



Cornwall AONB Partnership Meeting
Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 12th March 2009 at 2.00pm
at Lakeview Country Club, Lanivet, Bodmin

Present:

Peter Mansfield Chairman, Cornwall AONB Partnership

Members:

Cllr Neil Hatton	Cornwall County Council
Cllr Val Newman	North Cornwall District Council
Cllr Jim Flashman	Caradon District Council
Paul Walton	The National Trust
Jimmy Scobie	CLBA
Ron Daniel	Cornwall Association of Local Councils (CALC)
Teresa Timms	Visit Cornwall
Nick Russell	English Heritage

Supporting Officers:

Malcolm Pinch	Restormel Borough Council
Al Collings	Caradon District Council
Polly Oliver	Penwith District Council
Kath Statham	Cornwall County Council
Colette Holden	Acting Partnership Manager, Cornwall AONB Unit
June Crossland	Planning Officer, Cornwall AONB Unit
Pete Maxted	Communications Officer, Cornwall AONB Unit
Karen Johns	Office Manager, Cornwall AONB Unit
Hannah Govier	Work placement student, Plymouth University

1. Apologies

Cllr Bill Maddern, Penwith District Council; Cllr Malcolm Brown and Cllr David Hughes, Restormel Borough Council; Cllr Mark Kaczmarek, Kerrier District Council; Cllr Steve Chamberlain, Carrick District Council; Cllr Beryl Martin, Caradon District Council; George Brew, Natural England; John Mortimer, CLBA; Paul Cottington, NFU; Phil McMahon, English Heritage; Sue Wearing and Andrew Gunn, SW RDA; Steve Crummay, Cornwall County Council; Ian Kemp and Nick Lawrence, The National Trust; Ann Reynolds, Cornwall County Council Historic Environment Service; Deborah Boden, Cornwall County Council World Heritage Site team; David

Attwell, North Cornwall District Council (attended pre meeting presentations only);
Wendy Pascoe, Cornwall AONB Unit.

Morning presentations

The agenda stated that Steve Crummay, Cornwall County Council was to give a presentation on the development of Environment Kernow and the Cornwall Climate Change Action Plan. However, Steve Crummay was on sick leave and no-one was available to deputise.

Victoria Whitehouse, Cornwall Wildlife Trust kindly agreed to provide a presentation on 'a living landscape' document that had been produced by the South West Wildlife Trusts in 2008.

A Living Landscape - the bigger picture - is a vision for the 8 south west Wildlife Trusts, creating a sustainable future of wildlife and people in the South West. A copy of the document was circulated at the meeting. The vital first step in applying the Living Landscape approach in the South West has been the creation of the South West Nature Map. Produced by the Regional Biodiversity Partnership (which includes the Wildlife Trusts), it has identified key areas of habitat with adjoining land where habitat can be re-created and linked to guarantee the long term survival of the region's most vulnerable and precious wildlife. The nature map also guides how funding for environmentally sensitive farming is targeted and is part of the region's Spatial Strategy.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust manages 54 nature reserves in the County. The West Cornwall Wetland Project was mentioned - key partners in addition to Cornwall Wildlife Trust are FWAG and Natural England. The Project involves catchment sensitive farming schemes - working on the ground with farmers/landowners. Whole Farm Plans will be produced, which will include economic advice, water and soils quality management advice in addition to wildlife advice and management.

Further information can be obtained from www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk and www.biodiversitysouthwest.org.uk which is an interactive website that has just been re-launched and includes information on the SW Nature Map.

Tamsyn Butler, The National Trust, provided a presentation on Shifting Shores - the Trust's approach to climate change.

The National Trust's experience of caring for, managing and understanding our changing coast has meant it has learnt 5 key lessons that formed the basis of the Trust's Shifting Shores policy launched in 2005:

- long term planning is essential
- the need to think and act in the wider context
- work with nature not against it
- solutions need partnership
- involving the public is critical.

Shifting Shores seminars to engage stakeholders were held in October 2008 and the National Trust worked with Natural England and the Environment Agency to put content of the seminars together. Stakeholders felt that the Shifting Shores document will be useful in influencing policy and the document will hopefully be used by wider stakeholders e.g. schools. 4 issues are affected by Shifting Shores - wildlife; historic environment; coastal economy and public access.

In addition to stakeholder events, the Trust are helping to raise public awareness of climate change issues by holding public events on the beach and coastal path and encouraging the public to take part in events that show on the ground for example where the cliff edge was 100 years ago and where it will be in 100 years time. More of these events are to be planned across the country.

The Sense of Place project in Cornwall was mentioned. The project team write actual educational units for the schools curriculum so that schools can learn and part-take in activities about the history of Cornwall. The Trust was aware of this project. The National Trust's Neptune coastline Campaign was also mentioned - this was set up in 1965 to protect, conserve and provide access to the coast for generations to enjoy.

2. Minutes of last meetings and matters arising

2.1 Partnership meeting - 11th December 2008

Agenda page 5, item 4, Cornwall AONB Future Funding - C Holden confirmed that Cornwall Council had confirmed funding to the AONB Partnership/Unit for a further 2 years until 31st March 2011.

Agenda page 6, item 6, publicity/marketing/events - P Maxted confirmed the Tamar Valley and Isles of Scilly AONB teams will be joining the Cornwall AONB stand at the Royal Cornwall Show 2009 and the stand will be in the Cornish Heritage Tent.

Agenda page 7, item 8, Environment Kernow - C Holden confirmed that 'landscape' is included in the new Terms of Reference of Environment Kernow.

Agenda page 7, item 8, Hearing Loop System - R Daniel reported that the hearing loop worked well for the pre-meeting presentations but 'input' is the important part of the system. It is essential for all participants at a meeting to use a microphone when speaking during the meeting for users of the hearing loop to obtain maximum benefit.

2.2 Officer Group meeting - 11th February 2009

Agenda page 13, item 5a, Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) - a map showing the NVZs in the Cornwall AONB will be circulated to all Partners with these minutes.

Agenda page 14, item 5c, Recruitment of Cornwall AONB Partnership Manager - the vacancy will be advertised this week in the national Guardian. The delay of advertising the post has been due to the budget being approved and new processes due to the new unitary authority.

Agenda page 14, item 7, TRAC project - following the meeting, C Holden found out more about this project which is at the application stage at present.

3. The Review of the Cornwall AONB Management Plan

It is a requirement of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 for the Cornwall AONB Management Plan to be reviewed within 5 years of its publication date - June 2004. The legal requirement is for the relevant local authorities acting jointly to review the plan.

Actions(s)

AONB Unit

C Holden gave a presentation on the Management Plan Review and the progress to date. J Crossland has produced a scoping report to inform the Management Plan Review and a copy of the Draft Report for Discussion was included as an appendix to the agenda papers. The main finding of the scoping report is that there is a need for a significant amendment to the Plan that warrants replacing the current Plan with a new document.

Consultation with partners and stakeholders confirmed that in addition to the strategic section of the new plan, there is a need for 12 area chapters (for each of the 12 separate areas of the AONB) which will be developed in conjunction with local communities.

Linking the new Management Plan in the planning system could be a valuable tool for spatial planning and the process of producing it can be complementary to the Local Development Framework (LDF) process.

The presentation included the timetable of the various stages of producing the new Management Plan, commencing with Community/Stakeholder engagement document in April 2009, through to the production of the new Plan in September 2010.

Since the last Officer Group meeting, the AONB Unit contacted Natural England nationally. DEFRA would ideally like the new Plan produced by March 2010 (it had already granted this extension to the deadline due to the new unitary authority in Cornwall commencing on 1 April 2009) but the AONB Unit requested a further 6 month extension to September 2010 to allow time to write the area chapters. Natural England confirmed it would accept the extension to the deadline for September 2010 and formal written confirmation of this has yet to be received

The AONB Unit has requested the help of Cornwall Rural Community Council (CRCC) at the community meetings which will be held to help compile and consult on the area chapters. R Daniel suggested that in the new Cornwall Council Community Network Areas (CNAs) where there is a substantial amount of AONB, interested individuals within those CNAs could be involved with CRCC as CRCC are Truro based but R Daniel said there needs to be a link with the parish at a local level. The Unit confirmed that CRCC will act as facilitators at the community meetings, the AONB Unit will set the brief for CRCC and will state that CNAs must be consulted.

Cllr Newman raised her concerns over the timescale for the consultation with the CNAs as the CNAs will take some time to become established. The AONB Unit has details obtained from the Cornwall AONB tour of communities in 2004, which will be updated and the Unit will also undertake consultations by linking with existing festivals and events.

P Walton suggested nominating a 'champion' e.g. a councillor, for the Management Plan process now rather than just waiting for the 3 members from the planning service delivery areas to be nominated from Cornwall Council to the AONB Partnership. P Walton added that the National Trust has a facilitating process that they use and the AONB Unit can take guidance from this established process and other such processes that other partner organisations may have.

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➤ **Partners agreed to the recommendations as set out in points 9.1 - 9.7 on page 18 of the agenda paper namely:**

- 9.1 That the Partnership agrees with the results of the scoping report in particular-
- 9.2 The principle of the area approach
- 9.3 The acquisition of services in April to produce the community/ stakeholder engagement document
- 9.4 The involvement of the Cornwall Rural Communities Council in the facilitation of community involvement with the plan
- 9.5 The principle of undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal of the new Plan
- 9.6 The linkage between the Cornwall AONB management plan and the LDF preparation and with the aspiration to adopt parts of the plan as a supplementary planning document
- 9.7 The timetable for publishing the document, to be complete in September 2010

4. Cornwall AONB Partnership Structure from April 2009

The Partnership has previously agreed it will go forward as an independent body to take forward AONB purposes from 1st April 2009 when the new unified council for Cornwall commences. The One Cornwall Partnerships and Stakeholders Lead has confirmed that following elections on 4th June 2009, the AONB Partnership will be assigned 3 elected members from the 3 planning service delivery areas as previously agreed and requested by the Partnership.

Page 20 of the agenda papers included a table detailing the 'current membership of the Partnership', and page 21 detailed a list for 'suggested future Partnership structure'. These tables listed the organisations and the number of representatives (including members and officers) suggested for each organisation.

➤ **Partners AGREED the following:**

- **DEFRA should be deleted as they no longer send a representative**
- **SWRDA should be deleted and could be a non signatory representative, as they have confirmed that due to re-structuring they will not be able to attend meetings.**
- **Suggested that Rural Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Partnership (RCP) - be included as they have delegated responsibility from the SWRDA to administer various funding streams in Cornwall.**
- **importance of electing substitutes to the elected members from the planning service delivery areas and CNAs. This should help ensure there is a member or substitute from each present at each Partnership meeting.**
- **importance of parish councils to be more involved - it was confirmed that parishes will be represented in the CNAs**

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- **Partners felt that the CNA managers are not the most appropriate representatives from the CNAs**

A Collings mentioned several points regarding the proposed membership:

- the countryside officer involvement e.g. A Collings, D Attwell may be lost if membership just includes planning officers - also M Pinch may not attend as he is planning policy not development control.
- CSEP will be part of the new Cornwall Development Company (CDC) (replacing Cornwall Enterprise)) so this may result in just 1 representative from both CSEP and CDC.
- parish rep from e.g. Rame could be elected to the CNA, but a different parish rep from Rame could be elected to the AONB Partnership so that there will be 2 different people representing the AONB not just 1 person which would help promote wider awareness and importance of the AONB.

- **C Holden AGREED to contact Sophie Hoskin, Cornwall Council to confirm we also require 3 member substitutes to be elected to the Partnership in addition to 3 members.**

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5. Cornwall AONB Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Statement of Intent (Sol)

The existing Cornwall AONB Partnership Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) and Sol both expire on 31st March 2009. The Memorandum of Agreement will be replaced with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the Sol will also be replaced with a new version - both of these should be in place as soon as possible.

Natural England has renamed the document Memorandum of Agreement instead of Understanding as they now do not view it as a legal document and it is an Understanding that funding partners sign up to setting out its vision.

The term 'understanding' was queried as the document is regarding exchange of money. This would be a matter for Natural England to address, but the Chairman confirmed that the new MoU is for a 2 year period and Cornwall Council and Natural England have already both agreed funding for a further 2 years. Natural England (George Brew) and Cornwall Council (Steve Crummay) will meet to discuss. Draft text will be reported at the July 2009 Partnership meeting and formal signing of the new MoU and Sol is planned for the November 2009 Partnership meeting.

G Brew/
S Crummay
AONB Unit

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- **Points 5.1 to 5.4 on agenda page 24 were AGREED, namely;**

5.1 Natural England will discuss the new MOU with Cornwall Council and revise where necessary

5.2 Natural England seeks confirmation from the National Trust regarding their potential signatory of the MOU as a funding partner

5.3 The AONB Unit will seek comments from Partners on the wording of the Statement of Intent

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5.4 The suggested timetable for the signing of the new MOU and Statement of Intent is agreed

6. Cornwall AONB Draft Planning Protocol

The changes to the structure of governance in Cornwall, and in particular the creation of one Local Planning Authority - the new Cornwall Council provides the opportunity to review the arrangement with existing Planning Authorities and clearly and formally set out arrangements between the AONBs and the new Planning Authority. Not only the involvement in development management, but also the engagement with the emerging Local Development Framework for Cornwall. Applying the principle of best value, a new draft planning protocol has been developed by Cornwall AONB as a joint planning protocol for the Cornwall and Tamar Valley AONBs. This will provide consistency for the AONB throughout the county.

A draft protocol was included in the agenda papers. An addition to the current protocol has been included to look at applications brought to the Unit/Partnerships attention by parish councils as this was omitted from the present protocol and it is important that this is now included.

Cllr Hatton suggested that there be a Planning Officer AONB contact appointed in each of the 3 new Cornwall Council Planning Service Delivery areas.

Partners agreed the Recommendations as set out in the agenda paper, namely;

- **that the Partnership agrees the content of the Draft Planning Protocol and**
- **that the AONB Unit takes forward the signing of the Protocol between Cornwall Council and the AONB Partnership.**

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7. Planning matters

- A site between Treen village and Logan Rock was mentioned. The AONB Unit had been consulted on the proposed siting of an agricultural building and had provided comments to Penwith District Council on the application. The Unit requested that the applications should be 'called in'. GOSW decided not to call in the application.

Bearing this in mind, GOSW representation on the Partnership was raised. It was agreed during discussion under item 4 to not include GOSW as a representative on the Partnership but in the light of this planning matter may be they should GOSW remain on the Partnership? (P Walton clarified that when Heather McBeth left, the GOSW wrote to the Unit to confirm this and that they would not be able to send any representatives for the foreseeable future).

- **Higher Newham** - 15,000 housing development proposal. AONB Unit objected to the Draft Truro and Threemilestone Area Action Plan and not specifically because of the AONB Units objections, but nonetheless, the housing development at Higher Newham was taken out of the Area Action Plan, so it was a positive outcome for the AONB.

The AONB Unit has been involved with the application and had meetings with the developers and Carrick District Council during the past 2 years. The AONB Unit had liaised with Chris Bolton, Beth Tonkin and Wesley Smythe, Natural England, regarding response to the planning application. A response has been submitted on behalf of Natural England, objecting to the proposed development.

- **New Jetty, Helford** - Cllr Hatton mentioned the judicial review which was successful. He was meeting the residents that evening to discuss the way forward.

8. Cornwall AONB Staff Unit - present and planned activity

- **Staff changes** - in addition to the Partnership Manager post being advertised, the SDF Admin Officer post has also been advertised as Wendy Pascoe has resigned and will finish at the end of March 2009.
- **Cumulative Impact report on North Cornwall Wind Turbines** has been produced which the Cornwall AONB helped to fund. Simon King, North Cornwall District Council can provide a copy of the report. Nick Russell and Cllr Val Newman both requested a copy.
- **Sustainable Development Fund** – two of the 2008/09 projects was mentioned: Best of Bodmin Moor book being launched at end of March 2009; and St Gerrans and Portscatho Old Cornwall Society, Wells, Shutes and Springs booklet has been produced - copies were available for Partners to view at the meeting.

The Cornwall AONB Partnership Grants Panel will meet on 18th March 2009 to discuss and agree SDF projects for 2009/10.

9. Any other Business

- Cheesering, Bodmin Moor - A Collings mentioned a major crack that has appeared in the disabled access track to the Cheesering - an emergency meeting is being arranged to discuss.
- Cllr Newman and Cllr Flashman conveyed their thanks to the Partnership and Unit and said they have thoroughly enjoyed their involvement with the work of the Partnership. This is their last meeting before the new Cornwall Council commences so they may not be appointed to represent on the Partnership in future.
- D Attwell circulated a copy of the Bude Canal Regeneration Project newsletter and the Coast Lines & Countryside News 2009 – a free guide to the coast and countryside of North and East Cornwall

10. Date of Next meeting – Thursday 2nd July 2009 - to be confirmed.

AONB Unit