

# **Cranborne Chase**

## **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**



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**STEERING GROUP**  
10.30 am, Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016

**Edmondsham Village Hut**

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. WELCOME / PRESENT / APOLOGIES**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
Richard Broadhead Wilts Chairman	√	
Phil Sterling DCC		
Gary Foyle EDDC	√	
Michael Mounde Chairman REG	√	
James Ives NFDC		
Hilary Jordan NDDC		√
Susan Batstone NE	√	
Barry James SCC		
David Clarke MDC		√
Garry King HCC		√
Gavin Fauvel Chairman LMAF	√	

#### **AONB Team**

Linda Nunn AONB Director	√	
Shirley Merrick Support Officer	√	

Hilary Jordan has replaced Kevin Morris (NDDC)

#### **ACTION 1**

1. Apologies were noted.

#### **2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND ANY MATTERS ARISING**

RB reported that the Partnership Agreement has been returned to the Legal Department at Wiltshire Council following the further queries they had on the wording. Hopefully the draft will be ready to send out to Partners next week. This up-to-date version should then be ready to be signed in time for the Partnership Panel meeting in April.

The Local Authority contributions are set out in this Agreement with the same amounts requested for 2015 – 2016. DEFRA has now confirmed their funding figures for the next five years to this AONB. Just two Partners have confirmed to LN what their contributions will be for 2016 – 2017. Hampshire Council will pay their full contribution and Somerset County Council will pay their reduced contribution, the same as for this financial year.

GF (EDDC) updated the Steering Group on matters within his Council. EDDC's Scrutiny Committee will meet this evening.

Looking at ways to make savings in the IT budget LN has been in discussion with Wiltshire Council's (WC) IT Department on the AONB transferring onto the Wiltshire IT system. Savings of approximately £11,000 could be possible. WC has an issue with connecting the AONB to its IT system whilst the AONB does not currently have its offices in a Wiltshire Council administered building. The possibility of the AONB moving to offices in the Nadder Campus at Tisbury is still in the early stages of negotiation. The works on the Campus have been delayed and office space will not be available until later this year. Therefore savings on the IT budget are linked, currently, to an office move to Wiltshire. LN is waiting to hear what space would be made available to the team at the Campus and at what cost. As for the rental on the Wimborne office, this is now on a 6 month rolling contract, and 3 months' notice for the IT system.

Early talks are also taking place on the possibility of sharing office space with the National Trust, RSPB and Plant Life. This would create a convenient hub of environmental groups.

<b>ACTION 2</b>
1. RB to have the Partnership Agreement ready for signing for the next Partnership Panel meeting.
2. Steering Group Members to notify LN ASAP of their authority's contributions for 2016 – 2017.
3. LN to provide an update at the next Partnership Panel meeting on the potential new offices for the AONB team and potential costs or savings as a result.

### **3. 2015 – 2016 BUDGET UPDATE AND 2016 – 2017 BUDGET**

LN took the Steering Group through the figures on the budget printout and explained the figures for the Core Budget (75% DEFRA and 25% Local Authority contributions) and those for Projects (100% DEFRA funded). The budget is on track and will be fully spent by the end of this financial year.

#### **Projects 2015 – 2016**

Sustainable Rural Tourism (SRT), there are insufficient funds this year for the Discover Cranborne Chase project. This budget was used instead for exhibits, etc. for the AONB Marquee at the Woodfair. Rachel Limb (RL) attended to help promote the SRT work. RL is also leading on the AONB food festival at the Larmer Tree on April 20<sup>th</sup> – the 'Taste of the Chase'. The walks and cycle ride maps will also be reprinted from this budget.

Landscape Partnerships Scheme The HLF Landscape Partnership Scheme bid - AC is dedicated to working on this project with input from LN and Emma Rouse.

Major Heritage Trail – 'Walking Through Time' – this is on hold. These monies were used for the AONB exhibits at the Woodfair and the printing on the new AONB leaflets.

AONB Countryside Centre – this allocation will go to other projects including additional funds for the Ancient Tree Project in the Donheads expanding into the Vale of Wardour; and the Lightscape Management Plan for the Dark Night Skies project.

HLF Origins of Archaeology - All AONB monies allocated to this as match funding for 2015-16 are spent.

Sustainable Development Fund – 2 projects awaiting funding. Will be fully spent.

LN then took Members through the standard bid form. There are no wage increments but the superannuation amount has increased.

LN is seeking sponsorship for the Dark Night Skies project.

Plans are being made for 6 – 8 sessions to be held around the AONB where parishes will be invited to attend to learn more about planning and the AONB.

The SRT work will progress with the Taste of the Chase and the Discover Cranborne Chase project.

Requests for SDF funding do not always fit the bid criteria. A small amount of project monies have been put aside to fund these small requests. The SDF will have a budget of £4,000. The Local Initiative Fast Track (LIFT) will have a budget of £854. MM questioned the health and wellbeing projects. The LPS bid, if successful, will incorporate this type of project. Steve Duckett of Christchurch and East Dorset Councils was suggested as a contact for health & wellbeing projects as he sits on the Council's Health and Wellbeing group.

<b>ACTION 3</b>
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| 1. The figures for this financial year 2015 – 2016 to date were noted as being on track and will be fully spent. |
| 2. The Project spending and outcomes were noted, including the changes to the Project list.                      |

#### **4. DELIVERY PLAN 2016 – 2017**

The outcomes in the Delivery Plan need to be SMARTer. The Plan covers a 5 year period and so little has changed for 2016 – 2017. No new actions have been added. Each team member knows what is expected of them to achieve the objectives.

<b>ACTION 4</b>
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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Any comments from Steering Group Members on the Delivery Plan to be sent to LN by Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> March.                               |
| 2. After comments are taken into consideration the Delivery Plan will be put to the Partnership Panel at its next meeting in April for approval. |

#### **5. TEAM WORK UPDATE**

The work of the team is listed below, and does not include everything that is being worked on at this current time.

Richard Burden, Landscape and Planning Advisor

- C13 and Dinah's Hollow proposed remedial works.
- Looking at charging for pre-application advice
- Looking to finalise the Rural Highways publication
- Finalising Planning Position Statements for Panel endorsement
- Neighbourhood Plan for Blandford +
- Planning Application requests from LPA partners

David Blake Project Development Officer

- LIFE bid for chalk grassland
- Ancient Tree Project
- Stepping Stones Project – arranging to plant out the plug plants
- Fixed Post Photography
- Foundations of Archaeology HLF funded project

Tracy Adams, Farmland Bird Project Officer (new title???)

- Chalk Valley Farm Cluster - working with landowners to achieve habitat gains.
- Farmland Bird Project work.
- Wessex Water pipeline work, including pond improvements

Anne Carney, Funding and Partnerships Officer.

The Landscape Partnership Scheme bid – see below.

Harry Bell, GIS and Communications

HB works just one day per month. He is in the office today. The e-bulletin will be going out today.

Linda Nunn, AONB Director.

LN leads on the following projects, amongst the day-to-day operations of managing the team and fulfilling objectives:-

- The Cranborne Chase Countryside Centre/Landscape Partnership Scheme bid.
- The tourism initiatives
- The Delivery Plan
- Achieving Dark Night Sky status

In conjunction with AC and ER

- The first stage bid for the Landscape Partnership Scheme. LN reported on the meeting with the Heritage Lottery Fund in November when the AONB was encouraged to put in a bid. This bid has to be submitted before 31<sup>st</sup> May. All the potential projects have to provide 10% match funding. If successful this will proceed to a development phase for which HLF will pay for one person to put that bid together. This would be a five year project with a £1.5 million budget. Wiltshire Council have been asked to deal with the financial affairs, if finally successful, as HLF pays partly in arrears.

G Fauvel left the meeting at 11.15. He promised to send an invitation to the AONB's Planning Officer for the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March to look at housing requirements in Cranborne.

G Foyle offered apologies for the Partnership Panel meeting in April and said Wilbert Smith would attend in his stead.

LN presented copies of the new Position Statements and Fact Sheets. These have been sent out to selected people for comment. These documents will proceed to the Panel meeting in April.

Richard Burden and David Blake have been in conversation with Highways England (HE) on the proposed works to the A303. HE has requested suggestions for bio-diversity gains along the highway within this AONB.

The Planning Seminar has been booked on the 10<sup>th</sup> May at the Sixpenny Handley Village Hall. Three key speakers have been booked; Merrick Denton-Thompson President Elect of the Landscape Institute (President for 2016-2018), Karin Taylor (National Trust) and Christine Tudor (Natural England).

The Annual Forum was not held in 2015, although the Woodfair in October showcased the work of the AONB. LN is in the process of sending out various AONB publications to various groups and people to inform them of our work.

The Star Gazing events are going well. Two more are planned for March 9<sup>th</sup> at the New Remembrance Hall Charlton and on 31<sup>st</sup> March at Ansty PYO.

LN is working with Rachel Limb on the Food Fair, 'Taste of the Chase', at the Larmer Tree on 20<sup>th</sup> April.

LN is putting together Value for Money spreadsheets for each local authority partner, detailing core contributions, projects, grants and match funding over the past 6 years. This should show each LA the 'value' they receive for their annual contributions.

<b>ACTION 6</b>
1. LN to forward a map of the proposed HLF LPS area to members.
2. LN to send out electronic copies of the Position Statements and Fact Sheets. Any comments on these document to LN please. These will then be presented to the Partnership Panel at its meeting in April for approval.
3. LN to send out a web link to the Rural Highways document that is on the AONB website. Any comments on this document to LN please. This will then be presented to the Partnership Panel at its meeting in April for approval.

## **6. PANEL REPORTS FOR WEDNESDAY**

Welcome from the Chairman

1. Minutes of the meeting 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015
2. Matters arising
3. Report A – Partnership Agreement
4. Report B – Budget 2015/16 and proposed budget 2016/17

5. Report C – Delivery Plan 2016-2017 and team work update
6. Cranborne Chase Landscape Trust - progress
7. A presentation by Wessex Water on the pipeline work

A general discussion on the budgets, IT and office location possibilities took place following the agreement of Panel reports.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Chalara dieback of ash is a disease of ash trees caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*. The fungus was previously called *Chalara fraxinea*, hence the name of the disease. See 'The Science' link below for an explanation of the name change. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ashdieback>

## **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Steering Group will meet on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October.

The next Partnership Panel meeting will be on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April at the New Remembrance Hall Charlton.

**The meeting ended at 12.00 pm.**

Minutes signed as a true record

By Richard Broadhead .....Chairman

On Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016