

MINUTES

Meeting held at 13:30 on Wednesday 17th April 2024, hosted at Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge.

Present:

Dr Neil Arnold (Scott Polar Research Institute)
Ms Natalie Allen (Polar Regions Department, FCDO – alternate)
Dr Mark Brandon (Ad hoc member)
Ms Catherine Cheetham (Permanent Committee on Geographical Names)
Prof Bethan Davies (Ad hoc member)
Mr Rod Downie (Ad hoc member)
Ms Elena Field (British Antarctic Survey – Secretary)
Mr Andrew Fleming (British Antarctic Survey)
Mrs Philippa Foster-Back (Chair)
Dr Adrian Fox (British Antarctic Survey – alternate)
Mr Robert Headland (Royal Geographical Society)
Ms Sue Gregory (GSGSSI – alternate)
Ms Jane Rumble OBE (Polar Regions Department, FCDO)
Dr Beatrix Schlarb-Ridley (British Antarctic Survey – observing)
Dr Kate Winter (Ad hoc member)
Mr Rob Wheeler (UKHO – alternate)

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Prof Dame Jane Francis (British Antarctic Survey), Ms Jane Rumble (Polar Regions Department, FCDO), Dr Mark Belchier (GSGSSI) and Mr Lee Truscott (UK Hydrographic Office). All have sent alternates to attend.

The Chair welcomed Dr Adrian Fox (British Antarctic Survey), Ms Nathalie Allen (FCDO), Ms Sue Gregory and Mr Rob Wheeler (UK Hydrographic Office), acting as ex officio representatives. The Chair noted that this meeting marked Adrian's 20th year of involvement with APC, either as Representative or Secretary.

2. Place-names decisions and matters arising from APC(23) 2nd meeting**2.1. UK APC/US ACAN Activities**

Follow-on meeting with US ACAN was arranged and took place in November 2023. The main topics discussed were:

- International Thwaites Glacier Collaboration: as this joint UK-US project has ended, it offers an opportunity for collaborative naming for the region between APC and ACAN.
- Policies on commemorative naming

- Establishment of naming themes for geographic regions.

ACTION: Chair and Secretary to liaise with US ACAN and arrange new meeting.

3. UK APC Membership Updates

The Chair welcomed the news of membership extensions for Prof Bethan Davies and Mr Rod Downie (ad hoc members).

Dr Neil Arnold announced that he is to step down as Director of SPRI in September.

ACTION: Chair and Secretary to draw up advertisement for new committee member(s).

4. APC Policy on naming man-made structures - Should HSM's be places?

This paper was presented by Ms Camilla Nichol, UKAHT Representative.

A recent review of the co-ordinates of the Blaiklock refuge hut revealed the fact that the locations of Historic Sites and Monument's in Antarctica are not officially listed anywhere other than the ATS protected areas database. In there and on maps and the APC gazetteer it is hit and miss whether they might be included or indeed correctly located which seems to be a shame. But perhaps more importantly, it means that it is unclear where the authoritative source of the location data for HSMs sits. The ATS database holds only a single reference for an HSM which may be between four or eight figures.

Another example, the location for Endurance, having just been determined has also been discussed for inclusion in charts by the UKHO and on maps of the Weddell Sea by MAGIC, but it wouldn't be included in the gazetteer.

Whilst appreciating there is no current provision for HSMs in the gazetteer and guidance, is it worth reviewing this policy to see whether there is merit in their inclusion? The rationale would be twofold: HSM's would be accurately and precisely located in a database recognised for its rigour and would become the respected source for that data, and as permanent fixtures (more so than modern infrastructure in Antarctica) they could be acknowledged as fixed elements of the landscape and therefore be navigated (to find them, to avoid them etc).

Mr Headland commented that there are a number of HSM names that are associated with a place-name and therefore already in the gazetteer.

All agreed that HSM sites that are fixed should be recorded in the gazetteer, if there is no suitable database table established within the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat.

ACTION: formal paper to FCDO for review. Where in APC Remit, will include this data. Liaise with ATS Secretariat.

ACTION: Rename Biscoe Wharf to Rothera Wharf, with information included in the description.

ACTION: Review how a classification field would be implemented within the database.

4. Minutes of the last meeting [APC(23)2nd], held on 2 November 2023

Accepted and Actions complete.

5. Secretary's report

The report was sent to members in advance of the meeting, with the Secretary giving a highlight summary verbally during the meeting.

5.1. Gazetteer Additions:

All approved names have been added to the UK BAT gazetteer and SGSSI gazetteer, submitted to the SCAR CGA teams and recipients/applicants notified.

5.2. Actions from APC(23)2nd Meeting:

All actions are complete or in progress, as per the List of Actions document *APC(23)2nd List of Actions*.

5.2.1. ACAN Meeting coordination

Follow-on meeting with US ACAN was arranged and took place in November 2023. The main topics discussed were:

- International Thwaites Glacier Collaboration: as this joint UK-US project has come to a close, it offers an opportunity for collaborative naming for the region between APC and ACAN.
- Policies on commemorative naming
- Establishment of naming themes for geographic regions

5.2.2. Guidelines Review

Guidelines text was circulated to the committee and added to the APC Website.

The following text was added to the Guidelines:

The Committee welcomes nominations for individuals from historically underrepresented groups.

5.2.3. Committee Terms of Reference Review:

The Terms of Reference were circulated and are now included in the APC Meeting Agenda templates going forward.

As per the reviewed Terms of Reference, Committee members have been assigned to introduce a section/paper in this meeting as a trial. This involves providing an introduction/summary of the Paper content and giving initial views, before opening it out for wider discussion.

5.2.4. Prepare advertisements for committee members

A draft advertisement has been prepared and is under review by the Chair and FCDO.

5.3. APC Documents and Books Reorganisation

APC(24)1st Minutes V1

Following the review and catalogue of the BAS APC bookcase, EF further reviewed the contents held in the BAS Archives with work continuing.

Good progress has been made on the digital archive. EF has scanned all APC meeting minutes, agendas, and decisions papers since 1961. These documents have been run through text-recognition software and have been extensively reviewed, so now these PDF scans are available as a searchable resource.

This work is currently contained within a Sharepoint site which only the APC Secretariat can access, but options are being explored to allow access by Committee Members.

EF has also reviewed the meeting papers from 1943 and as these are bound documents this will be much harder to scan and extract relevant information from, as it would need the books de-binding.

5.4. Internal Communications:

Three Place Name of the month articles have been published in the BAS internal newsletter and on the BAT website:

- Union Glacier
- Marguerite Bay
- Pensacola Mountains

Prior to meetings, circulars are sent out to BAS Ops, BAS Science, and UKNCAR with the application deadline and links to application form/website. As agreed in the last meeting, this information is also circulated to Committee members for awareness.

5.5. External Communications

5.5.1. APC Website:

These metrics are increasingly being blocked by users' web-browser privacy settings, and so it is difficult to get a full picture of traffic.

Consistent traffic to the APC website:

- Average of 364 website views a month, of which 164 are considered "new" users per month.
- 75.7% accessed the website via desktop web-browser, with 22.3% mobile device and 2% tablet device.
- 23% of new users accessed the website from social media (twitter or Instagram)
- Top pages include:
 - Main page (with web-map)
 - Application Proposal Guide
 - Application web-form
 - Contact the Secretary
 - Themes web-map

- APC Web-map: Usage statistics for the past few months have been high, with 3715 views and averaging 20.3 unique views per day.

5.5.2. X (Twitter)

- Average of 1500 impressions a month, with peaks around specific tweets/events.
 - Place name of the month features average at 5.5K impressions per tweet.
- Followers:
 - Average of 3 new followers each month

Currently the Analytics pages are not working, and it is unclear when these metrics will be recorded. X is currently restructuring the webpages, but they are not available at the time of writing this report.

5.6. APC Website

5.6.1. Web map application updates:

The web-map has been updated with the following:

- Addition of COMNAP Stations facilities layer
- Addition of splined place-name labels
- Update to base-map for BAT when zoomed in, with a new [hillshade derived from REMA v2](#).
- Updated base-map for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- Updated Contact the Secretary webpage.

5.6.2. Application page

The place-name proposal application page has been updated with minor edits to text and additional information.

The corresponding form that is available for download has been updated to match the questions and information in the web-form.

5.7. South Georgia Gazetteer updates

All updates to the gazetteer have been made and are now available to view from the website. This includes updates to coordinates and descriptions of features following on from Pat Lurcock's feedback.

6. US ACAN Comments for APC(24) 1st Meeting

Comments were noted by the Committee, and thanks passed on to ACAN for providing useful feedback.

7. New Place-name Proposal – South Georgia [APC(24)01]

This paper was presented by Dr Adrian Fox (BAS Representative). The committee expressed concern over the forced naming of the feature when they are already referred to by a number. However, the Committee agreed that as the numbers are incorrect as spot heights, the current colloquial names are misleading and the features require naming.

Several names were proposed, including naming after the local valleys or after Grytviken clergymen. However, the Committee felt that they did not have enough information at this time to come to a decision on naming.

ACTION: Mr Bob Headland to send information on Grytviken clergymen to Secretary

ACTION: Secretary to go back to applicant with decisions.

ACTION: Secretary to collate list of potential honourees and if possible, identify their links to South Georgia for review.

8. New Place-name Proposal – Zavodovski Island [APC(24)02]

This paper was presented by Rod Downie (ad hoc member), who highlighted that there is a need for a name due to logistical and navigational need, especially given the recent visit to the island by a Darwin+ team in December 2023.

The Committee noted that the generic “Landing” was not in the list of approved generics. Members also expressed concern over the use of the term, given the feature is not very accessible.

After discussion, the Committee approved the name “Mephitic Scarp” to keep to the established theme for the area, and to use a more appropriate generic.

ACTION: Secretary to communicate result to the applicant.

9. New Place-name Proposal – Signy Island 1 [APC(24)03]

This paper was presented by Mr Bob Headland (RGS Representative). All members agreed on the need for a name and a suitable justification.

ACTION: Secretary to communicate result to the applicant.

10. New Place-name Proposal – Signy Island 2 [APC(24)04]

This paper was presented by Ms Catherine Cheetham (PGCN Representative). All members agreed on the need for a name and a suitable justification.

ACTION: Secretary to communicate result to the applicant.

11. New Place-name Proposal – Petermann Island [APC(24)05]

This paper was presented by Prof Mark Brandon (ad hoc member).

The Committee agreed that the cove/inlet feature required a name, but using the term Bay was misleading as there is a well-known place name called "Ryder Bay."

All members approved the name "Rider Cove"

ACTION: Secretary to communicate result to the applicant.

12. New Place-name Proposal – Alexander Island [APC(24)06]

Bethan introduced the proposal and the existing themes of composers and musicians.

The Committee felt that there was no suitable justification for the honourees proposed as they do not meet the naming guidance.

ACTION: Secretary to communicate result to the applicant.

13. New Place-name Proposal – Merrick Mountains [APC(24)07]

This paper was presented by Dr Neil Arnold (SPRI Representative).

All members agreed on the need for a name and a suitable justification.

ACTION: Secretary to communicate result to the applicant.

14. Any Other Business.

14.1. Language used in place name guidelines

Ms Camilla Nichol questioned whether the Committee need more active language for a statement on historically underrepresented groups.

Following discussion, it was decided that the wording needed updating.

ACTION: Sec to review Application form and ensure

14.2. Committee member website update

Prof Mark Brandon requested that the information on Bethan Davies be updated, following her successful attainment of Professor.

ACTION: Secretary to update Composition of the Committee to reflect this.

15. Date of next meeting.

The date of the next meeting will be decided in due course.

Committee Membership:

Role	Name	Start date	Term / renewal
APC Chair	Philippa Foster Back	01/06/2009	Rolling contract – reappointed 14/08/2012
APC Secretary	Elena Field	01/01/2022	Rolling contract

Ex officio nominated lead representatives.

(Reps should nominate an alternate if the lead cannot attend)

Core organisation	Representative	Date in current role
Government for British Antarctic Territory	Jane Rumble OBE	01/01/2007
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office	Jane Rumble OBE	20/09/2020
British Antarctic Survey	Prof Dame Jane Francis	01/01/2022
Permanent Committee on Geographical Names	Catherine Cheetham	01/01/2022
Royal Geographical Society	Robert Headland	26/06/2013
Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge	Dr Neil Arnold	23/01/2013
UK Antarctic Heritage Trust	Camilla Nichol	01/10/2021
UK Hydrographic Office	Lee Truscott	01/11/2016
GSGSSI Representative	Dr Mark Belchier	01/11/2019

Fixed-Term Expert representatives.

(Serving a maximum of 2 terms, lasting no more than 8 years)

Role/ representation	Name	Date in current role (renewed date)	Expiry	Comments
ad hoc	Mark Brandon	05/10/2017 (01/10/23)	October 2025	
ad hoc	Kate Winter	14/07/2020 (01/10/2023)	October 2025	
ad hoc	Bethan Davies	14/07/2020 (17/04/2024)	April 2028	Contract renewed
ad hoc	Rod Downie	14/07/2020 (17/04/2024)	April 2028	Contract renewed

APC Committee Terms of Reference:

- APC members will confirm attendance at the meeting well in advance. Apologies should be sent to the Secretary as soon as possible if attendance is not possible.
- APC members unable to attend in person are invited to submit their assessments on each application using the review form.
- Ex officio APC members who are unable to attend a meeting are asked to send a deputy who can represent their organisation.
- All APC members are expected to assess each proposal in advance of the meeting.
- An APC member will be nominated in advance to introduce each proposal. This responsibility for introduction will ensure any necessary additional research or clarifications can be provided in advance. Normally an APC member will be required to introduce no more than one proposal per meeting. In some cases, assigning proposals based on expertise may mean this is not possible (e.g., underwater features should be introduced by the UKHO representative). The APC Secretary will consider relevant expertise and assign introducers to ensure even distribution of effort.