

**Avebury World Heritage Site
Archaeological and Historical Research Group
Notes of Meeting 25th October 2013**

Present: Gill Swanton (Chair), Brian Edwards, Sarah Simmonds, Colin Shell, Dan Miles, Josh Pollard, Steve Marshall, Ian Barnes, Beth Thomas, Phil McMahon, Nikki Cook, Rachel Foster, Bruce Eagles, Nick Baxter, Paul Cripps, Susan Greaney, Matt Leivers, Andrew David, Andrew Powell, Heather Sebire, Ros Cleal

1. Apologies and Introductions

Nicola Hembrey, Mark Bowden, Martyn Barber, Kate Fielden, Abby George, Jonathan Last, Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, Nick Snashall, David Dawson, Jim Gunter, Julie Scott Jackson, Jude Currivan, Mike Allen, Martyn Barber

2. Minutes and matters arising

2.1 Minutes

The minutes were approved.

2.2 Matters Arising

Covered under agenda items. There will be no break in today's agenda and therefore AOB will be dealt with once at the end of the meeting.

3. Monitoring of the Resource Agenda

3.1 Update on WHS Research Framework

3.1.1 Resource Assessment

Matt Leivers (ML) from Wessex Archaeology reported that the Resource Assessment papers are all in. Only the paper on the history of work at Avebury remains to be completed. Images are now required to provide visual impact. ML will be contacting authors and others who have indicated they are able to provide images in the near future. DD has provided free access to all images held by WANHS. The final collation and typesetting remain to be completed for the Resource Assessment.

3.1.2 Research Agenda

The draft Research Agenda has been circulated to all AAHRG members and comments received. Many were in depth and will be very helpful in moving forward to inform the revision and produce a provisional final text. Two further sets of comments are expected by the end of October. The Post Medieval section requires further work. Following the AAHRG meeting the project board for the WHS Research Framework met to discuss next steps in producing the Agenda. The final draft of the Research Agenda will be circulated to ASAHRG for information in January 2014.

3.1.3 Research Strategy

An outline Strategy with broad principals and aims has been drawn up based on input at workshops and suggestions provided by some authors as part of their resource assessment. All resource assessment authors will be approached for further suggestions for the Strategy. Following the AAHRG meeting the project board for the WHS Research Framework met to discuss next steps in producing the Agenda. The target date for circulation of the draft Strategy to ASAHRG for comment is March 2014. The agenda and strategy should be signed off in April 2014.

3.1.4 Launch

The target date for the launch is October 2014. The project board discussed options for the format of the publication. It was agreed that SARRF would be published as a 2-volume hardcover book (volume 1: the Avebury revised Resource Assessment and the Stonehenge update; volume 2: the new combined Research Agenda and Research Strategy), but would also be made available on-line. The on-line resource would include the 2-volumes of SARRF, as well as the previous Avebury (2001) and Stonehenge (2005) volumes (already available on-line).

4. Current archaeological & historical research

4.1 Excavations of the West Kennet Occupation Site - Josh Pollard

JP gave a presentation on the excavation that took place this summer. The presentation is attached. Further work is planned for 2014.

4.2 Between the Projects: Snail Creep Geophysics - Colin Shell

As part of on-going research in the Upper Kennet valley CAS reported the initial geomagnetic survey with GRS of ring ditches/barrows in Snail Creep field, North Farm, West Overton, to determine the degree to which they may have survived recent ploughing, and also to define more closely their positions - resolving differences in the County HER and EH NMP spatial records. The ditches of two barrows were located, but not two small (15m diam.) ring ditches recorded in the HER/NMP mapping. Possible pit features detected near the southern barrow of this complex may warrant further study.

4.3 ASAHRG Draft ToR - Sarah Simmonds

The draft ToR for ASAHRG were circulated prior to the meeting. SS summarised the changes to the ToR which were based on feedback from the working group and the July meeting of AAHRG.

The focus of discussion included the need to word the elements of the ToR related to membership appropriately to ensure that the group was sufficiently inclusive but that numbers were kept manageable and an appropriate balance of focus between Stonehenge and Avebury was achieved. The group agreed to maintain the criteria of *active involvement or interest* in the wording and put in place a system of nomination.

The group agreed that new members would need to be nominated by two existing members who will act as their sponsor. These nominations should be made to the WHS Coordinator as the secretariat for ASAHRG. Guests/observers can be invited to relevant individual meetings by existing members following agreement with the secretariat. The opportunity for wider engagement is offered by the planned bi-annual public seminar.

A single representative will attend both Steering Committee meetings and the Partnership Panel to maintain continuity. Minutes of these meetings will be available to their deputy who would attend meetings in their absence.

The following additions/amendments were agreed to the ToR:

viii encourage the timely deposition of reports and publications in the HER and relevant museums

ix facilitate wider public dissemination of research through all means available, including publication (e.g. in journals, monographs and under the auspices of ASAHRG where practicable), lectures, improved interpretation, e-means or any others identified.

xi retain responsibility for the oversight and maintenance of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Research Framework

xii Add that the group will encourage research, the wider dissemination of results including improved interpretation.

xiv support the sharing of knowledge and data between institutions, organisations and individuals

xv monitor and review the public impact/benefit of research

Action: SS to amend ToR in line with discussion and circulate a final draft to the group

5. Review of Current Opportunities for Dissemination of Research

5.1 Wiltshire Archaeology Field Group

DM reported that the Wiltshire Field Group will be undertaking a training excavation with EH at Horton in the Vale of Pewsey as part of an extension to the Marden Project.

5.2 Geological Society Symposium

SM reported that there will be a symposium in London on 16th May 2014 looking at silcretes. Stewart Ullyot from the University of Brighton will be presenting a new method for geochemically fingerprinting silcretes to identify their source.

6. Review of content of report from/to WHS Steering Committee

6.1 ASAHRG

CS to report on the expansion of the group to create ASAHRG which will take place from the next meeting in early 2014.

6.2 WHS Research Framework

CS will report on progress.

7. Other Research Opportunities

7.1 County Archaeology Update

RF had no relevant applications to report.

8. AOB

8.1 Repairs to West Kennet Long Barrow

HS reported that a final decision has been delayed by the restructure at EH. An options appraisal is planned and work should be carried out in the next financial year.

Action: HS to update the group on the outcomes of the options appraisal

8.2 Silbury Hill Trespass

PM reported that no one had actually committed an offence as there has been no damage. This however does not preclude future damage and efforts continue by all WHS partners to engage those climbing the Hill via a range of media to explain the reasons for the exclusion.

9. Date of next meeting

2 PM on Friday, 28th February 2014. Wiltshire Museum, Devizes

There will be a social event to mark the first meeting of ASAHRG following the meeting. BE kindly offered to organise the event.

Action: SS to update the group on plans for the evening.