

FINAL AGREED



MINUTES OF THE ASAHRG SPRING MEETING, Friday 3rd May 2024

Hybrid at the Wiltshire Museum, Devizes.10.15 am-13.00 pm

(Many thanks to the Museum for hosting us).

1. Present

Neil Adam (Chair), David Sabin, David Dawson, Gill Swanton, Colin Shell, Claire Selman, Martin Barber, Jess Thompson, Dan Miles, Phil Harding, Christina Tsoraki, Jonathan Last, Ben Chan, Steve Marshall, Tim Harvard, Amanda Chadburn (minutes), Emma Sayer (observer).

2. Apologies

Ros Cleal, Katie Whitaker, Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, Briony Clifton, Lisa Brown, Nick Snashall, Alistair Barclay, Andrew David, Susan Greaney, Matt Leivers, Nick Baxter, Heather Sebire, Clive Ruggles, David Roberts, Jennifer Wexler, Nikki Cook, Josh Pollard, Martin Brown, Jackie McKinley, Brian Edwards.

3. The Agenda and previous Minutes were **agreed.**

4. Matters arising.

Kate Fielden tribute article. Amanda had not heard from the WANHM editor about a possible tribute to Kate Fielden in the next volume, but it is still planned to try for the next volume. She agreed to chase. Colin has been in touch with Bowood House. It was agreed that Kate Fielden's assessment of Outstanding Universal Value, which was a written manuscript, should be considered for publication elsewhere. **ACTION: AC**

5. Elections.

Brian Edwards has stepped down from our Deputy Representative role (thanks from ASAHRG were given to him), but thankfully coverage is being

maintained by previous and current Chairs. Colin Shell reminded the Group that the positions of the Representative and the Deputy Representative is that they work independently on behalf of ASHRG, and advise the Partnership Panel and Steering Committees and other task-and-finish groups on behalf of the Group. We had previously agreed that the current Representative would be replaced as soon as the current round of governance initiatives had been completed.

Emma Sayer commented that we were at an exciting time for the World Heritage Site in terms of governance changes, and thanked Colin for his contributions on this issue on behalf of ASHRG. This is also a critical time for the World Heritage Site because of recommendations which will be debated at the forthcoming World Heritage committee meeting in Delhi in the summer.

ASHRG members are encouraged to volunteer with reference to Colin Shell's paper on the need for a replacement for the Deputy Representative/ Representative in due course. He is happy to chat to anyone about this. Claire Selman indicated she would also be happy to chat about the role within the various WH meetings and bodies. **ACTION - ALL.**

6. Amanda Chadburn gave the **first presentation** about the current lunar research she is undertaking with Fabio Silva and Clive Ruggles at Stonehenge. She also talked about related forthcoming events at Stonehenge, and the Woodhenge dating results. The latter are to be published in her book with Clive Ruggles on May 8th, *Stonehenge: Sighting the Sun*.

See links here: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/stonehenge/things-to-do/major-lunar-standstill/>
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/stonehenge-sighting-sun>
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/04/13/new-research-proves-woodhenge-is-just-as-old-as-stonehenge/>

Claire Selman asked about lunar sight lines as an attribute of OUV, and how this might impact on planning applications. Amanda offered to discuss this with Neil Adam and Claire Selman. **ACTION: NA and CS to contact AC.**

Colin Shell suggested that the World Heritage Site needs a buffer and/or a formal setting in order to help protect the sightlines.

There was a brief discussion about the possible dating of the Station Stones.

7. WHS Research Framework and Agenda Review

Colin Shell had pre-circulated a paper, and reminded the groups that a review of the WHS Research Agenda was needed, the last one being published in 2016: <https://researchframeworks.org/stonehengeavebury/>

Dan Miles Indicated that the group needed to decide how to approach this. Digital copies are all online, and it is relatively simple to update elements online and digitally. A review of the gaps and what is out of date is needed, plus a quick audit of recent research. He suggested that volunteers from the group might wish to help with this. The HER is to do an audit along with A303 colleagues as a health check on what needs to be updated. The bibliography can be updated simply - however what are the new research questions?

Jonathan Last suggested that we need more on public/ social value to make it in line with newer research agenda. The European Archaeological Council has just provided a link on that.

Amanda reported back that Matt Leivers and David Roberts had previously indicated a willingness to help depending on availability and other commitments. Christina Tzoraki also offered to help. Our own ASHRG updates and presentations are a source of new material.

Dan reminded the Group that the Research Framework is owned by ASHRG. Claire Selman offered to help and support any updates or a working group. There was a discussion about what was available for researchers to include: not all parts of the HER are available freely online? Not everyone has reported via OASIS?

Colin suggested that a complete bibliography is very important and would be very useful. This was agreed as a priority.

Dan offered to help with the process of pulling together a new or reviewed research agenda.

A small ASHRG task-and-finish group may be needed to take this forward.

ACTION: Interested members to contact Dan Miles in the first instance.

8. Representative's Report

Colin Shell gave a short verbal update. The main issue that he'd been involved with related to the setting up of a possible CIO charity. At present, progress via the steering committees and the monitoring of actions in the management plan is therefore taking a backseat.

There is another meeting of the partnership panel and the trust transition project board on the 14th May. The steering committees meet shortly after that, and Colin hopes to be able to report back in writing after those meetings.

Consultants are currently being employed to help set up a CIO and apply to the Charity Commission. Initially it is hoped to set up a CIO by foundation, with a CIO by association happening later with full trustees being allowed at that point.

9. S&A World Heritage Unit Report

Claire Selman gave a short verbal report. The trust transition project relates to setting up a new charity, and reshaping governance of the WHS. With regard to the management plan, there is going to be an annual action plan for the first time.

Emma Sayer added that it is hoped to get a draft constitution to the Charity Commission in May.

10. Condition Survey Update

Claire Selman said a draft report had been produced. UNESCO want a copy, and it is hoped to complete this work in the summer.

11. Other items for discussion.

11.1 A recent graffiti attack on West Kennet Long Barrow was discussed at some length and Amanda read out Briony Clifton's (NT) statement in her absence:

There are current procedures for reporting heritage crime which we (NT) follow. If a heritage crime is happening, 999 is called and the police requested. Police forces generally have designated Heritage Crime and/or Rural Crime officers so mentioning 'heritage crime' is important at this stage as the report will get to the appropriate officer. A crime reference number is also requested. Organisations (WHSCU, HE, NT, EHT, WCAS, MoD) or individuals are notified ASAP where relevant.

If a crime has been committed, but it was in the past and does not require an immediate police reaction, the relevant organisations/individuals are notified ASAP, and a report to 101 is made promptly after details of the crime are collated. It is also possible to report 101 crimes online. We work closely with the Wiltshire Rural Crimes team and it is again important to reference 'heritage crime' in the 101 reports, and/or 'Operation Apollo', which is specifically for heritage crime in Wiltshire.

The police are investigating and the graffiti has been removed.

There was a discussion on why this attack was not made public by EH/NT.

11.2 WHS Setting Study

Colin Shell gave some background. In 2012 Beth Thomas, a previous Stonehenge World Heritage Site coordinator, had suggested a boundary change at Stonehenge. In discussions after this, it was decided that there needed to be a Setting Study first. This was apparently commissioned from Chris Blandford Associates and was completed two years ago (but has not been circulated).

However there have been further discussions: a Setting Study has to conform to the local plan as the local plan takes primacy? Colin suggested that the Setting Study needs taking forward as a matter of urgency.

Emma Sayer indicated that UNESCO have repeatedly asked for a Setting Study and the delay is problematic.

Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger has been actively involved and Amanda read out her statement in her absence:

Setting Study Supplied by Wiltshire Council, 22.04.24

The WHS Setting Study is going to be a document adopted by Wiltshire Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in or affecting the WHS as the local planning authority. The Council has a formal process to follow that includes a public consultation exercise before it can be formally adopted. The Council also intends to consult with WHS partners, and the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies as requested in due course. Progress on developing the study has started and will continue in 2024 with the intention of consultation on a draft in the autumn of 2024. The exact timetable for the consultation and formal adoption process is yet to be confirmed.

11.3 Ridgeway Surface Protection Project

Gill Swanton indicated that the Rights of Way people haven't met to discuss this for a long time. Neil Adam indicated that there was a temporary ban in force, but monitoring was problematic.

Now that trees are cleared, overnight parking is a blight and people living in vans are not being moved on. There is a problem with fires, litter, drugs. There are archaeological impacts and the National Trust are concerned. Colin Shell indicated that there is a problem for archaeological features which are not scheduled which can be damaged by vehicles. These rights of way issues are a problem in both parts of the World Heritage Site. Emma Sayer suggested that this needs a much greater focus in the next management plan.

Claire Selman agreed to review what traffic regulation orders are active again - there are precedents in National Parks e.g. the Peak District. **ACTION: CS**

12. PRESENTATION 2

Amanda gave a short PowerPoint presentation on behalf of Brian Edwards, relating to historical discoveries he had made in relation to Victorian photographs at Stonehenge and elsewhere.

These discoveries had led to the current exhibition at the Museum and other events:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_H9vGAK7ok



13. Museum Updates

Amanda read out Ros Cleal's report on the recent flooding of Keiller's squash court at Avebury, which is the AK Museum store.

We're trying to keep the collection on site for at least a year or two by moving it to the Manor, which will keep it accessible, but it's completely dependent on getting LBC for some temporary structural work, which is not at all a done deal (decision not for a few weeks yet). If we can't keep it here, then unfortunately I don't really see how we'll be able to keep it open to researchers so I'm very much doing my best to make sure we can keep it here, and then argue for a better solution than the alternatives we have at the moment (which are essentially just storage units - albeit in very professional and safe complexes - with no study space and at some distance. David Dawson very kindly offered to let us part of the Wiltshire Museum store but there just wasn't enough space).

It was noted that ASHRG has very good links with Avebury and Wiltshire museums, but currently less so with Salisbury Museum.

14. Other updates

Evora in Portugal is the European capital of culture in 2027. They have reached out to make links with Stonehenge and Avebury. There will be a conference there in September with the lead theme is on mindfulness and landscape. Claire and Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger will be visiting Evora in May.

15. Research Opportunities

It was noted that the work on the A360 had uncovered a pit and ditch/linear features; the A360 archaeology works were done by Dalcour McLaren.

16. Opportunities for Outreach and Dissemination of research

Amanda and Clive are publishing their new book on May 8th and this will feed into the proposed lunar programme of events by EH. All are welcome to attend the book launch.

The Dahlia show will be back at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre in Sept.

17. Agree what to report back.

It was agreed that Colin should feedback about the research agenda and the presentations given.

18. AOB

Susan Denyer is retiring from ICOMOS and the position has been advertised - it is two days a week and a non-salaried volunteer position.

19. Next meetings:

Josh and Anna kindly agreed to host some summer site visits to their digs x3 in and around Avebury. **AC to action and arrange.**

It was agreed that October 11th at Devizes Museum would be the next autumn meeting, with Matt Leivers chairing.