



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Appointment of President of World Heritage UK**

Eleven months ago the Gorham's Cave Complex was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List and Gibraltar joined the global community of special heritage sites. In becoming the UK's 30th World Heritage Site Gibraltar joined a select family of UK and Overseas Territories properties, supported by World Heritage UK, the forum for all UK world heritage sites. Today Gibraltar welcomes the appointment of Chris Blandford as World Heritage UK's first president and looks forward to continuing to contribute to the forum.

Formed in late 2015, World Heritage UK was set up to represent the collective views, opinions and aspirations of the UK's 30 World Heritage Sites, and provide a platform for networking, advocacy and promotion. With nearly all of the UK's mainland Sites now full members, some strong advocacy and two national conferences having been staged, this is a perfect time to move up a gear, and Chris is superbly placed to help the organisation do that. Chris has over 40 years of professional experience within the heritage sector, both as a company director and as a consultant, and is widely known and respected in the UK and overseas.

Our World Heritage is under significant pressure, with Sites needing to cope with the fast-moving change of modern development, challenges from funding restrictions and climatic change. The UK is a world leader in heritage management and WH:UK provides essential support to those charged with the responsibility for our heritage management.

Chris' passion for natural and cultural heritage has enabled him to be a significant contributor to the nomination, management planning, and masterplanning of over 25 World Heritage Sites and Candidates in both the UK and overseas. He says: "We have 30 outstanding UK World Heritage Sites, 25 of which are on the mainland of our four home nations, ranging from the spectacular Giants Causeway in Northern Ireland, and Blaenavon Industrial Landscape in Wales, through to the Neolithic Sites of Orkney in Scotland and Stonehenge & Avebury in England. I am delighted and very privileged that the Board of Trustees have asked me to be President of World Heritage UK at this exciting time. I look forward to championing the UK's wonderful cultural and natural World Heritage through advocacy, networking and promotion."

Dr Sam Rose, Chair of World Heritage UK goes on to say, "this is great news for WH:UK and more importantly for our membership - those organisations who look after the county's finest heritage. Chris' business leadership experience, professional profile together with his innovative and



interdisciplinary way of working makes him well suited to assist in the challenges ahead and future development of WH:UK, and we look forward to him getting fully involved”.

More details about WH:UK can be found at [worldheritageuk.org](http://worldheritageuk.org) or follow us on twitter @worldheritageuk

## **Editors notes**

The United Kingdom has 26 World Heritage Sites within the four home nations, ranging from the Giants Causeway in Northern Ireland, and Blaenavon Industrial Landscape in Wales, through to the Neolithic Sites of Orkney in Scotland and Stonehenge & Avebury in England, and the others are in the Overseas Territories of Bermuda, Tristan da Cunha (Gough and Inaccessible Islands) and Pitcairn Islands (Henderson Island). Gibraltar’s World Heritage Site (Gorham's Cave Complex) was inscribed on the World Heritage list in July 2016, and became the UK's 30th World Heritage Site.

World Heritage UK is a Charity set up in 2015 to undertake networking, advocacy and promotion for the UK’s 30 outstanding World Heritage Sites, and the Tentative List Sites progressing towards WHS status. World Heritage UK has evolved out of LAWHF, the Local Authority World Heritage Forum, which was established as a LGA special interest group in 1995, and which did a great deal of positive action to support the UK’s Sites.

The WH:UK vision is that “the United Kingdom will have a coherent approach to World Heritage Sites, which will be better known and understood, and supported through sustainable funding so that their Outstanding Universal Values can provide inspiration, learning and enjoyment for society”.

The WH:UK mission is to “raise the profile and secure the future of UK World Heritage Sites by advocating for support and resources, promoting the Sites values, and facilitating networking, training and sharing of good practice”.

More details about WH:UK can be found at [worldheritageuk.org](http://worldheritageuk.org) or contact Chris Mahon, Development Director on [chris.mahon@worldheritageuk.org](mailto:chris.mahon@worldheritageuk.org)

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