



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Council Offices
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date and Time

4.00 pm, WEDNESDAY, 22ND NOVEMBER, 2023

Location

Virtual Meeting

For public access to the meeting, please contact us.

Contact Point

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LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

Gwynedd Councillors

**Dafydd Davies
John Brynmor Hughes
Gareth Tudor Jones
Gareth Williams
Gruffydd 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.
FWAG Wales**

A G E N D A

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

To elect a Chair for 2023/24.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

To elect a Vice-Chair for 2023/24.

3. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

5. URGENT ITEMS

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

6. MINUTES

4 - 8

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of this committee, held on 29 March 2023, be signed as a true record.

7. THE DARK SKY

9 - 10

To provide information on the Dark Sky status for the Aberdaron Community area.

8. THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

11 - 13

To provide information to members about the current situation of the Sustainable Development Fund.

9. LLŶN AONB CAPITAL PROJECTS

14 - 15

To present information on the Llŷn AONB capital projects.

10. NATIONAL MATTERS

16 - 17

To provide information on National matters.

LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 29/03/2023

Present:

T. Victor Jones (Chair) (Llanbedrog Community Council)

Members: Councillors Gareth Williams, John Brynmor Hughes, Gareth Tudor Jones, Gruffydd Williams, and Angela Russell (Cyngor Gwynedd Rural Champion) together with Noel Davey (Campaign for Rural Wales), Brett Garner (Llŷn Fishermen Association), Jina Gwyrfai (Llanaelhaearn Community Council), Sianelen Plemming (Pistyll Community Council), Eirian Allport (Clynnog Fawr Community Council), Andrew Davidson (Principal Archaeologist - Gwynedd Archaeological Trust) and Molly Lovatt (Natural Resources Wales).

Officers: Bleddyn P. Jones (Llŷn AONB Service Manager), Morus Llwyd Dafydd (Llŷn AONB Projects Officer), Kevin Roberts (Countryside Warden - Llŷn AONB) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Robert Parkinson (National Trust), Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum), Wenda Williams (Aberdaron Community Council), Einir Wyn (Llanengan Community Council), Euros Jones (FWAG Cymru), Lea Elin Connelly (Biodiversity Team Leader, Sian Parry (Tudweiliog Community Council) and Councillor Dafydd Davies.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

None to note.

3. URGENT ITEMS

Members were reminded that 'Llygad Llŷn', the annual AONB newsletter would be published over the next few weeks and a request was made for Members' assistance to raise awareness about it.

Members were informed that Wyn Williams (Countryside Manager) would be retiring in a few weeks. It was agreed to send the committee members' gratitude to him prior to his retirement.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Joint committee held on 27 June 2022, as a true record.

5. NATURE RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

The report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Officer for information to the Members. It was explained that the nature recovery plan was operational across local authorities in

Wales and an advisor had been appointed to assist to prepare the plan in Gwynedd in accordance with the Council's duty.

It was reported that the plan's consultation period would commence in the next few weeks and Members were encouraged to complete the consultation and to encourage others in their communities to complete this.

It was confirmed that this consultation questionnaire would also be distributed during the Nefyn Show to be held on the first of May this year to get the views of the public on the nature emergency in Gwynedd and within the AONB.

Several different views about priorities and nature recovery processes were shared and attention was given to various ideas. The need for Members to complete the consultation questionnaire was emphasised to ensure that their views were considered jointly with the views of the public.

DECISION

To accept the information noted in the report and note the observations raised during the discussion.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE VISITOR ECONOMY

The report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Officer for Members' information. It was explained that Cyngor Gwynedd had been collaborating with Eryri National Park to create a strategic plan to realise the vision and principles of the Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan 2035.

It was reported that the impact of tourism because of the Covid-19 Pandemic had increased the pressure on culture and the environment. It was considered that there were various issues that caused concern to the Welsh language, transport and the rural economy as well as tensions in some areas due to the unprecedented number of visitors.

It was confirmed that Cyngor Gwynedd had approved the strategic plan following a period of consultation of the concerns jointly with Eryri National Park. It was explained that the vision for the Gwynedd and Eryri Strategic Plan was 'A visitor economy for the benefit and well-being of the people, environment, language and culture of Gwynedd and Eryri'.

The principles and aims of the plan were detailed, namely:

1. Celebrate, respect, and protect our communities, language, culture and heritage.
2. Maintain and respect our environment.
3. Ensure that the advantages to Gwynedd and Eryri communities outweigh any disadvantages.

It was confirmed that a full copy of the strategic plan may be viewed on the Council's website.

In response to a question about the role of the AONB when implementing the plan, the Llŷn AONB Officer confirmed that the unit had been part of a task group that had worked together to prepare it. In order to clarify the role of the AONB in the plan's implementation, officers will discuss with the Tourism Team and will report back to Members.

DECISION

To accept the information noted in the report.

7. SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES, SUSTAINABLE PLACES PROJECT

The report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Officer for information to the Members. It was explained that only information about capital projects had been included in the report and these had been funded via the Welsh Government's Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places programme.

It was explained that Designated Landscape in Wales had submitted projects for the period 2022-25. Details were given that these had been submitted within the themes set, namely: Biodiversity and nature recovery, Decarbonisation, Resilient and green communities and Sustainable Tourism. It was confirmed that the projects for the Llŷn AONB were:

- Gyrn Goch Circular Walk
- AONB Warden electric van
- Common Land in Rhos Botwnnog, Foel Gron Mynytho and Horeb/Mynytho
- Canolfan Llithfaen
- Access improvements to Mynydd Tir y Cwmwd, Porth Ysgo and Porthor jointly with the Wales Coast Path
- Traditional Boundaries (stone walls, 'cloddiau' and hedges)
- The Dark Sky

It was mentioned that other projects had been developed via funding received from Cyngor Gwynedd and Natural Resources Wales. Recent positive work with volunteers was discussed to re-establish paths and litter pick.

It was noted that officers were working to raise awareness of the AONB by sharing updates on the website, social media and in the 'Llygad Llŷn' magazine.

DECISION

To accept the information noted in the report.

8. THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

The report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Officer for Members' information. It was reported that £100,000 was available in the Sustainable Development Fund at the beginning of the 2022-23 financial year and they had managed to allocate £92,149.52 of this to worthy projects. It was explained that this led to a small underspend of £7,850.48.

It was confirmed that the projects supported during the past year were:

- Llŷn Maritime Museum
- Llŷn Fflecsi Bus

- Llandegwning Cemetery Gate
- R S Thomas Festival
- Eglwys Newydd Aberdaron
- Sarn Exhibition
- Aberdaron Sailing Club
- Llithfaen Playground
- Hafod Ceiri Windows
- Coedlan Carl Archaeological Survey
- Aberdesach Car Park
- Melin Daron
- Plas Carmel Shed
- Aberdaron Community Noticeboards
- Dog waste bag dispensers
- Abersoch Hall.

It was confirmed that the budget was to fund projects over a period of two years rather than a year (between 2023-25), if required, as a total funding of £100,000 was available for the 2023-24 financial year and a further £100,000 had been granted for the 2024-25 financial year.

It was noted that the latest Welsh Government guidelines placed more emphasis on the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and gave priority to projects that related to 'de-carbonisation' and 'nature recovery' themes.

It was emphasised that the work of promoting the opportunity to apply for the grant from the Sustainable Fund had begun and Members were urged to further share information on the opportunities.

Members of the Sustainable Fund Panel were given an opportunity to stand down to give other Members of the Joint Committee an opportunity, if they wished.

During the discussion, Members raised the following matters:

- Representatives from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales and Clynog Fawr Community Council offered to stand down from the Sustainable Fund Panel should anyone else be keen to be part of it.
- It was considered whether it was possible to attract different organisations to be members of the Panel to ensure a wide cross-section when considering applications.

In response, it was noted:

- That several organisations were part of the Membership of this Joint Committee. Members were reminded that the Panel membership were members of the Joint Committee and therefore any cross-section would derive from the organisations that are part of the Joint Committee.
- Both representatives were thanked for offering to stand down. It was resolved to re-visit the Panel membership at the next Joint Committee meeting to have a discussion when more representatives are present.

DECISION

- a) To accept the report on the Membership of the Consultative Joint Committee.**
- b) To consider the Membership of the Sustainable Development Fund Panel at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.**

9. DARK SKY DESIGNATION

The report was presented by the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer who noted that the AONB Unit had been working for some time to apply for an International Dark Sky status for Llŷn. It was explained that data collection was a huge challenge as the Llŷn AONB was extensive. Details were given that the unit was focusing on a specific area of Llŷn on the tip of the Peninsula to receive the International Dark Sky designation rather than the whole area.

It was confirmed that Ynys Enlli had been designated as a Dark Sky Sanctuary in February this year and was the first site in Europe to receive this designation. It was reported that news of this designation had raised the awareness of people about the island and the Llŷn area and it was hoped that the Dark Sky designation would benefit the area of Pen draw Llŷn in the same manner.

During the discussion, Members raised the following matters:

- It was asked if this matter had been discussed at a meeting of Aberdaron Community Council.
- Details of other matters to be considered were given such as safety and the need to have specific lighting in some parts of the area.

In response, it was noted:

- That officers hoped to receive support from the Joint Committee to work towards completing an application for a Dark Sky designation. It was confirmed that no work had been completed at the moment to work towards this designation and no application had been completed. Details were given that consultation with the community was an important element of the work and therefore discussions at Aberdaron Community Council meetings were key to see whether the community supports the intention to apply for a designation or otherwise.
- Assurance was given that every effort was being made to ensure health and safety in every situation. It was discussed that the Night Project was collaborating with various businesses and organisations to learn about light pollution and the methods to reduce it and to continue to light locations effectively.
- It was elaborated that close cooperation occurred between the AONB Unit and Cyngor Gwynedd planning officers to set conditions that relate to lighting on new applications when appropriate. It was explained although these conditions had been set recent recruitment deficiencies had led to fewer enforcement officers and some issues continued to be raised.

DECISION

To accept the information noted in the report and support the AONB Unit to work towards making an application for a Dark Sky designation for the Pen Draw Llŷn area, in consultation with the Pen Draw Llŷn communities.

The meeting commenced at 4.00pm and concluded at 5.05pm.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE	Llyn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	22 November 2023
TITLE	The Dark Sky
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	AONB Project Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The issue of a Dark Sky designation was discussed at the Joint Advisory Committee held in March of this year. At the time it was explained that the AONB Unit was now keen to concentrate on designating a part of the area, namely the Aberdaron community, rather than the whole AONB as an International Dark Sky area.
- 1.2 This was decided because the whole AONB area is fairly large, there is a variation in the quality of the dark sky within the area and that fact that Bardsey was recently designated as a Dark Sky Sanctuary. It was further explained that the intention therefore was, in partnership with the NOS Project, to make an application for a Dark Sky designation for the Aberdaron Community Council area.
- 1.3 At the meeting it was agreed to support the intention of making an application for this area if the Aberdaron Community Council was supportive.

2.0 DARK SKY STATUS FOR THE ABERDARON COMMUNITY AREA

- 2.1 The AONB Officer attended a meeting of Aberdaron Community Council in July 2023 to provide information of the Dark Sky designation, the process of making an application and to respond to any questions. The Community Council then discussed the matter at the meeting in September and decided to support the proposal.
- 2.2 Now, in partnership with the NOS project, the AONB Unit will begin the process of preparing an application for a Dark Sky designation for the Aberdaron Community area. As noted previously it is the IDA (International Dark Sky Association) which has established the concept

of Dark Sky areas and controls the designation process. For information the IDA has recently amended it's name to *Dark Sky International*.

- 2.3 There are various Dark Sky designations - including Dark Sky Park, Sanctuary , Reserve and Community. It appears that a Dark Sky Community designation would be most appropriate for the Aberdaron area.

3.0 MONITORING

- 3.1 Monitoring the Dark Sky is an important part of the process in applying for a Dark Sky status, to measure darkness in different parts of the area. For these measurements an apparatus called a *Sky Quality Meter* is used and the measurements need to be undertaken once, or if possible twice, annually. It is important to undertake the monitoring at a suitable time – when there is no moon and the sky is clear.

4.0 COLLABORATIVE DARK SKY PROJECT

- 4.1 The Llŷn AONB is also part of a collaborative project with the other 4 Welsh AONB's and the 3 National Parks (collectively named The Designated Landscapes). This is financed by Welsh Government through the Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places grant
- 4.2 As part of this project the specialist consultancy Ridge have undertaken surveys of the night skies in all the Designated Landscapes, including the Llŷn Peninsula, and has identified areas with bright and intrusive lights.
- 4.3 The intention now is to work with some of the sites identified to offer advice and Financial support to adapt lighting systems so that they are more Dark Sky friendly.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 To accept the report.

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	22 November 2023
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 members about the current situation of the Sustainable Development Fund and other issues regarding it.

2.0 2023/24 EXPENDITURE SO FAR

2.1 A grand total of a £100,000 was available for the Sustainable Development Fund at the start of this financial year (2023/24), and £4,833 remains and needs to be allocated and claimed before March 2024.

2.2 Here are the projects supported thus far;

CDC 23.1	Llŷn Maritime Museum	£5,895
CDC 23.2	Fflecsi Llŷn	£30,000
CDC 23.3	Balchder a chelf Llŷn	£2,000
CDC 23.4	Storws Enlli	£30,000
CDC 22.5	Protecting the names of Llanengan	£8,371
CDC 22.6	Llŷn's Library	£1,394
CDC 22.7	R S Thomas Festival	£1,271
CDC 22.8	Llŷn Woolen Mills Exhibition	£2,000
CDC 22.11	Berwyn Jones Exhibition	£1,766
CDC 22.12	Rhydyclafdy Playground	£1,000
CDC 22.13	Menter Raber	£1,470
Total:		£95,167

3.0 STORWS ENLLI AND THE FLEXI BUS

3.1 This year a significant sum of money from the Fund was set aside for two projects- £30,000 for the renovation of Storws Enlli and £30,000 for the Llŷn Flexi Bus.

3.2 Both projects have been a success. The Storws has now been completed to an excellent standard, maintaining the original character of the building. The Flexi service has also been a success this year with more trips completed and more customers than before.

4.0 THE FUND NEXT YEAR

4.1 We have had confirmation that there is a funding of £100,000 available for the next financial year (2024/25).

4.2 The Welsh Government has amended the Fund's regulations to place more emphasis on the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act and projects related to De-carbonisation, and Nature Recovery themes should be prioritised.

4.3 You as members of the Joint Advisory Committee are encouraged to spread the word that a total of £100,000 is available in the Sustainable Development Fund for the next financial year. Please get in touch if you hear of eligible projects.

5.0 GRANTS PANEL

5.1 This is the current membership of the panel;

- Councilor Angela Russell
- Noel Davey (Campaign to Protect Rural Wales)
- T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council)
- Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum)
- Sian Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council)
- Linda Ashton (Natural Resources Wales)
- Councillor Gruffydd Williams
- Councillor Gareth Williams
- Eirian Allport Clynnog (Fawr Community Council)

5.2 During the last Joint Advisory meeting, the membership of the grants panel was discussed. Eirian Allport and Noel Davey announced they were prepared to stand down as members of the panel to offer an opportunity for someone else. Is there a present member of the Joint Advisory Committee that wishes to join the grants panel?

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 To accept the information above.

COMMITTEE	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	November 22 nd 2023
TITLE	Llŷn AONB Capital Projects
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	AONB Officer
RECOMMENDATION	To accept the information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report contains information on the Llŷn AONB capital projects. These projects are part of the Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places (SLSP) programme by Welsh Government which is available to support capital projects within AONBs and National Parks.
- 1.2 The SLSP projects cover a 3 year period (2022-25) and we are now therefore in the second year. Information of the first year of SLSP projects was presented to the JAC at the meeting that was held in March of this year.

2.0 CAPITAL PROJECT THEMES

- 2.1 Themes were set by Welsh Government for projects which form part of the Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places scheme as follows:
 - Biodiversity and nature recovery
 - Decarbonisation
 - Resilient and green communities
 - Sustainable Tourism

3.0 LLYN SLSP PROJECTS 2023-24

- 3.1 **Porth Ysgo stairway** – this stairway is on a public right of way leading down to the beach at Porth Ysgo on the southern coast of Llŷn. It was installed around 30 years ago and by now is in relatively poor condition. This project will entail removing the original stairway and erecting a new structure using locally sourced timber. The path has been formally closed to enable the work to be carried out (work expected to start soon).

- 3.2 **Common lands** - this project, which relates to work on common land in the AONB, has already started last year, this is a 3year project. It concentrates on common land at Rhos Botwnnog, Foel Gron Mynytho, and Horeb/Mynytho. The work underway includes vegetation cutting and clearing, access improvements, treating invasive species and installing interpretation boards.
- 3.3 **Indigenous trees** – this is a 2 year project and the aim in this financial year was to identify suitable sites within the AONB to plant indigenous trees by undertaking consultation and surveys. Following on, next year to intention is to plant the trees over the winter period.
- 3.4 **Invasive non-native species (INNS)** - species such as the himalayan balsam and japaneese knotweed are an increasing problem across Llŷn with knock on effect on biodiversity. This year the aim was to identify problem areas and pilot different treatment types. In the next financial year there will be more direct action to tackle these problem species.
- 3.5 **Y Ganolfan Llithfaen** – this is a more substantial project than the other and it relates to refurbishing and upgrading Y Ganolfan, the community hall, in Llithfaen. Y Ganolfan has been closed for a number of years now due to the poor condition of the building. Due to the significant costs involved with this project we have had to apply for additional funds (from the Shared Prosperity Fund). At present the work is out to tender.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Accept the information

COMMITTEE	Llyn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	22 November 2023
TITLE	National matters
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	AONB Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report contains information on two National matters that will be of interest to members. Firstly, Welsh Government is arranging training for members of National Parks and AONB Joint Advisory Committee members and secondly there are moves afoot to change the operating title and branding of AONBs.

2.0 MEMBER TRAINING

2.1 Recently a letter was sent by the Minister for Climate Change, Julie James MS, to the Leaders of Local Authorities and National Parks and Chairs of National Parks and AONB Joint Advisory Committees.

2.2 In the letter the Minister states that the Designated Landscapes are very important in realising the Welsh Government's key priorities on the nature and climate emergencies. It goes on to state that it is important that the leaders and members of these bodies have the information and skills necessary for the work they are undertaking. On this basis Welsh Government officers have developed a package of online training for members of the National Parks and AONB JACs.

2.3 There are 2 modules of training that are applicable to JAC members:

- Introduction to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Tackling the nature and climate emergencies.

2.4 This training will be held online during this Winter and each module will be for around 2 hours. The intention is to arrange meetings of the JAC during which the training will be provided. More information will be sent soon.

3.0 RE-BRANDING

- 3.1 The term “Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty” is included in The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. This Act was passed by the post war Labour Government in order to protect these special places and, in the case of the Parks, promote leisure enjoyment.
- 3.2 Over the years there has been much discussion about the AONB name, mainly due to it’s long and descriptive nature and secondly because it lacks the “National” label and therefore somehow lacks the status given to the Parks.
- 3.3 Recently a review of National Parks and AONBs in England was undertaken under the leadership of journalist Julian Glover. This report came to the conclusion that there was a strong case to change the operational name of AONBs to something more punchy and to include the term “national”.
- 3.4 The National Association of AONB’s (NAAONB), which was established to help the AONBs in the UK by promoting good practice, education and training, has been part of the discussion regarding the future of National Parks and AONBs in England and Wales. The Association has been coordinating the discussion in England regarding changing the operational name of AONBs to “National Landscapes”.
- 3.5 The majority of areas in England were supportive of the name change and the Association also adopted this viewpoint. Consequently the Association has led on developing information packs, new branding and logos to be used. The Association itself will also be renamed as National Landscapes Association.
- 3.6 A discussion has been held on rebranding in Wales. In general there is support for the initiative and Welsh Government also seems supportive. There is no formal requirement to use the branding and logo that has been developed though and the formal title Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will remain.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 To accept the report.