

**CLEE HILL PARTNERSHIP**  
**MEETING TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2012**  
**7.30PM DODDINGTON VILLAGE HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Henry Chance	Bitterley Parish Council Chairman (Clee Hill Partnership Chairman)
Chris Neal	Clee Hill Commoners Association Chairman
Roddy Yapp	Clee Hill Commoners Association
Phil Edwards	Clee Hill Commoners Association
George Cummings	Friends of Clee Hill Village Forum Chairman
David Jamieson	Hanson Aggregates Clee Hill Quarry Manager
Colin Bytheway	Hanson Aggregates Clee Hill Quarry
Peter Cuthbert	Hopton Wafers Parish Council
Richard Rallings	Natural England
Cllr Richard Huffer	Shropshire Council, Clee Division
Phil Holden	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Manager
Cath Landles	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership
Carl Pickup	Shropshire Wildlife Trust Reserves Manager
Glynn Barratt	Titterstone Clee Heritage Trust
Sue Dawes	Titterstone Clee Heritage Trust (for Chairman Alf Jenkins)

**1. Welcome and apologies**

Henry Chance from the Chair welcomed those present to the meeting, including Cath Landles as a speaker and Colin Bytheway, who had taken over from David Jamieson as Hanson's representative. Henry thanked Phil for organisation to make the meeting happen. The following apologies had been received:

James Wheeler	Landowner, Bitterley Court
Vicky Turner	Shropshire Council, Community Working
Mark Wiggin	Landowner, Downton Hall
George Williams	Caynham Parish Council Chairman
Andy Chapman	Commoner & landowner representative
Garth Ridgers	Friends of Clee Hill Village Forum
Chris Woodward	Landowner, Hopton Court
Alf Jenkins	Titterstone Clee Heritage Trust Chairman

**2. Minutes of last meeting 15 November 2011 and matters arising**

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as an accurate record and there were no matters arising which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**3. Proposed Clee Hill Community Wildlife Group – Cath Landles**

Cath gave a presentation on the proposed community wildlife group. Following the successful establishment of similar groups including the Upper Onny and Upper Clun through earlier AONB projects, a LEADER funding application had been put together by Leo Smith to form further such groups in other areas. The National Trust are acting as the applicant organisation, and the AONB Partnership through Cath had been contracted to develop the work in the Clee Hill area. This stage was very much about consultation, and it was for the community to decide whether they wished to form a group. So far

there had been quite a bit of interest expressed. A public meeting had been very well attended. The group was likely to cover the same geographical area as the Clee Hill Partnership.

#### **4. Potential Heritage Lottery Fund project grant bid**

Following on from earlier discussions on this topic and the need for a strategic approach, Glynn Barratt had been asked to give a short presentation on the heritage management plan for the hill which had been prepared in 2007 with Aggregates Levy funding. He explained that this had been a significant piece of work involving fieldwork and desk research and was published in two volumes. It outlined the complex and intimate relationship of people past and present, with geology, landscape and the environment. This had gone on for over 4,000 years and evidence from across much of this timescale was still visible. The plan recognised the strong local pride in the hill and its value and importance. Recommendations for heritage management included: vegetation control and erosion repair on monuments, enhanced visitor access including themed walks, signage and use of IT for interpretation, community involvement, potential new visitor centre(s), further designation of selected features, and archaeological research. Heritage sites at risk included the Novers, the Benson's Brook hydro-electricity installation, the Bitterley Incline and the Titterstone Quarry floor. The area was also very important for wildlife and geological conservation, and a structured, collaborative approach was needed. Natural environment proposals included work to safeguard important and protected species including stonechat, wheatear and peregrine.

It was felt that plan would provide a very useful basis for further discussions about a potential project bid. Members were asked if they would be interested in contributing to a smaller group to work on project ideas, and it was agreed this might include Phil, Clare Fildes (AONB Partnership Development Officer), Glynn, someone from Shropshire Wildlife Trust, George Cummings, Chris Neal, Richard Rallings and someone from Shropshire Council.

#### **5. Update from litter group**

George said that in January about six people had cleared along the main road from Cornbrook to Doddington. February's litter pick had been aborted due to snow and ice, and a pick-up truck full had been collected in March. Graeme Perks of Skillbuilders had been in touch and was keen to link to Ludlow and Craven Arms. Insurance costs of £196 had been donated by Hanson's. The hill wardens scheme was discussed, and the suggestion made that these volunteers should meet some of the commoners by way of training in relation to management of the hill, and so that the commoners knew who they were. Issues around training, safety and risk assessment for hill wardens were discussed again, with some concerns being raised by members about the potential for volunteers to get in situations for which they were not prepared. Carl explained that for the Wildlife Trust there were people who would regularly visit the reserves and let the Trust know about things, but if volunteers were actually doing anything, there were systems for training, support, etc. It was suggested that 'rangers' might be a more positive name than 'wardens'. Glynn suggested that a potentially valuable role for the volunteers would be finding out about visitors through a structured visitor survey.

#### **6. Update from Titterstone Clee Heritage Trust**

Sue outlined that volunteers from the Trust were involved with regular weekend tasks at the Novers. 8-16 people regularly attended, including a few teenagers. Into April more

work would be done on the roundhouse. There was also tree planting, and work on the forest garden area of about an acre.

## **7. Update from Clee Hill Commoners Association**

Chris said that Hanson's were to supply some material for road bumps, and it was reported that communicating with the authority responsible for the radar station was difficult as they didn't respond. The burning season for gorse had arrived and the graziers all know who to ring. The Fire Service had offered training but this had not happened. The official latest date for burning was 15 April, but the commoners had agreed to finish by 15 March. There was still some illegal burning.

Signs erected had been successful, and having been up two years, have helped to deter off-roaders.

## **8. Other updates from partners**

Richard Rallings updated on behalf of Natural England. They were working with the commoners on a potential Upland Entry Level Stewardship Scheme for the common and looking at things such as aerial bracken spraying. Richard had met with other groups – the butterfly group, Leo Smith and the Wildlife Trust. Agreements on bracken and scrub control for the SSSI were needed, and conditions could be put on gorse burning. There was a nationwide review of SSSIs.

Roddy Yapp mentioned that the commoners were experimenting with a topper with a chain to cut gorse.

Phil mentioned some Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership activities – the Farming Project offering first point advice to hill farmers and work with schools (including Clee Hill primary), tourism work with the new Destination Development Partnership, Walking with Offa, the Shuttles which would start again in April, the HLF project on Stiperstones – Corndon and rivers work in the Clun catchment.

David Jamieson was leaving Hanson's and Colin Bytheway was taking over as manager. David said consent had been given for night works on the asphalt plant for 40 nights per year. A bund area would be raised with shrubs and birch planting to break up the skyline. David said that community links were important to the business and would be continued through Colin.

Henry said there was a meeting on Thursday regarding the beacon. Glynn had advised that Scheduled Monument Consent would be needed.

Peter asked about the speeding issue previously discussed and whether a meeting had taken place. Henry said that the meeting had not yet happened, but that he had agreed to organise it.

## **9. Any other Business**

There was no other business.

## **10. Date of next meeting**

It was suggested to have the next meeting as a site visit meeting - to be confirmed.