



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Gower AONB Partnership Annual Meeting**

**Down To Earth - Down To Earth, Little Bryngwyn, Cefn Bryn,
SA3 1ED**

Monday, 25 June 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor P Lloyd (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

J P Curtice
A H Stevens

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams

Councillor(s)

L James

Steering Group Member(s)

Roger Button
Rod Cooper
Gordon Howe

Michael Lewis
Hamish Osborn
Barbara Parry

Paul Tucker

Officer(s)

Chris Lindley
Jeremy Parkhouse
Mike Scott

Gower AONB Team Leader
Democratic Services Officer
Gower AONB Officer

Also Present:

Tracey Button
Ian Button
Paul Thornton
John France
Robin Kirby
Hildegard Roberts
Audrey Frank
Stuart Mackinnon
Sue Lyle
John Davies
Jo Scott
Alan Glass
Jan Ellis
Jemma Hayburn
Tim Davies
Martin Slucutt

Pitton Cross Camping & Caravan Park
Pitton Cross Camping & Caravan Park
Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales
Swansea Ramblers
Gower Society
Gower Society
Gower Society
Tread Gower / Gower Walking Festival
Dialogue Exchange
BayTrans
Rhossili Community Council
Penrice Community Council
Penrice Community Council
St Madoc CYC
St Madoc CYC
Swansea Co-Housing

Apologies for Absence

Steering Group Member(s): Stephen Heard, Keith Marsh and Deborah Vine

1 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.

2 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group Meeting held on 26 March 2018, be accepted as a correct record.

3 Matters Arising from the Minutes.

Gower Dark Sky Survey

The Gower AONB Team Leader updated the Annual Meeting on the Gower Dark Sky Survey report. He outlined that the Council was currently in discussions with Dark Skies Wales with the intention to apply for Dark Sky Community status early in 2019. It was hoped that the application would coincide with the International Dark Sky Week in April 2019. Discussions were ongoing between Council departments and partners.

4 Presentation - The Work and Roles of the Gower AONB Partnership & Gower AONB Team.

Mike Scott, Gower AONB Officer provided a 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 AONB Team within the City and County of Swansea.

5 Presentations - Partner Bodies.

Gower Society

Robin Kirby, Chair of the Gower Society provided a presentation on the work of the Society. He highlighted that the Society currently had 14,000 members and was concerned with the Lordship of Gower, including Swansea City Centre, where it focussed upon Swansea Marina.

He made reference to the planning work undertaken by the Society, the grants and financial support the Society had awarded during the previous year and the 'Guide to Gower' journal that was scheduled to be re-printed. He highlighted the significant role the Society had on Gower and its objectives.

Questions were asked in relation to planning and access, which were answered accordingly.

The Chair thanked the Gower Society representative for his presentation.

Natural Resources Wales

Hamish Osborne, Swansea Team Leader, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) provided a presentation regarding the background and work of NRW. He stated that NRW were the largest Government sponsored body in Wales with 1,170 staff and £180 budget. He provided details regarding the overall role and purpose of NRW, particularly on Gower and made reference to some of the sites it manages on Gower.

Questions were asked in relation to illegal camping, dog waste problems at Oxwich, the seawall at Llanmadoc and the size / bureaucracy / under funding of NRW, which were answered accordingly.

The Chair thanked the NRW representative for his presentation.

Gower Landscape Partnership

The Gower AONB Team Leader provided a presentation on the background and work of the Gower Landscape Partnership. He outlined that the Heritage Lottery Fund project was ending and he highlighted that its legacy was important.

He provided examples of a number of the projects supported by the Partnership and commented upon the partnership working undertaken to deliver the work. He added that a celebration of the programme would take place at the Gower Show in August and a final report would be made to the Steering Group in September 2018.

Questions were asked in relation to identifying buildings / objects worthy of protecting on Gower and in relation to the restoration of Mount Hermon Chapel, Penclawdd project, which were responded to accordingly.

The Chair thanked the Gower AONB Team Leader for his presentation.

6 Presentations - Gower Voices.

Tread Gower / Gower Walking Festival

Stuart Mackinnon, Tread Gower / Gower Walking Festival, provided a presentation regarding the work of both organisations on Gower. He thanked Swansea Council and the Gower Society for their financial support and highlighted that 42 walks had been used during the Walking Festival.

He highlighted the walks inside Gower, in addition to the coastal walks and leadership programme available to young people via Tread Gower.

Questions were asked in relation to use of NRW land, leaflets produced in respect of the Walking Festival and wild camping on e.g. Cefn Bryn. The questions were responded to accordingly.

The Chair thanked the Tread Gower / Gower Walking Festival representative for his presentation.

7 Public Question Time.

Questions were asked in relation to the following: -

Gower Ambassador Scheme

Alan Glass requested an update regarding the Gower Ambassador Scheme.

Mike Scott, Gower AONB Officer explained that the Gower Landscape Partnership project had now received SDF funding to run this year. Tourism Swansea Bay would act as the host body and would undertake training of the volunteers. The events / areas the ambassadors attend would be decided following training.

Illegal Camping on Cefn Bryn

Hildegarde Roberts asked a question regarding policing of illegal campers on Cefn Bryn.

Mike Scott, Gower AONB Officer stated that illegal camping should be reported to the Police (Non-emergency – 101). He added that it is a civil offence and is the responsibility of the landowner. Swansea Council could not act in such matters but the Police would take action if the behaviour was classed as anti-social behaviour.

Footpaths

Jo Scott asked whether any additional finances were available to support the Countryside Access Team as some footpaths were in very poor condition and the budget / staff had been significantly cut.

Chris Lindley, Gower AONB Team Leader explained that budgets had been cut and the situation was unlikely to improve. It was added that organisations such as the Gower Society / Ramblers had worked in partnership with Swansea Council, providing much needed financial / voluntary support to projects.

John France also queried why there had not been any mention of the agricultural industry because the farmers controlled many of the accesses to footpaths. It was explained that the Commoners / National Farmers Union were represented on the Partnership Group.

8 Dates of Meetings for 2018/2019 to be held at 7 p.m. as follows:

Noted the following dates / venues of meetings for the 2018-2019 Municipal year: -

- 24 September 2018 – Barham Centre, Mount Pisgah Chapel, Parkmill, Swansea;
- 3 December 2018 – Venue to be confirmed;
- 25 March 2018 – Venue to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Chair