

Heritage Action Zones

Report on the output from the workshop held on 24th
November 2017 at Pewsey Heritage Centre

Prepared by:

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Background

The Pewsey Community Area Partnership (PCAP) organised a workshop to discuss the possibility of applying for Heritage Action Zone status for the Vale of Pewsey (Pewsey Community Area).

The Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) scheme is run by Historic England. A HAZ will provide a range of resources and skills including funding, advice, listing, research and staffing for historic places in order to foster sustainable economic growth with a range of partners. They are a time limited flexible approach with emphasis on delivery and interventions are tailored to local circumstances.

The HAZ initiative will engage with and support a range of partners to help deliver sustainable growth in places where the heritage interest is significant. The partners must commit to delivering long term change to deliver sustainable growth and manage change in historic areas.

The workshop was attended by many local organisations and businesses (list in Appendix A), including David Stuart from Historic England, Cllr Stuart Wheeler and Cllr Jerry Kunkler from Wiltshire Council and the Pewsey Area Board and Cllr Robin Gamble from Wiltshire Council.

Workshop Output

Following initial advice from Historic England, the approach of the workshop was to identify what we want to achieve i.e. objectives and outcomes, regardless of the mechanisms by which they might ultimately be delivered.

There were 5 tables and they were asked to identify projects and ideas that would support the vision for the Vale of Pewsey:

The Vale of Pewsey - An unspoilt and rural landscape, rich in history and heritage, offering a wealth of experiences for visitors and local communities in a sustainable way that protects the character and environment of the North Wessex Downs AONB.

Idea	Details	Area	Table
Business incubators	Set up business incubators in redundant buildings	Business opportunity	B
Develop Pewsey Wharf	Develop Pewsey Wharf and signpost it	Business opportunity	C
Holiday accommodation	Improve holiday accommodation	Business opportunity	C
Identify and repurpose buildings	Identify and repurpose buildings for low-cost business rent, eg. Start ups	Business opportunity	B
More accommodation	More accommodation is needed in the Vale of Pewsey for the Great West Way	Business opportunity	B
Overseas visitors	A company to offer bespoke touring packages for overseas visitors	Business opportunity	D
Small country hotel	Development of a country house hotel, like the Littlecote Hotel - this would then provide a means of running tours and trip itineraries in the Vale	Business opportunity	B
Carnival	Market the Carnival as a historic event - anyone can join in	Events	B
Local brand for locally produced food - low food miles	May need a local abattoir for example so that food doesn't disappear out of the Vale - there is a lot of food production (i.e. farms) but not that many which market their own meat.	Food	A
Local food	Local produce used by local providers	Food	B
Renovation of Wolfhall	Gardens and house. Further archaeological digs. Tunnels. Home of the Seymour family.	Historic building	A

Idea	Details	Area	Table
Car parking	Improve car parking	Infrastructure	C
Community building facilities		Infrastructure	B
Countrify Pewsey Station	Make the station look more like an old-fashioned country train station.	Infrastructure	A
Signposting Heritage	Improve signposts for heritage assets	Infrastructure	C
Branding	A distinct offer for VisitWiltshire and others to promote	Marketing	B
Identify target audiences	Cyclists, walkers, anglers, corporate, weddings.	Marketing	E
Links at GWR	Action to get a link to Visit P Vale website on GWRs site. GWR rep said he found no accommodation because they use a search for Hotel Rooms only and couldn't find anywhere to eat either.	Marketing	D
Local people	Market the Vale to local people to get them out into the Vale.	Marketing	C
Place branding	Brand to identify why people should come here	Marketing	E
TV advertising	To increase awareness of the area for tourism	Marketing	B
Bikes, boots & hooves	Routes around the Vale that can be used by cyclists, horse riders and walkers	Routes	A
Canal-side activities	Access to food and other services along the canal route	Routes	B
Cycleway	Cycleway from Great Bedwyn Station to Crofton, Windmill, Wolf Hall and back. Acknowledged that Wolfhall could be a big attraction. Or promote National route 4.	Routes	D
Cycling and walking	Create cycle paths and walks	Routes	C
Great West Way	Packages of what to do for those looking at the area, linked to Great West Way. Information about off the beaten track places to visit that are accessible? Apps maybe as well as hard copy guide book "Viewing the Vale".	Routes	D
Integrated tour	Bedwyn station, barge trip to Crofton, minibus to Wilton, back to Bedwyn station. With overnight stay, trip to Marden, Devizes/Salisbury	Routes	B
Link places to visit	Create trails to link places to visit	Routes	E
Seymour Trail	Route to take in Wolfhall, Tottenham House, Savernake Forest. Signed with interesting facts along the way. Create 'package' trips and stays at B&B's along the way.	Routes	A
Integrated transport	Bus, trains, build capacity for local use	Transport	B

Issues

Environmental impact of increased visitor numbers - coaches, minibuses, cars, cyclists and walkers
Transport - increased number of cars and the impact on the local communities
A lack of hotel/B&B rooms limits the ability of the Vale of Pewsey to grow the visitor economy

Other Projects

A number of other projects are in progress in various stages and they were discussed at the workshop within the groups. Because of their scale and complexity, they are listed below (rather than in the table above):

Wilton Windmill Granary

Stage: Planning

Details:

This Granary is an Oak Framed thatched 12ft square building. It is set on staddle stones and was built during the 19th Century, during the same period as the Wilton Windmill was commercially operational. The staddle stones provided the miller a safe, dry and vermin free store for the flour which he milled from wheat brought to the Mill by horse drawn trailers from local farms.

The granary will be used to house display boards which will:

- Explain the history and the restoration of the Windmill.
- Explain how the Windmill works.
- Display our collection of old photos of the Windmill.
- Display historic artefacts related to sowing, growing and harvesting grain.
- Display a wonderful old glass fronted display cabinet that contains around 50 samples of grain and ancient grass varieties. This cabinet also derives from the former Lackham College of Agriculture Museum.
- Create more space from which to run our Education Programme when local schools visit the Windmill.

Issues:

Access to funding

Access to specialist skills

Wolfhall

Stage: Planning

Details:

Wolfhall is owned by the Bruce-Binney family who can trace their roots back to Richard Esturmy, a predecessor of the Seymour family who resided there in 1086 at the time of the Domesday Book. They are also directly descended from Edward 'The Lord Protector' brother of Queen Jane Seymour both of whom grew up at Wolfhall.

Archaeological digs in the grounds of Wolfhall indicate that this is the site of the original Wolfhall, pulled down and redeveloped by Sir John Seymour in the beginning of the 16th century and an extensive network of underground tunnels built in Tudor brick still exist. The current building incorporates three periods - Tudor, Georgian and Victorian.

The plan for Wolfhall is to complete the archaeological work as well as recreating the gardens which would have existed at the time of Sir John Seymour and the visits to Wolfhall of King Henry VIII in 1535 whilst courting his third wife Jane.

There is a high level of interest in Wolfhall, particularly after the publication of the novel of the same name by Hilary Mantel and the recent TV production. There is no doubt that the story of Wolfhall would provide a big draw to visitors and could form an important part of the heritage offering for the Vale of Pewsey.

Issues:

Access to funding

Access to specialist skills

Crofton Beam Engines - 'Our Crofton Story'

Stage: Delivery

Details:

Crofton Pumping Station is a Grade 1 listed brick built building dating largely from 1807-09 with c.1846 additions. It is one of the most important surviving Industrial revolution buildings in the country, considered by Historic England to be of 'prime evidential value'. Built to supply water to the summit level of the Kennet and Avon Canal, it contains two Cornish-cycle steam beam engines, one of which, the of 1812 Bouton & Watt, is the oldest fully working steam engine in the world. The Harvey & Co of Hayle, Cornwall engine built in 1846 and rebuilt in 1905 is one of the few remaining operating engines of its type.

The 'Our Crofton Story' project will:

- Address urgent structural issues with the building including timber conservation, roof repair and asbestos removal
- Improve visitor facilities by rebuilding and extending the existing toilet block and adding disabled toilets
- Renew and update the site's visitor interpretation, explaining Crofton and its people
- Make the site more family friendly through addition of children's activity areas
- Provide new activities and learning opportunities such as a 1920s cottage garden as an additional attraction and educational facility
- Create and run an extended events & activity programme to encourage more visitors and volunteers to enjoy this special place
- Capture the memories of those who worked at and restored Crofton in a new recorded archive

Issues:

Access to Funding 'Our Crofton Story' was successful in gaining Heritage Lottery Fund support and matched funding from a variety of organisations and individual donors.

Specialist Skills - For the delivery phase 'Our Crofton Story' additional temporary staff with specialist skills have been engaged - project Manager, Works Manager, Development Officer. To sustain and deliver the project outcomes, additional volunteers with different skills are desperately needed. Current Crofton Volunteers are strong in traditional craft engineering and building skills, but we have gaps in softer, more people-focussed skills including administration, PR/Marketing, and visitor focussed skills.

Shalbourne Village Hall

Stage: Applying for NWD AONB funding

Details:

Shalbourne Village Hall lies at the centre of the village, next to the shop and adjacent to the village green and pub. This is a quintessential English setting, attracting walkers, cyclists and motorists who are discovering the North Wessex Downs AONB. It is an ideal location to attract tourists travelling within the planned Great West Way as well as walkers from the nearby Wayfarer's way.

The stone built, listed hall was constructed as a Bible School in 1843, since when it has gradually evolved into a facility which occupies a special place in the heart of the community and the heritage of the area. It hosts events to which many visitors are attracted. They may come to one of the monthly book sales or to view our gallery of local scenic photographs or just to buy a coffee. Staying nearby, visitors often enjoy one of our regular theatrical productions.

To increase visitor numbers and enhance their experience, the hall committee is proposing to improve the facilities offered. These include updated accessible toilets, a modernised kitchen, together with conservation of the building's fabric. In addition to the improvements already noted, by removal of a modern suspended ceiling, the hall's 1843 interior will be reinstated.

Essential energy saving measures such as upgraded roof insulation and double glazed windows are also proposed.

Issues:

Access to funding

Mardenhenge

The archaeology project that has been running here and at Cat's Brain over the last few years by Reading University is now completed. There may be additional work in the future. There are no information boards at the sites.

Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership Plan

The Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership (PVTP) was set up in 2015 as a result of consultation with local businesses. It has a website (www.visitpewseyvale.co.uk) and is active on social media and has produced a video on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/mzGwTQhzq2g>).

Through its work with its partners, the PVTP has a list of projects that would support the visitor economy and this can be found in Appendix B.

Summary

The Vale of Pewsey is an area rich in potential for developing the visitor economy which in turn develops the local economy.

The workshop has identified many projects and ideas to support the vision for the Vale.

It is clear that organisations are already accessing funding schemes to pay for the projects, but in some cases specialist knowledge is an issue and in others, the level of funding available so far is insufficient to deliver the projects in full.

Work needs to be done to determine the best way of delivering these projects.

From the feedback that was provided by Historic England during and after the workshop, it is envisaged that the Vale of Pewsey would be unlikely to achieve Heritage Action Zone status. However, there have been important links built between Historic England the organisations in the Vale of Pewsey which, although may not result in Heritage Action Zone investment, will nevertheless prove useful in the future in terms of gaining support and accessing future schemes that may be more suitable.

The ideas generated through the workshop will be retained by the Pewsey Community Area Partnership and the Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership in order to potentially deliver the ideas in the future, assuming that funding can be found at the time.

Appendix A

List of Attendees

Full Name	Info	Organisation	Table
Sylvie Clayden		Community/PHC	C
Pam Weekes		Crofton Beam Engines	B
Trevor Neal	Film production	Crofton Beam Engines	B
Cedric Hollinsworth		Easton Royal Parish Council	C
Peter Lemon	Wilton	Farmer/Landowner	D
Nick Spaven	Business owner	Gastronicks	C
Mark Youngman	Integrated Transport Manager	GWR	D
David Stuart	Historic Places Advisor	Historic England	
Bev McNeill	Business owner	McNeill Gallery	A
Patrick Wilson	Economy	PCAP Committee & PVTP	B
Colin Gale	Transport & Treasurer	PCAP Committee & Rushall PC	E
Dawn Wilson	Chair	PCAP Committee & Wilcot PC	D
Jane Brown		Pewsey Environmental Action Team	C
Paul Darby		Pewsey Environmental Action Team	C
Jerry Kunkler		Pewsey Area Board & Wiltshire Council	E
Stuart Wheeler		Pewsey Area Board & Wiltshire Council	A
Jennifer Totney		Pewsey Diocese	E
Mike Asbury		Pewsey Heritage Centre	D
Paul Cowan		Pewsey Heritage Centre	E
Curly Haskell	Chair	Pewsey Parish Council	E
David Smith		Pewsey Parish Council	E
Terry Eyles		Pewsey Parish Council	E
Nigel Baldock		Shalbourne PC	B
James Arnold-Baker		Wilton Windmill	B
Terry Bracher		Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre	C
Richard Gamble	Portfolio for Arts, Heritage & Tourism	Wiltshire Council	D
David Dawson		Wiltshire Museum	B
Alice Macaire	Archaeologist	Wolfhall	A
Dominic Bruce-Binney	Owner	Wolfhall	A
Susie Brew	Coordinator	Pewsey Community Area Partnership & Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership	A

Appendix B

List of existing potential PVTP Projects

This list has been edited to remove those items that are solely related to the website content or are already underway (e.g. Tourist Information Kiosks) or have been completed. This list is reviewed regularly and suggestions from PVTP workshops or meetings are added so that the ideas are captured.

Ref	Project	Details
002	Pewsey Vale App	Simple app: - What's available - Local Businesses and attractions - Where to stay - Historical info, etc
003	Issue	Getting Pewsey 'beautiful' - improvements to bridge, shop fronts in order to compete with other 'prettier' villages/towns in Wiltshire.
004	Films of what to do	Opportunity to connect to the youth group for a younger person's perspective. Or get the youth to film the local area to go on the website.
007	Bike Hire	Need to work out how this would work - Nick at Pewsey Velo might be able to help/run. Need to build capacity and survey local B&B's etc to see if there is interest. Sustrans cycle map can be shared. Tarka Trail already does this.
008	Cycle Routes	Sustrans website could be updated with local places of interest? There are some signs up, but should be checked. Is there a need for warning signs to try and make the routes safer? Wiltshire Council or perhaps a responsibility of Sustrans?
009	Pewsey Vale Way	Create a trail incorporating all of the beautiful sites and places of interest. Create a treasure hunt map like National Geographic ones which includes services available to tourists when out and about in the Vale - i.e. cafes, toilets, shops, gift shops, etc Similar to the Love Hungerford map.
011	Pewsey Vale Map	Reproduce a Pewsey Vale specific map with Pewsey Village at its centre. Use an old map that doesn't have copyright. Colourwash over the areas of historic interest in block and print the period - Roman / Saxon / Bronze age etc Highlight local places to visit ie Heritage Centre, B&B's and good food pubs.
013	Short film	Produce a short film from cycle helmet mounted camera and remote flying camera of the local area and allow attachment to all B&B and Pub websites.
021	Miles from Alfred	Signposts up around the Vale with 'xx miles from Alfred' - meaning the number of miles as the crow flies from that position to King Alfred's statue in Pewsey.

Ref	Project	Details
024	Maps for villages	<p>Maps of villages in villages highlighting places of interest for visitors. Perhaps place in telephone kiosks if they are not being used and have been retained. Similar to signs you see on viewpoints.</p> <p>(From Sylvie Claydon - 1. Each village in the Vale should have its own map (as Ken Bryant has suggested the French do) located next to the Parish notice board - the map should be bold and simple showing walks, local historical features and accommodation (B&B`s). In the margins, local businesses in and around each village can advertise in an agreed format - donations from these should be requested.</p> <p>The map would need to be on a stand and encased - wood back and glazed front or printed vinyl onto Aluminium which would be low cost.)</p>
025	Special glamping	<p>Encourage owners of places with wonderful views to host glamping sites</p> <p>Perhaps have 'special weekends' or pop-up glamping?</p>
029	Coach Friendly 'Town'	<p>May not be suitable for Pewsey Vale, but worth looking at?</p>
031	Pewsey as an Art Centre	<p>Highlight Pewsey as a centre for the Arts and support a simple one or two page website that can be managed by individual organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carnival and Feast Committee - Bernie Bradshaw Pewsey Music Festival - Liz Boden PVAD`s - Nettie Brown Pewsey Music Live - Cheryl Underhill Heritage Centre - Mike Asbury Pewsey Arts Walk - Sylvie Clayden
034	Local walks for families guide	<p>3. Produce a local walks and safe cycle guide for families</p>
042	Hidden Histories	<p>Collate local stories about pubs, places, people.</p>
048	Laybys	<p>On the Everleigh Road I think you should investigate with the farmer a further patch of ground, attached to the parking pull-in to lease the land from him. The idea is to make a small, say three table picnic spot just like they do on the continent all over the place.</p>