



Dorset AONB Partnership  
 Hosted by Dorset County Council  
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## Dorset AONB Partnership Board Meeting, 10.00am, Tues 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020

By zoom

### Draft minutes

Organisation	Representative	Status	2020-11
Council for the Protection of Rural England	Dr Guy Dickinson	Voting member	Present
Country Land and Business Association	Commander Rupert Best DL	Voting member	Present
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Cllr Peter Bowyer	Voting member	Present
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Cllr Mike Jones	Voting member	Present
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Cllr Janet Page	Voting member	Present
Dorset Council	Cllr Ray Bryan	Voting member	Present
Dorset Council	Cllr Jane Somper	Voting member	Present
Dorset Council	Cllr Roland Tarr	Voting member	Present
Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership	Luke Rake	Voting member	Present
Dorset Local Nature Partnership	Jim White	Voting member	Apologies
Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society	Jeremy Pope OBE DL	Voting member	Present
Environment Agency	Keith Calder	Voting member	Present
Forestry Commission	Chris Gibbard	Voting member	Present
Historic England	Ross Simmonds	Voting member	
National Farmers' Union	Robert Lasseter	Voting member	Present (chair)
Natural England	Robert Lloyd	Voting member	Present
The National Trust	Hannah Jefferson	Voting member	Present
Dorset Race Equalities Council	Nathalie Sherring	Voting member	Present
Jurassic Coast Trust	Lucy Culkin	Attending member	Present
Purbeck Heritage Network	Brian Bleese	Attending member	Apologies
Dorset Council	Matt Reeks	Supporting Officer	
Dorset Council	Hilary Jordan	Supporting Officer	
Dorset Local Nature Partnership	Maria Clarke	Supporting Officer	Apologies
Country Land and Business Association	William Langer	Supporting Officer	Present
National Farmers' Union	Louise Stratton	Supporting Officer	Present

**DAONB Team:** Tom Munro (AONB Manager), Ian Rees (Countryside Officer), Julie Hammon (Stepping into Nature Project Officer), Steph Aburrow (Stepping into Nature), Sue Dampney (Learning, Culture & Communications Officer), Jill Hearing (Reconnecting the Ridgeway Project Officer), Richard Brown (Landscape Planning Officer), Caroline Kelly (Purbeck), Caroline Richards (Dorset Food & Drink), Kate Townsend (Project Support Officer).

**Speakers:** Stuart Fox (Nat. Grid), Simon Toogood (Nat. Grid), Maddy Pfaff (Lulworth Estate), Derek Billings (Lulworth Estate)

### Welcome, introductions and apologies

Chairman welcomed all, with particular welcome to our guest speakers.

## 1. Election of Chair

**TMunro:** Jim White is standing down as the Chair from the partnership board. 2 candidates had expressed an interest taking over the role, Dr Phil Sterling and Robert Lasseter. Following a pre-meeting vote Dr Phil Sterling received the majority of the 14 votes cast.

As per the process agreed at the previous Board Meeting, Dr Sterling will be elected as AONB Chairman.

Vice Chair Robert Lasseter will Chair this meeting as both Jim White and Dr Phil Sterling unable to attend.

**RLasseter** asked for condolences from the board to be passed onto Jim White

**TMunro** asked board members to email him/team if they had a personal message of condolence or thanks they would like us to pass onto JW.

## 2. Dorset Race Equalities Council – Role

**TMunro** introduced the paper developed following discussion with the Steering Group, recommending that the board invites a representative from Dorset Race Equality Council (DREC) to sit on this board as a full voting member, to act as a champion for equality, diversion and inclusion at a governance level.

Discussion:

- a. **RBest**- questioned if anyone speaks Dorset on the board and why we should be looking after other ethnic backgrounds when we don't look after ourselves. **TM** – it is about broadening, not diluting the work we do.
- b. **RTarr** – problems here not same as cities but there are many groups not visiting our landscapes. We need to be inclusive of other ethnicities living in and visiting the AONB.
- c. **HJefferson** –if broadening the AONB's reach by having DREC on the board helps us then it will be an asset.

**NShearing** from DREC explained more about the organisation – DREC is a charity and aims to

- support people from different ethnic backgrounds discriminated against due to their race or religion
- work with ethnic individuals/groups in Dorset to empower and promote their culture
- support statutory and voluntary organisations and businesses to help embed equality and diversity throughout their work.

Lots of people do not access or contribute to the local environment so what can we do to open up and broaden access to everyone? Hopes to be able to contribute by raising issues around inclusion and offering advice on how to broaden access and engagement of people from different backgrounds.

- a. **RLass** - Glover Review clear on this and if want to appeal to a particular group of people important that board reflects who appealing to.
- b. **RBest** – concerned the board is expanding into areas which don't concern the people who have built the AONB and who work in it.
- c. **RTarr** – we need to adapt and encourage people from different backgrounds/ethnicities as they are a vital part of the tourist industry.
- d. **JPope** – at the Tank Museum 200k visitors from all over the world which contribute to the local economy and we can't expect support from funders if we don't address this issue. An opportunity and not a threat.
- e. **RBest** – we have a mix of races in my local village and I don't see why we need to make an issue of it.
- f. **KCalder** – this is about inclusiveness, being actively inclusive and addressing unknown biases.
- g. **JSomper** – Young people are also missing from the board. **TM** – this was also picked up in Glover review and we are aware of it. **JSomper** – could be addressed through work with partners.
- h. **RLass** – This is a way of looking after the AONB for subsequent generations.

**RESOLUTION: The board approves by majority vote a representative of the Dorset Race Equality Council joining the board as a full voting member**

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meetings held in November 2019 and June 2020 were agreed as correct. No matters arising.

### 4. National Grid's Visual Impact Provision (Dorset undergrounding project) (external speaker presentation - [here](#))

Simon explained that this is one of four undergrounding schemes across the country and work on the project is well underway. Despite the disruptions of Covid, for which site mitigations & measures have been put in place, the project is progressing as planned.

Progress so far - 32% of ducts in, 32% of trench installed and 90% of the haul road has been installed.

Over the next few months they are looking at bird nest mitigation on the pylons, the first cable pull and completing the haul road.

Excitingly a vast amount of archaeology has been found during the project, such as stone barrows, roman buildings, pottery etc. These will eventually be on display in the visitor's centre on the site. Artefacts are going to Oxford for carbon dating.

#### Questions:

- a. **JPope** – hopes the artefacts can link in with the museum.
- b. **RTarr** – wonderful scheme and will bring in crucial visitors.
- c. **RBest** – asked when it will be finished and will the flooding issue be resolved? **SToogood** it will be finished in 2022, explained the team are working hard on flooding issues, defences went in last Thursday but there are still challenges.
- d. **HJefferson** – asked if they had talked to TV companies about it as it is an enchanting story. **SToogood** said he had been in recent contact with them and is in discussion.
- e. **RLass** - suggested contacting Countryfile
- f. **PBowyer** – asked about the opportunity for incorporating this in the Dorset curriculum and embed the journey with an educational experience, to spark curiosity amongst all age ranges. **SFox** said Covid had prevented this but they have a meeting with local primary school next week and have a rolling programme but asked if there is something broader then they would be happy to discuss it and get involved.
- g. **RLass** – Dorset AONB boundary at Upwey to Abbotsbury, asked about the possibility of Nat. Grid legacy work for future generations by turning branch line into cycle way. Asked if others in the room thought it was a project for AONB to get involved in. **SFox** – potential funding for this from Community Grant fund up to 20k or LEI. **SToogood** – LEI could be explored. **TM** – tramway has long been identified as a potential cycling route. LEI currently being used to assist farms affected by pylons. Once these projects have been completed the team will look at this for a future application.
- h. **RTarr** - a good thing to do as bringing more people, but not more cars into the area.
- i. **JPope** – chimes with museum relaunch, suggested someone from NGRid might make contact with Dorset County Museum.

### 5. Spring/Summer 2020: pandemic visitors, the experience from Lulworth (external speaker presentation – [here](#) and Respect, Collect, Protect video [here](#) )

Derek & Maddy explained that despite the pandemic, it was 'business as usual' at Durdle Door and they experienced very high numbers of visitors from out of the area. This led to a huge array of challenges for the team such as mass littering, graffiti, fires on grassland, tombstoning and parking issues. The team worked hard to find solutions, including working with DC on an operational plan, employing beach wardens and cleaners, increasing signage and an educational campaign. This has had a huge economic consequences for the estate(over £100k). They are now looking at long term measures to cope with increased visitor pressures in future years e.g. educational programmes, partnership work, Just Park App, 5G Alert Trial.

#### Questions:

- a. **JBest**: – fascinating and horrifying – bought out concerns raised 20 yrs. ago when gov at time went for Right to Roam and remembers James Weld asking who would pay for maintenance and regulation for this new area of coastline being opened up to everybody. Covid makes the situation unusual but raises a warning of what happens when the government does something but does not

fund it properly. How is estate being recompensed for extra expenses? Also raises question of tourism in DAONB, do we want our own people to be so inconvenienced by tourism? **MPfaff** parking charges help recompense additional cost but does not cover it. Government also needs to better educate people from cities visiting the coast.

- b. **PBowyer (Chat)** - Durdle Door-serious issues of capacity management + need to address the tensions between access, excess and tourism-maybe a future topic?
- c. **RBryan** – As the portfolio holder horrified by the huge bills incurred and the terrible treatment of Dorset Council Highways officers who were brought in to assist. This will not happen again and will be tackled through education and enforcement.
- d. **RLass** – AONB team may be able to assist with educational aspect – asked if the team could they facilitate a future discussion.
- e. **TM** – Agreed this and said team are looking out for funding sources for a sustainable tourism strategy and will continue to work with agencies such as Visit Dorset. Thanked Maddy and Derek for their presentation and advised them to get in touch if we can amplify messages.
- f. **Lucy Culkin (Chat)** - I would like to be involved with wider discussions regarding education and visitor management/behaviour across the Jurassic Coast and in particular 'honey pot' Sites.

*Post meeting - Derek has asked if anyone wants to help or has any ideas for collaborative work, then to get in touch as they would love to hear any ideas or thoughts from board members.*

## **6. Delivering the AONB Management Plan**

TM presented on AONB team delivery report. Team members updated the board additionally: -

**Ian Rees** - update on the Defra Test & Trials scheme, an 18-month project trialling methods to map where in the landscape actions can be delivered to support improving landscape character and that help deliver DEFRA's 6 themes (clean air, thriving plants and wildlife, protection from hazards, clean air, climate regulation and beauty & engagement). At present they are looking at ways to link people to activities which they may benefit from, such as reducing flooding. For example mapping of the Cerne and Sydling valleys shows areas where there has been historical flooding and where there are more vulnerable communities. Such information leads to the identification of priority areas and informs where action e.g. tree planting should be undertaken. This information is on a landscape scale but they will be looking at a farm holding scale in the future. Next steps for the project are to test them out with farmers, report back to DEFRA and engage with a wider range of farmers about the benefits of ELMS & nature recovery strategies.

**Caroline Richards (DF&D)** – Most events were cancelled so they have been looking at other ways to trade, such as sharing pitches with Dorset Farmers' Markets. Following consultation with DAPTC members they had a positive response to the suggestion of Pop-up markets and will look to having a core body of travelling traders for these events next year.

Athelhampton Christmas event has been cancelled this year, but the Tank Museum Victorian Market is going ahead as well as some other Farmer's Markets which members will be trading at.

**Steph Aburrow (Step into Nature)** – Presented evaluation data, showing how activities have had a positive effect on their target audience, the full report is in the board papers. Another report is soon to be published - sharing the learning outcomes from the project.

An online resource hub is being created in place of live Picnic in the Park events this year (all cancelled due to the pandemic). Based on the 5 ways to wellbeing, it will be fun, interactive and very engaging. All activities will be pre-recorded and will grow and change with seasons. They are looking for new content so if anyone has anything suitable for the platform please get in touch. Once it is online a link will be circulated.

**Julie Hammond (Step into Nature)** – Reported they are looking at growing the Health and Nature Dorset collaboration with partners aimed at increasing engagement in nature for wellbeing and addressing inequalities. Following on from a workshop in 2019 with partners from health and environment organisations the collaboration recently put in a funding bid to Health Foundation's 'Shaping places for healthy lives' fund which, although unsuccessful, got through to the last 30. In conjunction with the CCG they also put in a

submission of interest to 'Green prescribing for mental health' fund, which was sadly also unsuccessful. However the work put into these submissions will help them to move forward with their work in the next phase SiN and HAND. This extension (funded by the National Lottery Community Fund) hopes to address cultural barriers to accessibility through new activities, in the New Year they will be recruiting someone part time who will be testing assumptions and creating activities.

**Sally King** – Recently worked on a signage project at West Bay. The many old, worn signs at East and West Beach have been replaced with 2 new up to date signs, decluttering the area. They have been re-sited from the crest of the beaches to the beach access points so as not to impinge views. The project used funding from the Coast & Community Fund and was undertaken in conjunction with Bridport TC, RNLI, Dorset Coast Forum, DC (Harbour Master). They include safety advice, dog & litter free information – which was missing from the old signage boards. The NTrust have expressed an interest in a similar project at Burton Beach car park as have Lyme Regis TC.

### Questions

- a. **PBowyer (Chat)** - 1. Dorset Council and the Strategic Land Availability Assessment. Some sites in the AONB that are in the SLAA are seen as unsuitable yet can be included in the Dorset Local Plan e.g 1000 houses at Worgret. Will the AONB comment on the SLAA and how can the Board respond to Dorset Council? Question 2 The SLAA supplies evidence to the Dorset Local Plan. Will the Board be consulted on the Dorset Local Plan and how can the AONB respond given that the Board meets twice per year? **TM** - no officer here from DC to comment but the Plan is in process and the AONB team is a consultee. Hoping the Board will hear an update from DC at next meeting.  
***RBrown (post meeting) Q1-** A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a technical exercise to determine the quantity and suitability of land potentially available for housing development. It is not a site allocations exercise – the purpose is to provide a robust indication of aggregate housing capacity at local authority level. The SHLAA is a required part of the evidence base needed for the preparation of a Local Plan (as specified in the National Planning Policy Framework, para. 159). The Local Authority is required to consider all options, included sites within or close to designated areas. Sites are commonly put forward by landowners, but the Local Authority can also look at land that is not being proactively promoted. A sequential test of the overall land considered to be conceivably available for develop is then undertaken to consider the suitability of the sites. This process requires consultation with stakeholders, of which the AONB Team is included.*  
*Q2 – The AONB Team are consulted on the Local Plan and a response is usually provided by the Landscape Planning Officer. In addition to formal consultation opportunities, the Team is involved in ongoing discussion with other specialist within Dorset Council on some specific sites of strategic importance, such as North Dorchester.*
- b. **JSomper** – Team have input into LEP, DF&D seeking support from LEP how much influence do we have around this? Dorset Growth Hub, promoted by DF&D provided valuable advice to members, in part. small businesses. This Good Earth - uncomfortable with the wording used in the press release, one-sided. **TM** – hard to say how much influence exactly, but members from around this table also sit on it, eg. Luke Rake. This Good Earth received a small SDF grant, comments are provided by interviewees – farmers, landowners, academics.
- c. **RBryan** – RE. This Good Earth - concerned that DC logo has been used which implies DC fully supportive, will follow this up. Climate Change work is at consultation stage – please take part. Low Carbon Dorset have received extra money which will be used to advance things in Dorset. Thanks and congratulations to the team for all the work you do.
- d. **RLass**– Thanks to the team, huge value for money.

**RESOLUTION: The Board approved and noted the progress made on delivering the Management Plan 2019-2024.**

## 7. Dorset AONB 2020-2021 Budget Outline

TM presented the paper.

**RESOLUTION – The board approved the proposed outline budget and funding priorities for the next financial year.**

## 8. 90 second partner updates

- a. **JPage** – 3 of us on this board and represent all PC's in Dorset, we are a membership organisation and work closely with AONB on planning applications in particular.
- b. **MJones** – Also represent DAPTC and on the Cranborne chase AONB board. Do we know much about them and share ideas? **TM** – yes we meet and share ideas and activities – their dark skies expertise is of interest to us and we are supporting them in landscape partnership development.
- c. **RBest** – Land - involved in Agri Bill and Environ. Bill, tied up in ELMS and BREXIT and AONB much to do on these areas to work with landowners and farmers. Planning – looking at growth and synergy of villages. Communications – support a better communication network for Dorset. Economy – energy issues, need more housing, tourism of value next year– AONB can help educate and to direct tourists to quieter areas.
- d. **GDickinson (Chat)** - There are many including CPRE who feel that the continued decline in Dorset's environment and natural capital will be reversed if the AONB is upgraded to a National Park. Point 9 of the recent Government's "Green Industrial Revolution" paper yesterday was entitled "Protecting our Nature Environment". It said "we will start the process of designating more of England's iconic landscapes as National Parks and AONBs..". So two questions please. 1) Dorset Council's recent consultation on their Climate and Nature Emergencies Strategy showed a continual decline in Dorset's natural environment. The AONB board have announced a similar one. So how will this board be involved in the reaction to Dorset Council's statement? And should it be more involved in future Council consultations? 2) There was a recent report from Natural England - "Building Partnerships for Nature's Recovery". We wonder how this board will be involved in this too? It appears the AONB wasn't mentioned in this report whereas others like RSPB, Forestry Commission etc were mentioned as key players. **TM** – Q1. we helped compile DC action plan and the team will be involved in consultation. Re a National Park the diversity of opinions on the board means there is no unified Board position; the team respond on the quality and impacts to landscape. Q2. Not seen that report but at launch of NNR delivery Partnership, Dorset AONB & the Purbeck Heaths were mentioned and AONBs are proposed as key part of NRN nationally.
- e. **PBowler** – TCs/PCs concerned over Local Government reorganisation, in part. a shortage of planning officers and the secrecy of the development of the Dorset Local Plan – lack of community consultation, excessive housing targets, insufficient control locally of planning functions and members have expressed opposition to Government papers to a new planning system. Urged board members to look at current consultation on the main modifications to the Purbeck Local Plan as likely it will feed into Dorset Local Plan and have significant consequences
- f. **HJefferson** – NTrust severely impacted by pandemic, predicted losses £200m have led to a major reorganisation and restructure. Nature recovery still at heart of organisation. Locally small houses still closed, hope to open end of March next year using an e-booking model. Positive way to manage visitor flow but staff losses. Moving away from the direct delivery of events themselves (e.g. Springtide). Will need to talk to Caroline and Sue about this.
- g. **JPope**– redevelopment of County Museum – 5 new galleries, opening in spring next year, plus a huge new basement. 1 gallery for 'Natural Dorset' – to explain geological history, landscape etc so lots of synergy with this meeting. There will also be a temporary exhibition gallery for valuable collections which are visiting. A possible facility for NGrid finds? Plus a Learning centre in John White's rectory.
- h. **RLloyd** – Team Leader with NE. NRN are the big thing at the moment and interested to learn what Boris' Green Revolution will mean for them.

- i. **LRake** - LEP and also on LNP now and prospectus –Environment part of LEP priorities and investment will come but we don't know when next capital tranche will come down from central government. As prospectus comes together will share with board as a key partner and will take feedback back to board.
- j. **RTarr** – along with Cllr Jane Somper, 2 local councillors and would welcome you to make contact if anything happening in your local area which would be of interest to them.
- k. **RLass**– Change in mood and more acceptance from Farmers to a change of direction. The challenge for AONBs, and government is 2-fold – networking landowners together on a landscape scale and providing early guidance to landowners to be able to implement changes. The ELMS trials need energy from the farming community, they are open to it but need forewarning. Exciting time for anyone involved in landownership though. **TM** - we will disseminate info around ELMS when received from DEFRA (due on 26/11).

**9. Any Other Business**

None

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Dates of next meetings

	Spring	Winter
<b>AONB Steering Group</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
<b>AONB Partnership Board</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2021

**May Venue tbc – but preferred to be National Grid VIP site HQ, Winterbourne Abbas**

If you wish to have items added to the agenda for the Board, please ensure suggestions are sent to [Tom Munro](#), [Kate Townsend](#) or the [AONB Chairman](#) at least 7 days before the date of the Steering Group meeting which precedes the Board meeting, so they may be considered for timetabling by the that group.