

## PRE-CONSULTATION DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

### ***Purpose***

To present the pre-consultation draft framework for the Wye Valley National Landscape Management Plan and the revised programme.

### ***Recommendations***

That the JAC

- A. Provides initial comment and feedback on the pre-consultation draft framework for the Wye Valley National Landscape Management Plan before 31<sup>st</sup> March.
- B. Endorses the revised programme for the review and publication of the National Landscape Management Plan.
- C. Recognise that the revised Management Plan is unlikely to be finalised and adopted in 2026, and therefore set the new Management Plan for 2027-2032.

### ***Key Issues***

- The proposed Vision for the National Landscape Management Plan 2026-2031 was agreed at the last meeting.
- The pre-consultation draft framework for the revised Wye Valley National Landscape Management Plan is appended and comments can be accommodated if received by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.
- The Public Consultation Draft Management Plan will then be finalised and published with a 10 week consultation period, including 3 public events.
- There is some slippage in the review programme with the likelihood that the new Management Plan will not be formally approved by the Local Authorities and JAC before the end of 2026. Therefore the 5 year period of the new Management Plan should be realigned to cover 2027-2032.
- The current Wye Valley AONB Management Plan (2021-2026) will remain valid until the new National Landscape Management Plan is adopted.

### ***Reasons***

Sections 89-90 of the Countryside & Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 require local authorities to review adopted and published AONB Management Plans at intervals of not more than

five years. The CRoW Act also requires local authorities to 'act jointly' in the preparation and review of AONB Management Plans.

### ***Implications***

The appended document 'Wye Valley National Landscape Management Plan Framework Structure and draft policies for review' includes the proposed Special Qualities and Policies for the new Management Plan. These have been reviewed and rationalised with the Special Qualities condensed from 27 down to 18, and the Policies reduced from 71 Strategic Objectives to 50 Policies, across the Themes of Nature, Climate, Water, People and Place. Under each Theme is a series of Outcomes for the Plan period, with respective Policies.

The five-theme structure reflects Natural England's and Natural Resource Wales' respective Management Plan guidance, aligns with DEFRA's Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework, and ensures cross-border policy responsibilities are addressed. Water is treated as a standalone theme to reflect the central importance of the River Wye and catchment pressures for the National Landscape and its communities.

Appended below is the revised programme for the Management Plan review. There have been further delays in the preparation of the draft Management Plan due to other work pressures within the Wye Valley National Landscape Team. The attached updated timetable identifies that completion of the Management Plan review is unlikely to conclude before the end of 2026. However, the statutory 5 year review of the Plan is underway and the current Management Plan (2021-2026) will remain valid until the new Plan is formally adopted by the Local Authorities and JAC. Therefore the 5 year period of the new Management Plan should be realigned to cover 2027-2032.

The Public Consultation process will last for 10 weeks and include 3 open events at different locations and times across the National Landscape. This will enable a range of stakeholders to engage face to face as part of the public consultation.

### ***Background***

The CRoW Act 2000 (Sections 89 and 90) require local authorities to review AONB Management Plans within five years of the publication of a Plan. The Management Plan formulates their policy for the management of their AONB and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it.

The current Management Plan 2021-2026 is available on the National Landscape website <https://www.wyevalley-nl.org.uk/caring-for-wye-valley-aonb/management-plans/>