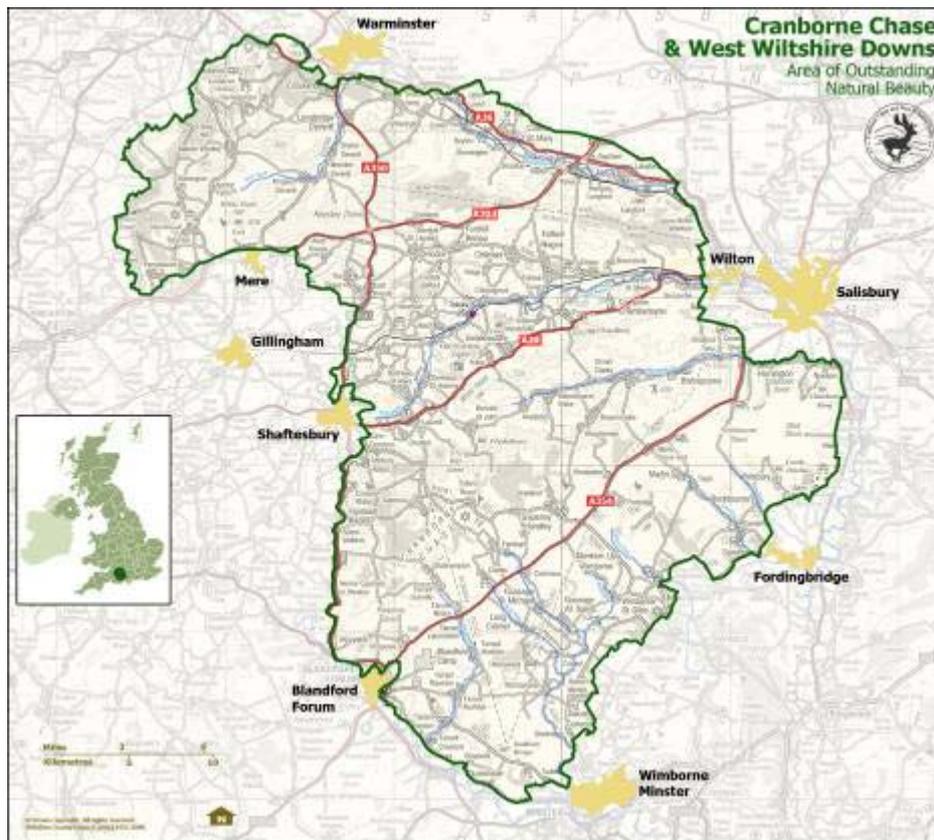


## Appendix 1

### Annual Report 2013/14 (First draft and text only version. Report still in preparation)

#### Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs

The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB stretches from Wimborne in the south east to Warminster in the north, covering an area of 981 sq. kms (379 sq. miles). It extends across the rolling plateau of Cranborne Chase to the steep chalk escarpments which lead down into the lush valleys of the River Nadder and the Vale of Wardour, then runs up again onto the chalk of the West Wiltshire Downs, until the Wylde Valley forms the northern boundary.



The AONB is a deeply rural area with scattered villages and narrow roads. The AONB comprises all or part of 104 parishes and has a resident population of approximately 33,000.

Visit the AONB website to find out more [www.cwwdaonb.org.uk](http://www.cwwdaonb.org.uk)

#### **AONB team and Structure**

2012-13 the AONB team has one new project staff member joining us in the office and the compliment is now as follows:

Linda Nunn	FT	AONB Director
David Blake	FT	Project Officer
Richard Burden	PT	Landscape and Planning Officer
Anne Carney	PT	Funding & Partnerships Officer

Nicky Matthews PT Communications Officer  
 Shirley Merrick PT Support Officer  
 Jo Taylor PT Support Officer  
 Harry Bell 2 days a week, contracted to undertake GIS work

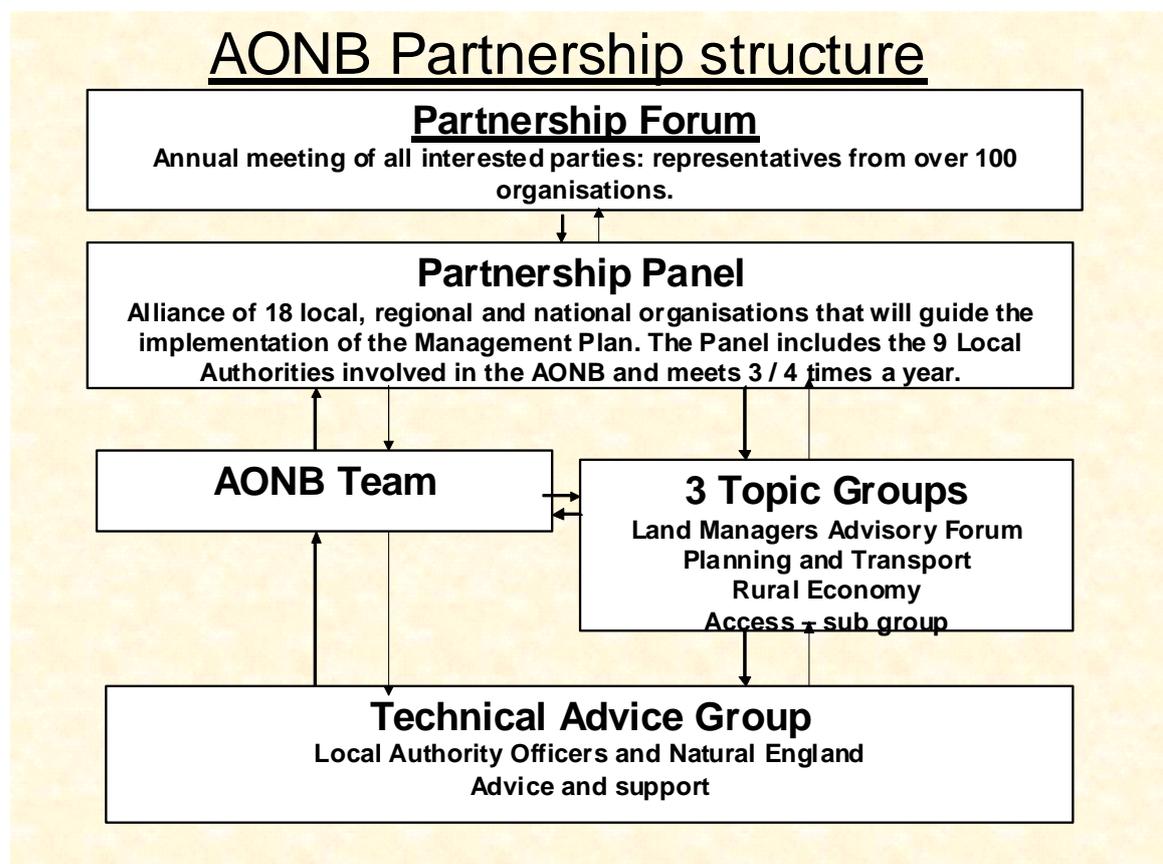
Externally funded project staff:

Tracy Adams FT Farmland Birds Project (funded by NE & Wessex Water)

Deb Beeson FT Sustainable Rural Tourism (funded by Sowing SEEDs)

Volunteer, Andy Davis, a mature student, placement from Sparsholt College.

## The AONB Partnership



The Partnership Panel has an independent Chair person and acts as the governing body for the AONB Team, meeting three times a year. It guides the implementation of the Management Plan and oversees the specialist Topic Groups that work on the annual Delivery Plan.

A Steering Group provides advice and support to the AONB Team, whose task it is to ensure targets in the Management Plan are met.

Once each year we hold an open forum that brings together the widest range of interested people to discuss and debate topical issues.

## Representation on the AONB Partnership Panel 2013-14

- Chairman: Mr James Stanford, OBE.
- Vice Chairman: Michael Mounde

One/Two Members and/or one Officer from the nine Local Authorities:

- Wiltshire Council
- Dorset County Council
- Hampshire County Council
- Somerset County Council
- East Dorset District Council
- North Dorset District Council
- New Forest District Council
- Mendip District Council
- South Somerset District Council

One representative from those organisations with a specialist, regional or national interest in the AONB:

- Natural England
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Forestry Commission
- Environment Agency

Those organisations with a local or community interest in the AONB:

- The Country Land and Business Association (1 representative)
- National Farmers Union (2 representatives)
- Community representatives from the Wiltshire and Dorset areas of the AONB (2 representatives)

Every year a team member from this AONB attends the National Association Conference.

### **Sustainable Development Fund (SDF)**

During the financial year 2013-14, the SDF awarded £4808 to 4 projects -

Scraptors Sculpture Group – Bird Henge of Giant Birds	£500
Six Penny Handley Parish Council – Deanland Telephone Kiosk	£810
RSPB Blackmoor Vale Group	£347
Woodfair	£3,151

### **Annual Forum – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at Dinton Village Hall ‘Your Views are Valued’**

Linda Nunn updated attendees on the teams work and there were 2 presentations by Sarah Dyke-Bratcher, Sowing SEEDs Leader Programme update & Michael Mounde, Chairman of the SEEDS Executive, looking forward to a potential new bid for further funding After the presentations, delegates were asked to rotate around various ‘stations’ set up in the hall and asked for input on several different initiatives, including the current AONB Management Plan review.

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## **Topic Groups**

### **Planning and Transportation**

Dorset and Hampshire highways colleagues have produced the Landscapes of Highways final draft guidance report has been edited by Richard and is with Wyvern Heritage for the insertion of illustrations. Hopefully Bill Parks or Chris Clarke will then have time to look at it from a Wiltshire perspective.

### **Core Strategies**

Wiltshire – Richard was involved with the Examination of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, primarily because the submitted document and policies do not distinguish between the nationally important and designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and ‘ordinary’ undesignated countryside. This AONB raised the issue in our consultation responses before the Core Strategy was submitted. The Planning Inspector recognises the significance of resolving this and has instructed the planning team to work with us to achieve an appropriate and effective form of words.

### **Planning & Transportation Annual Seminar 2013 held at Six Penny Handley on 15<sup>th</sup> October**

## **‘Helping us put the pieces together’ Influencing the Planning & Transportation Aspects of the AONB Management Plan 2014 - 2019**

To enable participants to appreciate the role and function of the Planning and Transportation elements of the AONB Management Plan to assist them and their organisation in responding to the consultation version of the 2014 – 2019 AONB Management Plan.

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### **Land Managers Advisory Forum**

#### **STEPPING STONES PROJECT**

We are developing the 2013 / 2014 work plan which delivered the 90 hectares of improved habitat. This included recruiting volunteers to grow plug plants that were placed into sites in the autumn of 2013 or spring of 2014. These priority sites were identified from the habitat mapping that was completed by the project last year.

#### **Ancient Tree Project**

Hampshire County Council & the Woodland Trust were the funding and delivery partners respectively, in this project. The Trust provided training for the identification and recording of ancient & ‘remarkable’ trees. Twenty volunteers of all ages received training and 150 trees recorded to date, in the Hampshire part of the AONB. It is strongly hoped that this work can be rolled out to rest of AONB & results shared with a variety of relevant organisations.

**L.M.A.F. Seminar** - held at Cecil Memorial Hall on 16<sup>TH</sup> July ‘Game Management in a Protected Landscape’

AONB Partnership supports land management, our natural environment and the rural economy.

Welcome by: Gavin Fauvel, Chair of Land Managers Advisory Forum for the AONB and Agent at Cranborne Estate and Linda Nunn, AONB Director.

Speakers were -

Teresa Dent, Chief Executive of the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) talking *about* Why wildlife management is a necessity for real species protection and Hugh Thomas, Land Agent and Chair of the Greater Exmoor Shoot Association talking about Developing a relationship between the game shooting community and a protected landscape: the experience from Exmoor.

Followed by a shoot walk conducted by Tim Hall, the Farm Manager, Head Gamekeeper Tim Potbury, with support from Mike Swan of the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT). Cranborne Estate has entered into an English Partridge restoration programme using ELS, good 'keeping' and a sympathetic arable regime.

### **Farmland Bird project**

Since the start of this financial year, 23 **farm visits** have been carried out. Seven of these involved new Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreements, one Entry Level Stewardship (ELS). Two visits were to assist farmers with bird options and one visit to discuss creating turtle dove habitat.

The farm manager at Cranborne Estate who have agreed to create some foraging habitat for small but important population of the **Turtle Dove** at nearby Martin Down National Nature Reserve.

The annual **Wessex Water** Partners Programme where all recipients of their funding get together and give a presentation of work carried out to the Board. A met with Wessex Water and Tracy who started working along the Corfe Mullen to Salisbury **Wessex Water pipeline** route, discussing proposals for biodiversity offsetting with various farmers affected by the works. A joint AONB / Wessex Water press release received good coverage by local newspapers, radio and TV.

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### **Rural Economy Group**

#### **Charitable Incorporated Organisation**

Members of the team are currently looking at the requirements for setting up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation for the AONB. This relatively new body is considered to be the most appropriate for the AONB.

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### **Other ongoing Team work**

#### **MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW**

**Arts input / illustration for the AONB Management Plan** - Following a round of public consultations for the Management Plan review the AONB team felt that further creative community input could be used to help bring this statutory document 'to life'. After discussions with the Arts Officers at Wiltshire Council it was decided that the best way to facilitate this was to engage community artists. Professional artists Ali Pretty and Richard White were commissioned to lead this project. They had just

finished leading the Walking Wiltshire's White Horses project with Wiltshire Museum and Devizes Carnival.

Richard and Ali ran four 'Outstanding Art in the Natural Environment' workshop's between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> November focussing on:

- ***rural economy and sustainability,***
- ***historic landscape***
- ***rural communities***
- ***working landscape and the natural environment***

The artists have drawn out and captured people's creative responses to the elements that make up the natural beauty of the area and distilled it down into a series of poems / illustrations and photographs (one set for each chapter heading). These should be finalised by the end of January 2014.

### **Delivery Plan 2013-14**

In the final column 'Outcomes', those actions achieved are highlighted in green, whilst those not achieved are in red. A few 'actions' are coloured both green and red, in that they have been partly achieved. Of 115 actions, 97 have been achieved/partly achieved.

The new annual Delivery Plan for 2014-15 was prepared during February. The intention is to ensure the 'outcomes' are SMARTER and more realistic in terms of staff time and other resources.

### **The Hart**

The Hart is now sent as an E-bulletin to reduce costs.

### **Fixed Point Photography**

.Apart from offering variety of photographic outcomes, the sites will also need to be readily accessible and have landowner permission.

### **Sustainable Rural Tourism**

The Sowing SEEDS funded project focused on the Nadder Valley central area of the AONB. Stretching from Wilton to Shaftesbury, this pilot area covered Tisbury (the biggest village in the AONB) and over 30+ villages between the A303 to north and A30 to south.

The project entailed working with businesses and key organisations to enhance the visitor economy of the AONB through developing tourism information, products like 10 walking and 10 cycling trails to encourage visitors to the area, and organising network events and training seminars for rural businesses to promote sustainability. A website 'Discover Nadder' was produced, by the generous contribution of the South West Wiltshire Area Board (SWWAB), to bring together the tourism information for the Nadder Valley and we became a partner of 'Our Land' project which promotes tourism across protected landscapes by putting stories of the landscape at the heart of the tourist experience. The SWWAB then offered further generous funding towards preparing walking/heritage trails within the Chalke Valley for the Sir Cecil Beaton celebrations.

## National Association of AONBs

The Association is the national voice of AONBs. It responds to national and regional initiatives on behalf of AONBs, offers training events and seminars on topical subjects and holds a high profile Annual Conference. Ongoing membership of the Association ensures Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs can input to decisions likely to affect protected landscapes at the highest level and can keep abreast of the latest ideas and progress in other AONBs.

### **Leader programme**

Initial discussions were undertaken with South Somerset and Mendip District Council officers exploring potential common ground between us.

### **WW1**

There was a meeting of interested parties regarding the potential restoration of the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment of London **military badge at Sutton Down** and advice on bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund regarding WW1 projects and signposting in the right direction. We also did mapping work for the **Wylve Valley WW1 commemoration**

**Government's Biodiversity Strategy** working in partnership with the National Association of AONBs on the delivery of this strategy

### **Game Management Research**

To develop a partnership with the RSPB, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) and academic research groups that may go on to AONBs nationally.

### **Archaeology Project**

in partnership with Salisbury Museum and University of Winchester

### **Cranborne Chase Woodfair – 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> October, Braemore House**

Another year that this event was a huge success!!

**Major exciting project in the making.....**

### **Countryside Centre**

The AONB Partnership is still very keen to establish an AONB Volunteer, Training and Visitor Centre. The concept has the support of training providers such as the agricultural colleges for Dorset, Wiltshire and Hampshire and organisations working with young people and local businesses.

This multipurpose centre will:

- Create a broad range of opportunities for volunteers
- Establish a wide suite of countryside skills training courses
- Provide interpretation, events and information for visitors
- Demonstrate renewable energy technologies and green build techniques, and in so doing...
- Increase employability
- Raise awareness and understanding of the AONB landscapes
- Provide increased access to the countryside
- Boost self-esteem, confidence, and sociability
- Showcase the reuse of historic farm buildings