



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

Date: Monday, 11 October 2021  
My Ref:  
Your Ref:

**Committee:**  
**Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership**

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 October 2021  
**Time:** 9.30 am  
**Venue:** Shropshire Room, Craven Arms Community Centre, Newington Way,  
Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 9PS

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

Tim Collard  
Interim Assistant Director – Legal and Democratic Services

**Members of Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership**

Heather Kidd	Gillian Binks
Hilary Luff	Jim Bunce
Dan Morris	Sarah Bury
Cecilia Motley	Alex Carson-Taylor
Chris Turley	Pete Carty
Alison Caffyn	Hilary Claytonsmith
George Chancellor	Janet Cobb
Adrian Cullis	Veronica Cossons
Gillian Preece	Charles Edwards
Fiona Williams	Rhona Goddard
Andrew Wood	Carol Griffiths
John Luck	Robert Harris
Ruth Houghton	Alan Jones
Mark Hughes	Bill Klemperer
John Long	Sue Lee
David Mills	Hazel MacDowell
Steve Pennington	Leo Smith
Wayne Barnes	

Your Committee Officer is:

**Tim Ward** Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 257713

Email: [tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto: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 - 4)**

The note of the meeting held on 31 March 2021 is attached for confirmation

## **3 Appointment of Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of Strategy and Performance Committee**

To appoint the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and to appoint the members of the Strategy and Performance Committee

## **4 Background Induction Briefing about the AONB and National Context, and discussion about future directions**

## **5 Update on Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme and Development of Environmental Land Management (ELM) (Pages 5 - 8)**

This paper updates members on progress with the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme in the Shropshire Hills AONB.

## **6 Partner Activity**

To receive brief updates and discussion from selected partners

## **7 Shropshire Hills Young Rangers and Green Leaders Projects**

To receive updates on the Shropshire Hills Young Rangers and Green Leaders projects

## **8 National Association for AONBs update, including collaborative work on climate change (Pages 9 - 10)**

This paper updates members on some recent activity of the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB).

## **9 Shropshire Local Plan Examination**

To receive an updated from the AONB Partnership Manager

**10 AONB Team Work Programme Update**

Report to Follow

**11 Dates of Future Meetings**

To agree dates of future meetings



Shropshire Hills  
AONB Partnership

9.30 am

Item  
Public

## **MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON 31 MARCH 2021 9.30 - 11.35 AM (ONLINE VIDEO MEETING)**

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

### **Present**

James Williamson (Chair), Hilary Claytonsmith (Vice Chairman), Cecilia Motley (Vice Chairman), Heather Kidd, Robert Tindall, David Turner, Chris Turley, Alison Caffyn, Adrian Cullis, Chris Naylor, Mark Hughes, John Long, David Mills, Wayne Barnes, Janet Cobb, Sarah Bury, Veronica Cossons, Helen Dale, Ian Dormor, Charles Edwards, Carol Griffiths, Robert Harris and Bill Klemperer

Officers in attendance: Phil Holden, Alison Kay, Alison Jones, Cath Landles, Joy Howells, Mike Kelly, Nigel McDonald, Tim Ward

### **30 Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

30.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

30.2 Apologies for absence were received from Gill Binks (Caring for God's Acre), Sonja Belchere (Visit Shropshire Hills), Emma Johnson (Natural England), John Pritchard (Town & Parish Council representative) and Leo Smith (Upper Onny Wildlife Group)

### **31 Minutes of the last meeting**

31.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2020 had been circulated.

#### **31.2 RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership held on 24 November 2020 be approved as a true record.

### **32 Nature Recovery Plan - Draft for Consultation**

32.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which introduced a full draft of the Shropshire Hills AONB Nature Recovery Plan for consultation.

32.2 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded the meeting that the draft plan had been circulated. He advised members that opportunity mapping work for a Nature Recovery Network was being carried out by a number of partner organisations which would provide detailed information to support the plan in due course.

32.3 There was discussion about topics including air quality, road verges, tree planting, connectivity of habitats, hedge trimming, the timing of the plan, its audiences, threatened species and wider public awareness.

32.4 The Chair thanked officers for their work in producing the draft plan and urged partners to submit any further comments to the AONB Partnership Manager.

### **33 ELM advocacy and Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme - Update**

33.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated them on the recent small programme of advocacy for the new Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme, and the forthcoming 3 year 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' funding programme from Defra.

33.2 The AONB Partnership Manager informed members that the advocacy work had centred around encouraging attendance at a webinar organised by NAAONB.

33.3 The AONB Partnership Manager said that more details regarding the Farming in Protected Landscapes funding programme were expected shortly.

33.4 The Community & Landscapes Officer advised the meeting that she had worked directly with farmers to encourage them to attend webinars and that she was working with the NFU and CLA to disseminate information and signpost farmers and landowners to further information. She added that there was a difficulty as there was not enough detail yet, but that as the ELM scheme would not start fully for a number of years there was a need to look at other schemes in the interim.

33.5 The Chair commented that it was encouraging that a large number of farmers from the Shropshire Hills had attended the webinar as a result of the team's work, but that he had concerns as to how the hard to reach ones could become involved.

33.6 In response to a question the meeting was advised that there was not one single webpage with all current schemes and grants on it. The AONB Partnership Manager commented that it may be possible to set up a page on the Partnership website signposting farmers to relevant schemes available in the AONB area.

### **34 South Shropshire Climate Action - Land & Biodiversity Group Plan**

34.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which provided information on the Land & Biodiversity aspects of South Shropshire Climate Action's plan.

34.2 Nick Read gave a presentation which set out the work that had been done by the group and the future work to be carried. He advised the meeting that the plan would be published on May 22<sup>nd</sup> as part of an online 'Next Steps' Conference.

34.3 The Chair thanked Nick Read for his presentation.

### **35 NAAONB Collaboration Group on Climate Change**

- 35.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated them on recent collaboration by the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) and the AONB team's involvement.
- 35.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that the collaboration involved officers from several AONBs and also people from outside the AONB community. He advised that the group had prepared a presentation for the NAAONB Lead Officers meeting which had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

### **36 Collaboration for Visitor Management**

- 36.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated them on collaboration between partners in the Shropshire Hills for visitor management during the 2021 season and especially in relation to post-lockdown pressures expected.
- 36.2 The Sustainable Tourism Officer updated the meeting regarding work ongoing with the National Trust, Church Stretton Town Council and other bodies with regard to the pressures created by the easing of the lockdown.
- 36.3 The Sustainable Tourism Officer took the meeting through a six point plan for visitor management which had been developed with partners, and updated members on work undertaken to date.
- 36.4 The Chair commented that the new Countryside Code would need publicising widely.

### **37 AONB Team Work Programme Update**

- 37.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated them on the work of the team in 2020-21 as the Financial Year draws to a close.
- 37.2 The AONB Partnership Manager gave a short update on work being carried out by the team.
- 37.3 The AONB Partnership Manager advised members that the biennial review of Partnership membership would be carried out over the summer.
- 37.4 The Chair congratulated the Team on the wide breadth of topics that were being covered.

**38 Partner Activity**

- 38.1 The AONB Partnership Manager updated members on work being carried out by the Longmynd Bridleways Association on maintenance and upkeep of bridleways across the area.
- 38.2 Bill Klemperer updated members on recent relevant activity by Historic England.

**39 Dates of Future Meetings**

- 39.1 Members were advised that future meetings of the Partnership would be held on: -

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021

All meetings at 9.30am

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date:





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## **UPDATE ON FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES PROGRAMME AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAND MANAGEMENT (ELM)**

**Responsible Officer** Phil Holden, AONB Partnership Manager  
e-mail: [phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 254741

### **Summary**

This paper updates members on progress with the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme in the Shropshire Hills AONB.

### **Recommendation**

The Partnership is recommended to note progress with the programme and consider how they as members and their organisations can help support good uptake and applications.

### **Background**

The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme was launched nationally on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. The programme is now well under way in the Shropshire Hills with 4 project grants approved.

Alison Jones is our Farming in Protected Landscapes Adviser post, and will be the main point of contact and case officer for most applicants/projects. Other team members will support the programme, in line with their normal roles:

- Mike Kelly, Cath Landles & Nigel McDonald – advice and input, 'case officer' for particular relevant projects, pro-active engagement where possible
- Alison Kay – admin and finance
- Joy Howells – programme management
- Steph Hayes – promotion
- Phil Holden – management, support, delegated decisions and Panel membership

A Local Assessment Panel was appointed with the required range of representation, including a good number of farmers:

Dave Cragg - Natural England

Cath Edwards - Shropshire Wildlife Trust

James Evans - farmer, Partridge Farm, Linley Estate and other interests

Phil Holden - Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership team

Lizzie Hulton-Harrop - farmer, Pollardine Farm, Gatten and other interests

Graham Price - farmer, Bockleton House, Stoke St Milborough

Matt Sankey - farmer, Upper Stitt, Ratlinghope

Kathryn Williams - farmer, upper Clun valley and land agent

Fiona Williams - family farm in upper Clun valley and lecturer at University of Chester

James Williamson - Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Chair (elected Chair of Panel)

These members will be joined where necessary for considering particular applications by:  
Pete Banford - Shropshire Council Outdoor Partnerships (recreation and 'people' theme)  
Reps of Environment Agency, Historic England and Forestry Commission England.

The Panel held an induction/briefing meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> August and the first decision making meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

Two webinars have been held for potential applicants in the Shropshire Hills – on 10<sup>th</sup> August for farmers and on 24<sup>th</sup> August for agents. The first was attended by 34 farmers, and the second by 25 people.

We are working with existing farmer clusters and groups, such as the Upper Clun Facilitation Fund group and the Upper Onny Farmers group. We will endeavour over the life of the programme to work proactively to encourage applications in under-represented areas both in terms of the themes of the programme and the geography of the AONB.

The grants awarded so far are:

Pollardine Farm: Training courses for transition to regenerative agriculture

The objective of this project is training to enable the landowners to transition to a system of Holistic Management, enabling the owners to regenerate soil and increase biodiversity, while improving profitability and quality of life; to learn how to use livestock to achieve environmental objectives and be equipped to share this knowledge with other farmers/landowners. Grant £2,509.50 (at 70%).

The Graig Farm for work at The Maice:

The objective of the project is to divide a 15ha field to better enable managed rotational grazing and to enable better grazing management and extension of two Local Wildlife Sites. This project will rejuvenate and restore 440m of currently unfenced ancient hedgerow through coppicing, gapping up, hedgerow tree planting and fencing as well as new stock fencing to encourage expansion of species-rich Local Wildlife sites. Grant £18,961.80 (at 100%, of current Countryside Stewardship rates).

Powkesmore Farm Soil Improvement Project:

The objective of the project is to purchase a direct drill in order to improve the overall soil health across the farm. This will deliver a number of benefits including improved soil structure and health, improved infiltration and drainage, increase in beneficial invertebrates and earthworms, increased soil organic matter, reduced soil erosion and improved carbon sequestration. Grant £18,840 (at 40%).

Blackhurst Farm for Blackhurst Highland Beef project:

The objective of this project is to develop and expand the applicant's Highland/Shorthorn Beef business, selling meat from animals reared on the Lawley hill and surrounds, carrying out a conservation grazing function on this wildlife-rich iconic local hill which is part Local Wildlife Site. The work includes alterations to an existing farm building - to house cold store, sorting area and customer facing area for collection of beef boxes; purchase and installation of cold store, kitchen facilities, display refrigerator etc; and purchase of refrigerated trailer – to enable safe transport of meat to and from farm, abattoir, butcher, farmers' markets. Grant £24,241 (at 60%).

Around 80 enquiries have been made from potential applicants, and a number of projects are now developing applications.

We are requesting Defra to reprofile a large proportion of the Year 1 allocation into years 2 and 3.

Phil Holden is sitting as the national AONB representative on Defra's Steering Group for the programme evaluation.

### **Environmental Land Management schemes**

The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme is not part of ELM, but sits alongside it. The transition to ELM is however a key part of the context of the programme and its rationale. Some members of the Partnership will be closely involved with ELM development, and others not. Some slides will be talked through briefly at the meeting. Background information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-land-management-schemes-overview/environmental-land-management-scheme-overview>.

<b>List of Background Papers</b> Update to informal AONB Partnership meeting 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2021, agenda item 3 Guidance for Applicants, Local Priorities and sample application form at <a href="https://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/help-to-look-after/farming-in-protected-landscapes">https://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/help-to-look-after/farming-in-protected-landscapes</a> .
<b>Human Rights Act Appraisal</b> The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.
<b>Environmental Appraisal</b> The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.
<b>Risk Management Appraisal</b> Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.
<b>Community / Consultations Appraisal</b> The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.
<b>Appendices</b> None

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## **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR AONBS UPDATE, INCLUDING COLLABORATIVE WORK ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Responsible Officer** Phil Holden, AONB Partnership Manager  
e-mail: [phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:phil.holden@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 254741

### **Summary**

This paper updates members on some recent activity of the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB).

### **Recommendation**

The Partnership is recommended to note and comment on the update.

### **Background**

The National Association for AONBs is a charity whose mission is to support and develop a network of ambitious AONB partnerships that have a strong collective voice and a positive impact on the places for which they care. <https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/>.

In September a new Chief Executive John Watkins started with NAAONB, and Howard Davies retired after over 10 years in post. John joins NAAONB from the Welsh Government where he was Head of Policy for Future Economy and earlier Head of Landscape and Outdoor Recreation and established the Future Landscapes Wales collaborative learning programme.

The NAAONB annual Conference was held in July with the theme 'A Climate for Change – Climate Change and Nature Recovery in AONBs'.

<https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/events/landscapes-life-conference/L4L-Conference-Blog>.

Landscapes for Life Week took place between 18<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September with on-line promotion and social media content highlight the importance of AONBs in delivering on climate change, nature recovery and access, especially in the context of the upcoming COP26 conference. Also highlighted were poems created through the partnership with Poetry School and the Laurel and Ginkgo poetry prizes.

An online Lead Officers meeting was held on 4<sup>th</sup> October, focussing on Defra's expected consultation on implementing recommendations from the Glover Review. Following the Ministerial Statement of June <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-06-24/hcws119> it is clear that the government does have appetite to

enact many of the recommendations in the review. Some require legislative change, and others have financial implications.

A series of Rebranding workshops have been held with AONB teams looking at the Glover Review suggestion of renaming AONBs as 'National Landscapes'. Importantly, this is just a small part of the significant Proposal 24: "AONBs strengthened with new purposes, powers and resources, renamed as National Landscapes". The NAAONB position in discussion with Defra is essentially supportive of a name change where this forms part of strengthening purposes, powers and resources, but not just on its own as superficial rebrand exercise.

Phil Holden gave a presentation at the first of a series of NAAONB webinars on Nature Recovery Plans.

#### Climate Change Collaboration

The small NAAONB Climate Change Collaboration group is still working, along with sub-groups engaging a wider range of AONB staff on topics of Agriculture, Nature-Based Solution, Sustainable Tourism & Transport, Planning & Development and Renewable Energy. Each group is working towards an evidence base, case studies, a policy narrative and recommendations to improve current practice, and learning for the AONB Family. A joint statement has been developed with the UK National Parks for COP26, and this has been developed into a statement for Protected Areas globally.

The Nature-based Solutions sub-group has submitted evidence on behalf of NAAONB to the current House of Lords Science & Technology Select Committee enquiry on nature-based solutions for climate change, and contributed to a briefing for the NAAONB Chair for a Land & Climate summit meeting with the Secretary of State. The group has identified the need for more quantifying of carbon storage and sequestration in Nature-based Solutions projects.

<b>List of Background Papers</b> None
<b>Human Rights Act Appraisal</b> The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.
<b>Environmental Appraisal</b> The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.
<b>Risk Management Appraisal</b> Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.
<b>Community / Consultations Appraisal</b> The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.
<b>Appendices</b> None