

NAAONB UPDATE

Purpose

To advise members of activity through the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB).

FOR INFORMATION

Key Issues

- The national 'Landscapes for Life' Conference 2021 is on-line on 7th & 8th July, 'hosted' virtually by the five Devon AONBs with the theme of 'A Climate for Change - Climate Change and Nature Recovery in National Landscapes'
- The NAAONB have signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding with Natural England and National Parks England.
- The new Chief Executive of the NAAONB will be John Watkins, formerly Head of Landscapes and Outdoor Recreation at Welsh Government.
- The NAAONB Strategic Plan for 2021-2023 is published and appended.

Landscapes for Life Conference 2021

The 2020 conference was cancelled because of the pandemic. The NAAONB will be hosting its first ever online annual conference this year. It will be hosted virtually by the 5 Devon AONBs. The theme of the conference is 'A Climate for Change - Climate Change and Nature Recovery in National Landscapes' which will look at the essential role the landscape approach plays in tackling climate change and nature recovery, essentially two sides of the same coin. The programme and tickets are available through the NAAONB website here: <https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/events/landscapes-life-conference/programme>

The representatives from the Wye Valley AONB Unit attending the conference are Andrew Blake, AONB Manager, Nick Critchley, AONB Development Officer and Nickie Moore, Lower Wye Projects Officer.

Memorandum of Understanding with Natural England and National Parks England

The NAAONB has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Natural England and National Parks England to strengthen the commitment to working collaboratively to

conserve and enhance the nation's finest landscapes to bring more benefits for people and nature.

The joint statement signed by Philip Hygate, NAAONB Chair, Mike McKinley, NPE Chair and Tony Juniper, NE Chair, stating "We want to transform and strengthen the way that our three organisations work, ensuring a step change in the way that we deliver multiple and integrated benefits for people, nature and climate through our network of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. So, we have signed a Joint Agreement with the aim of working more collaboratively together to make these special areas richer in nature, accessible for all to connect with for their well-being and deliver a green recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic."

The full text is available here <https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2021/06/05/collaboration-is-key-to-delivering-more-for-nature-and-people-through-our-national-parks-and-areas-of-outstanding-natural-beauty/>

Chief Executive recruitment

The NAAONB Board have announced that John Watkins has been appointed as its new Chief Executive. John has a long career in the landscape and environment sector, starting as a Countryside Ranger with Denbighshire Countryside Service and the (then) Clwydian Range AONB. He joins the National Association in July from the Welsh Government where he is currently Head of Policy for Future Economy. Previously he was Head of Landscape and Outdoor Recreation at the Welsh Government, with responsibilities for AONBs & National Parks. He established the Future Landscapes Wales collaborative programme as part of the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales to develop shared learning and consensus on how to safeguard the nation's most beautiful landscapes. This culminated in Valued and Resilient: The Welsh Government's Priorities for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks (2018).

Strategic Plan 2021-2023

The NAAONB has produced its next Strategic Plan for 2021-2023 which is appended. The Charity's mission is to support and develop a network of ambitious AONB partnerships that have a strong collective voice and a positive impact on the places for which they care.

Background

The NAAONB is a charity that provides a strong collective voice for the UK's AONBs. It works on behalf of its membership, fostering collaboration and collective action between the 300 staff of the AONB Family, the 700 elected members that support the AONB partnerships and the many partners with whom the NAAONB does business at the local and national levels. For more information see: www.landscapesforlife.org.uk