

Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel
Thursday 5 February 2015
Education Room, Avebury

Present: Alistair Sommerlad (Chair), Roger Fisher (Stonehenge WHS Committee), Colin Shell (ASAHRG), Jan Tomlin (National Trust) Andrew Vines (English Heritage), Andrew Williamson (Avebury WHS Steering Committee),

In attendance: Sarah Simmonds, Beth Thomas – Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Coordination Unit

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| 1.0 | Apologies Nick Snashall (National Trust), Cllr Stuart Wheeler (Wiltshire Council) | |
| 2.0 | Minutes of last meeting and matters arising | |
| 2.1 | Minutes were agreed with one amendment at 7.3 regarding the Woodland Strategy to “expected it to be complete by Easter 2015”. | BT |
| 2.2 | It was agreed that the minutes would be published on the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS website alongside the local committee’s minutes but that any commercially sensitive items may be excluded if necessary. Action: BT to upload minutes of meetings previously agreed on to website. | BT |
| | No other matters arising | |
| 2.3 | Actions from previous meeting | |
| (i) | BT had sent a copy of the WHS logos to NS as requested | Complete |
| (ii) | BT reported for SW that Nick Cowen the Rights of Way Officer for South Wiltshire had given an update on signage at both ends of the former A344. As works have not yet finished this is still a work in progress and BT will follow up with Nick Cowen in due course. | |
| (iii) | AW had followed up queries regarding usage of the community Wi-Fi in Avebury. He reported that until recently it had not been possible to record data of how many users there were. In the month to 22 December 2014 there were 190 users in Avebury which compares to 562 in Marlborough. The organisation responsible for the community Wi-Fi service will be able to produce more data in due course. | Complete |
| (iv) | <i>AW updated the PP on the development of the Avebury WHS Fund. A trust deed, based on the Charity Commission’s model deed for small charities, has been signed by all seven trustees and the charity is now up and running. It is call the Avebury World Heritage Site Charity. It will work at a relatively modest scale, helping to implement actions in the Management Plan, and SS will be attending the next Trustees meeting to discuss how this could be implemented in the future. The working group/trustees will also now be focussing on setting up a larger WHS-wide funding vehicle for the future; it will operate on a non-profit basis but will have wider powers than a charity.</i> | |
| (v) | BT and SS will invite Vince Gaffney to present on the Hidden Landscape Project but due to the size of the project and the amount of data to be analysed this is unlikely to be until 2016. | Deferred to 2016 |
| (vi) | BT and SS had taken advice on the “purdah” period. As the signing off of the final copy of the Management Plan will not involve committing government to any funds because the document is already in the public domain during the consultation period and the | Complete |

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| | Plan will not be endorsed until after the election there should be no issues with “purdah” for any of the bodies involved in the WHS steering committees. | |
| 3.0 | Chairs report | |
| 3.1 | Not very much to report since the last meeting. Time has been spent on A303 and the Royal Artillery Museum project. | |
| (a) | AS attended the press announcement of the A303 funding in December with Nick Clegg, David Cameron and others and spoke to the Salisbury Journal and Spire FM. He also had the opportunity to talk to representatives of the Stonehenge Traffic Action Group (STAG). | |
| (b) | For the RAM project AS has written a letter of support for submission to the HLF but the Panel recognises that although there are many opportunities for the WHS in this project there are also potential threats which must be dealt with. Both AS and BT will continue to engage with the RAML team | |
| 3.2 | Review of the year Thank you to all members of the Panel who responded to AS’s questions regarding how the Panel has been working over the past year. There was a good deal of unanimity which was helpful. | |
| (a) | Frequency of Meetings 3 times per annum seems to be about right. Suggested that the timings should ensure the ability of the Panel to work strategically and the following pattern is suggested: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. February to look at the coming year ahead and the annual action plan 2. Summer: An “Away Day” to spend more time discussing strategic issues in depth and perhaps looking at another WHS to see what can be learned from them. 3. October: to fit in with financial planning for the next financial year. | |
| (b) | Topics General agreement that the PP should be considering higher level strategy items rather than duplicate work that should be discussed by the local committees e.g. Overall presentation of the Site and its identity and branding; national issues; dealing with UNESCO etc. | |
| (c) | How public should we be about the work of the PP? Does the PP have stated views? Agreed that we should explain the PP and what it does both to stakeholders and the local committee as well as the general public, recognising its purpose and differences to the other areas of governance. Panel agreed that we should prepare consensus views on the major issues for which it is responsible. There will be a range of views on major issues and any statement would have to reflect this. | |
| (d) | Big issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be big issues on which the PP is expected to have an opinion, • PP members should be talking to key decision makers to ensure the best outcome for the WHS, • Pro-actively work on promoting activities such as working with other Neolithic sites in UK and Europe. • Should the panel have a direct relationship with UNESCO and ICOMOS? e.g. should we ask them to look at issues surrounding A303 before there is a | |

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| | <p>scheme developed in order to inform decisions rather than waiting until the scheme is ready for planning permission?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity/branding of the whole WHS • Proactively promote the whole WHS • Funding of the WHS – secure funding for the Unit and for projects <p>(e) It was agreed that in future draft statements would be prepared by the WHS Coordination Unit and circulated to PP members and finalised by email. Clear deadlines would need to be set.</p> <p>(f) AS proposed to increase the amount of communication between the Chair and members of the Panel AS will circulate a wider” vision” to PP members.</p> <p>Agenda in future will cover issues to allow more wide ranging discussion rather than updates from partners. Any local issues should remain with the local committees at future meetings.</p> <p>The Panel should undertake a review of the WHS Coordination Unit and how it functions.</p> | AS |
| <p>4.0 4.1</p> | <p>Local issues Avebury WHS Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Between the Monuments 2015 excavation – this project is being supported by a number of community fundraising initiatives. (ii) Transport Strategy – now signed off and will be presented to the parish in March (iii) Farmers Meeting – successful meeting held on the Management Plan with commitment to hold these on a regular basis at least annually. (iv) Superfast Broadband – currently being installed in the village. (v) Management Plan – comments from parish will be submitted to the Coordination Unit. | |
| <p>4.2</p> | <p>Stonehenge WHS Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Management Plan – Amesbury TC have discussed this (ii) Blick Mead – some local concern about the lack of information coming out from the excavations there. CS noted that there had been some discussion at the recent ASAHRG meeting that a symposium could be arranged with not only David Jacques but some of the other experts who have been involved in the project. ACTION: BT/SS agreed to explore this option. (iii) Army Rebasing – number of houses at Larkhill has been reduced. Planning application is expected shortly. (iv) A303 – watching developments with interest | BT/SS |
| <p>5.0</p> | <p>ASAHRG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Research Framework – work continues on this. It is now expected to be published at the end of 2015 but there may be some online publication before this. (ii) Talks – given by Steve Marshall on survey of sarsens in both parts of the WHS and Amanda Chadburn on work to explore solstitial alignment of monuments and stones which she has undertaken with Clive Ruggles. She concluded that stellar risings should be considered when looking at issues of setting. (iii) New publications – EH are publishing the results of the WHS archaeological | |

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| | <p>landscape assessment project in May 2015. It is entitled <i>The Stonehenge Landscape: Analysing the Stonehenge World Heritage Site</i> and written by Mark Bowden, Sharon Soutar, David Field and Martyn Barber.</p> | |
| <p>6.0 Management Plan</p> <p>6.1 Public consultation launched as planned on Monday 8 December and available on the Wiltshire Council Consultation Portal. The Consultation Draft and Draft Summary are available on line together with an online “snap survey” which around 38 people have submitted. The comments cover the following topics; Roads and traffic (39%), freedom of access (30%), visitor management (16%), research, community engagement, planning and interpretation made up the rest of the comments in small numbers. The WHS Unit does not consider at this point that these comments require any amendments to the final document. Comments reflect current interest in the A303 proposals and access to Stonehenge. The majority of the comments relate to Stonehenge. The majority of the more detailed, expert responses are expected towards the end of the consultation period.</p> <p>SS and BT have attended 7 public drop-in consultation sessions at Salisbury, Amesbury, Marlborough, Devizes and Swindon libraries, County Hall and Avebury Social Centre. There have been some responses to the Management Plan but most of the time was spent answering questions and raising awareness of the work of the WHS. Few people came specifically to speak with us despite good coverage including an interview on BBC Radio Wiltshire’s morning programme. Around 140 people were directly engaged with.</p> <p>In addition, two meetings with the farming community have been arranged. The first in Avebury which was a success and the second in Amesbury on 9 February. These are aimed at ensuring farmers and landowners have an opportunity to find out about the Management Plan and encourage them to participate in the actions once we begin to implement them. Future meetings have been requested to continue good communications.</p> <p>6.2 The draft document is currently with the designer and it is anticipated that we will have a draft of the final document for publication available by the end of the consultation period which can then be amended and proof read after any changes are approved by the Project Board. We are also finalising the choice of the printer.</p> <p>It is hoped to confirm the dates of the Project Board and local committees shortly after 2 March .</p> <p>It was noted that the comments and responses once agreed by the Project Board should be available to the public should they wish to see them.</p> <p>6.3 Foreword and Preface - In the Stonehenge 2009 Plan there is a foreword written by the then Minister for Heritage, Barbara Follett. We have been advised that DCMS no longer provide ministerial forewords to WHS Management Plans and this should be dealt with at a local level. After some discussion it was agreed to approach Jane Scott, Leader of Wiltshire Council to see if she would be prepared to provide the foreword. AS should provide the preface for the whole WHS. ACTION: BT/SS will draft text as necessary.</p> <p>6.4 Launch – local launch dates have been confirmed as Monday 18 May in Avebury and</p> | <p>BT/SS</p> | |

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| | <p>Thursday 21 May at Stonehenge. The joint launch at County Hall confirmed as Wednesday 20 May. It is likely that these will all be late afternoon.</p> <p>ACTION: BT will invite Jane Scott as well as Cllr Wheeler to host this.</p> <p>A music project to provide music inspired by the WHS has been taking place and hoped to have school children performing the results.</p> <p>ACTION: BT and SS to draw up invitation list to these events which they will circulate to the PP and other relevant partners.</p> <p>ACTION: BT and SS will extract from the Plan a specific list of actions for the Partnership Panel to focus on in the next year.</p> | <p>BT</p> <p>BT/SS</p> <p>BT/SS</p> |
| 7.0 | Current Projects: | |
| 7.1 | Avebury WHS Transport Strategy – SS to ask Stuart Wheeler if he will provide a foreword to this document | SS |
| 7.2 | Research Framework – see 5 (i) above | |
| 7.3 | Woodland Strategy – see 2.1 above | |
| 7.4 | <p>A303 – Government announcement on 1 December that it would be looking at improvements to the A303 corridor including the stretch within the WHS. It has stated that a tunnel is required that should be at least 2.9km. The first meeting of the Highways Agency Project Team held 5 February and more information will be available following this.</p> <p>The WHS has an invitation to the technical advice team and AS proposed that both he and BT should be on the circulation list to ensure the WHS can take part fully in the plans as they are developed.</p> <p>AV confirmed that EH is in the early stages of commissioning some research will be shared with ASAHRG in due course to look at areas of south of the A303. This will help inform the work of the Highways Agency but they will still need to undertake their own studies as part of the project. The OUV Assessment prepared in partnership with NT has been sent to ICOMOS UK but no response received as yet.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that both AS and BT would attend future A303 meetings.</p> <p>ACTION: AV agreed to talk to Henry Owen John about developing a more positive and proactive dialogue with UNESCO and ICOMOS.</p> | AV |
| 7.5 | <p>Royal Artillery Museum – It has been confirmed that Larkhill is the preferred site for this new military experience visitor attraction. There has been discussions at a number of different levels with EH and Wiltshire Council and the WHS Coordination Unit. AS and BT will attend a meeting on 26 February at which representatives of HLF will undertake a site visit and listen to presentations from the RAM team and others. There are potential threats to the OUV of the WHS as well as potential benefits. The successful project will depend on the support of the HLF.</p> <p>AS will update the PP as the project develops.</p> | |
| 8.0 | AOB | |
| 8.1 | <p>National Trust Wiltshire Countryside Team</p> <p>JT noted that there had been a restructure of her team. This has resulted in Hilary Makins taking responsibility for the team of rangers across the whole of the portfolio and Mike Dando has been made redundant. They are recruiting new posts including a marketing and communications post and a deputy for JT.</p> | |
| 8.2 | English Heritage/Historic England | |

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| | <p>AV noted that English Heritage as currently formatted will be splitting into two organisations English Heritage will retain responsibility for all historic properties and related functions including Stonehenge. Historic England will consist of the statutory functions and government advice.</p> <p>It was noted that there needs to be a review of who should attend both the local committees and the PP both internally and by the WHS. This should take place following the split and allowing both organisations time to settle into the new arrangements.</p> | |
| <p>9.0</p> | <p>Date of next meeting Date to be confirmed by WHS Coordination Unit for the beginning of July with an away day, possibly with the Jurassic Coast team.</p> | <p>BT/SS</p> |

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