

SURREY HILLS AONB BOARD

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4th MARCH 2020 AT WARREN FARM BARNS

CHAIR

*Heather Kerswell Independent

CORE MEMBERS

*Cllr Susan Parker Guildford Borough Council
*Cllr Hazel Watson Mole Valley District Council
*Cllr Stephen McKenna Reigate & Banstead BC
Cllr Denise Turner-Stewart Surrey County Council
*Cllr Geoffrey Duck Tandridge District Council
*Cllr Ruth Reed Waverley Borough Council
*Stephanie Fudge National Trust
Andrew Smith Natural England

ADVISORY MEMBERS

*Hugh Broom National Farmers Union
*Kristina Kenworthy CPRE
*Mike Waite Surrey Wildlife Trust
*Lisa Creaye-Griffin CLA
Liz Cutter SSALC
*Gordon Jackson Surrey Hills Society/Surrey Hills Trust Fund
*Simon Whalley Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC

*Members present

IN ATTENDANCE

Rob Fairbanks Surrey Hills AONB Office Director
Denise Furlonger Surrey Hills AONB Office
Wendy Varcoe Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC
Ken Bare Surrey Hills Society
Chris Howard Surrey Hills Society
Clive Smith Surrey Hills AONB Office
Ramsey Nagaty Guildford Borough Council

			ACTIONS
1		INTRODUCTIONS	
		Heather Kerswell welcomed all to the meeting and round the table introductions were made.	
2		APOLOGIES	
		Sarah Jane Chimbwandira, Tim Bamford, Rosemary Absalom, Andrew Smith, Denise Turner-Stewart, Liz Cutter	
3		MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	3.1	The minutes of the last meeting held on 4 th December were agreed.	

4	MATTERS ARISING		
4.1	<p>Item 5.2 Heather reported that she had been working on her list of priorities. She had secured a meeting with Julian Glover on March 18th.</p> <p>Heather referred to the offer letter from DEFRA for funding for 2020-21. It was a rollover amount from this financial year but in real terms a deduction. Defra had included a ring-fenced amount of around £11k that had to be spent on biodiversity. She explained that as we are not in a position to spend that money, we need to identify staff time spent on biodiversity work, for example the work on ELMS and the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund. Heather was surprised that in the letter DEFRA said that we will need to demonstrate how we will respond to the Glover Review even though DEFRA had not responded itself.</p> <p>Heather said that she has emailed Tony Juniper the Chairman of Natural England regarding a meeting to discuss the Boundary Review. Rob Fairbanks had been promised a phone call from Alan Law, the Deputy Chief Executive of Natural England. Rob added that his understanding is that Natural England is now looking at a new approach to boundary reviews and is looking for partners. We would expect the Surrey Hills to be at the front of the queue.</p>		
4.2	<p>Item 7.2 A letter was sent to the Secretary of State. Hazel Watson asked if a copy of the letter could be circulated to the Board.</p>	DF	
4.3	<p>Item 9.4 Denise Turner-Stewart had been briefed on the Surrey Hills transport and highway scheme and was very supportive of taking a strategic approach. Surrey County Council had a long list of traffic management schemes being consulted on. Rob Fairbanks was asked to invite Colin Smith to speak at the next Board meeting.</p>	RF	
4.4	<p>Item 10.1 Ruth Reed has invited Heather and Rob to give a presentation to Waverley Borough Council on 8th April on the AONB Management Plan, Nature Recovery and the Environment Bill.</p>		
4.5	<p>Item 11.1 John Evans was not available to come to the meeting to present Dark Skies Matters but the Board asked Rob to invite him to another meeting.</p>	RF	
4.6	<p>Item 11.2 Mike Waite said that Surrey Wildlife Trust will be objecting to drilling and they have a Climate Change statement on their website. https://www.surreywildlifetrust.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/SWT%20Climate%20Change%20Position_1.pdf</p>		
4.7	<p>Item 12. Heather asked if the Board would like the opportunity for meetings to be held at other venues. She suggested Juniper Hall which is the Field Study Council's centre as they could help with ideas on nature recovery. The Board agreed and suggested Sayers Croft as another alternative venue.</p>		
	<p>It was hoped that the Partnership Tour could be held at the Knepp Castle Estate but they were not able to host us on 3rd July. The Board would still like to make a visit if a suitable date can be found. Rob to make enquiries.</p>	RF	

5		MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE	
5.1		Hugh Broom explained the background to the project which is to look at new ways of funding land management schemes to replace funding from the European Union. The Surrey Hills had been successful in bidding to DEFRA as part of a National Association for AONB programme to Test and Trial a scheme to research and design environmentally friendly approaches to farming. Three workshops have been organised to bring farmers and landowners together and the first workshop was planned for the end of March to look at habitats for key species. The University of Surrey and Ordnance Survey are partners in the project and will be working on mapping the findings. This work is confined to research and design but with such a strong group we hope to bid to be involved in the pilot schemes which are due to start in 2021.	
5.2		Heather thanked Hugh and the Board expressed support for the project. Hugh responded and praised the efforts of the Surrey Hills AONB to secure the opportunity and that the aspiration should be that the Surrey Hills is selected as a pilot area to deliver payments.	
6		THE PRIZE TO TRANSFORM THE FUTURE	
6.1		Rob Fairbanks provided the background and gave a slide presentation. The Prize will be an open call to entries for visualisations and was an opportunity to inspire action and create a positive legacy for the future. It takes forward the Aecom vision for Protected Landscapes and the Glover recommendation that National Park Cities should have regard to how they relate to their regional hinterland. A website will be launched in March with judging on 23 rd June. Amongst the panel of judges will be our Chair, Heather Kerswell. https://www.prizetotransformthefuture.org/	
6.2		The members were asked to help raise awareness of The Prize and were asked to encourage their own organisations to submit a vision.	
7		SURREY HILLS AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORT	
7.1		Heather gave the background and explained that a new approach to reporting had come about following feedback at the Surrey Hills Family Away Day and the Chairs' meeting. The Members were asked to review the first draft of the new format of the Monitoring Report. It was acknowledged that the Surrey Hills Society, Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC, and Surrey Hills Trust Fund had only limited opportunity to comment prior to this meeting. The Members in general felt that it was a good format and acknowledged that it was very much work in progress.	
7.2		Pillar 1 - Clive Smith provided some updates and commented on Local Plans. Heather asked Clive to provide the Board with a list of Local Plans and their progress.	CS
7.3		Pillar 2 - Gordon said that the Trust Fund is looking for ways to support projects and Into The Wild, Inspiring Views, and Making Space For Nature were the project themes. He added that the Trust Fund is still looking for 2 or 3 active Trustees and asked the Members to contact him if they know anybody suitable. He is also looking for ambassadors to promote the Trust Fund. The Board expressed concern over tree planting which is very desirable but	RF ALL

		contains inappropriate species. Mike referred to the statement by the Surrey Local Nature Partnership. See attached link to Surrey Nature Partnership Policy document. https://surreynaturepartnership.files.wordpress.com/2020/03/tree-planting-for-climate-change-mitigation-in-surrey_snp-january-2020_final.pdf .	
7.4		Pillar 3 – Ken Bare commented that we need to be careful with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to ensure a balance between focussing on a small number of good quality outputs rather than concentrating on achieving numbers. Gordon added that the Society is already doing as much as it can on delivering events with the available number of volunteers. Susan Parker expressed concern over the proposed Surrey Hills Natural Health Centre at Newlands Corner. Rob responded that it was making use of the existing visitor centre and that relevant people from the Save Newlands Corner Action Group and catering business were being kept informed and consulted on the plans. Rob added that a visit to the site was proposed to be included in the Partnership Tour in July.	
7.5		Pillar 4 – Simon Whalley agreed with other’s comments that numbers are not the most important factor but quality is key, and that measuring quality outcomes can be difficult. Heather added the importance of the comments column in these cases and that not all outcomes needed to have KPIs	
7.6		Pillar 5 – Rob Fairbanks said he had no comments to add.	
7.7		Heather thanked all for their input. She said that we were in the early stages of creating the document and any Member feedback would be welcomed. The document will be updated for every Board meeting and is sure to evolve as we go along. The Board all agreed that this new format was a positive new way of monitoring and reporting.	
8		ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
8.1		Partnership Tour. Rob said that Knepp Estate was unable to host us on 3 rd of July so the suggested venue was West Horsley Place where there is the new opera venue and where Surrey Wildlife Trust have been restoring habitat. It is also being developed for arts and as a centre for rural industry. The Board agreed and to include a visit to Newlands Corner to see the Natural Health Centre.	
8.2		Susan Parker wanted the Board to be aware that the Guildford Residents Association had started lobbying to see if the Surrey Hills should become a National Park. Ramsey Nagaty responded that he had been at the meeting and that it had been raised over concerns of downgrading the AONB.	
8.3		Heather thanked all for their contribution to the Board meeting.	
		DATES FOR 2020	
		Agreed dates for 2020 13:30 Wednesday 17 th June - Surrey Hills Board Time t.b.c. Friday 3 rd July - Partnership Tour 13:30 Wednesday 2 nd September - Surrey Hills Board AGM & Meeting 13:30 Wednesday 2 nd December - Surrey Hills Board	

The above minutes are a true record of the Surrey Hills Board meeting held on Wednesday 4th March 2020.

Signature of Chairman

Date