

South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

AONB Partnership Committee Meeting

to be held at

10am on Friday 25 June 2021

Remote Video Meeting
via Zoom

Agenda & Papers



South Devon AONB Staff Unit, Follaton House, Totnes, TQ9 5NE
Telephone 01803 229330 Email enquiries@southdevonaonb.org.uk

AONB Partnership Committee Membership

Members nominated by local authorities

Devon County Council	Cllr Roger Croad Cllr Jonathan Hawkins (officer advising: Peter Chamberlain)
Plymouth City Council	Sarah Foque
South Hams District Council	Cllr Nicky Hopwood Cllr Bernard Taylor (officer advising Graham Swiss)
Torbay Council	Cllr Anne Brooks (officer advising Tracy Brooks)

Members nominated by statutory agencies

Environment Agency	Rob Price
Forestry Commission	Jon Burgess (whilst Kate Tobin seconded)
Historic England	Ross Simmonds
Natural England	Eamon Crowe

Members co-opted by the AONB Partnership Committee

National Trust	Richard Snow
Plymouth University	John Martin (Vice Chair)
Independent	John Green (Chair)

Community Representatives

Amenity groups	Geoffrey Osborn
Business community	Kate Ryder
Coast and marine sector	Vacant
Community/voluntary groups	Peter Sandover
Environmental organisations (NGOs)	Ed Parr-Ferris
Landowning/farming community	Robert Steer
Parish Councils	Lynne Maurer
Tourism community	Vacant

AONB Unit staff attending

AONB Manager	Roger English
AONB Office Manager	Vanessa Gray

Agenda

Item 1 (0 mins)	Public statements – no requests received	
The formal meeting and live recording to YouTube immediately follows the public statement session		
Item 2 (5 mins)	Introductions & apologies for absence	
Item 3	Declarations of Interests	
Item 4 (5 mins)	Minutes of the last Partnership Committee meeting (12 March 2021) for approval & any matters arising	Page 4
Item 5 (15 mins)	AONB Management – national programmes	
(15 mins)	5a) The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme	Page 12
(15 mins)	5b) Agri-environment programmes – Eamon Crowe, Natural England	Page 16
(15 mins)	5c) Other national announcements and implications for the South Devon AONB	Page 19
(10 mins)	5d) National Arts in the Landscape Strategy	Page 24
Item 6 (15 mins)	Partner updates - partner contributions to conserving and enhancing the South Devon AONB	Verbal
Item 7	AONB Management – local initiatives	
(15 mins)	7a) <i>Life on the Edge</i> – Devon’s Special Species on the South Devon Coast	Page 30
(15 mins)	7b) East Devon Ambassadors scheme	Page 34
(10 mins)	7c) AONB Gateway signage programme	Page 37
Item 8	For Information	
	8a) March – June 2021 Planning update	To follow
	8b) Current and recent key planning applications	To follow
	8c) AONB Staff Unit activity report	Page 40
	8d) Landscapes for Life Conference 2021	To follow

Agenda timings are provided as a guide

Agenda Item 4

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SOUTH DEVON AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE**

**HELD VIA REMOTE VIDEO MEETING
ON FRIDAY 12th MARCH 2021**

1. INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**Those present were:**

Cllr Jonathan Hawkins	JH	Devon County Council
Peter Chamberlain	PC	Devon County Council
Cllr Rosemary Rowe	RR	South Hams District Council
Cllr Bernard Taylor	BT	South Hams District Council
Graham Swiss	GS	South Hams District Council
Cllr Anne Brooks	AB	Torbay Council
Tracy Brooks	TB	Torbay Council
Rob Price	RP	Environment Agency
Eamon Crowe	EC	Natural England
Richard Snow	RS	National Trust
John Martin	Vice-chair	Plymouth University
John Green	Chair	Independent
Geoffrey Osborn	GO	Representative: amenity groups
Peter Sandover	PS	Representative: community/voluntary groups
Lynne Maurer	LM	Representative: parishes
Roger English	RE	AONB Manager
Vanessa Gray		AONB Office Manager – minute taker

Also attending:

Sarah Gibson	South Hams District Council
Debbie Board & Richard Boyt	presentation on The Primrose Trail

Attending to make public statements

Nick Cotter
Gill Stone
Jonathan Wigg
Leslie Pengelly

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr Roger Croad	Devon County Council
Ed Parr Ferris	Representative: environmental organisations (NGOs)
Samantha Dennis	Representative: tourism community

Observers

Observers were requested to follow the meeting live via YouTube

2. PUBLIC STATEMENTS

- 2.1 Four public statements were made at the meeting, all regarding the village of Bantham and Bantham Estate, in particular the Estate Office application approved at a recent SHDC Development Management Committee meeting on 3rd March and why no objection was lodged by the AONB unit.

The Chair and the AONB Manager welcomed the statements and thanked the four speakers. The AONB Manager added that Lower Aunemouth Quay was not the subject of a live Enforcement case so should be reported via the South Hams District Council's website to enable this to be looked at.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

4. MINUTES OF THE 27 NOVEMBER 2020 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING FOR APPROVAL & ANY MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
- 4.2 The Chair summarised the seven steps raised in the Amenity Groups paper:
- 4.2.1 Annual Forum. A separate meeting has taken place.
 - 4.2.2 Friends of group. East Devon AONB will be invited to the next meeting scheduled to take place in June to talk about their Ambassadors programme.
 - 4.2.3 Parish Representatives – the suggestion that each of the Parishes and Towns within the AONB nominate a representative for the AONB. The representatives for parishes and amenity groups are working together to progress this.
 - 4.2.4 Map of parishes in the AONB. Able to determine the border of the AONB however Google now shades the AONB and the heritage coast the same.
 - 4.2.4.1 Peter Chamberlain advised that an option for providing clarity on the detail of the AONB boundary in map form is to direct people to the DCC Environment Viewer that can zoom in to see detail at a very local scale:
www.devon.gov.uk/environment/environmental-maps
 - 4.2.4.2 Tracy Brooks added that Torbay Council shows the AONB boundary on Find My Nearest: www.torbay.gov.uk/gis/findmynearest
 - 4.2.5 AONB gateway signs. Necessary road safety measures limit where installation of new gateway signs can occur. Instead, parishes and towns are encouraged to add a symbol onto existing signage.
 - 4.2.6 Flag planning applications that fall within the AONB. This is not currently possible but South Hams District Council are exploring options.
 - 4.2.7 Website wording on the formation of the AONB. The AONB unit invites comment to improve the current wording.

5A SOUTH DEVON AONB TOURISM TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The representative for the tourism community, Samantha Dennis, was unable to attend the meeting given the high workload planning for lockdown easing. The paper prepared by Samantha was presented for information only. The topic will be brought back to the June meeting.

- 5a.1 The Chair highlighted the influx of visitors is an important issue for the AONB and encouraged Committee members to consider the recommendations contained in the papers.

5B FUTURE FARMING IN SOUTH DEVON

The AONB Manager went through the update provided in the papers. The AONB Manager added:

- 5b.1 AONBs and National Parks are involved in a small contract with Defra providing Environmental Land Management advocacy work.
- i. The AONB has been running a programme of activities with the ELM advocacy payment received last October focussed around: transition planning, carbon and countryside stewardship opportunities now and how these will change and what clean air strategies mean for farming in particular the role of hedges.
 - ii. The AONB have run a series of online workshops to explore carbon toolkits, partnering with Dartmoor National Park with their farmers also attending.
 - iii. The AONB has a developing database of contact information and mapping work looking at expiry dates of schemes and land that has not recently been part of a scheme.
- 5b.2 Collaboration with partners has been a very important factor in this project. The AONB does not have direct advisory staff so relies very heavily on the partnerships in place. The National Farmers Union and the AONB Farm and Land Management Advisory Group have both been crucial in helping get messages out and to assist farmers and land management businesses over the difficult transition period.
- i. The AONB has a developing database of contact information and mapping work charting expiry dates of schemes and land that has not recently been part of a scheme.
- 5b.3 The anticipated Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.
- i. Due to launch in 2021/22, the scale of funding over three years shows this is a significant investment programme.
 - ii. This initiative positions AONBs and National Parks centrally in the delivery Environmental Land Management, contributing to Glover review proposal 5.
 - iii. Further clarification and detail is expected imminently from Defra and we will have to move quickly to implement this programme in accordance with Defra requirements matched to the needs and circumstances in the South Devon AONB.
- 5b.4 AONB Partnership Committee members are requested to inform the AONB Manager of their view on principal areas for investment should an element of the fund be made available to address Management Plan priorities.
- 5b.5 Observations and in discussion
- i. Eamon Crowe, Natural England:
 - a. Sustainable Farming scheme launch information:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-farming-incentive-scheme-pilot-launch-overview
 - b. With the scheme being fronted by Rural Payments Agency, Natural England are looking forward to re-engaging with South Devon AONB
 - ii. The representative for community/voluntary groups, Peter Sandover, informed Committee members that he is also vice Chair of South Devon Coastal Local Action Group who have some experiences relating to operating a grants panel that could be useful to share with the AONB staff unit.

5C WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE UPDATE

Rob Price, Environment Agency, gave a presentation to provide a Water Framework Directive update to AONB Partnership Committee members.

- 5c.1 The Environment Agency catchment data explorer for South Devon, that presents information on the status of the various water bodies, can be accessed here: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/ManagementCatchment/3081>.
- 5c.2 **ACTION 1 (RP):** Forward a copy of the presentation to the AONB Manager for circulation with the minutes.

5D SOUTH DEVON AONB / DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK COLLABORATIVE WORKING

The AONB Manager provided an update on collaborative working with Dartmoor National Park.

- 5d.1 Following the Glover review, collaborative working has been taking place between Dartmoor National Park (DNP), South Devon AONB and also Tamar Valley AONB. For South Devon AONB collaboration with DNP includes:
- i. ELM advocacy
 - ii. Links with Facilitation Groups
 - iii. Shared catchment interests through South Devon Catchment Based Approach, benefitting water quality matters
 - iv. A number of emerging projects focussed on the A38 corridor
 - v. Nature Recovery
 - a. DNP recently appointed Simon Pryor as their Land Management Advisor specialist bringing knowledge on Nature Recovery
 - vi. Shared interest in mitigation hierarchy with regards to planning and Joint Local Plan DEV25 National Landscapes Policy – clause 8ix deals with an avoid/mitigate/compensate hierarchy approach
 - a. In South Devon AONB have had the opportunity to explore a test case, with LPA support, around Wembury Point. DNP, Natural England and Devon Landscape Policy Group are looking at this test case which has emerged as an exemplar case.
- 5d.2 The Chair requested that Partnership Committee members advise the AONB Manager of any other key areas of activity, priorities or opportunities in relation to collaborative working with DNP.

5E THE PRIMROSE TRAIL

Debbie Board and Richard Boyt of The Primrose Trail Group, gave a presentation on their proposal for a non-motorised route from moor to sea, South Brent to Kingsbridge, following as closely as possible the route of the old Primrose Line railway. An introduction to this project was included in the papers.

- 5e.1 The feasibility study for The Primrose Trail can be found here <https://primrosetrail.org/>.
- 5e.2 Observations and in discussion
- i. Devon has a network of multi-use trails and DCC receives many ideas for developing more trails. A key consideration is the practicality of developing and maintaining the routes. The Primrose Trail were commended for their approach, taking on the responsibility to look at the feasibility and develop a plan to provide a model to help develop the trail.
 - ii. DCC have a number of other priorities that although including further development of this type of multi-use trail, do not presently include The Primrose Line. DCC are keen to provide guidance and practical support.
 - iii. The draft Neighbourhood Plan for Kingsbridge, West Alvington and Churchstow is supporting of The Primrose Trail proposal, aligning closely with the health & wellbeing, sustainable transport and green environment policies.
 - iv. Would like to see how potential conflicts on the route between walkers and horse riders & cyclists will be addressed.

- v. Suggest the Group contact Adam Williams, SHDC climate change officer, to explore alignment with SHDC policies such as enhanced recreation opportunities and the health and wellbeing agenda.
- vi. South Brent station will hopefully be reopened, and this together with the proposed Primrose Trail could create a connection into the AONB.

5e.3 The Chair requested that Partnership Committee members send their views on the scheme to the AONB Manager.

6A CHAIRMANSHIP, ELECTION OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES AND ANNUAL FORUM

The AONB Manager introduced a number of time sensitive matters covered in the papers regarding Chairmanship, election of Community Representatives and the Annual Forum.

6a.1 Chairmanship

- i. The papers provided further information including an extract of the South Devon AONB Terms of Reference that relates to the Appointment of a Partnership Committee Chairman.
- ii. Chairs are usually appointed for a two year period. At the June meeting the current Chair will have been in position for two years.
- iii. Partnership Committee members are requested to consider the options for AONB Partnership Chairmanship put forward and vote on the two options. The Chair did not feel it appropriate to take votes during the video meeting.

IT WAS DECIDED

Committee members will vote via email.

ACTION 2 (all): Vote on the two options below via email to the AONB Manager, by 31st March 2021

- a. Option 1
Invite the current Chairman to extend his term by up to two years.
- b. Option 2
Express interest in becoming Partnership Chair.
- iv. If any Committee Member expresses an interest in becoming Chair:
 - a. If one person comes forward, Committee Members will be asked whether they support the proposal during April.
 - b. If more than one person comes forward, an election will be held during April.
 - c. If no one comes forward but more than 50% wish to have a new Chair, a process will start to look for an independent Chair.

6a.2 Annual Community Forum

- i. The papers provided further information including a brief summary of outcomes from the workshop held in February with proposals for this year's Annual Community Forum.
- ii. The proposal is to split the normal event into two providing one open public event and one invited community conference, enabling targeted audiences to be attracted to each.
 - Public event: open to all - as part of the 60th anniversary finale celebrations – to be held in October.
 - Community conference: by invitation to Peers, partners, organisations, businesses – to be held in September.

6a.3 Election of AONB Community Representatives

- i. The three year term Community Representatives serve, is drawing to a close and elections will be required in October 2021.
- ii. To give as wide an opportunity for engagement and inclusivity as possible, the proposal is to move the elections for Community Representatives online and announce the results at the Community Conference.
- iii. Further information was provided in the papers, including an Appendix containing a draft of the updated community elections procedure.

IT WAS PROPOSED THAT

Elections for Community Representatives are moved online.

THE PROPOSAL WAS SUPPORTED

The Chair directed that no responses would be taken as support.

6B NATIONAL MATTERS

The AONB Manager provided Partnership Committee members with a brief overview of a small selection of national matters pertinent the South Devon AONB, details and signposting were contained in the papers.

6C ROUND TABLE PARTNER UPDATES**6c.1 Peter Chamberlain, Devon County Council**

- i. The board of the Devon Local Nature Partnership are meeting next week. Agenda items include:
 - a. Consideration is being given to develop a framework to support community action for wildlife. Idea is to develop a Parish and Town Wildlife Network – a framework for advice and support and a means for developing a network for communication between groups.
 - b. Planning is taking place for 'Naturally Healthy May'

For more information visit www.naturaldevon.org.uk

6c.2 Cllr. Rosemary Rowe, South Hams District Council

- i. Expressed support for The Primrose Trail initiative.
- ii. Looking forward to the Annual Community Conference.

6c.3 Cllr Bernard Taylor, South Hams District Council

- i. Expressed support for The Primrose Trail initiative.

6c.4 Cllr. Anne Brooks, Torbay Council

- i. Decision awaited on Land South of White Rock (Inglewood) inquiry. Thanks was expressed to the AONB Manager for his work and support on the inquiry held in January.

6c.5 Tracy Brooks, Torbay Council

- i. National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code: consultation proposals deadline is 27th March 2021: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-and-national-model-design-code-consultation-proposals
- ii. Also expressed thanks to the AONB Manager for his work and support on the inquiry held in January.

6c.6 Eamon Crowe, Natural England

- i. New team member Louise Riley recruited for South Devon and Dartmoor focussing on SSSIs' and ELM matters. Looking forward to engaging with South Devon AONB staff unit.
- ii. Expressed support for The Primrose Trail initiative.

6c.7 Richard Snow, The National Trust

- i. Apologised for missing the start of the meeting due to other commitments.

- ii. Expressed support for The Primrose Trail initiative.
- iii. The National Trust experienced a number of challenges arising from COVID-19 and sites were heavily impacted by the high number of visitors. The National Trust anticipate an extremely busy summer, further impacting the AONB and scheduled projects. Everyone is encouraged to plan as far as is possible for this.

6b.8 John Martin, Vice chair

- i. Thanked AONB Partnership Committee members for their input into the Community Shaping Landscape project and completing the questionnaire. This is an ongoing project
 - a. Anyone interest in being involved is encouraged to contact John Martin j.martin-2@plymouth.ac.uk or Hanna Elisabet Åberg hannaelisabet.aberg@unibo.it.
 - b. Free online presentation taking place on Tuesday 13 April at 7pm, further information at www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/events

6b.9 Geoffrey Osborn, representative for Amenity Groups

- i. South Hams Society has recruited a new Chairman, Richard Howell.
- ii. Carole Box update
 - a. complemented the AONB Manager for his contribution to the Land South of White Rock (Inglewood) inquiry
 - b. pleased to hear the presentation on design review panels the representative for community and voluntary groups, Peter Sandover gave at the last meeting. Torbay Council hold these for major commercial developments
- iii. Encourages a Friends of AONB initiative and would like East Devon AONB to present at a future Partnership Committee meeting.
- iv. Would like further engagement with AONB Gateway signs, with signs erected at points of entry to the AONB.
- v. Raised the issue of the papers being circulated late.
- vi. Revised Planning Protocol requests:
 - a. Would like confirmation that each of the four Local Planning Authorities have adopted the revised Planning Protocol
 - b. To put the Revised Planning Protocol on the AONB website

The AONB Manager responded: the revised Planning Protocol has been shared with the Local Authorities. As pointed out at the March meeting, adoption varies from Council to Council as well as the nature of adoption. The AONB Manager understands that the particular focus from Amenity Groups is on South Hams District Council and added that the Protocol was developed with a great deal of support from Pat Whymer, Head of Development Management at SHDC, and is in place with his backing. Graham Swiss, SHDC and Tracy Brooks, Torbay Council, have both been discussing the new Protocol with their colleagues. In the run up to AONB Partnership Committee that adopted the revised Planning Protocol, the final draft Protocol was shared with Development Management Officers at SHDC, one of whom, Wendy Ormsby, is now Head of Development Management at Torbay Council. Training will take place as the opportunity arises.

ACTION 3 (RE): Publish the revised Planning Protocol on the AONB Website.

- vii. Public Statement session
 - a. Requests Cllrs. Rowe and Taylor's views on the Bantham Estate Office planning application, noting their support of it at the recent Development Management Committee meeting where the plans were approved

6b.10 Peter Sandover, representative for community and voluntary groups

- i. Neighbourhood plan referendums were not being held due to COVID-19 however at least two are now coming to referendum in May:
 - a. Strete
 - b. South Huish
- ii. Two Neighbourhood Plans: Kingsbridge, West Alvington & Churchstow and the Dartmouth Neighbourhood Plan are now close to regulation 14 submission.

6b.11 Lynne Maurer, representative for parish councils

- i. With the representative for Amenity Groups, Geoffrey Osborn, has been discussing a proposal to have a nominated representative within each parish and town council for the AONB. This would improve communications which are currently difficult due to a number of factors.

The AONB Manager responded: happy to support this initiative and will work with Lynne to put information together to send to parish and town councils

- ii. Supports John Graham's idea for producing separate maps showing parish and town councils wholly or partly in the AONB

The AONB Manager responded: warrants further discussion. There may be existing resources that could be utilised.

2021 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Locations and themes for meetings will be announced nearer the time.

25th June 2021 at 10am, venue TBC

26th November 2021 at 10am, venue TBC

Item 5a: The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme

Purpose of the report

1. This report provides members of the AONB Partnership Committee with details of the Defra funded Farming in Protected Landscapes programme which will run from July 2021 to March 2024, its priorities and operation in South Devon. Further detail will be provided by the AONB Manager during the AONB Partnership meeting.
2. Following formal announcement of the programme within the Written Ministerial Statement¹ on the Landscapes review, this is no longer a confidential paper.

Background

3. The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme has been created by Defra with advice and support from AONBs and National Parks and it forms part of the Government's Agricultural Transition Plan² (ATP).
4. It will provide funds to allow farmers and land managers to work with Protected Landscape organisations (National Park Authorities and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty teams) to provide benefits for nature, climate, people and places. The programme will run over three financial years from mid-2021 to April 2024.
5. The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, which will operate in England, will provide additional investment in these places to allow farmers to work in partnership with Protected Landscape bodies to deliver bigger and better outcomes for the environment for people and for the place.
6. Protected Landscapes can make an important contribution to:
 - **Climate** – delivering net zero with nature and nature-based solutions to help communities adapt to the unavoidable effects of climate change;
 - **Nature** – playing a leading role in the delivery of the Nature Recovery Network and achieving the PM's commitment to protect 30% of land by 2030;
 - **People** – providing a natural health service that will improve the nation's public health and wellbeing through increased access to nature across all parts of society, as part of our green recovery;
 - **Place** – creating centres of excellence and green innovation that are flourishing places to live and work, each with a strong identity and cultural heritage, and high recognition as attractive visitor destinations
7. As part of the Agricultural Transition Plan, the government has committed to help farmers and land managers deliver against these four areas, in a holistic way - in order to meet the requirements of individual Protected Landscapes, helping strengthen their special importance and enhance their environments and accessibility.
8. The programme will be delivered by farmers, working in partnership with Protected Landscape teams recognising that Protected Landscape teams and farmers living and working in these areas know the opportunities and challenges facing their landscapes and communities the best. This is an

¹ <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-06-24/hcws119>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024>

opportunity for Protected Landscapes, farmers and others within these areas to work better together, leading work at an individual landscape level, building on existing relationships.

9. The programme will be project based and take a bottom up approach - this means that funding will support individual projects proposed by farmers, and approved by Local Assessment Panels, which will support Protected Landscapes' local priorities.
10. This is a time limited programme (2021-2024) to provide additional investment in our most special places . It will work alongside, not in competition with, existing schemes and add value where it is most needed. Over the longer term, Defra would envision the Sustainable Farming Incentive, the Local Nature Recovery scheme and the Landscape Recovery scheme playing a specific part across these landscapes, with farmers who lead on Farming in Protected Landscapes projects taking part in one of these schemes.

South Devon AONB Funding Allocation

11. Funding from the Defra Future Farming and Countryside Programme has been allocated to English Protected Landscapes following a nationally agreed formula. The formula incorporates the following criteria:
 - Size of farming area and number of farm holdings in each Protected Landscape.
 - Size of farming area and number of farm holdings within 'Severely Disadvantaged Areas' (uplands) in each Protected Landscape.
 - Surrounding populations of each Protected Landscape (using a combination of three measurements, based on the areas 5km, 25km, and 50km from the landscape boundaries)
 - Deprivation within surrounding populations of each Protected Landscape, using Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data for the same three area sizes (5km, 25km, and 50 km from the landscape boundaries). The formula considers both raw numbers and percentages of those residing in the lowest decile of the IMD.
12. When applied to South Devon this has resulted in a provisional allocation of £[REDACTED] for the 2021/22 financial year of which a maximum of £[REDACTED] is available to support a combination of advice, guidance, coordination, communication, admin and finance work to deliver the programme. This leaves a minimum of £[REDACTED] for distribution to projects by the end of March 2022. Indicative allocations for 2022/23 and 2023/24 are due to be made shortly.

National Framework

13. A National Framework for the programme has been developed by Defra which sets out how the funding should be administered and delivered. The framework and its supporting annexes were distributed last week and Defra have been providing training to assist Protected Landscape teams with gearing up for delivery.

Outline timetable for 2021/22

14. An indicative timetable for launch and delivery is outlined below. The timetable for 2021 may be subject to change:
 - 24th June – Written Ministerial Statement published including announcement on the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme.
 - 24th June – Defra press and social media launch of the programme
 - 24th June – Individual Protected Landscapes to make programme information available on their websites
 - Training sessions for Protected Landscape staff between 16th and 24th June

- 1st July - Programme application window opens nationally for Year 1
- 31st January 2022 – Programme application window closes nationally for Year 1
- 31st March 2022 – all year 1 projects to have submitted final claims and been paid

15. Applications can be submitted at any time between 1 July 2021 and 31 January 2022, though as funding is limited early applications are encouraged

Managing the programme for South Devon

- Rapid Setup Phase – June 2021
 - Initial Delivery Phase – July 2021 to December 2021
 - Main Delivery Phase – January 2022 to December 2023
 - Programme Completion Phase January 2024 – end of March 2024
16. Initial setup and delivery is to be achieved through the existing AONB Staff with additional support from contractors and partners. Dedicated programme staff will be recruited, inducted and deployed during the Initial Delivery Phase to provide additional capacity. The Main Delivery Phase will rely on a small programme team, including the dedicated programme staff. A programme completion phase is required as all programme funds allocated to the South Devon AONB must be committed, projects actioned, funding claimed and paid out in advance of the 31st March 2024 when the programme closes.
17. A key underpinning principle of the programme is collaboration. In this regard, Defra will be establishing a “Farming in Protected Landscape Network”, so that advice and guidance staff from individual landscapes are able to have easy access to each other, can share good practice and lessons learned.
18. The five Devon AONBs will continue to work closely together. South Devon AONB, Tamar Valley AONB and Dartmoor National Park will work particularly closely collaborating through shared training, mentoring, workshops and back office support.

Local Assessment Panel

19. Protected Landscapes are responsible for creating and appointing an assessment panel. A panel’s purpose is: *To consider and decide on applications for projects (above £5,000) submitted to the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme, according to the agreed criteria for the programme as published in the information for applicants and in accordance with the scoring system provided.*
20. The panel must consist of representatives of:
- the Protected Landscape Team;
 - Natural England
 - the farming and land management community (several members);
21. Protected Landscape teams are strongly encouraged to include the RPA in the representation of the panels and also to consider including further representatives from the Defra network (Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, and Historic England) as appropriate. It may be that PLs bring in FC/EA/HE guidance and expertise for ‘one off’ advice when necessary.
22. The panel should consider representatives from organisations with a focus on nature recovery, rural development, public access/engagement and existing agri-environment support and provision.

23. The panel may keep its membership under review and may, at the discretion of the Chair and the Director of the Protected Landscape or their nominee, invite additional members or remove members.
24. Local Assessment Panels will be required to meet at least every 6-8 weeks to make decisions on batches of applications. Protected Landscape organisations may decide that their Local Assessment Panels can choose to meet more frequently where it is considered helpful, for example later into the application window period.

Project Grants

25. The National Framework has been developed to ensure consistency across Protected Landscapes, while providing some flexibility. The documentation contains the detail for operating the grant, though overall financial delegation, process and landowner legal agreements must be agreed by South Hams DC's finance and legal functions as the South Devon AONB's host authority.
26. The maximum level of grant has been set at £250,000. Project grants of up to £5000 are possible with decision making on these delegated to the AONB Manager. Devon protected landscapes have jointly proposed a minimum project grant of £2,000 recognising processing costs, need for value for money and consistency across the County.
27. Grants can range from up to 40% to 100% intervention rate dependant on the applicant, nature of the project and level of any commercial gain involved. Capital and/or management costs are eligible.
28. Official Defra Guidance is available via a Farming in Protected Landscapes page³ of the South Devon AONB website

Recommendations

29. AONB Partnership Committee members are invited to:
 - i. Note the scope of the opportunity for the South Devon AONB, its farmers and land managers;
 - ii. Advocate for the programme in discussions with the area's farmers and landowners to drive high quality, innovative and well developed proposals
 - iii. Offer their feedback on local priorities from the AONB management plan that fit with the programme aims and could provide key areas of focus for proposals to address under the four headline outcomes for climate, nature, people and place.

³ <https://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/opportunities-for-farmers-2021-24/>

Item 5b: Environmental Land Management schemes

Purpose

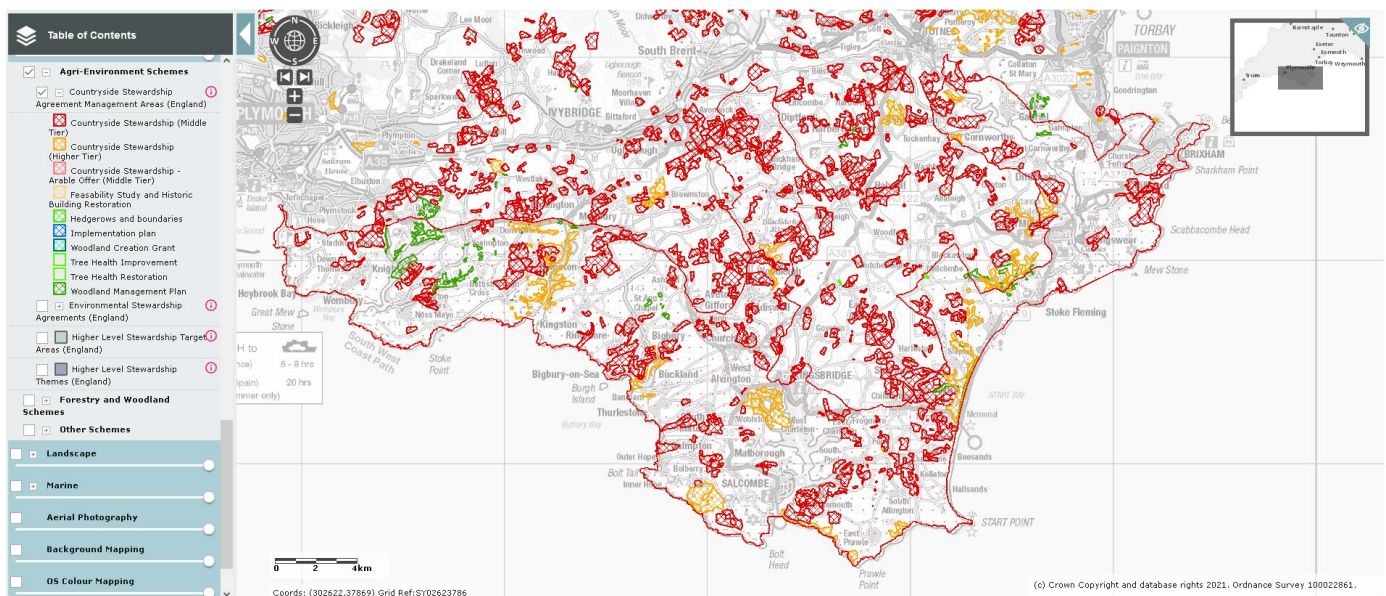
1. To provide members of the AONB Partnership with an update on existing and emerging environmental land management schemes pertinent to the South Devon AONB, an overview of related activity, current and emerging opportunities to advocate for. Eamon Crowe, Natural England Team Leader for South Devon and Dartmoor will add to this paper in the meeting.

Background

2. With 78% of the land area of the South Devon AONB under agriculture, farming and land management activities are one of the principal means to achieving the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, recovering nature and responding to climate change. Agri-environment or environmental land management schemes provide an important mechanism to secure and deliver environmental benefits - public goods from which society benefits.

Countryside Stewardship:

3. Now in its 6th year of operation Countryside Stewardship continues to offer a range of agreements including Higher Tier, Mid Tier and Hedgerow and Boundaries schemes to achieve environmental benefits.
4. Visit www.magic.defra.gov.uk and view the Countryside Stewardship Agreement Management Areas (England) dataset found under Land Based Schemes to view the locations of land under management within the Countryside Stewardship Agri-Environment scheme since 01/01/2016. Example map extract to illustrate coverage below



Environmental Land Management⁴

5. Following publication of an ELM Policy Discussion Document in February 2020 and a period of consultation and further refinement, there are three new schemes that will supersede Countryside Stewardship over the coming years and continue to reward environmental land management:
 - Sustainable Farming Incentive

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-land-management-schemes-overview>

- Local Nature Recovery
 - Landscape Recovery
6. Through these schemes, farmers and other land managers may enter into agreements to be paid for delivering the following:
- clean and plentiful water
 - clean air
 - thriving plants and wildlife
 - protection from environmental hazards
 - reduction of and adaptation to climate change
 - beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment

Sustainable Farming Incentive Pilot

7. The Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme will reward farmers for managing their land in an environmentally sustainable way. A pilot version of the scheme is currently in its very early stages. Over 2000 farmers submitted expressions of interest earlier in 2021 and have been invited to apply to take part. These farmers will help make sure the scheme works in practice. This is part of a process called 'co-design' where they will:
- implement the pilot version of the scheme on their farms
 - take part in learning activities based on their experiences
 - provide regular, comprehensive feedback on what's working and what's not.
- The pilot gives farmers an opportunity to help shape the future of farming in England.
8. The scheme is made up from a set of standards. Each standard is based on a feature like hedgerows or grassland, and contains a group of actions that are required, plus some that are optional often across three ambition levels: Introductory, Intermediate and advanced with payment rates that increase to match those levels of action. Applicants can choose which standards they wish to work to, and where on their land to apply them.
9. Standards have so far been published for:
- Hedgerows
 - Improved grassland
 - Improved grassland soils
 - Water body buffering
 - Farm woodland
 - Low and no input grassland
 - Arable and horticultural land
 - Arable and horticultural soils

More standards will be added as the pilot develops.

Catchment Sensitive Farming

10. Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) is a partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England. It works with farmers and a range of other partners to improve water and air quality in high priority areas. CSF offers farmers free training, advice and support for grant applications.
11. High priority catchments in South Devon are currently the Erme, Salcombe Kingsbridge and Slapton. For farmers and land managers with land in these catchments additional support, advice and training is available and in many cases the option of securing additional mid tier options and water

capital items, when applications are endorsed by the Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer for the area.

12. Opportunities may be provided through increased national funding to widen the geographic spread of priority areas within the AONB and in its setting upstream.

Recommendations

13. Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Note the range of current and emerging schemes together with associated opportunities for conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB
 - ii. Take all available opportunities to encourage the take up of agri-environment agreements in order to assist farmers and land managers during the agricultural transition period, contribute toward nature recovery, climate change action and the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

Item 5c: Other national announcements and implications for the South Devon AONB

Purpose of the report

1. This report highlights a number of significant recent national announcements relevant to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty that will markedly shape and influence future work in England's protected landscapes over the coming years. Partnership committee members are invited to consider specific implications, opportunities and challenges for the South Devon AONB that arise.

Background

2. The last quarter has seen a flurry of significant national announcements that are highly relevant to the management of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with more announcements expected in the coming months. The following sets out a selection of announcements for consideration, recognising that there are many more that could be mentioned here too:

Written Ministerial Statement on the Landscapes Review⁵

3. The following statement was made to the House of Commons by George Eustice, Secretary of State for the Environment:

In May 2018, Defra commissioned Julian Glover and an independent panel to consider how we might improve the management of our National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

Their report, the Landscapes Review, was published in September 2019. It set out a series of recommendations, including that more should be done to support nature's recovery in these landscapes; that the status of AONBs should be strengthened; that there was a need to bring the family of protected landscapes closer together with more strategic oversight and greater opportunities for career progression; and that more funding should support public access to protected landscapes.

The government agrees that more funding should be directed towards making space for nature and supporting nature's recovery in our protected landscapes. Since the review was published, we have been supporting important projects in our protected landscapes through our Nature for Climate Fund and Green Recovery Challenge Fund. Our future Local Nature Recovery scheme, part of the future agriculture policy, will also support the objective of nature's recovery in our protected landscapes and beyond. I have also asked Natural England to prepare proposals for the possible designation of additional National Nature Reserves, where there is landowner support, and to consider how nature's recovery within such designations might be supported financially through our new Landscape Recovery scheme (also part of our future agriculture policy).

The government also agrees that we should do more to support public access to protected landscapes. Today, I am announcing the new Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, which will provide additional investment to allow farmers and other land managers to work in partnership with our National Park Authorities and AONB teams to improve public access, and deliver bigger and better outcomes for the environment, for people and for places.

⁵ <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-06-24/hcws119>

Natural England also will be taking forward the government's commitment to designate additional protected landscapes and is currently considering the designation of four new areas:

- *Yorkshire Wolds AONB*
- *Cheshire Sandstone Ridge AONB*
- *An extension to the Surrey Hills AONB*
- *An extension to the Chilterns AONB*

This work will contribute to the government's commitment of protecting 30% of our land by 2030, and boosting biodiversity, while taking forward the review's recommendation to designate more areas of the country for their natural beauty.

Each of our protected landscapes has its own identity, and many of their functions require local accountability. However, we are also considering how their structures might be changed so that we can bring the family of protected landscapes closer together, and ensure there is more strategic direction nationally, while retaining their local functions. We will also be exploring opportunities to increase private investment, particularly by diversifying funding sources to include emerging markets in natural capital and other commercial opportunities. We are also considering options to strengthen the status and support given to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the recommendation to possibly change their name. The Government will be working closely with our partners over the coming months including local authorities and National Park Authorities, to address the review's recommendations in full and consult on draft proposals later this year.

Environment Bill⁶

4. The Bill's long title is recorded as:

*"A Bill to make provision about targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment; for statements and reports about environmental protection; for the Office for Environmental Protection; about waste and resource efficiency; about air quality; for the recall of products that fail to meet environmental standards; about water; about nature and biodiversity; for conservation covenants; about the regulation of chemicals; and for connected purposes."*⁷

5. The Government describes the main purposes of the Bill are to:
- Transform our environmental governance once we leave the EU by putting environmental principles into law; introducing legally binding targets; and establishing a new Office for Environmental Protection.
 - Increase local powers to tackle sources of air pollution.
 - Protect nature and improve biodiversity by working with developers.
 - Extend producer responsibility, ensure a consistent approach to recycling, introduce deposit return schemes, and introduce charges for specified single use plastic items.
 - Secure long-term, resilient water and wastewater services, including through powers to direct water companies to work together to meet current and future demand.
6. In the background briefing notes to accompany the Queen's Speech 2021 the Government announced plans to amend the Bill to introduce new duties to require the Government to publish a plan to reduce sewage discharges from storm overflows by September 2022 and report to

⁶ <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/41652/documents/310>

⁷ <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2593>

Parliament the progress of implementing the plan. The Government also announced it would be setting a biodiversity target and providing powers to amend the Habitats Regulations,

7. At the time of writing The Environment Bill 2019-21 has completed its Committee Stage and had day one (of two) of its Report Stage in the House of Commons when several amendments to the bill were tabled. Amendments related to targets for species abundance, the establishment of a Species reintroduction Taskforce and measures to reduce sewage discharges from storm overflows were heard. Line by line examination of the bill in the House of Lords begins on 21st June.

Protection of 30% of UK land by 2030 and the 30 by 30 campaign

8. Existing National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other protected areas already comprise approximately 26% of land in England. An additional 4% – over 400,000 hectares, the size of the Lake District and South Downs national parks combined – will be protected to support the recovery of nature. This commitment is referred to in shorthand as 30 at 30. Defra has begun work to develop a Green Paper outlining how it plans to meet the new 2030 target and the UK's commitment to protect 30% of terrestrial habitats for nature this decade.
9. Additionally the Wildlife Trusts launched a public appeal to raise £30m to contribute to the protection of 30% of land and sea by 2030.

Planning Bill

10. The Planning Bill, which will introduce changes to the planning system in England, was announced in the Queen's Speech on 11th May 2021. Following the consultations that closed at the end of October 2020 on the Planning White Paper and changes to the current planning system, government is considering their response before publishing legislation later this year.

England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024

11. The England Trees Action Plan⁸ 2021 to 2024 sets out the government's long-term vision for the treescape it wants to see in England by 2050 and beyond. The plan provides a strategic framework for implementing the Nature for Climate Fund and outlines over 80 policy actions the government is taking over this Parliament to help deliver this vision.
12. The action plan was developed in response to the England Tree Strategy consultation that closed in September 2020. 20,400 submissions were made to the consultation including responses from the South Devon AONB and National Association for AONBs.
13. Included within the Strategy are a vision, commitments and range of policies, including on:
 - **Expanding and connecting our trees and woodlands** - Supporting land-owners to create new woodlands; Creating new woodlands to benefit nature; Woodlands for water; Putting the right tree in the right place; Putting more trees in our towns and cities; and Building nursery capacity.
 - **Trees and woodlands as part of the green economy** - Encouraging the use of timber in construction; Greening finance and taxation to support woodland creation; Building a bigger, skilled workforce; Supporting innovative approaches to forestry; and Support for tenant farmers.
 - **Protecting and improving our trees and woodlands** - Improving woodland condition and resilience; Protecting and improving our trees outside of woodlands; Adapting trees and woodlands to the impacts of climate change; Ancient and long-established woodlands and

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/developing-a-tree-strategy-for-england>

veteran trees; Better regulation of tree management; Preserving the nation's forests for future generations; and Protecting trees by reducing biosecurity risks.

- **Connecting people with trees and woodlands** - Community Forests; Supporting access to trees and woodlands; Trees in our landscapes

England Woodland Creation Offer

14. The England Woodland Creation Offer⁹ (EWCO) is a flagship new grant scheme for farmers and landowners that supports the creation of a range of woodland types and sizes, including through natural colonisation, and from applications of small areas of land from 1 hectare upwards. The grant will cover standard capital costs for tree planting (up to a per hectare cap), as well as rewarding farmers and landowners for providing public and/or wider environmental benefits.
15. Woodland creation schemes that clearly demonstrate they will deliver environmental or social benefits can receive additional contributions, for example where they will support nature recovery, provide new public access, or reduce flood risk. More information is available on the Forestry Commission's England Woodland Creation Offer page.
16. EWCO opened for application on 9 June 2021 and replaces the Woodland Carbon Fund, which closed for applications in March 2021. The grant is administered by the Forestry Commission and is funded through the Nature for Climate Fund. EWCO is one of a suite of Forestry Commission initiatives to support woodland creation and tree planting across England.
17. The minimum total size of woodland included in a EWCO application is 1 hectare. All woodland blocks within a EWCO application must be 0.1 hectare or more in size. Blocks must have a minimum width of 20 metres (except for riparian buffers and shelterbelts, where the minimum width is 10 metres).
18. There are four types of payments available under EWCO:
 - support for the capital items and activities to established new woodland, at 100% of standard costs
 - 10 years of annual Maintenance Payments to help establish the young trees once the capital works are complete
 - contribution towards the actual cost of installing infrastructure to either enable the current and future management of the woodland, or to provide recreational access
 - optional Additional Contributions where the location of the woodland and its design will deliver. You can apply for multiple Additional Contributions on the same land where it touches the right spatial layer and the design is compatible
19. EWCO is a criteria-based, competitive scheme, with funding offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Points are available for a range of positive impacts, including:
 - climate change resilience
 - using private finance to support woodland creation
 - nature recovery
 - improved water quality
 - planting riparian buffers
 - flood risk prevention
 - social benefits, such as providing public access
 - ammonia capture

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-woodland-creation-offer>

Recommendations

20. Partnership Committee members are recommended to:

- i. Note the range of announcements relevant to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, and the opportunities associated with them for the South Devon AONB.
- ii. Highlight to the Partnership any additional announcements or key elements for consideration at this time.

Item 5d: National Arts in the Landscape Strategy

Purpose

1. To introduce a national Arts in the Landscape Strategy codesigned by the National Association for AONBs, the network of English and Welsh AONBs and the Arts Council; and to seek formal adoption and active participation by the South Devon AONB Partnership and its Staff Unit.

Background

2. A national strategy has been created by the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) to galvanise action that enables people to experience a deeper connection to the natural beauty of the landscape through the arts.
3. The Art in The Landscape Strategy was formally adopted at the NAAONB Annual General Meeting in November 2020 and all AONBs are invited to adopt the Strategy and participate in coordinated national and local action resulting from it. The Strategy helps the AONB Network achieve its Colchester Declaration aims, and those of Glover's National Landscape Review around:
 - Engaging with a wider and more diverse audience
 - Helping people to create deeper connections to nature, place and landscape
 - Inspiring pro-environmental behaviour to tackle the conjoined ecological and climate emergency
4. The Art in the Landscape Strategy helps focus future delivery of art activity, collectively within the AONB family as well as locally. It also shows Arts Council England and other funders that the NAAONB and the AONB Network are committing to broaden and deepen our work with arts and culture in order to better connect people to nature.

Relevance to the South Devon AONB

5. South Devon AONB's Special Qualities include the rich legacy of cultural associations with place. Such cultural associations past, present and future, offer a source of inspiration to us all and may help develop new ways of understanding and managing the AONB. The South Devon landscape continues to attract artists, writers and musicians to visit and live. Outside London and the South East, the South West has the second highest regional employment in the creative sector. Heritage employment in the region is the greatest outside of London (www.tuc.org.uk – cultural manifesto).
6. Through signing up to the [Colchester Declaration](#), the South Devon AONB Partnership are committed to actively engaging in nature recovery work. This is happening through national and local strategic collaborations and practically for example through work in the Avon Valley funded through the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund, South Devon's Treescapes as part of a National Lottery Heritage Fund project, and developing work for the Life on the Edge project as covered later on the agenda.
7. South Devon AONB Management Plan aims and objectives
 - **Policy objective BioGeo/P5 - Reconnecting people and wildlife.** Opportunities will be sought to reconnect the AONB's residents, visitors and workforce with nature, promote appreciation of the benefits nature provides to us and to inspire positive action and help monitor wildlife populations

- **Policy objective Hist/P1 Cultural and historic environment.** The identification, protection and active conservation of the AONB's cultural and historic environment will be promoted and supported
- **Policy objective Acc/P8. Naturally healthy.** Opportunities to use the natural environment resource of the South Devon AONB to benefit the health and well-being of residents and visitors will be sought and promoted, particularly where this coincides with opportunities to enhance the area's special qualities
- **Policy objective Comm/P1 Special qualities.** Initiatives that engage local communities in understanding, exploring, celebrating, conserving and enhancing the special qualities and distinctive characteristics of the AONB will be promoted and developed
- **Policy objective Comm/P4 Cultural traditions.** Activities which reinforce the cultural traditions of the AONB will be supported and fostered, especially where these strengthen the link between people and landscape
- **Policy objective Comm/P6 Community participation.** Local community participation will be encouraged in the research, recording, celebration, promotion, care and conservation of natural history, heritage and historic features
- **Policy objective Aware/P5 Involving everyone.** Organisations, groups and communities will be encouraged and supported in playing an active role in conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the AONB
- **Policy objective Aware/P6 Lifelong learning.** People of all ages will be encouraged to investigate, record and celebrate their local places, and enjoy considerate and informed experiences of wildlife and the natural environment
- **Policy objective Part/P5 Partnerships.** The AONB Partnership will foster constructive links with partnerships and strategic initiatives at local, county, regional, national and international level

8. Experience and activity

- South Devon AONB has had at least ten years experience of working with artists and arts organisations and has developed a good reputation for creating meaningful engagements with the landscape as well as exploring creative approaches to land management. For this Art in the Landscape initiative, the AONB Manager was involved in the initial development of the Arts in the Landscape project and the Community Projects Officer, Nicky Bailey, received the free Art in the Landscape training.

Art in the Landscape Strategy: Development

9. The 'National Moment' in 2019, supported by Poet Laureate Simon Armitage with ['Fugitives'](#), presented the NAAONB with a high-profile stage to make an ambitious ['Art in the Landscape Statement of Intent'](#) - a commitment to engaging people with nature through the arts.
10. In this statement, Howard Davies (Chief Exec, NAAONB) states, "The creative exploration of place, through music, painting, poetry, and dance opens up the experience of landscape beyond the world of science and policy and helps us better understand our place in the world. With better understanding comes better stewardship; the basis of a more sustainable future."

11. On the back of the statement of intent, the NAAONB resourced development of the strategy with grant support from Arts Council England (ACE) and contributions from the AONB network. A national steering group was set up and Activate Performing Arts were commissioned to:
- Consult with AONB teams with different levels of experience in delivering arts and culture projects, importantly hearing from those who have not yet delivered major projects
 - Research good practice from the three land guardians: National Trust, Forestry England and Canal & Rivers Trust who have Memorandums of Understanding with Arts Council England
 - Consult with senior officers from Arts Council England and other agencies
 - Deliver a training programme for the AONB members to offer insight into working with the arts and develop confidence in the teams
 - Produce the Arts in the Landscape Strategy to provide direction for the NAAONB and AONB Network
12. A summary of the Aims and Recommendations of the Strategy are detailed below, the full Strategy¹⁰ can be found [on the NAAONB website.](#)

Art in the Landscape Strategy: Vision and Aims

13. People experience a deeper connection to the natural beauty of the landscape through the arts.
- i. **To connect** people to nature and the natural beauty of the AONBs – increasing creativity, wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviour
 - ii. **To challenge** perceptions of access to the landscape in order to diversify engagement
 - iii. **To broker** new trusted relationships with the arts and cultural sector to co- create new programmes
 - iv. **To celebrate** the existing creativity in the AONB teams and the local community
 - v. **To work with** arts and culture to understand and directly address the climate emergency and nature recovery
 - vi. **To welcome** provocations and questions in exploring ways that arts can change perceptions
 - vii. **To inspire** ambition by sharing exemplary projects of all scales
 - viii. **To capture** the public's imagination through engaging them in creative responses to the landscape
 - ix. **To raise** the profile of the landscape and the AONBs and the purpose of the AONB teams
 - x. **To lever in** resources and relationships at all levels for an ambitious programme

Art in the Landscape Strategy: Summary of Recommendations

1. Adopt the National Arts Strategy

The process of developing the Strategy was grounded in the consultation across the network. A nationally and locally endorsed strategy will have strong currency in discussions with external agencies, both national agencies such as government and funders and locally with partners, arts and cultural organisations.

Recommendations:

- NAAONB adopt and endorse the Strategy and report at the Annual Chairs meeting;

¹⁰ https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/2116/0318/0964/Art_in_the_Landscape_-_Final_Report.pdf

- following on from this each AONB circulates the Strategy to all AONB's staff and members of AONB partnership boards;
- time is dedicated at full team meetings of each AONB and at partnership board for presentation and discussion of the Strategy;
- the Strategy is adopted by each AONB partnership board who agree an in principal commitment to invest in the proposed National resource;
- a five-year national action plan should then be drawn up (relating to Recommendation 8), endorsed by the National Steering Group and adopted by the NAAONB;
- recognising the unique sense of place each AONB has, each creates a local action plan of how the strategy can be implemented in their area within their Management plan and relating to the national plan.

2. Deliver a National Creative Projects Programme

Research responses also strongly advocated for national creative projects to be clustered around specific themes, e.g., dark skies, coasts, ceremonial landscapes and hill forts. Crucially the national creative projects need a simple artistic provocation at the centre. Further ideas will be created by inviting experienced artists from diverse backgrounds into the AONBs and allowing their thinking to imagine new possibilities.

Recommendation:

- That national creative projects, of different forms, are adopted as a powerful activity in line with the aims for the AONBs. They can offer the opportunity:
 - i. for all AONBs to be involved;
 - ii. to be planned to share good practice and encourage peer to peer support;
 - iii. to be scalable so can be variation of delivery dependent upon local partners and resource – it is important to note that small budgets can be used resourcefully with artists;
 - iv. to create stories, images, film that can be used for gaining profile and inspiration for future projects;
 - v. to take place over a specified period, such as Spring, or at the same time across the country such as building on the existing national Landscapes for Life week in late September each year;
 - vi. for collaboration with other national organisations, for example Culture Declares Emergency.

3. Widen the welcome

The NAAONB and many individual AONBs want to take positive action to set about broadening the reach of the work, which will result in far more people feeling connected to nature and wanting to be proactive in their tendency to nature conservation. Arts and culture are an excellent way to do this.

Recommendation:

- The AONBs work through arts and culture programmes to establish meaningful links, connections and visits with communities with higher levels of people from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds
- A target for new arts and culture projects that at least 50% of the commissioned lead artists are from D/deaf and disabled, BAMER and lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Equally, this should also be reflected in the teams brought in to work on the project and those participating in the work

- The Steering Group and National lead will support the identifying of a cohort of interested artists that AONBs could then work with on creative projects

4. Develop the Governance

There is a relatively low level of membership by representatives from cultural organisations on AONB Management or Stakeholder groups and in partnership working.

Recommendations:

- that the positive recruitment of at least one person from the culture sector to become a member of these Governance groups with a specific brief to help both the board and staff team to develop their engagement with the arts and to adopt the Strategy
- that relationships with artists, arts and cultural organisations that either are located in or near the AONBs are developed

5. Advocate continually

Arts and culture should be integrated in delivering conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in the same way that 'outreach' or 'education' currently are.

Recommendations:

- the NAAONB, the Steering Group and individual AONBs continue to advocate for the work through an existing and ongoing programme of conferences, regular information briefings and presentations and through the dissemination of case studies, evaluation and research findings and any generated external coverage into the enhanced arts programme
- a dedicated area of the NAAONB's website to be created to showcase the arts programme and house the links to individual projects across the country

6. Sustain and expand the National Arts and Culture Steering Group

This current research programme has been guided by a steering group, comprised of representatives from the NAAONB and individual AONBs, bringing a range of viewpoints, regional perspectives and represents differing levels of existing engagement across the membership.

Recommendation:

- The Steering Group is extended to become an ongoing steering group and that its membership is widened either by co-option or invitation to include places for representatives from artists, arts and culture organisations and that diversity is considered and reimbursement for time is offered

7. Develop an understanding between NAAONB, AONBs and Arts Council England

This funded research process has seen a continuing and developing dialogue at strategic level between NAAONB, AONBs and ACE.

Recommendations:

- the NAAONB continue these discussions with ACE and develop an agreement based around their shared priorities. This agreement should look to the coming five years, as a trial period for joint working to increase arts and culture engagement within AONBs, with artists and organisations for people based both within and without them. The

agreement should be monitored annually by senior ACE officers and the NAAONB and the Steering Group

- that as ACE refreshes its Rural Stakeholders group, it invites a representative from the Steering group to the bi-annual meeting considering issues relating to arts and culture and rural communities and sends officer/s to the NAAONB annual conference to understand the developing AONB context

8. Create a Core National Resource

Research and consultation identified the benefit and catalysing impact of a core national resource would have - encouraging, inspiring, supporting and advocating for arts and culture within the sector and beyond.

Recommendation:

- Create a new national role (with some administrative support) based within the NAAONB to bring expertise and additional capacity to deliver the strategy's aim and vision. This should be resourced for a medium-term period of five years, with a delivery budget

9. Create a Training and Professional Development Programme

AONBs and their staff have an identified need for specific training and capacity building and continuing professional development programmes in working with the arts.

Recommendations:

- Training & capacity building is developed in a number of ways and managed by the national Arts and Culture Development Manager:
 - i. Inspirational – making detailed case studies of projects available, commissioning online video interviews with AONB officers and artists on their work together and live presentations at future national conferences
 - ii. Practical – building on from the training delivered in this programme developing access to a set of bespoke resources e.g. project toolkit including planning guidance, suggested processes, timelines, budgeting advice, budget template, marketing and audience development; evaluation frameworks
 - iii. Mutual Learning and Support – cluster support and networking groups could emerge either from AONBs Taking The Lead programme, the Communications Group or areas of interest such as Dark Skies. These groups would develop a term of reference for a specific period to offer mutual support, explore themes together, develop potential group collaboration and share artist information

Recommendations

14. AONB Partnership Committee members are invited to:

- i. Adopt the Arts in the Landscape Strategy; and Participate in coordinated national and local action resulting from the Strategy.
- ii. Remain open to the future voluntary contribution of funds to a collective Arts in Landscape fund, in particular the proposed 5-year national post that will provide a resource to all AONBs.
- iii. Use arts to help join up our climate change mitigation and adaptation, and nature recovery work.

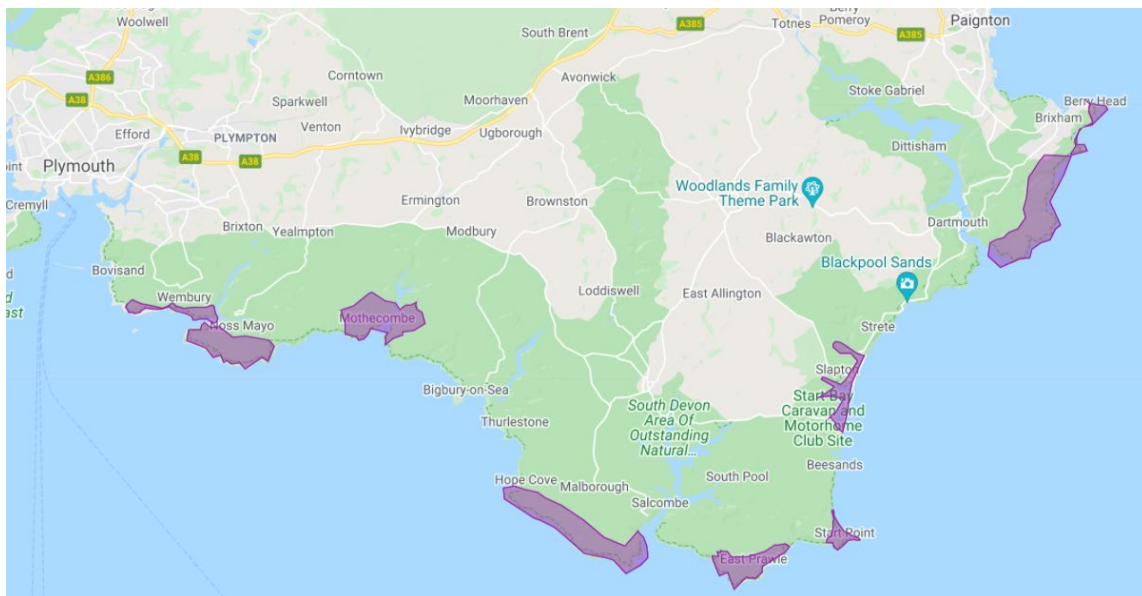
Item 7a: Life on the Edge - Devon's Special Species on the South Devon coast

Purpose

1. To inform the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee members of project detail and to secure member engagement as the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) application is prepared for submission week commencing 23rd August 2021.

Background

2. *Life on the Edge* (LotE) is a flagship project for the AONB Partnership led by the South Devon AONB Unit with specialist support from Buglife, wider partners and stakeholders. The project was prompted by Devon special species work undertaken by the Devon Local Nature Partnership.
3. The project demonstrates clear links to the South Devon AONB Management Plan policies and priorities, 25 Year Environment Plan¹¹, 30@30¹² and nature recovery work whilst contributing to the Colchester Declaration¹³ and our priorities of our core funders (Defra and Local Authorities).
4. The *Life on the Edge* project (LotE) is a multi-partner project that aims to restore viable populations of some of the UK's rarest insects living along the South Devon coast between Berry Head and Wembury, including the last known colony of the Six-banded nomad bee. This, together with several other invertebrate species, faces imminent extinction unless action is taken.
5. The project's six 'hotspot' areas have been defined by the populations of 26 target species and involves a range of landowners including the National Trust, Flete and Blackpool Estates, the Wild Planet Trust (formerly Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust) land privately owned by local farmers, Torbay Council, relevant parishes and wards and their communities.
- 6.



7. Saving these species and giving them a safer long-term future means enhancing, expanding and reconnecting the traditional coastal landscapes on which they depend, creating more flower-rich fields and highway verges, carefully managed scrub mosaics, strategic hedgerow connections, and more wildlife-friendly parks, churchyards, school grounds and private gardens. The result will be a

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-commits-to-protect-30-of-uk-land-in-boost-for-biodiversity>

¹³ <https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/projects/colchester-declaration>

coastline, and its connected hinterland, that is buzzing with wildlife, packed with wildflowers and a treat for the eye for residents and visitors alike.

8. It is a mission that needs the support and engagement of the whole community, from landowners and farmers to parish councils and school children, providing opportunities for everyone to get involved and make a real difference for these extraordinary and highly vulnerable species. Focusing on the survival of these flagship species and the expansion of the habitats on which they depend, the programme will build collective pride in the unique South Devon coastal landscape as well as boosting its attraction for visitors and developing new opportunities for people living in nearby urban areas to get involved. Through this programme, those who help bring about the rescue of Britain's rarest bee and allied species will gain valuable new skills and local connections, along with a deep sense of achievement.

Project partners

9. The project is led by the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit. Key partners and stakeholders include:
 - Buglife, National experts in invertebrate conservation and the creation of the B-Lines network
 - Plantlife, National experts in plant conservation
 - The National Trust, who own many of the sites where the flagship species are hanging on.
 - Other major landowners hosting flagship species: Flete Estate, Blackpool Estate, Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust (Torbay Council)
 - Doorstep Arts (National Arts Council portfolio holder), as cultural partner
 - The Field Studies Council as Education partner
 - A wider group of stakeholders including the RSPB, Natural England, Community organisations and groups

Project development prior to bid submission

10. The LotE concept has been developing over the last three years, spurred on by the growing threat to the Six banded nomad bee. The staff unit has secured two NHLF Expressions of Interest and in partnership with Buglife submitted an unsuccessful Green Recovery Challenge Fund bid based on one hotspot.

Timetable

11. With a positive outcome to the application, an 18-month Development Phase, starting in Spring 2022, will provide the opportunity to test out project assumptions and ensure the main project is ready to run. In Autumn 2023 a fully-detailed Round Two plan to NLHF will aim to secure their support for the main Delivery Phase, which will run from Spring 2024-Spring 2029.

Project components

12. In the Development Phase (March 22 – Aug 24) a range of actions will be tested, monitored and reported on in preparation for the phase two application.
13. In the Delivery Phase, our current expectations are that project outputs will include:
 - Provide habitat management advice and financial support to farmers in the six key biodiversity hotspot locations to secure the right conditions for the flagship species and ensure these are sustained in the long term.

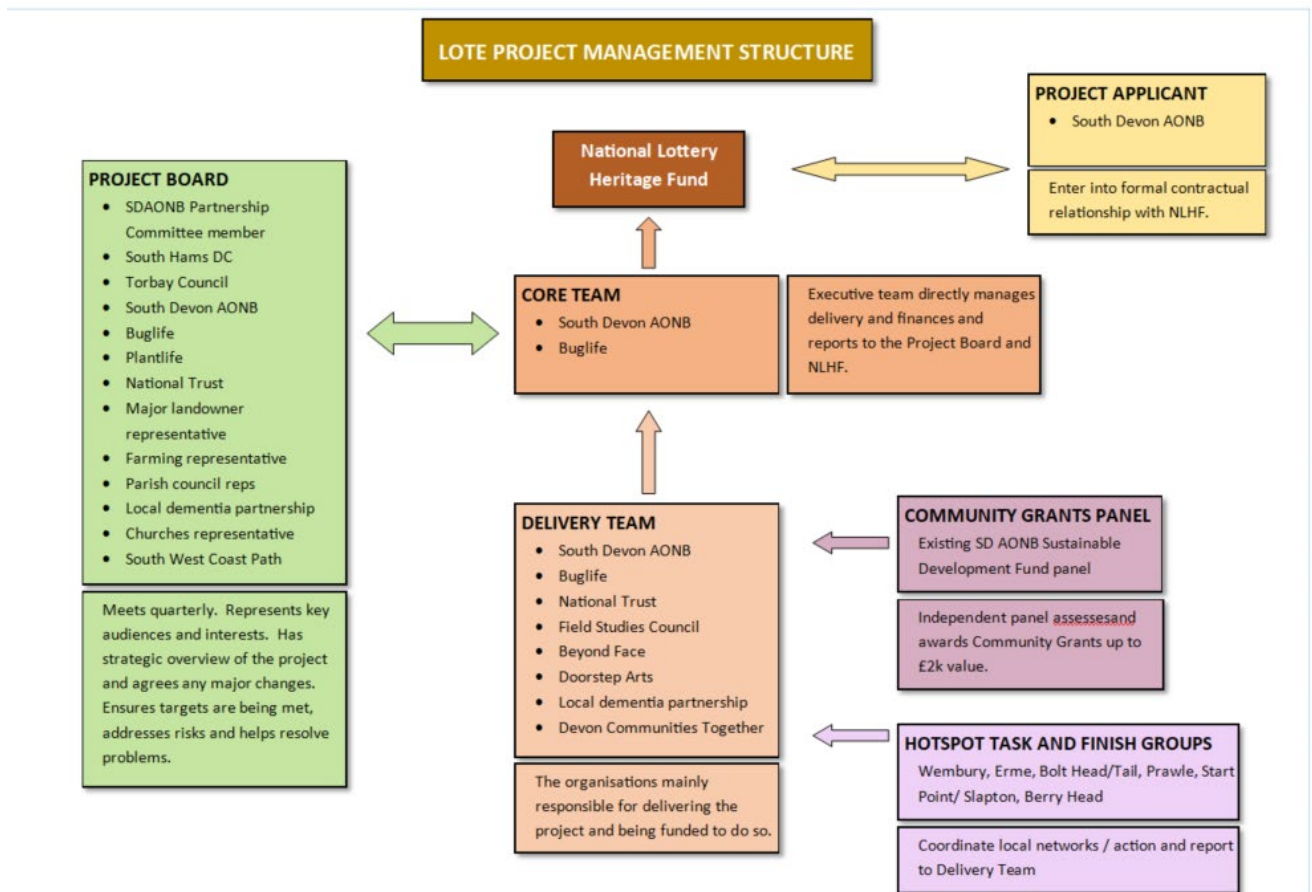
- Support landowners, businesses, public bodies and householders across the rural hinterland to create, restore and connect wildflower-rich habitat and build a nature recovery network for our pollinators using the principles of B-lines.
- Develop wildflower seed-bank sites that can provide locally-sourced wildflower seed for the restoration of sites.
- Develop Parish Pollinator Plans and provide Community Grants to support local initiatives.
- Organise a programme of training workshops for individual volunteers, landowners and community groups to build the skills of local people so that they can maintain the right conditions for our flagship species in the long term.
- Develop a digital LotE toolkit together with online learning / engagement resources available to residents, schools and visitors.
- Deliver a programme of community events working with young people and other groups, using the arts to build awareness of and involvement in the conservation of the flagship species.
- Involve groups from urban communities, that rarely visit the countryside, in recreational and educational visits, in arts projects, and in surveying and practical conservation work.
- Create opportunities for older and isolated people in rural communities to get involved and improve their wellbeing and social connections.
- Work with local tourist providers to build awareness amongst visitors, ensure that the LotE project helps strengthen the brand of the South Devon AONB and attract new audiences to the area.

Project resources

14. The total project cost is expected to be around £2.5m, with £1.8m coming from the NLHF. The balance will be made up of in-kind support (e.g., from volunteers or supporting organisations) and cash from grants and other funding sources
15. The project in the Delivery Phase will employ three full-time staff: a Project Officer, a Community Officer and a Conservation Officer; one part-time Finance/Admin Officer and a part-time Communications Officer and 4 x annual trainees.
16. Other key costs include specialist conservation advisors and surveyors, direct conservation and practical site works, the community grant scheme, resources for public events and activities, evaluation and impact assessment, interpretation (on-site and digital), the arts engagement programme and work with schools.

Recommendations

17. AONB Partnership Committee members are invited to:
 - i. Note the scope and ambition of the LotE project programme;
 - ii. Undertake the simple survey that is contributing to the information and evidence needed for the NLHF application for funding <https://us5.list-manage.com/survey?u=5ede14ae51d5e6e05cf965eb4&id=86c9f0b288&attribution=false>
 - iii. Consider representing the South Devon AONB as a Project Board member – initially meeting mid-August 2021 prior to NHLF submission and if successful committing to quarterly meetings with a strategic overview of the project, agreeing any major changes, ensuring targets are being met, risks are being addressed and helping to resolve problems. See Life on the Edge project management structure diagram below:



Item 7b: East Devon AONB Ambassador scheme

Purpose of the report

1. Following a request from an earlier AONB Partnership meeting, this report introduces the East Devon AONB Ambassador scheme for Partnership members to consider the applicability of a similar approach for South Devon. Chris Woodruff, East Devon AONB Manager will add to this paper in the meeting with his personal insight on this successful scheme.

Background

2. In 2013 the East Devon AONB Partnership launched an Ambassador Scheme¹⁴, as part of the 50th year anniversary celebrations, to help make useful and meaningful connections within AONB communities and build on the benefits of collaboration.
3. The scheme acts as a local networking group and brings together businesses, groups, organisations and individuals to help support, celebrate, promote and take care of the East Devon AONB.
4. Contact between the AONB Partnership and Ambassador network raises awareness of the AONB and highlights the importance of protecting our outstanding landscape – with the intention that ambassadors can then spread the word across their other networks, both personal and professional. The East Devon AONB Partnership also provides a platform for promoting the efforts, projects and business services of their ambassador scheme members via the AONB website, news and networking events.

The scheme

5. The East Devon AONB Ambassador scheme comprises individuals, businesses, community groups and organisations who deeply value and are passionate about protecting the local landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity. The scheme is free to join and offers the following benefits:
 - Direct association with a highly respected organisation with environmental credentials
 - Use of the AONB Ambassador logo and other promotional materials
 - Access to high quality AONB images for use
 - Free quarterly newsletter
 - Promotion on the East Devon AONB website and Ambassador map
 - Invitation to Ambassador events, networking and training
 - Free networking events and priority booking for the Annual AONB Partnership Meeting.
 - Advice and support on landscape, wildlife and funding matters
 - Opportunity to share news and events within the network, on our website and across our available news channels
 - Ambassador starter pack – information on leisure and sustainability opportunities within the East Devon AONB, Ambassador window sticker and enamel pin
6. In return it is hoped that Ambassadors encourage an appreciation and understanding of the AONB amongst friends, family, colleagues etc. Each Ambassador pledges a commitment to living and working in ways that promote sustainability and help to protect the environment. The pledge reflects the values and objectives of the AONB Partnership – taking action towards preserving the natural environment, promoting a healthy, inclusive society and supporting a thriving economy. All Ambassador members are asked to commit to the pledge (where relevant):

¹⁴ <https://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/ambassadors>

- Promote opportunities to explore and get to know our outstanding countryside
- Actively help to conserve and enhance our outstanding landscape and wildlife
- Help to reduce, reuse and recycle
- Save energy, lower carbon and water consumption
- Encourage use of/use local transport and local transport solutions
- Support local markets, buy locally and encourage local networking
- Offer opportunities for community involvement and support your local projects/clubs
- Mentor others and lead by example
- Meet all statutory and legal requirements relevant to your organisation or operation
- Promote the AONB on your website and literature and use the Ambassador logo


















7. The ambassador scheme further benefits the AONB and its Ambassadors by

- **Sharing** knowledge and providing advice
- **Creating** opportunities to network with others
- **Encouraging** and facilitating collaboration
- **Promoting** the work of Ambassadors and interests of others within the network
- **Celebrating** projects that conserve and enhance the AONB
- **Highlighting** ambassador businesses and organisations on the AONB website

8. Ambassadors are listed and mapped¹⁵ on the East Devon AONB website. Each Ambassador is categorised showing their type of business, group or organisation:



¹⁵ <https://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/ambassadors/ambassador-map>

 Self-Catering 31	 Things To Do 19	 Hotel/B&B 10
 Pub/Café/Rest 9	 EDW Walk 7	 Camping 2
 Farm Shop 1	 Local Business/Service 0	 Organisation/Group 0
 Self-catering 52	 Things to do 32	 Pub/Cafe/Cream Tea 21
 B&B/Farm 14	 East Devon Way 7	 Campsite 6
 Farm Shop/Deli 1	 Hotel 1	

Recommendations

9. AONB Partnership Committee members are invited to:
 - i. Note the scope of the AONB Ambassador scheme in East Devon; and
 - ii. Offer their views on elements of the scheme that could be incorporated into a South Devon focused approach to assist the Partnership in increasing its reach and conserving and enhancing the AONB.

Item 7c: AONB Gateway signage programme

Purpose

1. This report summarises for AONB Partnership members the rationale and scope of the AONB Gateway signage programme including the constraints within which the programme operates and provides an update on progress to roll out the programme.



Background

2. The AONB Gateway signage programme is intended to improve awareness and recognition of the AONB in a consistent and appropriate way.
3. The signs are installed at village boundaries to welcome visitors to the villages of the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to help raise the profile and awareness of the AONB for local people and visitors alike, helping to create a local identity.
4. The approach, in accordance with *Highways management in Devon's Protected Landscapes* protocol¹⁶ and guidance¹⁷, has been to incorporate the AONB logo as part of the village name plate to minimise additional signage and limiting passive road safety issues.
5. The AONB Partnership has supported installation of signs where communities have requested an AONB Gateway sign, matching the parishes own resources and that of South Hams District Council and Devon County Council locality fund grants.
6. A modest amount of funds has been included each year to achieve a gradual roll out of signs without inundating Devon Highways staff with additional work or necessitating a large capital outlay in any specific financial year.
7. If parish councils or community groups in other parts of the AONB are intending to replace, repair or add village signs and wish to incorporate the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty name and logo as part of their own scheme, the AONB Partnership requests that the general principles outlined in this brief document are used to achieve a coherent approach throughout the area.

¹⁶ [The Protocol: Highways management in Devon's Protected Landscapes](#)

¹⁷ [Guidance: Highway Management in Devon's Protected Landscapes](#)

Process

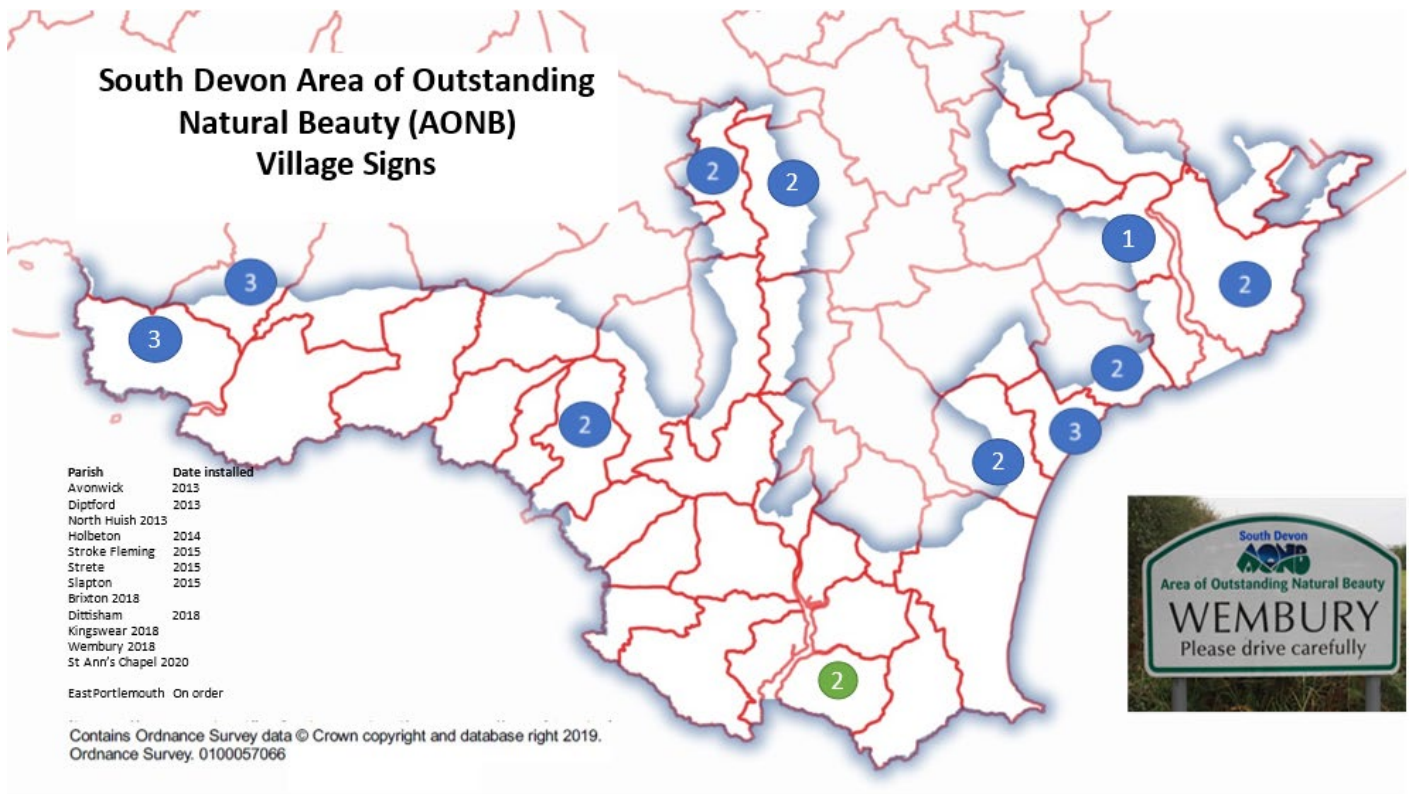
8. The highway authority, Devon County Council, will respond to requests for signing. The AONB Unit, parish councils and community groups will need to contact DCC to agree location, size, installation and cost of the signs. Where existing signs are in poor repair and due for replacement, the new signs may be produced free of charge to the Parish Council.
9. A mock-up of the sign is produced by the SHDC design office for the Parish Council to review in advance of ordering.
10. The AONB Unit can offer further information and advice and should be contacted regarding proposals to install a South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty sign.
11. Size and scale – as the preferred approach is to match with existing signs, requirements will vary depending on location, it is not possible to specify particular dimensions. The overall size and corresponding size of lettering should be the minimum necessary to meet highway safety requirements, to avoid undue visual impact.

Village gateway signs installed

12. Gateway signs have been installed within villages in those parishes listed in the table. The subsequent map illustrates the corresponding number of village signs within each parish.

Parish	Date installed
Avonwick	2013
Diptford	2013
North Huish	2013
Holbeton	2014
Stroke Fleming	2015
Strete	2015
Slapton	2015
Brixton	2018
Dittisham	2018
Kingswear	2018
Wembury	2018
St Ann's Chapel	2020
East Portlemouth	On order





13. Other parishes which have expressed an interest include Stokenham and Bigbury.

Method of promotion and challenges

14. Promotion has generally been via the ebulletin inviting interested parishes to get in touch.
15. The Devon Highways team is currently under significant pressure and the replacement or installation of AONB village gateway signs is not as high a priority as other road safety, repairs and maintenance matters. In some instances there have been lengthy waiting times to gain approval and subsequently to manufacture and install.
16. The unit has not sought to invite more interest than can be managed. The pandemic has exacerbated this pressure with local officers unable to estimate when they will be able to consider proposals.

Recommendations

17. AONB Partnership Committee members are invited to:
- Support liaison between the AONB Staff Unit, Devon County Council and Torbay Council's Highways Management to set out a process for the production and installation of further AONB town and village gateway signs, including consideration of installation by private contractors in order to increase the roll out rate;
 - Request the AONB Unit to renew the call for expressions of interest from the remaining AONB towns and villages, and set out target towns and villages for the next three years in advance of the next AONB Partnership Committee meeting.

Item 8c: AONB Staff Unit activity report

Purpose

1. To highlight to AONB Partnership Committee members a selection of project activity the Staff Unit has been engaged in over the last three months with the involvement and support of partners. It also signals the direction of work as we undertake projects identified in the 2021/22 Delivery Plan.

Background

2. The 2021/22 Delivery Plan has been finalised reflecting the difference between actions where the AONB Unit are taking the lead and those where partners are making significant contributions to the Management Plan.
3. The Unit continues to be flexible to address restrictions and lockdown issues by increased development of online resources and working closely with NAAONB campaigns.

Project activity March 2021 -June 2021

Nature

4. The Life on the Edge (LOTE) project development work has included meetings with our allocated National Lottery Heritage Fund engagement officer. An experienced consultant (Dominic Ackland) has been engaged to progress the early stages of the full bid application. Project team members continue to build relationships with landowners and project partners.
5. Nature recovery mapping, assessment and visualisations are being prepared as part of a shared Devon and Somerset AONBs contract to support the development of local AONB Nature Recovery Plans. For South Devon, the outputs will provide useful starting points and evidence to prompt discussions within the Nature Recovery Plan Working Group colleagues and subsequently wider partners, assisting in formulating a Nature Recovery Plan for the South Devon AONB.
6. The development phase of the Saving Devon's Treescapes project has come to an end providing a legacy of tree planting and community engagement in the South Devon priority focus area. Five citizen science landscape character assessment fixed post points have been established in partnership with South Hams Tree Wardens.
7. The delivery phase of the Wembury corridors and connections plan is closely linked to secured funding in the area, support from the Wembury Environment Group and major landowners. Priorities for 21/22 will ensure activity benefits both people and nature. A Yealm Woodland working group is focussed upon training, tree planting and management of invasive species whilst generating volunteer involvement and local primary school educational opportunities.
8. University of Plymouth Seagrass projects in the AONB – exploring feasibility of transplanting and enhancing dwarf seagrass beds, better understanding the value of both local seagrass species and a PhD project identifying optimal locations in SDAONB estuaries for extending seagrass beds. The 'Blue Carbon' implications of conserving the dwarf seagrasses have potential for setting up a self-financing carbon credit scheme.
9. The Estuary Officer is supporting the development of an 'Aquatic Literacy' project with Plymouth University & the National Marine Aquarium's charity is developing a new voluntary course for trainee teachers and other education providers – for them to take advantage of their local aquatic environments to teach children and groups about them, their nature and geography, our interdependence upon them and how we can conserve them. Project will offer teaching resources and aims to update the local site guides that we produced for teachers in the 10's.

10. The SDAONB is a partner in the Devon Biodiversity Record Centre led Water Vole survey training on South Milton Marsh reserve. The project will help us understand the local population of this threatened species and provide volunteering opportunities across the AONB.

Climate

11. The South Devon Catchments Based Approach partnership and Estuary forums have engaged its members and submitted a consultation response on the draft statutory River Basin Management Plan document. The South Devon catchment pages within the document have been agreed with partners and the Environment Agency.
12. Coastal change - the AONB Unit is supporting the National Trust with community engagement activity and development of a new management strategy for the coastal area at South Milton Sands that has been extensively affected by storm damage over recent years.
13. The Construction Environmental Management Plan template and guidance project has produced a draft document that is being peer reviewed before publication and promotion.

People

14. Throughout the pandemic the Staff Unit has continued to engage with our communities with increased online events, activities, walks and resources.
15. The AONB Communications manager has been closely involved with the National Association for AONBs developing and sharing messaging and approaches to lockdown easing and the release of a new Countryside Code.
16. The agreed extension of the 60th Anniversary programme continues until October 2021. The 60at60 fundraising challenge currently stands at £3562.52 raised - 59% of our target. This money will be used to take 60 Young Carers out for respite days on the coast during Summer.
17. The events programme continues to be well received and delivered online.

60th anniversary illustrated talks	Attendees
South Devon Estuaries	101
Tales of the Dart Estuary	56
A seasonal guide to Bird watching in South Devon AONB – Spring	120
History of Orchards and Cidermaking	91
Leaving our imprint	35
South Devon's incredible insects	96
A seasonal guide to Bird watching in South Devon AONB – Summer	31 Booked
A seasonal guide to Bird watching in South Devon AONB – Autumn	15 Booked

Estuary Forum illustrated talks by invitation	Attendees
The Avon Valley	21
Salcombe and Kingsbridge Estuary	23
Dart Estuary Forum	15
Yealm Estuary – Seagrass project	14
Dittisham Sustainability Group	

Other on-line talks and events	Attendees
Sustainable South Hams – Wildflower verges	30+
Chivelstone Church restoration project. NHLF dusk walk	25

Place

18. A one year extension to the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation programme in the Avon Valley was secured in October 2020 and is engaging farmers in virtual sessions only during the Covid restrictions period. 9 farmers are applying for mid-tier or higher tier stewardship applications this year. The group has 75 members covering almost 2000ha of land. A further 6 month extension has been requested to complete the proposed programme.
19. Between 1st January and 31st March 2021 the Defra funded, ELM advocacy programme reached 230 farmers and landowners directly and more through third party organisations. The aim of the programme was to encourage applications to Countryside Stewardship schemes during the transition to the Environmental Land Management Scheme commencing in 2024, as options as basic payment scheme payments begin to reduce in 2021/22.
20. The Project involved developing a database of farmers and land managers in the protected landscape by:
 - Buying in some mapping support
 - Generating addresses from public information available
 - Preparation and circulation of flyer to promote the programme.
 - Preparation and delivery of a selection of workshops including:

Workshop delivered	Attendees
An introduction to net zero and what it means for farmers	12
The Carbon Toolkit	10
The Agricultural Transition Plan	28
The value of hedges and how it relates to ELM	12
CS Mid-tier overview workshop with local case studies	10
The Clean Air Strategy	9

21. The AONB Unit is leading the South Devon Coastal Heritage project, funded by a Heritage at Risk grant from Historic England. Results from this development phase will inform a 5 year delivery project which will be submitted for funding in Spring and will run from 20021 - 2026. The focus areas are 'Bolt Head to Bolt Tail' and 'Defending the Dart'. It includes geophysical assessments, site management, community digs, surveys, working with volunteers, interpretation, and community engagement. We are working closely with National Trust, local landowners, Historic England and English Heritage.
22. The AONB Unit has been commissioned to deliver a selection of interpretation projects between Torcross and Jennycliff in the implementation of the new England Coast Path in the run up to its formal launch in Autumn 2021.

Recommendations

23. AONB Partnership Committee members are invited to:

- i. Note the breadth of the work undertaken by the Unit with positive alignment to the 25 YEP/ Glover Review and NAAONB priorities closely linked to the conservation and enhancement of AONB special qualities and Management Plan priorities;
- ii. Consider how the Partnership as a whole and as individual members wish to become more involved in the development and delivery of future projects.