

Jane Davies, LLB (Development Officer) represented Cornwall Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (A.O.N.B.) and gave a presentation at Mawnan Bowling Club, Mawnan Smith at 7 p.m. on Monday 19 November 2018, during a Public Meeting of Mawnan Neighbourhood Development Plan (N.D.P) Steering Committee, under the Chairmanship of Terry Damer.

Included in the 79+ audience which filled the Hall, were Mawnan Parish Councillors; Philip Moyle, (Chairman) Graham Marsden, (Vice Chair) Rex Sadler, David Nash, Peter Bradley and 2 Councillors from Mylor Parish. Other Parish Councils within the A.O.N.B. had been invited, but did not attend.

There are 46 A.O.N.B.'s designated in the U.K.

Cornwall has 958 square Km of designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The current Cornwall AONB set-up was created in 1959, when 12 sections; which include 10 coastal sections of the South-West Coast Path (including Constantine & Mawnan Smith) and 2 landward areas of Bodmin Moor and the Camel Estuary; were designated by the U.K. Government, under the National Parks & Access To The Countryside Act 1949.

This was reaffirmed in the Countryside & Rights Of Way Act 2000.

A.O.N.B. Cornwall are an independent organisation, but based in Cornwall Council H.Q. and the infrastructure and I.T. are supported by the same Authority.

Financially, 75% of the annual budget is funded is by the Department for Environment, Farming & Rural Affairs (D.E.F.R.A.) and 25% by Cornwall Council.

A.O.N.B. Cornwall are a relatively small operation, but are partnered with 21 other organisations (for example National Trust) giving them knowledge and expertise across a wide range of Countryside & Rural practitioners. As a result, they campaign for and routinely suggest that new developments should be required to fund and fit schemes to support and encourage bio-diversity, such as nest boxes, bee bricks, bat boxes and meadows.

They produce a 5 year plan, which carries limited protection from planning and other developments (mainly large scale schemes) and under Under Policy 23 of Cornwall Local Plan 2016, are considered as a consultee, but not a statutory consultee.

Part of the small Team includes a Planning Officer, but due to the frequency of applications and pressure on their limited resources, regularly they miss and are unable to respond to contentious applications within their remit.

A.O.N.B. Cornwall on the whole have a good relationship with Cornwall Planning Officers, who frequently respond favourably to objections. However, due to missed opportunities (see above paragraph) many objectionable applications slip through and are passed, much to their regret.

In April 2017, following fears that funding from Central Government will soon drastically reduce or even end altogether, A.O.N.B. Cornwall registered as a Charitable Incorporated Charity (C.I.C.) and recently added a fifth Trustee to oversee running of the Charity. The reason for forming a Charity is that in the future it will be easier to access grants and other income to (hopefully) financially self-fund. However Jane stressed that if Government funding ended, that A.O.N.B. Cornwall, would have to drastically downsize and would not be able to fund the current Team or operations.

A.O.N.B. have set up a number of practical environmental projects, the most recent being funding and practical assistance to a group wishing to preserve a wooded area between Perranarworthal and Mylor.

The Environment Landscape Trust (E.L.F.) enables professional woodmen to coppice the woods and educate/train volunteers in the skill set of wood craft. Participants receive payment in kind, with seasoned logs and wood prepared on site, by use of a solar dryer (poly-tunnel) purchased with the A.O.N.B. Grant, whilst helping to preserve and improve the Woodland.

On 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018, after 18 months of planning and development, A.O.N.B. Cornwall launched an “App” available for Apple (iPhone/iPad) and Android platforms via respective “App Stores” which gives users an interactive experience when accessing A.O.N.B. including information from their database. (Maps & detailed descriptive data)

“Beauty Betrayed...” it has been noted that Nationwide, not just locally that pressure to build more housing is pushing Councils and Planning Authorities to permit developments in otherwise “safe” areas. In the past 5 years building projects and housing developments have doubled on land adjacent to A.O.N.B.'s and some even within designated A.O.N.B. provoking anger and disgust in the local Community.

There is currently a review of A.O.N.B. and National Parks taking place at the request of D.E.F.R.A. Minister Michael Gove, entitled the Glover Review.

It has been suggested that Cornwall's A.O.N.B. be dissolved and replaced with a National Park, which would strengthen their status, also empowering them as a planning Authority. This could prevent planning decisions pushed through by unsympathetic Planning Officers, despoiling the Countryside.

However, recent political upheaval over Brexit and the attempt to replace the Prime Minister; has cast doubt on whether the Glover Review will ever be implemented; even if it does find in Cornwall's favour.