

## **Historic Rural Settlement Group**

**Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2004  
At 2pm in RCAHMS Offices, Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh**

**Present:** John Atkinson (GUARD, Chair)  
Malcolm Bangor-Jones (HS)  
Steve Boyle (RCAHMS)  
Chris Dalglish (GUARD)  
Donald Davidson (UoS)  
Althea Davies (UoS)  
Piers Dixon (RCAHMS)  
Sarah Govan (HS)  
John Lawson (ARIA)  
Lesley Macinnes (HS)  
Rod McCullagh (HS)  
Alex Morrison (GUAD)  
Chris Smout (UoSA)  
Donna Stewart (HS, Minutes)  
Jack Stevenson (RCAHMS)  
Lindsey Thomson (AOC)  
Richard Tipping (UoS)  
Robin Turner (NTS)  
Colin Welsh (Jura Consultants)

**Apologies:** Derek Alexander (NTS)  
Peter Corser (HS)  
Jill Harden (NTS)  
Aonghus Mackechnie (HS)  
Bob Powell (HFM)  
John Shaw (NMS)  
Ian Shepherd (AC)  
Biddy Simpson (ELC)  
Jim Souness (HS)  
Tam Ward (BMT)  
Fiona Watson (UoS)  
John Wood

### **1. Introduction**

JA welcomed members, explaining that the meeting would consist of a presentation by LT of AOC on the SRP Project Context Review and CW of Jura Consultants on the SRPP Audience Development Plan and Project Design. This would be followed by open discussion.

## **2. SRP Project Context Review**

### **Presentation by LT (Annex A)**

LT spoke to the SRP Project Context Review. Potential facilitators were generally supportive of the project, however, LAs/SMRs were concerned about data quality and resource issues. This could be addressed by producing a standard format for the submission of data. Museums also had limited resources to offer. A number of community-based workshops would be conducted before the end of the month to complete the context review.

## **3. SRP Project Audience Development Plan and Project Design**

### **Presentation by CW (Annex B)**

CW explained that Jura Consultants specialised in consultations relating to the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Sectors. It was hoped that the co-ordination of data would demonstrate to any funders that not only did an audience already exist for the project but that there was also the potential to engage new users. Four project options were presented for discussion, each one offering an incrementally enhanced service. Revisions were made to the costings of the options:

Option 1 Total Revenue Cost: £382,000 over 3 years

Option 2 Total Revenue Cost: £900,000 over 5 years

Option 3 Total Revenue Cost: £1.2 million over 5 years

Option 4 Total Revenue Cost: £1.5 million over 5 years

## **4. Discussion**

RTu chaired the open discussion, representing the SRPP Steering Group. He pointed out that the Project Design had been pulled together very quickly in an attempt to follow the original timetable which could facilitate commencement of the Project proper in 2006. The SGp was happy with the direction that the plan was taking and thanked AOC and Jura for their enthusiasm and hard work. As the final product would feed into the eventual project tender, any major revisions could not now be accommodated but ideas for refinement were welcome.

### **(a) Project Context Review**

RTu reported that the SGp had been represented at many of the stakeholder meetings. In order to gauge potential new user involvement, a meeting has been arranged with the Communities Futures Group, a society which has been established by Stirling Council in relation to the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NP. The Group will have environmental sensitivities but will not necessarily have historical interests. The HLF are keen that new audiences be engaged and this would not compromise the aims of the project.

DD asked if SEPA or SNH (via Peter Rockcliffe) had been consulted as it was important to achieve an integrated approach to landscapes. JL agreed that their comments should be invited and LT confirmed that there was still time for them to feed in or at least be made aware of the project.

The issue of national coverage was raised. As the survey comprised both workshops and questionnaires, it was felt that a good representative sample had been recorded, although this was constrained by response rate. LT confirmed that 68 questionnaires had been issued and all relevant museums sampled. The workshops had attracted a wide audience including members of ACFA and 13 out of 16 LA Archaeologists had also responded. LM recommended that both the Cairngorm NP (via Jane Hope, CE) and Loch Lomond NP (via Sarah Parkinson) Authorities should be consulted.

In response to CS's enquiry, it was confirmed that no negative responses had been received to the survey apart from the concerns previously reported by SMRs/LAs and the one week response time demanded by the questionnaire.

JS expressed concern about the sustainability of the numbers of projects set out in the options report. CW explained that the numbers used were the maximum number of projects feasible in any one year but that they could be reprofiled throughout the lifecycle of SRPP. SG added that the SRPP would not be directly managing the projects but empowering others to do so through training material and initiatives.

PD asked how the success of the Project would be measured. It was suggested that number of completed projects, the production of a folio of training material and the number of people trained could all be applied as quantitative measures. It was agreed that a web-based resource should be available after the completion of the project. This would not prove onerous if the resource was simply to be maintained without enhancement and could be accommodated within another host site.

It was agreed that a summary table of the project proposals would be useful for decision making purposes.

#### (b) Audience Development

RTu suggested that SRPP could tie into existing projects, such as FESP (First Edition Survey Project). Ideally, the SRPP team could assess a particular geographical area in terms of existing groups and scope for enriching community involvement. They could then conduct walks, talks and awareness

raising and ‘train the trainer’ activities rather than focussing on survey-intensive workshops, thus engaging the maximum number of people using the minimum amount of resources.

MBJ highlighted the fact that local enthusiasm for SRP would wax and wane and asked whether a permanent structure would endure after the main project had wound up. It was acknowledged that revenue funding could be sought for, for example, a Project Officer in the longer term though it was hoped that the main project itself would aid in producing a longer term resource in the form of materials and networked community groups.

JL suggested a study be made of similar projects currently in operation, possibly from the DES (Discovery and Excavation in Scotland) database, as a method of gleaning good practice and examples of successful projects in support of the HLF application. CW added that as well as demonstrating the demand for the SRPP, it would also be prudent to approach potential funders with a raft of viable project proposals which would be ready to go upon securing funding.

In response to a query, RTu confirmed that all interested parties were represented on the SRPP Steering Group, including the recent addition of BS and JL as ARIA (Association of Regional and Island Archaeologists) members and therefore there was no perceived ‘competition’ between SMR/Museums and the SRPP. It was acknowledged, however, that SRPP staff would have to support any additional burden on, for example, ARIA members, as resources were already overstretched.

### (c) Proposed Options

The principal limiting factor across the four options was funding. CW explained that for project costs of up to £1 million, HLF could in theory fund up to 90% of eligible costs and for projects over £1 million, the maximum percentage was 75%. RTu added that it was unlikely that SRPP would receive more than 50% of project costs, including in kind contributions, especially as the project has no tangible output.

JL asked if other sources of funding had been identified. RTu confirmed that he had approached HS for a meeting with John Graham, CE, to discuss funding options as the project cuts across many of the Agency’s funding streams. The regional funding of Museum Services was put forward as another possible framework for funding, though European funding would not be sought for reasons of ease of Project Management. Other potential lead bodies required for the delivery of the SRPP Stage Two would also potentially make an in kind contribution (possibly NTS, CSA, RCAHMS).

RTu pointed out that even if the HLF was approached for £8-900,000, HS for £40,000 per annum and NTS for £10,000 per annum, there would still be a funding gap in respect of Options Three and Four. Although, for example, the Society of Antiquaries or CSA could be approached for in kind contributions, this would not reduce the overall costs drastically. It would be possible to undertake Option Three over four years but it was agreed that a three year project was not feasible. Options One and Two could also prove problematic as no one would be employed to directly manage the project. It was noted that half of administration time would have to be given over to maintaining an audit trail and paperwork related to submission of grant claims.

CW explained that the main difference between Options Three and Four lay with the Interpretation Post which would establish a comprehensive programme of events including travelling exhibitions. SB noted that Options Two and Three would also have an Officer who would assist in, but would not be dedicated to, interpretation. CD and LM asserted that the SRPP should empower groups to undertake their own interpretation and not directly carry out that function for them.

RMcC emphasised that the first year of any project is taken up mainly with project set up, recruitment and establishing procedure and therefore the weighting of the Options presented would have to be revisited.

Although Option Four appeared to be at the 'luxury' end of the appraisal there was not a vast financial difference between it and Option Three. RTi intimated that field officers could become interpretation officers for half of the year if suitably qualified. It was agreed that the project emphasis should be on engaging new audiences and empowering local groups, not providing extensive interpretation at centre. RTu cited the model of the Common Grounds project in England which provided a toolkit for local people to interpret their own Parish in a straightforward way.

A comparison was made of Options Two and Three. CW reported that the main difference between the two options was that of preliminary investigation versus a more detailed approach. It was noted that fewer projects would be possible under the latter due to demand on staff time. A Project Manager would be required at Option Two, increasing salary costs. RTu suggested that instead of full projects, another estimate should be given for smaller projects based on two to five days analysis of an area with walkaround and introduction to field project. SB noted that no time for data co-ordination had been factored into Option Two. It was suggested that this could be spread around the staff in addition to the writing of training materials.

RTu intimated that a project of around £1 million was achievable and suggested opting for a proposal between Options Two and Three. There was general agreement to the suggestion with provisos. LM reaffirmed the need to review year one costs as staff training and project start up would impact on project activity. Expert advice may have to be bought in for staff training purposes.

RMcC pointed out that it would be difficult for two Field Officers holding eight field kits centrally to push eight projects forward simultaneously. SG hoped that the kits would not be held centrally but be available in the regions via SMR/Museums.

The Group discussed the need for planning in Year Five to facilitate project closure. RTu reported that additional funding had been found for the Ben Lawers project to continue beyond its original lifecycle. It was agreed that a Risk Assessment on project wind-up should be built into the Project Plan and could be drawn from the experiences of projects such as the Defence of Britain and Carved Stones. Sound project planning would ensure that projects were wound up and not started in Year Five and also that more people would be available to input into Year Five than in Year One.

The need to supply IT equipment and specialist software to Groups was debated. It was felt that other funds were available to help societies purchase this equipment themselves, for example, Awards for All, and that the SRPP fund should only be used for the purchase of robust field equipment like plane tables. No specialist software was actually required by Groups for recording purposes and supplying CAD or GIS would raise a requirement for specialist training.

**Action: It was concluded that AOC/Jura should devise an ‘Option 2.5’ falling between Options 2 and 3 as presented taking on board the comments and recommendations made by the HRSG. Once the full raft of Options has been discussed and a favoured Option agreed, RTu will discuss the preferred package and ascertain whether a contribution of £500,000 is feasible at the next HLF progress meeting.**

It was acknowledged that the timetable for the Project Design Project had slipped slightly, however, once the final community workshops had been conducted a draft document would be released for comment by the HRSG in late December at the earliest.

**5. AOB**

SB confirmed that Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2005 had been earmarked for the Discussion Group Training Day which would be held in Aberdeenshire. SB was progressing the detail and would report back to the HRSG once these had been firmed up.

**6. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the HRSG will take place on Tuesday 01<sup>st</sup> March 2005 at 2pm in the NTS Offices at Hutchison Hall, Glasgow.