

# MINUTES

**Meeting:** MARLBOROUGH AREA BOARD  
**Place:** St Michael's C of E Primary School, Back Lane, Aldbourne, SN8 2BP  
**Date:** 21 June 2011  
**Start Time:** 7.00pm  
**Finish Time:** 9.05pm

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Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

Kevin Fielding (Democratic Services Officer), Tel: 01249 706610 or (e-mail) [kevin.fielding@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.fielding@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Papers available on the Council's website at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

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## **In Attendance:**

### **Wiltshire Councillors**

Cllr Chris Humphries (Chairman), Cllr Nick Fogg (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peggy Dow and Cllr Jemima Milton and Cllr Dick Tonge

### **Wiltshire Council Officers**

Dave Roberts – Community Area Manager  
Kevin Fielding, Officer  
Niki Lewis – Service Director

### **Town and Parish Councils**

Marlborough Town Council – Andrew Ross & Guy Loosmore  
Aldbourn Parish Council – Alan Phizacklea  
Baydon Parish Council – Tony Prior  
Berwick Bassett & Winterbourne Monkton Parish Council – James Keith  
Broad Hinton & Winterbourne Bassett Parish Council –  
East Kennett Parish Council – Philip Loveday  
Fyfield & West Overton Parish Council – Mary Spender  
Ogbourne St George Parish Council – Martin Grove  
Ramsbury & Axford Parish Council – Sheila Glass

### **Partners**

Wiltshire Police – Inspector Ron Peach & Chief Inspector Sue Austin  
Marlborough Area Development Trust – Martin Cook & Richard Clarke

**Total in attendance: 40**

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<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
1.	<u>Election of Chairman</u> Cllr Chris Humphries was re-elected as Chairman.
2.	<u>Election of Vice Chairman</u> Cllr Nick Fogg was re-elected as Vice-Chairman.
3.	<u>Chairman's Welcome and Introductions</u> The Chairman welcomed everyone to St Michael's School. The Chairman then invited all the Wiltshire Council members and the Parish council representatives in attendance to introduce themselves to the meeting. The Chairman thanked Kevin Fielding, (Democratic Services Officer) for his hard work as this was his last Marlborough Area Board meeting. It was agreed that the Chairman would take the area grant funding application straight after his announcements as the speaker had another engagement which she needed to attend.
4.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies for absence were received from Julia Densham – Community Area Manager, Bob Gutherson – Berwick Bassett & Winterbourne Monkton Parish Council, Tony Barron – Wiltshire PCT, Rich Pitts – Marlborough Community Area Partnership and Mike Franklin - Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service.
5.	<u>Minutes</u> a. The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. b. Matters arising There were none.
6.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> There were no declarations of interest.

7.

### Chairman's Announcements

#### **Core Strategy Consultation Event**

Wiltshire Council is consulting on the Core Strategy for Wiltshire. The consultation would take place between 13th June and 8th August.

This would set out how Wiltshire will change over the next 15 years or so and would importantly give a certain framework within which investors can make decisions and communities can consider their neighbourhood plans (subject to what emerges through the Localism Bill).

As an ongoing part of that dialogue we are committed to further consultation within each Community Area.

An event has been organised in Marlborough Town Hall on Wednesday 29 June. It will run from 2.30 – 8.00pm and will take the form of an exhibition with officers on hand to answer any questions and take note of comments made.

#### **Marlborough Energy Awareness Event**

Wiltshire Council's Energy Awareness Event would be held at Marlborough library on Wednesday 29th June 10.30am - 2.30pm.

Attendees would have access to a wealth of knowledge and information and the opportunity to chat with specially trained Home Energy Efficiency Officers to find out how you can reduce costs by running their home more energy efficiently.

#### **Invitation to comment on the final draft proposed new council-wide Street trading scheme**

At a meeting on the 5 April 2011 Wiltshire Council's Licensing Committee considered the issues raised by public consultation on the proposed council-wide street trading scheme.

The street trading scheme would now be revised in the light of these decisions. Council officers would undertake a second, two week, public consultation commencing mid June 2011 with all interested parties including area boards.

The consultation document is available on the Council's website: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council/consultations.htm>

The Licensing Committee would consider the revised street trading scheme and the results of the second public consultation at a meeting in September 2011, with a view to the council adopting the council-wide street trading scheme by the

end of 2011.

**Consultation on Wiltshire and Swindon Proposed Submission Draft Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)**

Wiltshire Council is updating its policy framework to ensure that future proposals for waste development in Wiltshire are for the right types of facilities in the right locations. Consultation will commence in June 2011 for 8 weeks on a draft Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) (starting 13 June 2011 and closing at 5pm 5 August 2011).

The consultation document allocates a range of sites for a variety of potential waste uses to provide a flexible and responsive framework that will enable waste to be driven up the waste hierarchy - i.e. reducing our dependence on landfill, with a greater focus on recycling and composting of waste. The majority of sites identified are on land currently in use by existing waste management facilities or current/proposed industrial areas (list of sites and map attached).

Once the consultation period had closed, the draft Sites DPD, the supporting evidence base and all comments received during the consultation will be submitted to the Secretary of State (following Full Council approval) for independent examination.

This DPD forms the final key document in the policy framework for the provision of waste sites within Wiltshire and Swindon, which includes:

- Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Core Strategy (adopted July 2009)
- Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (adopted September 2009)

The draft Sites DPD would be available from the start of the consultation period (13 June 2011). The Council encourages anyone wishing to view and comment on the consultation document to use the council's consultation website:

<http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal>

Hard copies of the documents would also be available for inspection at Wiltshire and Swindon Borough Council main offices as well as all libraries throughout the county and Borough. For further information please contact the Minerals and Waste Team at Wiltshire Council by telephone (01225 713429) or email:

[mineralsandwastepolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:mineralsandwastepolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk).

	<p><b>St Peter's Junior School</b></p> <p>The Chairman advised the meeting that St Peter's junior school had written to thank the Area Board for its help in ensuring that post of the lollipop lady would be made permanent.</p>
8.	<p><u>Funding</u></p> <p>The Community Area Manager outlined the grant application that the Wiltshire Councillors were about to consider.</p> <p>The Wiltshire Councillors then considered the application to the Community Area Grants Scheme 2011/12, as follows:</p> <p>Representation was made by Jude Edmondson on behalf of the Aldbourne Scout Group</p> <p><b>Decision</b>  <b>Aldbourne Scout Group was awarded £798 towards provision of new tents.</b></p> <p><b>Reason</b>  <i>The above application met the Community Area Grant criteria for 2011/12 and the application demonstrates links to Wiltshire Council's priorities in the Local Agreement for Wiltshire that aim to get more young people to take part in a wide range of activities and play, increase children and young people's access to facilities and activities and to help local communities build a strong and vibrant voluntary sector.</i></p>
9.	<p><u>Area Board Meeting Format</u></p> <p>Cllr Chris Humphries lead a discussion about how to improve the area board meeting format and content, a report from the Community Area Manager had set out various suggestions including agenda and minutes, staging, content and presentation.</p> <p>Points made from the included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seating plan is important if good debate is to be encouraged.</li> <li>• More local/topical issues which would then attract better attendances.</li> <li>• More time spent actually debating issues.</li> <li>• Wifi access available at meetings, saving on paper agendas.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More bottom up discussions with less corporate items.</li> <li>• Parishes should be able to bring their ideas and issues to the Area Board.</li> <li>• More clarity on how the Area Board process works with less bureaucracy.</li> <li>• That the Area Board is an evolving process.</li> </ul> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for their input.</p>
10.	<p><u>Speeding in the Marlborough Community Area</u></p> <p>Mary Spender (Fyfield &amp; West Overton Parish Council) introduced a discussion to tease out the key issues around speeding through the villages and how to go about reclaiming them from traffic, the work of Ben Hamilton-Bailey, (traffic management expert) was discussed.</p> <p>Cllr Dick Tonge (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) was in attendance to outline the main processes for addressing speeding issues.</p> <p>Points made included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most villages appear to have speeding issues.</li> <li>• Villages should take responsibility for tackling speeding in their community.</li> <li>• Villages highlighting the fact that drivers are travelling through a village.</li> <li>• Village traffic working groups were a good way of bringing speeding issues to the attention of Wiltshire Council.</li> <li>• That perhaps a forum could be set up with Ben Hamilton-Bailey invited to speak at it.</li> <li>• Villages should try and make changes in an holistic way.</li> </ul> <p>Points made by Cllr Dick Tonge included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That a complete review of all Wiltshire's A &amp; B roads had been carried out.</li> <li>• A large number of changes to speed limits had been carried out.</li> <li>• The review process had now been carried out, only changes to speed limits on these roads would be carried out if material changes were to</li> </ul>

	<p>occur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wiltshire Council were to carry out twelve 20mph pilot schemes, these pilot schemes would be self enforced. Villages would be invited to apply to be a pilot area.</li> <li>• Community Speed Watch had been a great success throughout Wiltshire.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>That the Parish Forum leads on the issue of village speeding and is supported by the Marlborough Area Board.</b></li> </ul> <p>The Chairman thanked Mary Spender and Cllr Dick Tonge.</p>
11.	<p><u>Marlborough Community Area Plan</u></p> <p>Martin Cook - Chairman of the Marlborough Area Development Trust and Richard Clarke - Marlborough Area Development Trust advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MAP Programme is currently the major focus for MADT. MADT has been commissioned by the Marlborough Area Board (initially by MaVCAP) to review and update the Marlborough Area Community Plan, which is currently in phase 2: MAP Consultation Programme which has been underway since 15<sup>th</sup> March and will be extended until the end of July 2011.</li> </ul> <p>MADT New Projects</p> <p>MADT is now working on a number of new projects principally aimed at supporting local business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Business Awareness: new Directory Services as part of <a href="http://www.marlborougharea.org">www.marlborougharea.org</a></li> <li>• Monitoring of Broadband Performance for services in the Area.</li> <li>• Study of options for deploying a Community WiFi system.</li> </ul> <p>The Chairman thanked Martin Cook and Richard Clarke for their update.</p>



12.	<p><u>Great Stones Way</u></p> <p>Cllr James Keith, Broad Hinton and Winterbourne Bassett Parish Council gave an update on the current proposals concerning the route of the foot path.</p> <p>The proposal by Friends of the Ridgeway to publicise the Great Stones Way walk would have an impact for nine affected parishes within the Marlborough area. These parishes had resolved to come together to ensure that there is effective representation from the community on the Scoping Committee which will, amongst other tasks, scrutinise a proposed Environmental Impact Assessment.</p> <p>The Parish Forum sub- group wish to appoint either one or two representatives to the Scoping Committee and the group wishes to seek a resolution from the Marlborough Area Board that the board will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the request and forward a recommendation to the Rights of Way Officer, Wiltshire Council, to appoint parish representative(s) to the Environmental Impact Assessment’s Scoping committee.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>That the Marlborough Area Board agrees to support the nine affected parishes within the Marlborough area, and will forward a recommendation to the Rights of Way Officer, Wiltshire Council requesting that Wiltshire Council appoints parish representative(s) to the Environmental Impact Assessment’s Scoping committee.</b></li> </ul> <p>The Chairman thanked James Keith for his update and agreed that letters from Avebury and East Kennet Parish Councils voicing their concerns over the route of the Great Stones Way would be appended to the published minutes.</p>
13.	<p><u>Draft Commission Strategy for Young People aged 13-19</u></p> <p>Julia Cramp - Service Director for Commissioning and Performance, Department for Children and Education, Wiltshire Council gave a presentation about the 13 to 19 Commissioning Strategy which sets out a coherent vision and offer to 13 to 19 year olds who live in Wiltshire. It had been designed to ensure Wiltshire’s young people receive a sustainable service which meets their needs.</p> <p>The key aim is to improve outcomes for young people aged 13 – 19 in Wiltshire.</p> <p>This would be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making sure there is a good range of quality services.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing an early response to the needs of young people when they are at risk or problems arise.</li> <li>• Improving the way we work together.</li> <li>• The 13 -19 Commissioning Strategy has a broad scope and includes health, education, housing, leisure, teenage pregnancy, youth crime and safeguarding.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Peggy Dow made the point that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Marlborough Community Area is a large, rural area with a small, dispersed population. We want to be sure that this consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Acknowledges the specific issues of service provision in our area in terms of its rural nature;</li> <li>b) Undertakes a broad consultation that includes the various existing youth services not provided by the council, for example, the Aldbourne Youth Council.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Julia Cramp was presented with a book which had been compiled by members of the Aldbourne Youth Group highlighting activities that the group had taken part in.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Julia Cramp for her presentation and invited her back to speak at a future meeting where more time could be given to the topic.</p>
14.	<p><u>Response to Written Question</u></p> <p>Cllr Dick Tonge will respond to the following written question received by the area board:</p> <p>‘There have been reports in the press about Wiltshire Council losing track of £16 million of S106 funds (equivalent to the target savings of unitary transfer). Can we have an update and were any Marlborough area funds affected?’</p> <p><i>Answer</i></p> <p><i>In April the press suggested that the council had lost £16 million in section 106 Agreement contributions. This is incorrect. Prior to the move to one council, the four former districts had different ways of recording section 106 agreements, the collection of funds and where contributions were held in their finance systems. Wiltshire Council quickly recognised the problem and began a process of capturing data on all agreements in a single database so that it has an accurate and accessible record of what has been collected, what is</i></p>

	<p><i>outstanding , where funds are held and what has been spent. This process is well underway but is taking longer than expected because of the sheer number of agreements and their complexity.</i></p> <p><i>What the press were presumably referring to was 'uncollected' contributions. Standard Section 106 Agreements contain payment 'triggers', stages in a development when payments fall due. Examples range from commencement of work on site, completion of the 50th, 150th or 200th house, bringing open space/highways up to an adoptable standard etc. At any given time there are always considerable amounts outstanding simply because the 'payment trigger has not been reached. This is particularly so in respect of the larger residential developments which take years to complete and which also generate the largest contributions.</i></p> <p><i>The new database is enabling Wiltshire Council to quantify for the first time what is outstanding in the county and to ensure the triggers are monitored and contributions collected more effectively.</i></p> <p><i>It is worth mentioning here that Section 106 contributions are tightly ring fenced and have to be spent on exactly what is specified in the relevant agreement. The funds do not form a 'community chest' and if £350,000 has been paid for highway improvements, or to provide new classrooms for children who will move into new houses, this is <b>precisely</b> what the money has to be spent on. It cannot be diverted to another worthy cause.</i></p> <p><i>Looking ahead, it looks increasingly likely that this will change with the introduction of the 'Community infrastructure Levy' in 2014. This will phase out the use of most Section 106 Agreements and will probably contain a requirement that an unspecified percentage of contributions can be held centrally to be spent on priorities identified by local communities/neighbourhoods.</i></p> <p>The Chairman thanked Cllr Dick Tonge.</p>
15.	<p><u>Partner Updates</u></p> <p><b>a.Wiltshire Police</b></p> <p>The written update distributed with the agenda was noted. Points made by Inspector Ron Peach also included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That crime rates were reducing in all areas.</li> <li>• Good partnership working being carried in Lockeridge by PC Sarah Watts.</li> <li>• That there had been no actual reduction in Neighbourhood Policing.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>b.Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> The written update distributed with the agenda was noted.</p> <p><b>c.NHS Wiltshire</b> The written update distributed with the agenda was noted.</p> <p><b>d.Town or Parish updates</b> There were no updates.</p> <p><b>e.Marlborough Area Development Trust</b> Covered under agenda item No.10.</p> <p><b>f.Marlborough Area Parish Forum</b> There were no updates.</p>
16.	<p><u>Appointments to Outside Bodies</u></p> <p>The following Wiltshire Councillor appointments to outside bodies were re-confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Avebury Solstice Operational Planning Meeting – Cllr Jemima Milton.</li> <li>b) Avebury World Heritage Site Steering Committee – Cllr Jemima Milton.</li> <li>c) Avebury Traffic &amp; Visitor Management Group – Cllr Jemima Milton.</li> <li>d) Marlborough Area Young People’s Issues Group (CAYPIG) – Cllr Peggy Dow.</li> </ul>
17.	<p><u>Future Agenda Items - Your Ideas</u></p> <p>It was agreed that any suggestions should be sent to the Community Area Manager, and that perhaps a small guide giving information about presentation, drawing from agenda item No.8 could be put together, this would perhaps encourage more concise, better researched presentations with more local relevance in the future.</p>
18.	<p><u>Any Other Questions</u></p> <p>There were no questions.</p>

	<p>Cllr Jemima Milton requested that her thanks be noted to all the people who had helped to arrange the recent Health Fair.</p>
19.	<p><u>Evaluation and Close</u></p> <p>The Chairman thanked everybody for attending the meeting.</p>
20.	<p><u>Future Meeting Dates</u></p> <p>Tuesday 6 September 2011 - Marlborough Town Hall.</p> <p>Tuesday 1 November 2011 - Broad Hinton Village Hall.</p> <p>Tuesday 7 February 2012 - Kennet Valley Village Hall, Lockeridge.</p>

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STONE COTTAGE  
EAST KENNETT  
MARLBOROUGH  
WILTS  
SN8 4EY  
Tel 01672 861507

29<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Dear Sirs

## **The Great Stones Way**

As Chairman of East Kennett Parish Meeting, I attended the Marlborough Area Board Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June to express my considerable concern and dismay about the lack of consultation on The Great Stones Way proposals, especially in relation to the latest draft route which passes directly through the Village.

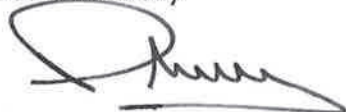
East Kennett is a small village of about 45 households and approx 120 residents. It has no shop or pub and will shortly lose its school. There is therefore **no** economic benefit in up to 400,000 additional visitors passing through the village – in fact there are considerable economic and environmental disbenefits, not least the fact that East Kennett could become the default “free” car park at the start of the route.

The first the village knew about the GSW proposals was “by chance” in late 2010. Such was the immediate reaction to the initial route through the village that an EGM (the first in 20 years) was held in Feb 2011, following which representations were made to Wiltshire Council to bypass the village entirely by adopting the WHITE HORSE TRAIL from West Kennett Long Barrow up to the Wansdyke.

Just before our Annual Meeting in late May, we discovered, again by chance, that the original route through the village had been reinstated, despite our concerns and representations. Cllr Jemima Milton will be fully aware of this background as she attended both the EGM and the Annual Meeting. Such a lack of consultation for a village that is so directly affected is not only unacceptable but also undemocratic.

I request that East Kennet is now fully consulted on **any** GSW proposal going forward.

Yours faithfully



Philip Loveday  
Chairman East Kennett Parish Meeting

philip@lovedayandloveday.co.uk

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**Avebury Parish Council**  
6 Rhyls Cottages, Lockeridge, Marlborough, Wilts SN8 4EE  
Tel 01672 861424

Dear Mr Keith

30 June 2011

**Great Stones Way proposal**

Thank you for your email of 21 June. We have not had a substantive discussion about the Great Stones Way since 15 March when Ian Ritchie of FotR came to a meeting of our Council. This followed a letter our previous Chairman wrote to him on 29 January.

Ian Ritchie gave us two assurances at our meeting: an Environmental Impact Assessment would be commissioned and the GSW route would be realigned to follow the Ridgeway southwards from Barbary Castle. We have therefore been awaiting news of the EIA and, among other things, specific estimates of the numbers of extra visitors that might be attracted to Avebury, and evidence of benefits/damage to Avebury's economy.

Although FotR have accepted our requests for an EIA and the realignment of the route, our other requests have been rejected. In terms of the Area Board minutes, this letter together with our previous Chairman's letter, below, best set out the reasons for our concerns.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Williamson  
Chairman

Letter dated 29 January 2011 to Mr Ian Ritchie

Dear Mr Ritchie

29 January 2011

**Great Stones Way proposal**

I am writing to give you the preliminary views of Avebury Parish Council on the Great Stones Way proposal. The Parish Council may wish to write again later when we have more details.

Given information currently available, the Parish Council objects to the underlying principle of the GSW proposal and also objects on three specific grounds.

The Parish makes two positive proposals: that an Environmental Impact Assessment be conducted to address the implications of the proposal, and that the route be realigned.

By way of background, about 480 people live in 225 households in the Parish.

**The need for information and consultation**

The Parish Council has not been sent any information on this ambitious and large scale proposal. The Council has indirectly obtained a leaflet and a note on the scheme dated 21 April 2010, but these documents lack much important detail on the proposed route of the GSW, the likely economic benefits to the community or the practical implications of the proposal. On consultation, we invited a representative of Friends of the Ridgeway to attend our recent Parish Council meeting on 18 January but he/she did not turn up.

As Avebury is prominently featured on the cover of the project's leaflet, the Parish Council is disappointed that the sponsors of the scheme have not sought to inform or consult.

### **Objection in principle**

The underlying objective of the proposal is to increase greatly the number of people visiting Avebury and other settlements on the Great Stones Way. The Parish Council objects to this because increasing visitor numbers directly conflicts with the one of the central objectives of the World Heritage Site Management Plan:

- The WHS Plan states that 'For many years there has been agreement amongst agencies involved with the management of the WHS that visitor numbers in Avebury are at capacity levels and should not be actively increased' (para 8.2.5)
- The WHS Plan therefore aims to limit visitor numbers to present levels and avoid advertising to promote Avebury as a tourist destination
- Visitor numbers are estimated at 276,000 to 350,000 annually in the WHS Plan and at between 150,000 to 300,000 a year in the National Trust's draft management plan
- The Great Stones Way proposal states that the GSW would attract, at a conservative estimate, an extra 250,000 to 400,000 visitors a year

Such numbers would double present levels and would be directly contrary to the WHS plan.

The GSW proposal also runs counter to emerging initiatives in Avebury to introduce a greater element of managed tourism, instead of mass tourism.

### **Three specific issues**

#### **1. Damage to the local economy**

The Parish Council is concerned that the economy of the village will be damaged:

- People walking the GSW will have little time to spend money on meals, refreshments and souvenirs in Avebury if they have to complete a 29 mile walk to Stonehenge or a 38 mile walk to Salisbury in daylight
- When arriving early and parking all day, their cars will block spaces that are currently used by tourists visiting Avebury itself, see section on car parking below. These visitors do spend money in the village, and the loss of this income will harm Avebury's economy, and be counter to the objectives of the LEADER programme
- The National Trust is an important local employer and will also suffer a significant loss of income from car parking fees for the same reason
- Any benefit to the local economy from B & B as the other principal source of income in the village will be very limited. There are only 225 households in the Parish and few of them have come forward to offer B & B despite excess demand in recent years. This is evidenced by the difficulties the Tourist Information Centre already has in finding overnight accommodation at busy periods.

The Parish therefore objects on the grounds of damage to the local economy, and notes the proposal's negative impact on the aims of the LEADER programme.

#### **2. Damage to the monument, visitor experience and local residents' quality of life**

A fragile balance has to be maintained at Avebury between the impact of large visitor numbers and:

- Archaeological damage to its monuments
- The quality of the visitor experience
- The quality of life of local residents
- The infrastructure of the village and its ability to cope

Advertising the attractions of 'the Great Stones' will inevitably attract some visitors who will not attempt to walk the GSW but will restrict their visits to the centre of the village. Others will use Avebury as a base for local circular walks. The greater the numbers of such visitors, the more their footfall will damage the monuments. Greater numbers will also reduce the quality of the visitor experience, diminish the quality of life of local residents and put further pressures on the village's amenities.

The Council objects to the proposal on the grounds of damage to the monument, a reduction in residents' quality of life and a poorer quality of visitors' experience. We also object to any advertising of Avebury as a tourist destination as being contrary to the WHS Plan.

### **3. Car parking**

Contrary to the assertion in the leaflet we have obtained, public transport links along the GSW route are poor at present, and will deteriorate further if public expenditure cuts are imposed as expected.

The Parish Council believes that the great majority of walkers will arrive at the GSW by car. Car parking is however limited at Avebury:

- The WHS Management Plan policy on car parking is that no additional spaces be provided
- The main car-park in the village can accommodate about 275 cars. In high and shoulder seasons the car-park is often full
- If the GSW were to increase visitor numbers, within the sponsor's conservative estimate, by say 365,000 visitors a year, Avebury would receive 1,000 more visitors on an average day
- An additional 1,000 visitors would need parking for about 125 to 500 more cars a day, depending on car occupancy rates and whether walkers leave their cars at each end of the GSW to get home, or walk part way to Stonehenge and then return to Avebury.
- While 1,000 is an average throughout the year, the GSW will probably attract about three times more visitors on peak days. This would create a demand of between 375 to 1,500 extra car spaces a day, twice to five times the village's current parking capacity
- Avebury's parking problem would be further aggravated by all-day parking. Visitors currently park for about two hours on average and each space in the car park therefore accommodates several cars during a day. But most people walking the GSW would need to arrive early and leave their cars all day if they were going to complete their walk to/from Stonehenge or Salisbury in daylight. Their cars would block spaces that would otherwise be available for other tourists visiting Avebury.

The Parish Council does wonder whether it is realistic to expect as many as 250,000 to 400,000 people to walk the GSW each year. But even if these numbers are halved, the current capacity of the car park of 275 spaces would still be exceeded by an extra 200 to 750 cars a day in busy periods.

On the other hand, if the sponsor is correct and estimates of visitor numbers do turn out to be conservative, parking demand may rise to 2,000 spaces a day or more.

The Parish Council objects to the GSW scheme in view of the massive increase in car parking that the GSW proposal will require.

### **The need for an Environmental Impact Assessment**

The Parish Council is concerned that the implications of the GSW have not been thought through and that important issues have not been addressed. The Council considers that an Environmental Impact Assessment is essential and requests Friends of the Ridgeway to undertake one as a priority. The Parish also requests that it be included in this process.

### **Possible re-designation as 'The Great River Avon Way'**

The Parish is aware of the problems that mass tourism brings to Stonehenge as well as Avebury. The Council therefore suggests that the sponsors of GSW realign the route to avoid both monuments.

We are aware of support for GSW from Plain Action and some villages at the southern end of the GSW route. We also note that much of the proposed route follows the River Avon through Enford, Netheravon, Figheldean, Amesbury and on to Salisbury. Providing these communities agree, we suggest the route be revised and established from Upavon to Salisbury. If there were local support, it might be re-designated 'The Great River Avon Way'.

The Parish Council would be grateful if a representative of the GSW would attend a Parish Council meeting in the near future to give details of the project and to respond to this Council's concerns.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jennifer Baldrey  
Chairman

Copies by email to:

Mark Boden, Corporate Director, DNP, Wiltshire Council

Claire Perry MP

Jane Scott, OBE, Leader Wilts Council

Cllr Jemima Milton, West Selkley Ward

Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cabinet Representative for Leisure, Sport and Culture, Wilts Council

Julian Head, Principal Regeneration Officer, Wilts Council

Sarah Simmonds, Avebury WHS Officer

Richard Broadhead, Rights of Way Manager, Wilts Council

Corinna Woodall, NWD LEADER Programme Manager

Janet Tomlin, National Trust

Kate Fielden, Acting Chairman, The Avebury Society

Mark Harold, National Trust

Susan Denyer, ICOMOS (UK)

Andrew Vines, Regional Director, English Heritage

Amanda Chadburn, English Heritage

Christopher Young, English Heritage

Henry Oliver, NWD AONB

Richard Pitts, MAVCAP

Gretchen Rawlins, Clerk, Avebury Parish Council