

# Minutes

## *BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM*

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM HELD ON MONDAY 5 MARCH 2018 IN MEZZANINE 3, COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 4.10 PM.**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

#### **Members**

Mr C Williams  
Mr M Farley  
Mr G Marshall  
Mr N Crank  
Mr W Chapple OBE (Chairman)  
Mr R Pushman

#### **Organisation**

Natural Environment Partnership  
Bucks Archaeological Society  
National Trust  
Milton Keynes Council  
Buckinghamshire County Council  
Bucks Heritage Champion

#### **Officers**

Ms J Wise  
Mrs E Alqassar  
Mr P Markham  
Mr M Petchey  
Ms S Taylor  
Ms S Shave  
Ms J Foster  
Ms L Levitt  
Mr R Newcombe  
Ms J Hunt  
Mr P Clements  
Mr I Williamson

#### **Organisation**

Buckinghamshire County Council  
Buckinghamshire County Council  
BCC  
Milton Keynes Council  
BCC  
County Museum  
Chiltern District Council  
Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Stoke Mandeville Parish Council  
BCC  
Fusion HS2

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP**

Apologies had been received from:

- Ms Sarah Oborn
- Mr David Sutherland
- Mr Clive Harris
- Mr Brett Thorn

Mr R Newcombe had replaced Ms C Paternoster as the Aylesbury Vale District Council representative.

Mr M Petchey from Milton Keynes Council had become a new member.

## 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3 MINUTES

Two minor changes were noted:

- Item 9, BCC Report - Ms E Alqassar's job title should read Archaeological Officer rather than Historic Environment Records Officer.
- Item 12 – Any Other Business – it should read “Historic England” rather than “Historical England”.

Subject to the changes above, the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18 September 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

## 4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Item 5 – The progress in making maps accessible on the County Council's website – Ms J Wise, Historic Environments Records Officer advised that the problem still needed to be resolved. It was agreed the Chairman would follow up on the issue.

**Action: Mr Chapple**

## 5 HS2 UPDATE

Mr Iain Williamson, Historic Environment Manager (Archaeology), Fusion, ran through the presentation “HS2 Phase 1 Central Section: Urgent Works Package Archaeology”.

Mr J Carver had taken the group through the strategy at the previous meeting and Mr Williamson attended the meeting to highlight the progress since then.

- The length of the central section of the HS2 route was 100.7 kilometres, 62 kilometres of which were in Buckinghamshire.
- Mr Williamson had been working on the urgent pre-construction activities:
  - Ecological surveys
  - Geotechnical ground investigation
  - Ecological habitat creation
  - Advanced utilities diversions.
- 21 sites had been identified at which historic environment works were required.
- Diagrams showing Stoke Mandeville, Fleet Marston, Doddershall and Chetwode

habitat sites were shown and an explanation provided.

- There were clearly defined objectives for each site.
- Geophysical surveys had picked up evidence of a Roman settlement at Doddershall.
- Chetwode was the site of a medieval water mill.
- Historic Landscape and setting recording had taken place at Doddershall House and Putlowes Cottages.
- Mr Williamson presented a work package plan on how the work would be delivered as follows:
  - Baseline review, scoping and programme assessment
  - 77 Project Plans
  - 35 Location Specific Writ Scheme Investigations (LSWSIs)
  - Tenders for two phases of geophysical survey, two phases of trial trenching and historic landscape, built heritage and setting record works.
- 14 geophysical surveys (February-May 2018 phase 1) and 23 geophysical surveys (April – June 2018 phase 2) would be carried out.
- 20 Trial trench evaluations (April-July 2018) and 15 trial trench evaluations (July-October 2018) would be carried out.
- Setting recording at Grim's Ditch and St Mary's Church to be carried out in April 2018.

In response to a query from Ms J Hunt, Stoke Mandeville Parish Council, Mr Williamson explained that they were looking at an area wider than the HS2 route itself and would be investigating the whole landscape around the St Mary's Church area to understand the origins.

Mr Farley said he had not received an answer to his query about the finds in St Mary's church and asked that it be noted.

## **6 BCC REPORT**

Ms J Wise referred the report contained in the agenda pack. The following points were raised:

- Mr P Markham, Senior Archaeologist said Ms H Wass was still the Head of Heritage at HS2. Mr Markham had received approximately two dozen HS2 project plans to review and would be meeting with Mr N Shepherd, HS2 area manager next week.
- The Oxford/Cambridge expressway documentation needed to be reviewed and advice provided. Ms Wise and Mr Crank added that they had not yet been asked for the archaeological data.
- Ms E Alqassar, Archaeological Officer, was still working with the Chiltern's Conservation Board on a project called "The Mystery of Grim's Ditch".
- Mr M Farley, Bucks Archaeological Society, asked for progress on the non-

published archaeological reports. Mr Markham said there were a few outstanding matters but many reports had been supplied and/or were nearing publication.

## **7 UPDATE FROM THE CONSERVATION OFFICERS**

Ms J Foster, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils, took on the role in December 2017 and reported that a contractor covered three days a week in the Chilterns area and another contractor covered four days a week in South Bucks but that their contracts were ending soon leaving 1.5 officers covering the two districts. The systems from each district were being merged. Ms Foster confirmed there had been a significant loss of planning officers and that there was a shortage of staff in both districts.

Ms L Levitt, Aylesbury Vale District Council, started her full time role in November 2017 and there was a team of three full time officers. There had been an increase in the number of applications.

Mr N Crank, Milton Keynes Council, referred to the report he tabled at the meeting and highlighted the following:

- There were no new listings of New Town structures in 2017.
- Elsewhere in the borough there were three new listings:
  - The war memorials at Bow Brickhill
  - Chicheley
  - New Bradwell Cemetery listed at Grade II
- There were two de-listings:
  - The Grade II listed Parkside Hotel and its former stables and coach house in Woughton-on-the-Green
- Wood PLC was reviewing the 27 conservation areas and they had produced two draft reports.

Nominations to the Milton Keynes New Town Local Heritage Register opened on 23 January 2018 and could close on 23 March 2018.

## **8 NATIONAL TRUST UPDATE**

Mr G Marshall referred to the report contained in the agenda pack and highlighted the following:

### **Cliveden**

- The South Terrace – an abridged article would be published in the Records of Buckinghamshire 2018.
- Proposed conservation works to reinstate the roof of the generator house were on hold as the tenders received exceeded the Trust's original budget.
- There was a new viewing platform overlooking the generator house.

### **Bradenham**

The Princes Risborough Countryside Group had discovered a mounting for a 20mm anti-

aircraft gun from WWII in Park Wood; it had become an item of national significance due to its rarity.

## 9 AN UPDATE ON THE COUNTY MUSEUM

Ms S Shave, County Museum Director, reported the following:

- The Museum was hosting the first of the Elizabeth Frink Shows in the country to commemorate 25 years since the death of the artist– an iconic female artist from 20 Century worth visiting; ends on 21 April 2018.
- Curators Choice – running until 30 June 2018. Each curator had chosen their favourite items for display.
- Paul Kidby: Discworld and Beyond - The art of Terry Pratchett on display in 5 May – 30 June 2018.
- Civilisations – an interactive LEGO brick adventure displaying life size models from around the world with some of the Bucks County Museum appropriate collections displayed too.
- Wonder Dogs; skulls and skeletons and the stories of local charities working with dogs to improve human lives
- World War I (legacy of war).
- Meet the Saxon Warriors – 1-2 April 2018. A poster would be circulated to the group.

### **Action: Ms Shave/Ms Taylor**

- Mediaeval puppetry – the story of Beowulf told in puppetry for May half term.
- Recruitment opportunities were available at the moment – Community Outreach Officer, Workforce Development Officer and Marketing Officer posts on the web site vacancies page funded mostly by the Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation funding (NPO)
- The Arts Council NPO funding for Bucks County Museum Trust (BCMT) would make it possible for BCMT to work on community engagement projects over the next four years, including Rites of Passage projects and reminiscence projects collecting objects and stories from community groups with the new Community Outreach Officer.
- Events would be held to celebrate Eid and Diwali to help engage with the community.
- A Local Archaeology Day held at Halton would be held on 22 July 2018 funded by Heart of Bucks Kop Hill Climb – the day would be by invitation only for selected charities and groups in need around Aylesbury. Ms Shave said she hoped that the BCC Archaeology Officer and colleagues might be free to help on that day too.
- Pre-history workshops would be taking place with schools at the Halton site during the summer term onwards - details to be available shortly. The workshop would include a replica dig, prehistory objects handling session, cave art and fire making experimental archaeology and had been trialled by Halton School.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) had recently reduced the limit for funding for projects in the South East from £2.0 million to £1.0 million; therefore, Ms Shave

had been considering splitting the master plan for development of Church Street and Halton into smaller projects and looking for funding from other organisations as well.

- Ms Shave and the team planned to refresh the Touch of Bucks galleries in the next few months and plan completely new galleries with a more representative story of the people in Bucks.
- The Museum had applied for a wedding licence and wedding packages would be available from May 2018 onwards.
- Work continued with partners Milton Keynes Heritage Trust and Milton Keynes Museum to help care for and relocate their collections to their new galleries spaces and displays over the next 2 years.

Mr R Pushman enquired if there was an audio library of the Buckinghamshire dialect. Mr Farley advised there were a substantial number of recordings at the Halton site from all over Buckinghamshire.

Mr Farley thanked Ms Shave for transforming the museum.

## **10 AN UPDATE ON THE HALTON SITE**

Ms S Shave outlined a recent meeting she attended where a number of groups had met, including the RAF Halton Apprentices and the British Military Museum Trust, to discuss the future of what the RAF Halton site might yield and whether there was any heritage experience that could be developed for future audiences. Heritage includes World War 1 practice trenches which were the only ones accessible in the country, the Trenchard RAF Museum and St Georges Church. Some of the other partners were keen to look at sport and leisure and apprenticeships. A presentation had been made to the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and ideas were in the early stages and would be discussed with the DIO at a meeting on 23 March 2018.

Ms Levitt confirmed she had had discussions with the RAF. The Chairman mentioned the stained glass window in the church which was unique.

## **11 JOINING THE DOTS**

Ms E Alqassar, Archaeology Officer, presented “Joining the Dots: Research into the landscape history of the Icknield Belt around Aylesbury” and highlighted the following points:

- The blue areas on the map showed the areas where archaeological events or fieldwork had taken place. Most of our understanding about Iron Age and Roman settlement had come from the fieldwork particularly around Berryfields, Bierton, Weston Turville and Aston Clinton.
- The HS2 route would run diagonally across the study area in SW Aylesbury.
- The Icknield Way was an important historical trackway running along the edge of the chalk escarpment from Wessex to East Anglia.

- The area was a bi-axial (co-axial) landscape where the routes ran perpendicular (mainly NW/SE alignment) to the ancient route way and suggested the drove ways could be dated back to the Bronze Age.
- Iron Age and Roman farmsteads had developed alongside the drove ways.
- Geophysics had confirmed at least four farmsteads.
- The Arla dairy site was on the line of the parish boundary.
- Medieval parishes were re-using existing boundaries or roads as their parish boundaries.
- There was a line of sites on the Weston Turville boundary.
- Akeman Street was an early Roman road in Buckinghamshire but it did not respect the NW/SE alignment.
- The Lower Icknield Way was believed to be a much older track. A Roman trackway had been found at Aston Clinton.
- The Fleet Marston Roman Town had been investigated by HS2; the route just missed the town. The site was all below ground and was Buckinghamshire's biggest Roman settlement.
- The road pattern changed in the early medieval period but parishes were laid down in a pre-existing landscape.

In summary the key points were:

1. Landscape divisions established in the late Bronze Age and reinforced in the Iron Age.
2. Pattern of drove ways leading from the Vale to the Chilterns influenced Romano-British settlement.
3. Romans imposed their own road layout and larger settlements.
4. Widespread desertion of Roman settlements in the post-Roman period.
5. New radial pattern of routes established around Aylesbury.
6. Parishes and villages created within the pre-existing landscape and mirror alignment of prehistoric trackways.

The paper, by Mrs Eliza Alqassar and Mrs Sandy Kidd, will be published in Records of Buckinghamshire in a couple of months.

Mr Farley congratulated Ms Alqassar on her report and suggested that the Fleet Marston Roman town site should be scheduled.

Mr R Newcombe asked if the parishes were typical of other areas. Ms Alqassar said she thought they were typical along the Chilterns and that there was an Iron Age hill fort in Aylesbury; Aylesbury had always been a place where people wanted to settle.

## **12 AN UPDATE ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP**

Mr C Williams, Chairman, Natural Environment Partnership (NEP), reported that the NEP had been in existence since 2012 and he had taken over as Chairman 18 months

ago. The Board included representatives from Milton Keynes Council, the District Councils, the County Council, Bucks, Berks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOT), the Local Economic Partnership (LEP), The Chilterns Conservation Board, The Clinical Commissioning Groups, The Forestry Commission, Natural England, Ngage Solutions and the Open University. Their aim was to speak with a single voice about the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. The five year plan included the need to use and manage land sustainably, recovering landscapes and enhancing the beauty of landscapes.

Mr Williams said most of the work was undertaken by the partnership organisations as there was only two staff working for the NEP. The main areas of focus were as follows:

- Responding to local plans to ensure that green infrastructure requirements before, as well as during and after, growth and development were identified.
- Comments were made on the Greater London plan
- A green infrastructure plan was published in draft form recently and would be used to proactively steer major developments such as the expressway and also biodiversity accounting either onsite or offsite.
- The NEP had been involved in many of the major development schemes in the County.
- The NEP was looking at how to move onto the next stage as part of a national pilot.

Further details could be found on the [Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership website](#).

The following points were raised:

- Mr Williams confirmed the parish councils could be represented at the NEP conference in April if it was a local conference.
- Mr Markham asked to be consulted on the Plan. Mr Williams confirmed this was possible as it was still in the early stages and was due to be published on 26 June 2018.
- Mr Williams said the Local Access Forum could also have an input to the Plan and advised he would ask Ms Nicola Thomas, to contact Mr Pushman to discuss.

**Action: Mr Williams**

Ms J Wise commented that the green infrastructure plan did not take into account the historic environment. Mr Williams explained that the map was at a county-wide scale and that more detailed local maps were available.

### 13 UPDATE FROM MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGIST

Mr N Crank referred to his report (attached to the minutes) and highlighted the following:

- The workload statistics.



- The Field work project list, in particular the excavation by Albion Archaeology which disclosed slabbed crop processing floors.
- The work in partnership with the Park Trust – phase one involved archaeological work and the bid for phase two had been submitted.

**14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

**15 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 10 September 2018 at 2.00 p.m.

**CHAIRMAN**