



Avebury WHS Steering Committee
Tuesday 6th October 2015
10.30 AM – 12.30 PM
Lecture Hall, Wiltshire Museum, Devizes
Minutes

Present:

Andrew Williamson	(Chair/Avebury PC)
Sarah Simmonds	(Avebury WHS Coordinator)
Jan Tomlin	(NT General Manager – Wiltshire Countryside)
Nick Snashall	(NT– Archaeologist (Stonehenge and Avebury WHS) NT)
Stephanie Payne	(Land Advisor, Natural England)
Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger	(County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council)
Colin Shell	(ASAHRG)
Gill Swanton	(Avebury Environs Group)
Kate Fielden	(Avebury Society)
David Woolley	(Fyfield and West Overton PC)

<p>1. Introductions and apologies</p> <p>David Woolley was standing in for Martin Northmore-Ball (Fyfield and West Overton PC)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Ariane Crampton, Georgina Clampitt-Dix, Bill Buxton, Robin Butler, David Andrews, Phil McMahon, Ian Barnes, David Dawson</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of the previous meetings and matters arising</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting agreed.</p> <p>SS reported that DCMS had approved the Plan following sign off by both Steering Committees. The Plan was launched in May.</p> <p>AW congratulated SS and BT on producing an excellent Management Plan.</p>	
<p>3. Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Management Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsement of the Plan <p>Following sign off of the Plan by Steering Committee in April partners were requested to provide notification of endorsement to fulfil action 2.</p>	

<p>Key delivery partners</p> <p>SS updated the group on endorsement of the Plan by key delivery partners. The WHSCU has received letters from English Heritage, Highways England, Wiltshire Museum and Salisbury Museum. Notification of endorsement is in the pipeline from Wiltshire Council, Historic England, the National Trust, Natural England and the RSPB.</p> <p>Local partners</p> <p>Fyfield and West Overton PC will be sending a letter outlining concerns about the proposed closure of the B4003 to protect the West Kennet Avenue. They are also concerned about the proposal to facilitate a crossing of the A4 below the start of the Ridgeway. SS pointed out that the actions related both projects include provision for public consultation which will be required before a decision to progress with either project is taken. At present no detailed schemes have been produced for consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on delivery partner meetings <p>SS and BT have been meeting with partners to discuss how they are planning to move forward with implementing the actions they have signed up for as lead partners. Discussions have focussed on a review of timescales, funding and planned approaches. They have so far met with the NT, HE, EH, VisitWiltshire and both Highways and Planners at Wiltshire Council. Further meetings are planned in October and November with Natural England and the Wiltshire Council Rights of Way and Countryside and Economic Regeneration teams. Further meetings will be arranged with the NWDAONB. SS is happy to attend parish council meetings or meetings of any other group if they would like to discuss the new Plan and its implementation. She will be attending the Avebury PC meeting to talk about the Plan in the evening following the Steering Committee meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination Unit implementation role <p>SS presented the table outlining the division of responsibilities within the WHS Coordination Unit (WHSCU). The first point of contact for partner organisations is outlined as well as for the thematic areas of responsibility and the planned strategies. The division of responsibilities is designed to enable efficient working by avoiding double handling by the coordinators. As coordinators retain their roles in building and maintaining local relationships at Avebury and Stonehenge respectively there may some cases where they take on tasks outside their thematic area or are both required to engage with some projects. The table will be circulated with the notes for reference.</p>	
<p>4. WHS Gateway Signs</p> <p>SS reported on an excellent outcome from the implementation meeting with Wiltshire Council Highways who have agreed to pay for new gateway signs for the WHS at both Avebury and Stonehenge. At Avebury this will include the replacement of the four existing signs. At Stonehenge new signs will be installed as currently they exist only on the A303 installed by Highways England. The group welcomed the decision and thanked Wiltshire Council Highways for funding the work.</p>	

<p>SS presented the proposed style based on the current A303 signs. The group agreed that this simple design with UNESCO symbol was the most appropriate design. The colour will be either the light blue of the existing Highways England sign or approximate to the blue of the Management Plan. The group raised the following points for consideration by Highways in the final design and position of the signs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position should be as close to the actual boundary as possible taking into account safety considerations. If the position can assist in slowing traffic that would be a benefit • Choose a material that is sustainable and will not fade • Consider how it will appear at night. Avoid odd appearance of original Avebury signs • Colour should be the same as the A303 signs but consider using the blue/grey colour of the Management Plan 2015 cover. Accessibility/legibility should be taken into account • The size should not be bigger than the current signs. The smallest possible sign which one which remains an effective marker to raise awareness of the WHS should be used. • Ground disturbance should be kept to a minimum if new poles are required. The smallest appropriate poles should be used • Consider provision for future maintenance <p>The project should be delivered this financial year.</p> <p>ACTION: SS to work with Highways and advise on signs in light of the above considerations</p>	<p>SS</p>
<p>5. Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current position and challenges <p>Austerity and limited resources remain a challenge for the WHS which requires funds both for the implementation of the Management Plan actions and the support of the WHS Coordination Unit. Recommendations from this meeting can be passed to the WHSPP.</p> <p>For delivery of projects the WHSCU can look at funding from delivery partners and also streams such as Leader and the HLF. Some actions might be bundled into larger projects that might gain more extensive funding from sources such as pots administered by the LEP. The WHCU will explore possibilities. Seeking funding can be extremely time consuming. Larger bid could require an initial outline project to gain funding to employ someone to put together a more time-consuming detailed project plan and bid. Funding could also be pursued for project officers to deliver the projects once funding is identified. MPK added that History Centre staff with experience of seeking funding can advise. SS to explore whether the Wiltshire Council Economic Regeneration team can assist. A meeting is planned with the team in November.</p> <p>Currently discussions are underway between funding partners and other organisations on the WHSPP regarding the future resourcing of the WHSCU. The current HE</p>	

<p>secondment of the Stonehenge WHS Coordinator comes to an end in March 2016 and a solution will need to be identified in advance of this.</p> <p>Another funding option would be to set up a charity or trust that could initially raise seed corn funding to draw in additional resources from partners and other sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jurassic Coast Trust <p>The WHSPP undertook a site visit in September to look at the Management and funding of the Dorset and East Devon Coast WHS. The Jurassic Coast WHS has a Trust which has become extremely effective at gaining funding over recent years. It has gained funding that help support the work of the Coordination Unit although it is a separate entity and not part of the governance structure of WHS. One of its volunteers is both very active and a skilled expert in applying for funding and through substantial HLF bids has raised money for projects such as Growing the Jurassic Coast Community. A Community Coordinator funded by the HLF is based within the Jurassic Coast team.</p> <p>In addition the Trust allows money to be raised through a Business Associates scheme which could be replicated in this area. Care would be needed in selecting appropriate partners and the use of the UNESCO symbol.</p> <p>The Jurassic Coast is considering the Trust model for the WHS team but with some caution. The Trust would need to be very successful with funding partners agreeing to sustained support. The Hadrian's Wall Trust was unsuccessful and failed due to changes in the political and management context which demonstrates the real risks related to the trust as a funding model for the coordination of the WHS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avebury WHS Charity/Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Trust <p>AW reported the Avebury WHS Charity currently has pledges of c. £7,000 from local people. Its aim is to fund projects which will deliver actions in the Management Plan particularly in the Avebury part of the WHS. This could be extended to a general trust covering the whole WHS</p> <p>It was suggested that any such Trust could be based on the Jurassic Coast model but that it should be more closely related to the governance of the WHS to allow for the most appropriate targeting of funds raised. The idea should be passed on to the WHSPP for consideration as it affects both parts of the WHS. The Stonehenge Steering Committee will also need to agree the idea.</p> <p>ACTION: SS/BT to put together a list of deliverables and possible funding sources. Identify where actions can be bundled into larger projects and possible funding streams for these</p> <p>SS to talk to the Jurassic Coast Trust to find out more details of how it was set up and is run. See if other examples exist elsewhere and review their efficacy to help inform a model for a future Stonehenge and Avebury Trust.</p>	<p>SS/BT</p> <p>SS</p>
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<p>6. WHS 30th Anniversary</p> <p>SS outlined the current ideas for a celebration of Stonehenge and Avebury's 30th year since inscription as a WHS. Six other properties were inscribed in 1986 alongside Stonehenge and Avebury: Giant's Causeway, St. Kilda, Durham Castle and Cathedral, Castles and Town Walls of King Edward, Ironbridge Gorge, Fountains Abbey.</p> <p>A weekend conference is being planned for November 2016 which will focus on the range of attributes of OUV including the influence the WHS has had on artists and architects in addition to its archaeological importance. It will be aimed at a wider public with interest beyond only archaeology. The international resonance of the WHS will be included. The WHS Liaison group has been advising on the event and a small working group will be set up to focus on its organisation.</p> <p>A 30th Anniversary logo has been produced for the seven WHSs and partners are requested to badge any events they hold during the year with logo to raise awareness of this important anniversary and the status of the WHS. Further ideas for marking the anniversary were suggested by the group: an anniversary brew from local breweries; a WHS farmers' meeting/party; a publication from the conference papers; a special edition of one of the heritage management journals with a percentage of profits to the WHS Trust; travelling display to travel the county with banners and posters; launch of a WHS Trust; involvement of an appropriate celebrity.</p> <p>ACTION: All to contact SS if they would like the logo to use on any events in 2016.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>7. WHS Coordination Unit update</p> <p>The update from the Coordination Unit is attached. It outlines work undertaken since April 2015.</p>	
<p>8. Partner updates: implementation and opportunities for partnership working</p> <p>Partners provided brief oral updates.</p> <p>National Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NT Countryside Team has made access and condition improvements to the path along the winterbourne to Silbury and Waden Hill. • Ros Cleal and team represented the Trust at the Salisbury Museum Festival of History • RC appeared on Antiques Road show to talk about Avebury and Keiller • Between the Monuments dig took place in the summer. Around 10,000 people followed the daily blog and there was substantial media interest. Thank you to the local community who helped to fund the excavation. • The NT contributed to the WHS newsletter Megalith • The first launch of the new joint Management Plan was hosted by the NT in Avebury 	

- NS took part in the meeting to agree a methodology for the repair of the Ridgeway

Historic England

HE was not present at the meeting. AW proposed inviting English Heritage, now a separate charitable trust, to join the Steering Committee. This was agreed and EH will be invited to attend the next meeting. EH is responsible for the Guardianship monuments at Avebury which are managed through a Local Management Agreement with the NT except in the case of Silbury Hill.

NS reported that EH will begin repairs on the West Kennet long barrow where the glass roof tiles are leaking and allowing water into the monument. Heather Sebire from EH had reported that the work on replacing the glass and re-mounding at the eastern end will take place in November for a period of weeks. Work inside will be minimal but should have very positive effects. It will consist of draining any water present and making a stable surface on the already disturbed ground. Access will be restricted during the period of repair.

Action: NT to put news of the West Kennet long barrow repairs into the Parish Magazine. WHCU to put up on the WHS website

Wiltshire Council

- Hosted one of the WHS Management Plan launches and continues to host the WHSCU
- The Strategic Planning Team has been working in the Housing Allocation and Gypsy and Traveller Plans. The Archaeology Team has commented on these plans which should be going out to public consultation in February/march 2016
- The Archaeology Service has also been offering advice on Countryside Stewardship applications for NE. The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project is almost complete. A WHS-specific case study is under preparation

Natural England

- SP reported on the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme. An expression of interest from a farmer not already in HLS in Avebury could offer some substantial benefits if they decide to proceed.
- Some facilitation funding from DEFRA has done to Gemma Batten to help extend the benefits of the NIA for which funding is now finished. The area includes the whole of the Avebury part of the WHS so it may offer an opportunity for events to mark the 30th anniversary.
- NE attended the meeting to agree an acceptable surface, repair and management approach to the Ridgeway in the summer
- Opportunities related to new work on catchment sensitive farming are evolving. A new methodology for no-till cultivation has arisen in relation to this which could be presented to a WHS farmers' meeting in the new year
- Ben Clarke a former NT warden had been employed to develop opportunities related to Fyfield Down NNR. There is a new volunteer group which on the first 3 Wednesdays of the month undertakes scrub management and coppicing. They are in touch with HE and aware of the historic environment sensitivities.

**NT/W
HSCU**

BC is looking at interpretation and the long-standing idea of an audio guide with Prof. Peter Fowler. Opportunities and funding to pursue this are awaited.

- Work will take place to prolong the life of the beech circle in the NNR through tree surgery in March next year.

NWD AONB

- HO offered his apologies. The NDAONB Forum will take place on 14th October and will focus on the new HLC statements of significance. All members of the Steering Committee are welcome. Information on the day was circulated prior to the meeting.

Parish Councils

Fyfield and West Overton Parish Council

- DW mentioned concern over the project to consider closure of B4003 which appears in the Transport Strategy.

Avebury Parish Council

- AW reported that APC had considered two small planning applications in the WHS
- The APC Transport Group had met with Cllr Whitehead who was very positive about the Avebury WHS Transport Strategy that encompasses much of the Parish Traffic Plan. The group is currently asking for priority actions including an extension to the 30 mph speed limit to the north of the henge which would have the advantage of removing the signs from the setting of the monument. The green verges narrowing of the A4 at Beckhampton/West Kennet. This will produce a blueprint for the scheme along the length of the A4 at the points where narrowing is proposed in the WHS Transport Strategy.
- Discussions are underway over the future of the URC chapel in Avebury. Around 50 people attended a recent public meeting. The community is thinking about a possible reuse schemes to deliver a community benefit in this important site.
- Solstice went very well and APC would like to thank the NT and the Police.
- There is concern over damage to the West Kennet Avenue which the APC has notice appears to be ongoing and worsening. This is the reason the closure of the B4003 is proposed in the Transport Strategy as vehicles pushing out into the verge on passing each other are causing damage to the internationally protected monument. The mini-bund put in place to protect the informal lay-by is now heavily eroded and traffic is once again parking in the area.

ACTION: Request Historic England to review the damage to West Kennet Avenue. SS to set up a meeting to identify how to move forward with actions to protect the Avenue including education on the impact of traffic on the monument. Interim/alternative measures may need to be considered in the short term.

HE/SS

9. Report from/to WHS Partnership Panel

The WHSPP met in Lulworth Cove. It was a very useful meeting offering the chance to

<p>learn from the approach to governance and management of the Jurassic Coast WHS.</p> <p>There may be funding available for heritage from Europe. A project looking at the linkages of the historic and natural environment and examples of best practice may be an appropriate funding stream for Stonehenge and Avebury. There has been no call for projects as yet but a watch should be kept for any opportunities that may arise.</p> <p>Report the proposal to establish WHS-wide trust for Stonehenge and Avebury along the lines of the Jurassic Coast one.</p> <p>Greater clarity is needed on the role of the WHSPP and its relationship to the Steering Committees.</p>	
<p>10. ASHRG Report</p> <p>CS provided an update on ASHRG. The meeting was hosted by EH at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre in the education room. There were two presentations; one of Blick Mead by David Jacques and the other on the third season of the Between the Monuments project by Josh Pollard. The latter had identified a large enigmatic posthole and a slight rise in the centre line of the West Kennet Avenue.</p> <p>On discussing the implementation of the Management Plan the group agreed that the setting study was a priority to allow forward movement the Stonehenge boundary change. 27 people were present at this consistently popular and successful WHS group.</p>	
<p>11. Information exchange and AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KF reported that the Stonehenge Alliance had 18,500 signatures on their petition regarding possible changes to the A303. • KF commented that the Secretary of State's decision to refuse permission for the Navitus Bay wind farm off shore in the setting of the Jurassic Coast. The impact on future generations was referred to in the decision despite the fact that the application was for 25 years. The impact on the WHS was weighted more heavily than the perceived public benefit. • Tickets are available from KF for the Alton Talks from the Chronicle producers Davies Costello and Rose Sutcliffe on their programme on Silbury Hill on 12th November at 7.30 PM. Tickets cost £7.50. 	
<p>12. Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Avebury WHS Steering Committee will take place at 10.30 AM on Wednesday 13th April 2016. Venue tbc.</p>	

<p>JT proposed that the Stonehenge and Avebury Steering Committees be held in the morning and afternoon of the same day to enable partners who need to attend both meetings to make the most efficient use of their time. A possible joint lunch could be suggested. SS/BT to look into this for the autumn meeting of the two groups.</p>	<p>SS/BT</p>
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