

DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES REVIEW IN ENGLAND

Purpose

To update members on the Designated Landscapes Review in England and determine how to respond to the 'call for evidence'.

Recommendation

That the JAC welcomes the Landscapes Review call for evidence and establishes a Task Group to prepare a response by the 18th December deadline.

Key Issues

- Environment Secretary Michael Gove MP launched the Review of Designated Landscapes (National Parks and AONBs) in May, appointing Julian Glover to lead a small advisory panel.
- The advisory panel have simplified the name to the Landscapes Review and have opened a call for evidence. The 'Landscapes Review call for evidence' document is appended.
- The National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) has been leading collaboration and liaison with DEFRA and the Review panel prior to the formal consultation and call for evidence.
- It is proposed that the JAC nominate a small Task Group to collate a response to the call for evidence on behalf of the AONB Partnership, supported by the AONB Manager.

Reasons

The Review of Designated Landscapes (National Parks and AONBs) in England, now referred to as the "Landscapes Review" was launched in May, as part of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. The Review is led by the writer and journalist Julian Glover, supported by an expert panel of advisors consisting of Lord Cameron of Dillington, Jim Dixon, Jake Fiennes, Sarah Mukherjee and Dame Fiona Reynolds.

The advisory panel have been visiting National Parks and AONBs around England over the summer and talking to people who live and work in, visit and care for them. Julian Glover has met with a small group of officers and chairman from various AONBs and the NAAONB. Julian Glover also attended the NAAONB Landscapes for Life conference in July. This has helped the panel gain insights into both the opportunities and the challenges for designated landscapes. The panel are now opening a formal consultation period and call for evidence.

Implications

The Landscapes Review 'call for evidence' is appended and is also available on the DEFRA consultation website: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/land-use/landscapes-review-call-for-evidence>. It asks a series of open questions across a range of issues that is intended to allow people to set out their thoughts. There are 24 consultation questions. The deadline for responses is Tuesday 18th December 2018.

The panel will continue conversations with AONB s and interested parties as the review progresses. The panel members will be visiting more AONBs and Julian Glover is attending the Landscapes for Life Chairmen's Conference on 29th November as a keynote speaker. The panel has asked the NAAONB for a repeat meeting with DEFRA, Chairs and Chief Executives early in the New Year to have a conversation informed by the call for evidence.

The JAC has the opportunity to make a collective response to the questions. Constituent organisations and interested parties may choose to make their own responses. The NAAONB have been collating 'key asks' from the AONB partnerships and is preparing a 'prospectus' to feed into the call for evidence.

It is proposed that the JAC nominate a small Task Group to collate a response to the call for evidence. In preparation for the Task Group meeting, possibly during the week commencing 19th November, the AONB Manager can prepare and circulate an initial draft response to the questions. The AONB Manager will also attend the Landscapes for Life Chairmen's Conference on 29th November. Thereafter the response can be refined and circulated again before final sign off by the JAC Chairman &/or Task Group, for submission by the 18th December deadline.

Background

The review of National Parks and AONBs in England was announced in the DEFRA 25 Year Environment Plan. The review's purpose is to ask what might be done better, what changes could assist these areas, and whether definitions and systems, which in many cases date back to their original creation 70 years ago, are still sufficient. Weakening or undermining existing protections or geographic scope are not considered.

The Review panel is to report during 2019, the 70th anniversary year of the formative National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949. For more information on the Review of Designated Landscapes in England visit

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>