



Is it Time for a Peatlands World Heritage Site?



Background



- 1988 – IUCN + The Nature Conservancy Council identify The Flow Country as a potential WHS.
- 1999 – The Flow Country included on the UK's Tentative List.
- 2013 + 2015 – The Peatlands Partnership submit Technical Evaluations.
- 2017 – The Peatlands Partnership establishes The Flow Country WHS Working Group.



What is a World Heritage Site?

- Places on Earth that are of outstanding universal value to humanity.
- Belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of where they are.
- Protect and celebrate for future generations.



How does a Bog become a World Heritage Site?

Stage 1: Convince the UK Government that The Flow Country is the best candidate on the Tentative List.

Stage 2: Prove to UNESCO that The Flow Country has outstanding universal value.



What would The Flow Country bring to the World Heritage Site list?



- 32 sites in the UK
- Only 4 are natural (13%)
- Only 6 in Scotland (19%)
- 1,121 sites in total
- 213 are natural (19%)
- 0 are peatlands (0%)
- Carbon storage
- Cultural heritage of the North Highlands

What are the Benefits?

- ❑ Eco and heritage tourism
- ❑ Educational activities
- ❑ Raise awareness of peatlands
- ❑ Encourage slow tourism
- ❑ Spread economic benefits
- ❑ The #1 heritage accolade
- ❑ Potential to increase funding
- ❑ Join a global community
- ❑ Protect and promote heritage



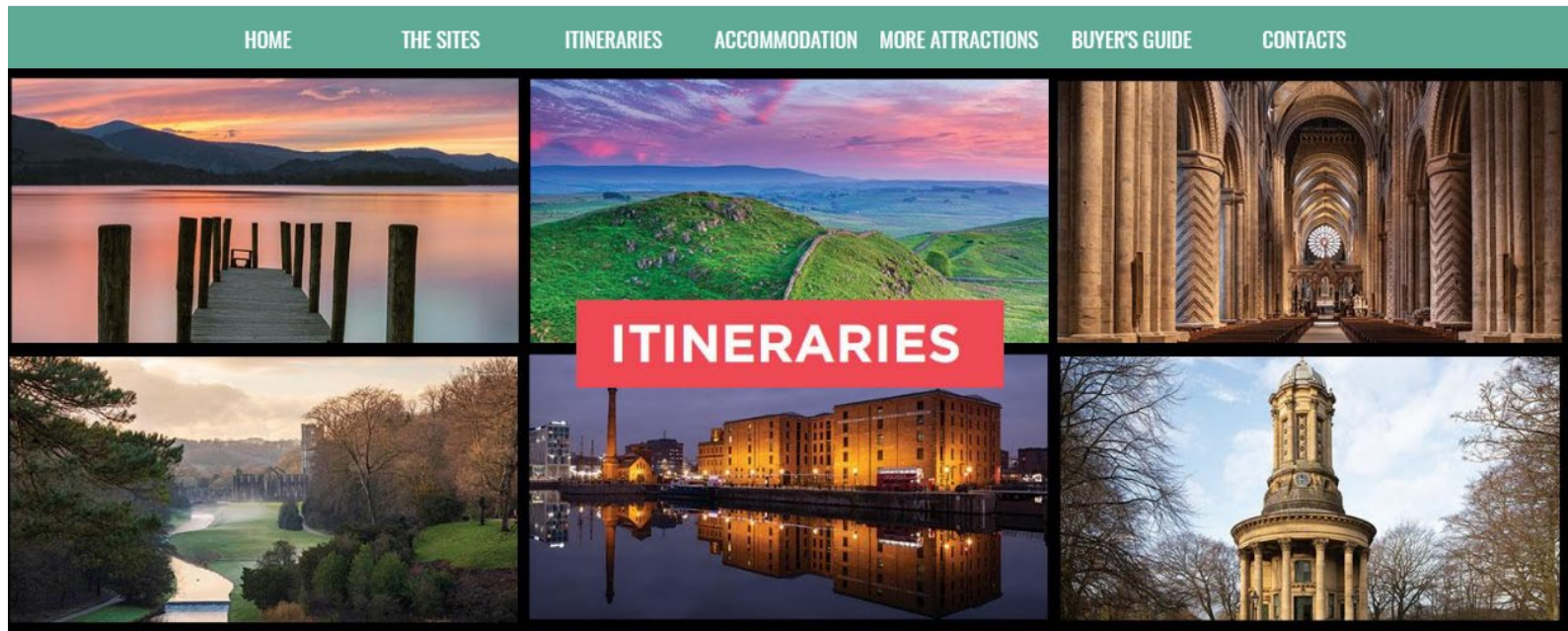
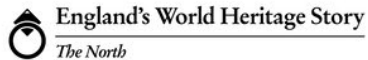
Jurassic Coast Ice Cream

- Partnership between Purbeck Ice Cream and the Jurassic Coast Trust.
 - ▣ 5p of every tub goes to the Trust
- Purbeck Ice Cream are now a “lead business partner” (contribute at least £3k per year)
 - ▣ Advertised on the Jurassic Coast website
- Funds are used “to preserve the scenery and heritage” of The World Heritage Site.



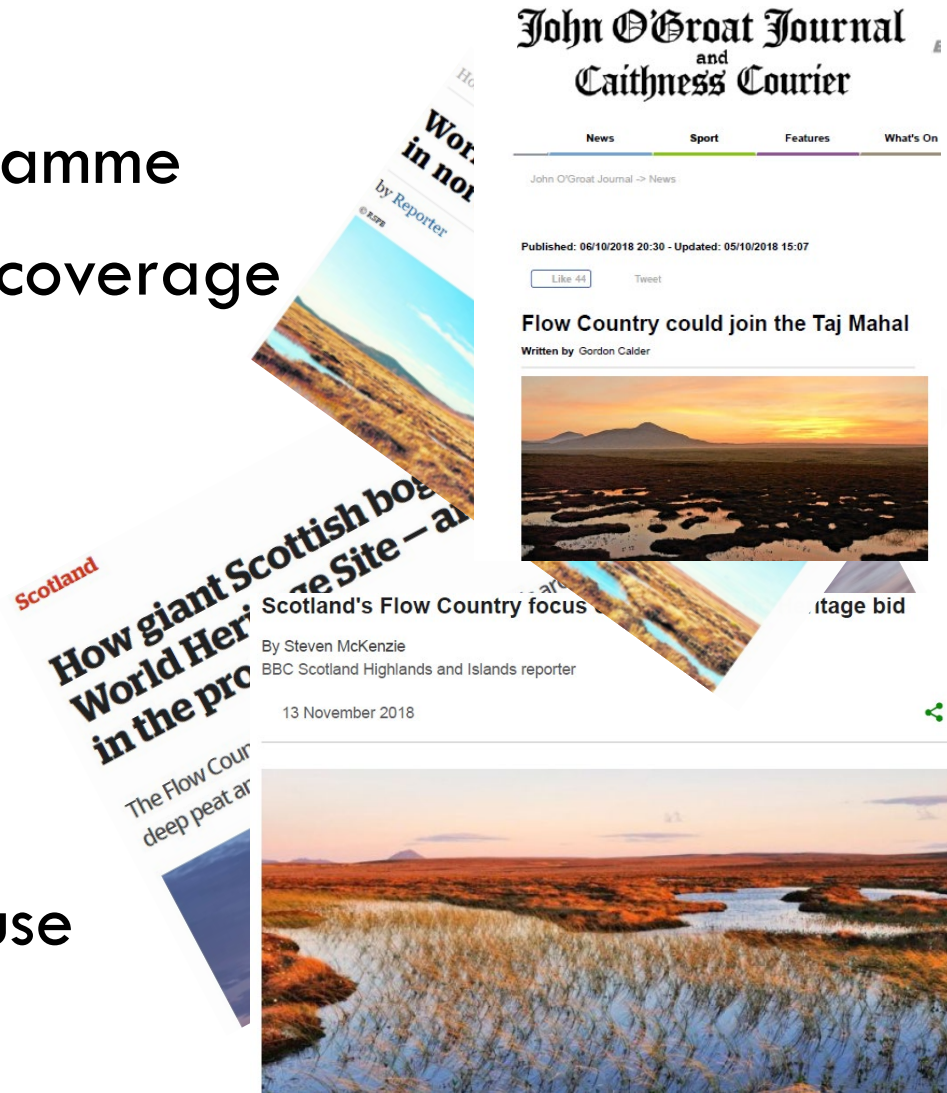
England's World Heritage Story – The North

- A tour of England's six northern WHSs
- Encouraging people to explore beyond the “honeypot” sites



Benefits of the Process

- Raising awareness
- UNESCO Volunteers Programme
- Local and national media coverage
- Oral and local history
- School talks
- Community Engagement
- Gaining political support
- Encouraging important conversations about land use



The past year

Community Consultation

- ❑ 15 drop-in events across Caithness and Sutherland
- ❑ Big events in Lairg, Thurso and Inverness
- ❑ Online consultation
- ❑ Feedback forms at Edinburgh Botanical Gardens
- ❑ Community Council meetings + much more!

Technical Evaluation

- ❑ Developing a draft boundary
- ❑ Bringing in planning and World Heritage expertise
- ❑ Liaising with UK Government and advisory agencies

Out and About



Edinburgh Botanical
Gardens – August 2019



Wick drop-in session, May
2019



Full Flow Event in Inverness,
July 2019



Mairi Gougeon MSP, Gail Ross
MSP, Frances Gunn



Sutherland Show, July 2019



Volunteering on a croft,
February 2019

What happens next?

- Community consultation report
- Technical Evaluation submission

Then, hopefully...

- Confirmation of The Flow Country as the UK's next World Heritage Site candidate
- Full nomination to UNESCO (alongside much more consultation!)



The Flow Country – A Future World Heritage Site?

