

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SOUTH DEVON AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE
REMOTE VIDEO MEETING VIA ZOOM
ON FRIDAY 11 MARCH 2022**

1. INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Those present were:

Cllr Roger Croad	RC	Devon County Council
Peter Chamberlain	PC	Devon County Council
Cllr Nicky Hopwood	NH	South Hams District Council
Cllr Bernard Taylor	BT	South Hams District Council
Chris Shears	GS	South Hams District Council
Cllr Anne Brooks	AB	Torbay Council
Rob Price	RP	Environment Agency
John Green	Chair	Independent
Richard Snow	RS	National Trust
John Martin	Vice-chair	Plymouth University
Ken Carter	KC	South West Coast Path Association
Penny Mills	PM	Representative: amenity groups
Gary Jolliffe	GJ	Representative: business community
Peter Sandover	PS	Representative: community/voluntary groups
Ed Parr Ferris	EPF	Representative: environmental organisations (NGOs)
Charles Wreford-Brown	CWB	Representative: landowning/farming
Liz Hitchins	LH	Representative: parishes
Roger English	RE	AONB Manager
Vanessa Gray		AONB Office Manager – minute taker

Also attending (to present):

Sam Lew	SL	Slapton Adaptation Manager
Nicky Bailey	NB	AONB Community Projects Officer

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr Jonathan Hawkins	Devon County Council
Graham Swiss	South Hams District Council – <i>Chris Shears attending</i>
Tracy Brooks	Torbay Council <i>update provided</i>

Observers

Observers were requested to follow the meeting live via YouTube

The South West Coast Path Association are warmly welcomed to the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee.

2. PUBLIC STATEMENTS

2.1 No public statements.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

3.1 No interests were declared.

4. MINUTES OF THE 26 NOVEMBER 2021 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING FOR APPROVAL & ANY MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 Two actions from the last meeting are incomplete: to provide a copy of slides from presentations made on Plymouth Sound National Marine Park and Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest.

ACTION 1 (AONB Manager): Continue to follow this up with Kathryn Deeney, Plymouth City Council and circulate when received.

- 4.2 The AONB Manager informed Partnership Committee that South Devon AONB is now formally signed up to the joint statement on the historic environment in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Once the last few AONBs have signed up, Historic England will plan a launch event and workshops.
- 4.3 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

5 PARTNER UPDATES

An opportunity for Partners to update Partnership Committee on their projects contributing to conserve and enhance the South Devon AONB and working towards AONB Management Plan priorities.

- 5.1 Penny Mills, representative for amenity groups
- i. All Amenity Groups welcome the additional planning support resource, can see the impact this has made, and wish it to continue.
- 5.2 Gary Jolliffe, representative for the business community
- i. Would like to be put in touch with key stakeholders
ACTION 2 (Diane Lethbridge, AONB point of contact for the business representative): send a list of suggested contacts to Gary.
- 5.3 Peter Sandover, representative for community and voluntary groups
- i. Welcomes the additional planning support resource which is very helpful.
 - ii. Currently engaging with voluntary and community groups that have an interest in nature, the coast and arts that have an impact on the AONB.
 - iii. National Coastwatch Prawle Point have a smartphone weather app that is of use to Coast Path users¹
 - iv. Salcombe Yacht Club are keen to be involved in future activities. They have previously promoted eel grass areas with an exhibit during Salcombe regatta.
 - v. The Island Trust, who were involved in the AONB 60@60 campaign supporting days out for Devon Young Carers, are raising money again to help fund Ocean Discovery days for Devon Young Carers. The Island Trust's continued support is a great result from the 60@60 campaign and for Devon Young Carers.
 - vi. Peter provided Partnership Committee with an update on progress with Neighbourhood Plans.
- 5.4 Ed Parr Ferris, representative for environmental organisations (NGOs)
- i. Nature Recovery Network mapping is now available online on the Devon Local Nature Partnership website². Now linking to local nature recovery strategies and Devon Land Use Framework.
 - ii. Planning Toolkit, helping individuals respond to planning, now available on the Devon Wildlife Trust website³.

¹ <https://www.nci-prawlepoint.org.uk/app.html>

² <https://www.devonlnp.org.uk/our-work/nature-recovery-network/nature-recovery-network-map/>

³ <https://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/planning-applications-objection-checklist>

- iii. Continuing seeding work on the Avon Valley project, now working with Plymouth City Council to establish a seed hub as part of the green minds project. Also hope to work with National Trust on that too. This is working towards a strategic approach to restoration of grassland habitat; doner sites have been an issue in the past.
 - iv. Currently pulling together applications for the Landscape Recovery Scheme, higher tier part of ELM. Not aware of any in the AONB currently, deadline for applications is in May.
 - v. Flooding and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme, led by DCC, has projects in and around AONB.
 - vi. Working to better understand Marine Habitats, especially the near shore environment. Starting conversations with University of Plymouth and University of Exeter and colleagues in East Devon to understand in particular seagrass and kelp beds and see where there may be opportunities for restoration.
- 5.5 Charles Wreford-Brown, representative for landowning and farming
- i. Member of the South Devon AONB Local Assessment Panel for the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme. Attended two of the meetings held to date, considering a number of schemes. Pleased to see the number of farmers coming forward and hoping for an even larger uptake in year 2 of the scheme to carry out environmental works across farms.
- 5.6 Liz Hitchins, representative for parish councils
- i. Sent a written introduction to all parish councils, receiving two responses including an invitation to attend Stokenham parish council meeting in July.
 - ii. Also circulated a separate communication on the Glover Review response consultation.
 - iii. Will liaise with Adam Davison, AONB Project Officer, on how to get better contacts with parish councils.
- 5.7 Peter Chamberlain, Devon County Council
- i. DCC are leading a project called the Emergency Tree Fund, a Woodland Trust funded activity to try to accelerate tree planting especially through local authorities. Within South Hams, over the last few months, 4,300 trees have been planted around a dozen or so sites under the scheme. This activity has included areas within the AONB; there has been a good response in Wembury Parish and in Dartmouth.
 - ii. Historic environments work being done through TIDE, developing new types of activities and information on maritime historical interest. Work to link local groups and museums has been completed. Next steps are to upload information on this activity to websites, including Explore South Devon. More activity is taking place over the next few months.
 - iii. Leading a programme of activity with all local authorities across Devon for a common approach for the implementation of biodiversity net gain – mandatory from 2024. The latest policy guidance has been produced and circulated.
 - iv. DLNP will set out their vision for a trees and woodland strategy for Devon in the coming year.
- 5.8 Chris Shears, South Hams District Council
- i. Most of the activities we have highlighted in the joint corporate strategy for South Hams [Better Lives For All] support and contribute towards the objectives of the AONB. The strategy is available on the South Hams District Council website.
- 5.9 Cllr Anne Brooks, Torbay Council
- i. Consultation on the updated Local Plan closed on 28 February.
 - ii. There are now four Neighbourhood Forums and three Neighbourhood Plans. When the Neighbourhood Plans are refreshed there will be four, covering the whole of Torbay.

- 5.10 Robert Price, Environment Agency
- i. Provided a presentation to Partnership Committee. A copy will be circulated with the minutes.
- 5.11 John Martin, Vice chair
- i. Previously reported the University of Plymouth led review of the Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in England's Protected Landscapes programme. The report is complete and with Natural England for signoff.
 - ii. Offered to provide a presentation on the outcomes and proposals going forward at a future Partnership Committee meeting.
- 5.12 Richard Snow, National Trust
- i. Thanked the AONB team, incredible progress being made across multiple workstreams. The team is an important conduit connecting everyone together.
- 5.13 Ken Carter, South West Coast Path Association
- i. Thanked the AONB Manager and all Partnership Committee members for inviting South West Coast Path Association to be part of the partnership.
 - ii. SWCPA is involved in discussions on the Landscapes Review. The Association has hosted the development manager for National Trails UK. Similar to the National Association for AONBs, all of the National Trails now have this charity in place that represents them and potentially will work with the new protected landscapes partnership the Government is proposing as part of its response to Glover.
 - iii. Recently met with the Tree Council that advises on Ash die back. Keen to understand the impact of Ash Dieback on the coastal corridor and the potential for closing parts of the trail.
 - iv. Looking for equity of access, particularly easy access routes, making improvements to areas that will enable greater use by Trampers and similar activity.
 - v. The Association has undertaken research with Exeter University on the physical and mental health value of walking the National Trail. The report highlights £75m of savings to the NHS from walking the National Trail. Now following this up by looking at the mental health benefits of walking the Coast Path.
 - vi. Business planning takes place on a five year cycle; the new business plan will begin in 2023.
 - vii. Next year is the SWCPA 50th anniversary and 2023 is also the year of the coast (2023).
 - viii. Hoping to see the completion of England Coast Path next year too. Looking at Nature Recovery opportunities to extend schemes and linking AONBs around the region.

6A RESPONSES TO LANDSCAPES REVIEW

- 6a.1 The Chair updated the recommendations for this agenda item. Recommendation iii is changed to 'the Partnership supports the process of SDAONB Partnership submitting a consultation response'.
- 6a.2 The AONB Manager introduced this item, highlighting specific sections included in the papers.
- 6a.3 The aim is that, as far as reasonably practical, the 34 AONBs in England should be aligned. There will be some differences, for example SDAONB has coast and estuaries, marine and intertidal environments.
- 6a.4 The AONB Manager thanked everyone that attended the workshop on 18th February working towards an SDAONB Partnership response, looking in detail at a range of elements in the Government's response.
- i. The AONB Manager gave a presentation to Partnership Committee, sharing outcomes from the workshop held on the 18th.

- 6a.5 The AONB Manager will draft a SDAONB Partnership response, circulating to Partnership Committee. The AONB Manager requests a rapid response from Partnership given the approaching deadline for responses on 9th April.

ACTION 3 (AONB Manager): Draft and circulate a response to Partnership Committee.

ACTION 4 (all): With the deadline of 9th April in mind, Partnership is requested to respond quickly to the draft SDAONB Partnership response to be circulated by the AONB Manager.

- 6a.6 The Chair asked if anyone had an objection to the three recommendations for this item, noting the earlier amendment to recommendation number iii:

Objections: none

Decision: approved

7A THE LIFE ON THE EDGE PROJECT

- 7a.1 Nicky Bailey, AONB Community Projects Officer, gave a presentation on the Life on the Edge project.

- 7a.2 The presentation started with a short film to introduce the project. A full version of the film can be viewed on the South Devon AONB YouTube channel⁴.

- 7a.3 The Chair went through the recommendations for this agenda item.

- i. First recommendation: ask the AONB Community Projects Officer to convene the LotE grants panel and work with the Community Representatives to set up the protocol for decision making and admin:

Decision: Approved

- ii. Second recommendation: agree a method of the Grants panel feeding back to the Partnership committee:

Decision: Approved - Peter Sandover agreed to be the nominated person that feeds back to Partnership.

- iii. Third recommendation: agree communication procedures between the Partnership and the LotE Board rep, Ed Parr-Ferris.

Decision: Approved - Ed Parr-Ferris will be the link, feeding back to Partnership Committee

- iv. Fourth recommendation: Discuss Partnership support role to the LotE project team and Board – funding and audiences:

Decision: Approved - Workshop to be set up. Arrangements to be made once a Life on the Edge project manager is in post.

- 7a.4 Feedback

- i. Liz Hitchins, representative for parish councils: Would like to put this on the agenda for the next meeting of the Four Rivers Dementia Alliance chaired by Liz, covers nineteen parish councils around Ivybridge.

ACTION 5 (Nicky Bailey): Contact Liz Hitchins to agree arrangements

- ii. Ken Carter, SWCPA: Pleased to be involved as a partner in this project. Viewing this as a good pilot, looking at the region as a whole and how they may manage the coastal corridor going forward. Looking forward to involvement with the project officer when they have been appointed.

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFyArImxfcM&t=505s>

- iii. Ed Parr-Ferris, representative for Environmental Organisations: Congratulated the AONB team for securing development phase funding of this size. Lot of work to get this and it is national scale work being led by AONB.

7B FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES PROGRAMME

7b.1 The AONB Manager went through the update for this project provided in the papers.

7b.2 The Chair invited comments and thoughts on the recommendations for this item.

Decision: recommendations approved.

7C SLAPTON ADAPTATION PROJECT

7c.1 There are two papers for this item.

i. First paper.

a. Sam Lew, Slapton Adaptation Manager, provided a summary on the project for Partnership Committee.

b. Feedback

- Peter Sandover, representative for community and voluntary groups:

- The Joint Local Plan was referenced; would encourage to also reference Neighbourhood Plans in the evidence base. There are a number of neighbourhood plans that impact on the Slapton line. Slapton has an emerging plan. They have as much weight as the Local Plan as development plans for those areas.
- South Pool parish has an emergency plan and others in the surrounding area may also have emergency plans. Suggest Sam also looks at these.

ii. Second paper.

a. The AONB Manager went through the update in the second paper that sets out principles that the Partnership should seek to promote within the adaptation planning process.

b. The Slapton Adaptation Manager has set-up a co-creation workshop on behalf of the Slapton Line Partnership that is coming up shortly. The AONB Manager will attend the workshop to represent the SDAONB Partnership and requests any AONB matters Committee members would like fed into the session are sent to him.

7c.2 The Chair proposed that the recommendations for this item are approved.

Decision: recommendations approved.

8A UPDATE TO AONB PARTNERSHIP TERMS OF REFERENCE

8a.1 The AONB Manager introduced the reasons behind the proposed update to the Terms of Reference.

8a.2 Following a conversation with the Chair prior to this meeting, the AONB Manager shared the following updates to the proposed amendments contained in Appendix 1 to item 8a in the papers:

i. Insert an additional item at 4 (Vii):

Any independent Chair appointed by invitation, under Part 7 to these Terms of Reference, for the duration of their term.

ii. Further amends to the wording Part 9 (iii):

One further member of the Partnership Committee, usually the Chairman, who is not a member of South Hams District Council or Devon County Council. This member represents the Partnership Committee at Core Funding Group meetings and reports back to Partnership at the next available Committee meeting. Where the Chairman is also a member of South Hams District Council or Devon County Council, another Committee member will be chosen.

In acting in this capacity, the Partnership Chair will have a single Core Funding Group vote **and** will be entitled to nominate the Partnership Vice-chair as a substitute in the event of being unable to attend a meeting.

8a.3 Observations and in discussion

- i. Peter Chamberlain:
 - a. Suggests the start of Part 3 to have the following words "and parties" added, so this reads:
"The AONB Partnership will comprise the following organisations **and parties**".
- ii. A number of Partnership Committee members advocated for hybrid meetings
 - a. Penny Mills has recently attended a North Devon AONB hybrid meeting that worked well using Zoom.
- iii. Chair:
 - a. Suggests in Part 8 viii, fifth bullet: rather than remove 'Remember that' start with **'The'**
 - b. Change all references of Chairman to **Chair**

8a.4 The Chair invited a show of hands to vote on the proposed changes

Objections: none

Decision: recommendations approved

PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2022

Locations and themes for remaining meetings in 2022 will be announced nearer the time.

- 24 June at 10am, venue tbc
- 25 November at 10am, venue tbc

It is hoped in person meetings can resume, with a hybrid approach adopted where technically feasible.

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