



## International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance visit to Alderney July 7-9 – background information

**Date:** July 6<sup>th</sup> 2021

In 2019, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) began a project called “Safeguarding Sites, the IHRA Charter for Best Practice”. This involves five European sites of which Alderney became the first.

Between July 7-9, Alderney’s President William Tate hosts a visit of Lord Eric Pickles, UK Special Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues; Sally Sealey, Head of Secretariat, UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation; and Dr Gilly Carr, of the University of Cambridge and Channel Islands Representative on the IHRA.

They are visiting to update States of Alderney Members and the community on the revised plan for the Safeguarding Sites Project since their last visit to the Island in 2019. Islanders are invited to a public meeting in the Island Hall on Thursday July 8<sup>th</sup> (7 pm) for a presentation on the Project and an opportunity for the public to ask questions.

In September 2019, members of the team visited Alderney to assess the existing risks facing the four former Nazi camps on the island and to discuss steps that could be taken to safeguard the record in a sensitive manner empathetic to the Alderney community.

This resulted in a five-year plan for Alderney which has unfortunately been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021. The plan envisages a digital strategy, which will operate parallel to activities, to safeguard the remnants of the camps, present accurate information about them, and most importantly to partner with the local community.

This approach will enable Alderney and the IHRA to manage the narrative of the Island’s history during the Nazi occupation, as well as take administrative steps to legally protect heritage sites appropriately.

The team aims to achieve its objectives through consultations and partnerships, not only with local stakeholders, but also with the IHRA's Permanent International Partners and other heritage organisations. As part of the effort to strengthen such a partnership, the Project's Chair Dr Carr participated in a discussion at the Council of Europe in March 2020 on ways of training youth leaders and encouraging young people to take an interest in, and become engaged with, their Holocaust heritage.

Dr Carr writes on the IHRA website: "We have had to move all our activities online since the start of the pandemic. However, I have been really pleased with the significant progress that we have made. The digital mode of communication has facilitated new ideas and solutions for the sites with which we are working."

Meanwhile, the States of Alderney has begun a consultation process to designate the Nazi concentration camp Lager Sylt as a Conservation Area. Although Lager Sylt is in a protected zone near Alderney Airport it does not yet have the full legal protection of the Island's official list of Historic Buildings, Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas, as is the case with other sites such as Longis Common.

As soon as it is registered, full legal protection will be given to the remaining ruins including the gateposts, sentry posts, some foundations and a small tunnel which led from the camp commandant's house to the inside of the camp.

The other Nazi camps on Alderney are Borkum, Helgoland and Nordeney. The Hammond Memorial on Alderney has five main plaques in Russian, Hebrew, Polish, French and Spanish, built by local residents to commemorate the slaves and forced labourers brought to the Island who subsequently died from maltreatment.

More information on the IHRA Project is available at <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/news-archive/year-review-safeguarding-sites> (February 2021).

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