

Invitation

OWHC
VISBY
WORKSHOP
27-29 APRIL 2026



INVITATION

Dear all,

The OWHC Regional Secretariat for Northwest Europe and North America together with the OWHC Secretary General invites its active member cities to this interactive workshop in Visby/Sweden.

On the first day, we will address the topic of Heritage Futures in a workshop format which will be moderated by Prof. Cornelius Holtorf, UNESCO Chair Holder at Linnaeus University. We will explore the challenges of active peace work in the spirit of UNESCO in times of constant threat. Our aim is to provide inspiration and new perspectives for site managers and heritage professionals in our OWHC cities! A special focus will also be granted on the challenges in our host city Visby.

On the second day of the meeting, the OWHC invites the member cities for a New Urban Project (NUP) reflection. We will take the time to explain where we are with the elaboration process of the NUP-Program, which strategical and political orientations will have been validated. The Visby workshop will therefore be the opportunity to conduct a perception test to measure the relevance of the different components of the NUP's operational structure and to test with cities whether it meets their expectations and needs, as a program that targets the habitability of historical centers.

Dr. Matthias Ripp
Regional Coordinator

Mikhael de Thyse
Secretary General



WELCOME TO VISBY!

Visby on the Island of Gotland is a pearl in the middle of the Baltic Sea. A former Viking site, Visby was the main centre of the Hanseatic League in the Baltic from the 12th to the 14th century. Its 13th-century ramparts and more than 200 warehouses and wealthy merchants' dwellings from the same period make it the best-preserved fortified commercial city in northern Europe.

The walled town is still inhabited and surrounded by the modern city where much of the everyday life takes part. We will explore both sides of today's Visby and discuss heritage futures in our World Heritage cities.

A warm welcome to Gotland in April!

Meit Fohlin

Mayor

Louise Hoffman-Borgö

World Heritage Coordinator

Photo Credits: Emil Schöön; Region Gotland; Sara Appelgren



Draft Agenda

Monday 27th April:

Venue: Donnerska Huset, Donners plats 1 (same as Tourism office)

Arrival in Visby

14.30-16.00 Check-In Meet and Greet with refreshments –

Donners plats 1

16.00-18.00 Visby walking tour

Evening get-together informal (no official invitation needed!)

Tuesday 28th April:

Venue: Donnerska Huset, Donners plats 1 (same as Tourism office)

09.00 Official Welcome:

- *Mayor Mrs. Meit Fohlin, Visby/Gotland*
- *Mikhael de Thyse, OWHC Secretary General*
- *Dr. Matthias Ripp, Regional Coordinator*

09.30 - 13.00 – Workshop “Heritage Futures” with Prof. Cornelius Holtorf

13.00 - 14.00 – lunch break

14.00 - 17.00 – continuation of workshop with specific Visby case focus

Evening Program:

18.00 - 19.00 – Reception at the County Governor’s residence,

Venue: County Governor Charlotte Petri Gornitzka, Strandgatan 1

19.30 - 21.30 – Official dinner (on invitation of Gotland Region)

Venue: Gotlands museum, Strandgatan 14

Wednesday 29th April:

Venue: Gotlands museum, Strandgatan 14

09.00 - 16.00 NUP program Perception test (organized by OWHC General Secretariat)

12.00 - 13.30 Lunch Break with optional tours in the museum

16.00 Summary of results and Good Bye - official end of the workshop

16.30 Optional tour of the 17th century House of German Merchant Hans Burmeister, (with a taste of Gotland, and a moment to say Goodbye until next time)

Voluntary Good-Bye dinner or optional departure with late flight back to Stockholm

Accommodation

The OWHC grants accommodation for 3 nights for one participant per member city in good standing. Rooms have been reserved from Monday 27th - Thursday 30th at Hotel St:Clemens

<https://clemenshotell.com/>

Should you arrive already on Sunday 26th, you have to cover the extra night separately. Please contact the hotel at

Info@clemenshotell.se or use this link for a discount: code

"OWHC" (<https://app.mews.com/distributor/b194bf8b-9f6a-45d3-b1dd-b10e00855625?mewsVoucherCode=OWHC>)

Travel Information

You can reach the island of Gotland via ferry connection or plane from the Swedish mainland. Please check all connections on your preferred travel tools for your most convenient solution. Several connecting flights are available from Stockholm/Arlanda directly to the Visby local airport.

In Visby itself, our accommodation as well as all venues are in easy walking distance.

Registration

Please register via email to

Goettler.Monika@regensburg.de

or OWHC@regensburg.de

We will confirm your registration in cooperation with the General Secretariat.

Deadline: 23 March 2026

A detailed agenda with final information will be shared mid-April with all registered participants.