

12. Implementing the Plan

The achievement of the Plan's objectives requires the support and participation of many organisations and individuals. It is recommended that the implementation of the Plan should be the responsibility of an advisory *World Heritage Site Management Plan Implementation Group* and a small *Executive Group* drawn from representatives of key bodies, organisations and local residents and land owning interests. The Group would be aided by a full-time *WHS Implementation Officer* supported by a small *Co-ordination Unit*.

The Plan recommends the investigation of a special fund for the World Heritage Site to realise long-term objectives, such as the extension of permanent grassland in the core area around Stonehenge. Shorter term environmental improvements (increased public rights of way, countryside management etc.) may be achievable through some existing initiatives by local authorities, the National Trust, English Heritage and others in line with the aims of the Plan.

The Plan objectives will be realised through a wide range of projects. The Plan identifies a programme of actions, priorities and responsibilities for these. Since the World Heritage Site covers such a large area, six broad *Management Zones* with specific needs and opportunities have been identified to target and monitor appropriate actions.

13. Further Information

Questions or further information about the Stonehenge WHS Management Plan should be addressed to:

The Stonehenge WHS Management Plan
c/o English Heritage
23 Savile Row
LONDON
W1X 1AB

The full text of the Management Plan can be viewed at . . .

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>

. . . and is also available on CD Rom.

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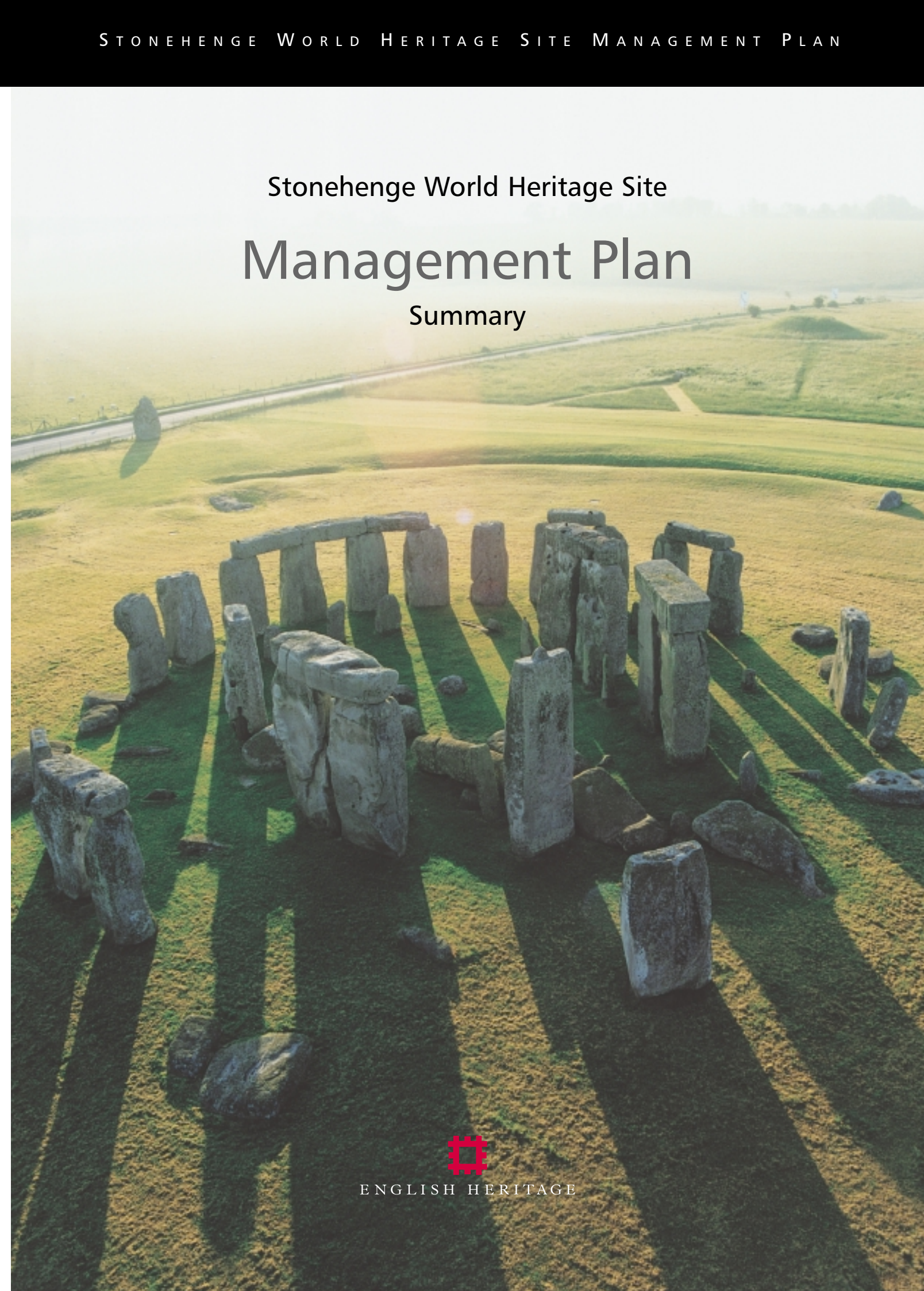
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Aerial photograph from North East showing WHS over Countess Farm and Woodhenge

KITCHENHAM / THE NATIONAL TRUST

Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Plan Summary

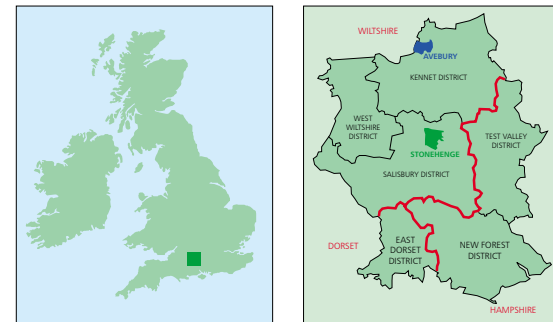


ENGLISH HERITAGE



1. The Stonehenge World Heritage Site

Stonehenge is the United Kingdom's most famous and distinctive archaeological site. In 1986, Stonehenge, Avebury and its associated sites were inscribed as a single cultural World Heritage Site under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention.



The Stonehenge part of the World Heritage Site contains 196 scheduled monuments, mainly prehistoric burial mounds, and a dense concentration of buried archaeological sites which combine to create a unique cultural landscape of international importance. These remains vary from well-preserved 'upstanding' monuments such as Stonehenge itself, to less obvious archaeological remains including ancient settlement and field systems.

The 630 Sites (as at December 1999) on the UNESCO World Heritage List, of which 18 are in the UK and its Overseas Territories, are internationally recognised for their outstanding universal value. Stonehenge and Avebury are acknowledged as two of the most important prehistoric landscapes in Britain. The international obligation under the World Heritage Convention for the careful protection and management of the Site, to prevent damage to the archaeology and its setting, and to ensure its survival for future generations, is recognised by the Government who are committed to producing Management Plans for all of the UK's World Heritage Sites.

2. The Purpose of the Management Plan

In providing objectives for the future management of the Site, the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Plan follows guidelines prepared by the International Committee on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the expert body which advises UNESCO. These guidelines require that the priority for such documents should be to establish a strategic framework for management based on analysis of the Site's significance. The Management Plan identifies and acknowledges the importance of the wide range of mechanisms, both statutory and non-statutory, which already exist to protect and manage the cultural and natural heritage of the Site.

The development of the Management Plan for Stonehenge was an iterative process. The Plan was prepared under the direction of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Group comprising national and local organisations, land owners and managers with an interest in the World Heritage Site, and drew on the considerable body of existing management information prepared for the Site over the last 15 years or so. The Management Plan is only the start in the continuing and ongoing management of the Site which, it is hoped, will provide a robust framework for identifying solutions to site-specific needs within the WHS, now and in the future.

In summary, the Management Plan aims to:

- provide objectives for the management of the WHS landscape and the archaeological sites and monuments within it, so that the outstanding universal value of the place is conserved and improved;
- increase public awareness of and interest in the WHS, and to promote the educational and cultural value of the archaeological landscape as a whole;
- outline a sustainable approach to the future management of the whole WHS landscape which balances archaeological and nature conservation, visitor access and farming;
- identify the economic and cultural benefits of the WHS and work with partners in the local community to maximise these benefits, without damaging the archaeological resource;
- suggest a prioritised programme of action that is achievable and will contribute to the conservation, understanding and, where appropriate, the improvement of the WHS for all those who visit Stonehenge and live or work in the area.



The Stonehenge World Heritage Site

A framework of statutory planning policy at the national, regional and local level aims to protect the archaeological resources of the World Heritage Site, and controls many of the potential threats to the integrity of the landscape and its wider setting from inappropriate development. There are also many organisations and individuals that are actively involved in managing the landscape and archaeological features within the Site. The Plan provides objectives to direct management towards clear priorities, and helps to encourage and enable others to take similar action.

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3. Stonehenge's World Heritage Values

Stonehenge is a uniquely designed stone circle of prehistoric date (3,000 BC) unparalleled in the world. It is at the centre of a World Heritage Site of over 2,000 hectares of largely chalk downland which contains a substantial number of important prehistoric monuments. Stonehenge occupies a unique position in our national heritage, is now visited by over three quarters of a million people a year and needs protection for future generations.

For a site to be included on the World Heritage List, it must satisfy a number of criteria. Stonehenge is considered to:

- represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time;
- bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition which has disappeared.

4. Key Issues for the Management Plan

The sustainability of the monuments and landscape of the World Heritage Site continue to be threatened in a variety of ways. Stonehenge and its immediate environs are under great pressure, not only as a result of the large number of visitors that it attracts, but also from the effects of traffic on the A303 and A344 which cut across the landscape.

The existing visitor car park and facilities are unattractive and form an inappropriate setting for the Stones. Arable farming in much of the World Heritage Site has put the survival of the archaeological remains at risk and is the primary influence on the landscape character and setting of many of the archaeological monuments.

The Plan analyses and addresses these and other issues in detail as a basis for developing a vision and objectives for future management.

5. Vision for the Future

The significance of the WHS as a whole is not only provided by the survival of the 'iconic' Stones themselves and the other visible monuments in the landscape, but also by the unique and dense concentration of buried archaeological evidence found throughout the area. This vision for the future of the WHS is based on the need to conserve, enhance and interpret the cultural significance of the whole Stonehenge landscape and its outstanding universal values.



Aerial photograph from South East showing WHS across the Avon Valley

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The WHS Management Plan envisages a landscape which includes an extended core zone of permanent grassland surrounded by a wider landscape of sustainable low-intensity mixed farming.

In the long term all farmland in the core zone would be restored to permanent grassland and all inappropriate structures and roads removed or screened to provide an improved landscape setting for the core of Stonehenge, the protection of the archaeology from ploughing, and an area carefully managed for open access on foot for visitors. The zone would be primarily managed for both archaeological, landscape and nature conservation, and for the access and enjoyment of the very large numbers of visitors who it is anticipated will continue to concentrate, at least initially, in the core zone.

With a new high quality visitor centre outside the boundary of the WHS as a starting point, visitors would gain access to the Stones and the heart of the WHS via primary access links, drop-off points and 'gateways' on the rim of the core area

(at Fargo and King Barrow Ridge for example). Pedestrian access beyond the core to the wider, and more tranquil, and more fully presented and interpreted landscape and archaeological sites of the southern WHS, would be possible using the existing public rights of way network and new links, and pedestrian gateways and routes to currently inaccessible sites and areas. Researching and improving understanding of the WHS, and the development of its enjoyment and educational value for future generations, would be fundamental concepts for guiding the long term management of the Site.

A working, but more environmentally sustainable, mixed farming in the wider landscape of the WHS would continue as the principal land use, and this would provide the landscape setting to the core zone. Outside of the core, the improved conservation and management of important archaeological monuments and ecological features would be balanced with the practical needs of modern arable or mixed farming, and military activities.

As a means of achieving the vision, the Plan identifies a set of objectives which are considered necessary for the effective future management of the Site as a whole in the short and long term. These objectives are listed overleaf.



Stonehenge

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6. Overall Long-term Objectives

Objective 1 - The endorsement of the Management Plan as the framework for long-term detailed decision-making on the conservation and improvement of the cultural heritage values of the WHS, by those bodies and individuals responsible for its implementation.

Objective 2 - Set within the framework provided by the Management Plan, to develop written and agreed policy guidance for the improved management and conservation of the overall character and integrity of the WHS as a cultural landscape, as well as its constituent parts.

Objective 3 - To interpret the outstanding universal value of the whole WHS to increase understanding and conservation of the cultural assets, and to promote the importance of the heritage resources for public enjoyment, education and academic research.



Visitors at Stonehenge

CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES

7. Statutory and Policy Objectives

Objective 4 - The Management Plan should be formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Salisbury District Local Plan.

Objective 5 - The Opportunity should be taken in future reviews of the Wiltshire County Structure Plan and the Salisbury District Local Plan to ensure that the importance of the WHS and its setting as a key material consideration to be taken into account in determining planning applications is strongly reflected in their policies.

Objective 6 - There should be an improved recognition of the importance of the WHS as a whole and its need for special treatment and a unified approach by government departments, agencies and other statutory bodies with responsibilities for making and implementing national policies and undertaking activities that may impact on Stonehenge and its environs.

8. Sustainable Landscape, Nature and Heritage Conservation Objectives

Objective 7 - In the management of land in the future, a practical balance between increased permanent grassland and arable farmland should be maintained.

Objective 8 - Existing permanent grassland in the WHS should be maintained, enhanced and extended.

Objective 9 - The appropriate landscape setting for the Stones and immediately related ceremonial monuments in the core should be restored

Objective 10 - The immediate setting of visible monuments in the wider landscape of the WHS beyond the core zone should be maintained and improved.

Objective 11 - Where opportunities arise, the character of the wider WHS landscape should be improved through the removal or screening of existing inappropriate structures.

Objective 12 - The overall nature conservation value of the WHS should be enhanced, in particular by maintaining and improving the limited areas of floristically-rich chalk downland turf, and by creating greater diversity.



Stonehenge

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

Objective 13 - Woodland management in the WHS should be improved.

Objective 14 - The WHS boundary should capture all significant archaeological features and landscapes related to Stonehenge and its environs.

Objective 15 - The condition and vulnerability of all archaeological sites and monuments throughout the WHS should be reviewed to guide future management action and priorities.

Objective 16 - Degraded and other archaeological features within the WHS should be enhanced where appropriate.

9. Sustainable Tourism and Visitor Management Objectives

Objective 17 - Management of visitors to Stonehenge should follow the Principles for Sustainable Tourism as set out in ICOMOS guidance.

Objective 18 - A new world class visitor centre should be secured to act as a gateway to Stonehenge, to improve the visitor experience and to encourage the dispersal of visitors around the whole WHS.

Objective 19 - Arrangements for managed open access on foot within the core WHS zone should be provided.

Objective 20 - Access and circulation to other key archaeological sites within the WHS landscape should be improved to relieve pressure on the Stones and increase public awareness.

Objective 21 - Interpretation should be improved to enhance visitor enjoyment and appreciation of Stonehenge and the whole of the WHS.

Objective 22 - The economic benefits of tourism to Stonehenge and the WHS should be spread to the wider area.

10. Sustainable Traffic and Transportation Objectives

Objective 23 - Measures should be identified which will provide comprehensive treatment of important road links within the WHS in order to reduce traffic movements and congestion, improve safety and enhance the historic environment.

Objective 24 - A policy should be implemented to reduce parking congestion on peak days.

Objective 25 - The use of more sustainable methods of transport to get to the Site and to move around within it should be encouraged to reduce the reliance on the private car by visitors to the WHS.



The A303 and A344 at Stonehenge

11. Research Objective

Objective 26 - Research should be encouraged and promoted to improve understanding of the archaeological, historical and environmental value of the WHS necessary for its appropriate management.

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