

BHPN contd

- Bruce Payne (Member of BH Natural Futures steering group) highlighted the activities of the Natural Futures group which has exceeded its quota of Community scale projects for the current year but is keen to identify additional projects for attention in 2016.
- Monkton attendees were surprised that their parish was not contributing to BHPN.
- Penny Lawrence announced the development of the Blackdowns Heritage group
- BH AONB management group membership criteria are under consideration, suggestions include inviting representation directly through the parish network rather solely Parish Councillors

7. The meeting closed at 10.10 pm.

Next meeting dates to TBA

BHPN contd

There were several questions from the floor relating to contract tendering procedures, selection of and policing of contractors and their obligations to observe regulations regarding operation in an AONB. Another question was raised regarding Parish-instigated signage to warn HGVs of unsuitable routes and roads. This prompted discussion as to whether this was a reasonable course of action in view of the fact that such signage may only result in HGVs diverting to even less suitable routes in neighbouring parishes, rather than avoiding the Blackdowns Hills altogether if they are not actually delivering in the area

Regarding transport, there was a comment that the vast majority of schemes are solely dedicated to health related matters. There are a great many other reasons why people may need active car share schemes, including transport to and from college/school/work, shopping trips, access to major travel nodes (bus/coach/train stations) etc. How can the schemes already in existence be realigned or emulated to help everyone?

The speakers were thanked for their contributions and all departed at 9.15 pm before the meeting turned to AGM matters.

4. Annual General Meeting

a. Minutes & Matters Arising AGM 21/05/2014 & General meeting 25/11/2014

The Minutes of both the AGM of 2014 and the subsequent general meeting on November 25th were agreed. There were no matters arising.

b. Chairperson's Annual report

5. The Chairperson Heather Stallard thanked the Steering Group and Co-ordinator for their support during the year, during which there had been five meetings. Items that the Steering Group had taken forward on behalf of the network included responses to the AONB Management plan consultation, the A303 consultation, kept a watching brief on broadband issues – vital to ensure good access for businesses, and invited County Councillors and officers to address the general meetings in November and this evening. The 10 parish EDDC Neighbourhood plans are in preparation, and Lisa Turner had offered a very well attended and useful Planning workshop incorporating AONB guidelines and landscape considerations. For all these issues it is important that the Network acts collectively as we share so many issues, and very important that parishes talk to each other.

a. Annual Financial Report: Treasurer /Co-ordinator Catherine Bass

The bank account stood at £2,636.43 on March 31st 2015, having opened at £2,595.69 April 1st 2014. Total Capital and reserves at the year-end taking into account outstanding transactions were £2,149.76. No grants were applied for or received during the year. Website associated expenses were high this year, due in part to an investment in training which did not translate into the voluntary help that had been anticipated. In-year income support from participating parishes was £1,375.00, with eleven actively contributing parishes. A welcome new contributor for 2015/2016 has already subscribed. Full details are available in the audited account.

b. Endorsement of the Steering Group

The current members of the Steering Group were all prepared to continue (Heather Stallard, Bruce Payne, Ken Pearson, Lisa Turner, Graham Long). Graham Long is a recent new member of the Steering Group. During 2014-2015 Geoffrey Sworder had retired from the Steering Group through ill health, and we were sad to hear that he had died recently. There is room for one or two more members to assist in covering all the aspects of Network activity. The Co-ordinator suggested that the Steering Group was elected en bloc – this was proposed by Sarah Clark (Monkton) and secondee by Penny Lawrence(Hemyock).

The Steering Group was unanimously re-elected.

6. AOB

Blackdown Hills Parish Network

AGM Minutes and Annual Report to the Network held on Friday 21st May 2013 at 7.30pm Blackdowns Healthy Living and Activity Centre

Present:

Chairperson: Heather Stallard (Hemyock PC)	Sarah Clark (Monkton PC)	Margaret Lee (Pitminster)
Catherine Bass (Culmstock, BHPN Co-ordinator)	Elaine Mumford (Monkton PC)	Neil Punnett (Hemyock)
Lisa Turner (Blackdown Hills AONB)	David Mumford (Monkton PC)	Jocelyn Pritchard (Hemyock PC)
Ken Pearson (Clerk Churchstanton & Stockland)	Richard Excell (Monkton PC)	John Brabrook (Clerk Combe Raleigh)
Bruce Payne (Wellington w-out)	Penny Lawrence (Hemyock PC + AONB Heritage Forum)	Linda Bennett (BH AONB)
Graham Long (Upottery PC)	Clive McIntyre (Kentisbeare PC)	Mike Canham (Otterford PC)
	A N Other (Kentisbeare PC)	Apologies received from:
	David Gollin (Churchstanton PC)	Cllr. Martin Wale (SSC)
		Cllr. Paul Diviani (EDDC, AONB Board)
	11 parishes represented	Cllr. Andrew Moulding (DCC)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Heather Stallard welcomed everyone to the meeting with an introduction to the Network's origins and purpose. This was followed by a resumé of issues facing parishes in the Blackdown Hills derived by Bruce Payne from available Parish Council minutes. This focussed on the three BHPN priority areas Communication, Transport/Highways and Planning (this category was restricted to large scale, non local specific matters) with a fourth category, Collaboration added, where there was evidence of parishes working together. These all featured in a number of Parish Council Minutes, none more than issues relating to Traffic/Transport/Highways. It was recommended that the BHPN focus on encouraging collaboration between parishes by promoting current examples of highways maintenance plans and to share experiences relating to speeding and HGV (*Notes of the analysis are on the website*)

2. Guest Speakers from Devon and Somerset County Councils

The meeting was addressed by

David Whitton: Devon County Council - Head of Highways, Capital Development & Waste Management who spoke comprehensively about measures that DCC is taking to improve efficiency in responding to maintenance problems on rural roads and the measures that are being made available to encourage parishes to work together on undertaking routine tasks.

Karen Rose: Devon CC Community Transport Adviser spoke about the variety of co-operative schemes available in Devon, grant schemes, her group can be used as a point of contact for co-operative schemes, and will write letters of support for local schemes. She warned that current subsidies to rural transport under threat.

Jane Newell: Somerset CC Senior Commissioning Manager, Transporting Somerset offered a similar analysis for Somerset, talking of volunteer group activities, pointing out how little uptake there is of rural public transport services. Somerset will not fund Community Travel, but will offer training support, including a Tool Kit to help set up Car Sharing schemes which are seen as a positive step forward.

It was agreed that KP will have further discussions with Devon & Somerset Transport groups to see if any progress can be made developing wider access to car sharing & public transport schemes for residents in the Blackdown Hills.

All the speakers' presentations are available to view or download from the website.

3. Contributions/Q&A from the floor