

COMMITTEE	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	November 17 th 2021
TITLE	Dark Sky Designation
PURPOSE	Inform members and seek support
AUTHOR	AONB Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Support an application for Dark Sky Park designation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 For some time now the AONB Unit has been working towards applying for an International Dark Sky status for the Llŷn AONB area.
- 1.2 The first step was commissioning a Dark Sky Survey to assess how dark the night sky was over the area and how much light pollution was present. This survey, which was financed by Welsh Government, proved that the night sky was indeed very dark over parts of Llŷn and pollution levels were low.
- 1.3 Following a presentation the possibility of applying for a Dark Sky designation for the Llŷn AONB was discussed at the meeting in November 2020. However at the time there were insufficient members still present to make a decision.

2.0 “NOS” PROJECT

- 2.1 The “Nos” project has been established in partnership with Anglesey AONB, Clwydian Range and Dee valley AONB and the Snowdonia National Park (which has been designated as a Dark Sky Reserve). The Nos Partnership has appointed a Dark Sky Officer – namely Dani Robertson.
- 2.2 The aim of Project Nos is to work together to maintain, safeguard and promote the dark sky in the various areas and work on dark sky designations. As part of this project we will work together to monitor the dark sky, raise awareness of light pollution, promote good practice and hold stargazing events. **It must be emphasised that there is no intention to switch off street light as part of this project.**

2.3 The Dark Sky Officer has already made a presentation to the JAC on the benefits of safeguarding the night sky – environmentally, economically and socially. In addition, at the request of the Committee all relevant community/ town councils within the AONB were invited to view the presentation and ask questions. Not many councils took up the offer but the AONB Unit did receive some messages of support following the presentation.

3.0 APPLICATION FOR DARK SKY STATUS FOR LLŶN AONB

3.1 It is the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) which has established the concept of Dark Sky areas and it is the body responsible for designations. There are a series of designations possible – including Sanctuary, Community, Park and Reserve. The AONB Unit staff have taken part in an online meeting with representatives of the IDA and there is support for an application for this area.

3.2 Originally the intention was for the Llŷn AONB to apply for Community status. However on the basis of monitoring results and discussions with the IDA we are of the opinion that a Park status would be a better reflection of the quality of the area's dark sky and would also have more prestige.

3.3 As part of the Dark Sky Application process there will be a need to produce and adopt a Supplementary Planning Guide and arrange a programme of events to raise awareness.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 To support an application to the IDA for Dark Sky Park designation for the Llŷn AONB.