

## Report for The Heritage Alliance and British Council Travel Grant Scheme

### Part 1

**Organisation:** Archaeology Scotland

**Name:** Cara Jones

**Job title:** Adopt-a-Monument Project Manager

**Countries travelled to:** Norway

**Specific region or cities travelled to:** Bergen, Hordaland

**Organisations visited:** Hordaland Fylkeskommune, Radøy Kommune

**Dates of visit:** 6<sup>th</sup> August to 9<sup>th</sup> August 2019

### Part 2

#### 1. Original purpose of the visit.

In 2017, we were invited to speak at the Hordaland County Culture Conference (Fylkeskulturkonferansen) in Bergen, where we learnt first-hand of how community archaeology groups are supported by Norwegian heritage frameworks. In turn we were able to give brief glimpse of our own community-led Adopt-a-Monument scheme, which supports local communities to record, conserve and promote local heritage assets. Our Norwegian colleagues were keen to learn more about the scheme to see if it could be replicated in Norway and we were keen to learn more about their innovative working practices with promoting and conserving heritage assets. My visit allowed me to see learn first-hand how our Norwegian contacts have utilised collaborations with project partners to tell heritage stories.

Through funding from The Heritage Alliance and British Council Travel Grant Scheme, this visit to Norway allowed me to learn how our project partners have been and are working in partnership with local communities to disseminate knowledge and understanding of local heritage and archaeology. Through this knowledge exchange, I observed new ways of creating and presenting narratives and innovative ways to conserve heritage assets. This new knowledge will feed back into our work which with community groups throughout Scotland.

#### 2. People, organisations, projects of relevance to your organisation/project that you encountered during your visit.

- Solveig Lohne Rongved – Senior Archaeologist (Hordaland Fylkeskommune)
- Inger Lena Gåsemyr – Senior Advisor (Hordaland Fylkeskommune)
- Charlotte Espeland – Cultural Schoolbag (Hordaland Fylkeskommune)
- Elizabeth Warren – Local Cultural Heritage Plans (Hordaland Fylkeskommune)

I was accompanied by my colleague Phil Richardson from Archaeology Scotland.

### **3. Summary of the visit, including what went well and what was challenging.**

The visit took place in August 2019, over two and half days and was planned in advance with Solveig Lohne Rongved. One aim of the trip was to go beyond the city of Bergen to observe directly how heritage sites are managed and presented to the public. On day one, Solveig had arranged for us to see two sites - one in Radøy (to the North of Bergen) which had worked with local communities to create a heritage trail. A second heritage site to the South near Norhelmsund was also visited where we learnt how access to the rock art site was to be improved, to develop safe access to the site but also to enhance the visitor experience through strategically placed lighting. Day two of the visit included a day seminar with colleagues from the Hordaland Fylkeskommune Culture department where we shared our working practice and case studies from Scotland, while also hearing of new initiatives being planned by the cultural department. This included a new department of 'Inclusion and Integration' and our work with new heritage audiences was of particular interest to our hosts.

It was incredibly useful to directly visit the sites and learn of the different methods of conserving heritage sites while also enhancing visitor experience.

Our only challenge was the length of time for our visit – constrained by budget and capacity within our working schedule.

### **4. Experience and knowledge gained, with particular focus on how this experience and knowledge will benefit your organisation.**

Our trip allowed us to learn of the different heritage approach and practice to heritage management in Norway and share our working practices from Scotland. From learning about Norway's [Cultural Schoolbag programme](#) (during day two of our visit) to observing how heritage sites can be enhanced through new technology and different ways of thinking.

We were particularly surprised to see the simplicity of the heritage trail at Radøy – interpretation panels were mounted on movable poles which would be moved to more suitable locations if required. In Scotland, panels are expensive, often permanently fixed for 5 to 10 years and it can be challenging to ensure that they are in the right location for visitors. The approach at Radøy not only allows the panels to be moved to areas which saw high footfall, it also allowed for panels to be moved to encourage footfall away from sensitive heritage sites. This flexible approach allows for site managers to react to how visitors use the site, rather than informed guess work at the planning stage. Radøy will be presented to the community groups we work with as a successful case study for onsite interpretation.

### **5. Top tips for other heritage professionals working internationally, based on the learning gained during your visit.**

Both myself and my colleague really valued the time we took out of our normal working schedule to learn of new working practices and think about how these could be applied to our work in Scotland. We were very fortunate to have met our hosts on previous occasions and while our trip was short, I had been in contact with Solveig Lohne Rongved months in advanced to ensure that our time in Norway was maximised. Thanks to Solveig and the advanced groundwork, we managed to fit a lot into the visit and meet so many new people. This contact with the Hordaland team has

continued and we hope to develop a learning outcomes report or publication from the visit, should time allow it.

**6. What are the next steps you are going to take following the visit and what resources/support might you need in order to successfully realise your ideas?**

Already we are in discussion to develop a trip for our hosts to visit Scotland to learn more about heritage site management and our work with new heritage audiences. Our hosts were interested in the skills development work of both Adopt-a-Monument and Attainment through Archaeology (two Archaeology Scotland initiatives) and would like to see examples of both initiatives in action. To do this, we will require further funding which is something both ourselves and our hosts are currently looking at. This next stage in our exchange partnership will hopefully continue to build upon our working partnerships with Hordaland Fylkeskommune Culture Department.

**7. In one sentence, summarise the impact the visit has had on your organisation and the organisations you visited.**

This visit allowed us to continuing building a working relationship with the team at Hordaland Fylkeskommune Culture Department and share innovative case studies with the communities we work with in Scotland.

**8. In one sentence, please summarise the impact the visit has had on you personally.**

This trip allowed me to spend valuable time learning about new and inspirational heritage practice.

**9. Quote from Chairman of the Trust on the benefit and impact of your international visit on your organisation**

“This trip has allowed our organisation to learn new working practices and build upon our international working partnership with Hordaland Fylkeskommune Culture Department. We look forward to continuing this working partnership and sharing the learning points from the trip with Scottish Heritage Sector”.

Eila Macqueen, Director of Archaeology Scotland.

**10. Following this international experience, how likely is it that your organisation will fund another international visit in the next 12 months from 1 to 5 (1=very likely, 5=very unlikely)?**

2=very likely though we will have to find sources of financial support to do so.

**11. Will there be any follow up to this visit (e.g. jointly paper writing, online community building, future project applications, formal partnership formed, etc)**

We hope to produce a learning outcomes report, conference paper or publication from the visit, jointly produced by ourselves and our hosts. As discussed above, we hope to develop a second project trip to allow our project hosts to visit Scotland to learn further about our projects and initiatives.