

CYNGOR GWYNEDD GWYNEDD COUNCIL

Draft minutes of the 17th Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Liaison Group meeting held on the 30th September 2009 (starting 7pm) at Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog.

Present:

Alison Hargrave	PLAS SAC Officer
Dafydd Jones	PLAS SAC Officer – maternity cover
Lucy Kay	RA - Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)
Dafydd Roberts	RA - Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA)
Cllr Caerwyn Roberts	Local Authority - Snowdonia National Park Authority (chairman)
Mike Bowyer	Other - Archaeology
Mike Parry	Tourism - Llyn Fisherman's Association
Bill Miller-Jones	Other - Diver and boat owner
Cllr Ray Quant	Local Authority – Ceredigion
Alan Gaydon	Community Council – Dyffryn Ardudwy & Tal y Bont
Sion Williams	Commercial fishing - Llŷn Pot Fishermens' Association
Iwan Hughes	Commercial fishing - Llŷn Pot Fishermens' Association
Rowland Sharp	Other
Kate Batton	Member of the public
Greg Guthrie	Speaker - Royal Haskoning
Dylan Griffiths	Speaker – Gwynedd Council

(PLAS – Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau)

(RA – Relevant Authority)

Introduction

Caerwyn Roberts welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies:

Liz Allen	RA – Ceredigion County Council (CCC)
Phil Oliver	RA – Environment Agency
Barry Davies	RA – Gwynedd Council
Virginia Prieto	RA – North Western and North Wales Sea Fisheries Committee (NW&NWSFC)
Rob Strachan	RA – Environment Agency Wales
Victoria Hickin	RA – North Western and North Wales Sea Fisheries Committee (NW&NWSFC)
Rhys Jones	RA – Gwynedd Council
Lea Hughes	RA – Gwynedd Council
Glynne Roberts	Commercial Fishing - Llŷn Inshore Fishermen's Association
Bill Bracewell	Recreation - Aberdyfi Partnership
Lee Oliver	Other - Keep Wales Tidy
Gruff Jones	Other - Keep Wales Tidy
Nia Jones	Wildlife – North Wales Wildlife Trust
Jilly Whipp	Other
Bob Lowe	Recreation - Sailing
David Roberts	Local Authority – Snowdonia National Park Authority

2. Minutes of the last meeting

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising

- 3.1 Item 3.2 (Rowland Sharp to send Gill Bell a picture of a boom made out of cotton bud sticks): Rowland explained that he did not have this picture at the moment but he would send one if he can get hold of one.

Action: *Rowland Sharp to send Gill Bell a picture of a boom made out of cotton bud sticks if he can get hold of one.*

- 3.2 Item 3.5 (Alison to send out information about the shoreline management plan to the Liaison Group and the Relevant Authorities Group via e – mail and to send a hard copy to those that request it): Alison sent this information out via e – mail in August 2009.

Action completed.

- 3.3 Item 5.1 (SAC Officer / Relevant Authorities to arrange for an update on the findings of the Ecojel jellyfish project in 2012): Alison said that this would be done in 2012.

Action on standby until 2012.

- 3.4 Item 5.2 (Alison to talk to Keep Wales Tidy and Barry Davies to see if there is something that can be done to raise more awareness about reporting stranded animal and improve the detail of reporting and identification): Alison explained that she had spoken to Keep Wales Tidy and they explained that they do ask groups to record strandings and to report them to the relevant authority. Rod Penrose's details have been included in the introduction pack that each group receives. Keep Wales Tidy also mentioned that they would be happy to provide groups with further information if necessary. Alison also explained that Gwynedd Council are proactive in recording stranding incidents and submitting these reports. They are also responsible for disposing of the carcasses.

Action completed.

- 3.5 Item 6.1 (Lucy Kay to seek clarification from biosphere reserve staff in CCW about strategic planning for the biosphere and its links with the SAC): This item is on the agenda.

Action completed.

- 3.6 Item 6.1 (Alison to look into whether a presentation on the Dyfi biosphere would be useful for the group at a future meeting): This item is on the agenda.

Action completed.

- 3.7 Item 6.2 (Alison to contact Huw Davies about a presentation to the Liaison Group on SMP2 and the proposed work under this): This item is on the agenda.

Action completed.

- 3.8 Item 6.2 (Alison to look into arranging a presentation about coastal processes within the SAC and what is known about this): This item is on the agenda.

Action completed.

- 3.9 Item 7 (Alison to arrange the next meeting).

Action completed.

4 Update from the SAC Officer**4.1 Work undertaken July – September 2009**

- Alison has organised and run a number of raising awareness events including:
 - A guided walk in Borth y Gest – over 60 people attended
 - A guided walk near Shell Island for the Wildlife Trust
 - A picnic with a porpoise in Porth Dinllaen – over 20 people attended

- Rock pool safari in Criccieth – this event had to be cancelled due to the presence of Portuguese Man of War on the beach
 - Sand castle competition in Aberdyfi – despite the rain we had over 20 people take part
- Alison took the mobile exhibition to the Eisteddfod in Bala where she ran a number of workshops and also an art competition where more than 50 children took part.
- Alison has produced and circulated issue 7 of the SAC newsletter
- Alison has had input into the following projects:
 - Natur Gwynedd LBAP
 - Marine Ecosystems Group
 - New Maritimes studies GCSE
- Alison has organised a Relevant Authorities meeting and a Welsh GEMS meeting, both will be held in the next couple of weeks.
- Alison continues to update the SAC website with the latest SAC news and publications.
- Alison continues to update and revise the management plan.
- Alison is also working on a review of the PLAS SAC with the view of reporting on what has been achieved over the last few years and the benefits of both the designation and having a dedicated SAC Officer in post. Every SAC in Wales will be doing this with the view of producing a final report that can be used when seeking funding in the future.

4.2 Maternity Cover

4.2.1 Details

Alison explained that she would begin her maternity leave on the 19th October and hopes to return to post mid September 2010. She explained that Dafydd Jones had been appointed to cover the post during this period. He will begin in the 12th October and will be in post full time.

4.2.2 Work programme

Alison explained that she had produced a work programme for Dafydd for the next 10 months with the following being priority:

- 1 Liaison Group meeting
- 1 Relevant Authorities meeting
- Raising Awareness
 - Cool Seas Roadshow
 - 2 events such as guided walks
 - Attend shows with the mobile exhibition
 - School visits
 - Presentations
 - Maintaining the website
 - Produce 1 newsletter
- Promote the SAC via press releases and distributing the SAC leaflet
- Continue with the review of the SAC
- Continue with the review of the management plan
- Continue with the litter focus group

4.3 Management Plan

Alison explained that she is still working to revise and update the management plan. She explained that CCW had completed half of their topic actions plans and that she was in the process of editing these plans. She added that she hoped to be able to arrange meetings to discuss actions fairly soon.

4.4 Litter

Alison explained that an e – mail group had been set up and that information had been distributed. Alison added that Dafydd would arrange the first meeting of this group to take this discussion forward and decide on the next steps.

Caerwyn Roberts added that the Environment Committee would be meeting the 1st October to discuss issues such as this. He also referred to an email that Alison had sent out regarding some fantastic work undertaken by Pete Wilkinson, the Marine Conservation Society and Keep Wales Tidy. They had cleared 10km of beach on the north Llŷn and collected 600kg of litter. They also raised £1000 for charity.

5 Presentations

Caerwyn Roberts welcomed Greg Guthrie and Dylan Griffiths who were giving presentations at the meeting.

5.1 Shoreline management plan 2 (SMP 2) - Greg Guthrie, Royal Haskoning

Greg Guthrie was invited to give a talk on SMP2. SMP1 was carried out ten years ago, SMP2 is a review of SMP1. The coastline of the UK is broken up into cells for the purpose of the SMP process. The cell that includes PLAS extends from St Anne's head in Pembrokeshire to the Great Orme in Conwy. This is the third largest SMP in the UK. SMP1 looked 50 years into the future whilst SMP2 looks at three stages, 0-20 years, 20-50 years and 50-100 years. The initial consultation has been done but Greg brought some of the questionnaires with him and said that they have informally extended the consultation. For more information please visit www.westofwalessmp.org/

Questions raised:

- a) Bill Miller-Jones: I have a concern that you state a possible 2m raise in sea level. Recent research shows it could be a lot higher and in a shorter timescale. Greg: A coastal impact assessment identified a possible 2m sea level rise. This mean value is less than the value quoted by DEFRA as guidance. However, by looking at a 2m rise we can see if our policies can deal with that. With a sea level rise of e.g. 7m an SMP would be irrelevant as that magnitude of a rise would change society. We are conscious that there is uncertainty.
- b) Rowland Sharp: Have you mapped the areas where land was historically under water because these are the areas that would flood first? Greg: Alterations in the coast and the sea is not always to do with sea level rise or fall, it has a lot to do with coastal processes and deposition of material. History is important but you need to be careful. Sometimes you can use coastal processes to have both a positive and a negative effect.
- c) Caerwyn Roberts: I have some concern for some areas e.g. a waste site in Harlech is only 6 feet above sea level. Greg: Sometime the best option with regards to waste sites is to dig it out but this can be costly. If it is not contaminated i.e. an inert tip, you can let it dissipate by diffusing into the marine environment as the coast erodes.
- d) Mike Parry: Coastal processes and sea level rise are very difficult to predict, this could lead to a lot of wasted public money trying to mitigate issues that are never realised. Greg: We look at economics in a broad brush way. Even if something isn't fundable by a national pot, if there is a way of protecting something of value we may develop policy to aid this.
- e) Dafydd Roberts: Given the uncertainty how useful are strategic environmental assessments (SEAs) and appropriate assessments of these plans? Greg: SMPs predict generally what will happen.

- f) Ray Quant: The SMP will take 2 years to complete. You will come up with three time scenarios 0-20, 20-50 and 50-100 years, and each time scenario has four further scenarios (hold the line / do nothing / advance / retreat). The battle is still to come once people realise what some of the scenarios are.
- g) Rowland Sharp: How do you prioritise areas, is this in the plan? Greg: Areas of influence in this locality are reasonably limited. They are judged by balancing all aspects including economics and the environment. Many scenarios are difficult to call.
- h) Mike Bowyer: With a sea level rise of anything over 3 or 4 meter will we even get tourists? I believe we would have social unrest.
- i) Alan Gaydon: With the consultation period closed, have you been in touch with land owners? Greg: We have a long list of consultees, I'm not sure who is specifically noted for each area. Please take a questionnaire as we are still accepting responses.

ACTION: *Greg Guthrie to send the SMP questionnaire and the leaflet to Alison electronically and Alison to send it out to the Liaison Group.*

- j) Mike Bowyer: Halcrow, who were commissioned to prepare the SMP from the Great Orme to the Solway Firth, took a different approach and we were able to comment on different parts of the plan. Greg: We can't separate things like heritage and the environment as it is all integrated.
- k) Mike Bowyer: Halcrow went 1km inland and 3km seaward. How far inland and seaward do you go? Greg: Our remit is to manage flood and coastal risk so we go as far as needed. We won't go that far off shore but if there was a problem e.g. with dredging we would consider this as it could impact the coast. We won't be putting limits as we need a flexible approach.
- l) Caerwyn Roberts: Other countries are already doing this and are mitigating against possible effects; this is a world wide problem.

5.2 The Dyfi Biosphere – Dylan Griffiths, Gwynedd Council

Dylan Griffiths was invited to give a talk on the Dyfi biosphere reserve. The Dyfi biosphere has been in existence for over 30 years but recently had to go through a re application process. It was re designated in June this year. The core of the biosphere is part of the PLAS SAC whilst the buffer zone is made up of surrounding SSSI's. There is also a transition zone which in this case is considered to be the catchments area of the estuary. It was noted that this does not have to be a definite boundary. Interestingly this is the only biosphere in Wales. For more information please visit the Dyfi biosphere website www.dyfibiosphere.org.uk.

Questions raised:

- a) Ray Quant mentioned that he pushed for Aberystwyth to be included in the transition zone and the boundary has been extended. Dylan added that the transition zone boundary should not be taken literally.
- b) Rowland Sharp: Will this biosphere bring any change to what people can and can not do? Dylan: No there will be no change.
- c) Rowland Sharp: What is the difference between the buffer and transition zone? Dylan: The buffer zone will be underpinned by a designation, in this case SSSI's. The biosphere itself does not bring any further nature designations it just shows what is unique about the area and how people live with the environment.
- d) Greg Guthrie: What you have described sounds like just what we need for the SMP. Do you have a document or a statement that shows what is important in the area? Dylan: The bid to UNESCO does cover this in general terms and this is available online.

- e) Mike Parry: The long list of partners you showed was very heavy with organisations and didn't seem to have much community involvement. Dylan: The partnership was drawn together primarily to put the bid together and drive that forward. The opinion of the community was canvassed. This is not necessarily the same partnership that will maintain the biosphere.

6 Any issue of concern or interest

Bill Miller – Jones noted that the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society are planning to survey Risso's dolphins in the PLAS SAC. They are hoping to begin work next spring. There is more information on their website www.wdcs.org/

Lucy Kay mentioned a consultation on a Strategy for Marine Protected Areas in Wales: Protecting Welsh Seas. The consultation is on the WAG website. Alison added that she had sent this information to the group via email with a copy of the strategy.

Mike Parry noted that it was interesting to have speakers at the meetings and wanted to thank those that had organised it.

7 Time and date of next meeting

Cllr Caerwyn Roberts drew the meeting to a close by thanking everyone for coming and thanked Greg and Dylan for their informative presentations.

Next meeting scheduled for April 2010, 7 – 9pm in Plas Tan y Bwlch. Date to be confirmed.