Stonehenge & Avebury WHS
Expert & Stakeholder Group

Minutes

Tuesday 3 March 2026, 10:30am – 1.00pm

Unhenged Coffee Shop

Minutes agreed: 29.06.2026

Chair: Andy Miller (WHS Expert & Stakeholder Group Chair).

Present in-person: Claire Selman **CS** (WHS Coordination Unit), Cllr V Hemery **VH** (Kennet Valley Parish Council), Cllr Angela Norman **AN** (Avebury Parish Council), Cllr Alice Macaire **AM** (Avebury Parish Council), Rachel Webb **RW** (Natural England), Laura Corbett **LC** (Avebury Farmers), Richard Crook **RC** (National Farmers Union), David Dawson **DD** (Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Society), Nick Snashall **NS** (National Trust), Peter Oliver **PO** (National Trust), Richard Dewdney **RD** (English Heritage Trust), Win Scutt **WS** (English Heritage Trust), Rebecca Davies **RD** (North Wessex Downs National Landscape), Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger **MPK** (Wiltshire Council), Alison Hems **AH** (ICOMOS-UK), Patrick Cashman **PC** (RSPB), Cllr John Berry **JB** (Shrewton Parish Council), Cllr Karene Johnson **KJ** (Durrington Town Council), Jo Tudor **JT** (Durrington Town Council), Sarah Tucker **ST** (Amesbury Town Council), Hugh Morrison **HM** (Stonehenge Farmers) Sarah Nichols **SN** (WHS Executive Board Chair, Guest), Chris Clark **CC** (Wiltshire Council, Guest). **Present online**: Howard Davies **HD** (Consultant, Guest).

Minutes: George Downs **GD** (WHS Coordination Unit)**.**

Apologies: Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological & Historical Research Group (ASAHRG), Mel Barge (Historic England), Rachel Hosier (Stonehenge Farmers), Cllr Ron Lock (Shrewton Parish Council), Stephanie Payne (Natural England), Chris Farr (Country Land & Business Association), Andrew Williamson (Avebury Society)

Abbreviations: United Nations Educational Scientific & Cultural Organisation **UNESCO**, Coordination Unit **CU**, World Heritage Site **WHS**, Outstanding Universal Value **OUV,** Management Plan **MP,** Charitable Incorporated Organisation **CIO**, Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological & Historical Research Group **ASAHRG**, North Wessex Downs **NWD**, Executive Board **EB**, Expert & Stakeholder Group **ESG,** Terms of Reference **ToR,** International Council on Monuments & Sites **ICOMOS**, Local Highway & Footway Improvement Group **LHFIG,** Royal Society for the Protection of Birds **RSPB**.

Item	Recommendation
3.0	Progress the closure of the B4003 on heritage protection and safety grounds.
4.1	Delivery Plan for the WHS Management Plan Review.
5.1	Arrange byways meeting between Stonehenge farmers and Highways Cabinet Member & Director.
5.2	Press for effective traffic calming interventions in Avebury (A4 and A4361).

Item	Action log	Lead	Completion / notes
3.0	Report back on the mechanisms available for managing vehicles on the WHS byways.	**Wiltshire Council**	**Update at ESG**
3.0	Consider the development of potential Access for All projects (e.g., Avebury rights of way), working with the North Wessex Downs team.	**Key Partners**	
3.0	Explore interim measures for the physical protection of vulnerable stone holes of the West Kennet Avenue.	**Wiltshire Council**	
9.0	Rearrange next ESG meeting to avoid clash, perhaps in Amesbury area.	**Chair, CU**	**29.06, Durrington**

1.0	**Housekeeping and Introductions**
1.1	The **Chair**, Andy Miller, introduced himself, thanked members for attendance and asked that they introduce themselves when speaking. Members welcomed the Chair to his first meeting. Apologies were noted (above).

1.2	The meeting was recorded as quorate. No conflicts of interest were declared.
1.3	The ESG minutes of 21.10.25 were agreed without amendment. No matters arising were raised and actions were marked as complete.
2.0	**Report from WHS Executive Board**
2.1	The Executive Board's last meeting and recent workshop focus on drawing upon the Partnership Values expressed by ESG and EB members to agree a Partnership Vision and Strategic Goals. **SN** and **CS** noted that this approach has sought to: • Learn from the recent North Wessex Downs strategy and management plan review. • Give a greater emphasis on communication, openness and trust within the partnership. • Allow the ESG to effectively deliver operational management actions. • Allow the EB to iteratively monitor progress as part of strategic governance. • Inform the relevant sections of the WHS Management Plan Review.
2.2	The Chair noted that the EB had: • Accepted the Site Values recommended by ESG. • Raised byways and highways recommendations with Wiltshire Council (see item 3.0).
3.0	**Update – Local Highways & Countryside Access**
ACTION	**CC** updated partners on byways in the WHS. Key points included: • Maintenance work on Byways 11 & 12 at Stonehenge were completed in September 2025, with a continued focus to manage vehicular access and reduce inappropriate use. • Wiltshire Council is exploring potential mechanisms to manage vehicular access, subject to legal advice, evidence-gathering and fair/prior consultation. An update will follow. • This has been accelerated ahead of the WHS Management Plan Review, with a plan for additional resourcing being developed over the next 12 months. • There will be closer work with the rural crime team to evidence issues such as fly tipping, hare coursing and illegal encampments. Penalties haven't changed behaviour. • Similar access pressures exist at Avebury and the experience gained at Stonehenge could inform future work. • Partners were encouraged to continue to provide evidence of impacts. Farming representatives reiterated concerns about safety, crop damage, livestock disturbance, with slow progress on resolving these longstanding issues. Partners requested a clearer timeline toward vehicular access control and emphasised the importance of drawing on partner evidence/assessments and police information.
ACTION	**LC** raised concerns about ongoing impacts on the Ridgeway and Green Street and lack of repairs. Partners supported developing potential Access for All projects for Avebury rights of way. **RD** proposed the WHS Partnership becomes project-ready and works with the North Wessex Downs team to ensure that, when available, funding could be accepted in the future.
RECOMMEND	**NS** noted the West Kennet Avenue remained on the Heritage at Risk Register for 2025. **AM** noted that the width of the B4003 is unsafe for cyclists and suggested exploring the legal ability to close it. **DD** proposed that the ESG recommends the progression of the closure of the B4003.
ACTION	Partners supported exploring interim measures for the physical protection of vulnerable stone holes of the West Kennet Avenue.

4.0	**Management Plan Review**
4.1 ***RECOMMEND***	**CS** provided an overview of the Delivery Plan for the Management Plan Review, including alignment with UNESCO and Historic England guidance. There is clarity on the role of the partnership groups in the review, reflecting the Terms of Reference. There will be a phased approach to agreement of the Management Plan (public consultation draft) at the next two ESG meetings. Details of thematic discussions will be circulated to inform how the content is drafted. Partners supported the Delivery Plan's clarity and realistic phased timetable.
4.2	Partners will soon be invited to update the descriptions and roles of their organisations for inclusion in the Management Plan.
4.3	Partners will soon be invited to contribute to an Activity Report outlining the partner achievements since the 2015 Management Plan, such as management initiatives, conservation work and public engagement.
4.4	Partners will soon be invited to confirm the process and timescale for their group/organisation to endorse the Management Plan, alongside the Partnership agreement process.
5.0	**Reports from Forums and Partners**
5.1 ***RECOMMEND***	**Farming** **HM** raised key updates from the Stonehenge WHS farmers including: • Byway impacts causing safety issues for cyclists, walkers and particularly violence against residents and farmers. • Increasing rural crime, hare coursing and damage to crops and field boundaries. • Regular updates on the byways are essential for partnership working. • Controlling dogs during lambing season and the need for partner organisations to use their influence to educate visitors. Partners recommended improving communication regarding the byways through a meeting between WHS farmers and Wiltshire Council Highways Cabinet Member & Director. **LC** raised key updates from the Avebury WHS farmers including: • Farmers are generally in a good financial position, but the departure of government support is not promising. • Farmers continue seeking to diversify their income, and buildings are their most important assets for development.
5.2	**Towns & Parishes** **AM** and **AN** raised key issues from Avebury Parish: • Multiple fatalities on A4 of valued parishioners in recent years. • Persistent speeding on A4361 Avebury, creating a sometimes-hidden risk for visitors. • Longstanding challenge to achieve funding for traffic-calming measures. Acknowledging the tragic collisions, **CC** noted that proposals to restrict speed limits had gone to

RECOMMEND	Marlborough LHFIG for consideration. **CC** noted there may be changes to speed limit policy in the future and emphasised the importance of enforcement. Partners supported pressing for effective traffic calming interventions at Avebury. **JB** raised key updates from Shrewton: • Suggestion that A360 Shrewton and adjoining roads should have a 20mph speed limit. • Learning from a one-year 40mph trial for A345 Netheravon. **KJ** noted the increasing traffic on A345 Durrington and Larkhill Packway on Friday afternoons due to A303 congestion. **RD** noted that 25,000 summer solstice visitors are expected in 2026, but the road network is designed for 17,000. **RD** raised that effective management would require 70% of solstice visitors in the future to use public transport. Town & Parish Councillors requested to be involved early-on in the summer solstice traffic management plan. **ST** raised key updates from Amesbury: • Cllr Alan Hagger is now on the WHS Executive Board, and the town council will be nominating a new ESG rep. • Town council has established a heritage tourism partnership to bring mutual benefits.
5.3	**ASAHRG (Research Group)** **DD** raised that ASAHRG has a new website with mapping of the Avebury landscape. **DD** noted that ASAHRG members discussed the management of Overton Down experimental earthwork, Fox Covert barrow cemetery, West Kennet Avenue, and the Ridgeway earthworks – as well as a research presentation on Manton Barrow.
5.4	**Partner Organisations** ICOMOS-UK, **AH**: • Welcomed the constructive, community-orientated and honest discussions, in the spirit of UNESCO values, as a way for members to overcome frustrations. • Urged partners to keep building of these encouraging ways of working, which could also apply to other UK WHSs. National Trust, **NS**: • Avebury will have an Easter trail and an August outdoor theatre. • Stonehenge Landscape walk for the Festival of Archaeology in July. • Continued progress on reverting the landscape to species-rich chalk grassland. **MPK** noted that the *Archaeology in Wiltshire* conference will be on 22.03.26 in Devizes Corn Exchange. **DD** noted Wiltshire Museum has a John Piper exhibition, 07.03.26 - 06.06.26. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, **PC**: • RSPB will support natural landscape sections for the WHS Management Plan Review. • A species of bird was reported as no longer nesting on Normanton Down. • Reducing cultivation has mutual benefits for the historic and natural environment.

6.0	**Celebrating 40 Years of Stonehenge & Avebury WHS**
	The Chair reported back from the Task Group: • Programme will run from autumn/winter 2026 through to autumn/winter 2027. • Aim of strengthening local ownership, connecting with young people, engagement with military families and the U3A, and future-proofing custodianship of the WHS. • Ideas for programme include walking events, exhibitions, public talks, heritage centre collaborations and wellbeing activities. • A potential anniversary logo and exploration of funding opportunities. • Task Group will meet in April, and partners are invited to propose ideas before June. **RC** noted his involvement in the WHS since the 1984 nomination meeting where there were discussions regarding highways at the time.
7.0	**AOB**
	HM gave an update from the Charity Commission decision not to register the CIO, and conveyed: • Frustration that there has not been progress on the CIO. • Future re-application would be possible after agreements are in place. • English Heritage and the National Trust did not support the CIO application as presented at the time. • Noted the importance of balancing the views and priorities of all partners. • Thanked partners and noted he will be stepping down from the Executive Board. **NS** noted the National Trust was legally unable to appoint a trustee to the proposed CIO board. **SN** has taken on the following priorities since becoming the independent EB Chair: • Stabilising and embedding partnership governance. • Ensuring the partnership priorities include: the Management Plan Review, a Business Development strategy, and understanding the value each partner brings to the table. • A CIO application may still be possible in due course, but sequencing and consensus is needed and only after a clear strategy where all routes to market are analysed. • The EB and the ESG are working together with their own areas of focus, with communication between the two groups being essential. Partners reflected on the significant voluntary time invested in partnership priorities. **MPK** thanked HM for his long service to the partnership. Partners concurred and thanked HM.
8.0	**Summary of Recommendations for Executive Board**
	• Progress the closure of the B4003 on heritage protection and safety grounds. • Delivery Plan for the WHS Management Plan Review. • Byways meeting: Stonehenge farmers and Highways Cabinet Member & Director. • Press for effective traffic calming interventions in Avebury (A4 and A4361).
9.0	**Next Expert & Stakeholder Group Meeting**
ACTION	The next ESG meeting (late June) will be rescheduled to avoid Durrington Town Council clash. **RC** proposed that the meeting take place in Amesbury. The Chair thanked RC for the suggestion.

Meeting ended: 1:00pm