Heritage Tourism: A management plan of Govan, Glasgow

Ran Liu

Jiangxi Normal University Science and Technology College Jiujiang, China

ranliu0@sina.com

Abstract. The Viking heritage of Scotland is not widely known locally. Govan Old Parish Church combined with the Govan Heritage Trust are aiding in the preservation and education of the Viking culture as well as deepening the local people ' s cultural roots in their own history. This redevelopment project will focus on creating a national Visitor Centre around the Govan Stones, generating enterprise activity and rental income. Remodeling the current space of the stones and providing a more secure site.

Keywords: cultural tourism, heritage management, museum.

1. History of the cite

The story of Govan is a multi-layered story which begins as an area with the earliest known Christian activity on the River Clyde with the establishment of a church by St. Constantine in AD 500. Govan was almost virtually not mentioned within the history books for the next couple of centuries. It was not until after the fall of Dumbarton in 870 AD by the Dublin Vikings after a four month siege, that we see the name Govan listed again [1]. The royal family abandoned Dumbarton and settled near Govan. "Here lay a ritual landscape comprising a mound of probable prehistoric origin, early Christian cemetery and an ancient church" [2]. With the presence of a small moot hill, known as Doomster Hill, helps to provide evidence of the strong political centre of the Vikings. This small step hill was located just to the East of the early Christian church which is today known as Govan Old. Govan Old Parish Church houses an extraordinary find that dates back to the medieval ages of Scotland. The church was established around 500 AD by St. Constantine. This coincides with the discovery of what is presumed to be Christian burials, where the deceased head is oriented to the West, which are dated around the 5th-6th century AD [1]. From the 6th century to 2007, Govan Old Parish Church was the ecclesiastical foundation for Govan. In 2007, the Church of Scotland consolidate three local churches, Govan Old Parish Church, Govan New, and Linthouse. Despite, Govan Old being the ecclesiastical foundation it was not selected as the seat of the new amalgamated parish [3]. With the United Parish of Govan being Govan New, serious questions were raised in regard to Govan Old about the future of both the building and the collection that was housed within. Within this plan, the efforts of local organizations will be discussed in regard to preserving the heritage of Govan and both the church and stones. Within ther church, there are the Govan Stones are made of locally available sandstone with a variety of grain sizes and colours, while some of the recumbent stones are made of fine-grained siltstones. These stones are said to be carved between the 9th-11th century to commemorate the power of those who ruled the Kingdom of Strathclyde. The centerpiece of the thirty one stones on display is the elaborately carved sarcophagus found in 1855 [4] This sarcophagus is the only one of its kind that has been found. The prominent scene carved is of a mounted warrior hunting. This horseman together with the interlace, brings the thought that this was carved potentially to house the bones of a Saint or Royalty of a Viking Kingdom. The five hogback shaped stones were used as grave markers for the deceased royals. These stones are only found within Northern Britain in the areas that were settled by Vikings. It is only in Govan that these types of monuments have been found in large numbers [2]. The hogbacks are described as "houses for the dead" and resemble Viking longhouses. The fives stones found at Govan, are the biggest and heaviest of any others found. The remaining twenty-five recumbent stones are made up of crosses and cross slabs. According to drawings and a publication by John Stirling Maxwell, in 1899 there were a total of forty-six carved stones recorded [5]. This so far has been the highest number to date. However,

that would mean, there are fifteen stones missing. It has been noted that according to historical accounts, there were possibly some stones that had been destroyed and misplaced. It can be speculated that when a neighboring shipyard called Harland and Wolff was destroyed in the year of 1973, many of these missing carved stones were also subjected to destruction, being mistaken for common building supplies [1].

2. monitoring of risks and current conditions

A study will be performed in relation to the stones as a whole collection and documented below in accordance to ICCROM standards. This will allow the Govan Stones Organization to deal with these threats more efficiently, as well as help minimize long-term damage.

2.1 Physical Forces: Incorrect handling, Deformation, Abrasion and Erosion

Physical forces affects almost every heritage collection. These can include, but not limited to incorrect handling, deformation, abrasion and erosion. Constant handling which includes touching, rubbing and even brushing against the stone will cause deformation of the stone itself. Deformation can be defined as the result of a distorting process, one that changes the shape and size. With the sandstone being of a porous substance, the pores can collapse into themselves, causing a change in appearance. In order to preserve the current state of these stones and to ensure their survival for the future, minimizing any handling will slow the erosion and deformation process. At this time, visitors are able to freely touch the stones. Constant touching causes damage over time due to the releasing of the oils from fingers. This will also cause the stone to show wear in places of contact which can cause erosion. As the stones erode, the engravings will eventually disappear, being lost for all times. Limiting this will reduce the likelihood of further erosion caused by human contact and or incorrect handling.

2.2 Thieves and Vandals: Destruction and Graffiti Vandalism

With the stones being of great size and weight, thievery is not an immediate worry. It would take machines and great strength to move any of the thirty-one stones on display, the main agent of deterioration that has seen themost issues is vandalism. Unfortunately, a few of the stones have experienced graffiti and vandalism, as well as destruction. According to John Stirling Maxwell [5], there was a total of forty-six stones recorded. Within 100 years approximately fifteen stones have reportedly been destroyed and or missing. It is thought that when a shipyard, that was in close proximity to the churchyard was destroyed, those missing fifteen stones were destroyed with it. However, a recent archaeology dig conducted in Spring 2019, uncovered one of the lost stones, bringing the total found to three. The stones have also seen vandalism, which can be seen. A few of the stones were repurposed as makeshift within the graveyard. These stones are on display and visitors are able to see the engravings on some of the upright stone slabs. These include the initials and dates of the deceased have been chiseled.

2.3 Fire

Fire and exposure prolonged heat can have devastating effects on the structure and chemical makeup of sandstone. The typical traces of deterioration by fire are changes of colour on stones, rounding off of the corners by blocks, spalling parallel of surface and crackling [6]. The most common and easily identifiable deterioration is the change of colour in the stone. According to the article by M. Hajpal colour change occurs around 200-300 Celsius. As the temperature accelerates, the colouration in brown or a buff-coloured stone will change to a more pink or reddish-brown colour. This happens when the stone has become dehydrated of its iron compounds. Discolouration is irreversible damage. Roughly around 500 Celsius, the stone will begin to turn to coal and complete decay. Cracking and spalling is another effect of fire and heat exposure. Spalling is a very typical

form of fire damae with sandstone. Components inside the stone burst causing the stone itself to crumble and peel off in layers. This gives the stone what is called an onion affect.

2.4 Water: Stains, speed up decay

Water can cause significant damage on sandstone. A stone being subjected to water, be it rain or submerged for a long period of time will cause erosion to the surface. The brittle strength of a rock is generally reduced in the presence of water [7]. With the presence of water, the rate of decay will see a significant increase in speed. With Sandstone being a porous material, water will seep through and change both the mechanical and chemical effects of the sandstone itself. When water enters the porous surface of the stone, the water seeps down into the stone itself. This will cause what is called, microcracking. Microcracking poses a large threat, as it is nearly impossible to spot with only one's eyes. Scanning of the stones will show if microcracking has occurred. If it has been determined that microcracking has occurred, then the proper steps for preservation can be taken. To help minimize water damage, proper storing and continuous monitoring will help to minimize this threat.

2.5 Loss of Information

Through the ages of time, the reasoning and meaning of the Govan Stones has been lost. There are a number of theories, one being that they were used as grave markers for the Kings of Strathclyde. It is known that similar hogback stones have been found in areas mostly inhabited by the Vikings. However, the actual purpose of these stones are not known. It is only through speculation that the purpose of the hogback stones is that of grave markers. The purpose or use of the cross slabs is currently unknown. When speaking of the stone sarcophagus, it is currently the only one of its kind that has been found. It is speculated that due to the intricate carvings that this was carved to either hold the remains of St. Constantine or a royal from the Strathclyde Kingdom. With the loss of the purpose of the stones, it is only through speculation as to what the stones were used for and their meaning..

3. Management strategies

3.1 Issues

This management plan has envisaged various issues that will come up through the redevelopment process. To carry out the plan, it is necessary to analyse the social background of the area first and then to solve specific problems when operating the museum. The economic downfall of Govan is a significant issue for the success of the Govan Stones. With the area having a negative reputation, tourist are more hesitant to venture to this area. The economic pitfalls will be discussed in more detail in terms of the issue that can be seen for tourism development. Another issue in relation to Govan tourism is staffing and the proper means of access to the site. In the following sections it will be discussed possible alternatives and hopeful positive solutions to these listed issues..

3.1.1 Economic Conditions

According to the Glasgow City Council in 2008, the region had already received approximately 2.8 million visitors per year [8]. While looking into the statistics collected by Faith in Community Scotland, the violent crime rate in Govan area exceeded the national average of 231%, and the youth unemployment rate reached 46%. As stated above, Govan remains Scotland's most deprived local authority area. According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), within Glasgow, Govan is one of the poorest areas [9], Govan has become the representative of the highest crime rate and the worst working record in Scotland (Faith in Community Scotland, 2010). While Govan is a city full of history, as already stated previously throughout this paper, the Govan Stones are kept in the former Govan Old Church, are one of the most influential post-reformation church building in Scotland. In 870 A.D., the Britons, an ancient Kingdom were destroyed by the Vikings. Govan is a fortification for building a new kingdom and the Govan Parish Church became the centre [2]. With

abundant historical and cultural resources, it is possible that tourism could be one of the leading industries that helps rebuild economic development in this area. Establishing a better economy will also promote the development of the museum. Also, from 2017, as a result of de-industrialisation, Govan is changing into a more service-based economy.

3.1.2 Lack of Use of Social Media

Social media has not been well utilized previously. However, at the time of the penning of this management plan there are active accounts set up through the generally popular channels of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram account. Upon examination of these social media accounts, there seems to be a growing following. The efforts of the Govan Heritage Trust to attract more followers is evident by their regularity in their posting, and the content that is being shared. When searched, one can also find the sites webpage. At this time the posts are made by both volunteers and employees of the Heritage Trust. In today's tourism society, modern technologies were widely used in museums such as online ticket booking, virtual reality experiences in the museum, etc. As the digital touch of the stones is already in progress, there will be more modern technologies applied in the museum in the future. Just the same as with social media, the current home web page *www.govanstones.org* was not well maintained nor updated regularly. Within 2019, the utilization of this said web page has been updated with material and news of events and current fundraiser. Having a well-maintained social media platform and home web page is essential in reaching an audience of all ages across multiple parts of the globe. In terms of comparing the web pages of The Govan Stones with other like-minded heritage museums; such as the JORVIK Museum in York, the official website of the Govan Stones still needs improvement on more detailed information of how to reach the site as well as a clearer introduction of its heritage meaning. At this time, the Heritage Trust is currently working on updating this information.s.

3.2 Cultural Heritage Tourism

In order to have a successful cultural heritage tourism program, there are four basic steps the business must follow. Step one, access the potential. There must be a potential for tourism for the proposed site. An examination of the area, conducting surveys and benchmarking towards like cultural heritage sites would need to be conducted before proceeding forward. Once the need has been established, the second step is to plan and organize. A full management and visitor plan will need to be proposed and finalized. Once a proper management plan has been finalized, the next step will be to prepare for the visitors. This includes adding signage to each item that is informative to the common visitor, having a clear route around the display area that is well maintained and clear of obstacles and being able to properly manage the cultural and heritage aspect of the items. The last step is to market for success. Having an active social media page, which is described earlier in this paper, is essential for the life span of any business. In the age of technology, the business would want to reach all generations across the globe to achieve maximum exposure.

3.3 Stakeholder Analysis

A preliminary assessment of the stakeholders are as follows.

3.3.1 Locals

Locals occupy an important position in preserving the site. The sustainable development of the historical and cultural heritages inherited their traditions, helps them in building their own cultural identities and forming a unique heritage of the local communities [10]. And building cultural pride for locals will also promote the conservation of the site itself.

3.3.2 Visitors

Visitors are one of the most important external stakeholders that affect how well the museum operates, the exhibitions displayed, and any events held. For visitors, the most important thing for them is if the site is able to provide a good educational experience, if what they learn is worth what

they pay or not [11]. For this management plan to be successful, the site will need to gain a good reputation among its visitors. It is important to pay attention to their feedback after their visits (detailed plans in Strategy part). Visitors with a good experience will also help to promote the site and museum widely.

3.3.3 Sponsorship

Govan Heritage Trust, with the support of its partner Govan Workspace, is determined to transform Govan's primary cultural asset into a catalyst for long-term change in the community. The Govan Stones Museum Redevelopment Project is seeking to demonstrate how heritage can be used to deliver heritage-driven regeneration in certain areas of post-industrial decline.

3.3.4 Museum Staff

At present, there are only two full-time staff members and roughly a numerous number of volunteers. Each staff member and volunteer devote most of their time and efforts to the site, in order to be successful, it will be necessary to hire more full-time staff members to help run the site efficiently. The plan also carries a task to raise the locals' and also the staff's awareness to the site and museum. One advantage to this, is that the staff and volunteers are also part of the local community. The authors of this plan believe that after the previous preparation of the management plan, the new staff and volunteers will be responsible enough for the welfare of the site and the stones

3.4 Museum Gift Shop

A small gift shop is located within the church. It is here that a visitor can find a small array of items for purchase. To motivate the tourists bringing cultural products back home, this study suggests a special product to deliver the concept of Scandinavian world. A special product such as shadow theatre or a screen presenting videos of Viking legends could be made to deliver the Viking culture and present the Scandinavian world to all customers. The stories can be related to the Govan Stones in order to make the customers feel closer to the site and the culture. The key cultural points of this special product can be as follows; the establishment of the lost Kingdom of Strathclyde and second the culture and customs of a Viking funeral and royal burial. The play or the screen can be placed at the front of the gift shop are in order to pique the interest of the visitors to browse. This can also be seen to motivate their interests before they continue going into the church itself. It is essential to choose products that would appease to the visitors and display in a fashion that would be easily noticed and organized.

References

[1] C. Dalglish and S. Driscoll, "An International Scottish Historical Archaeology?", International Journal of Historical Archaeology, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 309-315, 2010.

[2] T. Clarkson, The Strathclyde and the Anglo-Saxons in the Viking Age. Havertown: Birlinn, Limited, 2014., pp.56–61.

[3] S. Driscoll, "SERFing in the Scottish heartlands: artefacts and the research strategy", Scottish Archaeological Journal, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 57-72, 2010.

[4] J. Romilly Allen, "On Recent Discoveries of Pre-Norman Sculptured Stones," Journal of the British Archaeological Association, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 267–277, Sep. 1885.

[5] J. Maxwell, Sculptured stones in the kirkyard of Govan, 1st ed. Glasgow: unkown, 2022, pp. 14-20.

[6] M. Hajpál, "Fire damaged stone structures in historical monuments. Laboratory analyses of changes in natural stones by heat effect.", CIB General Secretariat, vol. 363, pp. 73-163, 2010.

[7]]P. Baud, W. Zhu, and T. Wong, "Failure mode and weakening effect of water on sandstone," Journal of Geophysical Research: Solid Earth,

[8] Glasgow City Council, "Glasgow's Tourism industry," Glasgow City Council, May 09, 2011. www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/Business/Tourism/ glasgowstourismindstry.html (accessed Aug. 01, 2022).

[9] Scotland. Scottish Government, Introducing The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016. Edinburgh: The Scottish Government, 2016.

[10] J. Assmann and J. Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," New German Critique, vol. 65, no. 65, p. 125, 1995.

[11] S. C. Beckman and S. Zenker, Place branding: A multiple stakeholder perspective, 1st ed. lisbon: 41st European Marketing Academy Conference, 2012, p. 2.