



## Stonehenge World Heritage Site Committee

Meeting on Wednesday 6th November 2019

2.30 – 4 PM

Wiltshire Museum, Devizes

### NOTES

#### 1. Present:

Steven Botham (SB) Deputising for Kathi Sharp	Durrington Town Council
Roger Fisher (Chair) (RF)	Amesbury Town Council
Jenny Davies (JD)	English Heritage
Ron Lock (RL)	Shrewton TC
Hugh Morrison (HM)	WHS Farmers' representative
Richard Crook	NFU/Amesbury TC
Jan Tomlin	National Trust
Nick Snashall	National Trust
Stephanie Payne (SP)	Natural England
Heather Dixon	RSPB
Philip Miles	Country Land and Business Association
Rachel Foster (RF)	Wiltshire Council
Gill Swanton (GS) Deputising for Colin Shell	ASAHRG
Sarah Simmonds (SS) notes	WHSCU

#### Guests:

Ray Bryant	Wiltshire Council, Spatial Planning
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#### 1. Introductions and apologies:

David Andrews	VisitWiltshire
Andy Shuttleworth	Winterbourne Stoke PC
David Dawson	Wiltshire Museum
Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger	Wiltshire Council, County Archaeologist
Colin Shell (CS)	ASAHRG
Melanie Barge (MB)	Historic England

#### 2. Agree minutes of last meeting & matters arising

- 2.1. Minutes – agreed
- 2.2. Matters arising – covered in agenda

### 3. Wiltshire Core Strategy Review

RB attended the meeting to present on the developing WHS policies in the Wiltshire Core Strategy. He had previously attended the meetings in April and asked for feedback from the Committees.

Wiltshire Council is in the process of reviewing the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (2006-26) Core Policies including 'saved' policies (in this case from the Kennet Local Plan). Included in this process is an opportunity to review, update and revise, where appropriate, specific policies and references to the WHS. These should then be in place until 2036.

Currently there are a number of references to the WHS specifically:

Core Policy 6 Stonehenge

Core Policy 59 Stonehenge, Avebury & associated sites World Heritage Site

'Saved' Policies on the Avebury WHS (TR6-TR9)

The review offers an opportunity to consider whether these policies should be amalgamated into one or remain geographically separate. RB thanked members who had sent in comments. He presented two options that had taken these responses into account: a combined Stonehenge and Avebury policy and two separate ones. Generally, it was agreed that the main priority was a policy/ies that reflect the specific challenges in the two parts of the WHS. If it is to be a single policy reference should be made in each relevant Neighbourhood Area policy to Policy 59 and the WHS Management Plan. The most important requirement is that any changes need to maintain or enhance protection of the WHS and its OUV. RB will look into whether the NPPF update requirement for Statements of Heritage Significance is relevant. We already have a Statement of OUV clearly outlining the significance of the WHS so it is probably not relevant to the WHS.

SS will be working with the planning team to consider the comments received alongside the national policy framework and WHS Management Plan policies.

Opportunities to comment on the entire Core Strategy review will be available to the wider public through a formal public consultation process.

**Action: Any further comments from the group to be received by 22<sup>nd</sup> November. Please forward to SS.**

### 4. Byways Open to All Traffic in the World Heritage Site

The implications of maintaining byways open to vehicular traffic are an on-going cause of concern to the Stonehenge WHS Committee and its members. The following summary of the current situation was provided by Wiltshire Council who is responsible for PRoW in the County:

*Wiltshire Council and Highways England have now entered into a legal side agreement to the Development Consent Order (DCO) where Highways England will work with the council to monitor the effects of the A303 scheme (once delivered) on the use of the byways by vehicular traffic and, if at that stage it becomes evident that some form of prohibition of driving order is necessary, Highways England will assist financially with the costs of*

*introducing the orders. It should be noted that the Council currently has no intentions for introducing s.1 RTRA 1984 prohibitions on the byways at this stage but will continue to keep the position and use of the WHS byways under review.*

The group agreed on the need to continue to advocate for closure to vehicular traffic which have a negative impact on amenity and safety as well as archaeology. Waiting for the completion of the tunnel project, if it is to go ahead, will mean too long a delay in addressing the issues which are affecting the WHS, its partner organisations, residents, landowners, farmers and visitors now. Monitoring and evidence gathering should be rigorous to enable any application for closure to be robust. This should be commenced as soon as possible by the relevant bodies. Something does need to be done in the short-term to limit negative impacts. While access remains legal it is essential that the Council enforces regulations preventing camping on a PRoW. The width of the byway should not exceed the legally required minimum. In consultation with curators and landowners, fences should be adjusted to ensure byways do not exceed designated widths.

The need to pursue closure to vehicular traffic was agreed by the whole group. The timetable should not be dependent on the delivery of the A303 project. A plan should be put together for robust data/evidence gathering by the relevant responsible bodies to support closure of byways to motorised traffic. A plan for this needs to be put in place. In the short term all relevant regulations should be enforced. The issue should be reported as a priority action at the next WHSPP meeting. Cllr Clewer is a member of this group.

**Action: RF/SS to report the need for the appropriate management of byways in the WHS to the WHSPP at their next meeting for adoption as a priority action.**

**Relevant Wiltshire Council officer and/or councillor to be invited to attend the next Stonehenge WHS Committee to discuss an approach to the issue in the short and longer term.**

**Maintain the issue of byway management as a standing agenda item.**

## **5. World Heritage Site Coordination Unit Update**

An Update Report was circulated with papers for the meeting and is attached. SS reported that a key focus of work has been securing funding for WHS landscape-wide strategies drawing on Management Plan actions and recruiting consultants to deliver both the Exploring the WHS and Beyond project (sustainable transport, tourism and landscape access) and the WHS Burrowing Animal Strategy. Arup who have been recruited to deliver the former will be holding a workshop with both Committees between the two meetings today to help shape the vision and principles for this project. Another key area of work has been the review of options for a more resilient funding model for the WHSCU which will provide a sustainable future and an increase in resources to allow it to expand the benefits

it provides to the protection of the WHS, communities and partners organisations. The project is NHLF funded. The range of current work is summarised in the attached Partnership Manager report.

Helen Weedon left the Unit at the beginning of September to take up a new role with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). Her hard work and enthusiasm during her time with us was very much appreciated and we wish her well with her new endeavours. The production of Megalith will be postponed till 2020 when a new officer will be in place.

## **6. Reports from Partners on implementation of WHS Management Plan and related projects**

### **6.1. English Heritage at Stonehenge**

The summer was extremely busy.

Conservation works have been undertaken in the Monument Field. Old tiles have been taken out which previously led to the bridge removed last year.

Defences have been put in place in line with required security regulations. These are all removable.

A programme of community events in place for Christmas including a shopping one on 11<sup>th</sup> December

The next temporary exhibition features 150 Years of personal photos of people visiting Stonehenge starting in 1875. There will be a free preview with mulled wine and mince pies.

Next year the focus of the exhibition will be on Japan to coincide with the Olympics.

### **6.2. National Trust**

Removed field gates on the Cursus outside of the Scheduled Monument area

Excavation with Josh Pollard and Mark Gillings at West Kennet Palisade Enclosures

Two new exhibitions Still Digging Recent Excavations at Avebury and Alexander Keiller's Avebury Manor

A new volunteer-led landscape tour in place

Worked in partnership with University of Leicester on [Places of Poetry](#) project

### **6.3. RSPB Natural England**

Update on monitoring on Normanton Down

There were two breeding pairs of stone-curlew throughout the season.

1 x pair on Valley Bottom plot made 1 nesting attempt resulting in a single fledged chick.

1 x pair on Stonehenge plot made 2 nesting attempts. The first attempt failed at chick stage and the result of the second attempt was undetermined.

A survey of breeding bird territories was undertaken recording 32 species in total.

Highlights include 12 of lapwing; 40 skylark; 4 corn bunting; 3 whitethroat; 3 linnet and 2 yellowhammer territories.

A volunteer made monthly visits to the Bush Barrow through the summer to monitor butterflies along a new transect. We haven't received all of the species data yet but Adonis blue was recorded this year and a good number of other species.

Our site manager has written to Highways several times raising concerns about the caravan which has been parked on Byway 11 for many months. This has been a big issue for the landowner and for the reserve. Enforcement measures should be followed.

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#### 6.4. Natural England

Providing advice on the WHS Burrowing Animal Strategy

Working with farmers to on repairs to linear features in the landscape

#### 6.5. Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service

WCAS are attending a number of World Heritage Site project meetings including the Ridgeway Project, Setting Study, Burrowing Animals Strategy, WHS Condition Survey and Exploring the WHS and Beyond Project

ETRO is in place on the Ridgeway and now need to assess results

WCAS continue to provide advice on a number of planning applications and utilities consultations.

WCAS attended A303 hearings in the summer

WCAS were successful in gaining a grant for extending the WHS Partnership Office post.

WCAS is working with the WHSCU and HE to review recent Solstice Park application and identify necessary mitigation to avoid harmful impacts on the WHS.

### **7. Parish/Town Council and Farmers' Group Updates**

#### 7.1. Amesbury Town Council

RF reported that the final phase of the Kings Gate development will result in a further 200 plus houses by 2025

#### 7.2. Shrewton Parish Council

The Council is hoping to get a RoW that enables residents to access the WHS with ease.

The village still suffers from major rat running. Proposed traffic calming measures have been turned down. SS suggested proposals are put forward to the A303 Community Forum and Arup who are undertaking the Exploring the WHS and Beyond project on our behalf.

#### 7.3. Durrington Parish Council

Reported that the Council is trying to renegotiate a lease for Millennium Field which they would like to maintain as open space for the community. The land is not included in available land for development in the Local Plan.

#### 7.4. WHS Farmers Group

HM reported that they had recently had a very good WHS farmers' meeting. One of the main issues discussed was the need to close the BOATs to motorised vehicles other than landowner and farmer access. The new Exploring the WHS and Burrowing Animal Strategy projects were discussed and there were presentations from Simon Smart on funding available from NE for farmers' groups such as the Marlborough Downs Space for Nature group. One might be considered focussed on the Stonehenge part of the WHS to help build on benefits for heritage and nature. There was also a presentation on Hen Harrier reintroduction programmes from Flemming Ulf-Hansen from Natural England.

#### **8. Report from the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel**

At the last meeting on 9th May the WHSPP discussed the need to prioritise remaining actions from the WHS Management Plan 2015. Other partner meetings have been Trust Transition Project Board focussed. Finding a sustainable funding model for the WHS Coordination Unit is a key action for the WHSPP. There are differences over how this model should look but there is openness among partners to consider broadening the funding base.

Support was expressed for a potential WHS arts initiative with the University of Sunderland and Bath Spa University. The Panel awaits a further approach and will be happy to discuss and consider any proposals put forward.

#### **9. Report from Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological and Historical Research Group**

ASAHRG has received the following reports:

- 9.1. *Living with Monuments Project Fieldwork Easter and Summer 2019 Report* – Josh Pollard (University of Southampton) A site visit to the excavation was arranged in the summer for members of ASAHRG and the WHS Committees.
- 9.2. The group is very well attended and appreciated by members.

#### **10. Information exchange and AOB**

- 10.1. A new WHS Partnership Officer has been appointed. We are looking forward to Sarah Askham joining the team at the beginning of December. JT thanked SS for her high level of on-going commitment and hard work. She has once again covered the work of the WHSCU singlehanded and continues to offer WHS partners high levels of support including attending evening meetings during an extremely busy period.

#### **11. Dates of next meetings**

- **Thursday, 30th April 2020**
- **Thursday, 29th October 2020**

## Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Coordination Unit Update November 2019

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Since the last meeting of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Committees in April 2019, the Coordination Unit has been involved in the following areas of work in line with the Management Plan aims, policies and actions:

- Continued to act as secretariat for:
  - Stonehenge WHS Committee
  - Avebury WHS Steering Committee
  - WHS Partnership Panel
  - Avebury and Stonehenge Archaeological and Historical Research Group
  - WHS Liaison Group
  - Stonehenge and Avebury Learning and Outreach Group (SALOG)
- Progressed development of the Taking the Past into the Future WHS trust project with Doug Stewart the Transition Project Manager with funding secured from NHLF, match and in-kind funding totalling £93,950. At the last Project Board meeting in October to review the options appraisal two preferred options were identified. Further details are being prepared to enable a choice of the final model to be made early in the new year. Wider consultation will take place on the details of the preferred model as its implementation proceeds.
- As a member of the Benefits Steering Group advising Highways England on A303 legacy projects to align with the aims and policies of the WHS Management Plan.
- Secured £120,000 from Highways England Designated Funds to deliver the project Exploring the WHS and Beyond which includes a WHS Sustainable Tourism, WHS Sustainable Access and WHS Sustainable Transport strategic strands. Arup has been appointed and an initiation meeting held in mid-October. Organised a workshop for both committees.
- Brief for the WHS Burrowing Animal Strategy finalised and let to Aecom. Gained agreement that this work will be funded and commissioned by Highways England. Designated funds of £45,000 secured to deliver this. Data collection and desk-based survey nearing completion. Work to be complete by end of financial year.
- Continued to advise on and discuss Countryside Stewardship schemes with landowners and farmers and options that would protect and enhance the WHS
- Provided advice on planning applications and pre-planning consultations affecting the WHS and its setting
- WHSPM attended DCO hearings in June and August and provided input in line with WHS Management Plan aims and policies

- Worked in partnership with Wiltshire Council to deliver improved road signage in Avebury in line with WHS Transport Strategy Design Principles. All signs refreshed, replaced and/or updated including improvements to main NT car park signage.
  - Discussed options for medium term repair of damage on the B4003 with Wiltshire Council Highways, the National Trust and Avebury Parish Council. A method statement using chalk sacks for building out grass verges agreed. Awaiting delivery by English Heritage.
  - Met with West of Marlborough traffic group representative to review solutions for reducing speed on the A4 in the east of the Avebury part of the WHS in August. Discussed solutions that aligned with Design Principles in the WHS Transport Strategy.
  - Worked with partners including Wiltshire Council, the NT and Parish Council on agreeing and approach to RoW signage in the Avebury half of WHS. Overarching principles agreed.
  - Continued to work with VisitWiltshire on their Great West Way tourism initiative to explore development of a World Heritage itinerary from Kew
  - Led Stonehenge WHS landscape walk south of the A303 as part of Festival of Archaeology.
  - Progressed work to refresh the interpretation, West Kennet Long Barrow, the Sanctuary and the free sites at Avebury with English Heritage and the National Trust. Work well-advanced for delivery this financial year with English Heritage funding.
  - Delivered a number of WHS-themed outreach activities at events including the Salisbury Festival of Archaeology and the WHS Cricket match in Avebury in July.
  - Continue to play an active role in SALOG the Stonehenge and Avebury Learning and Outreach Group. Working on ideas for celebrating the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World Heritage inscription in 2021.
  - Continue to discuss with the National Trust opportunities for achieving WHS Management Plan actions through their use of the chapel in Avebury.
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- Shared best practice on WHS management and explored opportunities for professional and community links as part of a delegation visiting the prehistoric Jomon Stone Circles in Japan with English Heritage, Wiltshire Museum and the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Culture, University of East



Anglia in October. These sites will be nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2021.

- Presented to Bath Spa University and Claremont Graduate University, California master's students on managing a rural WHS landscape.
- Presented at South Western Federation of Museums and Art Galleries in July.
- Built links with WH:UK and ICOMOS-UK by attending workshops and networking meetings to enhance sharing of knowledge and encourage best practise
- Presented to the World Heritage: UK AGM at the Tower of London on assessing impacts on the World Heritage Site
- Contributed to World Heritage: UK review of Sites now available at: <https://worldheritageuk.org/about/resources/whuk-downloads/>
- Liaised with and exchanged best practice with international heritage professionals to improve management, interpretation and resilience.
- Continued to attend and represent the WHS at parish council meetings and liaise with members of communities in the WHS on relevant issues. Attended meeting on car parking challenges in Avebury in September.
- Held annual WHS Farmers' meetings in October at both Stonehenge and Avebury
- Continued work on maintaining Stonehenge and Avebury WHS website and Twitter account @StoneAveWHS. Developing the Stonehenge and Avebury Facebook page
- Continue to respond to enquiries regarding the WHS from a local, national and international audience