

North Wessex Downs

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Annual Review **2019 - 2020**



Welcome

Welcome to the Annual Review of the North Wessex Downs AONB Partnership. This highlights our work during 2019-2020 to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the designated landscape for the benefit of those living, working or visiting in and around this special place.

2019 was an unusually important year for the UK's protected landscapes. The Landscapes Review chaired by Julian Glover published its report, with potentially profound implications for AONBs. We published our new AONB Management Plan 2019-24, designed to help us realise the ambitions of the Landscapes Review, the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and the new system of land management support that will follow Brexit.

The summer saw the successful delivery of our very first Walking Festival - part of our drive to raise the profile of the North Wessex Downs and encourage more people to visit, appreciate and benefit from the special qualities the AONB has to offer. We already knew how important green spaces are for our health and well-being; recently, it has become even clearer just how valuable beautiful landscapes are for everybody. This will spur us on in our endeavours to protect the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs, to encourage others to benefit from it and, in so doing, contribute to the recovery of the nation.

We also embarked on an ambitious programme of project development including major funding bids to expand our capacity to deliver the Management Plan objectives. We wait to see how these will be affected by the dramatic changes of the last few months.

The Partnership continues to face immense challenges ranging from pressure for damaging development to climate change. We cannot tackle these alone and we rely on a much wider group - volunteers, like-minded organisations, and our funding partners, DEFRA and the nine local authorities. We are hugely grateful for your continued support - thank you.

Ted Hiscocks

Chairman, North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (June 2020)



About the North Wessex Downs

The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is the third largest of Britain's 46 AONBs and received its status as a protected landscape in 1972.

The AONB forms the cornerstone of the chalk band which stretches across England from Lincolnshire to Kent. It covers 668 square miles (1,730 square km), taking in 173 parishes including the market towns of Hungerford and Marlborough, and reaching into four counties - Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire.

The rolling chalk hills with their thin, well-drained soils, provide the ideal conditions for chalk grassland with chalk-loving flowers, insects and rare butterflies. They also give rise to internationally-rare chalk streams that support some of the UK's most threatened and fragile plants and animals as well as sustaining the beautiful valleys of this landscape.



Council of Partners

Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs is the statutory responsibility of nine local authorities in Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire. They come together with community, farming, conservation, recreation, tourism and heritage representatives to make up the governing Council of Partners.

The Council of Partners meets three times a year and the smaller Management Working Group, which guides the work of the AONB staff unit, four times a year.

The Landscapes Review

Fulfilling a commitment in its 25 Year Environment Plan, in May 2018 the Government commissioned an independent review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). The Landscapes Review was led by Julian Glover supported by an advisory panel. In September 2019 the Panel published its report. The Review says AONBs should be renamed National Landscapes and it makes 27 proposals under five main themes:

Landscapes alive for nature and beauty - a “renewed mission” for National Landscapes to “recover and enhance nature”.

Landscapes for everyone - National Landscapes should “fulfil their original mission for people, providing unrivalled opportunities for enjoyment, spiritual refreshment and in turn supporting the nation’s health and wellbeing”.

Living in landscapes - National Landscapes should foster “vibrant communities” by offering meaningful social and economic support for the people who live in them.

More special places - designate new National Landscapes and a new National Forest, and support some existing AONBs to become National Parks.

New ways of working - strengthen AONBs with new purposes, powers and resources.

We were pleased to see twelve of the fourteen proposals we submitted with our fellow National Parks and AONBs as part of the South East and East Protected Landscapes Forum reflected in the final Report. Among the most significant recommendations are to:

- set up a National Landscapes Service to oversee National Parks and AONBs (National Landscapes), co-ordinate activity and hold them to account;
- strengthen the Section 85 Duty of Regard;
- amend and align the statutory purposes of National Parks and AONBs;
- strengthen the status of Management Plans in law;
- strengthen planning protection for AONBs and make them statutory consultees;
- encourage single development plans across larger AONBs;
- ensure a strong focus on nature recovery, with a central role in Nature Recovery Networks and the new system of environmental land management support;
- include National Trails within the National Landscapes family;
- work much harder to encourage a wider and more diverse range of visitors from the whole of society, emphasising health and wellbeing benefits, volunteering and sustainable tourism;

- reform governance to increase diversity and emphasise the national status of protected landscapes;
- ground action in data: regular and robust assessment of the state of nature and natural capital to inform priorities; and
- double national funding for AONBs.

Responding to the Review

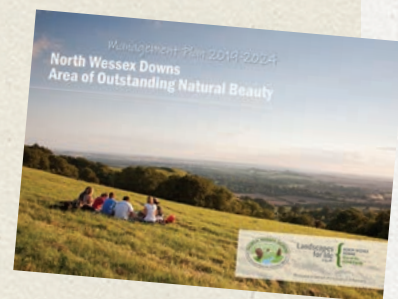
Alongside other AONBs and National Parks we have warmly welcomed the Review’s recognition of the value of designated landscapes and its ambition for their future. The North Wessex Downs AONB Partnership has discussed the recommendations. Some are controversial, or dependent on legislation being enacted, while others offer more immediate opportunities to rethink what we do and how. Elsewhere in this Annual Report you will find examples of how we have begun to consider how we can respond to these, for example encouraging more people to explore and access the AONB has been one of the prime motivations for organising our first North Wessex Downs Walking Festival.

New AONB Management Plan 2019-24

The AONB Partnership has a new statutory Management Plan to guide the work of the partners, the AONB Unit and others over the next five years.

Following approval by the Council of Partners in March 2019, the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-24 was adopted by all the nine local authority partners, designed, printed and formally launched at our Annual Forum in November.

The DEFRA 25 Year Environment Plan, the Landscapes Review and the new arrangements for Environmental Land Management to replace the Common Agricultural Policy offer opportunities for us to guide public funding and other support towards achieving AONB objectives for landscape enhancement, heritage conservation, nature recovery and carbon storage. The Management Plan responds to these emerging opportunities by identifying, for the first time, specific priorities for landscape management interventions in each of the AONB’s seven landscape character types. This will need to be supplemented by more detailed mapping and targeting of interventions.



The First North Wessex Downs Walking Festival - June 2019

Over 120 people booked on walks during our very first Walking Festival and we were delighted that all our scheduled walks went ahead, with many fully booked, despite quite appalling weather for the first week. Fourteen events took place across the AONB over 16 days and were led and supported by volunteers, local organisations and team members.

Through the Festival we aimed to raise the profile of the North Wessex Downs and the top-class walking country on offer here, and to encourage residents and visitors to explore and learn more about the area.

Furthermore, we wanted to build relationships with groups and residents of the AONB and to gain experience for the future.

Feedback from walkers was very positive with over 90% of respondents saying they 'thoroughly enjoyed' their walk. Nearly 70% said they learned something new about the North Wessex Downs while 55% said they discovered new parts of the AONB. 24% of respondents stated that they did not know about the AONB before the Festival.

Promotional activity resulted in increased engagement through our social media platforms and drove extra traffic to our website. For example, followers on Facebook increased by 30% during the promotion period and website traffic year on year was up by about 45%.

Following such positive feedback, engagement and the clear enthusiasm from participants, walk leaders and others we decided to organise a festival for 2020. By mid-March, 28 walks had been planned with help from 19 external organisations and included (among others) literary, wildlife, family-friendly and wheelchair-accessible routes. Unfortunately, the public health crises around COVID-19 meant that our plans had to change - but we are determined not to waste the efforts made by staff and volunteers so we intend to put the walking festival back on the calendar in 2021. Watch this space!

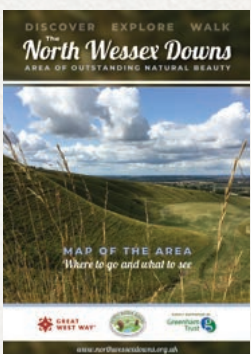


“ Everyone and everything superb. Lots of interesting information about area etc before and during walk. ”

“ Walk leaders excellent. Very interesting snippets of local history given en route. Walk paced just right. Scenery stunning ”



© C Hoey



New Visitor Leaflet

Reviewed, redesigned and reprinted ready for April 2020, our visitor leaflet features a beautiful new map including “20 Places Not to Miss” highlighted with photography and descriptions. The leaflet promotes the North Wessex Downs as a great place to nurture your health and well-being and the top-class walking country to be found here. Once normal distribution systems are re-established following the public health crisis, the new leaflet will encourage residents and visitors to explore more of the AONB and we are extremely grateful to the Greenham Trust for kindly supporting the project.

The Great West Way®

As an Ambassador member our involvement with and support for the Great West Way® continued through the last financial year. As a result, the North Wessex Downs AONB is achieving increased exposure via their communication channels through the travel trade industry, in this country and abroad.

The Great West Way® website was launched last year; by November 2019 it had had +70K users and over 195,000 page views. Closer analysis demonstrates that (by May 2020) the North Wessex Downs product page had received over 4,700 views and been added to personalised itineraries 556 times. Itinerary pages had been viewed over 1,000 times and other content pages featuring the North Wessex Downs (such as Top Ten Long Distance Walks) had been viewed over 4,000 times.

VisitWiltshire secured £94K in LEADER funding last year (2019) for content and product development across three LAG areas including the North Wessex Downs. As part of this work we were involved in filming at Barbury Castle and this will be included in a promotional film to be published later in 2020.



70th Anniversary of Protected Landscapes celebrated at County Show

The North Wessex Downs team (literally) flew the AONB flag at the Royal County of Berkshire Show over the weekend of 21st/22nd September 2019 - the 70th anniversary of parliament passing the pioneering legislation which paved the way for the creation of AONBs. This also coincided with the beginning of Landscapes for Life Week.

We shared a stand with the North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust and to mark the anniversary Richard Benyon (then MP for Newbury) and Kit Malthouse MP (Basingstoke and North Hampshire) joined us to toast and celebrate the protected status of the North Wessex Downs.

“Excellent event - very interesting talks and discussions and useful networking.”

We also took part in the wider celebrations on the day by contributing to the National Association for AONBs 'Hearts in the Landscape' activities. In a collaboration between AONBs across the country, the love of landscape was portrayed by creating heart-shapes in the natural environment - from making hearts with hands to hearts with tractors! These images were then promoted over social and mainstream media during the weekend. Our image - of young people overlooking the Pewsey Vale from the Pewsey Downs National Nature Reserve (above) - was included in the video footage of the occasion which featured Poet Laureate Simon Armitage's poem *Fugitives* which had been commissioned to mark the anniversary.

We asked people visiting our show stand to tell us what they loved about the North Wessex Downs by writing their thoughts in love hearts - nearly 100 people shared the love and you can see a few of the things they said here.

The Colchester Declaration

The 2019 Landscapes for Life conference agreed the Colchester Declaration. This commits AONBs to a greater focus on wildlife conservation, including collaborating to produce Nature and Species Recovery Plans across all AONBs in support of the Nature Recovery Networks proposed in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan.



(L-R) Kit Malthouse MP; Donald Sherlock (Chairman, North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust); Richard Benyon MP

The Future of our Finest Landscapes Discussed at North Wessex Downs Annual Forum

Well over 100 delegates attended our Annual Forum which was hosted by Mr Richard Benyon in the grand surroundings of the historic Englefield House in November. The event focussed on the recommendations of the Landscapes Review, their implications for the North Wessex Downs and publication of the new North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-24. It gave the wider community an opportunity to consider how they could contribute to the future of the North Wessex Downs in an era of great environmental challenge.

Speaking to the packed Long Gallery, Mr Benyon explained that it was the desire to protect the AONB that had led him into politics and that he wanted the North Wessex Downs to be as well-known as Dartmoor. Delegates also heard from Lord Cameron, a panel member for the Glover Review, who discussed the vision of the Review and spoke of the spiritual and physical enrichment people experience in the countryside.

Our Director, Henry Oliver, presented the new Management Plan and there followed a series of masterclasses on restoring wildflowers, tourism partnerships, neighbourhood plans and green spaces. Notes from these masterclasses can be found on our website.

We are extremely grateful to Richard Benyon and all the team at Englefield Estate for supporting the North Wessex Downs AONB as well as to all those who attended the Forum.

The Land of the White Horses

Stage 1 Bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund

Over the last year, the team has developed an extensive and ambitious Stage 1 Bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The Bid - themed around "The Land of the White Horses" - was submitted in February 2020 and, if successful, we will receive development stage funding of up to a possible £190,000 which could lead to delivery stage funding of up to £2.4M. This project will significantly raise the profile of the North Wessex Downs AONB, help to meet a number of our Management Plan objectives and extend the AONB Partnership's influence beyond our boundary.

The Bid incorporates extensive public participation in celebrating the archaeology, history, folklore and conservation value of the white horse hill figures and the landscapes they inhabit in and beyond the North Wessex Downs. In particular, we aim to link those local communities close to the white horses with urban communities surrounding the AONB so that children, their families and friends and hard to reach groups are encouraged to discover, explore and enjoy the landscape. Other project aims are to take steps to monitor and conserve threatened butterflies, make improvements to countryside access for people with restricted mobility and support new and existing tourism businesses in marketing the area.

During the preparation of the bid:

- Over 90 interested parties were consulted on the project elements of the bid; many were new contacts for the NWD AONB Unit.
- 690 members of the public responded to a questionnaire about the project.
- 236 people chose to be added to the e-newsletter mailing list.
- 15 Partners have signed up to the Land of the White Horses Partnership.
- The inaugural Land of the White Horses Partnership meeting has been held.

Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of Covid-19 the National Lottery Heritage Fund withdrew all previously-submitted bids during March 2020 and at the time of writing we wait to hear when we may be able to re-submit our bid and what changes we may have to make in order to meet new requirements.



Networking for Nature Recovery

In the context of the Landscapes Review, the Colchester Declaration, the DEFRA 25 Year Environment Plan and the Environment Bill before Parliament, we have begun to work with others to map opportunities for nature recovery in the North Wessex Downs. In February, joined by the Chief Executives of Natural England and the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, we participated in a workshop for South West AONBs to begin the process of mapping Nature Recovery Networks across and between protected landscapes in the region.

We have also worked with Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) and other landscape and biodiversity partners in Oxfordshire to map a Nature Recovery Network for the county, as part of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 process.

The North Wessex Downs and Chilterns join forces to Mend the Gap!

Early in 2020, together with the Chilterns AONB, we announced a new joint programme funded by Network Rail - 'Mend the Gap' - which will seek to restore natural beauty in the Thames Valley landscape that has been adversely impacted by electrification of the Great Western main line and address the impact on local communities and the visitor economy.

£750,000 is earmarked for tree planting and vegetation to help soften and distract from the impact of the steel gantries and other electrical equipment installed along a 12km stretch of line between the outskirts of Reading and Didcot. A further £3 million will be spent on projects and schemes which will enhance the AONB landscapes within the wider corridor on either side of the line. This funding was secured after intensive and extensive collaboration between the AONB teams and the local Railway Action Group.

Led by the Chilterns Conservation Board, North Wessex Downs AONB and the Railway Action Group, the programme will involve working with landowners, the local community, and other partners over the next three to five years to identify and deliver projects that will collectively enhance the affected areas.

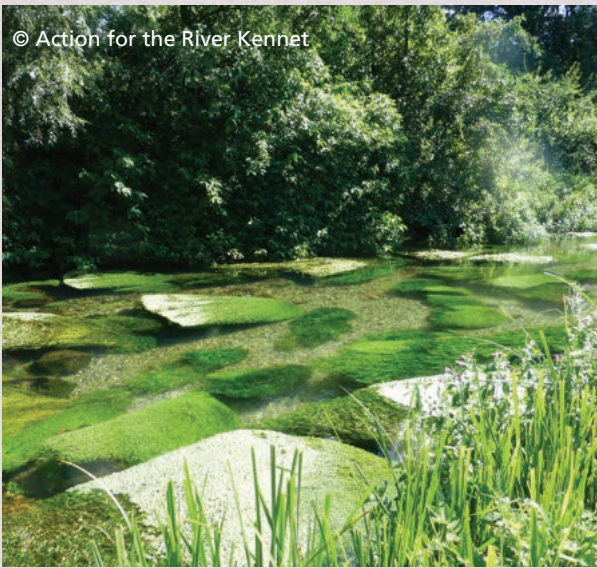
In late February 2020 Jo Watson was recruited as Programme Manager. Further announcements about the Mend the Gap programme will be made once arrangements for how the programme funds will be allocated have been finalised.



Facilitating farm conservation on a landscape scale

We supported two successful bids by Tim Clarke and Torz Brown, our farmer cluster development advisors, to DEFRA's Facilitation Fund for the Southern Streams and Ridgeway Farmer Groups. Together these groups include around 30 land holdings covering large areas in two parts of the AONB. Their members are helping to secure benefits for wildlife, landscapes and people on a landscape-scale. Among the groups' priorities are water quality, soil management, conservation along the National Trail, farmland birds, chalk grassland restoration/management and butterfly habitat. Both groups held events as part of the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust's Big Farmland Bird Count and are collaborating with the Pewsey Downs Farmer Group on a wildlife species ID app to enable members to log sightings easily in the field, gathering useful data to support their activities. In addition to these groups, we have supported moves to form a farmer-led group in the valley of the River Lambourn, a classic lowland chalk river which is designated both SAC and SSSI.





© Action for the River Kennet

Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) Grants

The SDF, which has been managed on our behalf by the North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust since July 2017, provides funding for projects that support the aims of the AONB Management Plan and bring environmental, social and economic benefits to the communities of the North Wessex Downs.

During 2019/2020 we helped five projects with grants totalling £7,257 which in turn attracted nearly £48,000 of cash and in-kind match-funding contributions, including over 100 volunteer days.

Projects we supported included:

- Tree and shrub planting around three existing historic beech clumps and to augment a species-poor, sparse hedge to provide habitat and create a 680-metre tree sparrow corridor as part of the Marlborough Downs Space for Nature programme.
- Support for Action for the River Kennet to run workshops in the Kennet catchment to train river keepers, fishery owners and their volunteers to trace sources of sediment pollution. This is a major issue for the Kennet and its tributaries and the overriding aim of the project is to raise awareness of and identify river and canal pollution.
- The purchase of a thermal imager for the Wiltshire Ornithological Society which will enable the team to record and, where possible to ring, farmland birds including skylarks and corn buntings. This will help farmers understand how birds use their land and inform their nature management practices. All records will be sent to the Biological Records Centre.

North Wessex Downs LEADER Programme

The 2019-20 year was another busy one for the North Wessex Downs LEADER Programme.

By June the Local Action Group (LAG) had committed all the remaining LEADER budget and successfully gained a small re-allocation of funds to ensure all the projects that had been approved could be fully supported.

The LAG has allocated almost £1.6 million to projects across the area with projects in Wiltshire, West Berkshire, Swindon Borough, South Oxfordshire, Vale of the White Horse, Basingstoke and Deane and the Test Valley. Forty-three projects have been running over the course of the Programme, all bar one are now complete and most of the grant funding has been paid out.

Projects supported during the year have been in tourism, dairy and arable farming, horse-racing, leisure, manufacturing and rural services. They include:

- **White Horse Inn, Compton Basset** - the refurbishment of an old skittle alley into a multi-functional space for the pub and community use.
- **Sherwood Forestry, (working across the North Wessex Downs)** - purchase of a new forwarder and felling head.
- **Sustrans** - improvements to the cycle path between Chiseldon and Marlborough.
- **Hampstead Norreys Village Hall** - upgrading windows and lighting to save energy costs as part of a much larger hall development project.
- **Universal Networks Limited, Hungerford** - purchase of manufacturing equipment.
- **Geoffrey Deacon Training, Compton** - a hayloft conversion to a client reception area and office space.

With the outbreak of Covid-19 many of the businesses we have supported are now in survival mode. Wiltshire Council and the Rural Payments Agency have quickly adapted their processes to ensure that project claims continue to be paid as quickly as possible, not least to help cash-flows at this very difficult time. We very much hope all will be able to “bounce back” once the restrictions are lifted and things return to some sort of normality.



Cycle Path Improvement



Making Roundway Hill More Beautiful

Roundway Hill has been selected as a fast-track project to benefit from the Visual Impact Provision (VIP). We are enthusiastically supporting this scheme, have provided National Grid with details of local stakeholders and are exploring potential landscape and nature conservation benefits that could be secured through it.

The VIP - whereby National Grid has agreed with Ofgem provision of £500m - is intended for mitigating the visual impact of its overhead line electricity distribution infrastructure where it runs through AONBs and National Parks. Under the principles of VIP, schemes should result in the greatest landscape enhancement and the greatest opportunities both to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the protected landscapes.

Following delays to one of the original schemes selected, the national VIP Stakeholder Advisory Group asked National Grid to identify an alternative project that could be fast-tracked. In April, National Grid approached us about the potential to bury the line that enters the North Wessex Downs AONB at its westernmost tip near Rowde and runs across the edge of Roundway Hill down to the Kennet and Avon Canal at Horton Bridge: around 4km in total.

This would dramatically enhance the appearance of this landscape and the setting of a number of historic, cultural, wildlife and recreational sites. The route runs across part of the site of the Battle of Roundway Down in 1643 (a Registered Battlefield), and close to Roundway Down and Covert Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Devizes Millennium White Horse. A local Stakeholder Advisory Group was established in the summer.

Dark Skies

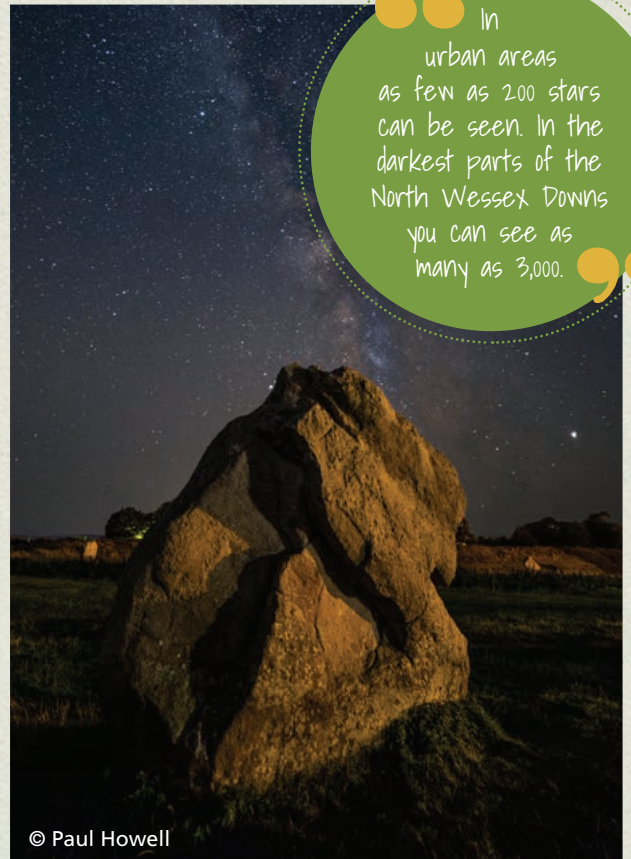
Here in the North Wessex Downs, dark skies add to the beauty and tranquillity of the landscape and enhance a sense of remoteness. We have some areas that are as dark as any in the country and intend to protect and celebrate our dark skies, working to reduce current light pollution and prevent its escalation.

To inspire people, we have created new pages on our website which focus on the night sky and the importance of darkness for people, wildlife and landscape beauty. There you can find straightforward information on stargazing, tips to help reduce light pollution and links to further sources of information.

In February 2020, nine people including planners, landscape specialists, ecologists and policy officers, representing six local authorities joined us to discuss the issue of light pollution and consider how we might support their work and protect the dark skies we have. As a result we plan to produce a Good Lighting Guide, primarily for use by developers, town and parish councils, and neighbourhood planning groups, to help them minimise light pollution in their area.

We have also been working closely with Marlborough Town Council on plans for an exciting science and arts Dark Skies Festival originally scheduled for October 2020. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of Covid-19 this has had to be postponed. Keep an eye out for further news on this.

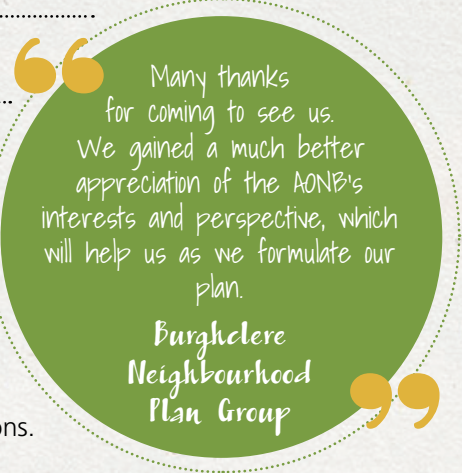
In urban areas as few as 200 stars can be seen. In the darkest parts of the North Wessex Downs you can see as many as 3,000.



Development News

As always, the landscape is under constant pressure and, alongside us, communities are having to fight to protect the AONB, the character of its settlements and the often fragile and endangered flora and fauna from unsightly, damaging or unsuitable development.

During 2019-2020 we received nearly 1,100 requests for planning application consultations. We responded to nearly 400 of these and, of the nine planning policy consultation requests we received we were able to respond to seven. Of the 42 pre-application consultations we received we commented on 26. We dealt with 15 Neighbourhood Plans (including pre-submission meetings and advice) and commented on Regulation 16 consultations.



Our Achievements

- The proposed Wheelabrator Waste to Energy Facility at Harewood, Andover was withdrawn after significant opposition from local residents and the AONB. The site lay outside the AONB boundary but the sheer mass of the main building and 100m-high chimneys would have been visible from many key viewpoints within it. This would have had a significant effect on the setting of the AONB and the landscape character within the protected area.
- An application for two drive-through restaurant/cafés in Chiseldon were refused after strong local and AONB opposition. The application failed to recognise the role or importance of the AONB and would have urbanised the edge of a rural village.
- A second application for a silage pad and waste lagoon near All Cannings was refused by Wiltshire Council due to the harm caused to the AONB.
- We assisted a number of groups and parishes who were developing Neighbourhood Plans, in a year which saw the greatest increase in these plans being made to local authorities.
- We also updated our Setting Position Statement which can be found on our website.
- A reserved matters application was approved for 100 dwellings on the edge of Hungerford in Berkshire. We had opposed any development of this greenfield site and now had serious concerns over poor materials. We advised the local planning authority that in another AONB the same developer altered materials when pressed. Unfortunately, both officer and committee members felt this was not necessary and approved materials that will appear detached from Hungerford.
- We were unable to convince the local authority to get a farm shop extension on the edge of Chiseldon revised. The proposed extension was approved and will double the size of the existing unit which will appear as two buildings. The existing building had the potential to be remodelled and a significantly smaller extension added to achieve the additional space required by the applicant. The AONB was supportive of the business but considered the scale and design to be inappropriate.
- A number of Local Plan reviews have fallen short on landscape policies and allocated housing within the AONB without first considering a sensitivity study. We have issued advice and encouraged the local authorities to include a lighting policy and that the AONB be considered within design and highway policies. None are yet at examination stage.

At National Level

- The Glover Review called for greater emphasis on designated landscapes and the importance of planning appropriately to avoid damaging and unsightly development.
- The National Planning Policy Guidance was revised which gives greater clarity on landscape setting and the weight that should be given to it.

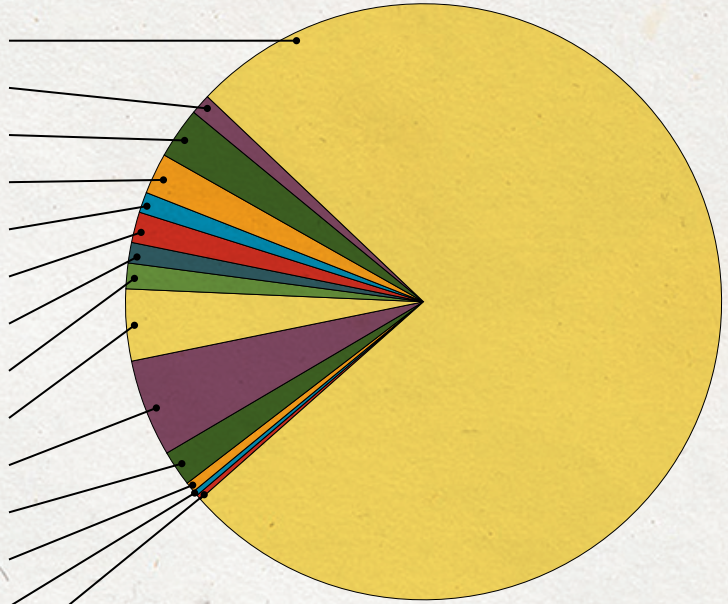
Disappointments

- An application for a new winery building including a dwelling was approved in an isolated location south of Boxford in Berkshire. The local authority concluded that the benefits to the rural economy outweighed the harm to the AONB including the detriment to dark skies as a result of light spill from large openings.



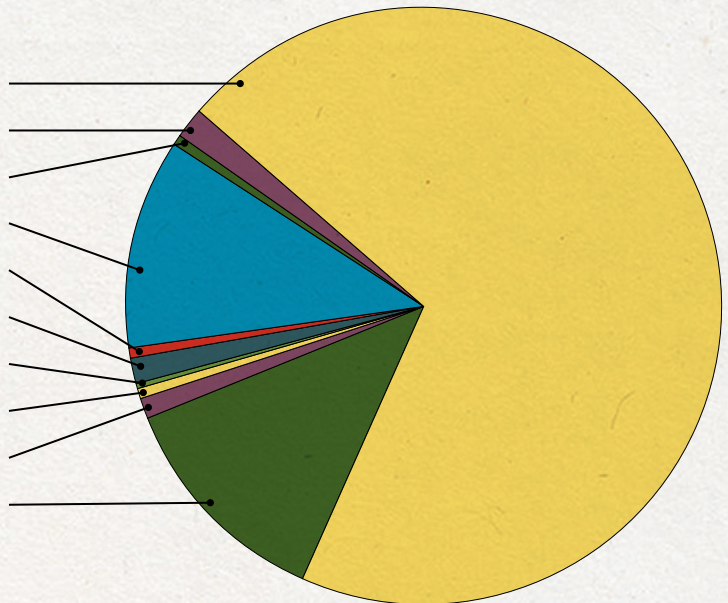
Income 2019-2020

DEFRA	248,684
Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council	3,939
Hampshire County Council	8,854
Oxfordshire County Council	7,299
South Oxfordshire District Council.....	3,939
Swindon Borough Council	5,121
Test Valley Borough Council	3,939
Vale of White Horse District Council.....	3,939
West Berkshire District Council.....	13,210
Wiltshire Council.....	16,322
AONB income generation	6,707
AONB project funds	2,090
Greenham Trust Grant	1,010
DEFRA visit reimbursement	114
Total Income	325,167



Expenditure 2019-2020

Salaries	229,072
Travel & subsistence	5,649
Staff development	1,218
Accommodation	37,401
IT	2,047
Partnership & national working	4,410
Events & publicity.....	705
Other general office costs	1,678
Forum.....	3,307
Projects.....	39,680
Total Expenditure.....	325,167



Adding Value

Local Authority Contributions

During 2019 - 2020 every £1 contributed by the Local Authority partners delivered £4.82 in benefits to the AONB.

LA Contribution	Benefit brought into AONB
£66,562	£320,788



Sustainable Development Fund

Every £1 in grant awarded by the SDF attracted matching contributions worth £6.52 towards projects in the AONB.

SDF grants	Community contribution
£7,357	£47,932

The £3.75 million **Mend the Gap rail corridor mitigation and enhancement fund** was established jointly with the Chilterns Conservation Board. Over the next five years this fund will benefit the landscape in both the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs AONBs.

Produced on behalf of the Council of Partners



Cover Image - Walkers on Aston Upthorpe Downs, to the north of Lowbury Hill, during the inaugural event of the 2019 North Wessex Downs Walking Festival. The walk was led by Pipsticks Walks.
© Philippa Sanders



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