

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

**HELD AT KINGSWEAR VILLAGE HALL
ON FRIDAY 13th MARCH 2020**

1. INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Those present were:

Peter Chamberlain	PC	Devon County Council
Cllr Rosemary Rowe	RR	South Hams District Council
Graham Swiss	GS	South Hams District Council
Cllr Anne Brooks	AB	Torbay Council
Tracy Brooks	TB	Torbay Council
Richard Snow	RS	National Trust
John Green	Chair	Independent
Geoffrey Osborn	GO	Representative: amenity groups
Kate Ryder	KR	Representative: business community
Lynne Maurer	LM	Representative: parishes
Samantha Dennis	SD	Representative: tourism community
Roger English	RE	AONB Manager
Vanessa Gray		AONB Office Manager – minute taker

Also attending:

Adam Davison	AD	AONB Project Officer
Nicky Bailey	NB	AONB Community Projects Officer

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr Jonathan Hawkins		Devon County Council
Cllr Roger Croad		Devon County Council
Cllr Bernard Taylor		South Hams District Council
Tom Jones		South Hams District Council
Kate Tobin		Forestry Commission
Eamon Crowe		Natural England
Rob Price		Environment Agency
John Martin	Vice-chair	Plymouth University
Peter Sandover		Representative: community/voluntary groups
Ed Parr Ferris		Representative: environmental organisations (NGOs)
Robert Steer		Representative: landowning and farming

Observers

Individuals and representatives from various groups attended as observers.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE

Please note this meeting of the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee took place before Government social distancing measures announced on 16th March. Dates, decisions and other information given at the meeting may have now been overtaken by events and current Government advice.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

- 2.1 No interests were declared

3. MINUTES OF THE 6th DECEMBER 2019 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING FOR APPROVAL & ANY MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 The notes of the last meeting were accepted as true record.

- 3.2 It was noted that most actions had been completed.

- 3.2.1 With regards to the South Devon AONB Partnership response to Glover review proposals: The delayed formal response to the Review proposals from Defra is now expected by the end of this year. The AONB Manager encourages Members to feedback comments and questions on the Glover Review proposals.

ACTION 1 (ALL): In particular, Members are requested to provide feedback on the National Landscape Service proposal to the AONB Manager by 27th March

- 3.2.2 The AONB Manager updated Members on the action to arrange a meeting with Torbay Council to discuss five-year land supply. The AONB Manager informed Partnership that the five-year housing supply will be a critical factor at the Inglewood/White Rock planning appeal, where the planning inspectorate will now effectively decide this issue.

- 3.2.3 The format of the public presentation and open forum will continue as now, with a review taking place at the next meeting of the Partnership.

- 3.2.4 Action 7 is carried forward as Countryside Stewardship fits into the agenda for the next Partnership Committee meeting that will be focussing on activity surrounding the new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS).

4A ADOPTION OF THE REFRESHED SOUTH DEVON AONB PLANNING PROTOCOL

The AONB Manager updated Members on the final draft of the South Devon AONB Planning Protocol, incorporating minor amendments arising from limited feedback received following the 6th December 2019 Partnership Committee meeting. There followed a wide-ranging discussion on planning matters.

The AONB Chair asked Partnership to vote to adopt the refreshed South Devon AONB Planning Protocol

RESOLVED: Partnership Committee members voted to adopt the refreshed South Devon AONB Planning Protocol.

The AONB Manager will progress adoption of the refreshed Protocol with the four Local Planning Authorities of South Hams, Torbay, Devon and Plymouth Councils as well as the Marine Management Organisation. A report on progress will be provided at the next Partnership meeting taking place on 26th June.

ACTION 2 (RE): The AONB Manager will pass the following additional comments put forward by Geoffrey Osborn, representative for amenity groups, to South Hams District Council for comment:

- i. Mention AONB when advertising planning applications that are either within or in the setting
- ii. Mention AONB in relevant areas on the SHDC website planning page
- iii. The AONB Manager should have the right to speak at Development Management Committee meetings

4B ROUND TABLE PARTNER UPDATES

4b.1 Special COVID-19 update

- i. Where dates are mentioned, these are subject to latest Government advice and may be liable to change.
- ii. Cllr Rowe – the majority of Follaton House based South Hams District Council staff are able to work from home. The situation is being closely monitored however it is likely to affect meetings going forward.
- iii. Graham Swiss - South Hams District Council has stepped up advice. Already in place is a small group of named officers that have liaison responsibility with targeted areas such as Parish/Town Councils, voluntary groups etc. Further information available via South Hams District Council website.
- iv. AONB Manager – as the AONB staff unit is hosted by South Hams District Council, the team will follow instructions and protocols issued by them. In terms of Partnership and AONB matters, it is recognised that the range of Partners may have differing approaches to the COVID-19 situation. Venues may also impose different things. The AONB Manager informed Partnership that the staff unit will follow District Council advice and is also able to work from home.
[Post meeting note: The AONB staff unit are willing to offer assistance for the local Corona \(COVID-19\) response effort where our skillset assists. The major funders of core AONB function would have priority should a conflict arise.](#)

4b.2 Samantha Dennis, representative for tourism

- i. Anthony Mangnall MP has asked for a round table for tourism to be set-up. A list of attendees is being compiled with a view to meeting every other month.

4b.3 Graham Swiss, South Hams District Council

- i. The Supplementary Planning Document is in the process of adoption by South Hams District Council, estimated to be in place mid-2020.

4b.4 Tracy Brooks, Torbay Council

- i. The Inglewood (White Rock) application, in setting of the AONB in Paignton, is going to appeal.

4b.5 Lynne Maurer, representative for Parish Councils

- i. Contacted all Parish and Town councils in the AONB. A range of feedback has been received. It was then
RESOLVED The AONB Manager will respond to issues raised in the Parish comments via LM.
- ii. Also researching Neighbourhood Plans and how these handle AONB matters.

4b.6 Cllr Rowe, South Hams District Council

- i. Supplementary Planning Document adoption is going forward at a special meeting of South Hams District Council taking place on 25th June.

4b.7 Richard Snow, National Trust

- i. Proposed a site visit to South Down farm to look at how the National Trust Land Outdoors and Nature programme is working and address any concerns. Suggested the next Partnership meeting could take place at a venue nearby, such as Malborough.

4b.8 Peter Chamberlain, Devon County Council

- i. Slapton Line Partnership update.
 - Current strategy is now the Slapton Adaptation Plan. Will work with local community and organisations to plan for the future in line with this strategy. South Hams District Council will host and provide a dedicated officer.

- The plan to move the Monument to a more secure location is ongoing. There are complex issues, however it is hoped to achieve this by end of 2020.
 - ii. Ash Dieback
 - Initial offer of forty free tree packs was oversubscribed.
 - Further funding now obtained, to be formally launched at the County Show.
 - Those unsuccessful in the initial offer will be contacted regarding this further offer from May onwards.
 - iii. Low Carbon Task Force – Developing a carbon plan for Devon
 - Next key stage, a Citizens Assembly of representatives for the communities of Devon, will be held June/July 2020 to obtain views on the draft plan.
 - Have also commenced work on the likely impact of climate change on Devon and adaptations to inevitable changes.
 - Devon Local Nature Partnership with West Country Rivers Trust looking at the impact of climate change on Devon’s natural environment.
- 4b.9 Geoffrey Osborn, representative for amenity groups
- i. Provided Amenity Groups Feedback on the public open forum sessions
 - Would like the open forum to be incorporated into the main Partnership Committee meeting.
 - Would like Partnership Committee members to be aware of the points raised during these sessions.
 - The AONB Chair informed Partnership that all Members are very welcome to attend these sessions and encourages them to do so whenever possible. The open forum commences at 0935.
- ACTION 3 (Chair/RE):** Circulate topics raised at the open forum when the draft minutes are circulated.
- ii. Underlined the importance of timely release of agenda papers prior to Partnership meetings and minutes afterwards.

5A NAAONB COLCHESTER DECLARATION ON NATURE AND NATURE RECOVERY NETWORKS

5a.1 The AONB Manager went through the update on the NAAONB Colchester Declaration contained in the papers. The AONB Manager drew attention to

- i. Draft criteria for identification of top species or assemblages provided by the National Association for AONBs.
- ii. Top 5 species or assemblages identified by the South Devon AONB staff unit

ACTION 4 (all):

- Provide feedback on the species that are important to communities/ areas represented by Partnership Committee members, bearing in mind the criteria specified.
- Indicate interest in forming a small working group to assist with developing and delivering this area of work

During the meeting interest in joining a working group was expressed from:

Richard Snow, National Trust

Samantha Dennis, representative for the Tourism community

Lynne Maurer, representative for Parish Councils within the AONB

Post meeting, interest in joining a working group was expressed by Ed Parr Ferris, representative for environmental organisations

- 5a.2 Ed Parr Ferris, Conservation Manager at Devon Wildlife Trust and partnership representative for environmental groups, provided a pre-recorded video presentation to update Partnership on work taking place to develop a Nature Recovery Network on behalf of Devon Local Nature Partnership.

5B. 2020/21 DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

The AONB Manager introduced this agenda item, running through the update provided in the papers and adding further information to the key projects mentioned.

- 5b.1 The AONB Projects Officer, Adam Davison, updated Partnership on the 2020/21 draft delivery plan, a statutory part of the AONB Management Plan. Projects that support Management Plan themes can still be added however work will soon commence on a draft 2021/22 Delivery Plan.

ACTION 5 (all): Contact the AONB Project Officer to add or amend information shown in the listings.

5C. SOUTH DEVON AONB 60th CELEBRATIONS

Nicky Bailey, AONB Community Projects Officer, updated Partnership on 60th celebration activities.

- i. Programme funding obtained from National Lottery
- ii. The celebration activities will take place May to October, with a formal launch in May at our Annual Forum being held earlier in the year than usual.
- iii. A finale event will be held in November.
- iv. A number of ideas were put forward by Members who had been split into small groups to come up with ideas for activities/celebration ideas that increase community engagement and appeal to a wider audience.

Post meeting note: The AONB Community Project Officer is currently evaluating the programme following a conversation with the National Lottery. Partnership Committee members will be updated with the outcome shortly.

6A. RESILIENT LANDSCAPES: MONITORING LANDSCAPE CHANGE

This item will be incorporated into the agenda for the next meeting taking place on 26th June which will have a focus on landscape matters.

The Resilient Landscapes project aims to establish a national monitoring network.

- 6a.1 Natural England with support from the University of Plymouth are aiming to draw together a summary of the current state of English landscapes to assist with a monitoring response to the 25 Year Environment Plan resilient landscapes priority theme. This includes but is not limited to England's designated landscapes and seeks to go further than recent MEOPL (Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes) datasets.
- 6a.2 A project steering group has been established which held its first full meeting in early March. Natural England, Defra, National Parks, National Association for AONBs and CPRE are all involved. The South Devon AONB Manager is also part of this steering group.
- 6a.3 Key principles:
- Understanding what is changing and what people feel about those changes

- Ability to nest data in support of indicators to cover a variety of spatial scales from National-National Character Areas down to designated landscapes and finer
- Common standards for indicators and spatial frameworks
- Maximising the potential of combining data collected at different scales
- Enabling wide participation, including organisations and real people through crowdsourcing and citizen science
- Creating a dashboard to easily access and view results

6a.4 AONB Partnership members are encouraged to email John Martin via J.Martin-2@plymouth.ac.uk if they would like to be interviewed about this project and share their views, feedback and suggestions.

6B. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR AONBS INCLUDING LANDSCAPES FOR LIFE CONFERENCE 2020

Firstly, the AONB Manager updated Partnership on the Landscapes for Life Conference 2020. The theme for this year's conference is A Climate for Change.

6b.1 Taking place in Devon for the first time in more than twenty years. Devon County Council are a key sponsor. Event to be based at Exeter University 7th to 9th July.

6b.2 Details of draft programme activities will be included as an addendum to the minutes.

6b.3 Tuesday 7th July is site visit day. South Devon AONB involvement includes hosting two site visits

- Focus on coastal change and farming on the coast
- Trip down the Dart estuary, using Sea Kayak Devon as our guide. To take a close up view of a variety of nature recovery and biodiversity related projects along the Dart corridor, starting at Totnes and finishing in Dartmouth.

6b.4 In addition to attendance by the South Devon AONB staff unit, the AONB Manager has budgeted for up to four additional places for interested Partnership Committee members. Early bird booking is expected to be available from next month.

ACTION 6 (all): Inform the AONB Manager of your interest in attending conference.

The ANOB Manager also updated Partnership on wider National Association for AONBs matters.

Post meeting note: [Landscapes for Life Conference 2020 has been postponed and will now be held in July 2021.](#)

7A. CURRENT AND RECENT KEY APPLICATIONS

An update on development management matters of note was circulated in the papers.

7B. PLANNING UPDATE COVERING THE LAST QUARTER

Provided as a separate report.

7C. KEY AONB PROJECT PROGRAMMES AND AONB STAFF UNIT PRIORITIES

The AONB Manager recommended looking at the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission final report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-with-beauty-report-of-the-building-better-building-beautiful-commission>

2020 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Locations and themes for meetings will be announced nearer the time.

- **NEXT MEETING Friday 26th June 2020**

Post meeting note: Based on current advice, this will now be an online/telephone meeting. Depending on prevailing advice nearer the time, the meeting may have to be postponed or cancelled. The AONB Chair proposes that a virtual meeting has a shorter than usual agenda and that the public elements comprising a presentation and open forum are suspended for now. This position will be kept under review, with Partnership Committee Members thoughts and advice most welcome.

- **FUTURE MEETINGS 2020**

27th November 2020, venue TBC

These minutes remain as draft until approved at the next meeting of the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee.