The Gefrin Trust

Heritage ~ Community ~ Education

Future Strategy 2024

Introduction

On the northern side of the Wooler to Kirknewton road, where it crests a small knoll rising amidst Northumbrian fields, stands a monument marking the site of one of the most evocative archaeological stories in the UK. A tale which takes us back around 1300 years to the royal residence of early Anglo-Saxon kings and queens and involves one of the most remarkable archaeological discoveries of the 20th century.

The **Gefrin Trust** was formed in 2002 to ensure the preservation of this internationally renowned site of **Ad Gefrin** in Northumberland. The work of the Trust over the last two decades has focused on securing free, public access to this important site through sympathetic, management, conservation and investigation. We have published an archaeological research framework to help direct research, on the protected site and in the surrounding, wider landscape. Now our programme of research-led investigation is underway (including archaeological excavation) we are turning our attention to developing other aspects of the Trust's work with the local community, exploring the potential for volunteering, and learning opportunities and developing a visitor destination with local partners.

Our strategy will guide all our future work. We will review our key focus areas regularly to ensure we continue to deliver our Vision and Mission.

Our Vision:

Ad Gefrin is rooted in history, a place where myth, archaeology and tranquillity come together. We aim to inspire everyone with the extraordinary story of Ad Gefrin (Yeavering), by giving people the power to experience something of the magic of this place and its people.

Our Mission:

To explore and communicate the contribution Ad Gefrin (Yeavering) has made to our understanding of the heritage and history of Northumberland and the British Isles. We are building on the archaeological and historical investigations of the past, by supporting and promoting an increase in knowledge and understanding of the site and environs.

Aims & Objectives

Aim 1: Protect and manage the site of Ad Gefrin: You cannot protect and manage what you do not understand.

Understanding the significance, needs and vulnerabilities of a fragile heritage asset is fundamental to its care and protection, and we know that significant remains survive buried below ground at Ad Gefrin.

For millennia we have shaped our rural landscapes and the remnants of our shared past are all around us. We live and work in this landscape, actively managing and safeguarding it for future generations.

Aim 2: Provide access to secure our future: Encouraging public access reaffirms a sense of shared ownership.

The Gefrin Trust is the temporary custodian of a public space for all to visit and reflect both on their past and of their place in the present. It's not just the natural beauty of this countryside that makes it so special but also its heritage.

Heritage makes a significant contribution to our daily lives and reflects the diversity of both past and present communities. It contributes to a sense of identity; the value it has for our national and local economy, and it promotes wellbeing, and strengthens, connects and empowers our communities.

Aim 3: Create opportunities for research and its dissemination: Discovery and revelation are at the heart of what we do, but meaningless until shared.

Only high-quality imaginatively applied research can unlock the site's unique story, but the real joy comes from sharing that story with others. Our research should unlock the wider landscape context and be wide-ranging and highlight new discoveries and provide greater understanding of this wonderful place.

The results of all research carried out at Ad Gefrin should be disseminated and made accessible to a wide audience, knowing that people learn in many different ways.

Aim 1: Protect the site of Ad Gefrin

Action	Activity	Timeline	Outcome	Targets	Lead
Objective 1.1. To effectively manage and protect the scheduled site, archives and collections with a commitment to sustainability, environmental management and performance					
Establish a maintenance & repair schedule for the whole site	Create a **maintenance and repair schedule** that covers both land management and all structures on the site	Regular inspections and work. Annual review of schedule	Awareness of what needs to be done to maintain the site and what it will cost to implement	Regular maintenance and repairs are carried out to the agreed scheduled to enable the site to remain open to the public. Budget of up to £1000	
Manage the farm tenancy on favourable terms and review annually along with our ongoing DEFRA landscape stewardship scheme	Review all agreements annually	Renewable agreements (tenancy 10 years/stewardship ? years)	The site is well maintained and compliant with agreements	Agreements to generate annual income of £1000 are in place	
Ensure all archaeological activity on site has the necessary permissions	Scheduled Monument Consent, DEFRA derogation, Local authority permission as appropriate	By project	Demonstrates a well organised approach to project management	All archaeological projects have permissions in place before commencement	
Ensure collection protocols are in place and our archive is managed appropriately	Immediate review of our collections policy including the condition and storage of our archive. **Update collections policy.**	By May 2024	Collection policy, protocols and recommendations for the conservation and storage of the archive agreed by October 2024	Collection policy agreed and implemented and the long-term management of the archive established. Budget for conservation	

				and storage arrangements £5000	
Manage loans agreements. Encouraging loans of our archive material for further study and public display	Immediate review of all existing agreements and possible future loans	By loan	Know where our archive is on loan and that protocols and agreements for their care are respected	All existing loans have an appropriate agreement, and we understand the need to extend the opportunity for further study and display to targeted audiences	

Action	Activity	Timeline	Outcome	Targets	Lead
Objective 1.2: Develop a new business model to ensure we have the people we need and a more commercial focus to raise funds to deliver our priorities. Explore opportunities that could extend and strengthen the delivery of our priorities					
Create a strategy and implementation plan with recommendations for a new governance structure that will deliver our objectives and identifies roles and responsibilities	Circulate draft plan and governance recommendations for consultation to trustees in September 2023	January 2024	Time for the trustees to focus on the future and discuss development opportunities and change	Agreed draft future strategy and implementation plan by end of 2023 Agreed governance structure in place for implementation by February 2024	Kate Wilson
Appoint a dedicated Fundraiser to the Board to identify a suite of income generating packages	Fundraiser to develop a **fundraising plan** with key partners	Summer 2024	Time for trustees to focus on fundraising opportunities for the future	Fundraiser appointed by summer 2024. Fundraising Plan implemented winter 2024	Kate Wilson
Assess the opportunities at the Milfield/ Maelmin site	Hold meetings and workshops as appropriate to gauge partner interest and scope of project.	During 2024	Trustees must be well informed to decide what to do. They will understand what is	Board makes decision by Spring 2024 Budget £400	Roger Miket

	Update and consult trustees in 2023/24		proposed, our role and the risks involved.		
Explore the potential for securing management and public access to the southern half of the Ad Gefrin scheduled monument				Budget £200	

Aim 2: Provide access to secure our future

Action	Activity	Timeline	Outcome	Targets	Lead
Objective 2.1. We will be a place of learning, inspiration, and enjoyment, delivering activities that respond to our priorities. To do this we will need to understand our audience and communicate what we have to offer					
Identify our existing and potential customer/audiences and how we engage and sustain their interest	Carry out customer mapping with partners, gathering new data over an initial 12 month period and create an **audience development plan**	Winter 2024	A sound understanding of our existing customer base and target audience so we can develop our products and services	By spring 2025 we will have new products and services for existing customers and target audiences. Budget for data gathering £2000	
Create a visitor car park	Partners design and deliver a new public car park for visitors to Yeavering with appropriate archaeological mitigation.	Spring 2024	A visitor car park	Car park is opened by the end of 2024. Budget held by partners	
Develop proposals for activities and events on site with key partners that engage and sustain our audiences	Create a number of packages that will benefit our target audiences (audience development plan above)		We deliver a suite of activities that generate income	Deliver at least two promotional activities on site every year that generates income of £1000	

Review and develop content on our web site to sustain existing and engage new audiences. Communicate our offer though social media	Prepare new content for our website including new products, services, and programme. Create a **communication plan**.		People return to our web site and social media because there is always something new of interest there	We implement a communication plan that increases and diversifies our audience and their engagement. Budget for development £1000	
Develop an advertising campaign aimed at bringing in new audiences and targeted sponsors/doners	Create an advertising package and identify a target list of donors		Proactive marketing campaign that communicates with a wide audience to encourages engagement with site, web site and followers on social media	Maintain the interest of existing visitors. Engage new audiences and target business sponsors and doners. Budget for development £500	

Action	Activity	Timeline	Outcome	Targets	Lead
Objective 2.2. Strengthen our local and regional networks and widen opportunities for participation					
Develop new partnerships across the region. Targeting existing and new audiences (audience development plan)	Engage proactively with existing and targeted partners to identify and market new opportunities for learning and visitor experiences.	Summer 2024	Maintain and develop established partnerships. Engage new partners. Develop new business relationships.	By spring 2025 we have 5 new partners engaged.	
Provide volunteer opportunities and encourage co creation of activities and	Create a **community engagement plan**	Summer 2025	Increase audience participation and engage new audiences	Community engagement plan in place by summer 2025. Budget for outreach research, consultation,	

events with new partners and audiences				and co-creation workshops £500	

Aim 3: Create opportunities for research and its dissemination

Action	Activity	Timeline	Outcome	Targets	Lead
Objective 3.1. Promote and refresh our Research Agenda					
Maintain and promote an active research agenda	5-yearly refreshment of the **Resource Assessment and Research Agenda** – with stakeholder involvement	Refresh due in 2025	Active agile research agenda that takes account of new opportunities, methods and partners	A refreshed set of published documents by Dec 2025 for review again in 2030	Sarah Semple
Instigate an annual reporting mechanism on research (and other activities) to keep stakeholders involved	Annual newsletter/webpage/feed on research highlights (and other info?)	December 2023 and Dec thereafter	Increased number of 'followers' in receipt of annual updates	Increased audience for research	
Regular refreshment of research stakeholders	Hold two events within each 5-year cycle to keep stakeholder involvement fresh a. open seminar/round table day (with exhibition?). b. closed invite-only workshop.	Spring 2024 for open event. Winter 2024 for closed event – both leading to refreshed framework in 2025	Active informed stakeholder participation in shaping 5-yearly research agendas	Increased suite of research stakeholders, with regular refreshment. Budget £200 for the open event/£500 for the closed/ invite only for travel	Sarah Semple
Develop opportunities for research initiatives that communicate the story of Yeavering (Ad Gefrin) and its surrounding multi-period landscape.	Via open and closed networking events, research agenda review and scoping with stakeholders	Ongoing	Active cycle of project work with active demand management and careful evaluation of fit to Trust research agenda and aims	At least one active project supported by the Trust in any calendar year	

Action	Activity	Timeline	Outcome	Targets	Lead
Objective 3.2. Disseminate the results of all research and use it to make connections with a range of new partners					
Ensure all research is disseminated appropriately and products are free to access if permissions and publishers allow.	Disseminate interim results via website, via newsletter/newsfeed, release unpublished and published reports and articles as open access as and when publication schedules and publisher constraints allow	Ongoing	All research outcomes to be freely available in some form online.	Support budget £ 200	
Engage stakeholders old and new in research activities and outcomes	Hold a dissemination event every five years (seminar day/conference or exhibition) inviting existing and new stakeholders	Every 5 years	Stakeholder involvement/partner growth	Fee-paying event perhaps to generate money, tied with driving broader stakeholder engagement with research results	
Work with stakeholders and advisors to develop new ways of sharing and promoting knowledge with new (non-academic) audiences	Evaluation of users/knowledge consumers, **develop dissemination and learning plan**	?	Broader user base	£200	
Seek out and engage with local, national and European heritage projects and initiatives as potential partners					

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