

# THE ANTONINE WALL



World  
Heritage  
Site

A Short Guide  
—  
April 2023



THE  
ANTONINE WALL

FRONTIERS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

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# INTRODUCTION

This short guide is an introduction to the Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Antonine Wall (FRE:AW) World Heritage Site (WHS), its inscription on the World Heritage List, and its management and governance. It is one of a series of Site-specific short guides for each of Scotland's six WHS.

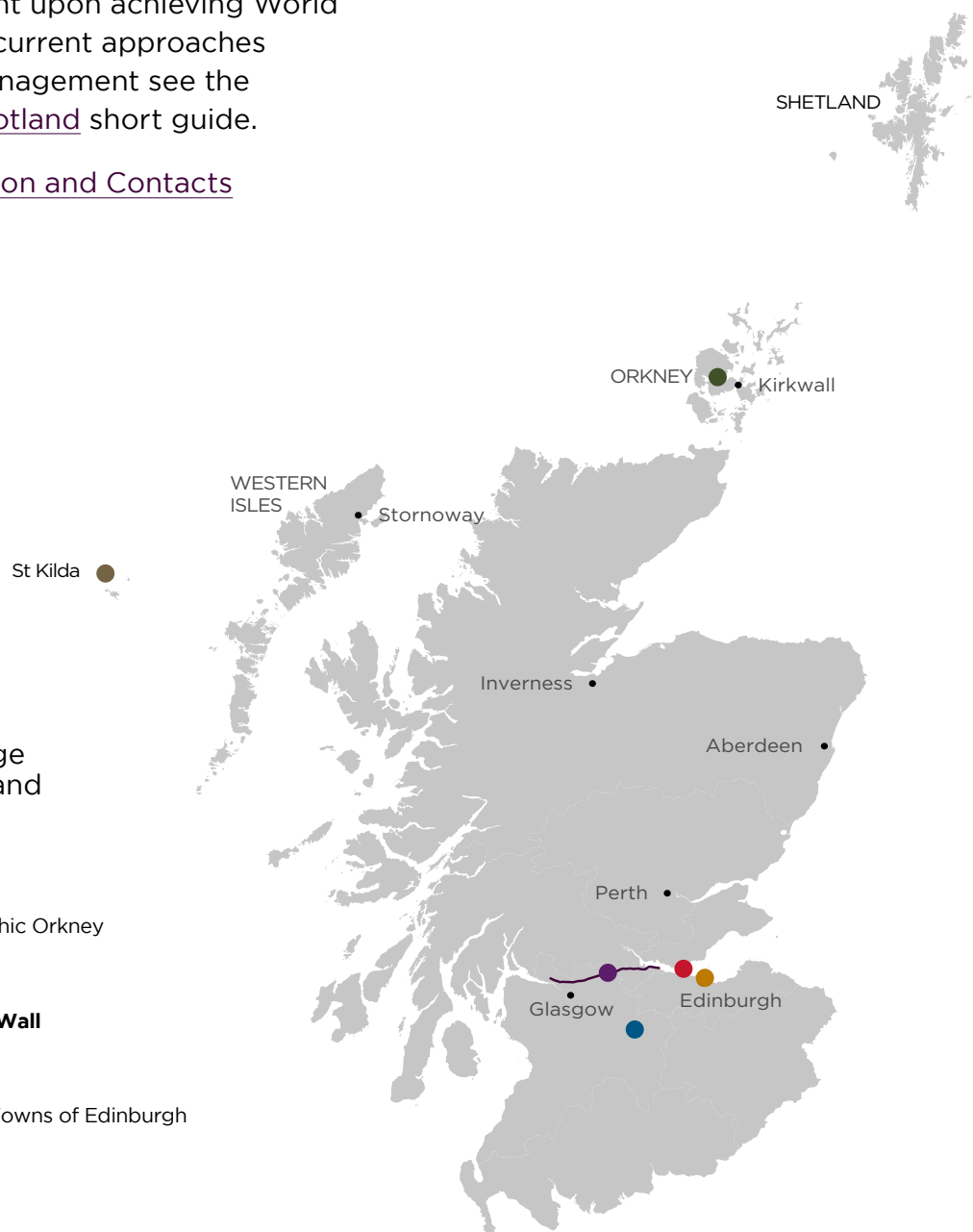
For information outlining what World Heritage status is and what it means, the responsibilities and benefits attendant upon achieving World Heritage status, and current approaches to protection and management see the [World Heritage in Scotland](#) short guide.

See [Further Information and Contacts](#) for more information.

## World Heritage Sites in Scotland

### Key

- 1 Heart of Neolithic Orkney
- 2 St Kilda
- 3 **The Antonine Wall**
- 4 New Lanark
- 5 Old and New Towns of Edinburgh
- 6 Forth Bridge



# THE ANTONINE WALL: KEY FACTS

- 1987 – [Hadrian's Wall](#) is inscribed on the World Heritage List as a cultural WHS.
- 1995 – the World Heritage Committee (WHC) approves an extension to the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site to include the [Upper German-Raetian Limes](#) and agrees that together the sites will be known as the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site (FREWHS), and individually as Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Hadrian's Wall and Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Upper German-Raetian Limes. It is recommended that this be seen as the second phase of a possible wider transboundary nomination to encompass the remains of all the second century Roman frontiers.
- 2008 – the WHC approves the extension to include the Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Antonine Wall.
- Other sections of the Roman Empire's 2nd century frontier system are inscribed as WHS's: The Danube Limes (Austria, Germany and Slovakia) and The Lower German Limes (Germany and the Netherlands).
- The Antonine Wall runs through five council areas. These are: East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, Glasgow City, North Lanarkshire, and West Dunbartonshire.
- These five councils, along with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) are partners in the delivery of the Management Plan for the Antonine Wall.

*Route of the Antonine Wall showing forts and fortlets.*





# THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND BUFFER ZONE

## THE ANTONINE WALL

The Antonine Wall runs for 60 km (37 miles; or 40 Roman miles) across central Scotland, from Bo'ness on the Firth of Forth to Old Kilpatrick on the Firth of Clyde.

The WHS has been defined as a 50m wide corridor, which includes the main linear elements of the Wall: the rampart, ditch and outer mound. This corridor is widened at certain sections to include the Military Way, where it is known.

The WHS also includes the remains of the 16 surviving known forts together with their accompanying annexes and civilian settlements.

Additionally, it includes other known external features: ten fortlets, six expansions, two smaller enclosures, and part or all of the 16 surviving labour camps in the vicinity of the Wall.

The WHS does not include parts of the Wall which have been destroyed, mainly through quarrying and the construction of canals, roads and railways. However, these sections are included in the buffer zone to maintain the linear integrity of the monument. The WHS does not include the modern buildings which lie within its boundaries but does include the underlying Roman archaeology.



*Statue of Silenus  
from Bar Hill.*



*Kinneil fortlet.*



# STATEMENT OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Each WHS has a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV). The SOUV describes the WHS and its importance, lists the Criteria for inscription on the World Heritage List, explains how the WHS satisfies UNESCO's requirements for Authenticity and Integrity, and summarises the management requirements. This provides a clear understanding of the reasons for the Site's inscription on the World Heritage List, and details what needs to be managed in order to sustain the OUV for the long term.

Coin of Antoninus Pius  
© Hunterian Museum.



## CRITERIA

To be included on the World Heritage List, Sites must meet at least one out of ten selection criteria, as explained in UNESCO's [Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention](#). The Criteria under which FRE:AW is inscribed on the World Heritage List are:

**Criterion (ii):** *Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.*

The Antonine Wall is one of the significant elements of the Roman Limes present in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. It exhibits important interchanges of human and cultural values at the apogee of the Roman Empire.

**Criterion (iii):** *Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.*

The Antonine Wall bears testimony to the maximum extension of the power of the Roman Empire, by the consolidation of its frontiers in the north of the British Isles, in the middle of the 2nd century AD. The property illustrates the Roman Empire's ambition to dominate the world in order to establish its law and way of life there in a long-term perspective.

**Criterion (iv):** *Be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.*

The Antonine Wall is an outstanding example of the technological development of Roman military architecture and frontier defence.



# MANAGING THE ANTONINE WALL

## KEY MANAGEMENT PARTNERS

As a serial transnational WHS, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site (FREWHS) includes Partners in Scotland, England, and Germany. When two new sections of the second century Roman frontier were inscribed in 2021, international Partners grew to include the Netherlands, Austria and Slovakia. Coordination and delivery of this complicated international management arrangement is undertaken at several levels within the Partnership, from strategic to operational.

At a strategic level, the Inter-Governmental Committee (IGC) meets annually and consists of delegations of the State Parties from the countries already inscribed. The rules and function of the IGC are approved and accepted by all the participating State Parties in the FREWHS, and the IGC is responsible for the coordination of the joint international management of the FREWHS and for maintaining compliance with WHC obligations.

At an academic level, a panel of international experts (the Bratislava Group) meets regularly, and advises the FREWHS IGC on all cultural heritage management issues. This group forms a key link for passing on 'lessons learned' from inscribed sections to those on the tentative list or considering nomination.

At an operational level for the FREWHS components (the Antonine Wall, Hadrian's Wall and the Upper German-Raetian Limes), the Hexham Group meets annually. This consists of coordinators and Site managers who discuss monitoring issues and share best practice approaches to site management and presentation.

In Scotland, the Partners responsible for delivering the Management Plan for the Antonine Wall are [East Dunbartonshire Council](#), [Falkirk Council](#), [Glasgow City Council](#), [Historic Environment Scotland](#), [North Lanarkshire Council](#) and [West Dunbartonshire Council](#).

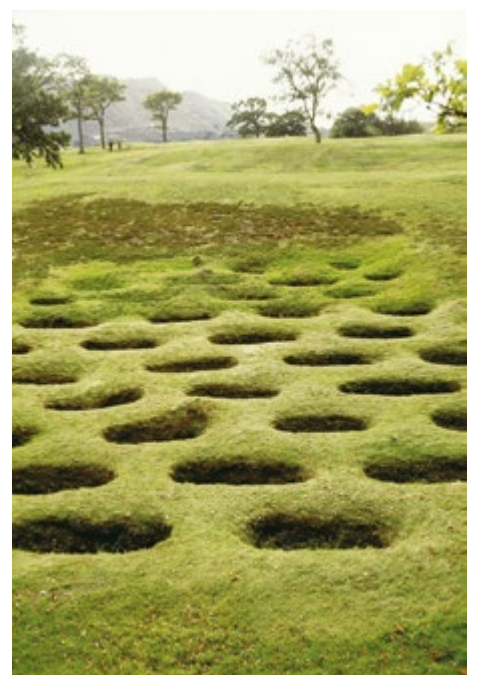
## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Representatives from each of the Scottish Partners form the Antonine Wall Steering Group. This group prioritises and guides the implementation of the aims and objectives set out in the WHS Management Plan. Specific projects and activities are agreed and delivered through delivery groups.

A WHS coordinator: ensures effective coordination between the Partners; coordinates and drives forward implementation, monitoring and revision of the Management Plan and associated action plans/objectives; promotes the OUV and public benefit of the WHS; increases awareness and understanding among Partners, stakeholders and the public; and serves as a central point for advice.



### GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



*Lilia (defensive pits) at Rough Castle.*

## THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Antonine Wall Management Plan is a framework document for the preservation of the OUV of the Antonine Wall. It sets out how the WHS will be managed by establishing a long-term vision for the Antonine Wall, identifying a series of key issues and devising specific objectives or actions to address these issues. The Management Plan is developed jointly by the Scottish Partners, with input from the International Partners, other stakeholders, and the public. It undergoes continuous review and revisions to ensure it meets the current needs of the WHS.

ICOMOS advises that Management Plans for WHS should be based on a strategic view over 30 years. The Vision provides the basis to develop long-term aims. These in turn will inform the priorities for the medium term, and lead to specific actions and projects.

The Management Plan sets out six long term aims to guide future decision making for the period 2014-44, considers some of the key issues for each of them and identifies medium term objectives to meet the longer term aims.



*Rough Castle*

## **A VISION FOR THE ANTONINE WALL WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

The 30-year vision for the Antonine Wall is as follows:

The Antonine Wall will be a World Heritage Site that is well maintained and sustainably managed to safeguard its Outstanding Universal Value; a property that is established as a world-class visitor experience; a catalyst to connect and transform communities locally, nationally and internationally; a focus to realise sustainable benefits economically, socially and environmentally for locals and visitors alike; and a resource for inspiring learning and creating opportunity for participation and discovery.

# PLANNING AND THE ANTONINE WALL

World Heritage designation does not result in additional direct legal protection. Instead, the Antonine Wall is protected through the planning system and designation as a scheduled monument.

Scotland's National Planning Framework 4 requires planning authorities to only support development proposals where the Outstanding Universal Value of a WHS or its setting is protected and preserved.

The Historic Environment Policy for Scotland sets out a series of principles and policies for the recognition, care, and sustainable management of the historic environment.

A series of thematic Managing Change Guidance Notes produced by HES provides best practice advice to help guide changes to the historic environment. One of the guides focuses on [World Heritage](#). It should be used to inform planning policies and help with decisions relating to planning applications affecting the WHS.

About two-thirds of the Wall which has remained unaffected by modern development is scheduled as a monument of national importance under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Most works carried out within the boundaries of the monument require [Scheduled Monument Consent \(SMC\)](#): the prior written consent of Scottish Ministers, obtained through HES.

The Scottish AW Partners collaborated to produce and adopt Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). This SPG provides advice for developers, decision makers and the public on managing the impact of development on the WHS and its setting. It is progressively adopted and amended by the five local authorities the Wall runs through.

## SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE:

- Our Place in Time – The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (March 2014)
- The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006
- National Planning Framework 4 (2023)
- Planning Advice Note 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology
- Historic Environment (Amendment) Scotland Act 2011, which amends three pieces of primary legislation
- The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953;
- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979; and
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) (2019)
- Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes, HES
- Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site





*The Antonine Wall  
at Watling Lodge*

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

FRE: Antonine Wall Coordinator  
– Historic Environment Scotland  
World Heritage Team

Email: [worldheritage@hes.scot](mailto:worldheritage@hes.scot)

Tel: +44 (0)131 668 8763

### KEY LINKS

The Antonine Wall website:  
[www.antoninewall.org](http://www.antoninewall.org)

UNESCO World Heritage Centre  
– World Heritage List: FRE: AW WHS:  
[whc.unesco.org/en/list/430](http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/430)

FRE: AW WHS on the HES website. Here you  
can find links to the Management Plan:  
[www.historicenvironment.scot/antonine-wall](http://www.historicenvironment.scot/antonine-wall)

Other FRE: AW documents are available  
from the HES website:  
[www.historicenvironment.scot/download-  
world-heritage-site-information](http://www.historicenvironment.scot/download-world-heritage-site-information)



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