

BIOSPHERE RESERVE PARTNERSHIP MEETING Minutes

Friday 17th April 2009

North Devon College @ 2pm

Members Present: Mike Moser (Chair), Rose Day (TTEF), Robert Down (Coastwise), Lesley Garlick (Devon County Council), Richard Butler (NDAONB), Justin Gillet (NE), Pete Jollands(NDBRF), Malcolm Harris (Torridge District Council), Humphrey Temperley (Devon County Council), Miranda Cox (Torridge District Council), Baroness Sue Miller, Hannah Harrington (NDC), Derrick Spear (Tarka Country Trust), Emma Herrera (Environment Agency)

Apologies: Brian Frazer-Smith (DAPC), Steve Mulberry(NT), Dylan Bright (WRT), Sarah Chesters (RHS), Mark Wallace, Roland Stonex (FWAG), New NDC elected Member representative to be announced. Jim White (SWF)

Observers Present:

NDCCS Present: Andy Bell, Tom Hynes, Linda Blanchard, Gigha Berry(minuting Secretary)

Item	Issues	Action agreed
1. Welcome and Chairman's Introduction	The Chair expressed thanks to North Devon College and welcomed everyone. He was hoping a representative from the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) might be attending but would be meeting with them next week.	
2. Chairman's Remarks	<p>The Chairman reported on recent positive and negative developments for the Biosphere Reserve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There has been a small cut in the budget of NDCCS from one of the core funders.• Regrettably, South West Forest has recently wound up and the remaining funds would be allocated to secure current project commitments, staff will be working until June.• The Hawthorn Bid jointly for SWF and the Biosphere Reserve will now be a Biosphere Reserve application.• Funding from Natural England and MOD for John Breeds has run out. There is a need to take steps in order to secure the knowledge he has gained over so many years, and to assure future education and monitoring.• A recent meeting in Braunton has highlighted the need for funding of the VMCA	

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	<p>officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AONB Management Plan has now been approved. • The Biosphere Schools initiative has reached the end of its first phase, and is considering options for a follow-up programme. • A number of Biodiversity Action Plans for the Biosphere Reserve have been published. • The Access to Nature Expression of Interest has been passed. Thanks to the Environment Agency and Natural England, the bid for up to 100k for Catchment Sensitive Farming has been secured. The BBC World film “Rising Tides” will be shown by The Plough Arts Centre, Torrington and by Beaford Arts in local villages throughout April. • The series of lectures by the Winkleigh Society are now complete. • The Chairman has written to Ben Bradshaw (MP for the SW) inviting him to visit the Biosphere Reserve to explore opportunities to support economic recovery, including low carbon projects. 	
3. Minutes	Minutes agreed	
4. Matters Arising	<p>AB reported on the matters arising:</p> <p>Outcomes from Community Engagement Paper There will be a familiarity day for Councillors and a briefing pack with FAQ’s sent out to all local authorities. We have a target to double the Newsletter distribution which is at 270 at present. Recruitment of BR Champions – we aim for 5 local and 5 national. The New website will be up and running by June</p> <p>New members to the committee. Following circulation of Coastwise constitution and AB reporting on Beaford Arts, the Partnership agreed to accept both organisations as members.</p> <p>Restructure & Integration of the Service. – Integration is good and the name is still under review. There is no date as yet for the change although it is likely to be discussed at the next Core Funders Meeting.</p> <p>Tarka Country Trust Recruitment. Slow progress, but Tom Hynes is now a trustee. DS asked for names of possible trustees and to pass this on to non present members. Stuart Knowler from Bideford College is a possibility.</p>	<p>Decision: Coastwise and Beaford Arts to join the Partnership as a full members.</p> <p>Members to pass on names to Tarka Trust</p>

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	<p>North Devon Biosphere Foundation Fiona Fraser-Smith from Appledore Arts and Robert Down have both accepted to become directors. Two others have yet to be confirmed. The website is ndbf.org.uk or northdevonbiospherefoundation.org.uk The Visitor Payback Scheme is a priority - application will need to go in to EA soon.</p> <p>TVE Film The film has been very well received and has been shown in 121 countries to over 145 million people. There is possibly enough material for a 2nd film. The short film explores North Devon's and Malindi Watamu Biosphere Reserves' shared experiences of climate change. Showings scheduled as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riverside Hall, Bampton 28th March @ 7.30pm • Ashreigney Village Hall 2nd April @ 7.30pm • Littleham Village Hall 4th April @ 7.30pm • Baxter Hall, Petrockstowe, 15th April @ 7.30pm • Chilsworthy Village Hall 17th April @ 7.30pm • Buckland Brewer Village Hall 18th April @ 7.30pm • The Plough Arts Centre, Torrington, 23rd and 24th April @ 8pm, screened before the highly acclaimed film about climate change called "The Age of Stupid" starring Pete Postlethwaite. 	<p>PJ and AB to draft Eol for LEADER and Environment Agency</p>
<p>5. Fundraising Strategy</p>	<p>Chair stressed the need to develop a source of unrestricted / recurrent funding, in addition to applying for restricted project funds to support the work of the partnership. AB introduced the paper, which focused on identifying fundraising priorities for the Partnership, Foundation and Trust. The use of LEADER funds was taken as read, along with other RDPE opportunities. The partnership was asked to score the funding proposals in the funding strategy. The results are listed below in order of score. Funding project/programme and score with comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access 2 Nature: 15 points Important bid. The final application for Access to Nature funds (Hawthorn project) is in progress 2. Visitor Investment Scheme: 14 points Will be welcomed to see alternative funding coming in. Needs strong buy in from businesses. LG suggested we target the larger businesses. PJ had approached Ringo 	<p>Decision: Top 5 priority fundraising routes agreed were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Access 2 Nature (BR team) ◆ Visitor Investment Scheme (NDBRF/TCT) ◆ Interreg (Sulis, Amaris and a climate change option) (BR team) ◆ Innovation Funds (BR team) ◆ Strategic Carbon

Item	Issues	Action agreed
	<p>Technologies (re. Car parking but they had declined). To be led by Foundation</p> <p>3. Interreg funds: 14 points Must take advantage while they are there. SULIS has been applied for. AMARSIM is in prep.</p> <p>4. Innovation Funds: 14 points Seeking funds from government for policy development and test policy.13 points</p> <p>5. Strategic Carbon management: 12 Points PJ asked for help on Strategic Carbon Management. AB informed that University of East Anglia can provide MBA student placements to help on development of approaches for carbon management.</p> <p>6. Landfill tax credits: 11 points These are readily accessible; the Foundation is already an approved body to handle the credits.</p> <p>7. Direct contributions from Parish councils to support parish biodiversity plans and sustainable measures. 3 points RD thought we need a parish precept to raise funds in this way. Community Council of Devon would be a possible partner in this approach.</p> <p>8. Legacies and bequests 1 points 9. Corporate sponsorship 1 points 10. Philanthropic contributions 0 points</p> <p>It was suggested integrating items community-based Council tax levy and strategic carbon management in areas that have rejected wind-farm proposals. These parishes might be more willing to consider alternative carbon reduction measures.</p> <p>A funding option needs to be drawn together for the Biodiversity Project bid (Item 9)</p>	<p>management (NDBRF)</p> <p>◆ Landfill tax credits (NDBRF)</p> <p>Parish based approach to be explored with District/Parish Councils and linked to Parish Plans and carbon reduction measures.</p> <p>Biodiversity Project Concept note to be drafted along with possible funding options. TH</p>
6. Sustainable Community Strategy	<p>Malcolm Harris provided a brief introduction. The Partnership has been asked to consider being the Theme Lead for the World Class Environment component. This is still not signed off by the Delivery board. Thematic groups are to be established with leads and champions for each group (next meeting is in May). HH & RD both commented that it was likely to involve only a small amount of extra work but would be a good opportunity and “fit” for the Biosphere Reserve.</p>	<p>Decision: It was agreed that the Partnership should take theme lead for World Class environment if offered</p>
7. Strategic Aims (progress update)	<p>See Notes appended to the minutes.</p>	
8.	<p>Coffee Break</p>	

Item	Issues	Action agreed
<p>9. Biodiversity Discussion Paper</p>	<p>Good progress was being made with the Biosphere Reserve's Biodiversity Action Plans, with several now completed. However, the unique feature of the Biosphere Reserve was its ecosystem-scale catchment-based approach to sustainable development.</p> <p>Several members of the Partnership were already working at this scale the Environment Agency and Natural England were working on streams and water related issues in the Catchment Sensitive Farming project. Culm wetlands and mires were being addressed by DWT and National Parks, but ancient natural woodlands were perhaps less well addressed. SAC woodland is being eroded from seaward erosion and encroached by farming from the landward.</p> <p>The Partnership should focus on minimising the loss of biodiversity and working where we can make the greatest gains. ie. farmland and urban areas. MC suggested that enhancing biodiversity areas in people's gardens would be a good gain.</p> <p>The sheepdog trials will be a good opportunity to liaise and work with landowners and farmers. Working with FWAG could bring many benefits.</p> <p>HT emphasised attention to the historic landscape (eg orchards) and adopting a corridor approach and not just focus on SSSI's. Overlapping historic and biodiversity landscapes will indicate hotspots to target with HLS&ELS. SULIS: Part of this is to integrate LCA's etc. The pilot will start in the Hartland and Combe Martin areas.</p> <p>RD suggested that Ordnance Survey should be a layer on the clickable PDF map. Another possible addition would be County Wildlife sites. Marine data is scant.</p> <p>HT noted that the Ottery St Mary floods highlighted the importance of soil and water management; we could use the Parrett catchment initiative (Somerset) as an example of good practice. EH noted that flooding, land management and adaptation to climate change are good hooks for funding.</p>	<p>TH to announce the launch and completion of BAPs.</p> <p>Decision: To adopt a landscape-scale approach focussing on the corridors of river valleys through to the estuary and sea. Issues of soil and water management and climate change adaptation would be cross cutting themes.</p>
<p>10. Education Provision in the BR</p>	<p>AB reported on the provision of education – (papers included)</p> <p>The paper highlights the range of education for sustainable development activity within the whole reserve from formal education provision through schools supported by the Biosphere Reserve activity, through to community and informal education through interpretation centres and museums. The paper also highlights business education for eco-efficiency.</p>	

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	<p>However there has been concern expressed in the media over the lack of education provision at the core area with the decline of funding for the Education Warden post previously funded by the MoD.</p> <p>For the first part, the membership suggested that the broader view is maintained but to widen the network to include the Yarner Trust and Beaford Arts. It was also suggested that Heritage, and culture should be considered and not concentrating on just the environment. It was agreed that all these things will need co-ordinating with priority on the whole Biosphere Reserve rather than just the core area.</p> <p>Marine awareness is absent at present. RB suggested that a Marine Educator Forum could be made specific for North Devon.</p> <p>Regarding the education provision at the core area it was suggested that schools should pay and that they are likely to if it is curriculum related.</p> <p>An initiative led by the Outreach Group with links with volunteers. The Save our World Trust were recently doing concerts at Tapley Park and were looking at renewable energy installations as an education feature; their relationship with the owners of the core area might be the vehicle to deliver education in the core area.</p> <p>Raymond Coldwell expects to have a meeting in public about the grazing. 2 meetings proposed, 1 in Core Area and 1 in themes for the Braunton area.</p> <p>At public meetings we need to be very specific about what issues we are dealing with. Meetings will need to be strongly managed.</p> <p>The partnership agreed that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Biosphere Reserve is meeting its function to support ESD but, • The Partnership would like to see a focussed provision of education on the core area to continue along with the other work in the wider Biosphere Reserve. 	<p>Decision AB to work with estate to support the 2 meetings with very focussed agendas: The first a public forum for estate to air the grazing scheme. The second for a targeted audience to elaborate on the issues of education and interpretation.</p>
11. Working Groups	<p>Evidence and Assessment: Meeting held on climate change at North Wyke resulted in an offer of a PhD's We could contribute to PHD positions. We applied to DEFRA or other for a 14k subsidy and to the Tarka Trust for 5k.</p> <p>Outreach group – Need to re-examine TOR as most of the actions fall to Matt. Main issues were assessment of action plan and press consistency with notes for editors etc.</p> <p>Climate Change group - not yet convened and there is no chair yet. EH suggested asking other groups – River basin planning forum. Justin Gillet suggested emailing Simon Bates who has responsibility in NE..</p>	

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12. Next Meeting	October 16 th - focus will be on Governance and operation of the Partnership- frequency of meetings and membership of the Partnership. RD noted that although the Partnership is working well as are the working groups, the annual forum is not. MM suggested holding workshop sessions to clarify the function of the 3 layers.	
13. AOB	<p>RD: TTEF's next meeting is on Monday 20th April</p> <p>HH: New Councillor is Pat Barker (Georgeham) will be attending future Partnership meetings.</p> <p>LG: DCC has established Partnership BBC Breathing Spaces programme – with temporary member of staff for promotion especially the Biosphere Reserve.</p> <p>MC – Local Development Framework Stakeholder Day on Monday 20th April which LB will be attending.</p> <p>RB: noted the very high levels of activity/events by the Service - shout for help from Partnership members if needed.</p> <p>LB – SDF is open for applications. Draft plan for 50th drawn up. She wants to hear from anyone who wants to hold a 50th branded event.</p> <p>MM – There is no longer an SWF representative so MM will try to persuade the Forestry Commission to get involved.</p> <p>AB – Next month is likely to see the confirmation of the new Biosphere Reserve at Dyfi Valley</p> <p>Meeting closed at 4.37pm</p>	

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	Surveys commenced on key species along shore including Sabellaria,	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
	General beach profiling with staff and volunteers on Shorething	Sea Search and sub-marine biotope mapping needs to linked to Finding Sanctuary and Marine Bill	Biosphere Reserve Team	DBRC, Marlin
	Current data base and baseline being gathered at Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service	Student/graduate project	Coastwise,	Marlin
	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.	Biosphere Reserve Team	
			Coastwise	

Project title ID	1.3			
Project title	Burrows conservation strategy			
Status	Green			
Activity	Higher Level Scheme applied at Braunton Burrows. Grazing about to be implemented	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
			Christie Devon Estates Trust	Natural England

Project title ID	1.4			
Project title	Promote rural skills for Biodiversity Management			
Status	Amber			
Activity	Volunteer Programme established including training events	Comments	Lead body	Supporting body
			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 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 Landscape Character appraisal to include as LDF		NDC, Torridge District Council	Devon County Council
Project title 	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 	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