

Managing, Using, and Interpreting Hadrian's Wall as World Heritage. Edited by Peter G. Stone and David Brough. 2014. Springer Briefs in Archaeology, Springer, London. ISBN 978-1-4614-9350-1.

How do you manage a World Heritage Site that is over 100 miles long, involves around 700 individual landowners, 12 local authorities, runs through two national parks, has AONBs and SSIs, and includes around one million inhabitants? Well the answer, according to this new book, is with great difficulty!

Looking at the management of Hadrian's Wall, as part of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site, the book is divided into twelve chapters on topics such as: a summary of its archaeology, history and significance; the production of three Management Plans; tourism; interpretation; museums; the National Trail; and the various management strategies. All of which are written by those who are or were directly involved in the use, management, care or interpretation of the monument and its setting.

The aim of the book, according to one of the authors and joint editors, is 'to chronicle the development - the "transformation" - of the management of Hadrian's Wall since the mid-1990s.' This it achieves with great success. So much so that it could be alternatively titled 'Everything that you ever wanted to know about the management of Hadrian's Wall but were always afraid to ask'. The authors pull no punches and have not been afraid to highlight where failures have occurred. Two common threads running throughout nearly all the chapters of the book is the problem of the inability to achieve cohesive joint working, and the problem of ever dwindling resources. While agreement that investment is necessary if not essential it is clear that this has been lacking in the past, however, in today's world, funds are still very scarce and may remain so for the short term at least.

There is a hope by the book's contributors that bringing together all of the management problems in the one publication will lead to a better understanding of these problems in the future and hopefully better management of the Wall. However, this reviewer feels that achieving the management panacea envisioned by the authors may be nigh on impossible to achieve whilst disparate organisations continue to be prevalent within the WHS zone: as, while each individual organisation will invest in their own part of the zone, there will always be a reluctance to spend even a penny on anything outside of their specific remit. Each of these individual organisations has different priorities, varied (and mainly limited) resources and responsibilities: juggling conservation, research (where possible), and tourism agendas - each one of which can be at the top of the list for the organisation concerned, to the detriment of the others.

There is though no simple solution and this reviewer is not offering one, but instead is recommending this book, which is extremely well written and will be a must for anyone studying WHS management. More importantly it should be compulsory reading for all those working directly with, and having responsibility for, this amazingly dynamic but undoubtedly problematic Frontiers of the Roman Empire WHS.

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