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Stonehenge, Avebury and
Associated Sites
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Avebury & Stonehenge Archaeological & Historical Research Group

21st January 2022
Microsoft Teams

Draft Minutes

1. Apologies/Introductions

Members wanted to note their congratulations to Richard Osgood on the MBE award for his work with project nightingale.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Corrections given by members were noted and made.

CS noted that the action regarding the Management Plan Review had been Conducted.

Minutes were agreed

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Group Membership

If a member wishes to propose that an individual is invited to join the group, please remember that the person needs to have agreed to join and be backed by the proposer and a seconder before the current members can consider the application.



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There were no proposals for membership.

5. Current Research Projects

Members were asked to send any further notes/ papers that are not being presented today to SA for circulation.

- Investigations at North Farm, West Overton.

CS gave a report on the White Hill Project, which incorporates a field to the east of Overton Down SSSI. 2 enclosures have been found that are probably Iron Age/ late Bronze Age. Geophysics and fieldwalking have been carried out as part of a community project. Help from Mike McQueen revealed more details about the site and archaeology in the area. There are several things that could be investigated further by a few small trial trenches and further community involvement could be used to examine what these features are. Dan Miles has also been involved with the project.

CS asked if members had any queries or comments regarding community involvement.

DD stated that Ali Rushton is the Education Officer for Wiltshire Museum and thought it could be feasible to include the school in some way.

SM recommended the book that he wrote for children – a guide to all monuments in the area.

CS mentioned the young archaeologists club and it was agreed that CS would liaise with KW to see if they were interested in some community aspect.

6. Reports

6.1 – Partnership Panel/ Steering Committees (CS)

- Methods for verge repairs along the B4003 needs further clarification. The Avebury traffic survey asks for it to be closed and ASAHRG recommends a one-way trial. A Chadburn mentioned there should be information on file about repairs to Scheduled



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Ancient Monument areas. A Carney noted that it just repairs to the layby and that there is a meeting scheduled for the 3rd of February with Wiltshire Council highways, local councilors, the National Trust, and Parish Council representatives. NS stated that Historic England is closely involved in the plans.

- The WHS Partnership Panel have been invited to express their views on the options Dr Sam Rose, the governance consultant, had put forwards on how the future governance of the WHS might be organized. This project was principally to ensure the sustainability of the Coordination Unit in terms of funding. At the last meeting it was hoped that Panel members could submit their views within a fortnight and CS questioned why there had not been enough time given to submit the views of ASAHRG on this report.

ES stated that under the existing Terms of Reference, ASAHRG is in a different position in terms of how the existing governance structure operates. The Egeria review was not fully adopted and the decision-making lines across the whole governance structure are currently opaque. Having gone through previous minutes for clarification we can see the Steering Group is currently the decision maker. ASAHRG is an equal partner, the issue around circulating the consultant's report is about managing the situation until greater clarity is possible.

6.2 – WHSCU (AC)

- The Setting Study is progressing in line with the timetable and the full draft report is expected late February which will be reviewed and amended by Wiltshire Council as it is a Wiltshire Council document. Partners, including the Partnership Panel, will have an opportunity to comment in May/ June and public consultation has been scheduled for July/ August. A copy will be sent to the WHC as requested.
- It is hopeful that the Condition Survey will progress this year. It was out for tender last year and no one came forward. The brief has not changed and contains elements of volunteer training and developing a future model for surveys.



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- The State of Conservation report has been submitted to the ministers at DCMS for sign off and must be with the WHC for February. A UNESCO mission has been requested and this will likely happen in February/ March.

6.3 – County Archaeology Service

- Nothing to report

6.4 – National Trust

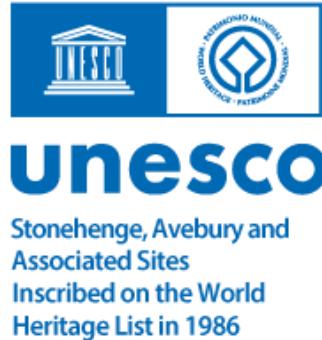
- Nothing to report
- NS asked if this was a new agenda item. GS stated it was just a chance to give members a chance to discuss what is happening in the WHS.

6.5 – English Heritage (HS)

- Lintels project has been successful at Stonehenge. The project was to take out the cementitious mortar applied in the 1960's – something which a 2019 structural engineering report had suggested.
- Winter Solstice was also a success which had 3000 people in attendance and was streamed online.

7. ASAHRG Going Forward

- Potential community project at Avebury Chapel which is hoped to be used to demonstrate what goes on in the area. So far, no lease from NT to parish council, but this is underway. BE stated that this presented Community engagement opportunities.
- The 30th anniversary of ASAHRG will be in 2023. CS suggested that something could be put on in early July at Marlborough College, such as a conference looking at 30 years of research. There could be a chance to bring on other WHS and see the research happening within them. CS also suggested a motto, logo for ASAHRG. E.g., 'find, discover, value'. CS



also suggested charitable status for the group to help bring in funding and support ASAHRG's aims.

8. The Historic Environment, Archaeological Protection and the new Agricultural Measures Being Introduced (GS)

The whole Agri-environment scheme is changing, and it should be noted that this could mean problems for cultural heritage as it will be much more difficult for farmers to apply for grants. If members want links to various paper by the government GS will forward them on.

9. AOB

DD – the British Museum exhibition on Stonehenge opens on the 17th of February. Wiltshire Museum have lent extensively. Wiltshire Museum have also re-found microscope slides made in 1884 by William Cunnington of Stonehenge. These are now on display and show a section of stone that is no longer available for study.

10. Date of next meeting

The next chair, KW to identify a Friday morning in May 2022.