

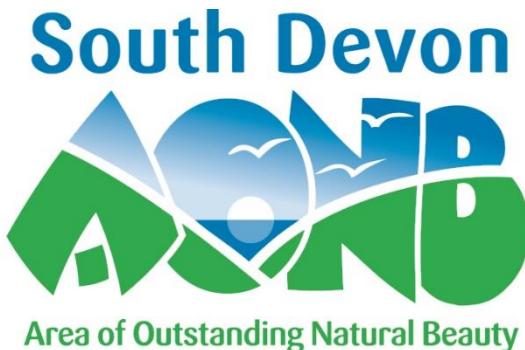
South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

AONB Partnership Committee Meeting

to be held at

10am on Friday 14th June 2019
at
Chillington Village Hall

Agenda & Papers



South Devon AONB Staff Unit, Follaton House, Totnes, TQ9 5NE
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AONB Partnership Committee Membership

Members nominated by local authorities

Devon County Council	Cllr Roger Croad Cllr Jonathan Hawkins (officer advising: Peter Chamberlain)
Plymouth City Council South Hams District Council	Sarah Foque Cllr Rosemary Rowe Cllr Bernard Taylor (officer advising: Tom Jones) Cllr Anne Brooks (officer advising: Tracy Brooks)
Torbay Council	

Members nominated by statutory agencies

Environment Agency	Rob Price
Forestry Commission	Kate Tobin
Historic England	Ross Simmonds
Natural England	Eamon Crowe

Members co-opted by the AONB Partnership Committee

National Trust	Richard Snow
Plymouth University	John Martin (Vice Chairman)
Independent	John Green (Chairman)

Community Representatives

Amenity groups	Geoffrey Osborn
Business community	Kate Ryder
Coast and marine sector	Vacant
Community/voluntary groups	Peter Sandover
Environmental organisations (NGOs)	Ed Parr-Ferris
Landowning/farming community	Vacant
Parish Councils	Lynne Maurer
Tourism community	Samantha Dennis

AONB Unit staff attending

AONB Manager	Roger English
AONB Office Manager	Vanessa Gray
AONB Projects Officer	Adam Davison

Also in attendance and presenting

DCC Historic Environment Manager	Bill Horner
CITiZAN South Devon Rivers Discovery Programme Officer	Therese Kearns
National Trust, Salcombe Project Officer	Dr Ken Neal

Agenda

Item 1 (5 mins)	Introductions & apologies for absence	
Item 2	Declarations of Interests	
Item 3 (5 mins)	Minutes of the last Partnership Committee meeting (15 th March 2019) for approval & any matters arising	Page 4
Item 4 (20 mins)	AONB Management 4a) Landscape scale nature conservation	Page 13
(25 mins)	4b) South Devon's Historic Environment – opportunities for action	Page 15
(5 mins)	4c) Other AONB Management Plan delivery	Page 16
Item 5 (10 mins)	Planning and Development matters 5a) Current and recent key applications	Page 28
(5 mins)	5b) Plymouth & SW Devon Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document & AONB Planning Guidance	Page 30
(10 mins)	5c) South Devon AONB Planning protocol	Page 33
Item 6 (15 mins)	AONB Partnership matters 6a) Round-table partner updates	Verbal
(10 mins)	6b) Partnership meetings: improving engagement with AONB communities	Page 36
(10 mins)	6c) National Association for AONBs: update on work	To follow
Item 7	For information 7a) Planning update	Separate report to follow

Agenda timings are provided as a guide

Agenda Item 3

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOUTH DEVON AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

**HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE
ON FRIDAY 15th March 2019**

1. INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Those present were:

Cllr Jonathan Hawkins	JH	Devon County Council
Peter Chamberlain	PC	Devon County Council
Cllr Daniel Brown	DB	South Hams District Council
Cllr John Green	JG	South Hams District Council
Thomas Jones	TJ	South Hams District Council
Cllr Ray Hill	RH	Torbay Council
Eamon Crowe	EC	Natural England
Andy Pratt (Chairman)	AP	Field Studies Council, Slapton Ley
Geoffrey Osborn	GO	Representative: amenity groups
Peter Sandover	PS	Representative: community/voluntary groups
Lynne Maurer	LM	Representative: parishes
Samantha Dennis	SD	Representative: tourism community
Richard Snow	RS	National Trust
Paul Naylor	PN	Underwater photographer and filmmaker
Roger English	RE	AONB Manager
Adam Davison	AD	Project Officer
Vanessa Gray		AONB Office Manager

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr Roger Croad	Devon County Council
Sarah Foque	Plymouth City Council
Kate Tobin	Forestry Commission
Ross Simmonds	Historic England
Kate Ryder	Representative: business community
Tracy Brooks	Torbay Council
Rob Price	Environment Agency
John Martin (Vice Chairman)	Plymouth University
Ed Parr Ferris	Representative: environmental organisations (NGOs)

Observers

Carole Box	Neighbourhood planning
Les Pengelly	Kingsbridge resident
Vivien Napper	South Hams Society

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

- 2.1 No interests were declared

MINUTES OF THE 7th DECEMBER 2018 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING FOR APPROVAL & ANY MATTERS ARISING

Prior to reviewing the previous minutes, it was noted the Papers were distributed just two days prior to this meeting however the draft agenda had been distributed three weeks before the meeting. The AONB Manager acknowledged the frustration, explaining a variety of pressures and juggling priorities had led to the delay in the Papers, but hoped that Members would recognise the improvement made.

3.1 Previous actions

- i. Action 1 (VG) – Corrected minutes have been published on the website.
- ii. Action 2 (RE) – Three documents pertaining to SHDC legal advice regarding land south of Townstal Road and AONB possible interpretation of the new NPPF paragraph 172, were distributed.
- iii. Action 3 & 4 (RP) – Presentation slides will be redacted and information on the Yealm added prior to distribution of slides and targeted areas.
- iv. Action 5 (All) – The AONB Manager thanked everyone that contributed their ideas for priority areas for activity.
- v. Action 6 (RE) – Covered under agenda item 6a.
- vi. Action 7 (All) – Although no feedback to date, the AONB Manager encouraged anyone with key comments following today's presentation, to provide feedback as speedily as possible.
- vii. Action 8 (RE) – The AONB Manager informed Members that there had been a series of consultation requests from Defra via the National Association for AONBs that included providing eight year finances to illustrate and evidence support from Local Authorities, partners and other funding. The AONB Manager and the AONB Communications Officer are looking closely at what was done here to see if there is an opportunity to take this style and approach into the Annual Report.
- viii. Action 9 (RE) – The AONB Manager informed Members that a session is scheduled for mid-April to look at a planning protocol in detail. GO has offered his services to look at this in more detail with the AONB Manager.
- ix. Action 10 (All) – The end date for Partnership Committee Members to express interest in taking up the role of Chair was extended to end of January.
- x. Action 11 (RE) – the Terms of Reference allow for a representative to deputise for a Member in circumstances which prevent the attendance of the usual nominated representative.
- xi. Action 12 (TJ) – Debated by Council but other priorities require funding. Other opportunities to be investigated.
- xii. Action 13 (All) – Covered by Agenda item 7b

4A CHAIRMAN AND CO-OPTION OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

4a.1 The AONB Manager introduced this agenda item, explaining the background is covered in item 4A in the papers, with decisions from Members expected at this meeting.

4a.2 Appointment of AONB Partnership Chairman

- i. John Green was the only member of the Partnership Committee to put their name forward. Proposer Daniel Brown, supported by Jonathan Hawkins.
- ii. The Partnership Committee voted unanimously to appoint John Green to serve as chairman. The term to run for two years, taking effect in June.
- iii. John Green thanked Members and looks forward to working with everyone. Although the appointment is officially June, John invited everyone to get in touch, and to advise him of the groups he should meet.
- iv. The AONB Manager expressed thanks and appreciation to Andy Pratt for his service to the Partnership Committee and looks forward to welcoming John Green to his new role.
- v. Members expressed thanks to Andy Pratt for his service as Chair.

4a.3 Co-option of Community Representative for AONB Parish Councils

- i. The AONB Manager received a number of suggestions that led to Lynne Maurer, who kindly stepped forward to represent the South Devon AONB Parish Councils.
- ii. The Partnership Committee voted unanimously to co-opt Lynne Maurer for the remainder of the three year term up to the next Community election of Representatives.
- iii. The Chairman welcomed Lynne to the Partnership Committee.

4a.4 The AONB Manager advised Members that co-option of a Landowning and Farming Community Representative is a priority. The farming sector is facing a number of challenges hence it may be difficult to find anyone able to commit time to this role. A number of conversations have taken place with Geoff Sayers. Geoff is a good advocate for farming in South Devon however he has many demands on his time and may struggle to find time for this role. If Geoff is willing to become the Landowning and Farming Community Representative, he may not be able to commit to meetings where the agenda has a less farming bias. The AONB Manager asked Members to vote on the principle of the co-option of Geoff Sayers as South Devon AONB Partnership Community Representative for the Landowning and Farming Community; Partnership voted unanimously in favour.

4a.5 The South Devon AONB Partnership Community Representative for Coast and Marine, Jamie Davies, has recently resigned due to a change in circumstances. The AONB Manager invited Members to advise him of any potentially suitable candidates.

- i. RH suggested Devon & Severn IFCA could be approached.

4B 90-SECOND PARTNER UPDATES

The AONB Manager introduced this trial agenda item, that is designed to replace and refocus the former 'Round Table Partnership Update' agenda item.

4b.1 Eamon Crowe

- i. Ministers have signed off eighty cases and have also agreed to an extension of the Countryside Stewardship scheme.
- ii. Sign-off is presently an annual exercise instead of the four year period NE would like, largely due to present circumstances re. Europe.
- iii. Two hundred cases are due to expire this year.
- iv. There is a new Countryside Stewardship window, closing at the end of April 2019.
- v. Mid-tier is working well.
- vi. Some involvement in the new environmental land management scheme.
- vii. Number of staff at NE has reduced so they will now struggle to provide one to one advice directly.

4b.2 Richard Snow

- i. NT has a new strategy and direction on how they aim to manage land. Ken Neale, who was appointed as Project Officer last year, has initially been working on the Bolt Head to Bolt Tail area and is in the process of finalising the Management Plan.

Action 1 (RS) – Provide a short presentation to Members at the June Partnership Committee meeting.

4b.3 Peter Chamberlain

- i. Devon County Council and Devon Local Nature Partnership (DLNP) launched Devon special species last year. Highlights the key species for Devon that are a conservation concern to focus on. SDAONB taking the lead on developing a collaborative project focused upon Devon's Special Species found along the South Devon coast. A small grant has been awarded to develop a project proposal.
- ii. DLNP (www.naturaldevon.org.uk) is currently undertaking a review of its operation. Offer any suggestions via Peter.

4b.4 Dan Brown

- i. The last full council meeting confirmed adoption of the Management Plan

4b.5 Lynne Maurer

- i. Enthused to be the South Devon AONB for AONB Parish Councils and looking forward to learning and disseminating.

4b.6 Ed Parr-Ferris

Not present at the meeting, but provided an update for this agenda item.

- i. Consultation responses – including Net Gain and Plymouth National Marine Park
- ii. Working on an Environment Act campaign to push for a robust Environment Act.
- iii. In the process of developing a mapping approach to Nature Recovery Network for Devon. Hoping to introduce this and begin work with partners through the LNP in late April/early May
- iv. South Devon Wildlife Champions – Maya Plass the new Education Officer and has been working hard on securing new schools, with a lot of success
- v. There will be a celebration event in September for Wembury Marine Centre's 25th anniversary. This will include a bioblitz in collaboration with the MBA to celebrate their 10 year anniversary.

4b.7 Samantha Dennis

- i. This year's Kingsbridge Visitor Centre guide is now out, with an emphasis on the environment, wildlife and nature. Includes a page on water quality from the South Devon AONB, part of the Holiday Footprints project, that also appears in the Salcombe and harbour guides. There is potential for the holiday footprints idea to be extended as tourism businesses are looking for opportunities to offset the effect their visitors are having.

4b.8 Geoffrey Osborn

- i. Would be useful to have a workshop discussion on planning protocol.
- ii. Would like to better understand the purpose of meeting and look at meeting attendance record for Partnership members.
- iii. Would like observers to be able to speak in the 90 second update slot.
 - a. The AONB Chairman clarified observers are welcome and the Terms of Reference allow for observers to submit written questions.
 - b. John Green suggested that this could be a future agenda item to discuss further.

4b.9 John Green

- i. Informed Members and observers he will be available directly after the meeting for anyone who wishes to speak with him.
- ii. The Joint Local Plan, South Hams and West Devon, is likely to be approved this month. [post meeting update, the JLP was adopted by South Hams District Council on 21 March 2019, Plymouth City Council on 26 March 2019 and West Devon Borough Council on 26 March 2019].

4b.10 Ray Hill

- i. Brixham harbour looking into putting in a pontoon to minimise disruption to sea beds and surrounding area.

- ii. The Brixham Neighbourhood Plan has been through examination and will be put to referendum in May 2019.

4b.11 Peter Sandover

- i. Involved in Neighbourhood Plan work and renewables. Taking time to engage community groups. Has been assisting one NP group write a policy on dark skies and avoidance of light pollution.

4b.12 Tom Jones

- i. Once the JLP has been adopted it would be appropriate to have a refresh of the planning protocol. The new JLP does not have settlement boundaries within the AONB, there will be a new development plan document issued later in the year. Offered to stay on post-meeting for questions.

4C ANNUAL FORUM

The AONB Manager outlined the emerging ideas for the 2019 Annual Forum.

- i. Aiming to hold this end of September / late Autumn.
- ii. This year is the 70th anniversary of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside act. Suggestion is to look at what has changed, successes and achievements, as well as the challenges going forward.
- iii. Open to suggestions on venue, currently looking at Stokely Farm Shop. Anticipate attendance by 80+ people, have had 120 in the past. There will be a food and drink element to the look back at achievements made over the years.
 - a. Samantha Dennis organises the South Devon business clubs that usually attract 80 people and will provide suggestions for potential alternative venues.

5A PLYMOUTH SOUND NATIONAL MARINE PARK PROPOSAL

5a.1 Paul Naylor provided a presentation entitled “Meet the neighbours”.

<https://vimeo.com/paulnaylormarinephoto>.

- i. The AONB Manager thanked Paul for a fantastic introduction to what is on our coastline and also his underwater photography and enthusiasm.
- ii. Paul offered to give talks on marine life to interested groups.

5a.2 Kaja Curry had hoped to be able to give a presentation to Members on the National Marine Park proposal at this meeting but was unable to attend. In Kaja’s absence, the AONB Manager gave a short presentation. Of particular note:

- i. The prospectus launched in late December 2018, with the consultation opportunity falling between Partnership Committee meetings.
- ii. Although named as Plymouth Sound National Marine Park proposal, the ultimate ambition for the Marine Park goes far beyond Plymouth Sound and includes a large area of sea.
- iii. There are a number of existing designations, managed by a range of partnerships and organisations, that fall into the area proposed. The proposal also comes at a time when there is a review considering the future of designated landscapes (including seascapes).
- iv. Plymouth City Council are offering an opportunity of a dedicated workshop for South Devon AONB Partnership Members around late May.

Action 2 (RE) – Contact Kaja to arrange a workshop on the National Marine Park proposal.

5.a.3 The AONB Manager invited views and opinions, initial feedback included:

- i. Although generally supportive, given the size of the area, of which Plymouth Sound represents a small part, and the number of existing designations, it was felt that more thought is required.
- ii. It was noted that the National Marine Park prospectus states the proposal is not to protect the environment.
- iii. The NE are fully supportive of the plans, which fit the Defra 25YEP.
- iv. The South Devon Partnership Chairman highlighted:
 - a. The importance of ensuring South Devon AONB is involved.
 - b. Members responses showed a strong mandate for the proposed workshop.

5B. NEW ENVIRONMENTAL LAND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The AONB Manager provided a presentation to Members to support the update provided in the Papers. Of particular note:

- 5b.1 ELMS is a key component of Defra's 25 year environment plan. Tests and trials will inform pilot schemes taking place from 2021 with the full scheme expected to be in place from 2025.
- 5b.2 Current environmental stewardship schemes tend to compensate landowners on an income foregone basis where they are rewarded for activities they undertake and compensated for the element they would have lost in profit. The new approach of public money for public goods is about making sure the public money invested in environment schemes in the future is rewarding the right practises.
- 5b.3 This is a significant shift from current schemes so has a long lead in period and is intrinsically linked to post-brexit agriculture.
- 5b.4 A land management plan is likely to form the core of the approach.
- 5b.5 ELMS positions AONB Management Plans and Partnerships as key delivery agents of new agri-environment schemes.
- 5b.6 This is at a very early stage of development. The National Association for AONBs collated proposals put forward by individual AONBs to submit to Defra. Although the South Devon AONB proposal was not one of the selected proposals, there is a coastal focus lead by the RSPB. The South Devon AONB is in conversation with the RSPB on opportunities surrounding that work. A proposal was also submitted through the facilitation funding groups and there are other opportunities for conversations through other groups testing and trialling different approaches.
- 5b.7 Although NE are not actively involved at this stage, there will be opportunity for assistance and a workshop to cover ELMS in more detail at a later stage.

5C. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Peter Sandover, Community Representative for AONB Voluntary Groups and a Locality Neighbourhood Planning Champion provided a Neighbourhood Planning update. Of particular note:

- 5c.1 Local Planning Authorities have a duty to support the production of Neighbourhood Plans. Once approved, a Neighbourhood Plan has statutory weight and is material in consideration of future planning applications.
- 5c.2 NPs should
 - i. Conform to the Local Plan
 - ii. Be evidence and engagement based
- 5c.3 There are a number of things that a Neighbourhood Plans could deliver, for example:
 - i. Set settlement boundaries, identify potential development sites, areas of green space etc.
 - ii. Set and reference environmental policies
 - iii. Help inform appropriate development

- iv. Help reinforce some of the policies of the Management Plan and Planning Guidance document, at a local and more granular level
- v. Set a principal residence requirement on future residential development to give priority to principal residents
- vi. Affordable housing policy appropriate to that area
- vii. Opportunity to encourage rural employment
- viii. Opportunities to highlight issues surrounding transport infrastructure and help improve these

5c.4 Challenges include

- i. NPs tend to be labour and resource intensive
- ii. NP groups need local skills to facilitate the process and can experience difficulty in putting the resource and funding together

To help overcome these, Parish Neighbourhood Plans can be combined. For example, the Kingsbridge Neighbourhood Planning group is a combination of Kingsbridge, West Alvington and Churchstow.

5c.5 There are some communities within the AONB without Neighbourhood Plans that may become surrounded by parishes do. This may lead to more planning pressure on those parishes that do not have a Neighbourhood Plan.

5c.6 Neighbourhood Planning groups need more support. Opportunities include:

- i. Provide standard advice on how to produce a NP
- ii. Access to funding
- iii. Access to technical expertise
- iv. Bring Neighbourhood Planning groups together to share knowledge and experience

Action 3 (TJ) – Discover whether money would be available via the locality budget to pay the AONB unit to provide landscape assessments.

6A. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

The AONB Project Officer went through the update contained in the papers and provided a short presentation. Of note:

6a.1 The stages of work to publish the statutory South Devon AONB Management Plan are on track to submit to the Secretary of State by the end of March.

- i. Devon County Council adopted the Plan on 13th February via Cabinet Member delegated decision.
- ii. South Hams District Council adopted the plan on 21st February by a unanimous vote of the Full Council.
- iii. The adoption process is underway in Plymouth City Council and will be an officer delegated response, expected shortly.
- iv. Torbay Council will take this to Mayoral Executive Committee on 20th March

6a.2 The 2019/20 Delivery Plan is currently in draft format, having 74 actions for the AONB Unit and Partners combined.

Action 4 (All) – contact the AONB Project Officer speedily with any suggestions for inclusion in the 2019/20 Delivery Plan.

6a.3 There are a number of Annexes

- i. Planning Guidance version 1
- Revision pressures include
- a. Protected Landscapes Review
 - b. JLP

- c. Local Planning Authority planning protocol
 - ii. South Devon Estuaries Environmental Management Plan 2018-24
 - iii. State of the AONB
 - a. Draft currently being finalised
 - iv. Understanding the special qualities of the South Devon AONB
 - v. Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability
 - vi. Appraisal and Habitat Regulation Assessment
 - a. Signed off by Natural England
 - vii. Statement of representation
 - a. Outlines the consultation process and comments received
 - viii. Strategic context and background to AONBs
 - a. From the National Association for AONBs
- 6a.4 The 2019-2024 Management Plan launch will take place on 24th May 2019. Sir Gary Streeter MP has agreed to launch the Plan. A venue in the west of the AONB has yet to be finalised.
- 6a.5 The AONB Project Officer covered some of the projects contained in the Delivery Plan, including undergrounding of power cables. This is a recently started project, one meeting has taken place to date.
Action 5 (AD) – contact Geoffrey Osborn to form a small community group to assist with identification of potentially qualifying sites.
- 6a.6 Initial feedback
- i. Peter Chamberlain commended the team for progress made on the Management Plan. He would like to see the Slapton Line Project in the Delivery Plan. The role of the AONB and their continued support is seen as vital to this project.
 - ii. Peter Sandover would like to see Neighbourhood Planning in the Delivery Plan.
- 6B. AONB RESOURCES 2019/20+**
- The AONB Manager referred Members to the full update contained in the Papers and said that due to time constraints, this agenda item is now for information.
- 7A. PLANNING UPDATE**
- 7a.1 The AONB Chairman pointed out that planning is now on the agenda of every meeting, with the update provided for information purposes.
- 7a.2 The AONB Manager referred to the following:
- i. The planning caseload is high and resources limited. Some juggling of priorities had to take place however in virtually every case a response had been provided, some of these are written responses and others are verbal.
 - ii. A couple of appeals where appeal statements have been provided by the AONB are Selworthy Court and Sandersons Field.
 - iii. The coming year includes a five year local planning review for Torbay's Local Plan. The review will require AONB officer time.
 - iv. The AONB Manager informed Members that case officers are up to date with the AONB position on applications irrespective of whether a comment has been placed on the SHDC website planning pages. Often it may appear that we are out of time given the determine date listed on the website however extension dates have often been agreed.

7B. RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION ON ENGLAND'S DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

The AONB Manager went through the update provided.

- 7b.1 The Glover Review Panel, via the National Association for AONBs, asked for a report highlighting major developments that had been consented or appeal consented where the reason for exceptional circumstance was local housing need. The AONB Manager will complete this by the 20th March 2019 deadline.

And Finally

- i. The AONB Manager thanked the Chairman for all of his help and support. On behalf of Partnership, gifts were presented to mark the occasion.
- ii. The AONB Manager thanked Dan Brown for his efforts on the Committee and on behalf of the AONB. A gift was presented to mark the occasion.

Item 4a: Landscape scale nature conservation

Purpose

1. To examine examples, challenges and opportunities of nature conservation action undertaken at a landscape scale and consider action the Partnership and Staff Unit should develop and undertake in support of AONB Management Plan priorities, the '*Colchester Declaration*' and 25 Year Environment Plan.

Background

2. Habitats and species are under continued threat and declining in numbers at a rate unprecedented in our history. Published in 2010, the Lawton Report assessed the state of nature and reported back with a worrying picture but crucially identified part of the mechanism that is required to help nature recover, summarised as: bigger, better, more and joined.

National Trust: Land, Outdoors and Nature

3. As one of the country's largest conservation charities and in response, the National Trust recognised that they must do more to prevent the decline identified by Prof John Lawton and proactively take steps to improve habitats for the benefit of nature. In 2015, the National Trust launched a ten year strategy called 'Playing our Part' which identified a core programme referred to as 'Land Outdoors and Nature'. This programme set a number of targets to challenge ongoing management and set stretching aspirations to improve what the Trust looks after with nature as its focus. At its heart was a need to look very carefully at how land is currently being managed, identifying where improvements for nature can be made and question whether the current management approach is indeed the right one. The programme is not about stopping farming or preventing access to the countryside but undertaking these activities in a way which has nature at the heart.
4. A number of locations were identified on National Trust holdings in South Devon where improvements could be made at a scale which should have more impact for nature. Phase 1 of this is referred to as "The Salcombe Project" and involves reassessing the land between Bolt Head and Bolt Tail to identify improvements that can be made and work with National Trust tenants to deliver more for nature. The South Devon team have spent the last year reviewing and assessing the land and have now completed a management plan which they are starting to deliver.
5. Dr Ken Neal and Richard Snow will provide a brief presentation of the Salcombe Project at the AONB Partnership Committee meeting to highlight the key elements of the programme.

Biodiversity 2020

6. 'Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' (Defra, 2011) built on the Natural Environment White Paper and set out action required to implement international and European commitments.
7. The principal contribution by AONBs to Biodiversity 2020 outcomes
8. includes 'Outcome 1C: By 2020, at least 17% of land and inland water, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, conserved through effective, integrated and joined up approaches to safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem services including through

management of our existing systems of protected areas and the establishment of nature improvement areas'.

9. Despite progress, it is now widely acknowledged that the targets set out in Biodiversity 2020 will not be achieved and substantive action for habitats and species remains a priority. The 25 Year Plan for the Environment sets out challenging targets to "... achieve a growing resilient network of land, water and sea that is richer in plants and wildlife".
10. A declaration by the AONB network is due to be formally developed, announced and committed to at this year's *Landscapes for Life* Conference being held in Colchester, Essex. The South Devon AONB will be asked to be a signatory to the declaration and endorse the commitments to be known as '*the Colchester Declaration*'.

Nature Recovery Network

11. The Nature Recovery Network is a major commitment in the UK Government's 25-Year Environment Plan, intended to improve, expand and connect habitats to address wildlife decline and provide wider environmental benefits for people. Initial options have been developed by the Defra Group on the objectives, structure, development and potential partnership approaches for developing a Nature Recovery Network.
12. In Devon, the Local Nature Partnership is taking the lead with technical support from Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) who have produced a discussion document that advocates Local Nature Recovery Network Maps. A range of local organisations have been developing work on ecological networks over several decades including DWT leading on Devon Nature Map and Buglife on B-Lines.

Recommendations

13. AONB Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Consider how you can assist in developing, delivering or advocating for landscape scale nature recovery within your organisation, community of interest and wider partnerships.
 - ii. Highlight key areas of activity where an AONB lead would be particularly beneficial to developing landscape scale nature conservation responses.

Item 4b: South Devon's Historic Environment – opportunities for action

Purpose

1. To provide South Devon AONB Partnership Committee members with an overview of a range of developing opportunities for action in support of South Devon's Historic Environment, a major contributor to AONB special qualities.

Background

2. Over the past 12 months a number of notable projects and initiatives to improve the extent, condition, understanding and awareness of the AONB's Historic Environment features have been progressed by partners with substantial benefits for AONB special qualities and delivery of Management Plan priorities.
3. Bill Horner, Historic Environment Manager for Devon County Council and Therese Kearns, CITiZAN (Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network) for the South Devon Rivers Discovery Programme Officer will provide short presentations to Partnership Committee members in the meeting on these projects, initiatives and developing areas of work including:
 - a. 'TIDE' an EU Interreg Atlantic Area funded project promoting coastal heritage tourism in the coastal zone
 - b. National Mapping Programme – Phase 2 of Devon's Moor to Shore focused upon Plymouth to Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary
 - c. Historic Environment Record
 - d. Devon Environment Viewer
 - e. CITiZAN South Devon Rivers Discovery Programme – initial work on the Dart estuary
 - f. Heritage at Risk Register – improving the condition of Scheduled Monuments at risk

Recommendations

4. Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Note the breadth of positive Partnership activity benefitting the South Devon AONB in this Management Plan theme area and the links to AONB special qualities and Management Plan priorities;
 - ii. Consider how the Partnership as a whole and as individual members wishes to become more involved in the delivery of these projects, initiatives and areas of work.

Item 4c: Other AONB Management Plan Delivery

Purpose

1. To provide AONB Partnership Committee members with an update on the published 2019/20 Delivery Plan and provide an opportunity for members to highlight upcoming new or developing work or request AONB project assistance relevant to the conservation and enhancement of the South Devon AONB.

Background

2. The Management Plan directly relates to the strategic aims of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. The annual delivery plan outlines the projects and outcomes that conserve the South Devon AONB and where possible result in environmental 'net gain'. The AONB focus areas reflect current issues by prioritising projects that deliver benefits to land management, biodiversity, planning and those based on estuaries and the coast. Communication and wider education activities are also essential actions for the team. Priority themes aside, the AONB Staff Unit actively work with partners to respond to all the themes in the management plan taking advantage of funding opportunities where appropriate.
3. The delivery plan for 2019-2024 provides an important second part to the Management Plan. It sets out actions to be delivered by partners and organisations that contribute towards the conservation and enhancement of the South Devon AONB and support the Management Plan's strategic priorities. The delivery plan will continue to be updated annually to ensure it remains relevant and flexible.
4. In recognition that much of the work of the AONB Partnership and its wider partners occurs outside of scheduled AONB Partnership meetings, this item is intended for Partnership members to update colleagues on organisational, personal or community activity undertaken in support of Management Plan delivery; or the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB.

Recommendations

5. Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Note the contents and format of the attached current working version and offer their views on the working delivery plan document recognising it is not meant to be an exhaustive list of activity.
 - ii. Highlight projects that could be added to the delivery plan as it provides information on key partner projects.

Appendix to item 4c

South Devon AONB Working Delivery Plan 2019/20

The following activity listing summarises a working Delivery Plan supporting the South Devon AONB Management Plan strategy. Further information on any of the projects or initiatives contained in this delivery plan can be obtained from the South Devon AONB staff unit office.

PLACE			
Landscape Character Action			
	Develop proposals for undergrounding overhead power lines and submit to Western Power Distribution as part of the regulatory period 2015-2023	Lead	South Devon AONB/Wester Power Distribution/landowners
	Achieve Dark Sky Discovery Site status for some areas of the AONB by educating and engaging residents and businesses.	Partner	AONB/ Devon County Council /local groups
	Develop a Seascape Character Assessment	Advocate	South Hams District Council/ Devon County Council
	Develop an approach to assessing the cumulative effects of landscape and seascape change.	Advocate	Devon County Council
	Further develop a sustainable and affordable landscape change monitoring framework.	Advocate	Devon County Council
Natural Resources & Climate			
	Promote projects South Devon Catchments Partnership Action Plan	Lead	Westcountry Rivers Trust/ South Devon AONB
	AONB Unit to facilitate and lead beach cleans with partners	Lead	South Devon AONB/local and national voluntary groups
	Complete and publish the South Devon River Catchments Strategic Plan	Partner	CaBA partnership
	Deliver the 2019/20 Catchment Sensitive Farming programme including Nitrate Vulnerable Zone initiatives	Partner	Natural England / Environment Agency/ Westcountry Rivers Trust

	Diffuse Water Pollution Project for the Gara catchment	Advocate	Natural England / Environment Agency/ Westcountry Rivers Trust
	Implement a programme of infrastructure improvements under the AMP6 programme)	Advocate	South West Water
	Implement a programme of infrastructure improvements under the AMP7 programme to begin in 2020	Advocate	South West Water
	Implement water quality projects informed by condition assessments under the Bathing Water Directive	Advocate	Environment Agency
Biodiversity & Geodiversity			
	Devon special species targeted conservation / habitat management projects	Lead/Partner	South Devon AONB / Partners
	Deliver South Devon Pacific Oyster Project	Lead	South Devon AONB/Natural England
	Support the implementation of the Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project through the project partnership	Lead	Projects/Devon Wildlife Trust
	Use Open Farm Sunday, Big Day out on the farm, local Community events and AONB events to highlight the contribution farming and land management make to AONB biodiversity.	Lead	South Devon AONB/ landowners/ National Trust
	Provide landowner advice, habitat enhancements and connectivity improvements through the Avon Valley Project / Facilitation Fund	Lead	D/ South Devon Nature Trust/South Devon AONB
	Deliver a programme of Naturally Active events and activities for target groups of over 55s to reconnect people, nature and place	Lead	South Devon AONB /Connecting Actively with Nature
	Deliver a NERC funded Collaborative Award in Science and Engineering PhD studentship using the South Devon AONB as an outdoor laboratory to better understand how pollinators act in fragmented landscapes	Lead	Exeter University/South Devon AONB
	Develop and deliver projects identified in the Wild Wembury Opportunities Mapping project	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Deliver a biodiversity monitoring programme for Devon focussed on County Wildlife Sites and their positive conservation management	Partner	Devon County Council/ Devon Biodiversity Records Centre

	Coordinate and deliver action to safeguard Devon's natural environment through the Devon Local Nature Partnership in support of the seven priority themes identified in the prospectus	Partner	Devon County Council
	Implement action in support of the management plans for Berry Head and Slapton Ley National Nature Reserves	Partner	Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust, Field Studies Council
	Support the implementation of the Back from the Brink Project for Grey long eared bats through the project partnership	Partner	Devon Wildlife Trust
	South Devon Wildlife Champions project 2018 - 2021	Partner	Devon Wildlife Trust
	Work with partners to monitor and manage Non-native invasive species in the AONB	Partner	Devon Wildlife Trust
	Work towards developing initiatives that respond to Ash Die Back in the AONB (LERG)	Partner	Devon Wildlife Trust /Local Authorities/others
	Work towards meeting conservation objectives for South Devon's SSSIs and SACs	Advocate	Natural England
	Publish guidance for the conservation and management of marine protected areas off the South Devon coast	Advocate	Natural England
	South Devon LON development	Advocate /Partner	National Trust
	South Devon Ecological Network Mapping	Advocate	Devon Wildlife Trust
	Salcombe Land Outdoors Nature programme	Advocate	National Trust
	Priority landscapes programme. Focus on Cirl Bunting support	Advocate	Devon Wildlife Trust /Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
	Publish the South Hams Special Area of Conservation Greater Horseshoe Bat guidance document	Advocate	Natural England/ Local Nature Partnership/Local Authorities
	Review of Management Plans for Woodland trust sites throughout South Devon	Advocate	Woodland Trust
	Deliver a Woods into Management programme – to include the wooded western parts of the South Devon AONB	Advocate	Forestry Commission
	Conservation management initiatives on National Trust tenant farmed land	Advocate	National Trust

Historic Environment			
	Use the National Marine Plan and Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment to develop a community research and recording project	Lead	South Devon AONB/ CiTiZAN?
	Seek funding and action to save “at risk” monuments from further deterioration	Partner	Local Authorities /English Heritage
	Seek funding to implement condition survey and recording work at priority HE sites	Partner	Devon County Council
	Develop a Management Plan for Bantham Ham Scheduled Ancient Monument	Advocate	Bantham Estate
	Complete the National Mapping Programme survey of the South Devon AONB	Advocate	English Heritage/Devon County Council
Farming & Land Management			
	Deliver a programme of education and community work to improve the links between farms, their local populations and the special qualities of the AONB	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Deliver South Devon AONB Farmers Sounding Board meetings	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Deliver Countryside Stewardship Facilitation support to farmers and landholders in the South Devon Avon Valley	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Provide coordination and promote knowledge exchange amongst land management advisers active in South Devon through the South Devon Conservation Advisers' Forum	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Provide support to SHDC to combat ADB disease	Partner	South Hams District Council
	Provide a strategic lead on action to combat tree disease throughout the area including <i>Phytophthora</i> and <i>Chalara</i>	Advocate	Devon County Council/ Forestry Commission
	Review of Management Plans for Woodland trust sites throughout South Devon	Advocate	Woodland Trust
	Develop the Gillard Road Nature Reserve LEMP	Advocate	Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust
	Support the community group management of The Grove, Churston	Advocate	Friends of Grove Woods

Coast & Marine Environment			
	Work with partners to deliver a series of events and activities to actively promote the coast - including Big Night out on the beach	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Dartmouth steel-piled sea walls habitat project. Local plans to identify mitigation opportunities	Lead	South Devon AONB/Exeter University
	Develop a marine engagement project in South Devon	Partner	Devon Wildlife Trust
	Marine Conservation Zone advocacy work (defined June 2019)	Partner	Devon County Council/ Partners
	Develop and implement a long-term plan for South Milton Sands	Advocate	National Trust
	Develop and implement a long term integrated plan for the coastline at Beesands	Advocate	South Hams District Council
	Review of coastal management policies and procedures for Slapton Sands	Advocate	Slapton Line Partnership
Rivers & Estuaries			
	Updating and maintaining 10 slipway information panels	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Seagrass meadow conservation projects - swim / no boat areas	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Implement the South Devon Catchment Partnership Year 5 work programme and seek funding for further work	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Develop a project and funding bid to investigate the occurrence of dinoflagellate blooms causing 'red tides' within Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary and remedial action	Partner	South Devon AONB /Exeter University
	Work with the Community Seagrass Initiative to raise awareness of Seagrass beds in the South West of England	Partner	National Marine Aquarium
	Sea grass conservation and trialling of advanced mooring solutions in the AONB.	Partner	CaBA partnership

	Develop and implement initiatives to ensure that the conservation objectives for the Salcombe-Kingsbridge SSSI are met and the site reaches and sustains favourable condition as speedily as possible	Partner	Natural England
PEOPLE			
Access, Recreation & Tourism			
	Brixham / Kingswear project - deliver / support identified projects from action plan	Lead	South Devon AONB / South Hams District Council /Torbay Council/Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust
	Produce and install interpretation boards around the coast path as part of Explore South Devon project to develop and promote 9 enhanced guided walks (audio, video and images)	Lead	South Devon AONB / South West Coast Path Association
	Develop and produce a walking guide app. for the Explore South Devon project.	Lead	South Devon AONB / South West Coast Path Association
	Develop a private sector funded environmental behaviour change project based on the pilot Holiday Footprints project	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Establish the significance, effects and appropriate solutions to human disturbance of seabirds, seals, basking sharks and cetaceans.	Partner	Dart Estuary Forum partners
	Develop a "Natural Health Service" for Devon	Partner	Local Nature Partnership
	Continued community involvement in the Rights of Way network through the Parish Paths Partnership and other schemes	Advocate	Devon County Council/ Local parish councils
	Continue the public open space improvement programme across South Hams	Advocate	South Hams District Council
	Implement the Green Infrastructure plan for the South Hams District identifying gaps in the provision of recreational opportunity and prioritised solutions	Advocate	South Hams District Council

Planning & Sustainable Development			
	Promote the use of the planning guidance document for the South Devon AONB	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Develop "Standing Advice" relevant to the most common forms of development experienced by the protected landscape	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Provide comment and advice on significant planning applications	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Assess condition of interpretation panels on the SWCP and secure funding to replace / maintain as necessary	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Develop a design guide to capture the vernacular and variations across the AONB. Could include built and natural environment	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Produce guidance for Construction Environment Management Plan production	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Engage in the development of a Supplementary Planning Document as part of the Joint Local Plan for South Hams/West Devon	Partner	South Hams District Council / West Devon District Council
	Support the development of Neighbourhood Plans for AONB Parishes	Partner	Local Planning Authorities & Parish Councils
	SDAONB act as a local liaison point for the South West Marine Plan consultation	Partner	Marine Management Organisation
Transport and Highways			
	Installation of AONB village gateway signs by agreement with parish councils and highway authorities	Lead	South Devon AONB / Devon CC
	Review, update and install ferry panels	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Develop and implement pilot approaches to roadside verge management to improve their nature conservation value	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Secure funding to produce and deliver a set of interpretation boards around the coast path at Brixham / Kingswear Peninsula and Wembury, coast path.	Lead	South Devon AONB

	Update and reprint Discover the South Devon AONB leaflet	Lead	South Devon AONB
Rural Economy and Services			
	Local food and drink campaign to raise sales and increase awareness of the protected landscape	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Develop a business and growth centred component to South Devon's woodfuel needs through the South Devon Local Action Group Forestry Productivity strand, developing the markets and supply chains for local wood fuel	Partner	South Devon AONB/Forestry Commission
	Develop initiatives in support of the strategic economic plan	Advocate	Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership Board
	Develop new prioritised programmes of local economic action and seek resources to support implementation	Advocate	South Devon Coastal Local Action Group
	New provision and upgrades to existing facilities through s106 developer contributions	Advocate	South Hams District Council, Torbay Council
Community & Culture			
	Deliver CAN projects with over 55s based on WI involvement and grandparents. Investigate links for ways into volunteering with NT	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Work towards the delivery Brixham and Kingswear Peninsula Routeways and Connections projects	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Seek to match fund Wembury corridors and connections project to deliver community engagement	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Develop volunteering opportunities including photographers, adopt-a-walk, event stewarding, estuary project eyes and ears reporting	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Plastics - reduce plastic waste - sustainably. Really impactful methods not headline grabbing - education, working with businesses	Partner	CaBA partnership

Working together			
Awareness, communication and organisation			
	Delivery of public events to promote awareness and understanding of the special qualities of the South Devon AONB and specific projects	Lead	South Devon AONB
	Support the Slapton Line communications programme	Partner	Slapton Line Partnership
	Contribute towards the Resilient Heritage funded 'Taking the Lead' national mentoring programme	Partner	National Association of AONBs
	Improve opportunities for collaborative working and joint initiatives	Partner	National Association of AONBs
	Explore opportunities for the national AONB network to jointly commission projects and provide consultancy services to generate income	Partner	National Association of AONBs

The core business of the AONB Unit on behalf of the Partnership also includes the following actions:
Service and coordinate the AONB Partnership Committee
Service and coordinate the AONB Core Funding Group
Service and coordinate the South Devon Estuaries Partnership
Ensure the AONB Management Plan Review works collaboratively with Parishes, Neighbourhood Plan Groups and local businesses.
Develop and publish an AONB Annual Report
Organise and run the AONB Open Annual Forum
Maintain and develop the South Devon AONB website, social media, e-bulletins, press releases etc. Support and promote #Outstanding Week in SDAONB
Ensure that the AONB has a profile at relevant shows and events
Respond to consultation requests from LPAs on planning applications for significant developments
Contribute toward the development of LPAs Strategic Planning Policy

Undertake an update of images as part of Fixed Post Photography landscape monitoring programme
Provide advice to Local Authorities and other organisations on AONB duties and special qualities
Deliver a programme of community engagement activities
Provide land management advice and coordination
Produce a 3-year South Devon AONB Partnership and Staff Unit Business Plan and submit to DEFRA
Revise the operation of the South Devon AONB Partnership, any working groups and support the AONB Community Representatives in liaising with their sectors
Publish an annual update to the AONB Delivery Plan
Seek initial trustees and formally launch a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in support of the South Devon AONB
AONB governance - 3xAONB Partnership meetings, 2xAONB Estuaries Steering Group, 1x annual open forum
Undertake a formal review of the 2019-2024 AONB Management Plan in 2023
Develop intern post to support team and specific project delivery
Working with and contributing to the NAAONB activities, sharing advice and best practice nationally and regionally. - conference; Lead officer meetings; Taking the Lead programme; comms monthly telecom
Specific volunteering opportunities for MOP - e.g. walks checkers; events assistants, tied to specific projects, photographers

The AONB Unit will lead or contribute to the following groups during 2019-20:

AONB Estuaries Partnership Steering Group
Avon Estuary Conservation Forum
Brixham and Kingswear Peninsula Project Group
Dart Estuary Forum
Devon AONBs Officers group
Devon Maritime Forum

Devon Landscape Policy Group
Devon Local Nature Partnership
Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat project steering group
Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat community engagement T and F group
Neighbourhood Plan Groups
South Devon AONB Partnership Committee
South Devon Catchments Partnership
Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary Forum
Slapton Line Partnership Steering Group
South Devon Outdoors tourism sector group
Slapton Nature Reserve Land Management Committee
South Devon Local Action Group Management Board
South Devon AONB Farmers' Sounding Board Group
Sustainability and Outdoor learning in Devon – LNP project group
Tamar Estuary Consultative Forum
Wembury Marine Centre Partnership
Wembury Voluntary Marine Conservation Area group
Yealm Estuary Management Group

Item 5a: Current and recent key applications

Purpose

1. To highlight to AONB Partnership Committee members a range of strategic development and development management matters of particular note.

Current and recent applications of particular note

2. Reserved matters applications for Local Plan allocated sites in the AONB setting at Belle Hill, Kingsbridge (96 dwellings); Green Park Way, Chillington (64 dwellings); Land adjacent to Townstal Road, Dartmouth (250 dwellings); Church Hill, Holbeton (14 dwellings); Yalberton Road, Paignton (192 dwellings).
3. Proposals for locations within the AONB and not on allocated sites: Land West of Collaton Cross, Newton Ferrers (70 dwellings); Fish Hoek & Waterside, Dartmouth (12 dwellings).
4. Proposals for locations not on allocated sites in the AONB setting at Land South of Whiterock, Paignton (400 dwellings); Former Shire Horse Centre, Dunstone (25 dwellings); Waterhead Brake, Kingswear (13 dwellings).
5. Land at Holwell Farm, St Ann's Chapel – Bigbury Neighbourhood Plan allocation and village housing initiative site (Conditional approval).
6. Reserved matters and discharge of conditions applications for Noss on Dart, Kingswear.
7. MMO Marine License Application MLA/2018/00506 for a 19-month trial seaweed farm. This was the first substantive development application via the MMO requiring AONB comment. Decision awaited.
8. A full list of planning cases the AONB Unit has been involved in over the last quarter is provided for information purposes in Item 7a.

Recent appeal cases of note in the South Devon AONB

9. Appeal Ref: APP/K1128/W/18/3208541 Land to east of Lyte Lane, West Charleton, Kingsbridge TQ7 2BP. An outline application with some matters reserved for construction of up to 24 dwellings (including affordable housing), village green, children's play area, parking area, and associated works including landscaping
10. The Appeal was dismissed. The main issues were:
 - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including the landscape and scenic beauty of the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB);
 - whether the proposal would constitute 'major development' in the AONB; and
 - if constituting major development, do exceptional circumstances exist, and would the development be in the public interest
11. The Inspector, Benjamin Webb concluded "*conclude that whilst the provision of affordable housing and market housing would each provide some public benefits, including to the economy, no exceptional circumstances exist which would outweigh the harm that would be caused to the AONB. As such the development would not be in the public interest. Consequently paragraph 172 of the Framework indicates that planning permission should be refused.*"

12. Key appeal cases the AONB Staff Unit has contributed to and that are awaiting Inspector decisions include:

PINS case ref number	Address	Case summary	Summary of AONB Matters	Start date
3213309	Home Farm, Wood Lane, Slapton	Erection of 5 new houses	Nature and scale not respecting character and village edge location	11 Dec 2018
3218669	Selworthy House, Kingsbridge	Outline application for demolition of existing building and erection of 18 dwellings	AONB Major development, coalescence, not respecting character of Bowcombe Creek, adverse impact on views	29 Jan 2019
3218474	Sanderson's Field, Kingston	Outline, 12 homes residential development		23 Jan 2019
3226585 case is linked to 3218474	Sanderson's Field, Kingston	Outline, 9 homes residential development		23 Jan 2019

Recommendations

13. The Partnership Committee is recommended to:

- i. Note recent and current levels of protected landscape development management advice required from.
- ii. Continue to alert the AONB Manager at the earliest possible opportunity to cases where protected landscape matters are pertinent and share views on live applications.

Item 5b: Plymouth & SW Devon Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document & AONB Planning Guidance revision

Purpose

1. This report brings to the attention of AONB Partnership Committee members work currently in the early stages of development to develop planning guidance in support of the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.

Background

2. The Joint Local Plan for Plymouth and South West Devon¹ was formally adopted by the three Councils on the 27th March 2019 and full weight has been attributed to its policies since this date for decision-taking on planning proposals affecting the South Hams and Plymouth LPA elements of the South Devon AONB.
3. The adopted Torbay Local Plan has guided decision-taking on proposals affecting the Torbay elements of the South Devon AONB since December 2015. A Local Plan Review is due to commence shortly.

Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document

4. Supplementary Planning Document text is currently being drafted in support of key policies within the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. The intention is to produce a single document containing additional material to aid in the interpretation, clarification and application of the majority of JLP policies.
5. The South Devon AONB Manager is drafting text in support of the DEV25 Nationally Protected Landscapes policy drawing on and updating material from the South Devon AONB Planning Guidance, Tamar Valley AONB work on AONB Major Development and other best practice from across the AONB network.
6. Part of this work is likely to include a formula and/or matrix to support expectation of enhancement associated with different scales of proposals to ensure a proportionate approach is followed that takes all reasonable steps to secure both conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.
7. Following approval by the three Councils, a draft will be consulted upon for 6 weeks from mid November 2019, before amendments are made. The current timetable aims for final SPD text to be adopted in March 2020.

South Devon AONB planning Guidance revision

8. Following publication of the 2019-24 AONB Management Plan, the South Devon AONB Planning Guidance has been assessed and scoped for essential and desirable changes required. A small budget from core funds has been reserved to support this essential work in bringing this important and valued annex to the AONB Management Plan up to date.

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¹ <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/JLPAadoptedVersion.pdf>

9. While the front end of the document remains contemporary and is proposed to remain largely the same, more significant changes are likely to result in the later sections from updating to reflect:
 - NPPF2 February 2019 changes
 - 2019-24 AONB Management Plan policy set
 - Recent Case Law
 - Recent Planning Inspectorate Appeals
 - Status of Development Plans with associated key policies
 - The inclusion of text to guide assessing impacts on the purpose of designation to bring in line with Habitat Regulations, EIA, GLVIA3 and NPPF footnote 55 terminology
 - Case studies
 - More information on enhancement

10. Work to develop Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) text for the DEV25 Nationally Protected Landscape policy and other relevant policies in the Joint Local Plan for Plymouth and South West Devon is being carried out in parallel with updating Annex 1 to the South Devon AONB Management Plan: AONB Planning Guidance, to ensure consistency of approach and that opportunities for cross referencing are maximised.

Design Guide

11. At this stage a design guide for the plan area is not being pursued by the Joint Local Plan team. AONB Partnership Committee members are invited to consider the merits, resourcing needs and options presented by the South Devon AONB Partnership leading on the development of a South Devon AONB focused design guide with the potential to involve a variety of partners potentially including Neighbourhood Plan Groups, Architects and Designers.

12. Securing good design is central to good planning and place-making with the appearance of a proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings being material planning considerations. Many AONBs such as the Chilterns² and High Weald³ have developed Design Guides to assist with maintaining and enhancing character and sense of place. Closer to home, elements of the recently consulted upon Teignbridge Design Guide⁴ that relate well to rural contexts also provides useful examples of design guide components that could be adapted and work well in a South Devon AONB context.

13. Other opportunities and mechanisms to develop subject specific design guidance are also being pursued. An example of this is work being developed through the Devon Landscape Policy Group, a grouping of landscape specialists from across Devon's local authority and protected landscapes, to update the publication 'New Farm Buildings in Devon: A Design Guide' originally produced in 2003.

Recommendations

14. Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Note the scope of work being undertaken and timetables involved.

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² <http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/BuildingsDesignGuide2010.pdf>

³ <http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/land-management-guidance/legislation-and-planning/2297-draft-design-guide-for-new-builds/file.html>

⁴ <https://democracy.teignbridge.gov.uk/documents/s1084/7h.%20Design%20Guide%20web.pdf>

- ii. Request a planning guidance focused update to be brought to a future meeting of the AONB Partnership Committee, or if timings do not align, provide an update via email, highlighting opportunities for involvement in any consultations.
- iii. Give their views on the development of Design Guide material and any potential AONB Partnership and Staff Unit role.

Item 5c: South Devon AONB Planning protocol

Purpose

1. This report brings to the attention of AONB Partnership Committee members work currently in the very early stages of development to review and update the 'South Devon AONB Planning Protocol' in support of the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.

Background

2. The existing AONB Planning Protocol was adopted back in February 2011 (attached for reference as an annex document to these meeting agenda papers) and relates to both strategic planning and development management.
3. In summary, the protocol sets out:
 - Background, Planning Policy and The AONB Partnership
 - The Role of the AONB Staff Unit in planning and development issues
 - Action the Local Planning Authorities will take
 - Conditions, thresholds or triggers for LPAs requesting consultation responses
 - The process and responsibilities associated with consultation requests
4. Following a series of substantive changes to the policy framework since 2011 and the volume of consultation requests regularly exceeding current resourced capacity, a comprehensive review and update of the protocol is required to ensure that it remains fit for purpose for all parties.

Review approach

5. While much of the over-arching framework and headline items remain relatively contemporary, much of the detail in the protocol requires updating and refining. In particular the items listed as significant developments require careful consideration, given the extensive South Devon AONB Planning Guidance available to case officers. More information on this matter will be given by the AONB Manager in support of this item during the meeting.
6. Ultimately, any revised protocol needs to avoid being unduly complex and strike an appropriate and realistic balance reflecting:
 - Current levels and best predictions of
 - Current levels and best predictions of number and type of Development Management applications / pre-application requests
 - The current level of resourcing for this area of AONB activity, requirement for income generation and adaptation combined with core funder and project funder contractual requirements
7. Account must be taken of substantive changes since 2011 including:
 - NPPF2 February 2019 wording
 - The current adopted development plans and resultant policy set for all LPAs and the MMO. Particularly in the case of South Hams and Plymouth applications, thresholds or triggers for consultations must as a minimum relate to the robust and clear criteria based policy contained in

DEV25 Nationally Protected Landscapes, and draw on other policy elements including but not limited to DEV24 Undeveloped Coast and Heritage Coast and DEV23 Landscape Character.

- Local Plan Review timetables and scoping
 - Annex 1 to the South Devon AONB Management Plan: AONB Planning Guidance including the extensive standing advice provided within.
 - A growing number of highly relevant and contemporary Planning Inspectorate appeal reports
 - Emerging JLP SPD and guidance from other LPA areas.
 - Provision of a separate paid for pre-application service linked to and signposted from LPA pre-application services.
8. An important principle to be maintained is the inclusion of wording and approaches for the majority of the protocol that are relevant across all Local Planning Authority areas. A decision supplemented by additions specific to the LPA interests of South Hams, Devon County, Torbay, Plymouth and the Marine Management Organisation.

Future Reviews

9. Given the changing nature of this area of work and the importance of keeping any protocol relevant it is proposed to undertake light reviews of the planning protocol at three yearly intervals in line with Core Funder Memorandum of Agreement reviews and renewals or at particular points in time when circumstances materially and significantly change. Examples of the latter case could be when:
 - Government implements its response to the Glover Review recommendations on Nationally designated landscapes
 - Defra or Local Authority Core Funder contributions and/or funding conditions markedly change.
10. Should the level of resourcing for supporting consultation responses to planning applications be increased in any way i.e. increased LPA contributions, temporarily funded pilot schemes, increased central government contributions etc. then an earlier review may be initiated.

Process and timetable

11. A small Working Group will be established supported and led by the AONB Manager with officer involvement sought from all South Devon AONB LPAs and those members of the AONB Partnership that have expressed a wish to be involved. Note that Geoffrey Osborn representing the AONB Amenity Groups has already indicated his wish to be involved.
12. An initial outline of the proposed process is provided below:
 - a) Initial scoping to agree and set terms of reference for the group and informal adoption process
 - b) Evaluate the current protocol – performance, outcomes, strengths and weaknesses
 - c) Agree and set a revised framework for the updated protocol
 - d) Agree
 - text to bring forward as is
 - text to bring forward and update
 - the purpose of any new text to be developed
 - draft new text
 - Prepare a final draft

- e) Test with LPA Development Management colleagues
 - f) Refine protocol text
 - g) Adoption by AONB Partnership and LPA informal adoption
13. The timetable for the review will need to reflect the magnitude of change required and availability of working group attendees, but the first meeting is anticipated during the next 6 weeks with substantive progress to follow soon after with an expectation of achieving f) in the process by early Autumn. Note that the earliest adoption date for the AONB Partnership Committee would be its December 2019 meeting.

Recommendations

14. The Partnership Committee is recommended to:
- i. Clarify any aspects that should form the Terms of Reference for the working group;
 - ii. Let the AONB Manager know of any interest to contribute to the working group;
 - iii. Give its views on updating the protocol and in particular thresholds or triggers for LPAs to request consultation responses to applications for development.

Item 6b: Partnership meetings: improving engagement with AONB communities

Purpose

1. This item reviews the structure of the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee meetings and makes recommendations for changes to increase engagement with communities.

Background

2. The Partnership has decided to reduce the number of Committee meetings from four to three per year. It has also agreed to hold at least one of these meetings at a venue within the South Devon AONB. Whilst the Committee meetings are open to the public, very few people who are not members of the Partnership attend the meetings.
3. The Partnership Committee meetings offer an opportunity for people to gain a deeper understanding of the functioning and role of the Partnership, as well as the current issues impacting upon the South Devon AONB.

Options

4. In order to attract more people to attend the Partnership meetings, it is possible to:
 - i. Ensure that on occasions where the agenda does not include presentations that are wide public interest which can be advertised locally to attract members of the public to attend, then a presentation is arranged prior to, or after, the Committee meeting, with Partnership Committee members able to decide whether to attend or not, depending on travel and commitments.
 - ii. Set aside 15 minutes prior to, or after, each Committee meeting, where members of the public are given the opportunity to make a statement, the timing dependent upon the number of people wishing to speak and at most 3 minutes.

Recommendations

5. Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. approve the trial for the next three Committee meetings of there being a presentation arranged on a topic of wide public appeal starting at 9:30 am prior to the meetings; and
 - ii. give members of the public the opportunity to make a statement to the Chair in a 15-minute session, starting at 9:10 am - the timing dependent upon the number of people wishing to speak – for a maximum of 3 minutes.