

CYNGOR GWYNEDD GWYNEDD COUNCIL

Draft minutes of the 19th Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Liaison Group meeting held on the 22nd November 2010 (starting 7pm) at Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog.

Present:

Alison Hargrave (AH)	PLAS SAC Officer
Dafydd Roberts (DR)	RA - Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA) (Chairman)
Mike Bowyer (MB)	Other - Archaeology
Mike Parry (MP)	Tourism
Bill Miller-Jones (BMJ)	Other - Diver and boat owner
Alan Gayden (AG)	Community Council – Dyffryn Ardudwy & Tal y Bont
Rowland Sharp (RS)	Other
Barry Davies (BD)	RA – Gwynedd Council
Rhys Jones (RJ)	RA – Gwynedd Council
Glynne Roberts (GR)	Commercial Fishing - Llŷn Inshore Fishermen's Association
Bill Bracewell (BB)	Recreation - Aberdyfi Partnership
David Roberts (DavR)	Local Authority – Snowdonia National Park Authority
Glen Bickell (GB)	Industry
Gabrielle Wyn (GW)	Speaker – Intertidal Ecologist CCW

(PLAS – Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau)

(RA – Relevant Authority)

Introduction

DR welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that he would be chairing the meeting in Caerwyn Roberts' absence. He also apologised that Gwynedd Councils translators had not turned up and asked if everyone was happy to hold the meeting in English, everyone agreed.

1. Apologies:

Cllr Ray Quant	Local Authority – Ceredigion
Cllr Caerwyn Roberts	Local Authority – Snowdonia National Park Authority (chairman)
Lucy Kay	RA – CCW

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 4.5 (RS to pass details of local groups involved with the empty shop in Barmouth to the SAC Officer): RS explained that complications had arisen. If items were put on display in the shop the building would be subject to rates so it is on hold at the moment.
Action completed.

4. Update from the SAC Officer

4.1 Update on work undertaken May 2010 – November 2010

AH explained that she had been back in post since mid September after a period of maternity leave. She thanked Dafydd Jones for all his work and wished him well in his new job as the Llyn AONB assistant.

AH outlined the work that had been accomplished since the last meeting.

- 12 school visits including classroom sessions and beach visits
- The PLAS mobile exhibition has been to four shows – the Sea Food Festival, Botanical Beats, North Wales Show and Harlech Show
- A couple of events have been held – a rockpool safari in Criccieth and a guided walk for the North Wales Wildlife Trust
- Presentations have been given to the Caernarfon Rotary Club and Messy Church group in Dyffryn Ardudwy
- The 8th edition of the newsletter has been produced and circulated

AH added that she is currently working on the following:

- The PLAS Management Plan
- Next years Cool Seas Roadshow
- Updating the PLAS website
- Writing articles e.g. for the AONB newsletter
- Responding to consultations e.g. Highly Protected Marine Conservation Zones and the Natural Environment Framework
- Exploring sources of funding to continue with the SAC work
- Working on the Turing Tide project

4.2 Turning Tide litter project

A grant was obtained from Tidy Towns to run a litter project. The purpose of the project was to hold a number of events to help tackle the litter problem on PLAS beaches and adjacent areas and to raise awareness of this issue. Eleven events have taken place during the course of the project combining beach cleans with activities such as kayak safaris and rockpool rambles. The rest of the grant money will be spent on a poster that will promote the SAC and encourage people not to throw litter. It will be held as a competition to get as many people involved as possible. The poster should be ready by February. AH also explained that she had begun a litter database for all the groups that clean the beaches. This will allow us to publicise what they do and allows us to see the big picture of who cleans where. AH showed a presentation given by the Marine Conservation Society at a previous meeting, showing the damage litter can do.

Questions / Discussion:

- MP noted that the situation with regards to plastic bags should improve when people have to pay for them.

- BMJ said that we should be raising this internationally in order to tackle the source of the problem, he has encountered many items of litter that are readily identifiable from countries such as Ireland and Canada.
- RS added that balloon releases are still a problem he mentioned a large event organised by ASDA for breast cancer, many people complained about it and this particular ASDA store said they would not do it again. The group agreed that this is an awareness issue, people don't realise that the balloons are litter and cause harm. RS suggested that GEMS could write a joint letter regarding this issue and send it out to companies.
- DavR asked how much GC spends on cleaning beaches. BD noted that GC invest £130 thousand pounds a year. AH agreed to check figures from the Marine Conservation Society presentation regarding costs of marine litter. BD added that they clean the amenity beaches daily.

Action: *AH to check MCS figures regarding costs of marine litter*

- BB noted that no machines are used to clean beaches. BD added that this was due to the effect they have on the environment.
- DavR noted that we could do better and spend more to ensure we get the job done.
- BD explained that all local authorities are facing cuts.
- AG mentioned that he was involved with a local regeneration group in Dyffryn Ardudwy that would like to undertake beach cleans but found that they were not insured and health and safety issues were too high. AH suggested that they get in touch with Keep Wales Tidy (KWT), groups under this scheme are covered by KWT insurance.

Action: *AH to send AG KWT's contact details*

- AG said more interpretation panels regarding litter might work.
- DR suggested placing a fine on plastic bottles that you get back when you bring back the bottle.
- RS suggested more bins.
- BMJ noted that sewage related litter has decreased this year.
- DavR suggested that we publicise the issue more widely.
- MB suggested that most large companies have environmental officers and that we should approach them. He also added that he was surprised that 0.8% of litter was found to be medical litter.

Action: *AH to set up a focus group to discuss this issue further*

5. Update on SMP2 (shoreline management plan)

AH explained that Greg Guthrie was unable to make the meeting and that she had obtained a brief update from Huw Davies at Gwynedd Council. She explained that the schedule had slipped a little. The public consultation should begin in February and last approximately three months. Greg Guthrie will be running 4-6 public meetings to discuss the draft SMP.

Questions / Discussion:

- MP asked if the dates of these meetings could be circulated asap.

Action: *AH to circulate dates of SMP public meetings regarding as soon as they become available.*

- BD noted that the SMP document is an umbrella document and will not refer to specific localities.

6 Update on Marine Protected Areas in Wales

RS gave a presentation on the current situation with regard to Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Wales. MPAs include marine SACs, SPAs (Special Protection Areas), RAMSAR and SSSIs. In September 2009 WAG produced a document called 'Protecting Welsh Seas' which outlined its proposals to use a new MPA designation called Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ). The intention in Wales is to have a small number of Highly Protected MCZ as we have a sufficient number of SACs. For more information please visit the WAG website www.wales.gov.uk and search Marine Conservation Zone.

7 Presentation and discussion on non-native species in Welsh waters

GW gave a presentation on non-native species in Welsh waters. GW is an Intertidal Ecologist with CCW. GW explained what non-natives are, how they come to the UK and what we are doing about it. The Convention on Biological Diversity ranks invasive non-native species as the second greatest threat to native habitats (after habitat destruction) in the world. Approximately 3, 500 non-native species have been recorded in the UK while approximately 1, 100 have been recorded in Wales. Most of these are not invasive. 44 non-native marine species have been recorded in Wales and of these 7 are classed as highly invasive (1 alga and 6 animals). So far we have relatively few invasive non-natives in Wales but the numbers are increasing. For more information please visit <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/home/index.cfm>.

Questions and discussion:

BMJ – Asked about the implications of global warming and would this account for non-natives.

GW – In Wales there are two geographical temperature boundaries – Pembrokeshire and Anglesey. As temperatures increase due to global warming species will move northwards, these species are not generally invasive species. However, the increase in temperature does mean that non-natives that might previously have perished due to the cold temperatures might now survive as the sea warms up.

MP – Mussel fishermen in the Menai Straits have had a problem with slipper limpet.

GW – The fisherman that brought the slipper limpet into the straits realised what he had done and informed CCW. He then dredged it all up from the Straits and took it to Holland and smothered it with new mussels. It worked.

RT – Asked what makes them invasive.

GW – They smother and out compete native species and take over. It is a big issue.

DR – CCW did a lot of publicity work on the invasive sea squirt on the One Show, did it work?

GW - They did a lot of work to get rid of it but it came back, they will be trying again this winter.

8 Any issue of concern or interest

RS put Greg Courtney name forward to represent industry on the Liaison Group. Greg is a member of BRIG in Barmouth, owns the Last Inn pub and has close contacts with various local campsite owners etc. AH noted that there was a vacancy under industry and asked the group if

they were happy that Greg became one of the representatives for this interest group. The group had no objections.

Action: *AH to write to Greg confirming that the Liaison Group has invited him to represent industry on the group.*

DavR – heard that 40 bass had been fished out of the Dyfi. He asked if this was legal and what we could do to prevent this from happening again. RS noted that this might not be illegal if they have abided by the minimum landing size and the fish are for personal consumption. It is only illegal for them to be fished commercially during the closed season from the 1st May to the 31st October. DavR requested more information on this issue by the next meeting. RS added that he could also report any incidents to the local fisheries officer that works for WAG. BD added that a flyer was produced by the sea fisheries committee.

Action: *RS to send information regarding bass fisheries to AH. AH to send this information to DavR.*

RJ – a planning application for a new slipway at the lifeboat station in Porth Dinllaen has been submitted. There will be some habitat loss. A 450 page environmental statement has been submitted with the application. The slipway will be built on stilts, this may create new habitat. An appropriate assessment will be carried out.

DJ – work is still on going with Pont Briwet. A planning application will be submitted in the New Year.

9 Time and date of next meeting

DR drew the meeting to a close by thanking everyone for coming and thanked RS and GW for their informative presentations.

Next meeting scheduled for March / April 2011, 7 – 9pm in Plas Tan y Bwlch. Date to be confirmed.

The group asked to include both SMP2 and Marine Conservation Zones on the agenda for the next meeting.