

North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership

16th May 2014

Fairlinch Farm, Braunton.

Meeting attendees

Steve Pitcher (AONB Chairman)
Pete Burgess (DWT)
Lesley Garlick (DCC)
Cllr Robin Julian (DCC)
Hannah Harrington (NDC)
Barbara Fryer (Community Rep.)
Richard Butler (Community Rep.)
Andy Bell (ND Biosphere)
Richard Dyer (NFU)
Alison Boyle (Community Rep)
Cllr. Rodney Cann (NDC)
Caroline Leaver (Community Rep)
Rose Day (Community Rep.)
Richard Prowse (Tarka Country Trust)
Jonathan Fairhurst (NT)

Officers

Dave Edcombe (AONB Project Officer)
Elaine Hayes (AONB Manager)
Gigha Klinkenborg (ND AONB)

Apologies

Barb Francis (TDC)
Michael Winter (BR Partnership Chairman)
Hon. John Rous (CLA)
Steve Mulberry (National Trust)
Cllr. Gaye Tabor (TDC)
Cllr. Derrick Spear (North Devon Plus)
Alasdair Barclay (TTEF)
Jenny Carey-Wood (ND+)
Cllr. Andrea Davis (ENP)
David Appleton (NE)
Jay Rowntree (EA)
Lee Dawson (Forestry Commission)
Cllr. Brian Redwood (TDC)
Paula Ferris (Coastwise North Devon)
Charlotte Russell (EH)
Terry Green (Community Rep)
Sarah Chappell (TDC)

Action/ Decision

1. Introductions and apologies

The Chairman made introductions and welcomed Cllr. Robin Julian, Caroline Leaver, Alison Boyle and Paul Green to the Partnership. The business meeting will be short. He thanked our host, Richard Dyer. Thanks were expressed to Barb Francis who is leaving TDC. Steve Mulberry is currently looking after West Somerset so Jonathan Fairhurst will be attending for the National Trust

2. Minutes and matters arising:

The minutes will be sent out electronically for approval.

GK

Rural Barn Conversions: The Chairman wrote to NAAONB and to government on behalf of the AONB. The outcome was satisfactory in that National Parks and AONBs will be exempt from the regulations.

Lesley reported back on the Biosphere Review process. There are twelve possible scenarios including looking at integration with the AONB Partnership, or moving to be part of the BR Foundation. Integration cannot be discounted.

The Chairman announced that there will be an extra meeting of the Executive to discuss the options and their impact on the AONB and also an extraordinary AONB Partnership in July. GK to schedule a meeting. Rodney commented that there were only 3 options and he thought it not acceptable for the AONB to be secondary to the Biosphere.

GK

3. AONB Manager's Report (incl. SDF)

Taken as read. The Management Plan is finally complete and now available in three formats, A4, A5 and on CD. There are good projects in the action plan. Defra has advised us not to spend 1.9% of the budget. There are some difficulties with this and we have asked for clarification but as yet received no response.

The business plan main theme for this financial year is farming and land management. Partnership also requested that the AONB consider the following

- Engagement around transport
- Wooden finger posts
- A roadside cull to reduce the number of surplus signs

We would welcome feedback on this. Rodney will put it on the agenda for HATOC.

The Partnership commended Alison's work with Simon Armitage's team. The cook book will be launched soon and the AONB will have a starring role.

Our Twitter and Facebook following is increasing. The ETC website will get a facelift as part of the Clean Marine project.

This year the communications strategy will be to attend fewer, but higher profile events which we think will prove more fruitful. We will also be attending the North Devon Show in August.

Greater Horseshoe Bat project now has a project manager. SDF paperwork has been revised and we now have two application forms. One for smaller projects up to £500 and a more detailed application for projects over £500.

4. Business Plan & Budget

Health has been added as a paragraph in the Business Plan

Planning:

Two major applications have been received, one of which is the 700 pupil Route 39 Academy at Steart Farm. We didn't make any initial comments as we wanted to wait and see what they came up with. It is an extremely bad reflection on the applicant's agent and Government funders that such a building has been proposed in the AONB. The sustainable credentials are very poor and the proposed sewage treatment is wholly inadequate. We are awaiting advice from NE, DWT and other AONBs, but have strongly objected.

The other application is outside the AONB. The Ilfracombe expansion is for 750 homes, a school. The issues will likely be landscape impact and biodiversity corridors. There may be a possibility of Section 106 money to support green infrastructure in Ilfracombe.

Other applications include a 35m turbine on the edge of the AONB near Bucks Cross. The AONB did object and currently this application is still undetermined. We believe that this is due largely to the fact that neighbouring Swanton Farm has an application for a similar sized turbine at Appeal.

Of the two other major applications affecting the AONB, Harbor Cross 3 X 107m turbines on the edge of the AONB near Bursdon Moor and a retrospective application for a 1 hectare slurry lagoon at Beckland Farm near Brownsham are still undetermined.

Pete Leaver has been re-appointed as our Planning Consultant. Thanks were expressed for the work carried out by Pete Leaver over the previous year.

5. NAAONB Update.

Rose's update was circulated to Partnership members.
Rose and Elaine will be attending the NAAONB conference.

6. AOB

Hannah reported that the Local Plan consultation would begin very shortly.

Richard thanked everyone for coming and reiterated that every farm can make a contribution to wildlife. But one of the issues is when the BBC picks a picture of a fluffy badger and not pictures of the slaughtering of cattle. The effects of TB are truly devastating for farmers.

7. Next meeting 30th September 2014

