting with Isabelle Bedu, Stonehenge WHS Co-ordinator, English Heritage

### **FRIDAY 8<sup>th</sup> LONDON: DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**

AM

Train to London Paddington

Meeting with Peter Marsden, Head of World Heritage, Culture Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport

PM

Check into Chesterfield Mayfair Hotel

### **WEEKEND LONDON**



Free time: suggested visits to WHS in London

**MONDAY 11<sup>th</sup> BATH AND LLANGOLLEN, NORTH WALES**

AM

Language review of London visits

Language preview for visit to Pontcysyllte

Lunch meeting with Tony Crouch, WHS Manager, City of Bath

Travel to LLangollen, North Wales

Check into Gales Wine Bar

**TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> PONTCYSYLLTE AQUEDUCT, LLANGOLLEN, NORTH WALES**

AM

Tour of Pontcysyllte site with Peter Birch, Heritage and Environment Manager, British Waterways

PM

**IRONBRIDGE WHS, TELFORD**

Tour of Ironbridge site

Return to Bath

**WEDNESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> CITY OF BATH**

AM

Language work:

PM

Language work:

**THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup> CITY OF BRISTOL**

Tour of Bristol: Avon Gorge, Clifton Suspension Bridge, Millennium Square, harbourside regeneration sites, Corn Street / St Nicholas Market, Cabot Circus, Park Street and City Museum and Art Gallery

**FRIDAY 15<sup>th</sup> CITY OF BATH**

Course review and evaluation

## APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE BRIEFING SHEET

### Words4World Heritage Management

English Language & Communication Skills Training  
City of Bath 4th -15th May, 2009

#### BRIEFING SHEET: STONEHENGE, AVEBURY AND ASSOCIATED SITES WHS



The site was inscribed by Unesco in 1986. It has two parts, one at Stonehenge (2,600 hectares) and the other at Avebury (2,250 hectares). Both sites contain Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments.

Stonehenge is one of the most famous prehistoric megalithic monuments in the world. It attracts about 900,000 visitors each year. The architecture of Stonehenge is sophisticated and unique. Some stones were brought 240 km from Wales. The largest stones were brought 30 km and weigh over 40 tonnes.

Avebury is much bigger. It contains the largest prehistoric stone circle in the world, and the largest prehistoric mound in Europe (500,000 tonnes of chalk and sandstone). Some stones weigh over 60 tonnes. Extraordinary engineering skills were used to create these monuments.

This cultural landscape was shaped over a period of about 2,000 years, from about 3,700 to 1,600 BC. It is evidence of a wealthy and highly organised society. The purpose of the monuments is still not understood. Recent archaeology suggests it was a centre for healing, perhaps like Lourdes in France.

Fewer people visit Avebury, but it is well presented. Stonehenge is badly presented. Some people have called it "a national disgrace".

#### **A new Stonehenge Management Plan was published in January 2009.**

The main purpose of the Plan is to ensure the protection, conservation and presentation of the Site for present and future generations. The priorities are to:

- maintain and extend grassland to protect buried archaeology from ploughing (farming), and to provide an appropriate (authentic?) setting for the monuments
- remove woodland and scrub cover (small bushes and other plants) from important monuments
- remove or screen (hide) inappropriate structures or roads, in particular the A344
- improve the visitor experience by 2012 (London Olympics) by providing better temporary facilities
- improve interpretation and increase access to selected monuments
- encourage sustainable archaeological research and education to improve understanding
- encourage sustainable management, balancing the needs of the WHS with farming, nature conservation, access, landowners and local community

**APPENDIX 3: Photos of site visits and meetings**



In the Roman Baths, erosion is a problem.



Discussing the design of interpretation boards with Peter Birch at Pontcysyllte.



With Sam Rose at the Jurassic Coast, where erosion is natural.



At Ironbridge: "How did they build it?"



Outside Tony Crouch's office in Bath.



What are the advantages and disadvantages of tourism at Stonehenge?

#### **APPENDIX 4: Contributing UK WH professionals**

##### **Peter Marsden**

Senior Policy Advisor  
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Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
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##### **Caity Marsh**

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##### **Isabelle Bedu**

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##### **Tony Crouch**

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##### **Libby Grundy**

Joint Head of Culture Team  
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##### **Sam Rose**

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##### **Chris Pound**

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## **APPENDIX 5: Examples of English language input materials**

### Participating in discussions

#### **INTERRUPTING**

May I come in here?  
Can I just add something?  
Wait a minute, ...  
Actually, ...  
Don't you think that.....?

#### **GIVING AN OPINION**

In my view, ...  
The point is this ...  
Frankly, ...  
In my opinion, ...

#### **ASKING FOR AN OPINION**

What about you Nasser?  
What do you think, Nick?  
How do you feel about that, Peter?  
What's your reaction, Abdul?

#### **AGREEING**

Absolutely!  
I couldn't agree more.  
Yes, that's true.

#### **DISAGREEING**

I see it differently.  
Isn't it more complex than that?  
Aren't there other factors involved?

**E- MAIL ISSUES**

**Proofreading**

**Opening**

**Capital letters**

**Emoticons**

**Signature**

**Paragraphs**

**Length**

**Abbreviations**

**Contractions**

**Closing**

**Attachments**

**First name**

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