

North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership
Friday 2nd October 2015
Bucks Cross Parish Hall

Meeting attendees

Steve Pitcher (Chairman)
Cllr. Robin Julian (DCC)
Cllr. Rodney Cann (NDC)
Cllr. Alan Whittle (TDC)
Rob Joules (NT)
Hon. John Rous (CLA)
David Appleton (NE)
Charlotte Russell (EH)
Richard Butler (Community Rep.)
Rose Day (Community Rep.)
Barbara Fryer (Community Rep.)
Caroline Leaver (Community Rep.)
Richard Prowse (Tarka Country Trust)
Paul Green (Community Rep.)
Andy Bell (ND Biosphere Reserve)
Lesley Garlick (DCC)

Officers

Jenny Carey-Wood (Manager)
Dave Edgcombe (Project Officer)
Gigha Klinkenborg (Administrator)
Natalie Gibb (Clean Marine officer)

Apologies

Jane Whittaker (TDC)
Jenny Wallace (TDC)
Terry Green (Community Rep.)
Paula Ferris (Coastwise)
Cllr. Andrea Davis (ENP)
Alison Boyle (Community Rep.)
Peter Burgess (DWT)
Richard Dyer (NFU)
Cllr Pat Barker (ND+)
Chrissie Ingle (team)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

The Chairman welcomed Cllr. Alan Whittle from Torrington District Council and Rob Joules from the National Trust. The chairman thanked Hannah Harrington for her longstanding and committed support and assistance to the AONB and wished her well with her new position as Barnstaple Town Centre Manager.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes were agreed. Matters arising:-

- MOA – TDC has agreed to sign the agreement, many thanks to Cllr. Whittle for his support
- Outstanding Items - the planning panel is still to meet to consider whether we charge for pre-planning advice; meeting of the group to progress 'access' issues.
- Cllr. Pat Barker has joined the Partnership representing North Devon+

3. Partnership Governance

a. Election of Chair

Steve Pitcher was the only nomination for Chairman from Partnership members by email before the deadline. Formally nominated by Cllr. Rodney Cann and seconded by Cllr. Robin Julian. (Steve Pitcher left the room while the Partnership held a vote.)

He was unanimously re-elected for a further 2 years. Partnership was advised that the position of vice-chair would be elected at the January 2016 meeting.

b. Election of Community representatives

All community representatives were contacted and have all expressed a wish to

continue for a further 2 years. Some of the agencies are struggling to attend so increasing the number of community reps might be the solution to fill knowledge gaps. An example is recruiting someone to support the legacy of the Clean Marine project. The MoA schedules would need updating to increase the number of Community Reps and to have formal representation from education and tourism/business. **Action: JCW**

c. Nominations for SDF Panel

Richard Butler is stepping down as Chair of the panel and Hannah Harrington (NDC) has left with the change to her job. Thanks were extended to Richard for his significant contribution and a small gift presented. Terry Green has been nominated by Richard Butler to chair the panel. The North Devon+ representative, Cllr Pat Barker has been invited to join the panel too. **These nominations were agreed. Action: JCW to invite officer representation from both districts to the panel.**

4. Clean Marine – results, outcomes and legacy (Natalie Gibb)

Presentation from Natalie Gibb

- 310 volunteers signed up, 1035 volunteers attended across 55 events
- 3 community groups set up, 9 schools engaged
- Coastal Code flyer being printed to be distributed across business and community outlets, **RC requested** inclusion of a contact to report fly tipping
- 55 beaches cleaned (target of 40) with survey and monitoring data being analysed for final report; 5.7 tons rubbish removed – local perception that beaches are cleaner
- **Westward Ho!** group has 216 members on their beach clean Facebook group. They also want to introduce a 'Bag for Life' scheme in the village to reduce plastic in the sea. **Croyde** has 32 volunteers, supported by Ranger Rose from Ruda and the **Ilfracombe** group are being supported by One Ilfracombe. More groups being developed at other beaches to support legacy work.
- TDC & NDC have been instrumental in the disposal of collected rubbish – we need to ensure this carries on for future activity
- The 5p levy on plastic bags – where is this money going – is this an opportunity to support a legacy to the project? RC mentioned that NDC has a number of litter picking kits/equipment for use by the local communities.
- A final workshop/celebration event is being planned
- On behalf of the Partnership, the Chairman thanked Natalie for all her hard work.

5. Landscape Report (Dave Edgcombe)

a) Planning Report Circulated

- Increase in caseload with a total of 24 planning responses so far this year, 16 in North Devon and 8 in Torridge.
- Timetable for Local Plan – likely to be submitted in early 2016

b) Fixed point photography Review

- 10 sites monitored twice a year, set up 7 years ago

- Used to review developments – buildings, turbines, habitat change, vegetation, hedgerows etc. Used in consultations on Atlantic Array proposals and could inform other marine renewable proposals – prompted Seascope work
- Analytical change compared with perceptual change by communities – 3 examples provided showing change
- AB raised renewable energy protocol for Bristol Channel – should partners be signatories? **JCW to follow up with NDC.**
- Robin Julian raised possibility of third bridge at Bideford, with potential for hydropower generation

c) Seascope Character Assessment

- £40,000 Partnership Project comprising the National Trust, North Devon Coast AONB, North Devon Council, Torrington District Council, Exmoor NPA and Natural England. Partners commissioned LUC in May.
- Study area stretches from Marsland Mouth on the Cornish border to the Exmoor NP boundary at Minehead (approx. 90 miles), but also includes the Taw/Torrington Estuary and extends offshore to the national marine planning limit (12 nautical miles), including Lundy Island
- Overall aim to provide a spatial framework, description and analysis of Seascope Character Areas and Seascope Character Types to: assist in spatial planning – development at sea and along the coast (including renewables); Feed into the SW marine planning process which will take place within the next 5 years; Help define the ‘special qualities’ of the coast and seascope to inform future landscape management plans

The 4 key stages are:

1. Desk study (including data collection and GIS interrogation) June to July
2. Field/boat survey (August and September)
3. Stakeholder engagement workshops and use of ‘Rate my View’ App - September
4. Report (End of October)

6. AONB Manager’s report

- **Project activity** noted with additional comments:
 - a. Combe Martin Mining Heritage: Young Roots – over 50 people attended successful final event. Report to be published.
 - b. Clean Marine third re-profile approved to support activity to end of year
- **Sustainable Development Fund** – several projects in pipeline but additional promotion by **Partnership members** would be helpful. Flyers circulated.
- **PR and Communications** – summary slides presented. CL asked for an assessment of the impact of different media, given limited applications for SDF. **Action: meeting with PR contractor next week.** Could SDF funds be used to support Clean Marine community groups? **Action: NG** to follow up. AB advised that the Shoreline Management Plan consultations could identify opportunity to deliver final action in Annual Delivery Plan.
- **Budget** – received by Partnership

7. Presentation of proposed New Activities:- 3 areas of work requiring external funding

Coastal Creatures - HLF

- Habitat restoration to support re-introduction of the chough
- Wildlife observation skills and recording
- Public wildlife surveys: sites and species
- Specialist training and equipment
- Local group support – legacy – sea schools
- Data interpretation, sharing and publication
- Art projects – legacy and increase reach

Theme: Geodiversity

- Develop and provide educational resources
- Interpret the geodiversity of the AONB for a range of audiences and communities

HOW?

- Geo-trails for the public
- Rock Boxes for schools
- Art projects – schools and professionals

AONB Interpretation

- Review and update websites
- Roundels for AONB boundary
- Annual report and public event
- Project interpretation materials – e.g. spotter guides, downloads, wildlife walks
- Business ambassadors scheme

Discussion Groups – key points

- Support for all three areas of work
- Wildlife project – include broad range of species including doorstep wildlife, prioritise coastal heaths and woodlands; engage farmers
- Geology – focus on coastal processes, link to building styles
- Support for developing partnership project approach
- Travel fund essential – for schools and maybe wider community groups
- Use technology and competition to engage different age groups
- Annual event and report supported
- Support use of art and creativity in both projects
- **Action: All** – to advise JCW of which activity you could support

8. National Association of AONBs update (report tabled) – Rose Day

- Successful national conference in July at Winchester
- Joint working with National Park's and Defra including publication "So Much More Than The View ..." to promote landscape, tourism and health benefits of protected landscapes
- Success of national "Outstanding" week to promote AONBs through a range of public activities, including 12 events in North Devon
- SP and JCW attending chairman's meeting in November

9. News from Partners – contributions to the AONB Management Plan

- **Tarka Country Trust** is developing a Community Wildlife Fund and seeking new trustees
- RB reported that **Richard Dyer** wanted to raise need for support to farmers with Countryside Stewardship paperwork.
- **Historic England** – can only attend meetings if an ongoing project in the AONB – work at Bucks Mills ongoing with NT to clear scrub, fence and graze. There is money available for heritage at risk – this can be 100% funding, new list out 20 October. HE still commenting on key planning applications. Braunton Great Field – not designated as not a monument because still in use. It is something we could take up with the NAAONB. AONB should meet with Bill Horner, DCC. **Action: JCW.**
- **Biosphere Reserve** – Estuary project approved with EA funding to address faecal deposits affecting water quality, working with 20 farms in catchments draining into estuary and would **welcome partners publicising this work**
- **North Devon Council** addressing air quality issues from traffic in Braunton.

10. Date of next meeting – January 2016 – Action: GK to doodle