



Cornwall AONB Partnership Meeting
Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 13th December 2007
at 2.00 pm at Chacewater Village Hall

Present:

Peter Mansfield Chairman, Cornwall AONB Partnership

Members:

Cllr David Hughes	Restormel Borough Council (substituting for Cllr Annette Egerton)
Cllr Steve Chamberlain	Carrick District Council
Cllr Neil Hatton	Cornwall County Council
Cllr Val Newman	North Cornwall District Council
Sarah Manning	Natural England
Richard Bellamy	Natural England
Jimmy Scobie	Country Landowners Business Association (CLBA)
Patrick Watson	National Farmers Union/CLBA
Sue Wearing	South West Regional Development Agency

Supporting Officers:

Mike Hawkey	Cornwall County Council
Al Collings	Caradon District Council
Tim Dingle	North Cornwall District Council (substituting for David Attwell)
Kath Statham	Cornwall County Council
Paul Walton	Cornwall AONB Partnership Manager
Pete Maxted	Cornwall AONB Communications Officer
June Crossland	Cornwall AONB Planning Officer
Tasha Dale	Cornwall AONB Office Manager

1 Welcome and Apologies

Members:

Cllr Annette Egerton, Restormel Borough Council; Cllr William Maddern; Penwith District Council; Cllr Mark Kaczmarek, Kerrier District Council; Cllr Beryl Martin, Caradon District Council; Ian Morrison, English Heritage; Shane Gould, English Heritage; Nick Lawrence, National Trust; Ron Daniel, Cornwall Association of Local Councils; Sonia Thurley, Environment Agency

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; Steve Crummay, Cornwall County Council; David Attwell, North Cornwall District Council; Malcolm Pinch, Restormel Borough Council; Rob Lacey, Carrick District Council; Ann Reynolds, Cornwall County Council Historic Environment Service; Colette Holden, Cornwall AONB Officer

Actions

Welcome: Kath Statham, Cornwall County Council Principal Landscape Officer, was welcomed to her first Partnership meeting and introductions were given from all Partners.

2 Minutes of last meetings and matters arising

2.1 Partnership meeting (27th September 2007)

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

Matters arising:

Agenda page 2, item 2.1, Sustainable Development Fund – Review of Cornwall AONB SDF Delivery – The AONB Partnership Manager confirmed that notification of 08/09 SDF funding had not yet been received and it was anticipated that this information would be available in January.

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Agenda Page 3, item 3.1, AONB Management Plan review – The AONB Partnership Manager advised that, following agreement at the September meeting to request an extension for the current management plan beyond 2009, approval had not yet been received from DEFRA.

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Agenda Page 4, Item 3.2, The Cornwall Lecture 2008 – The AONB Partnership Manager advised that Professor Robert Tregay, author of the Cornwall AONB Landscape Assessment, had confirmed his availability for the Cornwall Lecture on 24th November 2008. A second speaker was still being sought. There are currently discussions being held on the suitable number of workshops and this will be confirmed shortly.

2.2 Officer Meeting (14th November 2007)

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

Matters Arising:

Agenda Page 8, Item 3, Natural England Grant Support 2008/2009 – The Natural England Board paper: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnerships: Relationship development and operational delivery was received by the AONB Unit on the 12th December. The paper sets out a number of options through which Natural England will seek a “more independent and mature role for AONBs”. Consultation will take place on the options in 2008 with a view to establishing new procedures for the 2009/10 funding bids. The paper also proposes a timetable for the 2008/09 funding bid. The paper was welcomed by the AONB Partnership Manager but the full implications of the proposals will need to be considered by the Partnership in the March meeting. It was highlighted that the contracts for the staff of the AONB Unit only extend to March 2009.

3. Reports for Decision

3.1 Local Government Review and future arrangements for the Cornwall AONB Partnership

A sub-group of the Cornwall AONB Partnership met in October to consider the future arrangements for the Cornwall AONB Partnership in the light of the proposed unified council for Cornwall. A paper was circulated after the meeting summarising the discussions and highlighting the need for more information regarding representation of interests on the Partnership and future funding arrangements.

The creation of the unified council will result in a single local authority partner, from the current seven. Only two other AONBs, the Isles of Scilly and the Isle of Wight are in the same position but these are considerably smaller AONBs and the division of the Cornwall AONB into 12 separate geographical areas means that the management requirements are more complex.

It was suggested that discussion on possible options for the Cornwall AONB needed to be held in the context of the changes being proposed in the County Councils' delivery of planning and environmental matters with the primary concerns being whether the AONB staff should be wholly within the new council structure, how an advisory partnership might represent all the interests within the AONB and whether the independent nature of the current Partnership can and should be maintained.

It was suggested that a meeting be held between the AONB Partnership Manager, the AONB Chairman and Mike Hawkey from Cornwall County Council. This would enable a full discussion of the options to take place.

It was suggested that following the meeting, a comprehensive paper should be produced outlining the options available and the benefits of each.

- It was **AGREED** to arrange a meeting to discuss the options available for the Cornwall AONB Partnership and the Unitary Authority and to provide a paper to present at the Partnership meeting in March.
- It was **AGREED** to research the structures of other AONBs who have experienced similar changes – Shropshire Hills was provided as an example

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3.2 RDPE funding and the Cornwall AONB

At the June Partnership meeting Simon Trehane from the RDA gave a presentation on the Rural Development Programme for England, which aims to use EU structural funds to support the creation of genuinely sustainable farming, forestry and food sectors, whilst also bringing wider benefits for the economy, the environment and rural communities.

The RDPE has been agreed and will proceed, leading to considerable funds coming into Cornwall. The keys areas are:

Sustainable Rural Tourism - An indicative budget of £1,025,000pa has been identified to support the development of sustainable tourism in Cornwall and the published Investment Theme summary envisages that “resources will be spatially targeted towards areas of high heritage, environmental and landscape value. These may include the SW Coastal footpath, the National Parks / Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the “rural” World Heritage sites in the region”.

The Cornwall AONB Unit is currently working with the South West Coast Path team, the Cornwall Mining World Heritage Site Partnership and CoAST, the sustainable tourism project, on a “consortium” approach to delivering a range of projects that could meet the priorities of the investment theme.

Community Led Development – The aim of this investment theme is to encourage the creation of community based partnerships “to deliver projects that support integrated rural development and contribute to the sustainable development of rural communities within selected geographical areas”. It was originally hoped that an AONB wide bid would be possible but this does not meet the criteria. However, a number of partnerships are being established to apply for Local Action Group status and the AONB Unit has highlighted the need to take account of the AONB in the preparation of projects.

Expressions of interest are being developed that could impact upon various sections of Bodmin Moor – discussions are ongoing to ensure that in the event of one bid being successful, that the whole of Bodmin Moor is included in their proposals.

The AONB Unit is currently working with the South West Uplands Federation, an alliance of hill farmers, and statutory agencies concerned with farming on the SW uplands of Dartmoor, Exmoor and Bodmin Moor. Dartmoor and Exmoor are likely to be incorporated in LAGs in Devon and both Dartmoor and Exmoor National Park Authorities have each provided funding to maintain secretariat support for the Federation (with Devon County Council the accountable body) to the end of the 2007/08 financial year, so that the needs of the upland areas can be fully addressed in the relevant local development strategies.

It would be timely if a similar financial contribution was made by the AONB Partnership to ensure the needs of the Bodmin Moor area are addressed in emerging local development strategies.

- It was **AGREED** that the Cornwall AONB Partnership contributes £2000 to the SW Uplands Federation to enable the group to continue at least until the end of 2007/08 financial year.

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3.3 South West Coast Path

At the September Partnership meeting, Ros Love, the South West Coast Path Officer presented the South West Coast Path Framework for Action and posed three specific questions for the Cornwall AONB Partnership to consider:

1. What are the particular interests of the Cornwall AONB Partnership on the SWCP corridor?
2. Should a more regional approach be made to managing the SWCP in the AONB – is it more important for an AONB to take forward?
3. Should SWCP Team put effort to the areas of SWCP that lie outside the AONB?

In forming a view on these questions the AONB Partnership Manager highlighted the fact that the SWCP Framework for Action document should place greater emphasis on the purposes of the AONB designation, that it could do more to link with the AONB Management Plan, provide a greater commitment to enhancing the local distinctiveness of the areas where the path passes through the AONB and seek to improve the liaison between the AONB Partnership and the SWCP management team.

It was agreed that a response should be made to the SWCP Officer, highlighting the following recommendations:

- The objectives of the Cornwall AONB should be reflected in the management prescriptions of the South West Coast Path. A means of achieving this is to give greater prominence to the SWCP in the Cornwall AONB Management Plan, with consideration given to including more detailed management prescriptions in the

revised AONB management plan due to be published in 2009.

- The AONB through which the SWCP passes – North Devon, Cornwall, South Devon, East Devon and Dorset – should present a co-ordinated response to the strategic management issues relating to the coast path.
- Closer working with the AONB teams and alignment with AONB management plans should result in the SWCP team being able to concentrate more resources on the sections of the path that are outside of the designated areas.

3.4 Partnership Meeting Dates 2008

The proposed Partnership Meeting Dates for 2008 were distributed at the meeting, with a request to advise Tasha Dale at the AONB Unit if any dates are unsuitable as soon as possible. No queries on the dates were raised during the meeting.

All Partners

4 Items for information/discussion

4.1 AONB Display Materials – discussion on future requirements

The Cornwall AONB Communications Officer presented an example of the current display materials in use by the Unit. Due to years of successful use these were deteriorating in condition and also required an update of information. A proposal outlining a new set of display materials was circulated, with a request for suggestions of information that should be included on the display boards. The following ideas were raised:

- Seasons in the AONB
- Challenges facing the AONB
- Current management plan information
- Proposed management plan information

It was also suggested that it is important to raise the point that it is a managed landscape and that it would be beneficial to have a selection of display boards to enable a 'mix and match' system.

The AONB Communications Officer advised that an interactive system is being considered so that information can be updated in a simplified way – this would be undertaken via a display screen.

- It was **AGREED** that the proposals for the AONB display materials reflected the necessary requirements and that a further update would be provided at the March Partnership meeting.

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4.2 Heritage Assets Update

The AONB Partnership Manager advised that the Single Issue Panel work is ongoing with the areas of Breage, Germoe and St Endellion being assessed. The lead officer for the project is Kath Statham, Landscape Officer, Cornwall County Council.

4.3 Cornwall AONB Conference 2008

The AONB Partnership Manager advised that the venue for the 2008 Cornwall AONB Conference is currently being decided and invited suggestions from the Partnership. Previous conferences have been held at Bossiney House Hotel, Tintagel (2005), Cape

Cornwall Golf & Country Club, St Just (2006) and Falmouth Maritime Museum (2007).

- It was **AGREED**, following discussion, to examine options for holding the Conference in the Bodmin/Bodmin Moor area with a suggestion of contacting the Pensilva Millenium Hall. The AONB Unit will research the location and available venues in order to progress with arrangements for the 2008 Conference.

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5. Europarc / NAAONB / SWPLF

No further information

6. Any Other Business

Cornwall Today – The AONB Communications Officer advised that he will be providing 13 features on the Cornwall AONB for the Cornwall Today magazine. The first feature provided an overview of the AONB and was included in the December issue. The next feature, for the January issue, will be about Hartland section.

West Penwith ESA – The AONB Partnership Manager provided an update, advising that Phil Tollerton – Natural England SW Land Management Project Manager, will be invited to attend a meeting in the New Year to look at the issues.

Caradon Hill Project – Al Collings, Caradon DC, confirmed that the Caradon Hill Project is going ahead with help of funding from HLF and SWRDA.

Future of Farming Award – Sarah Manning, Natural England, provided information on this award which links in with good farming business practice and advised that there had been a winner on Bodmin Moor – South Penquite Farm.

7. Date and Time of next meeting

Thursday 13th March 2008 – time and venue to be confirmed

All Partners