

AONB Family Update - December 2018

The Glover Review of AONBs and National Parks

The NAAONB worked with AONB Lead Officers, staff, elected members, and key stakeholders to form a national response to the Glover Review of AONBs and National Parks. We believe our response offers a good balance of recognition and challenge and will help the review panel better imagine the huge potential of the AONB designation if its future is framed within the right policy framework and support mechanisms. Our response can be found [here](#).

Please use this document to help inform the debate as it reaches its conclusion in the autumn of 2019.

Valued and Resilient landscapes in Wales

Following the publication of the Valued and Resilient policy statement by Welsh Government, the NAAONB has worked with AONB Lead Officers in Wales, Natural Resources Wales, and Welsh Government to address issues of disparity between AONBs and National Parks. We have agreed a set of proposals to address many of these issues and are currently awaiting a Ministerial decision on taking them further. We hope to be able to report on the outcome of this in early 2019.

Farming for the Nation tests and trials

The NAAONB submitted to Defra the AONB Family proposals for a post Brexit Environmental Land Management Scheme “Farming for the Nation: AONBs as test beds for a new Environmental Land Management Scheme” which can be found [here](#). This proposal included reference to nine tests and trials within AONBs. Defra has since indicated that they would like to take our proposal forward for further development, as it aligns with current ELM priorities and will support government policy development.

This is a significant step towards a better post- CAP mechanism for supporting farmers and landowners. Please use this document to help strengthen the crucial link between AONB management plans and future farming support.

The Agriculture Bill amendment

The NAAONB has worked hard, with significant support from the AONB Family, to enable the tabling of what we consider to be a crucial amendment to the Agriculture Bill. This proposed amendment has been tabled by Neil Parish MP for Tiverton and Honiton and seeks to facilitate future farming support being directed towards activity that helps improve landscape quality. The amendment, if incorporated, would then ensure that the mechanics of the bill are aligned with the delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan with regard to landscape enhancement.

Please raise awareness of the importance of this proposed amendment with your local parliamentarians.

Taking the Lead

In August the NAAONB secured, in the form of an HLF Resilient Heritage award, around £165,000 towards a £200,000 project that would radically shape the NAAONB as a Charity and change how staff working in AONBs would work collaboratively in the future. The Future Landscapes project started in October and will run until December 2019. There are two elements Taking the Lead, a staff development programme, and a Review of the Governance and Sustainability of the NAAONB.

Taking the Lead started by providing the 40 staff taking part with Lumina Spark Psychometric profiles based upon their own self-assessment. They then attended a series of regional workshops to guide them through how they could use their “Lumina Portraits” to enhance the way they worked and how they worked with others.

After that there were a series of focus groups to identify the critical issues facing the AONB sector.

In the New Year there will a formal launch of the Taking the Lead and Topic Working Groups will be set up to start to work on activities that will provide greater resilience to AONBs individually and collectively. Topic Working Groups will specifically be tasked with developing tools and finding solutions that will better position the AONB network to respond to the rapidly changing context.

NAAONB governance review

The consultancy, Matthews Associates, have been commissioned, also as part of the HLF Resilient Heritage award, to undertake a Review of the Governance and Sustainability of the NAAONB. They started their work in November and as one of their first activities they ran a workshop for NAAONB Trustees. In the coming months they will be making contact with members and partners as they formulate recommendations and actions for the NAAONB. The ultimate objective is to develop the

NAAONB into a charity with the right purposes, the right governance and having the right people to oversee and deliver activity. This will be critical to securing the longer-term success for our protected landscapes. Matthews Associates are due to report in June 2019.

NaturAdapt

The NAAONB is supporting the Europarc Federation’s NaturAdapt project. The aim of the project is to help protected area managers adopt new adaptive planning and governance tools that help them account for Climate Change. Amongst other things, this project will help develop the methods, tools and services that will enable landscape managers to perform climate change vulnerability assessment and develop adaptation plans for protected areas. Involvement in the project starts with the completion of an online survey.

If you want to be involved, please complete the online survey which can be found [here](#), by January 11th 2019.

Biodiversity 2020 - Outcome 1c

The NAAONB has been working with Natural England to bring you a package of support to help you deliver more for nature and people through an ecosystem services approach. So far this has included free support from Bowfell consultancy for 12 AONBs to develop their Ecosystem Approach Checklist, and a free one-day workshop held in London on 15 November. Webinars and two further workshops are planned for February and March on topics that will help you understand how our work can contribute to the emerging Nature Recovery Network for England.

Do sign up for these events as they are announced on Basecamp.

Housing in AONBs

As a response to the Government's proposals in "Fixing our Broken Housing Market" the NAAONB has prepared a [paper](#) summarising how AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards work with local planning authorities to help address housing and other development needs in their areas through:

- their statutory Management Plans
- their convening powers
- the broad range of specialist expertise available within their Teams
- understanding their local landscapes (its character, sensitivities and capacity for accommodating change)
- awareness of the key pressures for change, such as, demographic changes and the needs of local communities, the requirements of visitors, and changes to farming, land management practices and the rural economy.

This will be shared with Government in the early New Year. Please use it to inform the debate about housing in AONBs.

Landscapes for Life Conference 2019

It is always with great anticipation that we look forward to the next Landscape for Life Conference. 2019 is no exception, with 70 years of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act to celebrate, and ample opportunity to share knowledge, learn from each other, and inspire others over the contemporary value of the AONB designation and the wonderful landscapes they represent. The 2019 conference will be held over the 9-11th July in Colchester, Essex with the support of the Dedham Vale AONB and the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.

Please do show your support for the AONB Family and ensure you hold the dates.

Staffing update

On December 14th Jill Smith, our Communications and Events Manager, retired after a long career with the National Association for AONBs. We are currently reviewing our national advocacy and communication's function and intend to recruit to a new role in early 2019. This will be an exciting opportunity for a talented person with an interest in promoting the work of the AONB Family to join the national team.

Please watch this space for further information.