

## WHS Committee On-line Meeting 17 September 2021

### World Heritage Site Co-Ordination Update – Ann Carney

Management plan is potentially 5 years with an extension to 10 years is being requested (although members felt there is a limit of between 5-6 years legally), all members asked for their view on this. It is noted the internal reporting isn't working effectively and needs to be changed.

### Partner Updates

Heather Sabire - The Interpretation boards at West Kennet Long Barrow, The Sanctuary, Silbury Hill and Windmill Hill have now all been updated.

Dr Nick Snatchel - There has been a reduction in Heritage Crime since everything has re-opened, this had increased during the lockdown earlier in the year. It was mentioned that a car managed to break through the gate in the East Quadrant in Avebury and lightly touched a stone. There was no damage to the stone.

Mel Barge – Gave a report on burrowing animals following a survey (unfortunately I lost internet throughout) She mentioned that fence repairs are now on a fast track and that they are running **Heritage Crime workshops that are open to any councillor if we would like to join?**

Steve Payne from National England said they are maintaining benefits for WHS plus two others due to burrowing animals and that East Kennet Long Barrow may now have a strategy for tree management including the relocation of some. There is going to be further funding approved for educational access to farmers who operate in WHS.

Nick Croxton – Fyfield Downs still does not have an interpretation board, however the funding has been approved. There are also potentially some drone videos being created to show what the farmers have achieved within the historic environment over the years.

Mel from Wiltshire Council said there have been some results from the excavations recently showing that there was a Roman enclosure to the north of the manor. This was a joint dig with Southampton and Bournemouth University. There are no full reports on the findings as yet.

Henry Oliver – The Defra farming program started in July which was late. It's a 3 year funding program that will run until 2024 covering nature, climate, people and place within protected landscapes. They are employing two people to support the program and the project will be aimed at **all** land owners and managers, not just farmers. It's an investment grant program to support farmers as they transit through Brexit, arable reversion and monument protection to name a few and the grant offered in 2021 is £650k. Robin Butler was particularly pleased to hear about the scheme and grant.

Gillian Swanton – Said that she feels there are still too many people able to climb up Silbury Hill and that it needs to be further protected from this.

### Ridgeway

There was significant discussion on the Ridgeway during the meeting. Damage by the vehicles driving up there remains an ongoing concern, increasingly there is worry for the levels of camping and parking that is now happening there too due to the damage to the environment, crops and bio-diversity of the landscape. Following various discussions with the Police it seems they are of the opinion that there should be a responsibility towards the owners of the land to prevent camping and driving on the surrounding land. Colin Shell felt these issues are of significant importance and some felt it was aggressive trespass. Stephen Stacy endorsed these thoughts and confirmed that he and Jane Webb have recently written to Wiltshire Council asking for a strategy of prevention rather than a counter policy.

Report by Cllr Byatt, 4 October 2021