

SDNPA : SDLMG : SDN Liaison Meeting
Butser Meeting Room, South Downs Centre, Midhurst, GU29 9DH
Thursday 04 April 2019
10:00-11:30



Present:

Margaret Paren – Chair, Tim Bamford, Nigel Clutton, James Cooper, Andrew Lee, Vic lent, David Johnson, Jackie Nicholls (note-taker), Robin Milner-Gulland, Christopher Napier, David Taylor, John Templeton, Alison Tingley, Adrian Webb, Tony Whitbread and William Wolmer.

Bob Epsom – SDNPA [Item 3]

Nigel James and Bruce Fowkes – SDNPA [Item 6]

Apologies: Trevor Beattie CEO SDNPA

1. Welcome

Margaret Paren welcomed attendees. The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 28 September 2018, were found to be accurate. There were no AOB items tabled.

2. Organisational updates

SDNPA –Margaret Paren and Andrew Lee

- We are just starting a new financial year, which generates reflection and forward planning.
- The review of England's protected landscapes is still underway, led by Julian Glover; we are watching this closely as the outcomes will be important in the National Park's transition to the future [see item 4]. Andrew Lee drew attention to some recent publicity in The Telegraph newspaper and informed the group that Trevor Beattie, SDNPA CEO, has written to NGOs inviting them to a round table meeting to discuss.
- SDNPA Local Plan has just finished the penultimate stage. The main modifications proposed by the Inspector and ourselves following examination of the plan have now been through a period of consultation. The team are collating the responses and our view on them, ready to send to the Inspector who will ultimately determine what, if any, changes are to be made. The whole Plan will then go for adoption by the SDNPA in May or July depending upon when we receive his final report. Adoption will be a significant moment as the Plan will be one of the biggest drivers of land use in the National Park for years to come. The Local Plan will be operated through the DM and host authorities; training for planning authorities is in place.
- Bespoke signs that reflect the unique heritage of the South Downs and create a sense of arrival are being installed at 19 pilot sites at specially chosen locations at, or near, the National Park's borders across Sussex and Hampshire. The feed-back so far has been overwhelmingly positive. The SDNPA will review this phase of installation before we progress phase 2.

SDLMG – William Wolmer

- The group have responded to the Glover Call for Evidence, as well as the Local Plan consultation. With regard to the Local Plan, the members are broadly pleased that their initial concerns have been addressed, although diversification on farms could still be seen restrictive.
- Membership SDLMG: because membership is integrated with NFU / CLA there are approximately 450 people on the mailing list.

SDN – Tony Whitbread and Vic lent

- Membership SDN: the SDN has been inactive over the last 6 months this, together with the sad death of Steve Ankers, has meant further disruption to the SDN calendar. However, it is the intention of the Network to become active again. Vic lent is the contact until a Chair is confirmed.

3. Chalara (Ash dieback) update – Andy Player SDNPA Woodlands – Landscape and Biodiversity Lead and Bob Epsom SDNPA Woodland Officer

- An update was given by Andy and Bob, with additional reference to various documents and reports, some of which have been produced by other organisations:
 - [Managing ash in woodlands in light of ash dieback – operations note 20.09.18](#) – Forestry Commission England.
 - [Ash Dieback Information for Landowners 01.08.18](#) – Euro Forest Limited.
 - [Ash Dieback Action Plan Toolkit 02.18](#) – The Tree Council
 - *Ash Dieback in the South Downs National Park 28.03.19* – Report by Andy Player Woodlands – Landscape and Biodiversity Lead. Attached to these minutes.
- Further discussion followed regarding Ash trees that are resistant to the disease. It was noted that NGOs could raise awareness to visitors. In addition, the issues could be signposted to parishes and communities.

4. Glover Review – Margaret Paren

- Margaret introduced the item and reported that the report is likely to be published in autumn 2019.
- Chairs of English National Parks have a Roundtable meeting with Julian Glover on 30 April 2019.
- There are key messages emerging, such as: protected landscapes working more together and more on biodiversity.
- Andrew Lee added that Julian Glover appears to be supportive of the work that protected landscapes do, but at the same time is challenging.
- William Wolmer stated that in the SDLMG's response to the Glover Review, there is great alignment with the response from the SDNPA. The response from SDLMG included: the positive outcomes of the relationship with SDNPA, the farm clusters, governance and the importance of the rural economy.
- Margaret Paren advised that there is a drift to get ministers to talk about the rural economy. National Parks England is developing an extra paper on the Rural Economy to send to Glover, which Andrew Lee is helping to write.
- **Biodiversity** – discussion included:
 - Tony Whitbread commented that the current wildlife debate appears to relate more to upland parks.
 - Biodiversity in South Downs going well but can deliver better against the vision with measures, tools and resources.
 - **Rewilding:**
 - Sussex Wildlife Trust found over 700 species in conventional farming, much of it outside the SDNP, which helps support the actual national park.
 - Financial resources can be stretched when considering rewilding, examples of successful rewilding, such as the Knepp Castle estate, are not an option for a proportion of land owners. There are many types of farming across Sussex, but all are delivering.
 - Margaret Paren informed attendees that a workshop at the SDNPA on rewilding was already planned and that it was clear from the extended discussion at this meeting that there is a great deal of support for a debate on rewilding. The workshop is likely to be late autumn 2019 or early 2020.

5. **Partnership Management Plan (PMP) Review – Andrew Lee**

- The PMP Member Task and Finish Group is continuing to Review the existing PMP, taking on board Partners' feed-back and developing a robust PMP for the next 5 years.
- Officers have had over 200 conversations with Partners; an additional outcome has been added to recognise the national park as an asset for sustaining mental and physical health and wellbeing, resulting in 10 outcomes; and the PMP will have 21 priorities.
- The Member Task and Finish Group is due to have its last meeting in July 2019, assuming that the Terms of Reference are complete.
- Officers will be working on writing revised chapters and Comms will be working on the publication; both hard copy and versions for other platforms.
- Subsequent discussion, included:
 - Health and Wellbeing (H&WB) – Christopher Napier, CPRE Hampshire: Bidding for money in Hants to connect urban areas with countryside; Partnership for South Hampshire (PUSH) and green belt proposal will also play a part in delivering H&WB priorities.
 - In addition to connecting urban areas with countryside beyond urban communities, it is worth noting that there are existing, wonderful green spaces beyond the park.
 - Policies - Vic lent, South Downs Society: Are PMP policies remaining the same? Local Plan refers to the PMP; same 57 policies.
 - Outcome 4 – James Cooper: noted that there is no mention of small business.
 - Outcome 4 – Sussex Archaeology Society: noted no mention of 'preservation and identification' of cultural heritage.
- Attendees were reminded that case studies of projects are always welcome to put forward.

6. **NELMS Tests and Trials – Nigel James and Bruce Fowkes**

Nigel and Bruce outlined the SDNPA approach.

- Proposal was submitted to Defra in February 2018.
- SDNPA were informed in December 2018 that our proposal was one of 49 others to be carried forward.
- SDNPA met with our designated Defra officer in February 2019.
- Phase 1: In 2019 we will be running a series of farmer workshop across the park: three pre harvest and four in October. The workshops will primarily focus on three issues: Land Management Plans, benefits of farmers working in clusters and local priorities versus a national scheme. We will also be working with farm cluster groups, focussing on the use of the Land App and how it can streamline delivery. The outcomes will feed into the next Phase 2, when ideas will be refined and more practical work will be carried out.
- The findings from our early work and other tests and trials will inform a national pilot of the New England Land Management Scheme (NELMS) to be rolled out in 2021.
- We are keeping in touch with other bodies involved in the Tests and Trials and working collaboratively. For example: Surrey University and the Surrey Hills AONB.
- **Action:** Jackie to send Alison Tingley a copy of the Rural Development / Economy paper, when available.

7. **AOB**

- Tony Whitbread – **Climate Change.** Much talk about public bodies declaring a climate emergency. Local Authorities should 'raise their game' to address Climate Emergency. The SDNPA are planning a Climate Change Workshop to inform and debate; date to be confirmed.

- James Cooper – Chichester District Council (CDC) Planning. There are continuing problems with CDC and their approach to pre-apps, which they are treating like a planning application.
Action: Please alert any specific cases of difficulty to Tim Slaney.

Meeting closed 11:30

Next meeting: 05 September 2019, 10:00, South Down Centre (Memorial Hall)
