

First Annual Hadrian's Wall Conference

The First Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site Annual Conference is to be held on Thursday 4th March at Hexham Auction Mart.

The Conference seeks to promote wider understanding of the World Heritage Site and of the processes by which it is managed and to encourage broader participation in managing the wide range of issues it faces.

Each year the Annual Conference will provide an opportunity to highlight recent developments and progress made managing the Site and will look in more depth at a key issue or theme and will also include presentations of case studies illustrating particular operational issues arising from the thematic Action Plans through which the Management Plan 2008-14 is being delivered.

We hope that all those who have an interest in the successful management of the WHS will be able to attend the Conference and be able to contribute to its consideration of how some of the key management challenges and opportunities can be most effectively addressed.

The Conference is organised in two halves with the morning sessions concentrating on some key strategic themes, while the afternoon presentations and discussions will focus on operational and project issues in delivering Management Plan actions. It is anticipated that all delegates would wish to attend the morning sessions, while the afternoon sessions will be primarily of interest to those with direct operational responsibilities and interests in different aspects of management of the site.

The Conference will open with an introduction to the 2008-14 Management Plan covering the obligations which come with being a World Heritage Site, the process and structure by which Hadrian's Wall WHS is managed, and an explanation of the purpose of the WHS Management Plan and the role of the six Interest Groups which oversee its implementation.

In a series of keynote presentations the significance of the contribution which World Heritage Sites can make to local and regional economies will be considered. James Rebanks from Rebanks Consulting will present his ground breaking research into the economic benefits that can accrue from WHS status. Christine Venus of Natural England will talk about Tourism and the Natural Environment. Linda Tuttielt from Hadrian's Wall Heritage will talk about the opportunities along Hadrian's Wall. John Rodger will then describe the regeneration experiences at Blaenavon World Heritage Site. The presentations will be followed by a question and answer session with the panel.

The second half of the Conference will focus on recent progress in delivering the 2008 – 2014 Management Plan. Contributors will provide short updates on issues and projects including archaeological research, conservation of the WHS, education and learning, access and local businesses. There will also be opportunities for delegates to participate in discussions looking at some of the principal operational issues identified in each of the thematic Interest Groups areas of: Planning and Protection; Conservation, Farming and Land Management; Access and Transport; Visitor Facilities, Presentation and Tourism; Education and Learning; Archaeological Research. This interactive process will enable a better understanding of these issues to be shared across all those involved with or affected by them, and will in turn be invaluable in helping identify and plan how they should be taken forward.

Participation in the Conference is open to any organisations, businesses or individuals who have an interest in the WHS or in any of the many issues involved in its management. An outline programme is available on the Hadrian's Wall Country website (www.hadrians-wall.org) together with a registration form. The deadline for registration is Friday 19th February. The website will be updated with further details as these become available.

The Conference is being organised by Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd on behalf of the Hadrian's Wall WHS Management Plan Committee. We would welcome your participation in the Conference and hope that you are able to attend. In the meantime should you have any questions about the Conference please contact either Nigel Mills at nigel.mills@hwhl.co.uk or David Brough at davidbrough101@btinternet.com