



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Council Offices
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date and Time

4.30 pm, WEDNESDAY, 5TH APRIL, 2017

Location

Meeting Room, Frondeg, Pwllheli, LL53 5RE.

Contact Point

Bethan Adams

01286 679020

BethanAdams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

(DISTRIBUTED 28/3/17)

LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

Gwynedd Councillors

Angela Ann Russell
W. Gareth Roberts
Gruffydd Williams
Owain Williams
R.H. Wyn Williams

Others

Aberdaron, Buan, Botwnnog, Clynnog, Llanbedrog, Llanaelhaearn, Llanengan, Nefyn, Pistyll and Tudweiliog Community Council nominees.

Nominees of the following agencies/institutions:

National Trust,
Natural Resources Wales,
Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum,
Cyfeillion Llŷn,
National Farmers Union,
Farmers Union of Wales,
Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership,
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales,
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust.

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

4 - 8

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of this committee, held on 22 November 2016, be signed as a true record.

5. LATEST PROJECTS FROM THE LLŶN AONB UNIT

9 - 10

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer.

6. THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

11 - 12

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer.

7. LOCAL MEMBERS AND THE JOINT-ADVISORY COMMITTEE

13 - 14

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

8. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

15 - 58

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 22/11/16

Present:

T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council) (Chair)
Councillor Angela Russell (Vice-chair)

Members: Councillors Gruffydd Williams and R. H. Wyn Williams (Gwynedd Council), Ashley Batten (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust), Noel Davey (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), John Gosling (Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership), Arfon Hughes (Nefyn Town Council), Laura Hughes (National Trust), William I. Hughes (Farmers' Union of Wales), Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum), Sian Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council), Sianelen Fleming (Pistyll Community Council), Alun Price (Natural Resources Wales) and John Eric Williams (Cyfeillion Llŷn).

Officers: Bleddyn P. Jones (Llŷn AONB Service Manager), Elin Hughes (Llŷn AONB Projects Officer), Wyn Williams (Countryside and Access Manager) and Bethan Adams (Member Support Officer).

Others invited: Rhian Hughes (Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig Thematic Officer, Menter Môn) and Alun Fôn Williams (Senior Tourism Development Officer, Gwynedd Council) - for item 5 on the agenda.

Apologies: Councillors Gareth Roberts and Owain Williams, and Gillian Walker (Botwnnog Community Council).

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

2. URGENT ITEMS

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager referred to a pre-application enquiry submitted to the Planning Service in relation to the installation of beach cabins and tourism plans on the Mynydd Tir y Cwmwd site, Llanbedrog (application no. C16/1094/38/YM). He noted that the AONB Unit had submitted observations expressing significant concern about the proposal in relation to the AONB.

Members noted their concerns in terms of the proposal and its impact on the AONB. A member referred to planning application no. C16/1226/39/LL - Castellmarch, Abersoch which would be submitted to the Planning Committee on 28 November 2016 and noted that there had been no reference to the AONB Unit as a statutory consultee in the report submitted to the Committee. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he believed that the site was outside the AONB boundary but that enquiries would be made with the Planning Service.

Reference was made to the decision of the Joint Committee at its meeting on 24 June 2015:

"...arrangements will be made to amend the constitution to enable every Local Member to be a member of the Joint Advisory Committee by May 2017."

It was noted that as the electoral boundaries would no longer be changing for the Local Council elections in May 2017, a report would be submitted on the matter to the next meeting.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the Frondeg building would be closing as part of the cuts regime but that there had been no confirmation of a date for closure. It was noted that the Joint Committee meetings would most likely be held in Pwllheli after the closure of the building.

3. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 13 July, 2016 as a true record.

4. VISITOR GIVING

Members were reminded that a presentation was given by the Senior Tourism Development Officer at the Joint Committee meeting on 18 November 2015 on possible schemes to receive a financial contribution from tourists in order to invest in a specific area.

Rhian Hughes (Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig Thematic Officer, Menter Môn) and Alun Fôn Williams (Senior Tourism Development Officer, Gwynedd Council) were welcomed to the meeting. A presentation was given on the visitor giving pilot scheme established in the Snowdonia area by the Snowdonia Partnership, namely Snowdonia Giving. It was noted that Menter Môn had won a tender to trial the scheme through the LEADER grant programme which funded the piloting of innovative projects. It was reported that 25 businesses were a part of the Snowdonia Giving scheme and it was hoped that more would join in the future.

A short film was shown which promoted the Snowdonia Giving scheme. It was noted that there was potential for such a scheme in the Llŷn area and Menter Môn would be able to pilot the scheme for approximately £5,000.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions, and the following responses were given:

- That the Snowdonia Giving scheme would be running from July 2016 to September 2017 in order to include all seasons. It was noted that an event would be held at the end of January where the total collected to date would be announced.
- That a similar scheme in the Lake District generated an income of approximately £100,000 per annum with only bed and breakfast and hotels participating in the scheme. It was noted that the Snowdonia Giving scheme included attractions and events also.
- That the LEADER grant scheme would last five years therefore it would be possible to wait until the end of the Snowdonia Giving pilot before deciding if there was a desire to pilot such a scheme in the Llŷn area.
- It was emphasised that a group was needed to run the pilot but Menter Môn would support the group and the costs could be kept down by using the same branding and website template as the ones created for Snowdonia Giving, but tailored for the Llŷn area.
- Contributing was not mandatory and it was up to the visitor if they wanted to contribute or not.
- No objection was received to the proposal from businesses in the Snowdonia Area but some were unsure as to whether they wanted to participate in the pilot. Businesses which were a part of the scheme as well as those which weren't and the press would

be invited to the event in January and it was hoped that this would inspire other businesses to participate in the pilot.

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager thanked for the update and noted that it was an idea to be considered and that the implications needed to be considered and discussed with others such as the Coast Path Team in terms of piloting such a scheme in the Llŷn area.

A member noted that it was an idea that should be considered at the end of the Snowdonia Giving pilot in order to assess its success. A member added that a report should be received in the context of establishing such a scheme in the Llŷn area.

The Chairman thanked the officers for the presentation and asked if it would be possible for members of the Joint Committee to be invited to the Snowdonia Giving event in January. The Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig Thematic Officer noted that she would keep in contact and would send an invitation to the event.

RESOLVED that a report should be submitted to a meeting of the Joint Committee in the context of establishing such a scheme in the Llŷn area.

5. LLŶN COASTAL FESTIVAL

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Project Officer detailing the activities of the Llŷn Coastal Festival 2016. It was reported that the AONB Service had collaborated with the National Trust, the Llŷn Maritime Museum and Plas Heli. It was noted that the AONB Service had held three guided walks as part of the Festival in the Rhiw, Llanbedrog and Nant Gwrtheyrn areas.

It was noted that the partners would meet within the next few weeks to discuss the 2017 Festival and a request had been received from the co-ordinators of the Llŷn Produce Market to be a part of the discussions in order to identify opportunities to collaborate.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

6. GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-26

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager providing an update on the process of preparing the Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Development Plan 2011-26. He noted that policies relevant to the Area of Beauty in the Draft Deposit Plan had been discussed in the Joint Committee on 25 March 2015, and the response of the Joint Committee to the consultation had been sent to the Joint Planning Policy Unit.

It was reported that, at its meeting on 13 July 2016, the Joint Committee had decided to submit the case in a hearing of the Independent Inspection, where two independent Inspectors would consider all the objections that had not been resolved, in relation to the following matters:

- Policy ADN1 - 'Onshore Wind Energy';
- Policy ADN 2 - 'Other Renewable Energy Technologies';
- Policy TWR 5 'Touring Caravan, Camping and Temporary Alternative Camping Accommodation';
- Strategic Policy PS16 - 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment';
- Policy AMG3 - 'Coastal Protection'.

It was noted that the Chair had represented the Joint Committee at a hearing on matters involving the Natural/Built Environment and the Economy and the Vice-chair attended the hearing on Renewable Energy matters.

The Chair and Vice-chair noted that they had been given a fair hearing when submitting the observations of the Joint Committee. A member expressed his gratitude to the interpreter who had been present at the hearing sessions and noted that the standard of the simultaneous translation had been praised.

A member noted that there had been no shift in terms of wind turbines in the AONB at the hearing; therefore, it should be ensured that the viewpoint of the Joint Committee was noted strongly in the AONB Management Plan. He drew attention to the fact that there were more current studies in relation to wind farms and solar farms noting that the wind clusters which had been recommended by *ARUP Associates* in 2012 were not accurate because the correct search areas had not been used and that there were moves towards designating the area around Rhoslan as the only area in Dwyfor for solar farms due to landscape issues as well as the capacity of the national grid.

In response to an observation by a member, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that a consultation on the action points arising from the hearing would begin in January 2017 and that no major changes were expected. It was added that the Inspectors' report would be published in March 2017.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

7. FUTURE LANDSCAPES WALES

The report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager was submitted providing an update on the Review of Designated Landscapes commissioned by Welsh Government. It was noted that a small group had been working on bringing together all the work of the Future Landscapes Wales programme in a document which would set the direction for the future and measures for the work fields.

It was reported that a Final Draft Report had been published and that copies were available from the AONB Service should members wish to have a copy. It was noted that the Working Group which had been established had considered the report and had concluded that it was too general and, consequently, it needed to be reviewed before being published in January 2017.

In response to a question by a member, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that a message had been sent to Lord Dafydd Ellis-Thomas, Chair of the development programme regarding the need to consider Crown Land; however, no response had been received to date.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

8. THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Submitted - the report of the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer detailing the position of the Sustainable Development Fund and developments in the pipeline. It was noted that £55,000 was in the Fund at the beginning of the financial year and £173.67 remained.

Members expressed their concerns that the Aberdaron Playing Field Project had not claimed the substantial contribution offered to them and that time was running out to allocate the money to any other projects given that every project needed to be completed and the money claimed before the end of February 2017.

In response to the concerns, the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer noted that a meeting would be held with representatives of the Aberdaron Playing Field before Christmas to confirm the

situation. It was noted that, if the project did not claim the contribution offered they weren't concerned in terms of allocating the money to other projects as other draft applications had already been received and efforts would still be made to promote the fund.

In response to a question by a member, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that confirmation of the amount in the fund for the subsequent financial year would usually be received during April.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

9. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager providing an update on the work of updating and reviewing the AONB Management Plan. Members were guided through two draft chapters of Section 2 of the management plan namely 'Language and Culture' and 'The Historic Environment' that were an appendix to the report. It was noted that the aim was to bring the remainder of the chapters in Section 2 of the revised plan before the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

Members were given an opportunity to provide observations; the officers responded to them as follows:

Language and Culture

- It will be noted in the 'Number of Welsh Speakers, AONB Communities' table that the figures were percentages.
- That reference would be made to the history of the language and the background of establishing Plaid Cymru.
- Changes to traditional names of houses and places would be noted as a hot topic, with a policy to respond.

The Historic Environment

- A sentence would be amended under mining under the heading 'The Post-Medieval Period (1500-1800) to read 'Manganese mining started in Rhiw in 1840 and by 1927 it employed 50 workers.'
- The receipt of technical notes and additional information from the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust representative would be welcomed, in terms of recent military history etc. and the information would be placed in the 'Historic Environment' section in the context of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to accept the report;**
- (ii) that the Llŷn AONB Service Manager amends the draft chapters in accordance with the comments of the Joint Committee.**

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm and concluded at 6.00pm.

CHAIR

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	5 April 2017
TITLE	Latest Projects from the Llŷn AONB Unit
PURPOSE	Inform Members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Projects Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an update to members of the JAC about recent projects undertaken by the Llŷn AONB Service. The themes vary from raising awareness, interpretation and environmental improvements.

2.0 REMOVAL OF UNTIDY ROAD SIGNS

- 2.1 The AONB Service have been working on village signs and historic signposts for quite some time. By now, most villages have the traditional black and white signs on the way in, each end, and we believe that this co-insides well with the area's character.
- 2.2 Some other features however, impair the character of the area's rural roads such as excessive road signs, untidy signs and poles which have no signs on them at all. The AONB Service, in cooperation with the Highways and Transport Department, has been working on a project to remove untidy signs at Edern, Sarn Mellteyrn and Botwnnog in 2016/17.

3.0 LLŷN CYCLE ROUTES

- 3.1 A Cycle Route project has been developed with Sustrans, which is a charity for sustainable travel. These routes were developed originally in 2003/04 by Visit Wales as part of a cycling holiday project but they had not been maintained or promoted for a very long time. Sustrans undertook a survey of the routes and relevant signs to establish any shortcomings and recommendations were made in order to re-launch the routes. Following this, new signs were ordered and installed showing clearly the routes in both directions. Also a new leaflet was created, again with Sustrans, to promote the routes with locals and visitors.
- 3.2 A launch was held in Sarn Mellteyrn at the beginning of March. 4 Routes are part of the plan – 3 in Llŷn and 1 in Eifionydd. The leaflet contains general information about the routes (including distance), a map and useful information about the facilities around. Also there are useful local contacts and advice on how to travel safely. We hope that the routes will encourage people

and children to travel by bike – which is a great way to exercise, save money – and enjoy the area’s beauty.

4.0 TRE’R CEIRI INTERPRETATION

4.1 This project is a follow-on from interpretation work in 2013 when information panels were installed by the hill forts of Garn Boduan, Garn Fadryn and Tre’r Ceiri.

4.2 The AONB Service has already removed an old and untidy information panel from Tre’r Ceiri. A further step was to commission a local company to design and publish an information leaflet about Tre’r Ceiri and the remains that can be found there. The leaflet also contains a map of the footpaths and information about wildlife in the Eifl area.

5.0 RHODD ERYRI

5.1 An evening was held recently in Llanberis to celebrate the success of the first year of Rhodd Eryri – a pilot scheme where visitors contribute to local conservation work. More information about the project will be available at the meeting.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The members are asked to accept the above information.

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	5 April 2017
TITLE	The Sustainable Development Fund
PURPOSE	Update on the Sustainable Development Fund
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Projects Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents information to the Joint Advisory Committee members about the current situation of the Sustainable Development Fund and other issues regarding it.

2.0 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- 2.1 Of the **£55,000** in the Fund at the beginning of 2016/17, all was allocated.
- 2.2 **Appendix 1** provides a summary of successful projects.

3.0 2017/18 BUDGET

- 3.1 Confirmation was received that **£55,000** will be in the Fund for 2017/18 and the work of promoting the opportunity to apply for the grant has begun.
- 3.2 The members are encouraged to share the above information about the available finance this year. As well as being in the office for a further discussion, the staff of the AONB Service will be present at the Sarn and District Ploughing Match (May 6th) and Tudweiliog Agricultural Show (August 12th) with an information stall.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 To accept the above information about the Sustainable Development Fund.

Allocation for 2016/17 - £55,000

Ref	Project Name	Sum Claimed	Total
	AONB Service Claim - Admin Costs	£5,427.72	£49,572.28
CDC 16.1	Booklet on the History of Agricultural Education	£1,125.00	£48,447.28
CDC 16.2	Castell Odo	£195.50	£48,251.78
CDC 16.3	Meillionnydd	£3,500.00	£44,751.78
CDC 16.4	Aberdaron Playing Field	£0.00	£44,751.78
CDC 16.5	Blas y Môr Aberdaron a Phorthdinllaen	£1,415.00	£43,336.78
CDC 16.6	Flower at Nefyn	£1,500.00	£41,836.78
CDC 16.7	Plas Carmel	£15,000.00	£26,836.78
CDC 16.8	Exhibition - Sarn Mellteyrn Village Hall	£360.00	£26,476.78
CDC 16.9	Improvements to the Roof at Capel Salem, Sarn Mellteyrn	£1,678.52	£24,798.26
CDC 16.10	Aberdaron / Nant Gwrtheyrn Language Taster Sessions	£2,475.00	£22,323.26
CDC 16.11	Trol Sets, Nefyn	£900.00	£21,423.26
CDC 16.12	Traditional Gate - Porth Neigwl	£716.47	£20,706.79
CDC 16.13	Llanbedrog Milestones	£615.00	£20,091.79
CDC 16.14	Bryncroes - Talks on Local History	£566.00	£19,525.79
CDC 16.15	Keep Wales Tidy - Wells Project	£2,999.00	£16,526.79
CDC 16.16	Literature Wales	£1,524.00	£15,002.79
CDC 16.17	Capel Tŷ Mawr	£1,575.00	£13,427.79
CDC 16.18	Hendregarreg - Scoping Study	£2,143.00	£11,284.79
CDC 16.19	Maritime Museum New Leaflet	£806.25	£10,478.54
CDC 16.20	Adfywio'r Ardd. Improvements to Garden at Plas Glyn y Weddw	£2,995.00	£7,483.54
CDC 16.21	Parêd Dewi Sant, Pwllheli	£2,159.39	£5,324.15
CDC 16.22	Cynnyrch Llyn	£2,345.15	£2,979.00
CDC16.23	Llithfaen Community Hall	£879.00	£2,100.00
CDC 16.24	Marketing Package - Pen Llyn and Plas Heli	£2,100.00	£0.00

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	5 April 2017
TITLE	Local Members and the Joint Advisory Committee
PURPOSE	Present information
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service Manager
RECOMMENDATION	Retain the present arrangement regarding membership of the JAC

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Report has been included on the Agenda following a previous discussion about the number of Local Members that sit on the AONB's Joint-Advisory Committee.
- 1.2 The Report's purpose is to discuss the obligations and the process, of changing the constitution of the AONB's Joint-Advisory Committee in terms of the number of Local Members that can be members of the Committee at any time.

2.0 THE PRESENT SITUATION

- 2.1 At the moment, the Constitution stated that 5 Local Members are members of the JAC. The current members represent the areas of Aberdaron, Abersoch, Clynnog, Llanbedrog and Nefyn. Also of course, there are representatives of many other organisations.
- 2.2 In its present form, the Constitution states that Members are changed following every local election. This would mean that current Members would stand down and 5 new members would join the JAC following the May 2017 elections.
- 2.3 Under this arrangement, Members could spend a period of 4-5 years on the JAC (depending on the timing of local elections).

3.0 CONSIDERING CHANGE

- 3.0 In June 2015, the possibility was discussed about changing the Constitution and allowing every Local Member from wards within the AONB (partly or entirely) to become members on the JAC. At that time, it was expected that ward boundaries would change and that there would be less Local Members for the AONB area.
- 3.1 However, no changes were made to the number of wards and the total of Members with wards within the AONB (partly or entirely) stands at 11. If all these Members were part of the JAC, the number of members would increase from 27 to 33.
- 3.2 If the present order is changed, all relevant Members from Gwynedd Council on the JAC would be permanent and would be the vast majority compared to other

organisations. It's important to state also that there is a seat for a representative from all Community Councils in the AONB already.

4.0 ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 A vote will be needed within the JAC if there is a change to be made to the Constitution to allow all relevant Members from Gwynedd Council to become members of the JAC. Also, following this, a change will need to be confirmed through Gwynedd Council's Cabinet or the decision of the Cabinet Member (as was made in the case recently of who could act as Chair).

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	5 th of April 2017
TITLE	AONB Management Plan
PURPOSE	Consider the draft sections
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service manager
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is presented to members of the Joint Advisory Committee to provide an update on the work of revising and updating the AONB Management Plan.
- 1.2 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 there is a statutory obligation on Gwynedd Council, as a relevant Authority, to prepare a Management Plan for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to review the Plan every 5 years.
- 1.3 The AONB Joint Advisory Committee also has an important role in assisting in the preparation of the Management Plan by providing comments and suggestions.

2.0 PART 1 OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 2.1 Part 1 of the revised Plan has previously been presented to the Joint Advisory Committee for comments.

3.0 PART 2

- 3.1 Recently the AONB Service has been working on Part 2 of the Plan. As mentioned previously, the intention is to change the make-up of Part 2 for the revised Plan and have sections relating to specific features (rather than include them all together as in the existing Plan). Also, much of the background information is to be placed in a supplementary document so as to make the Plan easier to follow and understand.
- 3.2 All sections or chapters will include an introduction, identify special features, key issues and policies. Images will also be used to illustrate relevant matters.
- 3.3 Part 2 will also include the Action Plan which will identify specific actions that are to be implemented during the Plan period.

3.4 Various sections of the Plan have been considered at earlier meetings For this meeting sections relating to the matters noted below are presented. Please see the Appendix for the text.

- **A clean environment and tranquillity**
- **Wildlife**
- **Work, produce and skills**
- **People and community**

3.5 These are the final chapters of the Plan to be considered. The next step will be to prepare the action plan to follow on from the policies and collate all the material together to form a draft revised Management Plan. Then a public consultation will be undertaken for a minimum period of 6 weeks before returning to the JAC with details of all the comments received and recommendations.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 To consider the draft chapters attached to this report.

4.2 To suggest changes or improvements if deemed necessary

Clean Environment and Tranquillity

Introduction

The overall area of “undisturbed” land in the AONB has decreased since 1997, from 85% to 71%.

Traffic has increased on the A499 since 1997 with related Environmental side-effects.

Many structures (masts and wind turbines) have recently been erected.

Many street lights have been replaced with LED in 2016/17

Tranquillity is a characteristic which is recognised and appreciated more in these busy times. Tranquillity is not easily measured but it is a combination of peace from engine and industrial noise, low traffic movement and other intrusions and not much light to disturb the night's darkness. Therefore it is a combination of many factors that creates an atmosphere of tranquillity and by now, such areas are relatively rare throughout the UK, even though there are large areas in Scotland.

Tranquillity or peace has been recognised as one of the Llŷn AONB’s qualities during the preparation of the original Management Plan in 2004/5. It’s certain that the area’s distant and remote nature is partly responsible for this and means that there are no significant industrial or infrastructural developments and only a little intrusion by traffic and machines. Also, the population is relatively low – around 6,000 – considering the surface area.

As well as this, the environmental quality of the soil, air, water and sea water on the whole is high in Llŷn with low levels of pollution. Therefore the area has an image of a clean environment which is an advantage for local people and attracts visitors. However, it is important to maintain, and if possible, improve the local environment’s condition by limiting activities that creates pollution and encourage activities that are pollution free – such as alternative methods of travelling.

For the purpose of the Management Plan of the AONB, the following was set as a Strategic Aim:

Strategic Aim

TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE PRESENT LEVEL OF CLEANLINESS, PEACE AND SECURITY SO THAT RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ENJOY BETTER WELLBEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Special Characteristics

Pollution-free air

The air here in Llŷn is clean and pollution-free. The area has an image of somewhere people can enjoy being outside and enjoy the fresh air of the countryside and coast. There are no large industries, plants or power stations in the area. Even though there is no specific information for this area, the Gwynedd Environment Condition Report (2004) contained information for the County and confirmed that levels of air pollution was low or very low (the four main type of air pollution are Sulphur Dioxide, Particulates, Nitrogen Oxides and Carbon Monoxides). No major changes are foreseen since the preparation of the Report.

It seems that pollution levels continue to lower on a national level. However, emissions still take place through many sources and affect the land, air and water thus affecting people, habitats and species. Local measures and projects on a small scale can help to reduce emissions and air pollution.

Clean Water

On the whole, the water quality is good in the area. The main issues affecting water quality rural areas such as Llŷn are pollutants such as acid rain, artificial fertilizer and slurry outflow. Natural Resources Wales are responsible for maintaining the quality of freshwater and coastal water in Wales.

Freshwater - The quality of rivers and streams in the area are good but a Natural Resources Wales recording system sometimes shows problems with river waters in Llŷn, mainly by pollution flowing into rivers. The main problems are:

- Pollution flowing from the land (mainly agricultural land);
- An overflow of agricultural fertilizer and pesticides, sewage and industrial water;
- Acid rain.

There is much information about the quality of river water in Gwynedd included in the Gwynedd Information Pack, The Environment Agency (2008). Only 1 river within the AONB was large enough to monitor – Afon Soch.

This river scores very highly in terms of biology and chemistry whilst pollutant and phosphate levels are quite low/moderate. There are no major failings in terms of river water quality stated in the General River Quality Assessment (Environment Agency).

To date, there are no Nitrate Vulnerable Zones in Llŷn.

Drinking Water – Welsh Water are responsible for ensuring a clean and reliable provision of drinking water. In terms of a local supply, Llŷn lies within the Llŷn- Harlech district by Welsh Water. There is no present or future shortage in this area. This is supported by the Environment Agency that stated that there is over 20% surplus in the area (Ofwat data 2008).

Bathing Water – The quality of Llŷn’s beaches are reflected by the number of beaches awarded with international and national beach awards. They are amongst the cleanest, safest and organized throughout the UK and many have received awards based on the quality of the water and facilities. The beaches of Aberdaron, Abersoch and Pwllheli for example are Blue Flag beaches.

On a national level, reports confirm that the quality of bathing waters in Wales is very good as a result of improvements in sewage disposal and treatment. At times, rainfall creates an overflow from agricultural and some of that is polluted water. The Marine Conservation Society predicts that these problems will continue due to climate change and are hopeful that Welsh Water, Welsh Government and Green Seas will aid the improvement of the situation. The Marine Conservation Society recommends changes in farming, improving sewerage systems and constant monitoring.

Clean soil

Llŷn is an agricultural area and the land has been farmed for generations. There is good quality soil on lower lands (2, 3a 3b) which is a valuable national asset for stock and crop production as well as maintaining wildlife. Also, due to that absence of industries and plants, the level of pollution in soil is low even though there are some individual sites where pollution is present following mining operations. Even though there are many historic landfill sites in the area, by 2009 there were no such sites within the AONB.

By now there is better understanding of the need to protect the land and soil. Legislations and systems have been adopted to assess soil quality, reclaim polluted land and prevent further pollution. The aim in Llŷn is to maintain the soil’s high quality and rationalise the use of fertilizer and chemicals.

Peace and Quiet

Llŷn is a place of peace and quiet due to its coastal and rural nature and the absence of large industries and plants. This was confirmed in a report commissioned by Countryside Council for Wales in 1997 to assess quiet areas in Wales. The study considered the main categories of development that creates disturbance such as traffic, towns and villages, electrical structures, railways and airports. Also, locations of some specific developments were recorded that affect the tranquillity such as quarries, masts, wind farms, clay pigeon shoots, personal water crafts and racing boats. A map summarising the finding of this Study was included in the original Management Plan.

In this Report much of Llŷn was defined as a Quiet Area or tier C (low levels of disturbance). Also, Trwyn y Penrhyn and an area near Clynnog have been designated as areas with little sky glow. The Study showed that some noisy activities (mainly marine activities) were apparent on the south coast around Abersoch and Llanbedrog.

In 2009, CCW commissioned Land Use Consultants to assess from new the whole of Wales. For this work, the aim was to follow the methodology used previously to compare. The Study found that there is around 11,600km square of Quiet Area in Wales (around 55% of the country’s land area) but that there was a reduction of 1,500km square

(around 6% of Wales' land area). See www.stats.wales.gov.uk for more information.

Dark skies at night

There is a connection between peace and quiet and light levels. As expected, there is a high volume of light at night in urban areas compared to a low volume in rural areas such as Llŷn. It is by now a realisation that areas with low volumes of light at night are getting scarcer in the UK. To acknowledge the significance of this, Welsh Government is supporting a campaign by the British Astronomical Association for Dark Skies.

By now, substantial night light is recognised as pollution. Not only does the direct light affect the natural dark sky but also, artificial lights affect the ecosystems that influence the health of people and wildlife.

Another matter is the electricity used to provide these lights. There are opportunities to make financial and environmental savings by reducing the use of lights and also changing to LED lamps and lights. Also, some Local Authorities have presented plans to switch off some street lights during the night to in order to make financial savings thus making environmental gains also.

It was stated in the original Management Plan that substantial parts of the AONB remain unpolluted by lights. Of course there are lights in towns and on some roads. Also there are floodlights at Clwb Chwaraeon Bodegreos and Ysgol Botwnnog – which are outside the AONB but visible from afar when in use.

By studying the Report to the condition of the environment in Wales, the situation in both 2009 and 1997 can be compared. In general, there is a reduction of 6% or 1,500 km² of peaceful areas in Wales. In terms of the Llŷn AONB, by 2009 the general tranquillity of the area shows pockets in and around Llithfaen, Tudweiliog, Rhiw, Llanengan, and the slopes of Garn Fadrun. It is unclear if these if these pockets are a decline recognised as a result of individual developments or if they are part of a longer term pattern. No further work has been undertaken to see if there is any changes in the situation.

Key Issues

Transport and Motoring

Due to Llŷn's rural nature, most of the residents naturally depend on motors for everyday use. Also, there is substantial increase during the holiday seasons in traffic levels as many Tourists travel by car. This is seen mainly obvious in the Abersoch and Pwllheli areas with congestions during the busiest months. An increase in traffic and congestion increases air pollution.

Less travelling in cars and an increase in travelling more sustainably would benefit in terms of pollution and create benefits in terms of health. Therefore it is believed that there are opportunities to promote sustainable means of travelling by displaying timetables and other relevant information. Current means such as the Cambrian Railway

and Llŷn Coastal Bus are convenient means and it is vital to work together and effective marketing.

It is believed that cycling can offer opportunities to reduce travelling in cars and be beneficial in terms of health. To coincide with this, the AONB Service has recently launched a new leaflet about Cycle Routes in Llŷn. It's important to develop further opportunities to cycle in the area by providing suitable paths and promoting.

Rubbish

Rubbish and dog fouling on footpaths, picnic areas, and parking areas are a problem and harmful to the area's image as clean and tidy. To date, this is not a big problem but there is a slight increase in cases and cuts in funding could mean less bins and wardens to oversee.

Placing more bins in prominent places could help, as well as raising awareness of the AONB and its special qualities and how harmful it is to rid waste irresponsibly. Previous project such as Tidy Towns have worked well with schools to create signs to try and tackle dog fouling problems.

Litter can also be seen on our beaches, with some carried here in stormy weather. There is a chance here to raise awareness with boat users on how to rid waste responsibly in the correct manner. Keep Wales Tidy hold cleaning events from time to time on beaches with volunteers such as in Porth Neigwl and any such project is to be encouraged and supported.

Even though there is no factual evidence to confirm this, there seems to be more fly tipping on roadsides also, following the reduction in waste collection services and the lack of a waste/rubbish recycling Centre in Llŷn. Again, there are opportunities to raise awareness and educate. Also, there is a scope to raise awareness about disposing farm waste more carefully thus reducing environmental side-effects.

Water Pollution

On the whole, cases of water pollution are rare in the area and there have been improvements in the quality of freshwater, drinking water and bathing water following legislations, regulations and new treatment works. There is uncertainty about the exact situation in terms of sewage discharge into the sea and perhaps there is a case for reviewing the situation. Lower quality bathing water could mean problems if applying for beach awards such as Blue Flag and Green Flag. Lack of funding also could prevent applying for such awards.

Water quality needs to be measured and maintained and Welsh Water needs to continue to work effectively within the AONB.

Tourism Activities on Beaches

There are numerous reports over recent years about power boats, personal water crafts etc. affecting others and the environment around them. This can mean creating noise, conflict between different users and an effect on wildlife. In order to respond to this, Gwynedd Council has created a system to register personal water crafts for many years and this has created an improvement. Also, the Gwynedd Marine Code has been published recently (2016) and is aimed at users of the sea and encourages them to be vigilant in terms of marine wildlife and not to disturb animals, fish and water.

New Developments

With some new developments, additional lights will be installed to service the building. In terms of individual houses, this is not a big problem but is more significant in housing estates. Also, lights can be installed on new commercial buildings and there are some examples of significant lights e.g. the new Fire Station at Nefyn. Lights can also be installed around farm buildings thus disturbing the night sky in rural areas.

Policies

PP 1. ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE PUBLIC TRANSPORT VENTURES AND THEIR USE AND OTHER MEANS OF SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL DUE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN TERMS OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

Travelling in motors can create air pollution and congestion during busy holiday periods. The AONB Service, in cooperation with other organisations, will promote public transport as a way of travelling around the area (buses and the Cambrian Railway). Also there are opportunities to increase other means of sustainable travel – cycling in particular. The AONB Service therefore will promote cycling in particular as a way of travelling locally.

PP 2. COOPERATING TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF SOIL AND WATER IN THE AREA

Although the quality of water and soil in the area is high, it is important to maintain the situation and make some improvements wherever possible. The aim is to work with other departments in Gwynedd Council and agencies such as Welsh Water, Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government as well as site owners to achieve this. Also, it is believed that applications should be made for awards such as Blue / Green Flag – to reflect the high quality of the water and resources in some areas.

PP 3. LIMIT NOISE LEVELS AND LIGHT AT NIGHT WITHIN THE AONB AND NEARBY AND PROMOTE THE USE OF EFFICIENT ENERGY AND LOW IMPACT STREET/OUTSIDE LIGHTS

Tranquillity and dark skies are features related to the Llŷn AONB and the policy aims to limit developments that would have an impact on them. On the whole, noise is not a problem but present lights and brand new ones can affect the night sky. Conditions will be recommended therefore to control lights in connections with new developments and

encourage owners to assess current lights to see if there are opportunities to reduce lights or install lights that have less impact.

PP 4. PROMOTE LOCAL CLEANLINESS LEVELS BY ENCOURAGING REUSING, RECYCLING AND DISPOSING RUBBISH RESPONSIBLY.

Even though there are some small areas of rubbish from time to time, fly tipping is not a major problem even though there were changes in rubbish collection services and reductions in the opening hours of local recycling depots. The AONB Service will cooperate with other departments in the Council and others such as Keep Wales Tidy to clear sites, educate landowners about reducing and recycling and take enforcement steps when necessary.

PP 5 . RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS AND DANGER TO HEALTH OF DOG FOULING AND ENCOURAGE OWNERS TO BE MORE RESPONSIBLE.

As well as being dangerous to health, dog fouling is a nuisance and creates a negative impression about a location or a path. Although there is no factual information to confirm, it seems that dog numbers are increasing in the area and that this is an increasing problem. The aim is to cooperate with the Environmental Health department and other organisations to recognise places with problems and to implement campaigns to raise awareness and enforce to improve the situation.

Habitats and Wildlife

Key Facts

There are three Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in the AONB, 6.6% of the land area
There are two Special Protection Areas (SPA) in the AONB, 4.4% of the land
There are 22 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), over 2000 hectares (11% of land area) in the AONB
There is one National Nature Reserve in the AONB, on Bardsey Island and one nearby namely Cors Geirch (also a RAMSAR site)

Introduction

Llŷn, including the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty sustains a wide variety of different species and habitats, some are rare at both a National and European level. Although the wealth of wildlife continues research has shown that there has been a major decline in natural and semi-natural habitats in Llŷn between the beginning and the end of the last century. See 'Vegetation change in Llŷn between 1920/2 and 1987/8' – J. P Stevens (1992) for full details.

There are many opportunities to see and study wildlife in the area including animals, land birds, sea birds and maritime life. The wealth of wildlife on our door step is also an effective educational resource that primary and secondary schools can take advantage of. Some visitors come to Llŷn especially to see and enjoy wildlife whilst many other visitors also enjoy some element of the area's wildlife when they stay here. Therefore, wildlife is a resource which contributes to the area's appeal to visitors and in turn to the area's economy.

A great deal of information was collected on local species when preparing Natur Gwynedd in 2003, and this information has been updated periodically. Information has also been available on the status number of species on a Wales level and a Gwynedd level, however, recently (September 2016) the State of Natural Resources Report - SoNaRR was published by Natural Resources Wales. For further details see: www.naturalresources.wales/sonarr?lang=cy .

The Report assesses the condition of natural resources in Wales and how sustainably they are managed, as well as recommending ways of creating future improvements. In addition, the Report creates a link between the condition of natural resources in Wales and the population's well-being - it looks specifically at how natural resources support the seven well-being aims in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. Based on the information in the State of Natural Resources Report, the Welsh Government will set priorities and policies to manage natural resources in the future. Natural Resources Wales, by working with partners, will then prepare Area Statements in order to implement the policies at a local level.

The Report generally indicates that the resilience of ecosystems in Wales is declining - there is less variety of habitats and species, habitats' size have been reduced, their condition varies and connectivity has significantly been reduced. This has an impact on the services that these ecosystems can provide.

Specific responsibility to protect Biodiversity was given to Local Authorities as a result of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006. As a follow-on to this, the Environment Act 2016 gave every Public Authority a new duty to try and protect and improve biodiversity. Under the requirements of the Act, Gwynedd Council is required to prepare a Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan by May 2017 and this will be reviewed every following two years.

Conservation Designations

As there are a number of rare habitats and species in the area, a series of European, National and local designations are in force. The main European designations in terms of sustaining and protecting habitats and species are the Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA).

Special Areas of Conservation - This is a designation under the 1992 Habitats Directive to safeguard habitats, plants and animals that are under threat. These are the best examples of habitats and species. These sites have also been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Special Protection Areas. There are 3 Special Areas of Conservation in Llŷn, namely: Pen Llŷn Sea cliffs, Llŷn Marshes and Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau

The Sea cliffs of Llŷn SAC: This designation is fairly extensive (877 ha) and has the Irish sea as its boundary. It is open to winds and weather from the west and the area represents the best examples of coastal and marine heathland and heath grasslands on the Peninsula. The area has been designated as it is of international importance for its sea cliffs and associated habitats. The area comprises sections of several Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Heathland in the SAC is in a satisfactory condition, however, the condition of the sea cliffs is unsatisfactory but is improving. Under-grazing and over-grazing were the main factors affecting the condition of these habitats and therefore, for the future correct/suitable grazing is essential in order to maintain and improve the condition. The condition in terms of the choughs and the Manx shearwater is satisfactory.

Llŷn Marshes SAC: There are four specific sites in the centre of Penrhyn Llŷn that are partly located within the AONB, these are Cors Hirdre, Cors Geirch, Rhyllech Uchaf and Abergeirch. The total surface area of the designated site is 282.28 ha. This SAC also includes the Cors Geirch Ramsar Site, however, this site is outside the Llŷn AONB area. Their condition in terms of the marsh habitat and snails is unsatisfactory - due to under-grazing, the spread of trees and scrub, and water management issues. However, recently there has been an improvement as a result of the Llŷn and Môn marshes LIFE + project.

Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau marine SAC: A vast marine area (14,604 ha) which extends from Penrhyn Nefyn to the River Clarach to the north of Aberystwyth and therefore only a part of this area links with the AONB. Further information regarding the designation, management etc. can be seen at:

Special Protection Areas (SPA)- These areas are designated under the European Commission Directive on protecting wildlife (The Birds Directive) in order to sustain the habitats of two particular categories namely rare species or those under threat and migratory birds that travel thousands of miles to reach various locations – and need safe locations for rest. There are 2 Areas of Special Protection in the AONB, namely The Aberdaron Coast and Bardsey Island SPA and the Mynydd Cilan, Trwyn yr Wylfa and St.Tudwal’s Islands SPA

Aberdaron Coast and Bardsey Island SPA - This area comprises a vast area of the coast from Porthor to Aberdaron and includes Bardsey and Gwylanod Islands. This varied coast comprises heathland and grassland which is habitat to a variety of plants and a Chough population. Bardsey is home to the largest population of Manx Shearwater in the UK, which is the reason for the island's international importance.

Mynydd Cilan, Trwyn yr Wylfa and St.Tudwal’s Islands/Mynydd Cilan SPA. This coastline is open to south-westerly winds and the sea-cliffs that shelter the beaches are continuously being eroded and offer a patchwork of bare sediment and maritime habitats and sand-dunes that are rich in flowers. There are also substantial areas of dry and wet heathland and rocky inter-tidal habitats of maritime interest, because of the network of rare species. These include one of only two populations of the Mason Bee (*OSMIA XANTHOMELENA*) which is under threat. This area is also very important specifically because of the Chough population. This site is used by 3% of the British population of this bird during breeding and non-breeding periods. The sea-cliffs and caves offer breeding and nesting sites, whilst the cliffs, heathland, sea-grass and pasture on the nearby fields offer feeding sites throughout the year.

See the Report on the Condition of the AONB 2014 for further information about these sites.

Wetlands of International Importance (RAMSAR)- These are wetland habitats that sustain various species of international importance. Four of the Llŷn marshes have been designated as a RAMSAR site (Llŷn marshes).

National Nature Reserves (NNR) - These reserves include important habitats and geological features, each one is special in its own way. Every reserve is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest. There is one National Nature Reserve in the AONB, on Bardsey Island and its surface area is 180 ha. The National Nature Reserve was designated because of the marine and inter-tidal habitats, the choughs and the Manx shearwater.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)- These are designated on the grounds of special habitat, species or geology. The sites in Llŷn vary from marshes and meadows to sand dunes and forests. There are a total of 22 Sites of Special Scientific Interest that are partly, or totally, within the AONB and these include 2,188 ha (11%) of the protected landscape. No new SSSI has been designated since 2008. An assessment of all SSSIs can be seen in the Appendix which includes the sites’ features, condition, their trends and

management factors. See the Report on the Condition of the AONB 2014 for further information about these sites.

Where information was available from the Countryside Council for Wales about SSSI the grassland, heathland, surface water, semi-natural broadleaved woodlands and dunes were in an unsatisfactory condition and were declining. There was no information regarding the fens and marshes. The wet grassland features were satisfactory as well as the rocky, marine and inter-tidal areas. The main issues that affected these habitats were:

- Grassland and heathland: under-grazing, invasive species and fires (dry heathland)
- Fen, marsh and surface water. Grazing and invasive species, pollution, water quality, water management
- Broadleaved woodlands – grazing and invasive species
- Coastline (including rocky sea-cliffs, gravel, and boulders, inter-tidal areas, sand dunes and rock pools), pressure from leisure and pollution.

Potential Wildlife Sites - These sites are of significant local conservation importance, however, they currently have no statutory status. There is a reference to them in the Unitary Development Plan and they have been noted on the Gwynedd Council Geographic Information system.

The Strategic Aim of the Management Plan in terms of Wildlife is:

Strategic Aim

MAINTAIN, ENHANCE AND ENCOURAGE HABITATS AND ENCOURAGE KEY SPECIES AND DESIGNATED NATURE SITES WITHIN THE LLŶN AONB TO ENSURE THE CONTINUATION OF THE RICH VARIETY OF ANIMALS, BIRDS, INSECTS AND PLANTS.
--

Special Habitats

Nowadays, natural or semi-natural vegetation, namely unimproved and uncultivated land is rare in England and Wales. The most prominent examples of such lands are heath lands, wetlands and woodlands and they are all present in Llŷn.

Natural broadleaved woodlands are not a prominent feature within the Llŷn AONB, however, they contribute towards the appearance of the landscape and biodiversity and are a scarce resource. Evergreen conifer forests have been planted on many hills and hillsides in the area. They are not a natural feature, but to an extensive degree, they have won their place now and the impact on the landscape is evident when they are felled and cleared.

A detailed analysis of all the relevant habitats in Llŷn can be seen in the Natur Gwynedd. Further details are given by noting the surface area of the most important habitats (the priority for Wales / the UK). The table in the Appendix contains information regarding the important habitats that exist in the Llŷn AONB, including their surface area.

The majority of the habitats in Llŷn have been included as habitats that are a priority in

terms of protecting a biological variety in Wales in Section 42 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). Details of the area's most important habitats are noted below:

Coastal habitats – There are many types of coastal habitats in Llŷn including sea-cliffs, slopes, coastal land, beaches and sand dunes. The sea-cliffs and slopes sustain a variety of vegetation and are important habitats for sea birds such as the guillemot, razorbill, cormorant and the shag. Carreg y Llam near Llithfaen and Trwyn Cilan are notable areas to view some of these birds whilst the puffin is very prominent on the Gwylan Islands and the Manx shearwater which resides on Bardsey.

More inland, the vegetation slowly turns into coastal pastures and heathland and they are again home to a variety of birds including the sand martin and the chough. These lands are also habitats for wasps and some rare invertebrate creatures.

Beaches and sand dunes are prominent habitats in Llŷn and there are many sand dune systems across the southern coast of the peninsula. Sand dunes are one of the most natural habitats to be seen in Britain and are home to a wealth of rare species. Sand dune systems are acknowledged to be of international importance to wildlife; they include plants such as sea-grass, a variety of fungi, lizards such as the sand lizard and a large number of invertebrate animals such as the carder bee.

Today, sand dunes are under threat and the numbers of species are declining as the scrubwood spreads and also due to sand dune over-stabilisation. One reason for this is the lack of grazing. The dunes system near Abersoch is the most prominent in the AONB (“The Warren”). This system is suffering substantially due to pressure from tourists during the summer months and a variety of developments such as caravan parks, parking facilities and improved or semi-improved grassland in order to create pastures or golf links.

Heathland - heathlands are a prominent and important feature in Llŷn and wet, dry, low and coastal heaths are found here. They contribute not only as a habitat and a landscape feature, but also on a historical and cultural level and as a leisure resource (many of the heaths in the area are common land which explains why they have not been improved for cultivation). The heaths sustain a wide variety of interesting pastures and plants such as the common rock-rose in addition to native heather and gorse that are so colourful during August and September.

The coastal heaths are important in the European context as they are typical of western heaths that have become drastically scarcer since the Second World War. By now, only 0.3% of the UK’s surface area is made up of low heaths. A great deal of work to maintain, manage, restore and improve access to local heaths has been undertaken under the “Cadw’r Lliw yn Llŷn” project. The project was developed by partners including CYMAD, the Countryside Council for Wales, the RSPB and Gwynedd Council.

Grasslands and meadows – the main land use in this area is agricultural pasture. Many of the natural grasslands have been lost following the agricultural revolution which was responsible for clearing, draining and improving land. Recently, there has been a new

threat to natural grassland with the spread of scrub, bracken and coarse grasses as a result of a lack of grazing. Nowadays, there are only a few small areas of grassland left, namely, land that is difficult to cultivate such as wet land or steep land and road verges. These natural lands are home to a wealth of wildlife; plants such as knapweed, ox-eye daisy, cowslip and sweet vernal grass, birds such as the skylark and the curlew, butterflies and many reptiles and insects.

The most important grasslands have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and there are management agreements in place for some of them. Also, due to their scarcity, untreated grassland and grass meadows are subject to substantial payments under agri-environmental schemes such as Glastir.

Woodland and trees - Broad-leaved forests are very rare in the AONB and the most important ones, and those under threat, are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. The main threat to these trees are new developments that would require the felling of trees, lack of correct management leading to a decline and diseases such as sudden oak death and Dutch elm disease.

- Indigenous deciduous woodlands are rare these include trees such as oak, ash, hazel, birch and mountain ash in the AONB. By now, there are only small, much dispersed places of semi-natural deciduous woodlands with many on steep slopes, valley sides, river corridors and on estate lands. These woodlands contribute to the landscape and are habitats which sustain a wealth of species including rare mosses and lichen. One of the most important natural woodlands is the ancient forest near Plas yn Rhiw. Mixed woodlands – of broadleaved and conifer trees are also rare, however there is an increase as efforts are made to control and reduce the number of conifer trees.

Areas of conifer trees are very prominent on some hillsides in the area, such as Garn Fadryn, Garn Boduan, Mynydd Rhiw, Nant Gwrtheyrn and Moel Penllechog. These make little contribution as a habitat and the landscape will be left bare when they are felled. There are opportunities for re-planting these areas with native trees.

The correct protection and management of trees is essential for their long term welfare. One threat to some woodlands is the rhododendron ponticum that can spread quickly and prevents natural growth in the forest. Another threat is intense grazing which deteriorates the woodland into poor grass as the trees die of old age and there are no young trees to replace them.

There are several bodies who work to protect, support, manage and promote trees and woodland in Wales, including Pen Llŷn namely:

- **Coed Cadw** (Woodland Trust) - A charity that aims to protect and promote native trees and inspire all to appreciate and enjoy trees and woodlands. Their aim is to protect ancient trees, restore woodland and create new woodlands. =
- **Coed Cymru** This is an enterprise for the whole of Wales to promote broadleaved woodland and the use of hardwood. Free, unbiased advice is given to farmers, woodland owners and managers, community groups and wood businesses

There are few peatlands and marshes in the AONB itself. They are important habitats to a wide variety of plants and animals, and also an important environmental resource by aspirating greenhouse gasses and purifying water by extracting excess amounts of nutrients and sediment. Many wetlands have been lost through intensive agriculture and activities such as drying land and water pollution from fertilisers.

Cors Geirch, which extends from Rhydyclafdy down towards the direction of Ederon on the northern coast, is a peatland of international importance and this peatland has been designated a National Nature Reserve. The sedge, moss and tall flowers such as the greater spearwort grow on the site, and it is a rare habitat for invertebrate animals including whorl snails, dragonflies, snakes and amphibians such as frogs. Cors Geirch and other Llŷn marshes (Cors Hirdre, Rhyllech Uchaf and Aber Geirch) were designated as a RAMSAR site and a Special Area of Conservation and by now an ambitious project sponsored by LIFE+ is being undertaken to restore and maintain these marshes.

Wetlands – according to the Habitats Survey 1990, Countryside Council for Wales, Llŷn is of special interest due to a series of rich muddy land in the central areas of Llŷn, including the River Geirch and also around the River Penrhos. The 1995 survey of the proposed Local Nature Reserve (GNR) at Lôn Cob Bach, Pwllheli declares a “high interest” in extending the GNR to include the area which surrounds the River Penrhos as the area appears to contain a wealth of wildlife.

Field boundaries – stone walls, hedges and especially 'cloddiau' are prominent features of the Llŷn landscape and they are also important habitats as well as prominent features in the landscape. A variety of wildlife is dependent upon these boundaries, and the older the boundary, the richer the wildlife. Regulations exist to protect hedgerows (Hedgerows Regulations) whilst agri-environmental schemes assist to maintain and restore other traditional boundaries.

Road verges - this is a semi-natural habitat which is important in terms of nature conservation for many reasons. They are a food source and a shelter which sustain wildlife corridors without much intervention. However, there is a problem regarding invasive foreign plants such as the Japanese knotweed in some areas. Gwynedd Council keeps a register of road verges and nature conservation interests, including a number in the Llŷn AONB area. This habitat is also included in the Natur Gwynedd Action Plan.

Marine habitats - Due to the importance of a number of marine habitats and species seen in the Llŷn a'r Sarnau area, for example the reefs and the estuaries, the area has been designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the European Habitats and Species Directive. The reefs support a wide variety of flora and fauna communities including a variety of seaweed forests, sponges and styela clava. Further information is available in the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau SAC Plan and on the website: www.penllynarsarnau.co.uk.

Key Species

The still and unpolluted nature of Llŷn has certainly contributed to the continuation of many species which are now considered rare species in the British Isles. Natur Gwynedd (2004) defines the species that are important in Gwynedd and those that are specifically important to the AONB were identified in each category mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, invertebrate animals and plants - see the Appendix for the full table.

There was no information regarding the numbers of the abovementioned species for the Llŷn AONB when reviewing the Management Plan.

Mammals - There is a variety of rare mammals here in Llŷn and in the AONB and these have been identified as priority -

- The Otter – there has been an increase in numbers in the area, has been spotted in the River Soch and recent surveys showed that it uses coastal habitats in Llŷn.
- The polecat – is present but there is a lack of information regarding location and numbers.
- Hare – present but there is a lack of information regarding location and numbers.
- Water Vole – recent surveys suggest that Llŷn is a stronghold but there is a lack of sufficient information.
- Lesser horseshoe bat – there are roosts in Llŷn but no definite information.

Marine Species – The Llŷn coastal waters are rich in marine life. The grey seal is common to the area (on the shores of Bardsey in particular) along with otters, harbour porpoises and bottlenose dolphins. The location and special feature of the bay, such as good access to deep feeding waters off Bardsey, is a suitable habitat for the Risso dolphin.

The grey seal and the bottlenose dolphin are species that are acknowledged in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and are also protected under the European Union Habitats and Species Directive. The Ceredigion Bay SAC Group has also prepared a Management Plan for these species in particular and they work closely with the groups and organisations through forums such as the Welsh Cetacean Group to share information. The Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau SAC Management Plan has concentrated on the SAC habitats as well as species.

Birds - Due to its rural landscape and varying coastline Llŷn is a habitat for a vast variety of land birds and sea birds, some of them are rare species. Some of these have been mentioned already, but amongst the most important is the chough, used as the AONB logo. In 2002, there were 67 sites and pairs in Gwynedd, but there is no information regarding exactly how many there are in the AONB. There are other species of birds of European importance also, including the puffin, guillemot, cormorant and the Manx shearwater.

The Barn Owl is amongst the important land birds of the area – it is estimated that there

are on average, 20 pairs nesting in Gwynedd and Pen Llŷn is one of the strongholds. Also, although they have significantly become scarcer, the lapwing is present here, however, there is a lack of information regarding location and numbers.

Invertebrates Again notable invertebrates live in the Llŷn area, although there is no certainty that there are some within the AONB boundary itself. There is detailed information in the appendix, but amongst the rare species are:

- Marsh Fritillary, an orange, gold and black butterfly which is under threat and is becoming more scarce – present in Cors y Wlad and Cors Gyfelog near the AONB boundary.
- Hornett Rubber Fly – present in Cors Geirch near the AONB boundary and according to reports, in Cilan and Nefyn at one time. Its natural habitat of untreated land and heathland has diminished.

Plants - There is a great variety of wild flowers and plants in Llŷn. In spring the verges of the area's rural roads are full of colourful wild-flowers such as foxgloves, red campion, wild carrots and primroses. Along the 'cloddiau' gorse is very prominent and also hawthorn and blackthorn. Along the sea cliffs, spring squill and sea thrift can be seen early in the summer months.

On heathland such as Mynydd Tir y Cwmwd and the Eifl, native gorse and heather are colourful and very striking at the end of the summer months. Amongst the other important plants in the area are bluebells which are present on some of the slopes such as in the Llanaelhaearn area and some types of orchids can be seen on the area's marshes.

Key Issues

After assessing the trends and policy documents, etc, it is believed that the key issues for the Management Plan period (2015-20) will be:

Climate Change

By now, there is fairly strong evidence that there is a gradual change in the world's climate as a result of an increase in temperature. It is the emission of greenhouse gases and CO₂ specifically that is responsible for this by damaging the ozone layer and changing the composition of the air. CO₂ is discharged into the air through burning fossil fuels, factories and industries and pollution from cars, lorries, ships and aeroplanes etc. Although there is no local evidence regarding climate change, it is true to say that minor changes can be seen in the seasons that appear to confirm the impact of climate change.

Scientific evidence predicts that the impact of global warming will mean a gradual increase in air temperature and sea levels. This in turn will lead to changes in seasons - and the view in Britain is that summers will be warmer but wetter, winters will be less cold but again wetter with more frequent periods of unusual weather - more heavy rain, winds and warm days.

Certainly climate change will influence biodiversity by impairing some species and

habitats These changes will entail that some native species will be under threat while others will thrive and some new species will appear. Thus far, there is not much information or evidence of what changes are likely in terms of biodiversity in this area.

There is a role for the AONB to play in terms of climate change by encouraging and promoting measures to reduce CO2 emissions by saving energy, generating renewable energy on a suitable scale and more sustainable travel etc. In addition, there is a need to raise awareness about climate change and the likely impact on the area.

Agriculture

In the past agriculture has had a fairly significant impact on wildlife throughout Britain. The industry was driven by pressure to produce more for a fair price and grants were available to drain wetlands, plough and cultivate the land, remove hedgerows etc. Also, there was extensive use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers in the second half of the last century. Studies have shown that this has had a significant impact on wildlife including birds.

Things started to change around the end of the last century. With research, factual information and expertise it was realised that there was over-production and over-dependency on chemicals and the impact of this. Since then various agri-environmental schemes have been introduced which gave grants towards environmental work such as creating and cleaning lakes, erecting 'cloddiau', restoring walls and planting hedgerows. These schemes and the current Glastir scheme (and the Single Payment that sets the conditions for cross-compliance) certainly benefit habitats and wildlife throughout Wales.

However, there are some agricultural activities that continue to have an impact on habitats and species. The main agricultural activities that may have an impact on habitats, water and wildlife during the Management Plan period are:

- Grazing and stocking levels (under-grazing and/or over-grazing can be harmful)
- Slurry entering water courses, streams and rivers
- Artificial fertilizers out-flowing into streams and rivers (nitrogen)
- Pesticides and herbicides
- More specialising in one type of farming in a more intensive way.

Grants and Environmental Projects

Projects can assist to maintain, restore and improve the management of habitats and by so doing provide for specific species.

In the past, projects such as Natur Gwynedd, Llŷn Landscape and the Nature Fund project in Llŷn did a great deal to improve some habitats in Llŷn, particularly the traditional boundaries, pools and lakes and heathland. Also, the Sustainable Development Fund that is associated to the AONB designation has supported projects that are beneficial to wildlife at a smaller scale such as Tan y Bwlch fields and Porthdinllaen Sea-grass. It is hoped that other similar projects can be developed in the future for the benefit of local

biodiversity.

In addition to the Glastir agricultural grants, grants have been provided by Coed Cadw and Coed Cymru to improve existing woodlands by introducing more native trees and better management.

Invasive plants

Recently, invasive plants and alien invasive plants have become more of a problem in the area. Although there is no specific information to support the view that an area of bracken has spread as a result of lower stocking levels on certain lands - e.g. hillsides and also small areas of land that are not farmed now. Also, the use of the herbicide Asulam is restricted and there is a threat that it will be banned completely. Therefore the signs will be that bracken will spread further and will impair on habitat such as heathland and rough grazing land and the species that live there.

The examples of Japanese Knotweed are rare at the moment, however, there has been an increase in the last decade. Because of the resilience of this invasive plant, its ability to spread and the fact that there is no specific scheme or project to destroy it, it is likely that it will increase and will impair native plants.

Himalayan Balsam is also increasing at a rapid scale. The plant spreads by throwing its seed far and wide and it likes wet areas such as river banks - therefore its seeds can travel far. By now Himalayan Balsam has spread significantly in some valleys and wet areas of Llŷn and has the potential to spread much further.

Environmental Regulations

There are a number of European statutory designations that are relevant to several sites in Llŷn and these include Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites. Brexit is causing great uncertainty regarding the future of these designations that offer support and protection to the sites in question.

In addition, European regulations regarding pesticides and herbicides are relevant to Britain and have been formulated to protect species and habitats.

Therefore, there is great uncertainty about the future and it will be important to review the situation and get the latest information. Perhaps national or local conservation designations may be considered instead of European ones if these are not relevant to Britain in the future.

Financial Squeeze

There have been cuts in public expenditure since 2008/9 following the banking crisis. This has had a significant impact on different public bodies and departments including Local Authorities and conservation bodies such as Natural Resources Wales (and its predecessors the Countryside Council for Wales, the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency).

There have been substantial financial cuts in Gwynedd Council over the years and the largest was following the Gwynedd Challenge exercise in 2015. These cuts have affected many services including the Countryside and Access Unit and the Biodiversity Unit and this has meant a reduction in staff and budgets. This means that staff numbers have been reduced, work has had to be prioritised and it is necessary to focus on statutory work only at the expense of implementing projects, promotion etc.

New Developments

New developments can impair on habitats and species and these developments include housing, sheds, agricultural developments, road improvements etc. Of course all these developments need planning permission via a formal process and are therefore assessed by different Council departments (including the Biodiversity Unit and the AONB where relevant) and Natural Resources Wales. Therefore developments that may be harmful to wildlife can be opposed or conditions may be recommended to be imposed on the planning consent.

No substantially sized sites have been allocated for development in the Llŷn area in the Gwynedd Development Plan. Therefore, on the whole there are no major concerns regarding the impact of new developments on the area's wildlife.

POLCIES

BP 1. PROMOTE THE PROTECTION AND APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT OF LLŷN'S KEY HABITATS.

A wide variety of habitats exist within the Llŷn AONB which is a reflection of the area's varied landscape and coast. Nowadays, natural or semi-natural vegetation, namely unimproved and uncultivated land is rare in England and Wales. The most prominent examples of lands such as these are heathlands, wetlands and woodlands and they are all present, to some degree, in Llŷn. There is a detailed breakdown of all the relevant habitats in Natur Gwynedd but generally these include various coastal habitats (beaches, cliffs, sand dunes etc., heathlands, grasslands and hay meadows, trees and woodlands, marsh and fenland, field boundaries and road verges and marine habitats.

BP 2. PLACE AN EMPHASIS ON THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF LLŷN'S COMMON LANDS AND PROMOTE APPROPRIATE USES.

Common lands are an important feature of Llŷn and they form an important habitat since they are mainly uncultivated land, they also provide public access opportunities (but they are not publicly owned). There are a total of 30 over a considerable area of land and there are different rights associated with individual sites (e.g. grazing, collecting firewood). Most of the land is heathland or rough grazing and due to lack of management some sites have become overgrown and bracken infested. Some of the common lands are in the ownership of the National Trust – and have benefited as such by being included in various management schemes to clear scrub and re-introduce grazing – e.g. through the Llŷn Landscape Partnership.

- BP 3.** PROTECT, SUSTAIN AND IMPROVE LLŶN'S WILDLIFE SPECIES ESPECIALLY THOSE WHICH HAVE BEEN DESIGNATED UNDER EUROPEAN LAW AND THOSE WHICH ARE CLASSIFIED AS PRIORITY IN THE 2006 NERC ACT AND OPPOSE ANY HARMFUL DEVELOPMENTS.

The Llŷn AONB boasts an abundance of wildlife species. The tranquillity of the area and the unpolluted nature of the area have certainly contributed to the continuation of many species which are now considered rare in the British Isles. Some species have been designated for protection under European law and other denoted as priority species in the 2006 NERC Act. These have been classified as mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians, invertebrates, vascular plants, lichen, mosses and liverworts, fungi, stonewort and marine species. A variety of these are present in Llŷn.

- BP 4.** SUPPORT PROJECTS TO CREATE AND IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN IMPORTANT HABITAT AND WILDLIFE SITES.

Ecological connectivity between habitats and the movement of species through the landscape is all important for the long term state of biodiversity. The AONB Service, Gwynedd Council and other bodies will give priority to support and develop plans and projects to improve connectivity and create new connections. This will follow on various projects that have been implemented recently by Partneriaeth Tirlun Llŷn. Guidance on local priorities is provided in documents such as Natur Gwynedd, Llŷn Coastal Connectivity Strategy (2013) ac Llŷn Wildlife Audit (2013).

- BP 5.** PLACE AND EMPHASIS ON ASSESSING THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON INDIGENOUS HABITATS AND WILDLIFE SPECIES AND POSSIBLE MEASURES TO MANAGE THE SITUATION.

Climate change has been proven to take place and will have an effect on habitat and species. It's believed important to take steps to try and predict what effect climate change will have on the Llŷn AONB so that steps can be taken to address the issue. Details specialised information will be needed from bodies such as NRW (The State of Natural Resources Report – SoNNaRR), Wales Biodiversity Partnership, RSPB etc. .

- BP 6.** WORK IN PARTNERSHIP ON PROJECTS TO DEAL WITH INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS INVASIVE SPECIES INCLUDING RAISING AWARENESS AND METHODS OF TREATMENT AND ERADICATION.

Historically bracken was a problem in this area – it grows strongly on hillsides and dominates other plants. From the 1960s onwards a combination of chemical spray and dense stocking rates meant it was curtailed. Recently however there has been resurgence due to lower stocking and constraints on spraying (there may be a total ban on the most effective chemical spray soon). The aim is to support schemes to raise awareness and trial new methods to control bracken.

Japanese knotweed and Himalayan Balsam are the most common non-native invasive in the area with some small areas of rhododendron. To date these species have not spread widely although there has been an increase in sites and area especially of balsam. The

aim is to work in partnership to target known sites, raise awareness among landowners and arrange training.

BP 7. RAISE AWARENESS AND IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF IMPORTANT HABITATS AND WILDLIFE SPECIES IN LLŶN AND PROMOTE VOLUNTEERS TO TAKE PART IN RECORDING AND CONSERVATION PROJECTS.

Most local people and tourists have only a basic knowledge of Llŷn's important habitats and the wealth of wildlife here. Without knowledge and understanding it is difficult to appreciate the resource and take beneficial action. There is a need to work with conservation bodies such as NRW, National trust and the RSPB, Llŷn a'r Sarnau SCA etc to raise awareness and improve people's understanding, including schoolchildren.

BP 8. IMPROVE AWARENESS ON THE CONTRIBUTION MADE BY HABITATS AND WILDLIFE SPECIES IN PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES AND THE BENEFITS CONFERRED IN REGARD TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

The natural environment, including habitats and wildlife provide a range of ecosystem services for the benefit of people and communities. Biodiversity contributes to these services by processes such as water purification, CO₂ uptake, soil quality and pollination etc. Although there have been improvements of late there is still a lot to do as regards raising awareness among the general public and those working in social and healthcare services. The AONB Service and other partners can play a role in this and possibly develop and work together on projects.

Work, Produce and Skills

Key information (2011 figures have been amended for the AONB area)

- * Unemployment levels were lower in the AONB than the levels in Gwynedd and Wales.
- * Self-employment levels were significantly higher than the levels in Gwynedd and Wales.
- * A decrease was seen in employment levels in land ownership, manufacturing and the public sector since 2001.
- * Jobs in agriculture and forestry counted for over 8% of the employment total, whilst the tourism sector counted for a little over 17%.
- * Tourist expenditure in the AONB had increased by 5% since 2006
- * There had been an increase of 17% in the number of tourists to the AONB.
- * There had been a reduction in the number of day tourists.
- * There had been a reduction in visitors staying in serviced accommodation.
- * There had been a 12% reduction in the number of people employed in the tourism sector since 2006.

Introduction

Economic activities in the AONB and nearby are important due to their influence on different qualities of the area - for better and for worse. In addition, economic activities create produce, support skills and create jobs and, therefore, support the local community. When there's insufficient employment opportunities, or low salaries, people leave areas to search for work. Losing members of the community, including well-educated members, would impoverish the community and create other issues.

The economy in Llŷn, as in Rural Wales, is relatively weak with the levels of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head and the economic activity much lower than the British and European average. There are limited work opportunities in the area and, in general, the salary levels are low. This is reflected in a poorer community in terms of earnings and higher levels of deprivation. The fact that it's necessary to travel to services and facilities also contributes towards poverty and deprivation.

In Llŷn, there is much dependency on traditional industries, service industries and administration and there are no big companies or factories. The work opportunities in the rural areas are very limited and many travel to centres such as Pwllheli, Caernarfon and Bangor for work, services and goods.

As is common in the majority of rural Wales, many more young people leave the area than move into it. It's estimated that the annual percentage of the age group that leave the area is somewhere between 8% and 10%. Those who choose to live and work in the area tend to be connected to two main economic activities, namely agriculture and tourism. However, agriculture and tourism do not add significant value to the economy and there will likely be no growth in employment in these fields in future.

For the purpose of reviewing the Management Plan, information was received on economic and social matters through research by the Land Use Consultants company. The information was gathered from the 2011 Census and the STEAM tourism information.

Wherever possible, information was included on the level of Gwynedd and the whole of Wales in order to compare.

The results of the 2011 Census shows an increase in the proportion of the population that are of working age that are economically active across the Llŷn AONB. In the 2001 Census, the number of economically active people was lower than in Gwynedd and Wales, but this has now changed. The eastern area of the AONB has seen the biggest increase, with an increase of 11.9% in the number of people who are economically active. See Figure 5.6 in the LUC 2014 report.

In addition to a reduction in the number of people who are unemployed, there have been few changes in the population's constitution that are unemployed since 2001. A reduction was seen in those who were ill/disabled in the long-term and a small increase in those that cared for the home or a member of the family. The majority of the population who are of working age but that are economically inactive are retired people, and an increase was seen in this sector. See Figure 5.7 in the LUC 2014 report.

The LUC research work also shows lower levels of long-term and short-term unemployment compared to the level of Wales and the levels of self-employment in the AONB is higher than Gwynedd and Wales.

Guidelines from Natural Resources Wales on preparing the Management Plans of AONB note that having an economy (and, more specifically, economic activity) that is rooted locally is important in order to manage the quality of the AONB (these have to be living landscapes to be sustainable). Certainly, economic use, or lack of use, of the land and the surrounding sea strongly influences on the character of every landscape, including protected landscapes.

It's possible to measure to what degree the economy is rooted locally by considering factors such as:

- The expenditure proportion of the residents that buy goods and services locally (interpreted usually in terms of economic multipliers)
- The number of local workers (see the travelling to work pattern)
- The number of owners that live locally

In addition, where the environment is of high standard, it's likely to attract tourists and their expenditure proportion on local goods is also important.

For the purpose of the Management Plan of the AONB, the following was set as a Strategic Aim:

Strategic Aim

TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT SUITABLE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES THAT WILL BRING BENEFIT TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES ON THE CONDITION THAT THEY WILL NOT DISTURB THE AREA'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

Special characteristics

Agriculture

Agriculture has existed on the lands of Llŷn for many centuries. It's likely that the peninsula was originally woodland, with the exception of the high lands. However, as a result of agriculture, many of the trees were cut down and boundaries were created to manage land and livestock. Over the centuries, more robust boundaries were constructed to manage lands - they were dry stone walls or *cloddiau* with clay surfaces. In some places, thorn trees were also planted to create hedges. These early fields were quite small, and a number were connected to cottages or farms. The historic field pattern is seen clearly in some areas such as Rhiw and Uwchmynydd, and the boundaries are important in terms of the landscape's appearance, history, culture and wildlife.

Traditionally, the farms in Llŷn were mixed, and they bred animals, grew crops and kept chickens or geese etc. Many were also producing milk and, consequently, South Caernarfon Creameries was established in 1938, which continues to be an important employer in the area today.

As a result of joining the Common Market in 1973, more emphasis was placed on creating single produce and a tendency was seen to specialise in one type of farming - this tendency has continued to the present day. Grants were available for creating different types of produce, but this led to excess waste.

More emphasis was then placed on environmental matters in the 1980s and 1990s and agri-environment grant schemes were established such as the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA), Tir Gofal and Tir Cymen. Also, from 2003 onwards, the grants system was amended, leading to the Single Farm Payments that was designed, to a degree, to show more consideration towards the feeling of place, including environmental considerations.

Much of the Llŷn land is good agricultural land and the standard of the stock is generally high. The area creates agricultural produce of high standard, including lamb, beef, milk and bacon. A proportion of this produce is sold locally through direct sales or supplying small stores, but a large amount also leaves the area. There's not much production of vegetables, fruits and rarer meats e.g. venison, and it appears that there's an opportunity to produce more varied agricultural produce in the area as well as using more local produce. This could offer local economic and environmental benefits in terms of transporting goods.

Agriculture continues to be an important employer in the area although the Report on the condition of the AONB in 2014 showed that employment in agriculture and forestry had decreased. The employment comparison in every sector shows that agriculture and forestry provides 8.5% of employment (from the 2011 Census) whilst jobs relating to tourism provides 17.5% of employment (from the 2012 STEAM).

In addition to creating direct work for farmers and supporting rural families, the agricultural industry creates work directly for others – farm hands and contractors. Also, the industry supports many other businesses and jobs such as those that supply the industry with animal feed, fencing equipment, gates, machinery, etc. In addition, existing buildings need to be maintained and new buildings need to be erected regularly therefore work is provided for builders and craftsmen.

Farmers and their families also make invaluable contributions to maintaining history, culture and countryside practices. It's a Welsh community that maintains countryside practices, local history, and the names of fields and places, farm houses, and historic buildings and wells. Agricultural skills, such as constructing and maintaining stone walls, *cloddiau* and land management is very important in terms of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty's environment.

Another area in which Agriculture makes a contribution to the AONB is the diversification initiatives – creating income, salary and adding value and a resource for tourists. Due to the financial squeeze and the government's support, a number of farmers in Llŷn have diversified to bring additional income to their businesses. The most common enterprises are caravans, adapting outbuildings into holiday accommodation and outdoor activities. Agricultural diversification schemes are of assistance to support farm units and local communities, and support the local economy. However, some schemes could disrupt some special qualities of the AONB e.g. caravans in prominent places, noisy activities or unsuitable adaptations to agricultural buildings.

Forestry

During the 1950s and 1960s, the government had plans to produce more trees in Britain in order to be more self-sufficient in its produce. A number of pine woodlands were planted on high lands and other lands of low quality in Wales, England and Scotland. Only a limited number of pine forests are in the Llŷn AONB, namely near Garn Fawr, Moel Penllechog, Nant Gwrtheyrn, Garn Boduan, Garn Fadrun, the Rhiw area and the Glasfryn trees. Although pine trees aren't indigenous to the area, they have become part of the landscape's appearance. There's a significant visual impact when these forests are cut and the process of replanting starts because this leaves the landscape bare and open.

The LANDMAP landscape assessment has identified some woodlands as ones where there's a need to increase the number of broadleaf trees at the detriment of pine trees, namely Garn Boduan, Mynydd Rhiw and Garn Fadrun and this could create economic opportunities in terms of biodiversity.

There are few indigenous woodlands within the AONB but they form an important element of the landscape and the natural environment. There's ancient woodland on the side of Rhiw and other important woodlands in Cwmgward and Coed Elernion. These woodlands are protected with Tree Preservation Orders in addition to being Areas of Special Scientific Interest.

In terms of work and produce, the pine forests provide very little, with the exception of Glasfryn Fencing Centre near Llanaelhearn which is a little outside of the AONB. A number of local people work here and many various products are provided including firewood, planks, fences etc. but specifically fencing stakes.

Fishing

Fishing has been an important activity in Llŷn across the centuries. There was dependency on the marine produce as a food source as well as something to trade.

According to the tale, there were large catches of fish in the past, especially herring, in the Nefyn area. Frequently, the fish were cured in order to transport them to market. It's important to remember that a number of tales and folklores are attached to the marine industry and those fishermen, like the farmers, played a part in maintaining local history and industry.

Today, the main marine produce are bass, mackerels, crabs, lobsters, prawns and whelks. No recent figures have been published on the fishing industry's catches in this area but catching fish, crabs and lobsters continue to be a popular activity, mostly as a secondary source of income, although some full-time fishermen remain.

Although some fish and shellfish are sold locally, to individuals and restaurants, the tendency is to sell the produce to companies that transport them from the area. Therefore, much of the quality local marine produce leaves the area, and is sold frequently for quite low prices.

Recently, the National Trust worked with local lobster and crab fishermen to adapt cowsheds in Cwrt near Aberdaron to develop storage, chilling, processing and packaging facilities, in the hope that more of the produce's economic value will remain in the area. They have also improved the facilities for landing at Porth Meudwy nearby. It appears that there's potential to sell and use more local marine produce in Llŷn and that there are economic and environmental opportunities tied to this.

Quarry work and mineral mining

Quarrying and mineral mining were very important industries in Llŷn during the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. During that time, there were a number of granite quarries on the side of igneous hills that are scattered around the area – areas such as Trefor, Nant Gwrtheyrn, Nefyn Mountain and Tir y Cwmwd, Llanbedrog. Also, there was mineral mining in the Llanengan and Bwlchtocyn area (mainly lead) and manganese in the Rhiw area. It's possible to read more about these industries in local history books.

The quarries have had a striking impact on the peninsula's landscape and geology, but they have also provided raw materials for a large number of the area's historical buildings and it could be argued that there's justification to continue producing some local stone in order to maintain buildings and in order to ensure that new buildings in sensitive locations comply with traditional buildings. By now, only two granite quarries remain active in the Area of Beauty, namely the Trefor and Nanhoron quarries. The two quarries mainly produce on a small scale for the local market; therefore they provide for the local need and support some jobs. Also, the tradition of quarrying is maintained, and some of the old skills and tradition continue.

Due to the sensitivity of the AONB, the Heritage Coast, interest in nature, archaeological remains and the possible impact if the old quarries were re-opened, Gwynedd Council set a Prevention Order to regulate the situation at a number of sites in 2003.

Small companies and self-employment

Due to the rural nature of the area, there is a tradition of small businesses in Llŷn. Many of them supply the needs of homes or other businesses, especially agriculture. These businesses

are crucial as they support individuals and families and provide for the needs of the population and other businesses. Some of these businesses open their doors to tourists and therefore are a resource for tourists and local people.

Self-employment is high in the area as the Report on the condition of the AONB in 2014 confirms. This sector includes farmers, individual contractors, builders and plumbers, electricians, joiners etc. Again, these people provide a service for the local community and for those who own property in the area as well as maintaining property and lands, including some historical buildings and structures, *cloddiau*, walls, rural paths, etc.

Co-operative initiatives

Over the years, Llŷn and Eifionydd has been an area where a number of co-operative initiatives have been established. This is an example of a community taking steps to support and provide work and services within the community because companies or individuals did not see sufficient profit in doing so. The most obvious examples within the AONB itself are Tafarn y Fic and Siop y Groes in Llithfaen, whilst South Caernarfon Creameries in Rhyd y Gwystl, y Ffôr, is an important example and provides work for many in the area and processes local agricultural produce.

Public services

A large number of the area's population is employed in public service (local authority, health service, fire service etc.). Over recent years, substantial cuts were seen in the budgets of some of these services, which have led to far fewer job opportunities locally. However, the public sector remains an important employer locally, and the services that are provided are also important.

Tourism

The tourism industry is an important part of the local economy in Llŷn, creating and sustaining jobs and contributing towards supporting the communities. Also, the expenditure from tourists is a great boost to maintaining services and local facilities such as pubs, restaurants, cafés, hotels, shops and garages. As expected, studies have shown that the area's natural environment; the beaches, hills, paths and wildlife, is the area's main attraction. Ensuring a balance between profiting from the industry and over-development which would disrupt the area's qualities is important and necessary.

Recently, an increasing shift has been seen from the traditional British weekly and fortnightly holidays to shorter holidays - this is also true for Llŷn. Overall, this tendency is of economic benefit to the area, increasing the demand for making use of the area's natural leisure resources (the sea, public paths, the Coastal Path etc.) for longer periods of the year.

There is good provision of self-catering accommodation in Llŷn now - mainly as a result of buildings being amended into holiday accommodation and an increase in the number of caravans.

Information was received on tourist accommodation in Llŷn as part of the Survey in 2003, which showed that the majority stayed in self-catering accommodation - accommodation, holiday homes, caravans or camping. There has been a substantial reduction in those who stay in hotels, bed and breakfasts and other serviced accommodation and, as a result, there is a reduction in this type of establishment (a number of hotels have been demolished, and guest houses have been converted into private homes).

In recent years, Visit Wales has placed emphasis on outdoor activities, culture and history, as this will attract different types of people and extend the holiday season. Llŷn has much to offer in terms of this type of tourism, and it is more sustainable and more compatible with the area's qualities. It's already possible to partake in a variety of activities here and it's possible to visit a number of historical / cultural centres. An Ecomuseum was established here in 2014 and this is the first one to have been developed in Wales. It operates in partnership with seven heritage establishments: Nant Gwrtheyrn, Llŷn Maritime Museum, Felin Uchaf, Porth y Swnt, Plas yn Rhiw, Plas Glyn y Weddw, and Plas Heli. The implementation is digital by using new technology and social media in an innovative and positive way to attract a large audience to this special area. The Ecomuseum's aim is to increase cultural tourism and create a larger and more sustainable holiday season that will bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the area.

But there are side effects to the tourism industry as well. Overuse of paths and beaches create erosion, some activities are noisy or create conflict and litter is left in some places. Also, in some areas, caravans disrupt the landscape and high levels of second homes could impact the language and the culture. In addition, the industry places significant pressure on public and social services during the busy summer periods, and there are traffic jams in Abersoch and Pwllheli.

The Report on the condition of the AONB (2014) analyses the tourism levels within the Llŷn AONB, and the sector's economic contribution to the local economy, especially financial income and employment. According to the report, there had been a reduction in the number of tourists to the AONB, and the numbers had reduced by 17% since 2006 to 321,700 in 2011. The number of day visitors have seen the biggest reduction in numbers, although they still count for over half (52.7%) of all tourists to the AONB.

Between 2006 and 2011, there was an increase of £1.7 million (5%) to the tourism expenditure in the AONB to a total of £35.8m. Looking at the information, according to each sector a reduction can be seen in expenditure is accommodation. There was an increase in every other sector, and the biggest increase was in the leisure sector, where an increase of 23% in income was seen, which means that 7.4% of tourist expenditure in the AONB is spent on leisure.

The Report also shows the employment levels in the tourism sector within the AONB. It shows that the number of people employed by the sector has fallen (12%) to 711 individuals. This reduction has not been consistent across all sectors, as some sectors such as accommodation, shops, and food and drink have seen a greater reduction than leisure and transport.

Leisure

There is an opportunity to do many outdoor leisure activities in Llŷn, and this is certainly part of the area's appeal to tourists. As well as the broad network of public rights of way and the Coastal Path, there are a number of lands with open access and an opportunity to do a variety of other outdoor activities including cycling, horse riding and visit beaches.

Due to the area's geographical nature, many opportunities are connected to the sea and the coast. In addition to activities on the beach such as sports, sunbathing and fishing, it's possible to go rowing, sailing, canoeing, windsurfing or surfing. In 2015, Plas Heli's new National Sailing Academy at Pwllheli was opened and a variety of activities take place here, with an opportunity for local people and tourists to participate. Outdoor activities in the sea and on land are low impact ones that don't create pollution or congestions and it's likely that there's significant potential to develop some further activities of these types in Llŷn.

Indoor leisure resources also exist in the area. Amongst these, there are some centres that have been established for a while, such as the small stately home of Plas yn Rhiw, the Language and Heritage Centre - Nant Gwrtheyrn, Canolfan Hanes Uwchgwyrfaï in Clynnog, and Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw.

Recently, indoor attractions have opened in the area, increasing the choice for visitors, including the Maritime Museum and the Cwrw Llŷn Brewery in Nefyn, Porth y Swnt (National Trust) in Aberdaron, Menter y Felin Uchaf in Rhoshirwaun and Plas Heli in Pwllheli.

Recently the first Ecomuseum in Wales was established here in Llŷn. The Ecomuseum's aim is to celebrate the area's distinctive identity and character by promoting seven heritage sites, namely Nant Gwrtheyrn, Llŷn Maritime Museum, Felin Uchaf, Porth y Swnt, Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw, Plas yn Rhiw and Plas Heli's Sailing Academy.

The Ecomuseum operates completely digitally through social media in order to appeal to a wide audience. It aims to promote a cultural tourism industry and to extend the holiday season for the economic, environmental and social benefit of the Llŷn Peninsula.

Key Issues

Lack of various employment opportunities

As was shown, the economy here in Llŷn is quite limited with dependency on the traditional industries - agriculture, fishing and forestry. It's believed that there are opportunities to establish new businesses to produce process and sell local produce - a number of examples were seen of this recently.

There's also dependency on jobs in the public sector - teaching, local government, professional service and the hospitality industry (including shops, restaurants, pubs, etc.). Hopefully there will be no more cuts in these fields.

There are more varied opportunities in the towns of Caernarfon, Porthmadog and Bangor nearby but it's quite a journey to these places from Llŷn which means time and additional costs

and, as a result, this is not an option for some.

The worldwide web has created opportunities for existing businesses to expand and for new businesses locally. It's possible to market to the world through the web and the transport service is very effective these days. It's believed that there are further opportunities to expand existing businesses and establishing new businesses that aren't limited to location (i.e. there is no need to be near specific markets).

Develop new enterprises and the expansion of existing enterprises

There are opportunities to further promote local produce – to use it and process it locally in order to add value to the produce and create work locally. In terms of this, using the AONB as part of the produce branding could be beneficial. Provide support to local companies with marketing their produce and place emphasis on buying local produce. It's also believed that diversification and entrepreneurial needs to be promoted and encouraged in terms of existing and new businesses.

Tendencies in farming

Farming has changed much since the middle of the last century and this has had a clear impact on the area's landscape, and the community in general. In the 1970s and the 1980s, there was much land draining and treating, demolishing *cloddiau*, fertilizing and using pesticides. Unfortunately, many of these actions have had an impact on the area's landscape and wildlife. Attached to this, farms were seen uniting and fewer were being employed in the industry, impacting on the local society and culture.

The tendency for some farm businesses to expand at the expense of others seems to continue, and specialising in a specific method of farming was also seen - be it beef cattle, sheep or dairy produce. As a result of this, there is a need for new resources and new agricultural sheds, yards and milking parlours has become common.

Agri-environment plans that started with the ESA Plan have been beneficial to maintain the agricultural industry as well as supporting, sustaining and recreating local historical and natural qualities. This was continued with the most recent scheme, namely Glastir, and the continuation of this scheme would be beneficial to the AONB's natural environment, and beyond.

Broadband and Mobile Phone Service

By now, good and reliable broadband is very important to a number of businesses, as well as mobile phone service. As expected in rural areas at the moment, the broadband service is sub-standard. Also, due to the coastal and hilly nature of the area, the mobile phone service is poor in some areas.

The Welsh Government is committed to ensure that everyone has access to Superfast Broadband. The Superfast Cymru project will bring this service to the majority of homes and businesses in Wales that will not be receiving it through the service by the private sector.

The money comes from the Welsh Government and the UK, the EU and BT. Also, the Welsh Government is working with Airband to bring high speed wireless broadband to other places that will not be part of the commercial provision or Superfast Cymru.

Also, the Welsh Government is looking at other technologies at some other places without service.

Cuts in public spending

Substantial cuts were seen in public services in recent years. This has had a substantial impact on Gwynedd Council Departments, National Resources Wales etc. meaning less money for capital work and jobs relating to countryside and wildlife conservation.

This will have an impact on the tourism industry due to:

- closing tourism centres, including the one in Pwllheli
- less expenditure on tourism marketing material e.g. leaflets, etc.
- closing public toilets

It has also meant less work opportunities locally and less work for contractors. There might be an opportunity for co-operative enterprises to provide some of the services and facilities that have been lost and to create jobs.

Brexit and the European Union

Britain has been a member of the European Community since 1973. The result of the referendum to leave the European Union in June 2016 has created great uncertainty in terms of the economy, environment and the movement of people throughout the United Kingdom.

When reviewing the Management Plan, it was not possible to anticipate what the impact of Brexit would be on this area, but concerns exist on the economic impact as a result of:

- Reduction in the value of the £ against the euro
- Grants to agriculture and other businesses through the Rural Development Plan
- Losing access to European grant funds
- The future of Regulations and European Conservation Designations.

The environmental impact of tourism

Over-development of the tourism industry can place pressure on the area's natural environment as a result of issues such as traffic, erosion and pollution. So far, the erosion of sites due to overuse, and litter aren't large problems but traffic jams in Pwllheli and Abersoch during the peak holiday periods create difficulties and increase the air pollution levels.

Static caravans, chalets and touring caravans have a negative impact on the AONB's landscape in some locations, especially in the Abersoch and Sarn Bach area. An increase was also seen in the number of sites and touring caravans across the northern coast and the inland over recent years. Information from the Public Protection Unit, Gwynedd Council (2015) confirms the

small increase in touring caravans and tents in the AONB but, ideally, a thorough and detailed assessment is needed on caravans and tents in the area. Another factor to consider is that some owners and site operators keep more caravans than they should. It's believed that supervision and effective management is crucial, as well as considering opportunities to reduce the impact of existing sites by landscaping and that there is a need to consider additional protection to some sensitive parts of the area.

As a result of the tourism industry's importance to the area, a number of leisure activities are available, as previously explained. Of course, local people also take part in some of these activities. Overall, it doesn't appear that any activities create problems or disrupt the area's special qualities. It's likely that one cause for concern, however, is the conflict between different users on the area's beaches during the summer.

The increase of awareness of environmental matters, and the increase in travel costs, will likely lead to growth in the demand for holidays in high quality environment areas.

POLICIES

GP 1. PROMOTE THE CONTINUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY BY ENCOURAGING INITIATIVES TO DEVELOP NEW PRODUCE, PROCESS MORE LOCAL PRODUCE, MARKETING AND MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING SKILLS.

Agriculture is an integral part of the Llŷn Peninsula and the AONB. Traces of farming from early days can be seen in the landscape and it is those practices and methods of farming that have given the landscape its present character. The agricultural community – the farmers and their families and also farm workers play an important part in the area's communities and enable the continuation of tradition, skills, practices, culture and language.

There have been many changes to farming in recent times – changes in policies, mechanization, markets and environmental regulations. But there are more changes to come as a result of leaving the European Union.

Whilst reviewing this Plan, an opportunity was established to support the agricultural industry by encouraging new produce – processing and selling more local produce and maintaining and developing skills.

GP 2. AIM TO ENSURE THAT NEW AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS ARE NOT HARMFUL TO THE AONB'S LANDSCAPE OR ENVIRONMENT.

It's clear that agriculture has to adapt as any other industry and that this will mean the need for buildings, slurry pits, silage pits etc. It is important to ensure that these developments are not made at the expense of the area's landscape and environment. Careful positioning (near other buildings if possible), design, colouring and landscaping can help. The aim therefore is to manage developments in order to limit the effect of new developments and this can include preparing and distribute a specific Design Guide.

GP 3. SUPPORT THE LLŶN FISHING INDUSTRY BY PROMOTING AND MARKETING MORE USE OF LOCAL PRODUCE AS WELL AS LOCAL PROCESSING INITIATIVES IN ORDER TO ADD VALUE

By now, only a few individuals make a full time living from fishing but the industry continues to be important locally and maintains a tradition that reaches back over hundreds of years. It is apparent that not much of the produce is sold and used locally – much is carried out of the area. It is thought that there are opportunities for more marketing and processing of local marine produce and to have more local businesses such as hotels and restaurants to use it and direct promoting within other local markets.

GP 4. PROMOTE THE USE OF LOCAL PRODUCE AND SERVICES FOR THE BENEFIT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Even though there is emphasis on agricultural and marine produce in the area, other various products are made here also. Although not obvious, two granite quarries are still open and their product is useful for constructions and road works etc. There is a forestry initiative at Glasfryn and other smaller ones in other locations. Helping to promote and sell, such as through local markets, would be useful.

GP 5. URGE THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE AREA'S BROAD BAND AND MOBILE PHONE SERVICES, AS LONG AS THIS WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT ON THE AONB'S LANDSCAPE AND COASTLINE.

In this day and age, keeping in touch and marketing is all important to businesses of all kind. Due to the area's rural and coastal nature, a broad band and mobile phone connection is poor in some areas, and this poses a disadvantage. The aim therefore is to support improvements in places that wouldn't affect the AONB's landscape and urge masts to be divided, and search for locations for new masts that are not prominent.

GP 6. PROMOTE AND ASSIST COOPERATIVE INITIATIVES AS A FORM OF RUNNING BUSINESSES, PROVIDING SERVICES AND SUPPORT JOBS

Some cooperative initiatives already exist in the area such as Tafarn y Fic, Siop y Groes and South Caernarfon Creameries. In a rural area such as Llŷn, it is believed that there is potential to expand this and establish new ventures in order to maintain businesses, services and jobs. These, in turn, maintain communities.

GP 7. SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW INITIATIVES AND DIVERSIFICATION VENTURES AS LONG AS THEY ARE NOT ON A SCALE, OR IN A LOCATION, THAT WOULD PUT UNACCEPTABLE PRESSURE ON THE AONB'S ENVIRONMENT.

Recently, many new businesses were established such as Pwyth Pistyll, Mirsi, Cwrw Llŷn, Glasu and Llaethdy Llŷn. New inherent businesses such as these are extremely important due to the income they create and the job opportunities they provide. Businesses such as these are compatible with the area and help young people find work locally. With partners therefore, the aim

is to assist present businesses and establish similar new ones.

- GP 8. ENCOURAGE NEW BUSINESSES, INCLUDING THE TOURISM SECTOR, TO BE MORE SUSTAINABLE IN TERMS OF ENERGY USE, RECYCLING AND MEANS OF TRAVELLING.

Maintaining and protecting the natural environment is one of the Management Plan's main aims therefore there is emphasis on reducing the side-effects that businesses have on the environment. The AONB Service and other organisations will co-operate to raise awareness on ways to save energy and renewable energy that are compatible with the AONB. Pressure also will be made to reduce pollution and other ways of travelling such as cycling, public transport and the Llŷn Coastal Bus.

- GP 9. SUPPORT NEW OUTDOOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES AS LONG AS THEY ARE NOT ON A SCALE, OR IN A LOCATION, THAT WOULD PUT UNACCEPTABLE PRESSURE ON NATURAL RESOURCES.

Outdoor activities have achieved popularity and there are many natural resources for this type of leisure in Llŷn. It seems that there are opportunities to further develop these types of leisure activities, thus benefiting from the industry and creating job opportunities locally. It is important to ensure that initiatives will not affect the special qualities and initiatives will be assessed and only the suitable ones supported.

- GP 10. PROMOTE CURRENT AND NEW TOURISM INITIATIVES, ESPECIALLY THOSE BASED ON LOCAL HISTORY AND CULTURE, AS LONG AS THEY WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT ON THE AONB'S LANDSCAPE OR ENVIRONMENT OR THE NEARBY AREA.

The tourism industry brings a substantial economic gain to the area and provides jobs and creates income that maintains local services and businesses. Some new suitable initiatives can add to the range of activities for visitors as well as local people. Therefore, support will be given to current and new activities, which are compatible to the area's special qualities, especially ventures relating to local history and culture.

People and Communities

- The AONB's population has increased by 4% since 2001 and now stands at 6,108.
- The AONB's population reflects an ageing population, with most people between 60-74 years of age.
- There was a 12.6% reduction in the number of those born in the AONB between 1981 and 2011.
- House prices reduced in the AONB, except in the Morfa Nefyn and Tudweiliog areas.
- The number of families with dependent children in the AONB has remained stable since 2001.
- The level of people with a limiting long-term illness has reduced in the AONB since 2001, in line with the national decrease.
- The AONB has seen a small reduction in the levels of deprivation since 2005.

Introduction

What is an area without its people? Local Llŷn people and the society that they form are a core part of the area's character. As with the naturally beautiful landscape and the wealth of wildlife, the society and its people are a unique feature of the Peninsula and the Management Plan recognises this. The aim is for the Plan to play a part in protecting and maintaining the native Llŷn communities as well as aiding incomers to learn about the history, culture and language and to become part of the community.

As well as maintaining the area's unique language and culture, the society has also added to the area's natural environment such as cultivating the land, maintaining trees and building stone walls and "cloddiau". Also, local building craftsmen such as carpenters and stone masons are important, being the people who have built and maintained the area's traditional buildings.

Of course the wellbeing and living conditions of local people are important. Therefore this part of the Management Plan also pays attention to basic needs in terms of homes, services and facilities – matters that affect the wellbeing and quality of life of Llŷn's residents.

Main Aim

PROMOTING MORE VIABLE COMMUNITIES WITH THE PROVISION OF HOMES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES AVAILABLE LOCALLY.

Special Qualities

The General Population

As stated, Llŷn's people and the society that they form are an integral part of the AONB's character. It's important therefore that this Plan pays due attention to people's circumstances and the key issues that affect them.

With 71.8% of the population in the AONB's communities being Welsh speakers, they maintain the language and the area's unique culture. The society also maintains and adds to the area's natural environment with many craftsmen and workers with specialist skills.

A recent report to the State of the AONB (2014), found that the population had increased by 4% since 2001 and now stands at 6,108. The population is characterized by an ageing population, with the most numbers between 60 and 74 years old. The fact that many people live for longer is partly responsible for this but also the nature of the area is changed due to migration. There is a constant migration from the area from young people born and bred in the area. The main reasons for this were highlighted in the previous Plan, in a study by Bangor University to migration in Gwynedd and Môn. No changes are foreseen in the following reasons:

- a reduction in jobs in traditional industries
- lack of new work opportunities
- lack of education opportunities
- a wish to live a different way of life (e.g. in a town)
- a wish to live in a specific place.

Many factors attract people who are born and bred here to leave – such as education, jobs, city life and family/friends connections.

On the other hand, people and families move into the area. Figures show that a high proportion of people who move into the area are people who have retired but recently and increase was seen in the number of families or middle-aged. In 2011, it was stated that 65.9% of the AONB population were born in Wales – this has reduced over the past three censuses, thus showing an increase in migration into the area.

People from other parts of Wales or Britain are those who mainly move to Llŷn but there are some ethnic minorities also. In general there are two caravans of people who tend to move into the area – older people who have retired and families who chose to change their way of life and leave urban areas to live in the countryside.

Social Capital in Llŷn

The term used to summarize the patterns and connections that exist in societies and the various values that unite people are “social capital”. The stronger the interrelation between people, then the stronger the feelings are of community spirit.

These community connections include a feeling of relation and neighbourhood, social

patterns and participation in events. A study has shown that social capital is very important and that there is connection between this and people's health, educational achievements, success in employment and crime levels. Measuring social capital can be complicated and usually this is done by opinion polls that ask questions such as:

- levels of trust, is the neighbourhood safe?
- levels of membership in groups, societies or clubs;
- connection with friends and families

Whilst reviewing this Plan, it was not possible to hold specific surveys to research the strength of social capital in Llŷn but general information suggests that it is very strong. The main factors to suggest this are:

- On the whole, the neighbourhood works well together and there is a high level of trust between residents. Crime levels are low in the area.
- There are a high number of members in groups, societies and clubs – such as Merched y Wawr, Chapel/Churches, Young Farmers Clubs, Sports Clubs, Literature and Social Clubs etc.
- There is a strong connection between people, friends and families and many people know each other and are aware of family connections;
- There are certain obvious caravans in Llŷn. This is especially true in smaller villages where everyone knows each other and there is a strong feeling of belonging. Also, there is a strong relationship between people in the same line of work – such as farmers, builders, teachers etc.

Maintaining language and culture

It is the Llŷn residents who have been responsible for maintaining the area's special culture over the centuries and maintained the Welsh language – which are in themselves important characteristics and matters that have been recognised as some of Llŷn's special qualities in this Plan. Culture is a very varied of course, and includes traditions, stories, tales and superstitions. Detailed attention was given in the last Plan to language and culture as part of Llŷn's prominent qualities.

Practicing and maintaining skills

As well as this, Llŷn's people have key environmental and rural skills that are transferred from generation to generation and also nurtured from new. These skills have been vital in creating and supporting the features that are appreciated today – such as the “cloddiau”, stone walls, buildings and traditional structures.

The main rural skills are:

- Building and maintaining “cloddiau” and dry stone walling
- Building and adapting historical buildings – carpentry, lime mortar, re-roofing with slates etc.
- Traditional farming methods e.g. maintaining hay fields, wetlands, hedges and

woodlands.

- Generally maintaining fields and managing invasive species.

Community Facilities

Sufficient facilities and service are important to nurture a society and maintaining social capital. At the moment, there is a good provision of traditional community facilities such as village halls and buildings for public use (e.g. religious buildings) in the area. These are important for holding activities such as meetings, training courses, entertainment, fundraising events etc.

Recently much of these buildings have been improved and made more energy efficient. It should be aimed to preserve these buildings for the future due to their importance to the area's community life. Also, it needs to be ensured that that buildings and facilities are suitable for disabled use and that there are efficient facilities for certain modern activities such as computers and the internet.

There are many leisure facilities in the area – for the local populations and visitors. They include the all-weather fields at Ysgol Botwnnog, Clwb Chwaraeon Bodegroes and Canolfan Hamdden Dwyfor. They offer various leisure activities including a swimming pool, fitness room, badminton, tennis and squash courts, football pitch and training field.

There are examples also of successful cooperative ventures in the area that provide community service such as Tafarn y Fic and Siop Pen y Groes in Llithfaen. Greater details regarding this issue can be found in the chapter on Work, Produce and Skills.

Key Issues

Young People Moving Away

This is a subject that greatly affects the area. Young people are drawn away from the area for many reasons. Amongst the most obvious are lack of jobs, lack of suitable jobs, studying and also the appeal of living in a town or city. Due to the lack of any further education establishment in the area and the increasing emphasis on qualifications, it is foreseen that young people will continue to leave the area for education reasons – with quite a high percentage not returning to the area.

Also it is foreseen that the tendency to leave the area to search for work will continue as opportunities decline further in the traditional industries and with it being unlikely that any production industry will establish in the area.

If young people wish to live and work in the area, it is important to try and ensure that opportunities are available to them and a variety of suitable jobs and course. More attention is given to this in the chapter in Work, Produce and Skills. It is believed also that there is an opportunity to raise awareness amongst young people about the advantages of living locally, or returning to the area after a period living away.

Moving into the Area

People have moved into this area at certain times for years and that has created diversity in the community. Historically, people moved here to work in mining or quarrying and some came during the war but recently people have been moving here as they have chosen a new way of life. Moving to the area is something that can influence a community and influence the use of the language and the culture which is part of the area's unique character.

Measures need to be taken to raise awareness of the area's history and culture amongst people who move into the area and try to assimilate them into the community.

Holiday homes and house prices

Ensuring suitable homes for residents is important. Difficulties in finding a home or suitable accommodation can be part of the reason why people move from the area.

Second/holiday homes form a significant part of the area's housing stock. Naturally, the numbers vary between different areas with the numbers in the popular holiday areas such as Llanengan and Llanbedrog being very high. Also, holiday homes create additional competition for homes in the area and influences house prices. Certainly, the fact that Llŷn is such a beautiful area appeals to have a second home here.

Although figures show reduction in house prices in all areas in Llŷn between 2008 and 2013, apart from the parishes of Aberdaron, Morfa Nefyn and Tudweiliog, house prices continue to be high – especially considering local wages. Some plans have been put in place however to help local people by agencies such as Gwynedd Council and private developers to provide affordable housing. Helping local people to gain local homes is important and promoting plans to assist to purchase or rent for reasonable prices is part of this.

Between 1997 and 2003, there was a 96.9% increase in house prices in Gwynedd, compared to 84.8% for the whole of Wales. More recent information shows that house prices in Llŷn has reduced in some areas – in line with national trend. More recent information was not received for local house prices but the impression is given that prices have increased gradually in most parts and increased significantly in popular coastal areas.

Empty Homes

Information in the State of the AONB Report (2014) shows that two areas in the AONB (West and East) have on average more empty homes than Gwynedd and Wales. Also there is a great difference between empty homes in the East (19.7% without regular occupants) and West (36.7% without regular occupants). Gwynedd Council have implemented an Empty Homes scheme and perhaps there is an opportunity to promote such scheme specifically in Llŷn due to the high percentage of empty homes and the potential to provide homes for local people.

Rural Deprivation

A reduction was seen over recent decades in service and facilities in the area – such as shops, post offices, pubs, garages etc. especially in villages and in the most western areas. Also, there were financial cuts in the public sector to provide service and facilities, in an attempt to achieve savings.

Nefyn, Abersoch and Pwllheli are the main centres that offer opportunity for AONB residents. Places such as Botwnnog, Morfa Nefyn and Llanbedrog offer a moderate level of service, whilst service are very scarce in very rural areas such as Ceidio, Dinas and Llangwinnadl. Detailed information about specific service in each area can be found in the Joint Local Development Plan (2015).

In terms of the services available, they are undoubtedly affected by the area's rural nature. Statistics in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2014) shows this. With a scattered and ageing population, access to important services can be difficult and there are schemes in the area such as the O Ddrws i Ddrws which is an important resource to meet the demand.

Fuel Poverty

According to recent estimates, around 23% of all households in Wales suffer from fuel poverty and it's important that the area's residents receive every support to use energy more efficiently in their homes and help to deal more effectively with any increase in energy prices in the future. Relevant schemes such as the Warm Homes Nest Scheme by Welsh Government are important in this context and again there needs to be enough information and support available locally. This is especially true following the end of the Communities First projects in the area.

Policies

CP 1. SUPPORTING PLANS TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE LOCAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND MAKE THEM SUITABLE FOR DISABLED USE AND MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT

It's important that local communities have convenient places to meet and hold social events. Through hard work, many improvements have been undertaken over the last few years but there is room for improvement yet again and the AONB Service and other partners will support plans to improve the condition of buildings and make them more energy efficient as well as improving access/facilities for those with disabilities.

CP 2. EMPHASISE ON GETTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO CARING FOR THE LOCAL HERITAGE INCLUDING VOLUNTARY WORK

Communities certainly have an interest in history and local heritage considering the amount of talks, exhibitions etc. are held and how many participate. However, not much practical or voluntary work is currently undertaken even though some features such as holy wells genuinely need constant maintenance. The AONB Service will work with others to encourage interest in this area with the hope of establishing a Society or similar organisation to lead on practical conservation work here in Llŷn.

CP 3. EMPHASIS ON RAISING AWARENESS AMONGST YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT THE AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES AND OTHER ADVANTAGES OF LIVING LOCALLY

Figures show that many young people leave the area for reasons such as education, work, new experiences etc. It is of course important for young people to gain education and new experiences but it is believed that there is a need to raise awareness of living locally and returning here in the future.

CP 4. SUPPORT PLANS TO RESTORE AND RE-USE EMPTY HOMES IN THE AREA

It's certain that young people find it difficult to compete on the housing market due to high prices and limited stock. Research has shown that there is higher percentage than average of empty homes in Llŷn and these houses could contribute to meet the local need for homes. Gwynedd Council have had an Empty Homes scheme for years by now, and provides advice, grants, loans and VAT reductions. Also, Welsh Government has a Houses into Homes scheme that provide interest-free loans to restore and re-use empty homes and Home Improvements Loans. There is scope to raise awareness and promote the scheme in the area.

CP 5. PROMOTE NEW PLANS TO MAKE HOMES MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT, SAVE ENERGY AND CREATE DOMESTIC RENEWABLE ENERGY.

Many homes in the area are historic and not very efficient in terms of energy use. As a result, they are more costly to heat and many rely on oil, coal or fire wood to heat them, thus contributing to CO2 emission. High costs of energy contribute to rural deprivation. The AONB Service and other partners support plans to save energy and create domestic renewable energy as long as they would not impair the character of historic houses or

the landscape.

- CP 6.** WHEN THERE IS A GENUINE NEED, NEW AFFORDABLE HOMES WILL BE SUPPORTED TO MEET LOCAL NEED, AS LONG AS THE PROPOSAL KEEPS WITH THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE AND THAT THE DESIGN IS SUITABLE FOR THE SITE

Preferably, local people could buy or rent houses from the current stock and the hope is that empty homes can contribute to this. In some cases however, especially in communities where houses for sale are scarce, new affordable homes can be justified. The AONB Service support initiatives to build new affordable homes when there is genuine need and when the plan suits the AONB's special landscape in terms of location and design.

- CP 7.** SUPPORT INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS THAT HELP PEOPLE WHO MOVE TO THE AREAS TO LEARN ABOUT THE AREA'S HISTORY AND CULTURE AND LEARN THE WELSH LANGUAGE

People have moved to Llŷn at certain periods and this has contributed to the creation of the community today. It is important to raise awareness amongst people who move to the area about the area's history, culture and tradition by various means. Also, emphasis should be put on learning the Welsh language which is an important part of the area's character. Already, there are many good plans and ventures in this area including Gwynedd Council, which puts emphasis on educating through the medium of Welsh.