

NAAONB UPDATE

Purpose

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

FOR INFORMATION

Key Issues

- The AONB Manager attended the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB) Chairman's Conference and AGM on 28th November 2019 which focused on taking the Glover Review forward.
- The 'Taking the Lead' programme of professional training for staff has concluded which both the AONB Development Officer and AONB Community Links Officer participated in.
- The AONB Manager attended the AONB Lead Officers' meeting in Birmingham on 10th & 11th February.
- A consortium of 11 AONBs are participating in DEFRA 'Tests & Trials' for the new post Brexit agri-environment Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS).
- NAAONB staff facilitated a joint training day for the Wye Valley & Shropshire Hills AONB teams.
- The annual National AONB 'Landscapes for Life' Conference will take place in Exeter on 7th - 9th July.

NAAONB Chairman's Conference

The Landscapes for Life Chairmen's Conference took place on Thursday 28th November 2019 in London, during the pre-election purdah. Andrew Blake, AONB Manager, attended on behalf of the JAC Chairman and the Wye Valley AONB Partnership. The focus was on the Glover Review in the context of the forthcoming General Election. The keynote speaker was Maxwell Ayamba, Environmental Journalist and founder of the Sheffield Environment Movement. He challenged attendees with the observation that the majority of Black & Ethnic Minority (BME) people have not heard about AONBs, what they stand for and what they do, while those managing them have done little to promote these beautiful landscapes to BME communities. Howard Davies, NAAONB CEO stated that AONB Partnerships, "as stewards of the nation's outstanding landscapes, should do all we can to ensure we are actively removing barriers that both intentionally and unintentionally stop people benefiting from the full value that beautiful landscapes offer". Philip Hygate NAAONB Chairman explained that National Parks and AONBs have failed to live up to the post-war vision of what these special places were created for, adding "we want to ensure the Glover Review will serve as the beginning to start addressing this issue of social injustice of national landscapes as places accessible only for the privileged". There was good attendance from both AONBs and

National Parks and robust discussions ensued about the future of Designated Landscapes in England and Wales.

Taking the Lead

Forty staff from AONBs across the country, including the AONB Development Officer and the AONB Community Links Officer, have benefited from the Taking the Lead programme. The objective was to strengthen the professional expertise within AONB teams and the AONB Network. Participants undertook self and group assessments, attended a series of workshops on collaborative working and established Topic Working Groups to address issues and provide tools to enhance the resilience of AONBs individually and collectively.

The AONB Manager sat on the NAAONB steering group for the Taking the Lead - Future Landscapes programme, which also included a Review of the Governance and Sustainability of the NAAONB. The Final report for the whole programme will be published shortly.

Farming for the Nation tests and trials

The NAAONB is coordinating 11 AONBs in running a collaborative test and trial for the new Environmental Land Management Scheme. DEFRA is running 44 tests and trials across the country in preparation for the post-CAP agri-environment scheme for supporting farmers and landowners once the UK leaves the EU. For further information see

<https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/2915/5586/2985/Farming-for-the-Nation-AONBs-as-test-beds-for-a-new-Environmental-Land-Management-Scheme.pdf>

Lead Officers' Meeting

The Wye Valley AONB Manager was one of 28 AONB Lead Officers who met in Birmingham on 10th & 11th February with the NAAONB team. Key topics discussed were; the Glover Review and what is happening and what next; the importance of delivering as a collaborative AONB network; and prioritising action and areas of work for the coming year. These were broken down into Support Collaborative Activity; Climate Change; Connecting people to Nature; Nature Recovery; and Planning Policy.

Landscapes for Life Conference 7th - 9th July in Exeter

Details for the 2020 Landscape for Life Conference are yet to be released. However, Devon has 4 AONBs and 2 National Parks is also hosting 10 of the DEFRA Test & Trials.

Joint training

On 29th January, the five core staff from the Wye Valley AONB Unit, along with the Wye Valley River Festival Director and Desperate Men, had a joint training day with the Shropshire Hills AONB team facilitated by NAAONB staff. All involved had undertaken Lumina Spark personal profiles. The training focused on how to make best use of the person information both within team-working and individually.

Background

The NAAONB is the charity that provides a 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. It takes a collaborative 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