

BIOSPHERE RESERVE PARTNERSHIP MEETING Minutes

Friday 16th October 2009

Beaford Centre @ 9.30am

Members Present: Mike Moser (Chair), Rose Day (AONB Chair), Robert Down (Coastwise), Lesley Garlick (DCC), Richard Butler (UKMAB), Brian Frazer-Smith (DAPC), Stan Pyle (Bideford College), Mark Wallace (Beaford Arts), Miranda Cox (TDC), Hannah Harrington (NDC), Emma Herrera (EA), Emma Richardson (DWT), Steve Pitcher (North Devon Plus).

Apologies: Justin Gillet (NE), Peter Howard (Winkleigh Society), Sarah Chesters (RHS), Pete Jollands (NDBRF), Derrick Spear (Tarka Trust), Maria Bailey (TDC)

NDCCS Present: Andy Bell, Tom Hynes, Linda Blanchard, Gigha Klinkenborg

Item	Issues	Action agreed
1. Chairman's Introduction and apologies	<p>The Chairman expressed thanks to the Beaford Centre for hosting the meeting and welcomed everyone.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated the AONB on the 50th anniversary of its designation. He thanked Richard Butler for his work as Chair of the AONB and congratulated Rose Day on her appointment as the new Chair and Steve Mulberry as Vice Chair. He also congratulated Steve Pitcher on his appointment as CEO of North Devon Plus. He also welcomed Emma Richardson from Devon Wildlife Trust. He reported that John and Mary Breeds had received a medal from the MOD for their work on the Braunton Burrows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Chairman outlined progress of the working groups, particularly Outreach Group.• The DCC meeting with Roger Croad and Ian Harrison was very productive and there will be a councillor's awareness day in Instow. We are trying to get the Minister for the South West to the meeting but the change in minister means that this has not yet been arranged.• The letter to Parish councils on how they can support the Biosphere Reserve will be going out week commencing 19th Oct.	

Item	Issues	Action agreed
2. Minutes	Minutes agreed	
3. Matters Arising	<p>Tarka Country Trust Recruitment. There has been no further progress on recruitment of trustees. The Trust do have one or 2 people they will be approaching directly.</p> <p>North Devon Biosphere Foundation Fiona Fraser-Smith from Appledore Arts and Robert Down have both accepted to become directors. Total confirmed directors is now 3.</p> <p>Visitor Investment Scheme A survey was carried out over the summer months where visitors were asked if they would be willing to contribute. 95% said they would be willing to contribute from 20 pence per night to £1.50 per night with an average contribution of around 50 pence per night. The most favourable option of collecting was to add it to the bill with a visitor 'opt out' to not pay the extra. Peter Jollands had previously suggested that an amount is added to the bill without an 'opt out' but the statement that £x amount of the total bill is donated to local projects. Brend Hotels currently adds £1 to the bill (with an 'opt out') and the statement that the money is donated the Amigos Charity. They have so far collected £13k. Peter Brend is prepared to discuss the possibility of changing the charity they donate to. Lesley Garlick suggested speaking to Deirdre Makepiece about the County initiative to promote visitor payback schemes. Linda Blanchard reported that the AONB website now has a Paypal Donate button on the front page for the Tarka Trust. The survey also found that 75% of residents and 35% of visitors had heard of Biosphere Reserves and 64% of residents and 25% of visitors know what a Biosphere Reserve is (indicating good progress on previous surveys).</p> <p>Biosphere Reserve Website The site is bedding in well, with reasonable hit rates. 50% of people who are on the map are from outside the Biosphere Reserve area.</p> <p>Biodiversity Concept Note Tom Hynes reported on the range of biodiversity projects that were currently operating within the Biosphere Reserve including MIRES Project and the Estuary. He highlighted the need for the programme to deliver biodiversity and water quality gains. The map analysis suggested concentrating on the river corridors (3km buffer) of the Torridge, Taw, Yeo and the Mole but excluding the areas covered by the Working Wetlands Project. The proposed zone included the core area and the estuary mouth therefore</p>	<p>AB/LG will look into this</p>

Item	Issues	Action agreed
	<p>extending into the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Rose Day requested that a key was added to the map. We will seek possible partners from the Environmental Quality working group. Natural England are currently seeking a more focussed approach to BAP working and there could be a potential partnership with the Devon BAP Partnership. The Environment Agency are keen to be involved in the project and could well be able to offer match funding because the project will tackle many of the EA's key objectives. The next stage is to agree funding partners and set up a project working group. We would welcome thoughts on a 'short' name for the project.</p> <p>Richard Butler expressed concern about losing all the knowledge of John Breeds. Andy has spoken to Natural England and the Estate and they are unable to employ him but are happy to have him working in the area. His knowledge of the core area is second to none.</p>	<p>TH – letter to possible partners</p>
<p>4. Progress Update Report</p>	<p>Andy thanked those people who had contributed towards the progress report.</p> <p>Biodiversity: Working Wetlands is doing great work that can also be incorporated. Heritage and Culture: Landscape Character Assessments were moving ahead with a contract to be placed jointly by the county and the districts. Coastwise have made a good contribution towards raising awareness about coastal issues and the oral history work at Croyde. The rest will be on the website in the next 6-9 months. <u>Developing the biodiversity bid is the key area of activity to progress.</u></p> <p>Resource use: Natural England and Environment Agency are working with Biosphere Reserve team leading Catchment Sensitive Farming with over £80k for 44 farm visits and 4 workshops to be completed by March 2010. Tenders will be out on Monday. Biosphere Reserve team will also be making site visits. Taw Torridge and North Devon streams are the chosen catchments from the Water Framework Directive Risk Modelling. <u>Main Area of concern is the support for Biosphere Reserve related policies within the emerging LDFs</u></p> <p>Climate Change: Main <u>area for concern is not having a working group to lead the climate change activity</u> – no obvious chairperson had been found to drive the process. Partnership suggested that we could offer to run a meeting for the LSP Federation, and use that structure to establish a group and find a chair. Project opportunities are Torridge District Council, Torrington area and Bideford College.</p> <p>Strong Community: Access to Nature submission imminent. Partners sent their thanks and best to Matt for all his hard work.</p>	<p>AB – arrange inaugural meeting of CC group under auspices of LSP Federation</p>

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	<p>Learning: Education was really good on Science and Nature and tertiary levels, and we are now looking to create a Science Café. David Weatherly's CD pack was very good though not properly published due to the recent change in the curriculum; the launch was a good event at Tiverton, though should be repeated in North Devon. <u>An area of concern would be the slow progress in developing the Educators Network, emphasising the need for an Education Co-ordinator.</u></p> <p>Robert Down reported that Coastwise gets a lot of requests from schools for leading and training for various coastal projects and rock pool rambles. They have just received a grant from the AONB's Sustainable Development Fund which will be used for the purpose of training Shore Guides to lead various events and get young minds involved.</p> <p>General point: Rather than amber and greens on the Progress Update, Steve Pitcher suggested targeting the reds, and coming up with ideas and resources as to what to do about them.</p>	<p>AB to pass on priorities to team and working groups.</p>
<p>5. Workshop on Strategic Aim 8</p>	<p>Strategic Aim 8: To develop the organisational arrangements for the Biosphere Reserve to ensure it remains fit for purpose and integrates fully with the MAB programme.</p> <p>Two working groups were established to assess the effectiveness of the governance of the Biosphere Reserve and to suggest improvements. Overall it was concluded that the governance was working reasonably well; the following bullets summarise the main conclusions.</p> <p>Group 1: "Institutional Engagement"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review Partnership Attendance and consider bringing in new members (eg. FWAG, NFU, Landowners and Estates) ▪ Work with LSP Federation to establish Climate Change Working Group ▪ Work with North Devon Plus to establish Economic Working Group ▪ Tighter Reporting – Targeted Information and a single mail out ▪ Publish a "State of the Biosphere" 5 year report <p>Governance should continue to operate at three levels (of which the third is the least well functioning):</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Tier 1. Partnership – Strategy/Monitoring</p>	<p>AB and ME to follow up on the suggestions of the workshop.</p>

Item	Issues	Action agreed
	<p>Tier 2. Working Groups – Actions/engine/task and finish groups</p> <p>Tier 3. Engagement/Central forum – Motivation/Inspiration</p> <p>Immediate areas for improvement were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership and working group minutes on website ▪ Improved co-ordination of meetings ▪ Website updates – membership of groups (and Partnership) ▪ Stronger links with BR Foundation and Tarka Trust <p>Group 2 “Community Engagement”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The following points summarise progress and issues to date: A good brand; ▪ A possible source of funding ▪ The opportunity to be part of something big ▪ It is still a young brand ▪ Good progress through schools and arts, now starting with Parishes ▪ We need to define BR values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A part of a sustainable tomorrow for our children ○ The concept is very broad – from wildlife to economy to health ○ Define succinctly at high level ○ Each partner will recognise their own benefits ○ Help identify concrete actions for each partner ▪ How do we connect these broad issues? ▪ How do we explain this broad concept? <p>Recommendations for engagement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define concept and values of the BR in terms that all can understand, promote, adopt and participate. 2. We need to do more to raise awareness of the benefits of the Biosphere Reserve (work through champions in different groups) 3. May need a major re-launch: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. series of events over a 2 month period b. Highway signage – You are entering BR c. Fly the Flag – Flags/posters 	<p>LG chase up highway signage in county review of highway policy.</p>

Item	Issues	Action agreed
6.	<p>Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman</p> <p><i>Nominated for Chairman: Mike Moser</i></p> <p><i>Proposed: Rose Day</i></p> <p><i>Seconded: Richard Butler</i></p> <p><i>Elected: Mike Moser</i></p> <p><i>Nominated for Vice Chairman: Richard Butler</i></p> <p><i>Proposed: Rose Day</i></p> <p><i>Seconded: Hannah Harrington</i></p> <p><i>Elected: Richard Butler</i></p> <p>Vice Chairman this year is for one year, thereafter for two years in order to stagger elections in future.</p> <p>Mike and Richard returned to the meeting. Mike thanked all and commented on his two very interesting years as Chairman of the Biosphere Partnership. He was delighted that the partnership had built a good foundation and he is committed to making more of the designation. Richard expressed thanks to Mike and the partnership.</p>	
8.	<p>Discussion paper: What constitutes an environmental economy</p> <p>The Partnership needs to develop a view on what constitutes an environmental business economy within the BR, and to work closely with North Devon Plus to implement that vision. The environment is widely recognised as a key economic driver.</p> <p>Six principles were considered:</p>	

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Sourcing/funding: Where possible economic activity should be developing local source and supply networks. 2. Energy: Where possible energy should be sourced locally and by renewable means. (Currently most money spent on energy escapes from the area and therefore breaks the principle number 2) 3. Closed loop thinking: From manufacturing to re-manufacturing. The manufacturing sector in the area should be supported to make the transition towards the concept of product re-cycling. Retrieving spent materials and re-vitalising old materials into new quality and environmentally responsible products. 4. Sustaining and restoring natural capital: economic development should not erode the natural capital and ecosystem services of the area. A concept of compensatory capital should be used such as land-banks. 5. Moving towards a service economy: Instead of a purchase and dispose society, we should be a product leasing society and service society where a cradle to cradle philosophy is adopted. 6. Internalising the costs; the whole lifecycle of costs of goods should be included in the price. <p>The following comments were made:</p> <p><u>Remanufacturing</u> Recycle – Reuse - Mend We need further education/college etc to train people how to go about this. Emphasise leasing (rather than buying), and remanufacturing and reusing. Rose Day added that the economy in North Devon is a service economy . A co-operative delivery service could be set up to source products locally and share and reduce transports costs. Links to such services could go on the website.</p> <p><u>Tourism/Farming</u> – What would they look like if these proposals were realised? Steve Pitcher suggested student projects to develop scenarios (eg predict what land area would need to be covered in wind turbines etc). What would it take for petrol station in Bideford to be converted to bio diesel? Brian Fraser-Smith noted there would be conflicts between the use of land for production of food as opposed to renewable energy. Emma Richardson added that Environment Devon are looking at this so it would be worth linking up with them. How do you put an economic value on given areas? Andy suggested getting university students to carry out this type of work. Rose Day reminded the Partnership that the green economy included the ‘blue’ economy as the estuary,coast and sea is a fundamental part of the Biosphere Reserve – we need to</p>	<p>AB to amend principles and put on website.</p> <p>AB Link with Environment Devon</p>

Item	Issues	Action agreed
	<p>champion this.</p> <p>Robert Down suggested that struggling local businesses might use the cost of going green as a deterrent so we would need to promote examples of businesses saving/making money by going green. A student thesis could quantify this.</p> <p>Steve Pitcher suggested that 20% of businesses were already green (particularly tourism), 20% were absolute green cynics and the remaining 60% are persuadable. He wants to increase the green capacity tenfold. The timing is good, North Devon Plus is preparing a business plan and Steve will feed this information to his board. We need to be careful about the messages on manufacturing - the manufacturing awards are inspirational and some of the best managed companies win awards every year and they are spreading the word.</p> <p>Robert Down noted the importance of working with the building sector. The need for good energy efficient homes, and builders with green credentials needs to be the message.</p> <p>Miranda Cox commented that we needed to steer manufacturing towards greener practices and make links between the environment and the economy. Manufacturing here has a greater cost than in Bristol or elsewhere, so the wages are lower to compensate. It is the architects as well as building regulations that specify what materials builders use. Planners, architects, builders and the people who want the building all need to be aware of how to set the example.</p> <p>Stan Pyle asked for assistance to help Bideford College in their project to 'green' Bideford.</p>	
7 Beaford Arts Presentation by Mark Wallace	<p>MW presented a view of the arts sector and its role in the Biosphere Reserve, emphasising that there is already a good Partnership between the various arts providers in the BR (Beaford, Appledore Arts, Aulne Head Arts, North Devon Theatres and the Plough)</p> <p>The presentation was illustrated with examples of Beaford's recent works and the impact of various performances. The key points from the presentation were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Arts provides a way to convey information and invoke a response that many other media cannot. ◆ It can reach 48% of the community according to market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can help in opening the door to enquiry ○ Flagship project development 	<p>ME and MW to develop an Arts Strategy for the Biosphere Reserve.</p>

Item	Issues	Action agreed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brand-usage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It promotes cross-discipline working ◆ The approaches and media need to be carefully chosen. It needs strong thematic programming. ◆ The case for a creative economy is well made <p>Chair thanked and congratulated MW and Beaford for an inspiring presentation. The Partnership requested a brief Arts Strategy for the Biosphere Reserve that could help to guide arts engagement and projects that spoke on the behalf of the Biosphere Reserve. Jurassic Coast WHS have developed a larger strategy that is now starting to deliver programmes.</p>	
8. LDF Verbal update	<p>Miranda Cox updated the group on the progress in the LDF's to date. There had been a meeting about how development could be incorporated within the framework using the Biosphere Reserve as a policy support tool. Outcomes of the meeting will be incorporated into the next draft of the strategy.</p> <p>Items discussed included the minimum level of sustainability in housing and green infrastructure policies as well as renewable energy policies.</p>	
10. Meeting Schedule	<p>Next meeting 22nd Jan Preferred next dates are in May, late September and February</p>	LG/AB to arrange dates.
11. AOB		

Biosphere Reserve Action Plan Report Actions 1 & 2

Aim 1 To reverse the decline in Biodiversity

Project title ID 1.1
Project title Biosphere Reserve Biodiversity Action Plan and work programme
Status Green

Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
Participation Strategic Natural Area planning for the County		Devon County Council	DWT, DBRC, Biosphere Reserve Team
Environmental Quality Working group is established.		Biosphere Reserve Team	DWT, Natural England, NDC
Has produced extended draft BAP plans for Estuaries, Culm grassland, Dunes, Enclosed Farmland,		Biosphere Reserve Team	DWT, Natural England, NDC
Broad leaved woodland, orchards Parkland at development stage		Biosphere Reserve team	
Dormouse survey and habitats.		Biosphere Reserve team	

Project title ID	1.2			
Project title	Improve baseline data about marine species and habitats			
Status	Amber			
	Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
	Surveys commenced on key species along shore including Sabellaria,	Sea Search and sub-marine biotope mapping needs to linked to Finding Sanctuary and Marine Bill	Biosphere Reserve Team	DBRC, Marlin
	General beach profiling with staff and volunteers on Shorething		Coastwise,	Marlin
	Current data base and baseline being gathered at Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service	Student/graduate project	Biosphere Reserve Team	
	Coastwise North Devon Beach Surveys – A programme of beach surveys covering land/marine flora and fauna, ambience and geology is in progress, . A rolling programme of annual re-surveys is in progress to provide a basis for assessing change over time.	and the results for 10 beaches are available on the Coastwise website.	Coastwise	
Project title ID	1.3			
Project title	Burrows conservation strategy			
Status	Green			
	Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
	Higher Level Scheme applied at Braunton Burrows. Grazing about to be implemented		Christie Devon Estates Trust	Natural England
Project title ID	1.4			
Project title	Promote rural skills for Biodiversity Management			
Status	Amber			
	Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
	Volunteer Programme established including training events		Biosphere Reserve Team	

Concepts of scheme have been drawn together as part of an HLF package	Uncertainty as to whether this will be a tighter geographic focus or Countywide, and topic focus such as hedges or other skills included.	Devon Hedge group	Biosphere Reserve team
2 Walling courses provided by Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service training 23 people	2 more courses for Devon hedge week is planned	Biosphere Reserve team	

Project title ID 1.5
Project title Survey, make recommendations for management and follow up on County Wildlife Sites

Status Green

Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
Parish Biodiversity Audits have been completed in Combe Martin, Landkey, Bishops Tawton, High Bickington, Northam , Bideford, Parkham, Welcombe, Bradworthy, Langtree, Buckland Filleigh, Sheepwash, Cookbury, Bradford, Okehampton, Okehampton Hamlets, Belstone		Devon County Council	DBRC
Work has been commissioned by NDC for its area.		NDC	DBRC
DWT extending Parish Biodiversity audits through working wetlands		DWT	

Project title ID 1.6
Project title Conserve and enhance Urban biodiversity
Status Green

Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
Actions to develop LNRs and improve access/community involvement to green space , targeted at most deprived communities in Biosphere Area, included in £300K Access to Nature stage 2 bid to be submitted in early summer (end May) This also includes some Provision for a skills enhancement programme for land managers and communities			
Torrige Task and Finish group enforcing Biodiversity messages in the Local Development framework		Torrige District Council	Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service
Torrige Task and Finish group addressing contract management of public realm for Biodiversity		Torrige District Council	Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service
Formal group established for Meddon LNR		Biosphere Reserve team	
Active Management Group for Fremington LNR		Biosphere Reserve team	NDC
Good progress with Ford Woods in Bideford as a LNR. Draft management plan produced		Bideford Town	Biosphere Reserve team

Aim 2 Conserve and celebrate our heritage and culture and best landscapes.

Project title ID 2.1
Project title Valuing Landscape and its importance to the economy
Status Amber

Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
Project preparation for a landscape character appraisal from Devon County Council in the North Devon Area		Devon County Council	

	Funds available for district based Landcape Character appraisal to include as LDF		NDC, Torridge District Council	Devon County Council
Project title ID	2.2			
Project title	Implement the AONB plan			
Status	Green			
	Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
	Various activities and management plan review underway to be completed by 2009	See Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty report for more details	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty team in NDCCS	Various
	Revised Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty plan has been produced		Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit	
Project title ID	2.3			
Project title	Celebrate our cultural and landscape richness			
Status	Green			
	Activity	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
	Early stage discussions about constructing a programme to support the Cultural Olympiad based on the literary associations of Devon, linking them up (trail) and finding new and innovative ways for people to experience them and reinterpret them through art, on-line, etc etc. Partners Devon County Council libraries and young people's services, Exeter University and the National Trust.		Biosphere Reserve Team	National Trust, Exeter University, DCC Libraries
	Submission to Include Hillsborough Iron Age Fort near Ilfracombe in a South West Coast Path bid to the RDPE fund for submission this summer. If successful this will upgrade interpretation and site management, involve the local community and encourage diversion from the coast path to explore heritage features in Ilfracombe		Biosphere Reserve Team	SWCP, SWRDA
	Six Biosphere branded events and one Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty branded. Summary of Biosphere events R:\Culture\ND Coast & Countryside Service\Access & Interpretation\EVENTS\Events 2009\Biosphere Events at NDF.doc	The brochure and website also have a text that highlights the special, protected landscapes of North Devon and mentions the Biosphere Reserve.	Biosphere Reserve Team	North Devon Biosphere Foundation
	Coastwise North Devon oral history project based on recollections of living and working by the sea – A joint project with Devon Wildlife Trust ended in March with completion of	Coastwise will continue to conduct interviews linked to the beaches being surveyed to develop unique linked natural and cultural histories based on North Devon coastal	Coastwise	

editing the 20 interviews conducted by members. A presentation was made to an audience including DWT, Coastwise, the AONB and Barnstaple Museum, who received CD copies of the edited material.

Series of 5 events in the North Devon festival. 1200 people engaged specifically about the Biosphere Reserve.

communities.
A deeper connection is being developed between the Festival and the Biosphere Reserve

North Devon Theatres

Biosphere Reserve team

Project title ID 2.4

Project title Conserve WWII features on the core and buffer zones

Status Amber

Activity

Survey has been commissioned by English Heritage to adopt into the HLS scheme on Braunton

Comments

Lead body

English Heritage

Supporting body

Project title ID 2.5

Project title Celebrate our heritage though artistic media

Status Amber

Activity

Roving Theatre to visit North Devon to use the Biosphere Reserve as an example of climate change impacts in rural communities

Comments

Beaford Arts are co-ordinating the programme

Lead body

Beaford

Supporting body

Biosphere Reserve team

Concept for the strategic working group has been pulled together

Beaford Arts and Appledore arts are working on a catchment based Arts project as a best practice programme

Beaford

Appledore Arts, North Devon Theatres

Early concepts for Art programme established called Watershed

Programme will support community action for activity to understand connection with their catchment

Beaford Arts

Appledore Arts