



**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturlol Eiddafed  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

**The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)  
Partnership  
Minutes of the Meeting held on  
Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019  
at  
Trefor & Garth Community Centre  
at 10:00 am**

**AONB Partnership Members**

Councillor Tony Thomas	DCC
Chair of Joint Committee	
Councillor Christine Marston	DCC
Councillor Martyn Holland	DCC
Councillor Sonia Benbow-Jones	WCBC
Councillor Paul D Jones	WCBC
Councillor Frank Hemmings	WCBC
Councillor Paul Cunningham	FCC
Councillor Colin Legg	FCC

**Representing Access & Recreation**

Andy Worthington OBE – Chair,  
John Roberts

**Representing Rural Interest**

Christine Evans, Roger Cragg

**Representing Business Interest**

Dewi Davies

**Representing Historical Interest**

Tony King

**Representing the Natural Environment**

Les Starling

**Representing Land Management**

Sandy Archdale, Huw Morgan

**Representing Landscape Interest**

Mike Skuse

**Representing Individual Interest**

**Representing Urban Interest**

Del Roberts Jones, Rajan Madhok  
Ian Papworth

**In Attendance**

**Clwydian Range & Dee Valley Joint Committee**

Howard Sutcliffe	AONB Officer
David Shiel	AONB Area Manager
Karen Weaver	AONB Communications Officer
Rhun Jones	AONB Senior Countryside Warden

**Representing Denbighshire County Council**

Huw Rees                      Head of Countryside &  
Heritage Services

**Flintshire County Council**

Tom Woodall                      Flintshire Countryside Service  
& ROW

**Wrexham County Borough Council**

Anna Irwin

**Our Picturesque Landscape (OPL)**

Kate Thomson

**Meeting Observers**

Ron Williams, Joan Cunningham



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**sir ddinbych  
denbighshire**  
County Council



**CYNGOR  
Sir y Fflint  
Flintshire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

**wrexham**  
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL  
wrecsam

**Apologies for absence were submitted from: -**

Councillor Derek Butler, David Davies, Dewi Davies, Phil Durrell, Allan Forrest, Tony Hughes, Councillor Hugh Jones, Councillor Huw L Jones, Rachel Jones, David Kelly, Councillor Christine Marsden, Rhian Peirce, Councillor Carolyn Thomas

**Welcome**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed meeting observers Ron Williams and Joan Cunningham, together with Angela Charlton, Ramblers Association and substitute Partnership member Councillor Frank Hemmings. He was delighted that the Vice Chair of the Partnership, Councillor Paul Cunningham and his his wife Joan were able to attend today's meeting explaining that Paul had recently been seriously ill. Best regards were also expressed to the former Chair of the Joint Committee, Councillor Hugh Jones who had also been suffering from ill health.

The Partnership had a new member, Rhian Price, however, Rhian was not able to attend today's meeting. Long standing partnership member Paul Mitchell had recently retired from his role within Natural Resources Wales (NRW). However, Paul would shortly be back working with the AONB covering Ceri Lloyd's maternity leave as SDF Officer. Alan Price would now represent NRW on the Partnership.

**1. Presentation: Putting Walking at the Heart of Communities**

The Ramblers Director for Wales, Angela Charlton provided a brief power point presentation explaining that the Ramblers now had around 107,000 members within in the UK and 6000 of them were in Wales. The Welsh section of the Ramblers had only three core members of staff, they relied heavily on volunteers.

Angela explained the various projects and walks that the Ramblers were involved with including: The Cambrian Way, Paths for People Project, the all Wales Coast Path and Ramblers Cymru Signposting Campaign.

The Big Welsh Walk 2020

The Big Welsh Walk 2020 would commence on June 13th from Chirk Castle.

Let's Walk Cymru

Angela explained that previously the Ramblers, with support from Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council, had funded the Community Wellbeing Officer, Katrina Day to deliver the 'Lets Walk Cymru' project. However, this funding had since been withdrawn, which was very disappointing.

The Chair thanked Angela for a most interesting presentation and said that it would be good practice to have a supply of their leaflets in outlets such as GP surgeries and community hospitals.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**Matters Arising**

**Page3, item 3**

**Visitor Appraisal Impact Study**

AONB Area Manager, David Shiel explained that a website designer company 'Artychoke' would present some of the study's key information in a more accessible way and once the draft was completed it would be presented to the Joint Committee

**Page 5. Item 7.1**

**Nature for Health Project**

The AONB Officer explained that Ellie Wainwright was unavailable to make a presentation at today's meeting but would be invited to a future meeting.

**Page 8, item 7**

**Moorland Officer**

David Shiel said that in response to the major fire at Llantisilo in 2018 DCC had led an enquiry and one of the key recommendations was for the feasibility of a Moorland Officer to be examined. NRW and the fire service were in discussions as to how this post could be created and funded.

**3. Our Picturesque Landscape Project (OPL) Update & Minutes**

OPL Partnership Officer, Kate Thomson provided a verbal update on the progress of the project including work to the woodland at Pontcysyllte to open up the view, opening up of Dinas Bran Gate House, circular trails at Wenfrwyd pocket park, opening up of the views at Horseshoe Falls and the restoration of the Dell at Plas Newydd.

Community Engagement

Our Picturesque Landscape Community Engagement Officer, Sallyanne Hall had been working extremely hard with community groups and a theatre production of the life of Thomas Telford had recently been enjoyed by school children. The OPL Team were also in attendance at the Eisteddfod. Discussion ensued and it was noted how well attended the community events had been and the OPL team was commended.

Accuracy

Subject to the foregoing it was resolved that the minutes be approved and confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.

**4. AONB Management Plan**

David Shiel informed members that the current plan expired this year and funding had been gained from Welsh Government to prepare a new draft document. The next steps would be information gathering and then the working groups would consider the detail. Data collected for the new Area Statements initiative introduced by NRW would contribute to the plan. An Environmental Impact Assessment would be completed in the summer and public consultations would be held in June. The plan would be finalised at the end of the summer. Discussion ensued. It was queried why consultants had been instructed to prepare the draft and it was explained that the AONB had completed the plan for the last fifteen years and with staff capacity issues and the complexity of the work consultants would have to be used this time. The consultants would interact with the working groups. A question was raised as to whether the plan could influence the Local Development Plan. It was explained that the special qualities of the AONB had to be considered in the LDP and the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) assisted with this.

John Roberts said that with all of the concerns regarding the future of the environment what the AONB Team achieved with minimal staff needed to be emphasised and supported to ensure that funding continued at a sustainable level.

**5. Update from the AONB Officer**

Findings of Designated Landscapes Review

The AONB Officer Howard Sutcliffe provided a brief overview of the review which stated that 170 million people visited AONB's in England with 24 rangers for 36 AONB's. The review proposed that 1000 new rangers to be appointed. Also proposed was the name 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' to be changed to 'National Landscapes'. Three new National Parks had been proposed and these areas would be considered further by Welsh Government.

Discussion ensued. Mike Skuse welcomed the report and said that it coincided with the National Development Plan (NDP). He raised concerns regarding that a large area in North West Denbighshire which had been designated as a solar and wind turbine area and the potential effect that this would have on the views out of the AONB. It was also raised if consideration could be given to North West Denbighshire and the Berwyn to be included in the AONB. Concluding the Chair said that both reports should be followed carefully and any implications for the AONB would need be considered further. Planning Officer Tony Hughes would draft a response to the report.

Ash Die Back

Ash die back was now present in Loggerheads woodland. Going forward this would have a major effect on the AONB. DCC was appointing a tree officer.

Arnside and Silverdale AONB

Howard and two of the Rangers had recently visited Arnside and Silverdale AONB  
Dinas Bran

There was 35 acres of land for sale near to Dinas Bran and DCC and NRW were investigating the possibility of buying the land.

#### Luminaire Project

The AONB had worked in partnership with Canal and River Trust and Wrexham Council to develop and organise a LUMINAIRE of iconic structures along the eleven-mile corridor of the World Heritage Site in October, and it had been effective in raising the profile of the World Heritage Site. The event marked the 10th anniversary since Thomas Telford's nineteenth century Pontcysyllte Aqueduct at Trevor Basin was given the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage Status in 2009. It also coincided with the hosting of the UK's World Heritage Site Annual Conference and AGM in Llangollen, and some of the work that the AONB were engaged with had been displayed. The strength of partnership working in the area was commended.

#### 7.1 **Heritage, Culture & Communities Working Group**

Chair of the Group Christine Evans said that the Group had met in September with 12 people attending and that it was a productive meeting. Projects currently being considered included Tomen y Rhodwydd, the slate works at Nany y Pandy,

Coed Henblas (Graigfechan) Moated Site, Pen y Gaer Hillfort (Garth, Trevor), Minera Decoy Station, Cilcain decoy Station, camera obscura at Dinas Bran.

#### 7.2 **Land Management & the Natural Environment Working Group**

Chair of the Group Les Starling was unable to attend the last meeting and AONB Senior Countryside Warden, Rhun Jones, updated meeting members on some of the projects that the group were considering included the Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI), Drystone walling at the Ponderosa, Alun and Chwiler Living Landscape project.

#### Curlew Cymru Project

Dr Rachel Taylor had attended the last meeting and presented the science behind the decline of the curlew. Three Curlews within the AONB had been tagged this year, and recently one had been sighted in Llanfairfechan. Monitoring was held last season in the area and there were about 75 breeding pairs with 190 reported sightings. North East Wales was now seen as a core area for Curlew.

#### North East Wales Grazing Project

A Project officer had been appointed but the officer had since decided that the role was not suitable for her. The appointment would be advertised again as soon as possible.

#### 7.3 **Landscape Character & Built Environment Working Group**

Chair of the Group Councillor Martyn Holland said that two meetings had been held since the last Partnership meeting. Some of the items the group considered included: Development Plan consultations – Denbighshire and Flintshire Local Development Plans, annual report on planning and development matters in the AONB, Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI), and Dark Sky Initiative National Development Framework (NDF)

Welsh Government had published the Draft National Development Framework (NDF) which covered the period up to 2040 and would 'set the scene' for all Local Development Plans. The group received a presentation from Welsh Government Officials and had an opportunity to question them on the plan. The Planning Officer would draft a response on behalf of the group.

The next meeting would focus on mineral and waste planning matters in and around the AONB.

#### 7.4 **Sustainable Development Fund (SDF)**

Chair of the group Roger Cragg said that a meeting had not been held since the last partnership because the fund was fully committed. However, he provided an update on three projects:

##### 1 **Light up Local**

Clwydian Range Food and Drink group and Llangollen Good Grub Club (both established via SDF) would be supporting the Christmas lights switch on in local areas to showcase local food produce

- 2     **Gwlan – gollen**                     This community based project involved wool spinning and bringing people together. Local markets would be used for the wool.
- 3     **Menter Sudd Afal Clwyd**     This project promoted local orchards within the AONB. Apples had been gathered from people’s gardens to make apple juice, over 900 bottles had been produced. Any profit made would be put back into the community

Paul Mitchell had been appointed as SDF Officer, Paul would be covering Ceri Lloyd’s maternity leave.

6.     **Any Other Business**  
No other business was raised.

7     **Future Meeting Dates**

**AONB Annual Forum November 7th**

The forum would be held at 6:30 pm at the Old Courthouse, Ruthin. The theme for the evening was ‘Landscape Character & Built Environment’ all welcome

<b>Partnership Dates</b>		<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February	2020	10 am	To be decided
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> June	2020	10 am	To be decided
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> October	2020	10 am	To be decided