



Shropshire Hills
AONB Partnership

12 July 2022

9.30 am

**MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON
22 MARCH 2022
9.30 - 11.40 AM**

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

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Present

Alex Carson-Taylor (Chair) Hilary Claytonsmith (Vice Chairman), Cecilia Motley (Vice Chairman), Heather Kidd, Hilary Luff, Chris Turley, Alison Caffyn, Gillian Preece, John Luck, Ruth Houghton, Mark Hughes, David Mills, Steve Pennington, Sarah Bury, Charles Edwards, Robert Harris, Sue Lee, Richard Grindle and Alison MacDonald.

51 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

51.1 The Chairman welcomed Richard Grindle to his first meeting of the Partnership.

51.2 Apologies for absence were received from Gill Binks, Janet Cobb, Veronica Cossons, Adrian Cullis, John Long, Dan Morris, Leo Smith, Fiona Williams and Pete Banford.

52 Minutes of the last meeting

52.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2021 had been circulated.

52.2 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership held on 19 October 2021 be approved as a true record.

53 Government response to the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes

53.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which provided them with a draft submission, for comment and approval, to the government's consultation on its response to the Landscapes Review.

53.2 The AONB Manager advised members that the government's response to the review had been published in January, and that the NAAONB had been running a number of groups to formulate its response to the consultation. He went on to advise members that the draft Partnership response was closely aligned to the

NAAONB position and recommended to members that they support the draft response.

53.3 Several members commented that the AONB Partnership's role in the planning process was important and supported the proposal to make AONB organisations statutory consultees and that the necessary extra resource should be found for this.

53.4 Several members commented that whilst they welcomed the increase in people using the AONB for recreation and enjoyment, this should be properly managed, and the necessary resource and infrastructure should be in place. It was suggested that voluntary rangers could be used to assist visitors and help prevent problems.

53.5 **RESOLVED:**

That the Partnership is approve the draft Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership submission, subject to the comments made at the meeting.

54 **Farming in Protected Landscapes programme update**

54.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated them on progress with the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme in the Shropshire Hills AONB.

54.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that to date 16 projects had been awarded grants, with 2 more projects currently being finalised. He informed members that some of the funding allocated for year 1 had been reprofiled to years 2 and 3, and that the small underspend on year 1 had been returned to DEFRA for reallocation.

54.3 There was discussion about levels of uptake of the programme and its attractiveness to farmers. Members were reminded that the structure and rules of the programme are set down by DEFRA, and the team were being active in promotion and support activity. It was being found however that many farmers did not feel in a position to bring forward projects or found the work involved in doing this off-putting.

54.5 Members made suggestions and offered support with promotion and engagement for particular parts of the farming community.

54.5 **RESOLVED:**

That the Partnership note progress with the programme and consider how they as members and their organisations can help support good uptake and applications.

55 **NAAONB Historic Environment Statement**

55.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which put forward the NAAONB joint statement on historic environment for endorsement by the AONB Partnership.

55.2 Members were advised that the purpose of the statement was to maintain and raise the profile of historic environment work in AONBs.

55.3 Members welcomed the statement.

55.4 **RESOLVED:**

That the Partnership endorse the NAAONB Joint Statement on Historic Environment.

56 Shropshire Good Food Charter

56.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which put forward the Shropshire Good Food Charter for sign-up by the AONB Partnership.

56.2 Members were advised that the Charter was an initiative of the Shropshire Good Food Partnership which was formed in 2021 with a vision “for regenerative food, farming and land-use systems” and a mission is “to bring people together to create a local food system which is good for people, place and the planet”.

56.3 Members welcomed the Charter and commented that its ethos fitted with that of the Partnership.

56.4 The AONB Partnership Manager commented that members of the Partnership may wish to consider signing up to the Charter themselves.

56.5 **RESOLVED**

That the Partnership sign up to the Good Food Charter in order to provide support for sustainable land management.

57 Ash Dieback Position Statement

57.1 Members received the report of the Natural Environment Officer which set out a draft position statement on Ash dieback for comment and approval.

57.2 The meeting was advised that the purpose of the statement was to highlight particular issues and sources of guidance and discourage an over-zealous response to felling in the disease, which would result in a faster loss of trees, including potentially healthy or disease resistant trees.

57.3 Members felt that the approach taken was a sensible one and it was **RESOLVED**

That the Partnership approve the position statement on Ash Dieback.

58 Shropshire Draft Destination Management Plan 2022-2025

58.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated Members on the draft Shropshire Destination Management Plan which had recently been prepared by consultants following stakeholder consultations.

58.2 Members welcomed the plan which supported AONB purposes through the adoption of sustainable tourism principles throughout the plan.

58.3 RESOLVED

That the Partnership note the production of the draft Plan and the summary contained in the report.

59 Progress with Shropshire Local Plan Examination

59.1 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that the draft Local Plan was at Examination stage, and while the Partnership had not requested to give evidence at hearings, he had offered that a Partnership view on topics relating to the AONB could be provided if requested by the Inspector. He informed members that he had recently raised again with Council officers the issue of setting of the AONB, following inclusion of this in the revised National Planning Policy Framework, but they did not however intend to propose an amendment to the Plan on this. A member commented that this was an important issue which should be picked up by the Local Plan.

60 Shropshire Hills AONB Trust Fundraising

60.1 Charles Edwards, Trustee updated the meeting on the work of the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust. He advised the meeting that the Trustees were looking at ways of expanding income to enable more grants to be awarded through the Conservation Fund. He informed members that the Trustees were working up a new Business Supporters scheme which local businesses could join in order to support local projects, and that Trustees would be meeting in April to finalise the details. He asked members to feed in details of any businesses that may be interested.

61 Partner activity

61.1 Alison Caffyn gave a short presentation on her work with the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission, especially on a pilot land use framework.

62 Dates of Future Meetings

62.1 Members were advised that future meetings of the Partnership will be held on: -

Wednesday 12th July 2022 and
Tuesday 8th November 2022

All meetings at 9.30am

Signed (Chairman)

Date: