



WHS Partnership Panel
Held as joint meeting with Trust Transition Project Board

Agenda items 1.0-2.0 and 6.0-14.0

Minutes – Agreed 14.05.24

Friday 19 January 2024, 11am – 1pm

Wiltshire Museum, Devizes & Zoom

Members present: Emma Sayer **ES** (Chair), Claire Selman **CSe** (WHS Coordination Unit), Cllr Nick Holder **NH** (Wiltshire Council), Hugh Morrison **HM** (Stonehenge WHS Steering Committee Chair), Colin Shell **CS** (ASAHRG), Lynn Trigwell **LT** (Wiltshire Council), Ross Simmonds **RS** (Historic England), Stephen Stacey **SS** (Avebury WHS Steering Committee Chair) Jan Tomlin **JT** (National Trust), Becky Eade **BE** (English Heritage Trust), Becky Banbury **BB** (Minutes / WHS Coordination Unit)

Observer by request: Cllr Jayne Drew **JD** (Avebury WHS Steering Committee Deputy Chair/ Kennet Valley Parish Council), David Dawson **DD** (ASAHRG chair-elect / Wiltshire Museum)

Presenting: Items 2.1 & 2.2 Phil Foxwood **PF** (DCMS), TTB Item 3.4 Sarah Lester **SL** (Wiltshire Council)

Apologies: Karen Jones (Presenting Item 3.4, Wiltshire Council)

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 Board **TTB**, Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological & Historical Research Group **ASAHRG**, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport **DCMS**, Development Consent Order **DCO**, State of Conservation Report **SOCR**

Meeting Summary	<p>Members received updates on Partnership business and discussed both progress and recommendations moving forward. This included a briefing on A303 Scheme and State of Conservation Report from DCMS; discussion about the Partnership Panel Chairs' Review summary, consideration of the Chair's appointment process and agreement on future Partnership Panel meetings.</p> <p>The Partnership Panel was held as a joint meeting with the Trust Transition Board and minuted separately. Key decisions are detailed in the table below.</p>
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Item	Decision	Outcome
1.2	Agree previous minutes 26.09.23.	AGREED with revision to section 5.2
1.3	Future meetings to minute arrival and departure times of attendees.	AGREED
6.1	Deputies to receive all meeting papers in future.	AGREED
6.2	Partnership Panel Chair – agreement regards appointment process (current 3-year term until Nov 2024) including appointment body.	Detailed information to be circulated post meeting for review / comment (see action) and added as agenda item in May.
7.0	Partnership Panel meetings – agreement regards in person / hybrid and venues for this year's meetings.	AGREED. To have in-person meeting in May and virtual meeting in September.

Date	Item	Action log	Lead	Complete
19.01.24	1.2	Revise wording in section 5.2, 26.09.23 minutes ref NT and recirculate.	CSe/JT	Complete
19.01.24	2.2	Thank Helen Woodhouse (HE) for work on State of Conservation Report and support of WHS.	RS	Complete

19.01.24	2.2	Make enquiries within HE about evidence used in pg. 2, box 3, para 2 and provide written update to Panel.	RS	
19.01.24	2.2	Request update from Wiltshire Highways on Avebury Transport Strategy and circulate to panel.	LT	
19.01.24	2.2	Request further information from Natural England and NW Downs National Landscape on grants for farmers in protected landscapes in WHS and circulate to panel.	CSe	
19.01.24	6.1	Ensure deputies receive all meeting paperwork / material for future meetings.	CSe/ BB	
19.01.24	6.2	Circulate wording / recommendations on Chair's terms of appointment in Management Plan and add to next agenda so that process can be agreed and commenced in May.	CSe / all members	
19.01.24	6.2	Add Partnership Panel Chair appointment to agenda for May meeting.	CSe	
19.01.24	7.0	Request written DCMS update for May meeting (if PF not available to attend in person).	CSe/PF	
19.01.24	8.4	Circulate CU Management Plan Actions update to members for review, comment and agreement.	CSe / all members	
19.01.24	9.0	Re-circulate draft Partnership Panel Management Plan Actions update to members for review, comment and agreement.	CSe / all members	

1.0	General Items
1.1	Apologies: Karen Jones, Wiltshire Council.
1.2	Minutes from 26.09.23 agreed with following amendments: JT requested revision to wording in section 5.2 relating to NT. Decision: section 5.2 relating to NT. Action: CSe to amend with wording provided by JT and recirculate.
1.3	Actions & matters arising: most actions completed or identified in this meeting for action. Decision: Future meetings to record when members arrive & leave (if outside published start/finish times).
2.0	Update from PF, DCMS
2.1	UNESCO UK elected to UNESCO's Executive Board in November 2023 with a new ambassador [Anna Nsubuga - GOV.UK] appointed in July. This is regarded as very positive and strengthens the UK's profile and prominence within UNESCO. A303 Scheme Judicial Review of challenge to DCO redetermination currently ongoing. Court sat in December 2023 with decision expected by end of March (or slightly sooner). State party cannot speak further about the scheme whilst judicial review is ongoing. However, given that DCO has been effectively determined it provides ability to start conversations with World Heritage Centre about proposed modifications. This includes consideration of options by National Highways to address concerns of Committee. ES asked PF whether comprehensive information package put together by Department of Transport and National Highways on modifications will be shared amongst WHS Partnership. PF confirmed this will happen but cannot provide timings. Looking Ahead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 February: submission of SOCR together with requested comprehensive information package on modifications. • February onwards: dialogue between DCMS, World Heritage Centre and advisory bodies. • End of May / early June: issue of World Heritage Centre draft decision papers • 21 - 31 July: member vote at UNESCO World Heritage Centre - 46th session of the World Heritage Committee [New Delhi, India]. <p>DCMS continues to engage with both the World Heritage Centre (which is responsible for draft</p>

	<p>decision) and members of World Heritage Committee (who make the final decision). This includes potential upcoming Ambassador-led committee focused activity in Paris (to follow 2023 'Stonehenge in Paris' event).</p> <p>ES asked PF if differing timescales of project delivery and publication of Setting Study (see agenda item 10.3) are an issue, given date of WH Committee and advisory bodies' previous request to see draft report. PF confirmed there is no significant concern as State of Conservation Report has set out progress. Timings not ideal but not a problem.</p>
2.2	<p>State of Conservation Report (SOCR) Draft SOCR circulated to members for information by CSe on 16 January 2024, in advance of submission by DCMS to the World Heritage Committee by 1 February 2024. Draft does not include responses to paras 7-12, which DCMS is currently taking further legal advice on.</p> <p>The report gives a comprehensive summary of work undertaken by the WHS Partnership over the past year. ES thanked Chairs of SCs, Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger of Wiltshire Council, CSe, Rachel Hosier (on behalf of WHS Farmers), RSPB and Natural England, plus all partners who submitted information for inclusion.</p> <p>Action: ES asked RS to convey Panel's thanks to Helen Woodhouse, Historic England for her work on SOCR and ongoing support of WHS.</p> <p>SS raised how SOCR makes reference to progress of Avebury Transport Strategy 2015 (Pg 2, para 2, box 3) but is unaware of any implementation of the strategy (other than design work undertaken on two sites funded by Parish Council and local residents). He therefore requested sight of evidence used to make assertion.</p> <p>CSe confirmed section refers to three updates given in previous years.</p> <p>Action: RS to make further enquiries within HE about specific evidence used & provide written update.</p> <p>Action: LT to request update from Wiltshire Council Highways on standing of Avebury Transport Strategy.</p> <p>CS requested more information about the specific grants referred to in SOCR regards farming in protected landscapes.</p> <p>Action: Cse to speak to Natural England and North Wessex Downs National Landscapes and share details.</p>

3.0 – 5.0	Trust Transition Project Board (TTB) meeting minutes recorded separately
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6.0	Partnership Panel Chair
6.1	<p>A confidential summary of the Chair's review was circulated by CSe to PP Members on 15 January. Members were asked to consider the summary of the review undertaken on behalf of the Panel by Wiltshire Council in accordance with the Chair's letter of appointment.</p> <p>Decision: JD flagged that she had not received document prior to PP in her deputy role. Meeting acknowledged this as an oversight and agreed that all deputies should receive full meeting papers in future.</p> <p>Meeting discussed the Chair's review, the process taken and what was subsequently shared in summary format with the PP. Members acknowledged that this was a difficult subject to discuss in an open forum. Several Panel members emphasised their discontent about the manner in which the review had been undertaken by Wiltshire Council and the broad nature of the survey questions.</p> <p>ES reflected on the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She read review in detail and wished to comment that she has always been available to all members of partnership and has tried to respond in timely fashion to people who

	<p>contact her.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She expressed view that entire report rather than summary could be circulated to the partnership, or those who responded, to achieve greater transparency. • She does not wish for the review to stand in the way of the important work that is being planned and delivered this year. <p>LT responded to concerns raised by panel members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WC led the review on behalf of PP. Annual review is a formal requirement set out in the Chair's letter of appointment issued by WC to positively identify areas of success and also possible areas for improvement. WC regrets that some members of the panel have not perceived the process and summary in this way. • In lieu of no set process for review, WC utilised existing methodologies used by the council to assess annual performance with the process checked by WC HR to ensure it was fair, open and transparent with questions based on Chair's role description. • Feedback was provided via summary to PP as per appointment letter. WC does not have consent of people who completed anonymous survey to circulate full review. <p>CS enquired if Coordination Unit and its officers are subject to similar performance reviews. CSe confirmed PP is responsible for efficiency of CU and staff have appraisals with WC and welcomed PP's thoughts on possible synchronisation of chair and CU reviews in future.</p> <p>Panel concluded that this was an important discussion, allowing members to reflect on different perceptions of review and air concerns about methodology and approach. Meeting agreed that a formal agreed process is required in the future.</p>
<p>6.2 Action:</p>	<p>Reappointment process (current 3-year term until Nov 2024) including appointment body</p> <p>CSe to circulate paper on Chair appointment process and seek feedback / comment on whether PP wishes to work on Chair's role description and appointment as a group or nominate sub-committee to undertake work (plus possibly the recruitment of CU posts). Timetable for work to start as early as possible to allow enough time for recruitment.</p> <p>Meeting discussed terms of appointment. ES understanding is that chair has two consecutive terms (normal for 3 year board position) and that a recruitment process is entered into towards end of the second term. JT felt that this is not what is stated in Management Plan and that end of current 3-year term sets in motion an appointment process.</p> <p><i>(for additional clarity see attached Appendix from the Management Plan: Role of the Chair of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel)</i></p> <p>Action: CSe to circulate wording / recommendations on Chair's terms of appointment in Management Plan and add to next agenda so that process can be agreed and commenced in May.</p>
<p>7.0</p>	<p>Partnership Panel Meetings 2024-25: Decision on in person/hybrid and venues</p>
<p>Decision:</p> <p>Action:</p>	<p>Panel discussed meeting representation for forthcoming PPs to ensure decision-making is both effective and timely.</p> <p>Members acknowledged virtual attendance was positive on grounds of capacity and resourcing, whilst in person attendance assisted discussion and relationship building (noting importance of next few meetings for delivery of partnership work programme).</p> <p>It was recognised that hybrid meetings offered flexibility in attendance, but some members felt they did not deliver best outcomes.</p> <p>Panel therefore agreed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 May 2024 - Exclusive 'in person' meeting (location to be confirmed). • 19 September 2024 - Exclusive 'virtual' meeting. <p>CSe to request written DCMS update for 14 May meeting (if PF not able to attend in person).</p>

8.0	Coordination Unit
8.1	Update CSe circulated CU Work Update Sept- Jan 2024 with meeting papers on 09.01.24.
8.2	Coordination Unit Budget & Funding CSe circulated Coordination Unit Budget and Funding to panel on 15.01.24. NH provided update to meeting on Wiltshire Council's position on funding contribution. Ongoing funding is subject to Full Council approval of annual budget in February 2024. Budget papers recommend funding for the CU (2024-25) be retained at the same level as previous years, however, this cannot be confirmed/clarified until Full Council has voted. NH wished to put it on record that WC's funding decision has been made in recognition of the progress made by partnership to address issues around governance. ES thanked NH for WC's support in the preparation of budget and to CSe for her work.
8.3	Coordination Unit Staffing 2024-25 Role profiles for CU Manager and Officer (as per previous recruitment) have been circulated in meeting papers 15.01.24 and officer position will be going out for recruitment in due course (dependent on partnership funding confirmations).
8.4	Management Plan: Coordination Unit Lead Partner Actions This item was not discussed and will be progressed via email as part the CU's current review of Management Plan Action status. Action: CSe to circulate CU Lead Partner Actions update to members for review, comment and agreement.
9.0	Annual Action Plan – Partnership Panel Lead Partner Actions
	Partnership Panel Management Plan Actions update circulated with papers on 09.01.24 for agreement. This item was not discussed in detail at the meeting. Action: CSe to re-circulate for review, comment and agreement on status and wording.
10.0	Update on Key projects (circulated to panel in advance on 09.01.24 – summary below)
10.1	Management Plan Review - summary of points from the Management Plan Review Steering Group 26.10.23: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow 2 years for delivery • Members agreed that a realistic completion date is end of financial year March 2026, given other significant activities being undertaken by Coordination Unit and WHS partners over course of next two years. • First steps: activity between now and next Steering Committee in March: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of actions status • Costing of review agreed and funding sourced with support of Partnership Panel • Refining Management Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of actions from 178 (Bath have 47, Edinburgh 39) • Sign posting information rather than including them in document, including links which can be updated during lifespan to research and policies. • Should move away from print to digital formats including a PDF of the whole plan and more specific accessible sections (areas of work) to meet needs of different stake holders /audiences (including residents and planners).
10.2	Condition Survey The Wessex Archaeology project team and trained volunteers are completing the field work phase of the Condition Survey winter 2023/2024, visiting monuments to examine and record conditions using a standard digital recording system. All monuments have been reviewed and a number prioritised for fieldwork survey based on factors such as their previous condition and other aspects such as proximity to PRow. Avebury: Survey complete Stonehenge: Survey underway

	The expected completion date of the final report is late Spring 2024 and will be available for the UNESCO Advisory Bodies in line with Decision 45 COM 7B.62.
10.3	<p>Setting Study</p> <p>The WHS Setting Study is intended 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.</p> <p>There is 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 as part of that process.</p> <p>Progress on developing the study has been delayed over the course of this year due to staff resources being limited and the priority that has had to be given to other key Council strategic documents going through the public consultation and adoption process, such as the Local Plan and the Wiltshire Design Guide SPD.</p> <p>The Council intends to recommence the development of the setting study in 2024 .</p>
11.0	Partner Updates
	None received for circulation.
12.0	Summary outcome of meeting - including decisions made to share with all members of WHS partnership
	See page 1
13.0	AOB
	No AOB
14.0	Next Meetings 2024
	14 May, 11am – 1pm (in person meeting, location tbc) 19 September, 11am – 1pm (virtual)

Meeting formally extended by 15 minutes on agreement of attendees. Ended: 13.19

Meeting attendees online:

- Ross Simmonds (Historic England)
- Becky Eade (English Heritage Trust)
- Colin Shell (ASAHRG)
- Phil Foxwood (DCMS)

Record of arrival and departure outside of published times:

- Lynn Trigwell joined meeting at 11.09
- Phil Foxwood left the meeting at 11.30
- David Dawson left the meeting at 12.30
- Becky Eade left the meeting at 13.03
- Ross Simmonds left the meeting at 13.04