

LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 18/03/2026

Present:

Members: **Sian Parri** (Tudweiliog Community Council) (Chair)
Councillor Gareth Williams (Vice-chair)

Councillors **Gareth Tudor Jones** and **Gruffydd Williams** along with Councillor **Angela Russell** (Cyngor Gwynedd Countryside Champion), **Noel Davey** (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), **Jina Gwyrfai** (Trefor and Llanaelhaearn Community Council), **Eirian Allport** (Clynnog Fawr Community Council), **Andrew Parry** (Llanbedrog Community Council), **Jenny Emmett** (Gwynedd Archaeology), **Guto Roberts** (National Trust), **Seimon Jones** (Cyfeillion Llŷn) and **Morgan Jones-Parry** (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum)

Officers: **Bleddyn P. Jones** (Llŷn AONB Officer), **Elin Wyn Hughes** (Llŷn AONB Activities Officer), **Kevin Roberts** (Countryside Warden – Llŷn AONB), **Heledd Fflur Jones** (Planning Policy Team Leader), and **Rhodri Jones** (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- **Rhys Llewelyn** (Cyfeillion Llŷn) with **Seimon Jones** substituting.
- **Robert Parkinson** (National Trust) following restructuring, with Guto Roberts as a new member, present for the first hour of the meeting.
- **Dewi Evans** (Aberdaron Community Council)
- **Councillor John Brynmor Hughes**
- **Sianelen Fleming** (Pistyll Community Council)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the last meeting of this Joint Committee held on 2 July 2025 as a true record.

5. UPDATE ON LLŶN AONB CAPITAL PROJECTS

The report was presented by the Llŷn AONB Officer and the Countryside Warden – Llŷn AONB, highlighting the following key points:

It was explained that all the projects presented in the report were funded through the Welsh Government's 'Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places' grant scheme available for Welsh Designated Landscapes - National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It was further explained that the Welsh Government had set themes for the grant for 2025-27 namely 'Promoting biodiversity and nature restoration', 'Facilitating decarbonisation' and 'General improvements relating to access, infrastructure and visitor pressures'. Members were guided through the successful projects delivered by the Llŷn AONB during the current financial year, and it was confirmed that further information would be available to the public through the Llygad Llŷn newsletter.

Planting Native Trees

It was reported that planting native trees such as oak, blackthorn, hawthorn, holly, hazel, silver birch and other species, offered significant environmental benefits such as creating habitats for wildlife, absorbing carbon from the environment, purifying and managing water and providing a sustainable resource for the future.

It was recognised that the Llŷn AONB Unit had faced a challenge in finding suitable locations to plant these trees, as there was insufficient suitable land available under the Council's ownership. It was explained that officers had worked with the National Trust to obtain permission to plant trees at Tŷ'n Parc, near Plas yn Rhiw. Natural Resources Wales officials were also thanked for assisting the project, in the hope that the scheme could be continued in the coming year on Natural Resources Wales' lands.

It was confirmed that the work had been carried out this year at Plas yn Rhiw and Tŷ'n Parc (Rhiw) in addition to areas near the cemetery and community garden in Nefyn, and everyone who had undertaken the work were thanked.

Non-native Invasive Species

It was explained that this project was a follow-up to research carried out on the non-native invasive species that were harmful to the native wildlife of the Llŷn AONB, in an attempt to eradicate them as they posed a threat in some places. It was stressed that this project was challenging as the non-native invasive species were to be found in several areas across the AONB.

Particular attention was drawn to work carried out to dispose of Himalayan Balsam in areas of Pistyll and Penllech, and Natural Resources Wales were thanked for their co-operation. However, it was noted that this species had been found in other areas such as Nefyn, where it was out of control as the budget to eradicate the species had been used in areas where there was confidence that it could be eradicated, rather than attempting to eradicate it in areas where the situation was out of control.

Similarly, it was confirmed that work had been carried out to remove Japanese Knotweed, drawing particular attention to the work carried out in the Trefor area. It was explained that eradicating this species was considered to be less challenging, and there was a possibility that the entire budget would not be spent during the next financial year as officials were in control of the situation. Anyone who found the species within the AONB was urged to contact the Unit so that it could be eradicated.

Similarly, it was explained that work has been carried out to remove rhododendron trees in areas near Garn Boduan and Llanbedrog beach, and it was confirmed that there were plans to continue to eradicate the species over the next year.

Decarbonisation of village halls / centres

It was reported that the intention of this project was to assist village halls and centres to decarbonise by introducing measures such as insulation, switching to low-energy LED lighting, carbon-free heating systems and creating systems to store renewable energy. It

was explained that delivering these changes would also result in financial savings for those buildings. Attention was drawn to three buildings that had benefited from the project during 2025-26:

- Edern Community Hall – upgrade to LED lights.
- Sarn Memorial Hall – install an electricity storage system from its solar panels to save money rather than selling it back to the grid.
- Y Ganolfan, Trefor – carry out an inspection of the building prior to installing solar panels, storage system, insulation and upgrading to LED lighting.

Abergeirch

It was noted that this area near the village of Edern had been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest due to its particular marshy wetland vegetation.

An ecological assessment report had been carried out on the site which showed that there had been a deterioration in the condition of the special features found there. It was further explained that the report had recommended possible enhancements to the area, confirming that these would be achieved over the coming year.

General and joint projects

Other small projects that had been delivered were highlighted, such as the restoration of a multi-use path and the installation of picnic benches in Porthor, the improvement of a local route near Bodwrdda Aberdaron, the improvement of key routes in Clynnog and the restoration of rusty iron railings on the quay in Trefor.

It was also explained that the Llŷn AONB had benefited from collaborative projects with other Designated Landscapes such as the 'Dark Skies' and 'Tirlun 2 - Landscape Education Pack' projects.

During the discussion, the following observations were noted:

In response to an enquiry, it was confirmed that the Unit appreciated the assistance from volunteers on these projects where appropriate, recognising that volunteers could not be accepted on all projects, such as the schemes to improve paths in Clynnog.

Several matters were drawn to the attention of officers as potential issues to be considered as capital projects, such as areas of Japanese Knotweed at Carreg y Defaid and Mynytho, the need to install iron railings on the road to Llanbedrog beach, Rhododendron trees near Gyrn Goch waterfall as well as the need to repaint signs and milestones in the Mynytho area. It was also proposed that officers should contact Plas Glyn y Weddw to see if they would like native trees to be planted there, as their forest had been damaged over recent years by severe weather.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that a link to the Landscape Education Pack project had been shared with all schools within the AONB, and it was confirmed that the link would be shared with members of the Joint Committee for information.

In response to an enquiry, the Llŷn ANHE Officer confirmed that Community Councils had received information about all these projects as they developed, noting that it was hoped that Community Council members who were members of this Joint Committee would also report back to their meetings.

DECISION

- **To accept the report, noting the observations made during the discussion.**
- **To ensure that a link to the 'Tirlun 2 – Landscape Education Pack' project was shared with Members.**

6. TIRLUN BYW

The report was presented by the Llŷn AONB Activities Officer. The following main points were outlined:

It was explained that Tirlun Byw was a project jointly funded by Natural Resources Wales and Cyngor Gwynedd for a period of three years up to 2027. The project's aim was to promote the AONB as a living landscape, by providing activities for people who work, live or visit here. It was noted that the project responded to several objectives such as the AONB Management Plan, Welsh Government's Natural Resources and Well-being objectives as well as the priority areas of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28.

Data was presented on the activities that had taken place over the past year and participant numbers. Photographs of those events were shown to provide a taster of the activities. Copies of poems were provided which had been composed as part of a project undertaken by local schools with the help of Meirion Macintyre Huws to promote the dark skies and their importance within the AONB. It was confirmed that the project had received very positive feedback from the schools.

Some other upcoming events were highlighted, such as the invasive species information session on 30 April and an information session on running successful guided tours on 14 May.

It was confirmed that it was intended to prepare a work programme for the 2026/27 year and suggestions were welcomed for suitable events to be held during that period.

During the discussion, the following observations were noted:

In response to an enquiry, the Llŷn AONB Activities Officer confirmed that it was hoped that the poems composed by school pupils as part of the project would be published in an edition of the Llanw Llŷn community paper. However, it was confirmed that they could not be published in the Llygad Llŷn newsletter because they would need to be translated as the newsletter was published bilingually. However, there would hopefully be another opportunity in the future to publish these poems.

In response to an enquiry, the Llŷn AONB Activities Officer confirmed that members of this Joint Committee could be invited to these activities via a calendar meeting request instead of by e-mail if they so wished, and members were asked to contact the Activities Officer.

In response to an enquiry, the Llŷn AONB Activities Officer emphasised that every effort was being made to ensure that all activities were conducted bilingually. However, it was acknowledged that there had been one event where the presenter did not speak Welsh and there had not been sufficient time to translate her presentation and therefore the event had been held in English.

It was noted that an information session on the Welsh names of trees, flowers and birds would be beneficial as part of the work programme, and that if this was not possible, that a page should be created on the website containing all the information so that those names were not lost.

DECISION

To accept the report, noting the observations made during the discussion.**7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND**

The report was presented by the Llŷn AONB Officer. Attention was drawn to the following main points:

It was explained that the report provided information on the Sustainable Development Fund's situation for the current financial year, 2025-26. It was confirmed that there was a total of £95,000 in the Fund at the start of the financial year, and it was noted that a large proportion of the funding had been allocated to local projects in the area, namely:

- 1st Mate Llŷn Maritime Museum (£4,506)
- Llŷn Flexi Bus (£25,000)
- Nefyn multi-use paths (£11,450)
- Enlli Solar Power (£9,572)
- Llanbedrog Playing Field (£22,145)
- Porthdinllaen Rowing Club (£750)
- Decarbonisation of Rhiw village hall (£2,250)
- Menter Rabar (£4,995.37)
- Aelhaearn Nature Garden (£1,000)
- Website for Tafarn y Fic, Llithfaen (£2,439)

The total amount allocated to these projects was reported to be £84,107.37. The joint committee members were reminded that the AONB Unit was entitled to claim a grant of £9,500 for the administration of the fund. It was confirmed that the true total amount of money that had been allocated from the fund was £93,607.37, if all projects claimed in full by the end of the financial year.

It was a matter of pride that £95,000 had been allocated by the Welsh Government to the Fund for the 2026-27 financial year, and it was confirmed that a meeting should be held soon to consider new applications that had been received.

It was noted that the Welsh Government had published a revised Framework Document which contained several significant changes to the governance of the fund, such as:

- 60% of the Fund's budget was required to be earmarked for projects that address or respond to the nature and climate crisis and biodiversity losses.
- Emphasis is placed on collaborating with other landscapes, the voluntary sector and communities along with other partnerships
- Information about the Fund must be included on a regularly updated website, with access to the application process and further information. It was confirmed that the Llŷn AONB was already acting in accordance with this.
- Changes to Membership - it was explained that there must be between 3 and 5 members on the Fund Panel, with a requirement for each Member to serve for a minimum of two years and a maximum of 4 consecutive years. The need to review the membership every 2 years was noted. It was emphasised that all members were required to attend any training organised by the Welsh Government in order to be aware of their priorities.

- It was confirmed that the Panel was accountable for its decisions and must be able to provide justification for its decisions. It was noted that decisions would be published on the website.

It was confirmed that these changes would be effective from the 2026-27 financial year onwards, citing the urgent need to amend the membership of the Panel. Members were reminded of the Panel's membership of the Panel, and it was noted that Councillors Angela Russell and John Brynmor Hughes could continue as members for now as they had not served for four years. However, it was clarified that Councillors Gruffydd Williams and Gareth Williams, Morgan Jones Parry, Sian Parri and Noel Davey could no longer serve as members as they had served for 4 consecutive years or more.

During the discussion, the following observations were noted:

The membership of the Panel was discussed, and the Members were confirmed as a follows:

- Councillor Angela Russell (Cyngor Gwynedd Countryside Champion)
- Jina Gwyrfai (Trefor and Llanaelhaearn Community Council)
- Eirian Allport (Clynnog Fawr Community Council)
- Seimon Jones (Cyfeillion Llŷn)

Officials would confirm whether Councillor John Brynmor Hughes intended to continue as a Panel Member following the meeting. It was further explained that the new guidance for the Panel permitted between 3 and 5 panel members, and it was confirmed that Panel meetings could be held with the new membership.

Observations were made that the new Welsh Government guidelines placed great emphasis on their priorities rather than allowing local communities to approve those projects that would bring the most community benefit to its residents and visitors.

The officers were thanked for the summary of the projects supported over the current financial year, and the request was reiterated to receive information spanning several years when this report was submitted in future. It was explained that this would allow Joint Committee members to compare which projects had been approved, the types of projects that were applying and the areas that were taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the Fund. In response to the comments, the Llŷn AONB Officer confirmed that the information could be gathered and included in future reports.

DECISION

- **To accept the report, noting the observations made during the discussion.**
- **Request that information on the projects supported by the Fund over a minimum of 3 years be submitted as a future appendix to this Report.**
- **To elect the following individuals to be members of the Sustainable Development Fund Panel:**
 - **Councillor Angela Russell (Cyngor Gwynedd Countryside Champion)**
 - **Jina Gwyrfai (Trefor and Llanaelhaearn Community Council)**
 - **Eirian Allport (Clynnog Fawr Community Council)**
 - **Seimon Jones (Cyfeillion Llŷn)**
 - **Councillor John Brynmor Hughes (if desired)**

8. STATE OF THE AONB REPORT

The report was presented by the Llŷn AONB Officer.

It was noted that the intention of the report was to receive a full and clear picture of the state of the area including the landscape, nature, people, work, historic environment, language and culture. The report would form the basis for the review of the new AONB Management Plan, as the current plan had become outdated.

Members were reminded that the first report on the state of the AONB was developed in 2014, with a review of it undertaken in 2021. It was noted that the Joint Committee had submitted several comments on that report and had decided to update the document in order to receive up-to-date information. It was confirmed that Craggatack company from Cumbria had been appointed to develop a new report, following a tendering process.

It was explained that the State of the AONB Report presented at this meeting was based on information gathered in 2025, with a wide range of information covered, including: location, pollution, renewable energy, flooding, natural and cultural heritage, habitat designations, the language and culture as well as people and health issues.

It was hoped that the development of the AONB Management Plan would continue following receipt of information from the State of the AONB Report. It was explained that the process of carrying out that work would be undertaken by commissioning individuals and consultants, dependent upon the receipt of budget assurances.

During the discussion, the following observations were noted:

Concern was expressed about the need to protect traditional houses and cottages within the AONB, and it was proposed that the Joint Committee write to Cyngor Gwynedd's Planning Policy Committee to highlight the need to introduce stricter policies to protect them so that new owners were not free to demolish them for no reason. In response to the comments, the Planning Policy Team Leader confirmed that the Planning Policy Service was currently undertaking a period of public engagement on a draft of the Planning Policy and encouraged members of the Joint Committee to submit their observations through the consultation to ensure that they received due consideration, and that they were included within the proposed policy.

Parts of the report were considered to be very comprehensive, such as the data on planning applications and information about Dark Skies. However, it was considered that there was room for improvement in dealing with the economic impact of caravan and camping sites, renewable energy, schools, language and culture and second homes. It was felt that these areas had not received due consideration within the report. Consideration was given to whether all the information necessary for the development of the report was available to the company.

Concern was expressed that incomplete information had been included by the company in compiling the report, drawing particular attention to a part of the report which confirmed that there were only 8 caravan sites and 1 campsite in Gwynedd in 2025. Similarly, the information presented about settlement numbers and sizes was also considered to be flawed. Reference was made to a third part of the report which stated that there was insufficient details were available on the numbers of second homes in the Botwnnog and Aberdaron area. As with previous observations, consideration was given to whether Joint Committee members and Cyngor Gwynedd officials had the information to hand to share with the company to ensure that their report was accurate and a fair reflection of the true state of the AONB, to ensure that there was an accurate baseline for the work.

In response to an enquiry, the AONB Officer confirmed that it was intended to submit the Management Plan to this Joint Committee in future, but the limitations of the AONB Unit's capacity had led to the commissioning of external consultants to deliver the work. Following the response, it was asked whether this Joint Committee could take on a greater role in the development of the Management Plan as several members were eager to support the Unit in ensuring that the information contained within the State of the AONB Report was complete and comprehensive. In response, the AONB Officer confirmed that observations submitted by Joint Committee members had been noted by the AONB and would be used as a starting point for the development of a new Management Plan, in conjunction with the existing plan. It was hoped that independent consultants would be appointed to sift through all the information, to begin assessing the situation in order to deliver a high-quality Management Plan. It was acknowledged that a timetable for the report could not yet be confirmed; it was hoped that a draft timetable could be submitted to the next meeting of this Joint Committee, when funding issues had been confirmed.

In response to an enquiry regarding the role of community councils in contributing information for inclusion in the report, the AONB Officer explained that at present only factual evidence was required in order to set a baseline, information which was not available to the community councils. However, it was noted that they would be able to provide observations in the future.

An idea was put forward to contact Cyngor Gwynedd's Research and Information service to ask whether the information missing from the Report was available so that the process of creating a Management Plan could be developed.

In response to a proposal to reject the flawed sections of the report, the AONB Officer explained that this report had been commissioned by Cyngor Gwynedd and that the service's decision was to proceed based on the information within it. It was further noted that it was intended to continue with the process of drawing up a Management Plan using this report; members of the previous Committee were encouraged to get in touch regarding any area where they believed additional information should be obtained, for consideration by the Llŷn AONB Unit. Several further comments were received from Members who did not believe that the report could be accepted at this time as it was flawed, in the hope that ensuring accuracy would assist the Llŷn AONB Unit in the development of the AONB Management Plan.

DECISION

- **To reject the flawed sections of the report and ask the AONB Unit to urgently ensure data accuracy, with the assistance of Members.**
- **To ask the AONB Officer to write to Cyngor Gwynedd Council's Planning Policy Committee and the Planning Policy Service on behalf of this Joint Committee, formally requesting to include the protection of the character of houses and cottages in the AONB as part of the development of a new planning policy, with the assistance of Councillor Gruffydd Williams.**
- **To encourage Members to take part in a Planning Policy Service public engagement event.**

The meeting started at 4.00pm and ended at 5.45pm

CHAIR