



Avebury WHS Steering Committee

Minutes Agreed: 09.11.23

Thursday 13 July 2023, 11am – 1pm

Wiltshire Museum, Devizes / Zoom

Present: Henry Oliver (Chair, North Wessex Downs AONB) Claire Selman **CSe** (minutes/WHS Coordination Unit), Neil Adam **NA** (Wiltshire Council), Mel Barge **MB** (Historic England), Robin Butler **RB** (WHS farmers), Cllr Donna Byatt **DB** (Avebury Parish Council), David Dawson **DD** (Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society), Cllr Jayne Drew **JD** (Kennet Valley Parush Council), Kate Fielden **KF** (Avebury Society), Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger **MPK** (Wiltshire Council), Heather Sebire **HS** (English Heritage Trust), Colin Shell **CS** (ASAHRG), Cllr Stephen Stacey **SS** (Avebury Parish Council), Gill Swanton **GS** (Avebury Environs Group), Jan Tomlin **JT** (National Trust), Lynn Trigwell **LT** (Wiltshire Council), Sarah Valdus **SV** (Wiltshire Council)

Observer by invitation of the Chair: Emma Sayer (Chair, Partnership Panel)

Apologies: Cllr Jane Davies (Wiltshire Council), Stephen Thomas (Avebury Society), Andrew Guest (Wiltshire Council), Nick Snashall (National Trust), Helen Garside (Wiltshire Council), Phil Foxwood (DCMS)

Abbreviations: Steering Committee **SC**, Partnership Panel **PP**, World Heritage Site **WHS**, Coordination Unit **CU**, English Heritage Trust **EHT**, National Trust **NT**, Historic England **HE**, Wiltshire Council **WC**, Trust Transition Project Board **TTB**, Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological & Historical Research Group **ASAHRG**, Working Group **WG**,

Meeting Summary	New Chair Stephen Stacey (Avebury Parish Council) and Deputy Chair Jayne Drew (Kennet Valley Parish Council). The committee endorsed the updating of processes to continue and acknowledged the recommendation by TTB of a survey regarding all three options at workshop. Member comments included to re-commence adding meeting minutes to WHS website, the request to review of membership of Management Plan Review Steering Group and for consultation on charitable objects currently being reviewed by CIO Working Group.			
Date	Item	Action	Lead	Complete
13.07.23	3.4	Add meeting minutes to website once Admin Officer is in post	CU	Ongoing
13.07.23	4.2	Extend invitation for membership to Management Plan Review Steering Group	CSe	Complete 28.09.23
13.07.23	4.2	Circulate ToR for Management Plan Review Steering Group	CSe	Complete 28.09.23
13.07.23	6.1	Review membership list and advise CSe of amendments and deputies	All	Ongoing
13.07.23	6.3	Work with ES and SC Chairs to continue revision of processes	CSe	Ongoing
13.07.23	8.1	Participate in survey	All	Complete Aug 23
13.07.23	8.3	Clarify terminology of CIOs within survey	CSe	Complete Aug 23

13.07.23	8.5	Consult with CIO WG how and when to circulate draft charitable objects	HO	Complete Aug 23
13.07.23	12.1	Work on a cross partnership communication for September	CSe	Complete 12.10.23

1.0	Election of Chair
1.1	HO stepping down as Chair at the end of this meeting after a period of 5 years.
1.2	Following a call for nominations for Chair via email: Decision: Avebury WHS Steering Committee Chair: Stephen Stacey, seconded: Robin Butler. Avebury WHS Steering Committee Deputy Chair: Jayne Drew, seconded: Gill Swanton
1.3	SS thanked members for the trust placed in him and thanked HO for his efforts as chair.
2.0	Apologies, agree minutes of last meeting 22.03.23. Review actions and matters arising
2.1	Apologies given above.
2.2	Minutes of 22.03.23 agreed as an accurate record of the meeting, with actions complete and the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KF Item 6.0, p5: clarification of wording on Deputy Chair for PP meetings. • HO Item 6.0: wishes for it to be noted that in future revision of processes it be logical for PP Chair to attend both SC, seconded by KF. • CS Item 6.0: recommendation for SC Chairs to attend reciprocal meetings. • HO gave thanks to CSe for overseeing Periodic Reporting.
3.0	WHS Coordination Unit Update
3.1	MPK gave an update of CU staffing. CSe recently promoted to Partnership Manager in an acting up position for six months. Rather than replace Officer post, WC are looking into a combination of support as soon as possible: consultancy for transition project and admin support via Wiltshire Council pool similar to Natalie Matthee last year. CSe thanked partners for their support to date and welcomed feedback as to the delivery of the CU's work.
3.2	CSe referred to circulated work update, reflecting on work undertaken and events attended. Periodic Report complete and signed off by SC Chairs with thanks to all for their input. May be opportunity through DCMS to update Statement of Significance and mapping via Steering Committees next year. Starting to work within WHS and welcome invitations.
3.3	CSe: 45 th session of the World Heritage Committee taking place in Saudi Arabia 10 -25 September, DCMS are awaiting the agenda. No update to report at this time on the A303.
3.4	Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HO Enquired date for ICOMOS International Day for Monuments and Sites/ World Heritage Day: 18 April 2024 • CS raised need to update the minutes available on the WHS website, which will be addressed when CU admin support is in post.
Action	CU: add meeting minutes to website once Admin Officer is in post
4.0	Management Plan
4.1	CSe fed back from Management Plan Review Steering Group 16.05.23. Group completed initial review of the status of actions. SG meeting again to form recommendations as to how to proceed with the review with a greater understanding of CU capacity for year ahead, which will be fed back to the November SC meetings.
4.2	Members discussed how there is duplication of actions and actions that are more of a wish list/good practice than deliverable activities, could be as an Appendix. HO reflected need to review membership of the Management Plan Review SG to encourage a wider span of skills. ES reflected recent parishes group showed appetite for community representatives to be involved not necessarily as SG members. Next steps: Management Plan Review SG draft project plan with timetable. Historic England developing guidance for WHS Management Plans, may offer opportunity for collaboration. There may be guidance available from ICOMOS. Members highlighted merit of community

	consultation events for current Management Plan, and confirmed the role of the Management Plan Review SG is to support the CU to develop the programme and consultation rather than the review itself. KF asked for ToR for SG to be circulated to SCs. CSe: Extend invitation for membership to Management Plan Review Steering Group. CSe: Circulate ToR for Management Plan Review Steering Group
Action	
5.0	Parishes Group
5.1	CSe introduced new informal group to discuss relevant actions from Management Plan. CSe working with parishes and organisations to create new residents' page on WHS website.
5.2	Parish/Town Council members found group useful and reflects desire of parishes to support the WHS. SC members acknowledged this is an informal group and discussed importance of reflecting anything substantive to SCs.
6.0	Revised Steering Committee Processes
6.1	CSe introduced item, with titles supplied in the papers of areas to be revised to achieve a united process across the partnership eg decisions between meetings to maintain momentum. Processes to be drafted and sent to members for comment. Current membership list circulated with papers, Action All: review membership list and advise CSe of amendments and deputies
6.2	SV supported meeting in person as default and online by exception with nominated deputies and encouraged consideration of process to nominate or adjust representation. DB supported attendance in person, made easier by meeting dates supplied a year in advance. CS highlighted importance of ensuring deputies remain informed through the mailing list. CSe sought views on holding an in-person only meeting once year to give flexibility of venue and potential to hold a site visit.
6.3	The Steering Committee supports the continuation of the revision of processes. Action CSe: work with ES and SC Chairs to continue revision of processes.
7.0	Report from Partnership Panel
7.1	HO reported from Partnership Panel of 27.06.23: discussion around revision of processes, action for CU to add guidance to focus partner updates and updates given on CU staffing, Management Plan review and WH Committee in September.
8.0	WHS Workshop: The Way Forward
8.1	HO reported from Trust Transition Board meeting of 27.06.23: the recommendation from WHS Workshop was that almost all partners favoured Option 1 CIO to host the CU with a broader funding base than currently, with some reservations. Result of TTB was agreement to continue consultation from WHS Workshop to ensure everyone's views were heard through a survey for partnership exploring what would need to be in place to find Option 1 workable, with supplementary questions for the remaining two options. HO reported actions from TTB were to produce an organogram for CIO by Association which CIO WG have been working on, and work associated with Partnership Funding Agreement discussions. Action All: participate in survey
8.2	CSe CIO Working Group, ToR (for agreement by TTB) with notes from meetings in SC papers. WG reports to TTB, sharing information with SCs and PP. Task & finish group to support delivery of TTB activity. ES: three meetings to date, members applying their experience and a collaborative mindset. Group has explored CIO by Association Model, which unlike Foundation model can involve a membership as well as Trustees in decision making.
8.3	JT raised inconsistency in how options are identified and the importance of clarity between different structures referred to, eg the CIO type (CIO by Association) being explored now is different to that proposed at the workshop (CIO by Foundation). Action CSe: clarify terminology within survey
8.4	LT highlighted importance of a clear diagram to help progression and understand what governance and decision making looks like, and making sure outcome works for all partners including National Trust as a major landowner.

8.5	<p>CS raised that members need to view proposed charitable objects to help focus. CSe confirmed CIO WG have begun this process by reviewing draft charitable objects supported by PP in 2016.</p> <p>Action CSe: consult with CIO WG how and when to circulate draft charitable objects</p>
8.6	<p>CS raised the need to progress to respond to WC statement that it needs to see significant progress before September. SV confirmed that timings set by WC are based on annual funding cycles, where the review of all funding begins in September. LT gave clarity regarding the WC statement in that it had two key points. One, making significant progress towards new governance structure, moving forward but we are not agreed on it and need a structure that all key partners can buy into. Two, moving forward with new funding agreement, not expecting confirmation at this stage but progress towards this.</p> <p>Members discussed whether the Gantt chart supplied to TTB of the Trust Transition Project Plan would demonstrate this. CSe confirmed this was illustrative based on original NLHF grant and didn't necessarily reflect current direction.</p> <p>LT further clarified that WC is needing to see an agreed and funded way forward under a new governance option. Detail or Gantt chart isn't required at this stage, but clarity of direction where partners can be clear on their position, critical to have all key partners there.</p>
9.0	Member Updates - written summaries to be circulated in advance please
9.1	<p>DD Wiltshire Museum: recently awarded £300,000 NLHF funding towards Devizes Assize Project for two years development stage before potentially receiving up to £5 million towards the project with remaining to be fundraised for. Recent publication of Wiltshire Council Draft Local Plan supported development strategy and role of the project within the town. New creative exhibition Wiltshire Airspaces: Elevating Wiltshire.</p>
	<p>Wiltshire Council:</p> <p>SV: Local Plan presented to Cabinet this week then Full Council, public consultation opening in September. Document published on website, essential document and encourage all to engage in consultation.</p> <p>MPK: following current work on Local Plan and Design Guide, due to capacity Setting Study will be the next priority alongside Landscape Character Assessment work and Landscape Strategy. Aiming provisionally to start marking progress later winter/early spring.</p> <p>LT: Draft Wiltshire Design Guide currently open for public consultation which if adopted will become a Supplementary Planning Document. www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/6110/Wiltshire-Design-Guide</p>
	<p>JT National Trust: About to start the summer dig at Avebury in parkland, led by Professor Josh Pollard, Southampton University, seeking evidence of Neolithic activity and of the shrunken medieval settlement.</p>
	<p>CS ASAHRG: ASAHRG report to the Stonehenge & Avebury Steering Committees available at Appendix A</p>
	<p>SS Avebury Parish Council: Community exhibition space in the chapel report April – June available at Appendix A</p>
	<p>HO North Wessex Downs AONB: publishing Nature Recovery Plan which sets a framework across whole AONB that the local nature recovery strategy documents, in this county led by Wiltshire Council, can respond to. www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/our-work/our-current-projects/nature-recovery/. Priorities for AONB this year include chalk grassland, some of which covers the WHS.</p>
	<p>HS English Heritage Trust: aware of flooding at West Kennet Long Barrow, nesting swallows, ongoing trespassing at Silbury Hill despite fencing.</p>
10.0	AOB
	<p>CS proposed for SC Chairs to be invited but not required to attend reciprocal meetings with observer status.</p>

	Members gave consideration of how membership is currently reflected in the Management Plan, how this would be agreed formerly and of what's practical to ask of a volunteer. GS raised that this would further UNESCO's request with the 2015 Management Plan to unite the two sites together. Members supported this to be considered within the revision of processes discussed at Item 6.0 which would be formally agreed by SCs and PP.
11.0	Confirmation of what to feed back to Partnership Panel
	See meeting summary on page 1
12.0	Future meeting dates (venues tbc)
12.1	9 November 2023, 11am – 1pm 12 March 2024, 11am – 1pm 9 July 2024, 11am – 1pm 7 November 2024, 11am – 1pm CS proposed need for a Joint Steering Committee by early September. ES reflected how a joint meeting would be beneficial but timing would be challenging and a cross partnership communication to update regarding trust transition project work would offer a solution.
Action	<i>CSe: work on a cross-partnership communication for September</i>
13.0	Handover of Chair
13.1	SS thank you from all of us to HO for chairing so efficiently

Meeting ended: 1.07pm

Appendix A

Partner Updates supplied via email

ASAHRG Report, Colin Shell, 02.07.23

ASAHRG held its 28th April 2023 meeting at the Avebury Club, to whom thanks for access to their excellent facilities. The meeting was hybrid, and expertly managed by David Dawson. There was a full Agenda organised with pre-meeting inputs by our Secretary, Amanda Chadburn.

The staggered entry for new ASAHRG Chairs commenced with two current Chairs and two Chairs elect: Gill Swanton (present-Autumn 2023), Matt Leivers, Wessex Archaeology,(present-Spring 2026), and Chairs elect: David Dawson, Wiltshire Museum, (Autumn 2023- Autumn 2026), Neil Adam, Wiltshire Archaeology Service, (Jan 2024-Jan 2027).

Further important administration: new ASAHRG Terms of Reference were finalised, and came into operation on 16th May. Membership details are now updated, and there was more discussion on celebrating 30 years of ASAHRG.

Presentations were given by Josh Pollard on fieldwork at Cherhill and plans for fieldwork in the Avebury Manor Environs this summer. David Nash updated his work on sarsens at Stonehenge, and Fran Alfrey introduced the major Avebury Papers Project. Reports were also received from Claire Selman on the WHS display at the Wiltshire Archaeology Conference, for which ASAHRG members supplied some of the material, and from Anna Collar on the 2022 season at the Roman site N of Avebury Henge.

The next meeting is 13th October,2023, chaired by Matt Leivers

Avebury Parish Council

Community Exhibition Space in the Chapel, Green Street, Avebury

Update July 2023, Stephen Stacey

This update summarises activities for the second quarter (April-June).

We now have **nine organisations** exhibiting under the heading of 'A Living Landscape':

- **Avebury Papers:** two posters on the project to digitise the Keiller archive (see <https://www.aveburypapers.org>)
- **Avebury and Stonehenge Archaeological and Historical Research Group:** posters on work led by Josh Pollard on the West Kennet palisades
- **Avebury Community Orchard:** text about Wiltshire apples, a quiz for schoolchildren, and an apple press
- **CPRE Wiltshire:** posters on hedgerows and local campaigns and pamphlets
- **Friends of the Ridgeway:** two posters and a map of the Ridgeway
- **National Trust:** one pull-up about its presence in Avebury
- **North Wessex Downs AONB:** large free-standing map of AONB, pull-ups, and pamphlets
- **Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures:** pull-ups on Jomon stone circles
- **Wiltshire Museum:** pull-ups entitled 'Wiltshire in 100 objects' with the associated guide and other pamphlets.

In addition a triptych photograph of the Ridgeway at Hackpen Hill is on display.

Other organisations have expressed interest:

- **Avebury Society:** posters/pull-ups and text on Avebury 'personalities' (e.g. Aubrey, Beveridge, Keiller, Lubbock, and Smith) are being prepared
- **Marlborough Downs Space for Nature:** photos and text.

A rota of volunteers has allowed the chapel to open on most weekends. 48 visitors passed through the chapel on 1 July. An A board outside the chapel entrance now advertises the exhibition. Our gardeners do impressive work as does our cleaner. The chapel's website is under preparation. WiFi has been installed. We are very grateful to all who contribute in a variety of ways.

The National Trust was in occupation from 16-23 June over solstice with the chapel closed to visitors; this is a requirement of our lease. Druids used the chapel for a lecture on 30 June. An exhibition of photographs and art is taking place over the period 13-23 July. A group led by David Dawson used the chapel on 21 April and did ASAHRG on 28 April. Through ASAHRG, a group of postgraduate archaeology students from Oxford will meet in the chapel on 4 November.

James Holden gave a talk on nonconformist chapel architecture on 7 June; Stuart Raymond talked on 8 July on Avebury's history ('Avebury without the stones'); and Prof Mark Gillings, Dr Fran Allfrey, and Dr Ben Chan on 12 July on the Avebury Papers project ('Making Avebury - the past, present, future - and you?'). Attendance ranged from 24 to 40.