

**NAAONB Annual General Meeting
Business Meeting Agenda**

Thursday 19th November 2020 10.30-11.30 a.m.
Meeting to be held by videoconference
01584 892112 (Clare Elbourne)

Item 1 **Apologies**

Item 2 **Introduction of current NAAONB Board members** (verbal) for information

Item 3 **AGM November 28th, 2019 - Minutes and matters arising** for agreement

Item 4 **Art in the Landscape National Strategy** (Kate Wood, Activate) for information

Item 5 **Chairman's Annual Report 2019-20** for information.

Item 6 **Financial Report 2019-20** for agreement

Item 7 **CEO's Report of work completed for NAAONB Business Plan Oct 2019 - Oct 2020** for information.

Item 8 **Review of Memorandum and Articles of Association** for agreement

Item 9 **Membership Rates for Individual Lifetime Membership** for agreement

Item 10 **Election of Trustees and appointment of auditors** for agreement

Item 11 **AOB**

**The National Association for
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

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A company limited by guarantee no: 4729800
Charity Number: 1158871
Registered office as above

Item 3 - AGM November 28th 2019 - Minutes and matters arising

Report to The Annual General Meeting of the National Association for AONBs
Subject AGM November 28th 2019 - Minutes and matters arising
Date 19th November 2020
Purpose For agreement

MINUTES OF THE NAAONB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019

Thursday 28th November 2019 3.15 - 5.00pm
Broadway House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NQ

Attendees

Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership	Tim Youngs
Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership	Paul Diviani
Chilterns Conservation Board	Elaine King
Chilterns Conservation Board	Ian Reay
Dedham Vale AONB Advisory Committee	Nigel Chapman
Dedham Vale and Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB Partnership	Simon Amstutz
Dorset AONB Partnership	Sally King
East Devon AONB Partnership	Chris Woodruff
High Weald AONB Partnership	Sally Marsh
Howardian Hills AONB Partnership	Paul Jackson
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Partnership	Steve Jack
Mathews Associates	Simon Matthews
Mathews Associates	Lindsey Simpson
Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Tim Haselden
National Association for AONBs	Ian Rappel
National Association for AONBs	Howard Davies
National Association for AONBs	James Williamson
National Association for AONBs	Mat Roberts
National Association for AONBs	Nick Holliday
National Association for AONBs	Denise Hewlett
National Association for AONBs	Philip Hygate
National Association for AONBs	Richard Clarke
National Association for AONBs	Rose Day
National Association for AONBs and Arnside and Silverdale AONB Partnership	Lucy Barron
National Association for AONBs and North Pennines AONB Partnership	Chris Woodley-Stewart
North Devon AONB Partnership	Jenny Carey-Wood
North Pennines AONB Partnership	Jan Simmonds
North Wessex Downs AONB Partnership	Henry Oliver
North Wessex Downs AONB Partnership	Ted Hiscocks
South Devon AONB Partnership	Roger English
South Devon AONB Partnership	John Green
Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB Partnership	David Wood
Surrey Hills AONB Partnership	Rob Fairbanks

Surrey Hills AONB Partnership	Heather Kerswell
Tamar Valley AONB Partnership	Neil Burden
Tamar Valley AONB Partnership	Tim Dart
Wye Valley AONB Partnership	Andrew Blake

Item 1 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following.

Cannock Chase AONB Partnership	Ian Marshall
Cannock Chase AONB Partnership	Frances Beatty
Chichester Harbour AONB Partnership	Richard Austin
Chichester Harbour AONB Partnership	Ann Briggs
Chichester Harbour AONB Partnership	Robert Macdonald
Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Partnership	Howard Sutcliffe
Cotswolds Conservation Board	Andy Parsons
Dorset AONB Partnership	Tom Munro
Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership	Elliott Lorimer
High Weald AONB Partnership	Sylvia Tidy
Isle of Wight AONB Partnership	Jonathan Bacon
Malvern Hills AONB Partnership	Gwyneth Rees
Malvern Hills AONB Partnership	Paul Esrich
NAAONB	Paul Walton
National Trust	Karin Taylor
Norfolk Coast AONB Partnership	Estelle Hook
Norfolk Coast AONB Partnership	Angie Fitch-Tillett
North Devon Coast AONB Partnership	Steve Mulberry
Oxfordshire County Council	Nick Mottram
Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership	Phil Holden
Solway Coast AONB Partnership	Bill Jefferson
Solway Coast AONB Partnership	Naomi Kay

Item 2 Introduction of current NAAONB Board members

The Board members present introduced themselves - Rose Day, Mat Roberts, Denise Hewlett, Chris Woodley-Stewart, Lucy Barron, James Williamson and Nick Holliday

Item 3 AGM November 29th 2018 - Minutes and matters arising

The Chairman introduced this paper and went through the minutes page by page for accuracy and matters arising.

Resolution that the minutes be agreed as true and accurate record, and the matters arising be noted.

Agreed: Unanimously

Item 4 Chairman's Annual Report 2018-19

The Chairman introduced this report and took questions from the floor.
No questions were raised.

Item 5 Resilience Report

Lindsey Simpson and Simon Matthews, from Matthews Associates, presented the findings and recommendations of the Resilience Report which was part of the HLF funded NAAONB project.

Elaine King asked about the relationship between the NAAONB and Defra in the context of the NAAONB being a charity. Simon Matthews answered that this fits into the standard model of government working with the charitable sector to deliver activities on behalf of government. Howard Davies clarified that there is a tripartite agreement between Defra, Natural England and the NAAONB – in terms of the agreed activities within this agreement, the NAAONB has taken on much more work in the absence of capacity within Natural England.

Item 6 Financial Report 2018-19

James Williamson, NAAONB treasurer, introduced this report. There has been a large increase in income but this is mostly been restricted funds for the HLF funded project and the Welsh government funded post of Wales Development Manager. In the opinion of the treasurer, reserves are currently a little higher than they need to be.

Paul Jackson raised the following points: what was happening to the bad debts from 2018 – these are being written off; and what is happening to the £2900 which was earmarked for Management Plan Support – Howard Davies confirmed that all information relating to management plan support will be uploaded to the website and the remaining funds have been moved into revenue.

Resolved that the accounts be agreed, signed and submitted to Companies House and the Charities Commission.

Item 7 CEO's Report of work completed for NAAONB Business Plan Oct 2018 - Oct 2019

The Chief Executive introduced this report. The existing business and strategic plans need renewing in 2020. A Business Plan has been prepared for one year and this has been accepted by Defra. The intention is to develop a new 5 year strategic plan during 2020. The CEO also reported that the NAAONB will have to register for VAT and this will affect the cost of events going forward, though the VAT element can be reclaimed by AONB partnerships though not by the two Conservation Boards.

Chris Woodley-Stewart, NAAONB trustee, wanted thanks and congratulations recorded to the NAAONB team for their work.

Item 8 Appointment of Trustees and auditors

The Chairman introduced this report and proposed that the current auditors - Whittingham Riddell be re-appointed.

The Chairman then highlighted that the following Trustees are required to step down at this AGM as they have come to the end of their current term serving on the NAAONB Management Board: Mat Roberts, Rose Day and Nick Holliday. Mat Roberts and Rose Day are stepping down at this AGM and the Board wishes to thank them for their valuable contributions while serving on the NAAONB board. Nick Holliday has agreed to be co-opted for a further year

Resolved that Nick Holliday be re-appointed/co-opted to the Board for a further year.

Proposed: Henry Oliver
Seconded: Andrew Blake
Agreed: nem.con.

Item 9 **AOB**
None received
Meeting closed at 16.00

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Item 4 – Art in the Landscape Strategy

Report to	The Annual General Meeting of the National Association for AONBs
Subject	Art in the Landscape Strategy
Date	19 th November 2020
Author	Kate Wood
Purpose	For information

Following a successful bid to Arts Council England, supplemented with additional funding from individual AONBs, the NAAONB engaged the consultants Activate to prepare a National Arts Strategy and to deliver a national training programme for AONB staff. Kate Wood, from Activate, one of the authors of the strategy will present the report which is distributed separately.

Item 5 – Chairman’s Report for the year ended 31st March 2020

Report to	The Annual General Meeting of the National Association for AONBs
Subject	NAAONB Chairman’s Report for year ending 31 st March 2020
Date	19 th November 2020
Author	Philip Hygate
Purpose	For information

This time last year I spoke about uncertainty around a changing climate, the loss of nature, and the associated and predictable spread of pests and diseases. I also made the point that much of what we have taken for granted over the last fifty years is now not so certain.

Earlier this year these observations were thrown into sharp relief as a global pandemic forced us to change the way we live and, as a nation, re-evaluate our priorities. For many, this pandemic has caused great loss, grief, and trauma, whilst for others the impact has been merely inconvenient. The differences in the way we have all been affected provides an insight into the variability that exists across society with regards opportunity, health, economic resilience, and choice. Our Nations may be far from homogeneous but landscape and nature have the inherent capacity to focus and inspire all to work towards a sustainable and just future. A future that respects the reality that we all utterly depend upon living in harmony with the natural world.

In truth, the value of the natural environment to us all has rarely been made so clear. The importance of local food production, highlighted by the global disruption of supply chains; the value of green space sharpened by restrictions placed on exercising and travel, and the importance of local community infrastructure have all contribute towards a heightened appreciation of the natural environment.

The lifting of successive lockdowns has generated an upsurge in visitors to the countryside, many of whom are exploring the landscapes on their doorsteps for the first time. Whilst this has created unprecedented challenges for land managers, it also presents a real opportunity for AONB partnerships as the landscapes they are tasked with looking after become relevant to more people. The rationing of access to green space has served to highlight its importance to the nations’ health and wellbeing.

Against this backdrop, the National Association for AONBs, your national association, has worked hard to ensure you remain effectively represented in policy discussions. We have worked to place AONB partnerships and conservation boards central to nature recovery, the emerging post-Brexit agricultural support mechanisms, and a post-Covid ‘green recovery’. We have remained agile, capitalising on opportunities as they arise, and demonstrating the value that a small charity can add to advancing an environmental agenda and facilitating powerful collaboration across a complex network. We operate closely with governments and arm’s length bodies in England and Wales and continue to successfully navigate the different political and legislative contexts on your behalf. We have also devoted a great deal of time and effort to directly supporting our network of members through this difficult time.

We wait with interest to hear how the UK Government responds to the recommendations of the Glover Review. NAAONB staff have remained closely engaged with Defra officials and other stakeholders to maintain your profile in policy and funding discussions, and fully engaged with the current spending review to this effect.

It is a thoroughly enjoyable privilege to Chair the National Association and to celebrate and advocate the outstanding value and work of AONBs. I remain impressed by how much is achieved with such modest cost by each and every partnership. We have a valuable offer to society and governments but can only deliver with resources. I am particularly inspired by my Board and staff who work unstintingly to enable the National Association to have truly national impact on our members' behalf. In fact the National Association staff have more than met the challenges of Covid and lockdown. They have excelled in keeping all priorities and programmes of work moving forward and offered encouragement and support to others in these truly testing of times

Philip Hygate FRSA
Chairman

Item 6 – Financial Report FY 2019-20

Report to	The Annual General Meeting of the National Association for AONBs
Subject	NAAONB Financial Report for year ending 31 st March 2020
Date	19 th November 2020
Author	James Williamson (Honorary Treasurer)
Purpose	For information and agreement

The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) “Accounting and Reporting by Charities” issued in March 2005.

These financial statements (distributed separately) have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The accounts show a surplus of £12,319 (not including restricted surplus) for the year ended 31st March 2019.

On approval by the membership at the AGM, the Accounts will be submitted to Companies House and the Charities Commission.

Item 7 - Chief Executive's report to the AGM for the year to date 2020/21

Report to	The Annual General Meeting of the National Association for AONBs
Subject	CEO's Report of Work
Date	19 th November 2020
Author	Howard Davies, Chief Executive
Purpose	For information

This year has focused on the delivery of an interim business plan designed to bridge the gap between this strategic planning cycle and the next. With uncertainty over the outcome of the Glover Review in England, an imminent Comprehensive Spending Review, and the unexpected global pandemic, hindsight has validated our decision to take this approach.

The outgoing strategic plan highlighted several high-level challenges for the National Association:

Devolution and the complexity associated with working within and across different national political and legislative frameworks. Our challenge was to identify where and how to focus limited resources to best effect, how to generate political support, and how to access funding to drive the work of the charity in Wales. Working closely with the AONB partnerships in Wales we helped unlock a package of measures designed to increase the level of parity between AONBs and National Parks, including a grant to the NAAONB to support the employment of a Wales Development Officer. This post has proved crucial in strengthening collaboration across AONBs in Wales and has allowed us to renegotiate the way we work in Wales. This post has enabled us to drive forward a Wales specific work programme that both informs, and is informed by, parallel programmes of work in England. Enhanced devolution has increased the richness of thinking and the creativity of approach across the AONB Family. We have not had resources to drive work in Northern Ireland, but this will be considered in the production of the next strategic plan.

Public sector reform, and increasing competition for public funds, continues to be a significant driver for the NAAONB. We continue to place great weight on working differently and supporting collaboration between AONB teams. This year this has included the conclusion of the Taking the Lead programme, and the development of a new collaborative programme of work, funded by AONB teams in England and co-ordinated by the NAAONB. Of course, effective collaboration has also taken place outside of these programmes and includes the work to deliver on the Colchester Declaration and to progress our collective approach to employing art in the landscape as a means to further the AONB purpose. Our collaboration around nature recovery includes a deepening relationship with Natural England, with the support of whom we now employ a Nature Recovery Coordinator. This post will help provide the resource required centrally to support the delivery of the Colchester Declaration and engage productively with the National Park Authorities who are employing a counterpart through National Parks England.

Withdrawal from the European Union has presented us with several challenges and opportunities. We have worked hard to ensure that emerging domestic legislation reflects the interests of AONB partnerships and conservation boards and have worked with others to optimise opportunities for AONBs, including advocating for strengthening the duty of regard to the AONB purpose(s). The NAAONB also supported an amendment to include reference to landscape in the Agriculture Bill. The purpose of this, and its associated advocacy, was to position the AONB and National Park management plans central to any post-Brexit agricultural support mechanism and facilitate the targeting of support payments to help conserve and enhance natural beauty. Our collective response to government,

through the Farming for the Nation document resulted in the funding of a programme of Tests and Trials designed to inform ELMS. Whilst these have not been without challenge, they are providing valuable data and insight to government, and further securing the role of AONB partnerships and conservation boards in supporting a more integrated approach to agricultural support. In addition, the NAAONB has been awarded a contract to deliver an advocacy and training programme for designated landscape staff, working with AONB and National Park teams across England.

In addition to tackling these high-level challenges, the NAAONB has worked to support discussions resulting from the UK Government's Landscape Review. We have continued to provide data, evidence, and insight to inform discussion and ensure that decisions are made based on a sound understanding of how the AONB Family and the NAAONB operates. We have devoted significant time to advocating for, what we believe, will be the best outcome for AONBs.

We have also strengthened our relationship with Natural England, initially coming together around a collaborative approach to nature recovery, but more recently widening this commitment through a joint statement with Natural England and National Parks England that reaffirms our intention to work together to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Natural England has already brought this commitment to life by providing funding to the NAAONB for the employment of a national Nature Recovery Coordinator who will support the delivery of the Colchester Declaration. Our work with the National Parks also continues apace, with regular meetings and action planning happening around areas of shared strategic interest.

The NAAONB has continued to grow its ability to celebrate AONBs and natural beauty. We have maintained our relationship with Simon Armitage, the Poet Laureate, and extended this relationship with the arts to include collaborative work with The Poetry School. Co-ordinating the energy and enthusiasm across the AONB Family to support The Laurel and Ginkgo prizes has improved our reach, relevance, and impact, and will help us explore new ways of bringing landscape to a new audience.

With regards new audiences, we are currently supporting a national conversation to explore how we become more inclusive in the ways we operate. This is not just a response to the moral and ethical imperative, and the fact that AONBs are designated by the nation for the nation, but in order to drive the necessary innovation, creativity, and challenge upon which effective governance relies. This is a difficult, but necessary, conversation and we are grateful to those external partners working so actively with us to support us in our desire for change.

Covid 19, and the associated response, has impacted on the NAAONB as it has many other eNGOs. Our sources of unrestricted income were centred on our National Conference, Lead Officer meetings, workshops, and the Chairmen's Conference, all of which have necessarily been cancelled. However, this has given us an opportunity to reconsider how we might run events in the future, and how we can best utilise online platforms, reducing our carbon footprint and widening the potential audience for our work. We have invested in exploring options, and will soon be rolling out a carefully designed online platform that will allow us to run interactive events online. This facility will also be made available to AONB Partnerships and conservation boards for use at the local and regional level.

Importantly, we have made great efforts to support AONB teams over what has been a difficult year. We have opened up conversations on Basecamp that have been designed to bring people together, understand better how people are coping, and create a sense of unity during a period which, for many, has been one of enforced isolation. We have increased our commitment to working on a one to one basis with lead officers and other staff, and have made a concerted effort to lead from a position of principles and values.

As ever, I am immensely proud of what we achieve with such a small staff team and would like to publicly thank them all, whether employed directly or working on a contractual basis. We really could not do this work without you. I am also grateful to those of you that regularly step up and help deliver on national challenges. This pool of national leaders is growing, and collective action has become 'the way we do things round here'. This culture will serve AONBs well as we step up to future challenges, and places the AONB Family in a markedly different place to where we were ten years ago.

Howard Davies
NAAONB
21.10.20

Item 8 - Review of Memorandum and Articles of Association

Report to The Annual General Meeting of the National Association for AONBs
Subject Review of Memorandum and Articles of Association
Date 19th November 2020
Author James Williamson, Honorary Treasurer
Purpose For information and agreement

RECOMMENDATION

- The membership approves the replacement of clauses 8.5 and 8.6 in the NAAONB Memorandum and Articles of Association

At the most recent NAAONB board meeting significant discussion was given to the Memorandum and Articles of Association (distributed separately). This governing document is reviewed periodically and the Board has decided to carry out a thorough review over the next calendar year. This will be reported at the next AGM in 2021.

The Board also reached a decision to propose immediate changes to clauses 8.5 and 8.6 as the current wording is confusing and ambiguous.

The Board's recommendation is to delete the current clause 8.5 - (One third (or the number nearest one third) of the Trustees must retire at each AGM, those longest in office retiring first and the choice between any of equal service being made by drawing lots) and 8.6 - A retiring Trustee who remains qualified may be reappointed for a maximum of two consecutive three year terms of office

and replace these with:

8.5 Trustees will be appointed for an initial term of a maximum of three years and at the end of this first term shall retire and be eligible for re-election for an additional three years and at the end of their second term they shall retire and be eligible for re-election to a third three year period. At the end of their third three year term they cannot stand again for re-election

Item 9 - Membership Rates for Individual Lifetime Membership

Report to The Annual General Meeting of the National Association for AONBs
Subject Membership rates for Individual Lifetime Membership
Date 19th November 2020
Author Howard Davies, Chief Executive
Purpose For information and agreement

RECOMMENDATION

- The membership endorses the recommendation to create a new category of NAAONB Lifetime Membership at £150 one off payment

Following interest in individual lifetime membership, the NAAONB has decided to offer a new category of lifetime membership which will be available to individuals wishing to join the NAAONB. We have researched methodologies for determining life-time membership costs and none appear appropriate for our situation. As a result we are proposing a one-off payment of £150 that would then entitle the member to the regular membership benefits (part of AONB Network collaborative forum, discounted places on training/conference, vote at the AGM). Please note we have, to date, only received one expression of interest.

The suggested fee is £150.00.

Item 10 - Election of Trustees and appointment of auditors

Report to The Annual General Meeting of the National Association for AONBs
Subject Election of Trustees and appointment of auditors
Date 19th November 2020
Author Howard Davies, Chief Executive
Purpose For information and agreement

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The membership endorses the recommendation of trustees to reappoint Whittingham Riddell as the independent examiner of the NAAONB accounts

One trustee must resign at this AGM.

- Nick Holliday (co-opted 2019)

One trustee is voluntarily retiring at this AGM

- James Williamson (elected October 2016)

Trustees have reviewed the charity's relationship with Whittingham Riddell Bookkeepers and recommend their reappointment as the independent examiner of the NAAONB accounts from April 2020.