

**Avebury World Heritage Site
Archaeological and Historical Research Group
Notes of meeting 27th April 2012**

Present: Amanda Chadburn (Chair), Gill Swanton, Brian Edwards, Sarah Simmonds, Melanie Pomeroy Kellinger, Mike Allen, Jim Gunter, Colin Shell, Nick Baxter, Dave Field, Sian Williams, Richard Osgood, Tom Sunley, Susan Greaney, Rachel, Tommy Wilkes, Martyn Barber, Dan Miles, Abby George, Heather Sebire

1. Apologies and Introductions

Bruce Eagles, Nick Snashall, Andrew Lawson, Josh Pollard, Ros Cleal, David Vaughan, Jim Leary, David Dawson, Nicola Hembrey, Vicky Crosby, Julie Scott Jackson, Kate Fielden, Andrew Fitzpatrick, Rachel Foster, Jude Currivan, Jan Tomlin, Andrew David, Mark Bowden

Richard Osgood the senior historic advisor for the Defence Infrastructure Organisation attended to give a presentation on cultural heritage protection on DTE Salisbury Plain. Tom Sunley the new HLC officer for Wiltshire Council and Tommy Wilkes, a WHS placement student from Bath Spa University, attended AAHRG for the first time.

2. Minutes and matters arising

2.1 Minutes

2.1 AC to talk to NS regarding any necessary emergency out of hours contact arrangements for EH. All organisations to continue communicating with utility companies.

4.1 Change notes to reflect that the Roman pottery found was outside the fieldwalking area at Yatesbury.

5.5 Correct spelling Europa.

7.1 Funding for the repairs at West Kennet have been identified. EH are currently looking at options. MA would like to contact HS to ensure maximum opportunity for environmental work.

7.3 CS reported that he would discuss recommendations arising from the Egeria WHS Governance Review report with AAHRG at the next meeting and report back to the Steering Committee in November. He will be attending a meeting in July where the consultants will present their report to members of the Steering Committee.

Action: SS to add to agenda for next meeting

3. Monitoring of the Resource Agenda

3.1 Update on WHS Research Framework

Apologies were received from Wessex Archaeology who were unavailable to attend to update the group. A large proportion of the chapters are now in but some are still outstanding.

He is looking at how research frameworks are created and carried forward. Helen Keeley is the project officer for the WHS Research Framework following the retirement of Kathy Perrin. Dan Miles is the new Research Assessment Officer with EH.

Action: Those with outstanding sections to send in as soon as possible.

Action: SS to circulate any update received from Wessex.

Action: CS will request Wessex to send the names of those who have provided voluntary contributions to the WHS Research Framework. He will contact contributors to ask them to estimate time spent on the Framework in order to calculate in kind contributions generated by the WHS.

Action: AC to send EH funding figures to SS for inclusion in the WHS Management Plan evaluation.

4. Current archaeological & historical research

4.1 Cultural Heritage Protection on Defence Training Estate (DTE)

Salisbury Plain, recent work – Richard Osgood

RO gave a presentation on recent heritage projects taking place on the DTE Salisbury Plain. The presentation highlighted their archaeological and social outcomes. Projects are related to work at development sites for mission specific training facilities and the large Eastern Infrastructure Project.

Eastern Infrastructure Project

Eastern Infrastructure Project (EIP) has produced important finds including Iron Age burials, grooved ware, antler picks, a Roman cremation urn and cremation urns. The work was carried out by Wessex Archaeology.

Operation Nightingale

Operation Nightingale is a rehabilitation project for members of all five battalions of the Rifles Regiment. This welfare project aims to address injury, stress and mental health issues related to service in Afghanistan. The effected soldiers work in areas such as finds processing and report writing which

helps them to regain confidence and new skills that may help them back into work. Placements with industry partners can follow.

At Chisenbury Midden 4,000 shards of pottery were found. Post excavation work was carried out at the barracks and plotted on GIS.

Heritage at Risk

The DTE Salisbury Plain has 68 entries on the Heritage at Risk Register. The biggest threats are rabbits and badgers. Rabbit mesh has been placed on barrows and badger fences erected although the latter are regularly cut. SMC has been sought to excavate part of a barrow at Barrow Clump due to its fast deteriorating condition caused by burrowing animals. Wessex Archaeology will be undertaking the work. This will take place over 6 weeks in June and July. Local volunteers and soldiers will be assisting and there will be an open day.

MPK underlined the great importance of the EIP which has uncovered around 30 new sites. The road provides a transect through the landscape which is turning up hundreds of thousands of incidents of prehistoric activity on Salisbury Plain. The report should prove immensely important for increasing our understanding of early prehistoric activity on Salisbury Plain. It will include new 20 - 30 carbon dates.

4.2 Draft Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) - Amanda Chadburn

AC reported that UNESCO now requires that the concept of OUV is clarified to enable it to be understood and managed more effectively. For example, articulating the physical expression of OUV should assist planners in understanding what needs to be protected and how this can be achieved.

The original nomination and evaluation documents from 1986 are rather too abstract to enable this. In 2011 the retrospective Statement of OUV developed with the Avebury and Stonehenge Steering Committees was submitted to UNESCO as a first step in more clearly and succinctly describing OUV. The detailing of the attributes of OUV should further clarify what elements of the WHS are of outstanding universal value and require protection.

AC, SS and BT have met to consider approaches to attributes for Avebury. Seven generic attributes have already been developed for Stonehenge and appear in the 2009 Management Plan. It would be appropriate to have the same or very similar attributes for Avebury as both sites share a Single

statement of OUV. The components of OUV exemplifying the generic attributes would need to be developed for Avebury.

The first and fourth attributes referring to the iconic nature of Stonehenge and astronomical alignments respectively might be less relevant at Avebury.

CS, BE, and DF suggested elements of the Avebury landscape that might meet the fourth astronomical attribute. There is room for debate over whether these alignments meet Clive Ruggles' hard line distinction between clear intent and purely incidental alignment. MA emphasised the need for a structure to also incorporate elements of design over and above simple alignment.

MA added that the physical connectivity and close proximity of monuments and their relationship to rivers and streams was an important attribute at Avebury as well as the position at the meeting point of two watersheds in the landscape.

SS commented that this might fit in with attributes three and five which focus on the careful siting of monuments and sites in relation to the landscape and their siting in relation to one another. The development of a list of attributes and components as an Aunt Sally for discussion by the group would be helpful in identifying whether the current seven attributes are adequate or require rewording or addition.

Action: AC to circulate an Aunt Sally of attributes of OUV to the group for discussion at the next meeting.

Action: SG to approach Clive Ruggles to add a small report outlining attributes of archaeoastronomy at Avebury into his work commissioned for Stonehenge.

5. Review of Current Opportunities for Dissemination of Research

5.1 Proposed WHS Seminar

SS reported that DD was considering a seminar in November to mark the 40th anniversary of the Convention for the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage. Stonehenge and Avebury qualify under three of the ten UNESCO criteria and papers could reflect these themes.

6. WHS Steering Committee

6.1 Review of content of report to WHS Steering Committee

CS will précis progress on Research Framework, work to develop the attributes of OUV, the Nightingale Project, and AAHRG's interest in being consulted on the Governance Review.

7. AOB

7.1 Wiltshire and Swindon HLC

Tom Sunley is the new HLC officer who is leading on a three year project HLC for Wiltshire and Swindon. It will cover most of the county and tie in with work already done by the NWDAONB and Cranborne Chase AONB. He will be covering Salisbury Plain and the WHS. The project will be delivered in four phases: initiation; characterisation; analysis of data and links to management plans, agenda, outreach; publication including interactive mapping. Stakeholder groups will be coordinated to feed into the project and a website produced to allow work to be reviewed. TS will present on progress at a future meeting of AAHRG.

7.2 Between the Monuments Project

MA reported that the project had passed the NT Archaeology Panel. Funding can now be sought. The focus of the work is the landscape outside the foci of the main monuments. MG has completed the GIS mapping of fieldwalking as part of this work.

7.3 Silbury Hill Monograph

DF reported that the monograph has been delivered to the publishers.

8. Date of next meeting

10.30 AM on Friday, September 7th 2012 in Avebury Study Centre.

9. Other research opportunities (i.e. utilities, development control issues)

9.1 County Archaeology Update

9.1.1 Skokholm

DV reported that at Skokholm there is an application for a new garage on the edge of Green Street. This could further obscure views eastward to the henge.

9.1.2 East Farm, Stock Housing

There is potential for impact on the setting of the WHS and on several key points including the Ridgeway and Windmill Hill. The proposed location is near shelving stones field and the potential long barrow. Advice was given to bring the building back into the farm area by altering its orientation and reducing its height.

9.1.3 Hunters Barrow

This has now been cleared of scrub under the Wiltshire Council and English Heritage Monument Management Scheme. The badgers seem to have left.

9.1.4 HLC

Funding has been secured from EH. It is a three year project and the post is currently being advertised on the Wiltshire Council jobs website. The work will include Swindon Borough and more detailed sections on the WHS.

9.1.5 Ridgeway Arts Project

Faye Goodwin is running a project encouraging creative interpretation of the experience of walking the Ridgeway. Currently it involves pictures but may later include sensory and sound elements. Material will be used to encourage others out onto the Ridgeway. DV will be contributing to the project.

9.1.6 Wiltshire HER

MPK reported that a new HER officer, Faye Glover, is in post. The HER software will be updated over the coming months to improve the online experience.

9.2 Bridgemead

JG reported that one further trench will be dug to the front gate at the bottom of the High Street. All previous evaluations and watching briefs have confirmed that the area is too disturbed to offer any insights. It is likely that this trench will prove more interesting however it is in the area where a stone was purported to be beneath the former bungalow.

9.3 Hoard in SW Wiltshire

KH reported on the excavation of a hoard in SW Wiltshire. It includes an early Bronze Age flat axe, mid Bronze Age spears, Late and Early Iron Age objects. The 114 objects show a very great chronological mix. Although taken out under archaeological conditions, it will be a challenge to analyse. The deposition date is hard to ascertain as it was found within a natural feature. Salisbury Museum hopes to acquire the hoard.

10. Review of Monitoring

10.1 Condition Survey

PW reported that the project board had met for training on using the database and for discussion of its final form. It will be provided in ArcReader with drop down boxes facilitating queries.

The hard copy will be circulated with an overview summary. It will be possible to split into two parts: Avebury and Stonehenge.

PW presented to both Steering groups in November on this project and the WHS Woodland Strategy.

11. Final Review of the Report to WHS Steering Committee

As at item 6

12. AOB

12.1 Fencing opposite the Sanctuary

JG will be undertaking a watching brief for some fencing to protect the tenant's land and water supply. He mentioned problems with uploading onto OASIS at present.

Action: DV to follow up on OASIS

12.2 Tree on Burial

CS raised concerns over the mention of a tree on a burial mound on Dr Oliver's land in the Stones of Stonehenge interim report.

Action: DV/MPK to investigate site for possible inclusion in future Monument Management scheme