Therapeutic Landscapes of Prehistory: Exploring the role of archaeology in the promotion of present-day wellbeing

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Archaeology

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Declaration of Original Authorship

I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged. Aspects of this thesis have been published in the following papers:

- Reilly, S., Nolan, C. and Monckton, L. 2018. *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment: Threats, Issues and Opportunities for the Historic Environment*, Historic England. https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/wellbeing-and-the-historic-environment/wellbeing-and-historic-environment/

- Nolan, C. Forthcoming. Prehistoric Landscapes as Transitional Space, in T. Darvill, K. Barrass, L. Drysdale, V. Heaslip, & Y. Staelens, (eds.) *Historic landscapes and mental well-being*. Oxford: Archaeopress. http://www.archaeopress.com/ArchaeopressShop/Public/displayProductDetail.asp?id={EEA08FF4-B364-4615-9743-1C5770C73BCE}

Structure of Thesis as a Collection of Papers

As this study takes the form of a collection of papers, the above titles have been included in the thesis as Chapters 2 and 10, respectively. The first paper, *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment,* was co-written by the author of the thesis and Historic England researchers, Sarah Reilly and Linda Monckton, in order to assess the role of both Historic England and the historic environment in the creation of wellbeing. This collaboration came about as part of the author's AHRC-funded PhD placement with Historic England. The author's contribution which amounts to just under 45% of the overall document (approximately 9008 of 20641 words), includes an evaluation of heritage-based wellbeing projects and methods (p. 42-64 of thesis) and some work on the measurement of wellbeing impact (p. 41 and 68 of thesis). This paper forms the main part of the literature review for the thesis.

The second paper resulted from an invitation to contribute to the volume, T. Darvill, K. Barrass, L. Drysdale, V. Heaslip, & Y. Staelens, (eds.) *Historic landscapes and mental well-being*. Oxford: Archaeopress, and constitutes one of the main results chapters in the thesis.

The *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report has been included in its original published format with fonts and page numbers distinct from those of the thesis. The publication page numbers for the report are located at the bottom of each page. The report also contains its own list of contents which corresponds with these page numbers. However, please note that the page numbers of the thesis, which correspond with the contents list for the whole thesis, are located at the top right-hand corner of each page.

Chapters 8 and 9 are also included in the form of papers for publication. Chapter 8 was originally submitted to the journal, *Heritage and Society*, on November 4, 2018. A revised version of this manuscript was submitted on August 27, 2019, and is currently under peer review. Chapter 9 was submitted to the journal, *Public Archaeology,* on December 21, 2018, and is awaiting a decision.

These papers have been formatted in accordance with the house style of each journal and therefore there may be some difference between the chapters.

Note, as each paper requires a degree of context setting some parts of the thesis are repeated in the results chapters.

Abstract

In recent years heritage professionals and researchers in the UK have been called upon increasingly to evidence the social value of the historic environment in terms of its effect on wellbeing. Previous research in this area has successfully demonstrated some of the wellbeing effects of heritage involvement, particularly with regard to the promotion of social and human capital. Nevertheless, it is still not entirely clear how heritage assets directly influence individual wellbeing. This ultimately begs the question of whether, in fact, the historic environment has an impact on wellbeing that is any different to other cultural forms or pursuits. Adopting a novel approach to the study of heritage-related wellbeing, this study suggests that a phenomenological inquiry into people's lived experience of heritage assets may help to address these questions. Accordingly, it tests this hypothesis in the context of Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS), the Vale of Pewsey, and environs in Wiltshire, UK. Through the application of phenomenological interviews, mindful heritage walks and reflective written participant accounts and photography, the study explores how individuals experience, interpret and value these prehistoric landscapes. This thesis presents the design, process and results of the qualitative research undertaken and considers the findings of this work in light of the theoretical frameworks and the results of other studies concerning heritage experience. In conclusion, it proposes that prehistoric archaeology, and the historic environment more generally, has a unique role to play in the promotion of present-day wellbeing , specifically in its ability to facilitate for some people a sense of ontological security, existential relatedness and existential authenticity. The research also demonstrates that the phenomenological methods applied can help participants to reflect more deeply on their embodied lived experience of the historic environment. As a result, the study suggests that such approaches combine to form effective methods for evaluating heritage experience and for the development of heritage-based therapeutic interventions.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Attempting to understand why certain sites and landscapes achieve a 'healing sense of place', health geographer, Wil Gesler (1993, 2003), conducted a series of ethnographic studies of places historically renowned for healing, such as the healing sanctuary at Epidauros, Greece. On analysing the distinguishing characteristics of these places, he observed that it is the specific form and qualities of the physical, symbolic, built, and social environment that combine to make a landscape therapeutic (Gesler 1993; 2003). Since Gesler first put forward his thesis in 1993, the original definition of the therapeutic landscape has been expanded, both contextually and conceptually, to include a variety of environments ranging from natural settings to hospital wards (Williams 2007). In view of this broader definition, Timothy Darvill (2009) has also suggested that heritage sites might be added to this list. This observation reflects a growing interest in heritage-based wellbeing research (see Darvill *et al*. forthcoming; Pennington *et al*. 2018; Reilly *et al*. 2018) that has developed within the heritage sector in the UK in recent years. Taking its lead from this research and the therapeutic landscape principle, this study explores the therapeutic potential of heritage landscapes in the present day in the context of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, the Vale of Pewsey and their surrounding areas.

The motivation for this study ultimately stems from my Masters research on ecotherapy, which examined the nature of the connection between mind and earth (Nolan 2008). Defined as '…healing and growth nurtured by healthy interaction with the earth' (Buzzell and Chalquist 2009), ecotherapy is generally associated with the therapeutic impact that can be gained through engagement with the natural environment in the form of, for example, horticultural practices, green exercise and wilderness work (e.g. Buzzell and Chalquist 2009; Cooper Marcus and Sachs 2014; Smith 2015). However, a number of authors writing from the perspective of ecopsychology (Chalquist 2006, 2009; Gambini 2006; Mazis 2006; Sabini 2008) demonstrate that these therapeutic benefits do not just derive from interaction with the environment in the form of nature-based activities but also through an appreciation of humanity's long relationship with the earth. Roberto Gambini (2006, 74) helps to ground this concept with the suggestion that if one is to attempt an archaeology of the soul, '…we could imagine a stratigraphic cut of our collective psyche 50 metres deep, corresponding to these last 50,000 years'. Stressing the importance and formative nature of the relationship between earth and the human psyche,

Glen Mazis (2006, 19) describes it as an 'interweaving of identity in time'. Similarly, Craig Chalquist (2009) stretches the definition of ecotherapy to encompass healing that can be gained through meaningful engagement with the cultural elements of places, including their prehistoric and historic pasts. As such, these perspectives indicate that the historic environment also has a fundamental role in the promotion of wellbeing. This idea resonated with my own interest in prehistoric archaeology and curiosity about its social value. The discovery of therapeutic landscape research, with its emphasis on the healing potential of certain built, symbolic and social environments, served to justify these questions and the need to research them further.

Objectives, Methodology and Findings

Responding to the initial questions outlined above and those flagged up in a subsequent review of previous heritage-related wellbeing studies (Chapter 2), the study aims to address the following objectives: (i) to gain a better understanding of the relationship between heritage and wellbeing; (ii) establish whether people derive a sense of wellbeing from the prehistoric landscapes of Stonehenge, Avebury and the Vale of Pewsey and explore their therapeutic potential; (iii) develop an effective methodology capable of accessing the deeper, more personal ways in which people experience prehistoric heritage; (iv) investigate the social value of prehistoric heritage and its relevance to modern life; and (v) explore the social and therapeutic value of 'everyday' heritage.

Based on the strengths and weaknesses of previous studies (see Chapter 3 for this assessment), the thesis proposes that, in this instance, qualitative methods are the best-equipped to discern this information. Consequently, the study adopts an exclusively qualitative approach to data-collection and analysis through the application of phenomenological methods within what might be described as a critical realist (see Braun and Clarke 2006; Dahlberg and Dahlberg 2019; Dahlberg *et al*. 2008; Willig 2013) epistemology. In this much, it reports the reality of participants' individual lived experience of the archaeology, as felt and interpreted by them; '…a subjective experience in relation to or against the background of the objective and shared world' (Dahlberg and Dahlberg 2019). The study grounds this approach within a reflective lifeworld research design (Dahlberg and Dahlberg 2019; Dahlberg *et al*. 2008), which specifically uses reflective and reflexive practice to elucidate the implicit and explicit meanings of the lived world. Correspondingly, the data collection methods used are based on

phenomenological theory and practice derived from psychotherapy (mindfulness-based practice and focusing-oriented psychotherapy) and the place-based disciplines of cultural geography (more-than-representational research) archaeology (landscape phenomenology).

The study applies a thematic approach (Braun and Clarke 2006) to analysis which, in a mode compatible with a reflective lifeworld research framework, takes place in two stages: descriptive and interpretive. Initially, the interviews and written accounts are transcribed and manually coded for patterns of meaning relevant to the research questions. This is undertaken via an iterative, inductive and reflexive process, through which the participants' experiences of the archaeology are described and ordered under different themes and subthemes. The subsequent interpretive analysis and discussion assume a more critical tone; considering some of the broader discursive social and cultural, as well as the preconsious affective, mechanisms that may contribute to the reality of participants' experience (See Budd 2012; Skrede 2019; Willig 2013). Along with the many different branches of knowledge that inform the literature review and methodology sections, this part of the analysis demonstrates the fundamental interdisciplinarity of the project. Led by theoretical frameworks underpinning relevant heritage studies, insights from anthropology, existentialist philosophy, psychoanalysis, psychology, public archaeology and sociology, are used to further interpret the data and demonstrate their relevance to the field of heritage-related wellbeing research.

The findings of the study suggest that, for a number of people, the heritage landscapes investigated appear to support the development of existential wellbeing, in the form of ontological security, existential relatedness and existential authenticity. The term ontological security is used here to describe the physical and psychological security that some participants derive from the constancy, nurturing characteristics and narratives of their prehistoric environment. Existential relatedness is translated as the sense of comfort, genuine community and reverence that many people experience when connecting to a power or cause greater than themselves. This theme is characterised by the feeling of connection certain people derive from the prehistoric remains, in terms of feeling part of time, history, the human collective, landscape, the earth, and the wider cosmos. Existential authenticity may be understood as the possibilities for new meaning, purpose and transformation afforded by the affective qualities and symbolic motifs that certain participants perceive in the narratives, age, character and agency of the prehistoric remains. These effects ultimately allow these participants to not only see their environment, but also their life challenges and personal creativity, in a new light, and to find greater existential meaning as a result.

The research also demonstrates that in many cases the particular set of phenomenological methods employed can help participants to reflect more deeply on their embodied lived experience of the historic environment. As a result, it suggests that such approaches combine to form effective methods for evaluating heritage experience and for the development of heritage-based therapeutic interventions.

Overview

This inquiry begins in Chapter 2 in the form of the recent Historic England report, *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* (Reilly *et al*. 2018), a co-written assessment and the first of my collection of published/submitted papers included in this thesis. The report assesses the current knowledge on heritage-based wellbeing research in the UK, the political and social context in which it has developed, and the potential role of the historic environment and heritage institutions in the promotion of wellbeing. As part of this assessment the report reviews a range of heritage-based wellbeing studies undertaken in the UK over the past 15 years. It also lists some of the main wellbeing and evaluation frameworks which underpin these studies. Based on this analysis, this chapter presents an overview of the different ways in which the historic environment has been argued to produce wellbeing. Consequently, it highlights existing gaps in knowledge, as well as the research questions and methodologies necessary to address them, making a list of recommendations on the direction that future research should take.

Chapter 3 reflects on the findings of the *Wellbeing and Historic Environment* assessment and develops some of the research questions highlighted therein, as well as some additional gaps in knowledge that the survey did not address. These questions concern the following areas: (i) poor current appreciation of how and why heritage assets directly impact lived experience and personal wellbeing, and a subsequent need for more period-specific, artefact-focused studies; (ii) problems in the use of traditional wellbeing definitions and measuring systems to evaluate the direct impact of heritage assets; (iii) a need to better understand the relationship between sense of place, belonging, identity and wellbeing, and consequently, to develop more site-specific studies; and (iv) to gain a better understanding of how everyday experience of the historic environment effects wellbeing. Responding to claims that there is limited interest in, and understanding of, prehistoric heritage amongst the general public (Holtorf 1997; Last 2010a; Waterton and Watson 2014) this chapter also highlights the need to

include prehistoric archaeology more prominently within the heritage and wellbeing discourse. In consideration of relevant theoretical, methodological and political issues, this discussion helps to refine the research aims and methods of the current study. These are, ultimately, to establish, via qualitative phenomenological methods, the intrinsic value of the prehistoric archaeology of the study area – i.e. how people value the archaeology in and of itself, intellectually, emotionally and affectively – and how it influences individual lived experience and personal wellbeing.

Chapter 4 describes the study area in further detail, providing an overview of the geographical context, the archaeology contained within it and the rationale for the particular choice of sites. It also reviews some of the known public perceptions of these sites, past and present. This discussion helps to give a sense of the character of the archaeological sites located in the study area, setting the scene for the qualitative field work around which the study is based.

In an attempt to establish how much the historic environment was directly responsible for the positive outcomes of previous heritage-based wellbeing projects, a recent assessment stated:

> The interventions were complex and multifaceted, with components relating to heritage and other components not related to heritage. We were, for example, unable to distinguish between the impacts of landscapes in general and the heritage features of landscapes (though we note in the UK, all landscapes, including seemingly wild areas, have been managed by human populations for centuries if not millennia, and so many may be considered 'historic landscapes'). Inability to distinguish between the 'true' determinants of wellbeing within complex social interventions is a common problem (Orton *et al.*, 2017). It is possible that non-heritage interventions that, for example, bring people together, or support people, may have similar outcomes. (Pennington *et al.* 2018)

In light of these issues, the present study argues that, of all the qualitative methods available, phenomenological approaches have the power to isolate the direct impact of the archaeology, while also respecting what wellbeing may mean to the individual. Referencing phenomenological theory and practice drawn from the disciplines described above, Chapter 5 presents the rationale for this conviction. It then goes on to lay out the methodological framework of the study. Chapter 6 charts the preparation for, and implementation of, the qualitative fieldwork, which ultimately took the form of semi-structured phenomenological

interviews with residents from across the study area, written reflective participant accounts and a series of mindful groups walks in the Avebury landscape with visitors and residents. This chapter describes the analytical processes involved and examines contextual factors, such as self-selection and researcher bias, which may have influenced the research process from recruitment to data collection and analysis. It also acknowledges the various methodological strengths and weaknesses of the study.

Chapters 7 to 12 focus on the results yielded. This evaluation begins with a brief descriptive analysis of the participant feedback in Chapter 7. An interpretative analysis of this data is presented in Chapters 8-10, which also form part of the collection of papers embedded within the thesis. This analysis puts forward the idea that the prehistoric landscapes discussed have the capacity to promote existential wellbeing. The validity of these claims is critiqued in Chapters 11 and 12, which consider instances where these landscapes are not experienced as therapeutic.

Conclusion

The study ultimately posits that, at least in the context of the heritage landscapes investigated and the sample population engaged, the unique therapeutic value of the historic environment arguably lies in its potential to create existential wellbeing. It suggests that this impact stems from the intrinsic value of the heritage assets themselves, (i.e. standing remains, excavated material, and portable artefacts) in respect of their narratives, age, character and aesthetic agency. As a result, the thesis concludes that the archaeological sites in question do function for some people as therapeutic landscapes. In addition, while the findings indicate that the great age of these antiquities plays a unique role in the development of existential wellbeing, the thesis proposes that many of the impacts reported might also be experienced in relation to historic heritage.

The study also presents methodological and theoretical frameworks capable of isolating the direct impact of heritage assets, which, with the exception of those used by heritage object-handling studies, have hitherto been lacking in heritage-based wellbeing studies. It proposes that these frameworks can be used to conceptualise the connections between heritage, sense of place, belonging and identity, and consequently, to gain a better appreciation of the therapeutic potential of the historic environment. The study thus helps to pave the way for future heritage-based wellbeing studies and justify the social value of the historic environment.

Part I: Literature Review

Chapter 2: Reilly, S., Nolan, C. and Monckton, L. 2018. *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment: Threats, Issues and Opportunities for the Historic Environment***, Historic England.**

Preamble

The following report is the product of a collaboration between researchers from Historic England and the author, undertaken as part of her AHRC-funded PhD placement with the former Historic England Strategic Research and Partnerships Communities Team. Tasked with writing an assessment of Historic England's role, and ultimately that of the historic environment in the creation of wellbeing, the Communities Team invited the author to contribute to the report. The author's main contribution comprises the section on the evaluation of heritage-based wellbeing projects and methods (p. 42-64 of thesis) which derives from the original literature review drafted for the thesis. It also encompasses some work on the measurement of wellbeing impact (p. 41 and 68 of thesis). Consequently, this report makes up the first and main part of the literature review for the thesis, with Chapter 3 making up the second. Please note any information missing from the report presented in this thesis can be found in the updated on-line version available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/wellbeing-and-the-historic-environment/wellbeing-and-historic-environment/

WELLBEING AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Sarah Reilly, Claire Nolan and Linda Monckton

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wellbeing is politically and conceptually linked with health inequality and social cohesion as a long-term government priority. This focus on wellbeing reflects a shift away from an exclusively economic valuation model based on Gross Domestic Product to one that shows that physical and mental wellbeing have a significant impact on life quality. There are routes to wellbeing using the historic environment, many of which already exist within Historic England's core work, and we now have an opportunity to better evaluate and demonstrate this. This document provides:

- A framework for considering wellbeing and heritage evidence, designed to help Historic England develop a contribution to the agenda, Figure A.

- Strategic objectives for wellbeing and the historic environment formulated through the NEF (New Economics Forum[1]) Five Ways to Wellbeing (Give, Be Active, Keep Learning, Take Notice, & Connect), Figure B.

- A logic model summarising a proposed wellbeing strategy, Figure C.

The benefits of working with the wellbeing agenda include focusing on diversity and inclusion by breaking down barriers to access; working with local authorities to raise aspiration in areas of high indices of multiple deprivation; promoting wellbeing and engagement with the historic environment through social prescribing; achieving local sustainability in new ways; building the relationship between people and place, while demonstrating the public value of the historic environment.

Framework: six routes into the agenda

Heritage as Process: volunteering as an active and committed relationship over time, is a process of being involved that yields wellbeing outcomes yet many volunteer projects tend to capture a limited demographic of employed, educated and higher socio-economic groups. As a counter to this lack of diversity, community archaeology projects such as Operation Nightingale and Homeless Heritage focus intentionally on non-heritage or self-selecting groups. There is considerable potential to deliver more along these lines, with clearer and more effective public value outcomes.

Heritage as Participation: visiting sites of cultural interest is the largest area of research regarding the historic environment and wellbeing. It supports understanding that cultural engagement is linked to wellbeing, thus positively contributing towards life satisfaction. Surveys are useful for establishing numbers of

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[1] neweconomics.org/2008/10/five-ways-to-wellbeing-the-evidence/   [accessed   05.05.17]

people involved yet limited in demonstrating wellbeing because the degree of improvement can be too slight to be statistically significant. Additionally, bias capture of higher socio-economic groups can happen, and causality is difficult to determine without greater contextual understanding of a person's life, so further work is recommended in this area.

Heritage as Mechanism: using cultural assets to bring people together for therapeutic or social purpose providing a common point of interest or experience. Multiple examples exist including large-scale (such as British Museum Reminiscences programme) and local projects (such as the memorialisation at the Chattri Indian Memorial, Sussex), a Sikh community focus. Benefits can include social interaction, creative opportunities, while memory and the sharing of experiences can contribute towards social cohesion. Some examples of the sharing of cultural assets suggest it can strengthen the identity of minority or disadvantaged groups by helping develop new connections. This has significant potential for the historic environment, especially community and place-based initiatives.

Heritage as Healing: heritage-triggered thinking, meaning-making and cultural inclusion is relevant to health and wellbeing. The notion could be translated from mobile heritage (or object handling) to the context of a place-based historic environment. Qualitative and experiential assessment of patients on wards handling museum objects revealed a number of transactional and emotional benefits such as thinking and meaning-making, self-esteem and positive interactions.[2] The Improving Futures project,[3] which focussed on building confidence and skills amongst disadvantaged young people including those with poor mental health, found that while connectedness was the major outcome, benefits included increased self-awareness, self-expression, a sense of belonging and an ability to relate to others by seeing things from different perspectives.

Heritage as Place: reclaiming a sense of place is seen as a potential solution to social isolation, sustainability and environmental degradation. There has been a wealth of research on 'sense of place' (see Heritage Counts[4] for aspects of this) and specific studies that articulate the character of place to the feelings of its inhabitants (for example, 20 Years in 12 Places[5]). Does the historic character of a place have the potential to support newfound expressions of community, and shape an existing

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[2] University of London Museums collection in conjunction with health care providers see http://www.ucl.ac.uk/impact/case-study-repository/healing-heritage.
[3] https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/improving-futures-volunteers-take-lead-iwm-north
[4] https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/HC09_England_Acc.pdf and https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2017/heritage-and- society-2017.pdf
[5] https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/research-evaluation/20-years-heritage

sense of belonging into a shared experience? Developing this further, the idea of 'place-shaping' naturally emerges; ensuring local people have a voice, feel empowered and express a sense of belonging. Culture and heritage generally are understood as key methods of generating belonging.

Heritage as Environment: the beneficial link between nature and wellbeing has been extensively researched and some findings can be usefully applied to the historic environment, however more research is needed to understand which historic characteristics of a place (building or landscape) best promote wellbeing.
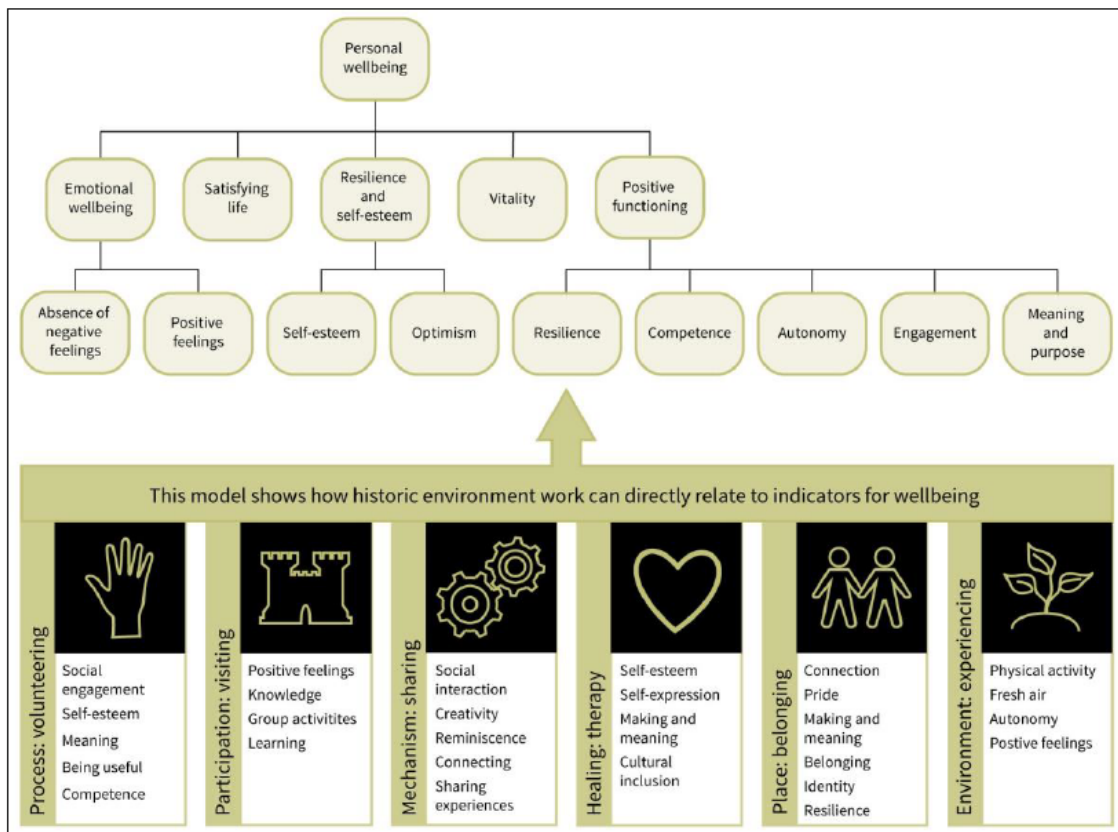
Figure A - How routes into the historic environment can directly relate to wellbeing indicators

Strategic objectives

The characteristics of the historic environment and involvement with it provide a range of potential advantages for engaging with the wellbeing agenda, namely:

1. The combination of physical activity with outdoors and cultural heritage.
2. The formation of a new relationship with the past that creates new perspectives and meaning.
3. The combination of the past connection with skills and feeling meaningful through productive contribution to something.
4. The social interaction and creativity that relates to the links with the past.

5. Long lasting benefit increased awareness of themselves and their place and social networks.

6. Our capacity to promote mixed projects with mixed evaluation methods including longitudinal analysis.

7. Potential to develop a wider collective sense of community, belonging, order, balance, stability and place through place-based initiatives.

Individually, none of these is particular to the historic environment, but in combination they provide a unique selling point (USP) for promoting wellbeing. The Five Ways to Wellbeing provides a structure to express these objectives and enable language change, guiding an approach to integrating wellbeing.

Figure B – Strategic objectives for wellbeing and the historic environment

Logic model

This logic model summarises the findings of our research and structures them around what we would like to achieve and the steps needed to get there. It forms the basis of a proposed strategy for enhancing understanding of the role the historic environment can play in promoting wellbeing.

SITUATION		PLANNED WORK		INTENDED RESULTS		
Rationale	Assumptions	Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
To demonstrate the public value of the historic environment	There is a relationship between engaging with the Historic Environment and health	Historic England staff time	Pilot projects to assess qualitiative evaluation	A review of non-heritage values	Clearer articulation of pubic value	Address social inclusion and engagement
To articulate Historic England's impact on wellbeing	There is a relationship between cultural participation and engagement and wellbeing	Grant applications	Identify demographic gaps project spectrum	Recommendations on indicators for community wellbeing	Enhanced focus on outcomes as well as outputs	Increase individual and community wellbeing
		Placements	Review work of heritage and historic environment bodies in this area	A stakeholder review	Greater social inclusion	Broaden participant demography in heritage
	Historic England is not only about buildings but people and society too	Grant funding with partners from external sources	Understand stakeholders and partners needs	Round table events	Mix of quantitative and qualitative assessment	Reduce barriers to the historic environment
	There is a relationship between place and identity	Staff time from external organisations	Assess public value demonstration	Research collaborations	Maximising potential of projects	Increase social impact of our work
	We can find ways to demonstrate and measure wellbeing impacts		Build relationships with mental health champions	Sector insight report	Debate on identity and wellbeing	Integrate wellbeing into working methods and language
			Build collaboration with heritage place-based initiatives	Partnership and collaboration with new partners	Enable others to communicate their experience	
			Work with higher educational institutions	Revised language to reflect the five ways to wellbeing	New direct and sustainable partnerships	

Figure C – Proposed logic model for wellbeing outcomes

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CONTENTS

1.   DRIVERS

1.1.   Historic England and wellbeing – why now?

Wellbeing issues were identified as a priority in 'Health and Wellbeing and the Historic Environment' Horizon Scan (Fluck 2015), which recommended that:

> *Historic England should produce an assessment report looking at the current information available on health and wellbeing and the historic environment and scoping the key issues for further research [because] while the contribution of the historic environment to wellbeing is hinted at in a number of studies, and is included by implication in so much as the historic environment is part of the natural environment, there have as yet, been no studies that specifically focus on the role of the historic environment in contributing to wellbeing.*

This assessment report is the product of that recommendation. Its key purpose is to set out the available evidence for the role of the historic environment in promoting health and wellbeing and explore ways in which it could be developed further, both by Historic England and more widely.

1.1.1.   Political context

- Wellbeing is being looked at more frequently as an indicator of the health of a nation because Gross Domestic Product (GDP) no longer adequately reflects this. According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS):

  GDP has the key attraction of internationally agreed standards for calculation, but it has several limitations as a measure of well-being. For example, it does not include non-economic determinants of well-being such as social relationships, or the distribution of income and wealth.[6]

- Government has prioritised the aims of addressing social inequality, health inequality and social cohesion and the effect of 'culture' on mental and physical health. As an organisation we must consider how our work can aid in these core priorities.[7]

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[6] https://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/...wellbeing/measures-of-economic-wellbeing.pdf,   p2   [accessed 27.02.18]

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510798/~DCMS_The_Culture_White_Paper__3_.pdf p15 [accessed 02.05.17]

- Wellbeing is embedded within many other initiatives such as Ecosystem Services, Natural Capital, local government planning agendas and National Health Service (NHS) commissioning agendas.

- Wellbeing provides an opportunity to link a well maintained and well utilised historic environment to a key local and national priority.

- Wellbeing is now a prominent policy issue in government, our Corporate Plan,[8] and Research Agenda.[9]

- Large parts of the public and third sector are working with wellbeing, providing potential opportunities for new partnerships and collaborations.

- Wellbeing is a topic that has already been explored and interwoven into the core strategies of Historic Scotland[10] and Cadw.[11] More widely, heritage is recognised in the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (11.4) for the benefits it provides to the creation of social cohesion and resilient communities.

1.1.2. Public value

- Local decision-making models are showing greater links between the historic environment and wider agendas, such as health and wellbeing (Lloyd-James 2013; Reilly 2015). This can open up opportunities for Historic England to maximise the potential of heritage impact in a number of agendas, not least health and wellbeing, by influencing local commissioning agendas.

1.1.3. Corporate Priorities for Historic England

- There is a corporate emphasis on equality, diversity and wellbeing both in our staff orientated approach (MIND Wellbeing Index and Action Plan, Workforce Diversity Action Plan), and public facing position (Historic England Equality Scheme 2015 – 18).

- Wellbeing is clearly being articulated in the introduction to the 2017 Corporate Plan:

The Culture White Paper encouraged Historic England to take a more proactive role in opening up our expertise to markets abroad,

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[8] https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/he-corp-plan-2017-20/three-year-corp-plan-2017-20.pdf/ [accessed 01.01.17]
[9] https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/he-research-agenda/research-agenda.pdf/ [accessed 01.01.17]
[10] http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0044/00445046.pdf [accessed 12.01.17]
[11] http://cadw.gov.wales/docs/cadw/publications/ValuingWelshHistoricEnvironment_EN.pdf [accessed 12.02.17]

as well as helping to develop the heritage sector's international commercial offer. It also emphasised the significance of diversity for our sector, and the need to engage and train young people and to promote the wider social benefits of cultural heritage, including health and wellbeing…

This also aligns with Objectives 6, 7 and 19.

- The Historic England Research Agenda[12] articulates a clear remit for the organisation to include research into the areas of identity, wellbeing, social impact, communities, diversity and inclusion.

1.1.4. The value of local heritage

- Heritage can be a potentially democratising process. Individuals and communities can connect with the historic environment, creating meaning and values especially at a local level.

- We have the potential to use the historic environment as a tool for individuals and communities, which may suggest our perception of its importance goes beyond inherent value of existing.

- The concept of the importance and relevance of 'everyday heritage' has long been developing. It is fundamental to the Faro Convention 2005[13] which is gradually influencing the policy of countries to understand their heritage and its relationship to communities and society.

- Most recently work carried out for Historic England (Da Silva, *in prep.*) has highlighted the importance of 'everyday heritage' in people's lives in a detailed analysis of local values. This project undertook ethnographic research on local communities in East Anglia at severe risk of flooding. Heritage was cited as an extremely important community asset.

- We need to consider how we can increase the impact of our work by understanding the connection between people and place through quantitative economic evaluation complemented by qualitative approaches to measuring how the historic environment impacts on quality of life.

1.1.5. Opportunity

- National policies can help (or hinder) the conditions for wellbeing, but it is local government that is in the driving seat of actions to support

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[12] https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/he-research-agenda/research-agenda.pdf/ [accessed 01.07.17]
[13] https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention [accessed 25.01.18]

improvement. With devolved responsibility in some local governments for health care budgets, wellbeing is at the forefront of that agenda. This makes it opportune to get heritage on these agendas and work in a more efficient and joined up way for the benefit of citizens.

- It is likely that factors contributing to wellbeing are already embedded in much of the work that we do as an organisation but we need to learn to better measure them in terms of our public value and social impact.

- Having recently been awarded Independent Research Organisation (IRO) status, there are increased opportunities to develop the heritage and wellbeing evidence base through partnerships and collaborative working.

2.   CONTEXT

In 1948 the World Health Organisation defined 'health' as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'.[14]

In 2010 the UK Government defined wellbeing in a broader way as:

> *a positive physical, social and mental state; it is not just the absence of pain, discomfort and incapacity. It requires that basic needs are met, that individuals have a sense of purpose, and that they feel able to achieve important personal goals and participate in society. It is enhanced by conditions that include supportive personal relationships, strong and inclusive communities, good health, financial and personal security, rewarding employment, and a healthy and attractive environment.*[15]

Research by the What Works Centre for Wellbeing (WWCfW)[16] defines wellbeing as 'about people, and creating the conditions for us all to thrive. It is quality of life and prosperity, positive physical and mental health, sustainable thriving communities.' It recognises that humans are emotional and value non-financial benefits, so how you feel and your quality of life as you experience it matters too.

The concept of the subjective experience of happiness and positive emotion has been the subject of enquiry for over 2000 years. For example, Aristotle's theories on eudemonia (a moral philosophy that defines right action as that which leads to the wellbeing of the individual, thus holding wellbeing as having essential value) remain valid 2000 years later.

In past investigation within philosophy and religion, subjective happiness is strongly linked to the notion of a good life, but is not necessarily the same as it (Halpern 2015). Additionally, the link between environment (historic and natural) and wellbeing is not a new idea; for example the nineteenth-century Arts and Crafts movement largely arose from the conviction that art and craft could change people's

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[14] Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948

[15] www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/progress/documents/SDI2010_001.pdf   [accessed 10.07.17]

[16] https://www.whatworkswellbeing.org/about/what-is-wellbeing/ 'What is wellbeing?' [accessed 25.01.18]

lives by its strong social and moral purpose. The current articulation of wellbeing as a political priority in the UK (rather than the sphere of artists or designers acting as social reformers) is as recent as 2010 when it became part of Government agenda.

The increasing prominence of wellbeing as an agenda is based on the concept of Government influencing health outcomes in new ways. It has, as an overriding objective, the ambition of saving on health expenditure and reflects a (slight) move towards preventative care through its focus on early intervention. Additionally, wellbeing as a concept has clearly raised the profile of mental health in Government, given that mental health is such a crucial factor in life satisfaction and happiness.

Importantly, the New Economics Foundation (NEF) was commissioned by the Government's Foresight project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing to develop a set of evidence-based actions to improve personal wellbeing. In the resultant report,[17] NEF presents the evidence and rationale between each of the actions, drawing on a wealth of psychological and economic literature and introduces the concept of the Five Ways to Wellbeing; Connect, Be active, Take notice, Keep learning and Give. These are now common indicators in the wellbeing agenda and shown in an illustration in Figure 1.

Government is increasingly aware of the impact of demonstrating improvements in life satisfaction. Research using cross-country panel data has shown that the electoral fate of governing parties is associated not only with the state of the macro economy but also with the electorate's wider wellbeing. In fact a country's aggregate level of subjective wellbeing is able to account for more of the variance in government vote share than standard macroeconomic variables. This is consistent with a simple political agency model, and has implications for the incentives faced by politicians to act in the interests of voters (Ward 2015).

Given this broad political context, financial pressure on health and social services is forcing achieving wellbeing by other means than the National Health Service (NHS) up the national and local government agendas.

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[17] http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/8984c5089d5c2285ee_t4m6bhqq5.pdf   [accessed   20.06.16]

Figure 1 - NEF Five Ways to Wellbeing

The important relationship between people and place however is not new to Historic England; in 2000 English Heritage (its predecessor) published Power of Place,[18] an attempt to look at a more socially-based rather than preservation-based approach to the historic environment. In 2006, a conference was convened by English Heritage, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to debate how to capture the public value of heritage following the then Secretary of State's (Tessa Jowell) challenge to 'find a new language to describe the importance of the historic environment' in her 'Better Places to Live' report (Jowell 2005). In her summary publication of the event, the editor Kate Clarke quotes Tessa Jowell saying that:

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[18] https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/power-of-place/ [accessed 12.12.17]

the market place can tell us how many visited a particular museum or how much profit a particular show or event made..... but when it comes to putting a value on things like trust, fairness and accountability, it has failed miserably

She concluded that we needed a new way of thinking to be able to measure and articulate the value of heritage on citizens.[19]

In 2008, English Heritage published Conservation Principles (English Heritage 2008), which provided guidance on considering communal values of a place as part of an assessment of significance. The policy objectives of these events and documents actually remain broadly similar to the present day, although the terminology and the specificity of the drivers have changed. For the reasons stated above, the Government's focus on the specific capacity of the arts and heritage to deliver core agendas of wellbeing and reducing inequality and social cohesion is now much more explicit and is set out as an expectation for the sector to deliver.

By way of summary then, over the last ten years both 'health' and 'wellbeing' are terms that are appearing with increasing frequency in heritage policy and research. In 2014, an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) was set up to engage with Arts, Health and Wellbeing demonstrating the cross-party interest in this issue. Health and wellbeing feature strongly in Health Policy (Dept. of Health 2014) and in the Wellbeing Economics 2014 report,[20] which acknowledges the important role wellbeing plays in four policy areas: labour markets; planning and transport; mindfulness in health and education; and arts and culture.

In the 2017 Heritage Counts report (section Heritage and Society[21]) it is pointed out that:

research undertaken by the Centre for Economic Performance (CEP) has revealed that in European elections since 1970, the life satisfaction of the voting public is the best predictor of whether the government gets re-elected, even more so than the economy, unemployment levels of inflation.[22]

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[19] https://www.academia.edu/3639888/Capturing_the_Public_Value_of_Heritage   [accessed 23.10.10]

[20] Wellbeing in four policy areas. Report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing Economics 2014 http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/ccdf9782b6d8700f7c_lcm6i2ed7.pdf[accessed 20.06.17]

[21] https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/   [accessed   10.07.17]

[22] http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1343.pdf[accessed 09.09.17]

The real economic impact of mental health issues is only just being understood, and this must be a key driver for political focus on the issue. For example, the Thriving at Work report[23] states that:

> *about 300,000 people with a long-term mental health problem lose their jobs each year and puts the annual cost to the UK economy of poor mental health at up to £99bn, of which about £42bn is borne by employers.*

The authors; the MIND chief executive, Paul Farmer, and the mental health campaigner Dennis Stevenson said they were 'shocked to find the number of people forced to stop work as a result of mental health problems was 50% higher than for those with physical health conditions.'

While the benefits of the natural environment to health and wellbeing are well established in the available literature (Natural England 2013; NEF 2005), and perhaps more easily understood, the role played by the historic environment is less well articulated. It is possible, indeed likely, that many projects carried out across the sector have resulted in positive public value, yet the methodologies and language to articulate this has not yet been sufficiently developed.

The notion that historic places relate to identity is borne out by research. The ResPublica report 'A community right to beauty'[24] cites a study by The Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE) and market researchers Ipsos MORI. The study found that people asked to identify 'beautiful' buildings in Sheffield most readily identified the two cathedral buildings. The reasons for this related to the perceived longevity of their presence as well as their grandeur, rather than style; and that by contrast contemporary buildings were considered lacking in character. This suggests that people's appreciation and understanding of the history of a place contributes to its perceived value and could reasonably be posited to contribute to any wellbeing benefit (cf. Cattell *et al* 2008).[25] While it is not claimed here that aesthetics are the only or largest factor contributing to feelings of wellbeing, it does suggest that projects or initiatives relating to historic environments might be more likely to support local identity and community pride agendas.

23
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/654514/thriving-at-work-stevenson-farmer-review.pdf [accessed 10.11.17]
[24] http://www.respublica.org.uk/our-work/publications/a-community-right-to-beauty-giving-communities-the-power-to-shape-enhance-and-create-beautiful-places-developments-and-spaces/ [accessed 26.01.18]
[25] http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1353829207000913?via%3Dihub   [accessed 26.06.17]

Additionally, devolution and decentralising budgets are pushing the case for localism and public participation in roles and services traditionally provided by local government. As a result the Local Government Association (LGA) is actively promoting their role in the wellbeing agenda.[26]

The Culture White Paper[27] is underscored by the positive effects of culture (including the historic environment) on wellbeing and offers a stronger mandate to pursue a social inclusion, equality and diversity agenda. This emphasises the need to articulate a clear understanding and definition of community wellbeing and how conditions that support strong and inclusive communities, which are believed to aid the wellbeing of citizens, can be promoted.

That Historic England understands the importance of this agenda is shown by the Chairman's statement in the Corporate Plan for 2017 – 20 which states that '...wellbeing and community pride's a key reason for protecting historic buildings and places'.[28] What is needed now is a clear strategy for how to deliver this, and the recommendations from this assessment will inform it.

2.1.   Wellbeing legislation

Wellbeing is now embedded in a range of legislation UK wide: the Localism Act 2011,[29] the Education Act 2011[30] and The Social Action Responsibility and Heroism Act 2015.[31] In England, The Care Act 2014[32] and The Health and Social Care Act[33] led to the statutory introduction of Health and Wellbeing Boards in local authorities across England in 2013, the regulations for which can be found in The Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) and Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2015.[34] Understanding the detailed implications of this legislation and how they operate is a key concern of public bodies such as Historic England and could be the focus of a separate assessment.

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[26] http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=bcd27d1b-8feb-41e5-a1ce-48f9e70ccc3b&groupId=10180 [accessed 29.07.17]

[27] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510799/DCMS_Arts_and_Culture_White_Paper_Accessible_version.pdf   [accessed   03.03.17]

[28] https://historicengland.org.uk/about/what-we-do/corporate-strategy/   [accessed   25.06.17]

[29] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted   [accessed   29.01.18]

[30] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/contents/enacted   [accessed   29.01.18]

[31] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/3/contents/enacted   [accessed   29.01.18]

[32] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted/data.htm   [accessed   29.01.18]

[33] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents/enacted   [accessed   29.01.18]

[34] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/921/contents/made   [accessed   29.01.18]

2.2.   Wellbeing and change

The Government's Commission on Wellbeing and Policy attempts to measure wellbeing as an indicator of the health of the country, instead of the more traditional 'goods and services' measured as GDP. The reason for this is that despite GDP rising, social inequality is increasing, so GDP can no longer be an accepted indicator of the wellbeing of a nation. The report (by the Legatum Institute: executive summary,[35] full report[36]) recommends that this national wellbeing should be measured regularly.

The WWCfW[37] is an independent collaborative centre that puts high quality evidence on wellbeing into the hands of decision-makers in Government, communities, businesses and other organisations. The centre encourages 'routine measurement of wellbeing and an experimental approach to policy and practice to look at the causes of wellbeing, and how to increase wellbeing cost effectively, as a major objective',[38] and bases its evidence on data gathered by the ONS.

The ONS splits its annual data gathering into a 'dashboard' of ten themes: personal wellbeing, relationships, health, what we do, where we live, personal finance, economy, education and skills, governance, and the environment.[39] While there are case studies relating to wellbeing in the wider community landscape, at the time of this research, the WWCfW site doesn't specifically reference heritage.

In the same way the LGA published guidance Health in All Policies[40] talks about the factors (social, economic, natural and built) that influence health and wellbeing and recommends partnership working with Health and Wellbeing Boards and stakeholder engagement, yet only 'natural heritage' is referenced in the 61-page document.

Projects such as the Happy City Index[41] is an accessible and engaging tool that enables individuals, communities and policymakers across a city to evaluate and improve wellbeing and recognises the role of local government in wellbeing work.

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[35] https://lif.blob.core.windows.net/lif/docs/default-source/commission-on-wellbeing-and-policy/commission-on-wellbeing-and-policy-report---executive-summary---march-2014-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=0 [accessed 05.06.17]
[36] www.li.com/wellbeing-policy [accessed 18.10.17]
[37] https://www.whatworkswellbeing.org [accessed 05.06.17]
[38] https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wellbeing-2/ [accessed 05.06.17]
[39] https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc364/dashboard/index.html. [accessed 05.06.17]
[40] https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/health-all-policies-manua-ff0.pdf [accessed 10.06.17]
[41] http://www.happycity.org.uk/ [accessed 27.06.17]

The 2008 Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project[42] aims to analyse the most important drivers of mental capital and wellbeing to develop a long-term vision for maximising mental capital and wellbeing in the UK for the benefits of society and the individual.

Bringing this and the definitions referred to above together, the concept of wellbeing comprises two main elements: feeling good and functioning well. Feelings of happiness, contentment, enjoyment, curiosity and engagement are characteristic of someone who has a positive experience of their life. Equally important for wellbeing is our functioning in the world. Experiencing positive relationships, having some control over one's life and having a sense of purpose are all important attributes of wellbeing.[43]

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[42] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mental-capital-and-wellbeing   [accessed   27.07.17]
[43] http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/d80eba95560c09605d_uzm6b1n6a.pdf.   [accessed   10.06.17]

3. LITERATURE SURVEYS AND CURRENT KNOWLEDGE

The current state of knowledge is largely based on a number of surveys, research and projects that have attempted to improve wellbeing and to find ways of demonstrating that. This section summarises a range of the most influential projects in the subject to articulate methodologies and results, help identify research gaps and assist Historic England in identifying a role in the agenda.

Seminal research was carried out between about 2009 and 2015 providing comprehensive literature reviews and demonstrating the Government's impetus for developing the wellbeing agenda.[44] It included refining ways of measuring wellbeing in a range of subject areas under the broad heading of 'culture and environment'. Most of these publications were about wellbeing projects and how they were evaluated and so references to them are embedded throughout the various sections of this text. Additionally, as wellbeing can only be demonstrated by measuring change, a review of the principal methods is provided in the next section.

In June 2017 the WWCfW commissioned the University of Liverpool to conduct a rigorous data gathering exercise of all literature associated with 'heritage-based interventions' and community wellbeing. The methodological protocol (Pennington *et al* 2017) specifies that by 'community wellbeing' they include the wellbeing of individuals and groups, and the determinants of their wellbeing, as components of communities'. The work will be published in 2018. The project will search electronic databases in a systematic and comprehensive way and provide information on 'interventions that are delivered using tangible, physical heritage resources'. This will be a valuable and comprehensive source of data and may provide the evidence base to allow further exploration into the qualitative, less tangible elements of the wellbeing agenda.

Historic England has already made a significant contribution to the sector debate on wellbeing through Heritage Counts (published annually by Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum, or HEF). Heritage Counts (editions 2014 to 2017) references comprehensive, high level summaries of research that demonstrate the importance of heritage to society. In particular, the 2017 publication contains a ten page section called 'Heritage and Society'. This provides a comprehensive factsheet of our knowledge of heritage and wellbeing at that time by reprising some earlier secondary data and conclusions while adding to this body of information with more recent studies and updates from the DCMS Taking Part figures.[45]

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[44] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-wellbeing [accessed 10.10.17]
[45] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey [accessed 10.10.17]

It has been suggested that the impact of heritage on wellbeing can be in part demonstrated by measuring 'participation' or visiting a heritage site. Whilst there is a wealth of research available in this area, employing slightly different criteria to assess participation, what is harder is demonstrating how it has a positive effect on wellbeing.

In 2015/16 the Taking Part data[46] provided the figure (by self-assessing participants' wellbeing) of an increase in wellbeing from 7.8 to 8.1 out of 10 in people who had visited a heritage site in the last 12 months. Notwithstanding the other causal factors that might contribute to an increase in perceptions of happiness, it remains an encouraging statistic and the findings of this study have implications for future research.

The 2014 research by Fujiwara *et al* (2014) looked at the relationships between heritage visits and wellbeing using data from the Wave 2 Understanding Society survey which includes variables related to engagement in arts and sport, taken from the DCMS Taking Part survey. Looking at the impacts of different types of heritage sites and impacts across different groups in society they were able to attach a monetary value to these impacts.

They note that at time of starting the research there was little data or literature on heritage and wellbeing, the main body of evidence being projects involving from object handling for hospital patients. And the research carried out by Bickerton and Wheatley (2014) who, also using the Understanding Society dataset, concluded that 'visiting historical sites had a statistically significant impact on wellbeing which was similar to attending arts events and larger than for visiting museums, but less than for playing sports'. The work provided evidence that certain groups get more from visiting a heritage site than others, for example those with health conditions.

The Fujiwara study analysed complex data sets from DCMS Taking Part survey among other things) based on *visits* to an archaeological site, historic building, historic industrial site, historic park, historic place of worship, historic town, a monument (for example castles or forts), or a sports heritage site to measure life satisfaction. The good effect on wellbeing was found to be the same or more than doing other activities, including sports, and visiting historic towns and buildings has the greatest impact. The monetary value of this positive impact on general wellbeing is calculated as £1,646 per person per year for the average heritage visitor.

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[46] DCMS, 2016. *Taking Part 2015/16 Quarter 4 Statistical Release* [pdf] Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539312/Taking_Part_2015-16_Quarter_4_Report_-_FINAL.pdf[accessed 02.06.17]

They attest that their research has implications for policy and future research in that:

> It [their research] creates a positive foundation and argument for the role of heritage in society and provides figures that can be used directly in Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) to inform investment decisions in heritage, but the caveats regarding causality should be noted when using the results and the results should be seen as upper-bound estimates. As new waves of Understanding Society and Taking Part become available we will be able to use the longitudinal aspect of the data to better understand causality between heritage and wellbeing. (Fujiwara et al 2014)

While a lot of the current data is based on 'visiting' a site, the longitudinal studies are well developed and provide an evidence base for participation that will help in the future with evidencing the relationship between heritage with wellbeing and its financial value. More usefully, the report also looks at self-reported barriers to engaging such as poor health, lack of time and transport, and cost. This suggests there is scope to pursue work on barriers to heritage, be they physical, values, cultural or language-based, and conduct complementary research into qualitative evaluation and subjective wellbeing.

In July 2017 Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing[47] was published. The report is the culmination of a two-year Inquiry led by the APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing in collaboration with King's College London. It represents the most comprehensive overview of the field to date and makes recommendations that will be of relevance to everyone working in the arts, health, social care and research. Through these recommendations the report seeks to catalyse a culture change that will benefit all areas of society by improving health, wellbeing and quality of life. At its core, the Inquiry report argues that the arts can help to meet the major challenges facing health and social care today. The report states that:

> the natural and built environments have a profound impact upon our health and wellbeing. Within healthcare, access to daylight, fresh air and natural materials aids healing, restoring the integrity between mind, body and soul. Patients and staff alike appreciate health and social care environments which are well designed and animated by the arts.

Historic England should be a contributor to and a recipient of the advice produced by reports such as these. At the moment the emphasis is on arts and museums and

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[47] http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry [accessed 09.08.17]

therefore our role is to ensure the historic environment is on the agenda and its potential is realised.

3.1. Wellbeing inequality

The issue for Historic England as well as for government and the charitable sector is not just wellbeing, but social and health inequality as shown by measurable levels of wellbeing. The inclusion (for the first time in 2016), of figures showing wellbeing inequality in the World Happiness Report reflects the importance of understanding this. The ONS is adding wellbeing themed questions to several labour and household surveys as part of the Measuring National Wellbeing Programme, and Eurostat included 20 questions on wellbeing to its data gathering on 'individual living conditions', demonstrates this conceptual shift.[48]

Many local authorities have considered this issue. According to Oxford City Council, for example, having places to exercise, socialise, communicate and share experiences helps people to have a positive approach to life and to enjoy their surroundings. They promote a people- rather than asset- led approach to the historic environment by asserting that that:

> There is a direct link between heritage and health. It is the relationship between people and the historic environment that makes it meaningful and gives it value. This meaning and value are arguably a contributory factor in people's sense of belonging, identity and their motivation to engage proactively with the historic environment. Remembering that heritage is the result of interaction between people and their environment and that heritage is as much about people as it is about places makes it easier to understand the relationship between heritage and health.

Oxford City Council also references the behavioral scientist Roger Ulrich who developed a diagrammatic representation of the 'determinants of health' (Figure 2) to highlight the way in which our surroundings and lifestyles impact our health. Heritage and the historic environment can be seen to be beneficial to our health under a number of the categories he identified; lifestyle, community, local economy, activities, built environment and natural environment.

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[48] University of Cambridge, City University London, and NEF (2016) *Looking through the Wellbeing Kaleidoscope: Results from the European Social Survey*. [pdf] Available at: http://www.wellbeingcounts.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Wellbeing-Kaleidoscope-Final-Report.pdf [accessed 30.01.18]
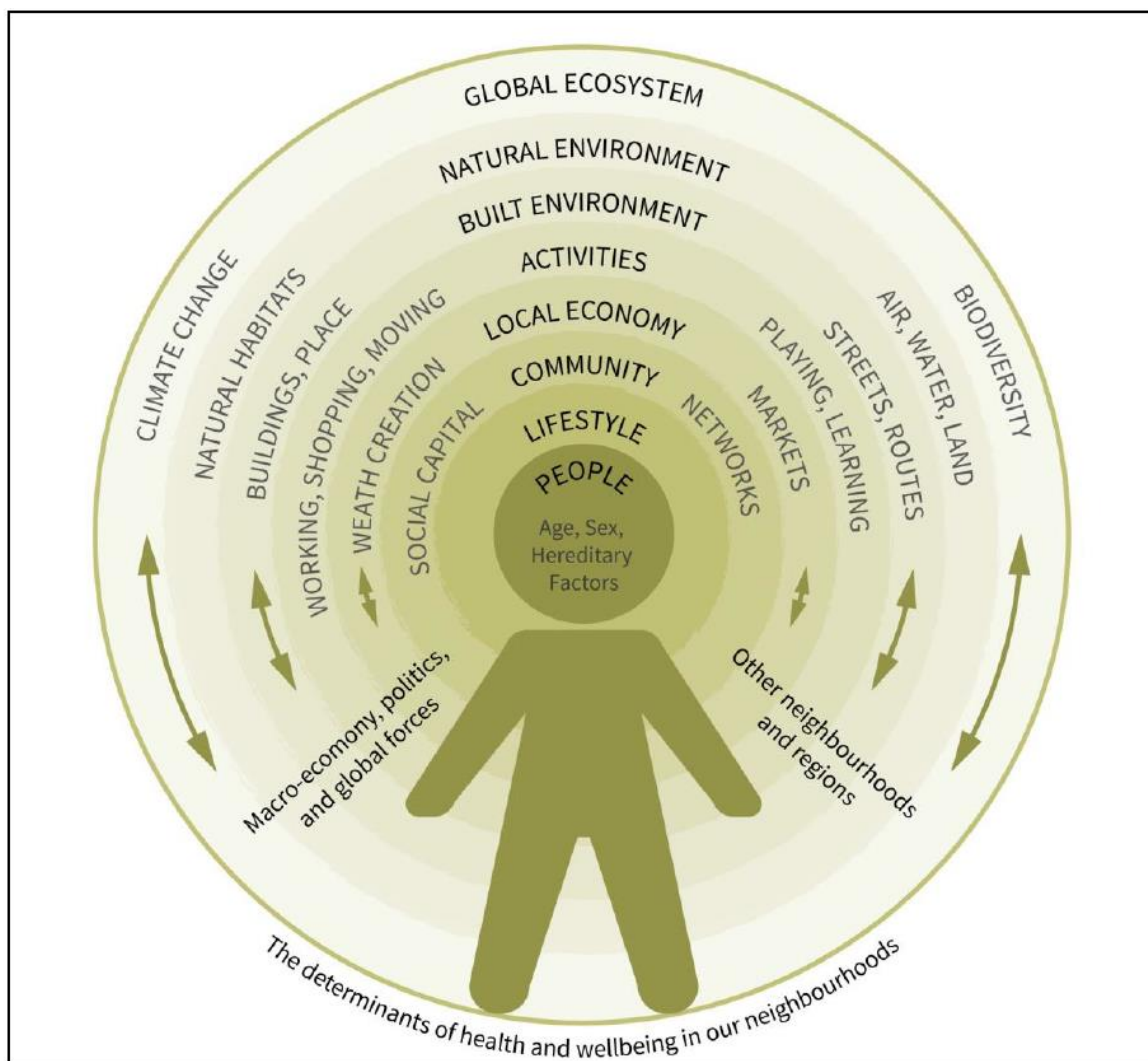
Figure 2 - The determinants of health and wellbeing in our neighbourhoods[49]

A recent publication by HLF reflects on the benefits of twenty years of funding heritage projects '20 years in 12 places' (BritainThinks 2015[50]). Using random samples of communities as opposed to self-selecting groups of 'heritage participants' the research 'reaffirms that heritage is positively linked to local quality of life' yet goes a step further and articulates how unequal participation is and considers how to tackle engaging non-traditional parts of the community. It is this clear rationale for the benefit of heritage participation in wellbeing that provides the business case for continued funding to ensure that heritage is accessible and relevant to all the diverse members of our communities.

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[49]

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20191/oxford_heritage_plan/887/heritage_health_and_social_well_being [accessed 27.08.17]

[50] https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/research-evaluation/20-years-heritage. Feb 2015. [accessed 04.07.17]

3.2.   Scope for further research

The evaluation report for Quay Place Suffolk (Ecorys 2016) presents the methodology for and rationale behind converting a church into a mental health and wellbeing centre. It concludes that:

> *the link between the built heritage environment and participation in heritage-based projects is helping to sustain good mental health, meaning we can be confident that the utilisation of heritage-based assets can improve overall wellbeing for both individuals and the wider community.*

They also state that:

> *there are gaps within the research, where there is a deficit in qualitative research to elucidate the correlations that have been uncovered by the quantitative surveys and impact studies. Further qualitative research will allow us to understand how engagement with heritage activities and environments can support and sustain (mental) wellbeing.*

A literature review into articles on 'sense of place' and 'social capital' carried out by Newcastle University for Historic England (Graham *et al* 2009) concludes that:

> *We have found no major studies which directly link all three components: historic environment, 'sense of place' and social capital. However there are promising links between the historic environment (heritage) and 'sense of place' and between 'sense of place' and social capital.... social and environment psychology have developed and used scales and questions for the measurement of 'place attachment', 'place identity' and 'place dependency'......A research framework 'sense of place' may enable all sorts of previously unseen relationships to emerge' .....[not forgetting] the considerable research on audiences and visitor patterns, demographics, motivations, identity and capital which has been carried out within museum, gallery and heritage studies...... To our knowledge there has been no crossover between these approaches and this is an obvious gap in the literature.*

Such a framework would also offer scope for pursuing themes of inclusion and diversity in heritage and communities, as well as issues of contested heritage.[51]

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[51]https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/182155/1/Historic_Environment%252C_Sense_of_Place_and_Social_Capital_Lit_Review.pdf[accessed 10.07.17]

4.   MEASURING IMPACT

The following section outlines some of the most commonly used approaches to measuring impact and demonstrates that in terms of evaluation, 'one size doesn't fit all' and that researchers need to have access to a range of options for measuring both quantitative and qualitative impact in order to align with partners' or funders' agendas and criteria.

The way that we measure the economic and social value of culture varies because it is valued in distinct ways by those who use it and those that do not, as well as by different groups in society. Our choice of measurement affects whose values we capture. For this reason, arts funders have recently advocated a holistic assessment of the benefits of culture, which goes beyond the economic and cultural to encompass the wellbeing, societal and educational value of culture[52] (Arts Council England, 2014).

The actual concept of evaluating the impact of work is not new, and in the UK a methodology was consolidated into the Green Book in 2003 (revised 2018) and the Magenta Book (2011). The Green Book provides guidance for central government produced by the Treasury on how publicly funded bodies should prepare and analyse proposed policies, programmes and projects to obtain the best public value and manage risks. It also covers the evaluation of policies, programmes and projects after they have been implemented to find out how well they have achieved their original objectives and how well they have delivered within their original budgets and planned timescales. The Green Book guidance on assessing public value and risks applies to proposals and decisions about both spending public money and to changes in regulation and supports the Cost Benefit Analysis' approach. CBA assesses the cost of an action, intervention or investment against the benefits that it creates for society.[53] 'The revised version[54] shows a significant shift in language with wellbeing now embedded in the guidance; a change in terminology from Cost Benefit Analysis to 'Social Cost Benefit Analysis', and an emphasis that wellbeing needs to be considered when making policy decisions'.

The Green Book presents the recommended framework for the appraisal and evaluation of all policies, programmes and projects. This framework is known as the 'ROAMEF' (rational, objectives, appraisal, monitoring, evaluation, feedback) policy cycle, and sets out the key stages in the development of a proposal in a standard

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[52] http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/project-reports-and-reviews/measuringeconomicvalue/.
[53] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-governent#history [accessed 09.08.17]
[54] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-governent [accessed 21.03.18]

project management structure (rationale, setting objectives, options appraisal, implementation, evaluation, and feeding back of evaluation evidence into the policy cycle).

The Magenta Book is complementary guidance to the Green Book and provides further guidance on the evaluation stage of this process for central government departments and agencies to ensure that their own manuals or guidelines are consistent with the principles contained within it.[55]It is presented in two parts; part A for policy makers and part B for analysis. It sets out guidance for:

> *policy makers who wish to be able to provide evidence of a policy's effectiveness and value for money; anyone commissioning, managing, working, or advising on an evaluation of a policy, project, programme or delivery of a service; and those seeking to understand or use evaluation evidence, particularly for the purposes of improving current policies and using that learning for future policy development.*

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) seeks to promote policies that will improve the economic and social wellbeing of people around the world. The OECD provides an international forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. Working with governments to understand what drives economic, social and environmental change, it measures productivity and global flows of trade and investment; analyses and compares data to predict future trends. Their evaluation framework is built around three distinct domains: material conditions, quality of life and sustainability. They provide a range of guidance on using metrics and evaluating subjective wellbeing.[56]

At the same time the coalition government conducted work to complement the more traditional economic measures used by policy makers, providing an additional way to think about what we value. The progress we are making as a society was measured by asking the question 'what matters to you?' in a survey of national wellbeing. Launching the National Wellbeing Programme,[57] the then Prime Minister David Cameron explained that this was an attempt to 'start measuring our progress as a country, not just by how our economy is growing, but by how our lives are improving; not just by our standard of living, but by our quality of life.'

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[55]https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/220542/magenta_book_combined.pdf[accessed 09.08.17]
[56] http://www.oecd.org/statistics/measuring-wellbeing-and-progress.htm [accessed 09.08.17]
[57] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-wellbeing [accessed 10.08.17]

4.1. Frameworks

There are other methods of measuring impact and within them there are approaches to evaluating wellbeing.

A logic model (with the addition of a theory of change, or programme matrix) is a methodology for planning, participation and evaluation used by funders and managers, to ensure that measures for assessing the effectiveness of a programme or project are in place at the outset of a project and that the corporate aims of the project are being adhered to. It is often used to assess and promote social change and therefore is of particular relevance to the wellbeing agenda.

They can also be used during planning and implementation. It is a simple mechanism of ensuring that outcomes are set in a logic relationship to each other and to the required inputs and outputs, therefore used appropriately it can help articulate the relationship between goals, outputs and outcomes. A theory of change model, added to the logic model, is a tool specifically for articulating outcomes (by way of change or impact) and helps to ensure evaluation is integral to any project and demonstrates this logical relationship. It helps articulate the difference any project is intended to make. Models can be proportionately complex depending on the project, programme and/or organisation, for example see the one used by the Architectural Heritage Fund,[58] but the key elements include:

Inputs (what we invest); outputs (products, participation, engagement); outcomes (by period of time, short, medium long for example), and impact (what difference the work will make and indicators of how this will be measured).

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a framework for measuring and accounting for this much broader concept of value; it seeks to reduce inequality and environmental degradation and improve wellbeing by incorporating social, environmental and economic costs and benefits. The methodology was devised in 2007 by the founder members of what is now Social Value UK, a member organisation for organisations who want to demonstrate social change. They explain:

> *An account of social value is a story about the changes experienced by people. It includes qualitative, quantitative and comparative information, and also includes environmental changes in relation to how they affect people's lives.*[59]

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[58] http://ahfund.org.uk/toc/ [accessed 01.04.17]
[59] http://www.socialvalueuk.org/what-is-social-value/the-principles-of-social-value/ Social Value UK [accessed 25.04.17]

Other frameworks include the return ratio which enables a ratio of benefits to costs to be calculated and provides a figure for 'values to outcomes'; that is, for x invested you can expect y in return. For example, a ratio of 3:1 indicates that an investment of £1 delivers £3 of social value. A recent 'high five for heritage' campaign by Prospect Union used the calculation 1 in 5 (£s) investment in heritage to anticipated economic return.

Government economic outcomes can be more obviously met by monetarising value, for example in approaches that try to calculate either the amount an individual would pay to preserve a heritage site (Stonehenge for example) or conversely, the amount of money that would be needed to produce the same level of wellbeing in a person if they had to forego visiting a heritage site.

4.2.   Methods

Having outlined the predominant frameworks in use, this section considers the methods we might use to assess and measure personal and physical wellbeing outcomes.

4.2.1.   Subjective Wellbeing

Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) is one of a broad set of measures that the ONS has developed as part of an emerging measurement framework for national wellbeing. There are two approaches to this depending on the data used.

4.2.2.   Evaluative Subjective Wellbeing

Evaluative SWB measures tap into a cognitive assessment of one's own life and how it measures up to aspirations, goals and peers, as well as a reflection on how one feels now. Evaluative SWB usually uses large national datasets such as those measured in annual surveys. In 2011 the ONS introduced four subjective wellbeing (SWB) questions on its largest household survey, the Annual Population Survey (APS - archived), followed by other large surveys such as Understanding Society.[60]

4.2.3.   Affective Wellbeing

Affective Wellbeing collects data on a person's feelings 'in the moment' both positive and negative and requires the gathering of primary data. The 'Experience Sampling Method (ESM) collects information on people's reported feelings in real time at selected times of the day (usually using a Personal Digital Assistant or PDA). The Day Reconstruction Method (DRM) uses a diary based approach whereby

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[60] https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/about.

respondents measure their feelings retrospectively for points of time during that day (Fujiwara and MacKerron 2015). This approach is exemplified by the huge and groundbreaking data set on wellbeing and cultural activities collected in the 'Mappiness' project which captures participants location and mood at given times during the day via a mobile phone app.[61] Within these there are two ways of gathering subjective information that are used fairly consistently in medical spheres to measure such indicators as pain or mental health.

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)[62] is a self-report questionnaire that consists of two 10-item scales to measure both positive and negative affect. Each item is rated on a Likert[63] scale of 1 *(not at all)* to 5 *(very much)*. The measure has been used mainly as a research tool in group studies, but can be utilized within clinical and non-clinical populations as well. Positive feelings might be 'active', 'enthusiastic', 'inspired' while their opposites might be 'irritable', 'distressed' and 'scared' respectively.

Modified Visual Analogue Scale (MVAS) uses a narrower scale and is validated by both the ONS (1-10) and Warwick-Edinburgh (1-5) measures. The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale[64] was developed to enable monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. In some projects the questions were also modified to incorporate the Five Ways to Wellbeing key elements (NEF, referred to above) for example: 'How interested are you in the world around you?'; 'How connected do you feel to people around you?'; 'When considering your personal happiness, at the moment how happy would you rate yourself?'; 'Thinking about your own life and personal circumstances, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole?'. As such, if a participant provided high scores they would be deemed as happy.

A further range of articles offering advice to policy makers on value for money (VFM) when budgets are tight (the 'bang for buck' ratio), and assessing the reliability of self-assessing as a way of measuring happiness through SWB methods can be found on the London School of Economics website. [65] In the article 'wellbeing measurement and cost-effectiveness analysis' (Layard 2016), the author sets out some useful evaluative suggestions that he applies specifically to the WWCfW and concludes that:

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[61] http://www.mappiness.org.uk/ [accessed 10.08.17]
[62] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positive_and_Negative_Affect_Schedule   [accessed   03.07.17]
[63] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Likert_scale [accessed 30.01.18]
[64] https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/research/platform/wemwbs/   [accessed   20.07.17]
[65] http://cep.lse.ac.uk/_new/research/Wellbeing/wellbeing_policy.asp#wellbeing_measurement [accessed 20.07.17]

The science of wellbeing is in its early stages. But, if wellbeing is the proper objective, we should use all the available knowledge about it. Much of this knowledge has considerable margins of error, but the value of this approach to policy should be judged by comparing it with existing methods, which are generally even weaker. It is better to be roughly right than precisely wrong.

Layard concludes that:

Life-satisfaction is the best common currency for policy-makers to use when comparing the outcomes of different interventions. But other measures also have their uses.....When necessary, other measures can be converted into life-satisfaction.....We give more weight to raising life-satisfaction when it is low than when it is high.....Policies should be evaluated in terms of the wellbeing improvement (weighted for inequality) per unit of net expenditure from the policy-maker's budget.

Thus according to Layard, SWB in terms of units of life satisfaction appears to be the most versatile and appropriate measure for use across all sectors. Detracting slightly from this statement, Felicia Huppert's recent paper (Huppert 2017) on wellbeing measurement maintains that, 'subjective wellbeing is multi-dimensional, and cannot be defined in terms of a single construct such as happiness or life satisfaction'. Huppert asserts that an adequate evaluation of SWB requires a multi-dimensional approach, and proposes an alternative operational model of measurement which includes: sense of competence, emotional stability, engagement, sense of meaning, optimism, positive emotion, positive relationships, resilience, self-esteem, and vitality. This work suggests that while SWB may be one of the most appropriate measures of wellbeing, the criterion of life-satisfaction alone is not sufficient, and a multi-dimensional definition of SWB is perhaps more favourable.

Projects also need to integrate a qualitative component to explain why people's life satisfaction changes and in what kinds of ways. This approach is supported by the findings and recommendations of an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Cultural Value Project Report (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016). Thus a mixed evaluation approach, using qualitative and quantitative methods would be the recommended approach for Historic England.

5. EVALUATION OF PROJECTS AND METHODS

This section collates wellbeing research, initiatives, programmes and projects currently or recently undertaken across and for the sector. Its purpose is two-fold. Firstly to evaluate the advantages and opportunities these offer for Historic England. Secondly, to examine the usefulness of the framework proposed as a 'way in' to talk about the relationship between heritage and wellbeing. It is by no means exhaustive but will illustrate how certain types of projects can (or can't) frame our research and in doing so, inform where Historic England might have a locus.

5.1. A route into the evidence

This work is trialling a way to structure discussion about heritage, the historic environment and wellbeing, through a suite of headings and questions (below). As with any such categorisation, they are not wholly or mutually exclusive but provide a basis for considering where Historic England fits and where there are gaps.

- Participation
  - How does participating in heritage affect wellbeing? For example, volunteering, engaging with heritage events, membership of local history groups, and perhaps evidenced by Taking Part[66] or the WWCfW.[67]

- Process
  - How can heritage provide a process to wellbeing? For example the process of carrying out volunteer and heritage work to enhance wellbeing?

- Healing
  - How can cultural heritage act as a catalyst to healing in specific environments or for particular groups?

- Mechanism
  - How can using heritage or the historic environment provide a mechanism to social wellbeing? That is, as a topic used as a common point to start a conversation or bring people together about something else?

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[66] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey [accessed 01.04.17]
[67] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-what-works-centre-for-wellbeing [accessed 01.04.17]

- Place
    - How does sense of place relate to community wellbeing and what opportunities are there to develop this?
- Environment
    - How does heritage shape our wellbeing in the environment? Physical, natural and intangible?

5.2.   Participation

This section will review the existing evidence for the impact of heritage-participation on wellbeing. For the purposes of this assessment participation is defined here as visiting a heritage site or attending an event as a leisure activity. Volunteering, in contrast, is understood as a more involved and committed engagement, which produces benefits, not necessarily because it is heritage-based, but because the activity creates wellbeing by leading to benefits such as a sense of worth and sense of belonging. Volunteering will therefore be dealt with in the next section under the theme of 'process'.

The Heritage Counts 2014 report suggests that heritage-participation in itself can be used to some extent 'as a proxy measure for value, assuming that people participate in heritage because of the benefits they derive from their participation.'[68] The Heritage Counts 2016 report on the impact of heritage on society states that:

> *people who visit heritage sites are happier than those who do not. As noted earlier, between 2010 and 2013, on average, those who had visited a heritage site in the previous 12 months, reported happiness scores 1.6% greater than those who had not* [69]

It also affirms that between 2014 and 2015 the happiness score was 8.1 in comparison to 7.8 for people who had not visited a heritage site. Such results are however, a mixed blessing; not only is the difference incredibly small, but it cannot assess the other causal factors that might contribute to it. This is itself highlights a need for a wider range of evaluation.

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[68]https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2190644/value-impact-chapter.pdf p.5 [accessed 01.05.17]
[69] https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2016/heritage-and-society-2016.pdf p.1 [accessed 01.05.17]

5.2.1. 'Heritage and Wellbeing' study

One of the most comprehensive quantitative assessments carried out to date on the impact of heritage participation on wellbeing is the Heritage and Wellbeing study commissioned by English Heritage (Fujiwara *et al* 2014), the positive findings of which have already been referred to.

Yet despite the positive statistics presented in the Heritage and Wellbeing report, the study acknowledged that as the data lacked randomised controls for the samples examined, the results were likely to be positively biased with regard to reverse-causality. Causal factors included the positive drivers of attendance: being taken to heritage sites as a child; being a volunteer; access to a car; socio-economic class, high education and good health. Conversely, the barriers to participation or reasons that reduced likelihood of attendance also influenced the results. Some of the main barriers included: time; lack of interest, poor health; lack of transport; cost; and limited social network. While reasons for reduced likelihood of attendance took in: living in social housing; watching 5+ hours per day of television; being from an ethnic minority; having lower levels of education; and disability in terms of access to certain types of sites. The study concluded that:

> there is higher attendance amongst those from higher socio-economic
> classes, white and aged 45-64. Access was also found to be a factor,
> with car access and being located closer to heritage sites increasing
> the probability of attending (Fujiwara *et al* 2014).

Subsequently, it recommended that the collection of further data from future surveys would be necessary to support the results.

The Heritage and Wellbeing study also noted that the wellbeing valuation method used to quantify impact is not a fool- proof system of measurement as it depends on SWB which can be affected by a variety of contextual factors, such as the weather on the day the questionnaire was completed, question order or issues relating to 'accurate retrospection'. Likewise, the study recognised that the measurement of life-satisfaction or happiness may be too narrow to reflect the full diversity of individual wellbeing experience (Fujiwara *et al* 2014).

5.2.2. Subjective Wellbeing and Engagement in Arts, Culture and Sport

Another study carried out in 2013 by Nottingham Trent University (Wheatley and Bickerton 2017) found that: 'visiting historical sites had a statistically significant impact on wellbeing similar to attending arts events', however it met with issues regarding demography and causality comparable to those discovered in the Heritage and Wellbeing study.

5.2.3. Mappiness

Mappiness, (Fujiwara and MacKerron 2015) another project recently undertaken to evaluate the impact of cultural participation, also reported positive results concerning heritage participation, in the case of museums.[70] Using a phone app to monitor participants' momentary affective SWB responses to specified cultural activities, the method asks participants to rate 'how happy, how relaxed, and how awake they feel' at different intervals throughout the day. Affective SWB differs from evaluative SWB (happiness and life-satisfaction) in that it measures a person's positive and negative feelings 'in the moment', along the lines of the PANAS scale described above. The survey has collected information from 'tens of thousands of individuals' in the UK since 2010. The study found that:

> *all forms of cultural engagement and all art forms are positively associated with happiness and relaxation after controlling for a range of other determinants of wellbeing. Cultural activities rank very highly in terms of impacts on happiness and relaxation in comparison to the other activities reported in the dataset.*

However, the project also had to contend with issues of causality, noting:

> *the population of Mappiness respondents differs in a number of ways from the population at large; wealthier people, young people and employed people are over-represented relative to the UK adult population. Therefore, when interpreting and extrapolating the results from this study it should be acknowledged that the results may not necessarily be directly applicable to other socioeconomic groups.*

The study also acknowledges the exclusivity of the results in that they require participants to have a smartphone. In terms of measurement, Affective Wellbeing was purposely used as the unit of evaluation in this instance in order to avoid the potential for bias posed by the use of Evaluative SWB. However, it could be argued that, like the single-item measures that characterise Evaluative SWB, the limited range of response choices offered by the Mappiness app do not necessarily reflect the breadth and depth of human feeling and experience. Furthermore, as the study discusses, Affective SWB measures are more costly and cannot be gleaned from national datasets as they are reliant on primary data collection.

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[70] As the responses relating to museum participation were reported under the broader heading of 'exhibitions, museums and libraries', the results reported do not reflect museum visits alone and may require further analysis.

5.2.4.   Discussion

These studies demonstrate that heritage participation can be shown to have a positive impact on wellbeing. However, while a range of wellbeing determinants were controlled for using regression analysis in the Heritage and Wellbeing, Mappiness and NTU projects, the results from these studies are not representative of the whole population and can only comment on the wellbeing impact of heritage participation for a narrow demographic. With regard to the systems of measurement employed by these studies, it would seem that neither Evaluative SWB nor Affective SWB are comprehensive enough. The latter measure also relies on the hedonic definition of wellbeing which, again, may not be an adequate representation of the full range of affective experience (Jones and Leech 2015). In response to the concerns linked to causality, the NTU study recommended that 'further investigation is required to unpick whether engagement in these activities drives satisfaction, or whether lack of access perhaps as a result of socio-economic factors is manifest in lower satisfaction.' (Wheatley and Bickerton 2017). Similarly, the Heritage and Wellbeing study suggested that while randomised control studies can be difficult to undertake in the cultural sector, they should still be encouraged. The study also recommended that more site-specific work should be undertaken in order to evidence the impact of specific heritage sites on wellbeing.

Regarding issues relating to the use of Evaluative SWB measures, the NTU study advised that:

> *further analysis could be performed using mixed methods...to facilitate the capture of more detailed perspectives from those engaging in activities, as well as those involved in the funding and management of these sectors. This would provide a potentially rich source of data with which to further our understanding of the SWB effects of engagement with arts, cultural and sporting activities.* (Wheatley and Bickerton 2017)

In terms of the value of applying affective measures, the Mappiness project asserted:

> *that it is important and fruitful for cultural institutions to collect data on momentary wellbeing and experience from their visitors and participants. This data can be linked with specific interventions and activities to provide a more fine-grained level of analysis on the drivers of affective wellbeing in the cultural sector.* (Fujiwara and MacKerron 2015)

Thus, the limitation of the approaches used in these studies does not render them ineffective. As a recent report stated:

> *there is evidence to suggest that there is a link between visiting a historic site or building and wellbeing. However, the existing*

> *research is limited because it is mainly based on quantitative data,*
> *with little explanation provided for this link.* (Ecorys 2016)

Picking up on these issues, the recommendations above suggest that perhaps in the future, if randomised, adapted to reflect a wider range of affect and experience, and used in combination with qualitative data, such studies may yield richer information.

5.3.   Process

This section contains a review of heritage volunteering projects and studies carried out over the past 14 years that were purposely designed and/or evaluated with the intention of establishing the impact of heritage involvement on individual and community wellbeing. The concept is simply that the action of participating creates wellbeing, so that the process of involvement and the nature of that involvement is the key. This is as set out above distinct from participating more passively by visiting. A key issue for Historic England will be whether any volunteering produces the same results or whether there are distinctive aspects of the historic environment of which we should be aware as we develop our USP in this area.

5.3.1.   Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Volunteering Study

A 3-year study of the social benefits of heritage-related volunteering conducted by the HLF revealed that 'HLF volunteers reported levels of mental health and wellbeing that are far higher than for the general population, or for the general volunteering population' (BOP 2011). Using both quantitative and qualitative methods of evaluation, the study examined the volunteering experiences of randomly selected participants across 134 HLF-funded heritage projects undertaken between 2008 and 2011. While the results of the qualitative evaluation were not reported on in detail, the quantitative investigation, based on levels of SWB and psychological wellbeing (PWB), found that the positive outcomes of heritage volunteering stemmed largely from the 'social engagement', and 'self-worth' or 'playing a useful part in things', which participants experienced as a result of their involvement (BOP 2011). Though positive and informative, these outcomes were limited by patterns of self-selection and mainly reflected the experiences of groups that were predominantly older, white, retired, well-educated and based in more prosperous areas. Thus, the study could only comment on the wellbeing experience of a specific demographic range.

5.3.2.   Excavation projects

A common form of heritage involvement which has been investigated for its therapeutic potential in recent years is that of community archaeology. In an

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assessment of the wellbeing benefits afforded by archaeological excavation, Faye Sayer notes:

> *it has been asserted that the benefits of participation in archaeology are not just personal, but have a wider social impact at a local and community level, that in forming relationships with the past, individuals also form relationships with each other.* (Sayer 2015)

The community archaeology projects discussed below offer a range of examples which support this statement.

Can Digging Make You Happy?

In her own quantitative assessment of the wellbeing impact of archaeological excavation on students and community groups, Sayer identified that participant wellbeing improved in relation to the 'physicality', 'connectivity', 'satisfaction' and 'social dynamics' gained through excavation, and suggested that:

> *specifically, it is the physicality of excavation and the active engagement in the process of archaeological discovery and learning that supports the growth of positive personal attributes, which can result in an increased sense of wellbeing. Consequently, this research highlights the ability of archaeology to enable people to connect, be active, take notice, learn and give, all of which are believed to be the building blocks for greater wellbeing and personal happiness.*

Notwithstanding this positive claim, the study identified that the archaeological activities also had a negative impact on some of participants involved, with slight increases in nervousness amongst the community group, and in irritability, hostility, distress and upset for the student group. Subsequently, Sayer concluded that:

> *involvement in archaeological excavation projects cannot guarantee increased wellbeing or personal happiness, contrary to assertions made by some academics. In part, this is because attaining a greater sense of wellbeing and personal happiness on excavations is influenced by external factors such as personal choice, and social and contextual dynamics.*

DIG Manchester

DIG Manchester, a community archaeology project which took place between 2004 and 2007, also produced a number of personal and community wellbeing outcomes. Incorporating community excavations and creative outputs, the project was set up by Manchester City Council with the support of the HLF and a number of other

local agencies 'to develop pride in the community; to raise aspirations amongst young people; to be accessible to as many people in the community as possible' (Russell and Williams 2008). Evaluated through questionnaires and interviews, the project appears to have impacted personal wellbeing through stress-alleviation; physical exercise; more time spent outdoors; reduced social isolation; and increased social interaction. It also created connections between participants from different community groups, age groups and socio-economic status, and helped to develop local voluntary groups.

Working in partnership with schools, youth services, the Youth Offending Team, and the Greater Manchester Police, the project was successful in its aim of engaging young people and in its capacity as a 'diversionary activity project'. The work of the project was also deemed to be partly connected with a drop in street and petty crime in 2003 and 2004, and a reduction in antisocial behaviour. In terms of long-term benefits, the archaeological and creative activities gave participants new skills and knowledge.

The nature of the work promoted a greater awareness of, and connection to, local heritage, and contributed to a sense of community pride and responsibility. Other longer-lasting outcomes include the development of new archaeological groups, related annual events and further community digs. It is also believed that the creation of Northenden Farmer's Market came about as a result of the sense of community generated by the project. The project achieved a lot, but also noted that the locations of the digs were made up of a predominantly white population and more could have been done to involve black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups. Likewise, it was felt that the project could have engaged with a more diverse set of schools. Added to these oversights, the exact project objectives and evaluation were not decided upon from the outset of the initiative, which led to confusion and a largely retrospective evaluation, thereby diminishing the power of the assessment.

Homeless Heritage

In a community archaeology study undertaken with homeless people in Bristol and York, Rachel Kiddey obtained results similar to those discovered in both Sayer's work and the HLF study, in terms of participants' experience of increased social connectedness and the development of new skills. Using a variety of qualitative methods Kiddey established that these impacts were experienced largely in relation to the self-esteem and skills gained through the social dynamic of the project activities, feeling socially included and valued, and the feeling of playing a useful part in something they considered important and meaningful. The project had a longer-term impact in that it gave some of the participants the self-esteem to volunteer with an art project based in the wider community. As the project focused on contemporary sites of homelessness that were within the participants' living memory, it also had a more rehabilitative impact as it enabled them to work through difficult memories in a way that helped to strengthen their

sense of identity and give them hope for the future. As a result, Kiddey proposes that 'heritage work offers people the opportunity to consider their own experiences and perspectives in a wider historical context and facilitates consideration of the future through its focus on chronology and change.' (Kiddey 2014)

Making a mark on history

The HLF-funded project, Making a Mark on History (McMillan 2013) led by Hereford MIND, also reported wellbeing impacts connected to social and human capital. The project involved 50 volunteers, drawn from the local community and a group of people using Herefordshire MIND services, in the excavation of a deserted medieval village in Herefordshire. The method of evaluation employed is not explicitly stated, however the way in which the outcomes are reported suggests that a qualitative approach may have been used alongside anecdotal contributions. Alongside the development of new skills, social relationships, a sense of social belonging and progression to further education and other heritage projects, the metaphor of excavation was particularly resonant and therapeutic for participants with mental health issues with respect to themes of the unknown and emergent; both thought to play an integral role in the process of recovery. Some participants also found meaning in the universal human narratives of the site.

Operation Nightingale

In 2012 through a partnership between Wessex Archaeology and the Defence Archaeology Group, the Operation Nightingale programme was established 'with the intent of utilising both the technical and social aspects of field archaeology in the recovery and skill development of soldiers injured in the conflict in Afghanistan and other war zones' (Finnegan 2016). Studies carried out on the impact of the programme confirm that the practical and social aspects of the individual archaeological projects had a positive effect on both the psychological and general wellbeing of military personnel returning from service. Quantitative psychological assessments were carried out with a group of early-returned injured infantry requiring post-tour group activity psychological decompression (GAPD) for symptoms of anxiety, depression and trauma. The results showed that 'Soldiers reported a mean of 13%–38% improvement across the self-reported domains' (Nimenko and Simpson 2013). The study concluded that this form of group activity can:

> *help early-returned soldiers in reducing symptoms of anxiety, depression, isolation and psychological traumatic symptoms. It also helps to increase perception of their ability to work and socialise as a team and help them to an early return to work. It can provide soldiers with the opportunity to approach their supervisors in an informal manner and help in early detection of mental health problems.*

Further benefits reported from individual participant testimonies include: a newfound structure and sense of purpose, the development of new skills, and opportunities for career progression (Walshe *et al* 2010).

A qualitative evaluation of a separate Operation Nightingale project carried out with a group of injured veterans in 2015, identified four areas in which the project activities had a positive impact: motivation and access; mental health; veteran and teamwork; therapeutic environment and leadership. The following related impacts were observed:

> *the psychological benefits were improved self-esteem, confidence, a reduction in stigma and motivation to seek help. The reduction in situational stressors associated with difficult life conditions also appeared to improve mood, and there was a clear benefit in being in a caring environment where other people actively paid an interest. There were extended social benefits associated with being accepted as part of a team within a familiar military environment, which presented an opportunity to establish friendships and utilise military skill sets.* (Finnegan 2016)

The study further observed that:

> *organised outdoor activities offer multi-factorial hope for veterans searching for ways to ease the transition to civilian life and recover from military stress and trauma. The relaxing and reflective environment within a military setting appears to construct a sense of personal safety and thereby offers therapeutic value.* (Finnegan 2016)

5.3.3. Community-based Heritage Conservation

Recent AHRC-funded research carried out by the Universities of East Anglia and Southampton has also shown that community-based heritage conservation has an influence on wellbeing (Power and Smythe 2016). Undertaking a qualitative investigation of 32 East Anglia-based conservation groups which had been involved in the HLF 'All Our Stories' programme, the researchers found that the projects facilitated the development of new social networks, interpersonal skills, and intergenerational engagement. Some participants also found that sense of achievement they gained through the successful completion of a project was therapeutic. In addition, the projects supported more heritage-specific wellbeing impacts in the way that it connected people to place and heritage itself. One participant explained that for her, looking into the past gives great security and stability in a current modern climate of instability and anxiety about the present. Other participants reported that relating to the past in this way promotes a sense of comfort and increased connection to the area. Participants also experienced a sense

of ownership not found in other types of voluntary work. The projects had a long-lasting impact on the wider community particularly through increased awareness of 'themselves and their place', the creation of new spaces to disseminate and exhibit the heritage outputs, and social networks, both of which continued to grow beyond the life of the projects. Overall, the researchers noted that the projects contributed to community wellbeing through the sense of belonging, connection to place and greater social cohesion they facilitated. While the projects appear to have impacted the wider community, the participants involved in the projects themselves were largely older adults and, therefore, it could be argued that the immediate impacts documented are largely generationally and culturally specific.

5.3.4.   Discussion

It is clear from the few examples discussed here that the wellbeing effects of heritage volunteering and involvement tend to fall generally into categories of, what a recent HLF-commissioned report on the value of heritage has defined as, transactional and emotional impact (BritainThinks 2015). In the context of heritage value, transactional impact is made up of:

> *the practical benefits it brings to individuals or the community, for example providing families with an opportunity to spend time together, or supporting the local economy. Thought about in these terms, heritage has much less emotional resonance.*

Taking into account the range of project outcomes above, the following transactional wellbeing benefits might also be added to this list: social inclusion; reduction of disability stigma; inter-generational engagement; crime reduction; development of social networks; new practical and interpersonal skills; reciprocity; physical exercise; a sense of achievement and purpose; educational and career progression; and the creation and development of community groups, assets and resources. Complementing these benefits, the emotional impact of heritage involvement is defined in the following way:

> *an emotional connection can be generated when heritage is thought about in terms of preserving, celebrating or discovering an aspect of local heritage or culture that is special, or has a particular, personal meaning to residents. This kind of connection generates a sense of personal resonance.* (BritainThinks 2015)

This latter category is less immediately apparent due to the intangible nature of emotional experience and the difficulties it poses in terms of measurement (Hewson and Holden 2006). However, some of the qualitative examples in this review give an insight into some of the ways in which emotional wellbeing manifests through involvement in heritage: increased connection to place and heritage; greater meaning; comfort and stability; perspective gained through past narratives and the

metaphor of archaeological excavation; and a stronger sense of community identity, pride, responsibility and ownership.

Combined, these two main types of impact demonstrate that heritage involvement undoubtedly supports individual and community wellbeing by way of improved mental and physical health, self-development, and community cohesion and development. However, there is a need to understand exactly how heritage involvement produces these effects. As has been pointed out in the case of Operation Nightingale, '...it could easily be argued that many other different team activities, other than an archaeological dig, could have been chosen which could have had similar results' (Nimenko and Simpson 2013). This same critique could be applied to many of the transactional benefits identified in other projects. However, contrary to this reasoning, Power and Smyth (2016) suggest that some of the transactional benefits of heritage conservation work are intrinsically connected to the unique character of the heritage resource in the way that this type of involvement can:

> *have longer lasting health-enabling effects, given the wider collective sense of community, belonging, order, balance, stability and place which can be cultivated and sustained by researching and conserving the heritage of one's local area. In a sense, people can embody and live 'in' the very outputs that they have created, for example, guided walks and parks. There can also be health benefits associated with walking around between places associated with the heritage project.* (Power and Smyth 2016)

This argument is further supported by the observation that participants involved in the 'All Our Stories' conservation projects 'were able to reap a strong sense of ownership over the process and outputs, which is not found in some other forms of voluntarism' (Power and Smyth 2016). While this claim is compelling, further research is required in order to substantiate it. Nevertheless, it does provide a new angle on how heritage underpins community wellbeing which may help to shape future studies so that they are asking the right questions.

Other influences which should be taken into account are those of SWB as discussed in the previous section, as well as, a lack of control studies, narrow demographic, and poor project design and methods of evaluation. Social tensions were also noted in some projects, as intimated in Sayer's study, as having an impact on participant wellbeing. This latter occurrence demonstrates the importance of acknowledging the negative effects that such projects may have and not to focus exclusively on the positives. Thus, while these projects provide examples of excellent work and much evidence to show that heritage can act as a process to wellbeing, there is room for further research in this area which takes these factors into account.

This discussion focuses exclusively on projects that were purposely designed and/or evaluated in terms of wellbeing. However, numerous community heritage projects have been carried out in the past that have also yielded many social and personal benefits, (Simpson 2008) but have not been analysed specifically from the perspective of wellbeing. It is possible that if such projects were retrospectively evaluated for indicators of wellbeing, they may provide further evidence to position heritage as a process to wellbeing. A search of this kind could potentially constitute a separate study in itself.

5.4. Healing

This section looks at the ways in which cultural heritage has been used to treat specific health issues by potentially acting as a catalyst to healing. Some of the examples in the previous section have already demonstrated the unique therapeutic power of certain types of heritage involvement. This is particularly apparent in the impact that Operation Nightingale, Making a Mark on History and Homeless Heritage projects had on the physical and mental wellbeing of vulnerable participants. This area of research has also been addressed by a number of museum and archive-based projects which will be discussed below.

5.4.1. Heritage-in-health

One of the key and most nuanced contributions to research on the wellbeing value of heritage, is the series of heritage-in-health interventions carried out by the University College London Museums Collection (UCLMC) in conjunction with hospitals and other healthcare providers (Ander *et al* 2013; Lanceley *et al* 2011; Paddon *et al* 2014; Thomson *et al* 2014). Investigating the potential wellbeing benefits of museum object-handing for people in receipt of care or medical treatment, the studies took the form of facilitated object-handling sessions. The sessions were carried out in different hospitals and healthcare settings with groups varying in age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background and diagnosis. Based on SWB and PWB measures, the quantitative UCLMC studies demonstrated an increase in wellbeing scores following the handling sessions, with slight variations in improvement across groups with certain health issues. In the case of the control studies undertaken, the experimental groups scored higher than the comparison groups, across conditions. Although, the researchers noted that results from the non-controlled studies were also influenced by causal factors such as duration of patient stay or the therapeutic relationship between the patient and the facilitator. They also recognised that the small, and in some instances unequal, numbers within the control groups may have confounded the results. Furthermore, the researchers felt that the inclusion of randomised and longitudinal measures would have strengthened the overall impact of the studies.

The UCLMC heritage-in-health sessions also incorporated a significant qualitative element (Lanceley *et al* 2011). Alongside the completion of wellbeing surveys, the project participants were interviewed while interacting with the objects. The different benefits experienced by participants, across all of the studies, fell broadly into the following categories: 'influence of social/physical/environmental contexts', 'thinking and meaning-making', 'positive interactions' and 'self-esteem' (Paddon *et al* 2014). Most of these positive outcomes resulted from transactional benefits that occurred in connection with the heritage objects, while 'thinking and meaning-making' was more specifically related to the objects themselves. The object-handling sessions that took place with women diagnosed with ovarian cancer showed that the effects of thinking and meaning-making stimulated through object-handling were experienced on a more emotional level (Lanceley *et al* 2011). Designed and analysed using psychoanalytic theory, sessions revealed the symbolic forms and narratives embodied in the objects enabled the women to reflect on their emotional issues, and to find meaning in their illness. While this qualitative work was successful, the final evaluation of the project noted that the impact of the study could have been strengthened by the inclusion of larger sample sizes, and an accompanying longitudinal study. The evaluation also acknowledged that the study did not control for causal factors such as the effect of the individual facilitator and the nature of the objects.

5.4.2. 'Who Cares?' programme

The 'Who Cares?' programme (Froggett *et al* 2011) carried out by the University of Central Lancashire in partnership with Museums, Libraries and Archives Renaissance Northwest, also engaged with a range of vulnerable groups living with physical and mental health issues. The participants were recruited from a variety of hospital and residential care settings, as well as from the wider community. The sessions were held in hospital wards and residential care homes, historic buildings, community spaces and museums, and involved facilitated interaction with either a heritage object or site. Following each interaction, participants were encouraged to communicate their experience of the activities in the form of creative outputs such as art and poetry. Some sessions also involved educational talks from experts on different aspects of heritage. The projects took the form of structured courses spread over a number of weeks.

The 'Who Cares?' projects were evaluated predominantly using qualitative methods and analysed from a psychoanalytic perspective. Self-evaluation questionnaires were also used, however the evaluation report does not relate the results of this assessment. The projects impacted positively on participant wellbeing in the form of social and human capital, and the self-esteem resulting from these benefits. Participants also gained a greater sense of identity and perspective through meaning-making and cultural inclusion, the latter being defined as follows:

This happens not only because participants have new experiences and opportunities for social interaction but also because interaction with museum collections in favourable conditions offers people the opportunity to find new cultural forms in which to express their experience. Personal experience can then be communicated to others. This is a distinctive contribution that museums can make to wellbeing which on the one hand draws on the nature of their collections and their symbolic cultural significance, and on the other hand the personal symbolic significance the collections hold for individuals.
(Froggett et al 2011)

Despite the many positives of the 'Who Cares?' programme, a number of the groups experienced a drop-off in attendance, partly due to organisational difficulties. The programme also acknowledged that the project results were not thoroughly analysed due to time constraints and that consequently the full value of the work was not exploited.

5.4.3.   Mental Health and Heritage Working in Partnership

A partnership project between Museums, Libraries and Archives Renaissance Southeast (MLARS), and a number of local mental health services in Guildford also delivered a series of museum projects aimed at evidencing the ways in which museums and heritage organisations can benefit health and wellbeing (Rasbery and Goddard 2011). The method of evaluation adopted is unclear, and much of the feedback appears to be anecdotal, but the report suggests that the outcomes of the projects were discerned from participants' creative outputs, group discussions, and individual testimonials. The main benefits reported were: social inclusion and the development of new social networks; education; skills development; inspiration; creativity and self-expression; the development of life skills; and the confidence and self-esteem the participants experienced as a result of all of the above factors. The report also notes that, in certain cases, participants explored themes of mental health and personal narrative in the context and narratives of the artefacts themselves.

5.4.4.   Inspiring Futures

Inspiring Futures: Volunteering for Wellbeing (Garcia and Winn 2017), a 3 year HLF-funded project, carried out in collaboration with the Imperial War Museum North and Manchester museums, was designed to build skills and confidence in participants with low mood and social isolation, through a programme of training and volunteer experience, and personal development. Delivered across 10 heritage venues in Greater Manchester the programme sought to work primarily with groups from disadvantaged backgrounds and with the poorest mental health, and engaged young people aged 18-25, older people aged 50+ and armed forces veterans. The impact of the programme was evaluated using interviews, and quantitative surveys, including a longitudinal study, which measured participants

SWB and PWB. The cost-effectiveness of the project was calculated using the SROI model. The analysis of the results demonstrated improvements in participants' mental and emotional wellbeing, skills, educational attainment and employability. It also found the following key benefits of volunteering in museums: 'Participants' interaction with visitors and with the museums' collections leads to a strong sense of connectedness; participants feel connected to the local stories that are told in the museums. This connection to human experiences appears to lead to improved self-awareness, belonging, imagination and ability to relate better to others' (Garcia and Winn 2017). The results also showed that 'the intervention worked for the target groups, the majority benefiting from sustained outcomes for almost three years after the initial placements.'

With regard to SROI, the project concluded that for every £1 spent, a social and economic return of £3.50 was created. The project appears to have been successful in achieving its objectives, but did experience some difficulties with regard to resource and expertise, in that some participants' issues were too severe to manage and accommodate, and put too much of a strain on the resources of partner organisations.

5.4.5.   Current Projects

This sub-section briefly reviews projects that are on-going or have not yet been fully evaluated or documented, but which explore and demonstrate other ways in which heritage can impact mental wellbeing. These examples may help to inform future recommendations.

Museums on Prescription

This is a three-year research project (2014-17) funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) investigating the value of heritage encounters in social prescribing. 'Social prescribing links people to sources of community support to improve their health and wellbeing'.[71] As part of the research study, a 2-year project looking at the impact of a 'Museums on Prescription' scheme based in Central London and Kent on older adults in terms of social isolation, loneliness, PWB and SWB.

Youthforia Mental Health Action Group

This is a HLF-funded project designed to help remove the stigma of mental ill health in young people by understanding the heritage of mental health. In this study, five groups of young people will explore archives, museums and art galleries across the North West, focusing on Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cumbria,

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[71] https://www.ucl.ac.uk/culture/projects/museums-on-prescription   [accessed   01.05.17]

Lancashire and Cheshire.[72] They will look back as far as the 19th century to map out a timeline of key dates and research the personal and wider stories behind them. This activity is a vital part of a campaign to raise awareness of the challenges still faced by young people with mental illnesses today.

Human Henge

A two-year project (2016-2018) carried out in collaboration between the Richmond Fellowship, Bournemouth University, English Heritage and the Restoration Trust which combines:

> *archaeology and creativity in a World Heritage Site as a way of improving mental health and reaching out to marginalised communities. The project builds on the idea that Stonehenge was once a place of healing by exploring the relationships between people and place in the past and the present. Thinking about how people might have used ancient places, come together for communal endeavours, interacted, and created social networks creates opportunities to break down some of the emotional barriers that underpin many mental health issues. Through a programme of participant-led activities, local people living with mental health problems and on low incomes, come together for fun and therapeutic adventures.[73]*

Therapeutic Landscapes of Prehistory

A three-year (2015-2018) AHRC-funded doctoral project undertaken by Claire Nolan (University of Reading) which explores the therapeutic value of prehistoric landscapes in the present day. It is a phenomenological study of how people experience, interpret and value the prehistoric landscapes of Stonehenge, Avebury and the Vale of Pewsey. It also aims to identify methods that are capable of accessing the less tangible ways in which people experience heritage assets, and to explore how this knowledge can support the development of the historic environment as a therapeutic resource. The project engages local residents, and student and community groups, and uses a range of qualitative methods drawn from psychotherapy, archaeology and human geography to understand, ultimately, how the perceived intrinsic value of the historic environment directly influences individual wellbeing.

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[72] https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/mental-health-and-young-people-%E2%80%93-looking-back-move-forward[accessed 01.07.17]
[73] http://humanhenge.org/ [accessed 01.05.17]

5.4.6. Discussion

The projects demonstrate a wealth of therapeutic benefits and good practice. Like the process and participation studies these types of heritage work also support the development of social and human capital, with the quantitative studies showing a clear impact on PWB and SWB. Alongside these benefits, many of the studies, especially those which incorporated a qualitative component, suggest that heritage assets have a unique therapeutic impact through 'thinking and meaning-making' and cultural inclusion. Limitations of the projects included small or incomparable sample sizes, and issues of causality, particularly the uncertainty around the impact of the relationship between the participant and the facilitator, which requires further exploration in respect of future research. Some researchers felt that projects which lacked longitudinal and randomised controls were weaker. Likewise, in some cases poor project design, organisation, and a lack of appropriate expertise negatively impacted the delivery and evaluation of projects. In addition, the same issues regarding SWB and PWB measures discussed in previous sections are also relevant for these examples. The learning from these limiting factors suggests that future studies might be improved through further research into new methods and measures that can better address issues of causality, including the use of randomised controls.

The positive outcomes of the Inspiring Futures project suggest that the use of longitudinal measures is advantageous, particularly when demonstrating wider social and societal impact, and cost-effectiveness. The qualitative studies seem to have provided some of the most informative and meaningful results and, in this way, should compensate for any limitations encountered through the use of SWB and PWB measures in future work. Lastly, it is imperative that the project design considers the costs and resources required to work safely and effectively with vulnerable groups, and to ensure that projects have sufficient resources to carry out full evaluation. The positive results of these projects were mainly associated with excavation, heritage object-handling, and visits to museums, galleries and historic buildings. However, some of the methods and approaches might be adapted to suit other heritage settings and activities, and some of the current projects may well provide evidence to confirm this.

5.5. Mechanism

This section considers how heritage and the historic environment can act as a tool or mechanism to bring people together with a particular social impact. It can provide a common point to start a conversation or bring people together about something else.

From previous sections it is evident that one of the main impacts on wellbeing engendered by the heritage work described, is the way in which it affects social

inclusion, the development of social networks and improves interpersonal skills. This is supported by recent findings in Heritage Counts 2017:

> *Heritage projects can become part of the currency of conversation within a local community which boosts instances of 'co-presence' amongst distantly connected people: 72% of HLF volunteers surveyed increased or significantly increased contact with older adults, and 23% stated that volunteering helped them to increase their understanding of over 65 year olds.*[74]

Indeed, in this much, Power and Smyth's study on the social impact of conservation work affirm that interest in heritage was the primary motivation for bringing people together on conservation projects (Power and Smyth 2016). The MLARS and Who Care's projects also demonstrated how heritage work can be used to facilitate creative activities, and the former project noted that for some participants, the positive impact they experienced was mainly as a result of the therapeutic effect of making art. The projects and studies discussed below provide some other examples of how heritage can act as a mechanism to social wellbeing.

5.5.1. British Museum Reminiscence Programme

The programme of reminiscence work carried out at the British Museum illustrates the unique way in which heritage can engage specific groups in conversation around specific subjects and personal memories (Phillips 2008). Delivered as an 8-week programme, one of the aims of the project was to investigate how object handling might help to improve the wellbeing of older adults aged 70-95 years. It was hoped that museum objects could be used as 'a valuable tool for engaging older adults, encouraging discussion and socializing'. To this end, 'familiar objects were used which could spark reminiscences and might enable the group to get to know one another and perhaps to feel unity through common experiences. Through participants listening to each other's memories and opinions, it was hoped the project would encourage all participants to feel valued'. The project found that reminiscence has the potential to encourage dialogue between participants. The objects led the conversation, acting as a conversation starter and a social lubricant. As a result the participants bonded as a group, recalled memories, talked about their personal histories and attained new knowledge which enabled them to think about things from different perspectives.

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[74]   https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2017/heritage-and-society-2017.pdf [accessed 30 October 2017]

5.5.2. Memorialising at the Chattri Indian Memorial

Susan Ashley's study of the use of the Chattri Indian Memorial in Sussex, investigates how this public site 'hosts and embodies heritage in complex ways'. Located on the edge of Brighton on the Sussex Downs, the Memorial was built in 1921 to honour Indian soldiers who fought on the Western Front during the First World War, and was subsequently abandoned after its unveiling. In 1951, local Second World War veterans initiated an annual event at the site, 'to perpetuate remembrance of that war and soldiers' sacrifice, shifting the value of the monument from a very specific colonial symbolic function to a broader-based value as place for rituals of commemoration'. In 1999 the local legion decided to discontinue the event. In response, a Brighton resident from the Sikh community, who had no previous connections to the event or any military background set up the first Indian-led memorial service in 2000 which has now become an annual community event.

Ashley's qualitative study of the site and the activities and events which take place there, found that the annual memorial service:

> *clearly brought out a sense of camaraderie; belonging to a community cemented through the historic site and annual ritual dedicated to remembering the past. What had been a colonial heritage object was re-appropriated by this minority group proud of their Indian heritage in an act that problematized the authorised heritage discourse of this place, and connects history and community to their position as minority outsiders in the UK. (Ashley 2016)*

In relation to the cross-cultural relations the memorial facilitated, one interviewee noted,

> *'they feel that, you know, the community spirit. And the diversity of the people that are there, black, white, Indian- they're all there. And they feel that. This is a very 'white' County- East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. So this is a good example of multiculturalism in practice, if you like. Where everybody just comes in and there's a bond.'*

The study demonstrated that such historic monuments have the power to strengthen cultural identity, while also facilitating cultural cohesion and inclusion.

5.5.3. Current projects

As mentioned above, the Quay Place programme, (Ecorys 2016) a HLF-funded initiative carried out in collaboration with Suffolk MIND and the Churches Conservation Trust, is a good example of how historic buildings might be reused to facilitate wellbeing through providing a venue for community events, activities and

therapeutic services. The project restored St Mary at the Quay, a Grade II listed medieval church in the dockland area of Ipswich, which lay unused since the Second World War, and at risk of serious structural decay. Through community engagement events held to inform the design of the project, Suffolk MIND found that '...getting groups together – older and younger people alike - to talk about local heritage brought the community closer together and could forge new friendships'.

Thus, alongside using the venue as a place for heritage interpretation, telling the history of the church, Ipswich's waterfront and port area and the people who built it, the project plans to offer a range of complementary therapy provided by self-employed therapists; meeting rooms and event hire; art exhibitions; performance by artists; a café for visitors and meetings; and a quiet space for people to rest and reflect, including a garden. The project intends to measure the wellbeing impact of these resources through interviews with beneficiaries and staff, and through, volunteer/visitor/user surveys. Basing some of the expected outcomes on the Govanhill Baths project in (Govanhill Baths Community Trust) which involved the renovation of an historic building into a wellbeing centre, they suggest that while evidence of impact is limited, the social and economic benefits to be gained from such projects are significant.

5.5.4.   Discussion

These projects provide an insight into how heritage can facilitate social wellbeing. They intimate how it is produced not only through the social interaction involved in heritage activities, but also through the creative and therapeutic opportunities that heritage assets can host and enable. Of particular note here, is the way in which heritage acts as an inspiration for creative activities which promote wellbeing. Its ability to strengthen the identity of minority ethnic groups and stimulate community cohesion is also an area of untapped potential and could be developed further. Likewise the Quay place projects provides perspective on the possibilities for the heritage sector to play a part in the development of community assets, through the conservation and re-use of dis-used and decaying historic buildings and spaces.

5.6.   Place

Much of the work which illustrates the relationship between heritage, sense of place and community is summarised over recent years in the Heritage Counts reports. There is a wealth of underpinning data and analysis that is referenced accordingly in each tier, with Heritage Counts offering the high level 'sound bites'. The reports have gathered evidence to suggest that:

> *heritage can play an important role in helping people understand*
> *more about themselves and others. It can act as a medium in which*
> *to bring communities together, engaging all members of society and*

increasing inclusion. Heritage experiences can help people to understand more about themselves and others who are different to them. This can contribute to greater levels of tolerance, respect and increased community cohesion.[75]

The 2017 report found evidence that, heritage projects can contribute to a greater public spirit and mutual understanding as well as to increased civic pride and positive feelings about people's local area. It also presented figures from the Heritage Open Day internal evaluation for 2017 which showed 86% of visitors reporting that Heritage Open Days made them more proud of their local area, and 75% that it made them feel more connected to their local community.

Another study which looks at the relationship between sense of place and social capital discusses the role of 'place-shaping' in community development, and states that:

> *While building trust is seen as likely to emerge via community involvement in local decision -making, promoting empowerment is understood as likely to be generated through shared interests, history, geographical features and key buildings and symbolic events. Culture and heritage are understood as key methods of generating belonging – and the historic environment (even in its narrowest definition) is explicitly evoked.* (Graham et al 2009)

Some of the projects discussed in the various sections above also pick up on some of these themes. In particular, Power and Smyth's study provides a good example of how this works in practice. It alleges that the conservation work carried out as part of the 'All Our Stories' projects contributed to a newfound sense of community:

> *The study design provided open opportunities to participants for thoughtful and felt responses. These included a range of affective experiences such as passion, curiosity, delight, accomplishment, pride, reciprocity, and growth. Moreover, these positive affects appeared to have contributed to wider experiences of belonging, engagement, and social wellbeing, with each tied to place overtly.*

This is asserted again in relation to the wider community benefits which arose from 'active community interpretation' or 'active engagement in visiting, seeing, hearing about or feeling a space/object representing one's local area', by which, 'the therapeutic effect can be extended to others through the sharing and interpreting of the heritage representation.' Ashely's study of the Chattri memorial also

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[75] https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2017/heritage-and-society-2017.pdf [accessed 01.05.17]

demonstrates how heritage can create a sense of community in yet another way. This was not only experienced amongst the minority Asian community that initiated the memorial event, but also between the different cultural groups that attended, in terms of mutual recognition, empathy and remembrance for what the monument signified and has come to signify for the various groups, both culturally and universally. Other projects mentioned, such as DIG Manchester, also make reference to the sense of pride and ownership that communities experience through community heritage involvement.

5.6.1.   20 Years in 12 Places

The Heritage Lottery Fund 20 Years in 12 Places study (BritainThinks 2015) also attests to some of the community benefits already mentioned. The study found that the majority of participants agreed that 'heritage makes local areas better to live' in the way that it boosts local economies, makes local areas more attractive and encourages local pride. One of the study participants felt that local pride occurred in the following way,

> *'there's a tremendous pride in the history of the area, even if they're from Govan or Carlton or wherever. They want to see it look better and be maintained properly. A huge part of that is the heritage and the history. Heritage is very important to them...The look and feel of a place is very important to how people feel about themselves.'*

The study further asserted that local pride is also brought about 'by celebrating residents' shared history and by preserving something that is thought to be worth remembering about local history' and through the sense of ownership that heritage engenders. Participants also cited social cohesion as a community benefit saying that it did this by fostering understanding between different groups of residents and unifying them around a shared history.

5.6.2.   Discussion

There is some evidence to suggest that heritage and sense of place can stimulate and facilitate a sense of community, but much of it comes from survey data and needs to be substantiated in order to demonstrate how these feelings about heritage and community work in practice. Power and Smyth's work shows how a qualitative assessment of impact is particularly useful in drawing out the less tangible influences that heritage and sense of place have on a sense of community and offer a template which might be used in future projects. Likewise, both Ashley's work and the HLF study help to give a better understanding of how heritage and place bring about a sense of pride and social cohesion. The latter project also demonstrates good practice in the adoption of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain this information, again offering a road map for future studies. Themes of community in question are well-developed in these studies, but would also benefit

from further investigation, especially with regard to causal factors which might affect one's sense of community, for example how long a participant has lived in a place.

5.7. Environment

The nature-wellbeing link has been extensively explored through the MENE surveys; a national survey on people and the natural environment (Natural England 2013; NEF 2005 [76]) and the link between the natural environment and the benefits it provides is now almost taken for granted. However, less recognised is the fact that in the UK many of the 'natural' elements that people value (woodland, hedgerows, footpaths and routeways, field patterns and pasture, heathland and down land) are all the result of millennia of human interactions with the environment.

Currently there has been little research into whether the cultural heritage associated with these 'natural places' enhances their impact upon human wellbeing. For example, a study published by Natural England in 2011 on walking routes and wellbeing in Devon did not mention the history of the landscape at all.[77] More is also needed to understand the link between green infrastructure in cities (much of which in the UK is historic) and the wellbeing of urban populations (cf. Wiggins 2016)

5.7.1. Discussion

The UN predicts that by 2030, 60% of the world's population will live in urban areas,[78] and this makes the protection and promotion of green infrastructure crucial both to the health of cities and their inhabitants. Furthermore, green heritage plays an important role in limiting the impacts of heat island effect (e.g. Forestry Commission 2009[79]), further adding to physical wellbeing and providing physical, social and psychological benefits to people (e.g. Cohen *et al.* 2007; Larson *et al* 2016; Alcock *et al* 2014). However, our public parks in particular face considerable challenges in securing their protection and curation (see Heritage Lottery Fund 2016).

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[76] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/127020 [accessed 20.02.18]
[77] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/47013?category=127020 [accessed 20.02.18]
[78] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/urbanization/the_worlds_cities_in_2016_data_booklet.pdf [accessed 20.02.18]
[79] https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/urgp_evidence_note_004_Heat_amelioration.pdf/$file/urgp_evidence_note_004_Heat_amelioration.pdf [accessed 19/10/2017]

6.   RESEARCH GAPS

6.1.   Intangible heritage

A crucial link between heritage and wellbeing that has been under-exploited is in the contribution of intangible heritage. Despite a gradual bringing together of the concepts of tangible and intangible heritage in international charters, in the practice of conservation and designation the relative impact of both is rarely articulated.

While extensive work has recently been undertaken by UNESCO and the World Health Organisation[80] there has been relatively little exploration of the subject in the UK, other than recognition of its importance; it is recognised in the cultural heritage manifesto of ICOMOS UK[81] as well as a priority for the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHCR[82]). More recent Historic England initiatives like 'Another England' have sought to redress this balance and tell stories that link intangible heritage to people's memories.

6.2.   Community Wellbeing

A problem remains in linking *community* wellbeing to heritage. In fact, although the UK Government has been assessing wellbeing at the national level (including economic performance, quality of life, the state of the environment, sustainability, and equality) these measures do not necessarily capture 'community wellbeing'.

The WWCfW have recently published their local authority indicators,[83] which capture individual wellbeing in a given area, yet this is not enough to measure the wellbeing of a community as a whole. Community wellbeing takes into account all of the individual wellbeing factors, plus things like intra-community relations, inter-generational connections and social capital. These relationships have been recently borne out by ethnographic research in East Anglia (Da Silva-Sinha *in prep*).

Community wellbeing is less well defined and understood as a concept compared to individual wellbeing, in part because it can be complex and contested. But it is also due to the fact that indicators measuring a community's wellbeing may be described using other terms, such as 'social capital' or 'liveability'. Within this suite of 273 raw

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[80] https://ich.unesco.org/en/news/who-and-unesco-experts-explore-the-linkages-between-culture-health-and-well-being-00224 [accessed 01.05.17]

[81] http://www.icomos-uk.org/about-us/ [accessed 29.03.18]

[82] http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/ [accessed 29.03.18]

[83] https://www.whatworkswellbeing.org/blog/what-wellbeing-data-do-local-authorities-need-to-make-better-decisions/ [accessed 01.06.17]

indicators which do cover some heritage aspects, they are predominantly (11%) focussed on health and wellbeing.[84]

6.3. Historic environment

The largest gap is the particular and unique relationship of place and people and how this can improve wellbeing. The WWCfW has focussed on the relationship of activity through arts and sports to wellbeing and on the notion of 'taking part' (as based on the survey of the same name) of individuals in specific heritage sites and visiting as an activity. This is largely because the nature of the existing evidence focusses on these aspects.

It is a good time therefore to develop an approach that considers connecting people with place and assesses the kinds of ways in which the historic environment can be a tool towards improving wellbeing.

6.4. Indicators

Wellbeing indicators may best be illustrated by the NEF indicator structure below (Figure 3) and this introduces us to subject areas that can be evaluated.
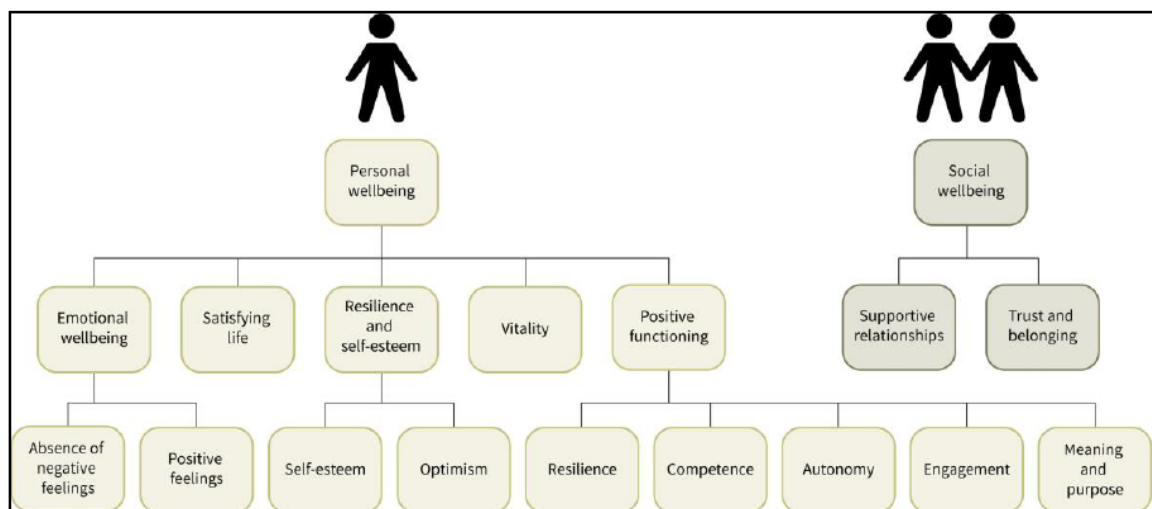
Figure 3 - NEF indicator structure adapted from their national accounts framework[85]

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[84] https://www.whatworkswellbeing.org/product/community-wellbeing-indicators-scoping-review/ [accessed 01.05.17]
[85] Source: International Journal of Heritage Studies, 2013
Vol. 19, No. 3, 229–242, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2011.651740

The NEF definition and the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' model would represent a recognised pathway which Historic England could adopt in its corporate language. We also need to be clear on whether our main concern is individual wellbeing, community wellbeing or wellbeing in general (at a national level). For this we need to map clear definitions with projects targeted at specific and relevant audiences and with clearly defined outcomes.

Responding to the difficulties in defining and measuring community wellbeing, the WWCW have produced a new local wellbeing indicator framework based on the wellbeing indicators currently available.[86] The framework takes into account the most important outcomes and risk factors for, and determinants of, local wellbeing, and groups them under the following six domains: Economy, Education and Childhood, Equality, Health, Place, and Social Relationships. This framework offers a good set of guidelines which may serve to help measure the impact of the historic environment on community wellbeing.

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[86] https://www.whatworkswellbeing.org/product/understanding-local-needs-for-wellbeing-data/ [accessed 01.06.17]

7.   STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

This section summarises feedback from two events at which stakeholder insight was captured. At each event a paper on the historic environment and wellbeing was presented by Historic England, followed by a feedback session devised to discuss the relationship of the historic environment to wellbeing, and especially to gather perceptions of Historic England's potential role.

The events at which the stakeholder consultation was held were *Health and Heritage* organised by the Churches Conservation Trust and Suffolk MIND (22-24 March 2017, Quay Place, Ipswich) and *Historic England staff conference* (18-19 July 2017, York University), and were led by Linda Monckton and Jenny Chesher. The main aim of holding two consultations was to compare external and internal perceptions on the topic to help develop recommendations for our engagement with wellbeing. The objectives were as follows:

- To gather opinions from those likely to be interested in the topic to help us refine our agenda but possibly broaden our perspective at the same time.

- To understand perceptions on our possible approach to wellbeing.

- To provide tangible and helpful suggestions for places to go and opportunities to follow up as we assess our direction and resources.

- To flag up informed potential risks and challenges from those with some experience of wellbeing projects, local community work and historic buildings and landscape protection.

7.1.   Results

The results of the two sessions were as follows:

- The primary drivers for our involvement in wellbeing were identified as social rather than political. Over one third of Historic England staff believed that addressing community wellbeing and social inequalities was a primary driver for our engagement with the wellbeing agenda (Figure 4).

- External professionals believed addressing barriers to accessing heritage, and understanding people's values and experiences, and partnering with 'non-traditional' groups were the most important drivers for wellbeing work.

- Historic England staff believed lobbying Government was a secondary key driver, this, however, scored lower for externals.
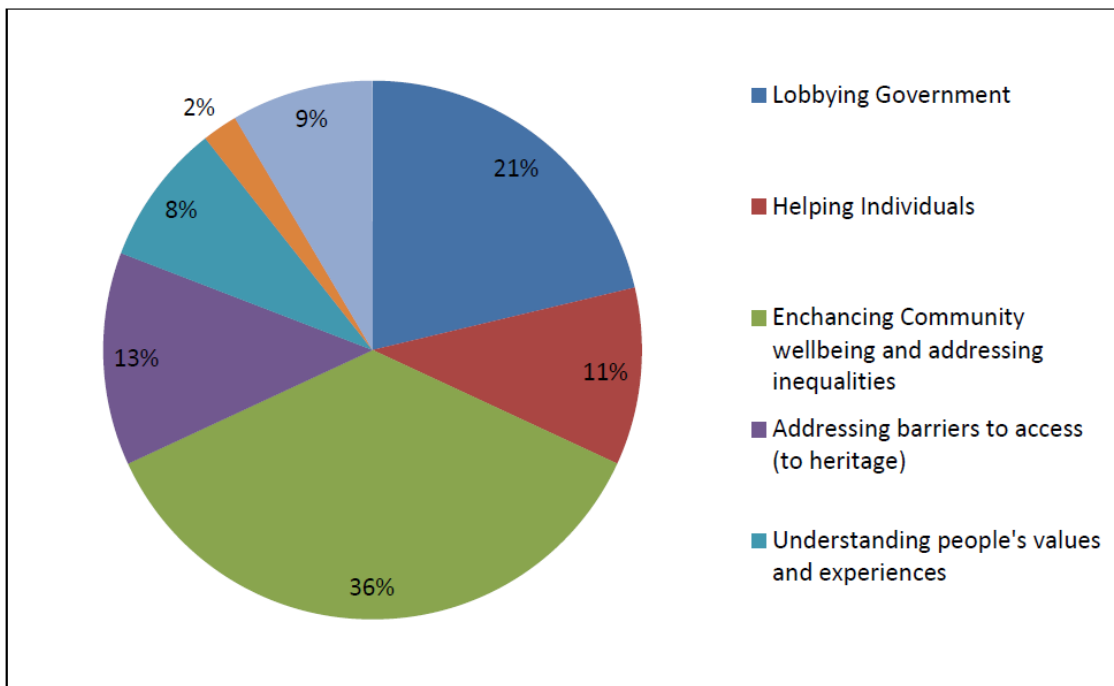
Figure 4 - Drivers for Historic England's engagement with wellbeing internal results

7.1.1. Opportunities

- Wellbeing could be a mechanism to enable Historic England to reach new people, including vulnerable groups.

- Historic England staff believe engaging with the wellbeing agenda could be an effective tool to help broaden the organisation's reach into society.

- Wellbeing provides a possible means to improve the reputation of Historic England as a socially valuable organisation.

7.1.2. Community & individual wellbeing

- Staff considered individual wellbeing in terms of themselves, and community wellbeing, as the remit of the organisation.

- Staff wished to help at a community level, particularly in the area of strengthening links between place and identity and belonging.

- Community wellbeing is currently much harder to measure and understanding individual wellbeing may be a route towards better assessing community wellbeing.
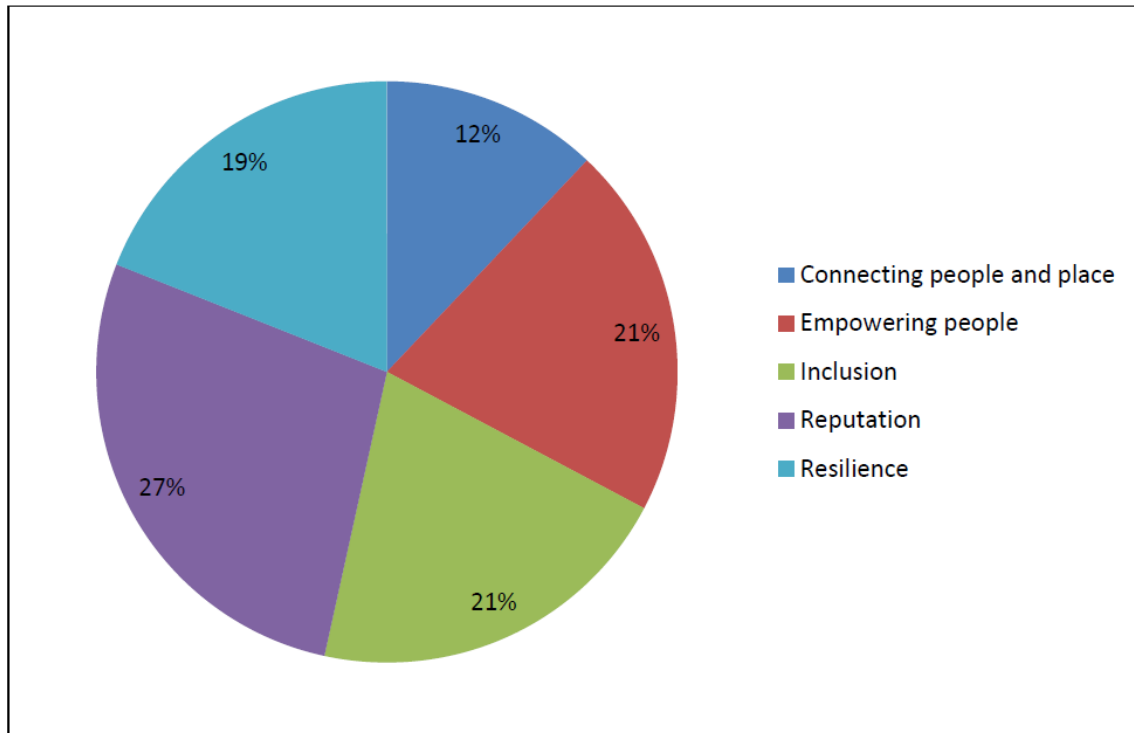
Figure 5 - Advantages of the wellbeing agenda as perceived by staff

7.1.3. Benefits

- A route to engage with new partners who have expertise in this field and through this help change perceptions of the historic environment's potential for social benefit.

- Historic England staff believe their wellbeing would be enhanced if our work had a clearer demonstrable impact on society rather than just on the historic environment.

- Historic England staff are keen to let local communities know who we are and that we are understood to be a force for social rather than exclusively economic or cultural good.

- Historic England has a corporate objective and a desire amongst its staff to address an inclusion agenda and see wellbeing as one of many possible ways to delivering this.
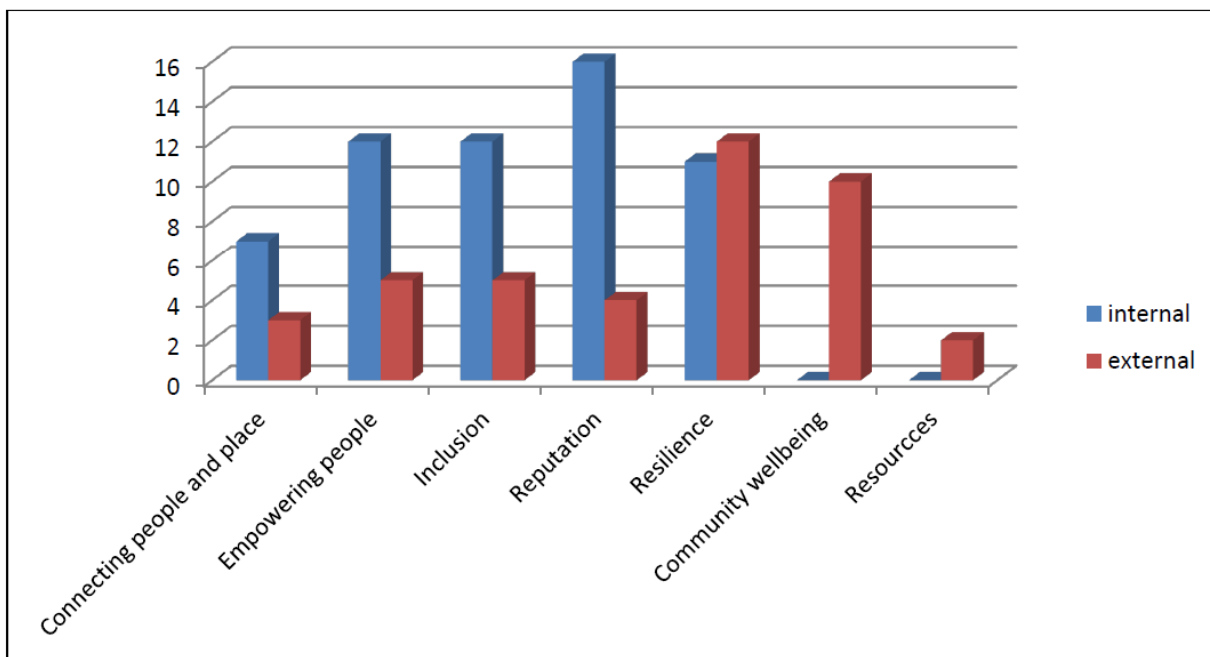
Figure 6 - Advantages of wellbeing agenda: comparison of internal and external perceptions

7.1.4. Challenges

- It takes time to connect with people and for project development with volunteers; this could increase if we work with more vulnerable rather than self-selecting groups.

- If this work is a priority then work plans and grant administration need to enable this to happen through an element of re-prioritising.

- The personal resources required to develop complex community projects require commitment and expertise in potentially new areas, at a time of increased casework and fiscal pressure.
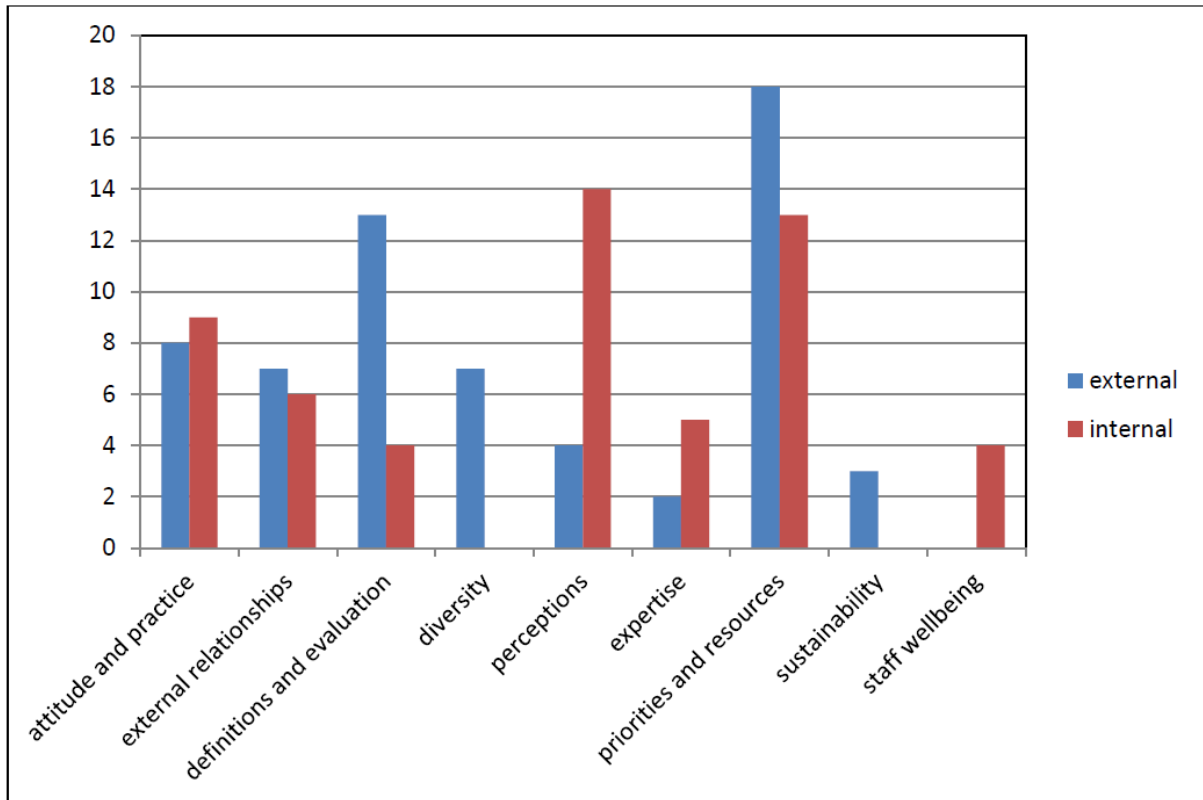
Figure 7 - Challenges of wellbeing agenda (comparison between internal and external stakeholders)

8.   CONCLUSION

The results of this report show there is an opportunity to better demonstrate the link between the historic environment and wellbeing. How this is enacted depends largely on the way in which the heritage asset, activity or object interacts with people.

The suggested framework helps to articulate these differences. However, there are multiple levels on which we could be considering wellbeing. In terms of our engagement with the topic at Historic England, as our strategy develops we will need to be clear on what we are able to deliver under each of these areas:

1. Project-based wellbeing outcomes
2. Programme-based wellbeing outcomes
3. The wellbeing impact of Historic England as an organisation
4. The wellbeing impact of the historic environment.
5. Making the case for the value of cultural heritage with others

Each of these requires slightly different responses and we would do well to establish a framework for dealing with these. In practice, it may be that we begin with the project level work (Area 1) and collaborate with others such as the WWCfW to make the case for the value of such activity (Area 5), moving towards Areas 2-4 as we develop our evidence base, longitudinal studies and evaluation methods.

Set within this framework, the issue of individual and community wellbeing needs to be considered, especially how we define the latter and how it can be measured as something more than an aggregate of individual wellbeing. Many of the case studies presented in this document show some ways of achieving this and how different solutions can relate to different circumstances.

What is especially clear from this assessment is the wealth of research and evidence in some areas, such as volunteering, an increasing interest in specific types of projects to do with healing and a relative dearth of material on issue of place and identity.

Each of the five ways of relating our work to wellbeing (Areas 1-5 above)which might be considered as layers of proof, needs to take additional issues into account, for example ensuring SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) and consistent evaluation methods that allow parity and comparison with others work in this field.

They also raise the important issue of whether our primary goal is to demonstrate the value of the work of Historic England to wellbeing, or whether we are aiming to demonstrate the value of the historic environment to wellbeing. The latter subdivides into the issues of whether we are using the historic environment as a mechanism to enact other social activities which themselves are known to aid wellbeing, or whether we are making a claim about the specificity of the historic environment and its direct impact.

The framework set out here suggests that using the historic environment as a mechanism to aid other activities is the most common and best researched relationship linking heritage and wellbeing. As we have suggested here, this might be a tool to get people together to talk about other things that have a social cohesion objective (Heritage as Mechanism); it could be the process of undertaking an activity that is in and of itself the wellbeing component, but the opportunity to do this is provided by an organisation such as our own and others facilitating this active participation (Heritage as Process). These two are certainly the areas that we could engage with directly through certain locally based projects, such as Heritage at Risk, Heritage Action Zones and local advocacy in particular. In fact there is considerable evidence that much of this work is being done already but it is not being done with the aim of increasing wellbeing, that is a by-product of the work to protect or conserve the historic environment, and as a result it is not evaluated or understood. There is much to learn from others in this area and to find best ways to approach this and collaborative working with other interested parties would be a productive place to start.

With regards to Heritage as Place, we probably have most to contribute and much to learn. The relationship between sense of place, power of place, belonging and identity is complex, multi-faceted and not static. The challenge in translating this into a meaningful and measurable concept is not insignificant; however this area of interest would be the only one which most clearly met the dual objectives set out above of demonstrating the specific value of Historic England (as a non-curatorial body with a largely assets and place-based focus) and the unique contribution of the historic environment to wellbeing. This certainly should be an area that we consider for in-depth research and assessment with others.

Set alongside these project or research based initiatives, there is the clear potential in this area, as shown by many examples detailed above, for allowing wellbeing objectives to focus our minds on the people we would like to reach and how to do that. This could provide a real opportunity to work with others and collaborate with groups we have less experience of working with. New objectives will require some new methods of engagement as well as evaluation. The inevitable follow on from this is that we need to be sure we have the expertise, or access to it, to facilitate such projects and to set project objectives that work for all partners, rather than simply aim to have others help us reach our goals. Equality of esteem in partnerships is one route to achieving this.

In order to build on the work of this assessment we need to have a sense of direction. The stakeholder research and comparative studies set out above help define these. At the broadest level we might wish to help Government address social inequality, social inclusion and wellbeing at individual and community levels. We have seen the potential to break down barriers of access to the historic environment through this agenda and support the wellbeing of the organisation itself.

We must also be clear on the degree of change in these areas we can achieve; wellbeing is not the same as mental health, and as an organisation our work is likely to support only aspects of the multiple variables that come together to support wellbeing. Yet we can work in ways that increase impact by providing a framework to show how our work relates to the complex picture of variables and ensure we report on the impact of those aspects most relevant. We can work collaboratively with others to contribute more to the whole picture of wellbeing. With this in mind working with local authorities and health commissioning bodies is most likely to enable this sort of joined up thinking, especially at the project level.

The logic model which follows (Figure 8) sets out the issues raised in this report, what we think it would be productive to achieve and the steps required to realise those aims. It forms the basis of a proposed strategy for enhancing understanding of the role the historic environment can play in promoting wellbeing, and provides a set of principles from which an action plan could be produced.

SITUATION		PLANNED WORK		INTENDED RESULTS		
Rationale	**Assumptions**	**Resources**	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Impact**
To demonstrate the public value of the historic environment	There is a relationship between engaging with the Historic Environment and health	Historic England staff time	Pilot projects to assess qualitiative evaluation	A review of non-heritage values	Clearer articulation of pubic value	Address social inclusion and engagement
To articulate Historic England's impact on wellbeing	There is a relationship between cultural participation and engagement and wellbeing	Grant applications	Identify demographic gaps project spectrum	Recommendations on indicators for community wellbeing	Enhanced focus on outcomes as well as outputs	Increase individual and community wellbeing
	Historic England is not only about buildings but people and society too	Placements	Review work of heritage and historic environment bodies in this area	A stakeholder review	Greater social inclusion	Broaden participant demography in heritage
	There is a relationship between place and identity	Grant funding with partners from external sources	Understand stakeholders and partners needs	Round table events	Mix of quantitative and qualitative assessment	Reduce barriers to the historic environment
	We can find ways to demonstrate and measure wellbeing impacts	Staff time from external organisations	Assess public value demonstration	Research collaborations	Maximising potential of projects	Increase social impact of our work
			Build relationships with mental health champions	Sector insight report	Debate on identity and wellbeing	Integrate wellbeing into working methods and language
			Build collaboration with heritage place-based initiatives	Partnership and collaboration with new partners	Enable others to communicate their experience	
			Work with higher educational institutions	Revised language to reflect the five ways to wellbeing	New direct and sustainable partnerships	

Figure 8 – Proposed logic model for wellbeing outcomes

Chapter 3: Reflections on: Reilly, S., Nolan, C. and Monckton, L. 2018. *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment: Threats, Issues and Opportunities for the Historic Environment*, **Historic England**

Introduction

The Historic England (HE) *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* (Reilly *et al*. 2018), assessment, co-written by the author of the current study, clearly sets out some of the outstanding gaps in knowledge concerning the relationship between wellbeing and the historic environment. The most fundamental of these is perhaps the lack of comprehensive understanding of how the historic environment directly affects wellbeing. This disparity was raised in particular by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) volunteering study (see p. 47 of thesis). The study stated that despite the fact that the projects involved had yielded significant wellbeing impacts, with a small minority citing the subject area, i.e. the heritage itself, as the 'single most important thing' in their volunteering experience, '...there is little evidence to show that the positive social outcomes that HLF volunteers report can be attributed to a distinctive HLF or heritage-based experience' (BOP 2011, 4). The study further emphasised this point with the discovery that: '...the positive outcomes experienced by HLF volunteers are driven principally by volunteering *per se*, and by context independent variables...' (BOP 2011, 4). Such findings highlight Ander *et al*.'s (2011, 246) reservation that, 'The difficulty of isolating the affect of culture in one's life means that attributing the cause of change or transformation to culture (causality) is also difficult'. They also beg the question of whether, in fact, the historic environment has any unique wellbeing impact at all?

Related to this discrepancy is the additional dearth of knowledge concerning the relationship between people, place, identity and wellbeing. According to Reilly *et al.* (2018):

> With regards to Heritage as Place, we probably have most to contribute and much to learn. The relationship between sense of place, power of place, belonging and identity is complex, multi-faceted and not static. The challenge in translating this into a meaningful and measurable concept is not insignificant, however this area of interest would be the only one which most clearly met the dual objectives set out above demonstrating the specific value of Historic

England (as a non-curatorial body with a largely assets and place-based focus) and the unique contribution of the historic environment to wellbeing. (Reilly *et al*. 2018, 58) (p. 75 of thesis).

Subsequently, this absence of key information calls into question the particular dimensions of wellbeing that heritage and wellbeing projects are measuring, the balance and nature of methods used to evaluate them and which aspects of heritage-involvement they relate to.

This chapter investigates the above issues in further depth. With reference to the case studies discussed in the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018), it will consider the wellbeing frameworks and methodologies within which they sit and the implications of this research in terms of evidencing the intrinsic value of heritage more generally. It will also look at other research gaps that are not mentioned in the report, such as the relative wellbeing effects of heritage assets from certain periods. More specifically, the analysis of these issues serves to develop the theory and methods that will inform the current study and help to achieve its aims most effectively.

Barriers to Isolating Direct Impact

While the various studies discussed in the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* (Reilly *et al*. 2018) report differed in their respective aims and methodological approaches, many of them shared similar limitations in terms of their power to posit a direct link between the participant wellbeing and the heritage assets engaged. Subsequently, a number of projects acknowledged that their results were potentially subject to a range of contextual and context-independent variables which challenged their ability to confirm that increases in participant wellbeing were directly connected to a distinct heritage-based experience. Taking a closer look at the approaches adopted by the projects discussed in the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018), this section considers some of the reasons why the unique contribution of the historic environment to wellbeing can be difficult to discern.

Context Independent Factors

In their *Heritage and Wellbeing* study Fujiwara *et al*. (2014) caution that, '…we can never be entirely confident that our estimate of the effect of heritage participation on life satisfaction is not biased to some extent by third factors that confound the relationship' (Fujiwara *et al*. 2014,

11). This statement pertains to a range of influences, but particularly context-independent issues such as the drivers of heritage-involvement and reverse causality i.e. causes of wellbeing that are external to one's engagement with heritage.

In the sphere of heritage-related wellbeing studies, primarily those of a quantitative nature, reverse causality is concerned with a participant's predisposition towards wellbeing prior to their involvement with heritage. For example, the level of wellbeing that a participant reports may be influenced by the benefits she gains from her existing standard of living or socio-economic status. Accordingly, it is customary for studies to control for factors that are thought to influence wellbeing. However, there are other factors which may drive an affinity for heritage and contribute to reverse causality, but that cannot be controlled for. Such factors might include the influence of a participant's upbringing and whether she visited heritage assets as a child. Likewise, it is possible that a person's mood on the day might also be coloured by ephemeral personal life events or circumstances external to the project that were occurring either during their period of involvement or at the time of evaluation. Fujiwara *et al*. (2014) advise that in view of these unknowns, it is difficult for studies to confirm how much the wellbeing reported stems from engagement with the historic environment or from other context independent variables.

Thus, where studies are unable to explore the impact of context independent factors in greater depth, the claims they can make regarding the role of heritage-involvement in the production of wellbeing are limited.

Contextual Factors

As highlighted in Fujiwara *et al*.'s (2014) study, some of the contextual influences, methodological and otherwise, which can make it difficult to confirm the wellbeing potential of the historic environment concern the following:

> …wellbeing responses can also be heavily influenced by contextual factors such as question order and the weather on the day (Schwarz and Clore, 2003, Schwarz and Strack, 1999), they may not reflect our experiences of events at the time (due to problems of accurate retrospection) (Kahneman, 2000, Kahneman *et al*., 1993) and single-item measures, such as life satisfaction and happiness, may not be broad enough to tap into or reflect all that is important to our lives (Loewenstein and Ubel, 2008). (Fujiwara *et al*. 2014, 14)

Added to this list are factors concerning aspects of the heritage-activity investigated, the type of heritage asset engaged, environment and the presence of facilitators. Furthermore, while some of these influences are mostly an issue for quantitative surveys, many of them are equally problematic for qualitative projects.

Alongside the influence of question order and accurate retrospection, i.e. the validity of questionnaires completed after an activity has taken place, other question-related issues include the relative timeframe which questions encompass, their intelligibility, and participant response rates. Related to the issue of accurate retrospection, Lucy Tinkler and Stephen Hicks (2011) note in their work on the measurement of national wellbeing that the presence or absence of a timeframe constraint in the question posed can have a large bearing on the focus of an evaluation. For instance, a question could ask how happy one rates oneself, 'at the moment', 'nowadays', or in relation to one's 'life as a whole'. Arguably, a less restricted timeframe has a greater potential to invite responses relating to a broad range of factors impacting one's wellbeing that are not necessarily connected to the context of the heritage-related activity itself.

Another area which may be a possible barrier to the collection of quality data, is the relationship between the wording of questions and one's level of emotional intelligence. In her study on wellbeing and excavation, Faye Sayer (2015) underscored the importance of this issue in response to the difficulty which some of the younger participants involved in her community project had in understanding standard Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) adjectives. However, as Tinker and Hicks (2011) point out in the case of cognitively demanding wellbeing survey questions, such factors could be just as much of a stumbling block for people of any age, background or circumstance. This factor may even be responsible in part for low response rates to certain questions, which also has a fundamental effect on the depth of information that can be gleaned from studies. For example, in their Heritage and Wellbeing study, Fujiwara *et al*. (2014, 23) noted that there was a low response rate for questions regarding 'people's views on the importance of heritage sites' which, had they been answered, may have yielded key information on the direct impact of the historic environment.

Where projects directed questions towards certain determinants of wellbeing such as how socially connected people felt as a result of their participation (BOP 2011; Sayer 2015), they clearly demonstrated that the conditions and activities facilitated by interaction with heritage assets can bring about wellbeing effects deriving from the development of social and

human capital. However, these experiences are more to do with heritage practice, and, as Wasyl Nimenko and Robyn Simpson (2013) observe in the case of archaeological excavation, could occur as much through non-heritage-related team activities. As the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018) notes, the significance of this uncertainty depends on the intention of the project:

> ...whether we are using the historic environment as a mechanism to enact other social activities which themselves are known to aid wellbeing, or whether we are making a claim about the specificity of the historic environment and its direct impact. (Reilly *et al*. 2018, 56) (p. 75 of thesis)

In this respect, while focusing on determinants of wellbeing can effectively evidence the value of the historic environment as a process or a mechanism to wellbeing, it may divert attention away from the very impact of heritage assets around which these activities are based.

The same could perhaps be said of the self-esteem and sense of accomplishment that projects participants gained from 'playing a useful part in things' (BOP 2009) or engaging in heritage-related creative activities. Several projects were carried out with the aid of such activities and, in some cases, evaluated on the basis of creative outputs. The poetry workshop which formed part of the Who Cares? project appears to have enabled participants to engage directly with, and convey, the positive impact and meaning of their heritage experience (Froggett *et al*. 2011). Here, it seems that the interpretation of the art piece created was useful in its ability to provide insight into the relative impact of the heritage experience, thereby demonstrating the validity and value of evaluating heritage through creative practice. Nevertheless, as Rasbery and Goddard (2011) observed in the context of the Mental Health and Heritage Working in Partnership projects, the act of making art is therapeutic in and of itself. In this light, this practice of combining heritage-involvement with creative practice also has the potential to confound results; making it difficult to establish exactly how much each individual intervention contributes to participant wellbeing, and whether the creative work could have had the same therapeutic effect in the absence of any connection with heritage.

The dynamic of facilitation has also been identified as a potential confounding factor. While recognising the practical benefits of having a facilitator at hand to explain and guide an intervention or the self-evaluation process, not least through their ability to set participants at ease as frequently attested by the Who Cares? programme (Froggett *et al*. 2011), the presence, role and input of the facilitator has also been posited as a potential source of bias in several of

the object-handling studies (Chatterjee *et al*. 2009; Lanceley *et al*. 2011; Paddon *et al*. 2014). The following comment from one of the women involved in Lanceley *et al*.'s study demonstrates this dilemma quite distinctly: 'I don't know whether it's that (the object) or just talking to you that's relaxing' (Lanceley *et al*. 2011, 818). Similarly, Paddon *et al*. (2014) have suggested that the tendency for participants to agree with the session facilitator may have been symptomatic of the power dynamic inherent in patient-clinician relationships.

The physical nature and type of heritage assets encountered in the projects may also have a bearing on results. For instance, the wellbeing effects of sensory experiences such as touch present a difficulty in establishing the source of wellbeing. Thomson *et al*. (2012) and Ander *et al.*'s (2013a) discussions concerning the therapeutic nature of touch suggest that there may be a degree of uncertainty around how much participants benefitted from handling the objects because they were heritage-objects and how much their responses were solely to do with tactile stimulation which, as Thomson *et al*. (2012) imply, can arguably be experienced with any three-dimensional object. Inherent in this quandary, is the question of whether any object can stimulate meaning.

The range of objects the object-handling projects gave to participants included both natural and cultural heritage objects, thus making it difficult for the researchers to establish the relative effect of the different types of object used (Chatterjee *et al*. 2009; Lanceley *et al*. 2011, Thomson *et al.*2012). Indeed, one project even included a 1950s print (Paddon *et al*. 2014). This use of what could be viewed as both heritage and art object raises the additional question of what defines a heritage object and, as Paddon *et al*. (2014) have debated, whether there is a difference between the effects of heritage objects and other cultural artefacts. Related to this uncertainty, is the tendency for heritage-related wellbeing work to be included in, or discussed from the perspective of, creative arts and health literature (Ander *et al*. 2013a; APPGAHW 2017; Neal 2015; Thomson *et al*. 2012). As Ander *et al*. (2013a) have queried, are the impacts of heritage different from those of the arts? Moreover, if they are found to diverge significantly, should they be analysed differently? Several object-handling studies maintain that heritage objects "... trigger memories, ideas and emotions in ways that other information-bearing materials do not..." (Paddon *et al*. 2014, 27). Likewise, it has been suggested elsewhere that the historic environment has a unique effect on identity and place-attachment (Jones and Leech 2016). However, some researchers hold that further, more finely tuned research is required in order to substantiate these kinds of claims (Chatterjee *et al*. 2009; Lanceley *et al*. 2011).

Discussion

From this analysis it seems that the difficulty which studies experience in establishing the historic environment in itself as a driver of individual wellbeing is proportionate to how precisely the inquiry is directed towards it. As discussed, this partly relates to the use of inadequate or ill-fitting methods and wellbeing indicators, an issue which will be discussed in further detail below. Connected to these limitations, is the apparent tendency for studies to focus on the wellbeing effects which stem from the transactional benefits of heritage-involvement, such as the development of social networks and new skills. These benefits are fundamental to the creation of general wellbeing, and when substantiated by quantitative research, they play an essential role in justifying the societal value of heritage in economic terms. Despite these gains, they reveal little about how people's wellbeing is affected by their relationship to the heritage assets they encounter.

This focus on a range of wellbeing determinants above and beyond the heritage resource itself is likely due to the fact that when testing the impact of a specific intervention, most heritage-related wellbeing studies are often evaluating a programme of work and its component activities as a whole, and not just the resource on which it is based. However, as discussed above, this approach is clearly not sufficient if studies also seek to make claims about the particular influence of the historic environment. Certainly, in the context of the Past in Mind project, McMillan (2013) suggests that the opportunity for engaging in meaningful interpretation which heritage-involvement affords, distinguishes it from other mainstream therapeutic activities such as occupational therapy[1]. Thus, if this is the case, there is a need for studies to adapt their current approaches to reflect such differences.

There will always be third factors which cannot be accounted for, but if projects wish to demonstrate more confidently the direct impact of the historic environment, then a keener awareness of influences which might potentially obscure this information is imperative. The above appraisal of project methods and processes suggests that the types of questions asked of participants, the manner in which they are conveyed and the phenomena to which they pertain, are critical to gaining an accurate and nuanced understanding of how the historic

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[1] This viewpoint suggests that occupational therapy does not allow meaningful engagement. This is not the view of the current study. It fully recognises that occupational therapy is fundamentally concerned with the performance of meaningful activities (Hasselkus 2011). This example is used simply to support the argument that heritage-involvement affords particular types of symbolic meaning.

environment affects personal wellbeing. Particularly important is whether studies are site- and asset-specific or focused more generally, and subsequently their ability to comment on how the varying character of individual assets influences wellbeing and identity.

Fundamental to all these research issues is the definition of wellbeing used and whether, as Ander *et al.* (2013a) have discussed, it is relevant to the intervention studied and the wellbeing experience of the individual. As noted above, adherence to standard measures of wellbeing such as life-satisfaction may account for certain aspects of wellbeing, not all of which necessarily reflect the range of wellbeing that could be experienced through interaction with heritage. This theory is supported by Ander *et al.*'s (2013b) observation that, '...defining museum wellbeing and then capturing the individual's response is difficult and conflicts with the more formal methods used in traditional health measurements' (Ander *et al.* 2013b, 231). Related to this problem is the issue of how heritage and the historic environment is defined; whether it is appropriate to treat them like other cultural resources, and whether they influence wellbeing in the same way (Ander *et al.* 2013a).

Following these lines of thought, it could be argued that certain interventions produce certain types of wellbeing. If this is the case, it would imply that in order to gain a better understanding of how the historic environment truly impacts wellbeing, a different approach to evaluation is required. However, this inquiry firstly necessitates a consideration of the most frequently applied wellbeing definitions and measurement systems, and their limitations, as well as possible complementary or alternative schemes. These subjects will be dealt with in the following sections.

Defining Wellbeing

Many of the wellbeing definitions which projects employ appear to be drawn from a narrow range of subjective or psychological interpretations conventionally applied in social and medical contexts. No doubt in most contexts these standard indicators are carefully chosen. However, it is also possible, as economist, Felicia Huppert (2017) notes in the case of the measure of life-satisfaction, that they are used simply because they have always been used. They may also be selected in response to the overarching demand for definitions commensurate with econometric approaches which can be quantified and compared as broadly as possible in order to measure social progress (Ander *et al.* 2011; Huppert 2017). Though convenient, this reliance

on such conventional definitions is problematic if, as Ander *et al.* (2013a) have noted, '...wellbeing is an ambiguous term which has little agreement among disciplines on its definition or measurement' (Ander *et al*. 2013b, 230). Indeed, as cultural policy researchers, Galloway *et al.* (2006) point out, it is often erroneously conflated with other concepts like Quality of Life (QOL) or with determinants of wellbeing such as a person's living conditions or social networks. Adding to this confusion, where certain standard measures persist, other indicator wellbeing frameworks are continually reviewed and updated (Jovanović 2015), and thus appear to be subject to change. These issues suggest that there is no fixed, unifying definition of wellbeing which, in turn, provokes the question of whether wellbeing can be described and evaluated at all?

If these uncertainties are disorienting for clinical health contexts, where health and wellbeing are assessed on a routine basis, it poses an even bigger problem for the heritage sector, especially if, as Ander *et al*. (2011) maintain, 'culture and heritage do influence well-being, but not in a way that fits with the traditional medical understanding of the body and mind...' (Ander *et al*. 2011, 253). This predicament naturally invites the following kinds of questions: what types of wellbeing are there? Does wellbeing mean different things to different people, and, as queried in the previous section, do certain types of experience stimulate specific types of wellbeing?

Accordingly, this section will examine some of the indicators which heritage-related wellbeing projects use most frequently, the types of wellbeing to which they refer, and their suitability, or lack thereof, to evaluate the direct impact of the historic environment.

Commonly used Wellbeing Indicators

Many of the projects discussed in the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018) evaluated their projects in a accordance with a range of different indicators of subjective wellbeing (SWB), psychological wellbeing (PWB), and various determinants of wellbeing drawn from generic wellbeing and mental wellbeing frameworks including: the Office of National Statistics (ONS) national wellbeing programme, General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), Warwick-Edinburgh Scale and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). The sets of indicators these frameworks embrace, with the exception of the GHQ and PANAS which also include measures of ill-being, tend to fall generally into two distinct types of wellbeing:

hedonic and eudemonic. The former is most often measured in terms of life-satisfaction or happiness. It is thus focused more on pleasure, feeling good and a high level of positive affect, and often contingent on social and cultural mores (see Deci and Ryan 2008). Eudemonic wellbeing, on the other hand, can be defined as '…a process of fulfilling or realizing ones daimon or true nature—that is, of fulfilling one's virtuous potentials and living as one was inherently intended to live' (Deci and Ryan 2008, 2), and is associated with aspects of wellbeing such as meaning and purpose.

It is becoming increasingly accepted that indicators of hedonic wellbeing on their own are not an adequate measure of wellbeing (Diener and Seligman 2004; Deci and Ryan 2008; Huppert 2017; Huppert and So 2013; Kennelly 2014; Tinkler and Hicks 2011). This is due, not least, to the fact that the validity of hedonic indicators is relative to whether one is measuring evaluative subjective wellbeing (see p. 39 of thesis for definition) or experienced wellbeing (also known as affective wellbeing - see p. 39 of thesis for definition). In other words, as economist Brendan Kennelly asks, '…it is possible to be experiencing happiness at the moment, or to have experienced it in the past year, while at the same time being dissatisfied with your life as a whole' (Kennelly 2014, 35). Kennelly concludes that there is a fundamental conceptual difference between each of these examples, pointing out that '…you could be quite satisfied with your life as a whole, but be in a moment or a period where you are feeling unhappy' (Kennelly 2014, 35). Displaying this contradiction in even sharper relief, health geographer, David Conradson explains that:

> While pleasure and happiness may be associated with a well-functioning human organism…this is not always the case…it is possible to experience these emotional states whilst participating in suboptimal, dysfunctional and even injurious patterns of behaviour. This observation suggests that pleasure is not, in and of itself, a good or sufficient indicator of wellbeing… (Conradson 2012, 16).

Nevertheless, many economists endorse life-satisfaction and happiness as valid single-headline indicators (Fujiwara *et al.* 2014; Layard 2016), and such units of measurement continue to dominate many wellbeing frameworks:

> The last decade has seen wellbeing move onto the agenda of governments, agencies and cultural organisations, though the debates around it have been framed in different ways. The

focus in the UK has been primarily, and perhaps disproportionally, on subjective wellbeing (Oakley *et al.*, 2013). (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016, 37)

This is perhaps due to the fact that measures of life-satisfaction and happiness are popular as they correlate well with social and economic drivers of wellbeing such as employment (Dolan *et al*. 2008), and thus be can be easily quantified and converted into universally comparable units of measurement capable of demonstrating social progress (Corry 2018; Fujiwara *et al*. 2014; Layard 2016; Tinkler and Hicks 2011).

Thus, ironically, while wellbeing economists now recognise that an assessment of the secondary social and economic benefits that heritage-engagement provides is no longer an adequate measure of personal wellbeing (Fujiwara *et al*. 2014), the direct wellbeing benefits it affords for individuals must still be measurable in terms of cost-benefit analysis. This would suggest that while, politically, there is a move away from a GDP-orientated approach to measuring national wellbeing, there is still a strong emphasis on measuring the cost-effectiveness of resources. Granted, this is entirely valid with respect to ensuring sustainable economic recovery and the prudent allocation of limited resources (House of Commons 2014). However, on its own, this approach is less likely to enable an adequate humanistic understanding of all the ways in which wellbeing is defined and experienced by the individual, or of how it is produced. This predicament not only raises a moral issue, as far as the pigeonholing and monetisation of individual experience and need are concerned. More precisely, it questions the ability of certain indicators to evaluate the direct wellbeing impact of the historic environment.

Huppert advises that hedonic indicators supply limited definitions of personal wellbeing which do not represent the concepts of longer lasting or sustainable wellbeing that are associated with eudemonic wellbeing, such as meaning and fulfilment (Huppert 2017). Coming to similar conclusions, a number of researchers hold that a multidimensional approach to measurement, integrating both hedonic and eudemonic constructs, is more appropriate (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; Ryan and Deci 2001; Huppert 2017; Huppert and So 2013; Tinkler and Hicks 2011; See also Dodge *et al*. 2012 for an in-depth discussion of this topic). Accordingly, as discussed in the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018) (see p. 41 of thesis), the set of indicators which Huppert and So (2013) promote includes: sense of competence, emotional stability, engagement, sense of meaning, optimism, positive emotion, positive relationships, resilience, self-esteem, and vitality. The New Economics Foundation

(NEF) advocates a similar structure embracing the diverse aspects of positive feeling and functioning (NEF 2009; see p. 67 of thesis). The Office for National Statistics (ONS) Measuring National Wellbeing programme also boasts a balanced framework which integrates evaluative, eudemonic and experiential or affective wellbeing (Tinkler and Hicks 2011). However, the dimensions of wellbeing included vary between frameworks and are dependent on the sources of evidence on which they are based. For instance, Huppert and So's (2013) schema does not include the indicator of 'autonomy', which features in the NEF framework (NEF 2009). Different again is the ONS programme. Although this framework does include questions on eudemonic wellbeing, it appears to be weighted towards the hedonic spectrum (see Crossick and Kaszynska 2016). These examples suggest that while multidimensional frameworks may be the preferable option, they too are not without their issues.

The *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018) suggests that the definition of wellbeing promoted by the NEF offers a valid measure against which the wellbeing effects of heritage-involvement might be evaluated. Certainly, many of the indicators which this definition encompasses, like competence, map directly onto some of the processes to wellbeing which heritage projects cultivate in terms of human capital (see p. 12 of thesis). However, the way in which these indicators relate to the less tangible impacts afforded by the unique historic characteristics of heritage assets and places, such as belonging and identity, is not as obvious. Thus, although existing generic indicator sets or single headline definitions are useful for evaluating the wellbeing impact of heritage-involvement, they may not represent all the effects that people derive from the historic environment.

The influence of specific determinants

The inability of certain frameworks to uncover the more unique wellbeing benefits of heritage-involvement qualifies the reservations of economists, Lord Gus O'Donnell and colleagues' (2014) regarding the use of single headline wellbeing indicators: 'Different measures capture different concepts, and the most appropriate measure will vary depending on the circumstances' (O'Donnell *et al*. 2014, 30). This issue has been highlighted in particular within the field of cultural geography in respect of the intrinsic relationship between place and wellbeing. For example, Conradson contends that the six-factor model of psychological wellbeing devised by Carol Ryff '…appears to assume a relatively autonomous individual,

somewhat independent of connection to a wider community or to the earth' (Conradson, 2012, 23). Arguably, factors such as these are key if, as Atkinson *et al.* (2012) observe, 'Wellbeing, however defined, can have no form, expression or enhancement without consideration of place' (Atkinson *et al.* 2012, 3).

This point is especially relevant to wellbeing studies concerning the influence of the historic environment and emphasises that there is a need to consider which dimensions of wellbeing it elicits and how they correspond with existing frameworks. The specific character of the historic environment, such as the age of certain heritage assets, may also have a bearing on the aspects of wellbeing that are produced. For instance, based on the results of some of the projects discussed above, it would seem that ancient heritage objects evoke wellbeing experiences distinct from those elicited by more recent artefacts. The personal reflection stimulated by artefacts from the distant past appears to have connected participants to broader life themes that linked indirectly with their personal life experience. A good example of this can be found in Lanceley *et al.*'s (2011) object handling sessions with women diagnosed with ovarian cancer, where the maternal symbolism inherent in the Egyptian cat figurine, reminds one participant of her late mother (Lanceley *et al.* 2011). Engagement with heritage from living memory, in slight contrast, seems to have reconnected participants to their remembered past in a more immediate and direct way, as implied by the following observation of one participant's experience of the Homeless Heritage project:

> It was as though *handling material* connected to the time he spent living homeless and in and out of the Bootham Park mental health hospital gave his experience authenticity, made his memories *more real*. (Kiddey 2014, 274)

This latter experience ties in with Arigho's definition of reminiscence work within which, '...the [heritage] objects are only important in so far as they relate to some aspect of remembered life-experience' (Arigho 2008, 205). Viewed in this way, it could be argued that there are two distinct aspects or types of heritage at work here – the distant past and personal history. This suggestion is supported by the following observations and reflections from Lanceley *et al.*'s (2011) study:

> Specific objects, e.g., an Egyptian figurine, evoked deep emotional responses. That the object embodied a huge span of time and reached far into mankind's past as a link with human beings'

> genesis and universality was key to this. The object provided much more than perhaps could be evoked by a present-day object which may lend itself to people's childhoods and memories, but does not carry that depth unless it is say a beautiful, hand crafted 21st-century bowl, which manages to carry a profound sense of history as well as modernity. (Lanceley *et al*. 2011, 816)

These insights suggest that in order to make more precise statements about the unique wellbeing effects of the historic environment, there is a need for further investigation into the impact of heritage assets from different periods. Furthermore, while the specific periods addressed by the projects reviewed in the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018) is not clear in each case, most appear to focus mainly on historic heritage or heritage in general. Thus, arguably, there is scope for more focused research to be carried out on the wellbeing impact of prehistoric archaeology.

In their scoping review of community wellbeing indicators, the What Works Centre for Wellbeing (WWCW) put forward (Brown *et al*. 2017) an ideal multidimensional set of measures which does take into account place-based determinants such as heritage. Nevertheless, in the absence of more nuanced examples of how heritage impacts wellbeing, the report uses proxy indicators based solely on heritage-participation and volunteering to represent this sub-domain. This infers that there is room for individual stakeholders to research and develop supplementary sector-specific indicators.

Individual Experience

In addition to the relative impact of different determinants, the experience of wellbeing also varies between individuals and cultures, and may, thereby, embrace values that are not represented by given frameworks. Health and wellbeing theorist, Ann Hemingway, maintains that the tendency to focus '…on ''expert advice'' may never increase our well-being freedoms as it does not enable us to find our own way forward.' (Hemingway 2011, 5). Yet, even general frameworks which derive from assessments of 'what people value most', such as the Office for National Statistics programme (Tinkler and Hicks 2011), are not necessarily the best measure either if, as psychologists, Ed Diener and Martin Seligman (2004) suggest, what they value is influenced by overarching political or cultural value systems:

One challenge for a society based on well-being is that individuals do not have ready and concrete models of how to pursue the goal of greater well-being, other than following the economic model. When people are asked what would improve the quality of their lives, the most frequent response is higher income (Campbell, 1981). It is not clear to people how they would achieve greater positive emotions and life satisfaction. Until there are concrete and proven steps toward these noneconomic aims, people are unlikely to abandon the dominant economic paradigm. (Diener and Seligman, 2004, 25)

Thus, it would seem that any standard definition of wellbeing, whether uni- or multi-dimensional, has its limitations. As Ander *et al*. (2011) point out:

In standardising what psychological well-being is, there is little room for the voice of the individual who may have a very different perspective on what makes them happy or well. It also does not indicate why the individual has a certain well-being level. (Ander et al 2011, 243)

In reality, as nursing researcher, Barbara Haas suggests, wellbeing is not just an emotional or psychological phenomenon, but concerns 'all dimensions of life' (Haas 1999, quoted in Galloway *et al*. 2006, 32). Correspondingly, health and social care researchers, Kathleen Galvin and Les Todres, assert that, 'within the human realm, experiential well-being possibilities can happen unpredictably in spontaneous and unexpected ways', and note that the 'felt experience' of wellbeing should also be taken into account (Galvin and Todres 2011). As a result, they propose that a 'wider vocabulary for wellbeing experiences', which also encompasses embodied existential experience, may allow a more faithful reflection of the broad range of wellbeing people encounter in their day-to-day lived experience (Galvin and Todres 2011).

Without doubt, evidence-based indicator frameworks provide a valid way of measuring many of the wellbeing impacts that the historic environment has to offer. Nonetheless, it is clear that an appreciation of the direct effects it affords demands a conception of wellbeing that respects people's individual lived experience of the character, age and affective agency of specific heritage assets. As Ander *et al*. suggest:

The challenge then is to define a contribution to well-being, but to define it in a way that ensures that the unique and idiosyncratic affect of museums is credited, and then to measure with tools that are sensitive enough to show the heritage sector's contribution… (Ander *et al*. 2011, 255)

Direct Connection, Emotional Impact and Intrinsic Value

It is clear from the discussion so far that if studies wish to establish the direct wellbeing effects of the historic environment, it is necessary to look beyond the transactional benefits it provides to what the HLF *12 Years in 20 Places* report (BritainThinks 2015) refers to as its 'emotional impact'. Concerned with the personal meaning and resonance that people derive from certain aspects of heritage (BritainThinks 2015), this definition of emotional impact addresses the ways in which individuals personally relate and respond to heritage assets in themselves. This section will examine the nature of emotional impact, its relationship to the intrinsic value of heritage, and the potential that this connection offers for understanding how the historic environment directly effects individual wellbeing.

The *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al.* 2018) lists sense of place, meaning, security, personal insight and perspective, identity, pride, responsibility and ownership as some of the emotional impacts which people experience as a result of heritage-involvement. Linked to the overarching theme of thinking and meaning-making which frequently arose in the context of museum object-handling studies, these emotional impacts appear to result from the symbolic power of heritage assets to trigger personal meanings for people. This presupposes a fundamental connection between the symbolic nature of heritage assets and emotion.

Lanceley *et al.* (2011) maintain that the emotional responses and realisations which people experience through heritage-object handling are made possible by the symbolic power of the object; whereby the symbolism inherent in the form and narratives of the object '…bypasses the intellect and the 'censor' and targets the unconscious mind' (Lanceley *et al.* 2011, 818). This mnemonic process elicits healing through the personal reminiscence and broader universal insights which the objects afford. Thus, for instance, the women who participated in Lanceley *et al.*'s (2011) object handling sessions found meaning in the themes of motherhood, survival and human endeavour they perceived in the age, symbolism and craftsmanship of the Egyptian cat figurine. Likewise, it is this same process which underpins the sense of cultural inclusion that participants experienced as a result of the Who Cares? project (Froggett *et al.* 2011), and the meaning which participants derived from the site narratives of the Past in Mind excavations.

Grounded in the relationship between object, emotion and personal reflection, emotional

impact has resonances with what, heritage scholars, Robert Hewison and John Holden define as the intrinsic value of heritage: '…the value of heritage in itself, its intrinsic value in terms of the individual's experience of heritage intellectually, emotionally and spiritually' (Hewison and Holden 2006, 15). Essentially the 'direct human experience of value' (Hoskins 2014, 22), intrinsic value has come to be associated with the less tangible personal benefits that can result from a direct connection with heritage assets (Hewison and Holden 2006; Hoskins 2014). In his work on the value of historic places, human geographer, Gareth Hoskins (2014), discusses intrinsic value not just in terms of emotion, but also embodied experience and the affective intensities that people intuit in response to the physical characteristics of an artefact. Subsequently, Hoskins refers to 'human meaning and felt experience' as important indicators of intrinsic value (Hoskins 2014, 23). Likewise, in her visitor experience study at Gladstone Potteries Museum, Emma Waterton (2011) emphasises the need to include affect and meaning in evaluations of heritage experience, demonstrating how more nuanced and meaningful data can be achieved through this approach.

If intrinsic value refers to the individual's direct experience of the historic environment, perhaps then instead of focusing on wellbeing impact, it is more useful to assess the felt sense, emotions and meaning that people derive from heritage assets. An emphasis on felt sense is especially valid if, as health geographers, Gavin Andrews *et. al*. (2014) assert, affective experience facilitates wellbeing. This understanding stems from the affective turn in cultural geography which privileges individual felt experience and narratives of place (Andrews *et al*. 2014; Conradson 2005, 2012; Dewsbury 2010; Latham 2003; Lorimer 2005). As Andrews *et al*. explain it:

> Notably, the idea of an affective state of wellbeing being a less-than-fully conscious and pre-emotional form of cognition is also critical to how wellbeing might arise in 'everyday' environments. This is because affect anchors wellbeing regardless of an individual's particular personal knowledge of, or history with, the place which they are occupying in any given moment, and regardless of whether the place fits social categories traditionally associated with wellbeing (such as retreats, spas, natural landscapes, holiday destinations, particular caring environments etc). Being pre-emotional, affect facilitates wellbeing in potentially limitless situations and circumstances. (Andrews *et al*. 2014, 216).

Furthermore, in David Conradson and Alan Latham's (2007) geographic approach to this

subject, they observe that much information can be gained about the 'affective possibilities' of a place based on the value that individuals assign to the specific affective states they experience there. This echoes, in the context of heritage studies, Emma Waterton and Steve Watson's contention that, '…research should capture moments of engagement and meaning *in situ* and should empower respondents to identify for themselves what is significant about their engagements with objects, places and events' (Waterton and Watson 2014, 122).

Attuned to individual experience and the assets themselves, an approach to evaluation based on affect, emotion and meaning arguably has potential for assessing the wellbeing effects of specific sites and everyday heritage. It would also help to gain insight into how people are affected by certain characteristics of heritage assets, such as their age and form. Drawing on the viewpoints presented, the current study suggests that a focus on the intrinsic value of heritage assets, as it is defined above, may help to determine the qualities and extent of what constitutes heritage-based wellbeing.

Measuring Intrinsic Value

The intrinsic value of heritage, otherwise referred to as social value or communal value (Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015), has been recognised as an important aspect of heritage experience, and key to understanding the public value of the historic environment (Clark 2006; Hewison and Holden 2006; Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015). Despite this significance, it is not easy to evaluate. This is due in part to the inherently ineffable nature of intrinsic value (Clark 2006; Hewison and Holden 2006; Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015). However, archaeologists, Siân Jones and Steven Leech (2015) maintain that these evaluation issues also derive from the tendency for studies on the public value of heritage to privilege the use of quantitative methods, which struggle to capture the nuance of social experience. As a result, more and more researchers are identifying the need for qualitative methods to be applied routinely in the evaluation of heritage experience (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; Graham *et al*. 2009; Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015; Reilly *et al*. 2018). This section will explore these issues further in order to establish which methodological approaches are best suited for the assessment of intrinsic value.

Quantitative Issues

The *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018) reveals that while quantitative approaches can verify at surface-level that heritage-involvement supplies wellbeing, for instance, in the form of happiness, they fail to establish exactly how or why it does so on a deeper personal level. As discussed above, this can result from contextual issues or the inability of single headline wellbeing indicators to reflect the breadth and depth of individual experience. However, as the report surmises, in respect of affective subjective wellbeing (SWB) measurement techniques, the restricted response scales characteristic of quantitative surveys also place a limit on how participants can express themselves. Such approaches arguably run the risk of providing a one-dimensional understanding of participant experience. As, archaeologist, Cath Neal observes, '…pre- and post-activity questionnaires can be a useful tool, but these somewhat crude measures can fail to provide detailed or nuanced data' (Neal 2015, 135).

Despite the limitations of quantitative methods, it would appear that studies continue to give precedence to them (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; Jones and Leech 2015). Even some mixed-method studies seem to report on their quantitative findings in greater detail than their qualitative results (e.g. BOP 2011; Sayer 2015). Jones and Leech suggest that this is symptomatic of the expectation for heritage projects to demonstrate their results in cost-benefit terms. Once again, this reflects the agenda to quantify and monetise wellbeing and heritage experience. In heritage-related contexts this is carried out with systems such as the wellbeing valuation approach, where people are asked to estimate the amount of income they would require in order to attain the same level of SWB that they derive from particular types of heritage-involvement (Fujiwara *et al*. 2014). However, as Fujiwara *et al*. (2014, 14) acknowledge, this approach has the potential to be confounded by contextual factors and the limited scope of single-item wellbeing measures. This ultimately casts a degree of doubt on the integrity of systems like wellbeing valuation. In addition, the validity of this approach is even more questionable if it is the case that income ceases to improve wellbeing beyond a certain earning threshold (Kennelly 2014; McDaid and Cooper 2014). This resonates with Diener and Seligman's conclusion that, '…money is an inexact surrogate for well-being, and the more prosperous a society becomes, the more inexact a surrogate income becomes.' (Diener and Seligman 2004, 2).

The uncertainties regarding the efficacy of Wellbeing Valuation feed into the greater problem of whether it is ethical to put a price on wellbeing at all. As, economist, Dan Corry puts it:

> …a key issue, not least for those interested in relationships, is whether the obsession with well-being is because we love well-being and want people to feel good, or whether it is its links to other things that we want. Things like reduced health spending, higher productivity in the workplace, less likelihood of being out of work. That's a fundamental difference: are we trying to maximise this thing for itself, or does it lead to other outcomes, many of which result in lower public expenditure? (Corry 2015, 2)

Similarly, can and should the intrinsic value of heritage be monetised? This is a moot point particularly if, as David Throsby suggests:

> …it is a value that is likely to transcend the sum of individuals' willingness to pay. Second, there are some benefits to which individuals would find difficulty attaching a monetary value. An example might be national identity – it makes little sense to ask someone what it is worth to them in financial terms to be British, or French, or Australian. (Throsby 2006, 42)

Echoing the issues concerning the selection of appropriate wellbeing indicators, both dilemmas imply that there is a moral obligation to consider the experience of the individual.

Qualitative Approaches

Recognising the need to understand the individual experience of heritage in greater depth, a number of researchers acknowledge that quantitative methods alone are not sufficient to assess social value (Accenture 2006; Blaug *et al*. 2006; Clark 2006; Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; English Heritage 2014; Hewison and Holden 2006; Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015; Reilly *et al*. 2018). In fact, Jones and Leech go as far as to say that '…the pressures that direct resources towards evidencing value through cost-benefit type analysis, risk undermining the very benefits they seek to secure' (Jones and Leech 2016, 35). In the same vein, Ander *et. al*. (2011) dispute the ability of scientific methods to isolate the effects of heritage-based wellbeing and imply that even controlled experimental approaches are insufficient to evaluate the full dynamic

nature of individual experience. Such perspectives have resulted in a call for qualitative methods to be used more routinely in the evaluation of heritage experience (Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015; Froggett *et al.* 2011; Graham *et al.* 2009; Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; English Heritage 2014, Ander *et al.* 2011, Galloway *et al.* 2006; Reilly *et al.* 2018).

Certainly, as discussed above, a number of the qualitative studies reviewed in the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al.* 2018) succeeded in allowing the nuance of people's individual experiences to surface, demonstrating what could perhaps be interpreted as heritage-based wellbeing. This was particularly the case for the reminiscence and museum projects that were designed from the outset as focused psychosocial interventions. Such approaches provide a promising template for future heritage-related wellbeing studies. Ethnographic and public participatory techniques have also been advanced as worthy modes of evaluation (Graham *et al.* 2009; Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015). In addition, recent studies suggest that phenomenological approaches to qualitative research are key to understanding the intrinsic value and wellbeing effects of heritage (Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015; Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; Hoskins 2014; Waterton 2011, 2014; Waterton and Watson 2014). Concerned with both sensory and semiotic experience, phenomenological approaches constitute techniques that pay attention to the felt lived experience of value from the first-person perspective, whether via interview or more performative techniques such as photography (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; Waterton 2011, 2014; Waterton and Watson 2014). Indeed, there is research to suggest that psychoanalytic object-relations theory, which forms the basis for some of the museum wellbeing studies discussed, essentially provides a 'phenomenological model of human behaviour' (Sugarman 1977; see also Romanshyn 1977 for similar discussion). Thus, if individual experience and meaning are two of the most effective routes to discerning how the historic environment directly impacts wellbeing, the use of phenomenological approaches to this subject seems essential. Likewise, it presents the most appropriate mode of evaluation for the purposes of the current study.

Discussion

It is argued here that qualitative approaches may help to access more in-depth information on the intrinsic value of heritage. This perspective does not deny the efficacy of quantitative research when applied in relevant areas or adapted to embrace more humanistic themes. Nor

does it imply that qualitative approaches are without their weaknesses. As the *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018) points out, the success of such projects is determined by the precision of their design and evaluation methods. Thus, if they lack rigour, qualitative studies too can neglect or struggle to provide sufficiently specific and systematic evidence for the direct influence of heritage assets. The discussion simply highlights the moral duty that the heritage sector has to account for individual experience. It also suggests that if undertaken appropriately, qualitative techniques, particularly those of a phenomenological nature, serve to form a suitable complement to existing quantitative methods in the overall assessment of heritage experience. Moreover, they may yield results that can inform the development of more effective quantitative approaches to this subject in the future

Conclusion

The *Wellbeing and the Historic Environment* report (Reilly *et al*. 2018) suggests that when designing projects researchers need to decide '…whether we are using the historic environment as a mechanism to enact other social activities which themselves are known to aid wellbeing, or whether we are making a claim about the specificity of the historic environment and its direct impact' (Reilly *et al*. 2018, 58) (see p. 75 of thesis). In view of the research gaps discussed, the current study aims to do the latter. This analysis proposes that a phenomenological investigation of the intrinsic value of heritage may allow studies to make such claims with greater confidence. It likewise suggests that this intrinsic value may form the basis of a type of wellbeing that is peculiar to heritage involvement. Focusing on how the innate characteristics of heritage assets influence individual experience, this approach has the potential to yield more nuanced information on the relationship between wellbeing, identity, place and everyday heritage. For these reasons, and in the service of developing well-informed theory to better describe the intrinsic value of heritage assets, which may help to create more relevant quantitative assessments in the future, this study favours a purely qualitative, phenomenological approach to data-collection.

Sharpening the focus even further, a phenomenological approach to the discernment of intrinsic worth may also help to establish whether prehistoric heritage assets exert an impact on wellbeing that is distinct from that provided by artefacts from more recent periods. This is of particular importance, if, as has been suggested by certain scholars (Holtorf 1997; Last 2010a;

Waterton and Watson 2014), that the social value of prehistoric heritage is generally not very well understood. Emma Waterton and Steve Watson note that even when prehistoric sites are, '…monumental in character, if they are difficult to fit with national stories they tend to be ignored for the most part…' (Waterton and Watson 2014, 115). Highlighting the implications of this situation, Jonathan Last asserts that:

> Prehistoric finds provide intimate insights into ways of life radically different to anything seen today but can also inform our understanding of and responses to important contemporary issues, such as climate change. There remains much we do not know about our prehistoric past, however, and there are many threats to the surviving resource, which is often ephemeral and fragile. At the same time, public appreciation of prehistory is limited in comparison to later periods, so that many of the most fascinating sites and discoveries remain little-known. (Last 2010a, 8)

He goes on to point out that, '…the contribution prehistoric remains make to contemporary landscapes is often overlooked…' (Last 2010a, 11), and that:

> Despite recent high-profile discoveries and projects, the prehistoric periods, especially the 'deep time' of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, remain undervalued and we currently have little understanding of the reasons for their 'invisibility' or how this might be addressed.

Similarly, Cornelius Holtorf has suggested that 'We need more basic research about the character of archaeology and its role in our society' (Holtorf 1997, 59). This is especially critical, if as Last suggests, 'The risks of not acting are a continuing low awareness and appreciation of prehistory among the public…' (Last 2010a, 18).

Bearing these issues in mind, this examination refines the aims and parameters of the study, which are: to establish, in a site-specific context, what, if any, intrinsic value the prehistoric archaeology within the study area holds for people and how it impacts them personally. The study, therefore, aims to discern the intrinsic value of the prehistoric landscapes investigated so that this subtle phenomenon may be better defined and identified. Based on the premise, as discussed above and in Chapter 2, that quantitative methods have hitherto struggled to gather this type of information in previous studies, this project will adopt an exclusively qualitative approach to data collection, focused on describing the structure of feeling and meaning of participants' experience.

Part II: The Archaeological Context

Chapter 4: The Study Area

Introduction

Addressing some of the research gaps discussed in the previous section, namely the absence of information concerning the relationship between wellbeing, prehistoric heritage, identity and place, this study takes the prehistoric aspects of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, the Vale of Pewsey and their environs, as its focus (Fig. 4.1). This chapter discusses the rationale for this choice of sites, provides an overview of the prehistoric character of the study area and some of the known public perceptions of these places.

Rationale for the Selection of Sites

As the research gaps identified in the previous chapter naturally relate to the phenomenon of everyday heritage, it was determined that the study should be in close proximity to residential
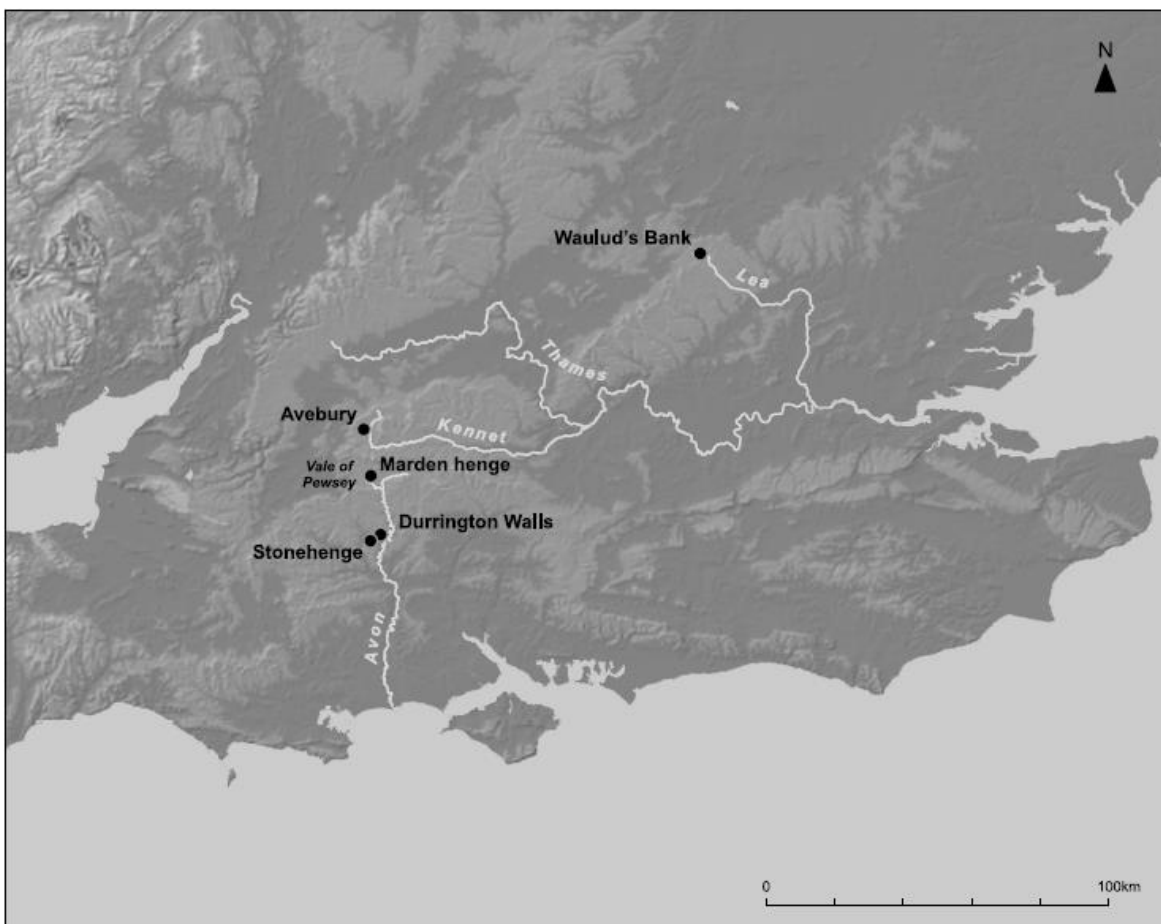
Figure 4.1 Location Map of Study Area, reproduced from Leary and Field 2012 (©Eddie Lyons/English Heritage).

areas containing a diverse and sizeable population from which participants could be recruited. The study also sought publicly accessible sites where, alongside superficial encounters with the archaeology, there was also the possibility for people to have engaged with it in more depth. In terms of gaining a clearer understanding of how people respond to different aspects of prehistoric heritage, it was also identified that it would be preferable to base the study within extensive prehistoric landscapes possessing a wide range of both well-preserved and eroded sites from different prehistoric periods. Furthermore, to facilitate the option of conducting a more in-depth experiential group study, the project required a prehistoric landscape with a multiplicity of upstanding remains with which group participants could interact. Reviewing the suitability of various sites throughout the UK, including Arbor Low and associated monuments in the Peak District, the Hurlers, Cornwall, and Balfarg circle-henge, Fife, it was established that the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, and the Vale of Pewsey were most capable of satisfying the criteria set out above within the funding limitations of the project.

As Cornelius Holtorf (2005) has discussed, the unique character and scale of high-profile heritage sites like Stonehenge have become well-established in popular culture and representative of distinct social and cultural viewpoints. For instance, Stonehenge has come to be variously associated with concepts of, to name but a few, national identity, nineteenth-century Romanticism and Druidism (Bender 1999; Blain and Wallis 2003, 2006; Chippendale *et al*. 1990; Darvill 2005; Parker Pearson 2013). It could be argued that Stonehenge is so iconic in these respects that it inevitably evokes preconceived meanings and affective responses for people which ultimately preclude the possibility of obtaining any fresh views. As will be suggested in the next chapter, this is not necessarily the case, particularly when examined from the perspective of everyday lived experience.

Yet, even if its popular reputation precedes it and unavoidably influences individual experience, Stonehenge, like Avebury henge, does not exist in isolation. They lie at the heart of much larger prehistoric landscapes and thus within a wider context, which, conceivably, serves to expand and alter their meaning (Brown *et al*. 2005; Darvill 2005; Parker Pearson *et al*. 2008; Tilley *et al*. 2007). Furthermore, these landscapes contain a range of lesser known sites and monuments from different periods, which arguably pose enough of a contrast to the iconic sites, that new and different perspectives on prehistoric archaeology may be gleaned. The same might be said for some of the sites located in the Vale of Pewsey that are poorly preserved and less visible. For example, even the severely eroded form of Marden henge, which has recently

attracted more media attention due to excavations undertaken there over the past decade (Leary and Field 2012; Leary *et al*. 2016), continues to have a low public profile. Thus, containing an abundantly diverse and accessible range of monuments, these landscapes and their surrounding areas provide a starting point from which to investigate the impact of prehistoric heritage on lived experience of residents and visitors.

Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS) and Environs

Even though they are inscribed as one WHS and share a number of similarities in terms of certain site types and ritual significance, the prehistoric landscapes of Stonehenge and Avebury are also quite distinct. Firstly, although they both occupy undulating chalk downland, they are separated by approximately 40 kilometres (see Fig. 4.2). They differ in the range of sites they contain and their arrangement. Regarding their present-day setting and use, they also differ in their proximity to residential areas, accessibility and the particular ways in which they have developed as heritage sites. Thus, while they are ultimately part of a larger landscape that also encompasses the sites and monuments in the Vale of Pewsey which lies between them, they will be discussed here as separate landscapes.

The Stonehenge Landscape and Surrounding Area

Located on the chalk plateau of Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, Stonehenge is perhaps the most renowned archaeological monument in the world. The remains of its circular enclosure and sarsen stone circle stand at the centre of an extensive prehistoric and historic landscape. Home to a range of prehistoric sites, both standing and plough-levelled, that range in date from the Mesolithic to the Iron Age, the Stonehenge landscape (Fig. 4.3) has been the focus of intense antiquarian and archaeological investigation since the seventeenth-century and has inspired numerous volumes and research papers (See Darvill 2005; Parker Pearson 2013). However, the purpose of this chapter is not to review the history of archaeological research in the study area, particularly as this has been discussed at length elsewhere (see Cleal *et al*. 1995; Darvill 2005; Parker Pearson 2013; Gillings and Pollard 2004; Carpenter and Winton 2011; Leary and Field 2012). Nor, given the prehistoric focus of this study, is it concerned with the historic archaeology in the area. Instead, it aims to give a general sense of the prehistoric sites in their

Figure 4.2 The Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site. Reproduced from M. Leivers, and A. B. Powell (eds) 2016a (© Wessex Archaeology).

landscape. Similarly, this chapter will not provide an exhaustive list of all the sites in each area; this information is presented in various other sources (see Darvill 2006 and Parker Pearson *et al*. 2008 for Stonehenge; McOmish *et al*. 2002 for Salisbury Plain; Jacques *et al*. 2018 for Blick Mead; Brown *et al*. 2005 and Pollard and Gillings 2004 and for Avebury and environs; Carpenter and Winton 2011, Leary and Field 2012, and Leary *et al*. 2016 for the Vale of Pewsey). As such, it will describe only the sites which project participants refer to during the study. Dates for these features are included where available.

Matthew Canti *et al*. (2013) suggest that it may have been the presence of naturally occurring open-canopy woodland and open grassland that initially encouraged human activity within the Stonehenge area during the Mesolithic (*c*.9600-4000BC), from *c*.8000 BC onwards. Presumably, these conditions attracted people to the area on account of the subsistence opportunities they afforded. In this connection, David Jacques and Tom Phillips (2014) previously proposed that the three early Mesolithic postholes (*c*.8820-6590 BC: Cleal *et al*. 1995), remnants of a line of east-west-running freestanding posts that were discovered immediately to the northwest of Stonehenge, may have been used to divert wild cattle for hunting purposes. Similarly, Colin Richards and Julian Thomas (2012) suggest that they were possibly erected as way markers for hunting parties. Certainly, the wealth of faunal and lithic remains discovered at the seasonal Mesolithic settlement of Blick Mead (*c*.7596-4695 BC), Amesbury, approximately 2km east of Stonehenge, provides extensive evidence for hunting activity in the area (Jacques *et al*. 2019). However, other scholars have advanced the idea that the timber posts are the first ritual monuments in the Stonehenge landscape and thus an indication that the Mesolithic inhabitants of the area viewed aspects of the natural landscape itself as special or sacred (Darvill 2006; Parker Pearson 2012, 2013; Tilley *et al.* 2007). Jacques et al. (2018) have suggested that the spring around which the settlement of Blick Mead developed may have been one such place.

Whatever the purpose of the Mesolithic posts at Stonehenge, the area became the site of conspicuous and elaborate ritual activity, the remnants of which is still visible today, that continued throughout the Neolithic period (*c*.4000-2500 BC) up until the end of the Early Bronze-Age (*c*.2500-1500). For example, during this period the construction of communal funerary monuments took place in the form of earthen linear mounds such as Lake long barrow, approximately 2.5 km southwest of Stonehenge. These features were accompanied by the development of other large-scale structures like the Stonehenge greater cursus (*c*.3660-
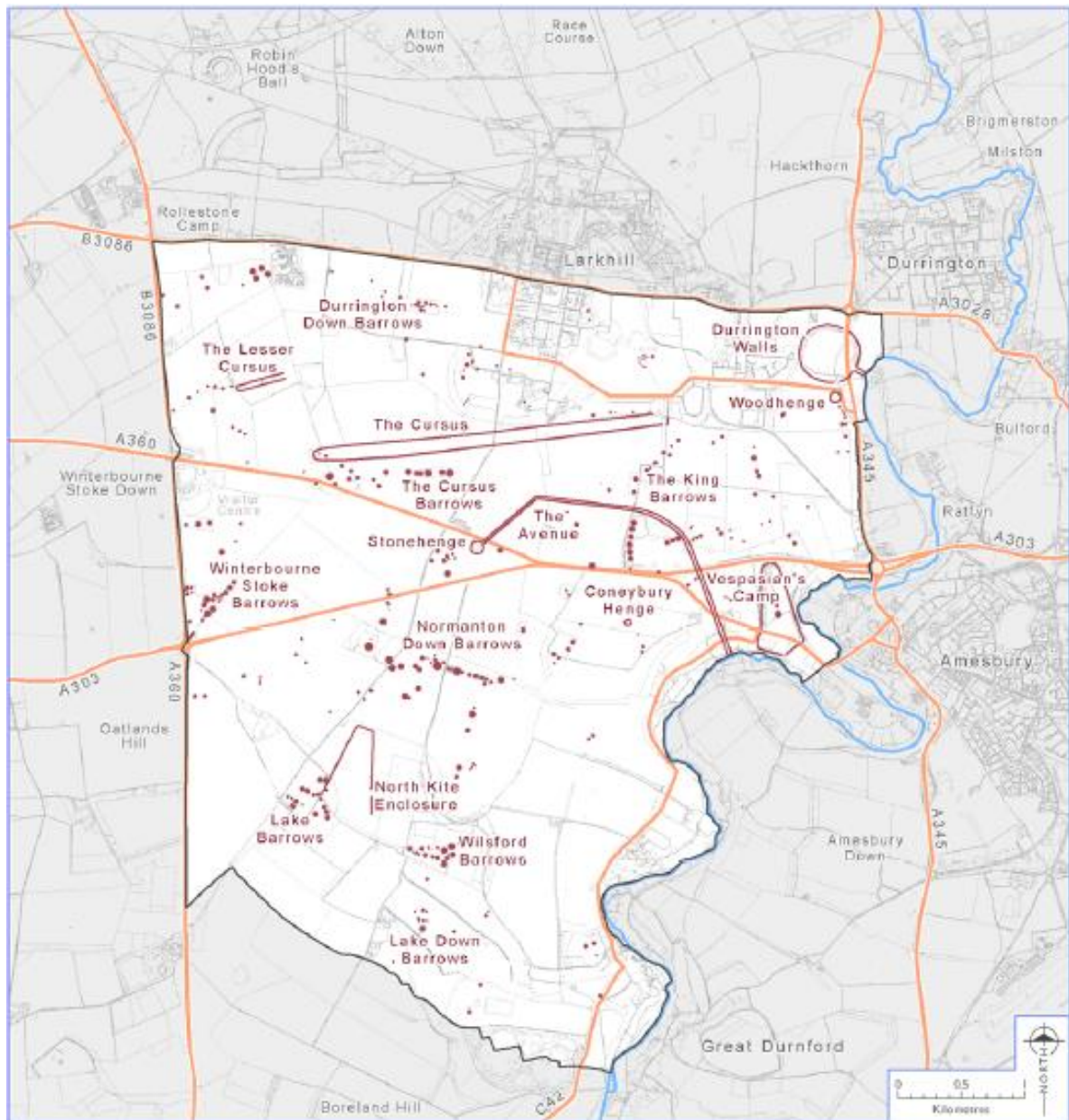
Figure 4.3 The Stonehenge World Heritage Site. Reproduced from Simmonds and Thomas 2015 (© Crown Copyright and database right 2014. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900).

3370 BC), a ditched and banked rectilinear enclosure approximately 2.8 km in length, which has been more recently interpreted as a monumentalization of a significant pre-existing processional routeway (Richards and Thomas 2012), or nodal point for transhumant groups (Loveday 2016). The period also saw the construction of Stonehenge itself and the five main phases of its morphology (*c*.3000-1520 BC) (see Darvill *et al*. 2012 for detailed description).This process included the monument's beginnings as a circular ditched and banked enclosure, the addition of timber structures, the bluestone and sarsen settings, the avenue, and the various rearrangements of the bluestones. These phases provide evidence of some of the many

ceremonial uses of the monument, including its role as a cemetery, gathering place and marker of solar and astronomical events (Parker Pearson 2012, 2013; Madgwick *et al*. 2019).

Contemporary with the first phase of Stonehenge (*c.*3000-2620 BC), which involved the erection of the first bluestone and/or timber circle, was the construction of a henge, a circular earthen enclosure with an internal ditch and external bank, now plough-levelled, at West Amesbury (*c.*2950 BC), approximately 2 km southwest of Stonehenge (Darvill et al. 2012; Parker Pearson 2013). The period between *c.*2620-2480 BC brought phase two of Stonehenge, which included the erection of the Sarsen stone circle and trilithon horseshoe that now dominate the present-day landscape. The seasonal settlement of Durrington Walls was also established during this time, between *c.*2600-2500 BC, and later enclosed by the large henge bank (Fig. 4.4) and ditch (c. 2500-2400) which still define the site (Parker Pearson *et al*. 2008). Further developments took place in the landscape between *c.*2480-2020 BC with the construction of the inner bluestone circle and the avenue at Stonehenge, the timber circles at Durrington Walls, and Woodhenge (*c.*2300), a henge enclosing six concentric circles of timber posts, located to the south of Durrington Walls (Parker Pearson *et al*. 2008).

The period between *c.*2000-1500 BC brought widespread changes in burial practices in Wiltshire, and with them the proliferation of the earthen round mound or round barrow, many of which continue to exert a strong presence in the Stonehenge landscape (Darvill 2005; Bradley 2017). Such examples include the Cursus barrow group and the barrow cemeteries on King Barrow Ridge (Fig. 4.5) and Normanton Down.

By the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age (*c.*1500-1150 BC) monument-building had ceased, and with the development of co-axial field systems, the land-use appears to have changed from being primarily ritual to agricultural (McOmish *et al*. 2002; Field and McOmish 2017). In this respect, it is important not to focus purely on monument building, for the landscape itself might also be considered a cultural artefact in that it was shaped by human activities such as tree clearance from the early Neolithic onwards, if not earlier (Canti *et al*. 2013). Likewise, as Richard Bradley suggests, 'Monuments impose order on the places in which they are built…' (Bradley 1993, 48). In other words, landscape becomes monument too in the way, for instance, the topography is incorporated into the construction of specific built monuments in order to enhance and emphasise them. A prime example of this is perhaps the way the undulating terrain on which the Stonehenge avenue is sited appears to focus attention on Stonehenge itself (Tilley *et al*. 2007).

Figure 4.4 Inner Face of Durrington Walls Henge Bank from the West (© Claire Nolan).

The construction of large-scale earthworks began once more within the Stonehenge landscape and its environs during the Iron Age (*c.*800 BC – AD 50) with the appearance of enclosed settlements in the form of large earthen ditched and banked, multivallate enclosures or hillforts (McOmish *et al*. 2002). Examples include Vespasian's Camp (*c.*500-400 BC) (Hunter-Mann 1999) in Amesbury, Yarnbury Camp (*c.*300-100 BC) (Cunnington 1933) on Berwick Down, approximately 7 km southwest of Stonehenge, and Sidbury Camp, Tidworth approximately 13 km to the northeast, on the edge of Salisbury Plain. According to the National Heritage List for England (Historic England 1990), it is possible that the earthwork enclosure and field system of Parsonage Down Camp, located approximately 2 km northeast of Yarnbury Camp, may also have been constructed during this period.

The Avebury Landscape and Surrounding Area

Situated in the Upper Kennet Valley amidst the Marlborough Downs to the south and east, and outlying downland to the west, Avebury and its environs reflect a similar pattern of development in prehistory to that of the Stonehenge landscape, in terms of land-use, chronology and, to some degree, the types of monument constructed. Likewise, the area has

Figure 4.5 Round Barrow on King Barrow Ridge, Salisbury Plain from the West (© Claire Nolan).

long been the subject of antiquarian and archaeological inquiry (Gillings and Pollard 2004; McOmish *et al*. 2005). The Neolithic henge at Avebury forms the modern-day focal point of the area. Akin to Stonehenge in terms of its multiphasic development, this site performed different functions, ritual and possibly domestic, throughout the Neolithic and early Bronze Age (Gillings and Pollard 2004; Gillings *et al*. 2019). However, as evidenced by the discovery of a number of *in-situ* and redeposited Palaeolithic artefacts, including the lithics discovered on Hackpen Hill and the Beckhampton Avenue, it is only part of a long history of human activity in the area (Scott- Jackson 2005). There is also evidence for transitory Mesolithic presence in the area in the form of lithic scatters, such as those found at Windmill hill and Cherhill Down, the latter of which lies approximately 6 km to the east of Avebury (S. Allen 2005; Gillings and Pollard 2004). In terms of the first signs of land-use, while the existing paleoenvironmental data indicate that, like the Stonehenge landscape, the area consisted of a mixture of open woodland and grassland at the outset of the early Neolithic, there is evidence for woodland clearance during the early Mesolithic period (M. Allen 2005; Canti *et al*. 2013). The data also indicate that there were instances of pre-monumental pastoral and agricultural activity in the area during the early Neolithic (Canti *et al*. 2013).
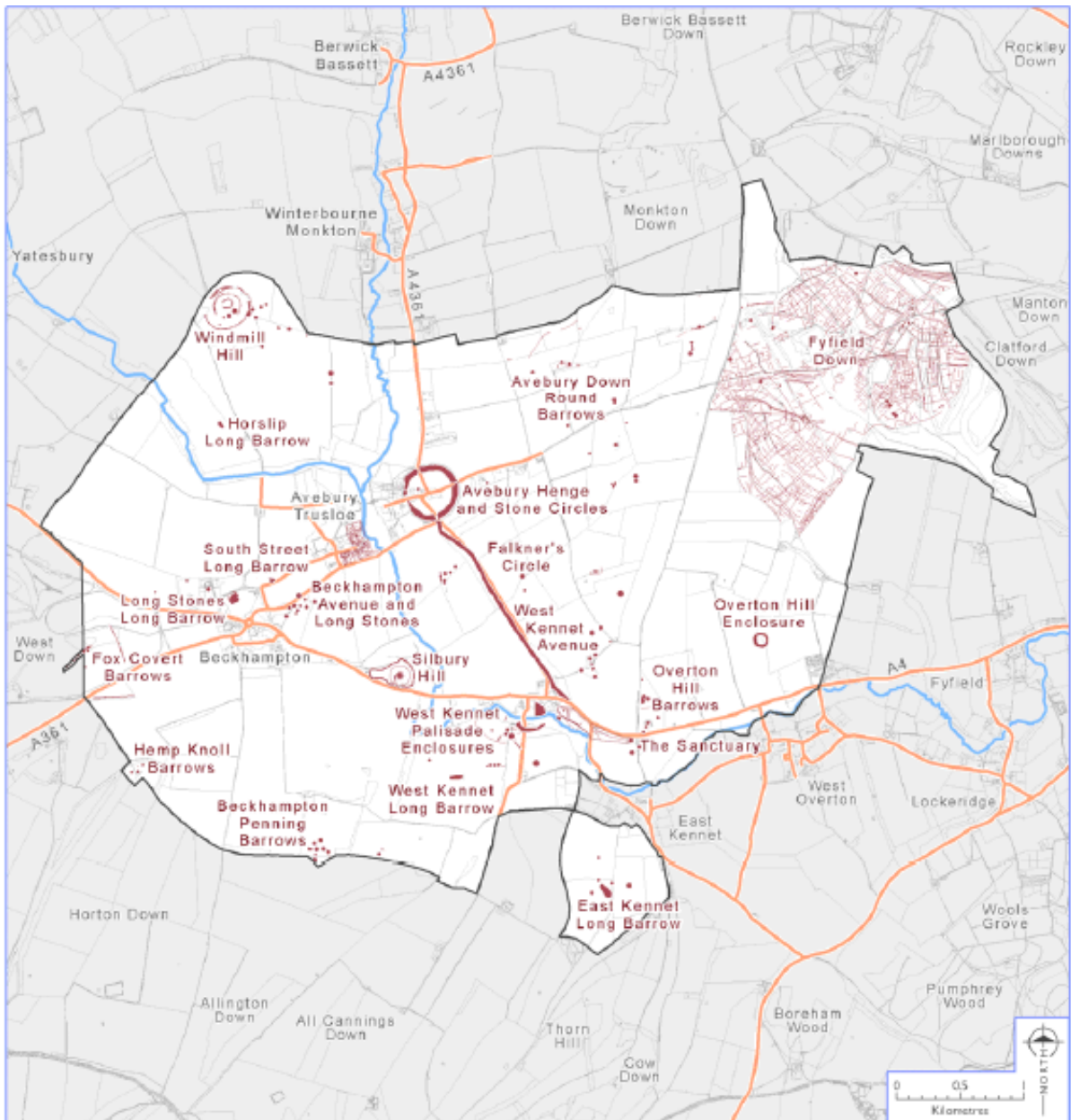
Figure 4.6 The Avebury World Heritage Site. Reproduced from Simmonds and Thomas 2015 (© Crown Copyright and database right 2014. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900)

Following the results of recent survey work, Mark Gillings *et al*. (2019) propose that the cluster of gullies which Alexander Keiller identified within the southern inner circle of Avebury henge may be the remains of an early Neolithic timber house, and thus one of the earliest structures erected in the Avebury landscape. However, this hypothesis can only be confirmed with further excavation. More certain is that long barrows, such as the example at West Kennet (*c*.3650 BC), were some of the first megalithic monuments to be constructed in the Avebury landscape (Gillings and Pollard 2004; Leivers and Powell 2016b). Like the other megalithic structures that came to be built in the area, it was partially constructed from sarsen stone extracted from natural outcroppings which once covered the downs between Marlborough and

Devizes (Field 2005). Examples of these sarsen boulders still survive in the valley areas of Lockeridge and West Woods (Field 2005). Field (2005) suggests that in conjunction with the multiplicity of springs and high places that characterise the area, the unique appearance of the sarsen boulders may have caused the early inhabitants of the area to view Avebury and its environs as a special or sacred landscape. Indeed, the evidence of flint axe polishing on a natural sarsen boulder, or a *pollisoir*, on Lockeridge Down supports this theory (Gillings and Pollard 2004). Broadly contemporary with West Kennet long barrow is the causewayed enclosure at Windmill Hill, a circular enclosure comprised of three concentric segmented ditches, thought to have functioned as both a gathering place and a site of ritual events (Gillings and Pollard 2004; Whittle *et al*. 1999).

The timeline for the construction of the Avebury complex is not definite. Gillings *et al*. (2019) have suggested that some of the stone settings which lie within the centre of Avebury henge, such as the Cove, may have been constructed in the late fourth to early third millennium BC, but this has yet to be confirmed. Despite these uncertainties, it is clear that a wave of intense monument-building took place in the landscape and its environs between *c*. 3000 and 1800 BC (Gillings and Pollard 2004; Leivers and Powell 2016b). This period involved the construction of, to name but a few examples: the Sanctuary (*c*.2500-2000 BC), a ritual site originally comprised of concentric timber and stone circles (Pitts 2001); Avebury henge and its outer stone circle (*c*. 2600-2000 BC); and the parallel stone rows of the West Kennet avenue (c. 2600-2000) that links these two sites (Gillings and Pollard 2004; Leivers and Powell 2016b). It also saw the erection of the Neolithic earthen round mounds of Silbury Hill (*c*. 2400 BC) (Fig 4.7) and Marlborough (*c*. 2580–2470 BC), both of which, in respect of their proximity to springs and river confluences, may have served to mark drainage-based land boundaries and routeways, while simultaneously honouring the life-giving, and liminal qualities of water (Leary 2010; Leary and Field 2012; Leary *et al*. 2013).

The context of certain monuments in the Avebury and Stonehenge landscapes, such as Windmill Hill and Coneybury Henge (approximately 1km from Stonehenge) were, at least, partly wooded. Other monuments, such as Stonehenge itself, Avebury, West Kennet and Silbury Hill were in short grazed grassland environments (M. Allen 1997, 2005; Canti *et al*. 2013; Evans 1972) at least superficially similar to the old grassland that exists in the pastoral parts of these landscapes today. Thus, in terms of viewing the landscape as a cultural artefact, the present-

Figure 4.7 Silbury Hill from the North © Claire Nolan.

day appearance of some of these areas does give a sense of how they would have looked in the past.

Paralleling the changes that occurred in the Stonehenge landscape during the early Bronze Age, round barrows, such as those on Overton Hill West and Avebury Down, became a prominent feature in the Avebury landscape between *c.*2200 and 1500 BC (Cleal 2005). Further reflecting land-use patterns in the Stonehenge landscape, by the middle Bronze Age the ritual focus of the Avebury landscape and surrounding area was replaced by intensive agriculture, a change marked by the appearance of field systems and small enclosed settlements (Gillings and Pollard 2004; McOmish 2005). Indeed, extensive field systems of Bronze Age and later date discovered to the east on the Overton and Fyfield Downs, have been the subject of extensive landscape survey and strategic excavation (Fowler 2000). Gillings and Pollard (2004) note that Avebury experienced a 'dark age' during the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age, when agricultural and settlement activity moved outward to surrounding areas. From *c.*1000 BC these outer regions became the focus of renewed large-scale communal activity with the development of Iron Age hillforts like Barbury Castle, approximately 7.5 km to the northeast of

Avebury, and Oldbury, approximately 5 km to the west (Bowden 2005; Gillings and Pollard 2004).

The Vale of Pewsey

In contrast to the chalk uplands of Salisbury Plain and the Marlborough downs, the geology of the Vale of Pewsey (Fig. 4.8) which lies between them is composed of Upper Greensand. Although the sites on the Marlborough Downs described thus far have been discussed in the context of the Avebury landscape, those which occupy the southern escarpment of the downs and dominate the northern viewshed of the Vale of Pewsey will be included in this section. Unconducive to agriculture, the thin and poor soil of the escarpment has ensured the preservation of these upland sites (Leary and Field 2012). Due to their location on fertile Greensand, the lowland sites have not been so fortunate, having been either severely eroded or plough-levelled (Leary and Field 2012). As such, this prehistoric landscape appears very different to those of Stonehenge and Avebury in terms of visible upstanding prehistoric monuments. For this reason, the Vale did not receive the same level of attention from antiquarians and archaeologists in the past as that enjoyed by the latter areas (See Carpenter and Winton 2011 for discussion). Save for a handful of excavations in the 1960s and early 1970s (Annable & Eagles 2010; Wainright *et al*. 1971), the prehistoric archaeology of the area has only become the subject of more intensive investigation since the 1990s (e.g. Barret and McOmish 2009; Carpenter and Winton 2011; Leary and Field 2012; Leary *et al*. 2016; McOmish *et al*. 2002; McOmish *et al*. 2005; Tubb 2009). The most recent of these investigations is the Vale of Pewsey Project led by Historic England and the University of Reading (Leary *et al*. 2016), the results of which will shed further light on the archaeological significance of the area.

The discovery of numerous Palaeolithic find-spots on the downs along the northern edge of the Vale, in rivers and valley gravels indicate that people were exploiting the resources of this area upwards of 600,000 years ago (Scott-Jackson 2005). Based on the paleoenvironmental data currently available for the area, Edward Carpenter and Helen Winton (2011) suggest that early inhabitants might have begun to shape the lowlands of the Vale, in terms of woodland clearance, by the Late Mesolithic/early Neolithic. Other indications of Mesolithic exploitation include the extensive lithic assemblage discovered at Golden Ball Hill, near Alton Barnes (Dennis and Hamilton 1997) and from excavations at Marden henge (Leary and Field 2012; Wainright *et*

Figure 4.8 Central section of the Vale of Pewsey containing sites mentioned in the text, scale 1:40000, Digimap © Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey (100025252).

al. 1971). Carpenter and Winton (2011) note that woodland clearance may have taken place later on the upland areas. Yet, environmental evidence at Knap Hill indicates an at least partially wooded landscape in the early Neolithic (Evans 1972). Certainly, the upland areas were sufficiently open at this time, either in the form of natural or human-made woodland clearings, that long barrows, such as Adams Grave Kitchen Barrow, and the timber and earthen mortuary enclosure at Cat's Brain, Hilcott (c.3800 BC) (Leary 2017), 5 km south of Adam's Grave, could be constructed. Also broadly contemporary with these monuments was the construction of causewayed enclosures on the escarpment at Knap Hill, near Alton Barnes, and Rybury Camp, All Cannings.

Recent environmental work carried out by the University of Reading in the lower lying area of the Vale of Pewsey (Marden inner henge and the Wilsford Henge) seems to indicate the survival of significant woodland into the Neolithic (M. Bell pers. com. 2019). These findings suggest that at least some of the monuments in the Vale of Pewsey originally existed in landscapes very different from those that can be seen there today.

There are few upstanding prehistoric monuments on the valley floor, either due to their obscuration by later historic structures or the impact of farming (Carpenter and Winton 2011; Leary and Field 2012). The exception to this rule, however, are the remains of the late Neolithic henge enclosure at Marden (Fig. 4.9), and the smaller henge that lies within it. Also contained within the enclosure is the, now, plough-levelled and excavated Hatfield Barrow, a late Neolithic round mound similar to the examples at Silbury and Marlborough in both form and function (Leary and Field 2012; Leary *et al*. 2013).

Excavations undertaken at Marden indicate that, like the monument complexes of Stonehenge and Avebury, the henge enclosure, and its associated earthworks, was also a site of ceremonial activity, including feasting, burial and possibly purification rites (Leary and Field 2012; Leary *et al*. 2016; Madgwick *et al*. 2019; Wainright *et al*. 1971). Ritual was also likely one of the main functions of the, now, plough-levelled henge at Wilsford, approximately 550 m southeast of Marden, a monument which, as evidenced by the discovery of a middle Bronze Age burial in the henge ditch, continued in use from the late Neolithic into the Bronze Age (Leary pers. com. 2019; Leary *et al*. 2016).

Wilsford was also the site of a barrow cemetery, the crop marks of which were identified by the National Mapping Project (Carpenter and Winton 2011). Such discoveries demonstrate that the Vale underwent similar changes in the early Bronze Age to those which occurred

Figure 4.9 Inner Face of Marden Henge Bank from the Southwest, source: University of Reading.

at Stonehenge and Avebury. Likewise, the settlement site discovered at Bishops Cannings Down (See McOmish 2005 for discussion) indicates that the agricultural revolution that was occurring on the Marlborough Downs in the middle to late Bronze Age was also taking place in the Vale at this time. John Barret and David McOmish (2004, 2009) suggest that the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age settlement and midden site at All Cannings Cross signals further changes in settlement and agricultural practices in the area at the inception of the Iron Age. Furthermore, they observe that this period of settlement reorganization also saw the rise of hill forts in the region (Barret and McOmish 2009), the construction of which continued into the middle Iron Age (Bowden 2005). The remains of a number of these structures can still be seen on escarpment at the northern edge of the Vale, including the hilltop enclosure at Martinsell and promontory fort at the Giants Grave (Fig. 4.10), both of which lie approximately 6 km to the east of Adam's Grave.

Public Perceptions of the Study Area

Today, as bustling centres of tourism that draw thousands of visitors every year (Pitts 1996; Simmonds and Thomas 2015), Stonehenge and Avebury henge behave variously as sites of

Figure 4.10 Giant's Grave Promontory Fort from the Southwest, source: University of Reading

archaeological inquiry and education, economic commodities and exports of a particular version of British identity (Bender 1999; Chippendale *et. al* 1990). In addition to these conventional uses, they are also the focus of pagan worship, earth mystery research and 'new age' gatherings (Bender 1999; Chippendale *et. al* 1990; Parker Pearson 2013; Simmonds 2008; Simmonds and Thomas 2015). Subsequently, Stonehenge and Avebury, as well as other British prehistoric sites, have come to be associated with various movements, agendas, and worldviews, including notions of authenticity; nationalist conceptions of a glorious prehistoric

past; anti-industrialist visions of a wholesome, rural arcadia; archaeological 'truth'; new age culture and politics, and pagan spirituality (Bender 1999; Blain and Wallis 2003; Chippendale *et. al* 1990; Darvill 2005; Edmonds 2006; Lowenthal 2015; Matless 2008; Pitts 1996; Parker Pearson 2013). Consequently, because these sites mean very different things to different people, their ownership, management, development and accessibility is frequently contested by multiple groups (Bender 1999; Blain and Wallis 2003, 2006; Pomeroy-Kellinger 2007; Chippendale *et. al* 1990; Parker Pearson 2013; Pitts 1996). Yet, despite the differences that characterize these distinctive viewpoints, Christopher Chippendale (1990) observes that, in the context of Stonehenge at least, many of these groups share a common sensibility:

> …that rich and optimistic view of Stonehenge which underlies so many of the visions of the place today – whether the Druids and the elements of the festival, with their regard for Stonehenge as a place of real and continued religious meaning; whether the astronomers, with their finding it a place of advanced learning and science; or, come to that the archaeologists who find it the most remarkable building achievement of prehistoric Europe. (Chippendale 1990, 32-33)

Indeed, many of these perspectives are woven together in the popular imagination to imbue prehistoric sites with an overarching aura of magic and romanticism (Edmonds 2006; Holtorf 2005; Matless 2008). Certainly, Stonehenge developed its reputation as a mystical place as early as the twelfth century with Geoffrey Monmouth's reference to the magical healing properties of the stones (Bender 1999; Darvill 2006). This image became more firmly established during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries under the antiquarians, John Aubrey and Willian Stukeley, who consolidated Stonehenge and Avebury's association with Druidism (Bender 1999; Darvill 2005; Parker Pearson 2013). Such mystical connotations might be included, along with antiquarianism, conservationist values and sublime artistic portrayals of prehistoric ruins, as part a tradition of landscape romanticism that began during the eighteenth century (Holtorf 2005; Johnson 2012; Last 2010b; Matless 2008) and which, some have argued (Edmonds 2006; Edwards 2000; Pitts 1996), continues to be marketed by the heritage industry. Indeed, it has been posited (Edmonds 2006; Johnson 2012) that even modern-day British landscape archaeology is a product of this cultural Romanticism.

The results of separate studies carried out on regional perceptions of prehistoric landscapes in the Lake District (Edmonds 2006) and East Anglia (Matless 2008) in the UK reveal

that to presume people's individual experiences of such places are governed by dominant cultural tropes is too simplistic. Similarly, Barbara Bender argues that, 'It is a mistake to assume that people are the passive recipients or dupes of the heritage industry' (Bender 1999, 125). As Mark Edmonds puts it, '…the identities and relations bound up in the lived experience of landscape are more tangled and messy than those narratives often allow' (Edmonds 2006, 186). Moreover, Sarah Simmonds and Beth Thomas (2015) point out that the Stonehenge and Avebury henge are but the 'honey pot' sites, while the surrounding sites in the WHS are less well-known and less frequently accessed. Hence, even if romantic portrayals of Stonehenge and Avebury do have the potential to influence people's perceptions of them, colouring the results of qualitative research in the process, it is possible that the outlying sites of the WHS are less easily defined, and thus capable of eliciting a different experience.

The Vale of Pewsey could arguably be seen as an extension of the lesser-known part of the WHS. Although the public profile of Marden henge has been raised due to archaeological excavations which took place on the site during the 1960s and more recently in 2010, 2015, 2016 and 2017 (Leary *et al*. 2016; Leary and Field 2012), it still does not receive the same level of attention as its counterparts at Stonehenge and Avebury. Indeed, it appears to be known only to those who study it or live within its vicinity. This is no doubt also the case for the prehistoric earthworks that line the northern edge of the Vale, especially as their natural forms make them appear almost as if part of the landscape. It is therefore possible that, along with the lesser-known sites in the WHS, the archaeology in the Vale of Pewsey, offers an opportunity to investigate the impact of less obvious and imposing sites, providing a contrast to the more popular ones in the study area.

Further challenging any assumptions that Stonehenge and Avebury signify predominantly positive or romantic qualities for people, Barbara Bender (1999) clearly illustrates that perceptions of these sites have vacillated between negative and positive through the centuries. In fact, the contested reality of these sites, particularly in terms of their impact on day-to-day lives of local people and issues such as traffic and parking congestion, road safety, planning restrictions and the negative impacts of tourism and solstice events (Hassett 2019; Pomeroy-Kellinger 2007; Pitts 1996; Simmonds and Thomas 2015), suggests that they are not necessarily seen in a positive light by everyone. These issues serve to highlight the fact that the WHS is not just a visitor destination or an international icon; it is also a locale (Edwards 2000; Pomeroy-Kellinger 2007; Pitts 1996; Simmonds 2008; Simmonds and Thomas 2015).

The monument of Stonehenge, as Bender asserts, may indeed be a museum, '…fenced in, available only to those who pay…' and thus, '…no longer part of a living landscape…' (Bender 1999, 114). However, the Stonehenge landscape and its environs are arguably very much a living landscape. While Stonehenge stands alone on Salisbury Plain, it is surrounded by a number of communities, some of which are quite densely populated: Larkhill, Durrington, Bulford, Amesbury, West Amesbury, Shrewton, Winterbourne Stoke and Wilsford. Likewise, Salisbury Plain lies adjacent to larger communities like Tidworth. In contrast, the main residential areas in the Avebury WHS lie within, and adjacent to the henge itself. However, the Avebury region is also home to the villages of Avebury Trusloe, Beckhampton, West Kennet and West Overton. The towns of Devizes, Calne and Marlborough are also located nearby. Likewise, the Vale of Pewsey, populated by a number of small villages, including Marden, Stanton St. Bernard, Honeystreet, Alton Priors, Bottlesford, Chirton and Wilsford is also abutted by Devizes to the West and Pewsey to the East. Thus, people live amidst the prehistoric sites in these areas, grow up around them and encounter them on day-to-day basis, for instance, while working, driving by them or walking their dogs. It is possible that this everyday experience affords a very different view of the archaeology discussed, even in the case of the more prominent sites.

Some work has been published on local perceptions of the Avebury landscape, which touches on the intrinsic value of the archaeology (Simmonds 2008, Simmonds and Thomas 2015; Pitts 1996; Wallis and Blain 2003). For example, one Avebury resident referred to the personal stability that the permanence of the stones affords (Stützenberger 2008). Likewise, some of the preliminary qualitative results of the Human Henge project carried out in the Stonehenge landscape demonstrate that some participants felt a connection to past people when handling prehistoric pottery (Heaslip and Darvill 2018). The final results of this work, will no doubt reveal further such examples. Similarly, Wallis and Blain (2003) have expounded the sense of sacredness that pagan and other subcultural groups experience at both Avebury and Stonehenge. However, additional examples and viewpoints regarding both sites are required in order to build up a more richly textured understanding of the everyday intrinsic value of the archaeology. It is especially necessary when, at least at the time of writing, there appears to be little published work on the local perceptions of the wider WHS and surrounding area. For instance, there has been no formal inquiry into the local perceptions of the archaeological remains in the Vale of Pewsey. Thus, there is a need to better understand the local and regional

perception of these sites, particularly if, as David Matless purports, 'A regional focus in part allows appreciation of how prehistoric debate plays within cultural and political argument concerning the meaning of landscape' (Matless 2008, 73).

Conclusion

Irrespective of the various culturally-specific representations that can potentially influence the experience of prehistoric archaeology, the most important factor for an inquiry into the intrinsic value of the sites discussed above, and their impact on wellbeing, is people's individual lived experience of them, how people interface with them and what these places mean for them personally. As Avebury resident, Eva Stützenberger, highlights, 'Avebury is something personal; it might look the same for everybody but it means a thousand different things depending on whose eyes you are seeing it through' (Stützenberger 2008, 51).

Representing different degrees of visibility and public recognition, as well as a range of monuments types and topographic settings, the prehistoric landscapes of Stonehenge, Avebury, the Vale of Pewsey and their environs offer distinct vantage points from which to assess the effects of prehistoric heritage on individual lived experience and personal wellbeing. In addition, the upstanding monuments which constitute these sites provide a variety of interactive heritage spaces which can be availed of to facilitate more in-depth experiential work with the public. In these capacities, the sites within the study area afford a rich platform from which to investigate the therapeutic potential of prehistoric landscapes.

Part III: Methodology: Theory, Practice and Application

Chapter 5: Methodology

Introduction

Acknowledging the need to adopt an alternative approach to understanding the social value of the prehistoric landscapes of Stonehenge, Avebury and the Vale of Pewsey, this chapter investigates in further depth the methodological approaches necessary to achieve this aim. Accordingly, it takes forward the ideas introduced in Chapter 3 regarding the use of qualitative, phenomenological approaches to examine the intrinsic value of the historic environment.

It has been suggested thus far that an assessment of intrinsic value of heritage assets presents the most appropriate method of evaluating how historic environment influences individual lived experience and wellbeing. Nonetheless, as Waterton (2014), amongst others (Clark 2006; Jowell 2005; Waterton and Watson 2014; Jones and Leech 2015), has highlighted, this intrinsic value is not always easily understood or articulated due to its subjective, largely intangible and embodied nature. As such, it requires more sensitive and detailed analysis. This is even more pertinent when faced with prehistoric heritage, which is often less well understood or easy to relate to in comparison with historic heritage that more closely resembles modern life (Last 2010a; Waterton and Watson 2014).

If, as previously suggested, the discernment of the intrinsic value of heritage, and by corollary, heritage-based wellbeing, may be achieved through phenomenological inquiry, it automatically demands an examination of a person's lifeworld or lived experience of the everyday world. As proponents of lifeworld research, Karen Dahlberg and colleagues, view it, 'Phenomenology begins within the lifeworld as the concrete and lived, but often disregarded, existence in the world' (Dahlberg *et al*. 2008, 35). The concept of the phenomenological lifeworld thus constitutes a useful schema within which to examine how the historic environment affects people in their daily lives, and what meanings it holds for them. It also provides an appropriate framework with which to lead a deeper inquiry into the wellbeing impact of specific heritage assets, while simultaneously respecting what wellbeing may mean for the individual.

This chapter considers the nature of intrinsic value in greater depth and posits a reflective lifeworld approach as the phenomenological framework most capable of discerning its qualities and impact. It then sets out a range of methodological theories and practices that align well

with both this framework and the distinctive character of the prehistoric environment. These include perspectives and methods drawn from more-than-representational research, mindfulness-based practice, landscape phenomenology, and focusing-oriented psychotherapy. Subsequently, the chapter provides a detailed description of, and justification for, the specific methods used to interrogate this phenomenon in respect of the current study.

The Nature of Intrinsic Value

In her 2005 essay on the value of the historic and built environment Tessa Jowell (2005), former Culture Secretary, highlighted the need to get beyond a focus on the economic and instrumental worth of the historic environment, advocating an approach that also values how people relate to heritage in itself. Drawing on her 2004 essay on the value of culture, Jowell put forward the case for an approach to discerning public value that takes into account the quality of individual experience and the more subtle, 'human' values of heritage for the individual with regard to '…what we are and the quality of our inner life' (Jowell 2005, 17). Jowell was essentially referring to the intrinsic values of heritage and their implicit connection with personal wellbeing. Consequently, she went on to suggest that the historic environment, as a dimension of 'complex culture', is an indispensable life resource – 'a personal heartland' (Jowell 2005, 17). At the *Capturing the Public Value of Heritage* conference in 2005, she argued further (Clark 2006) for the need to investigate and evidence this intrinsic worth; acknowledging the difficulties in accessing such insights and asserting that traditional modes of consultation were not adequate to the task. The consensus amongst the professionals and members of the public attending the conference was that there was a need to move away from top-down interpretations of value and further explore the intrinsic values of heritage (Clark 2006). As one of the citizen delegates put it: 'the difference is that experts 'think' and 'know', whereas people 'feel' and 'believe'' (Clarke 2006, 97). It was also widely acknowledged that more effective methodologies were required in order to understand how intrinsic value manifests for people (Clark 2006).

Drawing on non-representational theory, or what has come to be known as more-than-representational theory (Lorimer 2005), Waterton has begun to address the deficit of knowledge regarding the intrinsic value of heritage, presenting a more-than-representational conceptual framework to help understand not only what heritage means, but also what it

'does' (Waterton 2014). Applied in diverse ways, there has been much debate amongst researchers on how more-than-representational theory should be defined (Anderson and Harrison 2010). However, the common thread that runs through the various workings of this theoretical framework can broadly be described as the: '…processes of meaning-making as occurring within action, context and interactions – with other people and the world around us – rather than solely within the representational dimensions of discourse and structures of symbolic orders' (Waterton 2014, 826). As such, Waterton sees it as: '…a style of thinking that foregrounds explorations of feeling, emotion and affect and places emphasis on how these are negotiated and experienced through a recentred imagining of the body' (Waterton 2014, 824). Furthermore, both Waterton and Watson contend that this approach is relevant to the study of heritage in that, "heritage sites circulate with – and evoke – strong emotions and feelings that resist representation" (Waterton and Watson 2014, 75). They also assert that, "once semiotics is released from its representational nexus and placed in a landscape of affect and emotion, where bodies interact with each other, places and objects, then, and only then, can heritage experiences and engagements be better understood" (Waterton and Watson 2014, 107).

In this context, Waterton refers to the representational as the way in which the visual is privileged in conventional conceptions of heritage, and how in conjunction with established national, political and academic discourses that use and perpetuate this approach, it produces a one-dimensional appreciation of how heritage is experienced (Waterton 2014). One result of this approach is perhaps the following scenario which Eugene Gendlin presents in his treatise on the role of felt experience in the creation of meaning:

> People have always fallen into the trap of interpreting their experience only through stereotyped concepts whereby the actual stream of experience is largely missed…recall the many American tourists who interpret their experience in Paris as exactly what the guidebook and other Americans have told them. (Gendlin 1962, 17)

Jowell's comparison of the impact of textual and visual representations of heritage sites with that of the lived, physical experience of such places further illustrates this point:

> Think of the Roman settlements and fortifications in the North East – Segedunum Fort and Hadrian's Wall, for example. Much has been written about this period in our history, and photographs of the ruins and artists' impressions take us still further. But it is only when you

stand amongst it, and feel the biting wind off the North Sea and see the lush green of the rolling landscape, that you get any sense of just how threatening and *strange* it must have felt for the Roman invaders. And when you do so, you are making a connection through time that no other cultural medium can match. (Jowell 2005, 8)

Hoskins expresses this viewpoint best with the contention that, '…there remains a hierarchy of knowledges that privileges the apparently - the factual, the descriptive, and the materiality, rather than the human meaning and felt experience' (Hoskins 2014, 23). Jones and Leech also highlight this imbalance, maintaining that the intrinsic values of heritage commonly espoused in relation to themes such as identity and belonging are highly influenced by academic and professional definitions of what that value means for the public (Jones and Leech 2015). Ironically, it could be argued that despite Jowell's recognition of the importance of gaining a more subtle understanding of the public value of heritage, her emphasis on the need to develop a stronger connection between the historic environment and national identity is yet another manifestation of this dominant position (Jowell 2005). In response to this prevailing paradigm, Waterton is essentially urging for a fuller, more nuanced appreciation of what heritage means and evokes for people. Affirming that the felt experience of the historic environment offers insights which cannot necessarily be captured or mediated via representational means, Waterton and Watson propose an approach that also pays attention to embodied, affective responses (Waterton and Watson 2014). Affect, in this sense, is defined as:

> …those impulses and nerve firings that sit within bodies, just below mindful consciousness… affect is transpersonal and exceeds cognition, open, yet unfinished (Anderson 2014). Affect, then, is not something that we can easily put our finger on or even put into words, yet it is something we are familiar with nonetheless… (Waterton 2014, 827).

Consequently, they advocate an 'embodied semiotics'; an approach which attends to what individuals perceive through the visual and textual, as well as the emotions, feelings and sensations they experience in their everyday interactions with heritage (Waterton and Watson 2014). Jones and Leech (2015) have also noted the lack of attention to the intrinsic worth of heritage, arguing that, despite the fossilisation of such values in, and their centrality to, national and international conservation policy and principles, they are seldom considered in the

decision-making processes concerning heritage preservation. As a result, they too espouse a more embodied approach that deals with the quality and meaning of people's multidimensional relationships to the historic environment (Jones and Leech 2015). However, Jones and Leech (2015), amongst others (Clark 2006; Hewison and Holden 2006; Jowell 2006; Waterton 2014, 2011, 2005; Waterton and Watson 2014), also acknowledge the difficulties in evidencing this kind of intangible experience, particularly in the case of the everyday, where people are not necessarily consciously aware of how their environment affects them. Quoting from Chris Johnston's (1994) work on the definition of social value, Jones and Leech note:

> …"meanings may not be obvious in the fabric of the place, and may not be apparent to the disinterested observer". Indeed, they may not even be subject to overt expression within communities, remaining latent in daily practices and long-term associations with place, only crystallizing when threatened in some way… (Jones and Leech 2015, 26)

With this observation, Jones and Leech (2015) are referring to the intangibility of daily embodied experience - what Pierre Bourdieu terms *habitus* (Bourdieu 1990). As the intercultural communication scholar, Aaron Cargile, describes it, *habitus* is the way in which individuals habitually interact with, and respond to, their environment (Cargile 2011). Cargile further explains that like this, *habitus* essentially refers to 'pre-reflexive reactions' and is, therefore, largely unconscious (Cargile 2011; see also Kasper 2009 for similar perspective). To use Dahlberg *et al*.'s words, '…the things that we are closest to are the things that are most hidden from us' (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011, 34). Thus, where some individuals may struggle to put into words their embodied experience of the historic environment, others may not even give a moment's thought to how it affects them in their day-to-day lives.

In addition to these various barriers to awareness, Waterton and Watson (2014) suggest that yet another layer of intangibility presents itself in the context of prehistoric heritage. They maintain that, in contrast to recent heritage which translates more readily into people's modern-day understanding of the world, carrying a range of familiar signifiers and narratives with which people can identify, the distant past is not necessarily so easy to relate to (Waterton and Watson 2014). This infers that while people may find it difficult to access their felt experience of the historic environment and the meaning it holds for them, they may struggle even more to pinpoint how they are affected by heritage from more distant periods. Taking

British prehistory as an example, Waterton and Watson suggest that this is the case for the following reasons:

> The more difficult narratives to construct are those without discursive foundations…This makes it mysterious and difficult to relate to in terms of a national past since it predates any existing national identities. Indeed, there is no nationally essential discourse about any of its conventional 'ages'…Thus, the Neolithic, Bronze or Iron Ages have little contemporary cultural meaning (notwithstanding Stonehenge, of course), no clear connections to national identity and do not even provide any good stories... As a result there is a lack of semiotic activity around these periods... (Waterton and Watson 2014, 66)

Waterton and Watson go on to conclude that, with the exception of 'the most monumentally visible' sites, '…the prehistoric in the UK is too distant and lacking in contemporary cultural significance to have attracted any kind of semiotic activity beyond schoolbook cavemen' (Waterton and Watson 2014, 67). If this is the case, it makes an understanding of people's embodied experience of prehistoric archaeology doubly difficult to achieve, and at the same time, imperative, in order to establish what meaning and significance it does actually bear for people. Waterton and Watson suggest that monumentally visible sites such as Stonehenge do possess contemporary cultural meaning. However, returning to Gendlin's (1962) example of the American tourists interpreting their experience of Paris through the lens of the guidebook, it is likely that some of the cultural meanings of the iconic prehistoric monuments stem from a representational perspective. Thus, the affective possibilities of such sites demand to be investigated as much as those offered by less visible monuments.

This more-than-representational interpretation of the intrinsic value of the historic environment portrays it as a largely ineffable phenomenon, particularly in the case of prehistoric archaeology. Subsequently, this reading underscores the potential barriers to evidencing the impact of intrinsic value in terms of personal affect and meaning. It also suggests that in order to ascertain the intrinsic value which people derive from the prehistoric archaeology contained within the study area, a methodology capable of evaluating people's implicit and explicit experience of their environment is necessary.

Reflective Lifeworld Research

Concerned with the everyday lived experience of the individual, reflective lifeworld research offers an appropriate methodological framework for the purposes of the current study. Embracing the philosophies of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Hans-George Gadamer, reflective life world research adheres to the phenomenological research tradition of:

> …describing the world the way it is experienced by humans; what the world is and means to humans, what it means for humans to have a world, and how humans relate to this world, to each other, to different situations – to all possible "things" of the world. (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011, 36)

This approach thus aims to understand how individuals relate to the different phenomena that make up their everyday lived reality or lifeworld. Focused on 'intentional meaning' or 'one's directed awareness of an object or event' (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011, 47), reflective lifeworld research is particularly concerned with establishing, '…how the implicit and tacit becomes explicit and can be heard…' (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011, 36). In this way, it is especially appropriate for the study of one's 'natural attitude' or *habitus,* and the preconscious experience of the historic environment.

Reflective lifeworld research does not specify a particular set of methods. It simply recommends the adoption of the techniques that are best tailored to the research question and nature of the phenomenon studied, and most capable of describing, as faithfully as possible, the essence of phenomenon as it presents itself. In this respect, this type of research design might be viewed more as a guiding philosophical framework, which places importance on sensitivity and an 'openness' to, or suspension of assumption regarding, the phenomenon as it appears. It thus supports the use of traditional qualitative methods that allow this process to occur. Such techniques include qualitative interviews, participant observation, diary narratives, performative approaches like psychodramatic re-enactment and creative means such as the presentation of artworks. Likewise, the reflective lifeworld approach offers guidance on how to conduct these methods in keeping with the principles of openness and sensitivity that underpin it. For example, it proposes, human scientist, Peter Ashworth's model of Merleau-Ponty's 'inevitable structures of the lifeworld' as a guide for conducting interviews in the

'phenomenological attitude' (Dahlberg *et al*. 2008, 194). In this way, this model acts as a tool for enabling the experience of a particular phenomenon to be described from as many perspectives, and as thoroughly, as possible. The dimensions of phenomenological perception that comprise the model include: selfhood, sociality, spatiality, discourse, temporality, project, embodiment, or alternatively, as health and social care theorists, Les Todres *et al*. (2007), have interpreted them: temporality, spatiality, intersubjectivity, embodiment and mood or emotional attunement (Dahlberg *et al*. 2008, 194-195).

The phenomenon which forms the basis of this study is people's individual lived perceptions and experiences of the prehistoric archaeology of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, the Vale of Pewsey and their environs. The research question investigates what intrinsic value the archaeology holds for individuals, in terms of the affective experiences, emotions and meanings they derive from it. The research thus aims to help participants to describe and communicate this experience as clearly as possible. Researchers favouring a more phenomenological approach to the study of heritage experience, or at least one that places greater emphasis on embodied experience, suggest the following traditional qualitative methods as being adequate to the task: one-to-one interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and community participatory approaches (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; Hoskins 2014; Jones 2017; Jones and Leech 2015; Waterton and Watson 2014). Indeed, as noted in Chapter 2, studies such as Kiddey's (2014) work on homeless heritage, and some of the UCLMC projects (Lanceley *et al*. 2011) have already put some of these methods into practice and succeeded, in particular, in demonstrating how sensitive personal narratives can be accessed via appropriate interviewing techniques.

In recent years researchers have also begun to recommend the use of performative methods for understanding people's lived experience of the historic environment (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016; Hoskins 2014; Waterton and Watson 2014). Performativity in this instance can be understood in terms of the 'immediacy and engagement' of the lived experience of heritage (Watson and Waterton 2014, 4). As Dewsbury describes it, this conception of performativity takes in the more-than-representational territory of: '…practice-based thinking, embodiment, present-moment focus, and distributed agency…' (Dewsbury 2010, 322). In this form, performative methods provide ways to discern the affect and meaning of lived experience through attention to interactions in the present moment (Waterton 2014; Anderson and Harrison 2010). For example, Waterton and Watson (2014) view participant photography as a

performative practice, in that, more than just a visual representation, the act of photographing is reflective and expressive of the participant's felt, embodied experience of, and interaction with, the object photographed in that moment. Another, performative and more-than-representational approach is that promoted by Alan Latham (2003) – the diary-interview method. In his study of street culture in New Zealand, Latham requested that his research participants keep a personal diary of their daily comings and goings on Ponsonby Road, Auckland, for discussion during the interview. Latham employed this technique in order to encourage his participants to reflect more deeply on their experience so that during the interview, researcher and participant might uncover a less conscious dimension of the participants' experience.

Concerned with plumbing the depths of *habitus* and 'less-than-fully conscious' experience, more-than-representational approaches encourage personal reflection on everyday practice and affective experience (Andrews *et al*. 2014). Some more-than-representational researchers even promote experimentation with, and a deepening of, traditional methods in order to achieve this level of reflection (Dewsbury 2010; Latham 2003). Thus, focused on performative and reflective practices, more-than-representational practices accord with the principles and aims of reflective lifeworld research. They therefore present additional tools that can help to understand the phenomenological experience of prehistoric landscapes and enhance traditional qualitative methods.

Deepening Reflective Practice

To determine the intrinsic value of the historic environment and its impact on wellbeing, particularly in relation to preconscious experience, seems a challenging task. This is especially the case when faced with the ongoing debate amongst more-than-representational theorists which questions whether it is in fact feasible to represent the 'non-representational' (See Anderson and Harrison 2010; Lorimer 2005). However, this situation has not prevented researchers from experimenting with, and reframing, methods in the attempt to access the unexpressed or inexpressible. Latham's use of the diary-interview method is a prime example of this kind of experimentation. Adopting this attitude, the current study proposes that it may be possible to further refine reflective and performative approaches within a reflective lifeworld framework in a way that can help to elucidate the intrinsic values of the prehistoric

landscapes discussed. It suggests that methods conducted with the aid of reflective techniques drawn from mindfulness-based practice, landscape phenomenology and the psychotherapeutic process of 'focusing', may help participants to reflect more deeply on their felt experience and the meaning it contains for them. These approaches will be discussed below in further detail.

Contradictorily, Latham uses the representational medium of writing to access more-than-representational realms and is thus experimenting with a medium that may fail to convey what the body expresses naturally and non-verbally through practices such as photography. Andrews *et al*. (2014) also recognise this predicament, emphasizing that:

At one level… sensory happenings in life can never be translated directly through language and words, which tend to deaden them. At another level, when using words, one can easily go too far down contemplative and interpretative paths, and attempt to re-represent, not represent, what occurred. (Andrews *et al*. 2014, 213)

Consequently, they conclude that:

…affect cannot ever be described on its own, even if the researcher attempts to keep their interpretation of the event to a minimum. As suggested earlier, the best he or she can do is acknowledge this limitation, that their articulations are never affective feelings themselves, and be as true and honest as possible to the energy and momentum of events that unfolded (Cadman, 2009; Ducey, 2007; Laurier and Philo, 2006). (Andrews *et al*. 2014, 216)

Yet, approaching this subject from the disciplines of philosophy and existential psychotherapy, Eugene Gendlin (1962; 2003) maintains that language need not restrict the articulation of experience. In contrast, he argues that an 'experiential use of language', which is led by, and describes, the qualities of one's felt sense, can get close to providing a 'true and honest' reflection of affective experience. This type of language is thus born of, and reliant on, what Gendlin (2003) terms the 'inner act' or a person's ability to focus on their inner embodied experience.

This understanding suggests that reflective practice is key to the study and illumination of intangible experience. It also highlights the importance of inviting participants to explore their whole experience on a level, which, as Latham (2003) notes, they may never have done before.

Accordingly, it supports the main goal of reflective lifeworld research, which is to bring to awareness through reflective processes to the unconscious lived experience of particular lifeworld phenomena (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011). This is essentially the same process which underpins mindfulness-based therapy, the phenomenology of landscape and focusing-oriented psychotherapy. Each of these approaches are distinguished by a set of techniques that are appropriate for conducting reflective lifeworld research. Furthermore, they have the potential to help people reflect more deeply on their experience and its meaning.

Reflective Tools

An integration of Buddhist practice and Western psychological thinking, mindfulness-based practice has come to be used in the management of mental health issues such as anxiety and depression (Williams *et al*. 2007). Operating with the intent of disengaging people from the state of unawareness or 'autopilot' in which they habitually carry out their daily interactions, mindfulness-based practices deal, in effect, with the unconsciousness of *habitus*. Indeed, Cargile suggests that the reflexivity involved in the 'cultivation of mindfulness' may be the most effective means of bringing awareness to one's conditioned responses and *habitus* (Cargile 2011, 16; see also Kasper 2009). Mindfulness-based practice attempts to achieve this by bringing attention to what people sense, think and feel in relation their physical and social environment, and how this affects their internal world. In this form, the practice of mindfulness guides practitioners to pay attention '…on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally' (Kabat-Zinn 2004). This encourages practitioners to observe, connect with, and describe their thoughts, feelings and physical sensations in any given moment during their day-to-day activities. Through this process, practitioners gain greater perspective on their limiting thoughts, beliefs and behaviours. This in turn gives them the awareness and choice to respond differently to their environment and relationships in ways that enable them to manage their mental health. While such an approach may not help people to completely identify the character of their felt experience, it at least enables them to get closer to it than perhaps would be the case without reflection. This kind of work has become firmly established as a health and wellbeing resource. However, as an existential practice, its systems and aims are not necessarily limited to the health and wellbeing sector. Indeed, it shares a lot in common with the practice of landscape phenomenology, in terms of its focus on embodied, sensory experience.

Essentially the study of 'being-in-landscape', the phenomenology of landscape investigates the subjective experience of archaeological landscapes in the hope of gaining further insights into the realities and perceptions of the past peoples who constructed and used them (Tilley 1994). As such, it has been used to help to understand the possible uses and meanings of certain archaeological landscapes, and applied, in particular, to the study of prehistoric landscapes (e.g. Bender 1999; Bender *et al.* 2007; Cummings and Whittle 2004; Tilley 1994, 2004). The technique is concerned with the visual, and the visible relationships between monuments and their natural environment. However, it also takes the body and the senses as the main points of reference in the exploration of how the agency of certain heritage landscapes affects embodied experience in the present and, in turn, the past. As Christopher Tilley described it during an interview with Barbara Bender:

> Doing a phenomenology of landscape involves the intimacy of the body in all its senses. What I mean is that it's synesthetic, an affair of the whole body moving and sensing – a visionscape but also a soundscape, a touchscape, even a smellscape, a multi-sensory experience. GIS has become very popular lately, everyone seems to want to do it, but it basically can only produce an abstract knowledge. It can't reproduce a sense of place acquired through being *in* place. (Bender 1999, 81)

A good example of how this type of approach works in practice is Tilley's (1994) phenomenological study of the Dorset Cursus, in Cranbourne Chase, Dorset. Reflecting on his felt, sensorial responses to the physical relationship between the landscape and its monuments while walking along the Cursus, Tilley attempts to gain an insight into how it may have been perceived by past people. Based on these responses, Tilley conveys how the monument impacts him personally. He subsequently concludes that the Cursus was constructed in such a way as to elicit certain emotions from those who walked along it:

> In the account of walking the Cursus I have repeatedly emphasized the manner in which the spatial structure of the monument and its relationship with topographic features of the landscape and associated barrows constantly surprises someone moving along it for the first time. I want to argue that the experience of walking along it was an essential ingredient in its meaning… (Tilley 1994, 197)

This type of phenomenological approach to the study of prehistoric landscapes pays critical attention to how the body moves through and encounters landscape and architecture, somatically, perceptually and existentially (Tilley 1994). Thus, it deals not only with the basic physical experience of space and place relating to sensory perception, distance, direction and boundaries, e.g. touch, within sight/out of sight, above/below, inside/outside, but also with the thoughts, emotions and affect stimulated by these interactions (Tilley, 1994, 16). For instance when conducting a phenomenological walk along the Stonehenge Cursus, Tilley notes that 'In the section beyond the watery bottom, it's almost as though you've become inward focused rather than outward focused, in that there's higher land both to the north and the south…' (Bender 1999, 83). Here, he takes notice of how the structure and agency of the monument influences perception and mood.

The validity of landscape phenomenology as a method for ascertaining the perceptions of past populations is debatable (Brück 2005; Fleming 1999), but this does not undermine its potential as a tool for understanding how people experience heritage landscapes in the present day. Indeed, in his elaboration of the effects that may be yielded by conducting a phenomenology of landscape, Tilley explains that movement through space affords 'narrative understandings' and that people's perceptions of these narratives shape both their personal and cultural identity (Tilley 1994, 15, 28). He goes on to discuss this type of narrative understanding in relation to the practice of 'topoanalysis', which he defines as a way to explore, '… the creation of self-identity through place' (Tilley 1994, 15). Interpreted in this way, landscape phenomenology focuses on the basic physicality of bodily experience, as well as the broader range of phenomenological experience that makes up the intrinsic values and lifeworlds with which the current study is concerned. It therefore provides a natural interface between aspects of reflective embodied practice and the historic environment. Like this, to all intents and purposes, the phenomenology of landscape could be conceived of as a form of mindfulness-based practice applied to the historic environment. It thereby provides, arguably, the perfect tool for a lifeworld study of how the historic environment impacts embodied experience and wellbeing.

While mindfulness-based practices and landscape phenomenology can help to focus people on their embodied experiences of lifeworld phenomena, these approaches do not necessarily penetrate further into the deeper meaning of such affective encounters. This is particularly the case for mindfulness-based techniques, which encourage people to focus on

their thoughts, feelings, sensations, behaviour *without* judgement. The practice of 'focusing' which defines focusing-oriented psychotherapy, advocates the same process, but argues that experiencing naturally involves meaning or what Gendlin (1962) terms 'felt meaning'. Thus, focusing also looks for the meaning of an experience. As Gendlin puts is, 'Focusing is the next development after getting in touch with feelings. It concerns a different kind of inward attention to what is first sensed *unclearly'* (Gendlin 2003, 8). It guides the individual to focus intimately on, and abide with, a certain feeling or sensation until it is possible to get enough of a 'handle' on the quality of the experience so that it can be described in a word, phrase or an image. This process in turn has potential to help the individual to get a keener sense of an experience, in terms of its source, nature and meaning.

Respecting the ethos and aim of reflective lifeworld research, mindfulness-based practice, landscape phenomenology and focusing offer perspectives and reflective techniques which may help to achieve a more nuanced appreciation of how people are influenced by prehistoric landscapes. They thus arguably constitute a group of practical tools that can be used to guide and structure the methods employed within this study.

Methods

While the potential of descriptive anthropological methods, such as participant observation, have been advanced (Graham *et al*. 2009; Jones 2017) for the analysis of the social and intrinsic value of heritage, the methods chosen for this study were limited to those devoted to individual narratives and performance. This decision was due partly to the time constraints of the project, but was mostly influenced by the aim of honouring, and staying as close possible to, the subjective lived experience of the individual. This preference was deemed particularly appropriate for determining experiences of wellbeing, not least on account of its person-centred nature, but also because wellness is often invisible, unacknowledged and taken for granted (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011). It is therefore not necessarily perceptible to an observer.

Acknowledging the need to better understand the everyday experience of the historic environment, the study focused on individual experience at a local level, using one-to-one, self-report, and performative approaches. However, it also investigated individual experience through performative and reflective groupwork with participants who were not from the area. The latter method was developed with the dual purpose of providing a contrast to residential

experience, whilst also giving participants an opportunity to engage with, and reflect more deeply on, their personal experience of a direct interaction with prehistoric remains. This more focused approach was also devised in order to test the potential of specific reflective techniques to provide a foundation for the development of future heritage-based therapeutic interventions.

Adhering to a reflective lifeworld approach, and bearing in mind the potentially intangible nature of the personal information sought, the study employed a range of reflective narrative and performative methods adapted from more-than-representational practice and more traditional qualitative techniques. The suite of methods chosen comprised: one-to-one, semi-structured seated and walking interviews with local inhabitants from the study area, and a series of mindful group walks and accompanying group interviews in the Avebury landscape with student and community groups. Reflective participant accounts were also incorporated in order to inform and enrich both the group sessions and individual interviews, while simultaneously acting as standalone methods in their own right. These three distinct methods were also chosen in order to ensure a triangulation of different data sets, and as comprehensive an understanding of the phenomenon as possible. A combination of mindfulness-based, landscape phenomenology and focusing processes informed the design and delivery of each of the methods applied. A description of and rationale for the methods used is supplied below; the application of these methods will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Reflective Framework

Concerned with the same existential dimensions of the lifeworld identified by Todres *et al*. (2007), mindfulness-based, and landscape phenomenological practices focus naturally on people's experiences of temporality, spatiality, intersubjectivity, embodiment and mood within their cultural and physical environment. This supports the argument above which proposes that a combination of these practices provides a ready-made practical framework for helping participants to reflect on their lived experience of their prehistoric environment. Drawing on this resource, the foci of phenomenological inquiry typically foregrounded within mindfulness-based practice and landscape phenomenology were used to structure the questions and format of the interviews, reflective logs and workshops employed in this study. For example, interview questions centred on what participants notice about certain monuments, how monuments

feature physically in participants' daily movements, and the thoughts, feelings, sensations and meanings that specific prehistoric landscapes and monuments evoke for them.

Respecting the central reflective lifeworld principle of 'openness', this approach did not question participants directly about wellbeing as such, but focused instead on the different aspects of their existential experience (Dahlberg *et al.* 2011). Designed to reduce the potential for researcher bias, this 'open attitude' was adopted in order to allow wellbeing themes to surface naturally of their own accord as part of the participant's general lived experience of the phenomenon, without the need for direction (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011, 98). During the interviews and group interviews, participants were encouraged to 'focus' on their experience so that they might discern and articulate their embodied experiences with greater clarity.

Reflective Participant Accounts

The sole self-report method used within this study was that of the reflective participant account. Based loosely on the diary-interview method applied by Latham (2003), the primary purpose of this aid was to support the interview participants to reflect on their *habitus* - to direct attention to the ways in which they regularly interact with their local prehistoric environment, how this affects them and what it means for them.

The diary-interview method was originally devised as a substitute for traditional participant observation in an American sociological study of the lifestyle of a specific counterculture community, where the excessive presence of researchers in the field was deemed inappropriate and had the potential to influence the results (Zimmerman and Wieder 1977). The method was also developed in order to compensate for difficulties in identifying suitable interview questions and the insufficiency of the initial project interviews. Due to these circumstances it was decided that the use of participant observation in its conventional form was inconclusive and that requesting participants to be the observers of their own experience would be a more effective approach. The researchers drew upon the completed participant diaries in order to develop interview questions, but they also treated them as separate units of data within themselves. While, as alluded to above, the reflective accounts completed in the current study were used mainly for the purpose of reflection and not the design of interview questions, they were also included as independent sources of self-report data.

The reflective accounts integrated within this study were not requested to be kept in a

rigid diary format as in the case of Latham's (2003) diary-interview project. They were proffered mainly as a prompt for deeper embodied reflection, which, it was presumed, some participants may not have consciously contemplated before. It was, therefore, not compulsory for participants to complete an account, but it was hoped that by just reading the guidance notes that were provided on this method, they would consider their embodied experience of their lifeworld interactions in more depth. This device was included in order to encourage participants to reflect for the sake of reflection in itself, but also in order to focus their attention on the phenomenon under study – their relationship to the prehistoric landscape – in preparation for the interview. This method essentially emulates reflective lifeworld practice as a 'narrative introduction' to interviews, enabling participants to consider and recall their experience (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011, 183).

Putting the reflective account into practice, interview participants were invited to keep, three-four weeks in advance of the interview, a reflective account of any thoughts, feelings and sensations they experienced in relation to their past or day-to-day encounters with the prehistoric monuments and landscapes within the study area. Participants were welcomed to produce the account in any format preferred, whether written, illustration, audio- or video-recorded. They were also given basic guidance notes on how to complete the account, with the general aim of drawing participants' attention to how they are, or have been, personally affected by their local prehistoric environment, and the meaning this holds for them (See appendix C(iv-v)). Thus, using mindfulness-based and landscape phenomenological specifications, it was suggested that they might consider what thoughts, feelings and sensations that arise for them when passing through, noticing, or interacting with certain monuments or cultural features in the landscape, such as standing stones, barrow mounds, henge banks and ditches. Other prompts drew attention to the role these elements play in people's lives, past relevant experiences, how they affect people's outlook on life and their relative significance.

Participant Photography

Participant photography was also incorporated into the study, both in the interviews and workshops, for its potential to help participants to reflect on their embodied experience of the archaeology and any related meaning. Likewise, it was availed of for its performative capacity to engage people with their present-moment experience and sentiment. Further justifying the

role of photography in this context, Waterton and Watson explain that:

> The cultural work of the photograph is…to affirm and reinforce the materialities of social meaning: the significance of places and the past events associated with them, the relationalities of people in these places and the expression of power and permanence through culturally privileged objects. (Waterton and Watson 2014, 86).

Taking up this idea, participants were invited to take photographs of places in the prehistoric landscape that bore significance for them, and to present them at the interview or in the group interviews for further discussion. In this sense, photography was used as reflective tool as well as a talking point. Again, as in the case of the reflective log, this activity was not compulsory.

Phenomenological Interviews

According to Steinar Kvale (1996), 'The qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations' (Kvale 1996, 1). This understanding of the qualitative interview agrees with the phenomenological principles of reflective lifeworld research, thus establishing the interview as an effective method for examining lived experience of prehistoric landscapes. Furthermore, as the phenomenological interview encourages reflection (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011), it has the potential to illuminate participants' felt experience of particular lifeworld phenomena. It also provides a platform for researcher and participant to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon examined. Informed by phenomenological approaches (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011; Bevan 2014; Englander 2012; Kvale 1996; Sissolak *et al*. 2011), as well as the interview styles and formats employed by Rachel Kiddey (2014), Lanceley *et al*. (2011) (see p. 49 and 55 of thesis) and Richard Carpiano (2009), one-to-one seated and mobile (walking or driving) interviews formed the core of the study. As a result, they provided the principle and richest source of information regarding participants' lived, embodied experience of the prehistoric environment.

In keeping with a reflective lifeworld emphasis on open dialogue, the interviews were conducted in an in-depth, semi-structured manner. To prompt conversation, the interviews were structured loosely around a handful of basic questions regarding participants' thoughts on the interview guidance notes and preparation, the length of time they had lived in the area,

what it is like for them to live there, memories, and their day-to-day activities that revolve around the site discussed. These questions also served to maintain focus on the phenomenon discussed. However, the interview was largely guided by the process and narrative of the participant. Mindfulness-based and focusing questions were also used to help participants reflect more deeply on the sensations, feelings, emotions and meanings underlying the experiences and events they described. This approach was similarly applied to any photographs that were presented at during the interview.

The same reflective and structuring approaches were applied to both seated and walking interviews. However, the latter process also operated as a more concentrated form of performative research. The walking interview is a form of, what Carpiano (2009) terms the 'go-along' method. This method also embraces the 'ride-along' interview i.e. an interview conducted while driving. Carpiano maintains that 'The go-along method is a unique means of obtaining contextually based information about how people experience their local worlds and the effects these experiences have on health and well-being' (Carpiano 2009, 271). As such, it also allows a level of field observation, in that it gives the researcher the opportunity to witness participants' in-the-moment responses to place and the memories it holds (Carpiano 2009). The walking interview was thus offered in order to provide an opportunity for the dialogue to focus on present-moment experience of the prehistoric environment, thereby complementing the seated interview, which took place either in public places or participant's homes. Consistent with the principles of reflective lifeworld research, this approach was also employed for its potential to help understand the phenomenon from a slightly different, more embodied perspective. Consequently, it was hoped that this approach would enable participants to get in touch more easily with thoughts, feelings and emotions that were evoked by the environment in question, and to afford more detailed insights into this connection.

Mindful Group Sessions

One of the many useful insights unearthed in the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) volunteering study (BOP 2009, 2011; see p. 47 of thesis) was that the more involved volunteers were in a project, in terms of the amount of time spent working on it, the more they benefited. These findings suggest that the increases in wellbeing which participants reported were directly connected to the intensity of their engagement (BOP 2011). If this is the case, it is also plausible

that the employment of some form of immersive heritage-based activity might help to gain a better, more in-depth understanding of how the historic environment influences wellbeing. Taking this idea forward, a series of mindful group sessions was piloted as part of the current study in a section of the Avebury landscape. As previously outlined, this landscape is replete with a range of well-preserved prehistoric monuments, features and processional avenues. Consequently, it is a multi-sensuous, multi-period landscape, latent with material agency, and thus provides an interactive focus with which participants can readily engage. The sessions essentially combined mindful walking and landscape phenomenological exercises. Akin to the walking interview, they were conducted as a performative experiment to understand participants' present-moment, embodied experience of the prehistoric landscape. This experience was then assessed through a group interview carried out towards the end of each walk.

As the sole researcher, I led the group sessions, which took the form of a mindful walk through a part of the Avebury landscape over a four-hour period. The sessions began with a short 5-10-minute mindfulness exercise to focus the attention of the participants on their immediate, embodied experience. Participants were asked to apply this kind of mindful awareness to their surroundings for the duration of the walk, noting any thoughts, feelings and sensations that emerged during the exercise. They were also invited to keep a reflective account of this information during the walk in any format desired e.g. written, illustrated, photographic. Along the same lines as the preparation for the reflective accounts, participants were given guidance notes a week in advance of the session. The notes included prompts to help the participants to focus more intently on their present-moment experience of the landscape (See Appendix C(v)). As such, while the exercise was carried out in a group format, the focus of the walk was more on the nature of the participants' individual experience. The walk began at Avebury henge, where the participants spent approximately an hour exploring the enclosure. While I remained close to hand in case participants required any assistance, the participants explored the site in their own way and at their own pace. The group then reconvened and walked for approximately two kilometres along the West Kennet Avenue to the Sanctuary (Fig. 5.1). Here, the participants were engaged in an audio-recorded group interview in order to allow them to express their individual reflections on the walk. This route was chosen on account of the good preservation and visibility of the features which define it, their subsequent potential to control the groups' movement through the landscape, and thus
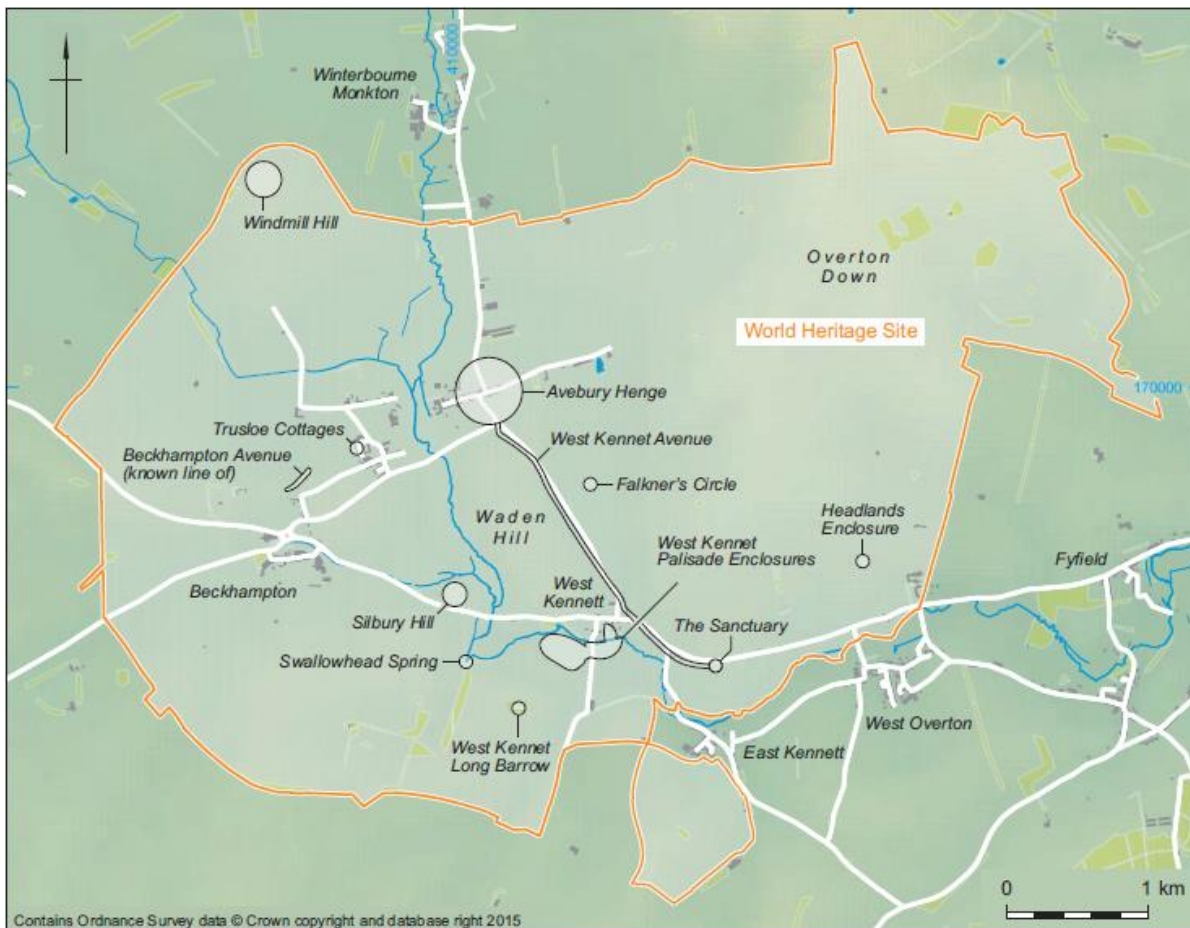
Figure 5.1 The Avebury World Heritage Site. Reproduced from M. Leivers, and A. B. Powell (eds.) 2016b (© Wessex Archaeology)

the possibility for the participants to experience the archaeology in a focused and embodied way.

Contrasting with focus groups, which are more concerned with the interaction between participants and 'cooperative knowledge formation', the group interview can be understood as a means to gather multiple individual responses to a phenomenon (Bosco and Herman 2010). Designed to collect a range of different perspectives, this method was employed to complement and triangulate the data gathered from individual interviews and reflective accounts (See Frey and Fontana 1991). It was conducted on the understanding that the felt experiences and meanings anticipated by the group participants, some of whom were visitors to the area, would be comparable with those of the interviewees. Once again, in alignment with an open dialogue approach, the group interview was semi-structured. As with one-to-one interviews, in my role as facilitator, I was only obliged to interject when it was necessary to clarify participant statements, answer any questions they had regarding the archaeology and keep the discussion focused on the participants' lived experiences of the phenomenon. The

group interviews lasted approximately 30-45 minutes, after which the group walked back to the car park along the Ridgeway.

The group sessions were piloted during this study, primarily as a method for gathering rich present-moment, performative experiences in the context of a specific prehistoric landscape, and thus to provide complementary data on how such sites influence individual perception and wellbeing. However, this method was also exploratory in that it sought to test further the capability of mindfulness-based and landscape phenomenological practices to access people's preconscious experience of prehistoric archaeology, and to assess the potential of this model for use as a formal and focused therapeutic intervention.

Conclusion

All the performative and reflective methods described above were combined to form an experimental phenomenological lifeworld approach to gathering rich qualitative data. The techniques, and the theory that informs them, have been selected for their potential to afford a greater insight into the arguably less obvious, more-than-representational meaning and impact of prehistoric landscapes. Conceivably, in this form they help to establish reflective and performative practice as a practical and reproducible tool for ascertaining the therapeutic value of the prehistoric environment, and the historic environment more generally. As a result, they offer a novel and potentially effective approach to the study of heritage experience and heritage-based wellbeing. The application of these methods will be described in detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Data Collection and Analysis

Introduction

Integrating the methods set out above, the fieldwork for the study was carried out over two stages across 2016 and 2017. The first phase of fieldwork took place in summer 2016 and was composed of interviews with residents of the Avebury and Vale of Pewsey areas, reflective accounts, and two separate mindful group sessions in the Avebury landscape. The second phase was undertaken in summer 2017, comprising an additional series of interviews with residents of the Stonehenge area, further interviews in the Avebury and Vale of Pewsey areas and a third mindful group session in the Avebury landscape. Additional reflective accounts were also gathered during this phase. A detailed description and critical discussion of the preparation for, and the processes of data collection and analysis is provided in the sections below. As follows, this chapter will cover issues such as ethics approval, sampling strategy, nature of the sample population, the delivery of methods, researcher reflexivity, contextual factors affecting the study, and the advantages and disadvantages of the approaches used.

Ethical Approval

In accordance with the University of Reading ethical policy for research involving human participants, an application for ethical approval for every aspect of the research fieldwork was submitted to the School or Archaeology, Geography and Earth Sciences Committee. The application was scrutinised and subsequently granted in respect of the following key areas: appropriate research methodology; participant details relating to sample size, and the identification and recruitment of subjects; informed consent and withdrawal; confidentiality; data access, storage and security; risk and risk management; publication and dissemination of research results.

Information sheets on the nature and purpose of the research, confidentiality, data storage, their freedom to consent to and withdraw from the study, and the publication and dissemination of results were given to each participant prior to their involvement (see appendices C(i-iii). Accordingly, signed consent regarding all of these elements was received from each participant before the study proceeded. Risk assessments and management plans for

each aspect of the study were also submitted to, and approved by, the School Health and Safety Coordinator.

Preparatory work

Prior to the fieldwork, interviews were conducted with eight local key informants i.e. professionals, residents and community leaders from across the study area, who possess a good knowledge of the local communities therein and community attitudes to local heritage. The key informants included four heritage professionals, a parish councillor, two residents who were long-established and particularly active within the community, and a community engagement worker. Thus, these interviews were conducted in order to get a sense of how best to approach the study and the residents. Key informants were also consulted in the hope that they may help to encourage suitable people to participate in the research.

Preparing for my role as interviewer, I undertook several solo walks within the study area in order to familiarise myself with the archaeology located there and get a sense of which sites and monuments participants might encounter in their day-to-day lives. The walks also helped me to identify locations and services, such as community hubs and notice boards where it might be possible to advertise for participants.

Sampling, Implementation and Analysis

Interviews

The sole criteria for participation in the one-to-one interviews, and subsequently the production of the reflective accounts, were that the participants were resident to the study area, over 16 years of age, and eligible to give informed consent. With such broad criteria the study aimed to engage people who were passively aware of the archaeology, as well as those who were either actively interested or, alternatively, had a negative view of it. However, within these specifications, the study also hoped to gather the views of people from a diversity of backgrounds and circumstances. Focusing on the archaeology of the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site, the Vale of Pewsey and environs, the study area was arbitrarily restricted to the communities contained within the Area Boards of Calne, Marlborough, Devizes, Pewsey,
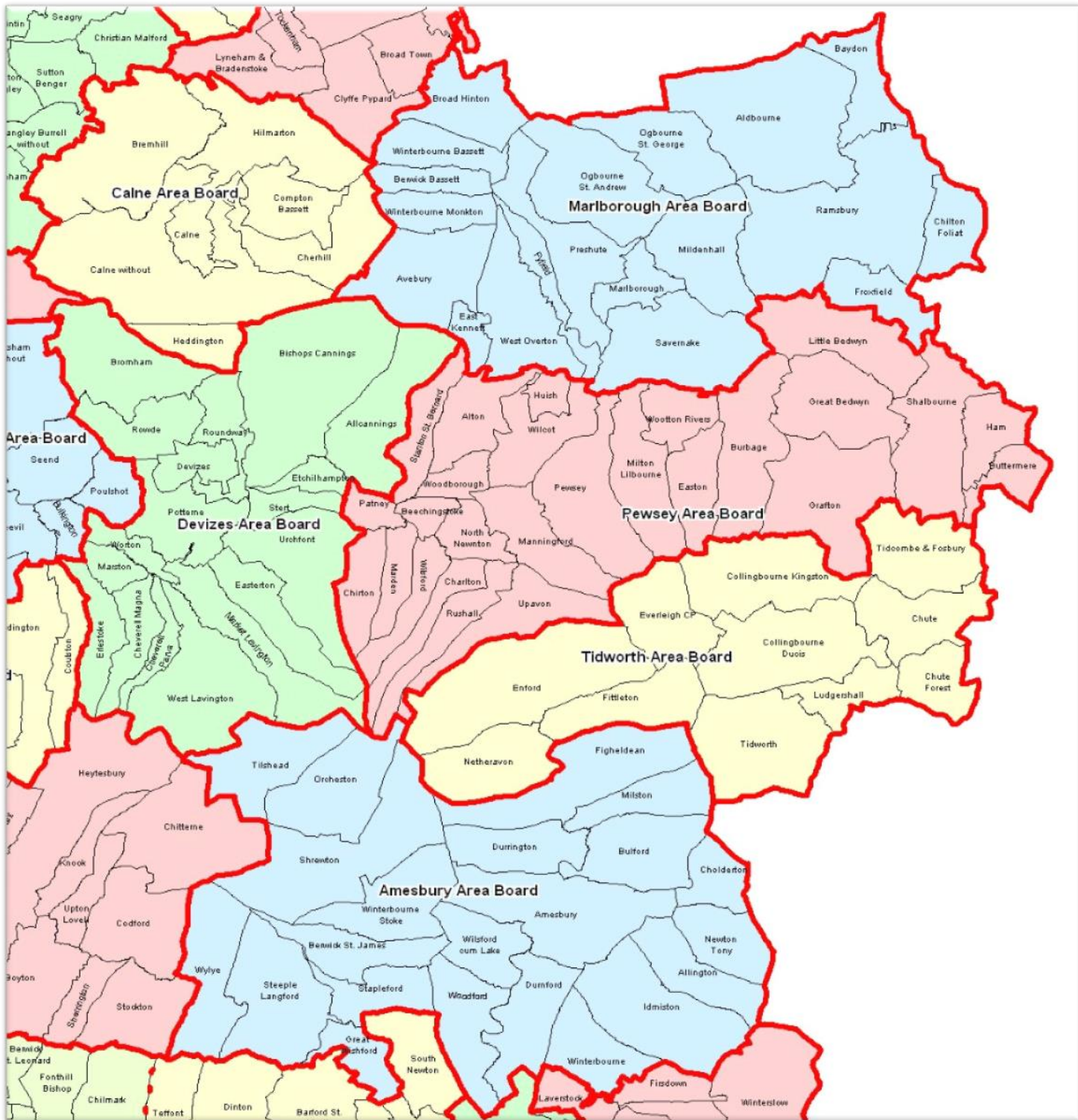
Figure 6.1 *Wiltshire Area Boards and Community Partnerships Areas 2009. This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (© Crown copyright Wiltshire Country Council).*

Tidworth and Amesbury (Fig. 6.1).

A total of 33 one-to-one interviews were undertaken with participants living in close proximity to the sites investigated - 10 from across the Stonehenge area and environs, 13 from the Vale of Pewsey, and 10 from Avebury and surrounding area. Comprised of 26 individual and seven joint couple interviews, this aspect of the study involved a total of 40 participants. Based on participants' experience, the study focused on archaeology located as far as Broad Hinton to the North, Lower Woodford to the South, Tidworth to the East and Calne to the West, covering a region of approximately 1000 km².

Due to the fact that the criteria for participation were so wide-ranging, and the study sought to engage as broad a cross-section of the community as possible, a mixture of sampling methods was employed. Interviewees were recruited via snowball sampling, where they were encouraged to get involved by key informants and other participants. A volunteer sampling approach was also adopted. This was accomplished by appealing for participants at local heritage events and conferences where the intentions of the study were presented; through the distribution of recruitment flyers at community hubs, shops, supermarkets and pubs; and the display of adverts in newsletters and social media networks (See appendix A(i-iii). Participants were also recruited via convenience sampling, where people were randomly encountered in different locations within the community. This approach engaged local people who were out walking their dogs in specific heritage landscapes within the area, socialising at their local pub, working in local businesses and volunteering at the University of Reading archaeological field school excavations that were concurrently underway at Marden henge.

In view of the reflective lifeworld understanding that 'meanings are infinite' and there is thus no limit to the number of meanings that can be held regarding any given phenomenon, the study sought to gather as many different participant perspectives as possible. Thus, while recruitment was undertaken before the fieldwork period, it was also carried out throughout, particularly at points where it was identified that additional perspectives, and thus the application of different sampling strategies, were required. As the fieldwork took place in two separate stages, it allowed time for the first set of interviews to be analysed and thus, the opportunity to identify whether more participants were needed. Ultimately restricted by resources and the level of participant uptake within the time-frame available for data collection, the sample size was limited to 40 participants. A breakdown of interview participant characteristics, based on information retrieved from the interviews themselves and diversity

Figure 6.2 *Personal Interview Participants*

Interview No.	Reflective Account	Age Range	Gender	Ethnicity	Qualification	Length of Residency (Years)	Recruitment Type
1	A	60-69	F	WB	No formal	Native	Volunteer
2		50-59	M	WB	Postgraduate	Native	Convenience
3	B	50-59	F	WB	Undergraduate	15-19	Snowball
4		60-69	F	WB	Undergraduate	15-19	Volunteer
5 (P1)		70-79	F	WB	No formal	20+	Snowball
5 (P2)		70-79	M	WB	No formal	Native	Snowball
6		30-39	F	WB	Undergraduate	15-19	Snowball
7 (P1)		70-79	F	WB	GCSE	Native	Volunteer
7 (P2)		70-79	M	WB	Undergraduate	20+	Volunteer
8		80+	F	WB	Undergraduate	20+	Snowball
9		50-59	M	WB	Postgraduate	Native	Convenience
10	N	50-59	M	WB	Postgraduate	Native	Volunteer
11	C	50-59	M	WB	Postgraduate	20+	Volunteer
12 (P1)	D	70-79	F	WB	A-level	5-9	Convenience
12 (P2)	D	70-79	M	WB	A-level	5-9	Convenience
13		60-69	M	Gypsy/Irish Traveller	No formal	1-4	Convenience
14		50-59	M	WB	GCSE	15-19	Snowball
15 (P1)	E	60-69	F	WB	A-level	20+	Snowball
15 (P2)	E	60-69	M	WB	A-level	Native	Snowball
16		40-49	F	WB	A-level	10-14	Volunteer
17		70-79	M	WB	A-level	20+	Volunteer
18		60-69	F	PNTS	Postgraduate	1-4	Snowball
19		20-29	M	WB	A-level	Native	Volunteer
20	F	60-69	F	WB	GCSE	5-9	Volunteer
21		80+	F	WB	No formal	Native	Snowball
22	G	60-69	M	WB	Postgraduate	20+	Volunteer
23 (P1)		50-59	F	WB	Undergraduate	15-19	Convenience
23 (P2)	H	50-59	M	WB	Undergraduate	15-19	Convenience
24	J	60-69	F	WB	GCSE	20+	Volunteer
25 (P1)		60-69	F	WB	GCSE	20+	Volunteer
25 (P2)		70-79	M	WB	GCSE	20+	Volunteer
26	I	50-59	F	WB	HND/Diploma	Native	Snowball
27		50-59	F	WB	GCSE	10-14	Volunteer
28	K	40-49	F	WB	A-level	Native	Volunteer
29		60-69	M	WB	Undergraduate	20+	Volunteer
30		50-59	M	WB	A Level	20+	Volunteer
31		50-59	M	WB	Undergraduate	5-9	Snowball
32		40-49	F	WB	Undergraduate	5-9	Snowball
33 (P1)		80+	M	WB	HND/Diploma	20+	Snowball
33 (P2)		70-79	F	WB	HND/Diploma	20+	Snowball

Key: M = Male   WB = White British   P = Participant

  F = Female   PNTS = Prefer not to say

monitoring questionnaires (see Appendix D(ii)) is provided above (Fig. 6.2).

Information packs containing consent forms (see Appendix D(i)), guidance on what to expect from the interview, themes to think about, and the completion of reflective accounts were sent out to participants approximately three weeks in advance of the interview (see Appendices C(i-v)). This procedure was adopted in the case of all participants, apart from one couple who were recruited towards the end of the fieldwork period. They only received the preparatory documentation a couple of days beforehand and did not necessarily have sufficient time to read through, or engage with, it in any great depth. Interviews (See Appendices F(i-v) for examples) varied in length between 45 minutes and three hours, depending on how much participants wanted to contribute or, in the case of walking interviews, the length of the walk they chose. Eleven people engaged in walking interviews. All the walking interviews but one were carried out in warm, dry and bright conditions. Instigated by participants, three interviews were partly carried out using the ride-along approach i.e. whilst driving through part of the landscape. In addition, seven interview participants presented photos to help convey their experience in greater detail. The range of knowledge that participants possessed of the sites appeared to vary considerably, ranging from vague day-to-day awareness and experience of the archaeology, through mild interest, to a more in-depth and, in some cases, researched understanding of them.

Mindful Groups

Hoping to add to the diversity and richness of the study sample, particularly with regard to age and cultural background, a purposive sampling strategy was adopted for the mindful group sessions in the first instance, with the aim of recruiting a local youth group and a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community group. Attempts to contact a range of different local groups possessing these characteristics were made, but without success. Consequently, a mixture of convenience and purposive sampling was applied. In terms of the former, a group of students from Reading School of Art who were participating in a week-long artist's residency at the University of Reading archaeology fieldschool at Marden henge. The session was also advertised to the archaeology students attending the fieldschool for volunteer participants. Seeking to triangulate the students' visitor perspectives with those of local people within a different age range, a purposive approach was used to recruit participants from a local

Figure 6.3 *Group Participants at Avebury Henge, used with Permission (source: University of Reading)*

community walking group. Determined by the level of uptake to this call, three separate participant groups were developed (see Fig. 6.4 below for participant characteristics).

The first group session was carried out with nine undergraduate archaeology students and a member of the fieldschool staff. While four of these participants displayed some basic knowledge concerning the archaeological significance of the Avebury landscape, the rest seemed to have little to no pre-existing awareness of it. The second group was made up of nine art students and a member of staff from Reading School of Art. This group also possessed little to no previous knowledge of the site. The third group session involved eight people from a local walking initiative, all of whom were resident to the study area. While two members of this group were native to the area and had some knowledge of the official and unofficial theories surrounding the meaning and purpose of the site, the rest of the group possessed little to no prior information. In fact, these participants gave the impression that they had either rarely or never been to the site before and were essentially visitors. In this respect, they provided a contrasting visitor experience to that reported by the students. Groups 1 and 2 were conducted in accordance with the format outlined above (see p. 142-143 of thesis), where the group interview (See Appendix G(i-iii) for examples) was undertaken outdoors at the Sanctuary. This format was adapted slightly to suit the physical needs and strengths of group 3. In this instance, once the participants had reached the Sanctuary, they were transported back to Avebury henge

Figure 6.4 Group Interview Participants

Participant no.	Reflective Account	Age Range	Gender	Ethnicity	Qualification	Length of Residency	Recruitment Type
Group 1, July 7, 2016							
P1		20-29	F	Turkish	A-level Equivalent	Visitor	Convenience
P2		20-29	F	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P3		16-19	F	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P4		20-29	F	White American	A-level Equivalent	Visitor	Convenience
P5		20-29	M	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P6		16-19	F	Indian	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P7		40-49	M	WB	Undergraduate	Visitor	Convenience
P8		20-29	M	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P9		20-29	F	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
Group 2, July 14, 2016							
P1		20-29	F	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P2	M	20-29	F	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P3		20-29	F	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P4	L	20-29	F	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P5		20-29	M	WB	Undergraduate	Visitor	Convenience
P6		20-29	F	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
P7		30-39	F	WB	Postgraduate	Visitor	Convenience
P8		20-29	F	Taiwanese	Undergraduate	Visitor	Convenience
P9		20-29	M	WB	A-level	Visitor	Convenience
Group 3, July 11 2017							
P1		70-79	F	WB	No formal	Native	Purposive
P2		60-69	F	WB	GCSE	Native	Purposive
P3		70-79	M	WB	GCSE	20+ years	Purposive
P4		70-79	M	WB	PNTS	1-4	Purposive
P5		70-79	F	WB	PNTS	1-4	Purposive
P6		60-69	M	WB	Undergraduate	5-9	Purposive
P7		70-79	M	WB	HND/HNC	15-19	Purposive
P8		70-79	F	WB	A-level	15-19	Purposive

Key: M = Male   WB = White British   P = Participant

F = Female   PNTS = Prefer not to say

by bus where they were engaged in an indoor group interview in the National Trust Learning room.

As with most of the walking interviews, all the group sessions were undertaken in warm, dry, and sunny conditions.

Reflective Accounts

Fourteen reflective accounts (Fig. 6.5) were completed in written form (See appendix E(i-iii) for examples), two of which were jointly written by participating couples. Except for one person who submitted his reflections prior to the interview, and another who submitted her thoughts after, the rest of the one-to-one interview participants brought their accounts to the interview for discussion. All the group participants who had kept written or pictorial reflective accounts (Fig. 6.6) during the walks discussed them in the group interviews rather than submitting them, except for one student who provided written feedback on her experience after the session had been completed. In addition, one of the art students from Group 2 video-recorded her experience using a head camera. After the group session, with the written consent from the other group members, this student used some of the footage, together with audio extracts of the group interview, to make a film (Cottrell and Nolan 2017) about her experience of the walk and, to a lesser degree, the fieldschool. In response to a specific set of interview-style questions, the student produced an accompanying written reflective account concerning the meaning of the film. This too was included as one of the participant reflective accounts. The accounts varied in length, style and detail, but essentially reflected what the participants considered to be true and relevant to their experience of living near or visiting a prehistoric landscape.

Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity

Dahlberg *et al*. (2008) recognise that as much as researchers may wish to see themselves as detached observers of a research phenomenon, this is impossible. They advise that, '...no researcher is a "blank document", and there exists no "uncontaminated" place from which to start and work on a research project' (Dahlberg *et al*. 2008, 125). This is equally true of the current study. While the inspiration for the study was borne out of a curiosity about whether
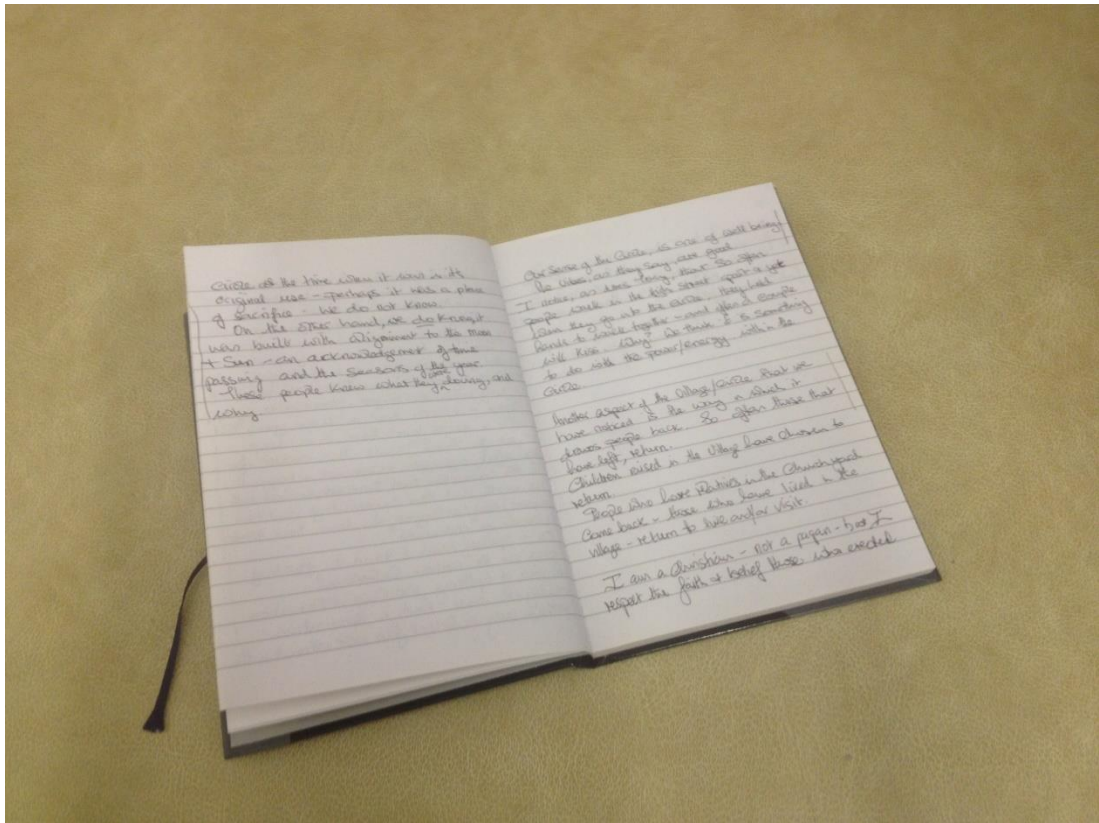
Figure 6.5 Example of a Reflective Participant Account (© Claire Nolan)

Figure 6.6 Group Participant Recording Reflections at the Sanctuary, West Overton, Avebury, used with Permission (Source: University of Reading)

Figure 6.7 *Data Archive*

Data item	Type	No. of participants	Duration (hours)	Length of Transcript (words)	Date Collected
Reflective accounts					
A	Written	1	N/A	211	29/06/16
B	Written	1	N/A	982	29/06/16
C	Written	1	N/A	3676	04/07/16
D	Written	2	N/A	1145	20/07/16
E	Written	2	N/A	1215	14/07/16
F	Written	1	N/A	904	22/07/16
G	Written	1	N/A	432	03/07/17
H	Written	1	N/A	1865	09/07/17
I	Written	1	N/A	3496	31/08/17
J	Written	1	N/A	396	20/06/17
K	Written	1	N/A	758	05/07/17
L	Written	1	N/A	174	31/07/16
M	Written	1	N/A	643	03/07/17
Interview no.					
1	Seated	1	1:16	12,682	29/06/16
2	Seated	1	0:46	7161	08/07/16
3	Seated/walking	1	1:31	12,983	29/06/16
4	Seated	1	1:18	9004	04/07/16
5	Seated	2	0:55	6619	05/07/16
6	Walking	1	1:28	12,128	11/07/16
7	Seated	2	1:28	8879	13/07/16
8	Seated	1	0:46	4401	13/07/16
9	Walking/driving	1	1:29	8936	21/07/16
10	Seated	1	1:34	14,465	22/07/16
11	Walking	1	1:59	12,260	05/07/16
12	Seated	2	1:06	9756	20/07/16

13	Seated	1	2:01	9788	05/07/17
14	Seated	1	0:51	7773	05/07/16
15	Seated	2	0:52	9228	14/07/16
16	Walking	1	1:43	9369	12/07/16
17	Seated/walking	1	0:46	5641	30/06/16
18	Seated	1	0:41	5205	23/07/16
19	Walking	1	1:21	7057	08/07/16
20	Walking	1	1:07	9546	22/07/16
21	Seated	1	1:18	5900	05/07/16
22	Walking	1	1:41	12,505	03/07/17
23	Seated	2	1:20	8819	09/07/17
24	Seated	1	1:25	10,737	20/06/17
25	Seated/driving	2	1:32	13,256	30/06/17
26	Seated/driving	1	1:30	11,499	10/07/17
27	Seated	1	1:12	10,747	29/06/17
28	Seated	1	1:20	12, 663	05/07/17
29	Seated	1	1:12	10,341	01/07/17
30	Seated	1	1:17	9887	05/07/17
31	Seated	1	0:52	8537	17/07/17
32	Seated	1	0:52	8219	22/07/17
33	Seated/driving/ walking	2	2:20	12,918	09/08/17
Group interview no.					
G1	Outdoor seated	9	0:35	3475	07/07/16
G2	Outdoor seated	9	0:30	3615	14/07/16
G3	Indoor seated	8	0:46	6684	11/07/17

the historic environment has any role in the creation of individual wellbeing, it also stemmed from my own personal experience of, and in interest in, prehistoric landscapes and wellbeing. Prior to the development of the project I had spent time walking in and studying prehistoric landscapes throughout the British Isles, including some of the sites within the study area, for recreational purposes, and perceived them as a grounding influence in my own life. Furthermore, with training and professional experience in archaeology, psychotherapy and community mental health, I had a specialist interest in the research topic, particularly in terms of understanding the meanings of megalithic monuments and identifying alternative resources that might be used to promote wellbeing. Familiar with therapeutic landscape research concerning heritage sites (See Gesler 2003; Williams 2007; Darvill 2009), and the findings of the heritage and wellbeing projects discussed in Chapter 2, I was also open to the idea that certain historic landscapes might be experienced as therapeutic places. Hence, I entered into the study with a particular pre-understanding of the phenomenon.

Reflective lifeworld theory recognises that researchers are inextricably embedded in the world of the research phenomenon (Dahlberg *et al*. 2008). In the same connection, it asserts that in their attempt to understand and explain the meaning of a phenomenon, researchers are essentially co-producers of that meaning. As such, reflective lifeworld research accepts that researchers cannot forget their pre-understanding of the phenomenon. However, it suggests that they can at least 'bridle' or suspend their foreknowledge in order to produce valid and reliable research. Part of the process of bridling thus requires researchers to reflect on their relationship to the research phenomenon and their role in its examination.

In view of my pre-existing knowledge and experience, I undertook three reflective autoethnographic walks (See Appendix B) in the study area prior to fieldwork in order to familiarise myself with it, but also to gain a better understanding of my own relationship to the research phenomenon. I discovered through this exercise that, despite my interest in the study area and love of archaeology, I did not have a clear awareness of what meaning these phenomena held for me personally. It subsequently occurred to me that perhaps I was undertaking this research in order to establish what that meaning was. In terms of researcher bias, this position was an advantage to the study as it suggested that as a researcher, I was already approaching it from a place of curiosity and openness. Notwithstanding this asset, I identified through the walks that I experienced a positive affective connection to parts of the study area (i.e. Avebury henge, West Kennet Avenue, the Sanctuary, All Cannings Down, the

Stonehenge Cursus, Avenue, and West Amesbury henge), which could perhaps be described as awe and/or upliftment, and recognised that this could potentially influence the research.

Addressing the potential for bias to occur during data collection, I endeavoured to bridle my own pre-conceptions of the phenomenon and maintain an attitude of openness to its meaning as it presented in the participants' experience. As such, I aspired to monitor, and be considered in, how and why I worded interview questions. I was also mindful that my identity as an Irish, female archaeologist and academic may cause participants to respond with answers which they perceived to play or be agreeable to these characteristics. Equally, these attributes could cause participants to be more reticent or purposely challenging in their responses. Conversely, I was aware that through my positionality, I too had the potential to make unconscious judgements or presumptions about participants' identities and experience. I set out to minimise the possibility for this type of bias, by attempting to adopt an attitude of openness; asking open questions, and guiding participants to focus on and express their individual experience. Similarly, in respect of the potential for my facilitation of the group session to influence participants' affective experience of the Avebury landscape, I assumed a less directive leadership style. Like this, I engaged in minimal conversation with group members during the walk, attempting to subtly guide the group along the chosen route and encourage participants to explore it in their own way. I also reflected on how each interview or group session was conducted, the part I played in its trajectory, and how to improve my technique in consecutive meetings.

Alongside the precautions discussed above, the overall methodological approach of the study arguably served to privilege the experience of the individual. For example, it was hoped that in contrast to working with a given definition of wellbeing, the focus on lived experience, and the affect, emotion and meaning that participants deemed valuable for them personally, would help to maintain this openness and reduce researcher bias. For the same reasons, the themes put forward for consideration in the participation guidance notes were constructed in a similarly neutral way. Likewise, it was intended that the self-report nature of the reflective accounts would give participants an opportunity to consider their experience of the phenomenon without the direct influence of the researcher.

Analysis

As the study aimed to gain a rich, comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon capable of theory development, it set out to identify key patterns across the entire data corpus. The data were thus analysed within a reflective lifeworld framework using the thematic analysis method developed by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2019; 2015; 2014; 2006). The analysis was carried out using an inductive or data-driven approach. Realist in nature, it was based on the reality and individual experience of the participants. The analysis was thus not concerned with any broader structural or socio-cultural influences that might underpin their responses, although these factors are considered to some extent in the final discussion of the results. Similarly, adopting a semantic approach, only the surface meanings of the data were analysed. Based on these criteria, in conjunction with the aims of the research question, the research looked for relevant patterns of meaning within the data, which were then grouped into themes.

The first phase of analysis involved the manual, verbatim transcription of the one-to-one and group interview recordings, and the written reflective accounts (See Appendices E-G for examples). To confirm the accuracy of the interview transcripts, they were checked once more against the audio-recordings. Then each transcript was read, and the data manually coded or labelled. A manual, as opposed to a software-assisted, approach to coding was employed in order to keep sight of the context of the data and pick up on the more subtle descriptions of the research phenomenon which, some have argued (See Elliot 2018; Richards and Richards 1994; Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Rodik and Primorak 2015; and Sohn 2017 for discussion), may be overlooked with the use of software programmes. This process involved the identification of instances where participants appeared to value any kind of affect, emotion or meaning they experienced in response to the archaeology *per se*. Conversely, examples where the archaeology had a negative impact or none at all were also noted. The transcripts were then re-read and subjected to two further stages of coding. Codes were manually applied to the margins of each transcript in the form of comments on any units of meaning (i.e. words, sentences or paragraphs) within the text that pertained to the phenomenon. Following this, the codes and corresponding data extracts were grouped into common themes, which ultimately constitute the findings of the study (see Chapter 7). These themes were established and validated through an iterative process where the codes from each transcript were compared with the patterns of meaning that evolved from the overall data corpus during the analysis.

Mindful of the potential for researcher bias to occur during this process, I endeavoured to adhere to a reflective lifeworld ethos, bridling my pre-understanding of the phenomenon and to remain open to new, unexpected and diverse meanings within the data.

After the final descriptive analysis of the empirical data, the themes concerning the intrinsic value of the archaeology were examined in the context of theoretical frameworks and other studies relating to the phenomenon in order to clarify the meaning, or potential meanings, of the data, and establish their relevance to the wider field of heritage and wellbeing research. This interpretive analysis is presented as a series of papers in the Results section of the thesis.

Discussion

Sample Diversity and Bias

Between one-to-one and group participants, the sample took in 66 people in total (N=66). Although the sample did encompass a wide range of people from a variety of backgrounds, and was relatively diverse socio-economically, it did not include a sizeable proportion of people from more disadvantaged groups. As the figures in the table below (Fig. 6.8) clearly display, the sample was not as ethnically diverse as it was originally intended to be. However, the ethnic diversity of the group participants did contribute some different and insightful cultural perspectives. With regard to age-range, the sample did not adequately represent people in their 30s and 40s or those in the 16-19 bracket. In contrast, participants in their 50s and over were well represented. Likewise, there was a good proportion of participants from the 20-25 age range. Although the participants that made up this group were all in third level education and thus not necessarily representative of people within the same age range who did not possess this experience, their contribution did allow some opportunity for comparison between different age-groups.

Despite the fact that a large proportion of the sample had either received, or was enrolled, in third level education, with 21 university graduates and 14 undergraduate students, it still represented a wide range of other qualifications and skills. In terms of participants' residency status, the sample took in comparable numbers of visitors, long-term and short-term residents and people who were native to the area. This allowed an insight into whether length

Participant Characteristics	
Age	
16-19	2
20-29	15
30-39	2
40-49	4
50-59	12
60-69	13
70-79	15
80+	3
Gender	
Female	38
Male	28
Ethnicity	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1
Indian	1
Prefer Not to Say	1
Taiwanese	1
Turkish	1
White American	1
White British	59
White South African	1
Qualification	
No formal	6
GCSE	9
A-level	24
HND/Diploma	4
Undergraduate	14
Postgraduate	7
Prefer Not To Say	2
Length of Residency	
1-4 Years	4
5-9 Years	6
10-14 Years	2
15-19 Years	8
20+ Years	15
Visitor	18
Native to the area	13
Recruitment Type	
Convenience	25
Purposive	8
Snowball	15
Volunteer	18

Figure 6.8 *Participant Characteristics*

of residency has an impact on people's experience of the archaeology.

The lack of ethnic diversity amongst the one-to-one interview participants is arguably largely reflective of the demography of the communities from which they were recruited. However, as in the case of the under-representation of certain socio-economic groups and age ranges, it may also be partly due to reliance on snowballing and volunteering (as opposed to directly engaging particular social and cultural groups in person), as well as unidentified socio-cultural barriers to self-selection. Regarding bias in recruitment methods, the convenience sampling of student participants clearly provided a very specific range of perspectives in terms of the group component of the study. As discussed, this imbalance was addressed by the purposive recruitment of a third group within a different age-range and from the local area. This counteraction only served to marginally increase the generalisability of the group study. Nonetheless, the students' perceptions ultimately helped to add diversity to the overall sample in that they provided a contrast to those of the resident participants from different age brackets. Likewise, the convenience sampling carried out for the one-to-one interviews appeared to reduce bias in the sample population as it resulted in the recruitment of a group of people from a range of different backgrounds and circumstances. Although the snowball approach brought in a similarly diverse group of people, a significant number of these participants appeared to be more affluent. While this might be due to bias in the referrers' recommendations, it is more likely to do with the demographic of the immediate area. This propensity, however, did not produce homogeneity in the participant responses. Indeed, like the convenience sampling, the snowballing approach succeeded in recruiting people who would not necessarily have

volunteered in response to an advert. In addition, the more varied socio-economic circumstances of the participants recruited via volunteer, purposive and convenience sampling helped to mitigate bias somewhat.

As participation in the study was voluntary, self-selection was also a potential impediment to the generalisability of the study. This was an issue in that the sample might exclusively reflect sections of the population that possess certain types of cultural capital or a positive predisposition towards the archaeology (Jones and Leech 2015; Robinson 2014). Oliver Robinson (2014) suggests that as it is impossible to prevent self-selection bias in the case of interview research, the only option available to the researcher is to be aware of the potential for it to occur and to consider its influence on the research findings.

While it is difficult to establish with certainty how much people's choice to participate was influenced by their particular socio-cultural background, it is possible this factor may have played a part for the one-to-one interviewees who had received a third level education and were subsequently more engaged with and comfortable participating in the research context. On the whole, however, participants appeared to have come forward for a variety of reasons. Some clearly volunteered in order to convey how the archaeology positively affects them. In contrast, a handful of participants purposely took part in order to put forward negative views concerning the impact of heritage tourism or the management of the archaeology by specific heritage agencies. Others were more neutral in their motivations. For example, one lady seems to have volunteered primarily for the sheer enjoyment of the interview experience itself. On another occasion, a woman participated purely out of courtesy; stepping in for her husband who had been called away at short notice on the morning of the interview. Another participant, recruited at a talk given on local archaeology, had no real interest in heritage at all and no obvious agenda for volunteering, except to help with the research. In fact, this was the case for the majority of participants, who appear to have volunteered out of a genuine desire to help with the study, without knowing exactly what they could contribute.

The motivations of the participants who agreed to take part in the group sessions were different again. Both student groups were keenly interested in archaeology in general, and as such, likely to have a positive predisposition towards the Avebury landscape. This was certainly the case for the art students. This group had agreed to take part in the study weeks in advance of the session and were visibly enthusiastic about their involvement. In addition, at least one of the art students had an interest in mindfulness and was no doubt drawn to the session even

more for this reason. The impetus for archaeology students was not as clear-cut. The group session was one of several evening activities that were offered to the archaeology students from week to week throughout the duration of the fieldschool. Thus, the students were not aware of the group session prior to their arrival at the fieldschool. Although up to half of this group undoubtedly volunteered out of a genuine desire to either explore the archaeology of the wider area and/or an interest in the experiential nature of the session, it is possible that the rest had just signed up in order to engage in an extra-curricular activity or to accompany their friends. In either case, it seemed that the majority of the archaeology students did not have a concrete understanding of what the session would entail. Similarly, the local group did not know exactly what to expect from the session and were even wary of the exercise when first approached, due to its unconventional format. They, nevertheless, agreed to do it as one of their planned weekly walks. This decision was perhaps made out of curiosity and a desire to try something different rather than any particular affinity with the archaeology.

Although some of project participants had a negative or neutral connection to the archaeology in the study area, the majority, whether they were aware of it prior to their involvement in the study or not, saw it as a positive phenomenon. In fact, once the interview dialogues unfolded it became apparent that most of the participants who had initially expressed negative or neutral opinions, experienced certain aspects of the archaeology as positive or illuminating. How much this reflected a bias in the sample population, however, can only be answered through future applications of this method with different groups.

All in all, the different views contributed via the one-to-one interviews, though varied, do not necessarily represent those of the entire population living within the study area. Nor does the group sample represent the full range of possible responses that visitors experience when they engage with the Avebury landscape. In this respect, the study might have sourced a greater diversity of perspectives through the adoption of a more purposive sampling strategy, directly approaching specific community groups in person and undertaking door-to-door recruitment in target areas. The results of this study reflect a specific range of individual experiences regarding a particular geographic location and the archaeology contained therein, and are therefore not generalisable to the wider national population. In this much, the main utility of this research is perhaps its capacity to afford greater understanding of the affective possibilities, meaning, and therapeutic value and potential that the archaeological resources in this particular area hold for certain groups. However, it also has wider relevance. As Francis

Pryor (2016) has suggested with respect to Stonehenge, as unique as the Neolithic monuments in the Avebury and Stonehenge landscapes may be, they still represent a tradition of stone and timber monument building that pervades the British Isles. Moreover, the study area contains a range of other types of prehistoric sites and artefacts that are not only commonly found throughout the British Isles, but also in parts of North-western Europe (e.g. chambered tombs, standing stones, prehistoric lithics).

In view of the considerations outlined above, it is not unfair to suggest that certain aspects of specific artefacts, such as their age, form or narratives, may stimulate responses that parallel those elicited by similar prehistoric remains in different locations. This possibility is perhaps also strengthened by the methodological focus on individuals' felt experience and a more-than-representational understanding of the archaeology. Consequently, the experiences reported in this study may be comparable with the experience of residents of, or people visiting, areas containing similar prehistoric features. Indeed, this can even be attested by the commonalities in participant responses to the different parts of the study area. For example, different sites within the Stonehenge and Avebury landscapes, and the Value of Pewsey elicited similar experiences and insights. Granted, such universal claims can only be substantiated with analogous results from additional regional and international studies. The results from Holtorf's (2005) study on contemporary meaning of three megalithic sites in Germany provides a good comparison in this respect. Yet, even in the absence of a larger evidence base, the current study arguably offers a good foundation for the development of theory on how people experience different aspects of prehistoric heritage, particularly in terms of wellbeing. Additionally, in its focus on temporality, this research also helps to contribute to a greater understanding of the social value and therapeutic potential of heritage assets more generally.

Contextual Factors

Alongside the possibility for sample bias, other contextual factors with potential to influence results positively included: length of participants' residency in the area, the presence of a facilitator, mindful reflection, group dynamic, context of involvement, physical exercise, natural landscape and the weather on the day. While length of residency and the effect of the natural landscape were relevant to both the one-to-one interviews and group session, the other factors

were more pertinent to the latter. The relative impact of these elements and the measures taken to address their potential to confuse results will be discussed below.

Length of Residency

While there were clear points of distinction between visitor and resident experiences of the Avebury landscape in certain areas, they were surprisingly similar overall. The main differences included the unfamiliarity or novelty of archaeological features, in that certain participants were unable to relate them to anything else they personally experienced previously. This is well-conveyed by the following example:

> P4: I also noticed, it was really cool looking just at the stones themselves because there's really no pattern to them. Not the way that they're aligned or anything - obviously, you've got those patterns, but if you just like get one individually, it's not 'something'. Like, our brains are so used to like seeing something and identifying it, exactly, you know. Like you see a wall, you're like, 'okay, it's a wall - it's a nice wall, okay', you know. But you're looking at something and, well at least for me, I was just like, I don't know what this is, this doesn't fit into a pattern for me - this is just big and still. It's not a thing, it's not a statue, it doesn't have a face on it, you know, nothing like that. So, I thought that was kind of cool - it's just like this sort of ambiguity is really exciting, I think, and calming as well.

> I: And takes you out of your normal - ?

> P4: Yeah, it feels a bit foreign, you know? (Group Interview 1, visitor, 20)

Accounts such as this helped to add strength to the study in that they suggest the participant's experience was genuinely in-the-moment and less likely to be biased. Incidentally, this account also provides an example of how a mindful approach to heritage-engagement can access other, more-than-representational perceptions.

   The other area where the visitor and resident experience differed slightly was the tendency to take aspects of the archaeology for granted. For the most part, visiting participants appeared to have experienced the archaeology in the Avebury landscape as either a positive or thought-provoking phenomenon. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the level of focused

engagement and phenomenological enquiry involved in the group session, in, what was for the majority of participants, unfamiliar territory. Participants that were native to the area, or had lived there for upwards of 15 years, naturally tended at times to take the archaeology for granted, more so than those who had moved to the area in the previous 14 years. This was perhaps because it was still, to some degree, a novelty for this group. However, the familiarity of the archaeology did not diminish the positive connection that the long-term residents had with it. Likewise, while residents had the additional influence of their own personal narrative and day-to-day lived experience in the Avebury landscape, their immediate affective, sensory and intellectual responses to the archaeology, in terms of age, narratives, agency and appearance, was very similar to those of the visitors. Thus, even if residents had negative associations with, for example, the way the archaeology was managed or the tourism it brought in, their direct embodied personal experience of it was comparable with that of the group participants. In this way, length of residency did not appear to skew the results of the study.

Presence of a Facilitator

As discussed in Chapter 3, the presence of a facilitator in heritage-related wellbeing projects bears the potential to influence the experience of participants and confound results. As the presence of a facilitator was necessary for the delivery of the group sessions, and available resources only allowed for a single investigator to carry out this part of the study, I had no other option but to undertake this role alone. As a result, I took certain measures to reduce the potential for bias presented by this situation. Firstly, the group participants were instructed to focus on their own individual embodied responses to the archaeology throughout the session. I then assumed a passive role during the walks, allowing participants to explore the henge in their own way, subtly guiding the group down the West Kennet Avenue, and only providing official information about the archaeology when asked.

Despite the steps taken to neutralise my presence, the following quote suggests that some of the calming effects which many of the group participants reported may still have been influenced by the fact that they were being led through the landscape:

> To explore the landscape free from the stress of organising and finding your way is one of my
>
> favourite things in life, always feels so much better to be shown something I find, it gains

> meaning through the sharing aspect and I remember it more. It feels a lot more relaxing
> because you relinquish control. (Reflective Account M, visitor, 22)

Nevertheless, viewed from a less conventional angle, as I had minimal involvement in the walk, intervening only to keep the participants on what was essentially a designated prehistoric ceremonial route, one could speculate that the sense of being led was largely created by the agency of this dedicated path and the monuments that define it. From this perspective it could be that the avenue itself was the primary facilitator. This idea is further explored in the context of liminal space and pilgrimage in Chapter 10. Regardless of this possibility, as facilitation was potentially responsible for some of the positive effects that group participants reported, only the instances where it was specified that the archaeology was the cause of the experience were included in the final analysis.

Other Contextual Factors

Alongside the influence of facilitation, it is also possible that participants experiences could have been affected by the positive effects that can result from mindful reflection (Aked *et al*. 2008; Williams *et al*. 2007) and/or engagement with the natural environment (Franco *et al*. 2017; see also Cooper Marcus and Sachs 2014). In terms of factors that were more relevant to the group aspects of the study, physical exercise, positive group dynamics, or exposure to the particularly clement weather in which sessions were conducted might also have coloured participants' experiences. Likewise, the context of the students' involvement, in terms of their attendance at the fieldschool, may have influenced some of the participants' perceptions.

With regard to the context of involvement, a number of the art students openly expressed how they found that the unstructured format of the group session, and its trajectory through the wider prehistoric landscape beyond the Vale of Pewsey, provided a welcome break from regimented structure of the excavations at Marden henge. This may have been the situation for the archaeology students as well. Moreover, by placing the excavation in perspective of its wider context in the surrounding landscape, the group session may have helped to imbue the archaeology in the Avebury landscape with more philosophical meaning for some students, thus leading to bias in their responses. However, if this was the case, it was not necessarily a disadvantage to the study as it provided a distinct contrast with the perspective of the local group. It also provided a point of comparison with the views of those of

the personal interviewees who possessed a wider-ranging knowledge of the study area as a whole.

The effect of the other factors was less easily pinpointed. Only one of the art students, and two people from the local group overtly referred to the impact of the group dynamic, mentioning that they enjoyed walking with the other group members. Overall, where participants seemed more engaged with the mindful ethos of the walk and thus more focused on their own individual experience, the social aspect of the exercise did not appear to have a significant influence on their responses. Aside from this dynamic, none of the participants made any positive remarks about the weather or the level of physical exercise involved in the session.

To help compensate for potential contextual influences, in both the personal and group aspects of the study, the sessions and interview conversations were purposely focused on the participants' responses to the archaeology. Furthermore, where possible, participants' answers were probed in more depth to establish causality. For example, it was frequently necessary to establish what participants meant when they used the term 'landscape'; to ascertain whether participants' experiences were a response to the topography and agricultural character of the area, the prehistoric remains or a combination of all of these factors[2]:

I: So, do you think - it's probably hard to even imagine it, because you've been here for so long and you're so steeped in it - but just say it was more of a sterile landscape, there weren't monuments around - ?

P: Yeah, I don't think it would have that, as I was saying about the whole 'comfort' thing - I think it would just be a fantastic landscape, it'd be lovely, but it wouldn't have that human bit to it.

I: So, there's something important about - ?

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[2] The study recognises that aspects of the pastoral landscape in the study area as they appear today, were first created through the activities of prehistoric communities. Likewise, the study does not deny that natural landforms accrue cultural significance and may be viewed as monuments, or vice versa, that certain monuments appear as natural features (Bradley 2000, 1993; Richards 1996). Taking built and mobile archaeology as the most prominent indication of prehistoric activity in the landscape, the artificial distinction between these material cultural elements and the surrounding terrain was made in the interview questions in order to ascertain how much the presence of archaeological remains was responsible for any positive connections that participants attributed to the landscape, and why. In this way, the archaeology is used to represent the concept of the prehistoric landscape as a whole.

P: Yeah, without a doubt. And, you know, I want to live somewhere where I feel comfortable, where I feel that, you know, yeah - home, very much at home sort of thing. And the fact that you're surrounded by where people have been, people have lived, all this sort of stuff, I think it makes it. Like I spent some time in Colorado on business and stuff like that - absolutely gorgeous place, lovely, but the newness of it, the brashness of it, which I enjoy and find exciting, and all the rest of the stuff, but it never felt quite homely, um, I think I need deep roots. (Personal interview 9, participant, 55)

This participant makes a clear distinction between the impact of a plain rural landscape and a monumental one. Several participants held similar perspectives. However, many felt that their experience of the landscape resulted from the articulation between the monuments and the terrain in which they are embedded.

As it was not possible to establish the cause of participants' experiences in every instance, once again, only the examples where the participants attributed their experiences to some aspect of the archaeology was included in the final analysis. It was hoped that this practice would help to distil out the evidence that was most relevant to the research questions.

Researcher Approach and Potential for Bias

As detailed above, as the sole researcher, I took various steps, in terms of reflexivity and methodological focus, in order to minimise the potential for researcher bias to influence the results of the study. However, on reflection I identified instances where my approach to interviewing might be construed as leading, and my analysis, partisan. These issues will be considered below.

Interview style

While I set out to adhere to the open style of interviewing recommended by Dahlberg *et al*. (2008; see p. 130, 139 and 159 of thesis for definition), on reviewing the interview recordings, I noticed areas where my approach might be perceived as directive. I attempted to conduct the interview conversations in a relaxed, friendly manner in order to put participants at ease and encourage them to discuss the topic without feeling self-conscious. However, at times I responded to participant statements in ways that might be viewed as being too enthusiastic

and thus potentially leading. This approach was partly due to my empathetic and gregarious nature, but may also be residual from my previous role as a counsellor, where it is the therapist's duty to be invested in the world of the client and to respond positively to them and the things they consider valuable. An example of how this type of positive regard was conveyed can be seen in the dialogue below, where the participant has just described how her sister had asked her to spread her ashes at a particular monument in the study area:

> P: You know, apart from all the other things that sort of happened before then, you know, sort of through life. I mean for somebody to ask me to do that.

> I: Yeah, it's a big deal. So, you're kind of linked to this monument throughout your life, in ways, that you've been here in the past, and then you moved here, and then your sister has sort of formed this bond with it, and then it's, yeah, God, it's fascinating, it's really, so your life has happened around it?

> P: Yes, it's...[inaudible]...[laughs]…sort of spooky -

> I: Oh, sorry -

> P: No, no, no, that's what I'm saying, it's quite spooky isn't it, really.

> I: But it's beautiful.

> P: Yes.

> I: You know it's, yeah, it's amazing. I mean maybe, I'm just, that's what - I'm just reflecting back what you're saying, but maybe I'm reflecting it wrongly, you know, so?

> P: No, no, no, no, not at all, no. (Personal Interview 27, resident, 57)

Although it could be argued that I stirred the participant to have a positive emotional response in this instance, my enthusiasm for the woman's story was sincere, and the sentiment the lady expressed was clearly authentic.

The previous dialogue also provides a good example of the way in which I adopted in the interviews the same approach I had taken as a counsellor, when seeking to verify the meaning of what participants had communicated. In this approach, I would reflect back in my own words what I understood the participant to have said. Though employed to genuinely understand the participant's experience, this approach too, might be seen as leading. The following joint interview dialogue provides another example of this tendency:

> I: Yeah, yeah, I see what you mean, because it's [the archaeology] there all the time around you, yeah. But this thing about being, it's almost like, I don't know, and I don't want to put words in your mouth, but just trying to feel what you're saying, with the community idea, and the 'connected in', and the peace, is it like you're held kind of, in a way by - ?

> P2: I think I know what you mean. I think, it's all stood here so long, it gives you a, it does give you a sense of, you know, at some level, and I've never really thought about this before, but some level of [pauses to find words], safety, really - whatever happens, we come home here, and it's like this.

> P1: Yeah, I think I've put that in the book as well, it's not going to change is it? (Personal interview 23, residents, 52)

In this example the question, which was meant to confirm the overall sense of what the participants were saying, does appear to lead participant 2 to think differently about his relationship to the phenomenon. Yet, he responds with his own independent thoughts on the matter; conveying a different meaning to that which I had anticipated. Thus, whilst this style of interviewing could have invited a biased response, it seems to have helped participants to reflect more deeply on the phenomenon.

I also adopted a potentially leading approach in the group interviews. On one occasion, while aiming to focus the participants on their felt experience of the landscape, I shared my own personal observations regarding the meaning of the relationship between the path of the West Kennet avenue and the surrounding topography:

> I: And then you get the same thing - I don't know if you noticed it, when you come down the avenue - you've got downs on either side all the way until you kind of come down and then you're up out here, you come out of it. So, it's almost like they've [the people who originally

constructed the monuments] put you into something, or they've kept you in something while you're in the circle, and they keep you in it all the way down the avenue, and then finally they lift you out of it up here, into what, you were saying, is like a different world, almost?

P5: It's almost like guidance, essentially. Like a pilgrimage sort of like. It's like the passing of man or something. You know that sort of, you're becoming something different or greater within your identity, your soul, your life-force, essentially - you're becoming. For example, I can't remember which religion it is, but you go through a, *Satyagraha*, I think it is, and you go through and you become almost a better version of yourself. You become greater as a person, just for you, but not for anyone else.

P4: Mmm.

I: Right.

P5: It's that kind of, you travel this path because this path makes you different.

I: Do you think that's what they're doing?

P5: Yeah

I: Is that what you feel, almost, on some level?

P5: Yeah, I think, on a level going - it doesn't matter where I walk, you walk your footsteps and you're becoming a step, ironically, a step better of a person, because you're walking forward, you're not walking backwards. Like for example, when we get older, we're always growing, we're always learning, our bodies may deteriorate, but we are always learning. And having that one step forward, you're growing as a person, consistently. I think that's what they're trying to get to you as you're coming out of this enclosed space as a person - you're coming into something greater. (Group interview 1, visitors, 19-49)

At every other stage of this group interview I maintained an open approach. Here, however, I momentarily departed from the inductive principles of the study, running the risk of leading the participants' responses. Likewise, in this instance, I had not considered the possibility that some

of the students may have been impressionable and that in my role as a more senior member of the student body, I could have influenced their responses.

Arguably, the chance for bias to occur in the above exchange was offset by the fact that my observations referenced themes which a number of participants had already highlighted towards the beginning of the interview. Likewise, the detail and depth of the participant's response in this excerpt suggests that he had already made and considered these observations prior to my remarks. The participant's response was also legitimised by consonant reports from other one-to-one and group participants. Indeed, where a similar, though slightly less directive observation, was posed to the other student group, it triggered parallel responses. However, it also had the opposite effect, in that it simultaneously stimulated a number of very different and unexpected responses, which succeeded in sending the conversation in a completely unanticipated and very illuminating direction. Thus, fortunately, my observations do not appear to have skewed the participants' responses enough to have rendered them void in this instance.

The examples given above could be viewed as directive. However, in each case, I endeavoured to probe more deeply to establish the truth of participants' opinions and experience. Notwithstanding this approach, it does not appear that any leading questions that were asked had any great influence on people's individual responses and opinions. In fact, in many cases it stimulated a more candid, transparent and informative dialogue. Moreover, many participants were keen to correct the interviewer and establish that they did not share the view offered. This response serves to justify James Holstein and Jaber Gubrium's (2005) assertion that interviewees are not just passive participants devoid of agency. It also supports the belief that leading observations or questions do not always create bias (Dahlberg *et al.* 2008; Kvale 1996) and that in actual fact they may serve to confirm or draw out the participant's true opinions and experience. As Kvale points out:

> The qualitative research interview is particularly well suited for employing leading questions to check repeatedly the reliability of the interviewee's answers, as well as to verify the interviewer's interpretations. Thus, contrary to popular opinion, leading questions do not always reduce the reliability of interviews, but may enhance it; rather than being used too much, deliberately leading questions are probably applied too little in qualitative research interviews. (Kvale 1996, 158)

This stance stems from the understanding that:

> …the interview is a conversation in which the data arise in an interpersonal relationship, coauthored and coproduced by interviewer and interviewee. The decisive issue is then not whether to lead or not to lead, but where the interview questions should lead, and whether they will lead in important directions, producing new, trustworthy and interesting knowledge. (Kvale 1996, 159)

Overall, I was focused on the experience of the participant, whether positive or negative. Thus, while any leading questions that were posed may have had the potential to influence participants, they do not appear to have done so. Nor did they seem to diminish the individuality and legitimacy of participants' responses. Regardless, in hindsight, I recognise that my approach could have been more bridled and that given another chance, I would not have shared my observations as I had in the group interviews. In addition, I would have refrained from asking closed questions in favour of a more open approach.

Despite the fact that there was room for improvement in certain aspects of my interview style, it also had its advantages. My relaxed, friendly and generally candid approach put participants at ease and enabled a positive rapport in all cases. Likewise, to all intents and purposes, I did manage to maintain an open approach; to adequately bridle my preunderstanding, listen intently and to make space for the participants to express their thoughts and experiences. Furthermore, while the aim was to bring out the individual experience, at times I became so engrossed in the exchange with the participant that it seemed more of a joint enquiry; that both interviewer and participant were working together to understand the phenomenon. This provides evidence of how the open approach worked well, in that I succeeded in bridling my pre-conceptions enough to see the phenomenon in a new light; to be surprised by, and to learn from the participant's experience. All of these factors, in turn, helped to produce rich data.

Potential for Bias in Analysis

The potential for researcher bias in qualitative research does not end with data collection, but also looms over the process of data-analysis. As, Braun and Clarke assert, '…it is important to note…that researchers cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological

commitments, and data are not coded in an epistemological vacuum' (Braun and Clarke 2006, 84). Thus, it is possible that I did not possess a thorough enough awareness of my own preunderstanding and personal experience. In addition, as I did not have the benefit of a research team and was thus the sole analyst, it could be argued that the trustworthiness of the results could not be validated.

While it is feasible that the analysis was unconsciously guided by some aspect of my preunderstanding and experience, I took necessary steps to ensure that I had analysed the data as objectively as possible. I made myself duly familiar with the data, re-reading the transcripts and subjecting them to multiple stages of coding. I also sought to describe the data with codes and common themes that faithfully reflected the surface meanings participants had reported, taking care to include in the analysis positive, negative and neutral responses to the archaeology. To achieve this aim, I endeavoured to bridle my pre-understanding and reflect upon the rationale for the judgements I made throughout this process. For example, before committing to the theme of 'security', which constituted one of the main findings, I took care to reflect upon whether this theme was true to the testimony of the participants and not simply a product of my own pre-understanding or personal perception of prehistoric remains as a grounding influence. Indeed, during the analysis, when reflecting on how I related to the insights that came out of the participant feedback, I realised that in most cases, I did not view the archaeology in the same way and had not previously considered a vast number of the perspectives given. This divergence was particularly noticeable in the case of resident perspectives, and highlighted how different my own experience was to that of people who live with the archaeology on a daily basis.

With regard to validation procedures, as respondent validation of the data, or its analysis, is not necessarily relevant to, or useful for, research adopting a thematic approach (Morse *et al.* 2002; Pope and Mays 2000; Thomas 2017), this practice was not applied. However, some level of validation occurred naturally in the case of interview participants who completed reflective accounts. In addition, it was hoped that the degree of reflection encouraged through the guidance notes, performative methods and the interview questions would support participants to provide considered responses, thus contributing to the rigour of the study.

Many researchers recognise (Dahlberg *et al*. 2008; Kvale 1996; see Pope and Mays 2000 for general discussion) that it can be advantageous to use validation techniques such as inter-rater validation or peer-debriefing, where the data or the primary researcher's analysis is

verified by multiple peers. Nonetheless, there also is research to suggest the contrary (Braun and Clarke 2019; Morse 1997; see Pope and Mays 2000 for general discussion). As Pope and Mays explain it, due to the subjective and multi-faceted nature of 'so called "reality"' different researchers will inevitably perceive data in different ways (Pope and Mays 2000, 83-84). This potentially proves problematic if the aim is to reach a consensus on the meaning of a given corpus of data. There is also the opinion, particularly in the context of unstructured interviews, that the researcher who has devised the study and carried out the data-collection, has an in-depth and unique insight into the data that cannot necessarily be easily grasped by researchers external to this process (Galdas 2017; Morse 1997; Morse *et al*. 2002; see Pope and Mays 2000 for general discussion). While the interview methods used in the current study were semi-structured to the degree that some of the same questions were put to each participant, they did not adhere to the same pattern or order in each case and were thus quite unstructured in reality. Janice Morse suggests that, ultimately, in such contexts, inter-rater validation is not always appropriate, and has the potential to '…simplify the research to such an extent that all of the richness attained from insight will be lost' (Morse 1997, 446).

It is widely recognised that, embedded in the context of their research, researchers can never be fully aware of their own pre-understanding, nor their work entirely free from bias (Braun and Clarke 2006, Dahlberg *et al*. 2008; Galdas 2017; Pope and Mays 2000). Paul Galdas (2017) even suggests that to attempt to separate the qualitative researcher's contribution to the process and product of the research is undesirable. Instead, he argues that it is the transparency and reflexivity of the researcher that counts. In this much, I took appropriate measures to minimise the potential for one-sidedness and, to my knowledge, produced as honest a reflection of the participant feedback as possible.

Methodological Challenges

Alongside the insufficiencies in interviewing techniques described above, there were other methodological challenges to the production of quality data. These largely centred around issues such as inadequate group interviewing skills; the cognitive and emotional demands of phenomenological approaches; and technical difficulties.

Group Interviews and Interviewing Skills

On account of my previous role as a therapist, my one-to-one interviewing skills were reasonably well honed and succeeded in gathering rich data from interviewees. My group interviewing skills, however, were arguably less well-developed. I perhaps did not moderate the groups and focus the participants on the research phenomenon as well as I could have. I also missed opportunities to examine participant statements in more detail and failed to engage the quieter members of the group in more in-depth discussion. However, this was also likely due in part to the less confidential nature of the group context and the difficulty it presents for examining individual experiences in greater depth. As a result, not all the participants who took part in the sessions provided detailed feedback. While the results of the group interview were still valid and illuminating, it is possible that these factors reduced the overall richness of the feedback gathered from this part of the study. On re-examination, the group interview data might have been further enhanced and illuminated by additional follow-up individual interviews with either some or all of the group participants.

Cognitive and Emotional Demands

The majority of project participants responded well to the interview guidance material and the phenomenological approach of the study and demonstrated that they understood what was being asked on them. Yet, as is evident from the following participant response, even some of these participants struggled with the open nature of the some of the themes and questions posed:

> I have to say, I read it, I got the book, I haven't read, I mean your info, I can't remember all that much. I mean I looked at it at what you were trying to say. Um. I mean they're very, how can I put it, encompassing questions - like 'how has it changed your life', gosh - how do you know for a start? How has it changed my life? I don't know what my life would've been without it…
> (Personal interview 15, resident, 64)

In addition, three of the one-to-one interview participants did not seem to engage with the phenomenological approach in any great depth. It is likely that this was largely because they had not read the interview guidance notes. However, other participants who expressly stated

that they had not read the guidance notes still responded well to the phenomenological tone and aims of the interview. In this respect, it may have been that the research question was not well enough articulated or that the participants had difficulty in communicating their felt experience. Alternatively, it could be that they just do not experience the archaeology on anything other than a superficial or representational level.

Many of the project participants did not readily refer to their personal experience of the archaeology and often required guidance in order to do so. This may be an indication that such personal reflection was not customary for these participants. Some of the members of the local group who had participated in the Avebury sessions also, initially, did not seem to connect with the phenomenological agenda of the study. This was perhaps because they too were unaccustomed to exploring their own personal experience in this way. In contrast, as indicated in the participant comment below, it is possible that the phenomenological emphasis of the study resonated more with those for whom this kind of reflection was more familiar, to the degree that they may have wanted to experience and report some profound impact: 'Returning to my walk two days ago. Maybe I was too keen to have an emotional response that I could record for this project, maybe the overcast skies subdued the beautiful contrasts of light that so enhance the sites' (Reflective account C, resident, 57).

The different participant responses to the phenomenological approach of the study serve to demonstrate how in order to be widely comprehendible, certain research questions need to be relatable to people's varying backgrounds, culture and experience. While the concepts used to convey to participants the aims of this project were effective overall, the study may have had an even greater impact had they been communicated in even more universally accessible terms.

Joint Interviews: Disadvantages

The personal interviews were all originally intended to be conducted in a one-to-one format. However, a few participants chose to be interviewed along with their spouse. As a result, seven of the personal interviews were carried out with married couples. For the most part this arrangement was very effective and yielded quality data. Nevertheless, as evident in the following interview dialogue, there were instances where key insights were lost through interruptions from one or other of the spouses:

P1: Well, I think it's just amazing, amazing that history is, that the bones can stay there and the teeth - this is what amazed me when I saw it. And I looked at it and I though, gosh you know, however many years that's been there and it's still protected. And I mean, I don't want to be cremated - I want to finish up in the churchyard, so em -

P2: I haven't even thought about that [laughs]! (Personal interview 5, residents, 70s)

Technical Difficulties

In all the personal interviews, only the participants wore a mic. This system still succeeded in recording the interviewer's voice and worked well for all interviews except those undertaken while walking in windy conditions. Under these circumstances, the interviewer's voice was frequently obscured, and in some cases, sections of the participant's feedback were also lost. Whilst this scenario was not ideal, very little participant feedback was actually lost, and thus it did not undermine the strength of the interview as a source of quality data. Nevertheless, the study would have benefited from the use of higher-grade equipment.

Methodological Strengths

Despite the difficulties described above, there were many strong points to the approach taken. The interview style adopted has already been cited above as a key strength of the study. The reflective lifeworld approach of the study was also ultimately very effective, in that it succeeded in revealing some of the less tangible ways in which people experience the archaeology. The application of Gendlin's (2003) focusing technique was particularly useful in this respect. Likewise, the reflective framework worked well for several participants in the context of the group sessions. The results of this aspect of the study also confirmed the potential for the group model to be developed into a legitimate therapeutic intervention. Other strengths include the ability of joint and group interviews to highlight commonly shared experiences of the archaeology.

Reflective framework: Personal and Joint Interviews

The integration of mindfulness-based, landscape phenomenology and focusing techniques within all aspects of the study worked well for most participants, and helped to produce rich and insightful data. This response arguably confirmed that the use of a phenomenological approach for understanding heritage experience in the context of the sites investigated was appropriate and effective. This is indicated in the following participant comment regarding Avebury henge: 'I was interested in the questions, um, I think they are relevant, they are definitely relevant, because there is something about being in the circle,
isn't there?' (Personal interview 15, resident, 64).

The same participant also demonstrated how the reflective approach of the study helped people to gain awareness of their *habitus*: '…first time I've really had to analyse my thoughts, connections, views about the monuments, although I've often thought about and spoken about them to others' (Reflective account E, resident, 64). It was useful even for those who had already thought about the archaeology in some depth:

> I: So, when you were, I mean I know you've sat down and thought about the journal when you were writing, did you, have you had those kinds of thoughts anyway before focusing like that?
> P: To some degree. I don't think I've ever sort of focused quite as much. Sort of, like I was thinking, when we get up there, the idea that I put about this little mental map of my sort of 'homeland', and I was thinking that when we get up to where the bench is, all this bit to the east is actually as familiar - I mean I know the paths and I've been there a thousand times, but going West into the Pewsey Vale seems, has a different aura about it, different sort of magic. And although there are sort of one or two barrows and things it is, I think to do with its, the fact that it is such an ancient landscape. (Personal interview 11, resident, 57)

Furthermore, a number of participants discovered things about themselves and their relationship to the archaeology that they had not anticipated or previously acknowledged. Consequently, some were surprised at some of the insights that they obtained through engaging in this kind of reflective process, as exemplified in the example below:

> I: …So, my last question is really, and I think I raised it on the sheet as well, if you couldn't come to this place for whatever reason, how would you feel about that?
> P: Ah, I'd be bereft.

I: Really?

P: Absolutely, yeah. I'm a physical person, I love to be out and about, so if I couldn't be out and about and come, I'd be bereft. That's one of the reasons why I ride a motorcycle - it gives me the freedom to go to places, and find new places as well. I love to come to places that I remember and that have a particular resonance for me and I always will, I'll do that, I know that, always, while I can, I'll always come here, and when I come here I'll stand in the stone circle and think of my brother and enjoy being here, and wonder at other people as well and what they do here. So, yeah, no, I'd be lost without it, I think, that contact. And for me it's contact with the present and the past and, part of my life, yeah. It's like those nexuses where the energy-lines cross - it's one of those for me.

I: In relation to your life?

P: Yeah, my lifestream, yeah.

I: That's amazing.

P: Yeah, and I'm surprised I said that, but now I've said it, it's absolutely true. (Personal interview 17, resident, 70)

Many participants described how difficult they found it to express the intrinsic value or affective impact that the archaeology holds for them. This is clearly outlined in the dialogue below:

I: Yeah, yeah. I think that is what I'm trying to understand, is what is it about the connection with the past that, it's, because we say 'it's special', like 'it gives a sense of belonging', and I'm trying to get underneath that to find out what feeling, what emotion, what is it that we experience when we get in touch with it, you know? Whether through an excavation, or through going to a monument?

P1: Very difficult to put into words that, isn't it? It's almost that sixth sense, isn't it, that I find that [pauses to think], it's something that you just feel within you, not something -

P2: Every day you say, 'oh, aren't we lucky and privileged', don't you?

P1: It's certainly a privilege and we are lucky and trying to get to what Claire's asking is a bit difficult. (Personal interview 33, residents, 74-81)

Yet, the next part of this interview demonstrates how, with the use of focusing-style techniques, some participants were eventually able to describe their felt sense of the archaeology or its intrinsic value in a more sure and detailed way:

I: Well, I was talking to someone the other day, where we did things slightly differently where I said, if you can imagine what the sensation you get in your body when you, if that helps, because that is sort of slightly different to putting a word on it - although you have to put a word on the sensation that you get. She came out with an interesting word, which I won't say, because I don't want to influence you [laughs]. Yeah, does that help at all?

P1: I suppose the nearest thing you can think of is, 'love'.

I: Really?

P1: Mmm. The strong feeling I have for my wife is almost the, it's not the same, but it's that type of feeling.

I: Really?

P2: I think I come second [laughs]!

P1: [Laughs]

I: Aw, no, no, no, not at all [laughs] - that's not even up for debate that one [laughs]. Really?

P1: Really.

I: Wow. So, it's quite an - ?

P1: Intense feeling, mmm.

I: Yeah, okay. And how about you, [P2]?

P2: I don't know, that's quite really [pauses to think], just, 'wonder', I suppose.

Reflective Framework: Group Sessions

Even though some of the group participants did not provide detailed responses, the sessions were effective for many of them. The session guidance notes and the brief mindfulness exercise at the beginning of the walk helped people to reflect on their experience in greater depth and to communicate relevant insights. This is well-illustrated in the visiting participant comment below:

> Yeah. I remember feeling very irritated when I was just trying to like, you know, focus, and be aware of everything, and I was feeling that - I was just seeing people walking through and they're just like, 'blah', you know, just talking about everything that has nothing to do with this, you know [laughs]. I think everybody should do a little awareness exercise before they go in, because I think you can really get quite a bit from that. (Group interview 1, visitor, 20)

The phenomenological nature of the reflective walk was also insightful for some of the local people from group 3, both for those familiar with the Avebury complex and those who were not:

> P2: One of the things, as I say, I come here regularly, been doing so since I was a child, it made me stop and really think, and feel. I mean I know I go around, experience the stones and the lovely energy, but it really made me...[inaudible]...it gave me a different perspective, so thank you very much.
>
> P3: Yeah, I enjoyed that.
>
> I: Oh, really?
>
> P3: Yeah, yeah, I enjoyed that.
>
> I: I'm so glad, no, I learnt a lot from you, now, as well - it's got me thinking.
>
> P3: Though I must admit when we first started...[inaudible]...it's just going to be a walk around there, a walk up there, but it did, gradually got me into it. And as [P4] said, it made you start to think.
>
> I: Yeah.
>
> P2: Yes
>
> (Group Interview 3, residents, 60-79)

In conjunction with these insights, the following reflective account from one of the members of group 2 suggests that this type of mindful engagement with prehistoric landscapes has the potential to be developed as a therapeutic method:

> Claire Nolan led a mindfulness walk in which we intuitively and spiritually experienced the landscape, discussing and recording guttural responses the environment evoked in us. This was a cathartic break from the dig that allowed us to connect with the ancient landscape and consider how it may cause us to think and feel. This was an opportunity to explore our inner selves in an environment that sought no particular end product or requirement. (Reflective account L, visitor, 22)

Similarly, another participant from the same group also describes how the non-ordinary character of the Avebury landscape can help to facilitate new and insightful ways of thinking about and experiencing the world, explaining that it gave her, '...a chance to discuss ideas about

things that aren't logical or linked to anything specific, actually very few circumstances in which you do that, especially with such a mixture of people.' (Reflective account M, visitor, 22).

Thus, while the group interviews were not conducted in as coherent and in-depth a manner as they could have been, the intensive phenomenological nature of the sessions still succeeded in producing quality data. This outcome also hints at the possibility for this type of mindful heritage walk to be developed into a formal therapeutic intervention.

Joint and group interviews: advantages

Aside from the drawbacks of the joint interview described above, this approach also had its advantages. It allowed spouses to compare and negotiate their individual views, and to reach a consensus on the various ways in which the archaeology impacts their lives. It also allowed contrasting opinions to be viewed in sharp relief. The group interviews had the same impact, highlighting the intrinsic values that were common for people, as well as the experiences that were unique to specific individuals.

Conclusion

While the methods adopted in the study worked well overall, they were not without their challenges and weaknesses. Without doubt, there was potential for bias in the study in relation to issues like limitations in sample diversity, the influence of the researcher, and certain contextual factors, some of which were arguably unavoidable. Nevertheless, the steps taken to minimise or compensate for the influence of these factors, the inherent strengths of the methodology adopted, the sound theoretical principles on which it was built, and the transparency of the research, arguably combine to produce a valid, innovative, and to some degree generalizable, study. Furthermore, the experimental nature of this approach provides a strong foundation for the development of new and more effective methodologies capable of discerning the unique character and social impact of heritage experience.

Part IV: Results

Chapter 7: Findings

Introduction

The aim of the current study was to gain as rich and textured an understanding as possible of the phenomenon: the intrinsic value of the prehistoric archaeology for the project participants, and its impact on their lived experience. As discussed in the previous chapter, this information was pinpointed by systematically identifying instances in the transcripts where participants appeared to value any affect, emotion or meaning that they experienced in response to the archaeology. Accordingly, this chapter introduces the findings of this phenomenological analysis.

Themes

The codes generated from the participant interview transcripts and reflective accounts describe how the archaeology examined, elicits a range of experiences for people which come under the following six themes: Security, Collective Connections, Possibility, General Interest, Disinterest and Negative Impact. Responding to the main research question, the themes of Security, Collective Connections and Possibility describe the essential meanings of the intrinsic values that participants derive from the archaeology. The other three themes have been included to demonstrate that these experiences are not necessarily universal and that some participants also have an ambiguous relationship with the archaeology.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006, 82), '…the 'keyness' of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures, but rather on whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question'. As Basit clarifies:

> While it may be interesting to know how many people feel positively or negatively about something, this is not the intention of qualitative inquiry. The idea is to ascertain 'what' they feel, and 'why' they feel that way. This will also incorporate 'who' feels the way they do, and 'where', 'when' and 'how'. Such a detailed scrutiny clearly cannot be carried out by using numbers, percentages and statistics. (Basit 2003, 151)

Furthermore, as Pope and Mays advise:

In a qualitative study where the sample has not been (and often cannot be) selected to be *numerically* representative of the population, and where the interview technique is flexible and responsive, it can be misleading to report relative frequencies. This particularly applies if the questions have not been asked of all respondents, or have not been phrased in the same way or delivered at the same stage in each interview (Pope and Mays 2000, 67).

In keeping with these principles, the number of times each theme appears in the transcripts has not been quantified. However, the positive themes arrived at have been generated based on their prevalence throughout the data corpus as a whole, while the negative and more unique themes, although less frequently reported, have been included to provide a balanced and critical analysis.

The themes and subthemes identified in the analysis are presented in the table below (Fig. 7.1). A basic descriptive analysis of these themes is provided in the following sections. Note, the data extracts included in the table below and the interpretive analysis in consecutive chapters have been selected to demonstrate the main themes identified. Overall, the extracts quoted are taken from different participant transcripts. However, despite the fact that a particular theme may be prevalent in a number of transcripts, in some cases multiple extracts are drawn from individual transcripts where the participant describes that theme in an especially clear and coherent way.

Figure 7.1 Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Variations	Example of Statements
Security	*Material Agency*	
	Protection	It's like your sort of protected somehow. Maybe it's that kind of feeling that I get - nothing's going to harm you, sort of like, you know, you're enclosed. I don't know what it sounds like to you, but that's how I certainly feel about things. (Personal interview 1, resident, 60)
	Peace	I have found it [Marden henge] to be a place of peace and calmness (Personal interview 1, resident, 60)
	Permanence	There is something about the longevity of prehistoric monuments, especially those where

			the remains are extensive, that gives a sense of permanence (Reflective account C, resident, 57)
	Age		
		Presence of Antiquity	
			That sense of the [Stonehenge] landscape being there for thousands of years just grounds me and slows me down (Reflective account I, resident, 52)
		Temporal Perspective	
			…it [the Avebury landscape] does make you realise that at the end of the day, you are only a small spec in the world and other things happen - there's far greater things to worry about (Personal interview 15, resident, 64)
		Past as Refuge	
			Today in the wake of the referendum result (a disaster in my opinion), I went for a walk up to Martinsell and along the Giant's Grave. Whether it was the act of walking or the sense of place, I do not know, but I certainly returned feeling more calm, feeling that some things were beyond the reach of political whim, such as the earth that had been so laboriously mounded up thousands of years ago. (Personal interview 11, resident, 57)
	Narrative		
		Landscape Narrative & Identity	
			So that whole journey of things, I just feel part of that, you know I sort of see myself as part of this sort of journey of what is visible in the landscape [Vale of Pewsey]… (Personal interview 10, resident, 54)
		Collective Identity	
			We're who we are because of what happened then - this is all part of our history, part of what we are (Personal interview 12, resident 70)
		Site Narratives & Identity	
			Because being in that space [sacred prehistoric sites] allows me to connect with that side of myself [her spiritual nature] (Personal interview 6, resident, 37)
Collective Connections	*Direct Connection*		Whereas a piece of flint or something you might find at a dig, that you pick up and you hold that, and the last time that anyone held that was thousands of years ago - that is 'that' feeling (Personal interview 12, resident, 70)
	Collective Containment		You're contained, you've got, as I say, both places [Stonehenge and Avebury] - you're contained by ditches or whatever, but you're also contained by the fact that you know this is where people were doing stuff (Personal interview 9, resident, 55)

	Connected Communities	…the thought that actually some of those beliefs and practices, some of their culture continued through, and you know, and it sort of morphed into different things along the way, yeah to me makes it into this one long continuum of change, but you know it's connected, it's a connected community, you know - connected change (Personal interview 10, resident, 54)
	More-than-human Communities	But I think the monuments kind of form part of the community. So, they're almost part of you, you know, your, like neighbours sort of. (Personal interview 23, resident, 52)
	Ancestral Reverence	Just the awe at how they survived, really. And the struggle it must have been in the Winter. There must have been seasons of plenty, but the Winter must have been agonising for them. (Personal interview 10, resident, 54)
	Transcendent Connections	[Avebury] It connects me to the earth, the past, present and the future (Personal interview 20, resident, 62)
Possibility	Space for Imagination	Very much so - the wonder of what they did, trying to reason why they did it. I sit there in the middle of wind, back against the tree, freezing cold, driving rain, and I think, 'what did they eat?' (Personal interview 33, resident, 81)
	Space for Creativity	So how living around here has affected me and all this sort of stuff? I've been inspired to do this [his creative project]. And that's reusing, reimagining the past, and actually making something from it. (Personal interview 9, resident, 55)
	New Horizons	…it's interesting, well it's interesting to me at least, is that...[inaudible]...If it was like a book that I had just read, I think I'd get bored of it, but it's like every time you look into stuff, and look at things a bit more, you see things. (Personal interview 9, resident, 55)
	Liminal Space	[After walking the West Kennet Avenue] It's almost like you're into a new world, like a new belonging, a new area, if that makes sense? Like a space and a different focus. (Group interview 1, visitor, 21)
	Space for Contemplation	

	Existential Understanding	Came down, sat down, over by the stones where we've just been, and I just put my back to the stone and, you know, spent four hours with my thoughts and, by the time I'd walked back up I'd stopped crying (Personal interview 20, resident, 62)
		It's a reminder that, you know, you are only here for a short time - yes, it's ok, it's a reality check in some ways. (Personal interview 18, resident, 60)
General Interest		It's always nice to have something of interest isn't it on your own doorstep (Personal interview 5, resident, 78)
Disinterest	*Indifference*	Well, I, to be honest, don't really feel anything about old things - I'm not interested. (Personal interview 7, resident, 70)
	Disappointment	…I always find it slightly disappointing that the earthworks aren't slightly more interesting… (Personal interview 2, resident, 54)
Negative Impact	*Heritage Management Issues* Tourism	You know, Stonehenge itself, I mean, people around here call it the neighbour from hell, because it's just, because of the number, you know the number of visitors, and the traffic… And the result of all that, it kind of tarnishes your view of how you see the place, which is terrible, really, because the landscape, and again, photographing, and I love walking and cycling, you know, I shouldn't feel that way about it. But you're constantly, you know, every time you're there, all you're aware of is traffic. You know, it's never ending. Whereas, you know, Avebury's a bit different. (Personal interview 29, resident, 60)
	Land-use restrictions	…it then became a damn nuisance. Because, although we were made aware it was an historic monument, we were naive and we seriously had not realised how many constraints that imposed upon us (Personal interview 3, resident, 59)
	Negative affect	But, no, I don't know, Woodhenge has, I don't know, I just think it's a bit sinister [laughs] (Personal interview 27, resident, 57)

Security

Many participants talked about the feeling of security that some of the archaeology in the study area provides for them. This sense appears to manifest in relation to the material agency, age and narratives of the archaeology. Material agency, in this context, is defined as the physical form, presence and aesthetic properties that distinguish the archaeology, and the capacity of these features to calm and ground people and provide a feeling of safety. The palpable age of the archaeology produces similar effects in relation to the almost tangible atmosphere of ancientness it emits and the temporal perspective it provides. In addition, these latter two factors combine to create, for some people, the sense that they are in another world, safely detached from the stresses of modern life. In some cases, the collective identity and site narratives which people perceive in the archaeology also serve to reflect and reinforce their own identity narratives, thus helping them to feel balanced and secure within themselves.

Collective Connections

The theme of Collective Connections relates, to some degree, to the feeling of foundation created by the perception of collective identity that people derive from the archaeological remains. However, it is less concerned with identity and more with embodied feelings of connectivity and belonging. It appears that through engaging with the prehistoric remains and their symbolic cultural meanings, many participants feel a strong connection to past people, the human collective, the landscape and particular monuments contained within it, and transcendent entities that people associate with the sites such as the earth, the cosmos and spiritual forces. For some individuals this sense of connectedness provides the feeling of being held or supported by these different influences. This feeling of connection not only serves to give some people a greater appreciation of their place in the world but also a nourishing sense of community.

Possibility

The participant feedback also suggests that certain aspects of the security and collective connectivity reported combine to create, for many people, possibilities for new meaning,

purpose and transformation that can be gained through interaction with the historic environment. Some participants identified affective qualities and symbolic motifs in the narratives, age, character and agency of the prehistoric remains which ultimately allow them to see their surroundings in a new light and to find greater meaning in them as a result. Similarly, these influences have helped a number of participants to gain perspective on, and creative solutions to, life issues and challenges. Such insights include acceptance of mortality, the ability to cope with anxiety and to approach life from a more grounded perspective. In addition, where heritage assets are perceived and experienced as heterotopic spaces, both physically and symbolically, they appear to support individuals to be and express themselves creatively. This space for reflection and expression has also enabled some participants to see and embrace the range of life choices and possibilities available to them.

General Interest, Disinterest and Negative Impact

Though most participants experience the archaeology in a profound and, in some cases, therapeutic way, a small minority appear to have, for various reasons, either a less potent connection, mixed feelings, or none at all. Where all participants conveyed that they had at least a general interest in, and respect for, the archaeology, a handful expressed this sentiment but did not indicate that they experienced the archaeology in any deeper way. In addition, a small number of participants expressed either disinterest, disappointment or negative opinions in relation to certain sites. These views and experiences were variously connected with the poor and unimpressive preservation of particular monuments, negative impacts stemming from the management of certain sites, in terms of tourism, traffic congestion and land-use restrictions on areas containing scheduled monuments, and the negative affective atmospheres that some participants intuited at specific places. Apart from one participant who claimed to be mostly indifferent to her local archaeology, the rest of this group revealed that they experienced other sites and aspects of the archaeology in the study area in positive and meaningful ways, some of which connect to the themes of security, collective connections and possibility described above.

Discussion

The findings suggest that the majority of people who took part in the project value the archaeology in the study area and the impact that it has on their lives; an impact which, in many cases, might be considered supportive of personal wellbeing. This effect is true even for many of the participants who have negative associations with aspects of the archaeology. However, as discussed above, this positive effect was not universal for the entire participant sample.

These findings are the product of a descriptive analysis. However, Braun and Clarke advise that, '…analytic claims need to be grounded in, but go beyond, the 'surface' of the data, even for a 'semantic' level analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006, 94). They clarify that:

> The extracts in thematic analysis are illustrative of the analytic points the researcher makes about the data, and should be used to illustrate/support an analysis that goes beyond their specific content, to make sense of the data, and tell the reader what it does or might mean… (Braun and Clarke 2006, 94)

Supporting this principle from the perspective of reflective lifeworld research, Dahlberg *et al*. (2008, 273) state that, 'Phenomenological and descriptive analysis works solely with the data that are obtained in the same study. This does not mean that a phenomenological study cannot involve for example theory at all'. Further discussing the role of external theory in the understanding the results of a descriptive analysis they maintain that, 'Theoretical descriptions or other research findings focusing upon the same phenomenon as the one of the study, can elucidate and clarify meanings that are present in the data but do not show themselves clearly' (Dahlberg *et al*. 2008, 273).

In accordance with the above recommendations, as participants were not directly questioned about how the archaeology impacts their personal wellbeing, the findings related were subjected to an interpretive analysis based on theory and results from external heritage-related wellbeing and heritage experience studies in order to consider them in a therapeutic context. These positive findings were examined within the theoretical frameworks underpinning these studies in order to clarify the meanings, or potential meanings, of the results and their relevance and contribution to the wider field of heritage and wellbeing studies. Reflecting this analysis, the themes of Security, Collective Connections and Possibility are discussed at length in

the following three chapters under the respective headings of: Ontological Security, Existential Relatedness and Existential Authenticity. The other themes will be described in greater detail in Chapter 11.

Chapter 8: Prehistoric Landscapes as a Source of Ontological Security for the Present day (As revised for review by *Heritage and Society* on August 27, 2019)

In her paper, *Conservation as Psychology*, Jane Grenville (2007) proposed that the built historic environment plays a key role in the development of individual ontological security. In view of the need to better understand the unique wellbeing effects of the historic environment, the current paper explores this theory further with reference to the prehistoric archaeology of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, the Vale of Pewsey and their environs in Wiltshire, UK. Considering the qualitative findings of research undertaken in these prehistoric landscapes from the theoretical perspective underpinning Grenville's work, this paper suggests that they have the capacity to impact ontological security, and thus existential wellbeing, in a significant way.

Keywords: prehistoric archaeology, prehistoric landscapes, heritage, ontological security, identity, wellbeing

Introduction

Over the past 20 years or more, the relationship between heritage and wellbeing has become the subject of increasing interest, giving rise to numerous heritage-related wellbeing projects and studies, which demonstrate that heritage-involvement does impact wellbeing in various ways (Darvill *et al*. forthcoming; Pennington *et al*. 2018 Reilly *et al*. 2018). Nevertheless, it is still not entirely clear how people perceive the intrinsic nature of heritage assets and the historic environment (Clark 2006; Jones 2010; Jones and Leech 2016), the prehistoric environment in particular, (Last 2010a, Waterton and Watson 2014) or what influence it has on individual wellbeing (Ecorys 2016; Neal 2015; Reilly *et al*. 2018). This ultimately begs the question of whether, in fact, heritage has an impact on wellbeing that is any different to other cultural forms and pursuits.

One promising line of inquiry is Jane Grenville's (2007, 2015) exploration of the psychological motivations that drive people to conserve the historic built environment. Drawing on Anthony Giddens' (1991) work on the relationship between self and the societal structures of late modernity, Grenville proposes that the historic built environment plays a key role in the creation of individual ontological security.

According to Giddens (1991, 55), ontological security results from the conscious or unconscious resolution of "fundamental existential questions" regarding the nature of existence and being, finitude and human life, interpersonal relations, and the continuity of self-identity. Guided by a psychoanalytic object-relations understanding of existential anxiety, Giddens maintains that these existential questions are continuously encountered and negotiated in day-to-day life at a behavioural level. He suggests that ontological security therefore lies in the ability to trust and feel safe in the very "existential anchorings of reality", both material and social, and to mediate the anxieties presented by them (Giddens 1991). Giddens proposes that it is this process which enables the development of a secure sense of self and personhood. He also reveals that this feeling of security is essentially created through, "...a bracketing, on the level of practice, of possible events which could threaten the bodily or psychological integrity of the agent" (Giddens 1991, 40). Thus, at its most fundamental level, ontological security translates as the "...confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action" (Giddens 1990, quoted in Grenville 2007, 448).

Grenville (2007) posits a link between psychological wellbeing and the feeling of ontological security that can be derived from the built historic environment. She asserts that in its capacity to provide people with a basic trust in their surroundings, the constancy of the historic built environment may contribute to their sense of ontological security, and therefore has a fundamental role in the development of "healthy and resilient societies" (Grenville 2015, 58).

Cultural heritage has frequently been associated with different aspects of ontological security, particularly in relation to themes of self-identity, belonging and stability (Avrami *et al*. 2000; British Academy 2017; Darvill 1995; Eriksen 2007; Hegardt and Källen 2011; Heidegger [1927] 1996; Holtorf 1995; Jones 2010; Lanceley *et al*. 2011; Lipe 1984; Lowenthal 2015; Newman 2015). On the subject of identity, Erica Avrami *et al*. (2000, 16) assert that, "Heritage objects...are a looking glass that reflects the image we hold of ourselves — our values, our beliefs, our understanding of who we are — as products of a common past" and that, "As such, cultural heritage transmits an existential quality of human belonging". Sharing a similar perspective, David Lowenthal (2015, 94) contends that, as a tool for the construction of self-identity, the past and its narratives are fundamental to psychic wellbeing.

With regard to belonging and stability, it has been suggested (Jones 2010; Lowenthal 2015; Newman 2015) that through their inextricable connection to place, heritage assets and their narratives enable individuals to situate and negotiate their place within the world. It has also been theorized that heritage assets assist this process on a temporal level in that, as markers of the passing of time, they enable individuals to find their place in time and reflect on themes of mortality (Eriksen 2007). In this respect, as William Lipe (1984, 6) expresses it, with reference to the work of Hannah Arendt, "...the 'objectivity of the man-made world' can stand against and hence stabilize the subjectivity and ever-changing nature of human life...". Related to this perception of continuity and stability, is Timothy Darvill's (1995) suggestion that the existence value of heritage assets creates feelings of wellbeing for people simply in the way it confirms that they have a past. In the same connection, Lipe (1984) espouses that the survival of past material culture in the present, encourages the belief that culture will continue, which in turn enables people to live meaningful lives.

Based on the results of a phenomenological study recently undertaken in Wiltshire to provide site-specific evidence of how individuals directly experience, interpret and value prehistoric heritage assets, this paper explores and develops these existential themes further. It uses the concept of ontological security to theorise some of the findings of the study. Subsequently building on Grenville's work, the paper suggests that ontological security may be one of the most fundamental wellbeing effects that prehistoric landscapes have to offer.

The Study

Located in a mixture of chalk uplands and greensand valleys, the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, the Vale of Pewsey, and their environs, are home to an exceptionally high concentration of prehistoric sites and monuments. Varied in form, function and preservation, the sites span from the eighth millennium to the first century BC. Stonehenge and the Neolithic henges at Avebury and Marden form the main foci of the existing prehistoric landscapes. However, the area also takes in a range of other lesser known sites, ranging from the Mesolithic (*c.*9600-4000BC) through to the Neolithic (*c.*4000-2500 BC), Bronze Age (*c.*2500-800 BC) and Iron Age (*c.*800 BC – AD 50). In conjunction with these characteristics, the proximity of the landscapes to residential centres established them as appropriate sites for an investigation into public perceptions of prehistoric heritage.
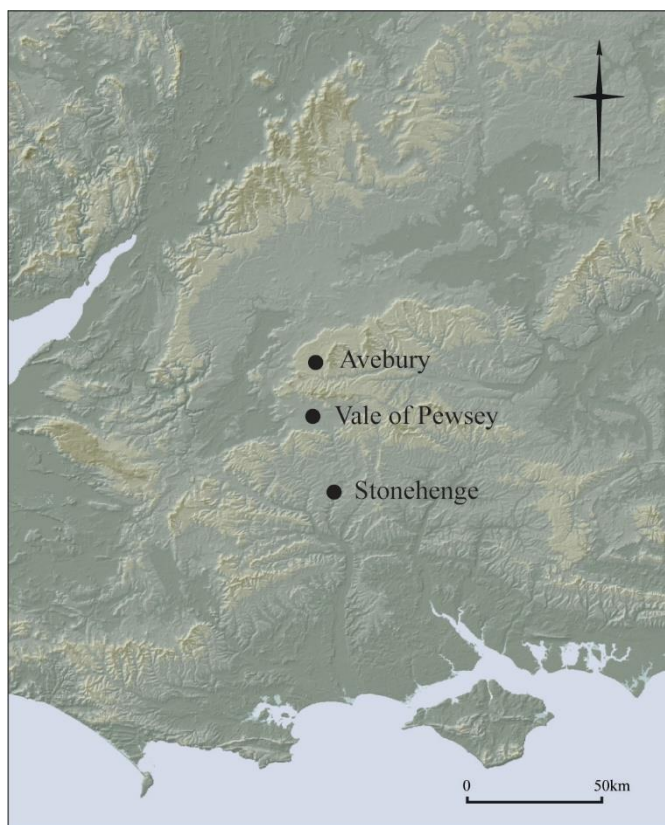
Figure 8.1 Location map of the study area. (Illustration by Elaine Jamieson. Contains Ordnance Survey data, Crown copyright, and database right 2015)

Methodology

The data was gathered using the following methods: 33 semi-structured seated and walking audio-recorded interviews, seven joint and 26 individual, with residents of the study area; three mindful walks and corresponding audio-recorded group interviews in the Avebury landscape, with two groups of nine visiting students from the University of Reading and one group of eight residents; 14 written reflective accounts from 12 interviewees and two group participants regarding their personal experience of the archaeology. These methods were chosen for their ability to retrieve rich phenomenological data from different experiential perspectives and to triangulate the findings.

All of the methods applied were guided by the phenomenological theories and practices of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (Williams *et al.* 2007), focusing-oriented psychotherapy (Gendlin 2003), landscape phenomenology (Tilley 1994), non-representational theory (Latham 2003; Waterton and Watson 2014) and reflective lifeworld research (Dahlberg *et al.* 2011). Participants' knowledge of the archaeology ranged from common or traditional (see Lipe 1984) to more in-depth scientific, spiritual and alternative understandings. In this respect, all modern perceptions of the past are inextricably grounded in the cultural context of the present (See Holtorf 2005, Shanks 1992; Thomas 2004). However, while the study embraced popular visual and textual understandings of the archaeology, it sought primarily to uncover the multidimensional and more-than-representational or 'truth feeling' (Micieli-Voutsinas 2016) of participants' in-the-moment and everyday personal experience of the archaeology. Thus, the above phenomenological approach was selected for its potential to help participants reflect more deeply on their direct individual lived intellectual, emotional and embodied perception of the archaeology *per se*.

Figure 8.2 Participants at Avebury Henge, source: University of Reading, used with permission.

Participants

The sole criteria for participation in the personal interviews, and consequently the production of the reflective accounts, were that the participants were resident to the study area, over 16 years of age, and eligible to give informed consent. These participants were recruited via snowball, convenience and volunteer sampling methods. In order to add diversity to the overall sample, art and archaeology students were recruited via convenience and voluntary means, respectively, to the mindful group study. Seeking to compare the students' visitor perspectives with those of local people within a different age range, members of a local walking group were also purposively recruited to this part of the study.

According with the reflective lifeworld (Dahlberg *et al.* 2008) understanding that 'meanings are infinite' and there is thus no limit to the number of meanings that can be held regarding any given phenomenon, the study aimed to gather as many different participant perspectives as possible; positive, negative and indifferent. Recruitment was undertaken both before the fieldwork period and during it at points where it was identified that additional perspectives, and thus the application of different sampling strategies, were required. Ultimately restricted by the level of participant uptake within the time-frame available for

Participant Characteristics	
Age	
16-19	2
20-29	15
30-39	2
40-49	4
50-59	12
60-69	13
70-79	15
80+	3
Gender	
Female	38
Male	28
Ethnicity	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1
Indian	1
Prefer Not to Say	1
Taiwanese	1
Turkish	1
White American	1
White British	59
White South African	1
Qualification	
No formal	6
GCSE	9
A-level	24
HND/Diploma	4
Undergraduate	14
Postgraduate	7
Prefer Not To Say	2
Length of Residency	
1-4 Years	4
5-9 Years	6
10-14 Years	2
15-19 Years	8
20+ Years	15
Visitor	18
Native to the area	13
Recruitment Type	
Convenience	25
Purposive	8
Snowball	15
Volunteer	18

Figure 8.3 Participant Characteristics

data collection, the sample size was limited to 66 participants in total (n=66) (Fig. 8.3).

Analysis

The author manually transcribed, coded and analysed the data thematically (Braun and Clarke 2019; 2015; 2014; 2006) within a reflective lifeworld framework (Dahlberg *et al.* 2011). Using an inductive, realist and semantic approach to analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006), the author reflexively identified units of meaning within the text where participants appeared to value any kind of affect, emotion or meaning they derived from the archaeology. Examples where the archaeology had a negative impact or none at all were also noted.

Results

Relating their experiences of the different prehistoric remains within the study area, the participants reported a range of positive effects that were categorised under the theme of Security and its sub-themes of Material Agency, Age, and Narrative. These findings are considered below within the broader theoretical framework of ontological security in order to clarify the meanings or potential meanings of the data and their relevance to the wider field of heritage and wellbeing studies.

Material Agency

In his work on modernity and self-identity, Giddens (1991) suggests that the constancy of one's material environment is crucial to ontological security in the way it brackets out influences that

are experienced as physically or psychologically threatening to the individual. Consequently, he likens ontological security to "…a 'protective cocoon' which stands guard over the self in its dealings with everyday reality" (Giddens 1991, 3). Filip Ejdus (2017) explains that it is partly the meanings people attribute to their surroundings that creates this sense of continuity and safety. However, referring to Grenville's work, Ejdus affirms that the physical constancy of one's environment, and the dependable routines and relationships it facilitates, also contributes to the feelings of basic trust, stability and comfort which make ontological security possible. Based on this premise, Grenville (2007, 451) argues that, for some, the historic built environment acts "…as a bulwark against a transient and untrustworthy external world". The feelings of safety, peace and stability that participants of the current study frequently referred to during the project suggest that through its material agency, the archaeology contained within the study area provides this function for some people.

Protection

A number of participants spoke about the physical security that they derive from certain sites within the study area and the overall sense of safety this provides. This impact is discussed below. Discussing his experience of the Iron Age hilltop enclosure of Martinsell, Vale of Pewsey, one participant noted:

> …I sort of get a sense of security up here, a lot of memories, certainly, but there's a sort of solidity and certainty and permanence that, and - we're just going through the ditch here into the start of it, go up here. Is it to do with the fact that it's a hill fort? I mean I think I can sort of understand entirely why they did put a hill fort here - it feels, if I was going to build a hill fort, this is where it would be. (Personal interview 11, resident, 57).

He further noted, '…at the moment it's a bit tricky to see it from my garden because the trees are in leaf, but you can see it from there, but as I say it sort of does, because of its height, it really does feel like it's guarding over you'.

This theme of safety was reported by a number of participants in the context of circular monuments, such as Neolithic henges and Iron Age enclosures. As one woman put it, describing her experience of being inside Marden henge, Vale of Pewsey, "It's like you're sort of

Figure 8.4 Martinsell Iron Age Hill Top Enclosure, source: University of Reading

protected somehow. Maybe it's that kind of feeling that I get - nothing's going to harm you, sort of like, you know, you're enclosed. I don't know what it sounds like to you, but that's how I certainly feel about things." (Personal interview 1, resident, 60). A student participating in one of the mindful walks reported a similar experience when inside Avebury henge:

> Yeah, just, because we went up to the mound, like on top of the mound on the outside and sort of looking down on it, it was very kind of awe-inspiring. Like you sort of like, 'wow', it's quite a lot bigger than you can appreciate from the inside as well. But then going back in, it feels quite safe...I think it was a sense of safety among the stones" (Group interview 1, visitor, 19).

For others these enclosures facilitate the sensation of being in another world. This is particularly attested by one student's experience of being inside Avebury henge: "I feel like you're just really overwhelmed by the actual size and like where you are, that you don't really think about anything else. You're like in the moment..." (Group 1 interview, visitor, 19). This example also alludes to the way such enclosures support people to let go of external distractions and come into the present moment. A participant from the Stonehenge area related how he commonly experiences this sensation in response to the seclusion and security of a local Iron Age enclosure, explaining: "It's very comforting, and it wraps round you, doesn't

it, if you sit here long enough and just let your mind wander" (Personal interview 33, resident, 81).

Although the sensation of containment was reported more frequently in terms of enclosures, it was also noted in relation to the entirety of the prehistoric landscapes themselves and the sense of being held within a network of ancient monuments. In this connection, a participant wrote of the Vale of Pewsey: "Timeless quality to the landscape, much of which hasn't been changed, especially the road to Devizes – Adam's Grave, Knap Hill, Milk Hill. Almost separates you from the real world" (Reflective Account D, resident, 70). Not simply produced by an aesthetic response to sites and landscapes, these sensations are also experienced in the context of specific monument features. This was well illustrated by a participant who related how she feels drawn to one particular stone at Avebury stone circle on account of the supportive qualities it holds for her:

> I: And like, I know you said 'grounding' is something that you get from it, is there anything, what else happens when you're by it?
> P: I'm going to sound very odd. If I'm, quite often if I'm feeling quite emotional, which happens, quite often with the lunar cycle, I don't know, it just feels like it comforts, almost like it embraces you. (Personal interview 16, resident, 49).

These examples communicate a very pronounced embodied sense of being safely held in place and bracketed off from the external world by the structure, form, and subsequent agency of certain monuments. In terms of the physical dimension of ontological security, Giddens (1991, 56) maintains that "The body…is experienced as a practical mode of coping with external situations and events", remarking on "…how complete and unending is the control that the individual is expected to sustain over the body in all settings of social interaction". Developing this idea, it seems that the protective agency which some people experience in relation to the sites and landscapes discussed, offers a sense of reassurance that while they are there, they no longer need to actively defend against threats to their physical security or sense of self. As a result, this feeling allows people to relax physically, become more present and enter into a liberated or, what Amanda Bingley (2003, 331) refers to in object-relations terms as, an "unintegrated" state of being. Viewed in this way, it is possible that the monuments reinforce or take over the bodily bracketing out process which individuals must exert on a daily basis, thus allowing a reprieve from the demands of life and creating time and space to 'be'.

Peace

While the protective, reassuring agency of certain sites may stem largely from their scale, form and strong presence in the landscape, it might also stem from the calming and nurturing atmosphere that some people attribute to them.

Specifying why Stonehenge is special for her, one participant explained:

For me? It's the peacefulness, it's the peace that I feel when I'm there. It's the peace inside the centre…But, I think as soon as I started going in there, it was like it found me - it wasn't something I was looking for…there was an opportunity to just stand there, and I realized just how peaceful I felt. (Personal interview 24, resident, 61)

The participant also noted in her written reflections: 'I was drawn to the stones when I was emotionally hurt' (Reflective account J, resident, 61). This sensation of Stonehenge was akin to that of another resident:

P: Um [pauses to think], why I said, yes, I mean, why I said contentment? I think it is a form of contentment to have it there.
I: Really?
P: Yes. Brings me contentment, yes. Yes, it makes me content, I think, yeah.
I: Do you know why?
P: I don't, no. I think it comes back to this 'feeling' thing, I suppose. And it's a feeling which I can't describe, and is contentment the right word out of the feelings it gives me, to use? But it is one of, just being, I suppose, which I suppose, contentment is a form of just being, isn't it? (Personal interview 27, resident, 57)

Similar again, is the following participant account of Marden henge: "…you'd have to sort of live here to know, but, like I said, it's just calm and peace and quiet. I'm not connecting what the neighbours do, I'm sort of talking about the actual place to me, that's how it feels - nothing to worry about" (Personal interview 1, resident, 60). This sentiment is also present in the following participant comments regarding Avebury henge:

Figure 8.5 Avebury Stone Circle, source: University of Reading

> I: Why, what is it about it that appeals?
>
> P: Just. I just, to me there's a sort of feeling about the place, but it's a friendly feel - it's not something, you know, it's not a feeling that there's any, it's not like a feeling that somewhere might be say haunted or bad sort of spirits about something, you know, it's actually to me, it's a, it's got a very friendly feel to it.
>
> I: Right.
>
> P: And, you know, like the site itself is sort of like welcoming you to be there, and sort of be part of it. (Personal interview 10, resident, 54).

Thus, certain monuments appear to exude a calming and welcoming atmosphere or 'spirit of place' for people, the exact origin of which is not easily discernible. One participant suggested, following a mindful walk in the Avebury landscape:

> ...if you look at the stones, they're just, they're there, they're strong, they're big and they're still and I think that's why people feel calm...I think that's where you feel the quietness from, you know. It's that you have these huge stones everywhere. ...but I mean even if the place was covered in oak trees, there still would have been a lot of movement - you've got the rolling hills, you know. There's so much, you know, even going on when you're trying to be still, but like you have that there and I think that might bring a feeling of calmness. (Group interview 1, visitor, 20)

In comparison, several participants proposed that the sense of peace and ease they feel in the Stonehenge landscape is an innate property of the physical landscape itself, and perhaps the reason why the monuments were originally erected. Others attribute the calmness to spiritual entities or energies which they anticipate, physically, at the monuments. Whatever the origin, this quality of peace is palpable for many, and combined with the materiality and forms of the monuments, it may be one of the reasons why they enable people to bracket out the external world.

Permanence

The sense of peace described above may also stem from the air of permanence that the archaeology conveys. The feedback revealed that, for a number of participants, the prehistoric monuments provide a sense of physical security in their constancy as familiar and unchanging landmarks.

> Writing of the archaeology in the Vale of Pewsey, one participant related:
>
> The very heart of the northern escarpment, for many years marking the halfway point between my home and my place of work in Devizes, and although I didn't actually say "good morning, Knap hill" as I passed it, a glance in its direction gave a sense of reassurance of permanence. (Reflective Account C, resident, 57).

He further emphasized this sense of the monuments, explaining that, "…by being conspicuous they provide points…and I don't want to anthropomorphize them too much, but it's a bit like, sort of, passing friends, you know" (Personal interview 11, resident, 57). This conception of the archaeology is reminiscent of what Ejdus (2017, 25) refers to as "homely spaces"; "sites of constancy", which "…shield people from the unreliability and impermanence of the outside world…". This could be said of any familiar architectural landmark. However, as the participant indicates in the account below, it is arguably the deep age of the monuments which is largely responsible for this sense of permanence:

There is something about the longevity of prehistoric monuments, especially those where the remains are extensive, that gives a sense of permanence. I could sit under a big oak tree that will almost certainly outlast me, but it would not feel the same as visiting a point in the landscape that feels fixed over a much longer time frame. (Reflective account C, resident, 57)

This sentiment is echoed in the following interview dialogue with a male participant from Avebury:

Interviewer (I): Any other kinds of qualities that you get from it?

Participant (P): Stability. We're in such a throwaway society. You know, they're [the standing stones] 5000 years old - that'll [points to the audio recorder] be out of date in about three years, and that's what I very much feel is Avebury, that in itself it's almost a lesson - 'look, you know, hang on - we're just using too much, we're disposing of too much', but that's just me because I think things should last longer.

I: Yeah. So it's the age of the monuments that gives a sense of - ?

P: Gives a sense of, yeah, um, belonging and steadiness, consistency… (Personal interview 15, resident, 63)

It would seem that there is also something about the continued existence of the monuments from their prehistoric origins into the present day that provides contentment and comfort for people. As one participant put it while describing his relationship to the Vale of Pewsey:

I don't know, I suppose there's a safety, security maybe, something like that - it just feels, you know, home, I don't have the curiosity to go elsewhere, I don't know. It's been very settled. And there is so much about here that I like. And I think part of that is, I mentioned earlier, that there's a huge continuity - I feel continuity, the history, and it just feels very fulfilling. " (Personal interview 9, resident, 55)

Discussing how she values this continuity of culture in relation to the prehistoric archaeology on her land, another participant related:

> The thing I do like, because our land was so neglected and protected as this century progressed, and therefore was not subjected to much in the way of impact on the land, there is to me a strong sense of it being as it always was. So, albeit overlaid with thousands of years of leaf and soil, and what have you. But essentially, it is what it's always been, and it was a gathering place. And I like the fact that its still, for us as a family, used like that. (Personal interview 3, resident, 59)

Ejdus (2017, 27) suggests that, "…material environments serve as an important source of ontological security for individuals by shielding their everyday routines from the transience of the outside world". It would seem that in response to the ideas of permanence and continuity of culture that the archaeological remains represent, people experience them as homely, comforting and reassuring sites of constancy. Thus, it could be argued that in this capacity these sites provide a source of ontological security.

Discussion

Clearly, the physical attributes and presence of the sites discussed exert a particular agency which can induce a sense of security and comfort for some individuals on a bodily level. Described as secure, solid, strong, protective, welcoming and peaceful, the sites create a reassuring and sustaining environment for some that is not just experienced as homely on account of the constancy of the monuments, but also as a result of the nurturing qualities attributed to them. As such, it could be said that the monuments serve to provide the sense of trust which makes possible the protective cocoon of ontological security. Furthermore, it seems that this cocoon-like effect of the monuments enables certain people to detach from the external world in a therapeutic way, to come into the present moment and enter into a more mindful, peaceful state of being.

Age

The feeling of security that some of the archaeological remains provide is not only experienced in relation to their material agency, but also through the significance of their age. This occurs in the way the archaeology stimulates for many people, an almost tangible sense of 'ancientness'

and the past. The presence of the archaeology also gives them a more pronounced awareness of deep time, the continuum of life on earth and their place within it.

Presence of Antiquity

For a number of participants the sense of the past in the present described above is tangible in that the age of the prehistoric landscapes are experienced as an almost physical presence. Perceived as dense, primordial and 'slow-moving', this presence exerts a calming effect on some people, as illustrated in the interview dialogue below:

> I: And do you, I mean obviously country life does that to you, but do you think there's something specific about the place itself and the area that's contributed?
> P: Yeah, I think it's the added thing of Avebury really, you know the countryside is one sort of aspect of it, but the other aspect is that you're just surrounded by history and I think that just sort of calms the whole situation down really to be honest. (Personal interview 14, resident, 56)

The participant also noted that this impact is cast in sharp relief for him when compared with his experience of modern-day architecture:

> …I think if, and I have been, if you're in a place where they're building new houses or there's huge development or, you know, I think subconsciously you feel as if, ' oh right, I've got to step up, step up the pace, and this is a new way of living, this is development, this is pace, this is the future, this is modern', and you almost subconsciously probably pick up the pace. Where if you lived in somewhere like this, you generally tend to calm down a bit more, you know?

Shedding further light on the nature of this effect, the following participant explains how it is the permanence and palpable ancient presence of her local archaeology that grounds her:

> … I have decided that my happy place and place of nourishment is the landscape between Lake barrow group and Stonehenge. That sense of the landscape being there for thousands of years just grounds me and slows me down…That 'be still and know that I am God' or 'be still and feel the eons of time that have passed before'. Pure Peace. (Reflective account I, resident, 52)

Figure 8.6 West Kennet Long Barrow, source: University of Reading

It appears that it is not only the persistence and permanence of the archaeology that creates the sense of constancy for people, but also the almost tangible weight of age it exerts. These influences provide feelings of foundation and continuity which, in turn, arguably help to protect against existential anxieties.

Temporal Perspective

In the interview quote above, the participant also appears to be implying that, comparable to the idea of God, in terms of its enduring, foundational nature and seemingly infinite reach, the time-depth of the prehistoric landscape holds a transcendent quality that is also calming and stabilising. This sense of the transcendent afforded through contemplation of the age of the archaeology, was also described by some participants as a levelling influence, in the way that it enables them to locate themselves in time.

Referring to cropmarks that become visible in the Stonehenge landscape at certain points of year, the same participant further expressed that, "Looking at these more often than not hidden features, it makes me think about their purpose – how they were built and by whom…I feel the roll of the years and how unimportant I am on the landscape – the land with its ghost

markings keeps me grounded" (Reflective account I, resident, 52). A participant from the Vale of Pewsey described a similar feeling of grounding humility with respect to the 'ancientness' and continuity of the archaeology that *is* visible in his local landscape:

> I sort of see myself as part of this sort of journey of what is visible in the landscape, you know from Cretaceous period right through to you know sort of, I suppose post Saxon period. You know, we're here in this little bit here and it sort of gives you a sense of place, but a sense of time, as well in the enormity of the world, you know, or the universe. That actually we're just like one little speck, just like a little grain of chalk [laughs]. (Personal interview 10, resident, 54)

He explained that this experience impacts him in the following way:

> I: So, it's you being part of this long story essentially, like? And how does that affect how you are in your life, do you think?
>
> P: I think it gives me a much more grounded perspective.

These testimonials demonstrate that conscious contemplation of the temporal significance of the archaeology provides an additional level of security in the way it promotes an appreciation of a lifespan much greater than that of the individual. In this respect, it seems as though it creates the feeling of being 'held' by or in the vast expanse of time. Subsequently, by prompting thoughts on themes of continuity and connectivity, this awareness helps to put things in perspective for the individual and induce feelings of trust and security.

Past as Refuge

In the same way that the visibility and physical presence of ancient monuments in the landscape gives people a feeling of being safely cocooned away from the 'real' world, the strong impression of the past in the present they exude gives the added sense of being cocooned in the past itself. This effect also provides a feeling of security for some participants in that it helps to bracket out negative aspects of modern life and provide a temporary escape to a more desirable world.

This vivid sense of the past in the present evokes for some participants the feeling of stepping back in time. Expressing how he experiences this sensation at Martinsell Iron Age

enclosure, one participant reported "…you come across it almost, you feel, as it was two or three thousand years ago after it had been deserted" (Personal interview 11, resident, 57). Similarly, he described the network of prehistoric sites held within the study area as an "ancient world", explaining, "I think particularly when you're up here, and along there, yes you see cars and tractors and an occasional train going along, and annoying helicopters, but you're sufficiently detached from 21st century life". The participant further intimated that this escape from the 'modern world' is important for him because:

> …all our lives everyday sort of get filled up with the immediate worries of, you know, 'what do we need to do, the shopping, will there be enough money in my bank account by the end of the month?'. But coming up here and sort of connecting with this, you suddenly put three, four thousand years between yourself and those immediate worries in the present. And for me that's almost as good as travelling three or four thousand miles.

In addition, he expressed that there is not only a feeling of travelling to another time, but also to a simpler, more meaningful world, which enables the participant to detach, at least in the imagination, from the stresses of modern life:

> …the person who dug this ditch, you know, what would a Barclay card have meant to them, or, 5.4% mortgage, you know? It just sort of puts things in perspective, that they were largely surviving. You know, they weren't encumbered by all that slightly ephemeral stuff that we fill our lives with today.

The above account also betrays a sense of nostalgia for better times and a more authentic way of life. As another participant mused:

> And the same with Stonehenge, I suppose, there was a purpose behind it rather than [trails off]. Everything, you know, life was simpler, I suppose - you just feel that life would've been. But then it probably wasn't, it was probably hard as hell. (Personal interview 28, resident, 45).

Emma Waterton and Steve Watson (2014, 6) suggest that this type of perception is symptomatic of "…modern society's desire to recover, in the cultures of other places and other epochs, the authenticity it imagines it has lost in its own". As such, nostalgia has frequently been dismissed as overly romantic, sentimental and misleading (Edmonds 2006; Edwards 2000;

see also Boym 2001, Shanks 1992 and Tannock 1995 for discussion). Yet, a number of researchers argue (Bower 1995; Boym 2001; Lowenthal 2015; Shanks 1992; Tannock 1995) that it also possesses social value and healing potential. Lowenthal (2015, 108) goes as far as to suggest that even heritage sites of questionable authenticity, "…might be antidotes to the frenzy of modern life…".

Stuart Tannock (1995) asserts that nostalgia establishes continuity between pre- and post-lapsarian worlds, providing a link to a seemingly more authentic, stable and meaningful past. Tannock also infers that this connection facilitates a sense of security, and through it, the "possibility of retreat" from a dissatisfactory present. Acknowledging the potential for nostalgia to be used for both positive and negative ends, Tannock advocates that:

> Nostalgia should unquestionably be challenged and critiqued for the distortions, misunderstandings, and limitations it may place on effective historical interpretation and action; but, in the modern West at least, nostalgia should equally be recognised as a valid way of constructing and approaching the past…as a general structure of feeling, present in, and important to individuals and communities of all social groups. (Tannock 1995, 461)

This statement is further supported by recent clinical psychological research which demonstrates (Batcho 2013; Routledge *et al*. 2017; Sedikides and Wildschut 2018) that nostalgic reflection on past events perceived as "wholesome" and personally significant, can provide a sense of existential meaning and purpose for people in the present, and, consequently, "…a fundamental buffer against existential anxiety…" (Routledge *et al*. 2017, 638).

In view of the preceding discussion, it is plausible that, as places which facilitate nostalgic reflection by virtue of their age and link to the pre-industrial past, the prehistoric sites mentioned function for some as existential resources facilitative of ontological security.

Discussion

The presence of antiquity that certain prehistoric sites emanate, and the depth of time they represent, clearly have a grounding and protective impact on people. However, the feedback suggests that this therapeutic impact is reinforced for some people by the perception that they cannot obtain this quality of security in the structures of modern society. This accords with

Giddens' (1991, 109) thesis that, "To live in the universe of high modernity is to live in an environment of chance and risk…". Giddens (1991) holds that the "extreme dynamism" of modern Western life and its abstract systems have disembedded space and time from the situatedness of place, creating a fast-paced, "runaway world", productive of a type of ontological insecurity unknown in premodern periods. He explains that, as late modernity does not provide the same social, economic and spiritual assurances or place-based rootedness previously facilitated by the structures of pre-industrial society, it is essentially a world underpinned by uncertainty and doubt.

Boym (2001, 16) suggests that it is this climate of instability and uncertainty which has created the modern nostalgia for "…the slower rhythms of the past, for continuity, social cohesion and tradition". As Lowenthal (2015) espouses, the past is seen as 'safer' than the future and the present because it is perceived as fixed, known and thus reliable. This safety in the known is also a possible contributor to the feeling of homeliness that people frequently experience at certain sites. Whether people today are any less ontologically secure than their prehistoric counterparts is debateable. Nevertheless, the participant feedback gathered does indicate that some people do find aspects of modern life destabilizing, and that for them, the apparent 'safety' of the prehistoric past helps to alleviate this. The feedback also underscores the one source of wellbeing that is completely unique to heritage assets - temporal significance. As Lipe (1984, 4) points out, '…the direct access to the past that these resources provide cannot be duplicated by any other means…'.

Narratives

Giddens (1991, 53) defines self-identity as "…the *self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography*". He maintains that the setting in which a person's life unfolds, influences and forms part of that person's biography. Thus, one's biography is continuous with the physical make-up and narrative of the material environment by which it is sustained and nurtured. Giddens (1991, 54) clarifies that, "The individual's biography…must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self". It is in this way that the constancy of the environment facilitates a sense of continuity of one's self-identity, what Giddens (1991, 55) describes as "…the persistence of feelings of personhood in a continuous self and body", and subsequently helps to bracket out

existential anxieties. The study found that this process also occurs for people in the context of the prehistoric landscapes investigated.

Landscape Narrative and Self-identity

Illuminating the dynamic which engenders a sense of continuity of self-identity for nation states, Ejdus (2017, 24), explains that, "Once incorporated into the project of the self through projection or introjection, material environments become ontic spaces..." or "spatial extensions" of the "collective self" of the state, which root, define and sustain a stable identity narrative. As Grenville (2007) has emphasized, this is also the case with the relationship between the historic built environment and the formation of individual identity, or more specifically, the individual's "everyday" identity.

The sense of identification with the landscape to which Grenville refers is clearly communicated in the following participant comments regarding the Vale of Pewsey: "...in terms of my sense of place, I firmly feel a part of the landscape and part of the history of that area" (Personal interview 10, resident, 54). Likewise, speaking of the Avebury landscape, another participant stated:

> Well, you feel that you live here, that you're the current tenant, well, I feel like, I'm the current tenant in this landscape, and there have been thousands and thousands… (Personal interview 23, resident, 52)

Describing this sense of integration in further detail, this participant and his wife revealed that the age and unique character of the landscape defines their identity in the following way:

> P2: I think, you know, you get the impression, you get the general impression it's been here for thousands of years and it's really important.
> I: Mmm.
> P2: [Pauses to think] So you feel, part of that, you know.
> I: Mmm.
> P1: Like it belongs to us almost.
> P2: Yeah, in some respects, like we belong to it. Like, you know, everybody knows what the rules are. Like 'don't paint the stones', and stuff. (Personal interview 23, residents, 52)

Feeling similarly defined by the nature of the Avebury landscape and its significance, another resident described herself and her husband as "passing custodians" of the monuments (Reflective account E, resident, 64), a role with which a number of participants from across the study area frequently identified.

These examples suggest that some residents see themselves as part of the chronology and character of prehistoric landscape in a way that not only serves to anchor them in their cultural surroundings, but also to define their sense of identity and purpose, thus allowing feelings of continuity and foundation.

The Collective Self

Bound up in the sense of continuity which some people derive from the prehistoric landscape is also a feeling of continuity with its past inhabitants. Inherent in this connection, is an awareness of, what Ejdus (2017) refers to as, the collective self or that part of one's identity which is shared in common with a particular group. Hence, Avrami *et al.* (2000) maintain that heritage assets are a reflection of human identity. Relating this concept to prehistoric monuments in particular, Cornelius Holtorf (1995, 54) suggests that, "…as 'timemarks' in the landscape: they are visible links to the distant past today…They transport the past into people's lifeworlds", and that, "Such prominent and long-living links to the past may be crucial to later inhabitants for establishing a social identity…". Holtorf (1997, 50) concludes that this mnemonic process, essentially a type of "retrospective collective memory" or "cultural memory", acts to stabilize society by "…reassuring it of its existing identity or supplying it with a new awareness of unity and singularity i.e. an historical consciousness".

The following interview dialogue with a participant from the Stonehenge area provides a good example of how the prehistoric environments in question are considered, in some instances, as vital to the affirmation, sustenance and development of human identity:

> I: …So, do you guys think it makes a difference to have monuments and archaeology where you live?
>
> P1: Not only where we live, I think the whole society, I think we need to understand the past, really. And it helps us plan the future, perhaps. But I think that it's essential that we keep it and look after it - nurture it.

I: Mmm, mmm. And what do you think we lose if we lose our heritage, or if we lose the heritage?

P1: Oh, it would be a tragedy, wouldn't it? I think we need our heritage to base our existence on. I think we need the past as much as food. (Personal interview 33, resident, 81)

A participant from the Vale of Pewsey likewise highlighted the foundational significance of the prehistoric archaeology in the study area, emphasising, "We're who we are because of what happened then - this is all part of our history, part of what we are" (Personal interview 12, resident, 70). Further contextualising this comment, a participant from the Avebury area wrote: "The different sites and monuments map out evolving perceptions of how everyday experience of the world fits into a wider cosmos. This is *Homo sapiens*. This is our story. This is us" (Reflective account G, resident, 67). In a subsequent interview, the participant went on to discuss the existential value of this landscape narrative in its capacity to reflect different aspects of human identity and potential, stating, "I think if you look at our existence at the moment, as human beings, the meaning of what we are isn't static, it's a narrative".

On an individual level, this sense of the collective self, as one participant revealed in the context of the Vale of Pewsey, occurs for some, in the following way:

….you are part of it - with it there, I feel emotionally part of that…you know, you feel that you're part of history…part of something which is, you know, it's there in history, it's continued through time, we're part of it, and it will continue in the future, so I feel part of that journey of humankind in this area. (Personal interview 10, resident, 54)

It can also manifest for people in the pride this sense of common identity provides in respect of the capability and achievements of their prehistoric forbears. This is well-expressed in the following participant comment regarding West Kennet long barrow:

…there's a sense of pride, certainly. I mean it's, you know, it's great - I mean, that [West Kennet long barrow] was built before the pyramids…It's a significant monument that represents an awful lot of determination and labour. And I'm proud of it. (Personal interview 22, resident, 67)

Ejdus (2017) points out that archaeological remains provide physical evidence which can help to legitimate the biography and existence of a culture and thereby guard against existential anxieties. Certainly, as has been widely documented (see Arnold 2006; Hegardt and

Källén 2011; Trigger 1989; Turek 2018), inherent in this potential is the danger for archaeology to be employed for negative purposes, the most extreme example being perhaps the use of prehistoric archaeology by the Nazi regime to justify racism and genocide (Arnold 1990, 2006). Yet, at the other extreme, Lipe (1984, 10) posits that, as a record of universal human achievement, archaeology from the distant past can also be symbolic of "…the common human interest, and of the continuity of past, present and future life…". Thus, as inferred by the participant comments above, it might be said that the cultural memory precipitated by the prehistoric landscape, triggers in some people a keener awareness of their wider human identity, and with it a positive feeling of foundation.

Site Narratives and Self-identity

While the sites may represent grand narratives concerning the origins and nature of human identity, they also convey more specific narratives which are equally influential in the development of individual self-identity. As Giddens (1991, 54) sees it, one's sense of self-identity is sustained by the "…capacity *to keep a particular narrative going"*. Ejdus (2017) suggests that particular narratives and properties of the material environment can assist in this process when correlated with self-identity narratives significant to the individual. Jones (2010) proposes that in the context of the historic environment, this impact is activated by the ways individuals relate to, and make meaning from, the narratives associated with particular heritage objects. This dynamic was true for a number of the study participants who noted how they find certain site narratives comforting, grounding and supportive of their sense of self.

This impact was especially visible in terms of sites associated with ritual use, as suggested by the following participant account concerning Marden henge:

> I personally - but this is me - I don't see anything different happening here now that didn't then because, I'll light a fire at *Beltane*, I will light a fire at *Samhain*, which is Halloween or, you know, because to mark the quarters, the Celtic quarters, and the seasons. They've always done that in the past here…It's just, maybe it's because, as I say, you're in a site where these things have all gone on before, you naturally link into it, and you naturally step into repeating patterns. And maybe I'm drawn to the place because those are the patterns that I feel comfortable with, and they're here. (Personal interview 4, resident, 62)

Some participants talked about the spiritual meanings that such sites hold for them, and how these places connect them to their faith and, in turn, to aspects of themselves which get neglected with the demands of day-to-day life. This was particularly the case of a lady from the Vale of Pewsey who explained that while she feels unable to fully connect to and express her true self at work or in the home, she finds that she can when connecting with the prehistoric sites in her area:

> P: Yeah. So, um, in terms of sacred sites, they are all [pauses to cry], sorry, I didn't think I'd get so emotional.
>
> I: Don't worry, don't worry, take your time -
>
> P: It's very important to me.
>
> I: Yeah.
>
> P: Because being in that space allows me to connect with that side of myself.
>
> I: Ok.
>
> P: Helps me link with my faith and my beliefs, my landscape, my land, my country, um, and like-minded people. (Personal interview 6, resident, 37)

For other participants, the qualities that resonate for them are those relating to the more mundane narratives of the sites. For instance, one participant described how connecting with the subsistence narratives of the Mesolithic sites in the area is calming for her in the way they fulfil, to some degree, her desire for a simpler lifestyle:

> P: I can imagine myself sat in the bottom of a tree-throw with a little campfire going, and you know, having animal hides over top of it.
>
> I: Oh, like you're almost there?
>
> P: I can kind of imagine myself doing that, and yet I can't stand camping, so, you know.
>
> I: And when you imagine yourself in that kind of set-up, how are you feeling?
>
> P: Chilled [laughs].
>
> I: Really?
>
> P: It's simple - there's no technology, there's no demands, there's no, it's a simple way of life, isn't it? (Personal interview 32, resident, 41)

In a similar vein, a lady from the Stonehenge area, speaking of the prehistoric inhabitants of the landscape, related:

…I think that they had a greater connection with the land and Mother Earth, so perhaps that's why I like it. Because they had the connection. Perhaps I'm wanting that connection, and that is a connection that I feel that I've got, and I want to deepen that. (Personal interview 26, resident, 52)

These last two comments indicate that as mnemonics for lifeways of the distant past that do not feature prominently in mainstream modern culture, these heritage assets affirm aspects of human identity which, for some, are fundamental to their sense of foundation, self and possibility.

In object-relations theory it is understood (see Trustram 2013) that cultural objects and their narratives form a key role in identity development in the way they symbolize specific relationships or qualities that are fundamental to the individual's sense of self, but which may be absent, denied or undeveloped. In this connection, it would not be unfair to suggest that the monuments discussed above also perform this function. As Rachel Kiddey (2014, 298) has demonstrated in the context of community archaeology, relating site narratives to individual

Figure 8.7 Solstice at Stonehenge, source: University of Reading

biographies can furnish people with "…a reflexive 'remembering' of who they are, from where they have come and crucially where they might go next". In the same way, it could be argued that the types of narratives associated with prehistoric sites, both official and unofficial, also have the potential to anchor, nourish and shape individual identity.

Discussion

In their theory of existential wellbeing, Kathleen Galvin and Les Todres (2011, 9) assert that a

sense of continuity of self-identity is realized in any experience "…where our sense of personal identity is felt to be connected to resources and contexts far beyond oneself, but which nevertheless, are continuous with what is most deeply one's own". They also suggest that such "identity resources" may include geographic, cultural or historic contexts that are significant for the individual. As such, in their ability to create this sense of continuity through the nature of their presence, antiquity and meaning, perhaps the prehistoric landscapes discussed might also be viewed as identity resources.

Conclusion

This paper focuses primarily on examples where participants view the archaeology in a positive light. However, this experience was not unanimous. One lady, for example, mostly expressed disinterest:

> Well, I, to be honest, don't really feel anything about old things - I'm not interested. In anything historical, I'm not really into history - I very much live for the moment. And anything that happened as long ago as, I'm very interested in what we found here because I live here, but it doesn't really turn me on, which is unusual I know. It's very interesting to imagine how they lived, and then I think how did they live with such simple tools and clothes and you know, compared to us today, because we're so well off... It's so far removed that I find it hard to comprehend… (Personal interview 7, resident, 70)

Likewise, where four of the one-to-one interviewees expressed interest in and respect for the archaeology, it was not clear if they valued it in any deeper way. In the same vein, the communal format of the group interview in the Avebury landscape did not allow deeper experiences to surface as easily, with only 13 people from the visiting groups, and four from the local group, overtly discussing their personal experience of the archaeology. However, each of these group participants indicated that they experienced the archaeology as either calming or insightful due to one or more of the influences discussed above.

Three one-to-one participants described how the local access, traffic safety and congestion issues that stem from the management of Stonehenge as a tourist site actually has a negative impact on their ontological security. Yet, all three revealed that they derive positive experiences from the archaeology itself, with one even reporting the following:

I: And when you say that the monuments and the burial mounds are part of that [the peace she derives from the area], how, how do you, I suppose I'm trying to get my head around - ?

P1: It's a feeling, isn't it? It's a feeling. Um, of being, well - close to nature, and close to things that happened thousands of years ago. I mean, we don't think that actually life existed thousands of years ago, do we [laughs]...[inaudible]...?

I: Yeah.

P1: But that's a feeling that, yeah, there was life thousands of years ago.

I: Right. So, what is that feeling, then?

P1: Um [pauses], just [pauses to think], I'm not very good at putting this into words unless I'm typing [laughs]!

I: Yeah, I know what you mean [laughs].

P1: A feeling of, um, belonging, um, grounding -

I: Really?

P1: Yeah, of being grounded.

I: Really?

P1: Oh, yeah - it grounds you, amazingly. (Personal interview 25, resident, 60)

Similarly, a participant from Avebury who initially professed disinterest in her local archaeology later stated: Why is it important? Because it's a reminder of time. You see, it's telling us, it's putting us, in perspective, you know, with time, and I think that's why it's worth preserving - that's why it has to be there and looked after' (Personal interview 18, resident, 60). Thus, some participants have conflicting feelings about the archaeology, or certain sites in particular. However, while a small number of participants did not consciously identify the archaeology as a grounding influence, the majority did.

The results of this study reflect the narratives and experience of a specific range of individuals regarding a particular geographic location. In this much, the main utility of this research is its capacity to afford greater understanding of the affective possibilities, meaning, and therapeutic value and potential that the archaeological resources in this particular area hold for certain groups. The sense of security discussed here is perhaps, naturally more pronounced for residents as they are immersed in the archaeology on a daily basis. However, some of the visitor responses suggest that it might also be a more widely experienced phenomenon. Indeed, the findings of this study may be comparable with the experience of residents of, or visitors to, areas containing similar prehistoric features. Although this is supported to some degree by analogous findings from Holtorf's (2005) study on contemporary

perceptions of megalithic sites in Germany, further studies with groups from a range of social and cultural backgrounds and age ranges are required to substantiate this theory.

The feedback presented suggests that, while the effects discussed are not necessarily universal, the intrinsic nature of certain prehistoric sites within the study area have the capacity to interact with people's sense of place, time and identity to facilitate feelings of ontological security in a very tangible way. Furthermore, where permanence, agency and symbolic meaning are features of heritage assets from any period, the types of structures, narratives and the degree of antiquity associated with the prehistoric remains investigated appear to possess additional power to promote feelings of ontological security for certain people.

Previous museum studies have suggested that heritage objects impact individual wellbeing in ways which other cultural objects cannot (Lanceley *et al*. 2011; Paddon *et al.* 2014). This paper proposes that perhaps one of the most distinctive of these wellbeing effects, is the capacity of prehistoric heritage assets, as existential and identity resources of the manner here described, to facilitate for some people, a sense of ontological security. Furthermore, if, as Grenville (2007) theorizes, this impact is largely unconscious, it may be that giving people the space to reflect more fully on their lived embodied experience of the historic environment might help to highlight its therapeutic potential.

Chapter 9: The Role of the Historic Environment in the Creation of Existential Relatedness (As submitted to *Public Archaeology* on December 21, 2018)

As material reflections of human identity and behaviour, heritage assets are often viewed as a source of belonging and existential awareness. In recent years these impacts have been shown to promote personal wellbeing in ways which align with the therapeutic concept of existential relatedness. Defined as a feeling of deep connection to something greater than the self, existential relatedness has been identified as a fundamental component of personal wellbeing. In light of findings from qualitative work undertaken in the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site and the Vale of Pewsey, Wiltshire, UK, and their environs, this paper considers the capacity for the historic environment to facilitate a sense of existential relatedness for people in the present day. As a result of this exploration, the paper proposes that the historic environment has a particularly unique role to play in the creation of existential relatedness, in terms of the cultural, collective and transcendent connections it evokes.

Keywords: prehistoric archaeology; prehistoric landscapes; historic environment; heritage; wellbeing; existential relatedness; *communitas*

Introduction

Cultural Heritage and the historic environment have long been associated with ideas of belonging and connectedness (Avrami *et al*., 2000; Bevan, 2016; Froggett *et al*., 2011; Graham *et al*., 2009; Jensen, 2000; Lipe, 1984; Lowenthal, 2015; Reilly *et al*., 2018). As Erica Avrami and colleagues explain it, 'Heritage objects…are a looking glass that reflects the image we hold of ourselves — our values, our beliefs, our understanding of who we are — as products of a common past', and that, 'As such, cultural heritage transmits an existential quality of human belonging' (Avrami *et al*., 2000, 16). In their work on the therapeutic power of heritage objects, Lynn Froggett *et al*. (2011, 65) refer to this conception of belonging as 'cultural inclusion', in the understanding that '…culture, which differentiates social groups from one another, is also something collectively generated over time and place'. Consequently, Froggett *et al*. (2011) suggest that interaction with heritage assets can stimulate a sense of belonging to the wider cultural and collective frame of human existence which the artefacts represent.

Adopting a similar perspective, Siân Jones (2010) proposes that, intrinsically linked to various networks of people, objects and cultural biographies, heritage assets can help people to negotiate their place and purpose in the world, and thus, to gain a sense of their 'authentic selves'. Likewise, Uffe Jensen (2000, 42) makes the case that the age and narratives of heritage objects, '…give us as individuals an understanding of ourselves as belonging to something or as being part of something beyond our own particular existence'. He maintains that this elevated perspective can enable people to transcend 'limitations of time and space' and adopt a more universal outlook on the possibilities of life (Jensen, 2000, 42). Subsequently, Jensen suggests that the reflective function of heritage objects is supportive of human flourishing.

Connecting with themes of existential wellbeing, each of these definitions of belonging and inclusion form, to all intents and purposes, aspects of what Ai *et al*. (2012, 370) term as existential relatedness: '…a sense of deep interconnectedness or deep connections, defined as a profound relationship with a significant entity or context in life that primarily bestows grand purpose and meaning, be it religious or secular'. Esteemed as a key factor in the development of emotional resilience, eudemonic wellbeing and personal growth, existential relatedness is characterized by qualities such as '…support, strength, comfort, and inspiration…' (Ai *et al*. 2012, 371).

Existential relatedness is perhaps best explained through a consideration of the concept of existential isolation. From a psychotherapeutic perspective, existential wellbeing is defined by the individual's ability to cope with and negotiate '…the fundamental challenges of the human condition…', which derive from the 'ultimate concerns' of: freedom, existential isolation, meaninglessness, and death (Yalom and Josselson, 2011, 289). According to therapists, Irvine Yalom and Ruthellen Josselson (2011, 290), existential isolation, '…pertains to our aloneness in the universe, which, though assuaged by connections to other human beings, yet remains'. They also infer that it is a prime cause of anxiety. Correspondingly, in their psychological study on relatedness and wellbeing, Haidt *et al.* (2008, 145) maintain that the social isolation and separation typical of modern life are a major cause of depression.

Yalom and Josselson (2011, 290) advise that 'A deep sense of connection does not "solve" the problem of existential isolation, but it provides solace'. Nevertheless, they assert that meaningful interpersonal relationships can help to alleviate feelings of aloneness. By the same token, Ai *et al*. (2011, 2012) assert that the sense of 'higher order' relatedness which people experience through religious belief and spiritual practice can also help to provide this deep

connection. However, they acknowledge that this affinity can be experienced in secular contexts as well, in terms of overarching causes or concepts like '…humanity, the world, and the universe…' (Ai *et al.*, 2012, 370).

Drawing on this latter conception of connectedness, it is not unrealistic to suggest that the sense of belonging which heritage assets afford through their temporal, cultural and geographical connections, is essentially a form of existential relatedness which can, as Jones (2010) has suggested, help people to find stability and meaning in a fragmented world. This paper explores this possibility in relation to the results of phenomenological research recently carried out in Wiltshire in order to understand how prehistoric heritage landscapes influence people's individual lived experience. It goes on to suggest that the presence of the prehistoric archaeology contained within these landscapes, together with the cultural meanings it represents, can help facilitate a sense of existential relatedness for people in the present day. The paper likewise proposes that this may be one of the key wellbeing impacts which the historic environment has to offer more generally.

The Empirical Context

Situated in a mixture of chalk downland and greensand valleys, the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS), the Vale of Pewsey, and their environs, are home to an exceptionally high concentration of prehistoric sites. Varied in form, function and preservation, the sites span in age from the eighth millennium to the first century BC. As such, they encompass a range of greater and lesser known antiquities from the Mesolithic through to the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age. These landscapes were thus chosen for study on account of the rich potential they present in terms of discerning public perceptions of prehistoric heritage.

As a comprehensive account of the participant sample, data collection and analysis has previously been reported elsewhere (Nolan forthcoming), these aspects of the study will not be discussed here in detail. Suffice it to say that the better part of the project comprised a series of semi-structured seated and walking interviews with residents of the study area. It also incorporated three separate mindful heritage walks and corresponding group interviews in the Avebury landscape, with two groups of students from the University of Reading and a local community group, respectively. Additionally, participants were invited to keep a reflective written and/or photographic account which expressed their personal experience and

perceptions of the archaeology. All of the methods applied were informed by phenomenological theories and practices drawn from landscape phenomenology (Tilley, 1994), non-representational research (Latham, 2003; Lorimer, 2005), Focusing-oriented psychotherapy (Gendlin, 2003), mindfulness-based practice (Williams *et al.*, 2007) and reflective lifeworld research (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2011). Including individual interviewees and groups, the study involved a total of 66 participants, 18 of whom were visitors to the area.

Results

A thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2019; 2015; 2014; 2006) of the participant feedback identified that the archaeology within the study area impacts people in a number of positive ways, some of which appear to facilitate a sense of existential relatedness. The nature and origins of these effects will be discussed in further detail in the following sections.

Direct Connection

Drawing attention to the capacity of heritage assets to unify people, objects and places meaningfully in time, Jones (2010, 189) observes that for some people, '…direct experience of an object can achieve a form of magical communion through personal incorporation into that network'. This feeling of connectedness, brought on by a strong awareness of past people at certain sites, or when handling artefacts, was a common experience for project participants.

This sense of connection particularly arose for a number of participants in relation to the special feeling or thrill they had experienced on finding artefacts in the landscape or while volunteering on local archaeological excavations. '…It's almost like a direct link to the past…', a participant from the Vale of Pewsey explained, '…a piece of flint or something you might find at a dig, that you pick up and you hold that, and the last time that anyone held that was thousands of years ago - that is 'that' feeling' (Personal interview 12, resident, 70). Another participant described his experience of finding an arrowhead in the Vale of Pewsey as 'just so, so privileged, but uplifting, exciting', particularly in the way it facilitated for him, a 'primeval' connection to human instinct and origins , '…almost like shaking hands with my ancestors' (Personal interview 13, resident, 61). A lady from the Avebury area identified the same experience with regard to the standing stones in the Avebury landscape:

...the people who put them here, the people who crafted them, because they are crafted... these were worked on, so when you touch this, it's like holding hands. Because they touched it and everybody who's been here and touched it - you're touching them, because they're connected through the stones. (Personal interview 20, resident, 62)

The feedback also established that this sense of connection is particularly tangible for people when walking along prehistoric ceremonial avenues or pathways between monuments. Describing his walks between different monuments in the Vale of Pewsey, one participant related, '...I do feel or reflect or sense that I am walking in the footsteps of many that have gone before' (Reflective Account C, resident, 57). This feeling is especially prominent for people when walking from Avebury henge via the stone rows of the West Kennet avenue to the Sanctuary, the site of a former Neolithic timber and stone circle. A local resident related that when walking her dogs in the area, '...I do walk up there [The Sanctuary], and...for me, it's like a procession route. I'm like, you know, again, "what were they doing, what were they going up here for?"' (Personal interview 23, resident, 52). Another participant similarly referred to this sense of procession during a mindful group walk along the avenue. During a group interview, she talked about the deep connectedness she had experienced in relation to the past, and the people who had processed this route, highlighting the sense of comfort and belonging this gave her:

Interviewer (I): And what did you think of the Sanctuary where we ended up?

Participant (P) 2: Lovely. Walking up the hill to get to the Sanctuary, it was almost like a real sense of connecting with people who would have done that in the past. I really did actually feel that as I was going up.

I: Really?

P2: Yeah. Much more open, yes, I could actually feel, sort of, a sense of belonging to the past rather than present.

I: Right, so you kind of went back, almost?

P2: Yeah.

I: And how did that feel, what was that like?

P2: It was actually really peaceful, sort of comforting feeling, to feel that I was actually part of that, and belonged to it. (Group interview 3, resident, 60)

These participant comments demonstrate how contact with heritage assets establishes an awareness of, and almost a communion with, past people. They also indicate that this interface gives people a sense of belonging to a network of individuals across time, and subsequently, to a wider cultural and collective whole. Moreover, this last example suggests that some participants find comfort in the resonances of past people which these sites evoke.

Cultural Inclusion and Foundation

Arguably, the sense of communion which participants reported facilitates, or forms an aspect of, the theme of cultural inclusion described above. This experience came up repeatedly for participants in terms of feeling part of the collective, but also through the feelings of grounding and support that this connection stimulates.

A lady from the Vale of Pewsey provided a vivid description of how this sense of inclusion manifests for her at Marden henge in feelings of safety and acceptance. She explained that she finds it 'encompassing' and that it gives the sense of, '…You know, being gathered in, part of the group' (Personal interview 1, resident, 60). Similarly, another participant intimated that when walking in the Stonehenge landscape, 'I find it comforting to know that you're walking where others have walked', and, '…that there's always been people there - there's always been people doing their thing…' (Personal interview 16, resident, 45). Inherent in these responses is

Figure 9.1 Avebury Cove, © Claire Nolan

the sense of being almost supported or cushioned by the residue of past people and their activities, and that there is something about others having been in the landscape which is perceived as grounding.

This feeling of foundation is also illustrated in the following interview dialogue concerning the affective impact of the monuments in the Stonehenge landscape:

> P: It's a feeling, isn't it? It's a feeling. Um, of being, well - close to nature, and close to things that happened thousands of years ago. I mean, we don't think that life actually existed thousands of years ago, do we [laughs]?
>
> I: Yeah.
>
> P: But that's a feeling that, yeah, there was life thousands of years ago.
>
> I: Right. So, what is that feeling, then?
>
> P: A feeling of, um, belonging, um, grounding -
>
> I: Really?
>
> P: Yeah, of being grounded.
>
> I: Really?
>
> P: Oh, yeah - it grounds you amazingly. (Personal interview 25, resident, 67)

This exchange gives the impression that, for some people, the grounding impact of the archaeology relates to an appreciation of collective origins and the successive generations of people who have previously occupied these landscapes. Sharing similar feelings in reference to the Vale of Pewsey, another participant reported:

> …I just sort of see this whole sort of journey of the landscape, you know, in the sort of life that went before, and the sort of emergence of humans and then the sort of mark they've made on that landscape, whether it's, you know, sort of Neolithic-type things through to Bronze and Iron Age and later…so I actually feel connected to that journey in a way. (Personal interview 10, resident, 54)

As one participant expressed it, in the context of the henges at Stonehenge and Avebury, 'You're contained, you've got, as I say, both places - you're contained by ditches or whatever, but you're also contained by the fact that you know this is where people were doing stuff' (Personal interview 9, resident, 55). Viewed in this way, this feeling of foundation might be best described as a sense of being contained by the collective in time.

All of these experiences of connectivity and foundation are comparable to what Kathleen Galvin and Les Todres (2011) have identified in their theory of existential wellbeing as 'intersubjective dwelling' or a sense of 'kinship and belonging'. They suggest that although this feeling of 'togetherness' naturally occurs in interpersonal relationships, it can also arise through a connection with objects from one's heritage or when an individual '… "joins with" ancestry and shared histories that give a sense of continuity, familiarity and belonging' (Galvin & Todres, 2011). They further propose that, 'Within this context, heritage can be healing in that it provides cultural homecomings and shelter' (Galvin & Todres, 2011).

While this idea is particularly relevant to personal ancestry, the participant comments discussed above demonstrate that it can also be applied to collective heritage in terms of connection to human origins and communities of the distant past. Thus, it could be argued, that the feelings of cultural inclusion which participants reported provide a good example of the 'deep connectedness with a significant entity' which defines existential relatedness, the significant entity in this case being the collective. Furthermore, it is clear that people also derive ontological security from the feeling of 'shelter' and containment this connectedness affords.

Figure 9.2 Knap Hill Causewayed Enclosure, Vale of Pewsey, source: University of Reading

Connected Communities

For a number of participants, this feeling of cultural inclusion is experienced in the sense that, as the next generation of people to reside in these landscapes, they share a unique connection with the past prehistoric inhabitants of the area. As a participant from the Vale of Pewsey said of Marden henge, 'We feel connected with the people who were here before, of course…we're doing what they did then - we're the modern them' (Personal interview 8, resident, 82). This identification is reinforced in cases where participants use the landscapes and sites in ways which prehistoric communities once did, such as for farming or ritual practices. This connection is also made apparent through the sense of ownership of, responsibility for, and belonging to, the landscape which people feel they share in common with the past inhabitants. These instances combine to give the impression that some participants feel connected to past people as if part of a community across time.

Describing this sense of community in relation to the archaeology within the study area, one participant expressed:

> …with it there I feel emotionally part of that, you know, just connected to it and part of it, and almost, you've almost got a stake in it…you know, you feel that you're part of history...insignificant bits of this wide thing, but certainly just part of something which is, you know, it's there in history, it's continued through time, we're part of it, and it will continue in the future, so I feel part of that journey of humankind in this area. (Personal interview 10, resident, 54).

Seeing this journey as an 'assimilation of different peoples', the participant insisted, '… it doesn't sort of go back to here and stop, you know, and it's someone else's turn to be here and things like that'. As a result, he sees this assimilation as '…one long continuum of change, but you know it's connected, it's a connected community…'.

Several participants also commented on how awareness of this connection generates within them a feeling of respect for the archaeology, and an accompanying sense of responsibility to look after it. Explaining how these sentiments occur for him, a participant from the Avebury area related: 'you feel that you live here, that you're the current tenant, well, I feel like I'm the current tenant in this landscape, and there have been thousands and thousands, and…I feel kind of, you feel some kind of responsibility...' (Personal interview 23, resident, 52).

This sense of custodianship was particularly strong for farmers living in the area, as one participant from the Vale of Pewsey indicated:

> …it sort of puts you in a small place - you're just one little cog in something that's very, there's a continuity, and you're just part of that, and you might be remembered, you might not, and you might have helped it, have you played your part properly in it, sort of thing. And that's, I mean there's an old farmer's saying about - you should farm as though you're going to live forever. (Personal interview 9, resident, 55)

Holding the same opinion, another participant from the Vale of Pewsey, related how the archaeology is a visible reminder that 'we're part of a much bigger picture', and added, 'I think it's a good thing, because it makes you realize that you you should look after it a bit better because then hopefully there will be lots of future generations enjoying here'. (Personal interview 2, resident, 54).

Notably, while these participants discussed the place-based bond they share with past communities, they also recognized how this same connection extends to the future inhabitants of the landscape. This sensibility gives the impression that on some level the participants see themselves as part of a greater, continuous community through time, the membership of which brings, in the style of existential relatedness, an accompanying sense of purpose.

More-than-Human Communities

While Jones (2010) suggests that heritage objects can help to integrate individuals within a network of past people and experiences, she stresses that they also create meaningful links to places and objects. Reporting on results of her fieldwork in the Hinton of Cadboll, Scotland, during which part of a late eighth-century cross-slab was excavated, Jones (2010) describes how local residents felt a deep connection with the artefact, seeing it almost as a living entity and a member of the community. Similar perceptions were communicated by participants involved in the current study as regards local monuments, giving the impression that heritage assets can also make people feel integrated within, and 'held' by, a 'more-than-human' community.

This perception of the monuments as animate was most apparent in the anthropomorphic terms which some participants used to describe them, and the accompanying

concern and care which they expressed for them, as exemplified in the following participant comments regarding the standing stones at Avebury:

> …you do care about the stones very much. I mean, you know, I'd be ballistic if anybody did aught to hurt them or harm them or what have you. I mean we were appalled when some idiot decided to paint on the stones down the Kennet Avenue several years ago, and, you know, you can't believe that people do that… (Personal interview 15, resident, 64)

In the same vein, the continuous, familiar presence, and unique character of the monuments, makes them seem to some like members of the community. This perception is well-illustrated in the following joint interview dialogue regarding the standing stones which populate the Avebury landscape:

> P1: And I think they're part of our community -
> P2: They're part of the heritage so you have to -
> I: Right.
> P1: Because there isn't a community of people, necessarily, here, because it's so lowly populated. But I think the monuments kind of form part of the community. So, they're almost part of you, you know, your, like neighbours, sort of.
> I: Yeah. Wow, that's a pretty amazing thought, isn't it - they're such a strong feature in the area - ?
> P1: Mmm, mmm -
> P2: No, they're not my friends [laughs]!
> I: Really?
> P1: I'm not saying they're my friends, I'm not saying they're my friends, but they are a part of our community, there's no, there's just no escaping. And I think that's why, that's why you just feel protective of them. You've got, you know, I think they need looking after. (Personal interview 23, residents, 52)

This is perhaps a prime example of existential relatedness in that the presence of the monuments perform a crucial role in the creation of cultural inclusion for individuals living within a socially isolated milieu. Evocative of the sense of emptiness which Lowenthal (2015) associates with landscapes that appear to have less 'temporal depth', such as the American prairies, this participant's experience suggests that visible ancient remains help to enrich the

Figure 9.3 Avebury Stone Circle, source: University of Reading

landscape and provide a comforting presence which makes it seem less isolated.

These perceptions demonstrate that, alongside the human resonances it evokes, the character and physical presence of the archaeology discussed also plays a significant part in the sense of connectedness, community and containment which people experience in these prehistoric landscapes. Thus, it might be said that, comforting and stabilising in its influence, the presence of the archaeology, and the cultural connections it represents, also helps people to define their place in the world and, arguably, to feel more ontologically secure.

Cultural Memory and Ancestral Reverence

Intrinsic to the experience of cultural inclusion, in terms of prehistoric archaeology, is the process of what Jan Assman and John Czaplicka (1995) term, 'cultural memory' or, as Cornelius Holtorf (1997) translates it, 'collective retrospective memory'. This form of memory occurs when past cultural events that are beyond the sphere of living and documented memory, are communicated, and thus collectively remembered, in the present through fossilisations such as monuments and ritual (Assman and Czaplicka 1995; Holtorf 1997). In this sense, as Holtorf (1997) argues, prehistoric monuments act as 'cultural mnemonics' or 'sites of memory', which trigger remembrance of the communities who used them and the activities they undertook. As discussed, this kind of remembrance is particularly stimulated for people when walking along

preserved prehistoric processional routes. However, the participant feedback suggests that this process of remembrance also seems to inspire in some people a sense of awe, appreciation and reverence for the former prehistoric inhabitants of the landscape and their achievements. Described in previous psychological studies (Ai *et al.*, 2011, 2012) as 'secular reverence' – a positive emotional state shown to promote personal wellbeing and resilience – this feeling of respect functions as an aspect of existential relatedness in that it underlies a feeling of deep connectedness to a collective power or project which transcends the self.

The following dialogue from an interview conducted inside West Kennet long barrow on the participant's first ever visit to the monument, gives an insight into how this reverence crystallizes for people:

> I: So, what comes to mind, then?
> P: You get a, a respect I guess, for the ways people lived. And, I don't know, I guess I'm kind of in awe at the moment.
> I: Really?
> P: Yeah. Well the effort they would've gone to make something like this, just shows how strong their beliefs were, and their determination. So, yeah, it just kind of, again, all the effort that went into it, everything that was required for it, just kind of, I don't know it's kind of overwhelming, in a way. (Personal interview 19, resident, 20)

Another participant from the Vale of Pewsey expressed analogous feelings in his appreciation for the prehistoric communities who created the foundations of the landscape as it appears today:

> …I find myself sometimes, you know, so out for a walk and you end up stood on some highpoint and you're just sort of scanning that area, and you're actually sort of like [inhales deeply] almost sort of thanking the people that were there, and sort of presented us with this, with the landscape that they've, you know, created. They went chopping down the trees and creating this sort of open expanse of sort of like land, and then all the sort of Neolithic and Bronze Age architecture in a way, in terms of what they've left us with. (Personal interview 10, resident, 54)

He explains that part of this appreciation stems from his respect for the way they survived and laid the foundations for future generations despite the challenges of their subsistence lifestyle:

…you're sort of thinking, 'God, people actually lived here'…they were just purely sort of self-sufficient, just sort like I suppose hunter-gatherers or early agriculture-type stuff, but totally at the hands of the elements…I've got a sense of awe and respect for actually how they've sort of come to sort of live like that and gradually develop the communities that have been there, you know, right through, you know as those communities got bigger…

In addition to these conscious expressions of gratitude, the account below, which details how one participant relates to the prehistoric archaeology on her land, infers that the sense of custodianship which people feel may also be a form of reverence that is performed unconsciously:

…I respect it - I don't just see it as a bit of land anymore. I do see it as going back to that word 'special', a special little bit of land, the monument. It's not to be treated in the same way. And funnily enough, it's kind of weird, because I'm not that sort of person. I was thinking - I have resolutely refused to put chemicals on it, even though we're over-run with docks and thistles, and I'm not anti-using chemicals… (Personal interview 3, resident, 59)

The participant explained that she treats the monument in this way, 'Because I feel it's special…my hunch is that it's never had anything on it other than something natural, and so there's a little bit of me thinking, well, I should keep that'. Reflecting further on the reasons for this approach, she interpreted it as, '…as a sort of preservation of possibly an increasingly rare bit of land. Rare in every sense …'. While this example does not openly convey a sense of reverence for the achievements of past communities, it does infer a respect for collective heritage; for something that may be of significance to the collective. It also appears to demonstrate a positive regard for traditional practices, human origins, and a need to preserve a connection to them. Thus, in this way, perhaps it does constitute a form of reverence for past peoples and their way of life.

These passages indicate that cultural memory can not only elicit in some people reverence for prehistoric communities as an almost transcendent collective power, but also an appreciation for the whole project of human development and heritage, which in turn can create feelings of foundation, inclusion and purpose.

Transcendent Connections

While the participant feedback focuses predominantly on collective connections in terms of past populations or the presence of monuments, the sense of existential relatedness which people derive from the sites is not limited to these contexts. Ai *et al*. (2012) demonstrate that feelings of existential relatedness are particularly tangible for people who hold strong religious or spiritual beliefs. They also point out that such feelings can manifest for people through a sense of belonging to a significant entity such as the earth or the universe. This was a common feature for a number of participants who reported that particular attributes of certain sites makes them feel connected to a power or entity greater than, but supportive to, the self.

Speaking of previous visits to Stonehenge, one participant related how she feels that '… inside the stones is pretty special' (Personal interview 28, resident, 45). When asked why this is, she replied, '…there's just something about it - I think it's because it's almost enclosed.' The participant went on to explain:

> P: It's the same sort of feeling that I get when I go into a really big cathedral.
>
> I: Okay. And what is that?
>
> P: I don't know it's just a feeling.
>
> I: Is it - ?
>
> P: I don't know [laughs], I can't quite describe it.
>
> I: Could you put a name or an emotion or a kind of - ?
>
> P: You just feel that you're somewhere special.
>
> I: Really?
>
> P: That you're somewhere where there's, yeah, I do - that you can talk to your maker or whoever or whatever you believe in. It's somewhere where you can commune, and it's got the same feeling at Stonehenge, I feel.

Another participant spoke about Marden henge in a similar way:

> …most people would walk into a church and say it's got a nice at, it's got an atmosphere. Because people go there to pray or connect with God, you know, irrespective of what their religion is. And I think this place has the same, only slightly different because it's more in touch with the environment. (Personal interview 4, resident, aged 62)

This quote touches on the connection to the earth which many participants experience in relation to the natural appearance of the monuments, the natural materials with which they were made, the land-based societies in which they were constructed, and their associations with the cycles of nature. As one participant explained it, sites like Avebury, and their calendrical significance, connect him to 'Nature's clock' (Personal interview 15, resident, 63). The participant and his wife further interpreted this sense of the monuments in the following way:

> P2: And after all if you go back to Maes Howe or anywhere like that, where everything was based on the sunrise at the longest day, um, yeah I'm a farmer at heart, so most of it is farming orientated.
> P1: It's the cycle of life isn't it, really?
> P2: It is, yeah, mmm mmm. (Personal interview 15, residents, 60-65)

Linked in this way to the movements of heavenly bodies, the sites also represent, for some, a meaningful connection to the cosmos. In this respect, one participant revealed: '…I think that our sacred sites are very linked to the stars…It's in archaeoastronomy, you know, it's a known fact that ancient sites were built in connection to the stars…' (Personal interview 4, resident, 62).

This perception of connectedness to transcendent powers or entities is epitomized in the following participant comment:

> …I believe that, you know that these places are, you can not only link with the earth and earth energy and the landscape around you, and the universe. And, whether that's connecting with the earth, or the the universe, as in cosmically or, the collective conscious, those sites facilitate all of that. (Personal interview 6, resident, 37)

Communicating how this sense of connectedness impacts her personally, the participant emphasized that it is not solely related to the sensation of feeling part of the human collective, and clarified that:

> That feeling of connectedness, that feeling of belonging, that feeling of being a little cog in a very big machine…It's hugely reassuring - it's very comforting. I know people talk about faith like that, but it's not just, you don't just belong to a group - it's not about belonging to a group, it's about understanding that you belong to everything.

Communitas

The sentiment of connectivity which resounds throughout the participant feedback presented, and especially visible in the previous account, bears a close resemblance to the notion of *communitas.* Discussing the concept in an anthropological context, with reference to the work of Victor Turner, James Fernandez defines *communitas* as:

> …that undifferentiated experience of communion, equality, poverty, openness to the other; that recognition of the "essential and generic human bond" that periodically occurs as an antistructural reaction to hierarchical, differentiated and invidious relations of the structured world of everyday life. Communitas is an experience spontaneous and elementally existential (Fernandez 1986, 178-179).

Developing this perspective, Edith Turner (2012) translates *communitas* as 'togetherness itself'; a state in which, 'The basic being – seemingly a lonely figure – is actually gifted with an immediate and genuine sense of the other, the plural of beings' (Turner 2012, 6). Similarly, philosopher, James Greenway (2018, 195) refers to it as 'genuine community', the type which results from experiences of communion or the feeling of 'oneness amongst many'. He asserts that, by eliciting a feeling of being held by, and a sense of duty to, community, *communitas* satisfies the existential tension that stems from an innate desire for 'genuine belonging'.

Conjointly, both Turner (2012) and Greenway (2018) posit that *communitas* is not confined to the socio-cultural sphere, and state that it can be experienced in connection to a more-than-human conception of community, such as the natural world, the earth, the universe or in spiritual contexts. Indeed, drawing on the work of Eric Voegelin, Greenway (2018, 198) holds that the deepest conception of *communitas* is essentially one's existential relatedness to 'God, man, world and society' or 'the primordial community of being'. In this light, it might be said that the experience of *communitas* is the very essence of existential relatedness, and is thus responsible for the sense of comfort, foundation and purpose participants experience in

relation to the cultural, aesthetic and transcendent significance that the prehistoric remains hold for them.

If the experiences of connectedness conveyed in the feedback above can indeed be collectively described as *communitas*, the positive responses which this state elicits arguably demonstrate that many participants value the sense of feeling part of something greater than themselves. In his study of religious movements in Africa, Fernandez (1986) maintains that the revitalisation rituals practiced by certain groups are undertaken in order to reproduce *communitas* and re-connect the community to the larger systems on which human existence depends. He asserts, that such rituals serve to 'restore the relatedness of things' and thus to revitalise the community. Fernandez also notes that the rituals appear to create feelings of wellbeing for the individuals who perform them. Haidt *et al*. (2008) suggest that while people in Western societies recreate this sense of *communitas* through religious experiences, they also unconsciously seek it out in the form of less traditional synchronous collective activities as well, such as 'raves' and sports events, and that it may be a fundamental human need. Extending this thinking to the historic environment, perhaps interfacing with the prehistoric sites discussed, or any heritage asset, is essentially an act of revitalisation for some people, in that it can help establish a connection to something greater than themselves, create a sense of *communitas*, and promote feelings of ontological security and purpose as a result. Moreover, although such acts of revitalisation are consciously performed by those who use these sites for contemporary ritual practices, it may be that the same restorative effects are unconsciously achieved simply by visiting these sites and following in the footsteps of past people.

Conclusion

Existential isolation has been posited as an innate characteristic of human existence. However, as has been alluded to above, some researchers suggest that the fragmenting and displacing structures of late modernity cause people to experience this phenomenon ever more deeply. As Jones points out:

> The decline of feudalism, mass-population movements and the rise of scientific rationalism led to new forms of social relations and new conceptions of the individual self as a discrete, autonomous entity distinct from other entities in the world... (Jones, 2010: 198)

This phenomenon may well explain the nostalgia for genuine community that is so prevalent in modern society (Boym, 2001; Lowenthal, 2015).

In view of the participant contributions above, it seems that archaeology already helps to create this sense of cohesion to some degree, in the way it populates the landscape, connects, comforts and provides a sense of place and purpose for people. This idea is supported by Froggett *et al.*'s (2011) suggestion that engagement with heritage objects can help those who feel socially excluded or isolated to at least feel culturally included. Thus, heritage assets can exert a positive effect in a very subtle way. Perhaps then, this is, or should be, one of the main social benefits which cultural heritage provides? As Roger Bevan (2016: 24) has suggested '…instead of the developing individual recognizing himself as a discrete entity, it is about tying that individual back into a wider community. It is about belonging'. In this respect, as William Lipe contends, heritage assets can help people to acknowledge their common humanity and the responsibility it entails:

> We must then view the evidence of the past as a record of *human*, rather than of *national,* accomplishment. Hence, if we wish to foster an awareness of the degree to which the fortunes of all human groups are intertwined, and to gain a broad and even dispassionate perspective of the various ethnocentric and nationalist claims of today, there can be no better road to recommend than one that leads back in time. And, to the extent that we can preserve actual cultural resources from the distant past, these fragments can serve as symbols not of nations, but of the common human interest, and of the continuity of past, present and future life that we must recognize and act upon if we are to fulfil our responsibilities to generations both past and future. (Lipe, 1984: 10)

Furthermore, as demonstrated above, it seems the more-than-human associations of heritage assets, particularly in the case of the natural and astronomical connotations of prehistoric monuments, also have the power to 'tie' the individual back into the primordial community of being. In this respect, arguably, the historic environment can provide an even deeper sense of genuine belonging for people which, as Greenway (2018) suggests, is necessary in order for individuals to thrive.

Chapter 10: Nolan, C. Forthcoming. 'Prehistoric Landscapes as Transitional Space', in T. Darvill, K. Barrass, L. Drysdale, V. Heaslip, & Y. Staelens, (eds.) *Historic landscapes and mental well-being*. Oxford: Archaeopress.

In recent years museum research has generated a rich and sophisticated body of psychosocial theory to demonstrate how the symbolic capacity of museum objects can support people to achieve meaning, personal insight, and healing. Based on the psychoanalytic concept of 'transitional space' — the meaningful experience that occurs through imaginative engagement with cultural objects — this work offers a framework for understanding the therapeutic potential of the wider historic environment. Accordingly, this paper considers the concept of transitional space in relation to people's lived experience of prehistoric landscapes. Drawing on qualitative research recently undertaken in the prehistoric landscapes of Stonehenge, Avebury, and the Vale of Pewsey in Wiltshire, UK, it looks at how the significance of the age, form, and narratives of these places aid in the production of transitional space, and thus the realization of existential authenticity, personal growth, and healing.

Keywords: prehistoric landscapes, historic environment, transitional space, existential authenticity, well-being.

Introduction

Although there has been much research in recent years on heritage as a process to well-being, it is still not entirely clear how heritage assets in themselves directly impact well-being (Ecorys 2016; Neal 2015; Reilly *et al*. 2018). This may be due in part to the neglect of site and artefact materiality that Siân Jones (2010) has identified in recent constructivist approaches to the study of heritage experience. However, a notable exception to this rule is the corpus of museum-based research carried out over the past 20 years on the therapeutic power of heritage objects (see Annis 1994; Chatterjee *et al*. 2009; Dudley 2010; Froggett and Trustram 2014; Lanceley *et al*. 2011, Solway *et al.* 2016; Trustram 2013). Particularly illuminating, is the way in which some of this work has conceived of heritage artefacts as transitional objects (Froggett *et al*. 2011; Froggett and Trustram 2014; Lanceley *et al*. 2011; Solway *et al.* 2016; Trustram 2013).

Borrowed from the work of object-relations psychoanalyst, Donald Winnicott, the concept of the transitional object has come to be used in museum contexts to denote the way in which heritage objects stimulate transitional or potential space; the 'intermediate area of experience' that occurs in the meeting between self and environment (Winnicott 1971). Based neither entirely in reality nor fantasy, the transitional space, can be understood (Bingley 2003) as a 'daydream-like' state of mind or being. Here, the individual draws on her inner experience to explore and play with the symbolic meanings and potential of external objects, in an imaginative way. Winnicott maintained that this 'creative apperception' of the world could facilitate new conceptions of self and environment. It was thus fundamental to the formation of self-identity and the foundation of a creative and meaningful life. Viewing culture as an inherited tradition — 'something that is in the common pool of humanity' that can be creatively re-imagined and interpreted by the individual — Winnicott proposed that cultural experience was transitional in nature, and that all cultural forms could be used as transitional objects (Winnicott 1971, 99).

Elucidating the transitional effects of cultural experience, Tania Zittoun (2013) explains that in their ability to capture the imagination, cultural objects and their symbolic meanings facilitate an immersive experience. She maintains that, in turn, this engagement encourages relaxation, respite from everyday life and offers people the freedom to live creatively. As a result, Zittoun suggests that the insights and affective qualities reflected in these meanings, enable individuals to contemplate and gain perspective on their own personal situations and potential. In this sense, transitional experience might be likened to the realization of existential authenticity; the freedom to be and express oneself, to see life from different perspectives, and to recognize one's unique existential possibilities (Steiner and Reisinger 2006; Yi *et al*. 2017). Zittoun (2013) asserts that, in their capacity to produce such effects, cultural objects assume the role of symbolic resources that can be drawn upon for the promotion of emotional well-being.

Employing object-relations theory to assess the therapeutic value of heritage objects, museum studies have shown that heritage objects too have the capacity to act as symbolic resources. This impact has been observed particularly in the way that the symbolic meanings of heritage objects help people to mediate personal issues and the effects of existential challenges, such as loss and terminal illness (Lanceley *et al*. 2011; Trustram 2013). Related effects encompass a sense of cultural inclusion or belonging to the wider cultural and collective

frame of human existence that the artefacts represent (Froggett *et al*. 2011). In addition, Lynn Froggett and Myna Trustram suggest that, as heterotopic repositories of symbolic objects, museum galleries themselves act as transitional spaces for '…creative playing, symbolisation and the management of transitions', and thus offer possibilities for 'authentic self-expression' (Froggett and Trustram 2014, 492).

In terms of its application to heritage, the concept of transitional space has hitherto been limited to museum-based studies. However, it arguably provides a valid artefact-oriented approach to understanding the social and wellbeing value of heritage assets in the wider historic environment. This is particularly pertinent to prehistoric archaeology, the public perception of which generally tends to be less well-understood (Last 2010; Waterton and Watson 2014). This paper reviews findings from qualitative research undertaken in Wiltshire to provide site-specific evidence of the ways in which individuals directly experience and interpret prehistoric heritage assets. Based on these results, the paper explores the validity of the transitional phenomena concept for prehistoric landscapes. It goes on to propose that these landscapes act as transitional places in their power to distance people from their everyday routines, engage their imaginations, and promote personal reflection, meaning, and insight. In conclusion, the prehistoric heritage landscapes discussed are posited as key symbolic resources for the realization of existential authenticity.

The Empirical Context

Situated in a mixture of chalk downland and greensand valleys, the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS), the Vale of Pewsey (Figure 10.1), and their surrounding areas are home to a dense concentration of prehistoric sites and monuments. Diverse in form and preservation, these antiquities span in age from the eighth millennium to the first century BC. Stonehenge and the Neolithic henges at Avebury, and Marden form the main focal points of the area. However, it also takes in a range of other lesser known sites and features, ranging from the Mesolithic through to the Neolithic, Bronze Age, and Iron Age, offering particularly rich potential for investigating public perceptions of prehistoric heritage.

The research discussed here comprised a series of semi-structured seated and walking interviews with residents of the study area. It also included three separate mindful heritage walks and corresponding group interviews in the Avebury landscape (Figure 10.2), with two
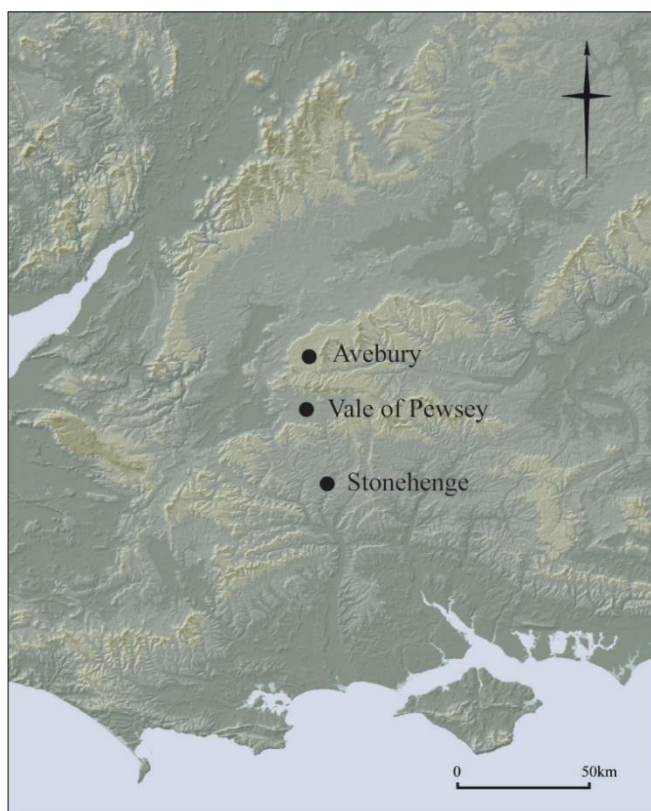
Figure 10.1: Location map of the study area. Contains Ordnance Survey data (c) Crown copyright and database right 2015. Illustration by Elaine Jamieson

groups of students from the University of Reading and a local community group. interviews in the Avebury landscape (Figure 13.2). Participants were recruited via a mixture of snowball, convenience, purposive and volunteer sampling. Between individual interviewees and groups, the study involved a total of 66 participants, 18 of whom were visitors to the area. The participant sample ranged from 19 to 87 years of age, with just under half aged 60 and over, and a quarter falling in the range of 18–29. In relation to gender, 38 participants identified as female and 28 as male. Five participants identified as American, Taiwanese, Turkish, South African, and European, with the rest of the sample native to the British Isles.

Alongside the interviews and group walks, participants were invited to create a reflective written or photographic account representing their personal experience and perceptions of the archaeology. All of the methods employed in the study were informed by phenomenological theory and practice drawn from mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (Williams *et al*. 2007), focusing-oriented psychotherapy (Gendlin 2003), landscape phenomenology (Tilley 1994), non-representational theory (Latham 2003; Lorimer 2005), and reflective lifeworld research (Dahlberg *et al*. 2011). This approach was chosen for its capacity to help participants reflect more deeply on their direct lived intellectual, emotional, and embodied experience of the archaeology.

Results

Participants discussed their experiences of the different sites and monuments within the landscape, both standing and excavated, as well as their responses to portable artefacts found in the area. They reported a range of positive effects, some of which could be described as

Figure 10.2: Research participants at the Sanctuary. Source: University of Reading, used with permission

transitional in nature. Following a thematic analysis of the feedback, these experiences were grouped under the category of 'existential authenticity', the sub-themes of which will be discussed in the sections below.

Imaginative Playspaces

In his thesis on *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger proposed that the level of conformity demanded by the mechanisms of daily life, prevents individuals from fully being themselves (Steiner and Reisinger 2006). He subsequently maintained that exclusive adherence to collective mores culminates in a failure to embrace one's unique existential possibilities, thus resulting in a loss of individuality (Steiner and Reisinger 2006). In their work on the role of heritage tourism in the promotion of existential authenticity, Xiaoli Yi and colleagues (2017) purport that heritage sites, in their capacity as heterotopic and culturally meaningful spaces, give visitors momentary freedom from conformity. Furthermore, they assert that this freedom ultimately enables people to rediscover their individuality, and to contemplate and interpret the world unselfconsciously in their own style. Comparable to the process which underpins transitional space, this description of existential authenticity resonates with Annette Kuhn's portrayal of cultural engagement as a kind of 'playspace' for the imagination that can be

'entered and left' (Kuhn 2013). Project participants frequently alluded to this type of in-depth imaginative engagement in relation to their experience of the prehistoric archaeology contained within the study area. As such, this feedback demonstrates how engaging with the symbolic meanings of prehistoric remains can create a transitional space where people can freely connect with, and express, their imagination and creativity.

The following quote, which describes a participant's day-to-day interaction with the site of Marden Henge in the Vale of Pewsey, provides a perfect example of how prehistoric archaeology and its obscure narratives creates a playspace for the imagination:

> And then if you start looking, your imagination starts going, especially out there [Marden Henge], like I said…thinking, now, I could be seeing people, I could be seeing this huge mound. Voices - I could be hearing voices, different dialects, probably, you know. And you're just making up this picture…of people, children, maybe it's a happy time there? A meeting place, a gathering place, like our families' barbacues in the summer, but just something different. But it doesn't seem to be a bad place there to me - if all this is going on, you know, this imagining that I am…
> (Personal interview 1, resident, 60)

Another participant revealed how drawing on her individual creativity in this way to build a meaningful picture of past prehistoric landscape of Stonehenge, gives her respite from daily life:

> I think there's an element of, um, I think these days they kind of call it mindfulness, I guess? Where you just walk across, and you can see weird lumps and bumps, and you think, 'what's that? How's that work?'. And then you start scanning the rest of the landscape - you're trying to work it out in your head, what went where and trying to visualize stuff… so, I think when I go up and stand on the edge of the cursus, I play it out in my head again, and I look at the map, and I try and work it out all the time, and that takes your mind off of whatever else is going on.
> (Personal interview 32, resident, 41)

Kuhn points out that certain types of cultural activities, such as viewing a film, can be so deeply immersive that the individual feels as though she is 'inhabiting' the 'spatio-temporal world' of the cultural object or medium (Kuhn 2013). This sensation was reported by a number of participants in terms of a sense of inhabiting the past. This phenomenon is exemplified by the following interview dialogue concerning one participant's experience of a mindful walk from

Avebury Henge, along the stone rows of the West Kennet Avenue, to the Sanctuary, the site of a former Neolithic timber and stone circle:

> Interviewer (I): And what did you think of the Sanctuary where we ended up?
>
> Participant (P) 2: Lovely. Walking up the hill to get to the Sanctuary, it was almost like a real sense of connecting with people who would have done that in the past. I really did actually feel that as I was going up.
>
> I: Really?
>
> P2: Yeah. Much more open, yes, I could actually feel, sort of, a sense of belonging to the past rather than present.
>
> I: Right, so you kind of went back, almost?
>
> P2: Yeah.
>
> I: And how did that feel, what was that like?
>
> P2: It was actually really peaceful, sort of comforting feeling, to feel that I was actually part of that, and belonged to it. (Group interview 3, resident, 60)

Another participant reported a similar sensation of stepping back in time at the Iron Age enclosure at Martinsell (Figure 10.3), Vale of Pewsey:

> '…coming up here and sort of connecting with this, you suddenly put three, four thousand years between yourself and those immediate worries in the present. And for me that's almost as good as travelling three or four thousand miles.' (Personal interview 11, resident, 57)

These experiences indicate that the strong presence of the past evoked by certain sites, and the related images they conjure up, make these places seem to some like another world where they can go to escape everyday life. It could thus be said that engaging with prehistoric archaeology engages the imagination, allowing respite and space from everyday worries to live creatively.

Everyday creativity

Whilst imaginative engagement with the past may provide a source of respite, it is, as Phyllis Crème affirms in the case of the immersive power of film, '…more than "escapism"; it is life enhancing' (Crème 2013, 49). However, it is not just life-enhancing in the way that it prompts people to draw on their

Figure 10.3: Martinsell Iron Age Enclosure. Source: University of Reading

own creative capacity to imagine and connect with their environment. People also experience a sense of fulfilment and vitality when attempting to interpret the meaning of certain prehistoric sites, and solve the puzzle and mysteries they present.

Matthew Hills views this interpretative dynamic as a form of 'everyday creativity' where the individual is in a 'state of creative readiness'; playing with possible explanations in the hope of 'making new discoveries' and meanings (Hills 2013, 117). As one participant put it:

> …you look at all the theories on Stonehenge, of calculators, and moon things, and sun things. And now they say, 'no actually, it wasn't the summer solstice, it was the winter solstice'… And you think it's almost one of those open pallets that you can sort of colour with your own sort of [trails off], and then you can find all these things that can then justify what you think or make you rethink what you think. (Personal interview 26, resident, 52)

Speaking of the prehistoric sites across the study area, a participant from the Vale of Pewsey revealed the sense of enlivenment this engagement affords:

> …when you're going back…thousands of years as opposed to a few hundred, that's mind
> blowing isn't it…and your brain can't work it out, but it doesn't stop it being fascinating and get
> the emotions going… (Personal interview 12, resident, 70)

Another participant illustrated, in relation to the Avebury landscape, how this process gives him a sense of creative fulfilment:

> …it's about getting the information and then, kind of putting your own interpretations on it, and
> that kind of process, and then what you think it would be like…makes it more, enjoyable in a
> way…you actually are getting the information and then kind of using it for your own personal
> gain… (Personal interview 19, resident, 20)

Essentially an exploration of cultural symbols and different world views, this type of imaginative engagement with prehistoric archaeology could be seen as a good example of how people draw on, rework and create their own meanings and enjoyment from the inherited tradition of the archaeological resource.

New horizons

The participant feedback indicated that the archaeology in the study area is also life-enhancing in the way that it continually enriches and renews people's experience of their everyday world. It opens up new dimensions to the landscape, both in the imagination and in the context of newly discovered sites and artefacts. This effect allows fresh conceptions of, and meaningful connections to, place, thereby presenting new possibilities for the individual.

Referring to the Iron Age/Romano-British enclosure and field systems on Parsonage Down, Salisbury Plain, a participant from the Stonehenge area described how encountering archaeology hitherto unknown to him has enabled him to appreciate the temporal dimensions of his environment. He discussed how this awareness has allowed him to see, experience, and relate to the landscape in a new light:

> …it's great, you know, when you go out there, like I said, when I went to the reserve – I've lived
> here for twenty-five years – and I found that little area, where those, the Celtic sort of field
> boundaries, village boundaries, and I'd never seen that before…And finding those stones, and

thinking, you know, this might have formed part of the village…And that definitely enhances that sort of, you know, that sense of enjoyment out there... (Personal interview 29, resident, 60)

This enjoyment is perhaps partly connected to the way in which — as one participant discovered at the henge enclosure at Durrington Walls, Salisbury Plain — the sense of past inhabitants helps to narrate the landscape and 'bring it all alive' (Personal interview 12, resident, 70). Furthermore, this imaginative connection to past people adds another layer of significance to the landscape, thus creating new meaning in the life of the individual. Recounting his experience of finding a flint arrowhead while out walking in his local area, a participant from the Vale of Pewsey described the impact that such connections hold for him:

> ...I picked an arrowhead up…And that whole anticipation and excitement, and when you held it in your hand, there was this thought that the last person that potentially touched that, was five thousand years ago. And just that thought alone was just so, so privileged, but uplifting, exciting. (Personal interview 13, resident, 61)

The participant affirmed that the encounter, '…just really opened up the doorway to the area where I live, and that my dog walks can be quite meaningful, you see?'. He emphasized that, as a result, this connection to the past has given him '…a hobby with an in-depth meaning', as well as a new sense of self and purpose:

> And when something does that to you, you can't ignore, you don't ignore it…it opens up a door, and it opens up the avenue…but it's an avenue that you, you just feel compelled. You feel compelled that you want to pursue that, there's some, you know, it draws you - don't know why. Instinctive, that's why I said about instinctive - that's how I can explain the instinctive, and that's what I sort of get from it.

Similarly, a lady from the Vale of Pewsey explained how, for herself and her husband, finding a flint axe has not only enriched their lives by imbuing their surroundings with meaning, but also by inspiring them to think about the wider world in different ways:

> …you see beyond just what you can see... And I think that, for us, has enhanced our lives, because you get a better understanding, and you question - you wonder about things, which you wouldn't normally do because of you have this awareness that we've now developed, you know.' (Personal interview 12, resident, 70)

Kuhn describes the transitional space as '…a place from which objects appear' and thus one that broadens the individual's horizons (Kuhn 2013, 2). With regard to the experiences referred to above, this reading is reminiscent of the way in which awareness of the past dimensions of landscape can impact people. New objects or dimensions of place appear and in so doing, change or add to one's reality. They consequently mediate one's relationship to the environment and provide a new experience of the world, creating meaning and purpose in the process.

Liminal spaces

While the symbolic meanings of the sites discussed mark them out as transitional objects, their aesthetic agency and the affective states that this evokes for people, also contributes to this conception. Whether this comes as a result of feeling enclosed in a henge or being moved through the landscape in a linear fashion by ceremonial avenues, certain monuments cultivate a liminal atmosphere. This effect also creates the feeling of being in a heterotopic space where transitional experience and the possibility for transformation can occur.

This sensation of stepping into numinous space is well-described by a participant who, referring to Stonehenge, maintains that 'Being inside the henge is magical, almost like stepping inside a building, everything outside becomes insignificant' (Reflective account K, resident, 45). Similarly, another participant reported that she and her husband view Avebury henge as an 'early cathedral' and that, 'Our sense of the circle is one of well-being' (Reflective account E, resident, 64).

The transitional nature of certain sites was also identified in relation to more linear features, as highlighted in the group interview extract below regarding a mindful walk along the West Kennet Avenue (Figure 10.4):

Participant (P) 6: When we were going through those stones, the kind of long ones, rather than the circle, that felt like rather a different movement, if that makes sense?

Interviewer (I): Right, yeah.

P5: Yeah.

P6: In the circle, it just felt like we were wandering, but that felt more -

P2: Directional -

P6: - like we were going somewhere.

I: Yeah.

P5: Yeah, 'you need to go this way - carry on'.

P2: It's nice to have a mission. It makes you feel like you have a purpose. So you're just walking with purpose — it's nicer than just like aimlessly wandering round.

P1: That's quite true, yeah.

(Group interview 2, visitors, 20-30)

Likewise, another group member commented that, '…there's like a heightenedness as you walk through those stones' (Group interview 2, visitor, 23). Some participants reported that they experience a similar effect when walking through certain prehistoric landscapes in the area, likening it to a feeling of pilgrimage. As one student described his experience of walking from Avebury Henge to the Sanctuary:

Figure 10.4: West Kennet Avenue. Source: University of Reading

It's almost like guidance, essentially. Like a pilgrimage sort of like. It's like the "passing of man" or something. You know, that sort of, you're becoming something different or greater within your identity... (Group interview 1, visitor, 21).

Akin to the idea of the museum as potential space, it appears that in some instances the sites themselves are experienced as transitional spaces that can be physically entered into and interacted with in ways that facilitate new understandings and expressions of self, creativity, and purpose. Thus, in essence, this experience supports Yi and colleagues' thesis that, '...architectural heritage helps tourists to develop the authentic-self and become more authentic, to escape their monotonous quotidian routines, and to pursue self-realization' (Yi *et al.* 2017, 1042).

Contemplation and resolution

It is perhaps a sense of liminality, combined with the imaginative process stimulated by the archaeology that gives people the license and space to think creatively. These influences enable individuals to reflect not only on the past and their surroundings, but also on personal issues. As Anthony Giddens clarifies in his work on existential authenticity, 'Creativity... means the capability to act or think innovatively in relation to pre-established modes of activity...' (Giddens 1991, 41). In the context of cultural experience, this manifests, as Zittoun (2013) points out, in the way the symbolic meanings of cultural objects enable people to gain perspective on their lives. This dynamic was reported by several participants, who described how they experience certain sites as places for contemplation and restoration.

Describing the feeling of support she gains from spending time in the Avebury landscape, one participant related, 'I find when I need to think or to clear my head, or just gain clarity about something troubling me, I go and sit by the stones...and I just feel it helps me somehow' (Personal interview 16, resident, 49). She revealed that when going through a particularly difficult period in her life, '...it was by walking around the stones at Avebury...that I came up with the answer one day...it simply was, just to be myself'.

Another participant from the Avebury area, who has lived with severe depression for over 40 years, has found that spending time in Avebury Henge has eased her symptoms. Attributing

this effect to the spiritual energies she intuits within the henge, and the connection to natural cycles and ancestral foundations that it symbolises for her, she asserted:

> It's sorted out my inner being. It doesn't get rid of all the stress, and I still live like everybody else does, with stress all around me. It makes me able to cope with it. (Personal interview 20, resident, 62)

For others it is the age of the site that facilitates this contemplative process, as one lady expressed with reference to the Avebury landscape:

> …just to be there [Avebury], and just to sort of, I suppose, get away from the problems that are here…I'll think through things, sometimes I get ideas, sometimes I don't, but it's still good to do that…so, it seems that a lot of these old places pull me back, and I don't know why, but I want to go there, um, it feels good there, and I feel nourished there, which I don't always other places. (Personal interview 26, resident, 52)

Similarly, a participant from the Vale of Pewsey reported that he derives 'a sense of sanctuary' from the symbolism of security mirrored in the age and scale of prehistoric sites in particular:

> At several points in my life…I have used prehistoric monuments as places of contemplation and reflection. On the first anniversary of the death of my mother, I went to Oldbury Castle (Iron Age fort a few miles west of Avebury) to be there and think of her at the exact time of her death. Months earlier, I had scattered some of her ashes on Martinsell. During the break up of my first marriage, I sheltered myself amongst the earthworks of Martinsell for several hours. And on numerous other occasions when wanting peace, I have found myself on one of the prehistoric monuments overlooking the Vale of Pewsey'. (Reflective Account C, resident, 57)

Zittoun (2013) argues that personal growth involves the use of cultural objects, in terms of their properties and narratives, as 'stand-ins' for specific relationships that are fundamental to the individual's sense of self, but which may be either absent or denied. In this connection, the above account also underscores how, for many people, certain monuments possess nurturing, stabilizing qualities, which establish them as suitable stand-ins for lost loved ones. As such, they help to mediate feelings of grief and allow what Trustram (2013) refers to as 'inner restorations'. This dynamic is visible in the case of another participant, who disclosed, '…when I

Figure 10.5: Avebury Stone Circle, (Photograph by Claire Nolan. Copyright reserved)

come to Avebury, I remember my brother at a particular stone, and I stand with my back to the stone, and I think about him…' (Personal interview 17, resident, 70). He clarified that, 'that engagement is about…feeling in touch in my life', and that, '…I'd be lost without it, I think, that contact'.

Taking this feedback into account, it appears that the different qualities and symbolism of particular sites nurture and resonate in such a way that they enable people to contemplate and transform their perspectives on troubling issues and life events. As a result, this process helps people to regain balance within themselves.

Existential understanding

Many of the examples above illustrate the manner in which the symbolic meanings and agency of particular sites help people to experience and see themselves and the world differently. This form of creative living is a new mode of being, in and of itself. However, these meanings also afford fundamental existential perceptions which create additional possibilities for transformation and living more authentically. This is particularly noticeable in the way that certain meanings which people derive from the archaeology, allow them to gain insights into

issues of meaninglessness, mortality, and anxiety. For some participants, this awareness gives them a sense of reassurance and hope.

Disillusioned with particular aspects of modern living, one participant described how he gains an appreciation for the simpler things in life, and thus greater meaning, through contemplating the subsistence narratives that Martinsell evokes for him:

…you know, the person who dug this ditch, you know, what would a Barclaycard have meant to them, or, 5.4% mortgage, you know? It just sort of puts things in perspective, that they were largely surviving. You know they weren't encumbered by all that slightly ephemeral stuff that we fill our lives with today. (Personal interview 11, resident, 57)

Similarly enlightened by the potential narratives of the Avebury landscape, a participant currently writing a fictional piece on West Kennet Long Barrow, noted that:

…I've had to think about things in all sorts of weird areas. And yeah, I think that, okay, if I just write a story set in the present day, I've had to think about humans and how they interact. If you write a Neolithic story, you've got to suddenly think about, not just that, you've got to think about so much more. So, it's really expanding my mind, and helping to make sense of things rather more. (Personal interview 22, resident, 67)

Highlighting the importance of this increased perspective, he added, 'It's shaking us out of a complacent, Western view of the way things are and should be, this mind expanding'. Correspondingly, following a mindful walk in the Avebury landscape, one of the student participants reflected on how the monuments had prompted her to think differently about British attitudes to death:

…you don't know if they had maybe a more healthier attitude to death. I don't think at the moment we've got a particularly great [trails off]…But then again, I don't think we like to talk about it, because I think we're scared of it. When, if you look at how they treated it centuries back, they were a lot more accepting. (Group interview 2, visitor, 22)

In response, another group member remarked that she gained a sense of 'acceptance'of death through '…talking about mortality and landscape…'. (Group interview 2, visitor, 21).

Participants frequently referred to the theme of mortality, particularly in relation to the way in which an appreciation of the age and continuity of the monuments gives them perspective on their place in time and life. This impact was noted by a lady from the Avebury area who observed that when she first moved to the area:

> …what I found like walking round the circle, going down the Avenue, is it made me aware of the time of life, the passing time, especially when you see the stones and also, consciousness about death. (Personal interview 18, resident, 60)

Evoking the Heideggerian notion that, '…human beings cannot authentically confront their concrete moments of existential choice until they grasp the full complexity or depth of their finitude' (Mulhall 2001: 138), she added, 'It's a reminder that, you know, you are only here for a short time…it's a reality check in some ways'. This awareness of choice was also emphasized in the following account given by a participant from the Vale of Pewsey, regarding his relationship to the age and permanence of the monuments in his local area:

> …I don't tend to sort of like get really sort of frustrated or angry about things or really sort of like anxious about things because I tend to find myself just reflecting back to, 'well, we're just part of this long continuum of life in whatever form it is... (Personal interview 10, resident, 54)

Illustrating the sense of well-being this outlook provides, he related, 'I sort of tend to find, I sort of look back to that perspective, just to balance things, you know, whether you get sort of het up or worried about things or angry about stuff, you sort of think, well it's pretty small in the scheme of things'. Gaining a similar sense of perspective through learning more about Stonehenge and the ingenuity of its design, a resident of the Vale of Pewsey conveyed:

> …I find it reassuring in that it makes you think that for thousands of years we've, you know, found a way to at least come to terms with the problems. And, as I say, it's not as if the crises facing the world now, that we're the first ever intelligent generation, and you know, we can look back at history and see how people survived. (Personal interview 11, resident, 57)

Furthermore, another participant from the Vale of Pewsey, inspired by the skill and competence visible in the construction of Stonehenge and other notable historic monuments, commented on how they fill him with a sense of possibility:

> …if, as a civilisation, we lost a whole lot of things - Stonehenge, Chartres Cathedral is another, Durham Cathedral is another …that I personally think would be very sad, because …they are examples of human ingenuity, industry, and in some cases religious significance, and…they are such amazing examples of what humankind can achieve… (Personal interview 7, resident, 70).

Giddens maintains that the structures of late modernity are ill-equipped to help people answer and negotiate certain fundamental existential questions and challenges, thus making existential authenticity and security difficult to achieve (Giddens 1991). However, the above examples show how prehistoric archaeology can help people to gain perspective on, and solutions to, such matters. Perhaps in this sense it might be seen as a legitimate resource for mediating difficult life events and issues. As one participant suggested in the case of Stonehenge, 'Perhaps the purpose of the monument is to make us think and test us?' (Reflective account I, resident, 52). This echoes David Lowenthal's (2015) conception of the past as a source of guidance. It also corresponds with Winnicott's (1971) understanding of culture as an inherited tradition, where the past is a source of possibility that can be drawn upon and reworked in innovative and individual ways.

Conclusion

The feedback here presented demonstrates, in the context of Stonehenge, Avebury, and the Vale of Pewsey, how engaging with the historic environment can provide transitional experiences conducive to the achievement of existential authenticity, possibility, and healing. In this sense, conceivably, this work serves to affirm or add another dimension to Lowenthal's claim that, '…the past is a route to self-realization; through it we become more ourselves; *better* selves, reinvigorated by our appreciation of it.' (Lowenthal 2015, 94). The research suggests that the transitional effects described are afforded variously by the embodied, affective, and sensory impact of the physical remains themselves, their temporal significance, and apparent narratives. However, in terms of the latter impact, whilst the themes discussed hold value for the wider historic environment, and can be applied to other periods, the relative

incomprehensibility of the narratives conveyed by prehistoric archaeology arguably allows a particularly potent playspace for connecting with one's thoughts and imagination. As one participant put it:

> …there are generally too many distractions in a church, temple or cathedral…Prehistoric sites, on the other hand, generally are not adorned with reminders of specific individuals or precise moments in time… Also, there is no demand for you to adhere to certain religious beliefs, or reminders of what awaits you if you do not, at least certainly not easily interpreted ones. (Reflective account C, resident, 57)

Moreover, it is possible that the age of the prehistoric remains, and the types of narratives associated with them, have the capacity to prompt existential thought in ways that perhaps the narratives of more recent heritage may not. Whilst the concept of transitional space is only one of many ways to assess the therapeutic impact of the historic environment, it does provide a theoretical framework and language useful for thinking about, and analysing, how and why individuals experience heritage assets therapeutically. Hence, this paper suggests that this framework can help to understand, and perhaps pinpoint and develop, some of the unique therapeutic impacts that the historic environment has to offer in respect of existential well-being.

Chapter 11: Contrasting Perspectives

Introduction

The previous chapters focus mainly on the positive lived experience of the archaeology in the study area. However, as mentioned in Chapter 8, some participants do not appear to connect with the archaeology in any great depth, while others have negative or mixed feelings regarding certain sites. This chapter will describe these experiences in further detail under the themes of General Interest, Disinterest and Negative Impact.

General Interest

Thirteen participants – four interviewees, four resident group members and five visiting group members – expressed interest in and respect for the archaeology, but for various reasons, some known and unknown, did not indicate that they had any stronger connection to it. Some of these examples are highlighted below.

The following quote from a lady regarding finds discovered during the excavations at Windmill Hill gives an example of how this general interest manifests: …I'm interested in stones and especially the pots which had all been done with bird bones and things like that, the decoration… (Personal interview 21, resident, 87). She indicated that this interest ran a little deeper for her in terms of the way some sites encourage people to think differently: 'Well, this is what I like about Silbury Hill - nobody really knows, you know, so it stays a mystery, it's what makes everybody tick. And when everybody ticks, that's good, you know, it's good'. While this remark arguably relates to the idea of everyday creativity discussed in the previous chapter, the next comment suggests that the archaeology is so much a part of her *habitus* that the participant does not consciously value it in a more profound way: 'I grew up with the stones and everything, so I accept them as they are. I wouldn't like them blown up in the night or anything like that, but I don't think I would call them sacred'.

The participant comments below regarding Marden henge and other monuments in the area further demonstrate how some residents take their local prehistoric archaeology for granted:

I: But, yeah. I mean, do you think, has it become important to you - the henge and the other monuments around?

P: It's created interest.

I: Yeah.

P: Um, we're in National Trust, so we've been to, though funny enough we've never actually walked round, we go to Avebury - never walked round the stones there. Never ever walked round the stones.

I: Really?

P: Been through there thousands of times and never actually walked round the stones.

I: Why not?

P: I don't know [laughs]!

I: Do they not appeal?

P: Well, it's something on your doorstep you see all the time, you don't, do you know what I mean? (Personal interview 5, resident, 78)

However, this participant reveals how this lack of engagement stems partly from the obscurity of the archaeology and its meanings:

But I think really the main interest is when, like you're doing now [University of Reading excavations at Marden henge], you take people round, that's when the interest, because the people that don't go round, that's how, 'oh, that's a waste of time all that going on up there', because they don't know what's going on, because we didn't know what was going on until you go round, and people show you what they're doing, and explain what they're doing, and that's when the interest starts isn't it really. But up till then, I mean, perhaps on the other dig, I was the wrong age in any case, to be interested, wasn't I?

However, the participant's wife explained that learning more about the archaeology through the excavations has made them more interested in their historic environment more generally. This was also the experience of one of the group participants following a mindful walk in the Avebury landscape:

P4: I can't say I really felt that much, but to me, it's definitely inspired me to look further, and ask more questions, sort of thing.

I: Really?

P4: I'm not saying go home and grab a book, but I will look into [trails off]. And we live so near the place, and yet we've driven past it a thousand times, and like I said to you [P4's wife] I haven't been round any of that. So, yeah, I enjoyed it, and a lot to discover, and I really appreciate it that the National Trust keep it for our future children. (Group interview 3, resident, 75)

This feedback gives examples of the general interest that participants, particularly residents, have in the archaeological remains. Nevertheless, it does not account for the participants who did not volunteer their personal experience of it. This was particularly the case for some of the group participants, and may relate more to inadequate group facilitation, an inability to verbalise their experience, or a disinclination for them to discuss it in front of other people, rather than a lack of connection with the archaeology. Likewise, for the interviewees, it may be that some participants felt unable to communicate their perceptions.

Disinterest

There were also instances where participants expressed disinterest in certain aspects of the archaeology, or in one case, prehistoric archaeology in general. This disinterest ranged in nature between complete indifference to slight disappointment.

Indifference

Two participants emphasised that the archaeology, or certain aspects of it, did not appeal and held no significance for them. One of these participants, previously referred to in Chapter 8 (p. 222 of thesis), was clear about her indifference to the archaeology. She explained that although she finds the construction of Stonehenge fascinating, and she could see why other people find it interesting, she cannot relate to it:

P: I can go back a hundred years, but anything before that.
I: You don't think about?
P: No, I think we were so badly taught history at school, that it wasn't made, if it's made interesting, you know, you hear children now today say, 'oh, well, history, this fabulous history teacher, and he makes it so interesting and imaginative', and we never had anything like that.

> We just had to write - 'right, get your rough book out', I can remember the teacher saying, 'get your history rough book', and she just read from the book - never elaborated. Terrible. And so, I mean that's my excuse.
>
> I: Yeah, yeah.
>
> P: No, I very much live in the present. I never think, 'I wonder how they did this?' (Personal interview 7, resident, 70)

Here the participant conjectures that her disinterest may stem from the unimaginative way in which she was taught history. However, her final comment in the interview dialogue suggests that some people do not consider the archaeology of the distant past relevant to their modern lives.

Similar to the previous example, another participant maintained that while she is intrigued by the archaeology of the wider landscape near Adam's Grave in the Vale of Pewsey, Avebury stone circle does not make a difference to her:

> P: …But I still, you know, look at the tree or I still look, I still admire things, but not the stones, but I admire, you know, the landscape, yeah.
>
> I: Right, yeah. So really the monuments don't - ?
>
> P: No -
>
> I: If they weren't here, it wouldn't make a difference to you?
>
> P: No, no, no. No, they don't have much [fades off]. (Personal interview 18, resident, 60)

Yet, this participant also identified that the presence of the stones did have a profound existential impact on her when she first moved to the area: '…I found like walking round the circle, going down the avenue is it made me aware of the time of life, the passing time, especially when you see the stones and also, consciousness about death'. Communicating the value of this realisation, she stated:

> P: It's a reminder that, you know, you are only here for a short time - yes, it's ok, it's a reality check in some ways.
>
> I: So it's grounding in a sense?
>
> P: Yes.

This latter example suggests that perhaps in some cases where participants believe they are not interested in the archaeology or that it has no effect, they are simply unconscious of the positive existential perspective that it does provide for them.

Disappointment

The level of preservation, visibility and tangibility of certain aspects of the archaeology also has a bearing on some participants' ability to connect with particular sites. A handful of participants, who had otherwise obtained positive benefits from other prehistoric remains in the area, found the eroded form of Marden henge slightly disappointing.

In a group interview following a mindful walk in the Avebury landscape, five archaeology students, who derived positive affective experiences from the sizeable and elaborate archaeological remains at Avebury, identified that, due to its poorly preserved and virtually invisible profile, Marden henge did not have the same impact:

> P4: I don't feel much at Marden.
> P1&P6: Yeah.
> P4: It's just, there's so many distractions.
> P3: It's so big you don't really realise where you are -
> P4: Yeah.
> P3: - you're just in grass [laughs].
> P2: Also, Marden's associated with work [laughs].
> All: [Laugh]. (Group interview 2, visitors, 19-49)

Three residents also expressed similar feelings. One of these participants explained: '…I suppose I always find it slightly disappointing that the earthworks aren't slightly more interesting…' (Personal interview 2, resident, 54). Yet, as the same participant demonstrates, this viewpoint does not prevent residents from deriving positive insights and experiences from the site or from other remains in the wider landscape: 'But it's a very strong reminder, actually, I mean the landscape is your reminder that people having been here in the past, and that you're here for such a short period of time, I guess'. Indeed, as evidenced in previous chapters, for some residents, the lack of visible material remains only serves to stimulate their imagination even more.

These examples display differences between visitor and resident experiences of the sites. The students' ability to experience Marden in any great depth appears to have been partly affected by the distraction of the excavations at the site with which they were involved. Despite this, it seems that they lack the local lived awareness and experience of the eroded archaeological remains that allows residents to appreciate them more fully.

Negative Impact

Alongside disinterest, some participants even held a negative view of certain prehistoric sites in the area. This was particularly in response to the negative impact of official heritage management practices and the negative affective atmospheres which some people intuit at specific sites.

Heritage Management Issues

Four participants related how the negative impacts of, what they considered to be, poor heritage management practices had soured their view of particular sites. These practices were primarily connected with the negative effects of tourism and land-use restrictions on areas containing scheduled monuments.

Tourism

Some participants made known their disapproval of the touristic aspect of Stonehenge and Avebury, with some expressing that, as a result, they felt no connection to Stonehenge. However, a small number of these participants intimated that they not only felt disconnected from it, but that the tourism it attracts has had a negative impact on their lives.

Three participants talked about how the tourism generated by Stonehenge, in terms of the crowds of visitors that populate the area on a daily basis, and their parked vehicles which obscure the horizon, have ruined the appearance and ambience of the site and its surroundings for them. As one participant put it:

It just, I mean it's like a theme park, that's the way it sort of appears, you know, because it's either covered in people or, as I say, the security guards in high-vis jackets. When you look to the south that's pretty much all pristine, you know. You've got some of the ancient by-ways that cut across there - that's a great place to walk, as well. It's very, very peaceful. (Personal interview 29, resident, 60)

Another resident shared similar feelings about this situation:

Um [pauses to think], what does it mean to me? Oh, I don't know how to answer that really. I'm not like the druids and stuff like that, it's not got that meaning to me, but it has got a feeling of peace, and just all the space around it - you never tire of it. It's just spoiled by all this [the tourism and traffic]. (Personal interview 25, resident, 60)

This group of residents also expressed that they feel disenfranchised by the fact that the tourist focus of the site prevents casual entry for local people:

…we're supposed to get in for free as locals - and the first time I tried it, of course I got approached by a security guy - 'you can't do this'. And I said, 'I think you'll find I can - I've got my card'. And then his boss came down, and she said, 'actually, you have to book your place like everybody else the day before'. I didn't know that. So, now if we want to go into the stones, we've got to book the day before. So, I just don't go. (Personal interview 25, resident, 60)

This experience seems to have caused these residents to further resent, and disconnect from, Stonehenge.

The residents further explained that in conjunction with the high volume of visitor traffic that comes through Stonehenge on a daily basis, the traffic management measures taken to develop the visitor experience have resulted in a level of traffic congestion and concomitant noise pollution that has not only reduced their appreciation of the site, but also the quality of their lives. This negative association with Stonehenge is further highlighted by the following interview dialogue, where one participant explains that the closure of the A344 to improve the visitor experience of the site has resulted in rat-running through her village to avoid traffic on the A303. The participant stated that alongside the traffic congestion this has caused in the immediate area, it has created traffic safety issues for residents, including herself:

P1: Well, I nearly got run over going to church.

I: Oh, really?

P1: By a tourist [laughs], up at the Co-op [laughs].

P2: When [P1] came home, I said, 'what's up', you know, because I could see there this 'argh' [grimaces mimicking P1's expression at the time].

P1: Clearly, they'd left London with no breakfast - that's the first shop they see out of London, is our Co-op, because they've rat-runned [sic], and it came straight at me... (Personal interview 25, residents, 65-75)

The management and development of certain prehistoric sites, Stonehenge in particular, to some degree undoes the existential security, relatedness and possibility they create through the knock-on effects of tourism. Notwithstanding these circumstances, each of these residents recognise that, as one participant put it, 'It's not the monument *per se*. It's a fabulous thing to behold, you know, particularly when you start thinking about how it was constructed' (Personal interview 25, resident, 71). Moreover, they revealed that they experience different sites throughout the Stonehenge landscape and the study area in positive ways, some of which connect to the themes of ontological security, existential relatedness and existential authenticity described in preceding chapters.

Land-use Restrictions

The other heritage management issue reported is the restriction in land-use that the presence of a scheduled monument can pose for landowners. One participant related how purchasing land containing a scheduled monument made her life difficult:

> Well, I think initially, it was after the initial 'ooh, that sounds fun', and reading a little bit about it and so on, it then became a damn nuisance. Because, although we were made aware it was an historic monument, we were naive and we seriously had not realised how many constraints that imposed upon us…And so we actually resented it, I'm afraid. (Personal interview 3, resident, 59)

However, the participant related that as she has learned to work with these restrictions, she has found that, 'The thing I do like, because our land was so neglected and protected as this century progressed, and therefore was not subjected to much in the way of impact on the land,

there is to me a strong sense of it being as it always was'. The participant further noted that this phenomenon gives her a special feeling:

> I: And when you look at, and you might not be able to answer this - it's trying to drill even deeper into that sense of it being there and sort of being the same as it was when it was built - can you put a name on that feeling, or that sort of, you know what I mean?
> P: Hmmm [long pause], hmmm, no I don't think I can really, um [long pause]. I'm not sure I can [laughs]!
> I: Yeah. Yeah, well, no, this is my issue [laughs] - It's like trying to understand -
> P: Other than - I have called it a 'special feeling', which is a very clumsy way [laughs]. I don't know if that's the right way to describe it. It's special. And people, as it's, although I wish it weren't well known, as it's got more well-known and people have perhaps come to realise in the village, and what have you, that it is special, I see it as beholden on us to keep it special.

This experience, which might be understood as a sense of existential relatedness, demonstrates that despite the negative impact the monument has had on this participant's life, it has also had a positive one.

Negative Affect

Four residents reported that, for unknown reasons, they experience a negative affective atmosphere at certain sites. Speaking of the archaeology of the Avebury landscape, which she otherwise respects, and through which she has obtained useful existential insights, one participant related:

> P: There are places that I don't feel at ease here.
> I: Really?
> P: Yeah. There's two places, and one is by Silbury Hill. I always walk very fast there. I look behind myself. It's very, very strange - I really don't like going there. I feel something there.
> I: That's crazy, and where's the other place?
> P: The other place is when you go down the avenue, you cross the road and you go up across the fields, towards the farm, and there as well, just as you cross the road a bit further down, I have a bad feeling there. (Personal interview 18, resident, 60)

Very similar is the experience of another Avebury resident, who explained, 'You know I can walk onto a hillfort and I will feel uncomfortable, won't I [confirms with his wife]? I've done it a couple of times. Avebury, there's warmth always. There's only about one place in Avebury that I don't feel happy on some days' (Personal interview 15, resident, 63).

This feedback demonstrates how these negative atmospheres vary for different people between different monuments, and that despite the many positives that the archaeology affords for people, it is not always supportive of wellbeing.

Conclusion

This analysis demonstrates that, for various reasons, the archaeology in the study area does not always elicit positive or meaningful experiences for people. As discussed, this may be to do with lack of awareness, which would suggest that perhaps, in some cases, the degree of knowledge that one possesses of the archaeology affects the level of wellbeing that one derives from it. This scenario is also supported by the fact that, for some people, poorly preserved sites, where their presence or significance is not immediately obvious, do not exert the same impact as more visible and extensive remains. However, it could also be that, particularly where residents are concerned, people are just unaware of the positive impact that the archaeology has on their lives. Alternatively, it may be that, as discussed above, it simply does not appeal to certain people.

This is certainly the situation for people who have experienced certain sites in a negative way. Moreover, the examples of negative impact described above serve to support Grenville's (2007, 2015) observation that the historic environment can also be a site of existential anxiety. Thus, the historic environment is not always experienced as therapeutic. However, this should not take away from the positive impact and existential wellbeing that many people do derive from the archaeology. On the contrary, it is a phenomenon that practitioners and researchers must be mindful of when designing and conducting therapeutic heritage programmes, so that they can create safe experiences and maximise the potential for the development of wellbeing. Likewise, insights into negative impacts which stem from the management of sites provides an opportunity for heritage bodies to develop the historic environment in a way that supports the wellbeing of residents.

Chapter 12: Discussion

Introduction

Addressing the aims of the study – to identify the intrinsic value of the prehistoric landscapes discussed and how it affects lived experience – the analysis of the research findings presented in the preceding chapters suggests that, for the majority of people that participated in the project, some of the sites investigated support the development of existential wellbeing. This chapter considers some additional factors which may or may not have had an influence on this outcome. These relate to differences between visitor and resident experiences, generational perspectives, social and ethnic diversity, level of heritage awareness and broader cultural narratives.

Visitor and Resident Experiences

Residents' experience arguably differs to some degree from that of visitors, in terms of their long-term relationship and daily exposure to the archaeology and their awareness of it. In this respect, as previously suggested, it is not surprising that residents more frequently reported experiences which could be construed as feelings of ontological security. This may also explain why fewer visitors reported experiences of relatedness. Yet, in the case of their in-the-moment phenomenological experience, the visitors' responses were similar to those of residents, particularly with regard to feelings of security and existential authenticity. Even if the mindful group walk only provided these effects for the visiting participants momentarily, it demonstrates that this kind of performative approach has the potential to be developed as a more formal therapeutic method.

On the other hand, some residents appeared to have less of a connection to the archaeology than many of the visitors. This was due to factors such as personal preference, their habitual relationship with archaeology, or contrarily, their lack of more in-depth knowledge of it. Whatever the case, in comparison to the number of residents engaged in the project, only a small number of visitors were involved. In addition, the data generated by the visitor group interviews were not as rich as they might have been. Thus, further phenomenological studies involving a larger and more diverse range of visitors would help to

establish whether feelings of ontological security and existential relatedness are experienced more commonly by this group in response to Avebury and other sites within the study area.

Generational Perspectives

It might also be argued that the age of the participants may have had an influence on responses. Certainly, most examples of existential wellbeing discussed in the analysis are cited by participants aged 50 and over. However, this is more a reflection of the fact that most of the feedback cited in this paper was collected from residents of the study area, of whom only five were under the age of 45. Notwithstanding this, each of these participants, including the single resident in his 20s, derived some aspect of existential meaning from the archaeology, as did many of the students involved in the group study. This suggests that, at least in the context of this project, age did not appear to greatly influence participants' perceptions. Nevertheless, this area of research would benefit from further studies with people from younger age groups.

Social and Ethnic Diversity

As acknowledged in Chapter 6, while the study involved a range of people from a variety of social circumstances and backgrounds, due to self-selection and the way in which the sampling strategy was carried out, underprivileged groups were underrepresented. Thus, the feedback only reflects the experience of individuals from a limited range of socio-economic backgrounds. Whether this had a bearing on the results can only be confirmed by similar studies with a larger proportion of participants from underprivileged communities.

With regard to ethnic diversity, the majority of the sample identified as white British. This does not seem to have had a bearing on participants' experience of the archaeology. As discussed, not every participant from this group related to the archaeology or experienced it in a positive way. However, the rest of the participants who did not identify as white British either benefited consciously or unconsciously from it in some way. Despite the fact that these participants do not represent a wider and more diverse range of ethnicities, their individual responses indicate that prehistoric archaeology, perhaps due to the fact that it represents a way of life very distinct from the practices of modern society, has the potential to appeal to

people from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Of course, this hypothesis can only be supported by additional studies.

Heritage Awareness

As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is possible that the level of knowledge and awareness that people possess of the archaeology has a bearing on the depth of connection and meaning that they experience. All participants came to the study with some common or traditional knowledge of the archaeology (see Lipe 1984), meaning they were able, at the very least, to distinguish the prehistoric archaeology from natural features and more recent heritage, and to appreciate the depth of its age. However, a few participants appeared to have a more specialist interest in the archaeology. At least 10 people expressed that they had a spiritual or new age understanding of certain sites, three of whom had moved to the area for this reason, and approximately 10 demonstrated that they were acquainted with some of the current academic interpretations.

Certainly, those who were more actively interested in the archaeology, either spiritually or academically, had considered its existential value to some degree. It could also be argued that a university education might allow a more objective and abstract understanding of the archaeology. In this respect, it does seem that most participants who were graduates or undergraduate students did discuss existential themes. Nonetheless, although level of education or a specific interest in the archaeology may facilitate this kind of understanding, the results demonstrate that participants who do not possess this experience also think about the archaeology from an existential perspective.

The key role of heritage awareness in the facilitation of meaningful connection with the archaeology is also underscored by the reduced impact that the poorly preserved remains of Marden henge had on certain participants. In some cases, the less dramatic the appearance of the site, and, consequently, the less aware people are of its presence and meaning, the less obvious value it holds for them. Whereas those participants who have spent more time at, and thinking about, Marden henge, derived existential wellbeing from it. In the same connection, responses of an existential nature may also be more a reflection of the participants who had engaged with the interview guidance notes and those who did not. If so, then perhaps the act of reflection also provided space for existential thoughts to occur. In this respect, it may be that

by giving people the space to reflect on how they perceive the archaeology, the mindful approaches adopted allowed these insights to surface more easily.

The feedback does suggest that engaging with the archaeology in more depth, whether in an intellectual or experiential capacity, helps people to understand and connect with it more and thus to benefit from it. Furthermore, even if it is the case that a certain type of education or specialist interest does prime people to think more philosophically, it is the archaeology itself which ultimately triggers the kinds of existential insights and experience that have been related in this study.

Overarching Cultural Narratives

People can only view the past from the present and the culture in which they are grounded (see Holtorf 2005; Shanks 1992; Thomas 2004). As a result, as discussed in chapter 4, there is the potential for popular cultural representations of prehistoric monuments, Stonehenge in particular, to cause participants' to automatically view these places in a positive and even numinous light. Arguably, the contrasting perspectives presented in the previous chapter serve to contest this assumption and reinforce Edmonds' (2006) assertion that peoples' experiences of these places are much more complex on the ground. Moreover, in actuality, most participants struggled to communicate their responses to the archaeology and had to dig deep to conceptualise them and put them into words. This suggests that they were not indiscriminately reproducing external representational interpretations of the site.

Some of the cultural narratives that participants subscribe to are apparent in the Site Narratives and Self-identity section of Chapter 8 (p. 219 of thesis). Specific examples where popular representations might have influenced participants' perspectives include the nostalgic belief that life was simpler and more wholesome in the prehistoric past, and the perception of certain sites as special or magical places. However, while these experiences may well derive from overarching popular narratives that have seeped into the common knowledge that people possess about certain sites, they are also based on participants' in-the-moment and everyday felt perceptions of the archaeology. Thus, for some, the preindustrial and natural appearance of prehistoric remains are felt as grounding, while the structured form and agency of other sites, such as the stone circle at Stonehenge or the stones rows of the West Kennet avenue may create a feeling of liminality. In this respect, as Matless (2008) has suggested,

phenomenological methods, to some degree, have the capacity to get beneath the influence of cultural narratives to the heart of individual felt experience. This is similar to Waterson and Watson's (2014) thesis that it is possible to get closer to people's more-than-representational appreciation of heritage. At the very least, the study has arguably succeeded in identifying participants' personal apperception of the cultural representation of the archaeology, the qualities they perceive to emanate from it, and the impact of which they experience as real and meaningful.

Conclusion

According to Gendlin (1962), inherent in experiencing is the process of meaning-making. Thus, one cannot perceive external objects without interpreting them in some way. Granted, this is based on whatever experience and understanding individuals bring to the object, and thus the socio-cultural narratives that influence their interpretation. However each interpretation is an individual one that is felt as real for that person.

This study is realist in approach. Therefore, while it recognises that contemporary perceptions of the archaeology are grounded in certain socio-cultural narratives and that the participants came to the study with at least some common knowledge of it or heritage consciousness, it also recognises individual agency and that each person's expression of the wider social and cultural narratives in which they are consciously or unconsciously embedded is unique. The study is more concerned with how individuals personally make meaning from the archaeology and what they consider to be real for themselves, regardless of the social or cultural background or discourse with which they may identify. Like this, it focused on the essence of participants' individual experience in order to establish what intrinsic value the archaeology potentially holds for people and how it impacts individual wellbeing. Based on this premise, in the context of this study, the intrinsic value of the sites discussed appears to lie largely in the existential meaning and experience that they afford for some individuals and the sense of existential wellbeing these phenomena create for them.

Part V: Conclusion

Chapter 13: Conclusion

Introduction

The results of this study suggest that the unique wellbeing impact of the prehistoric archaeology discussed lies in the existential understandings and experience that it evokes in some people through its material agency, age and associated narratives. This sense of wellbeing is created through the perspective these factors give individuals on their place in time, space and life, their collective and personal identity, and existential possibilities. Despite their limitations, these findings have wider implications not only for understanding the social value and therapeutic potential of prehistoric archaeology, but also for the historic environment more generally. They have similar implications for the development of the historic environment as a social and therapeutic resource, not least through the provision of a foundation for the advancement of phenomenological methodologies which may help to further evidence its fundamental social value and impact.

Therapeutic Significance

Addressing the original research aims, this study has succeeded in providing an insight into the nature of the intrinsic value of the heritage assets examined, for both residents and visitors, and how this impact can create wellbeing for people in the form of ontological security, existential relatedness and existential authenticity. The study proposes that as heterotopic and culturally meaningful places, the prehistoric sites discussed can help to facilitate existential understanding, the achievement of existential authenticity and subsequent healing. However, arguably, it is the sense of ontological security which people derive from the physical, temporal and narrative significance of the sites that first enables these realizations and possibilities. As Grenville (2007) insists, it is the confidence that people have in the stability of their environment and self-identity which allows them to progress and be creative. Ultimately, all these factors support the development of existential wellbeing.

Distilling out the therapeutic significance of these findings, it is useful to view them from the perspective of existential psychotherapy. Drawing on the work of psychotherapist Rollo May, Yalom and Josselson (2011, 318) maintain that, 'Existential therapy…is "an encounter with

one's own existence in an immediate and quintessential form" (May 1967, p.134) in the company of a therapist who is fully present'. In the context of this study, the archaeology itself might be viewed as a therapist in that its age, form, agency and narratives act as a therapeutic facilitating environment, in the manner espoused by Winnicott (1965), which 'holds', witnesses and positively reflects the individual. In this way, the archaeology could be seen almost as a midwife to existential insight, authenticity and wellbeing.

Often it takes illness or a threat to life to bring about existential awareness of the meaning and purpose of one's life (Ownsworth and Nash 2015). However, as suggested here, through their temporal, aesthetic and narrative significance, the prehistoric remains within the study area can help to bring about these kinds of existential realisations without the prompt of life-threatening conditions. If prehistoric archaeology has the potential to facilitate this kind of impact more widely for people beyond the geographical remit of this study, then it has a fundamental role in the promotion of wellbeing. Moreover, the importance of this impact cannot be underestimated, particularly if as Yalom and Josselson assert:

> Our present age is one of disintegration of cultural and historical mores, of love and marriage, the family, the inherited religions, and so forth. Given these realities, the existential emphasis on meaning, responsibility, and living a finite life fully will become increasingly important (Yalom and Josselson 2011, 318).

If this is the case, there should be an onus on heritage practitioners to explore and develop the potential of prehistoric archaeology in the area of existential wellbeing.

The Social Value of Prehistory

The results of this study pertain to a specific geographical area and a limited demographic range. In this capacity, it provides information about what is important for the people living in this area and may help to contribute to the better management, protection and development of the sites discussed. However, it still offers a significant insight into some of the intrinsic values common to prehistoric archaeology more generally, particularly in terms of age and form, and how they influence individual lived experience and personal wellbeing. For one, the resident perspective shines a light on research gaps concerning the wellbeing impacts of everyday prehistoric heritage as well as the relationship between heritage, place, belonging and

identity. This viewpoint demonstrates how some residents benefit from the archaeology in an everyday sense, and how others actively use it to manage their mental health and wellbeing. In addition, the results from the group work show that when fully immersed in, and cognisant of, the archaeology, visitors can also derive similar wellbeing benefits from it. Furthermore, the experiences reported by both residents and visitors corroborate many of the findings of Holtorf's (2005) study on contemporary perceptions of prehistoric remains in Germany. They particularly resonate with the participant experiences that Holtorf (2005) describes under the themes of Monumentality, Factual details, Social order, Remembrance, Identities, Aesthetics, Reflections, Adventures, Aura, Magical Places and Nostalgia. This overlap suggests that, in the Western world at least, prehistoric monuments are a phenomenon capable of stimulating certain kinds of wellbeing effects for different groups in different social and cultural contexts.

The site-specific focus of the current study succeeded in discerning how well-preserved, protected and managed sites, such as Stonehenge and Avebury, can support wellbeing. However, it also revealed how less visible sites like Marden henge do not always succeed in eliciting the same effects. This discovery supports the view that, outside of the more visible sites and obvious examples, prehistory does not appear to feature strongly in mainstream public consciousness (Last 2010a; Waterton and Watson 2014). Thus obscured, prehistory, and its relevance to modern life, is not always easily perceptible or, as Bevan (2016, 26) puts it, "If the touchstones of identity are no longer there to be touched, memories fragment and dislocate…". The danger inherent in this situation is the collective amnesia of those touchstones. This may have a bearing on why, even in the case of the more visible monuments, participants frequently struggled to discern and communicate the impact that the archaeology of the study area has on them.

These examples indicate that, to a greater or lesser extent, many people are either disconnected from, or unaware of their relationship to, prehistoric archaeology. This arguably constitutes a critical issue, if as Last (2010a, 8) asserts, 'Prehistory is a diverse and wide-ranging field of study, accounting for over 99% of the time that people have inhabited this country, from the earliest human occupation at least 700,000 years ago to the arrival of the Romans in the 1st century AD'. It suggests that to ignore prehistoric remains is to disregard a large proportion of what constitutes human identity, and with it, as this study has discovered, the possibility for anchoring and enriching people's lives, gaining new insights into human potential and for individual healing. As one participant expressed this connection:

> Because I think the Neolithic must have been a time when there had been quite a lot of change in belief systems coming about. And that's perhaps represented in the monuments that are left behind. So, that's an important part of the development of *Homo sapiens*, I think. (Personal Interview 22, resident, 67)

Thus, the findings highlight the importance of such impacts and provide an insight into how the social value of the prehistoric environment might be developed in the future.

Awareness and Reflection

Some of the participant responses indicate that it is possible for the existential wellbeing impacts identified to occur for people at an unconscious level. This phenomenon resonates with Giddens' (1991, 43) observation that, 'Reality is not just the here-and-now, the context of immediate sensory perception, but identity and change in what is absent – out of sight for the moment or, indeed, never directly encountered, but simply accepted as 'there'. Indeed, Grenville (2007, 458) has even espoused that, in the context of British and European heritage practice, ontological security is '...a deeply buried and hard-to-admit emotional aspect of conservation and restoration...'. This experience begs the question of whether the historic environment and what it represents is more fundamental to people's wellbeing than is currently appreciated, an idea which merits further investigation.

The ability of this study to obtain rich feedback from participants regarding their relationship with the archaeology is arguably due to the level of reflection requested of them, and the reflective methodologies employed. This outcome suggests that guiding people to focus on and become more aware of the archaeology is not only key to understanding how the they relate to it but may also enable them to derive greater wellbeing benefits from it. It also indicates that these prehistoric landscapes may have untapped therapeutic potential for both residents and visitors. Some residents engage with the prehistoric archaeology in this way of their own accord, without the aid or guidance of a facilitator. Essentially, this could be described as a form of heritage-based mindfulness practice that is free and available to everyone. However, the success of the phenomenological approaches employed by this study demonstrates that, with the presence of a facilitator, this practice also has the potential to be developed as a formal therapeutic intervention that might be employed by primary care services.

Wider Relevance and Application

Although this thesis focuses on the experience of prehistoric archaeology, the results of the study are arguably relevant to the therapeutic significance of heritage assets from more recent periods. This is evidenced by the fact that many resident participants related their experience not only to the prehistoric archaeology in the landscape, but also to the historic remains and the continuity of the occupation in the study area from the Mesolithic to the present day. Central to this appreciation is the age of the historic environment and the phenomenon of temporality; the golden thread that runs through all forms of heritage experience irrespective of period. As Heideggerian philosophy proposes:

> The meaning or underlying significance of the Being of Dasein is temporality. It is what makes possible the unity of existence, facticity and falling to which the tripartite structure of care alludes...the essence of Being is grounded in its relation to time...human beings exist as temporality... (Mulhall 2001, 145)

Thus, for instance, by providing perspective on the history and nature of human existence, the collective connections, permanence and the feeling of 'ancientness' or 'pastness' that project participants discussed, are relevant to heritage assets from all periods. Therefore, while it is proposed that the prehistoric archaeology examined in this study is particularly effective in producing experiences of ontological security, existential relatedness and existential authenticity, historic remains should also have the power to elicit some, if not all, of these effects. This is certainly suggested by the existential observations that some participants reported in wellbeing studies undertaken with historic remains (Kiddey 2014; McMillan 2013; Power and Smyth 2016) (see Chapter 2 for examples).

Reilly *et al*. (2018) identify that there is a challenge in translating the relationship between sense of place, power of place, belonging and identity into a meaningful concept, and that the answer to this conundrum is key to understanding the unique contribution of the historic environment. Relevant to the historic environment more generally, the findings of this study have, arguably, succeeded in providing a language that can be used to translate the meaning of the relationship between heritage, place, belonging and identity. They also elucidate the social value and wellbeing impact of everyday heritage. As follows, this study goes a long way towards specifying the unique contribution of the historic environment to wellbeing.

At the very least, the theoretical concepts generated through this study provide a framework that might be used to better understand this unique contribution. In this respect, the concept of existential relatedness may also help to understand why heritage creates the type of community cohesion to which many heritage and wellbeing projects refer (BritainThinks 2015; Graham *et al*. 2009; Power and Smyth 2016), not only in its capacity as a mechanism to wellbeing, but through its intrinsic value. Indeed, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that existential relatedness is the intangible adhesive that allows this sense of community to develop. Likewise, if prehistoric remains can support existential wellbeing for some people at an unconscious level, then it is likely that historic remains can perform this function too.

The methodology employed in this study also has wider application within the heritage sector. It presents phenomenological approaches to heritage-based qualitative research that can be used to discern the intrinsic value of heritage assets from any period. Consequently, the outcomes of employing this methodology posit that a mindful, reflective approach to heritage assets can not only help to engage people with the historic environment, but also to provide a more meaningful engagement. Furthermore, in the context of performative practices like the mindful walks undertaken in the Avebury area, it presents a template for the development of a new type of heritage-based therapeutic intervention. In this way, this methodological approach perhaps provides a foundation for future site-specific phenomenological investigations of heritage assets from a variety of periods. In terms of impact on the development of other methodologies, the findings of the study may also be useful for quantitative studies in that they form the basis for the conceptualization of a set of heritage-specific indicators. For example, this might take the form of surveys that question participants on whether different aspects of their existential experience, such as security, connectedness and fulfilment, are affected by interaction with particular heritage assets or the historic environment in general? More detailed questionnaires could investigate this experience in relation to the temporality, and material and narrative agency of the heritage assets examined. Indeed, these are perhaps other ways in which the results of this study might be tested.

The Problematic of Romanticism

Some of the perceptions that participants have of the archaeology, and which some experience as therapeutic, are not necessarily reflected in the archaeological record. For example, the

nostalgic belief that prehistoric life may have been simpler or more in harmony with nature cannot be confirmed. In its consideration of the potential benefits of nostalgic reflection the study does not encourage romanticism of the prehistoric past, particularly in view of the fact that, as Miranda Green (1998) observes, prehistoric sites are not necessarily without their uncomfortable histories, such as the practice of human sacrifice.

Needless to say, the past should not be sanitised, especially if, as genealogical studies have recently established, that simply thinking about one's ancestral heritage, even if it has negative connotations, can have a positive impact on wellbeing (Fischer *et al*. 2011). Furthermore, as Phillips (2008) points out, when certain heritage objects evoke negative responses in people, they provide an opportunity for people to identify their care needs and, with the support of a care professional, to therapeutically explore and work through difficult emotions. Nevertheless, if the nostalgic reflection which heritage assets and their narratives trigger can have a significant therapeutic impact, this should not be ignored either.

Participants' experience of the archaeology may be an emanation of the modern Western perception of the past and prehistory. However, if these perceptions are an antidote to the negative experiences of modern society, and thereby conducive to existential wellbeing, then they arguably possess value. How or whether this potential should be developed in heritage contexts in any formal capacity is open to debate and requires further research, but perhaps, if approached in a balanced and responsible way, it might be employed, as Mim Bower (1992) has proposed, as a resource for public good?

Discussion

This study demonstrates that, in the case of the heritage landscapes discussed, the intrinsic nature of the historic environment can impact individual wellbeing in positive ways and promote healing for people as a result. It thus establishes these places as therapeutic landscapes, not only in terms of their physical, symbolic, built, and social characteristics, but also, in relation to their temporal nature and meaning as heritage sites. Although further research in this area is required in order to make more generalisable statements, as discussed above the findings provide a starting point for addressing a number of existing research gaps. In particular, it identifies some of the intrinsic values of prehistoric archaeology and the wider historic environment, as well as qualitative methodologies capable of accessing this

information. The greatest value of this study, however, is perhaps the body of theory it contributes to wellbeing and heritage studies. This includes the formulation of a conceptual framework and theoretical language which can be used to understand the unique wellbeing impact and potential of prehistoric heritage and the historic environment in general, in both an everyday and a visitor capacity. This, in turn, sheds light on how the social value of the historic environment might be explored, particularly in terms of novel methodological approaches that can be used for understanding heritage experience, promoting public engagement and wellbeing. In this way, it provides a theoretical and methodological roadmap for future studies concerning the nature of heritage experience. Consequently, the study opens a window into the potential that exists within the historic environment to support the development of healthy and fulfilled communities, an insight reminiscent of the Heideggerian view that:

> True history allows past, present and future reciprocally to question and illuminate one another, and is thus at once a manifestation of and a preparation for anticipatory resoluteness. By doing her job authentically, the historian reveals the past as harbouring the real potential of her present and thus prepares the way for herself and her community to struggle with their destiny. (Mulhall 2001, 177)

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Appendices

The appendices below present the participation information material, volunteer recruitment adverts and ethics and diversity forms developed for the project. They also showcase some extracts from the autoethnographic reflections undertaken, the interview transcripts and the reflective accounts.

The autoethnographic extracts displayed were specifically chosen for the depth of insight they provide into the researcher's experience. The participant extracts presented were selected not only to give a sense of the interview questions and the researcher's approach to data collection, but also on account of their ability to show some of the quotes used in the thesis in context and to provide a fuller description of the data. However, these examples were singled out in particular, as they were the most easily anonymised. While there were other transcripts that could have been used to better illustrate the themes and style of the research, their personal and distinctive nature may have made it possible for the participants to be identified and would therefore have constituted a breach of confidentiality. For the same reason, extracts were used instead of full transcripts.
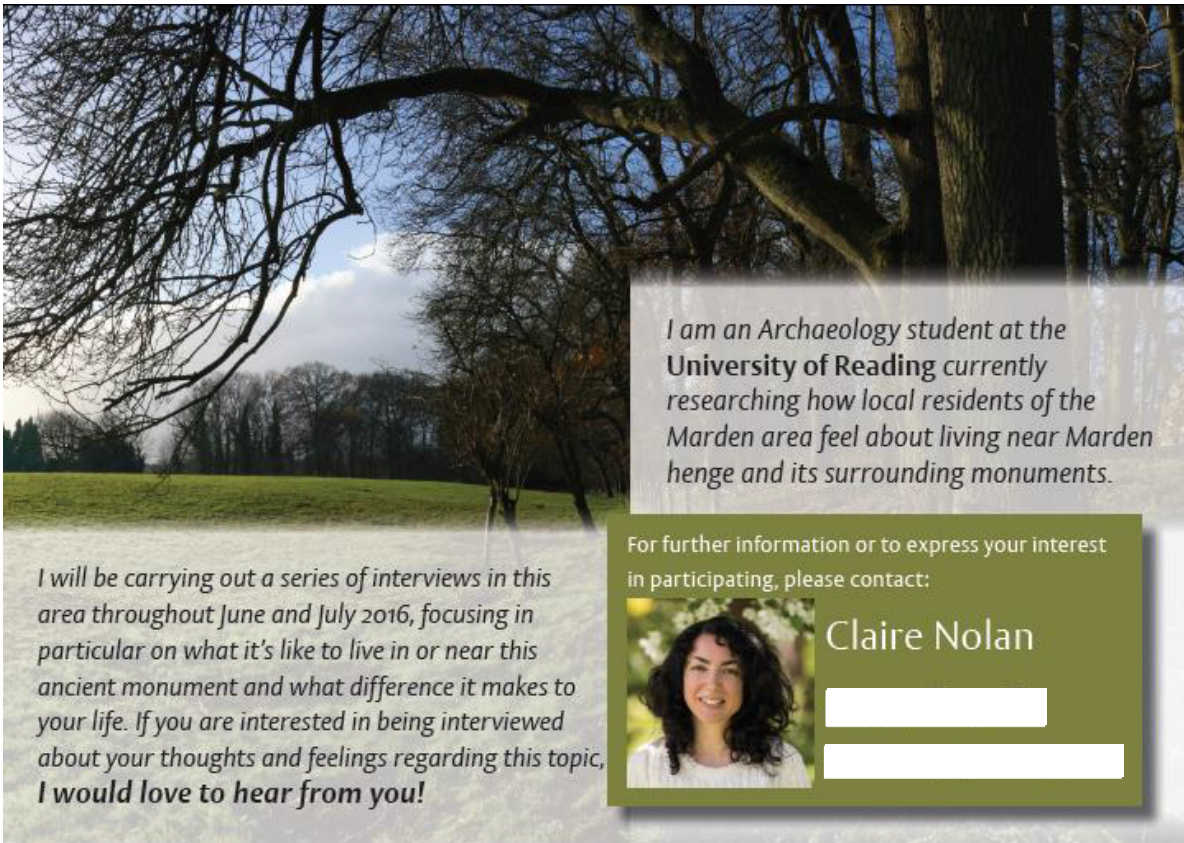
Appendix A(i): Volunteer Recruitment Material: Vale of Pewsey

Appendix A(ii): Volunteer Recruitment Material: Avebury

Appendix A(iii): Volunteer Recruitment Material: Stonehenge Area

Do you live near Stonehenge? Would you be interested in being interviewed about your experience of living there?

I am an Archaeology student from the University of Reading currently conducting a project on what it is like to live near Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments. Through this research I am hoping to understand how people personally relate to this prehistoric landscape, emotionally, physically or otherwise, and what it means for them.
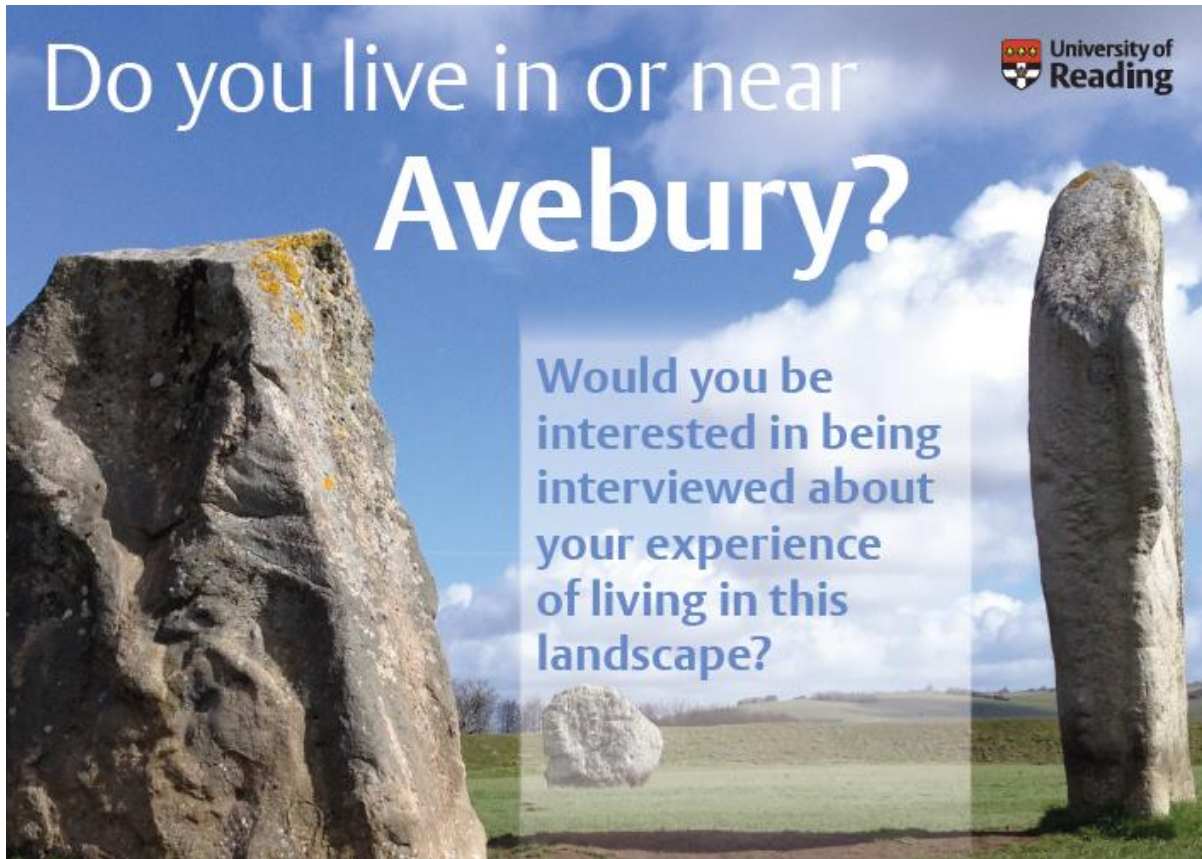
In order to gather this information, I will be carrying out a series of interviews with people living in the Stonehenge area throughout July 2017. If you are interested in being interviewed about your thoughts on this topic, I would love to hear from you.

For further information please contact me on:

Claire Nolan
Phone:
Email:

Appendix B: Extracts from Autoethnographic Reflections

March 6, 2016, Windmill Hill, Avebury

Sitting on the eastern side of Windmill Hill, viewing the 360-degree panorama and the way the downs surround it in the distance. I am struck by the convergence of space, place and meaning in this landscape. The emptiness, the stillness, the flow of the hills and the landscape. And yet it is animated by this flow, and the meaning inferred by the monuments. The sensation is: awe, the sublime, and reverence for the numinous quality that it evokes for me.

I feel I am in the presence of something, a mystery much bigger than I. It is a reminder that there is more to this life than I can conceive – meaning that I cannot know or understand. And yet the scale and symbolism itself is enough to affect me. The way the landscape has been manipulated to create unity between 'man' and 'cosmos' is the meaning that I take. I noticed how the setting and situation took me out of myself. The landscape positioned me.

April 9, 2016, Circular walk from Silbury hill to Tan Hill and East Kennet

Walking along the ridge of what looks like a glaciated valley below Tan hill, to the north of the Marlborough downs. I got the sense that this is a very old place. Long barrows straddled the ridge and there was something about the valley that reminded me of places in Dartmoor, Devon.

I ended my journey by visiting the Sanctuary. The sun was shining, it was warm, peaceful and the view was stunning. I could see across to the valley with the long barrows along the ridge, and felt as if I was remembering something from the past. Almost like I was lamenting the people who had built these monuments, put so much into them and used these landscapes – a lamentation for ritual, perhaps?

April 10, 2016, Circular walk from Avebury henge to the Longstones, Silbury hill and West Kennet Avenue.

I started in the circle, spent time walking clockwise along the circumference to get a better sense of the place, noticing the difference between quadrants. I noticed how the surrounding downland followed the manmade horizon of the henge. Then I walked to Longstones field, noticing how Windmill hill was visible on the horizon. I walked on to Silbury via the main road, noticing the streams running beside the road – onto the avenue, up the avenue, noticing how it changes in altitude, undulating so that some views go in and out of sight, noticing what it allows you, wants you to see, noticing the change in direction as it goes down to the South, noticing how Waden hill and the ridgeway flank the avenue, inducing a channelling movement.

Appendix C(i): Participant Information Documentation: Invitation Letter

University of
Reading

Allen laboratory 1.11
Department of Archaeology
SAGES
University of Reading
Whiteknights
Reading
RG6 6AB
Email:
Phone:

[Date]

[Participant Address]

Dear [Name],

Thank you so much for agreeing to take part in my research. I am just writing to confirm that we will be meeting at your home on [Date] at [Time], and to send you some further information about what will be involved.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to seeing you at the end of the month.

Warm wishes,

Claire

Appendix C(ii): Participant Information Documentation: Interview Participant Information Sheet

University of Reading

Claire Nolan
Doctoral Research Student

Allen Lab 1.11,
Department of Archaeology,
School of Archaeology, Geography and Environmental Science
University of Reading
Reading RG6 6AH
Phone
Email

Information Sheet

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this project is to better understand how people relate to prehistoric heritage landscapes in the present day and how they personally experience them emotionally, physically or otherwise. The project will focus specifically on the monuments and landscapes of Avebury henge, Marden henge and Stonehenge; exploring how they affect the people who live in proximity to them, and what meaning these places have for them.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been asked to take part in this research because you live within the study area.

Did anyone else check that this study is safe and appropriate?

Before we have undertaken any research we submitted the research to the *University of Reading Ethics Research Committee* and gained full approval.

Do I have to take part?

You don't have to take part and can withdraw from the study at any point if you decide that you would no longer like to be involved. You are not required to take part in all aspects of the study if you do not wish to.

What will be expected of me if I decide to take part?

Once we have determined that you are happy to take part in the project, you will be invited to engage in an audio-recorded interview to discuss your thoughts, feelings and experiences regarding the prehistoric heritage site(s) most relevant to you within the study area. It will take place at a time and location convenient for you, and can be conducted as a traditional seated interview, or during a walk in a part of the landscape that is significant for you. The length of the interview can vary between 30-90 minutes, however we can stop whenever is appropriate for you.

You will be invited to reflect, prior to the interview, on your day-to-day and past experiences of the site(s), and to keep an account of these reflections in advance of the interview. These reflections can then be discussed as part of the interview. You can produce the account in whatever form is most appropriate to you and it can be written, illustrated or photographic according to your preferences. The record will contribute to the overall study and will be returned to you on request once the study has ended.

You will also be invited to think of places within your local prehistoric heritage landscape that you feel are significant for you, and if you wish, to take photos of them which you can bring to the interview for further discussion.

What will the results of the study be used for?

The results of the study will contribute to my PhD research and the development of new knowledge concerning the impact of heritage and archaeology. They will feature in the main PhD thesis, publications, and public and academic presentations. A summary of the results will be shared with participants once the study has ended.

Will my information be kept private?

Yes, the information you provide as part of this study is strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone else outside of the research team. With your consent, feedback you provide during interviews may be quoted in presentations, papers or the final PhD thesis. However, all quotations will be anonymised, and treated with sensitivity and respect in each instance.

Your information will be securely stored for the duration of the project after which point it will be destroyed. Any personal information you submit in the form of personal logs etc., will be securely stored for the length of time it is in the care of the University of Reading and destroyed on completion of the research, unless you request for it to be returned to you. You will remain anonymous throughout the whole of the project.

Who can I contact if I require further information?

If you have any further queries or concerns about the study, please contact either the project lead or one of the project supervisors:

Project lead: Claire Nolan   **Supervisor**: Dr Jim Leary   **Supervisor:** Prof Martin Bell

Appendix C(iii): Participant Information Documentation: Group Walk Information Sheet

University of Reading

Claire Nolan
Doctoral Research Student

Allen Lab 1.11,
Department of Archaeology,
School of Archaeology, Geography and Environmental Science
University of Reading
Reading RG6 6AH
Phone
Email
Web   www.reading.ac.uk/archaeology

Avebury Research Field Trip Information Sheet

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this project is to better understand how people relate to prehistoric heritage landscapes in the present day and how they personally experience them emotionally, physically or otherwise. The project will focus specifically on the Avebury World Heritage Site; exploring how this landscape, and it's monuments, affect people, and what meaning it has for them.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been asked to take part in this research as you are a member of a local community group, and for your unique personal perspective on the prehistoric heritage examined within this study.

Did anyone else check that this study is safe and appropriate?

Before we have undertaken any research we submitted the research to the *University of Reading Ethics Research Committee* and gained full approval.

Do I have to take part?

You don't have to take part and can withdraw from the study at any point if you decide that you would no longer like to be involved. You are also not required to participate in all aspects of the study if you do not wish to.

What will be expected of me if I decide to take part?

Once we have determined that you are happy to take part in the project you will be invited to attend a group fieldtrip, which will involve a walk through the Avebury landscape. The walk will begin with a group mindfulness exercise in order to help focus your attention on your presence in the landscape.

You will also be invited to keep a field diary of any observations, thoughts, feelings and experiences that you have during the walk regarding the landscape. This account can be produced in whatever form is most appropriate to you e.g. written, illustrated, photographic, audio-recorded or video-recorded. You will be invited to submit these field recordings so that they can be studied further as part of the research and they will be returned to you on request once the study has ended.

The field trip will last between 3-4 hours and will involve a moderate walk, approximately 4 km in length, across undulating terrain. Please make sure to bring sunscreen, plenty of water, snacks, and wear comfortable, waterproof clothing and footwear.

Partway through the field trip, you will be invited to engage in an audio-recorded focus group with the other participants, in order to share your experiences of the walk.

If you have any concerns about the fieldtrip or have any special needs, requirements or health issues that you feel we should know about before you take part, please contact the project lead.

Are there any risks?

There are no known risks involved in this activity. However, all aspects of the fieldtrip will be assessed for any possible risks. There will also be a dedicated first aider present and we will have a first aid kit on hand in the event of an accident.

What will the results of the study be used for?

The results of the study will contribute to my PhD research and the development of new knowledge concerning the impact of heritage and archaeology. They will feature in the main PhD thesis, publications, and public and academic presentations. A summary of the results will be made available for participants, on request, once the study has ended.

Will my information be kept private?

Yes, the information you provide as part of this study is strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone else outside of the research team. With your consent, feedback and field recordings you provide during the field trip may be quoted/displayed in presentations, papers or the final PhD thesis. However, all quotations will be anonymised, and treated sensitively and respectfully in each instance.

Your information will be securely stored for the duration of the project after which point it will be destroyed. Any personal information you submit in the form of personal logs etc., will be securely stored for the length of time it is in the care of the University of Reading and destroyed on completion of the research, unless you request for it to be returned to you. You will remain anonymous throughout the whole of the project

Who can I contact if I require further information?

If you have any further queries or concerns about the study, please contact either the project lead or one of the project supervisors:

Project lead: Claire Nolan   **Supervisor**: Dr Jim Leary   **Supervisor:** Prof Martin Bell

Appendix C(iv): Participant Information Documentation: Interview Guidance Notes

University of Reading

Interview Preparation

In preparation for the interview, I would like to invite you to reflect on any thoughts, feelings and sensations that arise in connection to the prehistoric monuments and heritage landscapes you encounter in your daily life; noticing how they affect, or have affected, you personally - physically emotionally or otherwise. This could include, for example, past experiences of these places or what comes to mind when you pass by or notice certain monuments in the landscape, such as standing stones, barrow mounds, henge banks and ditches etc. If you would like to, you are welcome to record your experiences in the notebook enclosed in whatever format is appropriate for you e.g. written, scrapbook form, photographic or illustrated. This account can also be audio-recorded or video-recorded if preferred.

In addition to these reflections I would also like you to think about specific places in your local landscape that have significance for you and, if you wish, to take photographs of these places which you can bring with you to the interview.

Suggested themes to think about:

I am mainly interested in your personal reflections and experiences. However, some of the following themes may also be useful to consider:

- The ways you regularly come into contact or interact with the monuments

- The role they play and/or have played in your life

- Thoughts or feelings that arise when you interact with them

- Thoughts or feelings you experience when inside or outside a henge

- What the monuments make you think about or remind you of

- Parts of the landscape or monuments that are significant to you

- Any difference they make to your life

- Their effect on your sense of place in the world

- The ways in which they influence your outlook or perspective on life

- How it would feel if the monuments were removed and what would that mean for you

Appendix C(v): Participant Information Documentation: Group Walk Guidance Notes

University of Reading

Avebury Research Field Trip Guidance Notes

During the fieldtrip I would like you to reflect on any thoughts, feelings and sensations that arise in connection to the prehistoric monuments and heritage landscapes you encounter on the walk; noticing how they affect you personally; physically, emotionally or otherwise. This could include, for example, what comes to mind when you pass by or notice certain monuments in the landscape, such as standing stones, barrow mounds, henge banks and ditches etc. There will be an opportunity for you to share your experiences at the end of the walk during an audio-recorded group discussion.

Possible Themes

I am primarily interested in your personal reflections and experiences. However, as a starting point it might help to take note of the thoughts, feelings and sensations that arise for you in relation to the following themes:

- Your contact or interaction with the landscape and its monuments
- The way they affect your movement
- Being inside or outside the henge
- Walking through avenues and amongst standing stones
- What you can see, hear, touch etc. at different stages of the walk
- Changes in altitude as you walk
- Changes in the elements e.g. wind
- Relationships between different monuments
- Relationship between the natural landscape and the monuments
- Parts of the landscape or monuments that are more significant for you, and why
- What they remind you of
- How they affect your sense of place
- How they affect your sense of self

Appendix D(i): Ethics and Diversity: Consent Form

Research Ethics Committee

Consent Form

Please initial the boxes to indicate your confirmation and consent of each statement:

I confirm that I have read the accompanying Information Sheet relating to the project

I confirm that I have had explained to me the purpose of the project and what will be required of me, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to the arrangements described in the Information Sheet in so far as they relate to my participation.

I confirm my willingness to partake in this experiment.

I understand that participation is entirely voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the project any time, and that this will be without detriment.

This application has been reviewed by the University of Reading Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct.

I have received a copy of this Consent Form and of the accompanying Information Sheet.

Name: …………………………………………………………………………

Date of birth: …………………………………………………………………

Signed: ………………………………………………………………………

Date: …………………………………………………….……………………

Appendix D(ii): Ethics and Diversity: Diversity Monitoring Form

Diversity Monitoring Form

The information collected in this form will be used to provide a reflection of the diversity of participation within this research study and will contribute to the overall results and findings of the project.

I confirm that the information you provide in this form is strictly confidential, will not be shared with anyone else outside of the research team and will be anonymised. It will be securely stored for the duration of the project after which point it will be destroyed.

Gender   Male ☐   Female ☐   Transgender ☐   Prefer not to say ☐   Other ☐ - please describe:

Age   Under 18 ☐   18-29 ☐   30-39 ☐   40-49 ☐   50-60 ☐   Over 60 ☐   Prefer not to say ☐

What is your national identity?

English ☐   Welsh ☐   Scottish ☐   Northern Irish ☐   Irish ☐   British ☐

Prefer not to say ☐   Any other ☐ - please describe:

What is your level of education?

'O' levels/GCSE/Equivalent ☐   'A' levels/Equivalent ☐   Undergraduate degree ☐

Postgraduate degree ☐   Technical qualifications ☐   HND/HNC/Equivalent ☐

No formal qualifications ☐   Prefer not to say ☐   Any other – please describe:

What is your occupation?

Managerial, supervisory etc. ☐   Administrative, clerical etc. ☐

Vocational etc. ☐   Skilled manual ☐

Unskilled manual ☐   Self-employed ☐

Unemployed ☐   Retired ☐

Prefer not to say ☐   Any other - please describe:

What is your ethnic group?

White   **Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group**

British ☐   Irish ☐   White and Black Caribbean ☐

Gypsy or Irish Traveller ☐   White and Black African ☐

Any other - please describe: White and Asian ☐

                                     Any other – please describe:

Asian/Asian British   **Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British**

Indian ☐   Pakistani ☐   Bangladeshi ☐   **African ☐   Caribbean ☐**

Chinese ☐   Any other – please describe: **Any other – please describe:**

Other Ethnic Group

Any other ☐ - please describe:

Are you a member of a heritage organisation?

English Heritage ☐   National Trust ☐   Other ☐ - please describe:

No ☐   Prefer not to say ☐

Thank you for your participation

Appendix E(i): Reflective Account Extracts: Reflective Account A

Extract from Reflective Account A, resident, 60s

Lived here since 2010 with the monument, I have found it to be a place of peace and calmness, which I have experienced after going through a part of my life which was very stressful due to personal circumstance in my life.

Coming home – always a place of quiet.

I feel it may have been my destiny to live here. I could have been living anywhere, but when the chance came to be here I didn't hesitate.

This is where I belong
Settled – happy? My happy!
I will hopefully <u>die</u> here.
Maybe <u>buried</u> here.

To feel the "Earth" through my fingers and to hold in my hand. (warm earth) earthy smell after the rain!

Avebury

Love this place. Mum/dad and me connected here. More visits.

<u>Dad</u> – more than mum. Dad (Farm Labourer – the <u>Land</u>). Like his father – <u>worked the land</u>.

Silbury Hill

Connected with mum and her mum and me.

"Where the 'Devil' cleaned his shovel"!

Stonehenge
Never walk around the stones, only driven by – I seem to have <u>no</u> connection with this monument.

Remove the monuments – never! Disturbance would make me feel un-settled, nervous.

Appendix E(ii): Reflective Account Extracts: Reflective Account C

Extract from Reflective Account C, resident, 50s

In recording how I feel about, and have an interest in prehistoric sites, I have decided rather than repeatedly writing "in my opinion…" or "in my experience…" I will write and record more directly. Thus, it might appear that I am claiming undisputed facts, I do however realise that what I write and record is my own particular response to the sites and the landscape and should be seen as that.

There will be no particular structure to what I write and thus it may appear disjointed and at times barely relevant. There are many thoughts that occur to me whilst out walking in the landscape, but for one reason or another unless I record them immediately more or less in the order they occur they are likely to be lost.

Probably I will be repetitive at times being unsure whether I have recorded a particular thought before or not.

20/06/16

Two days ago I went for a walk, part in the Vale of Pewsey and part near to Avebury. During the course of the walk I went through, along or nearby about ten prehistoric sites Knap Hill, Adams's Grave, the Wansdyke, Rybury, Oldbury, Avebury, Silbury, The Sanctuary and numerous other minor ditches, tumuli and other earthworks.

At the start of the walk as well as a physical ordnance survey in hand, I had in my head a vague mental map of the area stretching the length of the Vale of Pewsey to east and west. To the north this mental map has Avebury, Silbury and West Kennet Long Barrow and perhaps Barbury Castle. To the south across the plain to Stonehenge in the distance. To this mental map is attached a sense that it represents the "homelands", although I actually live at the eastern end of the Vale and therefore fairly much on the edge of this vague map. Although the prehistoric sites in this area vary greatly in age from Windmill Hill to the Wansdyke they all, to me, have become part of the landscape, a landscape that is connected, though in my mind the connections are not those used by wheeled transport. Thankfully, the area is still sparsely populated and not smothered in the creations of recent centuries. A land that gives a sense of permanence in what is today a rapidly changing world.

I know that a detailed study of OS or older maps would show that this land is not an island, but an area within a much larger land with traces of prehistory stretching in all directions to Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire and beyond. But these and even the more distant bits of Wiltshire, especially away from the chalk downland do not form part of my own internalised local ancient world.

I am not a religious person and, on some interpretations of the word, I am not even a spiritual person. But I am an emotional person who responds to my local landscape in a very meaningful way, it having been a sanctuary at certain crises in my life.

My interest and emotional responsiveness is not limited to the prehistoric period, I admire and marvel at many churches, cathedrals, great houses etc. Generally, the simpler the better. But there are generally too many distractions in a church, temple or cathedral. Wall paintings, tombstones, reminders of named individuals and the specific lives they led.

Prehistoric sites, on the other hand, generally are not adorned with reminders of specific individuals or precise moments in time. They are much more a part of the landscape rather than being set into it or sitting atop it. Also, there is no demand for you to adhere to certain religious beliefs, or reminders of what awaits you if you do not, at least certainly not easily interpreted ones [religious beliefs]. I know

that many of the great local monuments when first built, would have stood out starkly in the landscape, their fresh cut chalk gleaming in the sunlight, but my experience is of them as they stand today, typically with gentler curves and slopes and depending on the season covered in wild flower and other vegetation.

Returning to my walk two days ago. Maybe I was too keen to have an emotional response that I could record for this project, maybe the overcast skies subdued the beautiful contrasts of light that so enhance the sites.

It was Saturday and after getting off the tarmac, I kept meeting groups of students doing Duke of Edinburgh Awards walks. They had more right to be there than those on scrambling bikes messing up the footpaths , or the man in a 4x4 trashing a field of grass, doing handbrake turns very noisily. And then there were New Age travellers setting up unauthorised camps with the sound of music and the scent of marijuana wafting in the air. All these people mildly breaking the law or not, but upsetting my own selfish enjoyment of the landscape. These monuments are no more mine than theirs, but to enjoy, commune, to resonate with the landscape, the least reminders of the 21st century the better.

Fortunately, most prehistoric sites, Avebury excepted, are not directly approachable by vehicle or on tarmac roads. This offers them some seclusion, but also makes the act of reaching them part of the experience. Travelling by foot, one approaches as people did two, three, four thousand years ago.

The joy of my walk on Saturday was as much about the landscape between sites and monuments, as it was about the monuments themselves. The fact that I was going between Neolithic, Iron Age, Saxon and Romano-British sites, and often along pathways determined by modern field systems, did not detract from the sense of the landscape as an ancient landscape.

Five or so local prehistoric sites of significance

Martinsell Hill – Iron Age Hillfort
An Iron Age Hillfort in an elevated position (second highest in Wiltshire). It is a peaceful, beautiful place not widely known. A sanctuary at times in my life. Uncomplicated, under-investigated and in some ways unexplained. The southern and eastern aspects afford wonderful views both along the Vale of Pewsey but also over the Marlborough Downs and into Berkshire. The second highest point in Wiltshire I believe. Much of the bank and ditch is lost to the eye by vegetation and trees.
The commanding view, makes it special for me. The distinctive profile against the skyline has been etched on my memory since early childhood, although one or two of the Douglas Firs at the eastern end that were so distinctive have gone. Immensely solid and imposing when viewed from any angle from East, South or West.
The place where I scattered some of my mother's ashes.
The place I would be most upset not to be able to reach if in my old age I became infirm and immobile.

Giant's Grave – Iron Age Fort Promontory
Just a mile or so to the West of Martinsell. A ditch and bank earthwork with a western aspect, a steep fall away on three sides making it seem almost like a coastal headland with the sea of the valley below. A wonderful spot to from where to see the sunset especially in October and February when it sets at the far end of the Vale.
Also a place where the special large headed Friar's Thistle occurs amid the other chalk downland flowers.
Along with Martinsell it forms the bow or the stern of the same block of the escarpment, like a ship docked alongside the quay.

Knap Hill/Adam's Grave

Important to me is another elevated position [Knap Hill and Adam's Grave] from which to look out over the Vale. The very heart of the northern escarpment, for many years marking the halfway point between my home and my place of work in Devizes, and although I didn't actually say "good morning, Knap hill" as I passed it, a glance in its direction gave a sense of reassurance of permanence. In deepest winter it would be dark in the mornings as I travelled west and also in the evening as I travelled back eastwards, so it was always nice at some point in February to start seeing it again in the early morning light, often above the mist of the valley below.

I rarely walk actually on top of Knap Hill preferring to view its characteristically round edges from different directions.

A short distance to the west beyond the white horse is my favourite view in Wiltshire, especially in low angled light when the shape of Knap Hill and Adam's Grave form the middle ground.

From the opposite direction, on the road to Wilcot, they contribute to a notable profile, that of a naked woman lying on her back, facing away, her right arm up behind her head, with her pelvis and legs twisted to the left. Adam's Grave is her nipple, Knap Hill her hip. When you have driven along that road several thousand times, as I have, you notice it!

Adam's Grave has various associations. Walks with my children when they were young, including sliding in the snow. The place where I sat to compose a poem of proposal to my wife.

The Wansdyke

Much later in history 5th or 6th century AD, but given that so little seems to be known about it, calling it prehistoric seems apt. Much newer and yet its purpose is still somewhat mysterious. Just a boundary, or a serious defensive undertaking? Whichever it is it must have taken millions of man hours to construct. The eastern section, the part I am familiar with snakes its way across the landscape in an East-West direction for 19 kilometres. I have walked most of its length and noted the change in character of different parts. This may be due to later activity and ploughing reducing the height of the bank in places and part filling the ditch in others. Or the action of thousands of rabbits that seem to abound along some of its length causing a constant hazard for the unwary walker who puts a foot into an unseen rabbit hole.

Again, what does it mean, signify, say to me? Whatever it is, it is the Wansdyke of the 20th and 21st centuries that I see.

Unlike other places on my list this is a site or monument you don't normally just walk to, you walk along it. It is the walk itself (though getting to a starting point usually demands quite a walk in the first place). Though it is less than half the age of the other places on my list, I do not respect it any less for its relative youth. However, its linear nature means that it is less a place of sanctuary, of permanence, of reassurance, compared to some of the others. What it is to me is a piece of Land Art from 1,500 years before the phrase took on its meaning, it could well be a track, a path walked by Richard Long, or a creation in the landscape by Andy Goldsworthy. Unlike Hadrian's Wall with its clear purpose of being a defining line between North and South, or Offa's Dyke more or less following the Welsh border, it is much harder today to see what the Wansdyke divided given that the boundaries of the kingdom of Wessex have completely dissolved. Therefore to the modern viewer its position is somewhat random or haphazard and, in its eastern part you get a sense of the free spiritedness of the Wansdyke as it cuts through the downland, bisecting at perpendicular the modern roads it crosses. It is clearly not part of the older Neolithic, bronze age or iron age landscape, but it waves a friendly hand to its neighbours Rybury, Oldbury, Silbury, Avebury, West Kennet Long Barrow and others as it snakes across the landscape.

At its most spectacular on a sunny winter's day when the low light from the south casts a sharp shadow in the ditch, heightening the surgical scar between the near modern fields.

West Kennet Long Barrow

Both an inside and an outside. A prominent position from which to view the surrounding landscape including its near neighbour Silbury Hill, yet from a distance it lies low and is hard to pick out. Unspoilt by information panels and fences. Rarely crowded. The simplicity of the internal chambers so different

from the gilded interior of a baroque church. A place of death, yet when visited yesterday, a site for swallows to nest inside. The massiveness of the flat entrance as powerful as any cenotaph.

The Stonehenge Landscape
Clearly for most the stone circle at the centre of the Stonehenge Landscape is the jewel, often the totality of their visiting experience. Wonderful and impressive in itself but only a part of a much larger and more complex landscape. Unlike my response to the other places on this list, where my response is not greatly influenced by rigorous academic archaeology, at Stonehenge it is more akin to a complex murder mystery, or a skilfully arranged garden with carefully sited viewpoints. Understanding the relation with Durrington Walls, the Cursus, the Avenue, the barrows, Woodhenge, etc., gives one a sense of a complex and cosmopolitan society. A society that clearly were capable of far more than previously had been given credit for. Thus, it [Stonehenge] is a monument to the ingenuity of man, and reminds us that although we have now harnessed electricity, plastics, metals, powered flight etc., our ancestors were not dumb, were not stereotypical, heavy-browed individuals that populated books and leaflets in my childhood. And whilst I do not follow any of their practices relating to the annual seasonal cycle (far less the modern druidic invention around the summer solstice) it does remind me that even if they did not have a written record or even a well formed language, they would still have had an emotional palette broad enough to understand the issues in a Shakespearian tragedy, or respond to a soulful piece of music. So, to me the Stonehenge landscape is a monument to remind us not to view our current modern age as the high point of the human race, and indirectly, therefore, that we must take care with our environment as we too will be history before long and our follies will be there for future generations to view. The more we learn, the more we should be humble.

Stone circles seem to exert a significant power, a sense of completeness, inclusion, a 360-degree viewpoint. For me, however, both Stonehenge and Avebury are spoilt and diminished in their power by the proximity of the modern day, though Stonehenge has improved since the removal of the road and the re-siting of the visitor centre. Not actually in this area, but one of the most powerful and emotive prehistoric sites for me is the Ring of Brodgar in the Orkneys. I have visited it on several occasions, and it is at the same time remote, beautiful, simple, sculptural, architectural, evocative and mysterious. Much of its present beauty lies in the individual stones as well as the whole. They are eroded and lichen covered and makes each one worth studying for its beauty, Clearly, these surface features were not part of the original design so that my present-day appreciation is in response to how it appears in the 21st century. Many of the stones at Avebury also have an individual beauty but, except in certain lights or conditions (e.g. frost or snow), do not compete with Brodgar. Were the circles in Wiltshire more complete and without roads running through them, they would perhaps contain more of a magical aura for me.

Appendix E(iii): Reflective Account Extracts: Reflective Account K

Extract from Reflective Account K, resident, 40s

Avebury

Went to Avebury many times on school trips and spent lots of time running up and down the steep banks of the henge. As a child it was just an exciting place to play.

However, remember visiting the museum and in there, there was the bones of a Stone Age child in the floor that you would walk over and look at. Even as a child, I thought it was so sad that he was in a glass box in the floor for us to gaze at.

Avebury is so much more than just the henge and I've only realised this as an adult.

Silbury hill is just strange. A huge earth-made hill in the landscape. If passing at twilight, it takes on a mystical, eerie form.

Kennet long barrow up the hill from Silbury is very magical. Going inside it is a strange experience, knowing that our ancestors were laid to rest there. It is cold and dark even on the hottest day and whenever I've been there people have always been respectful.

The whole Avebury complex is massive, and I can't help but wonder why there? Why not somewhere else? If you approach Avebury up its long Avenue, it is spectacular, but the village in the middle, I feel, ruins the feel of the place.

At East Kennet there is a place that is covered in bits of stone and according to the public notice there is was where the stones where shaped. Seems too crowded by the landscape to me and why so far away from the stone circle?

Stonehenge
Why there?
Why place it in that place?
What was it really for?

Always aware it was there, but never visited it properly until I was an adult.
My grandfather used to visit it regularly when he was based in Bulford, before the war. He used to tell me that he would wander up there and was able to walk around and do what he liked!

In 2010, a group of my friends and I decided to visit the stones for both Solstices. The summer one was just a mass of people, all partying but with pockets of those for whom the Solstice had a special spiritual significance. The winter Solstice was much more special, only a few hundred people, a frosty morning and we saw the sun rise. We were welcomed to the druid ceremony and given time to pray to our own Gods if we so wished.

I always thought the winter Solstice was more important. Why celebrate the days getting shorter, as in the summer when I would have thought days getting longer would be more important.

Mind you, the solstice ceremonies are all made up modern things – we really have no idea what it was used for.

Stonehenge is best-approached from Larkhill – it just suddenly appears and then you can't help but feel, 'wow'.

Being inside the henge is magical, almost like stepping inside a building, everything outside becomes insignificant.

When trying to tell people where I live, I just say over the hill from Stonehenge. Most people from most countries are impressed by that and understand where in England I live.

The museum/visitor centre at Stonehenge has a skeleton in it. The Amesbury Archer was dug up, studied and I assume is now in a box in a storeroom somewhere. Cremation pots have been dug up and are in storerooms.

I think it is so sad and disrespectful that we dig up our ancestors and then put them on display or leave them in boxes in storerooms. I understand the need to study them, but once done, they should be reburied with due respect as they were all those years ago by those that loved and cared for them.

Nine Mile River starts out on Salisbury Plain and winds its way down through Bulford and into Amesbury. Outside of Bulford, it goes through a number of ponds. Here, it also winds its way through a wood. I have always found this place a bit eerie. You could imagine druids or suchlike in amongst the trees, practicing their religion!

Bulford flats – nearer to Bulford has an amazing collection of burial mounds, both those that sit on the land and those that sit in it. I hope whoever is buried there, still does lie peacefully. Out the back of Tidworth there are burial mounds (towards Everleigh). I was always led to believe these were Royal burials – that's pretty cool. They sit below a hill fort.

Appendix F(i): Personal Interview Extracts: Interview 10

Extract from Interview 10: Personal interview, resident, 50s

I: So, how far back do your family go then here do you know?

P: I've never actually done much in the way of research, but I know sort of my father-in-law started doing some and I imagine a fair, you know we've been in this sort of area you know for a sort of fair few hundred years. And then we sort of like migrated from somewhere and came in, we're just sort of local people with local names, and I think the, the sort of trades that their engaged in as well, you know my grandfather, and his father, were contract farmers, so the traditional just sort of you know you're working for a landlord sort of, you know, and you sort of move around in terms of where the work is, which was sort of quite a common thing back in the sort of, well, sort of through middle ages up until I presume sort of 1700/1800.

I: Really?

P: Yeah...[inaudible]...some time ago, so yeah, so I think we've sort of you know, as a family, we've been in the area for a long, long time. So, we, I don't know of any outside influences that have come through, perhaps potentially Somerset direction, there's connections into Somerset, I think, from what one member of the family said a long time ago, so whether we sort of migrated from there?

I: That's amazing. So, you must have a massive sense of place because of that, because of your family being here for so long, and all over it as well.

P: Mmm, yes, yeah.

I: And then how does that compare, or does that differ, or what's added to it, like do you get sense of place from the monuments as well in the landscape?

P: Yeah, so, I think, in a sense, I think because my family have been sort of grounded in the country and lived in those quite minimalistic-type ways, when we were young, as a family, you know, things like days out, or holidays were generally quite local, sort of camping-type things, and you know, even if you went on holiday, you know, we're not people, never went to hotels, never been abroad as a kid or anything like that, to Spain and things like lots of people have. So, all our holidays were fairly local to the Southwest of England or Wales you know in sort of camping, or in a campervan type-thing. And, but we used to spend a lot of time, you know weekends, evenings, actually sort of being out in the countryside, and I think it was quite, you sometimes in adulthood when you look back and you think, actually you know we had a really fantastic upbringing and a really fantastic childhood because I can't actually remember being unhappy about doing the things we did. And you know you compare some people who've had quite a lot of luxuries and things like that, and they didn't have particularly good childhoods. And I think a lot of the memories back to childhood are of things that you do actually out in the countryside, so you know with that sort of local to home, you know we used to spend a lot of time in Avebury - that was quite a frequent sort of visit. Silbury hill when you used to be able to climb up it and slide down it. West Kennet long barrow, the ridgeway - we used to sort of go walking or cycling along the ridgeway a lot on the section between sort of Seven barrows hill across Avebury over towards Hackpen hill.

I: Yeah.

P: Yes, so over that section there. And playing around on burial mounds and things like that, you know, so just sort of messing around in the countryside, and I think that, so I've got lots of memories of that. And also, of particularly the escarpment, the sort of north escarpment of the Marlborough downs, so from like Rybury camp direction, Kitchenbarrow hill, Rybury camp and all sort of Tan hill to Milk hill, Walkers hill and Knapp hill. And as we got older you sort of we used to get the flying gliders, you know...[inaudible]...gliders from there. So, we've always been sort of, what we've done has been integrated with that environment. And most of it has been associated with a lot of the historical places. You know whether, as a child you were there, you know not necessarily appreciating the sort of history of it, but it was more of a playground. But it was a comfortable playground.

I: Really?

P: Yeah. It sort of felt, um, we used to feel scared going into West Kennet long barrow, certainly as a kid. Even he [points to the dog], sometimes when, I think, he always goes in there, but sometimes at certain times of night or of an evening when it's dusky he won't go in there.

I: Really?

P: Yeah.

I: Isn't that funny?

P: Yeah. You sort of go in there and the dog's outside and he won't come in.

All: [laugh].

P: And you just go up other times and he's quite happy, you know.

I: Wow, how odd?

P: Yeah. So, I think in terms of sort of, a sense of place, I sort of feel quite connected to the landscape. You know right through childhood, even till when I got older and started riding motorbikes, you know off-road motorbikes and sort of on the plains going up to Salisbury Plain, and things. So, there's always been that connection with the landscape, and that sort of comfortableness with it, and I think probably at some point I obviously got interested in, I suppose the history of it as you sort of get older, and start, you know, wondering what the meaning of these things are, and I started engaging with them in a different way. And, so [trails off]. And I think in essence, you know it does give me that sense of place, but I think in terms of the whole region of sort of like chalklands, so you know, the amount of sort of fossils you find, you know and you sort of get these great sort of masses of like the cretaceous period and things and you can sort of see the different sort of eras within that period, you know with the different types of things you see and the different sort of soil levels quite clearly, and you sort of then end up into the sort of point where you get to like Fyfield down or Overton down you know with all the Sarsen - you sort of get into the sort of Eocene sort of Miocene-type period. So, you've sort of got this whole thing of the changing landscape which all then comes into a sort of few - I know where there are some Mesolithic sites but there's nothing there to see type-thing you know. But then to the Neolithic, and you just sort of, you know, to me, I just sort of see this whole sort of journey of the landscape you know in the sort of life that went before, and the sort of emergence of humans and then the sort of mark they've made on that landscape, you know whether it's, you know, sort of Neolithic-type things through to Bronze and Iron Age and later. And what I sort of find particularly, you know, so I actually feel connected to that journey in a way.

I: Really?

P: Yeah.

I: Wow.

P: So, that whole journey of things, I just feel part of that, you know. I sort of see myself as part of this sort of journey of what is visible in the landscape, you know from Cretaceous period right through to you know sort of, I suppose post-Saxon period. And, you know, we're here in this little bit here and it sort of gives you a sense of, a sense of place, but a sense of time as well in the enormity of the world, you know, or the universe. That actually we're just like one little speck, just like a little grain of chalk [laughs].

I: That's one way of looking at it.

P: You know, that's what we are in our entity...[inaudible]...but in a way, we actually all have got an impact on that landscape, you know, we all impact on it and leave a mark in some way. And I find myself sometimes, you know so out for a walk and you end up stood on some highpoint and you're just sort of scanning that area, and you're actually sort of like [breathes in to demonstrate impact] almost sort of thanking the people that were there, and sort of presented us with this, with the landscape that they've, you know, created. They went chopping down the trees and creating this sort of open expanse of sort of like land, and then all the sort of Neolithic and Bronze Age architecture in a way, in terms of what they've left us with.

I: Yeah.

P: Yeah, you sort of end up sort of like yeah thanking them for it.

I: Wow. What is it you're thanking them for, is it like, because when you say you're part of this kind of thread or journey, what does that bring up for you, like what does it make you feel, yeah - what's the feeling?

P: I think it's a sense of sort of, almost a sense of awe, particularly when you're sort of, you know you can be in a blizzard and on the, particularly on the Marlborough downs and high up in places and you know it's sort of like...[inaudible]...and you're sort of thinking, 'God, people actually lived here', you know in some form of dwelling, you know, or some form of shelter, and they had to go out and find food and survive. And like now you can sort of walk two miles or three miles and you get down to a little village, and you know, or five miles and you find a shop you know to buy a Mars bar or something, but you know then they were just purely sort of self-sufficient, just sort like I suppose hunter-gatherers or early agriculture-types stuff, but totally at the hands of the elements or what was around. I sort of find this, I've got a sense of awe and respect for actually how they've sort of come to sort of live like that and gradually develop the communities that have been there, you know, right through, you know as those communities got bigger. And I think as a child, I always assumed that you had sort of like Neolithic or Stone-age people as we used to know them at school, you know and they died off and some other people came along and then the Romans came along and killed them and then you know. So, it was just the Romans, and there was that sort of like, that sort of cut-off point where you had this type of people and then that type of people. And then you sort of I suppose, start discovering, so you're just getting engaged in the archaeology of things that, you know that it is just a continuum, an assimilation of those people. So, you know the Neolithic people assimilated to the new people who came in through the sort of Bronze and Iron-ages. The Romans came along and started some assimilation between Roman people, you know and people from Europe and the local communities. So, it's not a, just a dead cut-off and a separation of people. And that sort of like, and that almost gives me that sort of continuity for, makes you feel part of this long sort of like assimilation of different peoples. And sort of, you know, there is a connection, it doesn't sort of go back to here and stop, you know, and it's someone else's turn to be here and things like that.

I: So, is it a good feeling?

P: Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, I hate to think that they were sort of, you know sort of, not civilisations, that sort of peoples here that, you know, their ways and things like that just finished and ended and buried, and you know there was not sort of continuity in a simple way, you know. And yeah, the thought that actually some of those beliefs and practices, some of their culture continued through, and you know, and it sort of morphed into different things along the way, yeah to me makes it into this one long continuum of change, but you know it's connected, it's a connected community, you know - connected change.

I: Connected through time kind of like?

P: Yeah.

I: That's amazing - that's an amazing way of looking at it.

P: Yeah. So, then you get to here, and you know, then I'm just part of it on this site here with the archaeology report - we found some, I think they were Bronze-Age pits and trenches sort of somewhere over there.

I: Right.

P: Um, then there was Roman settlement here, um, as well, you know in that. So, there must have been some form of like early settlement however big, where there was like one family in Neolithic or Bronze-Age times, um, whether they were part of just you know - 'we'll stay here for three months and move up the hill for the next six months', you don't know, but, you know there was part of, you know you're part of that just continuum you know. So, you know there was a site here, you know the Romans came along and got a bit more, you know that got sort of flattened as you know the next sort of wave of people, Anglo-Saxons or whoever it was next came along and did a little bit more, and you know that sort of just change in landscape. And obviously with the later period then obviously you see sort of like the architecture sort of left from the different periods.

I: Yeah.

P: Um, but prior to that, it's really just the forms left in the land, you know -

I: That's all that we have around us kind of, yeah?

P: It is yeah, yeah.

I: So, it's you being part of this long story essentially, like? And how does that affect how you are in your life, do you think?

P: I think it gives me a much more grounded perspective.

I: Right.

P: And a sense of perspective on things as well.

I: Really?

P: Yeah. I think, yeah I don't tend to sort of like get really sort of frustrated or angry about things or really sort of like anxious about things because I tend to find myself just reflecting back to, 'well, we're just part of this long continuum of life in whatever form it is' and, you know, and I sort of think that is part of, you know, us as part of the universe as well, you know sort of more holistically in a big sense, so. I wouldn't necessarily say it's like a spiritual thing, but it's certainly, you know I go off and feel connected to a presence - there's a certain sort of aura or power of, you know the, I suppose the Marlborough Downs, you know, and its sort of associated areas, and that to me is just sort of coming from what's been there before, you know, in almost a respect for the environment and the way that people lived in that environment.

I: Yeah.

P: So, yeah. So, I sort of tend to find, I sort of look back to that perspective, just to balance things, you know, whether you get sort of het up or worried about things or angry about stuff, you sort of think, well it's pretty small in the scheme of things.

I: Wow - that's amazing. Sounds like pretty foundational kind of, to who you are actually?

P: Yes, yeah.

I: And how you live your life?

P: Yeah.

I: Wow.

P: So, and that reference back, is always back to the, you know, the sort of enormity of the landscape and the expanse of time that we sort of see around us, and just you know, you know, in a thousand years' time, you know we'll actually, you know - we're looking at stuff which was built, you know, five, six thousand years ago, and thinking, 'well, that's good', so, you know, one little incident, you know, which takes, you know, thirty minutes to resolve is nothing in the scheme of things, you know, in a thousand years' time no one will know that incident ever happened.

All: [laugh].

Appendix F(ii): Personal Interview Extracts: Interview 13

Extract from Interview 13: Personal interview, resident, 60s

P: Now the interest in the past is, it's the past that [pauses to find the words], my foundation - that 'foundates' me, really, the past do - the past do.

I: It grounds you, kind of?

P: Yeah, absolutely - that's where my foundations are all from, the past.

I: Yeah.

P: That's where I am right now, who I am right now, is not where I'm going, it's where I've been. Where I've been has made me who I am right now.

I: Yeah.

P: Now [pauses to think], with that you don't need, as such, to look and go into the future, because that is the foundation that will automatically take you into the future - the future will sort itself out, destiny will sort itself out. You just need to be there to meet it. Now if you're not in the now, and you're trapped in the past, or you're focused in the future of what you're up to, where are you going to meet - you'll miss it.

I: Yeah, yeah, I see what you mean.

P: Do you get that?

I: Oh, completely, completely.

P: Do you know what, it's very, very difficult to explain how something makes you feel inside. You can only use it in picture term, or metaphoric term, but that's the only way that I can do it.

I: No, no, I know what you mean. And this is why what I'm doing is hard, because it's trying to get people to verbalise that 'feeling', you know?

P: Yes.

I: And it sounds like, it sounds like, from what you've said that the past is, yeah, that it's important for you because of the foundation aspect, but also, I'm wonder, because you, I get the sense that you like simplicity and a simple life?

P: Absolutely [said emphatically].

I: And does, is there a connection between that and the past for you?

P: I do feel that, yes, you see, don't need the house, don't need the car, don't need the bike, don't need any of it. Shelter and a campfire does me.

I: Which is what you were saying at the beginning?

P: Absolutely, yes. And I think, right, as a person, right, that, and I have, I've lived with just the necessities in life. Now [pauses to think], I think if you can adapt, shouldn't do - living with necessities

should be natural. Now I find them natural, I don't need to adapt. And I do, basically, as much as live like it now and then. I have the greatest of light when we have a power cut, because seriously me coal fire gets lit, the grill goes on the coal fire, and, how amazing is it to sit there by the coal fire with the egg and bacon on the go?

I: Mmm.

P: And again, it goes back to that, you know, primeval, that real basic instinct feeling, not the rose tint glass glitz that life can bring to you.

I: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

P: It's what you are, what you bring to life.

I: Yeah, yeah.

P: And I think whatever, or combination of things happened to me as a young child, it left me connected with that. Now maybe that's because sometimes in my darkened loneliness, that's all I had?

I: That connection?

P: Yes, that's all I had - was inside me.

I: Yeah, was you, yeah, yeah, yeah.

P: See, and I think as children, I think we're susceptible to all these emotions and feelings, but like the archaeology, we don't quite understand them [laughs]. But, I channelled into, I don't know, I don't know, but it's, it's a little flame in me, and it's always been there. I haven't always been able to exercise it, because situation, circumstance, places, wherever, hasn't allowed that. Well, mate, this [the archaeology] has opened it right up!

I: Really?

P: Well, yes, yes it has, yeah. Yeah, look, I've found, right, as you know, I'm older years in life - I'm not ancient, but I'm older years in life, and I've always had the ability, right, I've never been a game player. I don't want to be one of the eighteen or the twenty-two, or the eight of the team that's on the field - I like the side lines.

I: Mmm.

P: I like to look at it, understand it, know how to play it, if I was so inclined, but you get the whole perspective, the whole fact before your eyes. Now I think at that point, you can't alter that fact, only your way of looking at it. And it has a 360 degree, so just don't take your own opinion as being it. Take a sidewards step, have another look, have another opinion. If you end up arguing with yourself then drop the whole subject, have a brew and forget it [laughs].

I: Yeah [laughs].

P: But that's how I think, you know, sort of, I don't know, how we work possibly.

I: Yeah, yeah.

P: But, I think the one thing that we all have that are still, in a changing world that has changed so much, and I find it - expression these days is, I really am an old-fashioned boy lost in a modern world - but even so, even the children I take to school now, and they range from 8-year-old to teenagers, we all have a common characteristic - basic human instinct. Common with us all, and I think it always has been like that, and it always, that's it, it's in our make-up. And I think it doesn't matter what period of time you go through.

I: It's still there?

P: Yeah - that fundamental foundation of those elements in a person has always been there. So [pause], genetically [pause], somewhere in me [pause], that is there, and maybe it's that, that when you actually come into contact with it, that triggers that - you know it, we all know it.

I: Coming into contact with ancient stuff?

P: Yes, yes, yeah. As I said to you, right, like...[inaudible]...down, that door handle, that thing that, it's just something triggers it and that's how you feel.

I: Yeah.

P: Now is that going right back to [pause] your internal basic instinct? Because at the end of the day, it is there in our genetic make-up.

I: Kind of who we actually are, you mean?

P: Oh, absolutely, yes. Yeah, no, absolutely, yeah, yeah, right from the very back. Look, if you think about it, I'm walking in the wake of my ancestors - they've been here ever since the word 'dot', you're ever since the word 'dot'. We all have. And there is common characteristics, instincts in a person - the DNA, so on and so forth. And, and I think, although, yes, it becomes a different world around, we develop, right, mentally around that.

Appendix F(iii): Personal Interview Extracts: Interview 14

Extract from Interview 14: Personal interview, resident, 50s

I: So, when it comes to the wider landscape, you've got all these other things like West Kennet and Silbury - does that stuff have as much significance for you as - ?

P: Oh yes, definitely, I think. I mean I describe West Kennet long barrow as almost the jewel in the crown because it's just unbelievable. The setting itself because as you walk up to the long barrow, where the tombs are, it's elevated so by the time you get up there, the view is amazing. But just the experience of walking inside the tombs and knowing they date back 3600 BC that's just an experience in itself.

I: Yeah. So, can you, if you could, could you put your finger on what that experience is?

P: That it's - and I often say it - that it's remained untouched. You know. There's no development, there's no, you know - you're walking in those tombs and they've been there all those years, almost 5000 years, and you know there's nothing that's touched them since, you know. And other than loads of feet and hands nothing else has touched them, you know. And I think that's what's nice about Avebury. Because you look at so many different places, you know, and I know it sounds ridiculous, but even my paddock – nothing's ever been built on there, nothing's ever been, other than being ploughed and the grass being cut, you know nothing's ever, and it's as it was all them years ago, you know. And that's what I always think. And I think that's the appeal of Avebury as well.

I: So, there's something about almost being, something, what am I trying to say, something original or some, yeah - ?

P: Yeah, I mean I used to get invited to the archaeological digs and I think people sometimes look at me as if to say, 'God, you get excited about the simplest things', but, you know when you're at this archaeological dig, and 18 inches below the surface they find a Bronze Age spearhead, and then you hold it in your hand, I think that's something special, you know, I do. And I sometimes think, do people think I'm silly for thinking this, but you know I think it is. I remember standing around in a circle and holding this spearhead and your supposed to look at it and pass it on, and everyone was looking down the line as if to say what's the hold up, you know, and it was me just sort of conjuring up all thoughts about how many years it dates back and what it was used for, and the fact that it was probably dropped on the ground and then, you know, I know the landscape changes, but to find it only 18 inches below the surface, I mean it's just incredible. And again, no one's touched that since it was dropped, you know, I don't know - 5000 years ago or whenever it was, you know.

I: You were the first people to touch it?

P: Exactly, and that, I suppose that just typifies my point really, that there's so much that has just stayed the same.

I: It sounds like there's something about the connection to whoever dropped that or whatever was happening at that point in time - there's something special about - ?

P: I mean a lot of people come here because of the spiritual connection and that's never been something on my mind, but a lot of people do. And that's good as well. You know we have a lot of people who have come here because of that spiritual connection, and feel that it's, that they've got that connection with the place. And even you know, it's amazing because, you know we have so many people come here that are coming for hand-fasting, you know. And you think what a lovely thing to do. And you know such an ancient tradition that is still being carried on now, and you know it's great.

I: So, it's this idea of something again, something's not, it's staying the same -

P: Yeah.

I: It's unchanging kind of, yeah, wow. And, so when you talk about this feeling, like 'home' for you, what does that mean for you?

P: I think it's difficult to describe, but it just felt right when we saw it, you know. And when we saw the house, and we've done a lot to the house, and it was in quite a bad condition when we took it over - it just felt right. You know it just felt like home, I suppose.

I: Immediately?

P: Immediately, yeah. And I mean my wife and I were 'wowed' when we drove into Avebury for the first time, and we didn't know what was going on. And still you learn things, you know. And if I'm completely honest, I mean history was a bore for me when I was at school. But now it's a huge appeal to me. I mean I just absorb history now.

I: Really?

P: And it wasn't my way before, you know. Maybe it was the method of teaching or what it was trying to teach us, but maybe that was some of it and I always think it's the job of the teacher to motivate and inspire you to learn as well and try and find out the best way of you learning. And I just soak up history now like there's no tomorrow because, I suppose because it means more to me now. Because I'm living where they're talking about. And I think that's probably the thing actually, that I'm living where they're talking about, and where we're talking about. Where before, where you were learning history, you can't place yourself, can you. Because I'm living here, that's probably why I'm so interested.

I: So, it added all up and it's more real for you, yeah?

P: And what's really good is that people ask you questions, and it's a real challenge sometimes. You know you think, 'oh yeah, I know the answer to that', and occasionally you get one - and I can't think of one at the moment - but occasionally you get one and you think, 'ah actually that's a good question'. And I find out the answer, you know - there and then, I literally go on my iPad and literally find out the answer and tell them straight away because it's annoying that I don't know it, you know, so you do learn from people as well.

I: Right, yeah.

P: There was one guy that stayed here with his son, and you remember the film Indiana Jones and etc? Do you remember Sean Connery and the way he dressed -?

I: Yeah.

P: In a tweedy sort of suit and very old fashioned, you know. Well, there was a guy sat here with his son, and he was dressed just like Sean Connery was in that film - I couldn't believe it, he even looked like him a bit! And he was asking me question after question, and I was thinking, 'I've never been probed so much', and at the end he said, 'that's a bit unfair really', I said, 'what do you mean?', he said, 'well, you've done really well', he says, 'but I'm a historian', and I said, 'oh, that was unfair, testing me out there', but he said, 'no, you done really well', he said, 'you didn't slip up at all'. So that was quite a confidence boost. But I just wondered why his son was just sitting there sort of smirking because obviously he realised what was going on. But yeah, that was good.

I: So, it sounds like you're always learning all the time here - you're constantly learning more about the place?

P: Yeah, but you have to be open to learning as well don't you - you only learn in life if you want to learn. And if you're open to learning, and I suppose taking the analogy earlier that because I didn't like history before, but now it relates to the place where I live, I soak it up all the time now, and I'm searching for that as well, so I suppose it's easy to learn. I suppose that's it really - it's easy to learn about a place when you've got an affinity with it.

I: And what happens to you, the more you know about it - does that change how you feel about it even more?

P: Yeah, definitely, yeah, definitely, I think. And it truly isn't just my business here, and I mean obviously we're running a business here, and it truly isn't just that because it's more than that - it's our home as well.

I: Yeah - you're kind of set up here now. So yeah, going back to the 'home' idea - you said it feels right, or it felt right when you got here. What, I'm trying to drill down here into what that means - ?

P: Difficult to describe really. I suppose, we've always liked, although we've had city life in the past you know living in [location] and working in [location] for sort of 20 years - we've always sort of seen city life. But proportionately, we've always tried to live in the country, and I think because this particular place had six acres that went with it, and the neighbouring land is either farmland or hills or trees and sort of thing, and I think that appealed to us straight away. And the village life, immediately you can work out, you know, it isn't a big village and you know, I think that was the appeal, that it was just surrounded by countryside, and the village was small. Because one, we don't like city life, not even suburban really - we want to be in the country. So, it just felt right. And my wife's always been quite ambitious, you know because the property was in quite a state, but she was sort of, she had the vision to think about what it could look like, and here we are.

I: So, it sounds like you put a lot of love into the house?

P: Yeah we have. And I think, without getting too sentimental, I think because the previous people who lived here before, had bought the house in 1930s, and the original part of the house is still here. And we were only the second owners, you know, that we almost felt a responsibility to keep up the good work and -

I: Look after it?

P: Look after it, yeah. I suppose so, yeah.

I: So, when you talk about the landscape and all the sites and all that, is there one or more particular parts of it that stand out for you in particular, that mean more for you than other parts of it?

P: Yeah, I think so. I think, the long barrow, which I mentioned a while ago. And everyone I talk to, you know, once they've seen it are probably as passionate about it as I am. I just think it's amazing. And probably coupled with that, I think everything around Avebury is lovely, but I think the manor house is special as well, and I think that's because when we first moved here I saw the manor house - it's always looked lovely from the outside, but the manor house inside was quite dark, dingy, damp, and I suppose uninteresting really. And then since the BBC done this programme, 'To the Manor Reborn', and they done it up inside, I suppose I, because I saw it before and after, and I suppose I feel a connection there permanently now, because I saw the before and after, and the after is just amazing.

I: Do you know, I've never been in it.

P: No, you should do, it's just, um. They've done it in periods of time so, yeah. But it's done, they've got all the experts to do it properly, you know, so the ornate sort of painting and everything, so it doesn't just look nice, it's relevant to different parts of history, you know. And not particularly at one time - each room is done at a different time, and the Queen Anne bedroom is just, it's just amazing, you know - big 4 poster bed with curtains and straw rather than a mattress. And again, just the ornate painting and just the intricacy about what they've done is amazing really - it's worth a look.

I: So, how has it affected you as a person since you've been here, like how have you developed or changed, or have you noticed any difference in yourself since being here?

P: I'm calmer.

I: Really?

P: Yeah, definitely calmer. My brother-in-law, I hadn't seen him for quite a while and he had some business in [location] recently and he stayed over and he said, you know because he doesn't see me very often - he said, 'you're more relaxed and calmer', and those sorts of qualities, whereas before I was sort of, not stressed - because I've never really been a stressful person - but just a bit calmer generally really, and he said, 'you're much more considered', so yeah, I thought that was quite nice. Because he's known me obviously since I was a teenager.

I: Yeah, so he can see the change really clearly?

P: Yeah. But I think it's just the environment, you know, I think working in [city], particularly [city] for 20 years, you are what the environment is sometimes aren't you, and you adapt yourself to the environment, and you know, working for 20 years in [city], you can't necessarily be calm, you know. But come out of [city], and here you can be. Yeah, and I've noticed it in myself really.

I: And do you, I mean obviously country life does that to you, but do you think there's something specific about the place itself and the area that's contributed?

P: Yeah, I think it's the added thing of Avebury really, you know the countryside is one sort of aspect of it, but the other aspect is that you're just surrounded by history and I think that just sort of calms the whole situation down really to be honest.

I: Really?

P: And the sort of people, and there are an awful amount of – awful, that sounds – a huge amount of people that come here because of the spiritual aspect. And I suppose they give you a different view on life and a different, you know. And you know, subconsciously maybe you think yeah perhaps I should calm down a bit, and perhaps I should, because they just take everything, you know these guys that come for the spiritual aspect, they just - 5 minutes of talking to them and you can just feel that, they're a lot calmer and a lot more at peace with themselves, and yes I think that probably has an effect as well.

I: But it's fascinating what you're saying about the idea of history being around you, having an effect -

P: Oh, I think that's without a doubt, yeah without a doubt.

I: That's amazing, gosh, so is it a kind of a levelling of a sort?

P: Yeah, yeah I think. Yeah, I think if, and I have been, if you're in a place where they're building new houses or they're, there's huge development or, you know, I think subconsciously you feel as if, ' oh right, I've got to step up, step up the pace, and this is a new way of living, this is development, this is pace, this is the future, this is modern', and you almost subconsciously probably pick up the pace. Where if you lived in somewhere like this, you generally tend to calm down a bit more, you know.

I: Right, because it's slower, well it's unchanging like you said?

P: Yeah definitely.

I: I see what you're saying , now, yeah that makes perfect sense.

P: I think since we've done the business, more than ever before, because I literally talk about it with every visitor that arrives, I suppose subconsciously again, it just reminds me of what, where we live.

Appendix F(iv): Personal Interview Extracts: Interview 19

Extract from Interview 19: Personal interview, resident, 20s

I: Let's do some phenomenology. I just realised - I took the students out yesterday -

P: Mmm mmm.

I: - On that walk. And it's very much based on Chris Tilley's *Phenomenology of Landscape* book, and I don't know, because a lot of them probably haven't, they could have been First Years, they probably haven't done a theory module, may never have come across that. It's basically just being-in-the-landscape, being-in-the-world, just...[inaudible]...just tuning into what your experience of the place is, so that's what Chris Tilley did - he went around, he took a...[inaudible]...using the Dorset cursus, and he basically just...[inaudible]...and just documented everything he experienced - so everything he could see, but everything...[inaudible]...one side of the monument or the other side, what he could see from that direction or that direction, or how it felt for a stone to be beside him, or, so, it's those very basic kind of physical things. So, maybe we could do that now and see what we can pick up when we're going in?

P: Yeah. Well I guess, for me as well, well, it definitely puts things in perspective, kind of. It's, in the way that this is obviously a clear indicator that it is history and you're just one small person in a long line of history that's thousands, millions of people before. So, but that's, I think, with everything, with every monument, you kind of get that as well.

I: The sense of being part of something greater?

P: Yeah.

I: And what does that do for you?

P: Well it kind of makes me excited in the fact that I get to come to these sites, or find new sites and actually learn about them, as an individual. It kind of gives it more meaning in a way. It's not just - for some people this would just be a hill surrounded by some lumps of rock, but it puts it, it gives it more meaning as a site. I know you can get more information from it and go from there. But we also, it just makes you feel overwhelmed in a way.

I: Really?

P: Yeah. Well, I think so - it's definitely this, as you were saying, a sense of being part of something bigger.

I: Yeah.

P: It also just makes you feel, I guess in a way, lucky, that I'm in a position where I've been living around here, when I get to come and do the dig over at Marden and learn more about my homeland's history. Yeah, I don't know, it's weird.

I: Yeah, yeah. No, well let's go with it and see what comes up.

P: Yeah.

[We enter the long barrow]

I: There are swallows nesting there.

P: Yeah. That's another part of Wiltshire as well - it's kind of got all the sounds around you, yet you wake up with the birds chirping and things like that - you just kind of get used to it so it's just kind of what you're used to. And then obviously when you're living in Reading, and it's not necessarily like that, you don't necessarily get that. I don't know, it just, sometimes seems odd that there's nothing there, like not the birds or anything like that. It's not. And also, even when you're walking your dog or something, you stand in a field, not necessarily by any monuments, you can just look around and just appreciate the view, not, just the fields or whatever it is.

I: The countryside?

P: Yeah. It could just be yourself, in a way. You don't have to worry about anything else other than being in the moment kind of, just by yourself, just easy and you don't really have to worry about anything.

I: Yeah. So, the landscape gives you that basically? And do you think it's just the natural landscape that does that, or the combination of the cultural and the monuments as well?

P: I think it's both. I think it's probably more, the landscape is kind of, you're just secluded as an individual and then when you come to the other sites, it kind of puts you as the individual, and obviously you're used to that landscape, but then it also links it to the wider context of what the actual site means. So, yeah.

I: It's both. Let's have a break. I'll stop asking you questions - I feel like I'm interrogating you! Let's have a wander round and then we can come out and chat about it.

P: Ok, that's fine. Have you been here before?

I: I have, yeah, yeah. But it's new every time and I forget, you know, what it's like.

[Another visitor to the site engages us in conversation inside the long barrow]

P: [After the visitor leaves] Well, something like that as well - as he said, he's been travelling down, kind of just, it's not just the people in Wiltshire that have an affection or an affinity with this landscape. It kind of just makes you feel proud, and then, I don't know, more, as I keep saying, you know, more lucky, yet he has to keep travelling down. And it's clearly something that he's that passionate about and yet I get to have it every day, pretty much, it's just something like that.

I: Yeah, and to examine it in detail?

P: Mmm.

[We silently explore the long barrow for a few minutes]

I: So, have you been inside a long barrow before?

P: No. This is the first.

I: Wow.

P: Yeah. I went up to the All Cannings long barrow and I've seen Adam's Grave, but I haven't been in any of them. It's just from walking around the outside.

I: Right.

P: Yeah.

I: That's amazing.

P: Mmm.

I: So, what comes to mind then?

P: You get a, a respect I guess, for the ways people lived. And, I don't know, I guess I'm kind of in awe at the moment.

I: Really?

P: Yeah. Well the effort they would've gone to make something like this, just shows how strong their beliefs were, and their determination. So, yeah, it just kind of, again, all the effort that went into it, everything that was required for it, just kind of, I don't know it's kind of overwhelming, in a way.

I: Yeah.

[Continue to explore in silence for a few minutes]

I: Do you want to go out?

P: Yeah.

[We exit the tomb]

Appendix F(v): Personal Interview Extracts: Interview 32

Extract from Interview 32: Personal interview, resident, 40s

I: So, it just kind of happened that you ended up here?

P: Yeah, yeah, a bit of an accident. But we always used to get really excited coming up to visit my sister. And then as soon as, there was two kinds of points where the girls would get really excited when they were little, and one was - there's a weird sort of bump in the road as you see the 'Welcome to Wiltshire' sign.

I: Yeah.

P: And then obviously Stonehenge.

I: Yeah.

P: So, the kids would scream in the back of the car and get really excited. Soon as we saw that, we were close. So, everyone was really fine and cool about coming up and living here and making our lives here.

I: Okay, so there was something, already you were sort of interested in - ?

P: Yeah -

I: - connecting to the monuments?

P: Yeah.

I: So, have you always had that interest - ?

P: Yeah.

I: It's not something that just came recently?

P: No. I mean I did ancient history at A-level, so I did classics, you know, Greeks, Romans, and went to Greece - looked at all the monuments there. Always wanted to go to Italy, but never managed to get there - still on my bucket list.

I: Yeah.

P: So, yeah, there's always been a bit of a fascination. Um [pauses to think], yeah, can't really explain it, I don't think - just a bit of a fascination with it.

I: Right.

P: And I'd never been to Stonehenge until I actually lived here. We'd just driven past it a few times. But my first visit was - I did part of a project when I was on my teaching course. It was part of a geography project, so we had to take a bear and do it as if we were doing it for children that we were learning to teach. So, I took the bear, and I decided to go to Stonehenge. So, we had a day at Stonehenge - we put him on the stones and took pictures of it and then made this kids book from it and did lesson plans from it. So, everyone else did normal stuff locally and I went a bit wild and put him at Stonehenge [smiles].

I: And that was your first time at Stonehenge?

P: Yeah.

I: Right. So, when you were driving up that time, and the kids were getting excited about seeing the monuments, were you getting the same buzz as well?

P: Yeah, definitely.

I: Right. So, you were already kind of like feeling the 'vibe' or whatever?

P: Yeah, yeah.

I: And what was it like going to see it for the first time?

P: Yeah, really, it was good - we took so many photos. I think it's one of those weird things that once you've seen it, you've seen it, but, so if I'm having a bit of a down day, and as a single mum I get that, I will do my walk, and I will walk, sort of, Durrington Walls up to the back of Stonehenge, because you can walk right up to the back of it.

I: Right.

P: So, you can still get that - you can walk along the cursus and across and up and cheat them and not have to pay for it [laughs]!

I: Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly, and it's almost a better walk, actually, in a way.

P: It is. And there's hardly ever anyone out there.

I: I've noticed that - it's strange, isn't it?

P: There's hardly anyone out there. There's a few dog-walkers that will come up from Larkhill, across the back. But, yeah, you can walk out there and not meet anybody.

I: It's amazing, isn't it? So, when you say you have a 'down day' and you go out, is it just the walking and being out in the landscape, or is there something about being in a landscape with ancient monuments?

P: I think probably a bit of both.

I: Right.

P: I think probably a bit of both. I wouldn't want to walk across a field with nothing in it.

I: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, okay - it wouldn't have the same - ?

P: I think there's an element of, um, I think these days they kind of call it mindfulness I guess? Where you just walk across, and you can see weird lumps and bumps, and you think, 'what's that? How's that work?'. And then you start scanning the rest of the landscape - you're trying to work it out in your head, what went where and trying to visualise stuff. And I always find it really difficult to visualise what it would've looked like and all that kind of stuff, so, I think when I go up and stand on the edge of the cursus, I play it out in my head again, and I look at the map, and I try and work it out all the time, and that takes your mind off of whatever else is going on.

I: Okay. Oh, I see what you mean - so you're engaging with the past as like, it's sort of triggering your imagination almost?

P: Yeah. It's a distraction from anything else that's going on that's bothering you.

I: Yeah, yeah, yeah - it's like another world almost - ?

P: Yeah.

I: - to escape to or something?

P: Yeah.

I: I see what you mean, yeah.

P: Constantly on the lookout for other little bits and things. And, I know there's other people that do the same thing. You know I've got a friend who, I see things on Facebook, and he's walked across the Durrington Walls, and he's gone kicking the molehills to see what comes us. So, I think he does the same sort of thing.

I: Yeah, yeah.

P: And if you, like round here, you know what I was saying about there's so many different monuments and so many different things, you kind of feel like you're at the centre of the universe, because you're about an hour form anywhere important, and everything is here. And it's all walking distance from each other.

I: So, are you always aware of it then?

P: Yeah. Yeah.

I: Right, yeah, that's really interesting. Because you probably, did you read through the - did I send you stuff?

P: Yeah, you did. You sent me a load of stuff. And that was good, actually, that kind of got me to think about it, yeah.

I: Yeah, yeah. And as well as the imaginative 'getting out of yourself', what comes to mind or what - I suppose what I'm trying to understand is, and it doesn't have to be emotional, it can be anything, but it's like what does having ancient monuments around you, yeah, what does it make you feel when you're thinking about these things, and how old they are and - ?

P: I don't know, really. It's difficult because I know other people don't have the same feeling or experience. You know, I know local people get really fed up with it, because it's just tourist central. And at times like the Solstice, it would be so amazing just to go somewhere, and just be on your own for that, but other people don't want that, they want like, I don't know - it's a really hard thing to kind of pin down. I think we're incredibly lucky to have everything here, and have it so fierce, and so, you know, on the doorstep, but that's my passion. A lot of local people don't feel that, and I don't think they have that feeling. But it, I don't know, it makes my head run away, I guess. You know, I think of things like - there are probably people still living in Amesbury that their families have never moved away. You know, they could well be way back, actually some of the first people that settled here. And that makes my head explode and I like that [laughs].

I: Really? So, there's something about that kind of connection sort of?

P: Yeah, and there are some really old families in Amesbury, and that kind of makes you think, you know, why have they never moved away, why are those families still here, what it is that draws them to being here? And I think that's something really difficult to quantify.

I: Really?

P: Yeah, really difficult to quantify. But I totally feel at home here, and I've been here a relatively short time, considering my age. I've been here like eight years, and I totally feel at home here, totally feel comfortable here, and yeah. I don't know - it's a really hard thing to say, it's a really hard thing to say. We're incredibly lucky. And it winds me up when people start banging on about tunnels and destroying stuff.

I: Yeah.

P: They just don't get it. And I think they just don't get that feeling of 'this is really, really, really old stuff'.

I: Yeah.

P: But I don't know, it's a weird thing.

I: Yeah. No, no, and I think that's what I'm chasing as well - is trying to find out why this stuff is so important for people.

P: Have you been to the Blick Mead site?

I: I have, yeah, yeah.

P: Okay, so that's really weird. That will give you weird vibes.

I: Really?

P: Yeah [laughs], it's really weird.

I: In what way?

P: I don't know, there's something so, because you kind of go through the woodland, and you pop out, and it's this little mini clearing. And there's all that stuff just underneath the ground. Then you've got the spring. And the water is weird, it's a weird colour, it's really still, you can see bubbles coming up in it. And that is just a little magical place, it's like going back to, it's like a little fairy story.

Appendix G(i): Group Interview Extracts: Group Interview 1

Extract from Group Interview 1, visitors, 19-49

[Conducted sitting in a circle in the middle of the Sanctuary, Overton Hill]

I: So, maybe we could have a chat about what we've been looking at and experiencing? What are your thoughts so far?

P1: It's great.

P2: Really interesting walk to do, especially sort of trying to look at it in a different mindscape. And seeing other people's opinions of it as well, not just the people in the group, but other walkers and people in the henge, so you sort of saw other tourists, and then people who were clearly trying to turn it into a ritualistic feature [referring to the man doing a ritual performance on one of the stones in Avebury circle]. So, it was quite interesting seeing the impression that made, personally, to that. So, wanting to go and see it, and then also seeing people trying to make assumptions on what it was.

I: Yeah, yeah. It was interesting that you had that.

P2: Sort of throwing flower petals over himself.

I: Yeah. No, it is interesting. Anyone else?

P1: I do yoga back home, so it's really easy for me, not easy, but it's like really comfortable for me to get into like a silent mode, basically. So, I really like being in the nature and seeing what other people make of it. So, I just find it really comfortable, not working in it particularly, but just being in it all the time, so that's why I didn't talk to anyone.

I: Oh, you've been in 'the zone', kind of?

P1: Yeah, I don't really like talking about it, because I don't know how to put in words, what I really feel.

I: Yes, I know exactly what you mean, yeah. And I mean that's why I was saying maybe write stuff down.

P1: Yeah, I like writing, but not particularly talking about it.

I: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, and it's different for everybody.

P1: Yeah.

P3: I thought it was quite strange how when you're in the ditch area you can't actually see what's going on outside of it, so you're kind of in there and then as you walk along you can see more and more and more.

I: Yeah, yeah.

P3: ...[Inaudible]...

I: It's strange, isn't it? Do you feel like you've just come out of something?

P4: Yeah [laughs].

All: [Laugh]

P5: It's almost like you're into a new world, like a new belonging, a new area, if that makes sense? Like a space and a different focus.

P1: Yeah, like a gate to Narnia.

All: [Laugh]

P5: Yeah, it's exactly that.

P1: Basically [laughs].

I: It's like a different landscape?

P5: Yeah.

P4: Definitely.

P1: Like all your problems still are there, but you're just so much more calmer.

I: Really?

P1: Yeah, I feel that way. I still think about like the things I usually think about, I don't go into like someone else's brain, but I'm just really calm about it. Like pausing.

I: Yeah.

P2: It's also quite a nice relaxing time to just organise the things that are stressing you and just sort of think about how to deal with them, and that I think in itself is quite relaxing. It's a good sort of 'off time' just to look at it from an almost more objective view as if you're sort of stepping back to look at it.

I: Yeah. And do you think - is it the natural landscape that's doing that or is it the combination of that and the monuments or - ?

P2: Looking at the history always calms me down, so.

I: Really?

P2: It's also really close to home, so it reminded - like when we were walking through the fields where there were crops growing, it just felt like being back in the fields back on the farm really [smiles], so.

I: So, you have memories here?

P2: Mmm.

P6: I feel like you're just really overwhelmed by the actual size and like where you are, that you don't really think about anything else. You're like in the moment, like, 'oh wow', like...[inaudible]...

P5: ...[Inaudible]...

P7: You forget time - time sort of disappears when you're walking round in a circle - you don't notice the circle quite so much and it's like you can just continue.

All: Yeah.

P7: And you...[inaudible]...don't really realise it, you just keep going, so it's like a never-ending walk.

I: Yeah, wow.

P7: ...[inaudible]...

All: [Yeah].

I: Can you put it in perspective of Marden [where the students have been excavating]?

P4: I don't feel much at Marden.

P1&P6: Yeah.

P4: It's just, there's so many distractions.

P3: It's so big you don't really realise where you are -

P4: Yeah.

P3: - you're just in grass [laughs].

P2: Also, Marden's associated with work [laughs].

All: [Laugh].

I: It's all connected. So, Marden would be, basically that direction [pointing south]. So, you've got two long hills there, and there's a little one in the middle, and I think the White horse is just behind that, the other side of it. So, if you go straight down, you'll hit Marden. But, yeah, so, there's this continuity going all the way down and then it obviously goes on to Stonehenge as well...[inaudible]...

P1: ...[Inaudible]...to see where you are...[inaudible]...Marden...[inaudible]...over to where there's trees in the way. It's so massive, you don't really know what's what.

I: I know what you mean. Have you walked what you can of the henge bank at Marden?

P1: Some of it.

P6: Some of it.

I: Have you started in the English Heritage bit? There's a little bit across the road from where we are?

P6: Just briefly last year.

I: And you can see it a bit more.

P6: Mmm.

P4: Okay, yeah. Because you just know it's there - it's like you know you're working on it, but you don't really, it's, yeah [trails off].

P3: And if the mound and the ditches were like they are at Avebury, it might make you feel a bit more.

P4: Oh, definitely.

P3: But because it's all ploughed and stuff it's -

P4: People live there and there's a road.

P3: Yeah.

Appendix G(ii): Group Interview Extracts: Group Interview 2

Extract from Group Interview 2, visitors, 21-30

P7: I can't help thinking - I think it's the chalk on that ridge, but also the trench-bank element, and then, again, with these markers about it - the similarity between this as a monument, or the way we mourn through this monument when you visit - like has anyone been to visit World War Two trenches?

All: Mmm.

P7: The form - this like pleasant, grassy skin that covers the soil that then makes beautiful, makes green, this undulation of pitted landscape, feels really similar to me.

All: Yeah.

P2: That's so weird you said that because the first thing I said when we went into that circle was, we went to Berlin recently, and it really reminds me of the Jewish memorial, all the stones in the centre. They're like, weird, yeah.

I: Right. So, something around memory and reminders, and things like that?

All: Mmm

P4: I think you can tell when people have messed with the landscape because it's quite porous, I think. And I do think you, I don't know, there's some kind of weird sixth sense when you know people have probably been there, and it is, it's quite, not a creepy feeling, it's quite a nice feeling, but it is quite, I don't know - you feel like you're trespassing sometimes.

I: Really?

P6: Yeah, I get that.

P4: Like in places like that I feel like, they'd probably be a little bit irritated if I'm just cracking out my notebook and taking photos and that. It's a special, bit of respect - you know how people in cathedrals nowadays go you can't take any photos?

All: Mmm.

P4: They don't really have a say over that, but I think if they did, they probably would have a bit of a go at me.

All: Mmm.

I: That's interesting.

P7: But how does that contrast with say, when - if what [name] was talking about yesterday is true - where with the barrows, people had a different relationship with the bones and would enter in, move around the bones? They had that different relationship to death and body. We have a reverance of body and of like, you know, it's something you don't - it's just curious.

P4: Oh no, not necessarily if you were buried there - maybe the space would've been more sacred to them.

P6: It's interesting that they would do something like that with bodies, because we react that way because it's an evolutionary thing, right, because there's a danger that, you know, infection and viruses from dead bodies. So, it's weird that they didn't seem to - they'd kind of mess [laughs] around with bones and stuff. It's strange.

P4: Well, they did leave it out on the hills to get picked at by - they did, I can't remember what the word is?

P3: Sky burial?

I: Excarnation?

P4: Yeah, excarnation. And then you go collect the bones afterwards. So, I guess if they're clean and stuff, then it's not so bad. But I think it's more, obviously there is an emotional side, and if you live with the exact same people - like in a book I was reading recently, it was about, that there's only a certain number of people you can remember in your head, like exactly, and have a relationship to, and it's like a hundred to a hundred and fifity. So, if you lived in a community that was like easily that small or thereabouts, you would know every single person. So, when someone died, you would want to know exactly what happened to them and like where they were and all this stuff. I guess nowadays it's more just like, there's so many people that you can't really have that sort of relationship with death.

P6: And it's so easy to communicate with people every day.

P4: And then you're just like, 'oh, another one's gone', like, over and over again. Like, it's so different.

I: It's different, yeah.

P4: At the same time, you don't know if they had maybe a more healthier attitude to death. I don't think at the moment we've got a particularly great, maybe because of what you said, yeah. But then again, I don't think we like to talk about it, because I think we're scared of it. When, if you look at how they treated it centuries back, they were a lot more accepting. Even in other parts of the world today, they're a lot more - there's some areas where they'll lay out the body and wail over it, and then get their grief out, and they'll hug the body and hold it. I mean it wasn't that long ago we used to have open casket funerals, like commonly, and everyone would hug the body and kiss them and everything before they went. It's only recently we've kind of been like, 'lets not look at that', and just bury it in the ground or something.

P2: Yeah, I know what you mean - trying to get rid of it. I think people go through their whole life as well, and then they, like the whole mid life crisis thing - like they don't think about it and they get to 50 and they're like 'oh crap, it's going to happen, it's real', or something.

I: So do you think these places were there to make people think about these things a bit more?

P4: I don't know, I think it was just more natural to think about it because it was just more a fact of life, like less distraction. And because you know everyone so well, every death you heard of would be something that made you think.

I: Yeah, would be significant to you?

P1: I guess people didn't live as long.

P3: Yeah.

I: Exactly.

P1: So, they were just naturally closer to it.

I: Yeah. So, maybe these things were made to help with that as well?

P4: In weird way, I was just thinking, a lot of these ways of marking the landscape are something that's a lot more permanent than the human state. So, maybe it's like an ancient version of, well, I know grafitti's ancient, but you know when you think about people tagging things? I read somewhere, someone wrote something like, people tag monuments of walls in towns and that as a sad reminder that they'll probably die and that's the only thing they can contribute to society, like a little mark on the wall. Which is really dark, but I just wonder if this is their way of like, 'ok, we are going to go - let's leave something for someone to remember us by', you know, partially.

P2: Even if you're not consciously thinking it, I guess, like. In addition to it maybe being a functional object, maybe they had that in mind, like 'maybe this will outlast us'.

P1: Yeah, you want some kind of consequence.

P2: Yeah. they must have known that like stone was the most longlasting thing in their environment. I guess this one is made of wood, so they must have picked wood for a different reason.

P7: Is their any indication of how, like what proportion - oh, sorry, I should look at the picture [referring to the information board at the site]

P2: There was a construction in the museum last night, I think, like super duper tall timbers.

P4: Well, that's Woodhenge, isn't it - it's not far from here, isn't it?

I: Oh, was it Woodhenge they reconstructed in the picture?

P2: Yeah - massive, massive one.

I: I think it might have been similar here. But the fact that they erected a stone circle afterwards might give an indication of how it was before, so maybe it was freestanding as opposed to a building?

P2: Maybe they just got a bit more manpower? So, they were like, 'oh we'll do it with timber at first, but once we can get around to roping enough people and then we can make it stone' [laughs].

P6: Maybe they wanted it to be temporary, like? They knew it wasn't going to last forever so used it for that purpose.

I: Like some were only meant to be temporary and some were meant to be more permanent?

P6: Yeah. Weird.

P5: Pop-up.

P2: Pop-up shop [laughs].

P5: Pop-up - temporary henges.

P6: Pop-up henge.

I: Before we go, just a quick, 'felt sense round' going round the circle - what emotion or feeling or whatever it is springs to mind for you after all of this? I can start. Yeah, pretty peaceful, I suppose - somebody was saying that earlier.

P6: Acceptance.

I: Acceptance?

P6: Yeah, talking about mortality and landscape, yeah.

P8: Peaceful.

P4: Peaceful anxiety [laughs].

P7: Yeah, I think a mix of tranquil and thoughtful.

P1: Um, still. Just [laughs] flat.

P9: Respect.

P3: I have an ominous feeling, but it's a very good ominous feeling - I know that's a bit of an oxymoron.

P5: Relief.

P2: Aw, I'm going to be difficult and not use a word, but I guess kind of just like, for me like removing all the stuff from life that you don't really want to do, and just focusing on the thoughts that you like having, the stuff that you enjoy doing. So, streamlined [laughs]? Can anybody think of a good word?

P4: I thought you said dreamlined

P2: I'll go with that [laughs]!

I: Thank you very much.

All: Yay!

Appendix G (iii): Group Interview Extracts: Group Interview 3

Extract from Group Interview 3, residents, 60-75

[Conducted in the National Trust Learning Centre, Avebury]

I: Well I think we've probably gone way over time. Before we go, if we go round the circle quickly, and just everyone give me one quality or feeling or emotion or thought that came to mind from being around this stuff.

P3: The enormity of it, that's what got me.

P1: It's still a place to play as far as I'm concerned. I mean that's what it was from when I was a kid, and it still is, and I don't think it will ever change because it sort of takes you back to being a kid, yeah.

P6: I think it's quite a sad place actually, because they felt that they had to drag all these great big stones and create a place where they could worship God. And we don't have to do that, since Christ came, we don't have to go back and try and work and earn our way to God. You know Christ has saved us, Christ has died for us, so that's how we know peace with him. So, I think, it's history, it's interesting, but it's a dead religion, bones of a dead religion, really.

I: Ok, yeah.

P5: I feel linked to the past, I feel close to something there, there's just something very homey about the place.

I: Homey?

P5: Yeah, it just feels very, I don't know, peaceful.

P4: As I said before, I was surprised, as I say, I haven't done this before, haven't done any of the walks, and I was very impressed, and want to find out more.

P2: Well, as discussed for me, it's a place of energy, of spiritual importance. And, like you [P5], it gives me a real sense of belonging to the past, and the present as well, it brings both together for me, so very important for me indeed.

P7: Well, I come from a place where there is no archaeology at all, and yet it's older than this place here, and I wonder why the difference?

I: Yeah, yeah, so has that got you thinking?

P7: Well no, because all along the coast, all they do is seem to wander backwards and forwards, eating shellfish, and there's mounds and mounds and mounds of shellfish sort of middens, so they're there for a long time.

P1: Yeah, but they've got them in Scotland, they've got shellfish middens, and hazelnut middens, what was that place?

I: Skarabrae?

P7: Yes, but they never put, where I come from, they never put one stone upon another. It's just a case that I can't figure out why the difference. They were there since the beginning of time, and yet nothing ever happened.

P5: But isn't it a place where we walked away from to find other climes, because we discovered fire, didn't we come away from the places of the earth?

P7: Well one of the things they say is that we all came from Africa, and I don't believe them at all!

All: [Laugh]

P7: Because if we'd come from Africa we'd have left something behind, but there is nothing there.

P2: Well people evolved and they start to do more as they go further out and they evolved.

P7: Because they left it?

P2: Well no, because they're evolving, they start off as one thing, and then they learn more and develop more, and so more happens gradually.

P7: Still don't believe it.

I: The last one?

P8: The grandeur.

I: Really?

P8: Mmm.

I: How did that leave you feeling?

P8: Well, very peaceful and calm.

I: Because it's so - ?

P8: So impressive.

I: Yeah, I think, it's really nice being with you guys, because when you go out with different people, you talk about different things, so, I'm just kind of confused!

All: [Laugh]

P3: Just picking up on that point, what do the younger generation think of, or reckon?

I: Some similar things actually, yeah. I think a lot of them found it calming as well. Some people talk about feeling safe, which goes back to almost this defensive idea -

P2: Yes, it's safety and a calmness in the middle -

I: That it's safe inside the circle. Other people, they mentioned pilgrimage as well, felt like they were on a pilgrimage.

P2: Exactly, I think that probably did happen.

P5: There is a relationship thing going, isn't there...[inaudible]...feel a connection.

P7: Just one question, is there anything here in Avebury which is aligned to celestial markers?

I: Somebody's done some work on it, but I don't think it's been conclusive, not like it has been at Stonehenge.

P7: Yeah, I just wondered if there's anything here that's aligned on -

I: Yeah, as in some celestial thing, I don't know.

P2: I think it's aligned with North-South in various ways.

P5: You do get that feeling.

P2: One of the things that you said in your papers for us to prepare, was how we felt about historical sites, and I think, what we've experienced just really sort of enforces that it is really vital that these sites are protected and maintained, and gently investigated to find out more information. Because it's been here for so long, it needs to stay so that other generations can really come and explore it and experience it. I think that's really important.

I: Yeah, yeah, and to continue to ask the questions that we're asking today. Well thank you very much - I really appreciate it.

All: Thank you.

P2: One of the things, as I say, I come here regularly, been doing so since I was a child, it made me stop and really think, and feel. I mean I know I go around, experience the stones and the lovely energy, but it really made me...[inaudible]...it gave me a different perspective, so thank you very much.

P3: Yeah, I enjoyed that.

I: Oh, really?

P3: Yeah, yeah, I enjoyed that.

I: I'm so glad, no I learnt a lot from you now as well - it's got me thinking.

P3: Though I must admit when we first started...[inaudible]...it's just going to be a walk around there, a walk up there, but it did, gradually got me into it. And as [P4] said, it made you start to think.