

## **CYNGOR GWYNEDD GWYNEDD COUNCIL**

**Draft minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Liaison Group meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009 (starting 7pm) at Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog.**

### **Present:**

Bill Bracewell	Recreation - Aberdyfi Partnership
Mike Bowyer	Other - Archaeology
Lucy Kay	Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)
Emyr Williams	Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA)
Rhys Jones	Gwynedd Council (GC)
Rowland Sharp	Other - Personal Interest
Alison Hargrave	SAC Officer
Cllr Caerwyn Roberts	Snowdonia National Park Authority (chairman)
Cllr Ray Quant	Local Councillor
Bill Miller-Jones	Other - Diver and boat owner
Mike Parry	Tourism - Llyn Fisherman's Association
Virginia Prieto	North Western and North Wales Sea Fisheries Committee (NW&NWSFC)
Gruff Jones	Other - Keep Wales Tidy (KWT)
Alan Gaydon	Community Council
Rob Strachan	Environment Agency
Gill Bell	Marine Conservation Society (MCS)

### **Introduction**

Caerwyn Roberts welcomed everyone to the meeting. As there were a number of new faces everyone introduced themselves.

### **1. Apologies:**

Andy Jeffery	Industry
Liz Allen	Ceredigion County Council (CCC)
Liz Jones	Environment Agency (EA)
Alf Bowen	Tourism - Aberdyfi Partnership
Jilly Whipp	Other
Barry Davies	Gwynedd Council

### **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 3.1 (Alison to keep the group updated on the Interreg IIIA raising awareness project): This item is on the agenda. This project finished in June 2008.  
*Action completed.*
- 3.2 Item 4e (Alison to send out a list of topic action plans to the Liaison Group and all Liaison Group members who wish to comment on sections of the management plan to let Alison know by mid December 2007): Alison sent this information out to the Liaison Group on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Many Liaison Group members did respond and this has been recorded.

***Action completed.***

- 3.3 Item 5 (Alison to check with the remaining Liaison Group members who were not at the meeting if they are under the correct category): Alison has checked with the remaining Liaison Group members and everyone is under the correct category. This item will also be discussed under item 6 on the agenda.

***Action completed.***

- 3.4 Item 7.2 (Alison to see about getting a speaker to talk about the British marine Life Rescue and the strandings project): Alison said that she would organise this for the next meeting as the agenda for this meeting was full.

***Action: Alison to organise a speaker to talk about the British Marine Life Rescue project.***

**4 Update from the SAC Officer**

**4a) Living Coasts Living Seas**

Alison told the group that the Living Coasts living Seas interreg project had come to an end in June 2008. She explained that the project had been very successful and that many of the outputs were still in situ around the site e.g. the interpretation panels, the drop in the ocean sculpture and the murals in Tywyn. Alison also noted that the mobile exhibition and the underwater video were available to display around the site. She also reminded the group that a report on the project is still available that outlines the whole project. Alison finished by explaining that she hoped to use what they had learned from the project and to use aspects of the project in future raising awareness projects.

Alison mentioned that the Cool Seas Roadshow had recently toured primary schools around the SAC. The show was equally funded by the SAC and the MCS. The show consisted of a number of inflatable marine animals that were life like and life size. This show ended with a strong conservation message. The show was very well received. It toured for two weeks at the end of February 2009.

**4b) Updating the SAC management plan**

Alison explained that the management plan need to be reviewed and updated to include the 10 additional features added to the site since moderation. It was originally hoped that updated plan would be completed by March 2009 but that hasn't been possible. Alison explained that the process is well underway.

The SAC Officer and the RAs are still concentrating on the Topic Action Plans, i.e. the section of the document that deals with activities that take place (or may take place) in the SAC, the effect that they may have on the features and the management response to this. Alison reminded the group that some of the Topic Action Plan heading might have changed and there are some new headings. The reason for this is that the SAC Officers around Wales are trying to standardise management plans across Wales to ensure that people can go from one to the other with ease and more clarity.

Alison explained that as soon as the RAs had completed their sections the topic action plans would be sent out to the Liaison Group members that have requested them.

**5 Litter**

Alison explained that a number of Liaison Group members requested a discussion on litter and what the SAC could do to help alleviate the problem. Alison explained that there would be two presentations with Alison providing some input from other parties that were unable to attend.

The section would finish with a group discussion on possible actions for the litter topic action plan for the management plan.

**5a) SAC litter topic action plan**

Alison handed out the litter topic action plan that had been drafted for the updated SAC management plan. She explained that the actions section of the plan had not been updated yet and that the comments received at the meeting would help form the actions. She asked that everyone kept the plan in mind during the presentations and there would be an opportunity to comment and to add to the plan at the end. The group had the opportunity to read the topic action plan for a few minutes.

**5b) Presentation from the MCS – Gill Bell**

Gill Bell from the Marine Conservation Society gave a presentation on litter and the work that MSC do to tackle the problem.

Questions / comments:

1) Rowland Sharp mentioned that anglers use cotton bud sticks to make booms. Gill asked Rowland to send her a picture.

**Action:** *Rowland Sharp to send Gill Bell a picture of a boom made out of cotton bud sticks.*

2) Gill mentioned that MCS wants to see the government take a stand on marine litter. There is no strategy in Wales or the UK.

3) Gill explained that fishermen used to get litter bags for free and they were able to dispose of them for free. Now there is a charge so fishermen are likely to throw the litter overboard. This does not encourage fishermen to pick up any litter they might see.

4) Alan Gaydon asked about insurance for beach cleans. Gill answered by saying that for health and safety reasons you do need insurance and it is quite high so the best thing to do is join a group that has insurance all ready such as MSC or Keep Wales Tidy.

5) Gill mentioned that MCS were trailing a new litter cool seas roadshow. She added that for more information on the cool seas roadshow go to [www.mcsuk.co.uk/coolseas](http://www.mcsuk.co.uk/coolseas).

6) Gill explained that without carrying out a survey of the litter collected there is no way of knowing the source of the litter and this information is important if you want to stop the litter at source. Many groups don't do this.

**5c) Presentation from KWT – Gruff Jones**

Gruff Jones from Keep Wales Tidy gave a presentation on litter and the work that KWT do to help tackle the problem.

Questions / comments:

1) Gill asked Gruff why the groups Keep Wales Tidy organise don't survey the beaches. Gruff replied that KWT encourage groups to contact MCS but most groups just want to clean the beach and not do surveys.

2) Gruff explained that Lee Oliver would be the first contact point for KWT in Gwynedd and his contact details are:

Telephone number: 07824504799

E-mail address: [lee.oliver@keepwalestidy.org](mailto:lee.oliver@keepwalestidy.org)

3) Mike Parry asked if the name Tidy Towns was misleading. Gruff answered by saying that he didn't like the name but the Welsh Assembly Government chose it. He added that the project was for all areas not just towns and that this includes beaches.

4) Rowland Sharp said that fishermen have to itemise every item of litter that they land. How do you get round this? He added that this is a big ask for fishermen who are picking up litter that is not their own. He also mentioned that the skips provided for fishermen are being filled by other people so they need bins that they can lock. Gruff answered that they have a close relationship with the local authority and that if you leave it at an arranged collection point the local authority will pick it up.

5) Alan Gaydon pointed out that some wildlife need some litter as soil coverage. So if you keep Wales too tidy you may damage some species e.g. you get a lot of insects in leaves that are on the ground. Gruff said that they work closely with the local authority and they ask groups to remove man made items only. But at the end of the day it is up to each group what they remove. Gill added that MCS groups do not remove living environments such as the strandline. Alan Gaydon added that it might be useful to give advice to groups on what biodiversity needs. Gruff mentioned that they do other projects as well such as biodiversity projects.

6) Rowland Sharp mentioned the great egg case hunt run by the shark trust. He asked both KWT and MCS if they could provide training to groups undertaking beach cleans. Gill and Gruff both said that they could put groups in touch with either Rowland or the Shark Trust.

7) Lucy Kay asked how many groups clean the coastline within the SAC. Gruff answered that 26 out of 40 groups have adopted coastal areas in Gwynedd.

8) Mike Bowyer asked what the EU approach to litter was and whether there was a joint initiative. Gill mentioned the 3 year OSPAR project. OSPAR did not believe that there was a problem so they asked MCS to prove it. MCS undertook a three year project and did prove that there was a problem. OSPAR asked them to carry out another 3 year project. This came to an end in 2007. She added that the litter on European beaches has stayed the same since 1994 whilst the litter on UK beaches has doubled. She finished by saying that MCS are no longer specifically funded for this project but work continues. She added that the UK has not signed up to this.

9) Bill Miller Jones pointed out that we are inheriting a lot of litter from abroad. He explained that on the north coast of the Llŷn we get a lot of EU litter but with some easterly wind and a high tide it is all gone again. Equally when we get westerly winds we get a lot of litter from Ireland.

10) Mike Bowyer added that a lot of the litter on Anglesey is from Ireland and he asked MCS if they had dialogue with Ireland regarding this. Gill mentioned that they do have some groups in Ireland but not many. Gruff explained that KWT was a joint project with Ireland so they work very closely together. Gill added that litter is a global problem.

11) Emyr Williams mentioned a group called FERAC which has to do with fishing and recreation. He added that he had been appointed for a three year period on that group and it would be a good opportunity for either Alison or Gill to present the litter topic to the group. Emyr added that we could contact WLGA to provide more bins.

**Action:** *Alison to look into the possibility of presenting litter as a discussion topic at a FERAC meeting.*

#### **5d) Input from other parties**

Alison mentioned that Gwynedd Council do clean the beaches around Gwynedd on a regular basis and are responsible for a lot of the work involved in collecting litter and also collecting animal carcasses etc.

Alison explained that she had been in contact with a local volunteer from Pen Llŷn called Pete Wilkinson. Pete has done a lot of work with regard to litter and has been recognised as such by the MCS with a recent achievement award. He provided a lot of information that gave a very clear picture of the situation, he also provided many images which Alison showed the group. Pete's information mirrored the findings of the MCS.

#### **5e) Discussion**

The group was split into smaller groups to discuss what had been said and to come up with suggestions of how the SAC could help the situation without duplicating work that is being done already. Here are the suggestions:

- Student project – where does the litter come from
- Coordinate existing groups – to give a picture of what is happening across the site
- Publicise the work undertaken by various groups and raise the profile of the topic
- Co-ordinate and or hold a contact list for volunteers (some groups don't want to be part of an organisation but might want to know when events are being held)
- Put beach cleaning events on the SAC website calendar
- Provide more bins at the beach and ensure that they are emptied on a regular basis
- Encourage groups to survey during the September watch run by the MCS
- Set up a focus group to discuss this further

**Action:** *Alison to look into setting up a focus group to discuss the litter issue further.*

### **6 Any issue of concern or interest**

6.1 Alison provided the names of two people who had been nominated to join the Liaison Group, Siôn Williams to represent the fishing industry for the north of the site and Nia Jones to represent wildlife for the north of the site. The group agreed unanimously that Siôn and Nia could represent these two interest groups.

6.2 Alan Gaydon mentioned that there were many sea shore defence structures around Dyffryn Ardudwy, many still at the planning application stage. He asked what the group thought of this. Lucy Kay explained that it was a difficult issue for many reasons one being climate change, she added that this was a difficult issue for the public to become engaged with. Lucy also explained that the government were looking into issues of flooding and public engagement. It may be that areas labelled as 'need to be defended' will need a different stance.

6.3 Mike Bowyer explained that he had been involved with the first phase of SMP (shoreline management plan) – phase one was from the Scottish boarder to the Great Orme. The next phase will be from The Great Orme to St Anne's Head in Pembrokeshire. He explained that the

SMP was looking up to 100 years into the future. It will be tendered out in the next couple of months. He added that we should be involved in this. Mike also explained that the SMP covered 1km inland and 3km out to sea. It includes all wind farms and they also photograph the whole of the coastline within that phase.

**Action:** *Mike Bowyer to forward the minutes of the meeting he attended to Alison and Alison will forward them on to the group.*

**Action:** *Mike Bowyer to forward the details of the contract to Alison.*

6.4 Bill Bracewell asked if there was an update on the marine bill. Lucy answered that the bill was in the house of lords today. Quite a few amendments have been proposed (200 already). Gill mentioned that she sits on the Wales Environment Link group and they meet with the government.

## **7 Time and date of next meeting**

Cllr Caerwyn Roberts drew the meeting to a close by thanking everyone for coming.

Next meeting will be held on July 8<sup>th</sup> 2009, 7 – 9pm in Plas Tan y Bwlch.