

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

### ***Purpose***

To present the annual reports for 2018/19 on the achievements of the Wye Valley AONB Unit and the contracted Planning consultants for the AONB Unit.

### ***Recommendations***

That the JAC welcome the Annual Reports of AONB achievements for 2018/19

### ***Key Issues***

- The 2018/19 Annual Report on the Work Programme for the AONB Unit is appended, along with a summary financial report below.
- High standards of achievement were maintained by the AONB Unit and staffing was augmented with the Lower Wye Catchment NFM&GI Project Officer.
- The AONB Unit has levered in over £10 for every £1 of local authority contribution during 2018/19.
- Worcestershire County Council Planning department continued to provide strategic planning advice to the AONB Unit on development issues, preparing appropriate responses where necessary. The annual report for the contracted work is appended.
- The AONB Manager, on behalf of the AONB Partnership, has made a limited number of comments on Planning Applications, including on 2 adjacent to the AONB, and has been involved in more pre-application enquiries and Neighbourhood Development Plans.

### ***Reasons***

The Work Programme Report for the AONB Unit 2018/19 lists the achievements of the AONB Unit and is the basis of the AONB Partnership Annual Report. The Work Programme Report has been presented to DEFRA and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) as part of the annual grant claims to the two national government funding partners.

The continuing partnership with the Malvern Hills AONB over the use of Worcestershire County Council Planning Department has continued.

### ***Implications***

The number of planning application in 2018/19 has remained fairly close to the previous year. However the AONB Manager has responded to more pre-application enquiries and liaison with case officers. Similarly engagement with the development of Neighbourhood Development Plans has continued to increase. These are proving to be effective and robust policy documents that add a further level of protection locally to the AONB. Overall the shared contract with Worcestershire County Council Planning Department and collaboration

with the Malvern Hills AONB continues to work well, although there has not been a need for any co-ordinated approach to strategic consultations in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire during the year. It is proposed to review the arrangement towards the end of the current financial year.

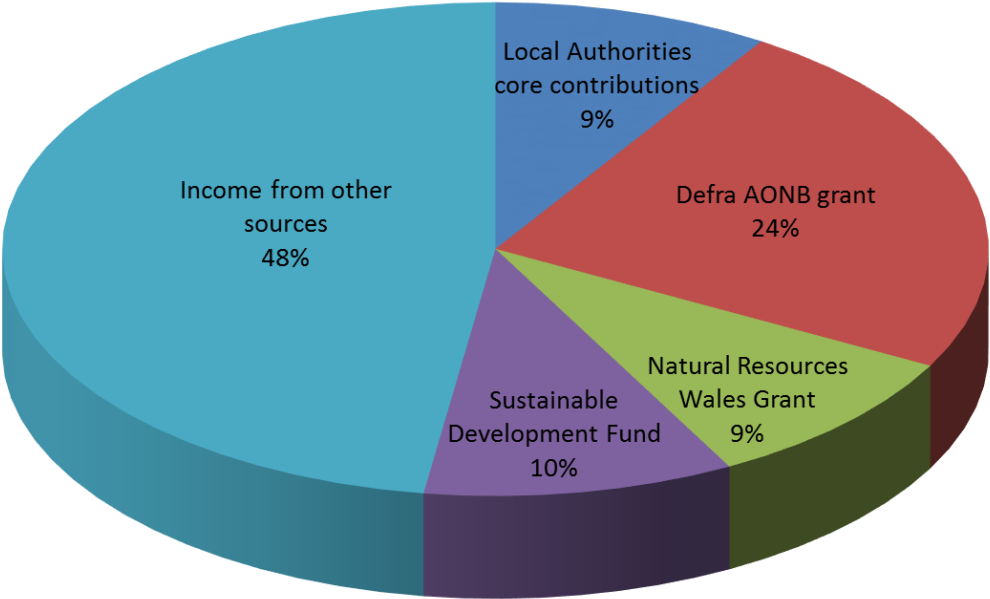
There are a number of highlights outlined in the 2018/19 Annual Report of achievements for the AONB Unit Work Programme. The Wye Valley River Festival 2018 was held, successfully engaging 32,500 people at 30 events and gaining national media coverage. The fourth cohort of Youth Rangers concluded their programme of activities and the 5<sup>th</sup> cohort was recruited, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund through the Forests' Forest Landscape Partnership. The recruitment of the Lower Wye Catchments Natural Flood Management & Green Infrastructure Project Officer enabled a new focus on land management practices in the Monmouthshire part of the AONB. A number of funding bids and collaborations were developed that will bear fruit during 2019/20.

The overall turnover of the AONB Unit was higher in 2018/19 than 2017/18 as last year's figures include the main income and expenditure of the Wye Valley River Festival 2018. The leverage of the AONB Partnership in 2017/19 means that for every £1 of local authority contribution, the AONB Unit has brought in over £10.

<b>Wye Valley AONB Unit Accounts 2018/2019</b>		<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Staff costs	194,945	201,279
	Unit Operating costs	24,334	22,541
	Core Initiatives	6,000	8,278
	AONB Projects	7,605	15,991
	Sustainable Development Fund	55,000	55,000
	Partnership projects	105,539	237,087
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>393,423</b>	<b>540,176</b>
<b>Income</b>			
	Local Authorities core contributions	50,002	49,002
	Defra AONB grant	126,234	128,405
	Natural Resources Wales Grant	52,210	50,251
	Sustainable Development Fund	55,000	55,000
	Income from other sources	109,977	257,518
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>393,423</b>	<b>540,176</b>

Wye Valley AONB Unit Accounts 2018/2019

Income Chart



Expenditure Chart

