

ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose

To present the annual report figures for 2021/22 and note the delay in the completion of the tabulated achievements for the Wye Valley AONB Unit.

Recommendations

That the JAC welcomes the Annual Report figures and awaits the finalised Annual Report on AONB achievements for 2021/22.

Key Issues

- The 2021/22 Annual Report figures are outlined below.
- There is a delay in finalising the full report tabulating the achievements of the year against the annual Work Programme. This will be presented to the next JAC.
- The AONB Unit has levered in over £16 for every £1 of local authority contribution during 2021/22.

Reasons

The Annual Work Programme Report for the AONB Unit is usually presented to the July JAC. However the Report is not yet complete due to other work commitments. The Work Programme Report will be finalised and presented to DEFRA, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the JAC at next meeting in November.

Implications

There have been a number of challenges in 2021/22 including the obvious on-going disruption caused by the Covid lockdowns and restrictions. However, there were some significant achievements too, that will be outlined in the Annual Report for the AONB Unit Work Programme. The Lower Wye Project Officer co-ordinated further Japanese Knotweed control and more farm plans were delivered by the seconded Catchment Advisor. Natural Flood Management (NFM) and riparian trees works were funded on a number of landholdings. A Lower Wye Valley Nature Recovery Officer was recruited. The Lower Wye Nature Networks bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund was successful. AONB volunteers and Youth Rangers continued to meet whenever possible, until sadly the Community Links Officer left in December. The Monmouthshire Wye Valley AONB Villages study progressed with Arup. The AONB 50th Anniversary programme concluded with regular 50@50 Walks and the What is Natural Beauty? symposium.

The overall turnover of the AONB Unit increased in 2021/22, mostly accounted for by the income and expenditure of the DEFRA Farming in Protected Landscape programme and the Welsh Government Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding. The leverage of the AONB Partnership in 2021/22 means that for every £1 of local authority contribution, the AONB Unit has brought in over £16.

Wye Valley AONB Unit Accounts	2020/21	2021/22
Expenditure	£	£
Staff costs	206,732	243,843
Unit Operating costs	20,623	23,260
AONB Initiatives	18,055	15,970
Farming in Protected Landscapes	~	96,525
Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places	194,700	233,000
Sustainable Development Fund	100,000	100,000
Partnership projects	56,162	91,525
TOTAL	596,272	804,123
Income		
Local Authorities core contributions	49,002	49,182
Defra AONB grant	137,645	132,443
Welsh Government	~	75,000
Natural Resources Wales Grant	49,600	45,500
Farming in Protected Landscapes	~	96,525
Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places	194,700	227,500
Sustainable Development Fund	100,000	100,000
Income from other sources	65,324	77,973
TOTAL	596,272	804,123

