

Conference Programme

Wednesday 7 October

12:00-13:00	Registration & lunch	
13:00-13:20	Chair's welcome / AHI Awards 2027 introduction	
13:20-14:10	Keynote 1: Rhiannon Hiles CBE Chief Executive of Beamish, The Living Museum of the North Interpreting our heritage, from Elephant to flat iron	
14:10-14:25	Break	
	Room 1	Room 2
14:25-14:50 Parallel sessions 	Dr Annetta Berry Director, Relevant Interpretation, Formerly Interpretation Manager and Editor, The National Gallery A Momentous Retelling of the Story of Art: Interpretation for the National Gallery's Bicentenary Re-hang An exploration of how the National Gallery's Bicentenary rehang, across 63 galleries, required both a new approach to interpretation and practical solutions to managing a project on this epic scale.	Ruth McKew Director, Headland Design Associates Sarah Oswald Director, The Authentic Spark Big stories, small packages Using flash fiction tools for interpretation inspiration Can we use flash fiction to inspire our text writing? Sarah and Ruth invite you to find out in this participatory workshop exploring similarities between interpretive writing and flash fiction. 
14:55-15:20	Natalie Buy Senior Interpretation Planner, The British Museum Displaying the Bayeux Tapestry at the British Museum Follow the whirlwind 12-month journey taken by the British Museum as we prepared to display the iconic Bayeux Tapestry. The presentation will chart the highs and lows of this once-in-a-lifetime interpretive opportunity.	



Parallel sessions



Workshop



Site visit

15:20-15:50

Break & hotel check-in

15:50-16:15

Parallel sessions



Gwendolen Powell

Senior Interpretive Consultant, PLB Projects (formerly Senior Consultant TDR Heritage)

Kate Brooks

Heritage and Volunteering Worker, 1625 Independent People

Kingsley Hall Heritage Project – Putting young people at the heart of interpretive projects

Exploring how co-produced interpretation can be developed with young people and key steps to sustain engagement. Participants from the 'Making Young Lives Better' project will share their learning, experiences and expertise.

Jackie Lee

Creative Director, Artemis Scotland

Connor Emerson

Curator of Social History, Beamish Museum

Tristan Langlois

Head of Learning and Participation, The Royal Armouries

Why you should use a costumed interpretation programme at your museum or heritage site

This workshop will provide an opportunity for delegates to discover, experience and discuss how emotional, multisensory engagement through costumed interpretation creates memorable, meaningful connections with people, objects and stories.



16:20-16:45

Dirk Bennett

Exhibition Manager, Tower Bridge & The Monument

Collaboration across disciplines: Tower Bridge and Worcester Polytechnic Institute

For many years, Tower Bridge has collaborated with science and engineering students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. This spring we evaluated Smartify's mobile tour using user data and on-site surveys.

16:45-16:50

Break/speaker changeover

16:50-17:15 Parallel sessions 	David Rees Interpretation Manager, Cadw, Welsh Government	Aileen Peirce Head of Interpretation & Design, Historic Royal Palaces
	Reinterpreting Tretower Castle and Court and Caerphilly Castle bilingually – blending story, language and experience. A case study in a re-interpretation of two Welsh historic sites in south-east Wales and explores how interpretation and particularly the use of languages can move beyond traditional approaches to create even more meaningful visitor experiences	Connecting With New Audiences: Last Princesses of Punjab Exploring lessons from an exhibition designed to engage British South Asian audiences through an organisation-wide approach, from community interpretation to marketing, PR, digital content and even retail merchandise.
17:15-17:20	Break/speaker changeover	
17:20-17:45 Parallel sessions 	Daniel Watkins Education & Learning Manager, Alnwick Castle Catherine Neil Head of Alnwick Castle Ventures, Alnwick Castle	Liz Drury Freelance Voiceover Artist, Liz Drury Voiceovers
	Alnwick Castle: Interpreting the Great Kitchen Exploring the methods and styles utilised in interpreting the Great Kitchen, a fascinating historic space at Alnwick Castle in Northumberland which, until 2025, had never been open to the public.	Recording the Past: Young Voices Old Stories How can heritage organisations use authentic voices to bring stories to life? Through case studies from Sheffield and Macclesfield, discover the power of mobile recording for interpretation.
17:45-18:30	Networking/Free time Optional session: Future of the Interpretation for Nature and Landscape group - with Jenny Dockett	
18:30	Dinner	
	Entertainment - Northumbrian Sword dancing	

Thursday 8 October

8:30-09:15	AHI Annual General Meeting
10:00-16:15	Full day site visits St Mary's Lighthouse, island and nature reserve Seaton Delaval Hall Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens
	→
TBC	Open session with feedback from the site visits with Jo Scott
18:30	Dinner



St Mary's Lighthouse and island

Friday 9 October

Room: Brecon Suite			
09:00-09:10	Chair's Welcome		
09:10-10:00	Keynote 2: Bill Griffiths Head of Programmes and Collections, North East Museums Hadrian's Wall - interpreting through partnership		
10:00-10:10	Break		
	Room 1	Room 2	Outdoor session
10:10-10:40 Parallel sessions 	Panel discussion: With Connor Emmerson		Jim Mitchell FAHI Access and Learning Manager, New Forest National Park Authority
10:40-10:45	10 mins break and speaker changeover		Tricks, tips and hacks- an outdoor interpretation skill share session An interactive outdoor workshop to share and discover practical interpretation techniques, storytelling, games and sensory activities. Exchange ideas, workshop improvements for future audiences, and leave with inspiring, ready-to-use approaches for engaging people with nature.
10:45-11:10 Parallel sessions 	Anna Maria Barry Content Producer: Historic Research and Interpretation Natalie Edwards Interpretation Manager, The Royal Parks	Ollie Taylor Head of Public Programming and Experience, Bristol Dockyards, and AHI Trustee AHI Best Practice Guides: What's Next? What do members and non-members think about AHI's Best Practice Guides and what's next for them?	
	Experimenting with Tours and Trails at The Royal Parks From apps to sculpture trails, we discuss approaches to self-guided tours across the Royal Parks. We'll share data and visitor research to explore what worked, what didn't, and what's next.		
11:10-11:40	Break & check out (30 mins)		

11:40-12:05

Parallel
sessions



Ollie Taylor

Head of Public Programming
and Experience,
Bristol Dockyards

**How the Whales Became
and Other Stories**

How do you use ocean pollution to transform a cathedral-sized space into an exhibition to engage new audiences about ocean conservation? Insights into the multi-award-winning Whales exhibition and programme.

Jenny Williams BEM

Founder Director,
Take the Space

**Three Streams Framework:
Inclusive, Anti-Racist and
Decolonial Practice in
Heritage Interpretation**

Heritage teams routinely work across all three streams at once - distinct approaches requiring different questions, interventions and relationships. This framework brings practical clarity to each as a standalone area and how they interconnect.



12:05-12:40

Panel discussion.

Chaired by Iain Wheeldon, Senior Lecturer in Museums,
Galleries and Heritage, Newcastle University

12:40-12:50

Break

12:50-13:00

Closing thoughts

13:00

Buffet lunch and departure

