

Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Liaison Group

Minutes of the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau SAC Liaison Group meeting held in Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, 12th September 2018 at 7pm.

Present

Owain Wyn (OW) (chairman)	Local Authority – Snowdonia National Park Authority
Alison Hargrave (AH)	PLAS SAC Officer
Dafydd Roberts (RO)	RA - Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA)
Bill Miller-Jones (BMJ)	Other - Diver and boat owner
Rowland Sharp (RS)	RA – Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
Rhys Jones (RJ)	RA – Gwynedd Council (GC)
Daniel Griffiths (DG)	Keep Wales Tidy (KWT)
Councillor Ray Quant (RQ)	Local Authority

(PLAS – Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau)

(RA – Relevant Authority)

Introduction

OW welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced new member Daniel Griffiths from KWT. DG has replaced Lee Oliver.

1 Apologies

Freya Bentham	Local Authority – Snowdonia National Park Authority
Nia Jones	North Wales Wildlife Trust
Bob Lowe	Recreation
Siôn Williams	Commercial Fishing
Jilly Whipp	Wildlife
Catrin Glyn	Gwynedd Council
Molly Lovatt	Natural Resources Wales

2 Draft minutes of the previous meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd November 2017 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 Matters arising

Action Number	Action	Notes
1	AH to send a letter of thanks to Cllr Caerwyn	Action completed

Action Number	Action	Notes
	Roberts on behalf of the group.	
2	AH to amend the surname of Aeron Williams on page 2 and re post on the PLAS website.	Action completed
3	AH to send terms of reference and list of members to the group.	Action completed
4	RS to send AH a copy of the angel shark presentation and poster	Action completed
5	AH to circulate the angel shark presentation and poster	Action completed
6	RS to send any relevant angel shark information to AH and MH	Action completed
7	AH and MH to circulate and post any relevant angle shark information on social media.	Action completed
8	AH to send the PLAS site level report to the group once it is available.	Action completed
9	AH to explore the issue of seal pup disturbance.	On the agenda
10	AH to arrange the next Liaison Group meeting.	Action completed

4 Site management summary

AH gave a presentation to outline the work undertaken April 2016 – March 2018 noting that March 2018 marked the end of the current funding round.

The work programme from April 2016 – March 2018 includes:

- Porthdinllaen seagrass project
- Morfa Gwyllt lagoon project
- Dolphin Watch
- Magazine
- Llŷn marine Ecosystems Project
 - o Marine Code
 - o Criccieth Litter project

AH explained that raising awareness and stakeholder engagement was an essential component to all aspects of the work. Further detail on the individual projects below.

Many reports have been produced over the last two year, they can be found on the PLAS website http://www.penllynarsarnau.co.uk/sac_publications.aspx. General information about the SAC and the work is also published frequently on the PLAS social media sites Facebook (Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau) and Twitter (@ACA_PLAS_SAC).

4.1 Porthdinllaen Seagrass Project

AH explained that the Porthdinllaen Seagrass Project focused on three main elements:

- Impact of moorings in the inner harbour
- Impact of moorings in the outer harbour
- Impact of vehicles on the seagrass

Work completed:

- Many studies and surveys have been conducted
- A number of reports have been produced
- Developed a monitoring programme with NRW and the National Trust
- An international conference was held in Nant Gwrtheryn in October 2016 attended by over 200 scientists from all over the world
- Made links with other locations

Inner Harbour

- A study has been conducted on the effects of vehicles on the seagrass
- Helix anchors ordered and the National Trust will be trialling them this year
- The National Trust are still working on legal aspects
- Excess moorings have been taken out of the inner harbour
- Trott moorings have been replaced with concrete blocks

Outer harbour

- Report on adapting the outer moorings has been produced

4.2 Morfa Gwyllt Lagoon Project

AH explained that the project was set up to assess and address the following issues:

- Dog fouling
- Litter
- Trampling
- Broken fences and gates
- Lack of monitoring data

Work completed:

- Site visit to ensure the information is correct
- Meeting with the GC maritime team and NRW
- A report has been produced that introduces the lagoon and outlines the issues and possible solutions
- Agreement that the new gate has helped to reduce the severity of the issues
- Action – keep an eye on the situation

4.3 Dolphin Watch

AH explained that the purpose of Dolphin Watch was to:

- Engage with the local community
- Monitor compliance with the new Gwynedd Marine Code
- Help inform site management with regard to marine mammals

Work completed:

- Abersoch has been agreed as a location
- An initial report has been produced
- A risk assessment has been produced
- Training sessions were held for volunteers in 2016 and in 2017
- DW has been run over the summer in 2016 and 2017
- Surveys from 2016 and 2017 have been handed in
- Results have been analysed and a final report produced

4.4 PLAS magazine

AH explained that the purpose of the magazine was:

- To promote the SAC
- Provide an update on all the projects that are being undertaken
- To raise awareness and get people interested in the marine environment

Work completed:

- Magazine has been completed – both English and Welsh copy
- Title – O Dan y Don (decided via competition)
- There will be an official launch, date tbc

4.5 Llŷn Marine Ecosystems Project

AH explained that the project is:

- A joint project between the SAC, the Welsh Fishermen's Association and others
- Working with the local fishing industry to develop a co management model for managing the marine environment around Llŷn
- Implementing some projects to demonstrate the model

AH also explained that a number of reports have been produced and are available on the PLAS website.

4.6 Cricieth Litter Project

AH explained that the project focused on three main areas:

- Beach cleans
- Monitoring
- Reducing litter from source

Work completed:

- A number of beach cleans undertaken
- A monitoring station has been set up on the beach
- A number of monitoring sessions have been completed with the local community
- Launch of the last straw campaign (to reduce the amount of plastic straws used). More than 10 businesses have signed up either to stop using straws all together or to switch to biodegradable.
- Launch of the first #2minbeachclean board in north Wales. The project translated the board and Dylan's restaurant on the beach have adopted the board. They put it out every day and ensure it is stocked with bags and litter picks. The idea is that people spend 2 minutes picking up litter then tweet about it.
- Other biodegradable products discussed and explored.
- Production of a toolkit that summarises the work done so that other villages / businesses can take part.

Group discussion:

- A project based in Fishguard are looking at alternative packaging for bait packaging for anglers
- There are many local groups doing their bit to tackle litter locally

- KWT are undertaking a Wales wide beach clean in September, they are also working with businesses to try and be greener
- It was noted that the north Llŷn is relatively clean now but there is a rise in uncollected litter bags e.g. litter bags on the beach at Porth Ysgo

4.7 Marine Code

AH explained that the purpose of the marine code is to address the issues of marine mammal disturbance by recreational vessels.

Work completed:

- Code produced for Gwynedd, Anglesey and Conwy
- Each local authority has adopted the code
- Codes distributed via each local authority
- Codes have been promoted

4.8 Raising awareness and stakeholder engagement

AH explained that a lot of work had gone into both these element and included:

- School visits
- SAC display at shows
- Website and social media
- Presentations
- Publicity (press, articles, radio)
- Marine education roadshow with SNPA
- Joint working
- Publicity on the beaches

5 General update

AH provided a general update on matters relating to the SAC:

5.1 MPA management steering group

- AH sits on this group and provides the link to site level management and issues
- There have been more regular meetings over the last year
- Next meeting is in May
- The next meeting is in October
- The group has produced the an MPA Management Framework and associated action plan (AH has sent a link to the group)

5.2 Marine Planning

- AH sits on the Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group to provide a link between MPA management and marine planning
- Marine plan consultation came to an end 29th March 2018
- AH submitted comments

5.3 Welsh Government litter task and finish group

- AH explained that she sits on this group at the request of stakeholders
- Wales level project

- The group heard about the Criccieth project and are keen to roll it out across Wales
- PLAS and the litter project was included in a Visit Wales presentation that has been given across Wales

5.4 Access and recreation project

- NRW are leading on an access and recreation project that will help promote existing marine codes and information by providing an online platform
- Website and social media platforms have been produced and are now live – Wilde Seas Wales
- It is about promoting what we already have in a consistent way

Action 1: *AH to re send the links to the Wild Seas Wales platforms*

5.5 NRW unregulated activities project

- NRW are running a project looking at unregulated activities
- Following a workshop the activities have been narrowed down to:
 - o Anchoring and mooring
 - o Angling
 - o Bait digging and hand collection of living things
 - o Foot access

5.6 UK MPA network

- Welsh SAC Officers now attend UK MPA workshops and teleconferences. Resulting in better joint working across the UK.

6 Funding and site management 2018 - 2021

AH explained that the previous round of funding ended March 2018. All the final claims have been submitted and final reports produced. AH went on to explain the situation with the current round of funding.

Action 2: *AH to send a copy of the final grant report to the group*

6.1 Core funding

- RAG contributions to core funding for 2018/19 have been confirmed from Gwynedd Council, Snowdonia National Park Authority, Welsh Water and Trinity House
- NRW, Ceredigion Council and Powys Council will not be contributing to core funding this year

6.2 Grant funding

- Local Authority single revenue grant has been secured
- Sustainable management scheme funding has been secured
- A final bid has been submitted to the endangered landscapes fund. Final decision will be made in October 2018.

6.3 Project – Land and Sea Llŷn

AH summarised the Land and Sea Llŷn project and gave a brief presentation.

- Funded by the Sustainable Management Fund
- 3 year project
- Led by Gwynedd Council – AH and Arwel Jones
- Land / Sea catchment area project
- Main project elements:
 - Create coastal connectivity corridors linked to the Wales Coast Path
 - Develop North / south access link on the Peninsula at strategic location to encourage further recreational opportunities aligned with sensitive landscape management
 - Pilot a payment for outcomes farming model on the Peninsular (National Trust)
 - Best practice guidelines / awareness / stakeholder engagement
 - Catchment management to limit damage to the wider environment on land and at sea (Afon Daron) – investigate areas of nutrient enrichment
 - Better lowland soil, water, planting and habitat measures – the careful management of soils, farm slurry and manures, together with a range of planting and habitat management measures, can address the multiple pressures on our ecosystems and in doing so, provide a wide range of benefits for land managers and society – water quality, flood risk management and carbon stores
 - co-ordinating good soil management practice through good tillage and sustainable grazing practices together with hedge and tree planting that lead to water quality and quantity improvements by controlling the source or movement of potential pollutants and sediments (including nutrients from fertilisers and manure, sediment from run-off, bacteria from manure and livestock and pesticides from treatment application and disposal) and improving drainage and reducing surface water run-off;
 - increasing connectivity between habitats to directly benefit wild pollinators and increase resilience of our biodiversity;
 - Catchment management - First step will be engaging with farmers and land owners (already begun) then sampling
- AH will be leading on the marine element (linked to catchment management)
 - Nutrient baseline / requirements of the estuaries
 - Fish assemblages of the estuaries
 - Otter project
 - Restoration of crawfish

6.4 Project – Summit to Sea (S2S)

AH summarised the S2S project and gave a brief presentation.

- If successful it will be funded through the Endangered Landscape Fund
- 5 year project
- Led by Rewilding Britain and the Woodland Trust
- Land / Sea catchment area project
- Looking to improve habitats and species and economy
- AH will be leading on the marine element
 - Nutrient baseline / requirements of the estuaries

- Fish assemblages of the estuaries
- Otter project
- Marine Code
- Litter project

6.5 Project – PLAS biosecurity plan

AH summarised the PLAS biosecurity project and gave a brief presentation.

- NRW have applied for EMFF funding to create a biosecurity plan for PLAS to tackle the spread of non-natives
- The full project is scheduled to begin in April 2019 with some preparatory work taking place this year
- They will use PLAS as a pilot site, then if successful use it as a model for the rest of Wales

6.6 Project - seal pup disturbance

AH summarised the seal pup disturbance project and gave a brief presentation.

- The issue of seal pup disturbance was raised at the previous Liaison Group meeting
- There have been multiple reports of members of the public attempting to ‘rescue’ seal pups, causing distress and sometimes death to the seal pup
- AH brought the issue to the attention of the Wild Seas Wales group and discovered that this is an issue across many sites in Wales
- The Wild Seas Wales group agreed to tackle the issue at a Wales level with a single sign
- Ceredigion Council have produced a sign with a general message that the group agreed would be appropriate
- Following small amends to the sign it will be available to print and install
- It was also agreed that the signs would go up temporarily during the pupping season. The group felt that people become blind to signs that they see over long periods

6.7 Project – raising awareness

AH summarised the raising awareness project and gave a brief presentation.

- AH explained that all the usual PLAS raising awareness activities would continue e.g. school visits, presentations, publicity and events
- In addition to the regular raising awareness programme AH will be working on :
 - Issue 2 of O Dan y Don
 - Education pack for primary schools
 - Children’s book

7 Angel Shark project

RS explained that NRW were partners in a new project looking at angel sharks in Welsh waters.

- It was thought that angel sharks were only in the Canary Islands but they have been found in Welsh waters but thought to be declining
- 3 year HLF project
- Work will mostly be carried out in Cardigan Bay

- 3 new posts, some in London and some in Wales
- SHED (over 60's club) are project partners
- The project will collect historical data, raise awareness, dive and identify sites and use baited cameras
- London Zoo Zoological Society is the lead partner
- Many partners including the Shark Trust, The Wildlife Trust, Welsh Fishermen's Association and NRW
- The project will work with local communities and fishermen
- A code of practice has been produce to show people how to handle them should they accidentally catch them

Action 3: *RS to provide AH with electronic copies of all angle shark material produced by the project*

Action 4: *AH to forward angle shark material to the Liaison Group*

8 NRW site level report

RS gave an update on the progress of the NRW site level reports. Indicative site level reports have been published. AH explained that she had sent links to the Liaison Group. The reports can also be found on the NRW website. RS explained that NRW will be implementing a new project to improve the site level reports this year.

9 NRW monitoring update

RS gave a summary of NRW PLAS monitoring for 2018/19:

9.1 Intertidal monitoring in PLAS

- Usual bedrock survey at Porth Oer – part of a wider network across Wales, nothing out of the ordinary to report
- *Pectenogammarus* survey at Pwllheli -the gammarid is still holding on.
- *Sabellaria* at Llandanwg and west of Afon Dwyfor – fairly stable with ever changing sand levels effecting the distribution
- Sediment sampling in Dyfi estuary – samples being worked up currently, nothing out of the ordinary to report.
- Update on *Gracilaria vermiculophylla* – non-native red alga invading Dwyryd estuary. Worked alongside the NNR team to plot out where this alga is currently known from. More work needed on full current extent, potential extent of future spread and levels of impacts (intertidal sediment and saltmarsh).
- Article 17 reporting has taken information from the Indicative Site Assessments for PLAS (and other SACs)

9.2 Subtidal monitoring in PLAS

- No diving surveys undertaken this year in PLAS
- Side scan surveys on the *modiolus* beds on the North Llŷn due to be carried out in the next month

9.3 Marine mammal surveys in PLAS

- Autumn 2017 – grey seal pup production census in North Wales (included PLAS), Doubling in pup production since last census (2004) and a significant increase in distribution of (number of) pupping sites.
- No monitoring of cetaceans that NRW funded, although they did provide boat support for surveys, not necessary all in PLAS but likely to have covered some of PLAS waters.

9.4 Bird Surveys

- Carreg y Llam Seabird count undertaken in June

10 Issues of concern or interest

10.1 Bill Miller-Jones

- There are alarming levels of PCBs in our cetaceans (source Rod Penrose from the Marine Stranding's programme). The levels in bottlenose dolphins are so high that reproduction is affected. The first calf born tends to die with subsequent calf's surviving. There has been an issue with a south Wales factory and PCBs in landfill.
- BMJ spotted the Bangor University vessel Prince Madog along the north coast of the Llŷn regularly over the summer. RS explained that they were conducting scallop surveys.

Action 5: *AH to put PCBs in cetaceans on the agenda for the next Liaison Group meeting.*

Action 6: *RS to see what information NRW have on PCBs and cetaceans*

10.2 Rhys Jones

- There is a new Biodiversity Officer, Lea Connelly
- The last Gwynedd Council warden post has now gone
- Blue fin tuna spotted off Enlli
- Records of strange fish this year e.g. puffer fish and mako shark

10.3 Rowland Sharp

- NRW are undergoing re organisation. This will have implications for the marine staff.

Action 7: *RS to keep the Liaison Group informed wrt NRW reorganisation*

10.4 Alison Hargrave

- AH has been looking into Liaison Group membership. She asked the group if the following could be considered:
 - o Robert Parkinson from the National Trust
 - o Alison Kinsey from the Cardigan Bay Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG)
 - o Neil Starkey from the Aberdyfi Community Council
- The group agreed that the above people should be invited to sit on the Liaison Group

- RS mentioned Tom Hughes from the Pwllheli tackle shop and Aeron Williams from Barmouth
- AH noted that she had been in touch with the Dyfi Biosphere and now sits on the Biosphere group
- OW mentioned that it would be a good idea to put the Liaison Group terms of reference on the agenda for the next meeting

Action 8: *AH to contact the National Trust, CB FLAG and Aberdyfi Community Council to invite them to sit on the Liaison Group*

Action 9: *RS to send Tom Hughes' (Pwllheli tackle shop) contact details to AH*

Action 10: *AH to put the Liaison Group terms of reference on the next agenda*

11 Date of next meeting

To be confirmed.

Action 11: *AH to arrange the next Liaison Group meeting*

12 Table of Actions

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1	AH to re send the links to the Wild Seas Wales platforms	Alison Hargrave
2	AH to send a copy of the final grant report to the group	Alison Hargrave
3	RS to provide AH with electronic copies of all angle shark material produced by the project	Rowland Sharp
4	AH to forward angle shark material to the Liaison Group	Alison Hargrave
5	AH to put PCBs in cetaceans on the agenda for the next Liaison Group meeting.	Alison Hargrave
6	RS to see what information NRW have on PCBs and cetaceans	Rowland Sharp
7	RS to keep the Liaison Group informed wrt NRW reorganisation	Rowland Sharp
8	AH to contact the National Trust, CB FLAG and Aberdyfi Community Council to invite them to sit on the Liaison Group	Alison Hargrave
9	RS to send Tom Hughes' (Pwllheli tackle shop) contact details to AH	Rowland Sharp
10	AH to put the Liaison Group terms of reference on the next agenda	Alison Hargrave
11	AH to arrange the next Liaison Group meeting	Alison Hargrave