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# Endorsements

The Countryside Agency and English Nature, in discharging their duty under Section 90 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, have approved this Management Plan as meeting its legislative requirements and the guidance set out for the production of AONB Management Plans.

The local planning authorities listed below have adopted the Plan as required by Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

The Dorset AONB Partnership Board approved the Management Plan on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2004.

The Dorset AONB Management Plan has been endorsed by the following organisations:

- Countryside Agency
- English Nature
- Dorset County Council
- North Dorset District Council
- West Dorset District Council
- Purbeck District Council
- Weymouth and Portland Borough Council
- Somerset County Council
- South Somerset District Council
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Government Office for the South West
- South West of England Regional Development Agency
- South West Tourism
- Country Land & Business Association
- National Farmers Union
- The National Trust
- Dorset Wildlife Trust



Working together for Dorset's outstanding countryside

## Chairman's Foreword

Dorset is a very lovely county and it is perhaps invidious to pick out any part of it as special. Maybe it was the recognition of this overall quality that persuaded the Government, advised by the Countryside Commission, to define the chalk uplands as 'Outstanding'. It did this in two stages. The largest part, including the uplands, vales and coastline, known as the 'Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' was designated in 1959, one of the first areas in the country to be given this accolade. A second area, based on the historic Cranborne Chase, followed in 1981, which with the West Wiltshire Downs makes up a separate AONB.

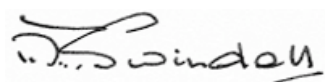
This present document is concerned solely with the Dorset AONB although the two areas have much in common.

The obvious question is why we need a management plan. The Dorset AONB appears to have survived perfectly well for forty five years under the protection of county wide policies and the guardianship of the local authorities. In many ways this is true but recent decades have seen such major changes to the countryside that many people have begun to fear for the future integrity of these special places. These changes and the threats they pose are described in the document.

One of the underlying problems is the large number of individuals, agencies and statutory bodies whose separate actions each influence the physical health of the area. If all these various activities could be loosely harnessed together towards some common agreed aims perhaps the overall result would be of benefit to all and, not least, to the landscape and wildlife. The first step towards achieving this must be to define these aims and, most important of all, to ensure they are aims which everybody involved can share and support.

This then is the task of this present Management Plan. The local authorities, the various agencies, the farmers and landowners have joined together to produce this document. They have been supported by a small, very able, staff and the result is the wide measure of agreement and forward thinking which you will find in these pages.

But preparing the Plan is the easiest part. The challenge comes in implementing it. If it is to make a real difference to this very lovely part of England then we are going to need a great deal of commitment both to the ideals expressed in it and a willingness to work together in harmony. The years ahead will show whether this can be achieved. I dearly hope it can.



**Alan Swindall**

Chairman, Dorset AONB Partnership



Eggardon Hill, an Iron Age hillfort, commands spectacular views across the AONB.

