

## HADRIAN'S WALL PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2016

Northumberland National Park, Eastburn, Hexham

**Members:** Humphrey Welfare (*Chair*), Steve Bishop (*North Tyneside Council*), Andrew Miller (*Northumberland National Park*), Mike Collins (*Historic England*), Bill Griffiths (*Tyne & Wear Museums & Archives*), Barbara Hooper (substituting for Carol Pyrah *Historic England*), James Fell (*Northumberland County Council*), Richard Hingley (*Durham University*), Duncan Wise (*Northumberland National Park*). Christine Venus (*Natural England*)

**In Attendance:** Sarah Rushton (*Northumberland County Council*), John Scott (*Management Plan Coordinator*).

- 1. Apologies** - James Copeland (*NFU*), Mike Conlon (*South Tyneside Council*), Kevin Kerrigan (*Allerdale Borough Council*), Lindsay Murray (*Gateshead Council*), Cllr Rob Higgins (*Newcastle City Council*), Nigel Walsh (*Northumberland County Council*), Jane Meek (*Carlisle City Council*), Cllr David Southward (*Cumbria County Council*), Julie Betteridge (*Copeland Borough Council*)

The Chair thanked the National Park for hosting the meeting.

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting –**

Members accepted them as a true record.

### **3. Matters Arising –**

- A.** Item 5 page 3, economic impact: JF provided an overview of the figures for activity within the WHS (10-mile wide corridor). The measures are those that have been used for many years. However these figures still include the urban areas so they require further refining to give a more accurate picture of for the WHS, e.g. to ask visitors if Hadrian's Wall was a primary or secondary reason for their visit. The Board supported this further research and asked for a report. The next raft of data will be available in August. North East Trend data on visiting and spend showed that the WHS was performing well when compared to other regional destinations, being over 2% up in most areas. JF said he would present the North West data at the next meeting. The presentation will be circulated for information. **Action: JF, JS.**
- B.** Item 5, Community Conference: JS provided details on attendance and some feedback from the evaluation of the event. JS will email out additional information with the minutes. The Board discussed the date of the next event, settling on late November, and once again at a weekend, Hexham was agreed by the meeting to be a good venue. JS will check for

conflicting events. Members said that they would be happy to publicise it through their networks. HW would inform Rory Stewart as Guy Opperman had attended the last meeting.

**Action: JS, HW.**

- C. 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Inscription: planning was going ahead. Various people had agreed to hold talks and lectures over the course of the year. JS would approach further likely participants. SB suggested looking at augmenting this with things such as 'Poets in residence' via grants from organisations such as Arts Council. JS suggested that we aim for '30 for 30': 30 small and varied events to celebrate 30 years of such a varied WHS. The Board agreed and pledged support. JF said the Marketing group would develop some appropriate badging.

D HW provided some feedback from the delayed Paris meeting of UNESCO and the FRE representatives. Progress had been made in the search to find a way forward for FRE enlargement. A thematic study will assess the collective nature of the prospective FRE sites; following this, the first of the new sites will submit to UNESCO in 2018 for a decision in 2019/20. The Retrospective Statement of Universal Value is going to UNESCO next month.

E JS explained that the Heritage@Risk project now had a small steering group of Officers from across a number of agencies, and this was developing the content. Newcastle University might be able to host the project.

F JS thanked Partners for sharing their accessible photo stocks and that these would be added to a section on the new website soon.

G SB reported on his discussions around the possibility of an all-party group being set up at Westminster. The Board welcomed the idea and asked to be kept informed. **Action: SB**

- 4. Website Developments** – JF gave the meeting an update on the new website structure and its current state of construction. The URL had been moved temporarily to [www.hadrianswallcountry](http://www.hadrianswallcountry) as the [visithadrianswall.co](http://visithadrianswall.co) address had not been transferred by the HW Trust. After 30 days that address could be acquired for the Partnership and re attached to the website. The Connect project had pre-paid some search-engine optimisation which would start once the address issue had been sorted out. JF explained the new web structure is much simpler. The download section for maps and guides had been extremely popular during this early part of the season. JF asked for feedback on progress so far. The members had found the site needed some improvement and further content development. JF said that training was being organised for all partners so that they could access the site and update their particular aspects, this would minimise copy costs. HW asked for the management section to be labelled in a clearer way, perhaps as the 'professional' menu? HW and other members had noted a number of facts that needed correcting or updating. JF said that any observations were very welcome. BH said that there is scope to have a section on the idea of World Heritage Status for public consumption; it certainly needed to be easier to find. BG said that the purple used was difficult to read on screen; there should be a better colour balance. The black and white UNESCO logo was much easier to read. DW asked if the marketing group could think about the social media feeds that the WHS generates and how they relate to the website. HW also asked if a 'Home' button or easy to navigate return

button could be built in. JF thanked the group for the feedback and asked for people to let him know if they would like to be trained to edit the website or had suggestions of officers to be put forward for training by NGi.

**Action** – All to feed comments on content and structure, and the names of those who should be invited for training to JF before 15 July.

## 5. Reports from Delivery Groups

**Conservation, Planning and Heritage Management** - MC updated members on activity, saying that the Group had now had a full meeting with all the local archaeologists represented and planning reps in Cumbria and Northumberland. The Group had developed a mission statement and had reviewed the policies and actions outlined in the Management Plan. The Plan included a formal annual Planning meeting but that is was probably not a sensible use of time at present; instead, a conference every three to five years was suggested. The Board agreed that this was much more practical and that the Plan should be amended accordingly. **Action JS & MC.**

The Group aimed to make the best use of the online format and had agreed to post at least one case study each per year as a way of sharing practice. The other outcome from the first meeting was the idea of delivering workshops for partners on OUV and how to use it. The Board agreed and asked MC to redraft the wording in the Plan. **Action MC & JS.**

MC said that during the meeting there had been a lot of discussion about the aspiration for a general conservation document. The Group was unsure how such a document would add value to the existing documentation covering all aspects of the WHS - including local plans, specific action plans and conservation guidelines. MC said he will consider this with Henry Owen-John and report back. **Action MC.**

**Archaeological Research** – RH said that the Group had a second meeting (22 April). The revision of the Research Framework – which sits outside the regional frameworks - is a major area of activity for the Group. The Group had discussed the finance and resources needed to deliver this outcome but considered that support from external agencies was unlikely. The Group will audit progress against the existing Framework. HW asked what the cost of revision might be in case the opportunity to gain some resource appeared, RH said that he or Rob Collins would contact David Mason to ask as he probably had the best idea and he would invite him to join the Delivery Group. **Action RH.**

RH said that the networking opportunities at the Community Conference event and been excellent and the sector needed to hear that external voice much more. The Archaeological Forum, which this year is on 22 October in Hexham, is inevitably more restricted in nature. HW asked the Marketing Group if they could hold a centralised calendar of events. **Action JF.**

The Research Group has also developed a mission statement also for the website. Paul Frodsham had updated the Group on the Heritage at Risk project. The group had also discussed the sustainability of Roman frontier study as the number of students had dropped dramatically; JS and RH presented an initial idea of recognising and rewarding good student work, giving students the opportunity to present their work to recognised audiences and gain valuable experience. HW asked

RH to develop some form of words around this to be considered by the Partnership Board. **Action RH.**

BG urged the group to think about the wider inclusion of the FRE in all issues. HW said that the wording in the Management Plan is necessarily Hadrian's Wall specific but it does need to be understood in the context of the wider WHS.

**Communications and Marketing** - JF reported on progress of the Connect project and showed some images of the installations at Hexham and Carlisle stations. At Newcastle station the advertising agency has suggested that the WHS should pay extra to have a presence on the platform but all other areas are going forward. Following the successful delivery of this project the Marketing Group was making an application to the Visit England fund. The bid focused on research into international visits, the development of bookable products, and orientation. The Board congratulated the Group on their achievements so far. JF added that Social media was being pushed hard by Emily Railton of English Heritage on behalf of all partners, and that some money had been found to buy a little PR support to enhance this further.

**Tourism and Travel** - DW said that at its first meeting. The Group had identified key issues, the main one being the collection and sharing of visitor and other data. HW asked JS to talk to NGi about the possibility of using the website to share data between partners. **Action JS.**

There was a good working relationship between the transport providers in the North East and North West. DW felt that there was a large degree of overlap between the Tourism and Travel Group and the Marketing Group and suggested that the two Groups should be brought together. The Board agreed. DW will talk to JF about how best to do this. **Action DW & JF.**

The Hadrian's Wall bus service had not got off to a good start this season. Go Northeast thinks that there is a need to promote the service better. DW said that the weather at Easter had been terrible and a number of sites had also suggested their visitor numbers were down on last year's figures, but that this that this had picked up over the last month. SB said that for the North East combined authority, transport was a big issue and we need to get good data. DW said that the Group had not identified any necessary changes to the Plan.

**Education and Interpretation** - BG outlined the main activities of the Group. The bulk of the interpretive activity has been focused around the Cavalry Exhibition, which was progressing well. The Education Forum, led by Barbara Birley, had been planning an Education Sharing Day in August, focussing on best practice from within the WHS and beyond.

The Group would be looking at the 30th anniversary celebrations, developing wider links to the FRE and getting to grips with the increasing possibilities of digital media. BG raised the need for continued support for the functions undertaken by Community Champions: the team's funding comes to an end in December. The Board agreed that this was an important facet of the WHS and any possible way of continuing the team should be supported. BG reported that the Group had no changes to make to the priorities in the Plan at this stage.

**Farming and Land Management-** JC could not attend the meeting but provided a written update.

*'The NFU have contacted all our members (c.50% via email and 50% by post) within a 20 mile corridor to assist in our communications and engagement plan. We are collating a list of those parties wishing to engage and take part in future work.'*

*'We have already been contacted by a number of landowners along the Wall in relation to access and feel that this would be a very useful topic for discussion at the next Partnership Board meeting. Engagement with the relevant authorities and parties has started and can feed into the discussion.'*

## **6. Management Plan Priorities**

HW noted that a number of issues had been raised during the Delivery Group reporting and that these issues would be reviewed at the next meeting.

## **7. National Trail**

CV updated the meeting with her knowledge of the Trail's funding situation for 2016/17. It had been announced that all of the National Trails would have their funding cut by 50% within this financial year, but subsequently that position had been reversed and there would be no change in the level of funding from Natural England this year. The time gained will be used to look at new solutions. HW proposed that the Partnership Board should send a letter to DCMS, copied to DEFRA. The experience of 2005 had underlined the importance of effective Trail management if the WHS was not to be put 'At Risk'. If that level of management was not achieved it was inevitable that the Board would ask the Highways Authorities – through the Trail Partnership – to close sections of the Trail where these coincided with the Scheduled areas that define the WHS. SB wondered it worth be worthwhile to copy in all the local MPs at this stage. HW suggested that he copy it to them when an initial reply is received. HW circulated a draft letter and asked members to look at it and give him any suggestions for its revision at the end of the meeting. **Action HW**

## **8. Finance**

JS presented the budget figures for 2016/17 and the forecast until 2019. The current figures and projections enable the *status quo* to be maintained, but the management and marketing budgets are especially vulnerable. Northumberland County Council had invoiced partners accordingly. A meeting of senior local authority officers, scheduled for 18 August, would consider the projections. JF said that the areas for discussion will be those that are currently under most strain: fund-raising and development,, marketing, and community engagement.

**Action – HW** to feedback from the senior officer meeting to the Board.

## **9. World Heritage: UK (WH:UK) (formerly LAWHF)**

JS presented for information the purpose and background of WH:UK, the main role of which was advocacy on behalf of UK WHSs. JS had presented the model of the Hadrian's Wall Management Plan at their AGM in Edinburgh earlier in the year. The Partnership should be a member of this organisation, and HE had provided funds for this. However JS had noticed that two members of the partnership had already paid the membership fees and were listed as member of WH:UK. Some saving might be possible here. DW asked if there were any other memberships the Partnership should have.

**Action** – JS to talk to LAs already paying for membership, and to apply on behalf of the Partnership once this is done.

## **10. AOB**

BG said that Vindolanda had been awarded Designated status by Arts Council England for their Hadrian's Wall collections; this was a major achievement and the result of a lot of hard work. The Board congratulated the Vindolanda Trust on its achievement.

DW drew the meeting's attention to a CPRE map of light pollution and dark skies. The north of England was without doubt the main area in England to enjoy an unaffected view of the night sky. DW said he will provide a link to the map on the Hadrian's Wall website. **Action DW.**

Tall Ships, at Blyth: JF said that Hadrian's Wall would have a Visitor Information Container at this hugely popular event over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

RH said that the prestigious international Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference will be hosted by the University of Durham in 2017. He would circulate details as they became available.

**11. Date of Next Meeting:** 11 October 2016 at Segedunum Roman Fort, Wallsend (NE28 6HR)