

EMBARGOED TILL WEDNESDAY 22nd MARCH



Historic landscapes
and mental health at
Stonehenge

Today our [Human Henge](#) project will appear on BBC Points West, on television, radio and social media.

The pieces will include interviews by Rhiannon Fitzgerald of BBC West with participants Mel Rogers and Simon Chaplin. Rhiannon also interviews our Director Laura Drysdale who manages Human Henge, Professor Tim Darvill, a renowned authority on Stonehenge as a place of healing, and Martin Allfrey, Senior Curator of Collections (West) for English Heritage.

The interviews are set in the world famous historic landscape of Stonehenge with the magnificent Stone Circle as a backdrop, and film of Cameroonian musician Alphonse Touna playing the balafon at King Barrows, courtesy of the National Trust.

Read more about the project below

Human Henge is a ground-breaking culture therapy project about archaeology, mental health and creativity, explored in journeys across the Stonehenge World Heritage Site into the world-famous stone circle.

Human Henge is a collaboration run by the Restoration Trust in partnership with Richmond Fellowship, English Heritage and Bournemouth University, with support from the National Trust and Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust. Human Henge draws on ideas that Stonehenge was once a place of healing and examines whether a creative exploration of historic landscapes can help people with mental health conditions.

Through a programme of participant-led activities, 32 local people living with mental health problems and on low incomes, come together for fun, therapeutic adventures. Accompanied by curators and artists, archaeologist Professor Tim Darvill, and musician and creative facilitator Yvette Staelens, they explore the monuments, features and layers of meaning in the Stonehenge landscape, enabled through the participation of English Heritage and the National Trust. The journey ends with a ceremony inside the Stone Circle near Spring Equinox, developed by the group with musician Alphonse Touna.

Laura Drysdale, Director of the Restoration Trust says, *“We hope that Human Henge will get people doing things they’ve never contemplated before, from star spotting on the cursus, to chanting poetry inside the stone circle, to presenting at conferences, curating an exhibition or publishing a book. That’s the whole Human Henge journey.”*

Participant Andria Walton says, “*Human Henge is a personal journey of healing for me. I live with emotional health issues, and I feel very comfortable and accepted with this group. It’s meaningful to learn about our ancient cultures, it’s exhilarating being in the open air, it blows away the cobwebs. It’s rejuvenating and revitalising.*”

