

## **Lansdowne Monument Report: August 2025**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024, the National Trust gave a presentation of their plans to restore the Lansdowne Monument to the Parish Council during the public participation session. About fifteen members of the public plus councillors were present. The National Trust, Wiltshire Landscape, were represented by Simon Fyles, Senior Communications and Marketing Officer and Andrew Townsend from Andrew Townsend Architects. To summarise, plans were to carry out test repairs during the Autumn of 2024 and then evaluate the effect of the coming winter. This would inform a decision of the final choice of stone and mortar to stand the test of time. The intention was to start major works as early as summer 2025.

However, the very wet Autumn weather delayed completion of the test repairs until late Spring 2025.

Since the presentation, the National Trust has been sending the Parish Council regular updates regarding the project.

Date: 12 June 2025

Specialist contractors returned to the monument last month to complete the trial repairs from October.

The work, which included high-level repointing and the installation of further new stone, was completed over a two-week period and the ladders were removed afterwards.

These repairs need a full winter in situ before they can be properly assessed.

The next activity on site will be the replacement of the catch netting. This needs to be done by August.

Away from the site, the project team have begun assessing the conservation repairs that were done last year.

The information from those repairs will be invaluable and used to inform our specification for the next phase of repair work.

Date: 26 February 2025

The first phase of conservation repairs was carried out last year, which included tests of new stone and repointing.

This work was due to be completed last October. However, a period of heavy rain and high winds meant we were unable to access the monument, and that work will now take place this Spring. The monument's location on an Iron Age Hill Fort surrounded by a SSSI means we cannot continue working during extended periods of wet weather.

All work from this first phase of repairs needs to be in place over a full winter for evaluation. With that in mind, we are now aiming to begin the larger, second phase of repairs in Spring 2026.

As mentioned, a planning application to keep the safety hoardings and catch netting in place has been submitted to Wiltshire Council. These safety measures must remain in place until the repairs have been completed, but our intention is to remove them as soon as possible after that.

The change to the timeline is both frustrating and disappointing, especially given the momentum that had been built in 2024.

However, we're committed to repairing the monument and ensuring it has a sustainable future and looking forward to work continuing on site soon.

Date : 11 Sep 2024

Conservation specialists have carried out some small trial repairs and repointing, informed by the analysis of the samples collected in April. They will be accessing the monument again by ropes later this month, with those trial repairs left to weather through the autumn and winter for further analysis.

The lightning conductor on the monument has also been replaced this summer.

Andrew Sadler-Smith