

## FRONTIERS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

### HADRIAN'S WALL PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Draft minutes of the meeting held **Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017** at Carlisle City Council

**Members:** Humphrey Welfare (Chair), Steve Bishop (North Tyneside Council), Andrew Miller (Northumberland National Park), Mike Collins (Historic England), James Fell (Northumberland County Council), Jane Meek (Carlisle City Council), Richard Hingley (Durham University), Carol Pyrah (Historic England), Christine Venus (Natural England), Nik Hardy (Allerdale Borough Council), Wendy Scott (Northumberland County Council)

**In Attendance:** John Scott (Management Plan Coordinator).

**1. Apologies:** Tania Robinson (South Tyneside Council), Cllr Rob Higgins (Newcastle City Council), , Cllr David Southward (Cumbria County Council), Duncan Wise (Northumberland National Park) Bill Griffiths (Tyne & Wear Museums & Archives), James Copeland (NFU), Paul Scott (Gateshead Council), Nigel Walsh (Northumberland County Council), Christine Venus (Natural England)

The Chair thanked JM and Carlisle City Council for hosting the meeting.

#### 2. Minutes of last meeting:

Members accepted them as a true record.

#### 3. Matter arising

**All Party Parliamentary Group** – SB is working closely with his local MP and suggested that other member's highlight this activity to their specific members of parliament for a joint push. He would keep HW informed of developments.

**Adopt a Stone** – JF and JS had arranged to meet with Nurture Lakeland to discuss possible ways forward and the scale of the opportunity presented. They would report back at the next meeting.

**30 Year Vision** – The 30-year vision statement for the WHS had been posted on the website.

<http://hadrianswallcountry.co.uk/sites/default/files/The%2030%20year%20vision%20for%20Hadrian%27s%20Wall.pdf>

**Community Conference** – JS summarised the feedback by saying that the very worst comment had been that it was 'good'. The youth group presentation that kicked off the day was a firm favourite with everyone. The audience appreciated the wide ranging nature of the event and the good networking opportunity it brought. HW added that he had asked how people had heard about the event and that the vast majority were there due to direct mailing. HW said that we have a need to cross-pollenate audiences, promoting the wealth of events that happen on the WHS to benefit the various audiences that we engage with.

#### 4. Finance

**Local Authority Core funding review** - JF provided an update on the Sustainability and Governance Report Brief: Interviews were to take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> March. HW thanked those who had assisted him in the shortlisting (JS, NH, and TR) and Northumberland CC for financing the report on behalf of the Partnership. HW pointed out that the report would be focusing on the models for sustainable finance but the consequences for governance would also be considered. The report had to be delivered in September. CP recommended that the Local Authority executive group that asked for the study to be commissioned should then be reconvened to review the outcome. HW said that he would be keeping an eye on developments across the FRE as the uncosted proposals of new structures might have a further impact on resources.

**Action:** JS – to report back on progress.

**STEAM data analysis** - JF reported on work he had undertaken with Newcastle Gateshead Initiative towards a better understanding the STEAM data for Hadrian's Wall. Although it was the industry standard method for the tourism industry it had always set out grossly inflated figures for the WHS (as it took the whole Tyneside conurbation into account) and really only was fit for trend data.

A survey of visitors to the WHS suggests that 26% are in the area either wholly or partly because of Hadrian's Wall. Applying this proportion to the STEAM data provides a more realistic picture. Those people for whom the Wall was the main reason for their visit contribute £510m to the local economy. An additional 10.5% of expenditure was generated by those for whom the Wall was a subsidiary reason for their visit. The total was therefore £716m. JM thanked JF for that work and said it is much more credible figure. The meeting echoed this. JF also provided some comparative figures which indicated that the WHS was out-performing many areas. NH said that with this in mind the next question is how this strong performance could be harnessed to support the management of the WHS; this would be a significant factor in the review of funding and governance.

JF and JS circulated the current budget for the coordination and marketing of the WHS. This was held at its 2015 level (£90k combined).

#### 5. Reports of the Delivery Groups

**Conservation, Planning and Heritage Management** – MC reported that the group had focused on developing the web presence with the assistance of JS. Progress had been made with the review of designations on urban Tyneside. SB asked if he and MC could meet to discuss North Tyneside in more detail. HW suggested it would be good to do a health check on the rest of the site. RH asked for clarification if this was in relation to boundaries or to condition. HW commented that the boundaries had to be considered first, then conservation. MC said that the group was bringing together good-practice case studies for the website; considerations of setting and of strategic planning policy will be followed up with partners in the near future.

**Archaeological Research** – RH reported that the DG had been meeting regularly and that attendance was strong and effective. It too aimed to increasing its presence on the website and it was looking at ways to communicate with the wider community. The main area of work had been the review of the Research Framework; as no resources are attached to this activity the group has been revising the objectives. Once this is completed the DG will open this up to the wider research community for

comment. Ideally this would be done in June, with feedback complete by November. RH said that making the case for funding would be part of the next discussions. The group's other area of work is the improvement of the sustainability of the relevant research community, especially in the area of finds experts. The idea of an annual prize for good research in the archaeology of Roman frontiers might be launched in 2018; this would highlight this area of research for students, wider community members and early-career professionals.

MC advised the group that the Archaeology Forum is on 21st October in Hexham. The theme for the day is 'new research work on the Wall'. RH was keen to coordinate the next Community conference/networking meeting and to link it with the Forum. HW offered to write to David Mason on behalf of the Board to see whether this can be put in place in 2018.

**Action:** HW to write to David Mason.

**Communication and Marketing/Tourism and Transport** - JF said that use of the website and social media is up nearly 25%. There had been a massive spike in activity on the website in January as the Cavalry Exhibition was announced and people started researching their visits for 2017. The overseas hits are now 40% (down 10% on usual) of the total website use but this slight reduction could be due to the amount of UK interest in Hadrian's Cavalry in the first period of the year. The AD122 timetables were out early and the service will run from 14 April until the beginning of October. 110k map leaflets will be printed ready for March; JF said that this is the most popular print that the Partnership produces; many more could be issued but we can't simply afford to print further at the moment.

**Education and Interpretation** – BG had sent his apologies but had said that members of the DG were fully engaged in preparations for the forthcoming Cavalry exhibition; everything was on schedule and looking good for being this main focus of activity over 2017.

## 6. Management Plan

**Draft report on progress** - JS said that this year had, as expected, been a period of development work across the various objectives. Bids had been submitted by partnerships for potential projects but a number of these had not been successful. JM said that European funding has been especially difficult at the moment while things settle after Brexit and this uncertainty has impacted on other funders; an increase in political backing will help drive through critical projects, but this takes time.

CP asked about the Wallwatch project and the related potential HLF project that partners had been working on. JS said that he had taken on board the Wallwatch project for the time being, hoping to simply keep the group together over a quiet period for the project (no winter inspections are scheduled) until the HLF project could come to fruition. However this new project had been pushed back 3 months; as a result JS was now looking for resources (for insurance and expenses for volunteers) to move the Wallwatch project forward. The HLF application will be submitted in the middle of March by Newcastle University and we should expect a decision in June. CP added that it would be useful to see a colour coded version of the progress summary to better understand where members could help.

**Coordinator's work plan** – JS provided members with a draft work plan for year 3 of the Management Plan. All members commented that the plan looked too large for one person and that there was a need to dramatically prioritize the work schedule as it stood. HW asked members to suggest key priorities for JS to focus on.

**Action:** members to suggest priorities.

**Priorities and proposals for revision** – no alterations were suggested at this meeting

**30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary plans** – The list of 30 things to do in the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year had been brought together by partners and provided a good spread of activity across the WHS. It will be posted on the website by the marketing team ready for Easter. JS had circulated some 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary badging for partners to use.

**Action:** JS to update the work schedule in line with member's suggestions and to colour code the activity sheets.

## **7. The National Trails**

**Hadrian's Wall Path: the current situation** - HW said that Natural England has decided to support all of the Trails to the same level as before, for the coming year. On staff resources, AM said that we will have a Maintenance Ranger with a seasonal apprentice/assistant. We will however lose the Trail Officer, David McGlade. All members agreed to record their appreciation of David's work over the years. David's post will be covered by a team of staff within the National Park: experts on access management, volunteer coordination, and fund raising. HW asked about the National Trail website, Will that be resourced? RH voiced concerns over such a dramatic change in management and asked on behalf of other partners for confirmation that the sustainable management of the Trail and its impact on the WHS would be monitored and findings shared with the Partnership. An important factor was also to make sure the long term data collected by David and others in the past was secure. AM wanted to reassure the members that a highly experienced team had been brought together as a result of this situation and that everything would be done to maintain the highest standards. Members thanked AM and the National Park for their efforts in securing continuity in a tricky environment. HW added that part of the review of sustainable finance and governance would consider how the Trail and WHS management could be brought closer together. CP highlighted that this is a time to experiment with new ways to monitor and maintain the Trail and to demonstrate good practice. She suggested that a section of the Trail, of low sensitivity, could be selected to assess the impact of a lack of maintenance and act as a control. HW asked JS to talk to the new team as they come into post and look at opportunities to assist.

**Action:** HW to write to David McGlade

**England Coast Path** – HW had responded, on behalf of the Partnership, to the consultation on the Gretna to Allonby section of the Path, focusing on the sensitivities of the sections within the WHS. This had been acknowledged, but there had been no further word about any revised proposals.

**Challenge Events** - The meeting discussed the impact of the use of the National Trail for challenge events; there are a growing number of them every year and their impact is potentially great. HW highlighted the confusing messages on the National Trail website that was, in effect, promoting these events. He will ask the Trail Partnership to clarify the necessary balance with the conservation of the WHS. The meeting agreed this precautionary approach.

**Action:** HW

## **8. AOB**

SB said that on 21 March a steel sculpture would be installed at Segedunum to mark the end of the W and the National Trail.

MC mentioned a proposed large-scale music festival on 6 August at Heddon-on-the-Wall which would be close to some sensitive areas.

## **9. Dates of the next meetings**

13 June 2- 4pm at Newcastle Gateshead Initiative, NE8 3AE

[www.visitnewcastlegateshead.com](http://www.visitnewcastlegateshead.com)

10 October 2- 4pm venue TBC\*

*\*This meeting may be brought forward to consider the recommendations of the review of funding and governance.*