

FRONTIERS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

HADRIAN'S WALL PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Draft minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, 11 October 2016 at Segedunum Roman Fort

Members: Humphrey Welfare (Chair), Steve Bishop (North Tyneside Council), Chris Jones (substituting for Andrew Miller Northumberland National Park), Mike Collins (Historic England), Bill Griffiths (Tyne & Wear Museums & Archives), James Fell (Northumberland County Council), Richard Hingley (Durham University), Christine Venus (Natural England), James Copeland & Andrew Stephenson (NFU), Paul Scott (Gateshead Council), Nigel Walsh (Northumberland County Council)

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

1. Apologies: Mike Conlon (South Tyneside Council), Nik Hardy (Allerdale Borough Council), Cllr Rob Higgins (Newcastle City Council), Jane Meek (Carlisle City Council), Cllr David Southward (Cumbria County Council), Julie Betteridge (Copeland Borough Council), Carol Pyrah (Historic England), Duncan Wise (Northumberland National Park)

The Chair thanked Segedunum for hosting the Meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting –

Members accepted them as a true record

3. Matters Arising -

Community Conference – 26 November at Hexham Auction Mart. JS was working with the Community Champions project to finalise the schedule for the day.

30th Anniversary Celebrations – JS was working with the Marketing Delivery Group to draw together a wide ranging list of 30 'things to do and see': talks, tours, ideas for places to visit, and challenges for visitors. A banner heading for the list is being designed for the website ready for the start of next season. HW asked if the preliminary list could be circulated as soon as possible so that Board members could comment and make suggestions. A full geographical spread of activity was especially important.

STEAM Data – JF said that the research to identify the primary or secondary motivation for visitors to the area was underway. This will enable the data to be made more relevant by excluding those visitors who were not coming to the WHS. The initial findings should be on available for early November. HW thanked JF for that research and looked forward to the results.

Heritage at Risk register – JS said that a bid to fund priority repairs had been submitted by Newcastle University to the HLF on behalf of the Partnership; a decision will be taken in the spring. The Board welcomed this. Community Champions had used some of their project resources to do some of the minor work identified earlier. Volunteer scrub-clearance days had taken place at Black Carts, and volunteers from Northumbrian Water will do some geophysics in late October near Cawfields.

All Party Parliamentary Group - SB said that he would follow up on the prior discussions for a Hadrian's Wall WHS group now that parliament had settled to some degree. He would report at the next meeting.

Actions - JF and the Marketing DG to share as soon as was practical the events listing for 2017

JS to follow up with DW the link to the CPRE's Dark Skies map on the website

JS to circulate the '30 for 30' activity list by mid November,

JF to circulate the results of the STEAM research by the end of November

4. Finance

HW briefed the Board on the meeting of senior Local Authority staff that had been convened by Geoff Paul, the Director of Planning and Economy at Northumberland County Council, on 26 September. The need for a step change in funding, and thus in governance, was recognised. It was agreed that an independent study should be commissioned to identify options for the sustainable funding of the WHS, and for the consequences in governance. The separate arrangements for the National Trail were questioned, and it was agreed that this responsibility should be included within the study. The aim was for a report to be complete by September 2017 so that new arrangements could be introduced for the start of the financial year in 2018. JF and JS are working with the NCC Economic Development team on behalf of the Partnership to develop the brief for the study; an initial draft will be circulated to Board members for comments.

In the short term, there was consensus that Local Authority should funding should continue at the present level for the remainder of 2016-17 and for 2017-18.

As part of the briefing for the meeting on 26 September, HW had drafted a long-term (30 year) Vision and a statement of Aims for the WHS. The economic opportunities provided by the Management Plan as a whole would need further emphasis. Once agreed, the Visions and Aims would become part of the Management Plan, standing at the head of the section on Objectives, Policies, and Actions. Members were asked to send revisions and improvements to HW by 1 November.

Adopt-a-Stone - Nurture Lakeland had taken on this web-based fund-raising initiative from the Hadrian's Wall Trust. More recently, Nurture Lakeland had reviewed its priorities and no longer saw this as part of its core activity; it sought suggestions as to who might take it over. Board members saw merit in new ways of raising funding and awareness but could not identify a new host. HW would convey this to Nurture Lakeland

Actions - Comments on the 30-year vision to HW 1 November,

HW to reply to Nurture Lakeland about Adopt-a-Stone.

5. Website Developments

MB provided a presentation (attached) on the impact of the new visitor website. Its brief was to 'Attract and Inform'. MB said the old site was complicated and expensive to run, it wasn't mobile-optimised and it duplicated information available elsewhere. There is now more sharing of partner data, saving of time and money. Web traffic is up almost 25%. Overseas readership amounts to almost 50% of that traffic. 70% of use is on mobile devices.

Board members asked who was using the website. MB said he can get further data but it was being used by students of all ages as well as visitors, and that Google is the main route to access the site. HW asked how the website will be monitored. JF said that, now we have a baseline, the Marketing Group will set targets for growth at its next meeting. Next year's Cavalry programme will be included within the website rather than being a separate space as it would be more sustainable that way. JS led the meeting in thanking NGi for the great deal of work that they had put in to make the site so effective so quickly.

Social media streams had not been passed over when the Hadrian's Wall Trust closed, but there are now 22k very active and engaged Facebook friends and 3k on Twitter. Good imagery and news of archaeological finds stimulate activity. Without further capacity the development of links to other social media platforms would be difficult if quality was to be maintained.

Action - JS to circulate a copy of MB's presentation with the minutes

6. Reports from Delivery Groups -

Conservation, Planning and Heritage Management (MC) The Group has been looking at best practice in bringing natural environment and heritage conservation issues together on sites with multiple designations. A balance of interests is key to an effective conservation strategy. Instances of metal-detecting are being investigated by Northumberland police. Parts of the wider site at Corbridge are coming under Stewardship which will remove large sections from cultivation.

Archaeological Research (RH) The meeting had discussed at length issues of better communication. The minutes will be posted on the website. The Group had developed a vision statement and will aim to provide a list of current research for the web. It is keen to develop the Community Conference, possibly with the inclusion of workshops in 2017.

The Group had discussed a limited expansion of membership, and the relationship with the annual Archaeology Forum. The light-touch revision of the Research Framework is the main area of work for the Group this year, for which it was keen to enlist David Mason's expert input. It will review progress against the Framework published in 2009, and hope to complete this in the Spring; further work will depend on funding.

Communication and Marketing (JF) With DW he had been working on ways to make the Tourism and Transport Group and the Communications Group more closely aligned. The first joint meeting will be on the 23 Nov and then on a three-monthly cycle outside external project activity. JF was working on the reprint of the WHS Map which is by far the most popular piece of print the WHS has; this year 120k plus were circulated. SB asked if JF could check on representation by North Tyneside and contact him if that needed enhancement.

Education and interpretation (BG) A successful Education Sharing day had been held in September at Vindolanda: the day took the theme of digital technology and looked at some of the best practice from the rest of the FRE as well as wider partners. Group members continued to work on the major Cavalry exhibition for next year. All loans have been agreed. The whole project is being designed around leaving a lasting legacy beyond the year of the exhibition. The re-enactment of the Turma is now set for 1 and 2 July; the whole exhibition will be launched on 7 April.

Farming and land management (JC) He introduced AS who will be working on the consultations with landowners in the corridor and providing the conduit role discussed at earlier meetings. JC presented the Board with an issue that had arisen with respect to inappropriate use of Access Land, particularly commercial photography without the permission of the landowner. The meeting agreed that the first step was more effective communication of the guidelines for Access Land. CV said she would send JF and JC a link to the relevant government advice.

7. Management Plan -

The draft of the Vision and Aims had already been mentioned and members had been asked to comment. RH wondered if a more general term of Understanding would work better for UNESCO objectives than Research. NW urged the meeting to look at the Vision in a more aspirational and ambitious way with statements that lead development. JC and CV asked if more reference to landscape could be made. HW reminded members to forward their comments by the end of the month.

The meeting then discussed the proposed changes to the Priorities and Actions in the Management Plan.

MC presented changes on behalf of the Conservation, Planning and Heritage Management Group. The Board approved the following revisions:

Policy 1c: *The OUV of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site will be managed in a way that takes appropriate account of the natural and landscape designations that apply to the area through which it runs*

- **Action:** *All those involved in the delivery of the management of the World Heritage Site shall, on a case-by-case basis, seek to protect and actively enhance the features protected by all of the formal designations that apply.*

No change was proposed to the Policies under Objective 3, but the Board agreed that the Actions for 3a should be amalgamated and revised as follows:

- **Action:** *Share best practice of planning and conservation issues, particularly amongst those engaged in management through the Planning system, through development of a dedicated web space of case-studies, and by holding a planning seminar every 3-5 years to disseminate these case-studies more widely.*

An addition Action for policy 3b was also agreed by the Board:

- **Action:** *Instigate a training programme for Local Authorities on the OUV of Hadrian's Wall and the implications of managing this through the Planning system.*

RH presented an additional Policy and Action on behalf of the Archaeological Research Group. These were agreed as follows:

Policy 9g: *Relevant parties will work together to develop a sustainable future for Roman Frontier research.*

- **Action:** *Develop an annual award in acknowledgment of excellent research on the Roman frontier (broadly defined) for any new research by a commercial, early-career academic, or independent researcher.*

HW asked JS to explore clear and concise ways to demonstrate the alterations that had been made to the Management Plan. MB said that he would help JS to work up a few options.

Action - JS and MB to explore and to recommend a suitable method for identifying any change to the Management Plan.

8. National Trails -

HW provided the Board with an update on the funding of National Trails. Following the proposal – later withdrawn – that NE funding to the family of Trails should be cut by 50%, the chairs of the various Trail Partnerships have been looking at new funding models, with the aim of completing this by Christmas. HW had written to the Minister for Heritage, on behalf of the Board, highlighting the need for sustainable funding to ensure the associated conservation of the WHS. The Minister's positive reply had been circulated to members and to the relevant MPs. Discussion then turned to the proposals for the Gretna to Allonby section of the England Coast Path. HW had responded to the consultation on behalf of the Board.

9. AOB

MC noted the death of Steve Speak who had been extremely active in the investigation of the archaeology of the WHS.

JS read a message from Henry Owen-John, Head of International Advice at Historic England, which provided an update on the options for the expansion of the wider FRE:

Work is now being done on a thematic study that will aim to define what should be included and excluded from future nominations from European colleagues. This will help to inform a nomination strategy and whether we go down the route of a single serial nomination for the European countries in approx. 2020 (unlikely, as it is improbable that all countries will be ready by then), or whether we push for separate nominations (some transnational, e.g. Bavaria/Austria, Lower Rhine in Germany and NL – not favoured by ICOMOS), or whether we go down the route of individual nominations within an overall framework, i.e. separate WHSs (good in management terms but loses the overarching concept). The writing team for the nomination strategy is in place and has been working on it and we are due to discuss it with Susan Denyer in Sofia in mid November all being well.

JF updated the meeting on the expression of interest to the Great Places Scheme: a bid that would bring capacity to the WHS.,JF said that the competition for this scheme is extremely high. Wendy Scott is leading the bid at NCC on behalf of all partners for this Wall-wide project.

HW congratulated those involved in securing the hosting of the Great North Exhibition in Newcastle /Gateshead next year.

JS said that the Antonine Wall app was now available for download on both Android and Apple platforms. Under the conditions for European funding the licence for the app will be made available to the wider FRE in approximately 18 months, once the Antonine project was complete.

HW said that, as part of Black History Month, the WHS would featured in a BBC series, highlighting the earliest identifiable African community in Britain, associated with the garrison of the fort at Burgh-by-Sands.

10. Dates of next meetings:

7 Feb 2017; 13 June 2017; 10 October 2017 - locations to be confirmed shortly by JS.