

Annual Review

2021-2022

GREAT
SPA TOWNS
of Europe



unesco

The Great Spa Towns of Europe
Inscribed on the World
Heritage List in 2021



Contents

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This is the first Annual Review of the new Association the Great Spa Towns of Europe. It outlines the major activities of 2021 (since the inscription in July 2021) and 2022, including changes in governance and structure.

The first 18 months since the inscription on the World Heritage Site have been eventful in many of the eleven towns that comprise this serial transnational site. There have been celebrations, capital projects, collaborations and new personnel. This report outlines the major highlights from each of the towns.

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Great Spa Towns of Europe Association

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Acknowledgements

Stefan Szirucsek, Margret Mergen
Chiara Ronchini, Paul Simons
Mayors, Lord Mayors and Site Managers of the GSTE

Unless otherwise stated, images have been taken by the GSTE team or provided by the municipalities.



Welcome

'Salve' is a traditional greeting meaning "good health" - tiles in Montecatini Terme



Stefan Szirucsek
Mayor of Baden bei Wien,
Chair of the Great Spa Towns of Europe
Association

From inscription to a new association
- what an incredible 18 months!

On 24th July 2021, the Great Spa Towns of Europe (GSTE) became a World Heritage Site - a huge achievement for all involved in over a decade of discussion, research and discovery. The hard work put in by teams of politicians, experts, and dedicated individuals was well-rewarded on that incredible day. Due to the pandemic, we all watched the announcement from the World Heritage Committee in China online and celebrated separately at the time, but were very glad to see each other a few months later and to celebrate in person.

Since the inscription, we have been busy laying the foundations for a smooth-running Association, which must now get on with the hard work of managing an extremely large and complex World Heritage Site. The Great Spa Towns of Europe is possibly one of the most complex sites ever listed on the UNESCO World Heritage list - as each of the 11 component parts is a living, breathing, working town, with many different needs and aspirations to accommodate, while still being conscious of our new mandate to preserve, protect and promote the Outstanding Universal Value of our site and of the World Heritage Convention.

Our informal Mayors Steering Group, a coalition of all 11 mayors of the Great Spa towns, which had been working together since 2011, held its last ever meeting in Spa at the end of April 2022. Chaired by Mrs Margret Mergen, the Lord Mayor of Baden-Baden for many of those years, the Mayors Steering Group made the key decisions for the GSTE up to and past the date of inscription on the World Heritage list in July 2021. I must pay tribute here to the leadership and determination of Mrs Mergen, who has laid a strong foundation for continuing co-operation between the towns and the future development of the GSTE.

Once we had been successful with the inscription, it became clear that we needed to form a new association, the Great Spa Towns of Europe Association. The new Association, registered under Austrian law, was ratified at that same meeting in Spa, and after electoral changes in Baden-Baden in the summer I was delighted and honoured to become the first chairman of the new Board of Directors of the new Association. We held our first General Assembly in Františkovy Lázně in September.

Behind the scenes, there have been more changes, with the imminent retirement of Paul Simons, who has been our Secretary General since 2013. I would like to pay tribute to the work that Paul has done for the Great Spa Towns of Europe. From the very beginning of the project in 2010, he saw the potential of a transnational serial bid, and worked tirelessly through political difficulties, differences of opinion and many practical challenges, to bring the project to a point where it could be presented to ICOMOS and UNESCO for consideration for listing as a World Heritage Site. It is due to his dedication, tireless enthusiasm and endless diplomacy that the project did indeed achieve its aim and is now a rather unique World Heritage Site. Paul will leave us later in 2023, to enjoy a well-deserved retirement, safe in the knowledge that he helped to create something truly remarkable!

With Paul's departure looming, we had to find a new Secretary General, and after a global search I am thrilled to be welcoming Chiara Ronchini, who joins us from Historic Environment Scotland. Chiara's appointment heralds the start of a new era for the GSTE, one where the hard work continues but in a different way, consolidating, reporting, protecting and enhancing all the component parts of our World Heritage Site.

The high levels of co-operation and communication between our eleven towns in seven countries have been noticed and held up as an example of best practice by many important institutions including UNESCO, and I am grateful to my colleagues in all the towns for the way in which they have worked together. I am sure that this close and collaborative working relationship will give us a very secure foundation for the years ahead, with Chiara as our new Secretary General, and with a lot more work to do!

Stefan Szirucsek

Stefan Szirucsek
Baden bei Wien, October 2023



Who We Are

Introduction

The **Great Spa Towns of Europe** is a large 'Transnational Serial' World Heritage Site, formed of component sites which are either complete urban centres or a spa quarter within 11 famous historic thermal spa towns and cities in seven countries. The site was inscribed on the World Heritage List at the Extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, meeting in Fuzhou, China on 24th July 2021.

The 'Great Spa Towns', in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom represent a unique cultural achievement which reached its height in the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as a particular urban type and form which deserves global recognition as a phenomenon which helped to shape the Europe we know today.

*"Not just a monument
but a whole philosophy".*

The **Great Spa Towns of Europe** developed around natural mineral springs which were the catalyst for an innovative model of spatial organisation which included therapeutic and recreational landscapes dedicated to curative and social functions.

These fashionable resorts of health, leisure and sociability created architectural prototypes and an urban typology that has no earlier parallel. They were early pioneers of modern tourism, and the only European settlement type to be in cultural competition with the great metropolises and capital cities of Europe.



The Anatomy of a 'Great Spa Town'



The **Great Spa Towns of Europe** is inscribed on the World Heritage List with **Outstanding Universal Value** on the following criteria:

- Criterion (ii) *Influence on Modern European Towns.*
- Criterion (iii) *Taking the Cure; human health and mineral springs.*

UNESCO recommended that the "Great Spas of Europe", the original name of the project, should be changed to the **Great Spa Towns of Europe**.

The values of criterion (iv) 'A unique urban typology' and Criterion (vi) 'Vectors of transnational culture', were in the original project submission and remain a key part of the story of the **Great Spa Towns of Europe**.

See the full Statement of Outstanding Universal Value on page 41.

From mineral and thermal springs deep underground to elevated viewpoints reached by funicular, each of the Great Spa Towns share a number of "attributes" which all contribute to the unique feel of a Great Spa Town of Europe.

Leadership - Our People - in 2021 and 2022



Stefan Szirucsek

Chair of the Board since 2022

Mayor of Baden bei Wien

Stefan was elected as the Chairman of the GSTE Board of Mayors in June 2022.



Margret Mergen

Chair of the Mayors Steering Group until 2022

Lord Mayor of Baden-Baden

Mrs Mergen was the chair of the Mayors Steering Group from 2016 until just after inscription.



Chiara Ronchini

Secretary General from 2023

Chiara joined the Great Spa Towns of Europe in February 2023, having been appointed in late 2022. Chiara joins the GSTE from Historic Environment Scotland where she held posts as a Policy Manager and Scotland's Urban Past Project Manager.



Paul Simons

Secretary General until 2023

Paul has been with the Great Spa Towns of Europe since the beginning of the project in 2011. He became the Secretary General in 2013 and was responsible for seeing the project through inscription. In 2023 Paul became a Special Advisor to the GSTE until summer 2023.



Mayors' Steering Group, now The GSTE Board

The GSTE Board is made up of the Mayors of the eleven towns. At inscription and at the creation of the new Association in 2022, these were:

Baden bei Wien, AUSTRIA: Stephan Szirucsek, Mayor

Spa, BELGIUM: Sophie Delettre, Mayor

Františkovy Lázně, CZECH REPUBLIC: Jan Kuchar, Mayor

Karlovy Vary, CZECH REPUBLIC: Andrea Pfeffer Ferklová, Mayor

Mariánské Lázně, CZECH REPUBLIC: Martin Kalina, Mayor

Vichy, FRANCE: Yves-Jean Bignon, Vice Mayor

Bad Ems, GERMANY: Oliver Krügel, Mayor

Baden-Baden, GERMANY: Margret Mergen, Lord Mayor

Bad Kissingen, GERMANY: Dr. Dirk Vogel, Lord Mayor

Montecatini Terme, ITALY: Luca Baroncini, Mayor

City of Bath, UNITED KINGDOM: Ruth Malloy, Councillor

Local political changes mean that every so often the Great Spa Towns of Europe welcomes new members to its Board.

*In March 2022, Dietmar Späth was elected as Lord Mayor of Baden-Baden, replacing Mrs Margret Mergen
In October 2022, Martin Hurajčík was elected as Mayor of Mariánské Lázně, Replacing Martin Kalina.*

International Steering Group

With representatives from all seven State Parties of the GSTE, the International Steering Group played a key role in the process of nomination and through to inscription. This group will become known as the Intergovernmental Committee from 2023 and will continue to act as an advisory panel.

Left to right: Gislaine deVillers (BE), Dita Limová (CZ), Birgitta Ringbeck, retired (DE), Ruth Pröckl (AT), Gilles Soubigou (FR).



Site Managers Group

The Site Managers Group (SMG) meets around four times per year and has established a number of sub-groups to develop specific topics. Delivering training and education needs is a key purpose of the SMG and building capacity and mutual support across all component sites remains a key objective to develop best practice. This group has been chaired by Tony Crouch since 2016.

Left to right
Back Row: Vladimír Kajlík (ML), Lisa Poetschki (BB) Julia Palotas (BE)
Front Row: Alexandra Harrer (BBW), Lucie Sochorková (KV), Jitka Ettler Štěpánková (FL), Tony Crouch (Bath), Rafaela Verdiccio (MT)
Hans Hornyik (BBW), Smriti Pant (BB), Anne Pirard (Spa), Anna Maria Boll (BK)



Tourism Officers Group

The Tourism Officers Group meets online four to six times per year, and is led by Klaus Lorenz (BBW). The group discusses tourism and marketing initiatives, especially attendance at travel shows such as World Travel Market in London and ITB Berlin.

Left to right: Spa's director of Tourism, Isabelle Grégoire, and Groups Manager Caroline Bloemers at World Travel Market in London in 2022.



Administration



Andrea Polak is based in the World Heritage Department in Baden-Baden and works part time for the Great Spa Towns of Europe. Her focus is on administration and supporting the Secretary General.

Marketing & Comms



Catherine Lloyd is responsible for marketing, press and communications within the Great Spa Towns of Europe. She is based in Canterbury in the UK. She is pictured with old-style British communications methods in Bad Ems!



1. Credibility



“As a transnational World Heritage Site the Great Spa Towns of Europe brings together 7 countries in their joint effort to safeguard and manage it. In this way world heritage generates and strengthens international cooperation which is at the heart of UNESCO’s mandate.”

Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Lazare Eloundou Assomo

1.1 Inscription

24th July 2021: The day finally arrived that so many had been waiting for - the 44th World Heritage Committee Meeting held online from Fuzhou, China. In the eleven towns, groups of people gathered around screens, and waited for the news - the Great Spa Towns of Europe was inscribed on the World Heritage List as a Serial Transnational World Heritage Site.

“The atmosphere was electric when the “Great Spa Towns of Europe” were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List on 24 July 2021 during the extended 44th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. What an incredible success!”

Margret Mergen



Margret Mergen, Lord Mayor of Baden-Baden and Chair of the Great Spa Towns of Europe Mayors' Steering Group and Mrs Nicole Razavi, Minister of Regional Development & Housing for the state of Baden-Württemberg celebrate the moment of inscription at a special outdoor event and concert outside the Kurhaus on 24th July 2021.



"The inscription recognises the exceptional significance of the European spa phenomenon and highlights the remarkable values of spa culture and architecture. It is a great honour for us - an inspiring example of transnational co-operation and partnership between all seven countries involved.

We are aware of the importance of sustainable preservation and presentation of this cultural heritage for future generations, and we are committed to ensuring that our common World Heritage property is conscientiously managed in the spirit of the convention."

Lubomír Zorálek, Minister of Culture, Czech Republic

Celebrating the 2021 Inscription

On 24th July, the announcement from the World Heritage Committee was eagerly awaited by the GSTE team in the Czech Ministry of Culture in Prague, and in town halls across Europe. Despite lingering restrictions still in place due to the Coronavirus pandemic, every town found a way to celebrate the great news about the World Heritage Inscription, either that weekend or soon afterwards!



In October 2021, Karlovy Vary hosted official celebrations, where mayors and site managers from all the towns were able to get together for the first time in person. A copy of the UNESCO certificate was presented to all the mayors.

“What we achieved this year is truly remarkable for many reasons....We proved to the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO that the European Spa Town phenomenon is worthy of international recognition”

Paul Simons, Secretary General



1.2 Presentations & Conferences

2021

16th September Termatalia - Ourense, Spain (hybrid)

- Klaus Lorenz: "Great Spa Towns of Europe Tourism"

21st October 2021 - Wiesbaden, Germany (hybrid)

EHTTA's European Thermal Heritage Day on Thermal Urbanism in the context of Therapeutic Landscapes.

- Paul Simons: "Thermal Urbanism in the Great Spa Towns"

13th October 2021 - Bath, UK

Presentations at Bath Royal Literary & Scientific Institute

- Barry Gilbertson, Chair of the City of Bath World Heritage Advisory Board on 50 years of UNESCO and the World Heritage convention
- Tony Crouch: "World Heritage management of the City of Bath"
- Paul Simons: "Importance of Bath's inclusion in the serial transnational project and what new aspects of spa heritage and landscape have been learnt during the process"

4th November 2021 - Vichy, France

European Days of Thermalism

- Chair of the Mayors' Steering Group, Margret Mergen attended a press conference.
- Paul Simons: "The Great Spa Towns of Europe – the story so far."
- Spa, Vichy and the GSTE were also represented on the panels.
- Film: "The story of the GSTE".

2022

4th May 2022 - Caldes de Montbui, Spain

EHTTA Café of Europe

- Julia Palotas presented Bad Ems and took part in the panel

June 2022 - Nottingham, UK

UK Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in the UK: Opportunities and Challenges

- Paul Simons: "The Great Spa Towns of Europe, UNESCO and the Cultural Route programme."

28th September 2022 - Ourense, Spain

International Congress on Thermal Tourism (Organisers were EHTTA, with the Participation of the UNWTO)

- Paul Simons: "The Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Spa Towns of Europe and took part in the "Heritage" Panel.
- GSTE Chair, Stefan Szirucsek was also present to introduce the GSTE.

October 2022 - Prague, Czechia

Karlovy Vary's Site Manager spoke at the 30th anniversary celebration of the inscription of Prague on the World Heritage List.

- Lucie Sochorková: "The Great Spa Towns of Europe and World Heritage management."

October 2022 - Shanghai University, China (online)

Paul Simons spoke at the WHITRAP China conference dealing with serial transnational and large World Heritage sites". celebrating the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. The GSTE was compared with the Great Wall of China, the Silk Road, the Grand Canal China and the architectural works of Le Corbusier.

4th November 2022 - Ladek Zdroj, Poland (online)

EHTTA's European Thermal Heritage Day (Therapeutic Landscape/Parks and Gardens)

- Keith Rowe: "A Renaissance for Sydney Gardens, Bath."
- Anke Matthys: Revival of the thermal heart of Vichy - Restoration of the "Parc des Sources" and renovation of its surroundings.



1.3 Trade Shows & Exhibitions

2022

March 2022 - ITB online

September 2022 - Termatalia, Ourense, Spain

- Shared stand with EHTTA and other individual members, eg Spa following the International Congress on Thermal Tourism in Ourense

November 2022 - World Travel Market, London, UK

- Stand hosted by Spa and Wallonia.be
- Spa, Bath, ML, Montecatini Terme were all present on other stands throughout the exhibition.



1.4 Special Projects

Paul Simons and Baden-Baden were involved in “The European Spa as a Transnational Public Space and Social Metaphor (2019-2022)” is part of the HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area) funding initiative of the European Union devoted to the topic Public Spaces: Culture and Integration in Europe.

See section 4 below for details of further special projects carried out with EHTTA.

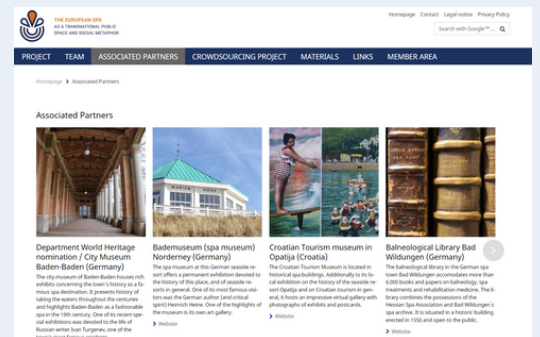


1.5 Sharing Experience & Best Practice

1.5.1 Sharing Experience

In the summer of 2022, GSTE Site Managers and experts joined the President of EHTTA’s Scientific Committee, Mario Crecente, on a mission to the Neptune Baths in Băile Herculane, Romania, which in 2022 was placed on Europa Nostra’s “7 Most Endangered Sites” list. The group had been asked to support the town’s mayor in finding out how to save the building and to provide expert advice.

In November 2022 the Chair of the GSMB and the Secretary General attended a meeting in Florence with officials from the Italian Ministry of Culture, representatives of the office of the President of the Region of Tuscany, the province of Pistoia, the commune of Montecatini Terme and other heritage agencies. This high-level intervention was to consider the future of the Montecatini Terme spa company (Terme di Montecatini S.p.A.). The meeting resulted in a successful outcome to ensure the future operation of the company.



1.5.2 Making a difference

ICCROM has presented the example of the GSTE's mapping of attributes and the identification of the elements supporting the attributes, as an example of best practice and are using this in current training courses concerning the new guidelines and toolkit on impact assessments.

1.6 National World Heritage Events

In October 2022, Baden bei Wien organised a conference to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Austria signing the World Heritage Convention, and the 50th Anniversary of the Convention itself. Delegates heard a message from Lazare Eloundou Assomo, Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, referencing international co-operation in the Great Spa Towns of Europe.

World Heritage expert, and Baden bei Wien councillor, Prof. Hans Hornyk was awarded the Austrian Monument Protection Medal 2022 “for the development of the Lower Austrian protection zone model. In his commitment as a city councilor in Baden, the preservation of monuments and the cityscape is a particular concern of his. Most recently, as World Heritage Commissioner, together with experts from the city of Baden, he successfully nominated the city as part of the "Great Spas of Europe" as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A protection zone model was developed for the whole of Lower Austria, which is now used in a large number of historic towns and markets.” Hans is pictured here with Ruth Pröckl, the incoming chair of the new GTSE Intergovernmental Committee and head of National Coordination World Heritage Austria.

Also in October, some GSTE members and experts attended the World Heritage UK’s conference at Jodrell Bank.



1.7 Collaboration

The GSTE continues to work closely with its partner organization, the European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA), one of the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes, and is collaborating on joint tourism and promotional opportunities with the UNWTO and the European Travel Commission. EHTTA holds annual heritage events where the GSTE has been able to focus on training and knowledge sharing.

Post script: United Nations Postal Administration GSTE series



In September 2022, The United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) added to its World Heritage stamp series with a set of stamps showcasing the Great Spa Towns of Europe. The set included six stamps and three special booklets. Each stamp featured a photograph of six of the GSTE towns as follows:

1. Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic (60¢)
2. Montecatini Terme, Italy (\$1.40)
3. Spa, Belgium (CHF 1,10)
4. Vichy, France (CHF 1,50)
5. Baden-Baden, Germany (€1,00)
6. Baden bei Wien, Austria (€ 1,80)



2. Conservation

BAINS

2.1 UNESCO Evaluation Report Recommendations

4. Recommends that the States Parties give consideration to the following, by means of a submission of a minor boundary modification:

- a. Adjusting the boundaries of the property in the Mitterberg and Badener Berg areas in Baden bei Wien and extending the protection zone under the Construction Plan to include the entirety of the property in this component part,
- b. Adjusting the boundaries of the component part that are still drawn down the middle of streets in Montecatini Terme to include the building plots on the other side of the street and extending the protection statute to the entirety of this component part,
- c. Extending the northern part of the buffer zone of Karlovy Vary to ensure adequate protection from future development, particularly from a visual perspective,
- d. Extending the buffer zone around the train station in Vichy, taking into account the protected perimeters of the surroundings of existing historic monuments;

5. Also recommends that the States Parties give consideration to the following:

- a. Confirming that the component parts of Bad Ems and Bad Kissingen are legally protected in their entirety as urban conservation areas,
- b. Extending the ZPU in Spa to cover the entirety of the World Heritage property in this component part,
- c. Formally approving and implementing the Local Management Plans for the three Czech component parts and ensuring their articulation with existing planning documents,
- d. Implementing the Local Management Plans at Vichy and Bad Ems,
- e. Reviewing the management plan of the City of Bath so that its fourth iteration takes into account both its inscription on the World Heritage List in its own right and its inscription as one of the component parts of The Great Spas of Europe,
- f. Appointing site managers for all component parts that have not yet done so and ensuring that their role is clear and adapted to the needs of managing a World Heritage property,
- g. Extending and further detailing the monitoring programme for the property as a whole,
- h. Introducing Heritage Impact Assessment procedures into the management system of each component part to address the potential impacts of development projects,
- i. Considering how the role of the Great Spas Management Board might be refined to allow full understanding by all States Parties of major development proposals in all component parts, in relation to their potential cumulative impacts on the property as a whole;

6. Requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;

7. Decides that the name of the property in English be changed to “The Great Spa Towns of Europe”.

2.2 Developing a Joint Monitoring System

One of the main challenges within the recommendations adopted by the World Heritage Committee when the GSTE was inscribed in 2021 is that to extend and further detail the monitoring programme for the property as a whole. This is both a challenge and an opportunity. Within the existing monitoring system across the seven State Parties and the associated federal structures, there is great variance of current practice and methodology. All systems however are aimed at achieving the same ends – that of maintaining an adequate and comprehensive record of the conditions of authenticity and integrity. Monitoring measures and records changes to the attributes and their elements.

Whilst acknowledging current differences in approach across the 11 components of the GSTE the opportunity to share best practice and to work together in teams on future monitoring exercises and to develop greater consistency or monitoring in all components is the challenge laid down in this recommendation. Progress needs to be submitted in the next State of Conservation Report.

2.3 State of Conservation Report

The State of Conservation Report was submitted to the World Heritage Centre by the Czech Ministry on 1st December 2022, in preparation for the report and its response to be discussed at the extended 45th World Heritage Committee in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in September 2023. The report explains in detail how the Great Spa Towns of Europe have worked through the UNESCO post-inscription recommendations listed in 2.1 above.

The report highlights the complexity of the Great Spa Towns of Europe, a Serial Transnational World Heritage Site composed of living urban centres, each with economic development, social and tourism pressures as well as an individual and collective responsibility to protect and manage the heritage and the OUV of the Great Spa Towns of Europe. Three interlinked, complicated issues remain for further development, namely (1) Impact Assessment, (2) Heritage Monitoring, and (3) Reporting the cumulative impact of development in all 11 towns.

These issues, and others have been the subject of the Site Managers' **Urban Planning Workshop Series**, and a special **Workshop/Training on Heritage Impact Assessments**, which are reported in more detail in section 3.1 below.

2.4 Conservation in Action

2.4.1 Baden bei Wien

Restoration of the Kurpark, including the Music Pavilion and Somertheatre, with its ingenious sliding roof. The Music Pavilion restoration revealed huge sash windows which could be lowered below ground level.



2.4.2 Spa

The long-awaited restoration and extension of the Ancient Thermal Baths continued in 2022. The complete restoration and rebuilding of the ornate metalwork in the Leopold II Gallery also continued and work on the surrounding Parc de Sept Heures progressed in 2022.



2.4.3 Františkovy Lázně

Significant investment took place in the extensive parklands which characterise Františkovy Lázně, including restoration of statues, new paths and seating areas.



2.4.4 Karlovy Vary

Restoration of the Hot Spring Hall and the conversion of the Imperial Spa to a performance space really got underway in 2022, the wrought iron Festival Bridge underwent a thorough renewal, and the Castle Tower, which now houses the World Heritage Information Centre was opened. Restoration of the Hot Spring Colonnade was started in 2021, and on the outskirts of the town, the Goethe Lookout tower has been restored and re-opened.



2.4 Conservation in Action

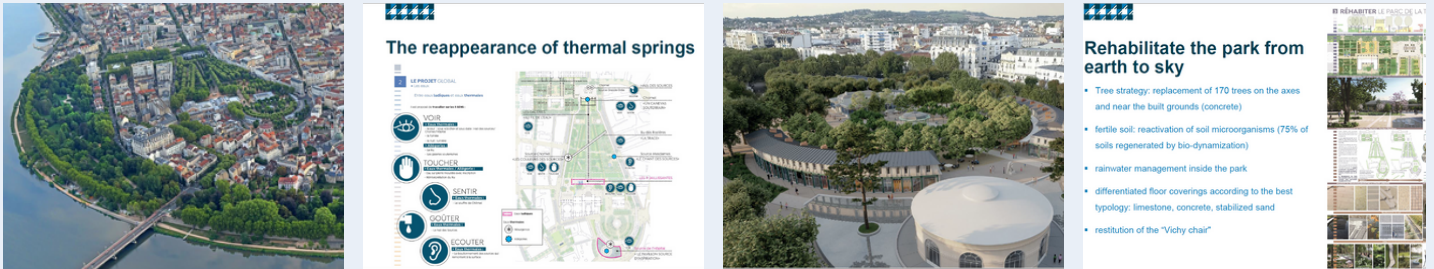
2.4.5 Mariánské Lázně

Repairs started on the Lesní Mlýn Hotel ballroom and the Rudolf Spring Pavilion in Mariánské Lázně to restore them to their former glory. The Hamelika stone tower was also restored and reopened.



2.4.6 Vichy

Vichy's Site Manager, Anke Matthys shared the newly-developed, extensive and exciting plans for the restoration of the spa park in the heart of Vichy at EHTTA's European Thermal Heritage Day in 2022.



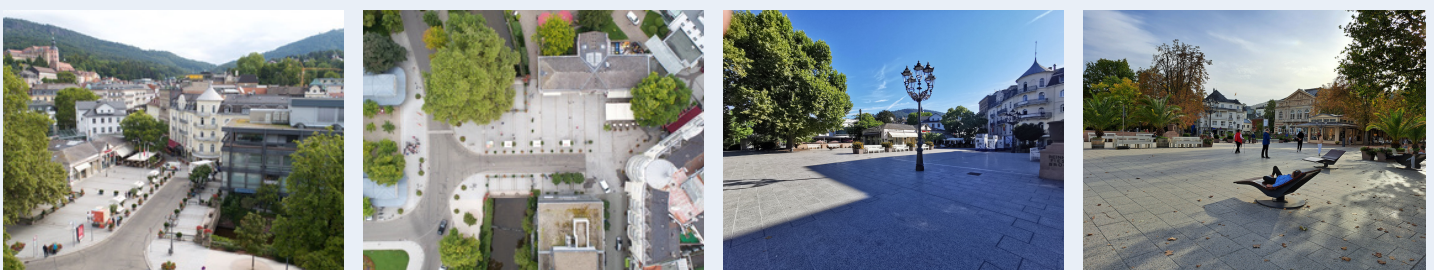
2.4.7 Bad Ems

Some major spa infrastructure projects which commenced in 2002 included restoration of the historic drilling platform (with community involvement) and the internal works starting on the Quellenturm (spring tower) which will provide district heating from the thermal waters. The 'House with the Four Towers' was sold for development.



2.4.8 Baden-Baden

The Casino has undergone some restoration, and there has been a major refurbishment of the public realm space, known as the Fieser-Brücke where the main connection between the town and the Kurhaus area crosses over the river OOS.



Stadt Baden-Baden

2.4 Conservation in Action

2.4.9 Bad Kissingen

Extensive restoration of the former Kurhaus took place in 2021 and 2022. An important site opposite the Kurpark was released for development for a new hotel, and plans to restore the former abattoir were approved.



2.4.10 Montecatini Terme

The GSTE was involved in raising funds to support the spa company to enable it to develop plans for the regeneration of the Leopoldine baths and the future conservation of the Tettuccio Terme structure (pictured below). In October 2022 work started on restoration of Galileo Chini's wall paintings and stuccos in the central staircase of the Town Hall, and restoration of the wall paintings in the hall on the first floor. These works are being done in partnership with the 'Palazzo Spinelli-Istituto per l'arte e il restauro', based in Florence.



2.4.11 City of Bath

An extraordinary period of restoration in the City of Bath meant that several major projects came to fruition in Bath in 2021 and 2022, most with funding from the UK's National Lottery Heritage Fund.

- Development of the Clore Learning Centre and World Heritage Visitor Centre using historic spa infrastructure adjacent to the Roman Baths (Archway Project).
- Cleveland Pools - restoration of the UK's first lido (open-air swimming pool) built in 1815.
- Footprint Project in Bath Abbey - reusing thermal energy from waste water from the Roman Baths for heating.
- Restoration of Sydney Gardens - "Parks for People" Project by LDA Design Consulting
- Bathscapes - landscape partnership providing increased access to the therapeutic landscape re-started in 2021
- Beckfords Tower was awarded money in 2022 to restore this iconic landmark and provide a new visitor centre, dealing with issues of slavery and colonialisation.



Bath World Heritage



James Newton



Suzy Slemen



by
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2.5 Conservation Challenges

Only recently have the effects of increasing temperature, increased rainfall resulting in flood events and wild fires become a concern to the Great Spa Towns of Europe.

Adjustments to risk management strategies and responsiveness are developing quickly with political will wishing "to be seen to be doing something about it". This may however lead to conflicts with heritage protection measures in the future. Climate adaptation plans for the towns would need to go hand-in-hand with heritage protection measures, to ensure the long-lasting preservation of the GSTE's outstanding heritage.

The Great Spa Towns of Europe continues to work with the States Parties, to develop an understanding of how to apply new policies which are emerging, concerning the impacts of climate change. Where these policies apply to the GSTE towns, there is an opportunity to develop pilot projects and good practice in heritage management and monitoring in the future.

In July 2021, just before inscription, severe floods engulfed parts of northern Europe, including the historic centre of Spa and the Francorchamps race circuit. This was followed by a severe drought during which several trees in the park were badly affected or died.

In December 2022 the river Avon broke its banks and flooded the newly restored Cleveland Pools. This flood was predicted as a once in 30 years occurrence but this has occurred three times in the last decade. The restoration of the pools was designed in such a way as to minimise such impact and was re-opened and ready for swimmers with clean water within 72 hours. Additional emergency climate legislation led to an additional € 650,000 of expenditure to the restoration project costs.

While climate-change-related wild fires are a potential threat in the wooded and moorland areas surrounding the towns, old-fashioned arson affected Baden-Baden in 2021, when a deliberately-set fire destroyed one of Baden-Baden's landmark thermal hotels, the Hotel Badischer Hof.

Sustainable Energy measures - solar and wind power have also begun to cause extensive discussions within the GSTE. Impacts on local biodiversity, including plant disease epidemics, have also become more frequent in the towns as climate changes.

Water management is likely to become a pressing issue in the future, not only in relation to the supply or mineral and thermal water to the spas, but also in relation to the management of parks and green spaces, and the care of trees. A good example of new management measures can be seen in Vichy's project to restore the spa park.

A good example of a flood protection scheme can be found in Bad Kissingen.





3. Capacity Building



3.1 Capacity Building

- increasing understanding through dialogue & exchange

3.1.1 Urban Planning Workshops Series

The Site Managers Group held a series of Urban Planning Workshops in 2021 and 2022, each with a set of defined aims prepared by a small working group who developed the series. The workshops were attended by members of the Site Managers Group, occasionally with other external experts, such as Tamás Fejérdy, Barry Gamble and Věra Kuchová.

Workshop I: Protection, Planning and Governance, 29th – 30th November 2021




- consolidation of the Site Managers’ understanding of their roles in relation to planning, and the need to have adequate policies, procedures and processes in place to address risk and opportunity from new developments within their spa towns

Workshop II: OUV, Attributes and Elements, 10th – 11th February 2022

- focus on establishing a common understanding of the OUV and criteria for inscription of the GSTE vis-à-vis those proposed in the nomination.

Workshop III: OUV, Attributes & Elements - Definitions & Management Implications, 19th-20th May 2022

- streamline the terminology and definitions of the attributes vis-à-vis the revised OUV and criteria for inscription;
- gain better understanding of the management implications of the Statement of OUV of the transnational serial world Heritage Property.

<p>1. Brief introduction to component part Františkovy Lázně</p> <p>a. Component part and buffer zone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Area of the component part (ha): 367• Area of the buffer zone (ha): 872  <p>The property is centred on the square plan of the historic spa town and contains the most important parts of the spa operation, reflecting its gradual development since the end of the 18th century until the 1930s.</p> <p>It coincides with the urban heritage reserve that consists of the built-up area of the spa centre and the therapeutic and recreational spa landscape in the east and west.</p> <p>Besides the inner spa landscape formed by natural landscape parks in the spa centre, there is an outer spa landscape with parks and forest parks surrounding the town and many spa trails which serve for spa therapy.</p>	<p>1. Bad Ems - Attributes & Principal Elements</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spa quarter in monocentric location• Closed spa ensembles on both banks of the river Lahn• visual integrity: close connection of the therapeutic landscape and the property	<p>The spa historic urban landscape is the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of 'historic centre' or 'ensemble' to include the broader urban context and its geographical centre [Article 8 HUI]</p>  <p>GREAT SPA TOWNS of Europe</p>
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3.1.2 Workshop on Impact Assessments, Prague, 22nd and 23rd November 2022

Monitoring, the consistent application of impact assessments and the measurement of the cumulative impacts, both harmful and of benefit, of urban development are issues that the GSTE is working to resolve.

Each of the eleven component sites are complex, living and economically vibrant urban centres, and the application of new approaches to the management of urban development through programmes such as the Historic Urban Landscapes initiative offer both opportunities and challenges. This remains a work-in-progress and all these issues were reviewed in a two-day workshop in Prague held on the 22nd and 23rd of November 2022, at which ICCROM and external consultants presented the latest approach and guidance on impact assessments with examples of good practice.

The response of the GSTE to these challenges has been developed through a series of Urban Planning Workshops. This series will culminate in a major conference on Urban Planning and Conservation in 2024 or 2025, where experience and knowledge will be shared across a wide range of experts and specialists. Such pressures are facing all urban centres globally and much further dialogue needs to be developed around these complex issues. UNESCO and its Advisory Body, ICOMOS, remain concerned as to the extent of urban development within properties focussed on urban centres and wish the GSMB and States Parties to inform them through the State of Conservation reporting cycle of progress made in collecting data concerning the cumulative impact of ongoing development. This remains a most complex challenge and the GSTE wishes to play a full part in this important activity.



thermal water tasting
at the historic Terme
di Montecatini spa in
Tuscany.

4. *Communications*

▶ 294.4K^{*}

^{*}at July 2023

4.1 Press & TV Coverage

GSTE press releases between July 2021 and Dec 2022 have covered:

- July 2021 Inscription success
- April 2022 Launch of the new GSTE Association in Spa
- June 2022 Appointment of new Board Chairman
- July 2022 Search for a new Secretary General
- September 2022 General Assembly in Františkovy Lázně
- November 2022 Appointment of new Secretary General

Some highlights include:

- Widespread press and TV coverage in July 2024, following inscription, often including the Mariánské Lázně image as the main picture.
- Publication of the Google Arts and Culture platform Exhibition & World Heritage Magazine.
- Globetrotter TV series (Broadcast spring 2022)
- Huge travel piece in the Telegraph (UK) covering Baden bei Wien, Montecatini Terme, Karlovy Vary and Baden-Baden, April 2022.
- Press and TV coverage in Spa – April 2022.
- Extensive coverage over several months in print and on social media from the ETC Campaign
- Feature in the Visit Europe magazine (online)
- Press and social media articles as a result of the ETC campaign

Media Kits have been produced in all five languages of the Association.

4.2 Website and Social Media

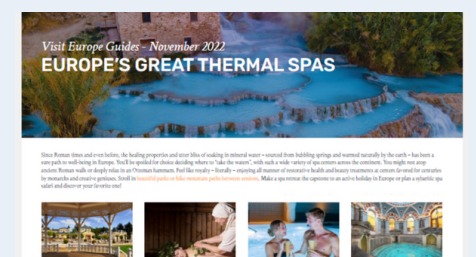
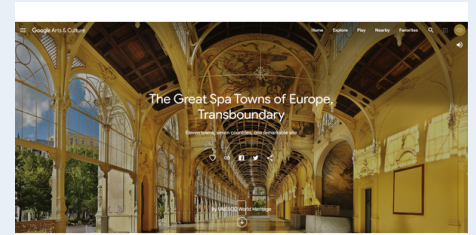
A brand new website, with a new URL, www.greatspatownsofeurope.eu was launched at inscription, and completed by the spring of 2022. Social Media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn were established with a consistent name and branding.

4.3 ETC Campaign

“Thermal Travels: Immerse Yourself in the Spa Culture of Europe” was a campaign co-funded by EHTTA, the European Travel Commission (VisitEurope) and the Great Spa Towns of Europe. This complex multi-media campaign ran for a period of 3 weeks from mid June to 15th July 2022.

It included:

- A dedicated landing page www.thermaltravels.com, with links to the Great Spa Towns of Europe on the home page. In the main 3 week period of the campaign the site had over 11,000 users.
- A series of press trips - see below for more details.
- Key visuals featuring several GSTE Towns promoted on social media.
- New video clip – this clip was created in English, German and French and featured several GSTE towns.
- Social media traffic-driving campaign – the results from the UK-based agency which ran the VisitEurope ads exceeded all expectations at the start of the campaign in terms of impressions, clicks and click through rate (CTR). The campaign ran in New York and Toronto, and a further campaign was developed for the DACH Market (Germany, Austria and Switzerland)
- Collaboration with Fitreisen, a German tour operator with target markets in German and French-speaking countries. A very competitive offer for hotels to be on the FitReisen website, was offered to all GSTE towns. Fitreisen produced newsletters and web materials for the campaign, and featured members that were on their website on the homepage.
- Post-campaign analytics were able to show travel booked and average spend of those travellers.
- Following the campaign, GSTE towns were featured in the ETC’s online magazine in November 2022, supported by a social media campaign.



4.3 Press & TV Trips in Collaboration with EHTTA

An important feature of 2022 was the joint projects developed with EHTTA, the European Historic Thermal Towns Association. These collaborative projects include:

Spring 2022:

Broadcast of the “**Amazing Spa Towns of Europe**” Series on **Globetrotter TV** episodes on 5 of the Great Spa Towns – reaching an audience of over 1 million viewers per episode on TV, and more online.

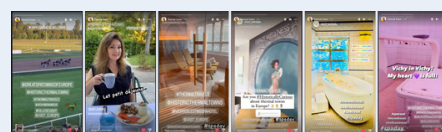
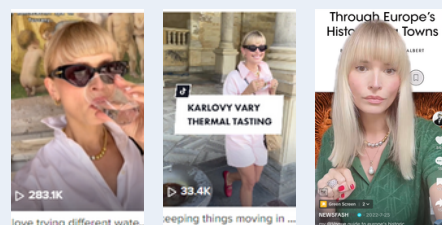
- Of the 7 towns visited by the Globetrotter team in Autumn 2021, five of them were from the GSTE - Montecatini Terme, Baden-Baden, Mariánské Lázně, Františkovy Lázně and Karlovy Vary.
- All episodes are also available on YouTube and on the Globetrotter and EHTTA websites, and the series has been seen by nearly 100,000 viewers around the globe, particularly the UK, USA, Japan and Australia.
- The social media around the series has had a reach of approx. 200,00 on Facebook, 280,000 on Twitter, and 12,00 on Instagram.



Summer 2022:

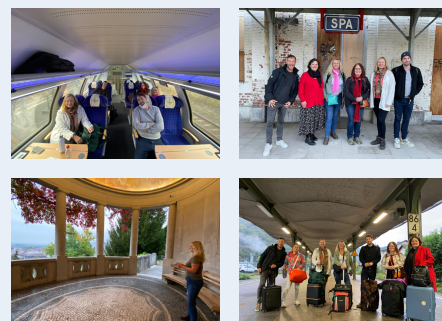
“Thermal Travels – immerse yourself in the Spa Culture of Europe” – an online campaign aimed at the USA market jointly funded by the European Travel Commission (visitEurope) and EHTTA, with a contribution from the GSTE.

- **Mosha Lundström Halbert**, Vogue.com – Montecatini Terme, Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně, Baden-Baden. Mosha’s main channel is TikTok – one of her posts, in the Tettuccio Terme has had nearly 300,000 views, and 45,300 likes. Her article on Vogue.com (a platform which has 15.8 million unique visitors per month) was published on 21st July 2022.
- **Alex Kallimanis**, blogger, Wanderlust Marriage – Baden bei Wien. Alex visited Greece for the ETC, but soon after was able to visit Baden bei Wien. He is most active on Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn with approx. 30,000 followers on each channel. His posts are long and detailed, great for culture and heritage enthusiasts, and he loves the subject!
- **Ava Roxanne Stritt**, USA Today and other publications - Vichy. Ava, “Spa Travel Gal”, has been called “the most influential person in the world on spa travel and atop authority on luxury travel.” She is also a journalist writing for USA Today and a number of other publications. The first of her articles was published in a glossy magazine, Lake Murray Lifestyle. Ava’s favoured medium was Instagram stories.



Autumn 2022

A press trip where participants travelled only by train took place in October in collaboration with Eurail. The trip showed that it was possible to journey easily from Spa to Budapest via Bad Ems and Baden bei Wien by rail. The five journalists and bloggers have produced a variety of articles and social media coverage as a result of the trip.



4.5 Newsletter and print materials

The GSTE’s first newsletter, including a video Christmas card was distributed in December.

GSTE towns feature in EHTTA’s “Themekits” and other brochures, while new publications have been developed to take to exhibitions such as Termatalia.

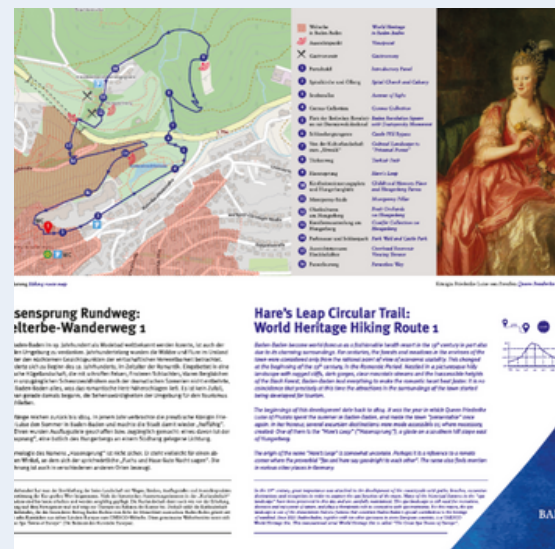


4.6 Communicating World Heritage and Local Engagement

During 2022, especially as Europe emerged from the pandemic, there were more opportunities to engage local communities and to meet the public to celebrate and explain this new World Heritage Site.

Communication with local people and visitors has taken many forms:

- Exhibitions with special themes
- Dedicated World Heritage information centres
- Pop up stands at local events
- Permanent and semi-permanent outdoor exhibitions
- World heritage-themed guided walks
- Brochures and booklets, some for children and young people
- Increased and dedicated social media presence
- World Heritage messages on local websites
- Branded signage and banners at town entrances, on roundabouts and throughout the town
- Brown signs on motorways
- Merchandising – special GSTE drinking cups sold in several towns.
- Royal visits
- Projects for younger audiences
- Talks, lectures, and education events
- Celebratory events
- Exchanges and informal twinning arrangements between the towns – from school children to the Mayors themselves



5. Communities



WIR SIND WELTERBE

5.1 Celebrating World Heritage in 2022

ICOMOS and the UN celebrate the **International Day For Monuments and Sites**, also known as **World Heritage Day** on 18th April, but within the Great Spa Towns of Europe celebrations took place on different days throughout the year.

Some chose to celebrate the 24th July, the first anniversary of the Inscription of the Great Spa Towns of Europe on the World Heritage List, and others, such as the three German towns, aligned with the national World Heritage Day on 6th June. There were some proud moments as the official UNESCO certificates were presented to the Municipalities by State Party representatives. Other events celebrating World Heritage also took place around the 50th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention and on European Heritage Open Days.

5.1.1 Baden bei Wien

Baden bei Wien celebrated their “Welterbifest” or World Heritage Festival on 23rd April with a community event in the Kurpark. A special UNESCO-themed postage stamp designed by Anita Kern was also unveiled, featuring the former Kurhaus, today's Congress Centre, which was the backdrop for the event. The summer's Festival of Roses, which included a concert in the spectacularly-lit Rosarium also took the theme of the Great Spa Towns of Europe.



5.1.2 Spa

Spa's celebrations of world heritage have included a Royal visit by King Philippe & Queen Mathilde, where they also celebrated the 100th anniversary of Spa's famous waters - Spa Monopole and SPA Reine. A delegation from Vichy arrived in April to sign an official friendship pact between the two towns. European Heritage Days was celebrated in September with several events, and school children visited the Council Chamber to sign a charter to become Ambassadors of Heritage.



5.1.3 Františkovy Lázně

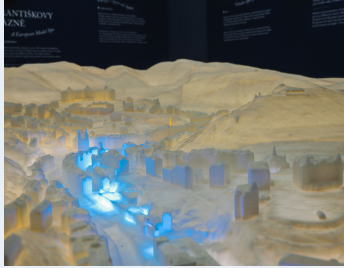
The first opening of the Spa season as a member of the GSTE was celebrated on 21st May, and coincided with the 210th anniversary of the first visit of the Emperor Francis I. – the founder of Františkovy Lázně. In June, a special exhibition marked the 100th anniversary of the opening of the museum and coincided with the Museum Night and Night of Churches. A new guide to the town with themed walks was issued for European Heritage Days 2022 and promoted at Seeburg Castle in September.



5.1 Celebrating World Heritage in 2022

5.1.4 Karlovy Vary

Karlovy Vary celebrated its world heritage on 25th June with the opening of the new World Heritage Centre and its new Great Spa Towns of Europe exhibition in the restored historic Castle Tower in the centre of the town.



5.1.5 Mariánské Lázně

Mariánské Lázně's annual programme of spa celebrations, from the Spa Opening Ceremony in May to the Spa Festival and numerous musical, gastronomic and themed festivals events celebrate the spa town and now the World Heritage status. Many of the events take place in or near the iconic Main Colonnade. Special architecture walks took place in 2022 to show residents and visitors the key buildings that contribute to the town's inclusion in the Great Spa Towns of Europe.



KIS Mariánské Lázně

5.1.6 Vichy

Vichy celebrated the first anniversary of the World Heritage inscription with its "Fête UNESCO" - a special themed event, attended by an official delegation from Montecatini Terme. Vichy residents were treated to the spectacle of flag throwers from the City of Florence, and were able to enjoy music made by Italian musicians as well as some fine gastronomy.



L.Plancke

5.1.7 Bad Ems

Bad Ems celebrated the presentation of their UNESCO certificate in style in the Marble Hall on 15th May, as guests assembled for music, talks and discussions. The wider community also came together with people from all over the country to celebrate Rhineland-Palatinate Day on June 18th (see image on page 28).



5.1 Celebrating World Heritage in 2022

5.1.8 Baden-Baden

Baden-Baden's World Heritage Day on 5th June 2022 was a spectacular programme including Groups in historical costumes strolling through the spa garden, a tea dance with the Baden-Baden Salon Orchestra, eating like the Romans in the Roman bath ruins. There was an extensive programme of free visits and guided walks through the world heritage property, as well as theatre performances and World Heritage films, and a Philharmonic concert in the evening.



5.1.9 Bad Kissingen

Stadt Baden-Baden

Bad Kissingen held its World Heritage day in June. Information points, merchandise brochures and quizzes were on offer as well as opportunities for people to say how they feel about living in a 'great spa town'. Historic VIPs even checked in - Theodor Fontane, King Ludwig III and Prince Regent Luitpold von Bayern. A special event was also held for the presentation of the UNESCO certificate to the Municipality.



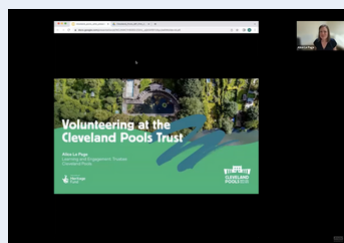
5.1.10 Montecatini Terme

Montecatini Terme celebrated their special relationship with Vichy in the autumn, when vintage cars drove from Vichy to Montecatini Terme. GSTE Chair Stefan Szirucsek was there to welcome the delegation.



5.1.11 City of Bath

The City of Bath World Heritage Site organised a day's programme of Zoom presentations on 22 April 2022 that showcased local and UK World Heritage and marked the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. The event featured five talks demonstrating the breadth and variety of Bath's local heritage and introduced of the UK's World Heritage Sites, including the City of Bath and the Great Spa Towns of Europe.



5.3 Youth Involvement

University of Vigo annual lectures

The Secretary General gave a presentation at the University of Vigo in September 2022 during a PhD research programme concerning “Thermal Cities from the Perspective of Endogenous Development; the cases of Bath, Chaves and Vichy.”

DAAD project: Student Exchange Programme

In March 2022, students from the University of A Coruña (Spain) visited Baden-Baden with students from the nearby Pforzheim Hochschule to take part in seminars and to meet local industry managers to learn about the management of thermal waters. The Great Spa Towns for Europe was presented on guided walks and presentations.



5.4 Engaging Younger People

The Roman Baths **Clore Learning Centre** opened in 2022, giving school children and local community groups a chance to learn about the fascinating history of Roman Britain where it actually happened. The innovative Investigation Zone allows children to have a go at being mini archaeologists, excavating replica Roman artefacts and taking part in hands-on learning activities amongst real Roman archaeology.

Františkovy Lázně, and several other towns including Baden-Baden and Baden bei Wien have developed special campaigns on social media on the theme of **#myworldheritage**. This one for young people between the ages of 3 and 18 was a competition with great prizes for the winners.

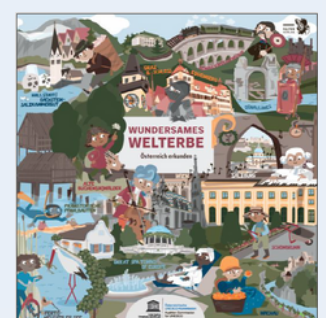
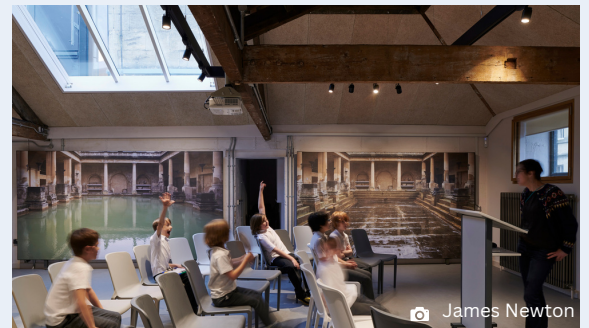
Baden bei Wien and Karlovy Vary have been part of an Erasmus+/Culture Connected **cross-border project** since 2021. In 2022 students from the two towns took part in a project celebrating the gastronomy of the two towns, producing a digital cookbook with GSTE-World Heritage recipes. Public engagement is very much part of this project, which will continue into 2023/24 and will take on a theatre theme and will include students from the City of Bath.

Baden-Baden have developed a series of guided walks and special events for younger people, along with a special “World Heritage in Baden-Baden” **children’s brochure**.

In Austria, the Great Spa Towns of Europe have featured in a special **book** on world heritage for children. It was developed by the Austrian UNESCO Commission and published by Falter Verlag.

Next page:

Some of the Great Spa Towns of Europe have used their magnificent buildings and even fountains to tell stories about their heritage.





Karlovy Vary



Vichy



Bad Kissingen



Montecatini Terme



6. Resources

6.1 Governance

The Great Spa Towns of Europe underwent major changes in its governance in 2022.

6.1.1 Creation of the Great Spa Towns of Europe Association

Having gained inscription in 2021, the group of 11 towns were obliged to form a new Association complete with new statutes and a new structure.

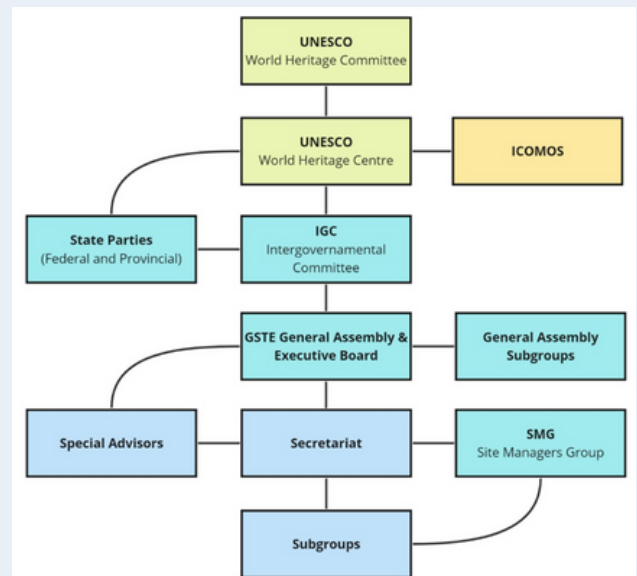
- The International Steering Group (ISG) became the Inter-Governmental Committee (IGC), working under an agreed Memorandum of Understanding.
- The Mayors' Steering Group (MSG) became the General Assembly.
- A new Executive Board was created.

The new Association, a European not-for-profit association with a new management structure, was announced in Spa, Belgium on 27th April 2022. The new Association, with new Statutes signed by all eleven towns, was registered under Austrian law, on 30th August 2022.

The process was finally completed with the acceptance of the new Statutes at the Association's first General Assembly in Františkovy Lázně on 4th September 2022.

The Great Spa Towns of Europe Association has five tiers (bodies) of governance, as follows:

1. **Inter-Governmental Committee (IGC)** of the 7 State Party World Heritage Focal Points or similar heritage representative.
2. **GSTE General Assembly** - the management board of 11 Mayors, or other political representative, of the 11 component sites.
3. **GSTE Executive Board** comprised of 4 Mayors; the Chair, 2 Vice-Chairs, 1 Finance Director. Secretary General is co-opted.
4. **GSTE Site Managers Group (SMG)** - responsible for the implementation of Property Management Plan.
5. **Secretariat** - responsible for supporting the whole system, coordinating the Property Management Plan and Action Plan implementation.



6.1.2 New Chair

In June 2022, the Association faced a change in political leadership as the previous leader of the Mayor's Steering Group, the Lord Mayor of Baden-Baden, Margret Mergen was not re-elected in the municipality elections, and was therefore unable to become the first Chair of the new Association.

The newly-created Board of the Association, comprising the Mayors of the eleven towns, elected Stefan Szirucsek, the Mayor of Baden bei Wien Austria as the first Chair of the new Association, and this change was announced on 15th June 2022.

6.1.3 New Secretary General

The Secretary General of the Association, Paul Simons, who has been working with the Great Spa Towns of Europe since 2010 and has been the Secretary General since 2013, announced his forthcoming retirement early in 2022, and in the spring and summer, a global search for a new Secretary General was started. A wide and interesting set of candidates was reduced to a shortlist of five candidates who were interviewed by the Board, at the Association's first General Assembly in Františkovy Lázně in September. The successful candidate, Ms Chiara Ronchini, was introduced to the Members and the press in November 2022.

Chiara started her post on 13th February 2023, working with Paul Simons in his capacity as Special Advisor to the Great Spa Towns of Europe during an initial handover period.

6.1.4 The GSTE Office

In October 2022, a new part time administrator, Andrea Polak started working for both the Municipality of Baden-Baden World Heritage Section and the Great Spa Towns of Europe, providing administrative assistance for both organisations. The finances of the Association are also managed in Baden-Baden.

Catherine Lloyd was contracted for 12 hours per week in 2021 and 2022 to work on communications and marketing. Since 2010, Catherine has also worked with EHTTA, on a part-time basis, and this dual role has proved useful in joint projects.

6.2 Meetings

6.2.1 International Steering Group (ISG)

- 6th September 2022, Františkovy Lázně and online

6.2.2 Mayors' Steering Group (MSG)

- MSG 30 - 25th & 26th June 2021, Baden- Baden
- MSG 31 - 2nd October 2021, Karlovy Vary
- MSG 32 - 5th November 2021, Vichy
- MSG 33 - 16th February 2022, Baden bei Wien
- MSG 34 - 27th April 2022, Spa, Belgium*

* This was the last meeting of the Mayors' Steering Group. The major task of this meeting was to ratify the creation of the new Great Spa Towns of Europe Association.

6.2.3 General Assemblies

- First General Assembly, 6th September 2022, Františkovy Lázně

6.2.4 Site Managers Group Meetings

- SMG 21 - 25th and 26th June, Baden-Baden and online
- SMG 22 - 7th September 2021, online
- SMG 23 - 1st October 2021, Karlovy Vary and online
- SMG 24 - 6th November 2021, Vichy and online
- SMG 25 - 28th April 2022, Spa
- SMG 26 - 7-8 September 2022, Františkovy Lázně

6.2.5 Other working groups and sub-groups :

- Trademark Protection Working Group
- Urban Planning Workshops Group
- Tourism Officers Group



6.3 Finances/Budgets

The Great Spa Towns of Europe has a central budget of approx. € 135.000 per annum. This funding comes from the member towns, which pay an annual fee, calculated in proportion to the population of each town.

In addition there is a certain amount of direct expenditure locally within each component spa town, covering items such as

- match funding for capital projects
- staffing costs (Site Managers), plus the time of other officers such as Tourism and Planning officers
- education
- promotion and marketing
- world heritage centres

Further details can be found in the auditor's reports for 2021 and 2022 in Annexe 2.

Great Spa Towns of Europe Milestones

- 1987
2005
- City of Bath inscribed as a World Heritage Site.
Luhačovice in Czech republic submits (an unsuccessful) nomination to become a World Heritage Site, and others start to think about applying.
- Nov 2010
Jan 2011
- Following a landmark international conference held in Baden-Baden in November 2010, called “European Health Resorts and Fashionable Spas of the 19th Century” a working group was established by the Mayors of 16 spa towns to carry out the proposed study - they first met in Paris in January 2011.
- May 2011
- "Important European Spas as Potential Candidates for Serial Nomination for Inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List": International Consultative Round Table Meeting of Experts held in Karlovy Vary to compare urban and architectural values of the West Bohemian Spa Triangle and important spas in Europe.
- from 2013
- Seven State Parties established an International Steering Group under Czech leadership to develop a comparative analysis and draft a nomination. State Parties, Experts and Mayors worked on a global comparative analysis for 6 years, identifying 40 possible spa towns, reduced to 16 and then finally eleven “Great Spas of Europe”
- 22/01/2019
- Nomination Dossier signed by all eleven mayors and delivered to ICOMOS in Paris, by the GSE Mayors, initiating a year-long evaluation of the application. (The final outcome was delayed from 2020 to 2021 due to the COVID pandemic).
- Sept 2019
- ICOMOS Evaluation Mission to all 11 towns with experts:
Prof. Marieke Kuipers NL. and Dr. Tamás Fejérdy HU.
- 24/07/2021
- Success! Inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List as the Great Spa Towns of Europe Serial Transnational site at the 44th Extended World Heritage Committee (Online from Fuzhou, China).
- 01/10/2021
- Formal Inscription celebrations held in person in Karlovy Vary and presentation of the official UNESCO certificate.
- 30/08/2022
- Official registration of the Great Spa Towns of Europe Association, registered in Baden bei Wien, Austria
- 06/09/2022
- First General Assembly of the Great Spa Towns of Europe Association, held in Františkovy Lázně, Czechia.



7. *Tourism*

Tourism

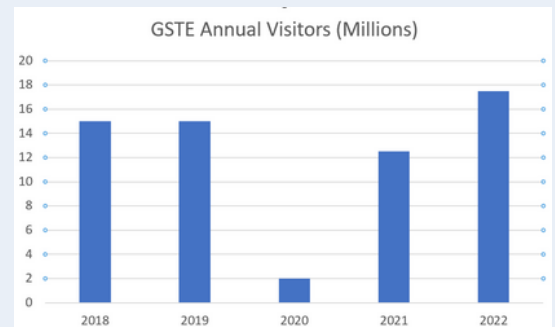
European spa towns can demonstrate a tradition of hosting international visitors right back to Roman times in many cases, and the GSTE members are among the earliest purpose-built tourism destinations in Europe, having been attractive destinations for long before the seaside was popular. As the original health resorts the spa towns are very used to and experienced in visitor management. All the Great Spa Towns of Europe are well provided with good transport links, a wide range of very good accommodation, including thermal hotels, visitor information centres, guided walks, online tours, tourism packages, and of course spa facilities which attract good quality visitors all year round. The average length of stay is two nights.

The inscription of the GSTE has given the towns an extra layer of visibility and promotional ability, and nearly all have taken advantage of the World Heritage status to provide new facilities, promotional materials, and even to invest in hotel facilities, transport infrastructure, and improvements to signage etc.

7.1 Visitor numbers

Collection of consistent Visitor Data in the Great Spa Towns of Europe is a project that is still in development.

The Great Spa Towns of Europe currently receive approximately 15.5 million visitors per year.



7.2 Tourism Officers Group

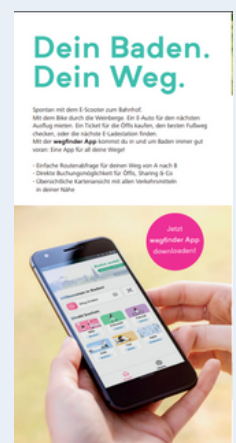
Representatives of the tourism officers and Direct Marketing Organisations (DMOs) of each of the towns meet every 6-8 weeks, under the leadership of Klaus Lorenz, the Director of Tourism in Baden bei Wien, to discuss tourism-related and marketing initiatives and issues in the Great Spa Towns of Europe. Their valuable perspective is sought on public-facing projects such as attendance at International Travel Trade events.

The group has also done a great deal of groundwork to define target markets, develop the GSTE website and to start to share information on sustainable and responsible tourism projects.

7.3 Responsible tourism initiatives

Many of the Great Spa Towns of Europe are already sustainable destinations, well-connected by train, and with plenty of walking, hiking and cycling routes in and around the towns. Heat from 'waste' thermal water, is also being used creatively. Initiatives include:

- Sustainable transport schemes such as the First/Last Mile mobility concept launched in 2022 in Baden bei Wien: , 70-E-Scooters, 30 E-Citybikes, 10 E-Trekking bikes, 18 E-Mountain bikes all bookable via one mobile app.
- Bicycle rental schemes in Spa, Františkovy Lázně, Bad Ems
- Bath's restored Cleveland Pools, launched in 2022, will use a water source heat pump instead of gas boilers to utilise energy from the River Avon to heat the pool water. No cars will be permitted, and the site will only be accessible by cycling or walking along the canal.
- Also in Bath, the multi-millions pound Footprint Project at Bath Abbey uses thermal water from the Roman Baths to heat the Abbey and its new Discovery Centre.
- Some major festivals and events in the GSTE run as carbon neutral events - a good example is the Festival La Gacilly-Baden Photo.





Annexes

Annexe 1: The Great Spa Towns of Europe

Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

The Great Spas of Europe* bear an exceptional testimony to the European spa phenomenon, which gained its highest expression from around 1700 to the 1930s.

This transnational serial property comprises eleven spa towns located in seven countries: Baden bei Wien (Austria); Spa (Belgium); Karlovy Vary, Františkovy Lázně and Mariánské Lázně (Czechia); Vichy (France); Bad Ems, Baden-Baden and Bad Kissingen (Germany); Montecatini Terme (Italy); and City of Bath (United Kingdom). The series captures the most fashionable, dynamic and international spa towns among the many hundreds that contributed to the European spa phenomenon.

Whilst each spa town is different, all the towns developed around mineral water sources, which were the catalyst for a model of spatial organisation dedicated to curative, therapeutic, recreational and social functions. Ensembles of spa buildings include baths, pump rooms, drinking halls, treatment facilities and colonnades designed to harness the water resources and to allow its practical use for bathing and drinking. 'Taking the cure', externally and internally, was complemented by exercise and social activities requiring visitor facilities such as assembly rooms, casinos, theatres, hotels, villas and related infrastructures (from water piping systems and salts production to railways and funiculars). All are integrated into an overall urban context that includes a carefully managed recreational and therapeutic environment of parks, gardens, promenades, sports facilities and woodlands. Buildings and spaces connect visually and physically with their surrounding landscapes, which are used regularly for exercise as a contribution to the therapy of the cure, and for relaxation and enjoyment.

Criterion (ii): The Great Spas of Europe exhibits an important interchange of innovative ideas that influenced the development of medicine, balneology and leisure activities from around 1700 to the 1930s. This interchange is tangibly expressed through an urban typology centred on natural mineral springs and devoted to health and leisure. Those ideas influenced the popularity and development of spa towns and balneology throughout Europe and in other parts of the world.

The Great Spas of Europe became centres of experimentation which stayed abreast of their competitors by adapting to the changing tastes, sensitivities and requirements of visitors. Other than physicians, the principal agents of transmission were the architects, designers and gardeners who created the built and 'natural' environments framing spa life. As a result, the property displays important examples of spa architecture such as the 'kurhaus' and 'kursaal', pump rooms, drinking halls ('trinkhalle'), colonnades and galleries designed to harness the natural mineral water resource and to allow its practical use for bathing and drinking.

Criterion (iii): The Great Spas of Europe bears exceptional testimony to the European spa phenomenon, which has its roots in antiquity, but gained its highest expression from around 1700 to the 1930s. 'Taking the cure', either externally (by bathing) or internally (by drinking, and inhaling) involved a highly structured and timed daily regime and a combination of medical aspects and leisure, including entertainment and social activities (e.g. gambling, theatre, music, dancing) as well as taking physical exercise within an outdoor therapeutic spa landscape. These parameters directly influenced the spatial layout of spa towns and the form and function of spa buildings or 'spa architecture'. Urban parks and promenades allowed people taking the cure "to see and be seen" by others.

Integrity

The eleven component parts that comprise the serial property represent the most exceptional examples of European spa towns. All component parts share a set of determining characteristics formed during the most significant "culture-creating" phase of their history and development, the heyday period from around 1700 to the 1930s. Each and every one continues to function for the purpose for which it was originally developed.

The series illustrates the main stages of the development of the spa phenomenon, starting with the most influential spa towns in the 18th century, to the development of model spa towns in the 19th century, to towns that are testimony to the last stages of the phenomenon in the early 20th century.

Boundaries are determined in relation to the mapping of the attributes that convey Outstanding Universal Value, namely: the most important spa structures and buildings used for thermal-related activities; the social facilities and buildings for leisure and pleasure; accommodation facilities; related spa infrastructure; and the surrounding therapeutic and recreational spa landscape. Buffer zones are drawn both for the protection of spring catchments and important setting.

Annexe 1: The Great Spa Towns of Europe

Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, continued

Integrity, continued

All component parts and their constituent elements are generally in good condition. Elements requiring conservation either have works already planned, or are awaiting alternative uses, with their current state of conservation maintained. Upgrades and redevelopments made to keep pace with standards of services, hygiene and new spa technology, can create tensions with their conservation as historic buildings, and need to be carefully addressed. Challenges in the adaptive reuse and technical upgrading of industrial structures pose similar challenges.

Authenticity

The property meets the conditions of authenticity in terms of form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions, and location and setting.

All component parts express the Outstanding Universal Value of the property through a variety of common and highly authentic attributes: mineral springs, of great diversity, which maintain their natural physical qualities, including substance, location and setting; a distinct and highly legible spatial layout and a well-maintained location and setting that combine to retain an enduring spirit and feeling; spa architecture, that remains authentic in form and design, original materials and substance, even though some buildings have experienced change of use; the spa therapeutic landscape, which retains its form, design and function, and continues to be used for the purpose for which it was designed; spa infrastructure, much of which is either original or evolved on original principles and remains in use; continuing spa use and function despite the need to meet today's standards.

The veracity and credible expression of attributes embodied in structures that date from around 1700 to the 1930s, the principal period of contribution to Outstanding Universal Value, is further evidenced during substantial and sustained conservation works that are informed by expansive archival collections of plans, documents, publications and photographs held at each component part.

Protection and management requirements

Responsibility for the protection and management of each of the eleven component parts of the property rests with the national/regional government (in the case of Germany, with the government of the Länder, and local authorities of that State Party). Each component is protected through legislation and spatial planning regulations applicable in its State Party or individual province, as well as by a significant degree of public/charitable ownership of key buildings and landscapes.

Each component part has a property manager or coordinator and a Local Management Plan in place conforming to the overall Property Management Plan. An overall management system for the whole property has been established, with a Property Management Plan and Action Plan agreed by all stakeholders. An Inter-Governmental Committee, made up of national World Heritage Focal Points and/or a representative of the highest monument or heritage protection authority, keeps track of matters relating to the property. A Great Spas Management Board (GSMB), made up of the Mayors of the eleven components, is responsible for the operational coordination and overall management of the property in close consultation with the Inter-Governmental Committee. The Board sets and manages the budget for the overall management functions, monitors and reviews the Action Plan, approves and publishes an Annual Report, employs the Secretariat, and directs other activities for the property as a whole.

The Site Managers Group includes site managers for each component part, the Secretariat, and any specialist advisors. The Site Managers Group is essentially an expert group for debate and exchanges of experience and to advise the GSMB on relevant management issues. The international structure is supported and serviced by a Secretariat jointly funded by all the component parts.

An important concern will be to continue to develop cooperation and collaboration between the individual component parts and to ensure that the property as a whole is effectively managed and the overall management system is adequately resourced. Development pressures may be an issue since these are living cities which will need to continue to adapt and change to maintain their role as spa towns. Managing tourism so that it is truly sustainable may also become a challenge. A management approach at the landscape level, which considers the relationship between each component part, the buffer zone, and the broader setting is also needed to maintain views to, and from, the picturesque wider landscape.

24th July 2021

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1613/>

** Please note that within the text of the inscription, the term "Great Spas of Europe" is used. The GSTE A is not permitted to change the wording, and permission is being sought from UNESCO to update the Statement of OUV to include the inscribed name, the "Great Spa Towns of Europe".*

Annexe 2: Great Spa Towns²⁰ of Europe Association Audits

GSTEA Financial Audit 2021

Great Spa Towns of Europe
Financial Audit 2021 - Report

26 January, 2022
zoom-Meeting

Hans Hornyk, Baden bei Wien
Peter Weidisch, Bad Kissingen

I. Circumstances

Baden-Baden is responsible for the bookkeeping of the GSE.

Account balance 30 December, 2021:
Current account: € 13.061,42 (Sparkasse)
Account balance 31 December, 2021:
Day-to-day money: € 80.249,17 (Grenke Bank)

The audit of the trust account „Great Spa Towns of Europe“ was performed digitally as Zoom-Meeting on 26 January, 2021. For the control of the trust account all the bookkeeping including the bank statements as of the reporting date 26 January, 2021 were at disposal. The control was performed on the basis of all the bills of the payment transactions. The factual and calculative correctness of the bills was checked by drawing samples. All the receipts, bills and bookings were arranged in a precise, clear and comprehensible manner. The requested items and transactions were scanned and emailed to the auditors for review. There were no reasons for complaints whatsoever.

The total income for the 2021 financial year was 134.347,66 Euro and the total expenditure was 119.015,18 Euro.

In the year 2021 all the 11 participating towns paid their yearly contributions. Total: € 134.347,66. Corresponds to the decision of the MSG.

The keeping of a fiscal surveillance list was continued.

The division of the costs for fees and travel expenses was continued.

The account management by SG Paul Simons is clear and concise. The single items could be assigned to the respective items of the annual budget.

Simone Bruck, Lisa Poetschki and Paul Simons were at the disposal of the auditors and answered pertinent questions immediately and completely.

II. Proposals / Recommendations
No remarks.

III. Remarks
No remarks.

Baden bei Wien, 28.1.2022

Hans Hornyk

Bad Kissingen, 28.1.2022

Peter Weidisch M.A.

GSTEA Financial Audit, 2022

Great Spa Towns of Europe
Association

Financial Audit 2022 - Report

15 February, 2023, Baden-
Baden

Auditors: Ruth Malloy, Bath
Julia Palotas, Bad Ems

Present:
Chiara Ronchini, Paul Simons,
Lisa Poetschki, Simone Bruck.

I. Circumstances

Baden-Baden is responsible for the bookkeeping of the GSTEA.

Account balance 31 December, 2022:
Current account: € 116.153,19 (Sparkasse Baden-Baden
Gaggenau)

The amount available to carry forward to 2023 was adjusted by a deduction of € 7.500,00 to cover the costs of the Administrator for the 3 months from 1st October to 31st December 2022, as yet to be paid to Baden-Baden, and with the addition of € 990,76 receipt received from the European Travel Commission in 2023 which should be credited to 2022.

The carry forward figure to the 2023 budget is therefore € 109.643,95.

The audit of the trust account „Great Spa Towns of Europe“ was performed on 15 February 2023. For the control of the trust account all the bookkeeping including the bank Statements as of the reporting date 15 February, 2023 were at the disposal of the auditors. The control was performed on the basis of all the bills of the payment transactions. The factual and calculative correctness of the bills was checked by drawing samples. All the receipts, bills and bookings were arranged in a precise, clear and comprehensible manner. All the requests for additional clarification from the auditors, including items and transactions, were provided for review and additional questions answered. There were no reasons for complaints as to the accuracy and quality of the information provided. whatsoever.

The total income for the 2022 financial year was € 134.341,45 and the total expenditure was € 107.966,65.

In the year 2022 all the 11 participating towns paid their yearly contributions. Total: € 134.340,00 which corresponds to the decision of the MSG.

The keeping of a fiscal surveillance list was continued.

The division of the costs for fees and travel expenses was continued.

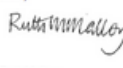
The account management by SG Paul Simons is clear and concise. The single items could be assigned to the respective items of the annual budget.


Simone Bruck, Lisa Poetschki and Paul Simons were at the disposal of the auditors and answered pertinent questions immediately and completely.

II. Proposals/ Recommendations
No remarks.

III. Remarks
No remarks.

IV. The auditors recommend that the Executive Board proceed as quickly as possible to comply with the recommendations of the bank and supply the requested personal details in order to establish a new account with credit card facilities. The Association's finances will not be able to operate efficiently in future without this facility.

Bath,

Ruth Malloy
Dated: 16-02-2023

Bad Ems,

Julia Palotas
Dated: 16.02.2023



GREAT
SPA TOWNS
of Europe



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The Great Spa Towns of Europe
Inscribed on the World
Heritage List in 2021

www.greatspatownsofeurope.eu

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