

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 Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB) Chairman’s Conference and AGM is on 29th November 2018 and will focus on “The Designated Landscapes Review in England”. The AONB Manager will attend.
- The national AONB ‘Landscapes for Life’ Conference, in Canterbury in July, was attended by the AONB Manager and AONB Community Links Officer.
- The Wye Valley River Festival won the Bowland Award at the ‘Landscapes for Life’ Conference.
- The NAAONB has received a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Resilient Heritage grant of £164,300 to help develop organisational and professional capacity across the AONB Family through a Future Landscapes Project.
- The AONB Development Officer and the AONB Community Links Officer will both participate in the professional training ‘Taking the Lead’ programme as part of the Future Landscapes Project.
- Outstanding Week was 15th – 23rd September 2018 with 65 events held nationally.

NAAONB Chairman’s Conference

The Landscapes for Life Chairmen’s Conference which will take place on Thursday 29th November 2018 in London. The programme is attached. Andrew Blake, AONB Manager, will attend on behalf of the JAC Chairman and represent the Wye Valley AONB Partnership.

This year’s Chairmen’s Conference will focus on “The Designated Landscapes Review in England” and Defra’s 25 Year Environment Plan. Lord Gardiner, Under Secretary of State for Environment, will be keynote speaker again, along with Julian Glover, chair of the Landscapes Review panel.

The one-day conference will provide a timely and valuable opportunity to optimise collaboration as part of the Landscapes Review call for evidence. It will also look at the UK’s Designated Landscape Family’s work as dynamic living landscapes that underpin the economy and the health and wellbeing of society.

Landscapes for Life Conference 24th -26th July, Canterbury

The annual National AONB 'Landscapes for Life' Conference took place at the University of Kent, Canterbury from 24th -26th July in association with the Kent Downs AONB. Andrew Blake, AONB Manager and Sarah Sawyer, AONB Community Links Officer, both attended. The theme was "Shaping the Long View" with keynote speakers including Merrick Denton-Thompson, President of the Landscape Institute, and Julian Glover, Chair of the Review of Designated Landscapes in England. The AONB Manager also gave a presentation on the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales. There were also field trip options. Andrew Blake's trip looked at 'New crops and new landscapes' visiting several different fruit farms and new vineyards, considering the landscape impacts and opportunities of these new and novel crops, especially in the context of Brexit and climate change. Sarah visited the North Downs Way National Trail and how the 'Pilgrimage story' using access and tourism can support walking services and experience to secure investment in the landscape and its heritage features. The conference is an excellent networking opportunity with plenty of informed, enthused and energised debate and sharing of experiences and advice.

The Wye Valley River Festival won The Bowland Award at the national Landscapes for Life conference, voted on by AONBs across England and Wales. The Award recognises a best project, best practice or outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There were 6 projects nominated and voted on by the Family of AONBs.

HLF Resilient Heritage grant - Future Landscapes Project.

The NAAONB has received Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) support in the form of a £164,300 Resilient Heritage grant. The grant, made possible by National Lottery players, will fund the Future Landscapes Project. The project will explore how the AONB Family and its national charity can become more resilient and better prepared to address strategic challenges. It contributes to the NAAONB ambition to develop organisational and professional capacity to respond to changing political, policy and fiscal challenges. This positive development will help ensure that the AONB Family can continue to help support the UK's treasured national landscapes and ensure their contribution to the economy and well-being of UK society.

The Future Landscapes Project consists of two complementary elements:

- A review of the sustainability and governance of the NAAONB Charity, investigating the remit, structures, resourcing and accountability of the organisation,
- A professional and personal development programme, 'Taking the Lead' that will be delivered to a cohort of AONB staff to help develop greater collaborative working across the AONB Family. Participants, from across the 38 AONBs in England and Wales, will receive personality profiling and coaching. Topic working groups will then be established to address complex problems facing the AONBs.

Nick Critchley, Wye Valley AONB Development Officer and Sarah Sawyer, Wye Valley AONB Community Links Officer will both participate in the 'Taking the Lead' programme. They join the national cohort of 40 AONB staff who will be taken through a series of workshops on collaborative working and constructive enquiry over the next 9 months. Participants will cascade their learnings into their local teams to improve the resilience of the AONB Family. Through Topic Working Groups, participants will concentrate on finding

solutions to some of the most pressing challenges facing AONBs today, and will report back at the Landscapes for Life Conference 2019 to start implementing recommendations.

The support from the National Lottery will help deepen the collaborative working culture across the AONB network of national landscapes. This will enable both the NAAONB Charity and the AONB Family to be well positioned to take full advantage of the opportunities that emerge from the Landscapes Review in England.

Outstanding Week

This is the AONB Family's week (and a bit) long programme of events to help people reconnect with nature by enjoying and being inspired by the UK's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). This year 65 events took place across 19 AONBs from Saturday 15th – Sunday 23rd September.

Background

The NAAONB is a charity that provides a strong collective voice for the UK's AONBs. Its objectives are to promote the conservation and enhancement of AONBs, advance the education, understanding and appreciation by the public of AONBs, and promote the efficiency and effectiveness of those promoting or representing AONBs, other Protected Areas and those areas for which designation might be pursued. It takes a collaborative and partnership-based approach to working with its membership and other organisations at a national level to achieve shared goals. For more information see: www.landscapesforlife.org.uk