

Minutes

Wednesday 10 July 2024, 10am – 12.30pm, Antrobus House, Amesbury

Minutes agreed: 07.11.24

Chair: Items 1.0 – 2.2 Hugh Morrison **HM** (Stonehenge WHS Steering Committee Chair/Stonehenge Farming) and Items 2.3 – 8.0 Cllr Stephen Stacey **SS** (Avebury WHS Steering Committee Chair/ Avebury Parish Council)

Present: Krista Passmore **KP** (Amesbury Town Council), Colin Shell **CS** (ASAHRG/ Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological & Historical Research Group), Gill Swanton **GS** (Avebury Environs Group), Andrew Williamson **AW** (Avebury Society), Phil Foxwood **PF** (DCMS/ Department for Culture, Media and Sport), Richard Dewdney **RD** (English Heritage Trust), Heather Sebire **HS** (English Heritage Trust), Mel Barge **MB** (Historic England), Cllr Jayne Drew **JED** (Kennet Valley Parish Council), Richard Crook **RC** (NFU/National Farmers' Union), Jan Tomlin **JT** (National Trust), Nick Snashall **NS** (National Trust), Stephanie Payne **SP** (Natural England), Patrick Cashman **PC** (RSPB), Cllr Ron Lock **RL** (Shrewton Parish Council), Rachel Hosier **RH** (Stonehenge Farming), Lynn Trigwell **LT** (Wiltshire Council), Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger **MPK** (Wiltshire Council), Neil Adam **NA** (Wiltshire Council), Cllr Jane Davies **JD** (Wiltshire Council), Cllr Dominic Muns **DM** (Wiltshire Council)

Minutes: Claire Selman **CSe** (WHS Coordination Unit)

Observer by agreement of the Chair: Emma Sayer **ES** (Independent Chair, Partnership Panel)

Apologies: Cllr Alan Hagger (Amesbury Town Council), Sarah Tucker (Amesbury Town Council, deputised by Krista Passmore), Laura Corbett (Avebury Farming), Donna Byatt (Avebury Parish Council), Chris Farr (CLA/Country, Land & Business Association), Richard Osgood (Defence Infrastructure Organisation), Cllr Ian Silk (Durrington Town Council), Henry Oliver (North Wessex Downs National Landscape), Adrian Green (The Salisbury Museum), David Andrews (Visit Wiltshire/Great West Way), Sarah Valdus (Wiltshire Council, deputised by Cllr Dominic Muns), Becky Banbury (WHS Coordination Unit), David Dawson (Wiltshire Museum)

Abbreviations: Coordination Unit **CU**, World Heritage **WH**, World Heritage Site **WHS**, National Lottery Heritage Fund **NLHF**, Outstanding Universal Value **OUV**, Management Plan **MP**, Charitable Incorporated Organisation **CIO**

Item	Decision	Outcome
1.2	Minutes of Joint Steering Committee 12.03.24 agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	Added to WHS website here .
2.2	To progress partnership governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LT & SS will develop a second draft of Governance Model Paper. - This will be reviewed by a working group. - The result will then be proposed for agreement at a cross-partnership online meeting 19 September. 	Decisions added to Annual Action Plan Focus 1: Trust Transition Project.
	Agreement to formally join Avebury WHS and Stonehenge WHS Steering Committees together from the next meeting, with a review of membership an early item on work plan.	

Item	Action log	Lead	Completion / notes
2.1	Include timescale of completion for projects not yet active or underway within Annual Action Plan for November Steering Committee meeting with indication of where additional resource would expedite progress.	CSe	Complete
2.1	Add North Wessex Downs National Landscape to progression of Avebury Transport Strategy prioritisation and arrange next steps.	CSe	Underway
2.2	LT & SS revise Governance Model Paper based on discussion for Working Group progression in August	LT & SS	Commenced 08.08.24
2.2	Invite membership to Governance Working Group and coordinate	CSe/all	Commenced

	meeting/s to allow for progression of model and consultation before 19 September meeting.		09.08.24
2.2	Invite Steering Committee members to online meeting 19 September for partnership-wide item within Partnership Panel and Trust Transition Board meeting to agree governance model progressed by Working Group.	CSe / all	Completed 09.08.24
2.3	Direct communications questions relating to the WH Committee Decision to Claire/WHS Coordination Unit for liaison with DCMS.	All	Complete
2.3	All members of WHS partnership invited to attend a DCMS update on 1 August at 10am via Teams after decision has taken place.	All	Complete
3.2	Send an introductory letter to the members of parliament.	CSe/ Chairs	Underway
4.1	Initiate discussion within Wiltshire Council to utilise available buses to support Solstice at Avebury.	DM	Underway
5.0	Check email junk/spam for WHS Partnership Newsletter and send content to Claire for inclusion by 20 th of month.	All	Complete / ongoing
6.0	Book November Steering Committee venue to north of county.	CSe	Complete
7.0	Notify partners when WHS Soundscape is available to view online.	CSe	In WHS CU workplan

1.0	General Items
1.1	CSe gave apologies received (see above) and HM welcomed new members with introductions.
1.2	Minutes of previous meeting of 12.03.24 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting with no additional comments on actions or matters arising.
Decision	
2.0	Annual Action Plan
2.1	Written Updates within Annual Action Plan CSe presented 'Paper 2.1: Annual Action Plan' containing written updates on a number of projects within the Management Plan. Members had opportunity to record arising comments (below), and recommendations to Partnership Panel for additional resource to deliver Annual Action Plan (none). The following comments were made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SS - recommended inclusion of completion timescale for projects not yet active or underway within Annual Action Plan with indication of where additional resource would expedite progress. CSe will add for November meeting. - CS - sought confirmation that submission of CIO application to Charity Commission to take place w/c 15 July. CSe confirmed, meeting with Counterculture consultant on 17 July to answer final questions to support smooth application process. - HO (North Wessex Downs National Landscape, via email) would like to be involved in further activity associated with Avebury Transport Strategy due to providing half of funding to produce strategy. CSe will invite to future discussion arrange next steps.
Action	
2.1	Annual Action Plan Focus 1: Trust Transition Project – Governance Model SS introduced the Governance Model Paper with six recommendations for Steering Committee discussion and agreement. SS described how partnership governance has been a long-standing discussion and with the imminent formation of a CIO it is necessary to provide a governance model that responds to the new charity. SS thanked colleagues that approved the paper, created to prompt conversation acknowledging that it may not be possible to resolve all today. CSe reflected how CIO creation has been staggered before partnership governance within the Trust Transition Project and thanked SS for the paper. Some members had concerns that, in order to make decisions, there was not enough notice to review proposal with colleagues and that greater representation was required from across the partnership with inclusion of Partnership Panel and Trust Transition Board. The following comments were made to further develop the proposal or indicate where additional information is required to enable decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More detail and clarity is required for where ultimate decision-making lies to signify nature of relationships within structure.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More information is needed to explain approach for priorities within MP delivered by partners that the CIO wouldn't fund. - Amount of prioritisation through the different groups could risk dilution. - Consensus was reached in areas of Sam Rose's work for the Trust Transition Project that could inform governance work so not lost. - Structure should reflect both the next 2 years and future transition of CU staff. - Would look for a structure that offers greater simplicity with the addition of CIO and that limits duplication of membership between groups. - WHS Management Plan aims for reflection in structure: policy, boundaries, conservation, visitor management, learning, transport, research, monitoring. - Importance of attracting several people with good financial and political contacts at regional, national and international levels to advocate for WHS and raise funds. - Clarification of phrasing of CIO will 'acquire responsibility for managing WHS' as: CIO will seek funding to deliver projects arising from the Management Plan with subsequent decision point to host functions discharged by the CU. <p>No concerns were expressed for the principle of forming one Steering Committee, with the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More information is required on composition and role with other groups within partnership, with opportunity for partnership members to comment on proposal. - Merging prevents overlap, 15 members currently on both Committees. - Review of membership is in-keeping with the Steering Committees' Terms of Reference within Management Plan. - Sam Rose's work recommended greater focus on nature conservation. <p>Members discussed the potential role of professional advice to support this work. Some members reflected how facilitation hasn't led to resolution on this matter in the past, acknowledged that a consultant could guide but it is up to partnership to decide the outcome.</p> <p>Decision must take place before the next Steering Committee meeting in November as the CIO will be in place, and the 2024 State of Conservation Report states this work will be completed in 2024. The next Partnership Panel and Trust Transition Board on 19 September (online only) presents opportunity for a cross-partnership meeting to agree a model.</p> <p>Members suggested a Working Group to advance consultation on the model for greatest chance of swift agreement. LT & SS will work before this to revise and expand on the Governance Model Paper informed by today's discussion.</p> <p>Decisions:</p> <p><i>Decision</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To progress partnership governance by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LT & SS will develop a second draft of Governance Model Paper. - This will be reviewed by a working group. - The result will then be proposed for agreement at a cross-partnership online meeting on 19 September. <p><i>Decision</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreement to formally join Avebury WHS and Stonehenge WHS Steering Committees from the next meeting, with a review of membership an early item on work plan. <p><i>Action</i></p> <p>Actions:</p> <p><i>Action</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LT & SS Revise Governance Model Paper based on discussion for Working Group progression in August. <p><i>Action</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSe/all Invite membership to Governance Working Group and coordinate meeting/s to allow for progression of model and consultation before 19 September meeting. <p><i>Action</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSe/all Invite Steering Committee members to online meeting 19 September for
--	---

	<p>partnership-wide item within Partnership Panel and Trust Transition Board meeting to agree governance model progressed by Working Group.</p>
<p>2.3</p> <p>Action</p>	<p>Annual Action Plan Focus 7: Transport - World Heritage Committee Draft Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members received an update from Phil Foxwood, DCMS, in advance of the 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee 21-31 July: - Draft Decision 46 COM 7B.18 (link) was published by the WH Centre and Advisory Bodies on 24.06.24. The draft decision is disappointing, although DCMS had prepared for a number of scenarios including the recommendation for addition to the World Heritage in Danger List. - The UK delegation in Paris is continuing negotiation with WH Committee members, ensuring they fully understand the scheme, site and options and we are pushing for the decision to be amended. - The WH Committee of 21 member states will discuss the draft decision at agenda item 7B, expected Wednesday 24 pm or Thursday 25 July. Amendments can be submitted by members of the WH Committee up to 24 hours in advance, which are then published online. - The World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies will introduce the item, and the WH Committee will open floor to discussion. Only WH Committee members can speak, and they can ask the UK questions which is expected. - The Draft Decision can potentially be amended. It will be read line by line and the WH Committee will agree to adopt or further amend text as shown on the screen. Countries can add alternate wording, support or object and the Chair will have final say as to whether there is overwhelming support or objection, and they will adopt. - If decision to adopt includes placing on WH in Danger list, this will require a vote as a show of hands or ballot with 14 out of 21 or 2/3 majority required. Once the Chair has finalised the item, that is the final decision. - The decision as to whether the A303 scheme is continued or reviewed lies with Department for Transport. - The full state of conservation report including A303 scheme modifications is now available from the UNESCO website here. - Comments expressed at meeting: - CSe expressed thanks to PH for leading a partner update on 14.06.24, with <i>all members of WHS partnership invited to attend a DCMS update on 01.08.24 at 10am via Teams after decision has taken place.</i> - RH - if entered on the World Heritage in Danger list, will we also be informed of areas that need to be changed for the site to be removed from the list? - PF – the Draft Decision included request for a Desired State of Conservation Report to be submitted. WH Centre and Advisory Bodies have been clear in Draft Decision about what is required and the report will address this. - SS - clarification of phrase used within Draft Decision: 46 COM 7B.18 ‘<i>with a view to mobilizing international support.</i>’ - PF - phrasing relates to origins of World Heritage Convention and purpose of the World Heritage in Danger list, where countries may seek addition to the list to mobilise international effort of expertise and funding for sites under threat. As the UK isn’t seeking funding or expertise, the phrase is redundant. - HS - has there been communication from the new minister since the election? - PH - Lisa Nandy is the new Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Yet to be confirmed whether it will be Secretary of State or Junior Minister who leads on World Heritage, and Ministerial portfolios have not yet been confirmed.

Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Andrews, Visit Wiltshire (via email): Enquired whether there is agreed comms messaging, especially for international travel trade and travel trade media to proactively reassure that any changes to status won't impact on the visitor experience. - PF advised that DCMS is leading on communications and invited <i>all to direct communications questions to Claire/WHS Coordination Unit for liaison with DCMS</i> as she is in direct contact with DCMS Communications team. - Henry Oliver, North Wessex Downs National Landscape (via email): Expressed regret for the Draft Decision and the threat it poses to WHS status, including the Avebury part which lies within the NWDNL, and regret for the continuing inadequacy of the State Party's response to the WHC's repeated criticisms of the scheme and recommended actions. Urges all those promoting the A303 scheme, which would demonstrably cause major irreversible harm to the WHS and wider landscape, to remove the threat to inscribe the WHS on the List of World Heritage in Danger by withdrawing their support for the scheme.
3.0	Stonehenge WHS Steering Committee matters
3.1	<p>Stonehenge Solstice Reflection</p> <p>Richard Dewdney (Head of Historic Properties for Stonehenge, English Heritage Trust) reported from Summer Solstice 20 - 21 June. 15,800 attended with 1 arrest and continued improvement in behavior. A new traffic management system was trialed to ease impact on road network and reduce time for buses to reach the site, which will continue to be developed alongside public transport service. Summer Solstice falls on a weekend in 2025 so anticipate high numbers.</p> <p>JT (General Manager, Wiltshire Landscape, National Trust) felt there were more people within the Stonehenge landscape but it was a positive atmosphere.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSe welcomed the local stakeholder meeting held by English Heritage Trust 12.06.24, with a subsequent meeting taking place later in July. - RL (Shrewton Parish Council) asked if consideration could be given to public transport from the north. RD confirmed this would be dependent on availability of service providers. - RH (Stonehenge farming) noted that for local land managers closure of A360 assisted in impact felt within landscape.
3.2	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HS (Senior Historic Property Curator for Stonehenge, English Heritage Trust) reported from the Just Stop Oil protest that happened at 12.20pm on 19.06.24 involving three individuals using a mixture of cornstarch and orange dye. Removal took place quickly in liaison with MB (Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Historic England) with the greatest care using air and monitoring will continue on impact to monument and lichen. Wiltshire Police continue to lead investigation surrounding the incident. - HS - Lunar Standstill taking place throughout the year at Stonehenge, with associated events to mark the occurrence. - RC - recommended that the WHS makes contact with the new members of parliament. <i>CSe will work with the Chairs to write an introductory letter.</i> - For a report from Stonehenge farming please refer to Appendix A. - RC (NFU) reflected on his 40 years with Stonehenge WHS Steering Committee, which reaches its 40th anniversary this year, and his pleasure that today's meeting is held at Antrobus House nearby to the WHS . The Chair thanked RC for his generous support in sponsoring the meeting alongside the Trust Transition Project NLHF grant.
4.0	Avebury WHS Steering Committee matters
4.1	<p>Avebury Solstice reflection</p> <p>Jan Tomlin (General Manager, Wiltshire Landscape, National Trust) reported that while it is</p>

Action	<p>difficult to give an accurate reflection of numbers at Avebury over Solstice, around 4000 attended for sunset which reduced to 2500 for sunrise with 1 arrest (not Solstice related). Solstice was well supported by Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Police, who worked to maintain a light, family atmosphere. 200 parking tickets were issued, with parking and lack of public transport remaining an issue.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SS (Avebury Parish Council) reflected the event was successful from the community's perspective, acknowledging the challenges presented by lack of parking and public transport availability. - JD (Wiltshire Council, Marlborough West) felt discussion should progress within Wiltshire Council to utilise available buses to support Solstice at Avebury. DM (Cabinet Member, Wiltshire Council) will initiate this discussion within Wiltshire Council.
4.2	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SS reported that Cllr Jayne Drew is stepping down from her role with Kennet Valley Parish Council after 17 years. Members thanked Jayne for her support as member of the Avebury WHS Steering Committee, including becoming Deputy Chair in 2023. - For a report from North Wessex Downs National Landscape please refer to Appendix A.
5.0	Coordination Unit Update
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSe notified partners that recruitment for WHS Partnership Officer 2 year full-time position is live until 31 July and is being advertised regionally and nationally. She thanked funding partners (English Heritage Trust, National Trust, Historic England, Wiltshire Council) for supporting the position. - CSe highlighted the monthly WHS Partner Newsletter. She reminded partners to check spam/junk and the opportunity for partners to submit news and updates by the 20th of each month. The next newsletter will be shared in September. - Becky Banbury, who has worked with the WHS Coordination Unit since October 2023 as a part-time Administration Officer, will be departing at the end of August and is working 1 day a week until then. Members thanked Becky for her support and commitment to the WHS Partnership.
6.0	Date of next Joint Steering Committee meeting
Action	<p>13 November 2024, 10am – 1pm, in person with hybrid facility.</p> <p>Members raised a number of considerations when selecting venues including fair spread of locations geographically, proximity and availability of free parking and how in person attendance is highly valued and productive, acknowledging the financial and time challenge this can present for attendance. CSe to book venue to north of county.</p>
7.0	WHS Soundscape Screening
Action	<p>CSe introduced soundscape piece produced by Kit, BA (Hons) Music & Music Technology student, which combines photography and sound to re-create the atmosphere and experience of the WHS for use online and at events. The project was undertaken with the CU, with permissions sought from landowners and discussion with Communications colleagues. Due to limited CSe will notify partners when the piece is available to view online.</p>
8.0	Joint Steering Committee Meeting close
	The Chairs thanked all for attending in person.

Meeting ended: 12:45pm

Meeting attendees online: Phil Foxwood, DCMS

Record of arrival and departure outside of published times: Phil Foxwood 11:30 – 12:10

Appendix A

Written Updates Provided for the Meeting

WHS Farmers Report, Rachel Hosier, Stonehenge Farming, 10.07.2024

Raves

During May the Police advised us of potential raves in this area and to check out our barns. The threat of raves seems to be something that now crops up every year. Fortunately, the Police intel was not correct on this occasion as I am not aware that any raves happened in the surrounding area this year, but no doubt they will in time.

Summer Solstice

The 2024 Summer Solstice was not too onerous on WHS farmers. The closure of the A360 at the western edge of the WHS meant visitors did not park at Druids Lodge water towers and walk down the byway 12. As a result of this there were no campers lighting fires on monuments and leaving filth behind. However, the tenants in the cottages at Druids Lodge did experience anti-social behaviours which has already been brought to the attention of the local Rural Crime Team.

The new traffic one-way system did cause access issues at the eastern end of the WHS. Waits of up to 25 minutes were reported journeying 200 yards up from Countess Roundabout and cars were abandoned along Countess Road to Woodhenge. Did the closure of the A360 add to this problem? What effects will traffic using the A360 bring to bear on the new system.

Google Maps and farm tracks

There seems to be an increase in Stonehenge tourists turning up private farm tracks. Many of the tracks are designed for agricultural vehicles and therefore unsuitable for car travel, bringing tourists into contact with large farm machinery. It is becoming apparent that rather than using signs stating "Private, no through road" there is a need for picture signage which can be understood by all nationalities. The "lost sheep" all say they are following Sat Nav or Google Maps, however, these maps do not distinguish between public roads and private roads or unmetalled dirt tracks with potholes.

As the WHS looks to open up, there is a real need for appropriate signage in the wider areas around Stonehenge; and it needs to be understandable to all nationalities.

Hare coursing

Haymaking has opened up the grass fields so all farmers are being vigilant and watching and waiting for the first visits of the hare coursers. We know it is going to happen, we just don't know when.

North Wessex Downs National Landscape, Henry Oliver, 09.07.24

- The life of the NWDNL Management Plan 2019-24 will be extended by one year (in accordance with the process approved by DEFRA), by decision of the CoP earlier this month.
- The NWDNL Management Plan review to publish the Plan for 2025-30 will begin imminently (the only constraint is staff capacity).
- The NWDNL Chair, Sarah Nichols, has announced her intention to step down at the end of her second term in March 2025 and recruitment of her successor is now beginning. If anyone is interested or knows someone suitable, please contact me.