

Avebury World Heritage Site Steering Committee

Meeting on Thursday 19th April 2018

10.30 AM – 1 PM

Wiltshire Museum, Devizes

Minutes

Present:

Andrew Williamson (AW) Chair	Chair/Avebury Parish Council
Sarah Simmonds (SS)	Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Manager
Rachel Foster (RF)	Wilts Council Assistant County Archaeologist
Henry Oliver (HO)	NWD AONB
Colin Shell (CS)	ASAHRG
Kate Fielden (KF)	Avebury Society
Stephanie Payne (SP)	Natural England
Bill Buxton (BB)	Winterbourne Monkton & Berwick Bassett Parish Council
Gill Swanton (GS)	Avebury Environs Forum
Robin Butler (RB)	Avebury Farmers
David Dawson (DD)	Wiltshire Museum
Jan Tomalin (JT)	National Trust
Sarah Nichols (SN)	Fyfield and West Overton Parish Council
Jane Davies (JD)	Wiltshire Council
Helen Miah (HM) Note Taker	Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Officer

Apologies:

Nick Snashall	National Trust
Mike Wilmott	Wiltshire Council
Phil McMahon	Historic England
Ian Barnes	National Trust

1. Introductions and apologies	Action
Apologies noted above	
2. Agree minutes of last meeting & matters arising Minutes agreed with minor amends: Sarah Nichols and Stephanie Payne were present Robin Butler sent apologies Insert text 'Management Plan Review in item 11.0 HO	HM update and circulate
3. Avebury WHS Transport Strategy <u>Transport Exhibition and public feedback (AW)</u> AW Transport Group – community and PC working together on transport issues. 3 rd March held an exhibition for public on issues that are important, a 'rain check' at Red Lion. A series of 'boards' each focusing on a specific problem, what are we doing, what solutions might there be? Feedback was gathered on post-it notes. The event was well received, 50+ responses. Results written up and analysed. Identified	

<p>a need to collect more information – work in progress. Outcomes to be discussed at annual PC village meeting next week and going to present the exhibition to neighbouring PC's.</p> <p>Commentary on Avenue/A4 and footpaths highest feedback. Wiltshire Council Highways have confirmed that any A4 traffic slowing/narrowing scheme cannot go forward without B4003 being closed as it would not have safe sight lines for turning off the A4. Satnav issue – Parish Council is writing to the companies to see if changes can be made.</p> <p>JD Is there a one-way only option? Too much signage and less benefits. CS Would closure in one direction help protect the monument? Is there an emergency order that could be put in place? SS a temporary measure is being explored with Highways to backfill edges. GS wants to see speed limited from Fyfield all the way to Beckhampton. The key driver for closure of the B4003 must be protection of the monument there is unrecoverable damage. JD still lots of work to do with the wider community to demonstrate the impacts HO need to sell the 'vision' and aspiration for the future, what it might look like. SS there was an illustration by Alice Macaire in the exhibition demonstrating this. RB need 30 miles an hour all the way from Avebury to Beckhampton roundabout. JD why didn't Atkins include the section to Fyfield? SS suggested it could be extended if there is wider local support. SS please can the committee all act as advocates for the WHS and the Management Plan and work to explain the impacts of the traffic and roads for which we have evidence. AW the outcomes/recommendations of the transport group will be going on the Avebury PC website. JT the aerial picture is a powerful showing how the B4003 conflicts with the protection of the Avenue RF happy to provide any further info, images etc to help get the message across AW be useful to have members of this Committee to come along and talk and explain. CS will put the issue to ASARGH so they can provide a statement. Suggested an experimental closure for 3 months</p> <p>JD action with Steve Hinds to see if 'something can be done' now. Temporary or emergency closure, weight limit.</p> <p>SS added that a weight limit was discounted by the working group including a police representative as unenforceable. In addition, weight is not the main issue.</p> <p>AW Atkins stopped work at West Kennet until B4003 decision made but have started took at traffic calming work at Beckhampton roundabout.</p> <p><u>Avebury World Heritage Site Directional Signage</u> HM explained a small sub group of the PC was developing a Principles and Guidelines Document to enable a coordinated and cohesive replacement/revision of signage across the WHS.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>CS</p> <p>JD</p>
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<p>GS will landowners will need to be involved AW happy to involve landowners and other PC's, discuss with SS when/how? SN where will the funding come from? PC have committed £1k to kick start</p> <p><u>Footpaths</u> CS expressed concern re road verges being used as footpaths (note this happened when the closure of the henge and other footpaths was in place)</p>	
<p>4. A303 Scheme Consultation</p> <p>Extraordinary meeting held notes circulated.</p> <p>SS will respond as WHSCU Partnership Manager giving advice based on the Management Plan. Look at how the scheme aligns with the aims and policies and where mitigation will be required. Welcomes change in preferred route but outstanding areas of concern.</p> <p>JT - SS gave an outstanding presentation to UNESCO at their visit and was very clear on nature of one World Heritage Site and its OUV. CS concern that if planning permission is given it could put the WH status 'at risk' and it might even be withdrawn if the scheme were to go ahead (note this would also impact on Avebury). Concern that tunnel cuts through archaeology on western side of the WHS which is important in relationship to activity pre-Stonehenge monument. Group of barrows near western portal have Beaker burials. Links to the wider landscape will be severely impinged. SS circulated statement from Historic England HO AONB will be doing a response SS would have liked to have the results of the Historic Impact Assessment to be able to comment more accurately SS – neither the Stonehenge nor Avebury Committee can give a unified response due to the nature of the Committee – made up of partner organisations with different views. Note this is not dissimilar to other WHS Committees at other WHSs. JT – National Trust put out joint statement with EH and HE which is broadly supportive National Trust broadly welcomes the proposals by Highways England for the A303 in the SH half of the WHS that are currently being consulted on subject to: the incorporation of a 200m grass-covered canopy at the western end, steep sided cuttings and a sensitively-located and designed green bridge to diminish the impact of traffic and the road in the west. In addition, the NT seeks the withdrawal of the proposal for a new linking Byway Open to All Traffic between Byways 11 & 12. CS talked to UNESCO on behalf of ASARGH and commentary is based on impact to archaeology. MPK Wiltshire Council response will need to get Cabinet approval, looking at how the scheme aligns with the WC Corporate Plan. Like others requires more information in certain areas to comment but in general supportive. HO fundamental principle of large infrastructure project in WHS will cause irrevocable damage. SP Natural England will be putting formal response forwards but concern about lack of detail re wildlife at this stage.</p>	

<p>AW – PC concerned about impact on Avebury and its WHS status</p> <p>In principle, the Committee happy to support SS approach – commenting as WHSPM in line with the Management Plan.</p>	<p>SS</p>
<p>5. World Heritage Site Coordination Unit Update</p> <p><u>World Heritage Site Trust update</u> See summary circulated. Working on HLF Resilient Fund bid contingent on getting in-kind support from partner organisations. Funding will enable the design of a sustainable and resilient WHS Trust and will look at issues such as branding, fundraising, governance and other key functions.</p> <p><u>World Heritage Day and Communication</u> HM summarised partners’ involvement in World Heritage Day which had been a positive event, engaging all partners and actively promoting the aims of the Management Plan around community engagement. SALOS will review the overarching approach and all partners have been sent an Evaluation Report to complete. The event provided an opportunity to develop the WHS social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram. <u>Megalith 2018</u> – request for articles for Megalith to be sent to HM by end of June <u>Desmond Dog’s Blog</u> – HM working with VisitWiltshire #timeforwiltshire to promote the WHS and disseminate key messages in a fun and engaging way. 7 blogs over next 7 months each featuring a different attribute of OUV. Any partners wanting to get relevant messages out please contact HM.</p>	
<p>6. Reports from Partners on implementation of WHS Management Plan and related projects</p> <p><u>National Trust (JT)</u> Breaking Ground Exhibition & Leaflet To mark the 100-year anniversary of some women gaining the right to vote in Britain, this year at Avebury in collaboration with Trowel Blazers, the NT are bringing to light the contributions made by female archaeologists in the twentieth century through an exhibition in the Barn Gallery of the AKM & an accompanying leaflet. AKM Undertaken a refresh of the Barn Gallery of the AKM. World Heritage Day 18 April AKM free entry for the day. Huge thanks to Helen Miah and team for work clearing rubbish around Windmill Hill. Human Henge Our work with Human Henge continued at Avebury. Briony Clifton presented (together with Martin Alfrey of EHT) on Human Henge, and the NT and Avebury at the recent Conference at Bournemouth University. Virtual Avebury NT partnering with Bournemouth University, Daden and Sat Symph in an AHRC /EPSRC funded research project to develop and test a Virtual version of Avebury. Living with Monuments the Living with Monuments Project team (AHRC funded) have this week returned to the foot of Avebury Down to complete the excavations they started last summer</p>	

Cobblestones Second-hand Bookshop Now opened. Volunteer-led and run.
Closures As a result of prolonged mild wet weather this winter and spring the NT have put in place temporary closures to parts of the henge & the WK Avenue to prevent damage to archaeology. The condition of the monuments has been regularly monitored throughout and the WK Avenue has now reopened.

All supportive of NT approach to closures

Natural England (SP)

Looking at interpretation panels at Fyfield will link to wider Avebury Interpretation Strategy as it comes forwards.

Avebury Society (KF)

Working on response to consultation

Wiltshire Council (RF)

Officers are attending meeting to look at the early stages of Wiltshire Core Strategy Review. The WHS Saved Policies will be reviewed as part of this process. Work includes work on advising housing allocations for county in terms of impact on the historic environment.

Advice has been given to the Avebury Transport Group who held an exhibition in March 2018 to communicate local issues and canvass opinion. Wider community consultation to follow.

Discussion of orientation signage in WHS with WHSCU, WC, NT and Parish Council. A policy being put together to ensure consistency; April 2018.

Advice has been given to the Avebury Transport Group who held an exhibition in March 2018 to communicate local issues and canvass opinion. Wider community consultation to follow.

Prelim design by Atkins for West Kennett followed by initial meeting in Oct 2017. Brief given to Atkins for Beckhampton for prelim design to be commenced from April 2018.

A meeting to look at damage on byway to Windmill Hill and consider appropriate repair April 2018

Avebury Farmers (RB)

Concerned about badger damage at Windmill Hill

NWD AONB (HO)

Experiencing challenging recruitment issues. Late summer hoping to consult on AONB Management Plan Review. Working with VisitWiltshire on Great West Way

Wiltshire Museum (DD)

Exhibition space extended, looking to ramp up special exhibition programme. Partnership NPO (with Salisbury, Poole, Dorchester) £1.4m funding from ACE

<p>Action SS to arrange mid-point review of progress with each partner</p>	<p>SS</p>
<p>7. Parish/Town Council Updates</p> <p><u>Winterbourne Monkton & Berwick Bassett Parish Council (BB)</u> Manor Farm planning permission agreed for 60 houses and 2 conversions.</p> <p><u>Fyfield and West Overton Parish Council (SN)</u> Marlborough Museum now open.</p>	
<p>8. Report from the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel</p> <p>AW reported -discussed new WHS Trust</p>	
<p>9. Report from Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological and Historical Research Group</p> <p>Living with Monuments update – may be a further dig in the summer CS Concern raised re disposal of archives at Salisbury Museum, should there be an ASARGH policy on this/should they be a consultee? DD Wiltshire Museum was involved in the review</p>	
<p>10. WHS Committee Chair Review</p> <p>Henry Oliver had expressed interest and accepted the Chair All agreed</p> <p>SS thanked AW for his outstanding championing of the WHS with the local community, support, guidance and advice. The group expressed their thanks and appreciation for AW's hard work and commitment while chairing the Committee.</p>	
<p>11. Information exchange and AOB</p> <p>GS Open Farm Sunday 10th June @ Temple Farm NWAONB Wayfaring event - Basildon Park 21st July NWDAONB – 17th October Annual Forum all welcome RB Bee Roadzz banners up – check all necessary permissions have been given</p>	
<p>12. Date of next meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday, 18th October 2018 • Thursday, 11th April 2019 – move away from WH Day 	
<p>Virtual Avebury presentation – Elizabeth Falconer, Bournemouth University</p>	