



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, TUESDAY, 20TH NOVEMBER, 2018

Location

Plas Heli, Pwllheli, LL53 5YQ

Contact Point

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LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

Gwynedd Councillors

**Anwen Davies
Simon Glyn
John Brynmor Hughes
Aled Wyn Jones
Gareth Williams**

Others

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

Gwynedd Council's Countryside Champion

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,
Llŷn Fishermen's Association.**

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 Chair shall propose that the minutes of this committee, held on 17 July 2018, be signed as a true record.

5. WALES COASTAL PATH

To receive a presentation from the Coastal Path Project Officer.

6. UPDATE ON THE LLŶN AONB SERVICE'S PROJECTS

9 - 10

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer.

7. REVIEW OF DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

11 - 13

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

8. TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AT PISTYLL

14 - 15

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 17/7/18

Present:

Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Local Access Forum) (Chairman)
Councillor Gareth Williams (Gwynedd Council) (Vice-chairman)

Members: Councillors Anwen Davies, Aled Wyn Jones and John Brynmor Hughes (Gwynedd Council), Noel Davey (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), Jina Gwyrfai (Llanaelhaearn Community Council), Laura Hughes (National Trust), T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council), Gruffydd Williams (Nefyn Town Council) and Wenda Williams (Aberdaron Community Council).

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

Others invited: Alan Jones (SP Energy Networks)

Apologies: John Gosling (Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership), Sianelen Fleming (Pistyll Community Council), Sian Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council), Alun Price (Natural Resources Wales) and Gillian Walker (Cyfeillion Llŷn).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Morgan Jones-Parry as Chairman for 2018/19.

2. VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to re-elect Councillor Gareth Williams as Vice-chairman for 2018/19.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

4. URGENT ITEMS

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that in error he had not included the following item on the agenda.

Under-grounding electricity cables

Alan Jones (SP Energy Networks) was welcomed to the meeting. He gave a presentation on the scheme to under-ground electricity cables within the AONB and noted that updating meetings were conducted with AONB officers every six months. He gave details of the work that was completed during the period 2010-15 at Aberdesach, Rhiw and Llithfaen and the work that had been completed and was on-going since 2015 at Mynydd Cilan, Mynytho Common, Sarn Bach, Dwyros and Bryncynan. It was noted that a budget of £8 million had been earmarked for the 3 AONB's and National Parks in North Wales for the period 2015-22 and that it was necessary to identify future projects.

In response to members' comments regarding the landslip as a result of water erosion following the completion of under grounding work at Nant Gwrtheyrn, and the safety of the restoration work, the representative from SP Energy Networks noted that he would look into the matter.

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager enquired about the under grounding work on Mynytho Common. In response, the representative from SP Energy Networks noted that the work would progress once the landowner had given permission.

In response to a question from a member regarding who decided on the sites where under grounding of electricity cables was to be undertaken, the SP Energy Networks representative explained that the AONB officers suggested potential sites and he considered the practicalities of under grounding electricity cables at those sites. He elaborated that operating on the sites where it was practically possible to undertake the work was dependent on receiving permission from the landowner. He explained that a landowner received a way-leave payment for electricity cables above ground due to their impact on day to day agricultural work with a smaller payment for under-grounded electricity cables. He further explained that a landowner could give notice to terminate permission if there was no easement operational on the land. He noted that the use of an easement on land was rare as it was a more difficult process.

A member asked what was the total length of overhead electricity cables in the AONB. In response, the representative from SP Energy Networks noted that only a small portion of the whole network was overhead. He added that they focused on the most practical areas for under-grounding electricity cables.

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager drew attention to an article in the 'Llygad Llŷn' magazine on the work completed at Cilan.

A member referred to an electricity transformer that was no longer in operation near the former Nefyn sewerage works and asked could it be removed. The representative from SP Energy Networks noted that he would look into the matter.

The Chair thanked the representative from SP Energy Works for his presentation.

The representative from SP Energy Networks noted that he would contact the Llŷn AONB Service Manager regarding potential sites for under-grounding electricity cables.

Countryside Champion

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that Councillor Angela Russell had been appointed as Countryside Champion by Gwynedd Council. He expanded that her role would be to promote countryside matters. He explained that the Champion received an invitation to Joint Committee meetings as an observer, however, there was an option to amend the constitution to include the Countryside Champion as a full member of the Joint Committee.

In response to a question by a member regarding the appointment process, the Countryside and Access Manager noted that the Environment Cabinet Member was responsible for the appointment and the Councillor had been chosen as she was previously the Biodiversity Champion.

RESOLVED to amend the Joint Committee's constitution to include Gwynedd Council's Countryside Champion as a full member of the Joint Committee.

5. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Joint Committee, that took place on 20 December 2017, as a true record.

6. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager submitted the report and he noted that the AONB Management Plan had been formally adopted by the Council via the delegated procedure of the Environment Cabinet Member.

He referred to the next review of the Management Plan, and noted that Natural Resources Wales, who were coordinating the national work on the AONB, had started to prepare new guidance for the next review. He noted that it appeared that as a result of recent developments regarding the The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Environment Act (Wales) 2016 and with the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, that there would be some changes to the process and it was likely that the status of the plans would be higher.

In response to a member's question regarding the status of the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in Wales following leaving the European Union, the Countryside and Access Manager noted that they had been designated under statute.

A member enquired about the publication of the Management Plan. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that the Plan had been sent to the print-room, and he explained that hard copies would be available soon and an electronic version would be published on the internet.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

7. NATIONAL MATTERS

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager submitted the report providing an update on the review of Designated Landscapes (National Parks and AONB) in Wales.

He noted that Hannah Blythyn AM, had been appointed as Minister for the Environment in November 2017, and that she now had responsibility for designated landscapes in Wales. He reported that the Minister had confirmed in a statement to the Senedd on 13 March 2018, that the Welsh Government was committed to designated landscapes. He added that she had noted that there was equality for the AONB with the National Parks in terms of planning policy, however, this was not true in terms of status, profile and resources. A further announcement was expected at the Royal Welsh Show.

In response to a question by a member in the context of further funding for the AONB, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that there was no reference to further funding but the minister's comments were positive and it was hoped that there would be more status to the AONB.

A member noted that it would be difficult to achieve without further funding. A member asked if consideration should be given to giving the Welsh Government a figure regarding how much funding was required to achieve this. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that if the status of the AONB was maximised to be of the same status as the National Parks, it was expected that the Welsh Government would outline the procedures and would then look at the resources to achieve this. He added that discussions were ongoing between the five AONB, Natural Resources

Wales and the AONB Association in order to submit a proposal to the Welsh Government in the near future.

A Member noted that the Minister's statement was exciting, prior to the statement it was very unclear as to the status and aims of the AONB. He added that he had concerns that the recommendations of Professor Terry Marsden in his report 'National Landscapes - Realising their Potential' would not be achieved. In response to the above observations, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that Professor Terry Marsden's report had 69 recommendations, he hoped that the most important recommendations would be implemented.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

8. PLANNING RELATED MATTERS

A report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Service Manager informing members of three planning appeals for developments within the AONB, namely:

- The Shanty, Abersoch (Planning Application no. C17/1024/39/LL) - the appeal was approved;
- Adjacent to Glynllifon, Llanbedrog (Planning Application no. C17/0725/38/AM - the appeal was refused;
- Trees near Gorse Bank, Abersoch (Planning Application no. C17/1185/39/CC – the appeal was refused.

A member referred to Policy TWR2 'Holiday Accommodation' in the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (JLDP), stating his concern about the increase in the number of applications to convert buildings into holiday accommodation. He noted that it was part of the policy to approve such applications as part of extending existing holiday accommodation establishments. He elaborated that it was difficult to undertake research in terms of over provision of self-catering accommodation in the area and the policy was open-ended as it did not state a percentage. He noted that he had requested for the policy to be reviewed.

In response to the above observations, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager stated that he shared the concern as the previous policy which referred to traditional buildings had been weakened.

A member referred to the 'Trees near Gorse Bank, Abersoch' appeal, and noted that similar trees had been removed over the road to Whitehouse, Abersoch and trees had been trimmed near the golf course. He stressed that it was necessary to keep an eye on such cases.

In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he would mention the above to the Biodiversity Unit, however, if the trees had no tree preservation order it was not possible to prevent this.

A member noted that the planning policies let down the area's young people with planning applications to re-construct stone buildings being refused. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he would convey the observations to the Joint Planning Policy Unit. A member noted that the matter had been raised at a meeting of Joint Planning Policy Committee.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

9. PROJECTS

The Llŷn AONB Projects Officer submitted her report on the work of the AONB Service. An update was given on the following projects:

- Common land survey
- Invasive species
- Rural skills training
- Improve access
- Dark sky

A member enquired if it was permitted to take a motorbike over common land. A member noted that it was Natural Resources Wales who were responsible for managing them. In response to the above observations, the Countryside and Access Manager explained that only access on foot was allowed on open land, however, there were other rights in some places.

A member referred to Moel Saethon where there was an Iron Age hill fort. It was noted that it was open land and there was no public footpath. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he had sought permission for Mynydd Ystum, however, the landowner was not very supportive. He noted that he would try to identify and contact the landowner in this case.

A member asked why footpath 12 in Cilan had been chosen to improve access. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that the path had been chosen in consultation with the Senior Public Rights of Way Officer (Dwyfor).

A member noted that Anglesey Council had received grant funding to treat the invasive plant, Himalayan Balsam. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he had spoken with the AONB Officer in Anglesey Council, and it had been mentioned that they would meet to discuss this. It was explained that work to eradicate Japanese Knotweed in the AONB was funded by the Natural Resources Wales block grant and there was considerable mapping work to be done prior to commencing the work.

A member referred to the path that started at Cefn Morfa and went from Plas yng Ngheidio to Ceidio, noting that it was overgrown. The member noted that she had contacted the Senior Rights of Way Officer (Dwyfor). In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he would contact the Senior Rights of Way Officer (Dwyfor) regarding this matter.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

The meeting commenced at 4.35pm and concluded at 5.50pm.

CHAIR

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint-Advisory Committee
DATE	20th November 2018
TITLE	Update on the Llŷn AONB Service's Projects
PURPOSE	Update Members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Projects Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the Information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides information to members of the Joint-Advisory Committee about the AONB Service's recent projects.

2.0 RURAL SKILLS TRAINING

2.1 Training was held during September to learn the craft of restoring and building stone walls and cloddiau, which are important features in the landscape of the AONB.

2.2 In collaboration with the National Trust and Coleg Meirion Dwyfor (Glynllifon) the training was held at Llithfaen and at Porth Gwylan farm, Tudweiliog.

2.3 We are confident that these events were a success and we aim to hold them again in 2019.

3.0 ACCESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

3.1 Some additional funding was received by Welsh Government for Access improvement projects. Work was completed at Mynydd Cefnamwlch (Public Footpath No.7). This is a site with a burial chamber from the Neolithic period.

3.2 By now, the site is signposted, branches have been cleared and the boundary wall has been restored – all of this has created a great improvement to the condition of the footpath and a steel fence has been erected around the cromlech itself.

3.3 Works were completed at Ffynnon Saint, Y Rhiw. The site is now signposted and overgrowth has been cleared to improve the condition of the well itself.

4.0 GUIDED WALKS

4.1 Our series of guided walks for 2018 have now ended. Interesting walks were held at Gymn Goch, Nefyn and Rhiw which raised awareness about archaeology, wildlife and the area's maritime heritage.

4.2 We have already begun preparing for our 2019 events. Members are welcome to suggest walks that could be of interest or to support us on the day.

5.0 THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

5.1 For your information, £55,000 was in the Fund at the beginning of 2018/19. There is now £2,000 remaining.

5.2 Amongst the projects supported this year were:

- The Llŷn Coastal Bus
- Taith Tridiau Llŷn (Three Day Challenge)
- Eglwys Llandegwning
- Llŷn Maritime Museum
- Tafarn yr Heliwr
- Neuadd Sarn – Old Photo Exhibition
- Plans to Develop Neuadd Mynytho
- Gŵyl Fwyd Pwllheli (Food Festival)

5.3 We have received confirmation the Fund will continue in 2019/20.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The members are asked to receive the above information.

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	November 20 th 2018
TITLE	Review of Designated Landscapes
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Officer
ACTION	None

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides further information regarding the national situation in relation to the review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty of Wales.

2.0 NATIONAL LANDSCAPES – REALISING THEIR POTENTIAL

- 2.1 A few years ago Welsh Government commissioned a review of designated landscapes. A Panel, under the chairmanship of Professor Terry Marsden, were appointed to undertake the work. The final report - “National Landscapes – Realising their Potential” included a detailed analysis of the existing situation and identified opportunities and constraints. The report also contained a total of 69 recommendations for action relating to principles, purposes, vision, governance, management, relationship with other bodies, planning, participation and resources.

3.0 FUTURE LANDSCAPES WALES

- 3.1 Following the “Marsden Report”, Welsh Government established a programme named Future Landscapes Wales to consider the situation further and Dafydd Elis-Thomas was appointed as its chairperson. This was an intensive programme of training, research, discussion and drafting proposals mainly associated with a vision, governance, economic development and resourcing. The work peaked with the publication of a joint report - “Future Landscapes Wales – Delivering for Wales” in May 2017.

4.0 MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 In November 2017 Hannah Blythyn AS was appointed as Minister for the Environment and she now has responsibility for Wales’ Designated Areas. The Minister made a statement to the Senedd on March 13th 2018 regarding Future Landscapes Wales.
- 4.2 She confirmed that Welsh Government are committed to the Designated Landscapes and that no changes will be made to the reasons for their designation - which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. The Minister also mentioned

that these landscapes need to do more to recognise, protect and promote the public benefits within them for the benefit of the people of Wales.

- 4.3 In terms of the AONB, she stated also that there is equality with the National Parks in terms of planning policies but that this was not the case in terms of status, profile and resources. She referred also to governance and suggested that even though there is flexibility, there are some weaknesses in present arrangements. The Minister said that a Policy Declaration will be published soon.

5.0 MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

- 5.1 During July 2018, the Minister announced a statement titled “Valued and Resilient – The Welsh Government’s Priorities for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks”. A copy of the full statement can be found on the Welsh Government’s website.

- 5.2 It is noted that the aim of the statement is to bring the review process to an end and set the Welsh Government’s priorities for the AONBs and National Parks. The statement declares **four goals** for the designated landscapes namely:

- That they are **Valued Places**
- That they contain **Resilient Environments**
- That they support **Resilient Communities**
- That the AONB Partnerships and National Park Authorities adopt **Resilient Ways of Working**.

- 5.3 Also, 10 priority themes were set, stated below. An explanation and justification of these priorities are also included.

- Landscapes for everyone
- Exemplars of the sustainable management of natural resources
- Halting the loss of biodiversity
- Green energy and decarbonisation
- Realising the economic potential
- Growing tourism and outdoor recreation
- Thriving Welsh language
- All landscapes matter
- Collaboration
- Innovation in resourcing

- 5.4 The requirements and expectations of the Designated Landscapes in the declaration are wide, varied and significant. They are expected to implement on many different levels for the benefit of these areas and beyond. Also, the declaration mentions the intention to establish a performance review system and introduce a performance management arrangement to measure the effect of the designation and efficiency in terms of the administration.

5.5 There is obviously a great difference between the AONB Partnerships and the Park Authorities and therefore the abilities of these organisations to realise these requirements. There is a brief reference to this in the document and it is noted that there are differences in terms of **status, profile and resources** between the two designations.

6.0 THE MINISTER'S LETTER

6.1 As a progression from "Valued and Resilient", the Minister wrote to the AONB Partnerships, Natural Resources Wales and the National Association for AONBs. In the letter, she asked the organisations to co-prepare a paper with proposals in terms of gaining more equality between the AONBs and National Parks, concentrating on **status, profile and resources**. There was an emphasis on being practical and realistic in terms of these proposals.

6.2 Following this, the organisations met, held talks and prepared a joint-response. The response presents 12 proposals that would increase equality between the AONBs and Parks in terms of status, profile and resources:

- An additional purpose in terms of the enjoyment and promoting the AONB
- Strengthen the responsibility on relevant organisations towards the AONB
- Declare the AONB Partnerships as a statutory consultant on planning matters
- Welsh Government to appoint on behalf of the AONB Partnerships
- Brand the AONB and Parks as "National Landscapes Wales"
- The Minister to hold an annual seminar to promote good practice
- Raise the status of AONB Management Plans
- Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to provide specific statistics for the AONB
- AONB Partnerships and Unions to be sufficiently funded in the long-term
- The Society for AONBs to be sufficiently funded to assist Welsh Government to realise the National Landscapes Partnerships
- Welsh Government, NRW, Local Authorities and governing organisations to have the strength and capacity to implement "Valued and Resilient" and its purposes.

6.3 This paper has by now been presented to the Minister and we are awaiting a response. An update on the matter will be given at the meeting.

7.0 RECOMENDATION

7.1 To accept the information.

Agenda Item 8

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	November 20 th 2018
TITLE	Tourism development at Pistyll
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Officer
ACTION	None

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been included on the Joint Advisory Committee's agenda on the Chairperson's request. It concerns a recent tourism development in the Pistyll area which is within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.0 THE BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Plas Pistyll was a hotel built in the 19C by the Goddard family. After a fairly prosperous period the hotel fell on hard times and closed in the 1980s and was put up for sale. The ownership then changed numerous times. The condition of the Plas deteriorated over time and it became an eyesore in a prominent location within the AONB. Gwynedd Council put pressure on the owners on numerous occasions to take measures regarding the building's condition.
- 2.2 Pistyll Farm used to be a traditional farm and had developed a static caravan site as a means of creating additional income. There were 29 static caravans on the site until relatively recently.

3.0 SUSTAINABLE LEISURE LTD

- 3.1 Around 2005/6 Pistyll Farm was bought by a company named Sustainable Leisure Ltd. Soon after Plas Pistyll was also bought by the same company. The company submitted 3 planning applications relating to Plas Pistyll and Pistyll Farm:
- **C07D/0309/43/LL** – Conversion and extension of outbuildings into 8 self catering holiday units and one staff unit (permitted with a conditions including a condition to restrict occupancy but this was later removed through appeal).
 - **C07D/0635/43/LL** – Leisure Building to house swimming pool, replacement of 29 static caravans for twin unit timber chalets and revised site layout (permitted with conditions).
 - **C08D/0422/43/LL** – Conversion of former Plas Pistyll hotel to 14 apartments for holiday use (permitted with conditions).
- 3.2 Sustainable Leisure Ltd went bankrupt in 2009 before completing the above developments.

4.0 NATURAL RETREATS

4.1 Natural Retreats came to be the owner of Plas Pistyll and Pistyll Farm following the demise of Sustainable Leisure Ltd. Since then this company, and associated companies/ agents, has submitted a series of planning applications relating to both sites. Information regarding the main applications have been noted below:

- *C11/0661/43/LL – Demolish Plas Pistyll and erect 20 self catering holiday units and the erection of 16 self catering holiday units in lieu of the existing caravan site (permitted with conditions).*
- *C13/0322/43/LL – Delete a condition which restricts any person/ family from residing in the unit for more than 3 months (permitted but a holiday use condition attached).*
- *C13/1021/43/LL – Construct a reception building to include office/ store (permitted with conditions).*
- *C16/0976/43/LL – Vary conditions 2 and 7 on permission C11/0661/43/LL in order to amend the development design and reduce the number of holiday units to 19 together with deletion of conditions 8,9 and 10 (permitted with conditions).*
- *C16/1595/43/LL – Vary condition in order to use staff accommodation as a holiday unit (permitted with conditions).*
- *C17/0416/43/LL – Alterations to holiday unit to include installation of 3 conservation roof lights, new gable window and internal alterations (permitted with conditions).*
- *C17/1010/43/LL – Vary conditions on permission C11/0661/43/LL - Condition 2 in order to build the holiday units to revised plans and Condition 21 to vary the materials proposed for the unit's external walls (permitted with conditions).*
- *C18/0678/43/HY – Install 2 temporary signs (refused).*

4.2 Details of the applications, including comments made by the AONB Unit, can be seen on Gwynedd Council's **Track and Trace Planning service**. Also, comments made by other organisations on the applications can also be seen.

5.0 RECOMENDATION

5.1 To accept the information.