



## Report of the Gower AONB Team Leader

Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group – 29 June 2020

### Welsh Government Funding and the National Landscape Partnership (NLP)

The Welsh Government, in its statement Valued and Resilient, called on the designated landscapes in Wales to champion collaborative approaches to maximise benefits and tackle challenges. It states that ‘a *National Designated Landscapes Partnership will be established to develop a robust culture of collaboration.*’

In June 2019, Welsh Government Landscape & Outdoor Recreation (LOR) branch officials produced an options paper for establishing the NLP. This set out possible scope and remit, as well as management arrangements. LOR carried out a written consultation exercise with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the 8 National Park Authorities (NPAs) and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and a summary of the consultation responses was discussed at the NRW-chaired Designated Landscape liaison meeting in October 2019. At that meeting it was agreed that a sub-group be formed to take forward the proposal. The sub-group was comprised of NRW, LOR, Snowdonia NPA (SNPA) (representing the 3 National Parks) and National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) (representing the 5 AONBs). The sub—group agreed that NAAONB and SNPA would collaborate on a proposal to Welsh Government.

LOR officials were content with the proposal submitted, and this is attached with the papers here. The sub-group invited Expressions of Interest (Eoi) from DL management bodies to host the Partnership team as set out in the proposal. Gower AONB were one of three management bodies to submit an Eoi, but Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority have now been selected to host the Partnership team, although work to proceed with this has been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Linked to the NLP initiative, Welsh Government Landscape and Outdoor Recreation Branch (LOR) issued details of a capital investment fund across Wales’ eight Designated Landscapes (DLs), to ensure that they can contribute to key Welsh Government objectives around decarbonisation, more resilient rural communities and sustainable tourism.

In the current financial year (20/21) this Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places (SLSP) Programme initially allocated £4.75M to projects within the 3 National Parks and 5 AONBs in Wales. The draft indicative allocation expected that £300k would be available for project delivery within – or directly benefiting - Gower AONB.

The SLSP programme was delayed due to the COVID-19, and the overall funding allocation was reduced. However, Gower AONB has now been awarded £135k of capital funding toward the following projects:

- Clyne Valley Country Park - Capital works and improvements to visitor facilities, access routes and heritage features.
- Purchase of battery-powered countryside management tools.
- Bishop's Wood Local Nature Reserve – sustainable drainage and access improvements.

**Chris Lindley**  
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