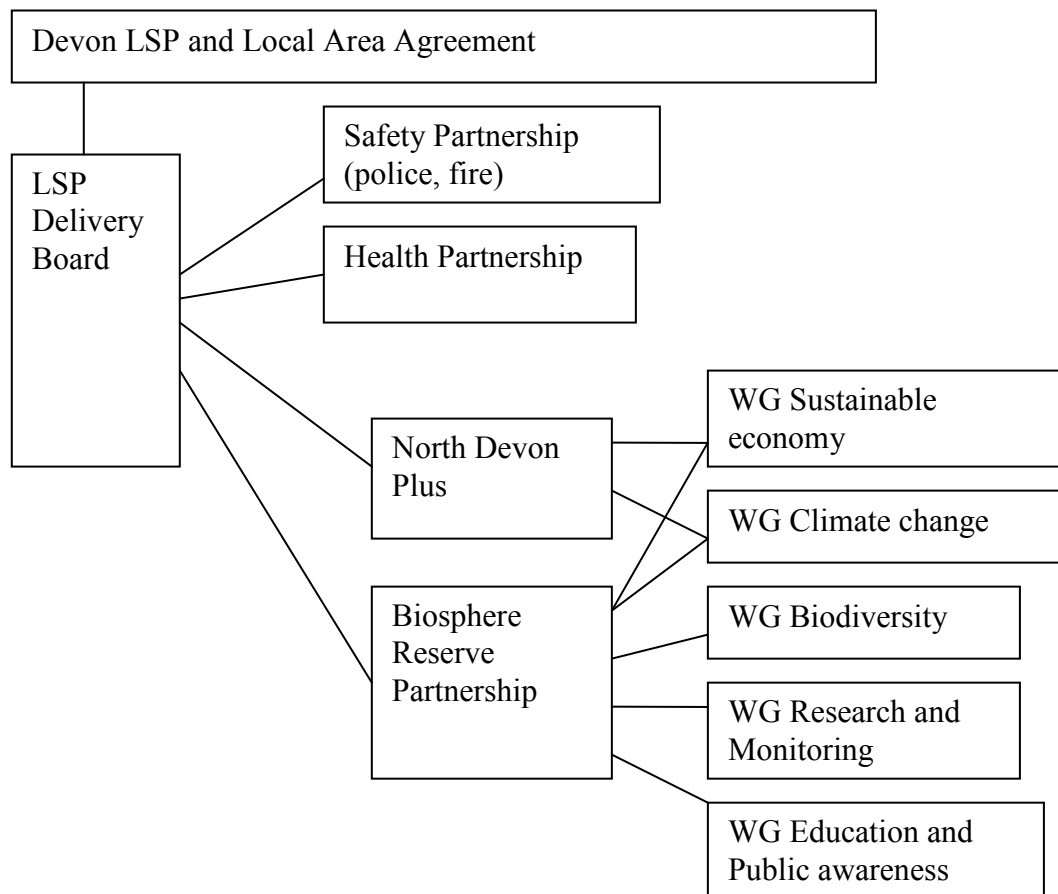


Fitting in to the Local Context:

North Devon and Torridge are about to make a joint Local Strategic Partnership whose function shall be to produce and deliver a Sustainable Community Strategy. This is a statutory requirement. This function is not so different from the aspiration of the Biosphere Reserve strategy, other than where it stands in terms of demonstrating to the rest of the world and its participation in a worldwide network.

The new LSP will have a strategic delivery board made up of several statutory bodies from a range of disciplines and it will link into a number of existing partnerships.



Whilst there is a separate Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty partnership, there will be reciprocal arrangements between the Biosphere Reserve and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the working groups can be used by each designation to support their management plan reviews.

The Biosphere Reserve partnership

It is proposed that the Biosphere Reserve partnership provides an environmentally strong link into the local strategic partnership. The Biosphere Reserve strategy will set a guiding framework for the application of sustainable development in the area for the LSP and local authorities in their

own right to use. The partnership has two functions both arising from the Biosphere Reserve strategy;

- Policy advice for other agencies to use to support sustainable development.
- Programme and policy development for activities relating specifically to the Biosphere Reserve

Given that the Agenda for the partnership can be extensive and therefore lengthy, there is a need to delegate work to specific working groups for specific functions. These groups will report to the partnership as set out in the diagram above.

Specifically for the Biosphere Reserve there will be:

- A Biosphere Reserve partnership: The proposed terms of reference are given below in Section B.
- A core funding group that manages the resources of the Biosphere Reserve staff unit (incorporating the AONB team only)
- A Biosphere Reserve staff unit currently known as Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service ((incorporating the AONB team)
- Three standing working groups that address
 1. Biodiversity,
 2. Research and Monitoring, and
 3. Education and public awareness.

The partnership will operate three working groups under its own umbrella and linking strongly into the economic sector to support the development of sustainable economies and to share in a climate change group which has major implications for environment and economy.

The Biodiversity group will effectively be a Biodiversity Action Plan group for the Biosphere Reserve and providing Biodiversity planning for the local authorities in supporting their duties under the amended Wildlife and Countryside Act and the Planning and Compulsory Purchasing Act (which led to the requirement of Local Development frameworks).

The Research and Monitoring group will focus on those functions required of a Biosphere Reserve. Its function will be to pull together a monitoring programme and set the research agenda for the entire area working with a range of partners in all sectors of the Biosphere Reserve.

The Education and Public awareness group will deal with developing the formal education, our activities under the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The scope ranges from the specialist training, foundation degrees, vocational training, and local school curriculum with regard to Sustainable Development. With regard to public awareness, this group will also host the communications group proposed under the communications paper, which will deal with selling the message of the Biosphere Reserve.

The following pages set out a draft terms of reference for the Biosphere Reserve partnership, Core funding group, Staff Unit and a framework for the 3 working groups.

Appendix 1

North Devon's Biosphere Reserve Partnership

Terms of Reference

1. Section A : General

2. Application and Context

2.1. These Terms of Reference apply to the management and governance structures of North Devon's Biosphere Reserve (aka Braunton Burrows Biosphere Reserve):

(a) the Biosphere Reserve Partnership (Section B)

(b) the Working Groups (Section C)

2.2. The term the 'constituent local authorities' applies to the four local authorities 2 National Parks (Exmoor and Dartmoor) whose areas intersect with the North Devon Biosphere Reserve in its entirety.

3. Review of Terms of Reference

3.1. These Terms of Reference will operate to 31 March 2009, at which time they will be subject to review by the Partnership.

3.2. Subject to the agreement of all funding partners and a consensus of the full Partnership, these Terms of Reference may be reviewed prior to 31 March 2009.

Section B: The Biosphere Reserve Partnership

1. Introduction

2. The North Devon's Biosphere Reserve Partnership is the body responsible for coordinating, on behalf of the constituent local authorities and stakeholders, the management of the Biosphere Reserve.

2.1. The principal purpose of the Partnership is to enable the relevant local authorities, 'acting jointly', to fulfil their commitments to the North Devon's Biosphere Reserve. In addition, the Partnership will encompass a wider membership in order to engage an appropriate range of relevant national, regional and local interests in the management of the area and facilitate co-operation and co-ordination between these stakeholders.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. As required by the UNESCO Seville 95 Strategy and the Statutory Framework for Biosphere Reserves, the Partnership will develop a vision and strategy for North Devon's Biosphere Reserve and will prepare and implement policies to support its functions of conservation, sustainable development, research, monitoring and education which formulates the policy of the constituent local authorities and agencies for the management of the region and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it.

3.2. The Partnership will seek to champion the interests of the North Devon's Biosphere Reserve and its communities (where this relates to the purpose of Biosphere Reserve designation), and will promote the identity and profile of the area.

3.3. The Partnership will periodically review the Management Strategy for the Biosphere Reserve,

3.4. The Partnership will facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the Biosphere Reserve Strategy and will monitor progress in achieving its objectives, policies and work programmes.

- 3.5. The Partnership, through a host body (currently DCC), will provide policy guidance to a core team of staff (the Biosphere Reserve Team) to provide administrative and professional support to its work.
- 3.6. The Partnership will co-operate with the owners and managers of the core area of the Biosphere Reserve to ensure that management policies and activities are, so far as possible, complimentary and mutually supportive whilst respecting their rights as owners.
- 3.7. The Partnership will establish and maintain effective working relationships with relevant bodies at national, regional and local levels where these can contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the North Devon's Biosphere Reserve, to a wider understanding of the purposes of Biosphere Reserves.
- 3.8. Partnership will seek to ensure that the North Devon's Biosphere Reserve is managed in accordance with national and international policy and guidelines.
- 3.9. The Partnership will seek to influence and support the activities of communities and agencies beyond the borders of the Biosphere Reserve so that these contribute to the achievement of Biosphere Reserve objectives.
- 3.10. The Partnership, through the Core Funding Group, will advise local authorities and other relevant agencies on the financial and staffing resources required for effective Biosphere Reserve management and will seek additional funds, including external finance, to assist in delivering projects and initiatives identified within the Biosphere Reserve Strategy.
- 3.11. The Partnership will have the ability to manage budgets for which it has been granted funds.
- 3.12. The Partnership will advise on an annual work programme for the Biosphere Reserve Team.
- 3.13. The Partnership will establish (and agree Terms of Reference for) other management and governance structures that it considers are necessary for the effective performance of its functions.
- 3.14. The Partnership will prepare and publish an annual report of its activities to be distributed to all interested parties.
- 3.15. The Partnership will organise a Biosphere Reserve Forum (on an annual basis or on some other frequency agreed by the Partnership) to provide an opportunity both for Biosphere Reserve residents and other interested parties to input to the management of the Biosphere Reserve and for the Partnership to provide feedback on its progress and achievements in managing the Biosphere Reserve.

4. Membership and Meetings

- 4.1. North Devon's Biosphere Reserve Partnership there will comprise
 - 4.1.1. A representative of Christie Devon Estates
 - 4.1.2. A representative of the MOD
 - 4.1.3. A representative of the Joint LSP
 - 4.1.4. Elected members appointed by the constituent local authorities; DCC, TDC, North Devon District Council, WDBC.
 - 4.1.5. A representative from the North Devon AONB Partnership (chairman or vice chairman)
 - 4.1.6. A representative from the Taw Torridge estuary Forum
 - 4.1.7. Environment Agency,
 - 4.1.8. Natural England,
 - 4.1.9. SWRDA

- 4.1.10. North Devon Chamber of Commerce and Industry
 - 4.1.11. Bideford College
 - 4.1.12. North Devon College
 - 4.1.13. University of Exeter
 - 4.1.14. University of Plymouth
 - 4.1.15. Devon Association of Parish Councils
 - 4.1.16. Exmoor National Park
 - 4.1.17. Dartmoor National Park
 - 4.1.18. Westcountry Rivers Trust
 - 4.1.19. NFU
 - 4.1.20. North Devon Fishermen's Association
 - 4.1.21. MP Torridge and West Devon
 - 4.1.22. MP North Devon
 - 4.1.23. Local Member of House of Lords
 - 4.1.24. Tarka Foundation
 - 4.1.25. National Trust
 - 4.1.26. North Devon Marketing Bureau
 - 4.1.27. Experts co-opted by the partnership
- 4.2. Further additions to the partnership may be approved by consensus of the partnership. Those new members must satisfy the partnership that they can further the aims of the Biosphere Reserve
- 4.3. A chairman will be selected by the Partnership by a vote. The term of office for the chairman shall be for 2 years, serving for a maximum of 2 terms.
- 4.4. The Partnership will seek to reach decisions entirely through consensus. A vote will be taken only when it is absolutely necessary. The chairman will have a casting vote.
- 4.5. The Partnership should normally meet three times per year in the months of February, June and October. Dates for these meetings should be identified several months ahead and be fixed with reference to the diaries of the local authorities in order to avoid clashes with other meetings. Additional Partnership meetings may be held, at the discretion of the Chair, as and when required.
- 4.6. All members of the Partnership should be asked to sign a 'Membership Accord' which sets out the role of individual members and the way in which they will be expected to contribute to the work of the Partnership. A copy of the 'Membership Accord' is attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.7. All new Partnership members should be offered, and would be expected to attend, an induction course covering the management and governance of the Biosphere Reserve. All Partnership members should be offered the opportunity to attend training events (held at least annually) on issues that are relevant to the future management of the Biosphere Reserve.
- 4.8. Partnership members representing an organisation or interest group(s) will be required to provide an annual statement of the steps they have taken to consult with the members of that organisation or interest group(s) and the opportunities that they have provided for those organisations or interest groups to feed in to the work of the Partnership.
- 4.9. Partnership members should be required to attend a minimum number of meetings within a set period. If they fail to attend for three consecutive meetings, the organisation that they represent should be asked to nominate an alternative person to sit on the Partnership.

- 4.10. Any Partnership member can submit items to the Biosphere Reserve Co-ordinator or Partnership Chair for consideration by the Partnership. The Chairman, in consultation with the Biosphere Reserve Co-ordinator, will decide whether such items are appropriate for inclusion on the agendas for a Partnership meeting or may be considered in other ways.
- 4.11. Where possible, Partnership papers (preferably including a summary) should be circulated electronically to enable members to forward/circulate the full papers or the summary to those organisations/interests whom they are meant to be representing. This should all take place at least three weeks prior to the Partnership meeting to give these organisations/interests an opportunity to feedback to their representative.

5. Financial Procedures

6. Until the Partnership is a legal entity it will have no executive financial function. The funding requirements of the Partnership will form part of a Business Plan for the Biosphere Reserve staff Unit, updated annually on a three year rolling programme. The Business Plan will distinguish between:
- 6.1. 'core costs' : i.e. costs associated with the establishment and running of the Biosphere Reserve Team and other aspects of the administration of the Biosphere Reserve;
- 6.2. 'project costs': i.e. costs associated with the implementation of projects and initiatives which contribute to the delivery of the Biosphere Reserve Management Plan.

Section C : Working Groups

1. Roles and Responsibilities

Under the governance arrangements as agreed by the Partnership on 10th May, there are 3 groups that need to be set up to support the work of the Biosphere Reserve partnership. These are:

- Educational and Public Awareness
- Research and Monitoring
- Environmental Quality

General TOR for the groups:

1. These are temporary and embryonic groups. All groups should be considered task and finish groups unless they can demonstrate a need for their continuance. Continuation of the group beyond 4 years must be with the consensus of the Biosphere Reserve partnership.
2. The first task of each group should be to establish its work load, priority tasks and determine a time limited programme
3. The group shall elect a chair person from within the group who shall report back to the partnership
4. The group can co-opt people on a long term or short term basis who are not part of the regular partnership but have experience or resources to contribute to the objectives of the working group
5. The groups will meet as often as they need to but must present a report to each of the partnership meetings.
6. Any resource requirements should be agreed with the partnership
7. Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service will provide a secretariat for the group and assist in convening the meetings.

Appendix 1
Membership Accord
North Devon's Biosphere Reserve Partnership

As a member of the North Devon's Biosphere Reserve Partnership, I undertake:

- to promote the 3 functions of conservation, sustainable development and education of the North Devon's Biosphere Reserve;
- to champion the Partnership's vision for the North Devon's Biosphere Reserve and its communities, as set out in the Biosphere Reserve Strategy;
- to contribute knowledge, expertise and experience to the work of the Partnership;
- to promote, support and play a full and active part in the work of the Partnership in fulfilling its 'Roles and Responsibilities' as set out in the Partnership's 'Terms of Reference';
- to assist the Partnership in achieving an independent and apolitical profile in the performance of its functions;
- to attend Partnership meetings whenever possible and, if I am no longer able to attend meetings on a regular basis, to step down from the Partnership or, with the agreement of the Partnership chair, to seek another representative from within my organisation to take my seat on the Partnership.

Signed.....

Date.....