

Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Date: Monday, 3 June 2019
My Ref:
Your Ref:

Committee:
Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

Date: Tuesday, 11 June 2019
Time: 9.30 am
Venue: Clee St Margaret Village Hall, Nr Ludlow, SY7 9DT

You are requested to attend the above meeting.
The Agenda is attached

Claire Porter
Corporate Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Members of Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

James Williamson (Chairman)	Veronica Cossons
Hilary Clayton-Smith (Vice Chairman)	Paul Davis
Cecilia Motley (Vice Chairman)	Ian Dormor
Heather Kidd	Charles Edwards
Robert Tindall	Patrick Edwards
David Turner	Carol Griffiths
Chris Turley	Robert Harris
Alison Caffyn	Alan Jones
George Chancellor	Jenny Joy
John Long	Bill Klemperer
Joe Manifold	Sue Lee
Andrew Wood	Marc Liebrecht
Mark Hughes	Hazel MacDowell
Yvonne Holyoak	David McGlade
Steve Pennington	David Mills
Mr John Pritchard	Ronald Repath
Martin Pye	Phil Ridley
Gillian Binks	David C. Smith
Sarah Bury	Leo Smith
Helen Dale	Donna Tavenor

Your Committee Officer is:

Tim Ward Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 257713

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence

2 Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 1 - 6)

The note of the meeting held on 5 March 2019 is attached for confirmation

3 Brief Updates

Report to Follow

4 Capacity Building Project - AONB Partnership Draft Business Plan and Skills Audit (Pages 7 - 10)

This paper provides Partnership members the draft of a Business Plan to guide future activity, and a skills audit for members, as part of our Capacity Building project.

Appendix 1 is to follow

5 Capacity Building Project - Shropshire Hills AONB Trust Draft Business Plan and support sought from Partnership Members (Pages 11 - 20)

This paper provides for the information of Partnership Members the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust's Business Plan and explores areas of joint working and ways that Partnership members may be able to support the Trust

6 'Unmuddying the Waters' Project (Pages 21 - 22)

This paper outlines the planned delivery by the AONB team for the next two years of the Environment Agency's 'Unmuddying the Waters' project in the Clun catchment.

7 Water Environment Grant - 'Teme Onny Clun' Project (Pages 23 - 24)

This paper provides some background on the new joint 'Teme-Onny-Clun' project between the AONB Partnership and the Severn Rivers Trust.

8 Judicial Review regarding the Implementation of the Habitats Directive, River Clun SAC (Pages 25 - 26)

This paper provides some background on the national Judicial Review case affecting the River Clun SAC.

9 Ironbridge Power Station Site Redevelopment Masterplan Consultation (Pages 27 - 28)

This paper provides some background for discussion on the proposed redevelopment of the Ironbridge power station site, to support an AONB Partnership response to the current consultation on the Masterplan recently released.

10 Date of Next Meeting

Members are advised that the next meeting of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership will be held on 8th October 2019 at 9.30am



Shropshire Hills AONB
Partnership

11 June 2019

9.30 am

Item

Public

MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2019

9.30 - 11.30 AM

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward
Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Local Authorities

Shropshire Council

Cllr David Turner

Statutory/Voluntary Agencies & Individual members

Individual Member	Alison Caffyn
Individual Member	Joe Manifold
Individual Member	James Williamson (Chair)
Individual Member	Andrew Wood
Town & Parish Council representative	Hilary Claytonsmith
Town & Parish Council representative	Mark Hughes
Town & Parish Council representative	Yvonne Holyoak
British Horse Society	Ronald Repath
Longmynd & District Bridleways Association	Sue Lee
Offas Dyke Association	David McGlade
Ramblers Association	Charles Edwards
SASTAK	David Mills
Shropshire Hills Tourism	Paul Davis
Strettons Civic Society	Ian Dormor

Observers/Officers

Shropshire Council

Tim Ward (Committee Officer)

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Staff
Team

Phil Holden (AONB Partnership Manager)
Alison Jones (Clun Catchment Officer)
Mike Kelly (Natural Environment Officer)

44 **Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

44.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

44.2 Apologies for absence were received from Gill Binks (Caring for God's Acre), Sarah Bury (CPRE), Pete Carty / Patrick Edwards (National Trust), George Chancellor (Individual Member), Veronica Cossons (Shropshire Wildlife Trust), Clare Fildes (Shropshire Council), Joy Greenall / Rob Harris (Land Life and Livelihoods), Mark Latham (Telford & Wrekin Council), Hazel McDowell (Natural England), Cllr Cecilia Motley (Shropshire Council), Martin Pye (Parish Council Rep), Leo Smith (SOS/UOWG), Donna Tavernor (Forestry Commission) and Cllr Chris Turley (Telford & Wrekin Council).

45 **Minutes of the last meeting**

45.1 The note of minutes of the meeting held on the 4 December 2018 had been circulated.

45.2 Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership held on 4 December 2018 be agreed as a true record.

46 **AONB Management Plan Consultation and Approval**

46.1 The meeting received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which summarised the responses to the public consultation on the draft AONB Management Plan and set out the expected timetable for approval of the Plan by the two local authorities.

46.2 The AONB Manager commented that relatively few responses to the consultation had been received, partially due to most stakeholders being involved in the preparation of the Plan, and partially due to the Christmas period. He informed the meeting that following receipt of their comments a constructive meeting had been held with representatives of the NFU. Several members expressed the view that the Partnership should endeavour to get more farmers involve with its work.

46.3 The AONB Manager advised the meeting that he had amended the draft plan to take account of comments and agreed to circulate the amended version of the plan to the Partnership.

46.4 The AONB Manager raised the problem of organised motor bike events which were becoming a problem in certain areas of the AONB. He advised members that such events could be held under permitted development rights which allowed a limited number of such events in any one year as long as certain criteria were met. Several members commented that the biggest issues with such events were noise and damage to the ground.

46.5 In response to a question the AONB Partnership Manager advised that permitted rights could be removed by the imposition of an 'Article 4 Direction' which would require planning permission to be sought for the holding of such events. It was agreed that this should be investigated further.

46.6 The Chair suggested that the AONB Partnership should contact other organisations to develop a joint approach to the problem.

47 **Council Approval of AONB Partnership Terms of Reference**

47.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which advised of amendments to the Terms of Reference agreed at the last meeting.

47.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that following the last meeting a number of comments and queries had been received from Telford & Wrekin Council, and following discussion between the legal departments at both councils the following amendments were proposed: -

- The number of seats allocated to different membership categories on the Partnership is to remain specified, and the maximum number of seats is proposed to be reduced from 45 to 36. It is proposed that reductions could be made by means of currently vacant seats and through the membership review due in the autumn of 2019.
- The procedures document becomes an Appendix to the Partnership's Terms of Reference and will therefore be approved by the two Council Cabinets. (The Strategy & Performance Committee is a sub-committee of the Partnership, and its Terms of Reference are approved by the Partnership itself).
- Sub-committees of the Partnership including the Strategy & Performance Committee would not have the ability to co-opt members.
- The term of office for the Chair and Vice Chairs, and for appointments to the Partnership and the Strategy & Performance Committee is to remain at two years.

47.3 Ms Caffyn queried the reduction in the number of seats on the Partnership and commented that just because an organisation did not attend Partnership meeting did not mean they did not make a valid contribution to the work of the Partnership.

47.4 After further discussion it was resolved:

- That the AONB Partnership endorse the new Terms of Reference to go forward for formal approval by the two Councils, and
- That the AONB Partnership approve the new Terms of Reference for the Strategy & Performance Committee.

48 **Work Programme Update**

48.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which provided them with a brief update on the AONB team work programme activity.

48.2 The AONB Partnership Manager took the meeting through the report highlighting the following: -

- Work was being completed on the River Clun Recovery Project which was coming to the end of the 4-year project.
- A new project was being developed with the Severn Rivers Trust to provide advice to farmers regarding the water environment. This was being funded by the Natural England/Environment Agency "Water Environment Grant".
- The Shuttle Bus service would commence on 4 May and had been extended to run to Picklescott twice a day. Additional funding of £1,000 had been secured from the National Trust which was welcome but additional funding would be needed in order to continue the service in future years.
- Work is ongoing with the Uplands Commons project. The delivery phase application will be submitted in October and work is ongoing to gain the required match funding.
- Following the visit of Julian Glover, a meeting had been held with the Leader of Shropshire Council and the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Leisure together with the Chief Executive and Director of Place and the CEO of the NAAONB.

48.3 The Chair thanked the team for all the work that they did.

49 **Landscape Guidance Contract**

49.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which set out proposals for the development of a guidance document for the AONB based on the Landscape Character Assessment.

49.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised members that the Shropshire Landscape Character Assessment had been developed in the early 2000's and provided a description of 27 'Landscape Types' across Shropshire, of which 16 were found in the AONB. He informed the meeting that a contract had been let, and work was ongoing which would result in the production of a guidance document and possibly web-based interactive mapping.

49.3 The AONB Partnership Manager informed members that a stakeholder workshop would be held at the AONB offices on 14 March and asked that if any members wished to attend they should let him know.

50 **Julian Glover Visit - Update**

50.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership manager which updated them on the visit of Julian Glover on the 17 & 18 January.

50.2 The AONB Partnership Manager gave a roundup of the meetings and discussions that had been held during the visits.

50.3 Members who had attended the visit commented that overall, they felt that the events had been worthwhile.

50.4 The AONB Manager reminded members that the Review Panel's final report was expected to be published in the Autumn.

51 Resilient Heritage Capacity Building project - Update

51.1 The meeting received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which gave an update on progress with the Resilient Heritage Capacity Building Project.

51.2 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded the meeting that the project was a joint project between the Partnership and the AONB Trust which was funded by a grant from HLF of £38,100. He advised that the following work had been carried out: -

- A contract had been let to Marches Sustainable Development to support the development of business plans for the Partnership and the Trust and workshops were planned with the Partnership and the Trustees of the AONB Trust to develop these.
- Preparatory work had been done toward developing a skills audit which would lead to the identification of training needs.
- Work had been carried out on areas of income generation and advice was being sought on other potential sources of income generation.

51.3 The Chair thanked the AONB Partnership Manager for his update.

52 Date of Next Meeting

52.1 Members were advised that the next meeting of the AONB Partnership would be held on 11 June 2019 at 9.30am.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

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<u>Committee and Date</u> Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership 11 th June 2019	<u>Item</u> 4
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CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT – AONB PARTNERSHIP DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN AND SKILLS AUDIT

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, AONB Partnership Manager
e-mail: phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254741

Summary

This paper provides Partnership members the draft of a Business Plan to guide future activity, and a skills audit for members, as part of our Capacity Building project.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to comment on the Business Plan, and members are requested to complete and return the skills audit.

Background

The draft Business Plan results from two facilitated workshops involving both the AONB team and the Partnership's Strategy & Performance Committee. It focuses on activity of the team, but the Partnership group itself is also an important part of the influencing and delivery model of the AONB structure, and the Plan should cover development of the Partnership too.

In addition a joint workshop with the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust trustees has been held where the Business Plan was discussed alongside the Trust's Business Plan, which was also developed through the same project (this follows as agenda item 5).

The Capacity Building project funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund includes a task to conduct a skills audit and identify training and development needs. This has been done by the team, the sub-committee and the trustees, and it was agreed to widen this in a simpler form to the whole AONB Partnership. Members are requested to complete the brief skills audit appended – either electronically or using the paper attached.

The Business Plan will be followed by a Communications and Engagement Plan. This will aim to update and clarify the Partnership's communication messages to a variety of identified priority audiences, as well as looking at more active engagement such as how we interact with people and how people get involved.

List of Background Papers

Papers on Resilient Heritage capacity building project from previous Partnership meetings.

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.

Risk Management Appraisal

Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Draft AONB Partnership Business Plan 2019-21

Appendix 2 Skills audit for AONB Partnership members

**Shropshire Hills AONB Capacity Building project
Skills Audit questionnaire for AONB Partnership members**

Name (unless you prefer to remain anonymous):

Please rate your own level of skill or capacity 1 low ---> 5 high

	1	2	3	4	5
Committed to the purposes of the AONB designation					
Understand the legal basis of AONBs					
Understand the priorities for the Shropshire Hills AONB					
Able to represent the Partnership and influence people to support the AONB					
Practical knowledge of activity to conserve and enhance the AONB, e.g. wildlife, heritage					
Able to help the AONB Management Plan review – policy, guidance, actions					
Able to help implement aspects of the AONB Management Plan					
Knowledge of public engagement and awareness raising					
Engaging with relevant partners, communication and building relationships					
Working with transparency and integrity					
Available time, enthusiasm and effort					
Able to reflect and listen, accept advice					
Clear about priorities of the Partnership and its relationships with the AONB team and the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust					
Knowledge of and capacity for fund-raising, working with the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust					
Interested in providing support to the AONB Team through the Partnership’s Strategy & Performance Committee					
Able to introduce AONB team members and other partners to your local or topic contacts to pursue activities for the AONB					
Awareness of the National Association for AONBs and its activities					
Encouraging new people to get involved e.g. as Partnership members or volunteers					
Any other skills you feel are important to the Partnership (please specify and score):					

What areas do you feel you are most able to contribute to in the Partnership’s work?

Are there any additional areas of the Partnership’s work which you could contribute more to?

What if any are the barriers to you being able to contribute more?

Are there areas on which you feel you need briefing or training? What areas are they?

Any other comments

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<u>Committee and Date</u> Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership 11 th June 2019	<u>Item</u> 5
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CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT – SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB TRUST DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN AND SUPPORT SOUGHT FROM PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, AONB Partnership Manager
e-mail: phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254741

Summary

This paper provides for the information of Partnership members the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust's Business Plan, and explores areas of joint working and ways that Partnership members may be able to support the Trust. Anthony Morgan the AONB Trust Chairman will speak at the meeting on this agenda item. The Partnership also needs to reappoint two of its three nominated trustees from Partnership members.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to:

- a) note the Trust's Business Plan and its priorities,
- b) re-appoint two nominated trustees to the AONB Trust for a two year term, and
- c) members are requested to consider if they can provide any assistance to the Trust in carrying out its activities.

Background

The Trust's Business Plan results from two facilitated workshops for the eight trustees. The Trust's constitution is broad but its activities for the coming period are focussed on fundraising - principally to support the AONB Conservation Fund and the grants it gives, along with some other strands of restricted income for specific purposes.

The Trust is still relatively new, and has identified that it needs increased capacity to fulfil the tasks it has set out in the Business Plan. Ideally the Trust will engage some more volunteers to help with the fund-raising priorities it has identified (principally other charitable trusts and working with businesses), and AONB Partnership members are requested to consider if they are able to assist with this.

The Friends of the Shropshire Hills AONB scheme, jointly run by the Trust and the Partnership but with all funds going to the Trust, remains an important means of engaging people with the AONB. Partnership members are encouraged to become Friends of the AONB and to actively encourage and recruit others to do so.

Appendix 2 provides for information a summary of the projects being supported this year by the Trust through the AONB Conservation Fund.

Three of the trustees – George Chancellor, Veronica Cossons and Joe Manifold are appointed by the Partnership and one is the AONB Manager *ex officio*. The two year terms for George Chancellor and Veronica Cossons are due for reappointment now. Both are willing to stand again, and the Partnership is requested to re-appoint them for a further two years.

List of Background Papers

Papers on Resilient Heritage capacity building project from previous Partnership meetings.

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.

Risk Management Appraisal

Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Draft Shropshire Hills AONB Trust Business Plan 2019-21

Appendix 2 Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund supported projects 2019-20

Shropshire Hills AONB Trust

Business Plan: March 2019 - December 2021

1. Executive Summary

The Shropshire Hills AONB Trust is a charity dedicated to promoting the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. It supports activities which protect the wildlife and heritage of the Shropshire Hills area and encourages knowledge about the importance of doing so. An important aim is to make it possible for local people and organizations to become involved in caring for the countryside around them.

One of the key relationships of the Trust is with the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, the official organization established by Shropshire Council and Telford and Wrekin Council to prepare and deliver the management plan for this designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Trust has developed a mutually beneficial way of working with the Partnership. In particular the Trust helps the Partnership in recruiting Friends of the Shropshire Hills and the Partnership supports the Trust in the administration of the Conservation Fund which directly funds conservation projects.

The Business Plan sets out the Trust's long term vision statement and a mission statement which describes its general approach to fulfilling that vision. In drawing up its more specific plans for the next three years the Trust has analysed its stakeholders – the people and organizations with which it will need to work or support – and has drawn up a priority list of objectives which will further its role as a charity. These key objectives fall into three categories: developing organizational capacity, fundraising, and co-operative working with other people and groups. It has also considered the risks to the achievement of its aims and the controls it needs to put in place to mitigate those risks.

2. Vision statement

The natural beauty of the Shropshire Hills is secured forever as a place where wildlife, people, landscape and heritage thrive in harmony.

3. Mission statement

We will inspire people, organizations and businesses to be active in supporting the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and in helping to secure its natural beauty for the future.

4. Legal Status and Main Services

The Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organization that was registered with the Charity Commission on 21st July 2016 (registration number 1168432). The Trust works alongside the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership for the benefit of the general public and the landscape of the Shropshire Hills.

4.1 Trustees

The Trust has a maximum of eight trustees serving for up to three consecutive two- or three-year terms. Four trustees are appointed by the Trust, three are nominated by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, and one - the AONB Partnership Manager - sits *ex-officio*. Despite the differences in how they are selected and their terms of office, all trustees have the same obligations and equal voting rights. This governance structure was agreed before the Trust was created and was intended to provide a balance between appointed members and those with a link to the AONB Partnership. In this way, the Trust remains legally and functionally independent of the Partnership.

The Trustees include the following:

- Appointed trustees (3-year terms): Sue Cooper, Diane Lyle, Anthony Morgan (chairman), Alastair Warrington
- Nominated trustees (2-year terms): George Chancellor, Veronica Cossons, Joe Manifold
- Ex-officio (term limited by employment): Phil Holden

4.2 Formal objects

The Trust's formal objects are:

- To promote the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, landscape, wildlife and historic value of the Shropshire Hills AONB, for the benefit of the public.
- To advance understanding, education and awareness, in and around the AONB, of the natural beauty, landscape, wildlife and historic value of the Shropshire Hills AONB, for the benefit of the public.

4.3 Working arrangements

The Trust has a formal agreement with the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership setting out how the two organizations will work together with particular regard to the Trust's main areas of work: the Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund, the Friends of the Shropshire Hills, the Shropshire Shuttle Supporters Scheme, the Caering for Caradoc Hillfort Appeal, and the National Lottery Resilient Heritage grant.

The Trust has overall responsibility for the Conservation Fund which provides annual grants to local groups and organizations undertaking projects in the AONB. The aims of the Fund are to encourage active involvement in conservation and so to spread understanding of the value of the local landscape, its heritage and its biodiversity. Partnership staff act as key points of contact and support the preparation and administration of grant applications and implementation.

In the financial year (2018 - 2019) the Trust supported 16 projects through the Conservation Fund with grants of between £600 and £3,000. These included: preserving wildflowers in roadside verges; providing woodland management training; supporting outdoor activities for young people; and surveying and controlling invasive plant species.

The Friends of the Shropshire Hills scheme was launched in 2008 and is now administered jointly by the Trust and the AONB Partnership staff. Annual subscriptions are paid to the Trust and Partnership

staff collaborate in the development and promotion of scheme and in setting indicative subscription fees.

The Trust also receives donations from the Shropshire Shuttle Supporters scheme and the Caering for Caradoc Hillfort Appeal. The use of such donations is restricted for these specific purposes.

The Trust benefited from a two-year National Lottery Resilient Heritage grant (2018 - 2019 and 2019 - 2020) which was awarded jointly to the Trust and to the AONB Partnership with Shropshire Council as the accountable body. The purpose of the grant is to support the organizational growth and development of the Trust and the Partnership and their effective joint working.

4.4 Finance

The Trust's income comes from donations: individuals, including subscriptions from the Friends' scheme; businesses; and charitable bodies. In the financial year to the end of March 2018, the Trust's income amounted to £28,609 with the majority from two Shropshire-based charitable organisations. As the largest of these has ceased operating, additional sources of income will be essential if the Trust is to maintain, let alone expand, its income and activities.

In the financial year 2017 - 2018 subscriptions from 120 Friends of the Shropshire Hills AONB scheme, totalled a little more than £2,400 or almost 10 per cent of the Trust's annual income. Income from the Friends is increasing through a combination of growing membership, annual cash payments, standing orders and, most recently, direct debits.

The majority of the Trust's income is used to fund projects in the AONB. In the financial year 2017 - 2018, slightly more than £21,500 or 76 per cent of the total income was disbursed through Conservation Fund grants, with the majority of the balance or 23 per cent retained in reserves. The Partnership staff currently provide administrative support free of charge which enables the Trust to keep operating costs at just 1 per cent.

4.5 Impact

The Trust has made a strong start in creating an independent but supportive governance structure and has worked well with the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership staff. It has provided significant financial support to the Conservation Fund and is increasingly engaged in taking responsibility for the management of the Fund. The Trust has also been active in supporting the Friends of Shropshire Hills scheme and in the recruitment of additional Friends. However it faces a more difficult task in establishing its own public identity whilst at the same time promoting joint activities with the AONB Partnership

5. Operational Plan

5.1 People, businesses and charitable organisations

The Trust's primary work involves creating, building and maintaining relationships with individuals, businesses and organisations to raise funds, to build knowledge and understanding of the value of the Shropshire Hills AONB, and to cooperate and collaborate with organisations that share the Trust's vision and mission. The Trust is developing different approaches to its key stakeholders as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder group	Nature of relationship	Nature of engagement	Planned
Individuals	Recipients of information on Shropshire Hills, potential Friends and volunteers	Newsletter, contact list, E-mail newsletter, events, feedback	Increased engagement planned for year 2 and 3
Friends of Shropshire Hills AONB	Supporters and Trust champions	Friends' group, E-mail newsletter, events	Training and capacity building for increased effectiveness. Life membership and legacy schemes
Volunteers	The Trust's front-line 'workers' including fund-raisers	E-mail newsletter, events	Volunteer's group Training and capacity building for increased effectiveness. Practical support to recipients of the Conservation Fund
Local businesses	Financial support to the Trust	E-mail newsletter, events, personal contact	Local business group
Charitable bodies	Financial support to the Trust	Grant applications, progress reports, E-mail newsletter, events	Charity group Analysis of potential future donors and relationship building
Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership	Shared vision for Shropshire Hills AONB	Shared Trustees and mutual support including the Partnership staff	Memorandum of understanding On-going
Other organisations operating in the Shropshire Hills AONB	Shared vision for Shropshire Hills	Casual/informal Trustees' links	Increased engagement in year 2 and 3
Community groups	Recipients of Conservation Fund	Through grants and project	Deepening links with high performing groups

5.2 Key objectives and actions for the next three years

The objectives and actions to December 2021 reflect the people, businesses and charitable organisation which the Trust regards as its key stakeholders.

1. Capacity development

- a. Increase the number of Friends to 200 and introduce a Life Membership and legacy schemes
- b. Recruit and train 25 active volunteers to be the Trust's front-line workers including fundraising
- c. Carry out a reasoned assessment of the advantages of increasing the number of trustees

2. Fundraising

- a. Establish two new sub-groups: businesses and charitable organizations
- b. Raise at least £40,000/ year for the Conservation Fund including at least 50 per cent from new sources by April 2021

3. Co-operation

- a. Ensure all policies and procedures necessary for charitable incorporated organisations are in place
- b. Clarify and streamline ways of working with the Partnership staff
- c. Trial mutually beneficial ways of working with Caring for God's Acre, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre and Shropshire Wildlife Trust

The Trust will review the delivery of the business plan annually and share the findings with the Partnership. The Trust will also develop other ways of communicating progress through the Communication Strategy which will be developed later in 2019.

5.3 Risk

As part of the business planning process, the Trustees carried out a detailed assessment of the risks to its operation and identified ways in which these risks will be managed. The key findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Risks and risk management

Category	Likelihood	Impact	Score	Management
Governance				
- Failure to achieve objectives	Medium	High	6	- Ensure adequate capacity through delivery of the capacity development objective
- Loss of Trustees	Medium	High	6	- Implementation of the business plan
- Trustees lack skills	Low	High	3	- More trustees to be appointed
				- Staggered recruitment approach useful
				- Ensure trustees are not overloaded
				- Volunteer scheme is a route to new trustees
Operational				
- Loss of administrative support	Low	High	6	- Confirmation of agreed ways of working
- Inadequate supervision of funded projects	Low	High	6	- Review of internal audit procedures and annual compliance note to Trustees
Financial				
- Inadequate income	High	High	9	- Planned focus on fundraising
				- Launch of Business and Charitable Organisation sub-Groups
- Inadequate financial controls	Low	High	6	- Quarterly financial reviews and reports
				- Undertake a review of financial procedures
External				
- Lack of co-operation from other organisations operating in the Shropshire Hills AONB	High	High	9	- Emphasise unique selling point: enhancing local natural beauty by small-scale interventions through community groups
- Change of AONB governance structure	Medium	Medium	4	

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Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund, 2019-20 Grants awarded from the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust



Brynmawr Farm Summer Club

This is a new one-day-a-week club for young people (aged 11-14) through the summer holidays at Brynmawr Organic Farm. Weekly topics will look at different elements of the natural environment and practical conservation work. Hands-on activities will aim to promote an active lifestyle and increasing self-confidence, self-belief and self-responsibility. **A Pettitt – grant £1,490**



Sowing the Seed of God's Acre

This project is surveying 10 burial grounds in the AONB, where little or nothing is known about the flora and fauna. Grassland management sessions and a meadow management training day will support volunteers and share best practice. Yellow Rattle seed from meadows in the AONB will be collected and sown into the long grass area of churchyards. Yellow Rattle suppresses grass growth, making the management of these sites more sustainable in the long term.

Caring for God's Acre - grant £1,500



Hills Stories 2019

This project is helping young people to explore and engage with Shropshire Hills landscape, its wildlife and heritage. Working with youth leaders, creative digital media practitioners, and other artists, the participants will use digital technology (eg iPods / iPads / digital cameras) to reflect on their experiences and create their own physical and digital media responses to share online. An exhibition will be held to showcase their work.

Nick Fogg & Mike Smart – grant £1,500



Shropshire Favourite Bird Sites (booklet)

This new booklet will highlight 20 wildlife sites in Shropshire which are good for bird-watching (8 are in the AONB). It is aimed at beginners. The grant is helping with printing costs. It will be launched in September at the RSPB South Shropshire group 50th anniversary event. All monies raised goes towards helping migrating birds. **RSPB South Shropshire Group - grant £500**

The Shropshire Barytes Industry

The barytes industry in the Shropshire Hills was of national importance and a substantial employer during the first half of the twentieth century. This project is undertaking practical work at two sites; Cothercott and the Bog Mine, to enable volunteers to continue their survey of the sites and help to reveal more of our barytes heritage. **Shropshire Caving and Mining Club - grant £1,000**





REACH

This project will deliver six sessions for 10 young people aged 13-16 who have been referred onto the programme by Church Stretton Secondary School. The young people play an active part in the development of the sessions to help them appreciate their local landscape. **South Shropshire Youth Forum – grant £1,500**



Upper Onny Balsam Bashing

The eradication of Himalayan balsam continues in the Upper Onny catchment. This year's focus is the West Onny, along Crifftin Brook and at the Bog. These stretches of river will be surveyed and the balsam cleared by volunteer work parties. The project also aims to increase awareness of the issues of habitat loss and encourage the community and landowners to help reverse the spread of invasive species in this part of the AONB. **Upper Onny Wildlife Group - grant £1,500**



People & Plants

The project is delivering 8 training sessions (walks, surveys and workshops) in the Shropshire Hills for people interested in plants. The sessions will teach people how to identify and record veteran trees, fungi, ferns and mosses as well as flowering plants, and aims encourage new people to get involved in active conservation. **Upper Onny Wildlife Group - grant £500**



Whinchat Conservation on the Long Mynd

This is a Pilot Project to test and evaluate proposals for a Whinchat conservation project on the Long Mynd. Whinchats are wholly restricted to bracken habitats. The project will find a sample of whinchat nests, monitor them with trail cameras, colour-ring the chicks and catch as many of the breeding adults as possible. **National Trust - grant £2,500**



The Halfway House on the Wrekin

The grant will help to create a flower rich garden at the Halfway House café that's attractive to visitors and to a range of pollinating insects. A series of six events will be held to increase visitor awareness of the uniqueness of the Wrekin, its natural heritage, the woodland, and the special wildlife it supports giving priority to the birds in the area, pollinating insects and the plants that they use. **J. Joy - grant £1,283**



Youth in Woods

This project introduces secondary school pupils at Bishop's Castle Community College to the richness and diversity of woodlands, and demonstrates how they can be managed for enjoyment, biodiversity and for wood fuel production. Students will carry out practical activities including building shelters, woodland management (cutting and logging), making things from objects found in the woodland, and exploring the woodland diversity. **Lightfoot – grant £1,500**



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CLUN UNMUDDYING THE WATERS PROJECT

Responsible Officer Alison Jones, Clun Catchment Officer
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Summary

This paper outlines the planned delivery by the AONB team for the next two years of the Environment Agency's 'Unmuddying the Waters' project in the Clun catchment.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to comment on the issues raised.

Background

A two year funding agreement to the end of March 2021 has been made with Environment Agency to fund Alison Jones as the Clun Catchment Officer, along with a capital works budget. The rationale for the project is as follows:

The River Clun catchment consists of seven waterbodies (tributary streams), and the presence of freshwater pearl mussel found in the lowest five kilometres of the river has led to it being designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This bottom section of the river is also part of the River Teme SSSI. Due to the position of the SAC within the catchment, inputs from all seven waterbodies influence water quality, and the river is failing to meet its Conservation Objectives for phosphates, nitrates and suspended solids and the freshwater pearl mussel population is in decline. Losing this population will be viewed as Defra failing its legal duty to maintain the SAC under the Habitats Directive and could result in Infraction Proceedings. In addition, the failure of the SAC to reach conservation objectives also precludes this waterbody from achieving 'good' status under Water Framework Directive (WFD) legislation.

This project will contribute to addressing the main impacts that are causing this failure: excess sedimentation and nutrient inputs. By concentrating on a suite of riparian measures and interception of sediment pathways which will reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients entering the designated rivers, it can be demonstrated that necessary measures are being taken to protect the freshwater pearl mussel.

Whilst this project concentrates on excess sedimentation and nutrient inputs there is also work taking place to improve the overall riparian habitat along the river and at two sites to achieve sufficient improvements that freshwater pearl mussels might be translocated to them in the future.

The programme of work in the project is as follows:

Task 1 – continued delivery of alternative drinking water systems - installation of solar pasture pumps and allied systems.

Task 2 – Feasibility and installation of a bridge crossing on a tributary of the River Clun where a ford crossing is causing major sediment inputs, or an alternative solution.

Task 3 – Diversion of highway drainage near the SAC to create a wetland and reduce sediment input into the river, working with landowners, Shropshire Council Highways and their nominated contractors.

Task 4 – continued delivery of gateway and trackway improvements and interception of highway drains to deliver work identified in the Highways and River Crossings surveys and reports.

Task 5 – continued delivery of fencing, erosion protection work and provision of alternative drinking water systems

Task 6 – tree planting - supervise Woodland Trust funded tree planting along stretches of river which have been fenced.

List of Background Papers River Clun SSSI Restoration Strategy http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/aonb-partnership/rivers/river-clun-restoration-strategy/
Human Rights Act Appraisal The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.
Environmental Appraisal The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.
Risk Management Appraisal Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.
Community / Consultations Appraisal The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.
Appendices None



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WATER ENVIRONMENT GRANT 'TEME-ONNY-CLUN' PROJECT

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, AONB Partnership Manager
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Summary

This paper provides some background on the new joint 'Teme-Onny- Clun' project between the AONB Partnership and the Severn Rivers Trust. Mike Morris, CEO of the Severn Rivers Trust will speak on this agenda item at the meeting.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to note and comment on the information provided.

Background

With support of the Severn Rivers Trust, the AONB Partnership made in 2018 an application to the government's new Water Environment Grant scheme. Through Shropshire Council as accountable body, the Partnership was well placed to be the applicant and bankroll the project, while the Rivers Trust initiated the project proposal, prepared the application, and is key to its delivery.

The project summary is as follows:

The River Teme SSSI and River Clun SAC are two of the most important river sub-catchments within the Severn River Basin. Their designations highlight their national and international importance. The River Teme assessment is that it is in 'Unfavourable – No Change' condition. The River Clun assessment highlights that it is 'Unfavourable – Declining'. The most significant pressures on these catchments relate to unsustainable land management and overall integrated catchment management. Particular issues include siltation and agricultural diffuse pollution, and modification of the flood plain. The Springs of Rivers Teme-Onny-Clun project, part of the Teme Partnership, will be delivered by the AONB Partnership and Severn Rivers Trust (both with a proven track record and experienced), and will focus on resolving the causes of failure to reach favourable condition, namely management impacts on water quality and high priority habitat. The project will work with land managers to ensure a sustainable future for farming in the catchment by following the principles of Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and Working with Natural Processes. The actions and their results will be through the production of 200 whole land holding plans with SMART objectives to ensure those engaged in the project are able to secure agri-environment support now and/or in the future, post-Brexit. The advice provided per land holding will be focussed on landscape restoration at a catchment scale to work towards water

quality improvements, restoring natural hydrological units, priority habitats and soil management that will benefit the designated status of each river and ensure no degradation in WFD status.

The project focuses on three areas of the Teme catchment – the Upper Teme, the Clun catchment and the Onny catchment. The main objectives are:

- 200 landowners from across the three main target areas will be provided best practice advice to issues identified within the SSSI/SAC diffuse water pollution plan and to any WFD reason for failure.
- Four high quality and well attended (approx. 50 attendees) workshops will be held across the area
- 200 landowners will have a land holding plan with SMART objectives that signposts to funding opportunities (e.g. CSF), focuses on water quality improvements, soil management, organic matter testing and natural capital through the Sustainable Management of Natural resources and/or Working with Natural Processes improvements from the holding.

The Severn Rivers Trust will employ three Farm Advisers (2.5 Full Time Equivalent) for the project. One of these, for the Clun catchment, will be located with the AONB team in Craven Arms, to maximise synergies with our other work in that area.

List of Background Papers

Background on Water Environment Grant

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-environment-grant-weg-handbooks-guidance-and-forms/guide-for-applicants-water-environment-grant>.

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.

Risk Management Appraisal

Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.

Appendices

None



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CLUN JUDICIAL REVIEW

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, AONB Partnership Manager
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Summary

This paper provides some background on the national Judicial Review case affecting the River Clun SAC. Paul Hayward from the Environment Agency will speak on this agenda item at the meeting.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to note and comment on the information provided.

Background

In November 2015, the High Court allowed a Judicial Review case against the government brought by WWF, the Angling Trust and Fish Legal about the government's failure to deliver Habitats Directive obligations on the health of Natura 2000 freshwater sites in the UK. The 44 sites to which this relates include the River Clun SAC. The issues in the legal challenge are mainly about agricultural pollution, especially soil, nutrient and pesticide run-off into rivers and wetlands.

As part of the Judicial review process, the Environment Agency commissioned a study on the River Clun, and progress was reported to the Clun Catchment Partnership which we convene, in July 2016. It is understood that the study corroborates other evidence that there is a problem in the Clun catchment, but it is still unclear what action will result from the Judicial Review. More recent reports have been that the process has effectively stalled.

Public bodies and other funders are investing significantly in practical works on the ground in the Clun catchment to try to address water quality issues, but these are undermined by a lack of regulatory action where needed, and by consenting through the planning process of developments which will compound the problems.

List of Background Papers

WWF briefing on the Judicial Review challenge available at the bottom of this web page
<https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/news/uk-government-taken-to-court-over-unprotected-wetlands/>

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.

Risk Management Appraisal

Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.

Appendices

None



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IRONBRIDGE POWER STATION SITE REDEVELOPMENT MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION

Responsible Officer Phil Holden, AONB Partnership Manager
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Summary

This paper provides some background for discussion on the proposed redevelopment of the Ironbridge power station site, to support an AONB Partnership response to the current consultation on the Masterplan recently released.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to note and comment on the information provided, to inform an AONB Partnership response to the consultation.

Background

The proposed redevelopment of the Ironbridge power station site has been fairly well publicised, and two stakeholder events have been held by Harworth Group, the most recent on 22nd May on the newly released masterplan (see link below). John Long and Hilary Claytonsmith each attended one of the workshops on behalf of the AONB Partnership and will be able to give further information.

The consultation deadline of 14th June is very short, but it is intended that an AONB Partnership response be made, and the views of members on this are invited.

After a large amount of site clearance work required, the proposals include mixed development including around 1,000 houses. A substantial area of agricultural land at the west of the owned site is earmarked for housing development in addition to the brownfield land of the power station site itself. This area is right by the AONB boundary and is probably the main issue of concern for the Partnership's response.

In December 2017, the AONB Partnership's response to Shropshire's Partial Local Plan Review included the following comments regarding the power station site:

The site is of high sensitivity, abutting the AONB at the western edge and the World Heritage Site to the east. A form of development which supports environment and heritage led regeneration is therefore to be preferred here. The layout and design of any proposed development should pay close attention to landform and environmental networks on the site, retaining features of value (e.g. woodland and mature trees), and making use of opportunities from the rolling terrain for some of the development to be relatively unobtrusive. Use should be made of open greenspace and new planting to help screen the

development, provide a landscape and biodiversity buffer to the AONB and provide recreational benefits for the new residents. The potential should also be considered for secondary impacts on the AONB from an increased population in close proximity, such as increase in traffic, impacts on tranquillity, change in character from upgrade of roads, increased recreational use, etc. Design should minimise these impacts, and appropriate mitigation put in place. Account should be taken of the AONB Management Plan on these as well as landscape and visual matters. The development should provide some investment in green infrastructure and heritage assets in the area affected. This is a large site, on which some redevelopment of the current built footprint is likely to have relatively little impact on the AONB, and offers opportunities for improvements in landscape and amenity terms. However, the existing character and topography of the western agricultural part of the site, with north-facing slopes and ridges, would mean development on these areas would have a much greater impact. This would be greatest on the higher slopes and on the land west of the disused railway.

List of Background Papers

Harworth Group web pages on redevelopment Masterplan
<https://ironbridgeregeneration.co.uk/the-emerging-proposal/>.

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.

Risk Management Appraisal

Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Harworth Group Wider Context Masterplan