

North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty PARTNERSHIP

Friday 17th May 2019
Westward Ho!

MINUTES

Meeting Attendees

Steve Mulberry (Chairman)
Steve Pitcher (Community Rep.)
Terry Green (Community Rep.)
Sean Kearney (Torrige DC)
Sarah Jennings (Devon CC)
Penny Mills (CPRE)
Rose Day (Community Rep.)
Richard Prowse (Tarka Country Trust)
Brian Butler (NFU)
John Rous (CLBA)
Dr Eirene Williams (Community – Vice Chair)
Martin Batt (Community – Vice Chair)
Paul Green (Community Rep.)
Hugh Bone (Torrige Parishes Rep)
Malcolm Wilkinson (N Devon Parishes Rep)

Apologies

Rob Joules (National Trust)
Chris Preece (Voluntary Sector – NDAS)
Cllr Ken James (TDC)
Paula Ferris (Coastwise)
Cllr Tony Inch (Devon CC)
Brett Grosvenor (EA)
Christine Goodall (NE)
Trevor Stanbury (ND Marketing Bureau)
Dr James Szymankiewicz (Community Rep.)

Officers

Jenny Carey-Wood (Manager)
Dave Edgcombe (Projects Officer)
Joe Penfold (Heritage Officer)
Laura Carolan (Communications Officer)

Guests

Daisy Headley – Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Cllr Nick Laws (Northam Town Council)
Cllr Claire Hodson (Northam Town Council)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

- **Chairman Steve Mulberry** welcomed Partnership members to the meeting, welcomed new members Hugh Bone and Malcolm Wilkinson and guests from Northam Town Council and the West Country Buzz project. Due to recent elections there had not yet been formal appointment of district councillors to the Partnership hence their non-attendance.
- **Cllr Nick Laws** welcomed the Partnership to Westward Ho! and raised a number of priorities from the local perspective. Firstly the importance of protecting the countryside around the local settlements within and outside the AONB designation – particularly the Torrs, secondly the importance of visitors to the local economy and finally the growing importance of green tourism. He requested support and advice from the Partnership members to address his first point.

2. Minutes of the last meeting on 25th January 2019 and matters arising. Minutes agreed Actions / Matters arising;

- New Members – Outstanding action on a Young people forum. JCW proposed that this be addressed after the 60th anniversary boundary relay so recent engagement of a wide

range of young people with the AONB. In the meantime, discussions being held with schools and groups to agree the most appropriate way to address this. **Action: SM/JCW**

- Parish Council representation – advising on appointees and reporting to parishes. **O/S Action: JCW** to write to parishes and agree process with representatives.
- Boundary Review – response received from Natural England reporting that North Devon AONB is not on the list of 17 ‘formal requests’ for a boundary review. Given staff changes we are invited to share any correspondence that may support our understanding that we were on the list. The advice from them is to await the report from the Glover Review due in Autumn 2019 which will address designation changes and a proposed prioritisation process. **Action: RD and SP** offered to share correspondence and evidence that a boundary review was requested. **Action: JCW** to take forward with Natural England and to keep local MPs informed.
- Kenwith Catchment – HB requested an update on works – **Action: JCW** to provide it.

3. Governance

- Draft Code of Conduct discussed briefly and some edits proposed including: - allowing for a Part 1 and Part 2 to meetings in case confidential matters to be discussed; email circulation of information from partners to wider Partnership members at the AONB Manager’s discretion. **ACTION: ALL – any further comments to JCW by 30 June 2019.** The final code will be sent to members and formally agreed at September meeting.
- It was agreed to circulate an open email to all Partnership members with the Minutes of this meeting to share each other’s email addresses. **Action: JCW**

4. AONB Manager’s Report – presented, with additional comments below: -

4.1 Management Plan 2019-2024 – plan now adopted by the three Local Planning

Authorities and new policies being used. The Chairman thanked the team for their hard work and the quality of the final report.

4.2 Annual Priorities: Biodiversity – Final report of Taw Torridge Estuary High Tide Roost study will be published online shortly. **Action: JCW** to send link to everyone.

4.3 Health and Wellbeing – projects in development

4.4 Coastal Heritage – Joe Penfold presented some of the stunning photos and digital images from the aerial photogrammetry work carried out on several hillforts working in partnership with the National Trust and Clovelly Estates. This work has revealed more information and detail than previous surveys, especially following scrub clearance work of the volunteer team. Images and interpretation findings in online story maps will be uploaded to the AONB website in due course. Waymark posts with interpretation will be installed over the summer. The partnership project with the Museums in support of the 75th D-Day anniversary has produced new exhibitions, an information booklet and a programme of events from June to September. See <https://www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk/events>

4.5 Sustainable Development Fund – LC updated on progress with high level of commitment so far, several projects in the pipeline and Partnership members asked to publicise fund opportunities through their networks.

4.6 Communications Reports – LC gave brief update on new reporting format and 60th Anniversary activities. **Action: All** – advise Laura if you can support any of the public activities this year.

5. Landscape Report and Planning Update – presented by Dave Edgcombe with additional points as follows: -

- Note new reporting information to provide more clarity on scale of AONB planning activities and final decisions.
- Applications for new communication masts – **Action: DE and planning authorities** to request a meeting with Airband and Connecting Devon and Somerset to develop a more strategic approach to minimise landscape impact and protect AONB.

6. West Country Buzz presentation by Daisy Headley of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust

- Focus on North Devon coastal strip between Somerset and Cornish borders, primarily Hartland, Northam Burrows, Braunton Burrows, Baggy Point and Hillsborough.
- Habitat creation, monitoring, mapping, lobbying to reduce stocking rates, partnership working with landowners, small grants, engage volunteers, support garden habitats
- August Bee Day being planned on Northam Burrows
- Contact: Daisy Headley daisy.headley@bumblebeeconservation.org
- A pdf of the presentation can be downloaded [here](#)

7. Partners' Delivery Actions towards the AONB Management Plan

- **Northam Burrows Visitor Centre – Sean Kearney, Torridge District Council.** Redevelopment of the centre will cost £2.1m with a contribution of £1.8m towards the building costs from the government's Coastal Communities Fund. Statement building on existing site as outside the SSSI designation and least flood risk on the Burrows. Centre to include more space for interpretation, education activities, office space and a café. Timetable – on site in January 2020 with opening in January 2021.
- **Clovelly Dykes hillfort - Terry Green, North Devon Archaeological Society.** Terry expressed thanks to the Coastal Heritage project for their work on Clovelly and to John Rous the landowner for his support and permissions from the farmer. Following successful dig last summer, interest in looking at field to the East but not accessible this year and no funds for digging. Proposal to do a geophysical survey of central scheduled section of the site requiring permission from Historic England and raising funds from partners. One of the most important sites in the UK so more information from surveys essential.
- **John Rous, Clovelly Estate** – successful 'yellow welly race' fundraising for RNLI
- **Eirene Williams** – Georgeham Parish are finishing their Neighbourhood Plan and have declared a climate emergency
- **Richard Prowse, Tarka Country Trust** – 'Life on the Verge – Biosphere' project is due to finish in Autumn 2019 and are seeking additional funding. Event on 4th July at Braunton Countryside Centre – all welcome (see <http://www.tarkacountrytrust.org.uk/love-b.html>)
- **Penny Mills, CPRE** – Devon's Best Churchyard competition closing end of May; primary school competition open; Devon orchard book by Michael Gee published by Devon CPRE – copies

available to purchase; Objection to Yelland development submitted; Devon's New Housing Need report published, and event held with Minister. See <https://www.cpredevon.org.uk/>

- **Sarah Jennings, Devon County Council** – advised that DCC is working with communities to manage their verges for wildlife; Devon Local Nature Partnership are holding a communities Action for Wildlife Conference at Chagford on 6 July (<https://www.naturaldevon.org.uk/2019-community-action-for-wildlife/> for bookings and information); Get Devon Buzzing campaign now live supporting the Year of the Fly; Exploring how to support wildlife at the local level - maybe working through parishes.

- 8. National Association of AONBs** – Rose Day summarised her report and shared the very useful annual summary from the NAAONB. More information is available from all the links in the document. JCW mentioned that Defra will be producing a summary report on indicators from all the AONBs later this year and will share with Partnership members.

- 9. Any Other Business** –
 - **Brian Butler** – suggestion for Outstanding Week or 60th Celebration – debating or public speaking competition for young people/secondary schools, maybe work with Rotary, judged by a panel of Partnership members. **Action: AONB team to contact Rotary and explore suggestion**

- 10. Date of Next Meeting:**
Thursday 19th September 2019 at 10.00am at Saunton Sands Hotel
Followed by 60th Anniversary Celebration and Lunch