

North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty PARTNERSHIP

Monday 20 July 2020
teleconference

MINUTES

Meeting Attendees

Steve Mulberry (Chairman)
Dr Eirene Williams (Community – Vice Chair)
Martin Batt (Community – Vice Chair)
Christine Goodall (NE)
Richard Prowse (Tarka Country Trust)
Brian Butler (NFU)
Hugh Bone (Torrige Parishes Rep)
Chris Preece (Voluntary Sector – NDAS)
Paula Ferris (Coastwise ND)
Cllr Ken James (TDC)
Cllr Malcolm Wilkinson (N Devon Council)
Cllr Ian Crawford (TTEF)
Jonathan Fairhurst (NT)
Kirstie Pritchard (DCC)

Apologies

Trevor Stanbury (ND Marketing Bureau)
Paul Green (Community Rep.)
Sarah Jennings (DCC)
Rob Joules (National Trust)
Rose Day (Community Rep.)
Pete Burgess (DWT)

Officers

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

- 1. Welcome, introductions and apologies - Chairman Steve Mulberry** welcomed Partnership members to the Zoom meeting and reported apologies.
- 2. Minutes of the last meeting on 31 January 2020 and matters arising. Minutes agreed**
Matters arising / outstanding actions:
 - Briefing local MPs on Colchester Declaration and Glover Review – **Action: JCW to write due to Covid-19 restrictions on face to face meetings**
 - Carbon Footprint/Environmental impact analysis of team – **Action JCW/MB**
- 3. Reports emailed to Partnership May 2020 – Additional Points Raised:**
 - **Estuary High Tide Roost Study** – PF drew members attention to North Devon Council consultation on a Public Space Protection Order focussed on dog control including areas in the estuary, Tarka Trail and beaches. **Closing Date: 9 August. See <https://www.northdevon.gov.uk/consultations>**
 - **Verges Project** – Cllr Crawford reported successful work in Fremington and request for ongoing encouragement of verge management for biodiversity. JCW reported that North Devon project now finished but Devon County Council continuing to encourage local action
- 4. Governance**
 - **Vacancies on AONB Partnership** – following Terry Green’s retirement there are now two Community representative vacancies. Discussion on need to recruit more people from

Torrige and/or younger people to increase diversity. Agreed to place public adverts, publicise through former SDF grant holders and use all social media. Action – JCW/LC

- **(Update** – Trevor Stanbury has advised that he will be stepping down and a new representative will be sought from the ND Marketing Bureau).
- **Vacancy on SDF Panel** – preference for a representative from Torrige but none forthcoming. Delegated to SDF Chair Eirene Williams to approach existing members and/or await new member appointments to Partnership.

5. AONB Manager's Report – July additional points:

- Promotion of SDF grants in Torrige aided by publicity for slipway extension at Westward Ho!
- **Nature Recovery Plan** – team will be in touch with partners to input to plan over next few months
- **Nature's Tonic** – JCW consulting with local partners on revising or halting project
- **PFND** – data from North Devon visualisation survey now being analysed and report/press release forthcoming
- **Coastal Heritage Project** - question raised regarding Clovelly Dykes hillfort and access by public as such an interesting site. JP replied that the project had not focussed on public events at the hillfort due to lack of access, but there may be some future potential for permissive access maybe through new stewardship schemes or one-off opening on, for example, Heritage Open Days but would depend on owner and tenant agreements. DE reported access was more difficult as off the main A59, raising Health and Safety issues plus a lack of parking. **BB** asked if any volunteers from the heritage project might be interested in joining the Partnership? **Action - Team** to include them in publicity.
- **Climate Change Issues** – HB asked question about Northam Burrows and vulnerability of former tip. Agreed to ask Natural England (CG), Devon County Council (KP) and Torrige District Council (Cllr James) for update at next Partnership meeting. Question raised about access to Rockham beach since new steps washed away in Spring storms. Agreed to ask Devon County Council and National Trust for update at next meeting.
- **Sustainable Development Fund** – update noted
- **Communications Reports** – LC presented reports and requested **Action: All** for ideas to share with the Channel 4 producers of 'Devon and Cornwall' programme, contact Laura. Initial suggestions of the British Surf Museum and Ilfracombe Harbour Shark litter picker.
- **National Association of AONBs** – JCW presented key points in report

6. Presentation on Coastal Heritage Project from Joe Penfold – reporting the successful achievement of outcomes for both people and heritage at the end of the 2-year project. Further details including presentation content on website <https://www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk/our-work/projects/coastal-heritage>. The Chairman on behalf of the Partnership thanked Joe for his hard work over the last two years making such a success of the project and leaving heritage in a much better condition. DE paid tribute to Joe, particularly the innovation within the project, the quality of engagement with sites and people and the legacy of strong partnership working.

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

- **Reporting** – activity table showing fewer applications being submitted but more being reviewed, and they were more challenging and taking more time. **There was a high level of pre-application advice sent to North Devon Council.** Trends seen this year include proposals to: extend the holiday season, increase occupancy, car parks and conversion of agricultural buildings to residential and tourism use. Issues of note so far have been:
 1. The National Trust’s proposed car park at Challacombe Hill
 2. Lee Bay pre-application
 3. The decision by the Croyde Area Residents Association to challenge planning application 56528 through a judicial review of the District Council’s decision in 2014, linked to the recent successful Appeal for certificate of Lawfulness on the “Service Field” at Ruda Holiday Park
- **Fixed Post Photography** has been limited to fewer sites this year due to Covid-19 constraints, but images have shown clear loss of ash trees at Windbury, and the visitor pressure at Sandymere in Northam Burrows
- **Update** requested on communications with North Devon Council following concern at decisions going against AONB recommendation – JCW advised she had not chased this due to immense pressure on council during early weeks of pandemic. **Agreed JCW** to follow up with Andy Jones to request formal written response to the Partnership
- **Line Removal at Morteheo:** Whilst there is in principle agreement by all landowners, the route has not been finalised due to delays cause by COVID 19. Line removal is expected to commence in November later this year.

8. Updates from Partners – due to running out of time partners were requested to forward any updates to JCW for circulation with the minutes.

9. Any Other Business – None

10. Date of Next Meeting:

Friday 25th September 2020 at 10.00am