

MoLRS WORKING GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 26th August 2004 at 13.00, Room 4U5, Cotterell Building, University of Stirling

Present: John Atkinson (GUARD, Chair)
Steve Boyle (RCAHMS)
Althea Davies (UoS)
Sarah Govan (HS)
Lesley Macinnes (HS)
Alex Morrison (GUAD)
Donna Stewart (HS, Minutes)
Richard Tipping (UoS)
Robin Turner (NTS)

Apologies: Derek Alexander (NTS)
Malcolm Bangor-Jones (HS)
Peter Corser (HS)
Chris DalGLISH (GUARD)
Donald Davidson (UoS)
Piers Dixon (RCAHMS)
Jill Harden (NTS)
Aonghus MacKechnie (HS)
Rod McCullagh (HS)
Chris McGregor (HS)
Ross Noble
Bob Powell (HFM)
John Shaw (NMS)
Ian Shepherd (AC)
Chris Smout
Jim Souness (HS)
Jack Stevenson (RCAHMS)
Tam Ward (BMT)
John Wood
Tim Yarnell (FC)

1. HRST Constitution

JA confirmed that he had received no e-mailed responses from the WG relating to the constitution. SG had received three responses:

(a) TY tendered his resignation from the WG (although his contact with HLA issues will continue) as he will soon be transferring to a new base in England. He pointed out that any FC representative could not be a Trustee of the HRST but could be an observer and favoured the idea of using existing groups and sub-groups to take forward initiatives. He added that the woodland element of SRP could attract small amounts of partnership funding from FC.

(b) MBJ agreed that the HRST should be at arms length from HS, the Trustees taking ownership at the outset with no interim tandem structure and reporting to the wider membership via annual reports and AGMs. The constitution would have to ensure that the Trustees were accountable and

allow for new Trustees to be appointed.

(c) JW reiterated the need to have democratic control over the Trustees, who should be voted in and out, and to have a fixed term in office.

SG spoke to the points she had raised in her previously circulated e-mail. She emphasised that while it was possible for HS to adopt an observer role in relation to the HRST, the current review of AMD may lead to a change in priorities of work and therefore her personal input into the Group as well as the extent of HS's input was not guaranteed in the future. She added that HS could not provide secretariat support to the independent Trust once established.

SB had been given permission by RM and JS from RCAHMS to become a Trustee in a personal capacity and would be permitted to attend meetings in work time. In response to SB's query, SG confirmed that any HS representatives could attend and contribute to discussion at both WG and Trustee meetings but could not make decisions or vote. No HS employee could become a Trustee on a personal basis as HS contributed financially to the Trust.

LM questioned whether the WG should move forward as a small Trust given the size of the anticipated project and associated employment issues. SG added that she had re-visited the SCVO website and was now not convinced that forming a Trust was the best way forward in legal terms (Trustees would be personally liable for, for example, settling an unfair dismissal claim of any employee) and that the formation of a limited company may be more suitable. It was noted that CSA is a limited company where the Directors are drawn from the membership. Directors can be voted on and off and the structure is legally watertight. It would be possible to speak to the CSA or BEFS about their 'Memorandum of Articles' with a view to adopting a similar approach. An expansion of membership could be encouraged and a membership newsletter could potentially be produced on a more formal basis than the information supplied to the DG at present.

JA asked for views on whether the Group should outsource the SRP or manage it directly themselves. RTu stated that he had met with Eila McQueen (CSA) and Colin MacLean (HLF) and had been advised that in the current climate HLF funding would only be given to those major projects which strictly fulfilled all criteria and was managed by a body with a proven track record in major project management. The establishment of the HRST had been the most expedient way, given the tight timescale, of securing HLF Stage 1 funding for SRP Planning Project but it may not be the best way forward in terms of the wider project. RTu described two possible scenarios, acknowledging that this is an area which will be investigated by the consultants as part of SRP Planning Project:

- (a) Pass the project over to, for example, CSA who have experience of running major projects.
- (b) Produce a new association of members in conjunction with a backup organisation, for example, RCAHMS.

It was agreed that any decision on how to proceed should be informed by the outcome of the SRP Planning Project. The HRST would continue to exist in parallel to the DG in its current form to facilitate the completion of the Planning Project and the MoLRS WG would continue to meet in its current form although the name would change to the 'Historic Rural Settlement Group'. The final consultancy report was due on 13th December 2004 and therefore the HRSG should meet in January 2005 to discuss the nature and need for an over-arching project management group. SG agreed to draft an e-mail for clearance by JA which would issue to all members of the MoLRS WG

setting out these interim measures and allaying any fears about exclusion from the decision making process. The details will then be posted on the website.

Other miscellaneous points:

- The MoLRS bank account name has been changed to HRST and Historic Scotland have officially been informed of this amendment.
- If the HRST Constitution is to be adopted in the long term, one item which will have to be amended is item 13. The quorum should be set at a minimum of three Trustees.
- SB agreed to send SG a copy of the most up-to-date version of the constitution for HS files.

2. Update on SRP Planning Project

RTu reported that, following interviews, the bid from AOC/Jura Consultants had been successful in winning the project planning contract. SB had to pull together various elements to satisfy HLF criteria at the last minute but eventually the HLF funding (£5,000) was secured on the same day. The project has started one month later than anticipated but RTu estimated that all HS and HLF deadlines for Stage Two of the project could still be met. Trustees hoped to meet with HS representatives in September to put the project forward for funding in principle, although actual funding would not be required until 2006-7 at the earliest, due to the HLF timetable. The reality of the project and costs had yet to be determined and AOC/Jura were consulting widely as to what would encourage a member of the public to become interested in HRS as part of their brief. RTu reaffirmed that the project was a worthy one though one compromise would be the nature of the product delivered by amateurs as opposed to professionals. LM shared this view and added that it would be best to approach HS centrally to play to the strengths of the project as archaeology would form only one element of it. She further advised that an approach should be made as soon as possible to ensure HS financial backing.

RTu noted that HS had launched a consultation on the 'Historic Environment Grants Scheme', although it did not include consideration of the Archaeology Programme. Archaeology was also excluded from the forthcoming Built Environment Forum workshop.

LM enquired whether the consultants intended to meet with the WG members individually. RTu suggested that the project steering group meet with the consultants initially with a view to producing a draft project design. This draft would then be presented by the steering group to the full WG at a meeting in November, the consultants also being present to address matters arising. The consultants would produce three items for discussion:

- (a) Project context review
- (b) Audience development plan review
- (c) Project design (for HLF)

It was hoped that the draft would be completed by 12th November and therefore the date of the next WG meeting was set at 29th November.

3. AOB

- SB reported that there was still one place available on the training days on 11th and 12th September. CD and Olivia Lelong would be helping out and RTi would attend on the Sunday when the trainees would possibly visit the GUARD excavations at the Kiltyrie Dyke.
- CD had submitted a draft funding bid to SG for HS funding for the HRS website. SG had responded to initial queries and was content for the Group to submit a bid for a three year package with the

proviso that the structure of the site may have to change to reflect the evolution of the Group and project. All references to MoLRS, including the domain name would have to be changed to HRSG, although it was recognised that this might take some time.

- JA reported that samples taken from the creel house structures at Bunrannoch near Kinlochranoch, where trenches had been dug by Gavin McGregor in 2001/02, had returned a carbon date of 8th Century AD. Three samples had been taken from occupation deposits, the ironwork pit and a burnt ditch. AM referred to the work of Margaret Stewart in relation to creel houses and SB cross-referenced Carrick House, Strathban, West of Pitlochry.
- RTu reminded the Group that there would be a Ben Lawers Open Day on 18th September as part of Scottish Archaeology Month. Details would be posted on the HRSG website.

4. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HRSG will take place on Monday 29th November 2004 at 2pm in RCAHMS Offices, Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh.

ACTION POINTS

1. SG to draft letter for issue to WG via JA regarding the interim set up of the HRST and HRSG.
2. SB to send SG an up-to-date copy of the HRST constitution.
3. RTu to arrange to meet central HS staff in relation to SRP Project funding.
4. RTu/CD to amend website to reflect name change to HRSG.