



Cornwall AONB Partnership Meeting
Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 18th September 2008
at 2.00pm in the Centre of Pendeen, Pendeen, Penzance

Present:

Peter Mansfield Chairman, Cornwall AONB Partnership

Members:

Cllr Neil Hatton	Cornwall County Council
Cllr Bill Maddern	Penwith District Council
Cllr Val Newman	North Cornwall District Council
Cllr David Hughes	Restormel Borough Council
Cllr Beryl Martin	Caradon District Council
George Brew	Natural England
Ian Kemp	The National Trust (substituted for Nick Lawrence)
Jimmy Scobie	Country Land and Business Association
Paul Cottingham	National Farmers Union
Teresa Timms	Visit Cornwall

Supporting Officers:

Mike Hawkey	Cornwall County Council
Steve Crummay	Cornwall County Council
Ann Reynolds	Cornwall County Council, Historic Environment Service
Polly Oliver	Penwith District Council
Greg Clouter	Penwith District Council
David Attwell	North Cornwall District Council
Al Collings	Caradon District Council
Nick Russell	English Heritage
Phil McMahon	English Heritage
Paul Walton	AONB Partnership Manager, Cornwall AONB Unit
Colette Holden	AONB Officer, Cornwall AONB Unit
June Crossland	Planning Officer, Cornwall AONB Unit
Pete Maxted	Communications Officer, Cornwall AONB Unit
Karen Johns	Office Manager, Cornwall AONB Unit

Welcome

Paul Cottingham, NFU; Nick Russell and Phil McMahon both from English Heritage were welcomed to their first Partnership meeting. Both work in Cornwall so one will hope to attend future Partnership meetings.

This was Paul Walton's last Partnership meeting as Cornwall AONB Partnership Manager. He leaves the AONB Unit on 26th September 2008 to take up a job with the National Trust. Members extended their thanks to Paul for his work with the Partnership and wished well in his new job. The Chairman presented Paul with a card and framed print of Cornwall as a departing gift on behalf of the Partnership members and officers.

1. Apologies

Cllr Steve Chamberlain, Carrick District Council; Nick Lawrence, The National Trust; John Mortimer, CLBA; Deborah Boden, CCC World Heritage Site Team; Veryan Heal, Cornwall County Council Historic Environment Service; Ron Daniel, CALC; Sue Wearing and Andrew Gunn, SW RDA; Rachel Bray, Penwith District Council; Malcolm Pinch, Restormel Borough Council; Robert Lacey, Carrick District Council.

Discussions on morning site visits

During the morning, Partners were joined by Jo Oliver from the Cornwall HEATH Project and Jon Brookes from the National Trust and visited the HEATH project area at Carnyorth and discussed a proposed Cattle Grid installation scheme at Carn Galver, offering to explore with other Protected Landscapes any relevant experience which might help resolve sensitive design issues.

2. Minutes of last meetings and matters arising

2.1 Partnership meeting 12th June 2008

Agenda page 2, item 2.1, Sustainable Development Fund – Cllr Neil Hatton was thanked for his contribution to the SDF Grants Panel meeting when 7 projects were approved funding from the Cornwall AONB SDF Fund 2008/09. Partners were also informed that the South West Protected Landscapes Forum had produced a DVD showcasing 4 projects for 2007/08 which included renewable energy project at Gorrans School. A link to the DVD will be made available from the Cornwall AONB website.

Agenda page 2, item 2.1, The Cornwall Lecture – the next Away Day workshop takes place on 25th September 2008. The presentation given by Professor Adrian Phillips at the June Away Day is of particular interest as it clearly emphasises the value of protected landscapes. Prof. Phillips has written an article based on his lecture for the Western Morning News and this will be useful for the Cornwall AONB 50th Anniversary publicity work. There is a link to this and all the other presentations on the Cornwall AONB website under 'latest news'.

Agenda page 2, item 2.1, Powerline Undergrounding – Western Power Distribution, has now agreed in principle to include selected undergrounding of power lines within AONBs and National Parks in the Business Plan for 2010-15. This is a direct result of a concerted response to their Business Plan consultation by the protected landscapes of the South West. The 14 south west protected landscapes within the Western Power region will be meeting to discuss to the next steps.

Agenda page 5, item 4.2, RDPE – the SW RDA has confirmed that £3m has been approved from RDPE for the 3 'Upland Areas' across the SW Region - which means £1m for Bodmin Moor. It is anticipated that a Project Officer will be appointed to work with upland livestock farmers and agree a priorities programme to support and maintain economically viable livestock holdings. S Crummay confirmed that Cornwall County Council is willing to be the accountable body for this initiative if required.

2.2 Officer Group Meeting 3rd September 2008

The draft minutes were circulated at the meeting. There were no matters arising.

3. Reports for decision

3.1 Future of the AONB Partnership

The agenda paper set out how the Partnership might work in relation to the

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new Cornwall Council, including a revised Partnership structure and method of working for 1st April 2009 onwards. The current Memorandum of Agreement and Statement of Intent for the Partnership will need to be revised to reflect the changes following the creation of Cornwall Council.

Partners views were particularly welcomed on the options listed on agenda page 7 (Partnership membership).

To address the issue of the local dimension of the separate AONB areas, representation could be drawn from the 17 Community Network Areas (CNAs) that have at least part of the AONB within their boundaries. A draft map showing proposed CNAs was circulated at the meeting.

The Design of Cornwall Council Service Delivery is likely to be in draft form by the next Partnership meeting in December so it is important for the Partnership to make decisions now. The AONB Unit has submitted a business case for continued financial support for the Partnership for the period 2009-2011 to the Cornwall Council Service Design Team. It is expected that a decision on proposals put forward will be made in the near future.

A diagram of the new Environment, Planning and Economy arm of Cornwall Council was circulated.

- **Partners AGREED there should be not less than 3 Cornwall Council members on the Partnership representing the 3 Planning areas. The importance of substitutes being elected for those members was also stressed.**
- **Partners AGREED to defer the decision of CNA representation. It was felt that having one member from each of the CNAs may result in too large a Partnership but that it was not necessary to discuss the detail at this stage as the CNAs may not be in place until June 2009 at the earliest. It was recognised that there may be a need for an interim Partnership arrangement for the first few months after the Cornwall Council commences.**
- **To ensure 'national' representation as well as a 'local' contribution to the Partnership, it was AGREED that there should be the facility to co-opt up to 3 "expert" additional members who would be subject to election at the Annual Forum.**

T Timms felt that tourism would be best represented by an officer from the new Cornwall Development Company which will commence from April 2009. As detailed on agenda page 8, para 5iii), a new agreement (Service Level Agreement) will be needed between Cornwall Council and Natural England concerning funding and financial management, AONB Unit staff employment and other management arrangements. It is anticipated that the new Head of Service for the Planning and Environment Directorate of Cornwall Council will be responsible for concluding this agreement with Natural England. A detailed service design for the Directorate is being developed which will set out how the staff unit will relate to other staff within the Directorate. The AONB Partnership will be able to challenge/review the Service Design in the next few months.

Cornwall Council and Natural England, with input from the Partnership Chairman will then sign a Local Service Agreement (LSA), to replace the existing Memorandum of Agreement. The LSA is being drafted by Natural England and will be out for consultation this autumn.

It was AGREED that the Chairman will respond to the consultation on behalf of the Partnership and provide an update at the December Partnership meeting.

There continues to be uncertainty over whether the Unit should move from being hosted by Cornwall County Council to being absorbed into Cornwall Council's management structure.

George Brew confirmed that Natural England wish to see the AONB Unit continue its independence from the local authority and Natural England and for it to be a 'champion' for the landscape.

S Crummay stated that he will discuss the greater involvement of the AONB with Cornwall Council with P Walton before he leaves the AONB Unit on 26th September 2008.

S Crummay

3.2 Interim staffing arrangements for the AONB Unit until the recruitment of a new Partnership Manager

P Walton leaves the AONB Unit on 26th September to take up a job with the National Trust. As with all the other AONB Unit staff, the Manager post contract ends on 31st March 2009. Until confirmation is received that the unitary authority will support the Partnership from 1st April 2009, the Manager post will not be advertised, so interim arrangements need to be made.

- **Partners AGREED to the proposals in the agenda paper – namely, that:**

C Holden will take on the role of acting Partnership Manager, taking on the financial and line management responsibilities for the Unit.

Additional administrative support will be sought for the day to day running of the Sustainable Development Fund.

J Crossland will take on additional planning responsibilities and co-ordinate the Management Plan review.

P Maxted will take on additional communications matters regarding the management plan view. Both J Crossland P Maxted will extend their working hours to four days per week until end of March 2009.

The SDF Administrator post has been advertised and an appointment made Subject to satisfactory references being received the postholder will start on 6th October.

3.3 Europarc Charter for sustainable tourism in protected areas

Jemma Roberts, from Cornwall Sustainable Tourism Project (CoaST) who was due to attend the meeting had to send her apologies.

In December 2006, the Partnership agreed to proceed with gaining Europarc Charter Park status for the Cornwall AONB. The AONB Unit has worked closely with CoaST to develop a sustainable tourism strategy and action plan that is a requirement of the Europarc Charter process. This preparatory work is almost complete and the application for Charter Status will be submitted by December. As part of the Charter verification, the AONB Partnership must agree to abide by a set of principles for sustainable tourism in protected areas. These principles must be signed and accompany the application.

- **Partners AGREED that the Chairman signs the 'Principles' on behalf of the Cornwall AONB Partnership.**

4. Items for information/discussion

4.1 Cornwall AONB Management Plan Review

A questionnaire has been circulated to all AONB Officer Group representatives. A Report of the Review will be provided at the December Partnership meeting and the main Review of the Management Plan will commence in March 2009. English Heritage requested a copy of the questionnaire – the AONB Unit will forward a copy to them.

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4.2 Cornwall AONB Atlas

C Holden is preparing a Cornwall AONB Atlas – a State of the AONB report. It will be an evidence base document that will pre-empt the Management Plan, and will hopefully be produced by the end of March 2009. C Holden will also be meeting with Partners along with J Crossland during discussions regarding the Management Plan Review.

4.3 Cornwall AONB Annual Report 2007-08

This will be produced electronically as a PDF document. A one page summary was circulated at the meeting. One draft copy of the full document was circulated at the meeting. It requires a few minor amendments and will then be available on the Cornwall AONB website.

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4.4 Cornwall AONB 50th Anniversary

The 50th Anniversary of the Cornwall AONB designation (2009) will be promoted at the Cornwall Lecture in November 2008. A 50th Anniversary logo has been produced and Partners were asked for their comments. Partners suggested the word 'national' should be included in the strapline.

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T Timms reported that she is encouraging tourism businesses to include AONB in their promotional material, and she could help promote the 50th anniversary next year. T Timms and P Maxted will meet to discuss.

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5. NAAONB/SWPLF

NAAONB Regional Planners met 17th September to discuss the RSS

6. Any Other Business

T Timms highlighted the Clean Cornwall initiative to Partners which is all about reducing litter, how litter is managed etc. There are 200 events being held across the county next week – beach cleans etc. Partners can find out more on www.cleancornwall.org

N Hatton highlighted a recent planning application refused by Planning Committee members, against officer recommendation, that was subsequently refused at appeal by the Planning Inspectorate with one of the reasons being the need to have regard to the AONB.

7. Date of Next meeting

Thursday 11th December 2008, 2pm, venue to be agreed.