

## **MOOR THAN MEETS THE EYE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

12 October 2016, Room 1, HMBC Princetown, 10am

<b>Present:</b>	Tom Stratton (Chair)	Duchy of Cornwall	TS
	Ally Kohler	DNPA	AK
	Andy Crabb	Historic England	AC
	David Lloyd	DNPA	DL
	David Rickwood	Woodland Trust	DR
	James Platts	South West Lakes Trust	JP
	Jenny How	Visit Dartmoor	JH
	Mark Allott	<i>MTMTE</i> Scheme Manager	MA
	Phil Hutt	Dartmoor Preservation Association	PH
	Simon Lee	Natural England	SL
	Peter Harper	CSG Representative	PH
	Rob Parkinson	CSG Representative	RP
	Vanessa Tyler	CSG Representative	VT
Attending:	Ellie Fabiani-Laymond	Finance & Admin Officer, <i>MTMTE</i>	EL
	Emma Stockley	Community Heritage Officer, <i>MTMTE</i>	ES
	Ian Durrant	DNPA Access & Recreation Officer	ID
	Lee Bray	DNPA Archaeologist	LB

### **1 Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Three members of the newly formed Community Stakeholders Group (CSG) were in attendance and were introduced to the group.

### **2 Apologies**

Apologies from Andy Bradford (Dartmoor Farmers Association), Helen Booker (RSPB), Ian James (Devon County Council), Kevin Bishop (DNPA), Andy Bailey (*MTMTE*) and Chrissy Mason (*MTMTE*) were noted.

### **3 Minutes of the last *MTMTE* LP Board Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2016 were agreed as a true record and have been approved.

**ACTION: EL to upload approved minutes to the *MTMTE* website**

There is one outstanding action point; signatories for the Memorandum of Understanding are required from the Dartmoor Commoners Council and Dartmoor Farmers Association.

#### **4 Project Spotlight**

LB gave a short presentation on project PA5 Unveiling the Bronze Age landscape of the High Moor and Forests with a focus on Hangingstone Hill and the Sittaford Stone Circle. Part of the investigation has involved peat analysis which has generated a lot of interest about Dartmoor's glacial geology, a topic that appeals to both academics and the general public alike. There may be media opportunities to promote the work being done, for example, through the news media or television and by local talks for the general public. Although currently underspent, project costs are expected to increase as invoices for the work undertaken so far are paid. Geophysical investigations are also underway which will inform the direction of any future work on these sites and this will affect any future spend.

[LB leaves the meeting].

#### **5 Highlight Report Review**

MA presented the Highlight Report. The main points are summarised as follows:

- Scheme expenditure is continuing to slip. Actual spend is £1.3m up to the end of Year 2 Quarter 4. Overall the Scheme is almost £1.2m down against the original forecasted spend of £2.5m. The figures were re-forecasted in Year 2 and the Scheme is currently down by £522k against the revised baseline. In the last quarter alone Scheme expenditure slipped by £23k
- Projects PD3 East Shallowford Trust and PB8 Pony Herd Identification have withdrawn from the Scheme
- The Pony Action Group (PAG) was approached with the view to suggesting a suitable 'pony-based' replacement project. They put forward the idea of a website, however, there is a strong volunteering element linked to this programme and it is important that any new project achieves the specified Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) outcomes
- The Community Stakeholders Group (CSG) had a training day on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, visiting various projects on site, such as: PD2 (EcoSkills), PA8 (Ancient Boundaries, Modern Farming), PB2 (Parishscapes) and PA6 (Higher Uppacott). This will become an annual event
- The CSG raised the idea of organizing similar trips, events or talks for the general public and this will be included in the events planning for the Scheme
- Page 6 refers to apparent forecast project underspends across the Scheme but in the absence of updates from the projects listed, this may not be an accurate reflection of where they are
- The Summer of Wildlife events have helped to raise the Scheme profile to audiences from outside the *MTMTE* area
- There have been some 1600 volunteer days reported across the Scheme. PB2 Parishscapes and PB3 Moor Medieval surpassed their targets a while ago. We will continue to record volunteer activity even if not submitting them in the quarterly claim
- A six week 'Palaeography for Beginners' course starts today. The volunteer courses which are now on offer aim to build on the experience gained from previous courses. For example, the palaeography course follows on from a series of taster days held earlier in the events schedule.

## Communications:

- There was lot of interest in the advertised summertime volunteer communications role. Lucy Alford gave volunteer support at events in July and August
- Kirsten Netley (KN) is volunteering on a flexible basis working one day per week primarily to support communications and the promotion of events
- As an additional benefit, DNPA has also recruited a Digital Communications Apprentice, Savannah Jones, part of whose role is to provide some support to Scheme communications. MA will be putting together a work-plan for this role. ABy will continue to co-ordinate communications for the Scheme overall
- In addition to providing information for the monthly newsletter, there is an ongoing need for project leaders to provide snippets of information on an ongoing basis to feed social media and general Project and Scheme publicity
- Visit Dartmoor has 8.5k subscribers and should be utilised to maximise Scheme exposure

**Action: ABy to arrange Communications meeting including Jenny How, Savannah Jones, Kirsten Netley and members of the CSG**

Appendix A of the Highlight Report is a RAG (Red Amber Green) summary showing project status across a number of key areas. Page 6 of the Highlight Report lists projects with underspends amounting to £101k in total but these figures have not been updated in over a year and may not be accurate.

Of the projects listed we know that PA5 will be submitting contractor invoices in the next claim. The spend profile for PA6 (Higher Uppacott) has just been updated. PB1 (Believer and Postbridge Trails) will be re-forecasted to reflect the change in the schedule and work-plan.

## 6 Scheme and Project Queries

The following projects were discussed:

### i. PA1- Moorland Birds

A re-scoped project plan by Helen Booker (HB), RSPB was submitted to Board for consideration. RSPB has just completed a baseline survey of key upland species and propose to use the raw data to help with habitat management. The new plan follows the model of other similar conservation projects which have proved successful in the past. The proposal includes the appointment of a land management advisor. This is a departure from the approved HLF purposes. There was a large volunteering element to the original project which has only been partially fulfilled to date (achieved £7k of their £21k target). The revised project is intended to reach beyond the Scheme boundaries and bring additional benefits to a wider area of the Moor and could complement the existing Duchy of Cornwall/Devon Birds uplands bird initiative. HB will be attending the HLF Monitoring meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> October to discuss the proposed changes in more detail.

ii. PB1 – Bellever and Postbridge Trails

ID gave an update on the current status of the project. There will be some changes made to car parking in the area. Information boards will be provided on site for the nine trails specified in the project outputs. A landscape and access plan was produced two years ago indicating where the nine trails will be. The partners involved are: DNPA, Forestry Commission, Duchy of Cornwall, Devon Wildlife Trust and the Pony Heritage Trust. The Forestry Commission will be providing some of the interpretation and orientation panels as part of their contribution. The following points were highlighted in the ensuing discussion:

- If there have been any changes to the trails proposed in the original Landscape and Access plan they must be conveyed to the relevant landowners immediately
- A further community consultation meeting is to be arranged next month (November 2016)
- Work is about to start on the interpretation
- Prices for groundworks are expected shortly
- It is expected that delivery of the project will be on the ground by the summer of 2018. A new timeline for implementation, schedule of works and spend profile will need to be agreed with key stages planned in
- A written set of goals with the Forestry Commission is to be agreed. The new schedule will need to work in harmony with the Forestry Commission's planned work to mitigate any further delays with the trail improvements on their land
- There may be opportunities to complete some of the 'easier' trails ahead of 2018, for example, the Archaeological trail could be completed ahead of the revised schedule with some active planning

**Action: ID to return to the next Board meeting (January 2017) with a detailed programme and schedule of works (this is also to be included in the Board papers for that meeting)**

[ID leaves the meeting]

iii. PB8 – Pony Herd Identification

The project is currently withdrawn from the Scheme but the intention is to find a suitable replacement. The Pony Action Group (PAG) suggested creating a website to provide a 'one stop shop' of information to the public about Dartmoor Ponies. JH expressed an interest in helping to steer this project. Visit Dartmoor is aware of the popularity of the ponies with the general public and fields numerous queries and requests for information. JH advised that she is willing to attend the next PAG meeting and will liaise with Dru Butterfield (of the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust) in bringing back a new project proposal to the Board in January 2017

**Action: JH to bring ideas for a new pony project to the LP Board in January 2017**

iv. PD1 – Dartmoor Diploma

There were no tenders for the post of training co-ordinator so it has been re-advertised with a closing date of 4<sup>th</sup> November. The Dartmoor Hill Farm Project (DHFP) also requires a training co-ordinator for their Moorskills programme and it may be possible to combine the two and expand the training on offer to farmers in the wider community. This would help bring the two sectors – farming and tourism/communities – together and help forge stronger links between them. The DHFP has delivered training to over 300 farmers and Moorskills has a sound pedigree to underpin it. There may also be opportunities to replace some of the match funding lost through the risk in generating substantial diploma fees with alternative funding from elsewhere. The first step is to clarify how we would like to proceed once procurement is closed.

[RP leaves the meeting]

A suggestion was made to consider creating a partnership apprentice ranger. The role could cover work across lands held by the various partners. This would achieve additional outcomes for the Scheme whilst also fulfilling key agenda points for the DNPA, the government and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The apprentice training could link to both Moorskills and the EcoSkills programme and strengthen the training and skills aspect of the Scheme overall. It was agreed a project re-scope will need to be worked up quickly so a new proposal can be put forward. AK will support MA in getting the proposal together.

[VT leaves the meeting]

## **7 Decisions**

TS advised the Board that he was stepping down as Chair. The Board thanked him for his time and commitment to the Scheme since its inception.

- a) James Platts was elected as the new Chair of the Landscape Partnership Board
- b) Ally Kohler was elected as Vice-Chair of the Landscape Partnership Board
- c) It was agreed that the deadline for quarterly reporting should remain as the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month after quarter end and therefore, the schedule of Landscape Partnership Board meetings would remain the same
- d) It was agreed that the Scheme will monitor unclaimed costs of the projects to reflect the true cost of the Scheme overall.

**ACTION: MA to compile an outline cost of Board oversight to date and pro-rata forecast to Scheme completion.**

[DR leaves the meeting]

**8 Communications**

- a) MA gave a brief events update.
- b) MA reminded the partners to keep sending in topical news items for the monthly newsletter and for social media, including photographs and images.

**9 AOB**

- a) The project spotlight for the next meeting will be on PD2 EcoSkills.

**10 Date of next meeting**

25 January 2017, Meeting Room, Parke at 10am.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 12.45pm.