



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

GOWER AONB PARTNERSHIP GROUP

At: Barham Centre, Pisgah Chapel, Parkmill, Swansea

On: Monday, 5 October 2015

Time: 7.00 p.m.

AGENDA

	Page No.
1 Appointment of Vice-Chair for the 2015-2016 Municipal Year.	
2 Apologies for Absence.	
3 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.	1 - 2
4 Minutes. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Gower AONB Partnership Annual Meeting Group held on 29 June 2015.	3 - 8
5 Matters Arising from the Minutes.	
6 To Elect the Following: -	
6a Sustainable Development Fund Grant Panel.	
6b Sustainable Development Fund Grant Appeals Panel.	
7 Designated Landscapes Review. (Verbal)	
8 Gower AONB Boundary Query.	9
9 Cwm Ivy Embankment.	10
10 Minutes of the Gower Landscape Partnership Steering Group Meeting - 15th July 2015.	11 - 13
11 Part-Time Traffic Lights at Parkmill - For Discussion.	

- 12 **Renewable Energy Position Statement.Gower AONB - Alternative Energy Sub Group - Progress.** 14
- 13 **Affordable Housing on Gower - A Position Statement by the Gower AONB Partnership.** 15 - 18
- 14 **Seascape Assessment. (Verbal)**
- 15 **60th Anniversary for Gower AONB - For Discussion.**
- 16 **Date and Time of Future Meetings: -**
- 7 p.m. on Monday, 21 December 2015 – Penclawdd Community Centre.
 - 7 p.m. on Monday, 21 March 2015 – Venue To Be Confirmed.



Patrick Arran
Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Procurement
28 September 2015

Contact: Democratic Services - 01792 636923

GOWER AONB PARTNERSHIP GROUP (6)

Councillors

Labour Councillors: 4

Mark C Child	P Lloyd (Chair)
Jan P Curtice	Jane E C Harris

Liberal Democrat Councillor: 1

Richard D Lewis	
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Independent Councillor: 1

Keith E Marsh	
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Officers:

Kim Flanders	Planning Policy and Environment Manager, Planning Services
Chris Lindley	Gower AONB Team Leader, Planning Services
Mike Scott	Gower AONB Officer
Jeremy Parkhouse	Democratic Services

For Information Email Only:

Phil Roberts	Director of Place
Phil Holmes	Head of Regeneration & Planning
Chris Dale	Countryside Access Team Leader (Rights of Way), Planning Services
Community/Town Councils	

Total Copies Needed:

32

GOWER AONB Partnership Group (June 2015)

Name	Organisation	Address	Post Code	Telephone
Gordon Howe	Gower Society	Annie's Stables, Middleton, Rhossili, Swansea	SA3 1PJ	01792 390560 mewslade@aol.com
Roger Button	Tourism Swansea Bay	Pitton Cross Caravan and Camping Park, Pitton Cross, Rhossili	SA3 1PN	01792 390593 rogerpitton@yahoo.co.uk
Alan Woodman	Representing Forestry & Farming	57, Gowerton Road, Three Crosses, Swansea	SA4 3PY	07970870490 woodman@lonisa.fsnet.co.uk
Stephen Heard	Gower Riding Club / Port Eynon Community Council	Pylewell, Pilton Green, Rhossili, Swansea, SA3 1PQ	SA3 1BJ	steveheard1@aol.com
Community Councillor P R Hood – Williams	Upper Killay Community Council	50, Pant-y-Dwr, Three Crosses, Swansea	SA4 3PG	Paxton.hood-williams@swansea.gov.uk
Sue Hill	Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust	Heathfield House, 91, Heathfield, Swansea	SA1 6EL	01792 655208 sue@ggat.org.uk
John Davies	BayTrans			01792 205071 johnbaytrans@btinternet.com
Huw Morgan	Pennard Golf Club	2 Southgate Road, Southgate, Swansea	SA3 2BT	sec@pennardgolfclub.com
Community Councillor Rod Cooper	Llanrhidian Higher Community Council	The Lodge, Park Road, Penclawdd, Swansea	SA4 3FQ	rcooper@yllety.F9.co.uk
Deborah Vine	Resident	Brolonydd, Reynoldston, Swansea	SA3 1AA	deb.vine@reynoldston.com
Ceri Daugherty	Natural Resources Wales	Llanion House, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire	SA72 6DY	01792 634981 ceri.daugherty@cyfoethnaturlolcymru.gov.uk
Rebecca Wright	Natural Resources Wales	Maes Newydd, Britannic Way West, Llandarcy, Neath	SA1 8PG	01792 634966 rebecca.wright@cyfoethnaturlolcymru.gov.uk

Disclosures of Interest

To receive Disclosures of Interest from Councillors and Officers

Councillors

Councillors Interests are made in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea. You must disclose orally to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest.

NOTE: You are requested to identify the Agenda Item / Minute No. / Planning Application No. and Subject Matter to which that interest relates and to enter all declared interests on the sheet provided for that purpose at the meeting.

1. If you have a **Personal Interest** as set out in **Paragraph 10** of the Code, you **MAY STAY, SPEAK AND VOTE** unless it is also a Prejudicial Interest.
2. If you have a Personal Interest which is also a **Prejudicial Interest** as set out in **Paragraph 12** of the Code, then subject to point 3 below, you **MUST WITHDRAW** from the meeting (unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Authority's Standards Committee)
3. Where you have a Prejudicial Interest you may attend the meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, **provided** that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise. In such a case, you **must withdraw from the meeting immediately after the period for making representations, answering questions, or giving evidence relating to the business has ended**, and in any event before further consideration of the business begins, whether or not the public are allowed to remain in attendance for such consideration (**Paragraph 14** of the Code).
4. Where you have agreement from the Monitoring Officer that the information relating to your Personal Interest is **sensitive information**, as set out in **Paragraph 16** of the Code of Conduct, your obligation to disclose such information is replaced with an obligation to disclose the existence of a personal interest and to confirm that the Monitoring Officer has agreed that the nature of such personal interest is sensitive information.
5. If you are relying on a **grant of a dispensation** by the Standards Committee, you must, before the matter is under consideration:
 - i) Disclose orally both the interest concerned and the existence of the dispensation; and
 - ii) Before or immediately after the close of the meeting give written notification to the Authority containing:

- a) Details of the prejudicial interest;
- b) Details of the business to which the prejudicial interest relates;
- c) Details of, and the date on which, the dispensation was granted; and
- d) Your signature

Officers

Financial Interests

1. If an Officer has a financial interest in any matter which arises for decision at any meeting to which the Officer is reporting or at which the Officer is in attendance involving any member of the Council and /or any third party the Officer shall declare an interest in that matter and take no part in the consideration or determination of the matter and shall withdraw from the meeting while that matter is considered. Any such declaration made in a meeting of a constitutional body shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting. No Officer shall make a report to a meeting for a decision to be made on any matter in which s/he has a financial interest.
2. A "financial interest" is defined as any interest affecting the financial position of the Officer, either to his/her benefit or to his/her detriment. It also includes an interest on the same basis for any member of the Officers family or a close friend and any company firm or business from which an Officer or a member of his/her family receives any remuneration. There is no financial interest for an Officer where a decision on a report affects all of the Officers of the Council or all of the officers in a Department or Service.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GOWER AONB PARTNERSHIP GROUP

HELD AT REYNOLDSTON VILLAGE HALL, REYNOLDSTON, GOWER,
SWANSEA ON MONDAY 29 JUNE 2015 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillor P Lloyd (Chair) presided

Councillor(s): **Councillor(s):**

J P Curtice K E Marsh

Representing Organisations:

R Wright	-	Natural Resources Wales
Professor	-	Cardiff University and Chair of the Review of
T Marsden	-	Designated Landscapes in Wales

Officers:

K Flanders	-	Planning Policy and Environment Manager
C Lindley	-	Gower AONB Team Leader
M Scott	-	Gower AONB Officer
D Hill	-	Nature Conservation Team - City and County of
		Swansea
J Parkhouse	-	Democratic Services Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

R Button	-	Tourism Swansea Bay
S Heard	-	Gower Riding Club/Port Eynon Community
		Council
Community Cllr	-	Upper Killay Community Council
P R Hood-Williams	-	
G Howe	-	Gower Society
S Hill	-	Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust
P Lanfear	-	Gower Commoners Association
A Woodman	-	Forestry and Farming
Community Cllr	-	Llanrhidian Higher Community Council
R Cooper	-	
J Davies	-	Bay TRANS
C Hill	-	Gower Society
R Harris	-	Gower Resident
I Button	-	Rhossili Community Council
S Holden	-	Sculpture by the Sea UK
P Holden	-	Sculpture by the Sea UK

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Gower AONB Partnership Group
(29.06.2015) Cont'd

J White	-	Friends of Swansea Horses
D Grimsell	-	Friends of Swansea Horses
P Roberts	-	Friends of Swansea Horses
L Cutforth	-	Friends of Swansea Horses
B Chapman	-	Friends of Swansea Horses
H Morgan	-	Pennard Golf Club
M Hurst	-	Nicholaston House
J Burgess	-	Gower Society
B Burgess	-	Resident
J Dunn	-	Ramblers
P Bowen-Simpkins	-	Reynoldston Community Council
H Jones	-	Reynoldston Village Hall Association
J Hurst	-	Resident
W Gayler	-	Resident
Community Cllr	-	Pennard Community Council
L James		
K O'Driscoll	-	Resident
J Jones	-	Representing Gower MP Byron Davies
I Donaldson	-	Clerk to Three Crosses Community Council
J Lambert	-	Resident

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed all present to the Annual Meeting of the Gower AONB Partnership Group at Reynoldston Village Hall and commenced proceedings.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M C Child, Councillor J E C Harris, Edwina Hart AM, Byron Davies MP, Paul Branchflower, Mike Thornton, and Mike Bristow.

3. **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group held on 2 March 2015 be approved as a correct record.

5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Broadband on Gower

R Button highlighted that there has still been no progress to date in relation to improving the broadband service on Gower, particularly from Scurlage to Rhossili. He added that local businesses were finding the situation very frustrating.

6. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Gower AONB Partnership Group Terms of Reference were provided for information.

7. **PRESENTATION - THE WORK AND ROLES OF THE GOWER AONB PARTNERSHIP AND GOWER AONB TEAM**

Mike Scott, Gower AONB Officer, provided a detailed and informative presentation on the work of the Gower AONB Partnership. He outlined the Gower AONB designation, the role of the Gower AONB Partnership and the work of the Gower AONB Team within the City and County of Swansea. He also updated the meeting regarding the work of the Sustainable Development Fund Panel. He outlined how much funding the Panel had received during the previous and current financial years and provided examples of the projects that the Fund had supported.

8. **PRESENTATION - WELSH DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES REVIEW - WELSH GOVERNMENT**

Professor T Marsden, Cardiff University and Chair of the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales provided the meeting with a very detailed and informative presentation relating to the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales. He outlined the background to the Review and outlined Stage 1 of the Review which examined the purposes of AONBs and National Parks in Wales. He added that the Review was looking long-term with regards to the future management of AONBs and National Parks and would create a new governance system which would last for the next 30 to 40 years. He also highlighted the opportunities and threats to the management of AONBs and National Parks in the future.

The meeting asked a number of questions of Professor Marsden who responded accordingly. The issue of retaining the title "AONB" was raised by members of the public, who were keen that it be retained.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Gower AONB Partnership Group
(29.06.2015) Cont'd

The Chair thanked Professor Marsden for his detailed and informative presentation.

9. **TO ELECT TEN STEERING GROUP MEMBERS FROM NOMINATIONS RECEIVED**

The Chair explained that ten nominations had been received for membership of the Partnership Steering Group. Therefore, no election would be held.

RESOLVED that the following be elected to the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group for a period of two years, in accordance with the Terms of Reference:

Name	Representing
Alan Woodman	Forestry and Farming
Roger Button	Tourism Swansea Bay
Sue Hill	Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust
Steven Heard	Gower Riding Club / Port Eynon Community Council
Rod Cooper	Llanrhidian Higher Community Council
John Davies	Bay TRANS
Paxton Hood-Williams	Three Crosses Community Council
Gordon Howe	Gower Society
Huw Morgan	Pennard Golf Club
Deb Vine	Resident

10. **TO ELECT THE VICE-CHAIR OF THE STEERING GROUP**

No nominations were received and the position was therefore vacant.

11. **TO REQUEST THAT THE GOWER AONB PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP ELECTS THE FOLLOWING IN SEPTEMBER 2015**

RESOLVED that the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group elects the following in September 2015:

- (a) The Sustainable Development Fund Grants Panel (consisting of Chair of the Steering Group and seven other members).
- (b) Sustainable Development Fund Grants Appeals Panel (consisting of Vice-Chair of the Steering Group and seven other members who do not already sit on SDF Grants Panel).

12. **PRESENTATIONS - GOWER VOICES**

The following were allowed five minutes to discuss a topic concerning the AONB:

- (a) Deb Hill - Nature Conservation Team, City and County of Swansea - regarding the work of the Nature Conservation Team.
- (b) Friends of Swansea Horses - regarding the work undertaken by the Group.
- (c) Gordon Howe - Gower Society - regarding planning issues, particularly in caravan parks.
- (d) Alan Woodman - regarding issues relating to the Gower AONB Steering Group and Gower as a whole, particularly small businesses.

The Chair thanked all speakers for their contributions.

13. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Community Councillor I Beynon, Rhossili Community Council asked a question regarding planning enforcement and referred to lack of consistency, support and guidance in relation to issues on Gower. He added that there was deep concern on Gower regarding bias within Planning Services and that planning was viewed very negatively locally.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Gower AONB Partnership Group
(29.06.2015) Cont'd

G Howe, Gower Society asked for an update regarding a sign locally which did not have planning consent but had remained in place for over three years.

P Lanfear, Gower Commoners Association requested that animal welfare matters be placed on a future agenda of the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group for discussion.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the Planning Policy and Environment Manager feeds back the concerns regarding bias and negativity to the Planning Services Manager;
- (2) the Planning Policy and Environment Manager provides feedback in relation to enforcement on the sign which had not had planning consent but had remained in place for over three years;
- (3) animal welfare be placed on a future agenda of the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group for discussion.

14. **DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2015/2016 TO BE HELD AT 7.00 P.M.**

NOTED the dates of meetings for 2015/2016 to be held at 7.00 p.m. as follows:

- 28 September 2015;
- 21 December 2015;
- 21 March 2016.

The meeting ended at 9.10 p.m.

CHAIR

Report of the Gower AONB Team Leader

Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group – 5 October 2015

GOWER AONB BOUNDARY QUERY

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

A query has been raised by Edwina Hart AM on behalf of one of her constituents regarding the correct boundary for the Gower AONB. The query relates to the original designation order map from 1956 and how it has been transcribed on subsequent Ordnance Survey base mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Officers of Natural Resources Wales and City and County of Swansea are to meet with the Assembly Member and her constituent on Friday 2nd October to discuss and clarify/resolve any issues.

Gower AONB Team Leader
25 September 2015

Mae Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru a'r Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol yn gweithio mewn partneriaeth ar brosiect cyffrous ac uchelgeisiol i greu morfa heli yma yng Nghwm Ivy a fydd yn darparu cynefin newydd i fywyd gwylt.

Yn 2014, torodd llanw uchel drwy'r arglawdd arfordirol a chreu bwlch ac, o ganlyniad, roedd yn rhaid dargyfeirio Llwybr Arfordir Cymru dros dro. Gall ymwelwyr ddal i gerdded ar hyd yr arglawdd ond nid oes mynediad trwodd. Mae'r bwlch wedi'i ffensio a gwaherddir mynediad ar sail diogelwch.

Diben y prosiect yw canfod y ffordd orau o reoli'r bwlch hwn er mwyn ail gysylltu'r morfa heli â'r aber ehangach unwaith eto. Bydd hefyd yn ceisio canfod ateb cynaliadwy ar gyfer ail sefydlu mynediad ar hyd y darn hwn o'r arfordir. Rydym yn cynnal sesiynau galw heibio i gysylltu â'r cyhoedd ac yn gweithio â rhanddeiliaid gan gynnwys Cyngor Dinas a Sir Abertawe. Bydd hynny'n sicrhau y gellir dewis yr opsiwn sy'n cael ei ffafrio a'i weithredu yn 2016 / 17.

Am ragor o wybodaeth....

Cysylltwch ag Andrew Basford (Rheolwr Prosiect Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru) ar:
Ffôn: 03000 65 3846
E-bost: andrew.basford@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk
Cyfeiriad: Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru, Tŷ Cambria, 29 Heol Casnewydd, Caerdydd, CF24 0TP.

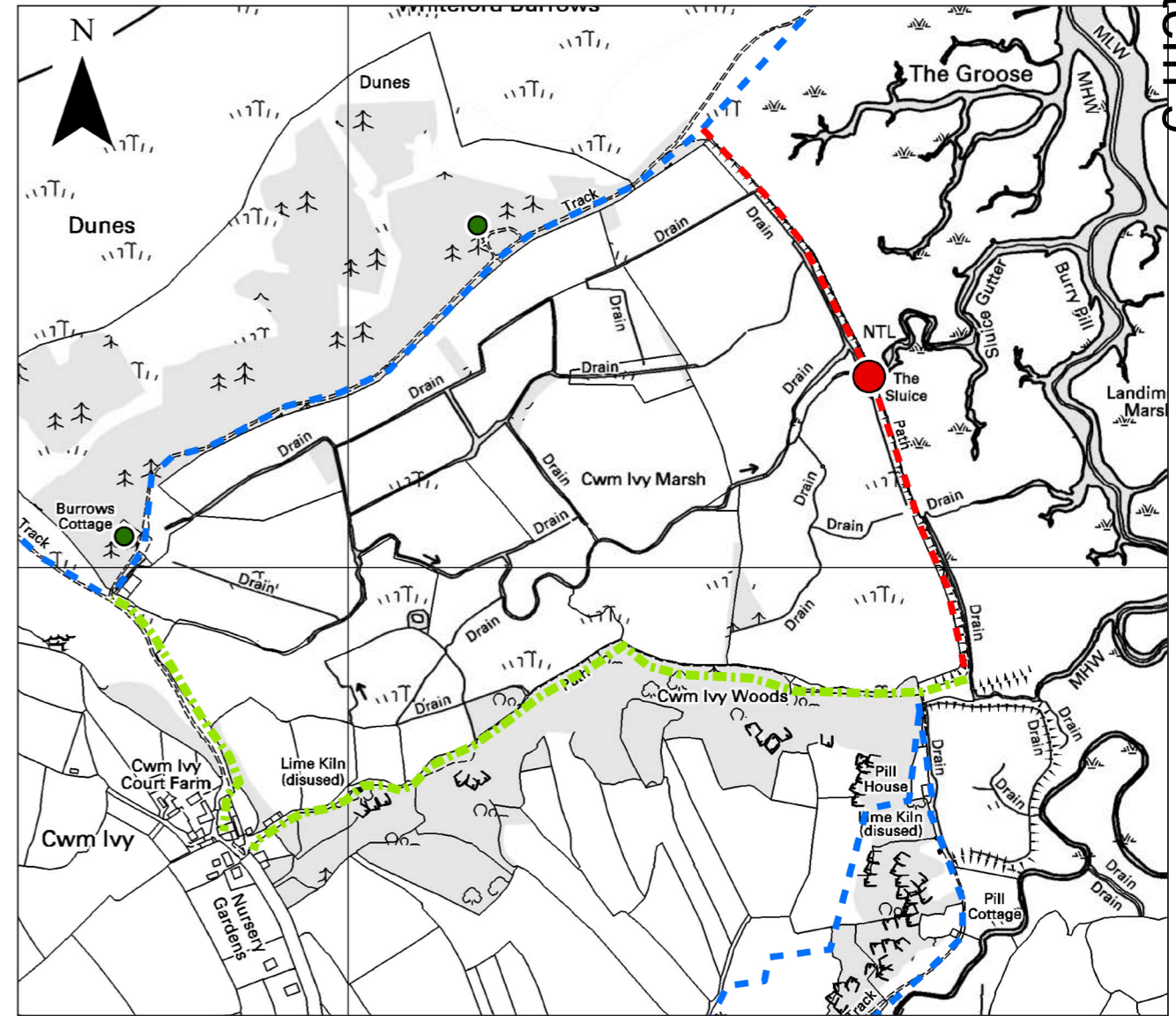
Natural Resources Wales and the National Trust are working in partnership on an exciting and ambitious project to create a saltmarsh here at Cwm Ivy that will provide a new habitat for wildlife.

In 2014 the high tides caused a breach in the coastal embankment which resulted in a temporary diversion of the Wales Coast Path. Visitors are still permitted to walk along the embankment but there is no through access. The breach has been fenced off and access is prohibited on safety grounds.

The project aims to identify the best way to manage this breach so that the marsh can be reintegrated back into the wider estuary. It will also seek to identify a sustainable solution for the re-establishment of the access along this section of the coastline. We are holding public engagement drop-in sessions and working with stakeholders including the City and County of Swansea Council. This will ensure the preferred option can be chosen and taken forward in 2016/17.

For further information...

Please contact Andrew Basford (Natural Resources Wales Project Manager) on:
Tel: 03000 65 3846
Email: andrew.basford@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk
Address: Natural Resource Wales, Tŷ Cambria, 29 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0TP



Allwedd

- Bwlch yn wal Cwm Ivy, dim mynediad
- Adeiladau'r Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol
- - - Mynediad ar hyd yr arglawdd at y bwlch yn unig, dim mynediad trwodd
- - - Dargyfeiriad dros dro ar Llwybr Arfordir Cymru
- - - Llwybr Arfordir Cymru

Legend

- Breach in Cwm Ivy Wall, no access permitted
- National Trust buildings
- - - Access along embankment to breach only, no through access
- - - Wales Coast Path temporary diversion
- - - Wales Coast Path



Darparwyd y delwedd at ddefnydd trwy ganiatâd caredig G R Howe, Cymdeithas Gŵyr. Hawlfraint G R Howe

Image provided for use by kind permission by G R Howe, Gower Society. Copyright G R Howe

MINUTES OF THE GOWER LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP MEETING

Held at the Rhossili Bunkhouse and Community Centre

On Wednesday 15th July 2015 at 10am

1. Welcome and Apologies for absence

- a) The Chair welcomed all present

Those present:

Mike Scott	- Chair, CCS Gower AONB Officer
Aled Davies	- Natural Resources Wales
Bryan Harries	- GLP Partnership Manager
Andrew Marvell	- Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd (GGAT)
Rebecca O'Dowd	- GLP Project Officer
Sean Hathaway	- CCS Nature Conservation Team
Alan Kearsley-Evans	- The National Trust
Roger Button	- Tourism Swansea Bay
Gordon Howe	- The Gower Society

In attendance

Mark McKenna – Down 2 Earth

- b) Apologies for absence were received from:

Deborah Hill	- CCS Nature Conservation Team
Sean Hathaway	- CCS Nature Conservation Team
Kim Flanders	- CCS Planning Policy and Environment Manager
Cllr Keith Marsh	- City & County of Swansea County Councillor
Ceri Daugherty	- Natural Resources Wales
Helen Grey	- GLP Project Co-ordinator
Chris Lindley	- CCS AONB Team Leader
Ian Button	- Tourism Swansea Bay

- c) Declaration of interest:

Agenda item 4 Andrew Marvel - Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd (GGAT)

Agenda item 4 Mark McKenna– Down 2 Earth

2. Minutes of the meeting

The previous Three Crosses meeting's minutes were accepted as an accurate record

3. Matters Arising

The meeting discussed the presentation by Kate **McCabe**
Re **action point – for GLP to host a meeting with John Davies of Baytrans to discuss the issue and how to approach the bus companies re capacity issues.**
The meeting had taken place and a number of positive outcomes had been achieved by John Davies with First Cymru and the NAT bus company.

The meeting felt that the comment re that the buses from the Qudrant station going to Gower always seemed to be at full capacity was not a true reflection and that places are usually available

The meeting was informed that re **Action - Ambassador Training Wales to be approached as to their ability to tailor the two day accreditation session for community ambassadors.** – that Ambassador Training Wales would be contacted that day on this matter as they were currently undertaking on behalf of GLP a training session in Reynoldston Village hall as part of the "Taste of Gower " initiative

Re agenda item Interpretation Content – Lecterns / App / Web site - **the Action - Any further comment on the drafts needed to be feedback to the GLP manager by Monday 8th June, whereupon the drafts would be send back to the consultants for final printing in readiness for final installation.**

The meeting was informed that Andrew Marvel had responded and these comments had been passed onto the Consultant for changes to be made

The panels would now be printed ready for installation

4. Tender Work Packages

The meeting was circulated with a number of tender opportunities which were currently available on the sell2wales site

As previously reported the process and specific tenders had been approved by the Heritage Lottery fund and represented £ 152,000 contracted work over 14 different lots

The tenders are:

- Evaluation and Monitoring of Gower Landscape Partnership Programme - £22,000
- Historical and Archaeology Delivery Package - £69,000
- Dry-Stone walling, Hedge laying and Rural skills - £62,000
- Community Supported Agriculture, Gower and its Heritage - £21,000

The meeting had a general discussion with a number of members expressing their dismay as to the bureaucracy involved in the partnership and that not sufficient

money and activity was taking place on the ground through the hard landscaping projects

A request was made to the meeting for volunteers to sit on an evaluation panel for each of these tenders to evaluate the bids and appoint the successful contractor – Gordon Howe / Alan Kearsley-Evans / Aled Davies / Mike Scott / Rebecca O’Dowd indicated their willingness to participate

Mark Mckenna made some general observations as to the process of issuing tenders through GLP and the difficulties of organisations such as Down2Earth in securing funding.

A comment was made to the meeting that Down2Earth was experiencing difficulties with the Heritage Lottery Fund in making bids as they were referred by HLF to GLP for sources of funding

Mark left the meeting at this point and invited members to the opening of Down2Earth’s Bryngwyn site that same day

5. Update on current projects

The meeting was updated by Rebecca O’Dowd on the current progress re the landscape type projects – these being: Dry stone walls / Hedgerows / Meadows

6. Heritage Lottery Fund visit

This has been postponed until the next meeting

7. Post of Administration officer – update

This is ongoing through the redeployment process

6. Date and location of next meeting

Date: Wednesday 23rd September 2015

Location: TBC

Time: 10am – 12:30pm

The meeting finished at midday

Agenda Item 12

Report of the Gower AONB Team Leader

Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group – 5 October 2015

GOWER AONB – ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SUBGROUP– PROGRESS

The steering group has previously AGREED that a renewable energy subgroup be formed in order to formulate the draft policy of the Steering Group on renewable energy; and that the subgroup should report its findings to the Steering Group in due course.

The subgroup (G Howe (Chair), A Woodman, P Lanfear, Steve Heard and Councillor K E Marsh) met on 7 January 2015, with the AONB Team (Chris Lindley and Mike Scott) in attendance. The meeting reviewed the range of issues, technologies, policy and guidance/policy adopted in other AONBs.

The Subgroup asked the AONB Team to prepare a position statement for the approval of the Steering Group. The statement would inform the local planning authority, landowners, applicants and other interested parties regarding the development of new energy projects within – or likely to affect – the Gower AONB. The scope of the position statement would be broadened, to include other (non-renewable) energy technologies that could impact on the AONB. There was also some discussion on future energy provision and technologies.

The AONB Team have not had capacity to work on this because of the necessity to engage with the Designated Landscapes Review over this spring and summer. The following programme has been agreed with the Alternative Energy subgroup to develop the position statement and bring it to the Steering Group for discussion.

Sept- Oct	Draft Position Statement and circulate to Alternative Energy sub-group – circulate by 23 October
Week ending 13 Nov -	sub-group meeting to discuss and agree Position Statement
27 November	Final draft circulated to sub-group for agreement
11 December	Issue Position Statement for inclusion in AONB Steering Group agenda and papers
21 December	AONB Steering Group

Chris Lindley
25 September 2015

Report of the Gower AONB Team Leader

Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group – 5 October 2015

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON GOWER

A POSITION STATEMENT BY THE GOWER AONB PARTNERSHIP

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past year, the AONB Partnership has been debating the issue of “affordable housing on Gower”, believing that this issue has a major impact upon the future of Gower, and on its communities. The partnership would like to state their position on “affordable housing on Gower”, as a contribution to the LDP process.

The Gower AONB Partnership and local people have discussed the issue of affordable housing on Gower, and have made a number of recommendations which they believe will go some way to addressing the issues highlighted by the local community.

The Gower AONB Partnership (‘The AONB Partnership’) 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.

Designated in 1956, Gower was the first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the UK. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 places the highest level of protection on AONBs and National Parks. The Act also places a statutory duty on 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.

The European Landscape Convention confirms that this protection includes the communities which have helped to create and maintain the landscape and its special features.

2. LOCAL NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Planning Policy Wales (7th Edition, July 2014) defines “affordable housing” as: *“Housing where there are secure mechanisms in place to ensure that it is accessible to those who cannot afford market housing, both on first occupation and for subsequent occupiers.”* This definition includes Social Rented Housing and Intermediate Housing.

Like many rural areas of Wales, the availability of affordable housing for local people is a serious issue, affecting the future of the communities which underpin the character and special qualities of Gower.

Gower is particularly affected because of its well recognised outstanding landscapes, and its proximity to Swansea and the M4. House prices rose dramatically during the post 2000 housing market “boom”, effectively putting the price of properties beyond the reach of many local people. This is leading to a shift in the demography and nature of the communities living on Gower.

The current CCS Local Housing Strategy (underpinned by a Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) carried out in 2007, and recently reviewed) identified a “massive gap between supply and demand”. This LHMA highlighted that some 500 dwellings would be required (up to 2025) within the Gower and Gower Fringe areas (approximating to Gower AONB).

Recent public meetings held by the AONB Partnership have emphasised this need, with local people speaking about how the shortage of affordable housing is impacting on their lives, and on the special qualities of Gower.

3. ISSUES RAISED

The AONB Partnership believes that the following issues need to be addressed through the provision of affordable housing:

- There is a demonstrable shortage of affordable housing on Gower, and this is having an adverse impact on the communities and special qualities of Gower.
- Both residents and the AONB partnership want to see socially balanced communities on Gower, and in a recent survey, a significant majority of local people would welcome more affordable housing on Gower.
- There was widespread agreement that all new housing development on Gower should be affordable as there is sufficient other housing available.
- It was agreed that, in general, when new affordable houses are built, they need to remain available as affordable housing. There need to be secure mechanisms in place to ensure this.
- Some affordable houses have been extended and developed, with the result that they are no longer affordable. It was suggested that mechanisms be considered to prevent this, such as Section 106, in the future.
- Families involved in agriculture and the rural economy are essential to maintaining the character and special qualities of Gower AONB as a protected landscape. Local young families (particularly couples wishing to start a family) are often unable to find affordable accommodation - the importance of policies which acknowledged and prioritised local (specifically Gower) need was agreed.
- The conversion of redundant farm buildings to affordable residential accommodation should be permitted, as this can be a means of meeting agricultural need, subject to appropriate agreements. It may also provide a sustainable use for buildings, in an appropriate setting, instead of a new build property.

- While Section 106 Agreements are often seen as positive, in that they enable farming families to build homes necessary to support their family farm, there was also agreement that these have sometimes been abused in the past. Many homes have been built in the past under a Section 106, but have later had these lifted, leading to ill-feeling and cynicism in the community. Yet there is also recognition that the need for farm diversification may make the agreements too restrictive, and that a certain amount of flexibility is necessary.
- Second homes have a very negative impact upon local communities, contributing little, but often occupying what were once affordable homes. The option of charging full Council Tax was widely supported.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a key policy goal of the Welsh Government, with the Wales Spatial Plan (2008) setting out a broad vision for the provision of affordable housing. One of the key priorities is the building of sustainable communities with more affordable housing for sale or rent.

The essential role of affordable housing in contributing to community regeneration and social sustainability is recognised by Planning Policy Wales, Edition 7, July 2014. Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2 – Planning & Affordable Housing (2006) provides practical guidance on the role of the planning system in delivering affordable housing.

Local planning policy is set out in a number of City & County of Swansea policies and strategies, which set out how affordable housing will be provided in Gower. These include Swansea UDP/LDP, Swansea Local Housing Strategy, Swansea Community Strategy, and Planning Obligations (SPG March 2010).

All these documents provide support for the provision of affordable housing in Gower, and the Gower AONB Partnership supports the implementation of these policies. There is wide spread agreement that the rural communities living and working in Gower, upon whom much of the character and special qualities of the AONB depend, are at risk if affordable housing is not available.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the public discussions, and in the light of the issues raised, and being aware of the planning policy context, the Gower AONB Partnership makes the following recommendations regarding the future provision of affordable housing on Gower.

- The City & County of Swansea and Registered Social Landlords should ensure that planning and housing policies affecting Gower sufficiently acknowledge the pressing need for affordable housing on Gower, so as to support sustainable local rural communities on Gower, and to protect the character and special qualities of Gower AONB.

- All new housing developments on Gower should be overwhelmingly affordable, with a balance of affordable housing for sale and rent.
- The use of “staircasing” or “shared ownership” schemes should be encouraged where this may enable occupiers to move to “market housing” at a later date. However, it is important that secure arrangements are in place to retain these properties as affordable housing for subsequent occupiers.
- The conversion of redundant farm buildings to residential accommodation should be permitted where appropriate, with secure arrangements in place to retain it as affordable or agricultural housing in the future.
- The use of Section 106 mechanisms to provide affordable or agricultural housing should continue, but with robust and secure arrangements in place to retain properties as affordable housing for subsequent occupiers.

6. IN CONCLUSION

The landscape of Gower is part of the Welsh cultural inheritance, and is protected through UK and European legislation for future generations. Its character and special features have been created, and are maintained, by its local rural communities.

There is a demonstrable shortage of affordable housing on Gower, and there is wide spread agreement that the rural communities living and working in Gower, upon whom much of the character and special qualities of the AONB depend, are at risk if affordable housing is not available.

The Gower AONB Partnership and local people have discussed the issues arising from this need, and have made a number of recommendations which they believe will go some way to addressing the issues highlighted by the local community.