



## City and County of Swansea

### Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

## Gower AONB Advisory Group

**At:** Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams  
**On:** Wednesday, 15 February 2023  
**Time:** 6.15 pm  
**Chair:** Councillor Paul Lloyd

#### Membership:

Councillors: P R Hood-Williams, L James, S E Keeton, N L Matthews and A H Stevens

Stakeholder Members: Howard Evans, Stephen Heard, Carrie Townsend Jones, Alan Kearsley-Evans, Peter Lanfear, Philip Ogleby, H Osborn, B Parry, Clive Scott, Anthony Thomas and Paul Tucker

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### Agenda

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1 Election of Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2022-2023 Municipal year.	
2 Apologies for Absence.	
3 Declarations of Interest. <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests">www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests</a>	
4 To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 2
5 Terms of Reference. (For Information)	3 - 5
6 Sustainable Development Fund - Appointment of Panels.	6 - 7
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8 Gower AONB Work Programme Update. (For Information)	9 - 15

**Next Meeting:** To Be Confirmed.

*Huw Evans*

**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**08 February 2023**

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**Contact: Democratic Services: - 01792 636923**

# Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Gower AONB Advisory Group**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 31 January 2023 at 10.00 am

**Present:** Councillor P Lloyd (Chair) Presided

### **Councillors**

P R Hood-Williams

L James

S E Keeton

### **Stakeholder Members**

H Osborn

### **Officer(s)**

Paul Meller

Natural Environment Section Manager

Jeremy Parkhouse

Democratic Services Officer

Mike Scott

Gower AONB Officer

### **Apologies for Absence**

Councillors: N L Matthews and A H Stevens

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## **1 Declarations of Interest.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests were declared.

Councillors L James and P Lloyd declared personal interests in Minute No.5 – Appointment of Stakeholder Members to the Gower AONB Advisory Group.

## **2 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group Meeting held on 14 March 2022 be approved as a correct record.

## **3 Exclusion of the Public.**

The Group was requested to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the item(s) of business identified in the recommendation(s) to the report on the grounds that it / they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the exclusion paragraph of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007 relevant to the item(s) of business set out in the report.

The Group considered the Public Interest Test in deciding whether to exclude the public from the meeting for the items of business where the Public Interest Test was relevant as set out in the report.

**Resolved** that the public be excluded for the following items of business.

**(Closed Session)**

**4 Appointment of Stakeholder Members to the Gower AONB Advisory Group.**

The Advisory Group considered applications received from 16 candidates for 10 Stakeholder Member positions on the Gower AONB Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group considered the background of each candidate; their reasons for applying to become a Stakeholder Member; the area, group or interest they represented; and the skills and knowledge they would bring to the Group.

**Resolved** that the following be appointed: -

- Alan Kersley-Evans (National Trust)
- Barbara Parry (Clyne Valley Community Project)
- Howard Evans (Gower Society)
- Peter Lanfear (Gower Commoners / Farming)
- Paul Tucker (Llanrhidian Higher Community Council / Gower Agricultural Show)
- Clive Scott (Bishopston Community Council / Walking)
- Steve Heard (Farming)
- Carrie Townsend Jones (Mumbles Community Council)
- Anthony Thomas (Individual)
- Phil Ogleby (Individual)

The meeting ended at 10.45 am

**Chair**

# Agenda Item 5

## Gower AONB Advisory Group - Terms of Reference

### STATUTORY ROLE & FUNCTION

- 1) The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 places a duty upon the City & County of Swansea ('the Council') to "prepare and publish a management plan which formulates their policy for the management of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it".
- 2) The Act also places a statutory duty on other relevant authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB when exercising or performing any functions affecting land in the AONB. "Relevant authorities" are any public bodies including local and statutory authorities, parish councils and statutory regulators.
- 3) The Gower AONB Advisory Group is an advisory group to the Council, convened by them, to facilitate the management of the Gower AONB, in fulfilment of their legal responsibilities and duties with regard to the Gower AONB.

### STRUCTURE

- 4) The **Gower AONB Advisory Group** will comprise:
  - a maximum of 6 Councillors (including the Councillor who is Chair of the Planning Committee), who will be appointed by the Council.
  - 2 representatives from Natural Resources Wales
  - 10 other local members, drawn from the following local interests as appropriate:
    - Community Councils
    - Nature conservation
    - History and archaeology
    - Land owning/farming/forestry
    - Commoners
    - Rural business
    - Tourism
    - Recreation
    - Local interest groups
    - Residents of the Gower AONB
- 5) The Advisory Group will be chaired by the Chair of the Planning Committee, with a Vice Chair selected from the members of the Advisory Group.
- 6) The term of appointment will be the same as the electoral term.
- 7) The Advisory Group will invite applications for new members towards the end of the term of appointment. The new members will be appointed by the

incoming Councillors appointed to the Advisory Group following Local Government elections.

- 8) The Advisory Group will encourage applications from individuals who are local, and can represent local interest groups, with a selection process based on their ability to contribute to the Advisory Group, through their local knowledge, experience and representation of that interest group.

## **PURPOSE & RESPONSIBILITY**

- 9) The Advisory Group's purpose is to oversee the management of the AONB and is responsible for the development of policy and strategy for the AONB, particularly through the AONB Management Plan, and influencing the policies and strategies of others. The Advisory Group will also take and support action to conserve and promote the AONB.
- 10) The members of the Advisory Group will appoint the following sub-groups:
  - a) **Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) Grants Panel.**
    - This panel will decide on grant applications to the SDF from funding obtained from the Welsh Government. It will determine how best to use that funding and will operate an appeals process when considering how funding should be spent.
    - This panel will comprise the Chair of the Planning Committee (who will act as Chair) and seven other members.
    - The panel will be supported by the AONB Officer, and a representative from NRW, as observers.
  - b) **The SDF Grants Appeals Panel**
    - This Panel will handle disputes on how funding should be spent and will decide on appeals for grant applications refused by the SDF Grants Panel.
    - The SDF Appeals Panel will comprise the Vice Chair of the Advisory Group (who will act as Chair of the SDF Appeal Panel) and seven other members, who do not already sit on the SDF Grant Panel.
    - The panel will be supported by the AONB Officer, and a representative from NRW, as observers.
  - c) **Other sub-groups as required**
- 11) The Advisory Group will have the power to co-opt individuals or organisations (to itself, or to sub-groups), or to set up further sub-groups as deemed necessary to fulfil the aims and objectives of the AONB Management Plan.
- 12) Members of the Advisory Group and of any sub-group will be expected to abide by the City and County of Swansea Members Code of Conduct.

## **MEETINGS**

- 13) An officer from Swansea Council Democratic Services will be present at all meetings to record proceedings. Minutes of each meeting shall be kept and circulated to Advisory Group members, and made available to the public, as soon as possible after each meeting.
- 14) **The Advisory Group:** will meet quarterly, and the meeting dates published annually. Additional meetings will be convened if required. In the absence of the Chair or Vice-Chair at a meeting, the Advisory Group may elect a Chair for that meeting. The quorum for the Advisory Group meetings will be six.
- 15) All meetings of the Advisory Group will be open to the public for observation.
- 16) Decisions by the Advisory Group shall be made by show of hands with the Chairman having the casting vote.
- 17) **The SDF Grants Panel:** will be called to meet by the Grants Panel members and advised by the AONB Team and NRW representative, determined by the timing and number of applications to received. Quorum of the SDF Grants Panel will be four.
- 18) **The SDF Appeals Panel:** will be called to meet by the Grants Panel and advised by the AONB Team and NRW representative, determined by the timing of appeals received. Quorum of the SDF Appeals Panel will be four.
- 19) Further information in relation to the election of Advisory Group members and other procedural matters can be found in the Gower AONB Partnership Procedural/ Guidance notes available from the AONB Team.

## **THE AONB PARTNERSHIP**

- 20) **The Gower AONB Partnership** will be a membership body, open to any individual, group or organisation that has an interest in the AONB and will be chaired by the Councillor who is Chair of the Planning Committee.
- 21) The role of the partnership is to:
  - protect, conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the Gower AONB (“the primary purpose”),
  - promote the sustainable social and economic development of the area, where it is consistent with the primary purpose of the AONB,
  - encourage the enjoyment and understanding of the area, where it is consistent with the primary purpose of the AONB.

# Agenda Item 6



## Report of the Gower AONB Officer

Gower AONB Advisory Group – 15 February 2023

### **Sustainable Development Fund – Appointment of Panels**

#### **For Decision**

#### **Sustainable Development Fund – Appointment of Grant Panel & Appeals Panel**

#### **Background**

Welsh Government provide annual funding for the Sustainable Development Fund grant scheme (currently £100,000/year) – this is managed locally by the Gower AONB Team, with a grants panel and an appeals panel to consider and approve grant applications.

The SDF Grant Panel, and the SDF Appeals Panel, are appointed by the Gower AONB Advisory Group, each with a membership of eight, as set out in the Terms of Reference document.

#### **SDF Grant Panel**

A list of potential grant panel members is listed below, with a mix of Councillors and stakeholders representing a range of interests and backgrounds.

The members of the AONB Advisory Group are asked to consider, and if appropriate, approve the appointments.

- Cllr Paul Lloyd (Chair)
- David Cole
- John France
- Cllr Lynda James
- Cari Jones
- Cllr Sarah Keeton
- Francis Morgan
- Cllr Andrew Stevens

#### **SDF Appeals Panel**

The SDF Appeals Panel only meets should there be a dispute regarding a decision made by the SDF Grants Panel, which has only happened twice in the last 20 years. The Terms of Reference require the Vice Chair of the Advisory Group to chair the



Appeals Panel. The AONB Advisory Group members are asked to volunteer a further six of their number to sit on this panel, should the need arise, and to confirm their appointment.

- Vice Chair of the AONB Advisory Group (TBC)
- Cllr David Hopkins
- TBC
- TBC
- TBC
- TBC
- TBC
- TBC

### **Next Meeting of the SDF Grants Panel**

The next meeting of the SDF Grants Panel is scheduled for 10am, on the 27<sup>th</sup> February, and will be a hybrid meeting, based at the Gloucester Room in the Guildhall, Swansea.

Mike Scott,  
7<sup>th</sup> February 2023

# Agenda Item 7



## Report of the Gower AONB Officer

Gower AONB Advisory Group – 15 February 2023

### Sustainable Development Fund – Financial Report

#### For Information

#### Sustainable Development Fund – Financial Summary

Welsh Government have confirmed the SDF budget for 2022/23 at £100,000.

To date 11 projects have been supported, with £54,378 committed. A further 8 applications are in progress, requesting £45,622.

If these are approved, this will fully commit the funds for 2022/23.

The Committed Funds figure includes the CCS Management Fee of £10,000.

Total Funds available	£100,000
Committed Funds	£54,378
Uncommitted Funds	£45,622
Applications in progress	£45,622

A detailed report will be produced after April, and circulated to Steering Group members, highlighting the work done by the projects we have supported.

The SDF budget for 2023/24 has been confirmed by Welsh Government, and will be £100,000.

A new SDF Grants Panel will be appointed following the initial meeting of the Gower AONB Advisory Group, in February 2023.

Mike Scott,  
7<sup>th</sup> February 2023

# Agenda Item 8



## **Report of the Natural Environment Manager**

### **Gower AONB Advisory Group - 15 February 2023**

### **Gower AONB Work Programme Update**

#### **For Information**

This report briefly summarises the work of the AONB team since the last Group meeting in March 2022. More detailed update reports will follow in due course as project work progresses. It is anticipated that subgroups of the Advisory Group will be established to work with the AONB team help progress these and other projects/AONB Management Plan Actions as appropriate.

#### **1) New Terms of Reference for the AONB Advisory Group**

New terms of reference were adopted by Swansea Council in January 2023 (see appendix A). The only significant change was in relation to the manner in which members of the group were appointed to represent a wider range of local interests, based on their ability to contribute to the work of the group through their local knowledge, skills and experience. New members of the Group were appointed on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 and the group comprises 6 councillors, including the chair of Planning Committee, two representatives from Natural Resources Wales and a full complement of 10 appointed local stakeholder members. The purpose of the Advisory Group is to provide advice to Swansea Council in regard to management of the AONB. The aim is that local communities, both as individuals and organisations, can be actively involved in the management of the AONB and can influence and contribute to its strategies and plans.

#### **2) Gower AONB Management Plan**

The current statutory 5 year management plan sets out a vision for the AONB - laying out aspirations for the future, and the work that will be needed. Review of the current Plan adopted in 2017 has been delayed by the Covid 19 pandemic when priority was given to delivery of capital projects from the available Welsh Government funding, as well as the hiatus in meetings of the Advisory Group. This review now needs to be progressed in earnest.

The identified actions to meet the Plan's objectives will be subject of a report to a future Group meeting along with an indicative programme for review to incorporate key current policy drivers including:

- State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR)
- Area Statement, Natural Resources Wales
- Climate Change and Nature Emergencies – declared by Swansea Council

### **3) Mapping a Local Ecosystem Resilience Baseline for Swansea**

This project was produced last year by the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBReC) and jointly commissioned by the AONB and Nature Conservation Teams. It seeks to provide a better understanding of the term ecosystem resilience. It provides a methodology for producing high-resolution maps for ecosystem resilience and to allow Swansea Council to demonstrate that they are taking account of not just biodiversity, but also the resilience of ecosystems, when making their decisions and thereby helping achieve their Section 6 duty under the Environment Act (Wales) 2016. Factors identified to act as useful proxies for measuring and mapping the key attributes of ecosystem resilience are Diversity, Extent, Condition and Connectivity.

The aim of this project was to deliver a comprehensive ecosystem resilience map for the whole of the Swansea Council area that could be used to inform a range of issues including:

- identifying opportunities to develop nature recovery networks and to increase ecosystem resilience through habitat restoration, re-creation and creation.
- helping promote a broader understanding of the meaning of ecosystem resilience on the ground at the local level.
- the location and ecosystem resilience impact of land proposed to be allocated in future Local Development Plans (Swansea LDP due for review 2025).
- the effectiveness of the suite of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (and other designations) in protecting the land identified as making the greatest contribution to ecosystem resilience.

The mapping has been used to identify areas where Nature Recovery Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places (SLSP) grant-funded projects would be most beneficial. For example, reviewing the light pollution layer to help determine where to focus retrofitting of Dark Skies appropriate lighting to have to biggest impact. It has also aided work to bring Gower Local Nature Reserves into favourable condition, this includes the projects for Port Eynon Dunes, a water supply for grazing at Pwll Du Cliffs and work on Fairwood Common to improve biodiversity.

### **4) Carbon Baseline Assessment of Gower (working towards Net Zero)**

A greenhouse gas emissions assessment and target scenario for the Gower AONB has been published (November 2022). It is one of a series of methodologically compatible reports produced for each UK National Park and Welsh AONB, designed to provide a robust and consistent evidence basis for climate action, matched to the unique characteristics and circumstances of each protected landscape. The report

contains a consumption-based assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions attributable to residents and visitors, including travel to and from the landscape.

The challenge for each protected landscape is to find a way to cut emissions in line with current science and be leaders in land stewardship while simultaneously creating better places for people to live, work and visit. Key findings for Gower:

- Residents' consumption is roughly 19% above the UK average
- There is a disproportionately retired population, with health expenditure being particularly high.
- Residents' carbon footprint is estimated to be 32% higher than the UK average
- Residents' emissions from flying are estimated to be 2.5 times higher than for an average UK resident.
- Driving emissions and other transport emissions are around 34% and 41% above the UK average, respectively,
- Estimated household fuel emissions (excl. vehicle fuel) are around 19% above the UK average.

It concludes that a transition to a low-carbon future for the Gower AONB entails strong action in many areas: construction, home energy, food production and diets, travel and transport, business energy use, the nature of tourism and the visitor experience, the circularisation of the material economy (including repair, maintenance, renting and reselling of consumer goods), and significant changes in land management.

## **5) Dark Sky Gower**

The AONB Team have submitted an application to the International Dark Skies Association (IDSA) for the Gower AONB to become a recognised International Dark Sky Community. This application has been compiled by a "Dark Sky Gower" working group over the period from October 2018 to August 2022, the process has been protracted for several reasons, including the Covid-19 pandemic as well as a requirement to adopt appropriate lighting guidance – which is now incorporated in the AONB Design Guide (2021). Initial drafts have also had to be rewritten following changes to IDSA criteria and guidance, plus evidence required of several years' worth of monitoring lighting levels at 40 set locations around Gower, various outreach events and demonstrations of community support as well as evidence of implementation in practice. For example, the majority of street lighting on Gower has also been changed over the past 5 years to fully shielded dimmable LED lights. A response from the IDSA is currently awaited.

Gower is also part of a half £million all-Wales SLSP collaboration project (2022-25) led by Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. This includes the appointment of a Dark Sky Officer supporting all the Welsh designated landscapes. As part of Welsh Dark Skies week later this month a free day of space science for young astronomers is being held at the Oxwich Bay Hotel on 23<sup>rd</sup> February

## **6) Landscapes Wales Seminar at Down to Earth, Cilibion, Gower 9/10, March 2023**

This seminar targeted at those responsible for the management of Welsh designated landscapes is expected to attract around 70 delegates with 5 places available for Gower Advisory Group representatives. The first day will include site visits to SLSP project work at Cefn Bryn and Fairwood Common followed on the second day by a Q&A with a panel of experts, keynote speech and series of workshops. Full details are yet to be finalised including, assistance with transport arrangements, welcome introduction from Swansea Council and Gower Advisory Group representatives.

## **7) Clyne Valley Country Park**

Around half the Country Park lies within the Gower AONB and in 2020 the AONB Team successfully applied for short term grant funding to undertake priority management action in relation to some basic infrastructure restoration and improvements works. Around £300k has been spent to date. The AONB Team were also tasked on behalf of the Council with identifying key issues affecting the Country Park. Arising from this has been the development of a Draft Management Plan focusing on public access and enjoyment, biodiversity and built heritage, as well as re-establishing contact with Clyne Valley Community Project – who are now represented on the Advisory Group.

The Draft Management Plan comprising a Vision Statement, a Policy Summary, and Management Objectives is expected to be ready for consultation with key stakeholders this Spring. In the meantime, enhancement works are continuing on site with the establishment of a biodiversity and nature trail, improved signage, Japanese Knotweed treatment, a memorandum of understanding with mountain bikers, whilst clearance works are shortly to commence around the ruined and overgrown former New Mill Farm to establish the condition of the buildings and make the area safe. Natural Resources Wales are also investigating the feasibility of a natural flood management scheme.

## **8) Port Eynon Waterfront development**

Following a Feasibility Study for Port Eynon and Horton in 2018, Swansea Council considered the issues raised within the report and the subsequent recommendations. As a key part of this work, the Council appointed architects, Rural Office for Architecture, to develop a Concept Design for a new beach/community centre building in Port Eynon. The commission was supported by a Sustainable Development Fund grant.

Initial options were consulted upon with the local community and notwithstanding any preferred approach the concept of replacing the existing toilet block with a multifunctional building was included as part of a Levelling Up Fund bid submitted last year. The £4.7m bid included a new play area, improvements to Borfa House, public realm and landscape improvements, upgraded broadband to the village, traffic and car parking improvements. The bid was not one of those agreed by Welsh

Government in Jan 2023. Further consideration needs to be given to which, if any, of these elements could be part of a future funding bid either alone or in combination with other proposals.

## **9) Port Eynon Sand Dunes - Geomorphological Assessment and Management Options Appraisal**

Prof. Ken Pye has produced a short report on the stability/erosion of the dunes in Port Eynon Bay, with recommendations on management of partially buried fence lines. Dune management works in the late 1970s and 1980s included the erection of more than 5.3 km of sand fencing in an effort to stabilise the dunes. Most were stabilized and well-vegetated by the late 1990s. However, erosion of the frontal dunes in the southern half of the Bay began to expose some of the fencing, and a succession of severe storms in 2013-14 and 2019-2020 cut back the dunes along a wider frontage, exposing broken posts, wire and mesh on the upper foreshore. Boardwalks constructed in the early 2000s were undercut at their seaward end and elsewhere buried by drifting sand.

The available evidence suggests that the long-term trend for slow shoreline retreat and landward migration of dunes within Port Eynon Bay is likely to continue and may accelerate slightly with sea level rise. The undefended central section of the Bay, and particularly the area east of the main Port Eynon Beach access, is likely to experience a continuing fall in beach levels and a trend for net frontal dune erosion, resulting in continuing exposure of old dune fencing.

The report includes recommendations for various management measures including removal of all exposed fencing wire and redundant posts, regular inspection and removal of exposed hazardous material and redundant sections of boardwalk. Improved signage is needed to direct beach users together with realigned paths.

## **10) Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments Works (various)**

Site improvement, consolidation and interpretation projects are currently ongoing at various historic sites around Gower, and update reports will be provided to the Group at key stages. Sites include: Pennard Castle (Pennard), Ivy Tower (Clyne Valley Country Park), St. Mary's/St Maurice's Church (Knelston), Pill House Pig Sty (Llanmadoc), Salthouse (Port Eynon).

## **11) Other Ongoing Project work**

- *Gower Places of Worship*  
Making provision within ten Gower churches and their grounds for wildlife and to help tackle any problem interactions. All churches have been surveyed, and a Biodiversity Improvement Plan is to be produced for each. Works will continue until 2025 to include new swift and barn owl boxes, improved bat access/features and bespoke mitigation solutions to protect valuable artworks.

- *Fairwood Common*  
Fairwood Common is one of the largest areas of open common land in AONB at 524ha and is in a deteriorating condition. Owned by Swansea Council, it is used by a declining number of commoners for grazing and has a mosaic of bog, wet and dry heath, ponds, scrub and woodland habitats. The common surrounds Swansea Airport and there is extensive public open access. There are issues around a lack of graziers (and barriers to releasing livestock out on the common), wildfires, increasing scrub cover and loss of biodiversity and ecological resilience.

This project aims to tackle these problems, by equipping those involved to reverse some of the changes, improving public access facilities, and by raising awareness amongst visitors and locals of the important role that the commons play. Recent improvement works have seen a water supply installed for grazing animals, along with the creation of ponds and scrub/fire breaks, scrub & grassland management works, whilst Dormouse presence/absence surveys are due to start in March 2023.

- *Cefn Bryn*  
Installation of an interpretation panel has been agreed with Commoners. Measures are being considered to address erosion of the Public Right of Way leading up from Reynoldston PO.
- *Gower Drystone Walling project*  
An ongoing programme of walling repairs being carried out in conjunction with the National Trust and Gower Society mostly around the Rhossili area.

## 12) Grant Funding Update

The two primary sources of grant funding for project work carried out within the AONB are from Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales:

### *Welsh Government: Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places (SLSP)*

This is a three-year Welsh Government programme of capital investment in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks which has expanded in recent years to include revenue funding to support project delivery. The allocation is to ensure that these Designated Landscapes can contribute to Welsh Government objectives and has four main themes:

- Decarbonisation
- Nature-based solutions and nature recovery
- Sustainable tourism
- Supporting communities to respond to COVID and promote a Green Recovery



Levels of 100% funding for Gower are:

2022/23 - £175k

2023/24 - £200k

2024/25 - £200k, plus an additional £50k revenue funding for each of these years

Current funded projects include:

- *Pennard Castle* – completion of a project to improve public access to and interpretation of the Castle and improve the condition of the Scheduled Monument. Two-year project to end of March 2024.
- *Gower Nature Recovery Programme* - to improve nature recovery and ecosystem resilience in Gower AONB, including work on Swansea Council Local Nature Reserves. Three-year programme to end of March 2025.
- *Gower Places of Worship* - This investment will enable the stakeholders on these sites to care for and improve their biodiversity value into the long-term. Target species include: bats; swifts; barn owls; pollinators; reptiles. Three-year programme to end of March 2025.
- *Clyne Valley Country Park* – Focussed on nature recovery, environmental remediation visitor facilities, safety and signage. Three-year programme to end of March 2025.

#### *Welsh Government Sustainable Development Fund (SDF)*

This grant-aid scheme supports innovative, sustainable projects in Wales's five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). The SDF supports projects that work to enhance and conserve natural beauty, wildlife, culture, landscape, land use and community within the context of the goals and sustainable development principles in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Total funding for the SDF in Gower is approx £100k annually until end of March 2025. The SDF is managed by the AONB Team, with grant applications considered and determined by the Gower AONB Partnership.

#### *Natural Resources Wales National Grant Partnership Programme:*

Natural Resources Wales and Swansea Council share statutory duties to conserve and enhance natural beauty, and to promote access and recreation. The AONB Team have received £147k funding (75% contribution) over the period 2022-24 (approximately £73,500/year). This grant funding aims to support the implementation of the Gower AONB Management Plan, which underpins these duties. The work is split between the AONB, Rights of Way, Nature Conservation and Strategic Planning Teams.