

Cranborne Chase

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



AONB Office, Shears Building, Stone Lane Industrial Estate,
Wimborne, BH21 1HD Tel: 01725 517417
Email: info@cranbornechase.org.uk Web site: www.ccwwdaonb.org.uk

STEERING GROUP
10:00am, Tuesday 21 February 2017

Edmondsham Village Hut

MINUTES

1. WELCOME / PRESENT / APOLOGIES

Member	Present	Apologies
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	√	
David Blake Projects Officer	√	

Ali Roberts Wilts	√	
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ACTION 1

1. Apologies were noted.

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND ANY MATTERS ARISING

Julie Harding (JH) has been appointed the new Communications Officer.
The Rural Highways booklet is now printed and the Management Plan CD's redone to include Neighbourhood planning documents.

The population of the 2 websites is on hold until LN's return. Discussions took place with Dr Sean Beer from Bournemouth University who has suggested 4 or 5 things to take forward.

LN asked Harry Bell about producing a Dark Night Sky website.

The hall has been booked for the food fair and Rachel Limb and JH will be looking to publicise the event.

The locator logo is now available but there has been very little interest. Will ask JH to help publicise this slow burner.

Cranborne Chase Landscape Trust are looking for new trustees, there was a burst of publicity before Christmas through local press and social media but no one has responded. Other project work has been hampered by the inability to get the message out.

An advert has gone out for a Landscape Partnership Officer interviews will be conducted by RB, Tom Munro and Anne Carney at the end of March. Horton Village Hall is £50 to hire per day and maybe the most appropriate location as it needs to be in the area for context. RB to print the shortlist, scan and send to appropriate officers.

There has been a 2 ½ year extension granted for the Foundations of Archaeology Project. There will be field work at 3 major sites with volunteers through 2017.

The first annual Heritage Conference will take place 6 and 7 May and will be self-funding Chalke Valley History Festival will take place June/July which will include school activities etc. at a prime location and will be an excellent opportunity to explain what the AONB does and potentially we could meet every landowner in the area.

Dark Night Skies LN has in hand. Ruth Coulthard has been seconded from Brecon Beacons National Park as she has expertise in developing dark night skies applications.

ACTION 2
1. RB to print the shortlist, scan and send to appropriate officers.
3. SM to ask Garry King to sign the minutes were agreed as a true record.

2. 2016-17 BUDGET, 2017-18 BUDGET & DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE

The AONB 2017 -18 grant bid to Defra was submitted by the end of January 2017 deadline. Local Authorities were given the Local Authority contributions needed to fully draw down the Defra match funding. Wiltshire Council and Dorset County Council are facing another round of budget cuts and may not be able to make their full contribution. East Dorset are able to meet their required contribution and request that an invoice is sent as soon as possible

The final 3 months of the financial year will see the salary, travel and training budget fully expended.

After discussion, Shirley Merrick has been fulfilling the finance role for the team alongside LN, through an additional 3.5 hours per week.

In addition, after consulting with the Steering Group, LN has taken on a new Communications Officer, Julie Harding. Both changes are being accommodated through the former Support Officer salary with some additional transfer from monies used to pay Harry Bell, from 'other core costs'.

The Steering Group and Panel have agreed in the past that good and consistent communications is crucial to raise the profile of this AONB. With the long awaited return of this post and the team is extremely pleased to have Julie on board and she is already making a difference to the AONB communications generally.

In advance of LNs absence, work has been put in place up to the end of the financial year and as long as all invoices are received as expected, the 'other core costs' will be fully spent up.

As the team requires more work stations for staff, an additional office space has been negotiated at the Wimborne office site providing 2-3 additional spaces and potential for a meeting space. With the success of the first stage of the Landscape Partnership Scheme, a 100% HLF funded Development Officer post has been advertised, hence the need for more space within the office. This additional office space now offers the AONB team the entire 1st floor of the current offices. It requires a small addition to monthly rental but at approximately £500 rental and rates per month, this remains a very economical option for the team going into 2017-18.

Sustainable Rural Tourism –Rachel Limb (former tourism officer, EDDC) has organised and will lead on the 2nd 'Taste the Chase' local producers event at Dinton Village Hall on April 20th.

International Dark Sky Reserve bid – 'secondment' of Ruth Coulthard from Brecon Beacons to pursue this bid has been successful in that Ruth has pushed forward with many elements of the work outlined in the Team Update Report including furthering vital work on the Lighting Management Plan; whilst LN and R Burden leading on training for LPA Officers regarding light pollution and lighting issues generally through the planning system.

Landscape Partnership Scheme – £4,000 has been committed as match to the Development Phase of the LPS in this financial year. Further monies were spent on developing the bid during the 2016-17 year.

Foundations of Archaeology – the AONB project match funding of £2,500 has been spent; the rest of the expenditure on this project is through Heritage Lottery Fund grant monies.

Landscapes in Planning – the Neighbourhood Planning document has been produced through Fiona Fyfe

Local Initiative Fast Track (LIFT) – £500 committed to encouraging attendance by our smaller scale woodland owners to a machinery/equipment demonstration day.

Any remaining project monies will be fully spent by 31st March 2017 as requests to complete projects have arisen e.g. additional days for Wyvern Heritage to complete some further Foundations of Archaeology work.

Monies have also been allocated to some small pieces of work on the Countryside Centre, so as not to miss *potential* opportunities for additional funding for such a project from the SWLEP Growth Fund and Heart of Wessex Leader funding during this coming 2017-18 year.

Sustainable Development Fund - £4,000, 100% Defra funded

4.1 At the last Panel meeting, the SDF Panel had awarded £550 to Sutton Veny History Project (research, maps, collation of materials in preparation to publish a parish history book) and £200 to Maiden Bradley Community Shop to replace their old till. David Blake can inform the Panel of the remaining SDF project in the pipeline. SDF funding is now fully committed this year.

ACTION 3

1. Invoice to be sent to East Dorset as soon as possible.

3. TEAM AND WORK UPDATE SINCE PARTNERSHIP PANEL MEETING OF 6TH APRIL

The red communications actions now go green with JH's appointment. The red/amber actions are opportunities to take up when they arise to deliver plans/elements of projects and are aspirational

Richard Burden - Landscape and Planning Advisor

Responded to over 100 applications since April. Here are ones to be most aware of:

- Large housing proposals and the modification of the Strategic Allocation **West of Warminster** (Wiltshire 16/01323/MAS) have been constant themes. In addition to over 200 houses (14/06562/FUL) being proposed over and above the allocation in the Wiltshire Core Strategy an additional application has been put forward of a similar scale on adjacent land. It has been deemed that an EIA will be necessary and the AONB has contributed to a Scoping Document.
- Restoration at the **Wimborne St Giles Estate** continues, with alternative uses being sought for historic buildings (East Dorset DC 3/15/1323/FUL and 1324/LBC).
- A **four day festival** (<http://www.shambalafestival.org/>) is being considered to generate income for the Wimborne St Giles Estate and meetings have been held with Lord Shaftesbury and the potential event organiser, focussing on the impacts on the tranquillity of the AONB and the physical fabric of a key historic park and garden.
- Some Panel members may have seen the correspondence in the Blackmore Vale magazine about the **Lidl Supermarket** planning application (NDDC 2/2016/0325/FUL) on what has become known as the Asda site, on the northern side of Blandford. This site is on the town side of the bypass but within the designation of the AONB. Some years ago the AONB negotiated a scheme for the Asda Supermarket that would have been a considerable improvement on the existing industrial planning permission for the site. Both Lidl and the North Dorset Development Management Team have been advised that the AONB would not object to a scheme that meets the fundamental criteria of the original Asda proposal, but that the current corporate design with a higher roofline and less effective screening planting would not be acceptable.

There are discussion regarding 2 proposed transfer sites in the AONB. The Plato site is going to be difficult to screen. The access is at the business park where the

Environment Agency have their office. The other site is on a farm at Blandford Camp, the lorries will have to turn back on themselves and there is a primary school at the site, however it does blend better with the landscape as it is in a valley. Logistics and scheduling would have to be looked at regarding school arrival and departure times. Dorset have a policy of no landfill only burn or recycle on waste.

The pace of neighbourhood planning seems to be picking up and neighbourhood plan groups in Dorset including Bourton, Iwerne Minster, Pimperne, Blandford, are communicating with the AONB team who can offer a lot of assistance. East Dorset has found take up has been very slow.

Future advice to Longleat Estate will be charged for regarding the proposed conference and hotel complex. There have been significant changes to the management structure and Longleat to ensure it remains a viable business that is dependent on a landscape setting. The estate, unlike most large estates, depend on the leisure industry and not land management. Most large estates have an external source of funding e.g. Cranborne is supported by a bigger estate and London properties. Wiltshire Council will be supporting the development as it is seen as best for the community and its economy.

4 network providers were subsidised to install mast on planned sites to improve rural connectivity. However planning has been very controversial and significant objections were received. As a result the providers pulled out of the plan through worry of expensive legal action; however it was felt their preference had been to concentrate on urban areas anyway. Each provider will now be putting up separate masts. The private sector is now looking at broadband connectivity e.g. Cranborne Estate had fibre laid at great expense but can now send that out to others and have planning permission for repeaters.

A current issue of importance to the southern AONBs is control of light pollution. The recognition of Dark Night Skies, and the provision of technical advice, including Bob Mizon's advice, Position Statement 1 Light Pollution and Fact Sheet 7 Good External Lighting is to help planning officers ensure permitted development has good lighting that does not cause light pollution or problems with wildlife. As part of our involvement in these regional groups and progress toward dark night sky status the team have offered to take forward some training for development management teams to help them help us achieve better lighting with less light pollution. The training was excellent but due to turn over constant engagement is essential. Training is required for Wiltshire Council planning officers.

David Blake Project Development Officer

Ancient & Veteran Trees - The Donhead Group has met to discuss planting trees in order to restore some of the trees that have been lost to the two parishes. The Vale of Wardour Group has continued to record trees, especially veteran ash trees that may hold genetic material that is more resistant to Hymenoscyphus fraxineus (Ash Dieback disease). David has undertaken "Verifier Training" so that he is able to support volunteers in their recording efforts.

Big Chalk - South Downs National Park Authority have put more resources into taking the programme on without an application to EU LIFE. Work is continuing on the objectives that emerged from the planning sessions in 2015 / 2016 with partners such as water companies, research groups and catchment partnerships.

Foundations of Archaeology - Field work has taken place in all three focus areas over the summer. The project was present very successfully at the Chalke Valley History Festival and the Berwick St John Country Fair. A Steering Group meeting has taken place and changes notified to the Heritage Lottery Fund that will improve the outcomes for heritage in the AONB.

Farmland Conservation Project

Tracy Adams has returned but is down to 1 day a week until reserve funds can be transferred so she can return to 3 days. David Blake has been keeping the project going in her absence.

- Pipe-line work: quotes for two pond restorations and hedge restoration have been gained and we await Wessex Water's decision on whether they will offer to grant-aid the projects.
- Farmer Clusters: The Chalke Valley Cluster has gained "Facilitation Funding" from Natural England via the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. We have offered support to the Cranborne Cluster and we hope to develop a cluster in the Nadder Valley.
- Funding is being sought to take the Turtle Dove research work to a next stage.

Fixed Post Photography – Need archaeologists to come and watch us dig the holes for the base plates at Wylde Down Scheduled Ancient. Sites have also been identified at Martin Down. 9 base plates have been installed. It is likely to show big changes in the woodland structure with the ash dieback. Looking to recruit and train volunteer photographers. Dorset have used a robotic head to capture a panoramic view.

Sustainable Development Fund - Application for funds is expected from the Cecil Memorial Hall, Sixpenny Handley. Interest in 2016/17 has been less than in previous years and we have had less capacity to publicise the opportunity.

Forestry machinery collaborative event – David is working with colleagues in North Wessex Downs AONB and Forestry Commission to hold a forest machinery day on 3 May that will focus on small-scale machinery and help replicate the farm cluster approach in small woodlands. RB would like his Tree and Woodland Officer, Rich Murphy to attend.

Environment Audit Committee (EAC) response

David responded on behalf of the team and Partnership to the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) initial consultation on 'The Future of the Natural Environment after the EU Referendum'. The draft response was sent to your Chairman in advance of submission.

Great Place Scheme - Expression of Interest (EoI) submitted. The Great Place Scheme will help to embed arts, culture and heritage in local plans and decision-making. Involving citizens and local businesses, projects will enhance the role that culture plays in the future of each place participating in this pilot Scheme, leading to social and

economic benefits that arts, culture and heritage can achieve. The scheme is jointly funded by the Arts Council, Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic England. The EoI was submitted by the 6th October deadline.

Trunk Roads is a verge management project organised by Plant Life and funded by Highway England and the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is a delegated grant fund that parish councils can bid for schemes around their 30 mile and hour sections for equipment and training or contractors. RB raised concern about the contractual aspect between councils and the contractors as Wiltshire had issues when any changes were made to contract responsibilities. Talks will be held with the companies that write these contracts to include flexibility and to understand the business model.

Anne Carney Funding and Partnerships Officer

The first stage submission of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Landscape Partnership scheme (LP) was submitted at the end of May of last year. We received notification of the successful outcome on 28th October 2016. Following the submission of additional information we had a 'Permission to Start' meeting with Claire Hyne, Senior Grants Officer, Heritage Fund South West and James Dennis (director at Savills, Taunton) who has been appointed to act as monitor by the HLF for the development stage of the LP scheme. 'Permission to Start' was delayed due to IT issues at the HLF end and was granted on 21st January 2017.

The AONB as lead partner has been awarded just over £100,000 to develop the second stage bid called a Landscape Conservation Action Plan or LCAP. A Development Officer will be employed and the advert for the post is currently advertised on the Wiltshire Council website <http://jobs.wiltshire.gov.uk/>, the Guardian online <https://jobs.theguardian.com/>, Environment job <http://www.environmentjob.co.uk/> and the Blackmore Vale magazine. The closing date is 05/03/2017 with interview to be held during the week beginning 27/3/2107.

If the second stage application is successful LP scheme will be delivered over a five year period with a total budget of £2.4 million; £1.7 million has been requested from the HLF. The three primary themes of the LP centre on enhancements to the natural, historic and cultural environments.

As part of the Development Stage a number of studies will be undertaken. These include:

- Archaeological Surveys
- Archival survey
- Audience Development Plan
- Biodiversity Permeability Mapping
- Branding, Promotion and Publicity
- Creative arts development input
- Disability Access Audits
- Evaluation and Monitoring Strategy
- Interpretation Strategy

- Landscape Character Assessment
- Landscape scale Heritage Compendium

The Branding and Logo brief has gone out to four design companies with a closing date of 22nd February. The remaining documents are being worked on and will be sent out shortly.

Following a recent meeting, Dr Sean Beer, Senior Academic at Bournemouth University has offered to act as a facilitator to establish if Bournemouth University and/or any of the 7 other universities that he works with might be interested in being involved with any of the potential projects within the LP scheme. This has got huge potential in terms of expertise and match funding.

Currently researching potential funding streams for the Countryside Centre.

Linda Nunn Director

International Dark Night Sky Reserve bid. Work toward bid submission is ongoing, although slowly due to a need for further resources. A 'Lightscape Management Plan' is a fundamental requirement and Malcolm Mackness, formerly of Lighting Design and Consultancy Services (LCADS) is the single consultancy currently able and experienced in undertaking this work. Malcolm has now begun work on with an extremely reasonable quote to undertake the work.

Several stargazing and 'meteor-shower' evenings took place this season. One on March 2nd formed part of the offer at the Cranborne Chase Annual Forum in Sixpenny Handley.

Ruth Coulthard is the experienced Dark Night Skies officer from Brecon Beacons NPA. Ruth has worked with the team for 22 days to further this work and has made considerable progress in that short time. She has:

- Contacted the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) in the USA to inform them of our intended bid to gain further advice
- Worked with R Burden on how to best further work on controlling lighting issues with Local Planning authorities, as this is part of the expectation from the IDA should they consider offering the Reserve status
- Developed a bespoke web site
- Produced the content for a Dark Sky booklet explaining how communities and businesses can help by installing and maintaining fixtures
- Developed resources to be used in schools
- Worked with Malcolm Mackness to assist in the Lightscape Management Plan
- Sourced additional night sky photographs from a professional photographer

'Taste of the Chase' - 20th April at the Dinton Village hall. This will mirror last year's event at the Larmer Tree gardens as part of the sustainable rural tourism and enhancing the rural economy effort. The AONB **'Locator logo'** will again be promoted there. Over 20 businesses have applied use these logos to highlight the fact that they are based

within or close to this Protected Landscape. Other AONBs utilise such a logo to very good effect. Taste the Chase now has its own web site.

7. Shirley Merrick – AONB Team Support Officer

Ensure monies have been spent up with LN. SAP is still not available but the FB60 system is working well. The grant for Foundation of Archaeology has not been coded appropriately by the finance team and is currently can't be found, there are 3 projects funded by this grant so this situation must be rectified.

There is a problem with the canon printer at the office. It was due for collection but LN was told to cancel the collection by canon as the contract is being reviewed. The printer is currently being stored by the company next door but this cannot continue as the printer is very large. RB to look into this situation.

ACTION 4
1. Dark night skies training to be organised for Wiltshire Council planning officers.
2 RB to inform Rich Murphy of the Forestry machinery collaborative event on 3 May.
3 RB to look into the problem with the canon printers contract

4. PARTNERSHIP PANEL REPORTS

- 1 LN and MM will not be available to chair the meeting on 16 March; hopefully Zam Baring will be able to do it. (now confirmed that Zam will chair)
- 2 It had been discussed with LN and RB whether the meeting could be postponed and papers and questions circulated as it was just information sharing as no speakers will be there. However it was decided that the meeting should go ahead as it would be better to discuss the budget face to face.
- 3 The Annual Forum will be taking place on 2 March with so far 50 attendees. RB volunteered to chair with DB to provide a briefing.

5. AOB

Gavin Fauvel has resigned from the group due to change of emphasis on his work commitments. Discussions took place on whether landowner representation was essential to the group. It was decided that it is very useful for officers to be exposed to the reality of private business and the diverse issues that arise.

It is likely that the group will be looking for a Chair and Vice Chair and it would be good if at least one of these roles could be filled by landowner for owning and land management expertise, someone from the Chamber of Commerce or a land agent? For discussion with LN on her return.

ACTION 5
1. RB to forward Wiltshire Council's Wire to Shirley.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A date in May to be decided.

The meeting ended at 12.00

Minutes signed as a true record

By Richard Broadhead


.....Chairman

On 12/09/2017