

## ITEM 3

### Item 3. Update on the AONB Management Plan Review and Current Work Programme

<b>Item for:</b>	Information
<b>Report by:</b>	AONB Team
<b>Financial implications:</b>	None
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>The Board notes progress made on the Management Plan review and work programme.</b>

#### Core Function A: AONB Management Plan Review

- 3.1 As discussed at the last Board meeting, work on the formal review of the AONB Management Plan, as required under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, has commenced. Progress so far includes:
- Two meetings of the Management Plan Review Working Group;
  - Agreement of the time table for the review process with review working group and steering group;
  - Creation of a web page on the AONB web site to act as a hub for information on the review;
  - Completion of a Statement of Stakeholder Involvement outlining how people can get involved in the review, currently being distributed and available on the web site. A revised database has been created to ensure key stakeholders identified through the Local Development Framework processes have been included;
  - Review of all chapters of the current management plan (transport chapter will be reviewed 25<sup>th</sup> February) using Review Working Group or specialist working groups where they exist. Outcomes of these sessions are being collated into a review report to be circulated to partners for the expediency consultation in due course;
  - Scoping work for the Strategic Environmental Assessment nearing completion for consultation with statutory agencies;
  - A series of questions have been included in the Dorset County Council Citizen's Panel which will help inform policy development for the AONB. This is circulated to 3000 Dorset residents.

#### Core Function B: Communication and Awareness-Raising

- 3.2 Communications this year have become more focused on project work and issues important to the AONB landscape, working with others to get these messages across. Key outputs have included:
- **Print:** We have worked closely with Dorset Countryside to remodel the **Dorset Coast & Countryside** magazine, taking on the editorial role to develop features relevant both to the partners and readership. In 2007/8 it provided a useful vehicle to feature our work on Pastures New, Woodlink, the South Dorset Ridgeway, as well as exploring AONB issues such as coastal management and climate change. **Dorset Magazine** has continued to request AONB articles, featuring Rural Roads, Pastures New, Woodlink and a general review of the AONB this year, while Dorset Life commissioned an article looking at protected landscapes and the AONB designation. Supplies of the **Discover the Dorset AONB** leaflet ran out this year, and work is underway to redesign and refresh this popular leaflet, with the help of useful feedback from TICs.
  - **Website:** Work has begun to upgrade the website so that it can be the hub of communications for the Partnership, particularly important for the Management Plan Review process. Revolving images have been built into an otherwise static homepage, to

signpost people to key sections on the website and to highlight consultations, which worked well for the Landscape Character Assessment and Woodland Strategy.

- **Events:** We have been active participants in key environmental events relevant to the AONB. At Lyme Regis Fossil Festival, we commissioned an artist to work with children to explore what climate change could mean to the local landscape. At the Bridport Food Festival, we developed a display linking food to quality landscapes and we also worked alongside DCC Library Service and Dorset Wildlife Trust to run the Breathing Places event at Wareham Library.
- **Regional & National Communications:** Working with South West Protected Landscapes Forum, we produced a 2008 calendar focussing on work of AONB Partnerships and the contribution we make to the region. Although primarily targeted at local and regional decision makers, we had a good public response from the Dorset Echo feature on the calendar. We have also contributed to the National Association for AONBs publication 'Outstanding' and to the current review of their communications work.

## **Core Function C: Implementing the AONB Management Plan**

### **AONB Landscape Character Assessment**

- 3.3 The AONB Landscape Character Assessment, including landscape management guidance, went out for public consultation in 2007. The document was revised based on the comments received and has been approved by the Landscape Advisory Group. Final amendments are now being made to prepare the document for printing. The completed document will be launched at the Annual Forum in March. The Landscape Planning Officer would like to extend his thanks to the Board for their valued input and support throughout the process.
- 3.4 The AONB Team is now assisting with Dorset County Council and partners in the development of county-wide landscape information. In addition, a pilot study on the application of landscape character assessment in development control work is being developed with North Dorset District Council.

### **European Landscape Convention**

- 3.5 With the ratification of the European Landscape Convention, the AONB Landscape Planning Officer was invited to speak at a national conference organised by the Landscape Character Network on behalf of Natural England. His presentation examined how the work of the Dorset AONB Partnership contributes to implementation of the Convention. The possibility of joining the European Network of Local and Regional Authorities for the implementation of the ELC is currently being explored. Papers from the event can be viewed at [www.landscapecharacter.org.uk](http://www.landscapecharacter.org.uk). The event was attended by 75 landscape professionals; other speakers included Adrian Phillips CBE (IUCN, National Trust & Woodland Trust Board Member), Michael Dower CBE (Visiting Professor, University of Gloucestershire) and Ricardo Priore, Director of the European Network of Local & Regional Authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention.

### **South Dorset Ridgeway**

- 3.6 Following extensive development work over the last few years, in December the Countryside Officer secured £159,000 funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a three-year programme of work of total value £275,000 to take forward the South Dorset Ridgeway Project. Recruitment is now under way for a project officer who will work four days per week on the Ridgeway and one day a week at the Roman Townhouse 'Domus Durnovaria' Project, ensuring close links between the two projects.
- 3.7 The Project will be officially launched at an event on the 16<sup>th</sup> February in Portesham, with presentations by Bournemouth University and English Heritage and featuring a flint knapping demonstration by TV presenter and archaeologist Phil Harding from Time Team. Local artist John Walker, whose work is inspired by the Ridgeway's heritage, will exhibit paintings and talk about his impressions of the area.

- 3.8 The Countryside Officer is currently working with three classes (over 60 pupils) from Thomas Hardy School on a design project to develop a waymarker logo for the Ridgeway.
- 3.9 Promotion of the project has included presentations to the Dorchester Society, Owermoigne Monday Club and Dorchester Heritage Committee, plus press activity linked to the project launch, including a BBC TV feature.

#### **Dorset Winterbournes & Wetlands Project**

- 3.10 Due to national funding cuts, Natural England and the Environment Agency were unable to provide funding for this project this year. Consequently the project has had to be scaled down but project partners have used the resources that have been available to maintain the momentum and ensure that the important links established with communities are maintained. Outputs in 2007/8 include:
- 3.11 Continuation of flow monitoring and invertebrate sampling by the Environment Agency and local volunteers. The invertebrate data has located a number of nationally scarce species and will be used to inform the development of stream enhancement schemes. A wildlife survey card was produced and has been distributed in the winterborne valleys, with a number of completed cards already received. 350 cards will soon be distributed with the parish magazine in Martinstown.
- 3.12 Two landowner workshops on in-channel management have been held with the Wild Trout Trust and a series of volunteer events to manage Himalayan balsam have been well-attended. Further development work has been done on potential restoration sites on the Winterbournes, with a contract currently being confirmed for a feasibility study for a channel restoration scheme on the South Winterborne. A site meeting has also been held with Highways to discuss highway management issues where the road runs immediately alongside the stream. The work programme for next year has been developed and includes implementation of restoration schemes, historic environment workshops and a chalk streams conference. This work will be dependent on availability of funding.

#### **Dorset Woodlink Project**

- 3.13 A major focus for Woodlink this year has been development of the Dorset Trees, Woods and Forests Strategy. This is the first strategy of its kind in the South West and represents a pioneering approach that will influence activity elsewhere in the region. The draft strategy went out for public consultation and is now being finalised ready for launch to the Woodlink Forum later in February. Further promotional activity for the strategy is planned for later in the spring to coincide with Springwatch.
- 3.14 Alongside developing the strategy, the Woodlink Officer has provided advice to 17 woodland owners and contributed to development of three woodland management plans for Sites of Nature Conservation Importance jointly with Dorset Wildlife Trust. With Forestry Commission grant schemes for woodland management only recently reopened, progress on delivery of management advice has been slightly more limited than anticipated.
- 3.15 Through the Woodlink Project, 128 enquirers from Dorset have received telephone advice on woodfuel from experts at the Centre for Sustainable Energy, all receiving a comprehensive follow-up advice pack. 23 potential woodfuel installation sites received visits from an expert adviser, three have received assistance with grant applications and two are being part-funded through the Woodlink programme. The Kingcombe Centre, Kingston Maurward College and Mapperton Gardens have been developed as woodfuel demonstration sites.
- 3.16 Four training events have been held training 35 people in a variety of skills and business approaches, from furniture-making to woodfuel supply. Considerable input was provided to the Cranborne Chase Woodfair, which was attended by 6000 people. A further 12 events have been attended by the Woodlink Project to promote its activities.
- 3.17 The Greenwood Tree Project, hosted by Dorset Wildlife Trust, was officially launched at Stock Gaylard Oak Fair in August. Promotional activity to raise awareness of veteran trees and the project's planned activities includes attendance at 7 events (including Dorchester Show, Broad Oak Apple Day and the Cranborne Chase Woodfair), creation of a Blog and newsletter

and early development of a Greenwood Tree Book which will feature photographs by Colin Varndell. Survey work has been a major work area, including training workshops for local tree groups at Cerne Abbas and in North Dorset, input to the Dorset County Boundary Survey and contact with parish councils to encourage them to appoint a tree warden / surveyor. Survey information has also been collected from Canford School, Hurn Court, Kingston Lacy, Stock Gaylard and Silton. Ancient English Yews in Dorset churchyards have been identified and work is underway to identify black poplars in Dorset. A number of advisory visits have been undertaken to secure favourable management of veteran trees.

### **Pastures New Grassland Local Area Agreement Target**

- 3.18 Work has continued to deliver the Pastures New Local Area Agreement target to improve management of Dorset's grassland habitats. The target includes three measures, with progress at December 2007 as follows:

**Measure 1.** 'Good' management of a selection of grassland Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (sites designated at county level) currently in poor condition. The target aims to get 1000 hectares of these sites into good management by March 2009, this being additional to what would normally be achieved in this period.

**Progress:** Expected progress by December 2007 - 440 hectares; Actual progress by December 2007 - 269.40 ha.

**Measure 2.** 'Good' management of grassland sites across Dorset (excluding those counted in Measure 1) through Entry Level Stewardship or equivalent measures. The target aims to increase the amount of land in good management by an additional 1500 hectares beyond normal expected performance, giving a total area in good management of 10,082.62 ha by 2009.

**Progress:** Expected progress by December 2007 - 8332.62 hectares in ELS or equivalent; Actual progress by December 2007 - 9842.84ha.

**Measure 3.** 'Excellent' management of grassland sites across Dorset (excluding those in Measure 1) through Higher Level Stewardship or equivalent measures. The target aims to increase the amount of land in excellent management by an additional 300 hectares beyond normal expected performance, giving a total area of 7405.18ha in excellent management by 2009.

**Progress:** Expected progress by December 2007 - 6155.18 hectares in HLS or equivalent; Actual progress by December 2007 - 5624.42 ha.

- 3.19 Progress towards Measure One (Poor SNCIs) is almost on target, with several sites having been recommended for assistance through the capital works scheme. Measure Two (ELS) in particular showed excellent progress, with the end of Yr 3 'without-project' target of 8500 Ha having already been surpassed. Deductions (of overlap, to avoid double counting) are still to be made but this will not impact upon progress. Progress towards Measure Three (HLS) is below target, due to the limited national budget for HLS. Figures have been boosted by Pastures New Management Agreements alone, covering 135Ha.
- 3.20 Capital Fund - Near Minterne Magna, over 60Ha of grassland have been brought into Pastures New Management Agreements in return for fencing works and scrub clearance. Planned scrub control work will bring another 60Ha into management, around Melcombe Horsey, Plush and Okeford Fitzpaine. DWT and WDDC are contributing financially to some of these projects, and all projects have secured some contribution from the landowner (financial or in-kind). Altogether, work with 20 land managers including the National Trust is under consideration / progression at the moment, and could contribute around 330Ha to the LAA targets in total.
- 3.21 Supporting work - A grazing scheme and a machinery ring are being established by DWT, aimed at helping landowners in West Dorset. Volunteering initiatives organised by DWT and DCC's Ranger Service will also assist by carrying out practical work on the ground.

### **Input to land management initiatives**

- 3.22 The AONB Countryside Officer and Dorset Grasslands Officer have provided considerable input to targeting statements and reviews for Higher Level Stewardship in Dorset / South West. The Team have also advised the Forestry Commission on approximately twelve woodland schemes, including scoping advice on MoD felling proposals at Lulworth.

## **Eyesore Removal**

- 3.23 Following our successful bids to Southern Electric Power Distribution, a number of schemes are now underway to under-ground intrusive power lines in the AONB. The Team has provided advice and support to SEPD to help with implementation, including landowner liaison. The Ferry Road scheme at Studland is finished and the West Bexington scheme will be implemented in the next few months.

## **Food and Farming / Local Produce**

- 3.24 AONB Team members have taken an active role on the Direct from Dorset local produce accreditation scheme steering group, assisting with the introduction of environmental standards for the scheme. This has included providing advice to existing producers on relevant environmental schemes and practices to ensure they meet the new criteria and also assisting four new members to the scheme. The team helped organise a launch event for the environmental standards in October 2007. The Team is working with Dorset Wildlife Trust's Grazing Animals Project Officer to develop a conservation grade standard, linked to an approach being developed regionally by the Wildlife Trusts. The Countryside Officer also co-ordinated an exploratory meeting to develop a Sustainable Food and Farming Forum for Dorset in December 2007.

## **Coastal Corridor Action Plan**

- 3.25 2007/8 has seen completion of a series of workshops to help develop a long list of potential actions for the Coastal Corridor Action Plan for Dorset and East Devon. The long list currently includes around 100 action ideas. A consultancy contract is currently being let to develop the long list into a prioritised and costed draft action plan ready for consultation in May / June 2008. This work is being funded through the World Heritage Team.
- 3.26 The action plan will be informed by the research studies already undertaken through the project, including the Access and Walks Study by Halcrow and a snapshot 'market research' visitor study undertaken in the summer by Dorset Coast Forum.
- 3.27 Some identified actions are already underway, including:
- Addition of location names to X53 bus stop signs;
  - Addressing the issue of presenting user-friendly information at bus stops;
  - Mapping of coastal transport services and facilities through the World Heritage Transport Group and Dorset and Devon Highway Authorities;
  - Inclusion of facilities symbols and destinations on signage by Dorset Countryside;
  - Creation of a working group to address coastal car park management, led by West Dorset District Council and the Dorset AONB Team; the group is developing guidelines for design and management of car parks in the coastal corridor, to address local context, materials and distinctiveness and measures to minimise clutter and 'urbanising' features. The National Trust is providing case studies and funding is being sought to convert sites currently of concern into demonstration sites.

## **Core Function D: Advising Local Authorities on their activities within the AONB**

### **Rural Roads and Green / Community Travel Planning**

- 3.28 The AONB Team has provided ongoing input and resources to the development of the Rural Roads Protocol which will influence design and management of roads across Dorset. The draft protocol will be taken to Dorset County Council Committee in March to enable implementation of the protocol to start in April 2008. Work on detailed guidance and reviews of all relevant policies will develop over the coming year, informed by pilot implementation schemes in the Piddle Valley and the coast road. Work will also begin to ensure greater understanding of the protocol among parishes and communities, district councils and other sectors which influence the highway environment. Elements of this communication activity are included in the project bid submitted to Natural England and are therefore dependent on availability of funds.
- 3.29 **Signing of National Cycle Network Route 2 Dorchester to Arne:** funding for this has been secured through the South Purbeck Integrated Transport (SPIT) Project, signing the route from

Max Gate in Dorchester to Arne. The AONB Access, Recreation & Transport Officer has worked with SPIT, Dorset Engineering Consultancy and DCC Highways to ensure the signing is an example of best practice to demonstrate some of the new principles from the emerging "Rural Roads" Protocol. Signage will be minimal but clear for cyclists, to ensure that the countryside is not cluttered with inappropriate signs and additional poles. Traditional fingerposts along the route will be refurbished where required in order to assure their continuing contribution to the local distinctiveness of Dorset. This work will be completed by the end of March 2008.

- 3.30 **Rural Reach:** A successful bid was made to Rural Renaissance to develop a project to pilot innovative community travel and accessibility planning, looking at integrated measures to get people to services and services to people. Two villages in North Dorset, Winterborne Whitechurch and Shillingstone, have been identified as the study areas and a detailed survey of current transport facilities and residents' transport needs is now underway. The project is being undertaken with North Dorset District Council, local parishes, community development workers, DCC Passenger Transport and Transport Planning teams. Additionally the Department for Transport and Department for Communities and Local Government are keeping a watching brief over the work as it will produce useful input to their own work on community travel plans in rural areas.

### **Dorset Design & Heritage Forum**

- 3.31 Work has continued with the development of the Design & Heritage programme. A launch event was held in May with Guardian Architecture Correspondent Jonathan Glancey. A Pride of Place community award has been launched, administered by Dorset Community Action alongside the Best Kept Village award, rewarding and supporting communities caring for the character and quality of their built and historic environment. Agreement has now been reached for West Dorset District Council to host a 'Creative Places Development Manager' to connect artists into the design and planning of key developments across the County. Exciting opportunities are also being explored with the Architectural Association regarding their plans for the development of their Hooke Park site in Dorset.

### **Identification of barriers to non-traditional countryside users**

- 3.32 Work was undertaken through a collaborative project led through the South West Protected Landscapes Forum to identify under-represented sectors of the community in and near protected landscapes in the region. This work will help us to identify the audiences we need to engage with to ensure that our work is inclusive and addresses the needs of all the community. The work has already been used to inform the Equality Impact Assessment for the Dorset Community Strategy.

### **Destination Dorset**

- 3.33 We have been an active member of the emerging Destination Management Organisation steering group that will soon become a single, strong voice for tourism in the county. Priorities for the DMO include developing and marketing tourism activities around food, walking and cycling particularly in rural Dorset as well as weaving sustainability through all its work.

### **Core Function E: Monitoring and reporting on progress**

- 3.34 The Annual Review for 2006/7 was produced and distributed to our stakeholders to keep them up to date on our activities.

### **Core Function F: Monitoring AONB landscape condition**

- 3.35 The AONB Team continued to contribute to the collaborative data project co-ordinated through the South West Protected Landscapes Forum to collate data on a core set of landscape indicators. This data has been used for the Strategic Environment Assessment scoping study for the management plan review. Further work has also been undertaken on the fixed point photography project.

## Core Function G: Accessing resources

- 3.36 Successful funding bids this year have included the Heritage Lottery bid for the South Dorset Ridgeway Project, securing £159,000 for a three year programme, and £29,000 from Rural Renaissance for community travel planning. The Team has been working with Chalk & Cheese to expand their current area of operation to include all of the AONB and Dorset section of the World Heritage Site and to develop a funding proposal for the new Local Action programme. A number of INTERREG proposals are also being explored.

### Sustainable Development Fund

- 3.37 Most of the SDF projects agreed are progressing well but two projects were unable to proceed due to problems with match funding. Funds have therefore been reallocated and final projects are as follows:

Project	Districts
<p><b>Inside Out</b> A festival of outside events to celebrate special places in Dorset and contribute to the development of cultural tourism in the county. Events supported through SDF include a performance at Hambledon Hill NNR and West Bay. The events promoted the culture, heritage and environment of these locations in the AONB and included schools education events in the lead up to the festival.</p>	N & W
<p><b>Chalk &amp; Cheese local products manager</b> Developing a local products retail and food service centre at Poundbury on a not for profit basis, to support the local food sector, supporting collaborative activity, raising awareness of the environmental and landscape benefits of buying local food and acting as a retail hub for existing producers and centres. The focus of this project was shifted to development work for Direct from Dorset to ensure that the scheme is well developed for the local produce centre.</p>	All (W)
<p><b>Rushworks</b> Rushworks is a company set up to revive the traditional rush industry on the River Stour. The project informs, celebrates and promotes this traditional craft form.</p>	N
<p><b>Small-scale Hydro Electric</b> Installation of a small hydro-electric turbine at Upwey Mill generating electricity for the building from the healthy stream flows. Once operational, the site is to be opened for demonstration purposes.</p>	W&P
<p><b>Harman's Cross Station Building</b> Construction of a new station building for this stop on the Swanage Railway, to enhance provision of car-free access in Purbeck for both visitors and local people.</p>	P
<p><b>Churchyard restoration</b> Restoration of the churchyard wall at the well-visited Bincombe Church (on the Inland SW Coast Path). The work involved some volunteers and also includes provision of water &amp; toilet facilities for visitors.</p>	W
<p><b>Axe &amp; Char Rivers Environmental Sustainability</b> The ACRES partnership including FWAG &amp; the Environment Agency continued a project aimed at improving the water quality of these two rivers. They work with farmers and local schools, as well as fishing groups who have a vested interest in the rivers' wellbeing.</p>	W
<p><b>Osmington White Horse remedial work</b> The Dorset Countryside Ranger Service organised a volunteer day to make a start at remedial work on the White Horse. Loose scalplings were added to the figure by Challenge Aneka (1989) &amp; have since migrated down the slope, forming scree running from its hind legs and tail. This work event cleared up some of this loose stone to re-establish a defined outline.</p>	W & W&P
<p><b>Harry's Wood</b> Frampton Millennium Green Trust is managing a patch of riverside woodland for both access and biodiversity. The woodland is already a popular public space, and the project links to the BBC's Breathing Places campaign.</p>	W
<p><b>Ignite</b> Rural Development Initiatives ran a national programme of training on woodfuel, covering management &amp; supply. In order to make it affordable for attendees, the course in Dorset was subsidised by the Sustainable Development Fund. This links closely with the Dorset Woodlink Project, and helps reach targets of the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy.</p>	All
<p><b>Village pigs</b> A consortium of villagers from Burton Bradstock came together to keep a handful of pigs raised for meat. The project linked with the village school, helping children understand the origin of their food, as well as providing well-raised, local meat back to the consortium. SDF provided small scale funding for start up costs for what will be an ongoing project.</p>	W
<p><b>Marine &amp; Coastal Education Pack</b> Dorset Coast Forum is developing a schools' resource pack (including instruction for teachers) aimed at Key Stage 2. This pack highlights coastal &amp; marine issues, including climate change, pollution, overfishing, food chains and coastal processes. It will be distributed by the Schools' Library Service to any Dorset school.</p>	All

<b>Low Carbon Village Hall – this project did not proceed.</b>	W
<b>Removal of Pylons – this project did not proceed</b>	P
<b>Development of the Kingcombe Centre</b> Installation of a woodfuel boiler and other renewable energy installations in a sustainable visitor / education facility at Kingcombe.	W
<b>Hardy’s Wessex Project</b> Contribution to development work for this important project focusing on Hardy’s properties in Dorset and links out to explore the wider countryside that inspired his work.	All
<b>Undergrounding of overhead wires</b> Support to the National Trust to underground BT wires associated with SEPD West Bexington scheme.	W
<b>Winterborne restoration study</b> Funding for a feasibility study for a restoration scheme on the South Winterborne as part of the Winterbornes and Wetlands Project.	W

## Core Function H: National and Regional Liaison

3.38 Regular liaison has been maintained with the South West Protected Landscapes Forum and National Association for AONBs through a range of events, conferences and topic groups. These include joint working on data, diversity, communications, strategic direction of the National Association and links with regional partners. The AONB Countryside Officer co-led a climate change workshop at the National AONB Conference in Winchester.

## Core Function I: Partnership and Team Co-ordination

3.39 The AONB Team has continued to co-ordinate working groups for key work areas, contribute to Heritage Committees and organise Partnership Board meetings. A new steering group was established by the funding partners to assist in the running and direction of the Partnership and Team.

## Core Function J: Community Involvement

### Links to Community Planning

3.40 The AONB Team and Chairman have continued to provide input to the DSP Environment Theme Group, contributing to delivery of the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement. The Grassland LAA target has been an important element of this work.

3.41 At the local level, the Team supported the successful Frome Valley Parish Planning event and contributes to parish plan consultations as they come forward, recently including Sutton Poyntz and Frampton.

### Volunteering

3.42 Volunteering forms an important element of a number of AONB projects, notably the Winterbornes, Woodlink and South Dorset Ridgeway projects. The Team also has an active steering role on the Dorset Countryside Volunteer Ranger Service and is ensuring links with the Local Area Agreement volunteering target.

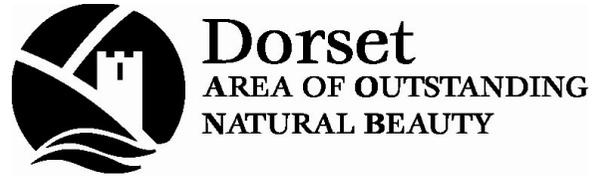
## Core Function K: Providing landscape-related planning advice

3.43 In accordance with the Planning Protocol, the AONB Team have provided advice to the relevant Planning Authorities on the following plans and applications:

- Minerals Core Strategy Issues and Options (Dorset County Council) – ensuring AONB policy considerations are highlighted;
- Prospect Business Park, Swanage (Purbeck District Council) – site visit with PDC economic development officer, looking at management advice for the landscape master plan;
- Quarr Cross to Chideock footpath (West Dorset District Council) – pre-application advice on landscape impacts of proposed surfaced path across open countryside;
- Weymouth Relief Road (Dorset County Council) – ongoing advice on design details to ensure landscape conditions are met;
- Winfrith Technology Centre (Purbeck District Council) – presentation to key stakeholders at an event run by the Prince’s Foundation, scoping proposed redevelopment;

- West Farm (West Dorset / Weymouth & Portland) – pre-application advice on location of new agricultural building;
- Poundbury Development Brief (West Dorset) – ongoing input to development of Green Infrastructure Strategy and landscape mitigation proposals;
- Proposed Portland Gas Unilateral Undertaking – As part of the application, Portland Gas Limited have proposed to contribute a yet undisclosed amount for enhancement work to be carried out in the AONB. A host of other projects will also be considered along the coastal corridor.





ITEM 4

Dorset AONB Partnership

# AONB BUSINESS PLAN

April 2008 – March 2009

DRAFT for AONB Partnership Board, February 2008

*Working Together for Dorset's Outstanding Countryside*

# 1. Introduction

## This Business Plan

- 1.1 This Business Plan sets out the work programme for the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership and its team of staff, showing the actions that will be undertaken and the resources needed to achieve them.
- 1.2 2008/9 is an important year for the AONB Partnership; a major focus will be the formal review of the AONB Management Plan, working with communities and stakeholders in the AONB to identify the new challenges that have arisen and the actions needed to safeguard the future of the AONB's outstanding landscapes.
- 1.3 2009 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the designation of the Dorset AONB, a milestone to be celebrated. In 2008/9 the Partnership will plan celebrations and activities to make the most of this opportunity.

## The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 1.4 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, together with National Parks, represent our finest countryside. Both are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, their primary purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
- 1.5 The Dorset AONB was designated in 1959; it covers approximately 42% of the county and includes small areas of Devon and Somerset. At 1,129 square kilometres it is the fifth largest AONB in the country and has a population of around 90,000 people.
- 1.6 The AONB includes some of the most varied and distinctive landscapes of any designated area. This landscape diversity is underpinned by a varied geology, giving rise to different landforms, wildlife habitats and building materials. The area also has a rich heritage and strong cultural associations.



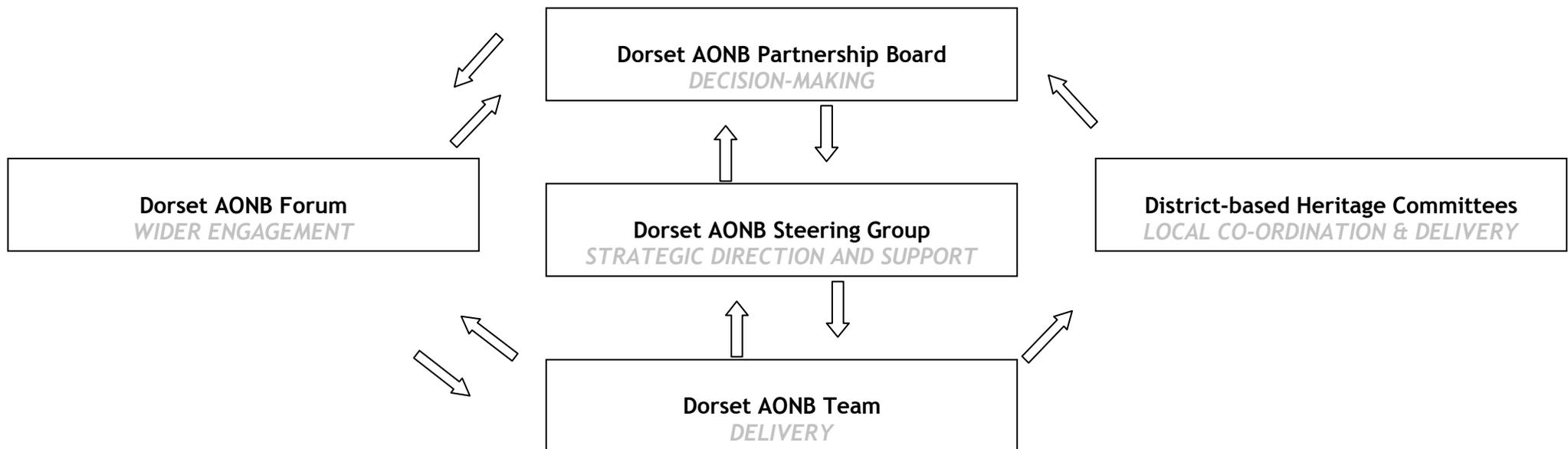
## Purposes

1.7 The policies for AONB management are:

- The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to **conserve and enhance natural beauty**.
- In pursuing the primary purpose, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. **Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.**
- Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the **demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.**

## Dorset AONB Partnership

1.8 The Dorset AONB Partnership unites 20 organisations to promote and deliver actions to conserve and enhance the AONB. The Partnership operates under a Memorandum of Agreement, with Dorset County Council acting as host authority and accountable body. The working arrangements of the Partnership are summarised below:



- 1.9 The AONB **Partnership Board** is the decision making body, overseeing development, implementation and review of the AONB Management Plan as required under the Countryside and Rights of Way act 2000. The Board includes one member from each of the 20 partner organisations, with elected members representing each of the local planning authorities.
- 1.10 The **Steering Group** oversees the management process for the Partnership and provides strategic direction and high level support to the team. The Steering Group comprises senior officer representation from each local planning authority and Natural England, the Chairman of the Board, AONB Team Manager and Dorset County Council Environment Group Policy Manager as host authority officer responsible for the welfare and performance of the team.
- 1.11 The **AONB Team** is responsible for the delivery of priority actions identified through the Dorset AONB Management Plan. The core team includes 5.5 full time equivalents plus additional project staff. The team is hosted by Dorset County Council but works to the Partnership Board; the office base is at the Barracks in Dorchester.
- 1.12 The **AONB Forum** meets annually to ensure that wider stakeholders in the AONB are kept up to date with activities and to engage in discussions over future priorities and key issues.
- 1.13 At the District level, the **Purbeck Heritage Committee, West Dorset and Weymouth Heritage Committee and North Dorset Countryside & Heritage Panel** act as local arms for the Partnership, extending countryside and heritage work across the districts including into non-AONB areas and helping to deliver local priorities. Strategic issues identified at the local level are fed up to the Partnership Board.

### **The AONB Management Plan**

- 1.14 The AONB Management Plan is a statutory requirement under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The current plan runs to March 2009, by which time a reviewed plan must be in place. The Management Plan is for the AONB and sets out the vision and policies for all those involved in its care and management. The Plan identifies priority actions which form the basis of work plans for the Team, though many other organisations also play key roles in delivering the Management Plan.

### AONB Purposes

- 1.15 The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty;
- 1.16 In pursuing the primary purpose, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.

1.17 Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met in so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

### AONB Team Core Functions

1.18 The AONB Team is responsible for delivering a set of core functions as defined by Natural England, which form the basis of the funding agreement:

- CF1 Developing a vision and strategy for AONB management.
- CF2 Preparing, with constituent local authorities, an AONB management plan as required by the CRoW Act.
- CF3 Promoting the vision and strategy to help distinguish the AONB from adjacent countryside.
- CF4 Implementing, and co-ordinating implementation by others, of the management plan.
- CF5 Co-ordinating or advising on local authority services in the AONB, to go beyond the normal level of service in countryside management.
- CF6 Monitoring and reporting on progress against management plan targets.
- CF7 Accessing resources for undertaking management activities, including external financing, project development and proposals, and providing matching funding for special projects.
- CF8 Tapping into advice, and liaison with AONBs at a national level.
- CF9 Providing an internal management role to co-ordinate AONB protection.
- CF10 Developing an involvement by the community in the management of the AONB.
- CF11 Providing planning advice and related activities.

### Staff Resources

1.19 The core AONB Team consists of 5.5 full time equivalents. In addition, there are two existing project officers (woodland and grassland projects) and a bid has been submitted for another part time officer for the South Dorset Ridgeway Project. Officer roles and details are:

Role	Full / Part time	Core / Project	Duties	Officer
Team Manager	Full time	Core	Strategic co-ordination and development of programme; team supervision; business planning & financial management; strategic links and liaison; lead on rural policy and resource management.	Sarah Bentley
Landscape Planning Officer	Full time	Core	Landscape character and condition; information systems to guide landscape management; advisory role for land use and spatial planning. Liaison officer for North Dorset DC.	Doug Harman
Countryside Officer	Full time	Core	Land management and heritage lead, developing projects and programmes, policy and advocacy work. Liaison officer for West Dorset DC.	Tom Munro

Biodiversity Officer	Part time	Core	Biodiversity policy lead, project development and co-ordination. Liaison officer for Purbeck DC.	Alison Turnock
Access, Recreation & Transport Officer	Full time	Core	Lead for sustainable access and enjoyment of the AONB, linking with ROWIP; input to development of sustainable transport solutions and AONB lead contact for rural road protocol development. Liaison officer with Dorset CC.	Sue Mitchell
Communications Officer	Part time	Core	Strategic communication, interpretation and education lead; community liaison and development; sustainable tourism lead. Liaison officer with Weymouth & Portland BC.	Sue Dampney
Administrative Officer	Part time	Core	Administrative support to team and Chairman; events organisation lead; promotions support; office and data management.	Katharine Wright
Dorset Woodlink Officer	Full time	Project	Delivery of Woodlink programme, including woodland strategy production and implementation; woodland management advice, woodfuel co-ordination and development.	David Rees
Dorset Grasslands Officer	Part time	Project	Delivery of Pastures New grassland Local Area Agreement reward target on grassland habitat management. Funded through LAA grant.	Alison Morse
South Dorset Ridgeway Heritage Officer	Part time	Project (HLF)	Delivery of programme of heritage research, management and celebration for the South Dorset Ridgeway Project area.	Recruitment scheduled for Feb 08

## 2. Summary of Work Programme 2008/9

Task	Description	Team lead / support	Priority	Staff time		Cost		Funding-dependent or at risk
				Core	Project	Core	Project	
1	Management Plan Review	TM / LPO / All	1	202		£12,000		
2	Landscape Character	LPO / TM	2	23		£2,500		
3	Planning Protocol	LPO / TM / others	1	72				
4	Design & Heritage Forum	TM / LPO	3	9				
5	Raising awareness	COMO / all	1 & 2	69		£12,500		
6	Education	COMO	3	5				
7	South Dorset Ridgeway & NMP pilot	SDRO / CO / others	1	52	176		£116,020.53	Match funding required
8	Poundbury Green Infrastructure	LPO / TM / CO / ARTO	2	10				
9	Winterbournes & Wetlands	BO / CO & DWT officer	1	36			£41,100	Match funding required
10	Dorset Woodlink Project	DWO / CO	1	34	220		£92,000	Match funding required
11	Land management initiatives	CO / others	2	33				
12	Removal of eyesores	LPO / TM	2	8				
13	Food & Farming	CO / TM	2	37				
14	Pastures New	DGO / CO / TM	1	19	132		£70,000	
15	Purbeck Keystone Project	TM / ARTO / BO	2	13			£174,355	Match funding required
16	Coastal Corridor Action Plan	ARTO / TM / all	1	79			£10,000	Match funding required
17	Rural Roads & Community Travel	ARTO / TM / LPO	1	70			£36,500	Match funding required
18	Hardy's Wessex Project	ARTO / COMO / TM	2	17				
19	Cultural Walks & Trails	ARTO / CO	2	15				
20	Destination Dorset input	COMO	3	12				
21	Chalk & Cheese input	TM / CO	2	21				
22	Sustainable Development Fund	TM / AA / all	1	47				Funding unconfirmed
23	Volunteer Ranger Service	TM / ARTO	2	13			£50,100	Match funding required
24	Community Planning	TM / COMO / ARTO	1	40				
25	State of AONB Report	LPO / TM / CO	1	23		£2,000		
26	Wider partnership contact	TM / COMO / all	1	34		£4,500		
27	Business planning & funding	TM / CO / all	1	50				
28	Partnership running and networks	TM / all	1	66		£2,000		
29	Managing team and office	TM / AA / all	1	57		£15,200		
						£50,700		
	Staffing costs:					£223,868	590075.53	
	<b>Total:</b>					<b>£274,568</b>	<b>£590,075.53</b>	

### 3. Summary of staff input

Task	Task Description	Team Manager	Landscape Planning	Countryside	Access, Recreation & Transport Officer	Communications	Biodiversity	Administrative	Dorset Woodlink	Dorset Grasslands	South Dorset	TOTAL
			Officer	Officer		Officer	Officer	Assitant	Officer	Officer	Ridgeway Officer	
1	Management Plan Review	50	73	17	20	17	10	15				202
2	Landscape Character	3	20	0	0	0	0	0				23
3	Planning Protocol	10	55	2	3	0	2	0				72
4	Design & Heritage Forum	5	4	0	0	0	0	0				9
5	Raising awareness	8	3	5	5	30	3	15				69
6	Education	0	0	0	0	5	0	0				5
7	South Dorset Ridgeway & NMP pilot	2	2	36	5	2	2	3			176	228
8	Poundbury Green Infrastructure	2	3	3	2	0	0	0				10
9	Winterbournes & Wetlands	2	0	5	0	0	27	2				36
10	Dorset Woodlink Project	3	2	25	2	0	0	2	220			254
11	Land management initiatives	3	8	15	5	0	2	0				33
12	Removal of eyesores	3	3	2	0	0	0	0				8
13	Food & Farming	6	0	26	3	0	2	0				37
14	Pastures New	4	0	15	0	0	0	0		132		151
15	Purbeck Keystone Project	5	0	2	3	0	3	0				13
16	Coastal Corridor Action Plan	7	5	5	45	10	2	5				79
17	Rural Roads & Community Travel	5	3	2	55	3	0	2				70
18	Hardy's Wessex Project	2	0	2	10	3	0	0				17
19	Cultural Walks & Trails	1	0	2	10	2	0	0				15
20	Destination Dorset input	2	0	2	1	7	0	0				12
21	Chalk & Cheese input	8	0	8	2	0	0	3				21
22	Sustainable Development Fund	6	5	8	6	5	1	16				47
23	Volunteer Ranger Service	5	0	2	5	1	0	0				13
24	Community Planning	11	6	4	10	8	1	0				40
25	State of AONB Report	3	12	4	2	1	1	0				23
26	Wider partnership contact	8	3	3	3	4	1	12				34
27	Business planning & funding	16	3	10	8	3	2	8				50
28	Partnership running and networks	20	5	10	10	5	4	12				66
29	Manageing team and office	20	5	5	5	4	3	15				57
	TOTALS	220	220	220	220	110	66	110	220	132	176	1694

## 4. Summary of Core Funding

AONB CORE ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE 2008/9					AONB CORE ESTIMATED INCOME 2008/9				
Staff costs			£223,868		Natural England			75%	£205,926
including salaries, ENI and travel					Dorset County Council			12.50%	£34,321
					West Dorset District Council			8.22%	£22,569.49
Staff training			£2,500		Purbeck District Council			2.91%	£7,989.93
Accommodation and office			£12,700		North Dorset District Council			0.92%	£2,526.03
Web site, newsletter and promotions			£9,000		Weymouth & Portland Borough Council			0.45%	£1,235.55
AONB leaflet			£3,500						
Partnership running costs			£2,000						
Annual review and Forum			£4,500						
LCA development and monitoring			£4,500						
Management plan review costs			£12,000						
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>£274,568</b>						<b>£274,568</b>

Project income and expenditure are outlined in the following pages.

## 5. Dorset AONB Work Programme 2008/9

The work programme is set out in detail here, with a brief outline of each task, outputs, costs and priority rating. Priority is given on a 1-3 scale as follows:

- 1 High priority leading - AONB Team leading a high priority work area;
- 2 High priority support or medium priority lead - AONB Team providing input to a high priority work area led by others or is leading on work of medium priority; Medium priority implies that time scales more flexible.
- 3 Low priority - AONB Team providing input or leading work if resources allow.

### Dorset AONB Management Plan

#### Task 1. Review of the AONB Management Plan (CORE)

Under the requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, the AONB Management Plan must be reviewed every five years. The current plan runs to April 2009, by which time a revised plan must be submitted to the Secretary of State. The Management Plan is intended to be an overarching document outlining the policies by which the AONB will be managed. As such it is a plan for all involved in the management of the area and the review must include engagement with stakeholders and communities to develop a consensus on the priorities for the next five years. The process will include a strategic environmental assessment to ensure that all impacts on the environment are considered.

Key issues that the Plan review must consider include climate change, greater consideration of coastal and marine issues, a more spatial approach and links to the emerging local development frameworks. The review process and development of the new plan will run through the entire year and a detailed time plan has been developed. A summary document of the final plan will be developed.

Summary:

Outputs: AONB Evidence Base, new AONB Management Plan and Delivery Plan for 2009-14, summary document.

Costs: Staff time: 202 days

£12,000 (includes draft plan, final plan, summary document and consultation costs)

Priority: 1

Team contact: Team Manager / Landscape Planning Officer

### Landscape, Planning & Built Environment

#### Task 2. Taking forward landscape character (CORE)

In 2007 the AONB Team produced 'Conserving Character', a guide to the landscape character of the AONB with management guidance for each character area. This is available as a printed document and as a download file on the AONB web site. In 2008/9 the Team will liaise with the local planning authorities to investigate the development of an accessible electronic format via Planweb / Explorer or similar, and identify any more specific guidance required. This may include urban fringe assessments, diversification, coastal / seascape assessments and guidance relating to equine development.

Summary:

Outputs: Searchable information base of landscape character data; guidance materials on specific issues.

Costs: Staff time: 23 days core; development costs: £2500

Priority: 2

Team contact: Landscape Planning Officer

### **Task 3. Delivering the AONB Planning Protocol (CORE)**

The Dorset AONB Planning Protocol was agreed with the local planning authorities in 2007. Under its terms, the AONB Team provides advice to the planning authorities primarily on emerging policies within local development frameworks and on development control issues where the planning officer considers there is a likely significant impact on the AONB. This is an ongoing role with the team providing advice according to LDF and development control time frames. In 2008/9 this will also include substantial input to the Weymouth Relief Road development through the Environment Group to advise on implementation of conditions and mitigation works.

Summary:

Outputs: Advice provided on planning issues as requested to support planning authorities in delivering their statutory duties for the AONB.

Costs: Staff time: 72 days

Priority: 1

Team contact: Landscape Planning Officer

### **Task 4. Dorset Design & Heritage Forum (CORE)**

The Dorset Design & Heritage Forum was established in 2006 to bring together different sectors working on the built environment in Dorset, including those from the planning, arts, historic environment, architecture, housing and development sectors. The aim of the Forum is to champion good design and management of the built environment. A work programme has been developed with partners funded through the Arts Council with a particular focus around increasing awareness of the role that public art can play in the design process.

The AONB Team will continue to provide input to the Forum, particularly in characterisation work to ensure good links with the landscape character approach, and to further delivery of AONB policies for the built environment.

Summary:

Outputs: AONB input to Pride of Place community award; design promoter post and design projects; and training programme.

Costs: Staff time: 9 days

Priority: 3

Team contact: Team Manager

## Communication and Education

### Task 5. Raising awareness of the AONB and our work (CORE)

With so many partners and stakeholders interested in the AONB, communication is vital to ensure that all are up to date on the Partnership's activities and that the Partnership is open and transparent in its operating practices. We are keen to increase public awareness and understanding of the special qualities of the AONB and to enable greater public involvement in our work. In 2008/9 this will be achieved in a number of ways:

**New AONB leaflet** – In 2007 the Team produced a new 'Explore and Enjoy' leaflet aimed primarily at those visiting and exploring the AONB. In 2008/9 the Team will produce a complementary leaflet aimed at local communities and residents in the AONB, highlighting the work we do for the area and the many ways that people can contribute. This will include both direct involvement in AONB projects and also lifestyle choices that can help the area, such as buying local produce.

**Dorset Coast & Countryside Magazine** – the AONB Partnership works with Dorset Countryside Service, Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team, Dorset Coast Forum and other partners to produce a joint newsletter and events guide. This demonstrates our close partnership working to care for Dorset's countryside, prevents duplication and makes efficient use of our collective resources. Three editions of the newsletter and events guide are produced each year, keeping information fresh and relevant to the seasons.

**AONB web site** – the AONB web site is becoming an increasingly important communication tool and acts as a hub for information about the AONB and the Partnership's activities. Greater dependence is being placed on the web site to reduce the need for printed materials, increasing our sustainability. The web site also provides a valuable tool for online surveys and consultations. In 2008/9 the focus will be on updating and refreshing the site, particularly the project pages. The site will be important for the management plan review and making online consultation effective and engaging will be a top priority.

**Wider communications work** – In addition to the above, the AONB Team will promote the AONB and our work through liaison with local, regional and in some cases national media, organising promotional activities and taking part in partner campaigns such as Breathing Places. Attendance at shows will be targeted to those that present significant opportunities to reach relevant audiences and are cost effective, such as Lyme Regis Fossil Festival, Bridport Food Festival and the Oak Fair (for Woodlink). Other shows are attended by partners who represent joint projects, such as the Dorset Coppice Group promoting Woodlink at a range of shows and events. The Team will also input to regional and national communications work through the South West Protected Landscapes Forum and National Association for AONBs.

**Planning 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations** – 2009 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dorset AONB's designation. With a new management plan being launched, this presents an important opportunity to raise the profile of the AONB and our vision for its future. The Team, working closely with the Steering Group and Partnership Board, will develop plans to make the best use of this opportunity. As part of this, the Team will run and promote a **photographic competition**, running over the course of a year. The aim is to engage communities in recording how the landscape changes in the course of a year but also to pick up and consider longer term changes, as a route to raising awareness of climate change and the challenges for the AONB over the next 50 years. The best images will form part of a celebratory exhibition in 2009 for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Summary:

Outputs: 10,000 copies of new AONB leaflet; 3 editions of newsletter and events guide; updated web site; press releases / media features; public engagement at 3 shows minimum; Dorset featured in regional / national communications initiatives; photographic competition.

Costs: Staff time: 69 days core team time  
Cost of PR materials / events: £12,500  
Priority: 1  
Team contact: Communications Officer

## **Task 6. Education (CORE)**

In addition to education resources being developed through the South Dorset Ridgeway Project, some pilot work will be carried out in 2008/9 with key partner organisations such as the National Trust. This will focus on both formal and informal learning, including through play, with an overall theme of landscape change. The aim in 2008/9 is to discuss with partners how this should be taken forward and develop proposals ready for piloting in 2009/10.

Summary:  
Outputs: Early development work with partners.  
Costs: Staff time: 5 days  
Priority: 3  
Team Contact: Communications Officer

## **Conservation, Heritage and Land Management**

### **Task 7. South Dorset Ridgeway Project (PROJECT FUNDED – SOME FUNDING UNCONFIRMED)**

The South Dorset Ridgeway Project focuses on the ridges and lowlands to the south of Dorchester. This is an ancient ceremonial landscape with an extraordinary assemblage of historic features, including the remains of wood henges, barrows and stone circles and hillforts. The area is also significant for its grassland habitats, areas of heath and farmland birds.

Funding has now been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support this project. While the historic environment provides the focus for much of the work, this is an integrated initiative which will combine management and celebration of the area's heritage with restoration of wildlife habitats, agri-environment targeting and access enhancement.

The guiding principle is that conservation and sensitive management of the ceremonial landscape should be secured through partnership working with the local community and landowners. The engagement and participation of local people is therefore at the heart of this project. A key focus is to enable people to see beyond individual heritage features to understand the landscape in its entirety and the connections between its different elements.

The overall aim of the project is to:

Conserve and enhance the natural beauty and unique heritage of the South Dorset Ridgeway and to increase public understanding, enjoyment and involvement in its future.

The objectives of the project are to:

- Develop and articulate a vision and plan for the future management of the Ridgeway befitting its international importance;

- Increase knowledge and understanding of the Ridgeway's special features at all levels through participatory research and study;
- Develop Curriculum-relevant materials for use in schools to enable them to use the Ridgeway area as a learning resource;
- Improve the integrated management and conservation of the monuments and associated landscape features and habitats of the Ridgeway;
- Improve physical and intellectual access to the Ridgeway and its special features;
- Bring local people and visitors together to celebrate and interpret the Ridgeway and what it means to them.

In 2007/8 funding was secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a programme of project activity from 2008-11. Match funding will be required and this will be sought from Natural England (via annual project bids) and other sources if necessary.

Pilot work to develop the project with the local community included:

- Liaison meetings with landowners and parishes in the study area, including a series of talks and open days about the project;
- Survey of Neolithic monuments by trained local volunteers working with English Heritage to pilot methodology;
- Trial of oral history study with trained local volunteers gathering stories from older residents in the community;
- Series of 'taster' events to develop the HLF programme;
- Production of 'Riddles of the Ridgeway' booklet;
- Interpretation at Hardy's monument refreshed to reflect whole landscape approach;
- Research with local schools on learning resource requirements;
- Guided walks to various parts of the study area.

The project outputs in 2008-11 will be:

- Survey of Bronze Age monuments in the study area, building on successful pilot;
- Celebratory events including talks, site tours and arts events; arts events will include poetry workshops and performances as well as visual arts and participatory events such as competitions etc.
- Physical restoration/protection/maintenance works on monuments where the need has been identified in the monument survey. This will involve volunteers in tasks such as scrub removal, conserving and enhancing the historic environment where possible.
- Habitat enhancements and species work in the Ridgeway study area, linked to Pastures New initiative.
- Engagement with schools. The project will compile educational materials for use in local schools and enable site visits for classes.
- Using products from the survey, oral history recording work, arts workshops and volunteers submissions, the project will compile a collaborative celebratory publication.
- Develop and improve interpretation material for the site including the use of novel technology (MP3/phone trails, palm computer guides).
- Develop and publicise walks and trails that will give a close up and personal experience of the landscape so important to the early inhabitants of Dorset.

**Breakdown of costs:**

ITEM	2008-09			2009-2010			2010-2011		
	COST	GRANT SOUGHT	%	COST	GRANT SOUGHT	%	COST	GRANT SOUGHT	%
Ridgeway Officer & on-costs	30101.77	4000	13	25431.47	3500	14	23858.87	3500	15
Monument Survey	15898.76	2000	13	10789.20	1500	14	6526.13	1000	15
Interpretation	15800	2000	13	13400	1500	11	6300	1000	16
Access & guides	32100	2000	6	1200	500	42	1500	500	33
Education	17620	3500	20	4130	2000	48	400	200	50
Celebration	2500	500	20	2800	1000	36	9900	2800	28
Habitat & landscape enhancements	2000	1000	50	2000	1000	50	2000	1000	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>116020.53</b>	<b>£15000</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>59750.66</b>	<b>£11000</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50485.00</b>	<b>£11000</b>	<b>12</b>

35. Total grant sought: £15,000 in 2008/9 (£36,000 over the 3-year project span)

Source	08-09 (£)	09-10 (£)	10-11 (£)	3-yr TOTAL
Natural England (UNCONFIRMED)	15,000	11,000	10,000	£36000
Heritage Lottery Fund (CONFIRMED)	79,596.58	39,798.29	39,798.29	£159,193.15
Volunteer time (CONFIRMED)	7,400	7,100	4,600	£19,100
Parish Councils (UNCONFIRMED)	800	400		£1,200
Bournemouth University (in-kind) (CONFIRMED)	9,052.26	6,789.20	4,526.13	£20,367.59

**National Mapping Project – Dorset Pilot – South Dorset Ridgeway**

The AONB Team has been working alongside Dorset County Council’s Historic Environment Team on negotiations with English Heritage to undertake the National Mapping Programme in Dorset. This programme uses aerial photography to digitally map archaeological remains, both ploughed features and upstanding remains dating from the Neolithic to 1945. The Programme has added substantially to the records and knowledge bank when implemented in other areas, providing valuable information to inform planning and land management and understanding, interpretation and awareness.

In 2004 English Heritage and the National Association for AONBs agreed a Joint Statement on the Historic Environment in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This project opportunity has arisen as a result of this agreement and a bid to English Heritage to fund the work has now been submitted. The mapping programme will be piloted in the South Dorset Ridgeway project area with a view to extending coverage to the whole county in future years. The AONB Countryside Officer and South Dorset Ridgeway Officer will provide some input as required to support this important initiative.

**Summary:**

Outputs: Survey report; celebratory events; restoration works; habitat enhancements; learning resources; publication to celebrate the Ridgeway; innovative non-intrusive interpretation; walks and trails; National Mapping Project Pilot.

Costs: Staff time per annum: 52 days management / supervision time by Countryside Officer and input from other team members (core budget); 176 days by dedicated project officer (project budget)  
Project costs (officer and implementation): £116,020.53  
National Mapping Pilot to be funded by English Heritage

Priority: 1

Team contact: Countryside Officer

### **Task 8. Input to Poundbury Green Infrastructure Strategy (CORE)**

The AONB Team has been asked to contribute expertise and advice to the development of a green infrastructure strategy being developed by the Duchy of Cornwall for its Poundbury development. This is a requirement placed on the Duchy by West Dorset District Council and presents an important opportunity to consider the treatment of the edge of the development and links from it out into the AONB. There are significant links to the South Dorset Ridgeway project and the team will liaise with the developer and Dorset County Council's Countryside and Historic Environment teams to provide appropriate input.

Summary:

Outputs: AONB issues fully recognised and addressed in green infrastructure strategy.

Costs: Staff time: 10 days (core team)

Priority: 2

Team Contact: Landscape Planning Officer

### **Task 9. Dorset Winterbournes & Wetlands Project (PROJECT FUNDED - SOME FUNDING UNCONFIRMED)**

The Winterbournes & Wetlands Project is a collaborative project between the AONB Partnership and Dorset Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, Wessex Water, Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group, Dorset Countryside, DCC Historic Environment Team and the local community. The project is currently focusing on the North and South Winterbournes, the Tadnoll Brook, Upper Frome and River Allen. The project is resourced through a project post based at Dorset Wildlife Trust and through core team input from the AONB team, Environment Agency and other partners. The AONB Team's input has particularly focused on the small chalk stream winterbournes which are so characteristic of the chalk landscapes in the AONB. These streams are extremely important for wildlife and have a fascinating associated heritage, but are often misunderstood and undervalued. The pilot work on the North Winterborne, funded through the North Dorset Liveability Scheme, demonstrated the value of the project in engaging local people and landowners and empowering them to protect, manage and study the stream and its heritage. This work has since been expanded to include the South Winterborne, which runs to the south of Dorchester.

The aims of the project are to:

- Contribute to the good ecological status of aquatic ecosystems in the AONB;
- Deliver relevant aspects of the Dorset AONB Management Plan, Dorset Biodiversity Strategy, Wessex Water Biodiversity Action Plan, UK Biodiversity Action Plan and EC Water Framework Directive; and
- Raise awareness and understanding of the value of rivers and wetlands and engage local people in their management.

Objectives are to:

- Conserve and enhance the wildlife, heritage and natural beauty associated with Dorset's rivers, streams and wetlands
- Spread good practice in sustainable resource management
- Support and facilitate local communities in caring for their local environment and becoming actively involved in the management and monitoring of rivers and streams
- Raise understanding of the link between our use of water and the impact on the local environment, thus promoting sustainable water use
- Increase scientific understanding of the ecology and function of river systems, in particular winterbournes, and the impacts of management regimes on them
- Increase intellectual and physical access to water environments for all.

This is part of a 4-year bid, but key outputs / outcomes anticipated in 2008/9 include:

- Promotion of wildlife sighting recording cards for the Winterbornes, and collation of biological records to raise awareness & inform future work
- A community event to carry out a baseline survey of otter and water vole activity along the South Winterborne, and subsequent recruitment of volunteers to carry out quarterly monitoring of these priority species, using them as indicators and to target conservation work
- Site-specific invertebrate sampling along the North & South Winterbornes to inform potential restoration works
- Targeted advisory visits to promote best practice management for habitats and to protect water and soil resources, and to advise on agri-environment options available (to include the production of Whole Farm Plans where appropriate)
- Exploration of local grazing schemes for riparian grassland sites, working with the Pastures New project to achieve beneficial management
- Workshops to promote local exploration and survey of the historic and cultural heritage associated with Dorset's river valleys, working closely with the South Dorset Ridgeway project in the South Winterborne Valley, and leading to the production of a Parish heritage map for one flagship Parish.
- Programme of talks, demonstration, and training events for riparian owners (householders, farmers, angling clubs) on aspects of the Water Framework Directive and their role in positive management. To include 2 workshops on in-stream restoration in partnership with the Wild Trout Trust, volunteering events to control Himalayan Balsam, and talks on wildlife gardening and Winterbourne Management Plans.
- A workshop for Highways department staff to encourage sensitive maintenance and repair work along winterbournes
- A National chalk rivers and winterbournes conference for key stakeholders and technical specialists exploring the value of these habitats, what we know about best practice management, & current research and planning, to inform future action in Dorset and elsewhere
- Continued production and distribution of an annual project newsletter, 'Streamlines', in order to raise awareness of issues such as management and conservation work
- Habitat restoration work, informed by the River Restoration Trust report produced in 2007/8 - Feasibility study funding for 2 restoration schemes to be sought from SITA. Also possible channel enhancement, watermeadow restoration, tree management, creation of ponds and scrapes, fencing and creation of drinking points to protect banks from livestock etc. at various sites.
- Development of a restoration project in partnership with the Wild Trout Trust for a large site on the South Winterborne.
- Access and interpretation enhancements at key sites along the South Winterborne to promote access for all the community.
- Continued development of a 'winterbourne signature' of the South Winterborne through volunteer river flow monitoring and ongoing work on this for the North Winterborne.
- Production of a Management Plans for the North and South Winterbornes, incorporating data collected in previous years of the project

Project Costs 2008/9

Activity	Cost	Amount (£)/% grant sought	Year	Comments
Administration and staffing (DWT wetlands officer)	£24,300	£4,860 / 20%	2008/9	Contribution to reflect input of wetland officer to Winterbournes work and co-ordination of species surveys across AONB priority areas
Community liaison, training & events (10), and other awareness raising & promotional work (newsletter)	£4,000	£1500 / 37.5%	2008/9	
Survey work to inform management plans	£2,750	£550 / 20%	2008/9	
Chalk streams conference	£3,750	£1000 / 27%	2008/9	
Advisory visits and landowner liaison, & production of 1 Whole Farm Estate Plan	£3,300	£1,250 / 38%	2008/9	
Physical restoration work and access enhancement	£5,500	£2,000 / 36%	2008/9	
	<b>Total: £41,100</b>	£11,160 / 27%		

Funding sources proposed:

Source	Amount (£)
Natural England (UNCONFIRMED)	11,160
Wessex Water (CONFIRMED)	7,000.00
Dorset Wildlife Trust (CONFIRMED)	17,300.00
Dorset County Council (in kind staff at £200/day & venue) (CONFIRMED)	1140
FWAG (in-kind rate reduction of £50/day) (CONFIRMED)	300
Volunteer input (in-kind £50/day) (CONFIRMED)	1000
EA (in-kind £400/site invertebrate sampling) (CONFIRMED)	1200
Wild Trout Trust (UNCONFIRMED)	2000
Total	41,100

Summary:

Outputs: Survey data; advisory visits; historic environment workshops & parish map; talks and workshops on stream management; highways workshop; national conference; newsletter; habitat restoration schemes; access enhancements; management plans.

Costs: Staff time: 36 days core from AONB Team (additional project time from DWT and partner staff)  
£41,100 project costs

Priority: 1

Team Contact: Biodiversity Officer

## **Task 10. Dorset Woodlink Project (PROJECT FUNDED - SOME FUNDING UNCONFIRMED)**

The Dorset Woodlink Project is a priority in the AONB Management Plan, operating county-wide to develop and deliver a strategy for our trees, woodlands and forests. Key priorities emerging from the strategy are woodland management, particularly ancient woodland sites, and the development of woodfuel as a renewable energy source to give an economic incentive for management. Veteran and landscape trees are also a priority; the Greenwood Tree Project has been developed as part of the Woodlink programme to focus on veteran tree survey and management.

The Woodlink Project has been developed with support from Chalk & Cheese Leader +, Natural England (AONB project funding through the two AONBs) and Forestry Commission. This supports a full-time project officer based with the Dorset AONB Team but operating across the county. In 2008 the Chalk & Cheese funding comes to an end; further funding opportunities are being explored to continue this important project. These include the next Leader scheme ('Local Action'), woodfuel funding via RDPE Axis 1, the Access to Nature fund and also private investment based on carbon off-setting. Until these opportunities become available however, the project will be dependent on its HLF funding and funds through Forestry Commission and Natural England.

The overall aim of the project is: Delivery of integrated and sustainable tree, woodland and forestry management in Dorset to deliver landscape, wildlife, social and economic benefits.

Objectives are to:

- Implement an integrated tree, woodland and forestry strategy for Dorset based on sound evidence and with clear targets linked to national and regional objectives;
- Identify and target new woodland planting to link up fragmented ancient woodland sites and create new community woodlands and orchards for access and recreation in appropriate areas;
- Negotiate long term management plans / agreements for identified priority sites such as plantations on ancient woodlands to ensure sensitive restoration and sustainable management;
- Promote open habitats policy on sites where plantations need to be removed to restore other habitats and raise understanding of the 'right tree in the right place' philosophy;
- Record, promote, celebrate and manage the ancient and veteran tree resource in Dorset with the help of local communities;
- Co-ordinate development of a supply chain and marketing for wood fuel and other sustainable wood products and promote and facilitate establishment of demand and required infrastructure;
- Promote and raise understanding of the multiple benefits of of sustainable woodlands in Dorset; and
- Support local community enjoyment and involvement in Dorset's tree and woodland resource through education, training, access and awareness initiatives.

Outputs planned in 2008/9 include:

- Implementation of woodland strategy
- Site visits to 20 woodland owners to advise on PAWS restoration, linking fragmented sites and sustainable multi-benefit management.
- Securing installation of 5 woodfuel boilers and ongoing advice to enquiries re woodfuel
- Steering group meetings and 2 Woodlink Forum meetings
- A Wood Fair and attendance at 8 further public events to promote sustainable woodland management and products
- Supporting businesses to maximise new opportunities offered by woodfuel sector, e.g. heating engineers, suppliers etc.
- Development of collaborative working for woodfuel

- Supporting Direct from Dorset environmental criteria through accreditation of woodland products, management advice etc
- Development of community woodlands.
- Community based veteran tree surveys
- Sensitive management works to veteran trees in the county
- Co-ordination of Dorset Bioenergy Working Group

Project funding:

Activity	Cost	Amount (£)/% grant sought		Year	Comments
Employment of Woodlink Officer providing advice to woodland owners and managers, securing management agreements	34,500	17,250	50%	2008 / 9	
Employment of Dorset Coppice Group Officer to coordinate woodland celebration at shows and training opportunities in woodland skills	17,400	7,700	44.25%	2008 / 9	
Dorset Coppice Group volunteers providing training, demonstration and celebration	4000	0	0%	2008 / 9	
Employment & resourcing the Greenwood Tree Project Officer to deliver ancient tree objectives	24,000	0	0%	2008 / 9	
Dorset Bioenergy Working Group	2,000	1000	50%		
Research: Woodfuel resource study	6,000	0	0		
Demonstration and training events	5,300	2,650	50%	2008 / 9	
Promotion & outreach	800	400	50%	2008 / 9	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£92,000</b>	<b>£29,000</b>	<b>33.72%</b>	<b>2008 / 9</b>	

Proposed funding sources:

Source	Amount (£)
Natural England (UNCONFIRMED)	£29,000 (£19,140 via DAONB, £9,860 via CCWWD AONB)
Forestry Commission (UNCONFIRMED)	£12,000
Leader + (Chalk & Cheese) (CONFIRMED)	£12,000 confirmed
HLF (CONFIRMED)	£24,000 confirmed
DCG Volunteers (CONFIRMED)	£4,000
Rural Enterprise Gateway (UNCONFIRMED)	£3,000
Dorset County Council (UNCONFIRMED)	£10,000

Summary:

Outputs:

Site visits, management advice and plans / agreements; woodfuel boilers installed and advice provided; Forum meetings; Wood Fair and awareness raising activities; business development and support for woodfuel sector; accreditation of wood products; veteran tree surveys and management.

Costs:

Staff time: AONB Core time for management and development: 34 days

Full time project officer (220 days), part time post through Coppice Group and part-time veteran tree officer at DWT

Priority: £92,000 project costs  
1  
Team contact: Woodlink Officer

### **Task 11. Supporting Land Management Initiatives (CORE)**

The AONB Team will provide ongoing support to partner agencies on the targeting of grant aid in the AONB for agri-environment schemes and detailed landscape input on forestry applications. This is to ensure that schemes provide the maximum benefits to the AONB and to minimise any adverse impacts. In addition, the team will provide input to strategic land management initiatives being undertaken and piloted in the AONB. These are likely to include Natural England's Natural England's Management Objectives ('NEMO') pilot and the Catchment Sensitive Farming initiatives.

Summary:

Outputs: Effective targeting of grant aid; ensuring best outcomes of initiatives for AONB.  
Costs: Staff time: AONB Core time through Countryside Officer, Landscape Planning Officer, Team Manager and others as required: 33 days  
Priority: 2  
Team contact: Countryside Officer

### **Task 12. Removal of eyesores (CORE)**

In 2006 the AONB Team submitted proposals to Southern Electric Power Distribution for 'under-grounding' of visually intrusive power lines in the AONB. The Team secured provisional support for four schemes, at Studland, West Bexington, Worth Matravers and potentially a scheme at Hartland Moor. The Studland scheme was implemented in 2007 and West Bexington scheme is programmed for spring 2008. The team will continue to provide support to SEPD with negotiations with landowners etc in support of the remaining schemes. The Team is also providing minimal input to the Dorset Campaign Against Litter to promote work to reduce the visual impacts of tipping and abandoned vehicles in the AONB.

Summary:

Outputs: Undergrounding schemes successfully completed in the AONB; work to reduce impacts of litter.  
Costs: Staff time: 8 days  
Priority: 2  
Team contact: Landscape Planning Officer

### **Task 13. Food and Farming (CORE)**

Farming activity is one of the key influences on the landscape and natural beauty of the AONB. As such, promoting sustainable farming and land management and the local products it generates can make a substantial contribution to AONB management. At present there is no clear strategy for food and farming

delivery in Dorset to help target RDPE and other funds and support. Building on previous work, the AONB Team will work with delivery partners and farming organisations to develop a programme of priorities in order to help secure funding through the Rural Development Programme for England and other sources.

In addition, the AONB Partnership has successfully negotiated the inclusion of environmental assurance as part of the Direct from Dorset local produce accreditation scheme. The team will continue to provide input to support the promotion of environmentally sound Dorset produce, in order to help secure an economic incentive for sustainable land management. This has strong links with the Pastures New programme, Woodlink and the Purbeck Keystone Project (see below).

Summary:

Outputs: Programme of priorities developed for sustainable food and farming in Dorset; delivery of environmental accreditation scheme for local produce with partners.

Costs: Staff time: 37 days

Priority: 2

Team contact: Countryside Officer

#### **Task 14. Pastures New (PROJECT FUNDED – FUNDING CONFIRMED)**

In 2006 the AONB Team, working with the Dorset Biodiversity Partnership and through the Environment Theme Group of the Dorset Strategic Partnership, secured a target in the Dorset Local Area Agreement Reward Element for the restoration of grassland habitats across Dorset. The initiative forms one of a number of 'stretch targets' designed to increase performance in priority areas. The target aims to improve management of an additional 2800 hectares of grassland beyond what would normally be achieved.

The target includes the following three measures:

1. To get 1000 hectares of SNCI grasslands out of 'poor' management and into either good or excellent management;
2. To get 1500 hectares of other grassland into good management – either through Entry Level Stewardship or equivalent measures; and
3. To get 300 hectares of other grassland into excellent management – either through higher Level Stewardship or equivalent measures.

A part-time project officer has been appointed to co-ordinate delivery of the target and additional staff resource has been provided to Dorset Wildlife Trust for delivery of measure 1 survey and advice. The officer, Alison Morse, is negotiating management agreements with landowners and organising capital works such as scrub clearance, fencing and water supply to enable grazing of the sites and secure their future management.

In 2007, the Pastures New programme grew substantially through the successful submission of a bid to the Tubney Trust by Dorset Wildlife Trust. The Trust now has a small team of staff in place to deliver wider elements of the programme in specific geographical areas in the county. With this additional input, Pastures New has become one of the most important landscape scale initiatives in Dorset and is regarded as a best practice exemplar further afield. The LAA target comes to an end in March 2009, and one of the priorities this year will be to work with partners to identify how to take the programme forward.

Summary:

Outputs: Enhanced management of an additional 2800 hectares of grassland biodiversity habitat, including management advice, capital work and survey; delivery of LAA reward target; delivery of UK / Dorset Biodiversity strategies.

Costs: Staff time: Core team input 19 days; project staffing funded through LAA and DWT  
Priority: 1  
Team contact: Dorset Grasslands Officer

### **Task 15. Purbeck Keystone Project (PROJECT FUNDED - SOME FUNDING UNCONFIRMED)**

The Purbeck Keystone Project is an ambitious programme of work focusing on Purbeck's stone-related heritage, funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnerships Scheme. The project includes three programmes:

1. The Natural Landscape Programme: focused on three areas – the Frome Valley, Purbeck Ridge and Coastal Plateau – the programme will enhance and link habitats and secure their long term management through viable farm diversification and public participation.
2. The Cultural Landscape Programme: focused on the quarried limestone landscape of the plateau this programme will support the stone carving industry through training, awareness and links to the built environment.
3. The Outdoor Learning Programme: improving physical and intellectual access to the area and building on Purbeck's unrivalled reputation in field studies.

The aim is to enhance Purbeck's landscapes, secure them through public interest and participation and underpin the livelihoods that manage and benefit them.

Outputs in **2008/09** will include:

- Management of 200ha of floodplain water levels
- 10 hectares of scrub management and fencing to reinstate grazing units on the Purbeck Ridge
- School and community events to increase public understanding of the links between farming and landscape – 4 school visits and 4 community events
- Provision of training events for farmers to include training on water level management, ditch management and traditional stock management
- 7 volunteer projects, to include scrub clearance and ragwort pulling
- Completion of one dry stone walling apprenticeship
- Internships to develop skills in hand-tooled Purbeck marble work for medieval buildings
- Creation of the Purbeck Stone Centre
- Development and implementation of a training programme for the Purbeck Stone Centre, to include courses with resident stone worker as well as visiting masons and carvers
- Purbeck Stone Fair and other local events linked to stone working heritage
- Restoration of stone walls – 2000 metres
- Dry stone walling training courses to be held at the Dry Stone Wall Training and Testing Centre at Durlston Country Park
- Develop a field studies website to promote the educational opportunities that Purbeck has to offer
- Work with field study Centre staff to continue APIOL and develop workshop and peer observation programmes for professional development
- Develop a young persons conservation group
- Create a virtual geological field trip, which will provide interpretation of the palaeontology, palaeoenvironment and palaeoclimate from collected fossils and detailed research
- Implement Redcliffe disabled access walk

- Upgrade trails to provide improved access, to include 1 built heritage trail, 3 cultural landscape trails and 1 farming trail
- Implementation of the landscape art project Footsteps in Stone to enable interpretation of Purbeck's landscape through participatory art forms
- Improve NCN 2 surface where needed in Rempstone Estate
- Promote extra cycle trails in Rempstone estate

Summary:

Outputs:

Costs: Staff time: Core team input 13 days for steering group and support; AONB contribution: £11,160 through project grant or SDF

Priority: 2

Team Contact: Biodiversity Officer

## Access, Travel and Enjoyment

### Task 16. Coastal Corridor Action Plan (PROJECT FUNDED - SOME FUNDING UNCONFIRMED)

The Coastal Corridor Action Plan is intended to bring together and co-ordinate the activity of different delivery partners in the coastal strip to enhance landscape and heritage, manage visitor pressure and support sustainable access and enjoyment to the World Heritage Site and surrounding features. With so many different organisations and individuals involved in the management of this complex area, the plan is intended to facilitate joint working, innovation and co-ordination of resources to ensure they are used to best effect.

Substantial development work has been undertaken over the last 18 months, including:

- Completion of an Access and Walks Study assessing access and transport links to the Coast Path, signage and information provision and potential circular walks;
- A series of workshops with delivery partners to identify priorities;
- A market research study to gain a snapshot of visitor expectations and impressions.

The draft action plan is being developed based on this work, identifying priority actions for the next five years. This will include those to be delivered using existing resources, but also more ambitious tasks which will require fundraising efforts.

The plan is likely to include:

- Improvements to priority link paths (beyond statutory requirements) to connect the Coast Path to public transport points and other access points;
- Signage in the corridor to include destination, distance and symbols marking facilities available to aid visitor orientation;
- Signage and infrastructure to be accessible to all where feasible and to be designed to include art and interpretation relating to the coast or location;
- Development of "Ride and Stride" walks linking public transport and urban locations to the coast path and suitable sites, encouraging car-free trips and interpreting the special features of the coast;
- Liaison with passenger transport team and bus companies to develop improvements to services, information and infrastructure to make public transport a more viable alternative to the car for accessing the coast;
- Basic assessment of landscape sensitivity along the coast to assist with visitor management and landscape enhancement work;

- Development of coastal voluntary wardens scheme through the Dorset Countryside Volunteer Ranger Service to provide on the ground service to provide basic information, lead guided walks, promote the fossil code, tackle litter and keep a check on footpaths etc.
- Build on current Beach clean and fishing line bins to tackle coast and marine litter more effectively;
- Development of car park guidance and demonstration work through West Dorset District Council;
- Self-guided trails using new technologies – MP3, mobile phones etc.
- Agri-environment targeting and management guidance for coastal fields;
- Removal of eyesores in the coastal corridor;
- Archaeological surveys and management / interpretation;
- Rock pool surveys to identify climate change indicators and other targeted biodiversity initiatives;
- Guided walks, events and celebrations.

The Dorset AONB Team is the lead body for the plan, working closely with the World Heritage Team, Dorset Countryside, National Trust, Natural England, South West Coast Path Team, Coast Forum and colleagues from counterpart organisations in Devon. Detailed cost requirements will be confirmed when the plan is completed.

Summary:

Outputs: Costed 5-year action plan; access and transport enhancements; promoted walks; landscape and heritage enhancements; wardens.

Costs: Staff time: AONB core time for co-ordination and development: 79 days

Delivery costs: TBC. Bid for pump priming funding to NE for £5,000 to be matched by World Heritage Team and Dorset County Council.

Priority: 1

Team contact: Access, Recreation & Transport Officer

## **Task 17. Rural roads and community / green travel (PROJECT FUNDED - SOME FUNDING UNCONFIRMED)**

In 2005 the AONB Partnership began working with Dorset County Council's Highways and Transportation teams to address the impacts of roads and travel on the landscape and environment in the AONB and across Dorset. These impacts included the urbanising influence of signs, lines, lights, kerbs and traffic calming features – all designed with urban environments in mind and out of keeping with rural character. More innovative approaches are being developed elsewhere in the UK and in Europe that use 'psychological' calming measures rather than engineered features and these could contribute to an alternative approach.

Over the last three years, the AONB and Highway teams have undertaken research and development work towards this approach and a Rural Roads Protocol will be presented to DCC Cabinet in April 2008. This sets the policy framework for a new approach to highway management in Dorset. A suite of policies will be reviewed and trial implementation carried out in the AONB in 2008/9. In addition, a crucial element of the work will be to engage parishes and local people in this work and the AONB team will play a key role in this community element.

In addition to the policy reviews, outputs in 2008/9 will include a parish fingerpost survey, trial implementation work in the Piddle Valley, clutter audits, a training programme for parishes and an education project with Bournemouth University.

Road infrastructure and appearance is not the only transport impact on the AONB; increasing traffic also has environmental impacts, exacerbating traffic management issues, impacting on tranquillity and contributing to pollution and climate change. Traffic in Dorset as a whole is increasing by 2-3% each year –

halting this growth and ultimately reducing traffic would have many benefits for the AONB. As such the AONB team is providing support and input to a number of initiatives with this aim, including encouraging green / community travel plans and promoting car-free access to coast and countryside.

Summary:

Outputs: Rural roads protocol in place; pilot schemes undertaken; fingerpost survey launched and underway; parish education programme; 2 clutter audits undertaken; education initiative launched; input to travel plans and car-free travel initiatives.  
Costs: Staff time: 70 days core time  
£6,000 project costs for £36,500 project  
Priority: 1  
Team contact: Access, Recreation & Transport Officer

### **Task 18. Hardy's Wessex Project (CORE)**

The Hardy's Wessex Project is a collaborative initiative led by the National Trust, and also involving the Hardy Society, Dorset County Museum and AONB. It centres on the two Hardy properties which the Trust owns – Hardy's Cottage and Max Gate. The Cottage is in need of major refurbishment and the Trust is keen to use this as an opportunity to develop a wider initiative, using Hardy as a means for people to experience not just his work but the landscapes and places that inspired it. In July 2007, the AONB Partnership Board endorsed the initiative and approved the involvement of the AONB Team in its delivery.

The Team's role is to help steer the project and to help develop elements of the wider work, such as trails and events to connect the properties with other locations in ways that minimise car dependency.

Summary:

Outputs: Trails and events linking the Hardy properties with the wider landscape.  
Costs: Staff time: 17 days  
Priority: 2  
Team contact: Access, Recreation & Transport Officer

### **Task 19. Cultural Walks and Trails (CORE FOR DEVELOPMENT PHASE)**

Linked to the Hardy's Wessex Project above, the AONB Team will work with partners to develop a number of walks linked to cultural aspects of the AONB. These might include both historic and contemporary artists, musicians, writers and craftsmen and also links to locally distinctive festivals or themes. They will build on the approach already successfully used with the West Dorset Pedal cycle routes, which have proved extremely popular. Partners to include Cultural Services, Artsreach, Common Ground and other relevant organisations.

Summary:

Outputs: Development work for two culture-based walks.  
Costs: Staff time: 15 days development work; production costs to be met through separate bids / sponsorship.

Priority: 3  
Team contact: Access, Recreation & Transport Officer

## **Task 20. Input to Destination Dorset (CORE)**

Destination Dorset is the new destination management partnership in Dorset, which brings together the local authority tourism teams with businesses and South West Tourism to co-ordinate a tourism strategy for Dorset. While tourism is not a function of the AONB designation, Dorset will always be a popular area for visitors and tourism activity can have both positive and negative impacts on the AONB. In 2008/9 the AONB Team will continue to provide input to Destination Dorset, advising particularly on sustainability issues, and working to develop more positive links between the tourism sector and countryside management activity.

Summary:  
Outputs: Sustainable and 'green' tourism activity that supports AONB purposes.  
Costs: Staff time: 12 days core time.  
Priority: 2  
Team contact: Communications Officer

## **Supporting Communities and Rural Development**

### **Task 21. Local Action – input to Chalk & Cheese (CORE)**

The AONB Partnership has been working with Chalk & Cheese since 2005, operating a joint application process for both the Leader + scheme and the AONB's Sustainable Development Fund. This has been a successful collaboration, making life easier for communities trying to access funding and providing community input to the decision making process for the SDF. Further joint working has developed between the two bodies on local food sector work, linking Chalk & Cheese Interreg initiatives with local produce activity in Dorset through Direct from Dorset.

The South West RDA is currently inviting bids for the next round of Leader, called Local Action and forming Axis 4 of the Rural Development Programme for England. The AONB Team has provided input to the development of the expression of interest, developing a programme that focuses on using the AONB and World Heritage Site as a driver for sustainable land and environment-based economic and social activity. Further work will be required to develop the full bid for submission in May and to ensure good links between Local Action and the AONB programme.

Summary:  
Outputs: £3-4 million funding scheme for local community-led activity that supports AONB purposes.  
Costs: Staff time: 21 days  
Priority: 2  
Team contact: Team Manager

## **Task 22. Sustainable Development Fund (ADMINISTRATION CORE; SDF FUNDING UNCONFIRMED )**

The AONB Team will continue to deliver the Sustainable Development Fund, which has proved highly successful in delivering community action to conserve and enhance the AONB and raise awareness of its special qualities. Promotion of the fund will be minimal until confirmation of available funding is received from Natural England. The team will continue to provide advice and support to the projects as required and to monitor outputs.

Summary:

Outputs: Community-led projects to support AONB purposes.

Costs: Staff time to administer: 47 days; grant from NE covers grant costs and will cover some administration though Dorset AONB generally keeps costs within core budget as much as possible to maximise funding available to communities. Support time contributed by Chalk & Cheese for applications and Local Action Group process.

Priority: 1

Team contact: Team Manager / Administrative Officer

## **Task 23. Volunteer Ranger Service (PROJECT FUNDED - SOME FUNDING UNCONFIRMED)**

In 2008/9 Dorset Countryside will establish a Volunteer Ranger Service, building on development work undertaken previously, to provide a more formal and trained volunteer base and to support active engagement of local people in coast and countryside management. The AONB Team is assisting with the development and steering of this initiative in order to create strong links with the AONB programme.

Through this service, we will explore ways to increase the involvement of local people in the Partnership's work, linking to key projects such as the Coastal Corridor Plan (coastal wardens) and South Dorset Ridgeway (surveys, research and awareness-raising). There are also strong links to the Local Area Agreement volunteering target.

Summary:

Outputs: Increased local involvement in AONB delivery; trained volunteer base to assist with project delivery.

Costs: Staff time: 13 days core time; £5,000 AONB contribution to scheme through project grant

Priority: 2

Team contact: Team Manager

## **Task 24. Community Planning (CORE)**

The AONB Team will continue to provide input to community planning at both the strategic and local levels, making strong links with communities in the AONB through the established community partnerships and parish councils. At the strategic level this will include input to the Environment and Accessibility theme groups of the Dorset Strategic Partnership to provide AONB input to delivery of the Dorset Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

At the more local level, the AONB will continue to develop and promote the Pride of Place toolkit and to provide comments on parish and community plans in the AONB.

Summary:

Outputs: AONB purposes integrated into community planning through input to DSP and LAPs / Parish Plans

Costs: Staff time: 40 days

Priority: 2

Team contact: Team Manager / Communications Officer

## Monitoring and Research

### Task 25. State of the AONB reporting (CORE)

The Dorset AONB will produce a state of the AONB report to accompany the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the AONB Management Plan 2009-14. This will present the data gathered through the South West Protected Landscapes Forum Data Project, in which Dorset AONB is a partner. This collaborative project has established a common set of condition indicators for AONBs and National Parks in the region, with data collated from a variety of sources and cut to AONB / NP boundaries. Additional data has been collected locally that will be included and results from the first fixed point photography trials will also be used.

Further work will be undertaken on monitoring through the coastal corridor plan, with a particular focus on monitoring visitor impacts.

Summary:

Outputs: State of the AONB report.

Costs: Staff time: 23 days core staff.

Operational costs: £2,000

Priority: 1

Team contact: Landscape Planning Officer

## Partnership Co-ordination and Liaison

### Task 26. Keeping in touch with our wider partners (CORE)

Many organisations and individuals beyond those represented on the Partnership Board are involved in delivering the AONB Management Plan and have an interest in the activities of the Partnership. As well as the ongoing communication we maintain through our projects and other activities, there are two main mechanisms for keeping our stakeholders informed and involved. These are the annual forum and the annual review.

The annual forum generally attracts 80-100 delegates and includes an update on the Partnership's achievements over the previous year and what actions are planned in the coming year. The event is then used to explore a particular theme to help shape the direction of future work. The Annual Review is produced in June to summarise the achievements of the Partnership in the previous year. This is sent out to all local authorities, statutory agencies, parish and town councils, local partnerships and stakeholder groups in and adjacent to the AONB.

Summary:  
Outputs: Forum for 80-100 stakeholders; annual report.  
Costs: Staff time: 34 days core staff.  
Operational costs: £4500  
Priority: 1  
Team contact: Team Manager

### **Task 27. Funding and business planning (CORE)**

With a new 5-year Management Plan being developed, a priority over the next year will be to ensure that the AONB Partnership has a secure funding base for its core operations and to make the best use of funding opportunities to secure resources for project delivery. For the core budget, much will depend on the outcomes of Natural England's review of AONB funding but it is anticipated that NE funding will be delivered at 75% for core team operation on a 3-year rolling agreement. The current Memorandum of Agreement will need to be revised and agreed by January 2009 with a commitment from Natural England and the five local authorities. As the delivery plan for 2009-14 is developed through the management plan review, a business plan for 2009-12 will be put together. Ongoing financial management will be carried out by the team supported by Dorset County Council as accountable body.

A number of funding bids will be developed by the Team. These include a greater AONB focus in the next round of the Chalk & Cheese Leader scheme under Axis 4 of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) (see task 21). An INTERREG IVa bid is being developed with protected landscapes in Devon & Cornwall and North West France to share understanding and develop collaborative projects for sustainable landscape management. An Access to Nature (Big Lottery and Natural England) bid is also being developed by the team for a range of project activity. Other sources of funding being explored include commercial funds linked to reducing corporate carbon footprints, particularly in relation to the Woodlink Project.

Summary:  
Outputs: MOA agreed and signed by all parties; business plan for 2009-12 agreed; funding bids developed – funds secured.  
Costs: Staff time: 50 days  
Priority: 1  
Team contact: Team Manager

### **Task 28. Running the Partnership and maintaining its links and networks (CORE)**

The Steering Group and Partnership Board will each meet three times in 2008/9 to provide strategic direction of AONB work programme delivery and future planning. The team will also provide input to the three heritage committees to ensure more local links are maintained. The team will continue to service the various working groups for key projects and work areas. We will aim to circulate papers at least one week in advance of meetings. Board papers will be made available on the AONB web site.

The Partnership will retain its important membership and links with the National Association for AONBs, South West Protected Landscapes Forum and Europarc Atlantic Isles, which provide essential lobbying and advocacy at European, national and regional levels, and provide support and training for the team. In addition, the team will maintain links with wider networks such as the Landscape Character Network, South West Woodland Renaissance Partnership etc.

Summary:

Outputs: 3 Board meetings; 3 steering group meetings; heritage committee meetings attended; working groups meeting regularly. Links maintained with various networks; input to Europarc, NAAONB and SWPLF activities.

Costs: Staff time: 66 days  
Operational costs: £2,500

Priority: 1

Team contact: Team Manager

### **Task 29. Managing the AONB Team and Office (CORE)**

Team supervision and development will be undertaken using the Dorset County Council Performance Development Review system and additionally through team health audit. Training and professional development will be supported and encouraged, each team member gaining from at least one training / development course or event per year. The team will strive to maintain as sustainable an office as possible, minimising paper use and travel as much as possible and recycling waste. Services bought in will use local companies and products where possible and appropriate.

The team will aim to respond to all enquiries within 10 days and will maintain open and transparent working practices.

Summary:

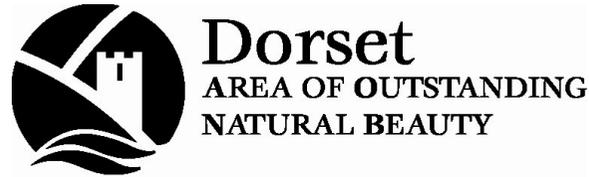
Outputs: Efficient running of AONB office; team supervised above and beyond requirements of DCC PDR process.

Costs: Staff time: 57 days  
Team training budget: £2500 and £12,700 accommodation / equipment costs

Priority: 1

Team contact: Team Manager / Administrative Assistant





# Making connections

**Dorset AONB  
Communication & Participation Framework for Action**

**2008 - 2012**

*Draft for Dorset AONB Partnership Board  
March 2008*



# 1. Introduction

The Dorset AONB Management Plan presents a picture of how to conserve and enhance this special landscape so that its character, the well being and enjoyment of people and the economic health of the AONB is passed on to generations to come.

Good communication and the involvement of people who live, work and visit the AONB are vital to the success of this vision.

The Communication & Participation Strategy drawn up in 2003 created the basic communication & participation building blocks required to produce a management plan, build a partnership and establish an identity for the Team.

Now that these core communication tools and consultation processes have been established, the work of the Partnership and Team has changed gear and is implementing the Management Plan through key projects and initiatives identified in the AONB Action Plan. These projects, together with forthcoming events such as our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2009 and the Olympics in 2012, give us fantastic communication and participation opportunities in the next few years.

This Framework for Action focuses on the communication and participation element of the work of the AONB Partnership, so that we can make true and lasting connections with people who will help us shape the AONB in the future.

# 2. Background

## 2.1 Making connections – who our audience is

One of the principles of good communication is that the right message is delivered to the right people at the right time. Identifying who we want to reach rather than considering communication to the 'general public' is an important place to start.

The progress made in making connections with people over the last 3 years has been good, and we will continue to build on the work we have done, particularly with:

- Partnership organisations
- General public with an interest in landscape / environment
- Geographical communities where projects operate
- Professionals, both locally & nationally
- Other protected landscapes

In addition to working with these, our priority for communication and participation work for the next 3 years will be to reach new audiences – those who do not already engage with the AONB agenda. National research identifies hard to reach groups by gender, ethnicity and age.

To work effectively at reaching these new audiences, we need to tap into existing community networks initially to get a better understanding of their interests and aspirations and to find common ground between these and our own AONB agenda.

## 2.2 Existing activity

This Framework for Action has been pulled together through analysis of current communication activity, discussions with team members and partner organisations and by looking at relevant strategies and action plans which have emerged since the publication of the Dorset AONB Management Plan.

A snapshot of the strengths and weaknesses of the communication & participation work we have achieved as a partnership to date and the drivers for change for the future are shown in Appendix 1.

## 2.3 Priorities for improvement

Analysis of these has led us to the specific actions outlined later in this document, but also to some broader principles which will help to improve effectiveness of our communication and participation work in the future:

- Work with existing environmental and community partnerships / groups to develop our communication & participation activities rather than trying to make connections from scratch – making the most of their expertise, resources, networks and contacts.
  - Maximise effectiveness & use of existing communication & participation mechanisms such as local media
  - Develop messages about the AONB which are relevant to peoples lives, finding common ground between our agendas
  - Be more imaginative with the communication and participation methods we use, exploring the potential of art and new technologies.
- Target communication and participation activity through careful planning and evaluation its effectiveness
  - Make sure all communication and participation work is as inclusive and sustainable as possible
  - Be realistic about what we can achieve, aiming for quality – well planned and targeted work - rather than quantity

### 3 What we want to achieve

The overall aim of our communication and participation work is to make a **true and lasting connection** with people who live, work and visit the Dorset AONB and those who make decisions over its future.

We hope to achieve the following outcomes as a result of our work:

1. Better opportunities for people to explore, enjoy and understand the **special qualities** of the landscape and natural beauty of the Dorset AONB.
2. A better understanding of how the Dorset AONB **landscape is changing**, the pressures on it and how to use the landscape in a more sustainable way.
3. More people making a **positive contribution** to the future of the AONB through involvement in decision making processes or through collective action.
4. A broader base of long term support for the Dorset AONB through recognition of the **importance of the protected landscape designation** and its family of nationally and internationally important protected landscapes.
5. A healthy, **active partnership** board and vibrant staff team that makes decisions openly and works innovatively.

## **Outcome 1: Better opportunities for people to explore, enjoy and understand the special qualities of the landscape and natural beauty of the Dorset AONB.**

### **Key messages**

- a.** Dorset AONB is a unique collection of very **different landscapes**, each with their own character and special qualities.
- b.** The AONB is a **living landscape** – the people who live and work here contribute to the character of the landscape, now and in the future.
- c.** The AONB is a **living text book** – the interaction between geology, human influence and natural processes is unique and very readable.
- d.** The AONB is an **inspirational landscape** – both for artists, writers and musicians past and present.
- e.** Being out in the natural environment can benefit **health and well being**.
- f.** When exploring the AONB, you can do things that **minimise your footprint and that benefit the local economy**.

### **Priority issues**

**Raising standards:** The Interpretation Audit and Coastal Corridor access audit have highlighted both gaps and duplicity of information promoting the enjoyment and understanding of the AONB. There is a commitment to work together to raise standards in the variety and sustainability of media used and to develop more audience-focused products. The strength of the arts community in Dorset offers new

opportunities to move away from our dependence on the written word and explore how visual and performance art, sound, film and e-technologies can help us communicate better.

**New audiences and inclusiveness:** In response to DEFRA's consultation, the South West Protected Landscapes Forum commissioned research into under-represented communities visiting the SW countryside, generating AONB-specific data on who and where our underrepresented communities are. Health, play and food are seen as common ground, key issues to engage new audiences.

**Health:** Natural England have identified Health as one of their 4 key campaigns, recognising the preventative health benefits of the natural environment, improving physical and mental health for a population where obesity and physical inactivity are becoming both common and costly.

**Food:** Public awareness of the benefits of buying local food is strong and a good platform for further action. Direct from Dorset, Chalk and Cheese, Year of Food & Farming and other local food initiatives present good opportunities for joint working.

**New networks:** Destination Dorset will provide a strategic voice for tourism in the county and has identified priorities for gathering market intelligence and building sustainability into the tourism industry. It will help deliver the tourism and cultural celebration elements of the cultural Olympiad. Likewise, Creative Dorset and Direct from Dorset are active networks keen to engage in the AONB agenda.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Message</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key partners</b>	<b>Mechanism</b>
1.1 Through core communications and new network activities develop awareness of the different landscapes & their special qualities, focus on views as a starting point	a	Targeted new audiences	AONB Partnership Destination Dorset Cultural Olympiad networks	Website Media calendar Coast & Countryside AONB leaflet Network events
1.2 Develop photographic gallery of high quality evocative images which captures the special character of the AONB landscapes	a	Residents	Local camera clubs County magazine Artsreach	Seasonal competition Commissions Website Touring exhibition
1.3 Build capacity to raise standards of new and existing interpretation by embracing audience focus, local distinctiveness, art, sustainability & new technologies	a, b, c,d,e,f	Day and staying visitors to the AONB	Coastal Corridor group & interpretation providers	Training Workshops Information share networking
1.4 Use local food to develop understanding of the link between farming & quality landscapes	b,f	Day & staying visitors Teachers & students Targeted new audiences	Direct from Dorset & Destination Dorset	Events Articles Coast & Countryside
1.5 Promote opportunities to visit the 'living textbook' landscape where it is most easily read	c	Teachers & students, primary & secondary school in Dorset Day & staying visitors	Destination Dorset	Website Coast & Countryside Flier for schools
1.6 Express interest in the Cultural Olympiad and engage as opportunities arise	d,e,f	Olympic visitors	Destination Dorset DSP Culture theme group	Networking
1.7 Promote opportunities for car free visits, walking & cycling and shopping locally	e,f	Day & staying visitors New audiences	Destination Dorset	Website Existing tourism leaflets Strapline development

**NB: See Action Plan in Section 4 for timescale, target & resource details**

## **Outcome 2: A better understanding of how the Dorset AONB landscape is changing, the pressures on it and how we can use the landscape in a more sustainable way.**

### **Key messages:**

- a. The landscape is **dynamic and constantly changing** as a response to both natural and man made influences
- b. Global **climate change** may increase the pace of landscape change in Dorset
- c. We need to **act in a sustainable way** to ensure that landscape change can be positive rather than negative
- d. **Monitoring changes** taking place enables us to manage change effectively

### **Priority issues:**

**Awareness of change:** There is a common misunderstanding that the AONB designation aspires to preservation of the landscape, keeping things the way they are now or in the past. This misconception neither acknowledges that we have a constantly changing landscape nor that an element of the AONB designation is to help manage landscape change positively.

However, there is a growing awareness amongst both decision makers and the public of global climate change and how patterns of travel, fuel consumption and food production can influence this change. With this growing awareness comes a great opportunity for the AONB Partnership to engage with people on the theme of landscape change – looking at how the landscape is already changing and how this may be different for future generations.

Clearly, this is an area relevant to both young and old. Capturing older people's perspectives of landscape change could be a valuable resource for future generations who will witness and have to respond to a greater pace of change.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring landscape change is a primary purpose of the AONB and work is already underway to establish a Fixed Point Photography infrastructure in key locations, consistent with other AONBs in the region. This FPP offers great opportunities to involve local people in witnessing landscape change, but also to use the vehicle of digital photography to communicate and celebrate landscape change in innovative ways.

### **Education, play and art**

Young people are key stakeholders when considering climate and landscape change and how to use the landscape more sustainably. There are clear links to KS2 & 3 which should be developed to help schools explore this further. Play also offers a great opportunity to engage young families in exploring change. Likewise, reference to acclaimed writers and artists of the past such as Hardy and Newberry could generate new perspectives on change.

### **Sustainable tourism**

Tourism is an important economic driver in Dorset and has an impact on many who live and work here. It is an industry which can influence very positive change in terms of using the landscape in a sustainable way.

Action	Message	Audience	Key partners	Mechanism
2.1 Involve local people in fixed point photography to record, understand and celebrate the changing landscape	a,b,d	Local* residents, including schools & youth groups where possible.  * to FPP locations	Parish Councils, Community organisations, POPP, youth groups & secondary schools	Digital photography and film
2.1 Build capacity at parish level to record landscape change & feed into community planning	a,b,d	Parish councils / residents:	Key parishes in each landscape character area DCA, DSP	Workshops & training Photography & visual art
2.3 For 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary, focus on intergenerational perspectives of landscape change		Older people, young people	POPP	Sounds & stories
2.4 Develop landscape change resources for KS2&3 as part of sustainability curriculum	a,b	Teachers, primary & secondary schools	DCC Education Primary & secondary schools	Teaching resources – website and print
2.5 Use landscape focused art & literature from the past to stimulate thinking about landscape change – past, present & future	a,b,c	Residents Teachers, primary & secondary schools		Self guided trails Media campaigns Teaching resources
2.6 Explore new ways of learning – art and play – to look at landscape change, including both local and global influences	a,b,c	Young families	DCA / Dorset Play Forum DCC art development Family Friendly Dorset	Summer play events Big Draw Artist led workshops
2.7 Through core comms, focus on issues of food, travel, energy and development that use the landscape in a sustainable way	b,c	Targeted new audiences	Partnership Board DA21	Website Coast & Countryside Media Calendar Events
2.8 Develop understanding in tourism sector of impacts to landscape and opportunities for positive action	d	Tourism business Visitors	Destination Dorset DNFTP SWT	Input into training workshops, events and promotional material

**NB: See Action Plan in Section 4 for timescale, target & resource details**

## **Outcome 3: More people making a positive contribution to the future of the AONB through involvement in decision making processes or through collective action.**

### **Key Messages:**

- a. The opinions of local residents, community groups and local businesses are important to the Partnership and help us shape the AONB management plan and prioritise action.
- b. Community planning is important and we will engage with it by offering support on issues relating to the AONB agenda.
- c. Local action and volunteering can make a really positive contribution to the AONB landscape.

### **Priority issues:**

#### **Management Plan review**

Review of the AONB Management Plan by March 2009 is a chance to reflect on whether the plan embraces the key concerns and opportunities expressed by local people. Now that the community planning structures are established in Dorset, we can do this efficiently using existing networks and plans. However, more proactive action may be needed to tap into other networks (such as business, landowners) where strong links have not yet been established.

#### **Tools to support local action**

The Landscape Character Assessment for the AONB provides a clear and structured approach to the character of landscape types and indicators for landscape change and will be a useful tool for parish and community planning groups. However, the landscape

character assessment also has much to gain from community planning groups –their local knowledge will be invaluable to verify the assumptions made in the assessment and contribute a ‘sense of place’ to the process.

The Pride of Place Toolkit and Award scheme, and the Breathing Places campaign are also useful tools to support local action, which should be promoted more to realise their full potential.

**Sustainable Development Fund:** SDF has been run successfully for three years, empowering local people to make a positive contribution to the AONB and leveraging new funds and resources into the area. More could be done to promote the outcomes of this local action and the reservoir of experience that now exists. Effort to secure continuation of SDF and other funds such as Local Action should be made.

**Volunteer opportunities:** The Every Action Counts initiative has highlighted the many different ways that voluntary action can have a positive impact on the sustainability of local communities, the environment and the economy. This initiative reflects the importance of volunteering to national and local agendas, volunteering currently being a LAA target for the county. The Dorset Countryside Volunteer Ranger Service will provide us with a vehicle to recruit and support volunteers.

Action	Message	Audience	Key partners	Mechanism
3.1 Engage Community Partnerships, local businesses and residents in the management plan review process to ensure local issues are fed in	a	Community Partnerships Local Area Partnerships Parish Councils DSP Business networks	DSP	Presentations Issues workshops Annual Forum Media articles
3.2 Parish photographic competition as part of 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, explore and celebrate local perspectives of what the designation means.	a	Parish Councils Community Groups Residents Primary schools Community Partnerships	DCA	Themed competition
3.3 Showcase SDF projects to celebrate contribution to AONB and share learning	b,c	Community Partnerships Residents Community organisations Targeted new audiences	DP&TC DCA	Website Coast & Countryside SDF report
3.4 Highlight how local people can make a positive contribution to the AONB	a,b,c	Residents Local business Community Partnerships	Breathing Places	Leaflet Website Breathing places events
3.5 Promote landscape character assessment as a useful tool to community planning	b	Community organisations Community Partnerships	DSP DCA DP&TC	Articles Presentations Website
3.6 Support local action through Pride of Place toolkit and response to AONB relevant actions in Parish Plans	b,c	Community organisations Parish Councils DP&TC	DCA Community Partnerships Pride of Place contributors	Website Local networks Specialist advice
3.7 Develop AONB focused volunteer opportunities in association with wider Dorset Countryside volunteer service	c	Residents, targeted	Dorset Countryside DCA	Input to Volunteer Warden Service

**NB: See Action Plan in Section 4 for timescale, target & resource details**

## **Outcome 4: A broader base of long term support for the Dorset AONB through recognition of the importance of the protected landscape designation and its family of nationally and internationally important protected landscapes.**

### **Key messages:**

- a. The Dorset AONB landscape contains geological, wildlife and historic features of **national & international importance**.
- b. Dorset AONB is one of a **family of protected landscapes** which together can make a big difference by delivering key national and international agendas.
- c. The Dorset AONB Partnership represents **good value** to its funding partners, efficiently translating funding into action and levering in new resources from partnership working.
- d. We are keen to work with a broad range of **local partners** to maximise the scope of our work.

### **Priority issues**

**National and international importance:** The AONB designation is often seen as a 'poor cousin' to other designations such as National Parks. However, as well as being a collection of very different landscapes, the Dorset AONB is also a collection of very important sites with national and international designations. We need to do more to demonstrate this national and international dimension.

**Family of protected landscapes:** We currently work with the South West Protected Landscapes Forum and the National Association for AONBs to demonstrate good practice and value for money, e.g. through SDF promotion. However, more targeted

promotion could show how together we can deliver key national agendas at a local level.

**National and international agendas:** AONBs can help deliver key national and international agendas such as healthy living, climate change awareness and food at a local level. However, more needs to be done to identify these agendas, the targets they hold and communicate how the AONBs deliver.

**New partnerships:** The AONB Partnership has forged strong relations with its primary partners – those with obvious environmental and planning agendas. To broaden the base of support in the long term, we need to explore common ground between other organisations and partnerships such as WI network, business networks and youth partnerships which have clear environmental agenda or can benefit from the AONB designation, to deliver our agenda and access new resources. The Management Plan Review process may be a good opportunity to identify these potential new partners, as will be the Cultural Olympiad with its focus on young people and community engagement.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Message</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key partners</b>	<b>Mechanism</b>
4.1 To mark 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary, create a pictorial ABC of the national & internationally important features of the AONB, to highlight & celebrate the designation	a	Local funders Local councillors Local MPs	Partnership Board Common Ground	ABC focused media campaign and questionnaire
4.2 Work with SWPLF and NAAONB to reach regional & national decision makers more effectively	b,c	National & regional decision makers	SWPLF NAAONB	National Conference targeted campaigns briefing notes national media & journal coverage.
4.3 Demonstrate good value and effective delivery of key national & regional agendas.	c	Funding partners	SWPLF NAAONB	Annual Review SWPLF & NAAONB reviews Annual Forum
4.4 Use Management Plan Review and 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations to broaden range of partners.	d	WI Business networks Youth partnerships	Partnership Board	Targeted consultations and celebratory events
4.5 Identify Patrons to the AONB who can galvanise a broader range of support and interest	a,b,c,d	General public or key decision makers		Include in promotional material & events
4.5 Use core communications to relate local, national and international news, events & issues to the work of the P'ship	a,b,c,d	Local funders National & regional decision makers Existing audience		Website Media calendar Coast & Countryside
4.6 Improve links to regional and national protected landscape communications	b, c	Wider partnership Funding partners	SWPLF NAAONB	Input to SWPLF / NAAONB websites, outstanding magazine and joint publications

**NB: See Action Plan in Section 4 for timescale, target & resource details**

## **Outcome 5: A healthy, active Partnership Board and vibrant staff Team that makes decisions openly and works innovatively**

### **Key Messages**

- a. Decisions are made by the Dorset AONB Partnership in an **open and transparent** manner, in terms of its structures, consultations and reporting.
- b. A healthy Partnership thrives on a two way **flow of information** within the AONB.
- c. The Partnership can **benefit from links with others in the family of protected landscapes** by sharing ideas, good practice, experience and expertise.
- d. The AONB Partnership is a **test bed for new approaches** and supports a specialist staff team which is keen to try new ways of working.

### **Priority issues**

**Communicating action:** Now that implementation of the AONB management plan is underway, the staff team now consists of 10 people each with their own specialism and priority project work. While communication within the staff team is good, more could be done to develop a regular and frequent flow of information from the staff team to the wider partnership so that partners remain informed between board meetings.

**Capacity building:** The AONB Partnership involves many people – the officers and members who sit on the Partnership Board as well as the three heritage committees who connect to issues at a local

level. The Management Plan review offers an ideal time to increase the role of all partners, so they not only assist in making decisions but begin to act together on AONB focused priorities as well. Better flow of information about the local, regional and national AONB agenda will help build capacity for greater involvement, as will further training / fact finding opportunities.

**Sustainable communication:** The AONB Partnership should be presenting good practice in all communications and participation activities, ensuring that they are as inclusive and sustainable as possible.

**Regional and national issues:** There are some issues relating to the Dorset AONB which are common to other AONBs regionally and / or nationally and require a regional / national audience rather than a local one. Through both the regional and national communication group meetings, we can respond to these issues as they arise, developing well targeted communications as necessary.

Action	Message	Audience	Key partners	Mechanism
5.1 All Partnership meetings will be effectively minuted and papers available on website or on request.	a	All partners Public	Partnership Board	Website Admin
5.2 Consultation processes relating to the management plan review will be held according to the report of stakeholder involvement.	a	Stakeholders Public	Partnership Board	Website Local media Targeted events
5.3 Improve flow of information through the partnership by reorganising website and establishing a regular e-bulletin	b	All partners	Partnership Board	Website E-bulletin
5.4 Develop depth of knowledge on key AONB agendas and respond to common issues	c	All partners, parish councils, Targeted new partners	Partnership Board SWPLF NAAONB	Annual Forum SWPLF & NAAONB communications
5.5 Develop programme of site visits & talks to increase understanding of AONB with wider partner organisations and funders	c	All partners Heritage Committee members Funding authority officer & members	Partnership Board	Topic based site visits and workshops
5.6 Encourage staff to research new ways of working relevant to their work and report to Partnership Board	d	Staff Partnership Board	Partnership Board Other protected landscapes	Verbal & electronic report
5.7 Propagate Champions to develop topical expertise and keep abreast of new issues & opportunities	b,c	Partnership Board Heritage Committees	SWPLF NAAONB	Training
5.8 Develop good practice in sustainability & inclusiveness of all communications	b	Partnership Board		Review & checklist

**NB: See Action Plan in Section 4 for timescale, target & resource details**

## 4 Timescales, resources and targets

Mechanism	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost
<b>Website</b>  <i>Ref actions</i> 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.4, 2.7, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 4.5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3	Refresh content by May	ST	Refresh content by May	ST	Refresh content by May	ST	Refresh content	ST
	Create E-bulletin by May	£600	E-bulletin x12	ST	E-bulletin x12	ST	E-bulletin x12	ST
	Construct Man Plan review pages by March	£350	Topical updates x12	ST	Topical updates x 12	ST	Topical updates x12	ST
	Construct SDF pages by June	£350	Design update	?	Design update	?	Design update	?
	Hosting	£700	Hosting	£700	Hosting	£700	Hosting	£700
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£2000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£700</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£700</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£700</b>
<b>Print</b>  <i>Ref actions:</i> 1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 2.7, 2.8, 3.3, 3.4, 4.5,	Design & print Local leaflet by march	£3500	Reprint of Explore leaflet	£2000	Reprint Local leaflet	£2000	Reprint of Explore leaflet	£2000
	Coast & Countryside 3 issues pa	£5000	Coast & Countryside 3 issues pa	£5000	Coast & Countryside 3 issues pa	£5000	Coast & Countryside 3 issues pa	£5000
	Annual Review by July	£2500	Annual Review by July	£2500	Annual Review by July	£2500	Annual Review by July	£2500
	SWPLF calendar	£350	SWPLF calendar	£350	SWPLF calendar	£350	SWPLF calendar	£350
	Development of distribution outlets	ST	Input into tourism brochures	ST	Input into tourism brochures	ST	Input into tourism brochures	ST
	Strapline & message development	ST						
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£11350</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£9850</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£9850</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£9850</b>

ST = staff time

Mechanism	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost
<b>Media</b>  Ref actions: 1.1, 2.5, 2.7, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 5.2,	Develop calendar of local regional & national news releases, features, campaigns by May  Key focus: projects, food, fuel, man plan review	ST	Develop calendar of local regional & national news releases, features, campaigns by May  Key focus: projects, 50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary, landscape change, climate change	ST	Develop calendar of local regional & national news releases, features, campaigns by May  Key focus: projects, community action	ST	Develop calendar of local regional & national news releases, features, campaigns by May	ST
	<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>Management Plan Review</b>  Ref actions: 4.4, 5.2,	Presentations to new networks May - July	ST						
	Issues workshops as needed	ST						
	Annual Forum	As below						
	Media coverage	As above						

**ST = staff time**

Mechanism	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Action / Target	Cost						
<b>50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</b> Ref actions: 4.1, 4.4	Development work	£750	Sounds and stories project	£1750				
	Development work	£750	ABC project	£750				
			Celebratory event for wider partnership	£2500				
			Big Draw	£100				
	Photographic competition / public Summer & autumn	£500	Photographic competition / public Winter & spring	£500				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£500</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£5600</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>Partnership Development</b> Ref actions: 5.1 – 5.7	Disseminate and contribute to SWPLF & NAAONB Communications Bimonthly	ST	Disseminate and contribute to SWPLF & NAAONB Communications Bimonthly	ST	Disseminate and contribute to SWPLF & NAAONB Communications Bimonthly	ST	Disseminate and contribute to SWPLF & NAAONB Communications Bimonthly	ST
	Annual Forum	£1500	Annual Forum	£1500	Annual Forum	£1600	Annual Forum	£1700
			Identify & appoint patron(s)	ST				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1500</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1500</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1600</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1700</b>

ST = staff time

Mechanism	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost
<b>Art</b> Ref actions: 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 3.2,	Photographic competition / camera clubs 50 contributors	£500	Photographic competition exhibition 10 venues	£2000	Exhibition: FPP 2 venues	£1500	Exhibition of FPP 5 venues	£1500
			Fixed point photography (FPP) workshops pilot & evaluation X2 locations	£2000	FPP workshops X5 locations	£2000	FPP workshops X4 locations	£2000
					Commission professional photographer	£1000		
					Landscape change project – art & literature 4 self guided trails	£4000	Landscape change project – art & literature 4 self guided trails	£4000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£500</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£4000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£8500</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£7500</b>
<b>Education</b> Ref actions: 1.5, 2.4,	Development work	ST	Landscape change teaching resources Web & print	£1500	Living textbook teaching resources Web & print	£2000		
<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1500</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£2000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	
<b>Play</b> Ref actions: 2.6	Development work	ST	Landscape change family events – pilot & evaluation	£2000	Landscape change family events	£3000	Landscape change family events	£4000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£2000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£3000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£4000</b>	

Mechanism	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost
<b>Input to network events</b>  Ref actions: 1.1,	Destination Dorset Direct from Dorset Bridport Food Festival	£1000	Destination Dorset Direct from Dorset Breathing Places Fossil Festival	£1000	As appropriate	£1000	As appropriate	£1000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1000</b>
<b>Community Planning</b>  Ref actions: 3.1 – 3.7,	SDF promotion Website& media	ST	SDF promotion Website & media	ST	SDF promotion Website, media & review	£1500	SDF promotion Website & media	ST
			Landscape character Presentations to parish plan groups X4	ST	Landscape character Presentations to parish plan groups X8	ST	Landscape character Presentations to parish plan groups X8	ST
	Specialist advice to parish & community plan groups By demand	ST	Specialist advice to parish & community plan groups By demand	ST	Specialist advice to parish & community plan groups By demand	ST	Specialist advice to parish & community plan groups By demand	ST
	Pride of Place Toolkit redistribution and promotion	ST	Pride of Place promotion – media / community mags	ST				
	Pride of Place Awards							
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>

ST = staff time

Mechanism	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost	Action / Target	Cost
<b>Training &amp; workshops</b>  Ref actions: 2.8, 5.5, 5.8	Interpretation providers workshop – coastal corridor plan area X2	ST	Input into tourism sector training	ST	Input into tourism sector training	ST	Input into tourism sector training	ST
	Staff media training: writing for print	£800	Staff media training: broadcast	£800				
	Staff training – sustainability & diversity comms Develop checklists for project planning	ST	Topic based site visits – wider partnership	£200	Topic based site visits – wider partnership	£200	Topic based site visits – wider partnership	£300
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£800</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£200</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£300</b>

ST = staff time

## Appendix 1: Snapshot of current communication & participation activity and drivers for change

The current Communication Strategy helped us build up the core communication & partnership infrastructure required to produce and implement the first Management Plan for the AONB. An analysis of current communication & participation activity is set out as SWOT analysis:

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<p>Key communication tools in place, e.g. logo, website, management plan, Annual Forum, Annual Review, leaflets, display material.</p> <p>Management Plan: consultation with stakeholders</p> <p>Joint communication work, e.g. Annual Forum, Coast &amp; Countryside newsletter, Interpretation Audit</p> <p>Active participation of geographical communities through project work e.g. Winterbournes, South Dorset Ridgeway</p> <p>Sustainable Development Fund in generating both participation and profile.</p> <p>Link up with SWPLF &amp; NAAONB Communications Groups e.g. SW calendar, articles in Outstanding magazine, share good practice, joint research into audience</p> <p>Events targeted at professional audience e.g. Rural Roads, Coastal Corridor Link up with Dorset magazine</p> <p>Strong community partnerships, links to community planning as active partner of Dorset Strategic Partnership</p> <p>Strong Partnership structure</p> <p>Team keen &amp; able to make &amp; sustain new connections with people</p>	<p>Patchy connections with: Business community, farmers &amp; landowners, national &amp; regional decision makers, local councillors, parish councils, young people, older people, families, schools, black minority ethnic communities, disabled people.</p> <p>Limited link up with community planning at District, Local Area Partnership and Parish Plan level.</p> <p>Overuse of print material</p> <p>Little message development &amp; audience segmentation</p> <p>Project planning not rigorous enough around communication, participation &amp; elements</p> <p>Ad hoc use of press &amp; broadcasting media</p> <p>No formal evaluation of effectiveness of communication &amp; participation activity</p> <p>No formal sustainability &amp; inclusiveness check</p> <p>Limited voice at parish level</p>

From these strengths and weaknesses we can pull out the following points:

### **Communication**

Core communication tools have provided a good start to communicating with the public, stakeholders and partners effectively. Implementing the management plan through varied projects and initiatives has also created new communication resources.

We feel we have communicated well with partner organisations, the public who are already receptive to environmental messages, some geographical communities, professionals and other protected area partnerships. However, there is room to reach a much wider audience. Likewise, defining relevant messages and methods of communication requires more work.

### **Participation**

The mechanisms for participation have evolved to include a strong Partnership Board, Steering Group, and Staff Team linking to a network of Heritage Committees and strategic partnerships. The Partnership structure has achieved a good 'making decisions together' mode of participation and has capacity to 'act together' effectively in the future.

Local people were consulted as part of the management plan process and have become actively involved in geographical projects. The SDF has also encouraged local people to generate their own projects which contribute to the AONB agenda. However,

more could be done to engage a wider audience in the implementation of the management plan through supporting local initiatives and acting together.

It is also important to build capacity within the Partnership Board and the wider community in order to both improve & sustain participation in the AONB in the future.

## Drivers for change

### Opportunities

- Management Plan: review opportunity to engage with new audiences
- Olympics: 2012, Cultural Olympiad and legacy, particularly priorities of tourism, cultural celebration and community engagement
- 50 year anniversary of Dorset AONB designation: time to celebrate
- Growing public awareness of climate change, local food & fuel consumption
- Health agenda
- New strategies to link up with: Childrens Plan, DSP, Play strategy
- New strong partnerships to work with: DMO, Creative Dorset, POPP, Young Peoples Forum.
- Wider access & understanding of new technologies
- Natural England establishing its priorities and campaigns
- Dorset Countryside Volunteer ranger Service
- Education: outdoor classroom manifesto

### Threats

- The relationship between people and the natural environment is becoming increasingly remote.
- Funding allocated on an annual basis so difficult to plan ahead
- Loss of SDF would take away effective mechanism for local empowerment
- Limited resources of money & time
- Environmental issues feel very global, hard for public to see how local action can make a difference
- Environmentalism can be very negative