

HADRIAN'S WALL PARTNERSHIP BOARD
Friday 15 May 2015
2pm Prospect House, Hexham, NE46 1XD

Draft minutes

Members: Nigel Walsh (*Northumberland County Council*), Humphrey Welfare (*Chair*), Kevin Kerrigan (*Allerdale Council*), Jane Meek (*Carlisle City Council*), Lindsay Murray (*Gateshead Council*), Steve Bishop (*North Tyneside Council*), Andrew Miller (*Northumberland National Park*), Christine Venus (*Natural England*), Mike Collins (*Historic England*), Professor David Breeze, Mike Conlon (*South Tyneside Council*), James Copeland (*NFU*), Carole Keltie (*English Heritage*), Duncan Wise (*Northumberland National Park*), Bill Griffiths (*Tyne & Wear Museums & Archives*), David Southward (*Cumbria County Council*).

In attendance: James Fell (*Northumberland County Council*), Sarah Rushton (*Northumberland County Council*), John Scott (*Northumberland County Council*), Henry Owen-John (*Historic England*).

1. Introductions

All introduced themselves and the authority they represent. Humphrey Welfare explained the purpose of the meeting and how it was hoped that things can progress.

2. Apologies

Cllr R Higgins (*Newcastle City Council*), Carol Pyrah (*Historic England*)

3. A new beginning: resources and current activity

HW explained that the Board is a new beginning. When he became Chair of World Heritage Management Plan Committee it had 52 members but limited accountability; he was keen to allow the Local Authorities and the other key groups associated with the Wall together to have a clear voice. Funding has been greatly reduced so it is important to get the governance right and to ensure that the priorities are correct.

JF reported on the financial position and on relevant developments. At the demise of the Hadrian's Wall Trust, a marketing group had been established, in July 2014, to maintain momentum. A great deal has been achieved, including keeping the website up to date and making sure visitors are kept informed of activities going on along the Wall. There has been a radio campaign, funded from

the Regional Growth Fund, which was match-funded by VisitEngland. The Hadrian's Wall visitors' map has been updated and 140,000 have been printed; these are being distributed through the usual channels. Two social media channels have been launched.

VisitEngland has offered funding of £400,000 for this financial year. A briefing was pulled together by NCC and Northumberland Tourism on a Connectivity Project which consists of four main themes:

- a) Hadrian's Wall Bus – work on bus shelters, timetables, etc
- b) Orientation – visitor hubs along the Wall, new signage
- c) Marketing – website update and maintenance
- d) Wider connectivity – Grip Study which is looking into re-opening Gilsland Station, and also product development.

This project has to be match-funded but this is achievable. Delivery of this project will be from NCC, Northumberland National Park, Newcastle Gateshead Initiative, and Northumberland Tourism.

In order to emphasise that other strands of work had not come to a halt with the closure of the Trust, JS provided an overview of current activity. This included key projects such as Wall Watch, a scheme in which volunteers along the Wall can report problems so these can be dealt with in good time. Work is continuing with colleagues from the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (the wider World Heritage Site of which the Wall is a constituent part) from Austria and Germany; in August there is a senior delegation coming across from Germany to study how the priorities for the Wall are identified and addressed. UNESCO has kept a close eye on issues, e.g. metal detecting, and Newcastle University is helping to widen the digital sphere with the FREDHI project and NU Digital Heritage. On 10 September the Tour of Britain will be raced along the Wall; this will be televised in 166 countries so in terms of profile this will be excellent advertising.

CK said that on 5 June the 'Wall of Sound' will be running on the BBC. This will co-ordinate filming and music being transmitted from various points along the Wall, finishing off at Segedunum which will be featured by BBC News.

4. The governance of the World Heritage Site

4a) Terms of Reference for the Board

These had been circulated; HW invited comment.

Tasks

J Meek suggested that it is important that co-ordination and collaboration for joined up thinking and networking should be carried out and referenced.

NW - the context 'resource in each financial year' should possibly be 'medium term'. Resources should not be looked at in a single year. HW agreed this was important.

LM asked how the Board is constituted? HW explained that the UNESCO WHS guidelines – which are, in effect, an international treaty obligation on the UK - recommend that a Board is established to ensure that there is effective management of the WHS.

DB asked whether Board is the correct title? Should it be Committee or Group? HW argued that although there is a range of different structures for WHSs in the UK, a Board provides strategic guidance and directs the work for delivery. The Board will be able to change its ToR as it moves forward.

Membership and quorum

Representatives from the Private Sector should be considered, or from LEP. HW said that it was important to be able to draw in expertise on specifics but it was difficult to strike a balance and he was reluctant at this stage to take any steps that would move the Board back towards the large membership of the former Management Plan Committee. On the question of a quorum, HW pointed out that the group can only work effectively and with maximum influence if the maximum number of members attend. It was agreed that there should be no less than 50% present in addition to the Chair. The question of substitute members was raised, and it was decided that any substitution would need approval from the Chair; it was reiterated that continuity of representation is important. It was agreed that the Board should meet 2 or 3 times per year, with urgent matters being dealt with between meetings.

Chair – HW said that he had taken over the Chair of the Management Plan Committee in 2012; he suggested that he should continue as the interim Chair of the Board until January; the Board can then take a decision as to what it wishes to do beyond that.

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference should be amended in line with the points accepted in the discussion and that they should be circulated with the minutes.

4b) Terms of Reference for the Delivery Groups

These had been circulated; HW asked for comment.

The task of each Group was to undertake the Actions, and to promulgate the Policies, set out in the Management Plan.

JC said that the NFU is not a funding body, and that he would appreciate further discussions as to how the delivery group will work in terms of the farming and agriculture. HW, JS and JC agreed to meet to discuss this in the near future.

MC suggested it would be helpful for Chairs of the Groups to sit down and talk about which Group will be responsible for particular Actions and how will this be decided.

It was recognised that Delivery Groups may need to prioritise actions without prior reference to the Board.

Membership – As a guide, it was thought that each Group should be not more than 10 people but the final decision will be with the Chair of the Group.

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference should be amended in line with the points made in the discussion and that they will be circulated with the minutes.

5. World Heritage Site Management Plan 2015-19 presentation

JS gave a presentation, explaining that the first Management Plan was produced in 1996 and was hugely influential. The Plan for 2015-19 is a radical departure from the norm in that it is entirely web-based; this makes it more accessible, much cheaper to produce, and easier to revise. With the support of English Heritage, the draft of the new Plan was the subject of extensive consultation which had greatly influenced its content and approach. The section on Policies and Actions is at the heart of the Plan and these should be deliverable and practical. The process should be transparent and accessible. The Plan should be adaptable - with the agreement of UNESCO – and should remain focused, conversational and useful; the functionality of the Plan will probably evolve.

The Actions had been provisionally prioritised. There are 42 of them, compared to the 177 that appeared in the last Management Plan.

UNESCO is keen for the WHS logo to be used on more sites along the Wall but it has to be used appropriately in line with guidance.

Consultation – it is hoped that more people will become involved in the way of volunteers with activities and the upkeep of the Wall.

The website can link to any resource or document, including those that the Delivery Groups may produce. Priorities can change and new ones can be added. Any significant changes, however, will need to be reported to UNESCO.

It was agreed that the initial priorities identified were appropriate.

6. Finance

6a) Current Position

The core budget available in 2014-15 was £118,000; this was based on the Service Level Agreement between the Local Authorities that had been originally established to support the Hadrian's Wall Trust after the demise of the RDAs.

Included in the spend was the Co-ordinator's role and the website update; this left around £9k to carry forward.

In 2015-16, the amount is around £119k with £55,000 committed to World Heritage Site costs including salaries, meetings etc. £10k was needed for the website licence.

There is a separate stream of funding for the National Trail Partnership from Natural England and the Highways Authorities.

It was agreed that JF should send copies of the budget around the group.

HW said the Trust had had around £1¼m available to support them so the reduction is a very radical one; however, based on experience in the first year, there is enough to maintain core activity because of partnership working. The concept of developing a future funding strategy is nevertheless critical. It was agreed that the meeting of the Board in September would consider the outlook for funding for 2016-17.

To that end, HW said that it would be helpful if a small group could be formed to work on the outline strategy for the 2016-17 budget and for the medium term. **It was agreed** that the Coordinator would send out an invitation so that that this small group could begin work as soon as possible.

It was agreed that there is a need to bring together research on visitor numbers and the effect on the local economy. CK asked how Adopt-a-stone fit into the fundraising strategy? HW said that he understood that Nurture Lakeland had taken this over from the Trust and that its trustees were considering how it might be taken forward.

7. National Trail condition & maintenance report

A brief report had been circulated by the Trail Officer. AM said that the Trail Partnership had made a positive transition and had continued business as usual. All work planned is being undertaken. The regular monitoring has continued and this has been used to further influence this year's work. The condition of the trail is good with no serious issues. Funding for maintenance is in place for this year, but there is a need to look to the future.

8. World Heritage

Henry Owen-John, the Head of International Advice in Historic England, gave an overview of World Heritage and its role in promoting the values of UNESCO.

World Heritage is valued because of the pride engendered by such a special global designation, and the practical effect that it can have in driving the local economy.

The sharing of knowledge and experience is important; this is especially true in a trans-national Site such as the Frontiers of the Roman Empire. There is a need to sustain a level of funding that will ensure high standards of conservation and to help the people that local authorities serve. The benefits are not just financial; World Heritage has an important role in wellbeing.

9. Dates of next meetings

To be arranged

10. Any other business

SB said that funding of £500k had been provided from Northern Powerhouse for Segedunum.