

South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

AONB Partnership Committee Meeting

to be held at

10am on Friday 6th December 2019

at

Holbeton Village Hall

Agenda & Papers



South Devon AONB Staff Unit, Follaton House, Totnes, TQ9 5NE
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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 Rosemary Rowe 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	Kate Tobin
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 Chairman)
Independent	John Green (Chairman)

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	Samantha Dennis

AONB Unit staff attending

AONB Manager	Roger English
AONB Office Manager	Vanessa Gray
AONB Projects Officer	Adam Davison

Also in attendance

Chief Executive South Hams District Council	Sophie Hosking
Director of Place and Enterprise SHDC	Chris Brook
Head of Place-making SHDC	Tom Jones
Forestry Commission	James Mason

Agenda

Item 1 (5 mins)	Introductions & apologies for absence	
Item 2	Declarations of Interests	
Item 3 (5 mins)	Minutes of the last Partnership Committee meeting (14 th June 2019) for approval & any matters arising	Page 4
Item 4 (15 mins) (20 mins)	AONB Partnership matters 4a) Glover Review proposals and the South Devon AONB 4b) General Update from South Hams District Council, including Partnerships Review	Page 18 Verbal
Item 5 (10 mins) (20 mins) (15 mins)	AONB Management 5a) Ash Die Back in Devon – implications for land management 5b) Tree Planting and the South Devon AONB 5c) Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Crisis – South Devon AONB action and opportunities	Page 24 Page 29 Page 31
Item 6 (10 mins) (5 mins) (5 mins)	Planning and Development matters 6a) South Devon AONB Planning protocol 6b) Plymouth & SW Devon Joint Local Plan – Supplementary Planning Document and consultation 6c) Current and recent key applications	Page 33 Page 42 Page 44
Item 7 (10 mins)	AONB Partnership matters (continued) 7a) Round-table partner updates	Verbal
Item 8	For information 8a) Planning update covering the last six months	Separate report to follow

Agenda timings are provided as a guide

Agenda Item 3

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

HELD AT CHILLINGTON VILLAGE HALL
ON FRIDAY 14th June 2019

1. INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Those present were:

Cllr Jonathan Hawkins	JH	Devon County Council
Cllr Rosemary Rowe	RR	South Hams District Council
Graham Swiss	GS	South Hams District Council
Cllr Anne Brooks	AB	Torbay Council
Tracy Brooks	TB	Torbay Council
Eamon Crowe	EC	Natural England
John Green (Chairman)	JG	Independent
Geoffrey Osborn	GO	Representative: amenity groups
Kate Ryder	KR	Representative: business community
Lynne Maurer	LM	Representative: parishes
Samantha Dennis	SD	Representative: tourism community
Rob Price	RP	Environment Agency
Richard Snow	RS	National Trust
Roger English	RE	AONB Manager
Adam Davison	AD	AONB Project Officer
Vanessa Gray	VG	AONB Office Manager

Also attending:

Bill Horner	BH	Devon County Council
Dr Ken Neal	KN	National Trust
Therese Kearns	TK	CITIZAN

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr Roger Croad	Devon County Council
Cllr Bernard Taylor	South Hams District Council
Peter Sandover	Representative: community/voluntary groups
Peter Chamberlain	Bill Horner attending - Devon County Council

The following changes to AONB Partnership Committee membership are highlighted:

- Cllrs Rosemary Rowe and Bernard Taylor, appointed members South Hams District Council
- Graham Swiss, link officer South Hams District Council
- Cllr Anne Brooks, appointed member Torbay Council
- John Green, South Devon AONB Partnership Chairman

Observers

Robert Steer	Independent
Carole Box	Neighbourhood planning
Robert Brooke	Chairman of the Dartmouth and Kingswear Society
Cllr Val Mercer	Slapton Parish Council
Cllr Colin Staines	Slapton Parish Council

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

2.1 No interests were declared

3. MINUTES OF THE 15th MARCH 2019 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING FOR APPROVAL & ANY MATTERS ARISING

3.1 The AONB Chairman proposed an update to the draft minutes, 5A - Plymouth Sound National Marine Park proposal. The minutes are to be updated to reflect Partnership's discussion of the importance of mitigating pressures brought by increased visitor numbers.

3.2 Previous actions

i. Action 1 (RS) – *Provide a short presentation on the National Trust Land Outdoors and Nature project at the June Partnership Committee Meeting.*

On this meeting's agenda.

ii. Action 2 (RE) – *Contact Kaja Curry to arrange a dedicated workshop on the National Marine Park proposal.*

Although unable to offer this in May, the Natural Infrastructure team at Plymouth City Council are still keen to provide a dedicated workshop for Partnership. The AONB Manager is in discussions with Kaja and a newly recruited officer to arrange a combined workshop for both South Devon AONB Partnership Committee members and South Devon Estuaries Partnership members.

Carry forward **Action 1 (RE)**

iii. Action 3 (Tom Jones) – *Discover if there is money available in the locality budget for Neighbourhood Planning Groups to pay for landscape assessments.*

Tom was not present at the meeting. Graham Swiss informed Members that Neighbourhood Planning groups can apply for funds from a dedicated Neighbourhood Planning grant. In principle, it would also be possible to have access to District or County locality funds although Graham is not aware of any applications to date. The AONB Manager added that Neighbourhood Planning groups should be advised they have the option to engage external services; for example Kingswear Neighbourhood Planning group have employed the services of a planning advisor, Liz Beth, to produce a focussed landscape character assessment (townscape and rural area).

iv. Action 4 (All) – *Contact the AONB Manager with any suggestions for inclusion in the 2019/20 Delivery Plan*

Date now passed.

v. Action 5 (AD) – *Contact the Amenity groups representative, Geoffrey Osborn, and form a small working group to assist with identifying potentially qualifying sites for the undergrounding project.*

The AONB Project Officer and Geoffrey Osborn are in contact. Currently at the scoping stage and contacting local landowners. A proposed small working group will be involved once willing landowners are on board, with initial applications to follow.

4A LANDSCAPE SCALE NATURE CONSERVATION

4a.1 At the March Partnership meeting, Richard Snow offered to provide an update on the Land, Outdoors and Nature programme. A brief background and purpose is contained in item 4a of the agenda papers.

4a.2 Dr Ken Neal and Richard Snow provided a presentation of the Salcombe Project. Of particular note:

i. Statistics

a. 56% of native British species have declined over the last fifty years.

b. More than 97% of the UK's wildflower meadows have been lost since the Second World War.

- c. The cuckoo has declined by 80% in Devon and the grey partridge is now extinct in Cornwall.
- d. Mammal populations, such as the hedgehog and water vole, declined up to 66% over the past twenty years.
- ii. National Trust Strategy
 - a. Ten year strategy
Launched in 2015 called 'Playing our Part'. The Salcombe project is the first in South Devon of a multi phased project.
 - b. Key Work Areas
Looking after what we have got / Experiences to move, teach and inspire / Looking after the places where we live / Restoring a healthy beautiful natural environment.
 - c. Key Performance Indicators
25,000 Ha (of which 5,000 Ha in the South West) of new or restored Priority Habitat /All SSSI and Priority Habitat in good condition /All farmland at High Nature Status /No minimum standards failures.
- iii. The Salcombe Project
 - a. Management Plan covers the area from Salcombe to Hope Cove:
 - Started in 2012, this documents the current condition of each habitat and plans improvements where needed.
 - Includes a plan for heritage features and visitor experience.
 - Focus on improving what is already there. Examples:
 - Silver-studded blue
This butterfly population was declining. Some small changes, such as clearing gorse, has already shown dividends (300% increase in six years).
 - Small-flowered catchfly
Endangered - plant now only exists in around 40 fields in the UK. Following the creation of fallow ploughed areas, hundreds of this annual plant appeared in one plot.
 - Cirl bunting
Requires more wide-ranging management. Following changes in farm-scale management, high numbers were observed last winter.
 - b. Aims
 - Manage, restore or create 350 Ha of Priority Habitat.
 - Manage 152 Ha of arable for High Nature Status.
 - Focussing on lower intensity wildlife friendly farming.
- iv. In the Q&A that followed, it was confirmed that
 - a. Although the 'Playing our Part' strategy is not based specifically on climate change, there will be benefits such as lowered emissions coming from the focus on low intensity farming.
 - b. Delivery of actions from the Salcombe Project will be tenant led.
 - c. All National Trust estates will eventually be involved, in South Devon this will include Coleton Fishacre and Greenway.
 - d. Thistle control will be done mainly by pulling it up. Where there are plants nearby such as the small-flowered catchfly, some targeted spot spraying will be done to minimise the risk of trampling.
Action 2 (KN): To contact Plantlife to see what thistle specific glyphosate free herbicide they would recommend.

4a.3 Biodiversity 2020

- i. There is no single uniform baseline for South Devon AONB, however a range of initiatives such as Buglife's Beelines project, Kingswear corridors and connections project, Wild Wembury corridors and connections project and the Avon Valley facilitation project have at some stage collected baseline material. The Nature Recovery Network paper from Defra, currently out for consultation, is a way of bringing all the material together into a common vision to work towards. Constantly changing baselines are an issue however and all of the current work will not be enough to answer the Biodiversity emergency. Galvanising more action on the ground is of great importance.
- ii. Eamon Crowe highlighted the increasing pressures on Farmers in the uncertain economic climate that in turn potentially increases the risk to wildlife due to more intensive farming practises. It is important that partners continue with their projects and for new schemes to be swiftly put in place. The AONB Manager confirmed this is a priority in the AONB Management plan and asked Partnership Members ask the organisations they represent to consider how they can develop, deliver or advocate landscape scale nature recovery work. The National Association for AONBs Landscapes for Life Conference, taking place in July in Colchester, will demonstrate a commitment to this area of work by issuing a Colchester declaration. The AONB Manager will articulate some of Members represented organisations priorities and offers as part of the declaration

Action 3 (all): Send priorities and offers to the AONB Manager by 5th July.

4B SOUTH DEVON'S HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT – OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Bill Horner, Historic Environment Manager for Devon County Council provided a presentation on DCC's South Devon historic environment projects and updated Members on the Devon County historic environment record, the baseline dataset for heritage across the county and how accessibility to that changes.

4b.1 TIDE project, Atlantic Network for developing historical maritime tourism. Of particular note:

- i. European funded project that started last month, due to end 2021.
- ii. Aim is to enhance maritime heritage tourism by enhancing the way maritime heritage is presented within existing visitor attractions.
- iii. Themes are Spanish Armada; Napoleonic wars; U-boat warfare
- iv. As well as notable historic maritime figures, Devon has museums displaying local archaeology such as Teignmouth museum that has a collection of late 16c artefacts. Work with museums will link what is displayed in the museum to what remains underwater.
- v. Local sites linked to maritime heritage include
 - a. Berry Head – Napoleonic fortification
 - b. Dartmouth Castle
- vi. Offshore archaeology
 - a. With the recent centenary of the first world war, work has been done by the National Maritime Archaeology Group to look at locations of torpedoed wrecks off the British coast
- vii. Bill Horner will be speaking to potential partners about the project.

4b.2 Aerial Investigation and Mapping Programme

- i. Funded by Historic England; being undertaken by AC archaeology, commercial archaeologists.
- ii. All available aerial photographic evidence is being looked at to identify and map sites of archaeological and historic interest. Source data includes:
 - a. RAF photographs – whole country was photographed at the end of the second world war
 - b. Archaeological photographs taken during dry summers

- c. Environment Agency LIDAR data
- iii. Various additional data sources including detectorists reporting finds and Google Earth 2018 images.
- iv. Already covered the North, East and South Devon coasts as well as the Exe Valley.
- v. Current project is South Devon Coast to Dartmoor project (Moor to Shore).
- vi. Three phase programme:
 - a. Phase 1 (complete): Dart
 - b. Phase 2 (underway): Plymouth eastwards to Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary
 - c. Phase 3: Hope to complete rest of South Devon, subject to funding.
- vii. HER information is available to view online:
<http://map.devon.gov.uk/dccviewer/?bm=OSGreyscale&layers=Historic%20Environment;0;1&activeTab=Historic%20Environment&extent=210064;27188;338387;150088>

4b.3 Heritage at Risk

There is an opportunity to work with Historic England on heritage at risk in the South Devon AONB. Historic England maintain a list of scheduled monuments and listed buildings that have been designated to be at risk. The 'most at risk' sites become a priority for work and funding can be made available. Currently North Devon AONB have a project to research & repair iron age forts on the North Devon AONB coast.

Therese Kearns, Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network (CITiZAN), provided a presentation on the South Devon Rivers Discovery Programme.

4b.4 First phase took place 2015-18. New funding has facilitated a second phase taking place 2019-21.

- i. Focus on six discovery areas of which South Devon Rivers is one.
- ii. Two CITiZAN staff members based in Portsmouth.
- iii. Area covers Seaton to Wembury, with focus on Rivers Exe, Teign and Dart.
- iv. CITiZAN are in the initial set-up phase of this project and are interested in hearing from potential partners to be part of a Local Advisory Network. A number are already in place including South Devon AONB.
- v. Losing inter-tidal and coastal heritage due to events associated with climate change. This project will preserve heritage by recording assets, including using 3D technology.
- vi. The project is focussed on themes:
 - a. Ships, boats barges
 - b. Coastal industries and lives
 - c. Coastal defences
 - d. Lost landscapes
 - e. Lost settlements
 - f. Coastal change
 - g. Sea-level change
 - h. Climate change
- vii. Training will be given to existing and new community groups to record and monitor using a standardised format.
- viii. There is an outreach programme of guided walks, community events and talks.
- ix. A CITiZAN app is available for download to smartphones. The app is used to locate features accurately using the interactive map, record and also photograph features. Captured data will feed into the Historic Environment Record.

- x. This year in South Devon two themes will be looked at
 - a. Coastal industries and lives
 - looking at South Devon lime kilns (Kingswear; Galmpton; Galmpton Creek)
 - call for volunteers will take place week commencing 17 June
 - first two day training session will start on 20 July
 - b. Ships, Boats and Barges
 - Lost Ships of the West Country, published 1988, will be taken as a baseline
 - Focus on the river Dart, Old Mill Creek
- xi. In 2020 CITiZAN will
 - a. work with partners to develop a series of 'low tide trails'.
 - b. share their training package with selected partners to rapidly increasing the number of volunteers trained.

4C OTHER AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN DELIVERY

The AONB Project Officer introduced the working delivery plan contained in the Papers. Of particular note:

- i. The working delivery plan builds on the delivery plan submitted to Defra last March (as part of the Management Plan).
- ii. The working plan shows South Devon AONB involvement as follows
 - Leading on 42 actions
 - Working with partners on 29 local projects and programmes
 - Advocating key partner actions on 33 projects
 - Contributing to local forums and groups on 23 projects
 - Undertaking core activities on 23 projects
- iii. The AONB Project Officer highlighted some of the 2019-2020 priority areas of work:
 - a. Biodiversity theme – Devon Special Species project
 - To focus on endangered species such as the six banded nomad bee. This species relies on the long horned mining bee. There are only tiny populations of this species, the rarest in the UK.
 - b. Farming and Land Management theme
 - Continuing with Countryside Stewardship Facilitation in the Avon Valley
 - Farmers sounding board meetings
Engaging local farmers on current issues
 - c. Planning and sustainable development theme
 - Update Planning Guidance document
 - d. Coast and marine theme
 - Continuing Pacific Oyster project
 - ECO moorings project – investigate ECO moorings that may protect seagrass

The AONB Project Officer requested Partnership Committee members highlight projects that could form part of the 2020-2021 delivery plan.

5A CURRENT AND RECENT KEY APPLICATIONS

- 5a.1 The AONB Manager referred Members to the addendum to the papers outlining a number of applications and appeal cases that highlight strategic and development management matters of particular note.

- i. Applications that have been on the list for a while; this is largely due to updated information becoming available, requests for information or changes of position.
 - ii. Applications relating to Local Plan allocated sites, sites that have come forward on locations that are not on the allocated sites, sites within the AONB, sites within the AONB setting that are significantly large.
 - iii. A village housing initiative scheme at St Annes Chapel that has scale and appropriateness to satisfy local housing need.
 - iv. Large, complex applications such as Noss on Dart at Kingswear with a number of reserved matters and condition discharge applications involving complex material and a lot of documentation.
 - i. A Marine Management Organisation (MMO) application for a marine license for a proposed seaweed farm in Start Bay. AONB involvement is due to the scale, significant seascape and therefore landscape impacts.
- 5a.2 The AONB Manager also informed Members Defra had requested AONBs submit planning cases that related to major developments where the case for local housing need was used as the justification for exceptional circumstances in the public interest. The Defra request followed AONB submissions to the Glover review into national protected landscapes that highlighted the challenges posed with conserving and enhancing natural beauty under these circumstances.
- i. Twenty-eight submissions were made via the National Association of AONBs.
 - ii. Fifteen AONBs reported major developments progressed using local need as a trigger for special circumstances.
 - iii. Thirteen AONBs reported no major developments.
 - iv. The AONB Manager noted that several of the thirteen AONBs reporting no major developments have Planning Officers in place.
 - v. The South Devon AONB Partnership submission highlighted twenty-seven examples, the highest of the 15 AONBs that submitted examples based upon number of applications not number of dwellings.
 - vi. Defra have passed the submissions to the Glover Review panel who are due to report late summer/early autumn this year. Julian Glover will be speaking at this years Landscapes for Life Conference.

5B. PLYMOUTH AND SW DEVON JOINT LOCAL PLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT & AONB PLANNING GUIDANCE

The AONB Manager went through the update contained in the papers. The following was highlighted:

- 5b.1 The Joint Local Plan for Plymouth and South West Devon (JLP) was formally adopted on 27th March 2019.
- South Hams District Council has a five year housing supply and a set of policies to support this.
 - Position has strengthened, can be robust on developments that do not fit the criteria.
 - AONB co-authored JLP DEV25 policy relating to South Devon AONB, Tamar Valley AONB and the setting of Dartmoor National Park. The first part of the policy has principles of considering development proposals from a local planning authority perspective. The second part has more detailed criteria policy.
- 5b.2 The JLP references an important change in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July last year that highlights the need to enhance (as well as conserve) natural beauty, in line with the section 85 duty of regard that exists in the Countryside Rights of Way Act.

- The Supplementary Planning Document will provide a great deal of guidance to support key policies within the JLP. The AONB Manager is working with planning colleagues to draft text for the JLP board ready for a six week consultation in November. Planned adoption date is March 2020.
- In the interim, until March 2020, the AONB Manager is providing verbal advice on this policy.
- JLP DEV25 8ix was highlighted as being of particular importance. As well as specifying the need to avoid or mitigate, this also includes compensating as a last resort.

5b.3 Torbay Council will soon commence the five year review of their Local Plan. A meeting with Torbay colleagues, elected members and the AONB Manager will take place to define AONB involvement in that process.

5b.4 Design Guidance

- It is generally accepted that a Design Guide would be helpful for the South Devon AONB area.
- It is now less likely that a Design Guide will be produced via the JLP process will take place, instead the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee and staff team could lead or steer on this.
- The AONB Manager asked Members for their views on what priority could be given to this, given the existing range of pressures on the AONB team
 - Issues on the Dart Estuary were highlighted, in particular light pollution from designs that have all or largely glass elevations to take in views. It was asked whether the AONB should work with marine navigation organisations on this; the AONB Manager confirmed that the South Devon Estuaries Partnership is the forum for this.
 - It was raised that the AONB are not a statutory consultee. The AONB Manager confirmed this and informed Members that the National Association for AONBs have advocated for AONBs to become statutory consultees.

5b.5 The AONB Manager requested that Members comment as issues arise or when applications are live, with no need to wait for the next Partnership Committee Meeting.

5C. SOUTH DEVON AONB PLANNING PROTOCOL

The AONB Manager referred Members to the existing AONB Planning Protocol, adopted in February 2011, sent as an annex to the Papers.

5c.1 The AONB Manager will set-up a small working group, Geoffrey Osborn has offered to be part of this. The first meeting is expected to take place in six weeks time.

5c.2 The Protocol is not specifically for South Hams District Council as it must work across all planning authorities for South Devon AONB. The opportunity for an appendix to pick up on South Hams specific items will be looked into as part of this review.

Action 4 (all): Partnership Committee Members are asked to contact the AONB Manager within two weeks if they wish to be part of the small working group.

5c.3 In the discussion that followed:

- i. Concern was raised over the unsustainable number of applications coming to the AONB unit for comment. The AONB Manager said an updated Planning Guidance document would be a key tool to help narrow the list of applications sent to AONB.
- ii. Geoffrey Osborn added Neighbourhood Plan policies should also be involved.
- iii. Jonathan Hawkins raised the issue of second homes and holiday homes and the added pressure on development due to this. It was pointed out that a few adopted Neighbourhood Plans have second home clauses but they are yet to be tested.

Action 5 (JH): Draft a template letter to send to the AONB Chairman that could be used to lobby Government on the second home issue.

6. PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

CO-OPTION OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE FOR AONB FARMING COMMUNITY

- 6.1 The Chairman introduced this additional agenda item, added so Members can decide on the co-option of a Partnership Community Representative for the Farming and Land Owning community.
- 6.2 At the Meeting on 15th March 2019, an in principle decision by Partnership was taken on the co-option of Geoff Sayers as Partnership Community Representative for the Farming and Land Owning Community. Geoff is a good advocate for farming in South Devon however he has many demands on his time will struggle to find time for this role.
- 6.3 Since the 15th March 2019 Partnership meeting, positive conversations have taken place with Robert Steer who is willing to take on the role.
- 6.4 Robert addressed Partnership Committee Members, outlining his background and the knowledge he would be able to bring to the role.
- 6.5 Interests declared prior to voting:
 - Rosemary Rowe stepped out for the discussion and vote.
 - Jonathan Hawkins abstained from the vote.
 - Having been a South Hams District Councillor with Robert Steer, the Chairman also stepped out after the discussion and did not vote.
- 6.6 Remaining Partnership Committee Members voted unanimously to co-opt Robert Steer for the rest of the three year term up to the next Community election of Representatives.
- 6.7 The AONB Manager welcomed Robert to the Partnership Committee.

6A. ROUND TABLE PARTNER UPDATES

6a.1 Rob Price

- i. A reminder to call the EA incident line on 0800 80 70 60 with information on an ongoing pollution incident. Reports can be made anonymously.
- ii. The five year River Basin Management Plan will be out for consultation in the summer.
- iii. Project work updates
 - a. Wembury Bay
Working with Wembury Beach business group to further investigate pollution incidents, including CCTV. Domestic sewage was found to be the cause; further investigation involved putting a sonde into the water body to monitor 24/7. A missed connection was the root cause.
 - b. Gara Catchment
Working with Westcountry Rivers Trust, Natural England and the Field Studies Centre to improve water quality on Slapton Ley. Twenty farmers attended a workshop in Blackawton, with five expressing interest in a grant for interventions to improve the quality of the water. This is a two year project through the South Devon Catchments Partnership joint hosted by South Devon AONB.
 - c. There will be a project looking at mitigation on the Dart Estuary and how to offset through environmental enhancement; salt marsh is one of the areas indicated to be

looked at. Will work closely with Dart Harbour and Navigation Authority, Dart Estuary Forum and the AONB Estuaries Officer.

- iv. The EA have confirmed they would like West Country Rivers Trust and South Devon AONB to continue hosting the South Devon Catchments Partnership. Next meeting will take place in July.
- v. Rob Price highlighted a recent article reporting that we ingest around 5g of plastic weekly (roughly a credit card).

6a.2 Eamon Crowe

Currently within the Countryside Stewardship application window.

- i. There are twenty-six higher tier applications across Devon and Cornwall.
- ii. Two significant higher tier applications relating to South Devon.
- iii. Six higher tier applications moved to mid tier.
- iv. Numerous mid tier applications reflecting that a wide range of options are obtainable at mid tier level without having to go to higher tier, in line with Defras expectations.
- v. Numerous mid tier applications relate to water catchment improvements.
- vi. Sign off of HLS extensions exercise taking place in July with around two hundred expiring. Extensions will be for one year due to Brexit uncertainty.

6a.3 Graham Swiss

- i. Supplementary Planning Document and the Planning Protocol are the two key issues.
- ii. A significant number of parishes within South Hams are producing a Neighbourhood Plan. Neighbourhood Plans work alongside the JLP, adding local detail to this strategic document. Where issues such as light pollution are of concern to the local parish, there is scope through Neighbourhood Plan work to introduce planning policies around that. Neighbourhood Plans planning policies carry statutory weight when dealing with applications.

6a.4 Rosemary Rowe

- i. Rosemary introduced herself and briefly updated Members on her roles and background.
- ii. Most Councils have now passed recommendations and resolutions on Climate Change Emergency. South Hams District Council is working on an action plan to become carbon neutral by 2050.

6a.5 Jonathan Hawkins

- i. A number of Parish Councils have also declared a Climate Change Emergency, including Dittisham, Blackawton and Kingswear. These parishes are looking at working together to see how to achieve the same things in an environmentally friendly way. Dittisham Parish Council would like to speak at a South Devon AONB Partnership Committee meeting to discuss how small Parishes can help on environmental issues.

Action 6 (RE): Invite Dittisham PC to speak at a future Partnership Committee Meeting.

6a.6 Lynne Maurer

- i. Contacting Parishes to introduce herself and her role on Partnership. Lynne is approaching District Councillors as another method of ensuring an introduction at the Parish meetings they attend. The Chairman informed Lynne he has met with Holbeton Parish Council to introduce himself and is due to meet with Bigbury Parish Council next.

Action 7 (RE): Provide a contact list of parishes partially or wholly within South Devon AONB.

- ii. Abandoned vehicles on unadopted land is an issue. Currently discussing this with the AONB Manager.

6a.7 Samantha Dennis

- i. Meeting hotels located within the AONB. All are keen to promote the special qualities and natural beauty of the area to a wider audience such as Germany and the Netherlands. This ties in with initiatives from Visit England such as projects with South West Coast Path, Englands Coast etc. Sam will be working together with hotels including Burgh Island and Dart Marina.

6a.8 Bill Horner

- i. In response to the latest report from the UN panel on climate change, and the target to be carbon neutral by 2050, a Devon Climate Emergency Response Group has been created. This is a consortium of over twenty Chief Executives and Directors of Local Authorities and other organisations in Devon. On 22nd May 2019 the members of the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group endorsed the underlying principles of the Devon Climate Declaration
 - Willingness to lobby for policy change and resources at a national and regional level.
 - Review organisation carbon reduction plans.
 - Produce and implement a Devon wide carbon plan.

Action 8 (all): Circulate the link to the Devon Climate Declaration to encourage organisations to sign-up <https://www.devon.gov.uk/energyandclimatechange/devon-climate-emergency/devon-climate-declaration>

post meeting note, signatories as at 3rd July 2019 are

- Devon County Council (12th June)
 - Ivybridge Town Council (24th June)
 - Teignmouth District Council (25th June)
 - Mid Devon District Council (26th June)
- ii. Since April 2018, Devon County Council Historic Environment Services has been providing historic environment record and archaeological planning advice to Torbay Council. Since May 2019, Torbay historic environment data has been available online (see 4b.2 vii for link).

6a.9 Tracy Brooks

- i. Brixham Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan passed referendum and will now go before Torbay Council in June.
- ii. There may be issues arising from the desire to be carbon neutral due the need for renewable energy sources such as wind and solar farms.

6a.10 Anne Brooks

- i. Anne introduced herself and briefly updated Members on her roles and background.
- ii. Torbay Council formed a motion on plastics around a year ago (<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=662>). This has now gone as far as it can within the authority. The next meeting has an agenda item on climate change.

post meeting note <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2795>

6a.11 Geoffrey Osborn

- i. All three Neighbourhood Plans in the Torbay District received combined approval in May's referendum of 30,011 votes, representing 89% of votes cast on a turnout of 33%.
- ii. Geoffrey and a number of representatives of Amenity Groups recently had a useful meeting with the AONB Partnership Chairman to explore how Amenity Groups can strengthen ties with Partnership Committee Members and how they could assist the AONB Manager.
- iii. Continuing to liaise with Amenity Groups, such as the South Hams Society and the Dartmouth and Kingswear Society regarding controversial planning cases, in particular on the Salcombe Kingsbridge estuary and Dartmouth.

- iv. The Selworthy House planning appeal has been dismissed by the inspector. Geoffrey commented that the South Hams Society objection was particularly useful.
- v. Geoffrey and Robert Brook will meet with the AONB Manager straight after this meeting to go through a few further planning cases.

6a.12 Richard Snow

- i. Invited Partnership Committee members on a site visit to see some of the improvements as a result of the Salcombe Project, part of the Land, Outdoors and Nature agenda.
Action 9 (RS): Liaise with the AONB Manager to arrange dates.

6a.13 Robert Steer

- i. Ash dieback is an issue for the farming community as well as the wider community and will devastate the countryside.
 - Eamon Crowe informed Members that Devon County Council have estimated Ash tree numbers.
 - The AONB Manager added that South Devon AONB, along with other Devon AONBs, is involved in the Devon Ash Dieback Resilience Forum and also contribute to the Landscape and Ecological Resilience group component. A number of studies have been done and summarised information aimed at the farming community is available.**Action 10 (RE):** Put together a package of useful information on this for Robert Steer and put a woodland focussed agenda item on the next meeting of the Partnership Committee.

6B. PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS: IMPROVING ENGAGEMENT WITH AONB COMMUNITIES

PARTNERSHIP MEETING STRUCTURE

The Chairman introduced this item intended to review the structure of the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee meetings and make recommendations for changes to increase engagement with communities. The Chairman added the most important aspects of the AONB are people and community and observed that a number of the Partnership Committee meetings are held in Totnes, which is outside of the AONB boundary. There is also little opportunity for the community to contribute to the meetings.

- i. The Chairman proposed the following
 - a. Hold meetings within the AONB boundary.
 - b. Introduce a session to take place prior to each Partnership Committee meeting, where a presentation on a topic of wide public appeal can be made. Such a session to be publicised locally to attract attendance. The suggestion is to start the pre-meeting session at 9:15 to last a maximum of 30 minutes, with the Partnership Committee Chairman and the AONB Manager in attendance. Partnership Committee Members attendance to be optional.
 - c. Set aside fifteen minutes after each Committee meeting, where members of the public are given the opportunity to make a statement of no more than three minutes duration. The address to be given to the Partnership Committee Chairman and the AONB Manager allowing them to listen to the AONB community. Partnership Committee Members attendance to be optional.
- ii. Members supported the Chairman's proposal, with the following comments:
 - There is a risk of a single issue being raised in all of the three minute slots in the public forum. There was a suggestion this could be managed by prior written submission; the Chairman said there is already a procedure allowing members of the public to submit written questions and felt this should be an opportunity to hear direct from the community without prior written submission.

- The preference would be to have the public forum prior to the Partnership meeting
 - Ensures members of the public do not have to wait for the Partnership meeting to conclude before being able to give their three minute address.
 - The public forum would have a defined end time - the scheduled time of the Partnership Committee meeting.
 - Beneficial to link with the public presentation session as some members of the public may wish to attend both the presentation and the forum.
- iii. Decision
 - Trial agreed, commencing at the December Partnership meeting and continuing through 2020.
 - Presentation session and Public forum to take place prior to each Partnership Committee meeting .

6C. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR AONBs: UPDATE ON WORK

The AONB Manager gave an update on work that the National Association for AONBs are leading on.

- i. Glover review related work
 - Questions from the Glover Review panel go via the National Association who distribute to the AONB network.
 - Data gathering and evidence for example major developments (covered earlier) and eight year financial information.
- ii. 70th Anniversary of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act
 - This years South Devon AONB open forum will focus on seventy years of change.
- iii. Internal projects
 - National Association changed from being a membership organisation to an independent charity and does its own fundraising work. Grant funding was obtained from Lottery Heritage Fund to support change needed at the national level to work collaboratively, avoid duplication and make best use of resources within the wider AONB family. The AONB is profiting from this through the Taking the Lead, a staff training programme, with South Devon AONB benefitting from having two places. The broader Future Landscapes programme will look at reshaping the way the National Association works. The Partnership Chairman and AONB Manager will be involved in advance of the Lead Officers and Chairmans meeting taking place in December.
- iv. Advocacy with Government
 - Agriculture Bill - the National Association is campaigning to insert an additional clause to explicitly include landscape condition. This passed its first reading and when parliamentary time allows for its second reading it will be key for Partnership to do advocacy work with MPs.
 - Environment Bill – the National Association is campaigning to ensure the best framework goes forward.
- v. Valued and Resilient
 - The National Association is leading on this in Wales. This is the National Association's programme for bringing National Parks, AONBs, Natural Capital eco system services and Climate emergency issues together with landscape at the heart. Work has already taken place that could potentially apply in England.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Landscapes for Life Conference

- 9th – 11th July 2019, Colchester

AONB Outstanding Week

- 21st – 29th September 2019

Annual Forum

- 9th October 2019, Stokeley Farm Shop

Next Partnership Committee meeting

- 6th December 2019, venue TBC

Proposed dates for 2020 Partnership Committee meetings

- 13th March 2020, venue TBC
- 26th June 2020, venue TBC
- 27th November 2020, venue TBC

Item 4a: Glover Review proposals and the South Devon AONB

Purpose

1. To provide South Devon AONB Partnership Committee members to discuss the findings of the Designated Landscapes Review¹, debate the relative priorities to be applied to the proposals in the context of the South Devon AONB and to consider areas of activity that could be pursued in advance of any formal announcements including on the provision of any new or increased funding.

Background

2. Initiated in May 2018, the Review of England's Designated Landscapes conducted by a panel of six and led by Julian Glover, published its findings including 27 proposals on the 21st September 2019. The publication coincided with the National Association for AONBs coordinated National Moment in which the South Devon AONB Partnership played a significant part. Since this date various organisations have assessed and responded to the report welcoming its findings. The South Devon AONB Partnership's Annual Forum in October 2019 featured a presentation from review panel member Ewan Cameron, Lord Cameron of Dillington who shared his personal insights into the review process and its proposals.

Landscapes Review final report

3. The Review's final report makes compelling reading and all Partnership members are urged to read the full 168-page document from cover to cover in order to benefit from its rich content and nuances. Taken on their own, the 27 proposals (Appendix 1 to this report) provide one summary of the review's outcomes, but the supporting analysis, case studies and data provide important context to the panel's thinking behind the proposals themselves.
4. Five areas were focused upon and form the detail of the report. They are:
 - Landscapes alive for nature and beauty
 - Landscapes for everyone
 - Living in Landscapes
 - More special places
 - New ways of working
5. Summary findings and detailed findings are presented for each of these areas. Within the detailed findings chapters a common approach is followed providing:
 - Context
 - What we found
 - What needs to be done
 - Related proposals
 - Further detail on each individual proposal and the components contained within them

This tiered approach to detail provides a number of different levels at which subjects are considered and reported on.

¹ Landscapes Review (England) Final Report 21 September 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

6. Overall the message from the review was clear *“Though there is much that is good, we should not be satisfied with what we have at the moment. It falls far short of what can be achieved and what the people of our country want.” ... “The way we protect and improve our landscapes needs to change radically to respond to this.” ... “...without structural reform and greater shared ambition and status, our national landscapes will always struggle to do more than make an incremental difference”.*
7. The review panel has been clear that their set of proposals should be taken forward together and not simply selected from.

Subjects not reported on by the Review

8. The Review was unable to cover all aspects relevant to designated landscapes; a number of significant subjects are absent in the final report. These notably include the historic environment; and the inter-relationship between coastal designated landscapes and their undesignated adjacent seascapes or coastal waters.

Considerations

9. Whilst there appears to be common agreement that it would be very difficult for the findings of the Designated Landscapes Review to be forgotten, a formal response from government has been delayed. It is essential that momentum be maintained and once a new government has been formed, that it acts on the review’s proposals to introduce new legislation, policy, guidance and grant agreements to enable meaningful change.
10. Although certain of the review’s proposals appear likely to require new legislation or significant resources there is also much that could be progressed without delay though this will necessarily be restricted to a more modest scale of impact by current capacity. Decisions to alter immediate priorities for action will need to be mindful of impacts on other priority areas of work and funded programmes. However, as work to shape a Management Plan Delivery Plan for 2020-2021 and beyond sharpens its focus, it is timely to consider what of the review proposals could and should be actioned in South Devon and to what extent.

The table in Appendix 2 to this item, based around the Review proposals, provides a useful starting point to explore this subject during the Partnership meeting and to collate feedback following it.

Recommendations

11. AONB Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Note the findings of the Designated Landscapes Review;
 - ii. Share their views on the relative priorities to be applied to the proposals from a South Devon AONB perspective;
 - iii. Offer their suggestions of areas of activity that could be pursued in response to the Review proposals and in advance of any formal government announcements or sources of new funding;
 - iv. Request the AONB Manager to prepare a response to the review and arrange for this to be sent by the AONB Chairman on behalf of the AONB Partnership to the new Secretary of State.

Appendix 1 to item 4a: Landscapes Review proposals and South Devon AONB**Designated Landscapes Review: Full list of proposals**

Landscapes Alive for Nature and Beauty	
1	National landscapes should have a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature, and be supported and held to account for delivery by a new National Landscapes Service
2	The state of nature and natural capital in our national landscapes should be regularly and robustly assessed, informing the priorities for action
3	Strengthened Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery including, but not limited to, wilder areas and the response to climate change (notably tree planting and peatland restoration). Their implementation must be backed up by stronger status in law
4	National landscapes should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks – joining things up within and beyond their boundaries
5	A central place for national landscapes in new Environmental Land Management Schemes
6	A strengthened place for national landscapes in the planning system with AONBs given statutory consultee status, encouragement to develop local plans and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework
Landscapes for Everyone	
7	A stronger mission to connect all people with our national landscapes, supported and held to account by the new National Landscapes Service
8	A night under the stars in a national landscape for every child
9	New long-term programmes to increase the ethnic diversity of visitors
10	Landscapes that cater for and improve the nation's health and wellbeing
11	Expanding volunteering in our national landscapes
12	Better information and signs to guide visitors
13	A ranger service in all our national landscapes, part of a national family
14	National landscapes supported to become leaders in sustainable tourism
15	Joining up with others to make the most of what we have, and bringing National Trails into the national landscapes family
16	Consider expanding open access rights in national landscapes
Living in Landscapes	
17	National landscapes working for vibrant communities
18	A new National Landscapes Housing Association to build affordable homes
19	A new approach to coordinating public transport piloted in the Lake District, and new, more sustainable ways of accessing national landscapes
More Special Places	
20	New designated landscapes and a new National Forest
21	Welcoming new landscape approaches in cities and the coast, and a city park competition
22	A better designations process
New Ways of Working	
23	Stronger purposes in law for our national landscapes
24	AONBs strengthened with new purposes, powers and resources, renamed as National Landscapes
25	A new National Landscapes Service bringing our 44 national landscapes together to achieve more than the sum of their parts
26	Reformed governance to inspire and secure ambition in our national landscapes and better reflect society
27	A new financial model – more money, more secure, more enterprising

Appendix 2 to item 4a: Landscapes Review proposals and South Devon AONB

Designated Landscapes Review: assessment Full list of proposals

Landscapes Alive for Nature and Beauty		Already delivering/ planning to deliver?	Could action without significant extra resources	Significant funding or capacity required?	Requires legislation?	Relative priority for South Devon? (H / M / L)	Comments inc. re possible short -medium term action and opportunities
Landscapes Alive for Nature and Beauty							
1	National landscapes should have a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature, and be supported and held to account for delivery by a new National Landscapes Service	Y	N	Y	?	H – Nature recovery M - NLS	Action planned to recover and enhance nature. NLS requires Defra, NE, NAAONB, NPE and others to come together
2	The state of nature and natural capital in our national landscapes should be regularly and robustly assessed, informing the priorities for action	In part	N	Y	N	M	Substantive data lacking at present for meaningful assessments but understand enough to take informed action. Build into State of AONB reporting
3	Strengthened Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery including, but not limited to, wilder areas and the response to climate change (notably tree planting and peatland restoration). Their implementation must be backed up by stronger status in law	Y	In part	Y	Y	M	Work underway through NAAONB, Colchester declaration, Taking the Lead TWG, tree planting strategy
4	National landscapes should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks – joining things up within and beyond their boundaries	In part	In part	N	N	H	NE, Devon LNP, and NAAONB work on this. Joint work with DNPA, B-Lines and through CaBA
5	A central place for national landscapes in new Environmental Land Management Schemes	In part	N	Y	?	H	Advocate for new Agriculture Bill to include Landscape Condition. Defra decision awaited on ELMS Trial. Potential contributor to RSPB ELMS in South Devon. NAAONB work. Needed to influence 84% of AONB land management
6	A strengthened place for national landscapes in the planning system with AONBs given statutory consultee status, encouragement to develop local	N	N	Y	Y	H to unlock additional resources and fully	Potential Rural Areas DPD linked to JLP, Torbay Local Plan review.

Landscapes Alive for Nature and Beauty		Already delivering/ planning to deliver?	Could action without significant extra resources	Significant funding or capacity required?	Requires legislation?	Relative priority for South Devon? (H / M / L)	Comments inc. re possible short -medium term action and opportunities
	plans and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework					support LPAs	
Landscapes for Everyone							
7	A stronger mission to connect all people with our national landscapes, supported and held to account by the new National Landscapes Service	Y	In part / some re-prioritisation	Y	N	M	NAAONB in the absence of a NLS
8	A night under the stars in a national landscape for every child	N	In small part	Y	N	L	Designate Dark Sky discovery sites. Private sector providers. Develop offer.
9	New long-term programmes to increase the ethnic diversity of visitors	N	Y in part	Y	N	M	Potential for starting off small. Need to do much more, can start with meaningful action in Plymouth/Torbay/Exeter. Opportunity for Devon AONBs/Devon PLs joint work?
10	Landscapes that cater for and improve the nation's health and wellbeing	Y	N	Y	N	H	CAN project initiatives short term.
11	Expanding volunteering in our national landscapes	Y in a small way	N	Y	N	M	Potential through upcoming externally funded projects / programmes
12	Better information and signs to guide visitors	Y in a small way	Y in a small way	Y	N	M	Continuous improvement, new technological solutions. Caution needed re signage clutter
13	A ranger service in all our national landscapes, part of a national family	Y in a small way	N	Y	N	L	Some small scale activities / services currently funded through projects
14	National landscapes supported to become leaders in sustainable tourism	N	Y in a small way	Y	N	H	Huge potential, past Beacon Council status for Green Tourism and many opportunities through/with Tourism partners
15	Joining up with others to make the most of what we have, and bringing National Trails into the national landscapes family	Y in part	Y	N	N	H	Close work with SWCPA. Partnership member? L4L National Conference?
16	Consider expanding open access rights in national landscapes	N	Y subject to partners	Y	?	M	Small scale pilots potentially possible

Landscapes Alive for Nature and Beauty		Already delivering/ planning to deliver?	Could action without significant extra resources	Significant funding or capacity required?	Requires legislation?	Relative priority for South Devon? (H / M / L)	Comments inc. re possible short -medium term action and opportunities
Living in Landscapes							
17	National landscapes working for vibrant communities	Y	N	Y	N	M	
18	A new National Landscapes Housing Association to build affordable homes	N	N	Y	?	H	
19	A new approach to coordinating public transport piloted in the Lake District, and new, more sustainable ways of accessing national landscapes	N	Y in part	N - Y	N	H	
More Special Places							
20	New designated landscapes and a new National Forest	N	N	Y	N	L	
21	Welcoming new landscape approaches in cities and the coast, and a city park competition	N	N	Y	?	L	Potential National Marine Park
22	A better designations process	N	N	Y	Y	M	
New Ways of Working							
23	Stronger purposes in law for our national landscapes	N	N	Y post introduction	Y	M	
24	AONBs strengthened with new purposes, powers and resources, renamed as National Landscapes	N	N	Y	Y in part	H	
25	A new National Landscapes Service bringing our 44 national landscapes together to achieve more than the sum of their parts	N	N	Y but not locally	?	L	Joint work with DNPA, SWCPA, NAAONB
26	Reformed governance to inspire and secure ambition in our national landscapes and better reflect society	N	Y	N	N	M	
27	A new financial model – more money, more secure, more enterprising	Y in part	N	Y	?	H	

Based on the Designated Landscapes Review Final report, September 2019

Item 5a: Ash Die Back in Devon – implications for land management

Purpose

1. Following a request for more information on Ash Dieback at the last AONB Partnership Committee meeting, this item provides committee members with background information drawn from a variety of partner sources to assist with a discussion during the meeting on land management implications and priorities for action.

Background

2. Ash dieback is a fungal disease affecting common ash trees, *Fraxinus excelsior* and the narrow leaved ash, *Fraxinus angustifolia*, by infecting the tree and weakening it to the point at which it becomes more vulnerable to other pests and pathogens². Ash dieback is affecting ash trees in our countryside and towns. It threatens to wipe out over 90% of Britain's native ash species and is likely to cause safety issues that need to be managed by landowners in high-risk areas.
3. Substantial sources of information are widely available at a national level, in particular via Forest Research³, Defra⁴ and The Tree Council.
4. Loss of ash trees, woodland, and hedgerow species could have a major impact on the wildlife and character of Devon's countryside.
5. Organisations, communities and individuals across Devon are joining forces to address ash dieback⁵. Central to this response has been the formation of and action taken by the Devon Ash Dieback Resilience Forum - a group of people representing different organisations and communities that share common interests in trees, the wildlife they support, and the risks posed by Ash dieback to people and the environment.

Responsibility

6. 99% of the 448,000 ash trees within falling distance of highways are the responsibility of farmers and other landowners. The Highways Authority is responsible for only about 6,300 trees. Elsewhere, away from highways, landowners have a duty to manage trees on their land and take appropriate action to minimise risks to public safety from diseased trees. This is often summarised as "*My tree? My responsibility*".

Anticipated Impact of Ash Dieback Disease

7. In woodlands, the consensus is that over 90% of ashes will be either dead or severely affected within 5 –15 years.
8. Outside woodlands, the current majority view is that around 50% of ashes will be severely affected within 5 to 15 years, to the stage where they are at least likely to shed large limbs. There is considerable uncertainty about this however, and over 90% may be affected.
9. Loss and damage of non-woodland trees will have a greater impact on landscape and biodiversity than that of woodland trees. This is particularly the case in South Devon though the full extent of

² <https://www.naturaldevon.org.uk/devons-natural-environment/devons-wildlife/devon-ash-dieback-action-plan/>

³ <https://www.devonashdieback.org.uk/resources/dadrf-advice-notes/>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chalara-management-plan>

⁵ <https://www.devonashdieback.org.uk/>

landmark trees, hedgerow ash, mature ash as hedgerow trees and ash in woodlands, is not specifically documented.

Implications for Land Management

10. The response to Ash dieback in Devon has been led by the Ash Dieback Resilience Forum and follows an Action Plan⁶ prepared in 2016. One of the key actions to take now to address high risk impacts and boost landscape resilience is to:

“Provide advice and support for farmers and woodlands managers, especially those with land adjacent to roads, so they can prepare for the disease”

11. The main tool for this has been the preparation and dissemination of a Farmer Information Sheet (Appendix 1 to this agenda item) to provide summary level background information, highlight key action to take and signpost to further sources of information and advice.

The section entitled What do I need to do? contains the following advice:

- You are not legally required to take any particular action if you own infected ash trees, unless you are served with a Statutory Plant Health Notice. This is unlikely.
- New cases of the disease should be reported to the Forestry Commission through the Tree Alert service <https://treealert.forestryresearch.gov.uk>.
- DO NOT FELL infected trees UNLESS for public safety (or timber production). There is evidence that a small proportion will be able to tolerate the disease and recover. Disease resistant trees could be the source of our future ash trees.
- KEEP AN EYE on the trees’ safety as the disease progresses and prune or fell them if they or their branches threaten to cause injury or damage. In particular, watch for basal lesions or fungus near the bottom of the trunk which can weaken the tree and make it more likely to fall.
- Bear in mind the need to obtain a FELLING LICENCE from the Forestry Commission before undertaking felling. Any felling near a highway will require liaison with Devon County Council. Also be aware of the requirements of protected species and their habitats e.g. active bird nests or bat roosts.
- Consider pollarding ash trees at breast / head height as an alternative to felling. This way you can prevent an expensive future bill and any costly accidents, whilst keeping the tree’s wildlife value. Future management will also be easier and safer.
- Avoid cutting ash dominated hedgerows during the summer months and during the bird breeding season, when the spore production from dead leaves on the ground is at its highest, and disturbance might increase dispersal.
- Establish replacement trees of suitable alternative native species using the 3-2-1 formula: plant 3 saplings for the loss of a large tree, 2 for a medium tree and 1 for a small tree.
- Tree shelters from diseased ash plants can be reused as long as any leaf litter is fully removed and that at least one month has elapsed before moving them.
- Keep tools, boots and equipment clean, particularly if working between infected trees.
- Consider undertaking a Woodland Management Plan to help improve resilience of trees and woodlands across the farm.

12. The Devon Ash Dieback Resilience Forum also produced a selection of companion advice notes⁷ in July 2019 covering related topics including:

- Ash dieback: Key messages and principles for landscape maintenance and restoration, including wildlife and natural capital

⁶ <https://www.naturaldevon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Devon-ash-dieback-action-plan-February-2016.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.devonashdieback.org.uk/resources/dadrf-advice-notes/>

- A guide to protecting species and habitats
- The many benefits of ash trees
- Engaging a contractor
- Replacing ash: appropriate tree selection
- Increasing the resilience of Devon's treescapes

Recommendations

13. AONB Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Note the content of the report and the range of supporting sources of information;
 - ii. Offers their views on the most impactful areas of work the Partnership should take forward to support AONB Farmers, Landowners and Landscape in responding to Ash Dieback.

Appendix 1 to item 5a: Ash Die Back in Devon - Farmer Information Sheet

Devon Ash Dieback Resilience Forum





Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group



the voice of British farming

ASH DIEBACK

Farmer Information Sheet

What is ash dieback?

Ash dieback is a highly infectious fungal disease originating from East Asia, which is threatening to wipe out our native Ash trees. There is no known cure and no clear method for stopping its spread. Currently there is a total ban on the movement of both ash seed and trees for planting.

Which trees are affected?

All common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) are susceptible, however a small percentage have shown a tolerance to the disease. Young ash trees are particularly vulnerable and often die quickly once infected (within 5 years). The majority of mature trees are expected to decline and die over a 10-15 year period.



Crown of affected ash dieback tree

Why is it a concern?

Ash is the second most common tree in the UK and occurs naturally in woodlands and hedgerows across Devon. Sadly around 90% of these ash trees are predicted to be lost over the coming years as a result of the disease. This will have significant impacts on the Devon landscape and the wildlife supported by the trees.

Due to the high numbers of ash trees along roadsides, there is also a significant Health and Safety and economic implication. Ninety-nine percent of the ash trees within falling distance of highways are the responsibility of FARMERS AND OTHER LANDOWNERS. The Highways Authority is responsible for only a small number of trees.

Farmers and landowners have a key role to play in restoring landscapes when ash trees start to disappear, by replacing ash with other suitable species.

How can I tell if my trees have the disease?












The disease causes leaf loss, erratic growth / dieback within the tree's crown, and lesions where branches join the trunk or around the base. Trees affected by ash dieback also become more susceptible to secondary pathogens including honey fungus which can cause butt or root rot and can speed up the trees becoming hazardous.

The best time to survey ash trees for symptoms in the foliage is July-September. This is because once autumn begins, the normal seasonal change in the colour of the leaves can be mistaken for symptoms of the disease.



Lesion on young tree affected by ash dieback

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

-  You are not legally required to take any particular action if you own infected ash trees, unless you are served with a Statutory Plant Health Notice. This is unlikely.
-  New cases of the disease should be reported to the Forestry Commission through the Tree Alert service <https://treealert.forestryresearch.gov.uk>
-  DO NOT FELL infected trees UNLESS for public safety (or timber production). There is evidence that a small proportion will be able to tolerate the disease and recover. Disease resistant trees could be the source of our future ash trees.
-  KEEP AN EYE on the trees' safety as the disease progresses and prune or fell them if they or their branches threaten to cause injury or damage. In particular, watch for basal lesions or fungus near the bottom of the trunk which can weaken the tree and make it more likely to fall.
-  Bear in mind the need to obtain a FELLING LICENCE from the Forestry Commission before undertaking felling. Any felling near a highway will require liaison with Devon County Council. Also be aware of the requirements of protected species and their habitats e.g. active bird nests or bat roosts.
-  Consider pollarding ash trees at breast / head height as an alternative to felling. This way you can prevent an expensive future bill and any costly accidents, whilst keeping the tree's wildlife value. Future management will also be easier and safer.
-  Avoid cutting ash-dominated hedgerows during the summer months and during the bird-breeding season, when the spore production from dead leaves on the ground is highest, and disturbance might increase dispersal.
-  Establish replacement trees of suitable alternative native species using the 3-2-1 formula: plant 3 saplings for the loss of a large tree, 2 for a medium tree and 1 for a small tree.
-  Tree shelters from diseased ash plants can be re-used as long as any leaf litter is fully removed and that at least one month has elapsed before moving them.
-  Keep tools, boots and equipment clean, particularly if working between infected trees.
-  Consider undertaking a Woodland Management Plan to help improve resilience of trees and woodlands across the farm.

Where can I get further information?

The following organisations and links can provide you with further information on Ash Dieback.



Devon Ash Dieback Resilience Forum www.devonashdieback.org.uk

Forest Research www.forestryresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/pest-and-disease-resources/chalara-ash-dieback-hymenoscyphus-fraxineus/

Forestry Commission www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-felling-overview

 0300 067 4960 (local)  southwest.fce@forestrycommission.gov.uk

FWAG SouthWest www.fwagsw.org.uk

 01823 660684 (local)  info@fwagsw.org.uk

Item 5b: Tree Planting and the South Devon AONB

Purpose

1. To provide South Devon AONB Partnership Committee members with an overview of the challenges and opportunities presented by new tree planting in the South Devon AONB and to discuss an emerging strategy.

Background

2. Woodland and trees are much-loved components of the South Devon landscape making an important contribution to landscape character and AONB special qualities. Woodland cover however is relatively low at 8.8% of the land area of the AONB, equating to around 3000 hectares. 74% of the woodland is broadleaved.
3. The current pressure to increase tree canopy cover with the principle aim of mitigating climate change, restoring nature and responding to pests and diseases including Ash Dieback, is being felt both nationally and locally. It is important that we respond positively to tree planting opportunities whilst considering 'right tree, right place' principles recognising the sensitive nature of our locally distinctive habitats and landscape features.

New Planting

4. New woodland creation schemes are considered on a case by case basis with landscape character, biodiversity benefits and strengthening the protection of our existing trees, woodlands and hedges being of great importance. Similar to built development, the availability of sites and timing of proposals for woodland creation are down to a complex range of factors including landownership, market trends for timber and agricultural produce, and availability of woodland creation and management incentives or funding.
5. The impacts of new tree planting on the landscape character of the South Devon AONB need careful consideration whilst not undermining the potential opportunities to complement, enhance or re-create landscapes and support the aspirations of national and local stakeholders.
6. Trees outside woodlands including in the form of Hedgerow trees, in field trees, landmark trees in settlements, treed estuary fringes, field corner and hill-top copses etc. all add up to make a substantive contribution to the quality and character of the South Devon AONB.
7. An emphasis on new woodland creation driven to meet political or policy targets may have positive and/or negative implications for the SDAONB landscape and existing habitats as well as some of our undermanaged existing woodlands. A strategic approach to guide new planting that considers landscape character, AONB special qualities, sensitivity and capacity, would assist in striking an appropriate balance.
8. To inform discussion, Forestry Commission colleagues Kate Tobin, Local Partnership Advisor and James Mason, Woodland Officer (Dartmoor and South Devon) will provide short presentations to Partnership Committee members in the meeting on developing areas of work including:
 - a. A tree planting Opportunity Mapping Programme for the SDAONB
 - b. Nature Recovery Networks
 - c. Trees Outside Woodlands and a Devon response to Ash Dieback (DADBRF)

- d. South Devon AONB case studies
- e. Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) and soils
- f. Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship and emerging ELMS

Recommendations

- 9. AONB Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Note the breadth of positive Partnership activity in the area of tree planting and woodland management linked to AONB special qualities and Management Plan priorities and the need for strategic direction and leadership;
 - ii. Work closely with Partners to develop and refine a tree and woodland strategy to guide new planting and management of existing woodland;
 - iii. Consider how the Partnership as a whole and as individual members wish to become more involved in the development and delivery of this area of work.

Item 5c: Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Crisis

Purpose

1. This report introduces AONB Partnership members to action underway in Devon as a response to the declared Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Crisis, before going on to explore the contribution the South Devon AONB Partnership and its Staff Unit are able to make to this priority area of work.

Climate Emergency

2. In response to clear evidence of accelerating climate change and the urgency of action required, a range of public, private and voluntary organisations from across Devon came together on 22nd May 2019, to declare a climate emergency and to endorse the principles of the Devon Climate Declaration⁸.
3. The Declaration was prepared by a consortium of public, private and voluntary organisations collaborating through a Devon Climate Emergency Response Group. It sets out an ambition to tackle climate change that covers all of Devon, including those people who live, work in and visit our county, and those businesses who are based or operate in Devon. Central to the declaration is reducing carbon outputs and reaching net-zero carbon emissions.
4. South Hams District Council together with several AONB Parish Councils are signatories to the Devon declaration and are developing their own supportive action plans. Torbay Council and Plymouth City Council have separately declared Climate Emergencies pledging action to reach net-zero carbon emissions and committing to work with other councils with similar ambitions.
5. All recognise that action is needed at a strategic, corporate, community and individual level.

Biodiversity Crisis

6. The primary focus of Devon climate emergency action to date has been on considering action required to achieve carbon net-zero. The biodiversity crisis component has perhaps featured less prominently or explicitly so far, though the Devon Local Nature Partnership provides strong leadership at a County level in this regard. The climate emergency and biodiversity crisis are inextricably linked and must be addressed in tandem. Nature based solutions must play a key role in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Biodiversity must be restored and enhanced both for its intrinsic value and for the tangible benefits that it has for society and the economy⁹.

Devon Carbon Plan

7. A Net-Zero Task Force has been established, which will use its specialist knowledge and experience to produce an evidence-led Devon Carbon Plan¹⁰.
8. There are three main phases to this work:
 - Evidence gathering (including a call for evidence¹¹ and hearings¹² during November and December)

⁸ <https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/devon-climate-declaration/>

⁹ <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Climate-Emergency-and-Biodiversity-Crisis-Briefing-v1.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/devon-carbon-plan/>

¹¹ <https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/devon-carbon-plan/call-for-evidence/>

¹² <https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/upcoming-thematic-hearings-dates/>

- Citizens assembly
 - Development and publication of a draft Devon Carbon Plan
9. Further information and a short presentation including progress to date and action in development will be provided during the AONB Partnership meeting.

South Devon AONB Action

10. These messages, associated calls to action and meaningful delivery in support of priorities through projects, initiatives and campaigns have been a central theme running throughout AONB Management Plans since their introduction in 2000 and action by AONB Partnerships, their Staff Units and Partners. However, the scale and urgency are something new; presenting new demands, challenges and opportunities.
11. Whilst significant contributions have been made in the past, much more remains to be done. Whilst others catch up, AONBs are well placed to share their learning with those new to this form of action in addition to redoubling our own efforts and leading by example, including on:
- Mitigating and adapting to climate change
 - Protecting the biodiversity that remains and restoring what has been lost
 - Recovering and restoring natural processes
12. Defra, Devon County Council, South Hams District Council, Torbay Council and Plymouth City Council along with Parish Councils and others are all to varying degrees requesting support, guidance and action from the South Devon AONB Partnership.
13. The National Association for AONBs and the AONB network developed and published the Colchester Declaration on Nature¹³ at the 2019 National Landscapes for Life Conference. This was partly in response to Glover review challenges to National Landscapes to do more for nature and partly to demonstrate the AONB networks readiness to act to redress declines in species and habitats within the context of a wider response to climate change.
14. During the AONB Partnership meeting the AONB Manager and local authority partners will assist the Partnership in exploring areas of activity and associated actions the Partnership wish to see prioritised for delivery by the Partnership and its Staff Unit.

Recommendations

15. AONB Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
- i. Offer their views on areas of activity or actions to be prioritised for delivery by the AONB Partnership and its Staff Unit over the next 15-month period.

¹³ https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/7815/6326/2583/The_Colchester_Declaration.pdf

Item 6a: South Devon AONB Planning Protocol

Purpose of report

1. This report provides an update for members of the AONB Partnership committee on work to revise and update the South Devon AONB Planning Protocol, a reciprocal agreement between the AONB Partnership and the AONB's Local Planning Authorities.

Background

2. The existing AONB Planning Protocol was adopted back in February 2011 and relates to both strategic planning, development management and the provision of other specialist advice. While much of the over-arching framework and headline items remain relatively contemporary, much of the detail in the protocol requires updating and refining.
3. As required by The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Natural England must give advice to local planning authorities on development proposals in an AONB. On Landscape matters, Natural England typically provide a standardised paragraph of text with some minor variations. An example of this text is:

“Landscape – Advise consultation with AONB Unit

*The proposed development is for a site within a nationally designated landscape namely **South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)**. Natural England advises that the planning authority uses national and local policies, together with local landscape expertise and information to determine the proposal and that you consult the relevant AONB Partnership or Conservation Board. The policy and statutory framework to guide your decision and the role of local advice are explained below in Annex A of this letter.”*

Annex A contains Natural England standing advice.

4. The nature of this paragraph and the resultant lack of site-specific detail typically results in consultation responses provided by AONB Units being more heavily relied upon by LPAs. However, as the Glover review highlighted, AONB Partnerships and their Units are not currently statutory consultees or sufficiently resourced to respond to the number of requests received, particularly given the increasing complexity of cases, and their policy and legal contexts.

Matters to consider

5. Following receipt of a variety of feedback including through:
 - an initial meeting of the AONB Planning Protocol Working Group,
 - discussions with senior Development Management and Strategic Planning colleagues from the AONB's local planning authorities,
 - landscape specialists,
 - Glover review proposals and
 - a review of best practice from amongst the AONB network of AONB Planning or Landscape Officers

The following have emerged as matters to consider and respond to in the drafting of a new Planning Protocol:

- a. Whilst Glover Review proposals (see item 4a on the agenda) for AONBs and the planning system are highly likely to result in meaningful change in the short to medium term, current resourcing levels do not provide for a sustainable expansion of service just yet. Only minor re-prioritisation and improvements in service performance are feasible at this stage.
- b. Levels of caseload are unpredictable. Peaks and troughs do not neatly coincide with available time and opportunities amongst other priorities. A dedicated AONB Landscape or Planning Officer role was highlighted as an important mechanism to address this.
- c. The protocol should be reviewed again when circumstances materially alter and if the level of service provided by the AONB Partnership to LPAs could be increased. This includes implementation of Glover review proposals such as an expansion of legal purposes, statutory consultee status and increased resources linked to a funding formula that recognises planning caseload. This applies to both quantum and detail.
- d. While Development Management caseload features strongly in discussions a wide range of other planning relevant work was recognised as important. This included advice and support on Local Plans; Supplementary Planning Documents; Neighbourhood Plans; provision of training/CPD for elected members and officers; validation checklists; policy interpretation; appeal cases; national consultations and coordinated input through NAAONB; tools and assessments including landscape character and tranquillity.
- e. Repetition in the existing protocol should be removed and an increased focus given to consultation triggers criteria, moving away from listing specific types and scale of development
- f. The quantum of consultation requests should be reduced to a manageable level with a renewed focus on those proposals that could result in the greatest adverse impacts. Appropriately skilled staff, advice, training and example cases would assist LPAs in feeling confident to make the right decisions on smaller applications.
- g. Pre-application advice should be separated out of the Protocol. A separate chargeable service commensurate with the offer and pricing of near neighbour AONBs was advocated.
- h. Future Core Funding from South Hams District Council is likely to be tied to a Service Level Agreement (SLA). A request has been made by elected members for any SLA to include planning service provided by SDAONB. Response times
- i. Development Management services across all local planning authorities are under immense pressure and particularly in need of quality natural environment responses to meet determination dates. The tailored nature of AONB responses was consistently valued by Development Management colleagues. Standard template responses were considered to be of little use or value

Draft text for updated South Devon AONB Planning Protocol

6. Acting on the advice received and particularly having reviewed the Cotswold AONB consultation criteria that is seen as best practice amongst the AONB network an initial revised Planning Protocol has been prepared in draft form (Appendix 1 to this item).

Recommendations

7. AONB Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Offer their initial views on the revised and updated draft protocol;

- ii. Give careful consideration to the draft protocol and provide any detailed comments to the AONB Manager by 6th January 2020.
- iii. Request the AONB Manger progress agreement with the four Local Planning Authorities and bring a final version back for formal adoption by the AONB Partnership in March 2020.

Appendix 1 to item 6a: South Devon AONB Planning Protocol

South Devon AONB Partnership DRAFT Updated Planning Protocol

Revision 1 November 2019

Context

The South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) spans four local planning authority areas. 98.02% of the AONB lies in the South Hams/Devon County administrative area; 1.95% lies in Torbay; and 0.03% lies in Plymouth City. Estuarine and inshore waters fall within the Marine Management Organisation's South Marine Plan Area and South West Marine Plan Area.

The care of the South Devon AONB is co-ordinated and overseen by a Partnership comprising local and statutory authorities and community representatives. An AONB Staff Unit is employed to act on behalf of the AONB Partnership, including in the development and delivery of the statutory AONB Management Plan for South Devon; and the provision of advice and consultation comments on development plans and applications for development consent.

The role of the South Devon AONB Unit in plan-making and decision-taking.

The AONB Unit, acting on behalf of the AONB Partnership, will:

- i. seek to make a positive contribution to the making and revision of development plans (local, unitary and neighbourhood plans) and marine plans relevant to the South Devon AONB;
- ii. provide constructive advice and information on AONB matters in response to requests from planning authorities;
- iii. provide comments in response to individual development management consultations for proposals that fall within the Consultation Triggers Criteria listed below. The AONB Partnership will endeavour to provide a substantive response within 28 days of the date of a consultation request or within such other period as might be agreed between the AONB Partnership and the relevant local planning authority.

Consultation Triggers Criteria¹⁴

The Local Planning Authorities will normally consult the AONB Staff Unit acting on behalf of the South Devon AONB Partnership on proposals that meet the following criteria:

Within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

1. Major development, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Part 1, Article (2)(1)), including housing development of 10 or more dwellings but excluding minerals and waste development (for which Criteria 3-7, below, should be applied).⁽¹⁾
2. Isolated homes in the countryside (i.e. development that meets the requirements of paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019)).
3. Schedule 1 development under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (EIA) Regulations 2017.⁽²⁾

¹⁴ Based on material prepared by John Mills, Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board

4. Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regulations, including screening opinion and scoping opinion consultations. (For pre-screening, please only consult the Partnership on proposals for 10 or more dwellings under 'Urban Development Projects', and all other proposals that are above the Schedule 2 'applicable thresholds and criteria').⁽³⁾
5. EIA Schedule 2 development that the case officer, post-screening, considers likely to have significant adverse environmental effects and, therefore, requires an EIA.⁽⁴⁾
6. Cases which the case officer considers could potentially be major development in the context of paragraph 172 and footnote 55 of the NPPF 2019.^{(5),(6)}

Within or outside the South Devon AONB

7. Cases which the local planning authority case officer considers could potentially:
 - (a) have a significant adverse impact on the statutory purpose of AONB designation (to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB), including relevant EIA Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 proposals outside the AONB;⁽⁶⁾
 - (b) set an important precedent that could fundamentally affect the statutory purpose of AONB designation;⁽⁶⁾
 - (c) have cumulative significance for the South Devon AONB.

Development management cases that the AONB Partnership should not be consulted on (unless the case matches one or more of the criteria outlined above):

8. Alteration, demolition or change of use of single buildings, including household extensions and replacement buildings.

Development Management Process

The local planning authorities will:

- a) Refer relevant planning applications to the AONB Unit for comment following the Consultation Triggers Criteria, identifying those applications likely to have a significant impact on the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB at the application registration stage;
- b) For proposals that fall outside of the consultation trigger criteria, use the South Devon AONB Management Plan and Planning Guidance Annex to guide decision making on AONB matters against relevant development plan and NPPF policies.
- c) Provide access to sufficient details about submitted applications to enable informed comments to be made;
- d) Record and treat a written comment from the AONB Unit as a representation from an outside body, rather than as an internal officer comment;
- e) In cases where the AONB Partnership is unable to respond to a consultation this should not be taken to mean that the Partnership does not consider there to be any (significant) adverse impacts on the purpose of AONB designation. For the avoidance of doubt, the absence of a consultation response must not be taken to mean no objection;
- f) Link and signpost as appropriate applicants requiring pre-application advice on designated landscape matters to the separate parallel paid-for service to be instigated by the South Devon AONB Partnership;

- g) Maintain appropriate levels of professional knowledge relating to designated landscape matters including within the development management, strategic planning and landscape functions of the local planning authorities;
- h) Send copies of relevant decision notices and any subsequent appeal decisions, to the AONB Unit in relation to applications it has commented on;
- i) Assist the AONB Unit in extracting and compiling monitoring data on decision-taking for reports to Defra and the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee;

AONB Unit will¹⁵:

- a) Provide a substantive response to development management consultation requests within 28 days of the date of a request or within such other period as might be agreed between the AONB Partnership and the relevant local planning authority;
- b) Liaise with case officers, landscape specialists and other relevant specialists as appropriate;
- c) Relate comments to relevant Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plan and National Planning Policy Framework policies;
- d) Refer to relevant AONB Management Plan policies, natural beauty criteria and AONB special qualities in any comments made;
- e) Confirm that comments made are those of the AONB Unit in its professional capacity and not of the AONB Partnership collectively;
- f) Support local planning authorities in appeal cases or inquiries where AONB matters are pivotal and as workload allows;
- g) Assist with local planning authority staff and elected member training on AONB matters.
- h) Continue to direct enquiries for pre-application advice to the relevant local planning authority pre-application service;

Review

This protocol will be reviewed on or before 31 December 2022 and revised as appropriate. Should substantive change result from the implementation of the Designated Landscapes Review proposals, an earlier review date would be likely.

¹⁵ As a small staff team, there will be occasions when the AONB Unit will be unable to respond to consultation requests due to the range of other projects, activities and casework being undertaken at any time

Appendix 1 to Protocol: NOTES RELATING TO THE CONSULTATION TRIGGERS CRITERIA

The numbering of these notes relates to the bracketed numbers shown, in superscript, in the consultation triggers list above.

1. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595/article/2/made>.

Major development, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Part 1, Article (2)(1)), means development involving one or more of the following:

- (a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits;
- (b) waste development;
- (c) the provision of dwellinghouses where:
 - (i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or
 - (ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i);
- (d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or
- (e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.

The South Devon AONB Partnership understands that this is not the definition of major development that should be applied in the context of paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As such, it is not a threshold above which there should be a presumption against granting planning permission. However, it does provide a pragmatic threshold above which it would be appropriate for local planning authorities (LPAs) to pro-actively consult the Partnership.

The exception to this rule would be for minerals and waste development. For the purposes of consulting the Partnership on such development, it would be more appropriate to apply Consultation Criteria 3-7. This is because planning applications for minerals and waste development typically relate to variations of existing planning permissions. In many cases, these variations are unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the South Devon AONB. Also, it is unlikely that the Partnership would have capacity through the Staff Unit to comment on all planning applications that relate to such variations. However, great care is nonetheless needed to consider cumulative effects on top of existing harm, or in conjunction with other development. Criteria 3-7 should allow for an appropriate level of consultation on these issues.

2. The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 UK Statutory Instruments 2017 No. 571 Schedule 1
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/571/schedule/1/made>
3. The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 UK Statutory Instruments 2017 No. 571 Schedule 2
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/571/schedule/2/made>.

As the AONB is a 'sensitive area', all development proposals of a type listed in Schedule 2 that are within the AONB require screening. However, it is unlikely that the Partnership will have capacity through the Staff Unit to comment on all such proposals, hence the caveat about only consulting the Partnership on proposals for 10 or more dwellings under 'Urban Development

Projects’, and all other proposals that are above the Schedule 2 ‘applicable thresholds and criteria’.

4. Criteria 5 should be applied *after* the case officer has taken a view as to whether or not a Schedule 2 development should require an EIA.
5. Paragraph 172 of the NPPF 2019 states that *‘planning permission should be refused for major development except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest’*. Footnote 55 of the NPPF explains that *‘for the purposes of paragraphs 172 and 173, whether a proposal is major development is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated’*. In most cases, given the potential for significant adverse impacts, such development is also likely to require an EIA.
6. The statutory purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. Public bodies, such as LPAs, have a statutory duty to have regard to this purpose. Landscape and scenic beauty / quality are obviously key components of natural beauty. However, natural beauty also includes other factors such as relative tranquillity (including dark skies), natural heritage (including biodiversity) and cultural heritage (including historic environment). The ‘special qualities’ of an AONB are also a key component of natural beauty. All of these factors should be taken into account when considering the potential impacts of a proposed development on the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB. The special qualities of the South Devon AONB are outlined on page 3 of the South Devon AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 with further detail provided in Annex 4: Understanding Special Qualities.

Appendix 2 to Protocol: CLARIFICATION NOTES

1. The commitment to providing a ‘substantive response’ within 28 days is similar to the requirements of a statutory consultee: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consultation-and-pre-decision-matters#Statutory-consultees>. The Partnership undertakes to meet all reasonable requests within the operational limits dictated by available resources, together with levels and complexity of caseload. Where cases need to be prioritised, this will be based on an assessment of likely risk to the natural beauty of the AONB and its special qualities.
2. The AONB Partnership reserves the right to provide comment on any cases it deems could result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB, even where the relevant local planning authority has not issued a consultation request.
3. The estuaries of the Yealm, Erme, Avon, Salcombe-Kingsbridge and Dart are included within the South Devon AONB boundary and are subject to an extensive range of additional statutory and non-statutory designations. The AONB Estuaries Officer will particularly comment on environmental matters including biodiversity and water quality impacts in addition to other natural beauty considerations.
4. Land and water within the setting of the South Devon AONB, including inshore waters that form part of the South Devon Heritage Coast, make an important contribution to maintaining the natural beauty of the AONB. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary.¹⁶ For these reasons views of the South Devon AONB Unit should be sought on proposals and plans likely to affect the natural beauty of the designated landscape in addition to proposals within the AONB.
5. Local Planning Authorities will continue to consult the AONB Unit at an early stage during the process of revising and producing Development Plan and guidance documents affecting the AONB. Appropriate support and comment on AONB related matters will be provided from the AONB Unit acting on behalf of the South Devon AONB Partnership;
6. Support will be provided to Neighbourhood Plan groups as far as resources allow and prioritised following a risk-based approach to likely AONB harm;
7. The provision of pre-application advice falls outside the scope of this protocol. In common with other AONB Partnerships in Devon, the South Devon AONB reserves the right to offer pre-application advice from the AONB Staff Unit in accordance with a schedule of chargeable services and rates. Services and rates will as far as practicable be comparable to those offered by other Devon AONB Partnerships.

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment#landscape> Paragraph: 042 Reference ID: 8-042-20190721

Item 6b: Plymouth & SW Devon Joint Local Plan – Supplementary Planning Document and Consultation

Purpose

1. To update AONB Partnership Committee members on work undertaken by Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon Councils to prepare a draft Supplementary Planning Document in support of Joint Local Plan policies; and highlight the current consultation opportunity to provide comments.

Background

2. In March 2019 the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) 2014-2034 was adopted by the three local planning authorities. To support the implementation of the JLP, a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was needed to add further detail and guidance to its policies. Once adopted, the SPD will be a material planning consideration when making decisions and will supersede those previously adopted SPDs across the JLP authorities.

Draft Supplementary Planning Document

3. Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council have jointly prepared and are consulting on two draft documents:
 - i. The Plymouth and South West Devon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
 - ii. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
4. Both documents continue the joint working undertaken by the Councils on the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP)¹⁷.
5. Consultation on the SPD and SCI will run from 5pm on Wednesday **13 November 2019 until 5pm on Monday 6 January 2020**.
6. In addition to the SPD, two companion documents have also been updated/produced and are available for comment, these are:
 - i. Developer Contributions Evidence Base, which presents methodologies used to calculate the value of developer contributions; and,
 - ii. Traditional Farm Buildings: Their adaptation and re-use (Barn Guide) which aids developers looking to adapt or re-use traditional farm buildings which are common in rural areas.
7. Statutory agencies are also being consulted on the draft Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) and Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion. The Screening Opinion and any comments received will be published in due course.

Providing comments

8. The Councils will only accept comments if they are provided in a written format with a name and address supplied. Comments made verbally or anonymously will not be accepted.
9. The preferred method to view and comment on the documents is through the JLP consultation portal¹⁸ hosted by Plymouth City Council.

¹⁷ www.plymouth.gov.uk/plymouthandsouthwestdevonjointlocalplan/plymouthandsouthwestdevonjointlocalplanadoption

¹⁸ <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/spdconsultation2019>

10. Pdf versions of all the documents are also available and comments will be accepted by email to: plymouthplan@plymouth.gov.uk and strategic.planning@swdevon.gov.uk or by post to City Planning Team, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ in advance of the **5pm on Monday 6 January 2020** deadline.
11. Further information will be provided by Local Planning Authority colleagues during the AONB Partnership Committee meeting, highlighting areas of draft guidance particularly relevant to the natural beauty of the AONB, its protection, conservation and enhancement.

Next steps

12. At the end of the consultation, all comments will be published and made available for public inspection on the JLP website. A response report will be published in the New Year.
13. The Councils will then make any changes necessary in response to the consultation and will aim to adopt both the SPD and the SCI in spring 2020.

Recommendations

14. AONB Partnership Committee members are recommended to:
 - i. Note the report and links to associated documentation;
 - ii. Prepare a response to those areas of policy guidance most pertinent to member interests and AONB priorities;
 - iii. Highlight the consultation opportunity to contacts and communities of interest;

Item 6c: Current and recent key applications

Purpose

1. To highlight to AONB Partnership Committee members a range of strategic development and development management matters of particular note.

Recent applications of particular note

2. 2167/19/FUL Gara Rock Hotel East Portlemouth, 8 additional holiday units within Gara Rock Resort. Associated impacts on the undeveloped coast, Heritage Coast and Deckler's Cliff Scheduled Monument
3. 19/00990/FUL Land At Bovisand Road Staddiscombe Plymouth, Conversion of two barns to 2 no. dwellings. Unsympathetic conversion on the skyline/settlement edge that will result in change in character from agricultural to industrial/residential on the edge of Plymouth administrative area.
4. 3627/19/ARM Land at SX857508, Townstal Road Dartmouth, Approval of reserved matters for layout, scale, appearance and landscaping for 116 dwellings
5. 3612/19/FUL Telecommunication Mast Wembury Point, Removal of co mount SSR antenna. Installation of replacement SSR (co-operative) radar. Comprising new steel lattice 15 metre tower, with new SSR antenna overall height 18 metre, and new ground equipment cabin.
6. P/2017/1133 Land To The South Of White Rock, Paignton. Outline application for residential led development of up to 373 dwellings, principle of a public house, primary school with nursery.
7. A full list of planning cases the AONB Unit has been involved in over the last six month period is provided for information purposes in Item 8a.

Recent appeal cases of note in the South Devon AONB

8. Appeal Ref: APP/K1128/W/18/3215689 South Barton Farm, Veasy Park, Wembury PL9 0ES. An outline application for the erection of 15 no. dwelling houses with all matters reserved save for access and layout.
9. The Appeal was conducted via written representations and was dismissed. The main issues were:
 - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, with particular regard to the natural beauty of the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
 - the effect on the living conditions of future occupants with particular regard to the proximity of farming activities; and
 - whether the proposal makes adequate provision for mitigating the effect of development on infrastructure in the locality.
10. In respect of the first main issue the Inspector concluded:

31. Having regard to the Framework I find that the development of agricultural land on the scale proposed at the edge of a settlement the size of Wembury, that would cause harm to the natural beauty of the AONB should be regarded as a major development. Given the weight that I attribute to the other considerations, in particular that there is no compelling need for the development in respect of housing delivery, and the detrimental effect on the landscape, the exceptional circumstances test at Framework paragraph 172 would not be passed.

32. *Even if I am wrong about the scale of the development, in light of the weight that I attribute to the other considerations and potential benefits of the proposal, the great weight that must be given to conserving and enhancing scenic beauty means that the harm to the AONB is decisive in this case. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with the Framework, read as a whole.*

Recent appeal cases elsewhere relevant to the South Devon AONB

11. Appeal Ref: APP/W1850/W/19/3225309 Dymock Road, Ledbury HR8 2HT. An outline application for the erection of up to 420 dwellings with public open space, land for community facilities, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with all matters reserved save for access.

12. The Appeal was conducted via an inquiry and was dismissed. The main issues included:

- The effect of the development proposed on the character and appearance of the area, including the landscape setting of the settlement and the setting of the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

13. The following extracts from the appeal decision are particularly pertinent to several current proposals for large scale housing development located in the setting of the South Devon AONB. It should also be noted that Herefordshire Council did not have a five year housing supply at the time of the decision:

25. *The Council's particular concern with regard to the setting of the AONB relates to views across the appeal site from the west. From Dymock Road, although the community facilities would be in the foreground when approaching Ledbury, the housing would be visible in the context of AONB, particularly that on the higher slopes of the appeal site. While the planting would provide some screening in the longer term, this would be less effective in the wintertime and would be limited along the majority of the southern boundary where the housing would be particularly prominent.*

26. *Users of Dymock Road would be drivers, and therefore have a lower level of sensitivity. Furthermore, Dymock Road is a minor road. However, it is still a route that is used to access Ledbury from the south, where I have found the sensitivity of the landscape to be medium to high given its relationship to the AONB, and the landscape features it contains.*

27. *Viewpoints from Durnlow Common and Marcle Ridge on the Hereford Trail have been identified within the Malvern Hills AONB Views Project as being a Special View Corridor (Viewpoint 20) and an Exceptional View Corridor (Viewpoint 21). I saw that the relationship between Ledbury and the AONB, and the particular contribution to setting made by the juxtaposition of high and low ground, including the appeal site, could be readily appreciated from these viewpoints. The PPG6 states that land within the setting of an AONB often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and where poorly located or designed development can do significant harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important as is the case here.*

28. *I saw that even though the viewpoints are 7-8 km from the appeal site, both it and the Barratt's site are visible, although the latter appeared contained within the existing urban influence of Ledbury. However, the quantum of development on the appeal site, would extend the settlement to a significant degree to the south, creating a large suburban mass of built form that would replace the current open setting of the AONB to a considerably harmful degree. There is minimal space allocated for planting to the west of the appeal site and therefore, even in the long term and with a careful choice of a materials palette, the housing would be visible in the landscape from these important viewpoints.*

29. The Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan states that if the quality of the setting declines then the appreciation and enjoyment of the AONB diminishes. I appreciate that views from the west are just one part of the wider setting of the AONB. However, given the particular contribution the appeal site and its surroundings make to its setting, then the proposed development would lead to material harm to that setting.

107. There would be improved surface water management and biodiversity enhancement. Furthermore, the environment within which the three protected trees on the site are located would be improved. Nonetheless, even with these benefits I have found that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, including the landscape setting of the settlement and the setting of the Malvern Hills AONB through its large scale encroachment into the open countryside and loss of features characteristic of the local area, which would be contrary to the environmental role of planning to which I give substantial weight.

Recommendations

14. The Partnership Committee is recommended to:
- i. Note recent and current levels of designated landscape development management advice required from the South Devon AONB Unit.
 - ii. Continue to alert the AONB Manager at the earliest possible opportunity to cases where protected landscape matters are pertinent and share views on live applications.