

Minutes

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2012 IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 2.31 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 3.47 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Members

Mr C Cashman
Mr R Evans
Mr M Farley
Mr G Marshall
Mr R Pushman (Chairman)

Organisation

Aylesbury Vale District Council
Diocese of Oxford
Bucks Archaeological Society
National Trust
Buckinghamshire County Council

Officers

Mr M Andrew
Mr J Brushe
Mr S Kidd
Mr B Thorn
Ms H Wailing
Ms J Wise

Organisation

Wycombe District Council
South Bucks District Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Bucks County Museum
Democratic Services Officer
Buckinghamshire County Council

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Mr R Pushman be elected as Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum for the ensuing year.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies for absence were received from Nick Crank, Anne Davies and Hugh McCarthy.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Richard Pushman declared an interest as he was Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust and a member of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Corry Cashman declared an interest as his partner was on the Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust, and because he was a member of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society.

4 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 May 2011 were agreed and signed as a correct record, with the following amendment:

- Page 5, Agenda item 12 (v) – Mr Andrews to be changed to Mr Andrew.

5 MATTERS ARISING

Page 2 – High Speed 2 (HS2) – Mike Farley said that he had attended a very interesting meeting that morning between the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society and HS2 Ltd. This was a critical time for the protest against HS2. Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) should be having free and open discussions with (HS2) re: mitigation, but BCC officers were still precluded from these discussions. Mike Farley asked members to ask BCC to reconsider their attendance at the meetings with HS2.

The Chairman said that this had been greatly debated, including at the Chilterns AONB Conservation Board. BCC had Judicial Review hearings going ahead later in the year.

However members noted that the HS2 final scoping document had been published on 13 September 2012.

Corry Cashman (Aylesbury Vale District Council) said that maximum input from BCC at this stage would provide valuable information for the future, whatever the decision was about HS2.

Action: Mike Farley to send the Society's views to the BCC Chief Executive and copy the letter to the Chairman, who would then discuss the matter with the Leader.

Page 3 – buildings of note in Aylesbury Vale – it was noted that they had already been input onto the system.

6 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST'S REPORT

Members had received and were invited to note the report.

Sandy Kidd, Buckinghamshire Archaeological Officer, took members through the Report and said the following:

- A meeting had been held with the English Heritage Designations Team to attempt to agree priorities for future scheduling of monuments in Buckinghamshire. English Heritage had reduced its scheduling. Four scheduling designations were being progressed in the current year from requests made over the past decade. The sites were in the Aylesbury Vale District area, but this balanced out the previous schedule list, which had contained many sites in the Wycombe and Chiltern District areas.
- A list of further sites would be given to English Heritage for consideration. Sites in the list were shown in Appendix C, and Sandy Kidd asked members to let him know within the next two weeks if there were any significant omissions or any sites which should be removed. Local members would also be consulted.
- Archaeological investigations of planning / building sites included the Arla Dairy Site (near Aston Clinton), the Red Lion in Brill and Middle Saxon burials in the

County Museum Garden, Aylesbury.

- The Strategic Air Command Bunker at RAF High Wycombe had been proposed for listing, with an associated generator building.

A member said that they understood that the bunker at RAF High Wycombe had been put forward for listing as well as the surface buildings. A copy of the consultation would be circulated – **Action: SK**

A member asked about Quarrendon sites I and II, described in Appendix C. Sandy Kidd said that a survey carried out for the Berryfields Housing site had picked up buried remains on the site. The schedule description needed to be extended to include adjacent features, such as some water channels.

The Forum NOTED:

- a **resources and performance indicators**
- b **strategic issues and projects**
- c **recent planning-related archaeological work**
- d **progress in securing publication of archaeological reports.**

7 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD: UPDATE

Members had received and were invited to note the report.

Julia Wise, Historic Environment Record Officer, took members through the Report and said the following:

- It had been another quiet half year in terms of enquiries, especially commercial enquiries. It was currently very difficult to predict trends, apart from a downward trend over the past few years in terms of numbers of enquiries.
- At the last meeting Julia Wise had reported on progress with enhancing the Historic Environment Record (HER) recording of historic buildings by inputting local buildings of note. It had not been possible to complete the work in the South Bucks District area due to other workload pressures, but it was hoped that work would resume on this shortly.
- Over 450 war memorials had been recorded in the HER by two volunteers. The next stage would be to visit the memorials to photograph them and to carry out a condition survey.

The Chairman asked if there was Government support for the war memorials recording work. Julia Wise said this was a volunteer project, not Government-funded. There were a number of different sources of funding available for owners of war memorials. The Chairman suggested that this information be given to the Bucks Association of Local Councils (BALC) for their newsletter.

Sandy Kidd said that they had embarked on a project to integrate environmental information more closely at Buckinghamshire County Council. This project was being led by David Green, Landscape Adviser. There would also be work over the next six months to look at how these environmental records operated. Officer time which was saved through this work could be re-invested to ensure that the records were up-to-date.

A member said that it was very important to include the words 'Historic Environment.'

Mike Farley asked about problems in acquiring statistics. Julia Wise said that the

mechanism which was preventing statistics being acquired was a security setting on the Buckinghamshire County Council website. This had been raised again. Mike Farley said that data was needed to justify the HER.

The Forum NOTED the HER performance indicators

8 MILTON KEYNES ARCHAEOLOGICAL OFFICER'S REPORT

This item was not taken, as Nick Crank (Milton Keynes Council) had sent apologies.

9 COUNTY MUSEUM REPORT

Members had received and were invited to note the report.

Brett Thorn (Bucks County Museum) referred members to the Report, and also circulated an additional paper.

The County Council had submitted an initial bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for capital funding to redevelop the Resource Centre at Halton. It was hoped that a Stage 1 bid would be made by the end of 2012. The amount of funding being requested was £4m.

The Resource centre had previously been a primary school. A successful lottery bid would enable the Resource Store to be transformed into a modern and energy-efficient new store. The best of the existing buildings could be converted to provide much wider access for public and learning. The grant would also fund a new Conservator post at the Museum.

Ros Tyrell was the Finds Liaison Officer, based at the County Museum. Ros Tyrell also worked for the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

The Chairman asked if there was a new board of management. Brett Thorn said that there were three trustees who would take the development forward and then open up the opportunities to others.

Mike Farley said that the bulk of the premises of the County Museum were actually the property of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society. The Trust would take over the running of the Museum and staff in Aylesbury, as well as the Halton site, once it was redeveloped.

The Trust would not take possession of the collections or the premises. The ownership of the finds would not change. New items found would probably belong to Buckinghamshire County Council.

10 NATIONAL TRUST REPORT

Members had received and were invited to note the report.

Gary Marshall (National Trust) told members that over the next three years the National Trust would be undertaking a major project to refurbish many of the tenanted buildings that it owned in West Wycombe. The aim of the project was to bring the buildings to modern living standards and to ensure that they met high environmental standards for insulation etc. The works would affect many of the 23 listed buildings that the Trust owned and, as many would involve re-roofing, the Trust was taking the opportunity to carry out a programme of research and investigation into the buildings.

An extensive programme of sampling for dendrochronology dating would also be undertaken.

The National Trust had recently re-interred four third century Romano-British skeletons in the parish burial ground in West Wycombe. Some lines from Catullus were being considered for the gravestone.

On the Bradenham Estate, the National Trust had been working with Princes Risborough Countryside Group to undertake geophysics surveys of a ploughed-out but scheduled Bronze Age barrow at Saunderton.

The Chairman said that a big problem in West Wycombe was the diversion of traffic from the M40. This needed dramatic thinking. It was also noted that the car park in West Wycombe there was not well signed.

The Forum endorsed the proposal for the National Trust project in West Wycombe.

11 CHURCH ARCHAEOLOGY

Roger Evans, Diocese of Oxford, said that there was nothing to report.

12 CONSERVATION OFFICERS' REPORTS

(i) AYLESBURY VALE

The officer was not in attendance.

(ii) CHILTERN

The officer was not in attendance.

(iii) MILTON KEYNES

The officer was not in attendance.

(iv) SOUTH BUCKS

John Brushe (South Bucks District Council - SBDC) said that SBDC had made a request for the designation of Heatherwood Hall on the Pinewood site, and had asked for the rest of the site to be assessed.

A relief by John Deer which had been in Manor House, Stoke Poges, (above a fireplace) had been acquired by the Nation and was now in the V&A Museum. This relief had been moved to the Manor House in 1952 and was a very important neo-classical relief. A high quality copy had now been placed in the Manor House.

(v) WYCOMBE

Martin Andrew (Wycombe District Council) reported that work had now started on Bledlow Children's Home. This was good news.

Progress on conservation area appraisals had been slow, and policy documents had been published.

In Fawley the body of a Polish priest had been disinterred and moved.

Trees would be planted at High Wycombe Station. A meeting had been held with

a marketing manager to discuss the future of the Station.

13 EMERGENCY RECORDING FUND:

Members had received and were invited to note the report.

Sandy Kidd, Buckinghamshire Archaeological Officer, took members through the Report and said the following:

- The current balance of the Emergency Archaeological Recording Fund was £7250, of which £1982.75 had been committed to Heathley Chase, Milton Keynes, as agreed at the meeting in April 2012.
- It had also been agreed at the meeting in April 2012 that £1000 of annual funding would be requested, split between the different member bodies. Invoices would now be issued.
- Members said that it would be helpful to have information on other sources of funding and funding partners.

The Forum noted the current status of the Fund

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bucks Archaeological Society

Mike Farley reported that at the AGM of the Bucks Archaeological Society a new Constitution had been approved.

The Society's interests covered the historic County of Buckinghamshire (dating to 1850s), and included Eton, Slough and Milton Keynes. The Society was at liberty to grant aid to people living in that area, and publish works relating to them.

It was noted that the Oxford Diocese also followed the historical boundaries of Buckinghamshire.

15 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

3 June 2013, 2pm, venue tbc

Members asked that the dates for 2013 be circulated – **Action: HW**

CHAIRMAN