

**FRONTIERS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE WORLD HERITAGE SITE  
HADRIAN'S WALL PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

**Draft minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 26th September 2017 at Bessie Surtees House, Newcastle.**

**Members:** Humphrey Welfare (Chair), Mike Collins (Historic England), Steve Bishop (North Tyneside Council), Wendy Scott (Northumberland County Council), Carol Pyrah (Historic England) (*by phone*), Cllr Rob Higgins (Newcastle City Council), Tania Robinson (South Tyneside Council), Janice Rose (Northumberland County Council), Joe Broomfield (Allerdale Borough Council), Andrew Rothwell (Newcastle City Council), Duncan Wise (Northumberland National Park).

**In Attendance:** John Scott (Coordinator), Colin Welsh (Jura Consultants)

**1. Apologies:** Jane Meek (Carlisle City Council), Nik Hardy (Allerdale Borough Council), Bill Griffiths (Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums), Andrew Miller (Northumberland National Park), Cllr David Southward (Cumbria County Council), Richard Hingley (Durham University), Paul Scott (Gateshead Council), Nigel Walsh (Northumberland County Council).

**2. Minutes of the last meeting:** Members accepted them as a true record.

**3. Matters Arising**

**All Party Parliamentary Group** - SB reported that the All-Party Parliamentary group had met on the 13th September but he was yet to receive any feedback on the discussions and outcomes. HW said that he had contacted Mary Glindon to offer advice and background as required.

**DMO Agreements** - JS had explored the detail behind the arrangements with the DMOs and noted that in general marketing formed a key part of the SLA drawn up at the closure of the Trust. HW said that the close relationship with the DMOs goes back further but that papers relating to prior arrangements are not accessible. HW advised that the Partnership take into consideration the findings in the Jura report and we can evaluate future DMO relationships based on its recommendations.

**The Sill** - DW reported that The Sill had had a very successful opening. It had been a great opportunity to test the smooth running and visitor operation of the building but it had all gone well and they had had some great feedback. Visitor figures looked very encouraging at this stage.

**Visitbritain Funding** - Whilst the Marketing Group's joint bid (led by English Heritage) to develop Chinese marketing opportunities had been unsuccessful, both the National Park and Carlisle City Council had been involved in successful bids that will have an impact on activity in the WHS corridor. HW welcomed this news and thanked everyone for the hard work getting the bids in. The Partnership looked forward to hearing more about the activities resulting from these successes.

#### **4. Review of funding and governance (presentation of draft by Jura Consultants)**

Colin Welsh (CW) from Jura led on the presentation and discussion of the initial draft of the review document, HW reminded the Partnership that the aim today was to provide comment and to accept draft recommendations, subject to corrections, and to initiate the next steps.

CW updated the meeting on his activity over the last few months. He had had further detailed conversations with those members unable to attend the workshops to make sure their thoughts were gathered; he had also met with the number of sites to get a view from the front line.

CW summarised the latter meeting for members as it give a different perspective on the WHS activity. The site meeting had brought out particular outcomes relating to the need for the associated conservation requirements and the need for action around visitor development. The sites favoured the smaller more realistic options for development, but support the need for development. They found it difficult to see how the wider Partnership marketing by the Hadrian's Wall marketing group had helped beyond the marketing done by sites themselves. There were some concerns over representation on groups, and over relevant communication.

CW pointed out that if the sites were to make contributions to the management costs they would need to know exactly what they would get for the investment. The sites were keen to push for higher political support for the WHS and thought that there was a need to further quantify support in kind already given to the WHS by partners. They were keen on the integration of the National Trail as part of management system but were surprised by the breath of activity that the current staff was engaged in and would like to see more of them. The sites saw the potential of the WHS and the scope to do more but realised it was currently constrained by capacity.

The meeting further discussed these observation presented by CW, this led to a suggestion that the report should set out where the Partnership has come from, what its current capacity is, and where it aspires go to. HW set out the background for members, reminding the meeting that over the last 3 years funding for WHS management activity had dropped

from the £1.2 mill provided by the RDAs by over 90%, currently we work on 8% off what it was, yet we have continued to run and delivered activity thanks to everyone's joint efforts. However, it was agreed that it is not sustainable to continue at this level.

This reminder led to further conversation on current progress and activity. JR thought that there was a definite need to move beyond this 'firefighting' phase. JR asked CW for his thoughts on whether, if the Partnership members went for one of the larger contribution options, how long it would be before we can replace a local authority model with a more standalone method of delivery. CW suggested that, in reality, for local authorities to put nothing in is a long way away; this was borne out when you looked at comparators who still have a level of Local Authority involvement and can operate far more effective management models.

JR thought that Option 1 would not take us forward, saying we are up to capacity, if not over it, We need to state our priorities clearly so we can use our current resources in a more focused way. The meeting agreed that at present it is not possible to cover everything effectively. RH said that we need to balance the marketing with conservation, DW agreed, saying we are looking at a WHS and sustainability is central to what we do and what we should focus on.

DW added that all the sites need to develop a longer season and be more commercial as time goes on. Marketing can help to extend the season sustainably by focussing on appropriate activities; it also offers a chance to push other markets at different times and in different places. JR added we need to be looking at how things like the website are used; we need more data and a better understanding of the opportunities such as the North of the Tyne devolution deal, Borderlands, etc.

AR said there's a need to revisit how things are carved up between the partners in terms of their practical contributions. HW said it's been difficult to quantify how much 'in kind' assistance Partners provide, but we do need to capture that data. AR we also need to identify who is best placed to explore opportunities, when we have limited capacity. As an example, JR said that the Borderlands Initiative will mean that Northumberland and Carlisle will be better placed to lead in certain areas. There are indications that Borderlands may be included in the Budget, with Hadrian's Wall being highlighted.

AR proposed that we should have a program of activity based on WHS events to gather partners around: perhaps a three-year programme across the Wall. SB agreed with this and said that we need to think about these events as fully across the whole Wall; it is unfortunate that the North East LEP has not taken culture and tourism as areas of focus despite these being central to the offer of the region.

JB said that, in contrast, LEP North West sees these things as being very important and Hadrian's Wall is mentioned numerous times. The meeting discussed ideas for events, recognising that we need ideas that drive the funding, but we also need to make space to develop these ideas, something that is a challenge at present.

TR said that we should get a bid into the HLF for resilience funding, as recommended in the report. That would give us the additional capacity to enable us to build on these ideas and carry them forward. CW agreed and said that it is possible that we could submit a bid before the end of the year to give the WHS extra capacity ready for the new financial year. HW recommended a discussion with HLF to kick start this. WS and JR said that they would discuss with HLF on behalf of the Partnership.

JR suggested that at the same time we need to explore ways in which the Partnership can meet the suggested capacity given in option 4, moving Local Authority contributions from £73k to £115k which will free up current capacity to be more focused and to add extra development time. The meeting agreed that this should form a key part of the next meeting agenda.

HW summarized the discussion. **The Board agrees to go for a HLF resilience bid, before the end of year. JS will explore possible funding sources to enable this to happen on time. We will also discuss option 4 as the agreed level of operation for the WHS. Members should consider if this meets the criteria of the regional strategies discussed.**

The meeting discussed the numbered recommendations in the report so as to increase clarity and understanding. Key suggestions are summarised below:

1. It was agreed that this was a minimum requirement, and should be the foundation for the development function and others over time.
6. Recommendation to be worded highlighting this as an international role and the WHS needs to be represented as such
8. The Interpretation/Learning and Marketing Delivery Groups should seek to gain better representation from sites and attractions; it may be advantageous to bring everyone together annually
11. JB said he would explore possibility of LEP support for this. Also this recommendation probably needs to say that this could be a development function rather than post at this stage.

13 and 2 should focus on projects and events. Bespoke marketing responses should include an events programme to animate the space.

All other recommendations were accepted as appropriate and were supported.

Members suggested some additional recommendations,

- To consider medium- and long-term alternative governance solutions, and to regularly review management structures as activity evolves, develops and opportunities arise.

CP asked if we should not consider how these findings are communicated, suggesting that the Partnership take up the offer from Newcastle City to bring key politicians together, and that we should do this as the report is issued. Members agreed this was a good way to gain maximum support.

The meeting then discussed timetables. CW asked for further comments to be passed on as soon as possible, once members had had chance to discuss issues with colleagues. The next draft will be circulated in mid-October, with a final report due at the end of that month. HW urged members to get initial comments to CW by the end of the week if possible.

**Action:** All, Comments to CW asap.

The meeting agreed that work should start on developing a resilience bid to HLF while members explored opportunities to meet the requirements of option 4.

**Action:** WS/JR to discuss possible bid with HLF, JS to start the bid process, All, to explore key regional strategies to support Option 4.

AR asked members to send him contact details for key members who should be at the launch of the report session as suggested by CP so that planning could start on this as soon as a date is finalised.

**Action:** Contact details to AR

HW brought the meeting to a close. He thanked the Chairs of the Delivery Groups for their summary reports on activity and asked members to note these reports and the positive activity underway.

#### **10. Date of next meeting:**

Members thought there was a need to have an extra meeting in mid-November to review the next draft of the report. This will be **2-4pm, 14th November 2017 at Baltic 39, Newcastle upon Tyne**. Thereafter, 6th February 2018; 12th June 2018; 23rd October 2018