



Cornwall AONB Partnership Meeting
Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 27 September 2007
at 2.00 pm at Kingsand Institute

Present:

Peter Mansfield Chairman, Cornwall AONB Partnership

Members:

Cllr David Hughes	Restormel Borough Council (substituting for Cllr Annette Egerton)
Cllr Beryl Martin	Caradon District Council
Cllr Steve Chamberlain	Carrick District Council
Nick Lawrence	National Trust
Richard Bellamy	Natural England
Jimmy Scobie	Country Landowners Business Association (CLBA)
Patrick Watson	National Farmers Union/CLBA
Ron Daniel	Cornwall Association of Local Councils
Sonia Thurley	Environment Agency
Sue Wearing	South West Regional Development Agency

Supporting Officers:

Mike Hawkey	Cornwall County Council
Steve Crummay	Cornwall County Council
David Attwell	North Cornwall District Council
Al Collings	Caradon District Council
Malcolm Pinch	Restormel Borough Council
Rob Lacey	Carrick District Council
Ann Reynolds	Cornwall County Council Historic Environment Service
Paul Walton	Cornwall AONB Partnership Manager
Colette Holden	Cornwall AONB Officer
Pete Maxted	Cornwall AONB Communications Officer
June Crossland	Cornwall AONB Planning Officer
Tasha Dale	Cornwall AONB Office Manager

1 Welcome and Apologies

Members:

Sarah Manning, Natural England; Cllr Neil Hatton, Cornwall County Council; Cllr Annette Egerton, Restormel Borough Council; Cllr William Maddern; Penwith District Council; Cllr Mark Kaczmarek, Kerrier District Council; Cllr Val Newman, North Cornwall District Council; Ian Morrison, English Heritage

Supporting Officers:

Deborah Boden, Cornwall County Council World Heritage Site Team; Rodger Dewhurst, Kerrier District Council; Rachel Bray, Penwith District Council; Veryan Heal, Cornwall County Council Historic Environment Service

Actions

Welcome: Richard Bellamy, Account Advisor for Natural England and Cllr Steve Chamberlain were welcomed to their first Partnership meeting. Also welcomed, following their attendance at the morning seminar, were Tom Fletcher, Project Manager at Tamar Valley AONB, Stephen Russell, Project Officer at Tamar Valley AONB, Ros Love of the South West Coastpath Team and Dave Dixon of South West Protected Landscapes Forum.

2 Minutes of last meetings and matters arising

2.1 Partnership meeting (28th June 2007)

- The minutes were **AGREED** to be a true and accurate record.

Matters arising:

Agenda Page 2, discussion on the morning site visits – The AONB Partnership Manager advised that he had drafted a 10 point action list, following on from the June Partnership visits to the Penwith ESA. This is attached as Appendix 1. The Partnership Manager had recently met with Andy Lebrecht, Head of Sustainable Food & Farming, DEFRA and provided evidence to him of the benefits that the ESA had brought to the area. Mr Lebrecht confirmed that he would take this information back with him to present to the relevant parties. A meeting of the SW Agri Environment Strategy Group was held in September and attended by Dave Dixon who raised issues on behalf of the Partnership. Cranborne Chase and Wiltshire Downs AONB Unit are working with Natural England to devise an Entry Level Scheme Plus that might address the management requirements of that AONB – progress will be monitored through the SW Protected Landscapes Forum.

Agenda Page 2, item 3.2.1, Members attendance at meetings – Following Council Elections on 3rd May 2007, Member representation had been confirmed and meetings held to welcome Cllr Steve Chamberlain, Cllr Beryl Martin and Cllr William Maddern and to provide information to them on the aims of the Partnership.

Agenda page 5, item 3.3, Sustainable Development Fund – Review of Cornwall AONB SDF Delivery – The AONB Partnership Manager confirmed that the review of the administrative delivery of the SDF would be undertaken once notification of 08/09 SDF funding was received. This is anticipated to be in January 2008.

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Agenda page 4, item 3.1 Natural England Grant Support 2007/08 – Previously the NAAONB had requested that all AONB Partnerships write to Sir Martin Doughty, Natural England Chairman and local MP's, highlighting the value of continued support for project work within the AONB and seeking reassurances about the SDF in particular in future years. The Cornwall AONB Partnership Manager confirmed that a letter had been sent on behalf of the Cornwall Partnership to Sir Martin Doughty expressing gratitude for the allocated funding and also raising concerns regarding the impact that grant reduction will have on projects within the AONB and therefore the AONB itself. The Partnership's letter and Sir Martin Doughty's response are attached as appendices 2 and 3.

Agenda Page 5, Item 4.2 – Cornwall County Council Heritage Assets Single Issue Panel – Mike Hawkey to provide an update at the December Partnership Meeting.

Mike
Hawkey

2.2 Officer Meeting (5th September 2007)

The minutes were **AGREED** to be a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising from the Officer Meeting Minutes.

3. Reports for Decision

3.1 Cornwall AONB Partnership Memorandum of Agreement

The current Memorandum of Agreement for the Cornwall AONB Partnership is due to end in March 2009.

There are three main issues affecting the Cornwall AONB Partnership:

Natural England review of policy towards AONBs - Natural England (NE) is the major funding party within the Partnership, a position inherited from the Countryside Agency. As a new organisation NE is reviewing its policy position with regard to AONBs, a process that is due to be carried out this autumn. It is NE's intention to consult with key stakeholders during October/early November before deciding on a new approach in December. It is anticipated that AONB Partnerships will be invited to submit funding bids for 2008/09 in January 2008.

Unitary Authority status - The current AONB Partnership was created to facilitate joint working between all the local authorities in Cornwall, who were required by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 to act jointly in respect of the Cornwall AONB and the preparation of the AONB Management Plan. From 1st April 2009 the statutory duty for the preparation and publication of the Cornwall AONB management plan and its duty of regard for the AONB will fall to the Unitary Authority.

The Cornwall AONB Partnership may wish to consider advising the transitional body for the UA on the possible future management arrangements for the AONB and a discussion of the options available to the UA will need to be held.

AONB Management Plan review - The CRoW Act 2000 requires AONB Management Plans to be reviewed within five years of their publication, which in the case of the Cornwall AONB is June 2009. The matter was discussed at the September Officer Group meeting which concluded that while the review of the current plan should proceed over the next 18 months, any revised plan should be endorsed by the new UA, which might delay its publication beyond June 2009.

- i) A sub group of the Partnership should be established to consider Natural England's forthcoming policy proposals regarding AONBs and respond on behalf of the Cornwall AONB Partnership
 - ii) The same sub-group should prepare advice for the new Unitary Authority on the future management arrangements of the Cornwall AONB and report back to the December Partnership meeting
- It was **AGREED** by the Partnership members to support the recommendation of an extension request for the current management plan beyond 2009. This would enable:
- The Partnership to provide information on the key areas to the new authority, via a draft management plan, which they could then endorse.
 - A fully integrated approach to issues included in the Local Transport Plan and the Access Strategy
 - The Partnership to focus on the current management plan actions between now and 2009 when the new authority will be in situ

The AONB Partnership Manager advised that approval for the extension of the Management Plan would need to come from DEFRA.

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- It was **AGREED** to form a sub-group to look at NE's forthcoming policy proposals regarding AONBs and respond on behalf of the Partnership and to prepare advice for the new Unitary Authority on the future management arrangements of the Cornwall AONB. The sub group would be made up of the funding partners, the Regional Development Agency, Country Land and Business Association and Cornwall Association of Local Councils.

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3.2 The Cornwall Lecture 2008

The Cornwall Lecture is an annual event which addresses themes of importance to the economic and social wellbeing of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The Cornwall AONB Partnership has previously been a sponsor for the event when the subject for debate has been relevant to the interests of the AONB eg 2003 when the subject was *Cornish Tourism* and 2004 *Was Cornwall's Past It's Future?*

As a consequence of this involvement the Cornwall AONB Partnership has been invited to be a main sponsor of the Cornwall Lecture in 2008, when the subject will be importance of the landscape to Cornwall. It is proposed that a series of workshops will be held through the year, culminating in the Lecture itself in late November / early December 2008. Invitations have been extended to CPRE President Bill Bryson to present the lecture, and Professor Robert Tregay, the author of the Cornwall AONB Landscape Assessment, to provide a detailed analysis of the issues confronting the landscape of Cornwall today.

The event would also provide a high profile platform from which to promote the 50th anniversary of the designation of the Cornwall AONB in 2009.

It is anticipated that the amount of sponsorship from the AONB Partnership will be in the region of £5000. If agreed by the Partnership, the sponsorship of the Cornwall Lecture in 2008 will form part of the 2008/09 funding bid to Natural England.

Further details about the Cornwall Lecture can be found on the website <http://www.thecornwalllecture.com> .

- It was **AGREED** that the Cornwall AONB Partnership sponsors the Cornwall Lecture 2008 and seeks funding from Natural England as part of its core bid for 2008/09.

AONB Unit

3.3 Annual Report Presentation

The AONB Partnership Manager advised that an electronic PDF version of the annual report had been produced. The PDF is available on the Cornwall AONB website at <http://www.cornwall-aonb.gov.uk/partnership> and will also be circulated via email to relevant agencies. A one page summary of the annual report was produced by the AONB Communications Officer and was circulated at the meeting. This summary is attached as appendix 4.

4 Items for information/discussion

4.1 Communications Update

Peter Maxted, AONB Communications Officer, introduced himself to the group and

provided details on the aims of his role within the AONB Partnership. This included objectives through to March 2009, the key messages that need to be disseminated, the target audience involved, the challenges that face the AONB and the Partnership and the methods that will be utilised to fulfil these objectives. The Summary of the Communications Plan is attached as Appendix 5.

A copy of the new AONB leaflet was distributed at the meeting and a number of comments were received regarding the content and presentation that will be considered for future publications.

4.2 Planning, Landscape Character and Monitoring Update

Colette Holden, AONB Officer, provided an update on current progress relating to Planning, Landscape Character and Monitoring. The information note on Landscapes Projects is attached as appendix 6.

4.3 South West Coast Path

Ros Love of the South West Coast Path team provided information on the work of the SWCP and referred to the 'Framework for Action' document, copies of which were available at the meeting.

The Framework for Action was put together by the SWCP Team in partnership with six managing authorities (including Cornwall) and organisations such as the South West Protected Landscapes Forum, South West Regional Development Agency, South West Tourism, Culture South West, the National Trust and Natural England.

It is more a positioning document than a strategy, designed to raise awareness of everything the SWCP and its wider corridor can do to help deliver other existing strategies. It is also designed to encourage partners help to deliver a range of outcomes, associated with the path itself, the landscape/cultural corridor, sustainability, health and wellbeing, economy and understanding. The Framework is already working - Natural England see it as a model approach to achieving multiple objectives – and the SWCP is judged to be one of 12 key infrastructures in the recently published regional cultural strategy, *People, Places and Spaces*

The Cornwall AONB is one of five protected landscapes through which the SWCP is routed (45% of the whole National Trail is in Cornwall) and there are strong natural alliances between the AONB Partnership and the SWCP Partnership who would welcome the endorsement of the Framework by the Cornwall AONB Partnership.

Ros Love concluded the session by asking the following questions of the Cornwall AONB Partnership:

- What are the particular interests of the Cornwall AONB Partnership on the SWCP corridor?
- Should a more regional approach be made? Is it more important for an AONB to take forward?
- Should SWCP Team put effort to the areas of SWCP that lie outside the AONB?

A PDF version of the Framework for Action document will be circulated by the AONB Unit.

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- It was **AGREED** to examine these questions further at the December Partnership meeting in order to provide a response to the South West Coast Path team.

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5. Europarc / NAAONB / SWPLF

- i. South West Protected Landscapes Forum – Update – Dave Dixon, SWPLF Co-ordinator provided an update on the work of the Forum. Slides from his presentation are attached as appendix 7.
- ii. Making the connection between land and sea – the AONB Partnership Manager referred to the above document. A PDF version will be circulated by the AONB Unit.

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6. Any Other Business

Working Together with AONBs - Tom Fletcher, Project Manager, Tamar Valley AONB, extended an invite to the Cornwall Partnership to attend the Tamar Valley Partnership meetings. He confirmed that he looked forward to close working with the Cornwall AONB and advised that any information required about Tamar Valley AONB could be obtained from Charlotte Dancer, Information & Communications Officer, at the Tamar Valley Office (Tel: 01579 351681). A copy of the Tamar Valley Annual Report will be forwarded to the AONB Unit for circulation to the Cornwall Partnership.

AONB Unit

Biodiversity Improvement Grant – Steve Crummay advised that Cornwall County Council's Natural Environment Service is offering small (£100 - £10,000) grants to assist biodiversity in Cornwall. Grants could be used for a variety of actions, e.g fencing, scrub management, wetland management, biological recording, habitat improvements, etc. Full details can be obtained via the Cornwall County Council website www.cornwall.gov.uk under the headings "Living / Environment & Waste / Living Environment" or alternatively via the Cornwall AONB Website at <http://www.cornwall-aonb.gov.uk/funding.html>.

Geology Walks Leaflets – David Attwell, North Cornwall District Council, distributed Geology Trail walk leaflets for Boscastle to Tintagel and Crackington Haven, part of a suite of leaflets that had been part funded by the AONB Partnership.

Intereg Funding – Colette Holden, AONB Officer, advised of the opportunity of funding availability from Intereg – up to £800m and will keep the Partnership updated at future meetings.

7. Date of next meeting

Thursday 13th December 2007 – full details to be confirmed.

All Partners

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – West Penwith Environmentally Sensitive Area – Action List*
- Appendix 2 – Partnership's letter to Sir Martin Doughty, Natural England*
- Appendix 3 – Response to Partnership's letter by Sir Martin Doughty, Natural England*
- Appendix 4 – Cornwall AONB Annual Report 06/07 Summary*
- Appendix 5 – Communications Plan Summary*
- Appendix 6 – Landscape Projects*
- Appendix 7 – South West Protected Landscapes Presentation*