

**Stonehenge World Heritage Site Committee
Meeting on Tuesday 20 November 2012
10.30am at Antrobus House, Amesbury
FINAL MINUTES**

Present: Presnet Lady Elizabeth Gass (Chair), Beth Thomas (Stonehenge WHS Coordinator), Loraine Knowles (English Heritage - Stonehenge Director), Richard Crook (National Farmers Union), Philip Miles (Country Land & Business Association), Nick Snashall (National Trust), Ariane Crampton (Wiltshire Council), Patrick Cashman (RSPB), Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger (Wiltshire Council), Sarah Simmonds (Avebury WHS Officer), Christopher Young (English Heritage – Head of International Advice), David Vaughan (English Heritage – Stonehenge Curatorial Unit), Roger Fisher (Amesbury Town Council), Peter Bailey (Wilsford cum Lake/WHS Landowners), Jan Tomlin (National Trust),

Apologies: Peter Carson (English Heritage - Head of Stonehenge), Georgina Clampitt-Dix (Wiltshire Council), Peter Wray (Highways Agency), Dave Healing (Durrington Parish Council), Paul Blaker (DCMS), Richard Osgood (Defence Infrastructure Organisation), Nigel Linge (Defence Infrastructure Organisation), Amanda Chadburn (English Heritage – Stonehenge Curatorial Unit), Stephanie Payne (Natural England), Phil Sheldrake (RSPB), Tony Richardson (RSPB), Alistair Cunningham (Wiltshire Council), David Dawson (WANHS/ Wiltshire Heritage Museum Director).

1.	Introductions and apologies As above	
2.	Agree minutes of last meeting Minutes agreed	
3.	Matters Arising BT reported that she had tried to obtain additional copies of the leaflet of the exhibition <i>Stonehenge: Monumental Journey</i> held this summer at Wellington Arch but unfortunately there were none remaining.	
4.	<p>International Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNESCO St Petersburg Conference July 2012 <p>There are now 962 World Heritage properties; 26 sites (five natural, 20 cultural and one mixed) were added to the list which now has 745 cultural, 188 natural and 29 mixed properties in all.</p> <p>For the UK the main item of interest was the State of Conservation Report. The reopening of mines and the Hayle Harbour development in the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site and developments around Liverpool WHS, Tower of London and Westminster were all considered.</p> <p>The Operational Guidelines were revised and copies have been circulated to all UK Coordinators. No major changes but there is more on Impact Assessments for developments affecting WHS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic Reporting 2012-13 <p>This takes place every 6 years and is a report on the State of Conservation of all sites. The draft Periodic Report should come to the WHS Committee before going to UNESCO.</p>	
5.	Governance Review 5.1 Christopher Young led a discussion based on the five questions on	

the agenda paper. There were written notes in advance of the meeting from MoD and Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. Both of these organisations were in general agreement with the main principles of the Review. A summary of comments is noted below.

However the general consensus was that the proposals were sound in principle but needed more discussion to explore the detailed arrangements.

- a) *Do you agree that there should be an Executive Board? Do you have any comments or suggestions on its makeup, role or relationship to the other groups?*

In general the Committee were happy with the proposal that there should be an Executive Board. However, it was clear that this was only if there continued to be local committees for each part of the WHS to advise and comment on local issues. In particular there are very different issues related to the communities at each site as the circumstances are so different with Avebury's community living right on the monument.

Wilts Council welcomed the proposal and felt that it would bring both parts of the WHS together as well as meeting UNESCO guidelines. They would wish to be part of the Executive Board as suggested by the Review.

RSPB can see the value of the Executive Board looking at strategy as a whole. They also see the sense in separate Stonehenge & Avebury committees. They would wish to be part of the Stonehenge group but would also be interested in working with the Avebury group when required.

In terms of composition the proposal that there be an independent chair, EH (Guardianship properties), NT (major landowner) and Wilts Council (statutory responsibilities & more) was accepted. The suggestion that the Chairs of each local committee were also on the board was generally welcomed as they would represent local interests.

Philip Miles suggested that an odd number of people was better to avoid hung decisions and a 7th member would be useful. It was suggested that the new standing committee on research could be represented and would provide 7th member.

- b) *Do you agree with the suggested structure of three groups below the Executive Board: a Stonehenge group; an Avebury group; and one standing conference on archaeological and historical research?*

This structure was generally agreed by the Committee.

A wider stakeholder group was also suggested. This would be an expanded form of the current Advisory Forum. This could be an annual meeting which would be open to the public as well as invited members.

Terms of reference for membership and a review of roles and responsibilities of all these groups would need to be developed as part of the implementation process.

There is some work to be done on number of meetings, and how these relate to the executive board.

- c) *Do you think that there should be a single Coordination Unit for both Stonehenge & Avebury? Do you have any comments or suggestions on this proposed arrangement?*

CY noted that previous experience at other UK WHS shows that where there is a larger unit there is greater productivity.

AC of Wilts Council said that they could see the benefits of a joint unit but that there was still a great deal of detail to be organised.

The Committee agreed that they accepted the idea of a joint coordination unit.

- d) *Do you agree that the key partners should take joint responsibility for the funding of the WHS Coordination Unit? Do you have any comments or suggestions on this?*

At the present time the posts of the Coordinators are funded by EH and Wilts Council. In the past Amesbury TC and the NT have provided additional funding.

The Committee noted that partners are spending money in the area on conservation projects etc, in particular EH and NT. Natural England has paid out large figures in grass reversion payments and other Stewardship schemes.

Whilst many projects would continue whether or not the area was a WHS as part of the management of the area there are some additional projects which take up staff time and other resources which are related to WHS activities.

It would be useful to have information on the amount of money that is spent in the WHS in terms of in-kind funding, staff time and projects such as ELS/HLS and the Committee suggested that the implementation group should review this as part of their discussions.

AC of Wilts Council noted that we need to be looking for additional funds from new sources to make up the shortfall due to cuts to public sector bodies

The committee agreed that this issue needs more consideration.

- e) *Do you have any suggestions, in addition to those included in the Governance Review, on how the World Heritage Site could be managed to ensure its continued protection and gain maximum benefit from its status?*

SS noted that evidence has shown elsewhere that by investing in our WHS will deliver greater benefits.

It is important to ask what it is we want to gain from WHS status. In this way we will maximise the benefit to the wider area.

RSPB noted that they agreed that focus needs to be less on the main monuments at Stonehenge and Avebury and more on the wider area. They are currently working on a "Wiltshire Chalk Country" project which focuses on the gap between the AONB of North Wessex which covers the border of the Avebury WHS and the Cranborne Chase/West Wiltshire AONB. There is a lot of historical and natural heritage in this area and they are working to raise people's awareness of the whole area.

5.2 Next steps

As the consensus was to accept the proposals in general it was agreed that a working group to consider the recommendations in detail and develop an action plan for implementation and timetable is required as the next step.

The implementation group should consist of EH, NT and Wilts Council plus the two Coordinators. In addition, a local representative from each locality would be essential to ensure local views are taken into account. Roger Fisher of Amesbury Town Council kindly offered to take on this role.

	<p>The Working Group will meet and discuss the proposals in detail and suggest a timescale for implementation and bring the proposals to the next WHS Committee Meeting.</p>	
6.	<p>World Heritage Site Coordinator's update Written report attached. BT drew the Committees attention in particular to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 54 – Climate Change study. She will be in touch with local partners and see if there is sufficient interest in a seminar on Climate Change in the Stonehenge & Avebury WHS. • Progress is being made with the Wilts Council Rights of Way Team on the Access Strategy for walkers and cyclists. • 3-year review – BT has circulated to partners and asked for their responses to the review. • Progress has been made on the GIS project and BT will be in contact with MPK and the HER. • One item not on the report which has been developing recently which is putting together a project to tidy up the area around the Major Hewetson Memorial at Fargo Plantation on the A344. BT hopes to get a team together to look at one can be done in time for the centenary in 2013 of Maj Hewetson's death and when the Visitor Transit System stop is installed near to its location. Jim Fuller of Amesbury has been very helpful with photographs taken in 1914 by his grandfather. • SS asked if the Stonehenge WHS Committee would be agreeable to publishing the next edition of "Megalith" in 2013 as a Stonehenge & Avebury WHS publication. This would be a useful way of people knowing not only what is happening to them locally but also the other half of the WHS. The Committee felt that this was a good idea. <p>ACTION: BT & SS to work together on the 2013 edition of "Megalith".</p>	BT/SS
7.	<p>Update on Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project Loraine Knowles, Stonehenge Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loraine provided a pictorial update of progress with CGI images of the site on completion and some time lapse photography taken at the construction site. • The project team are talking to the travel trade about how the site will operate once the new centre opens. • The Ancient Technology Centre in Dorset has one the contract to manage the replica Neolithic houses project at Old Sarum. • EH have been working closely with the NT on the planning application for the Stonehenge Landscape interpretation scheme. • PC noted that he had met with CBA, the landscape consultants, on the grass seed mixture subsequent to the Advisory Forum but had not had any feedback. <p>ACTION: LK to ask CBA to provide an update to the RSPB on their proposed programme.</p>	LK
8.	<p>English Heritage update David Vaughan, HEFA Written report attached David Vaughan noted in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The restructure of the National Planning Department within EH means that the Stonehenge Curatorial Unit will no longer exist. The responsibilities will be shared by a number of colleagues. EH is currently recruiting these posts and once this is completed the relevant details will be shared with the Committee. • DV drew the Committee's attention to the departure of Amanda Chadburn who has left her role as Lead Adviser to the Stonehenge & Avebury WHS. She has worked in the area for approximately 20 years. Her new role is still with English Heritage as Senior Rural and Environmental Affairs Adviser at a national level. Amanda continues to support Stonehenge & Avebury for 	

	<p>up to 2 days a week until Christmas whilst the remaining posts are recruited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MPK suggested that this lengthy contribution should be noted formally with a letter of thanks and good wishes from Lady Gass on behalf of the Committee. The Committee agreed to this. <p>ACTION: BT & Lady Gass to draft letter of appreciation to AC on behalf of the Committee.</p>	BT/EG
9.	<p>National Trust update Nick Snashall, Stonehenge & Avebury Archaeologist Written report attached. NS noted in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continuing four year geophysics project continues. The information is providing information on new sites and providing better understanding of known sites. The information will be used in order to manage monuments better in future. NT has been working with Natural England on HLS schemes. Work continues at Fargo Plantation on clearing the area. There has been some clear felling of monuments and there will be hazel coppicing in rotation. SMCs have been received recently for fencing/re-fencing and moving stiles to gates. This has been done in conjunction with the landscape interpretation scheme and aims to allow visitors to explore the landscape better. RC asked if self-closing gates were being installed to prevent movement of livestock. NS confirmed that all gates replacing stiles are self-closing with livestock in mind. PC asked how the natural heritage is being represented in the landscape scheme. NS noted that the landscape interpretation scheme focuses on historic environment but there will be walks, leaflets, downloads etc available which will draw visitors' attention to the natural environment. 	
10.	<p>Wiltshire Council update Ariane Crampton, Head of Service - Account Management Written report attached.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AC noted that the timetable for finalising the Core Strategy has been revised because Wiltshire Council had to carry out more consultation on renewable energy e.g. Wind Turbines etc. MPK noted that the Historic Landscape Characterisation programme was going well and Tom Sunley who is managing the project would be happy to give a presentation at a later date on the Study relating to the WHS Committee. AC noted that Wilts Council is also working on Climate Change. There is scope for some work to be undertaken together. It was suggested that in time there could be an exhibition on Climate Change in the WHS in the temporary exhibition space in the new visitor centre. 	
11.	<p>Natural England Update No representative was available to attend the meeting. Written report attached.</p>	
12.	<p>Highways Agency Update No representative was available to attend the meeting. Written report attached. RF noted that Amesbury TC have been involved in ongoing discussions with the Highways Agency regarding the sequencing of the lights and other issues at the Countess Road roundabout. The Committee asked BT to write to Highways Agency noting their strong concern that the problems at this roundabout are not just seasonal. ACTION: BT to write to Highways Agency on behalf of the Committee</p>	BT
13.	<p>RSPB Update</p>	

	<p>Patrick Cashman, Site Manager - Wiltshire Reserves Written report attached. PC noted that the RSPB would like visitors coming to the WHS to get a sense of place and the context of the diversity of the natural environment. A leaflet featuring 'Wiltshire Chalk County' will include the WHS.</p>	
14.	<p>Other partner updates Cllr Roger Fisher, Amesbury Town Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Amesbury Museum is now open on Wednesdays between 11am and 3pm located in The Melor Hall, Church Street, Amesbury. • The museums artefacts are mainly from the current dig being conducted at Vespasian's Camp. • The Town Council is planning its budget for 2013/14 and has included an item for Blue Plaques; these will be attached to the many historic buildings in Amesbury including one close to where the Amesbury Archer was found. A visitors' guide to the Town will be produced giving the location of the Blue Plaques together with additional information about the buildings or sites. • There will be a Lantern Parade mainly for Children on the 21st December. This will leave Stonehenge at 4pm, cross the open access field to the Byways leading to Countess Crossing thence into the Town. • The pavement along the A345 between Durrington and Amesbury is to be upgraded. 	
15.	<p>Information exchange and AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Nature Partnerships – These are new bodies and there is one representing Wiltshire and Swindon. Gary Mantle of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is the Chair. They may be potential to work with them on future projects within the WHS. 	
16.	<p>Dates of next meetings All meetings in 2013 subject to outcome of Governance Review discussions It was agreed that the meeting normally held in March would be moved to mid-April (after Easter break) if the Avebury Steering Group were willing to move the meeting they normally hold in May to April. This would make any next steps for the Governance Review easier to manage. A date will be circulated in due course following Avebury WHS Steering Group meeting 21 November 2012. Tuesday 23 July 2013 Confirmed Tuesday 19 November 2013 TBC</p>	