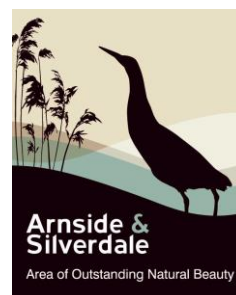


Arnsdale & Silverdale

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 19th October at 2.00pm
RSPB Leighton Moss



MINUTES

Attending

Members of the Executive Committee:

Fiona Allan	Arnsdale/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust
Andrew Frankish	Environment Agency
Brian Jones	Local User Group (Ramblers)
Ann Kitchen	Local Business (Bittern Countryside CIC)
Alison Lax	CPRE/Friends of the Lake District
Cllr Pete McSweeney	SLDC
Cllr Brian Meakin	Beetham Parish Council (Chair)
Cllr Keith Palmer	Silverdale Parish Council
Craig Russell	Local Business (Beetham Holiday Homes)
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB

In attendance:

Lucy Barron	AONB Manager
Barbara Henneberry	AONB Communications & Funding Officer
Sue Hunter	AONB Officer
Elliott Lorimer	Lancashire County Council
David Porter	Lancaster City Council
Tony Riden	AONB Countryside Officer
Lorayne Woodend	South Lakeland District Council

Apologies:

Ruth Ainsworth	AONB Funding & Communications Officer
Cllr Kevin Briggs	Warton Parish Council
Cllr Susie Charles	Lancashire County Council
Eve Hall	Local User Group (N Lancs Bridleways Association)
Sue Harrison	CLA
Georgina Lofthouse	National Trust
Maggie Robinson	Natural England

1 Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies are listed above.

2 Introductions

- 2.1 Each person present introduced themselves.

3 Presentation

- 3.1 The formal business was preceded by a presentation by Kerry Rennie and Sarah Wiseman of the North West Coastal Access Delivery Team on the work they are doing to establish the Cumbria and Lancashire sections of a long-distance walking route around the English Coast. It is hoped that the section passing through the AONB will be open by 2018/19.

4 Changes to Executive Committee membership

- 4.1 Members were advised that there had been several recent changes. The following new members were welcomed

Fiona Allan	AONB Landscape Trust
Cllr Susie Charles	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Pete McSweeney	South Lakeland District Council
Cllr Nigel Goodrich	Lancaster City Council
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB
Cllr Magnus George	Yealand Redmayne Parish Council

5 Annual re-endorsement of User Groups, Business and Farming representatives

- 5.1 Under the terms of the Constitution, representatives of the local interests are subject to annual re-endorsement by the other members. The current members – Eve Hall (User Group NLBA); Brian Jones (User Group Ramblers); Ann Kitchen (Business BCCIC) and Craig Russell (Business Beetham Holiday Homes) - were re-endorsed en bloc.
- 5.2 The AONB Manager advised members that we still do not have a Farming/landowner representative and requested help in filling the vacancy.

6 Election of Chair and Vice Chairs

- 6.1 Under the terms of the Constitution, the Chairman is to be elected from among the voting members of the Executive Committee. Nominations for the position were requested. Cllr Brian Meakin (Beetham Parish Council) was proposed by Craig Russell (Tourism/Business) and seconded by Cllr Pete McSweeney (SLDC). This was the only nomination. Cllr Brian Meakin was elected unanimously as Chairman. The appointment is for one year.
- 6.2 Nominations for the positions (2) of vice-chair were requested. Ann Kitchen (Bittern Countryside CIC) and Cllr Kevin Briggs (Warton Parish Council) indicated they were willing to stand for a further year. Proposed by Craig Russell (Tourism/Business) and seconded by Cllr Pete McSweeney (SLDC). These were the only nominations and Ann Kitchen and Cllr Kevin Briggs were elected unanimously as Vice Chairs. The appointments are for one year.

7 Minutes of the meeting held on 30th March 2016

- 7.1** The minutes were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting held on 30th March 2016

8 Matters arising from the minutes

- 8.1** All matters arising are covered elsewhere on the Agenda

9 AONB Team Business Plan (report circulated)

- 9.1** The Team Business Plan 2015-18 has been reviewed and updated. It details how the AONB Team will act to contribute to the implementation of the statutory AONB Management Plan and associated Delivery Plan. It sets out the operating context of the AONB Team, and details a work programme for 2015-18, including proposed actions that require further resources to be delivered, targets for delivery in 2016/17, the 2016/17 budget and risk analysis.

Due to illness the AONB Manager was not able to present this version to the last Executive Committee meeting. However, it has since been approved by the AONB Partnership Chair.

AGREED: to approve the updated Business Plan 2015-2018 (Proposed Ann Kitchen (Tourism/Business), Seconded Andrew Frankish (Environment Agency))

10 AONB Budget 2015/16 outturn and revised 2016/17 (report circulated)

- 10.1** The 2016/17 budget has been revised to take into account a number of changes.

- Lower travel costs following decision by Lancaster City Council to replace car allowances for essential users with pool cars and rental options.
- Lower electricity charges following installation of solar panels.
- Employee related insurance – advised by Lancaster City Council that increase in premiums is industry wide.
- Fuel costs down – new Land Rover more efficient and contributions from Silverdale & District Wood Bank who borrow the vehicle from time to time.
- Consultants – includes £4k covered by Natural England contribution to carry out priority habitat survey.
- Management Plan Implementation projects – adjusted to include income received in 2015/16 and brought forward to 2016/17, additional income generated through Solar panels FIT scheme and reduction to accommodate necessary increases elsewhere in the budget.
- LNR grants income – new Stewardship Agreement including additional educational visits @£290 per visit.
- First payment received from Solar Panels Feed-in tariff scheme.

AGREED: to note the report and approve the revised 2016/17 budget (Proposed Cllr Pete McSweeney (SLDC), Seconded Alison Lax (CPRE))

11 Draft AONB Development Plan Document (report circulated)

11.1 David Porter of Lancaster City Council updated members on progress made with the AONB DPD to date and the forthcoming consultation. Key points included:

- A recap on matters arising from the Issues & Options Consultation.
- Confirmation of a landscape-capacity approach to development.
- The decision not to calculate an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for housing within the AONB.
- Out of the 130 sites put forward, 11 have been identified as suitable for development, 4 of which are brown field sites. Additional expert advice on landscape, biodiversity and viability has been received and taken into account in reaching the decision on which sites to take forward.
- The Draft Plan includes a 50% affordable housing requirement.
- Important Open Spaces – key settlement landscapes – have also been identified.
- District-wide policies will cover many areas, but specific advice in certain areas will be provided for the AONB Plan.
- Mini-briefs have been prepared for preferred sites to be allocated, listing key constraints and opportunities.

11.2 The Draft Plan will be considered by SLDC Cabinet on 26th October 2016 and by Lancaster City Full Council on 9th November 2016. With Members' approval, the Plan will then go out to public consultation. A briefing for key stakeholders is to be held on 14th November, to be followed by public consultation drop-in events in each of the 6 parishes.

Wednesday 23 November: Heron Hall, Storth

Thursday 24 November: Gaskell Memorial Hall, Silverdale

Monday 28 November: Heron Theatre, Beetham

Wednesday 30 November: Yealand Village Hall

Monday 5 December: Arnside Educational Institute

Wednesday 7 December: Warton Village Hall

2pm - 7pm.

11.3 Members of the Executive Committee were urged to participate in the consultation which will run from 10th November 2016 until 3rd January 2017

11.4 Q&A

- Q: Has a design guide been drawn up?
- A: There will be a Design policy and an Historic Environment policy in the Plan, but no design guide. However, the AONB Manager stated that a design guide was still an aspiration for the future.

AGREED: to note the report on progress of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document. Members also wished to record their thanks to Lancaster City Council, South Lakeland District Council and the AONB Team for working together so effectively on the DPD.

12 AONB Delivery Plan update from the AONB Team and partners – verbal updates**12.1 Local Business - The Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company**

reported that Leeds Children's Holiday Camp at Silverdale has been sold and that the new owners do not wish to keep the solar panels which were

installed as part of the CIC's Renewables Project. It has been agreed to move them to Wildlife Oasis and a grant has been awarded to help with installation costs.

12.2 Local Business – Beetham Holiday Homes

reported that they are now enjoying hyperfast broadband which has been achieved through the B4YS project.

12.3 RSPB

reported that they are hoping to create a new wetland grassland area on land next to Warton village. A meeting has been held with local residents and members of the Parish Council as they try to strike the right balance between what is good for residents and what is good for wildlife. Flood risk management would be a key part of the proposal. The next step is to complete a hydrological study.

It was also reported that visitor numbers to the reserve have dropped significantly and members were asked to help promote Leighton Moss wherever possible through their own social media channels.

12.4 The Environment Agency

reported that a fish survey had been carried out on Leighton Beck in July at two sites – Dollywood Lane and Creep-i'-th'-call bridge. Whilst tests indicate a healthy water course, fish numbers were disappointing. Surveys are usually repeated every 6 years, but in view of the results, a request has been made to carry out another survey in 2017.

It was also reported that under the Urban Waste Water Treatment directive, the statutory undertaker (in this case United Utilities) *shall ensure all agglomerations with a population equivalent (p.e) of at least 2000, are provided with collecting systems for urban waste water.* The Environment Agency has been looking at Silverdale and has asked United Utilities to calculate the "agglomeration" for the village to see if it meets the 2000 p.e. criteria.

12.5 The AONB Team

reported on the continued success of the volunteer programme, with 28 Tuesday tasks - equivalent to 320 person days – on 30 different sites throughout the AONB. A new Countryside Stewardship Agreement has been secured for Warton Crag LNR and work continues in Trowbarrow LNR to comply with the Woodland Improvement Grant which is now in its fifth and final year. Volunteer tasks have included erecting new fingerposts; wall repairs; pond creation; permissive path vegetation cutting and working with the Silverdale & District Woodbank. Training courses for the volunteers in drystone walling and Emergency First Aid are to be arranged for later in the year. Other volunteering opportunities arise through butterfly transect recording and helping at events such as the Annual Hedgelaying Competition which has been arranged for Saturday 5th November.

The Taste of the Landscape Festival ran in May/June, with many new events including Arnside Tower Farm Open Day which over 60 people attended. Ruth Ainsworth was thanked for her hard work in organising it. Ruth is now working on 2017 events, including Forest Schools activities and events for young families which will have a "Wild" theme, encouraging families and children to spend more time outdoors.

Work continues on the Priority Habitat Survey, a joint project with Natural England. The survey will determine the extent and type of priority habitat in the area and help identify opportunities for connecting, improving the condition of, and creating new, priority habitat.

The AONB Team is also working with Natural England on a national research project "Mapping Special Places" which is being piloted in the AONB. The information collected by Natural England will help develop a better understanding of what people value about the area so that it can be considered when making decisions about landscape and nature conservation or other types of landscape change. Members were encouraged to participate <http://web1.adas.co.uk/pgisv2/>

A joint project has been undertaken with Arnside Parish Council to produce an interpretation/information panel for the benefit of visitors to the village. There is currently no information at all when visitors arrive by train and so this aims to improve the visitor experience, promote the village and encourage visitors to support local businesses and explore the area. The Panels are being funded by the AONB, Arnside Parish Council, Bittern Countryside CIC and contributions from Cllr Ian Stewart and Cllr Pete McSweeney. Cllr Ian Stewart, Cllr Pete McSweeney and the Bittern Countryside CIC have also agreed to contribute towards a panel in Beetham, if the Parish Council would like to undertake a similar project.

12.6 National Trust

No representative for the National Trust was in attendance but an update had been provided to the AONB Manager. She reported that the National Trust has been undertaking a consultation to find out what makes Arnside Knott so special to both residents and visitors. Information gathered will be used to improve signage and access.

Butterfly transect surveys have been carried out over the summer, revealing an increase in numbers of Scotch Argus but a poor year for the High Brown Fritillary.

Volunteers, through practical management tasks, butterfly transect surveys and helping at events, have contributed 4200 hours of their time.

13 AONB Planning work update (report circulated)

13.1 The AONB Officer provided the Committee with an update on planning and development management work carried out by the AONB Team on behalf of the AONB Partnership over the last 6 months. She also highlighted some important consultations which are about to take place – the Arnside & Silverdale AONB DPD, SLDC's Development Management DPD and the National Grid North West Coast Connections Project.

AGREED: to note the report on planning work

14 AONB Grants Fund update (report circulated)

14.1 The AONB Funding & Communications Officer was not present but had provided a report on the new Arnside & Silverdale AONB Grants Fund, which is being run jointly with the Landscape Trust following the closure of the Sustainable Development Fund. So far, four applications have been received of which one was withdrawn by the applicant, one was rejected by the Panel, one has been successfully completed and one has just been agreed. Press releases are to be sent out to publicise the success of the completed project and to promote greater awareness of the fund.

AGREED: to note the report on the Grants Fund

Brian Jones (Ramblers) suggested that an analysis of the Sustainable Development Fund, looking at the sustainability of projects supported, would make a good student project.

15 AONB Tramper update (report circulated)

- 15.1** Following the consideration of a number of options, RSPB has agreed to accept ownership and to operate the AONB Tramper at Leighton Moss. Systems have been drawn up and put in place and it has been available for public use on the reserve since March. It is also available for partner organisations to use by agreement. So far, the Tramper has been used on 25 occasions, enabling people who have difficulty walking to experience the reserve too. Future plans include looking at a wider roll out including improved routes on site to the Causeway hide and potentially into Trowbarrow LNR.

AGREED: to note the report on the AONB Tramper

16 Bittern Award 2016 – request for nominations (report circulated)

- 16.1** Each year the Bittern Award is presented to a group or individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the AONB. The AONB Manager asked for nominations for the 2016 award to be submitted by 1st December. The final decision will be made by the AONB Team and Chairman, with the award to be presented at the AONB Annual Conference in January.

ACTION: to submit nominations for the Bittern Award by 1st December All members

17 Update on the work of the National Association for AONBs

- 17.1** The AONB Manager advised members that the NAAONB has become a charity, which brings a range of benefits including the ability to apply for additional funding streams.

Two members of staff and two Executive Committee members attended the NAAONB Conference in Shropshire in July looking at Health & Wellbeing in relation to the high quality environment of AONBs.

For the second year running, AONBs across the country have worked together to put on a series of events in September under the banner of “Outstanding Week”. This resulted in considerable national press coverage.

The NAAONBs is taking a lead role on Brexit on behalf of the AONB family, helping to identify the challenges and opportunities for AONBs that will arise following withdrawal from the European Union.

The AONB Manager advised members that she has been invited to stand as a Trustee for the Association. Voting will take place at the AGM in November.

18 Any other business

- 18.1** The AONB Manager was delighted to be able to announce that Joan Jackson (NFU) and John Wilson (President of the Landscape Trust and previously Head Warden at Leighton Moss) both received national recognition for their contribution to AONBs when they were awarded the 2016 Landscapes for Life award at the NAAONB Annual Conference in July.

19 Dates for your diary

Saturday 5th November 2016 10am	AONB Hedgelaying Competition Next to the A6 between Hale and Beetham Hall
Monday 14th November 2016 6.30pm	Arnside & Silverdale AONB Planning Update Meeting Arnside Educational Institute
Wednesday 23rd November Thursday 24th November Monday 28th November Wednesday 30th November Monday 5th December Wednesday 7th December	DPD public drop-in consultation events 2pm – 7pm Heron Hall, Storth Gaskell Hall, Silverdale Heron Theatre, Beetham Yealand Village Hall, Yealand Educational Institute, Arnside Village hall, Warton
Wednesday 25th January 2017 10am	Arnside & Silverdale AONB Annual Conference Venue tbc
Wednesday 15th March 2017 2pm	AONB Executive Committee meeting Education Room at RSPB Leighton Moss
Saturday 30th September 2017 11am – 3pm	AONB Apple Day Orchard Barn, Briery Bank, Arnside
Wednesday 18th October 2017 2pm	AONB Executive Committee meeting Education Room at RSPB Leighton Moss, Silverdale

Signed Date: