

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

Date: Wednesday, 12 July 2023

Committee:
Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

Date: Thursday, 20 July 2023
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
Assistant Director - Legal and Governance

Members of Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

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

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 - 4)

The note of the meeting held on 23 March 2023 is attached for confirmation

3 National Landscapes Rebranding (Pages 5 - 6)

This paper sets out some background on the national rebranding initiative for AONBs to become known as National Landscapes. The AONB Partnership Manager will present and talk through some slides on this at the meeting.

4 AONB Management Plan Review (Pages 7 - 8)

This paper briefly introduces a workshop session which the AONB Partnership Manager will lead at the meeting to start generating a new Management Plan vision.

5 Review of Sustainable Tourism Strategy (Pages 9 - 10)

This paper sets out some background on the review of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy. Nigel McDonald Sustainable Tourism Officer will give a short presentation followed by a workshop session on this topic.

6 Brief Update on other AONB Partnership team and NAAONB activities

Report To Follow and verbal update/ presentation from the AONB Partnership Manager

7 Updates from Partners

To receive brief updates from Partner Organisations

8 Date of Next Meeting

Members are reminded that the next meeting of the Partnership will be held on Thursday 23rd November 2023 at 9.30am

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Shropshire Hills
AONB Partnership

20 July 2023

9.30 am

Item

Public

MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON 23 MARCH 2023 9.30 - 11.40 AM

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Local Authorities

Shropshire Council

Cllr Hilary Luff

Cllr Dan Morris

Statutory/Voluntary Agencies & Individual members

Individual Member

Alison Caffyn

Individual Member

George Chancellor

Individual Member

Adrian Cullis

Individual Member

Gillian Preece

Individual Member

Andrew Wood

Town & Parish Council representative

John Luck

Town & Parish Council representative

Ruth Houghton

Town & Parish Council representative

David Mills

Campaign to Protect Rural England

Sarah Bury

CLA

Alex Carson-Taylor (Chair)

Longmynd & District Bridleways Association

Sue Lee

/ British Horse Society

Middle Marches Community Land Trust

Janet Cobb

Ramblers Association

Charles Edwards

Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Veronica Cossons

South Shropshire Climate Action

Nick Read

Upper Onny Wildlife Group

Leo Smith

Observers/Officers

Shropshire Council

Pete Banford (Culture & Communities Manager)

Tim Ward (Committee Officer)

Shropshire Hills AONB

Rachel Glover (Natural Environment Officer)

Partnership staff team

Phil Holden (AONB Partnership Manager)

Resources for Change

Helen Fairweather

Curious Birds

Kate Garner

80 **Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

80.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence had been received from Jim Bunce, Emma Johnson, Cllr Heather Kidd, John Long, Cllr Cecilia Motley, Cllr Chris Turley and Fiona Williams.

81 **Minutes of the last meeting**

81.1 **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the AONB Partnership held on 8 November 2022 be approved as a true record.

81.2 The AONB Partnership Manager reported that Alastair Warrington, a trustee on the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust had sadly died and that this meant that there were now two vacancies for appointed trustees. He asked Partnership members to let him know of anybody that may be interested in becoming a trustee.

82 **AONB Management Plan Review - support for one year delay and identification of new/changed issues to cover in review**

82.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which sought the Partnership's support to delay the substantive review of the AONB Management Plan by a year.

82.2 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded members that in July 2022 a letter had been received from the Minister giving the option to delay the full review of the AONB Management Plan for one year and it was proposed that this delay should happen. He added that the light touch review had identified a number of emerging issues that would need to be covered in the full plan review.

82.3 The Chair commented that there were a number of policies emerging from Defra that would need to be considered.

82.4 Among other topics raised by members were : -

- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Carbon Offsetting
- The role small landowners can play
- The role of Town and Parish Councils
- The aspirations of local communities

The AONB Partnership Manager asked that if members had any further topics they should let him know.

82.5 **RESOLVED:**

That the Partnership support the proposed delay to the full plan review.

83 Update on AONB Partnership Ancient Woodlands and Peatlands Projects

83.1 Members received the report of the Natural Environment Officer which gave members information on the recently started Shropshire Hills AONB Ancient Woodlands project and the Peatlands project in the Upper Clun. She also gave a presentation which gave further details of the projects.

84 Brief Update on other AONB Partnership Team and NAAONB activities

84.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated them on certain topics and areas of activity not covered elsewhere in the meeting.

84.2 The AONB Partnership Manager updated the meeting on the work being carried out on Caer Caradoc as part of the “Fix the Fort” project.

84.3 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that the first meeting of the proposed Climate Action Plan sub-group would be held on the 1 April.

84.4 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that Hilary Clayton-Smith had stepped down from the Partnership. He paid tribute to the contribution she had made to the work of the Partnership both as Vice Chair and a longstanding member. He advised the meeting that this left a vacancy for a Vice Chair of the Partnership and asked that if anyone was interested in filling this, they should let him know. The AONB Partnership Manager also advised that there was currently a vacancy for a Parish Council representative following the resignation of Mark Hughes and suggested that this could be left vacant until the biennial membership review which would be carried out later in the year.

85 Access for All - better engagement and services in the AONB for under-served groups

85.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which gave an update on research currently under way to improve provision for and engagement with under-served groups in relation to the Shropshire Hills AONB.

85.2 Kate Garner gave a presentation which set out the findings to date and future work planned. She then took questions.

86 Stepping Stones Needs Assessment Consultation

86.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which introduced the consultation on Needs Assessment for the Stepping Stones project.

86.2 Helen Fairweather from Resources for Change gave a presentation on the consultation, and then led some workshops to gain the views of members.

87 Other Updates

- 87.1 Mr Cullis advised the meeting that he was currently working with the National Trust and the Longmynd Commoners Association to develop a new “Commoning Framework”, he also informed the meeting that the Foundation for Common Land and the National Trust were working on an interpretation project for the Longmynd.
- 87.2 Mr Chancellor advised the meeting that the AONB Trust had recently met and approved Conservation Fund grants for 13 projects.
- 87.3 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that Mike Kelly, Natural Environment Officer would retire in June and paid tribute to the work he had carried out whilst working for the Partnership team over more than 20 years.

88 Date of Next Meeting

- 88.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Partnership would be held on Thursday 20th July 2023 at 9.30am

Signed (Chairman)

Date:



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NATIONAL LANDSCAPES REBRANDING

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

Summary

This paper sets out some background on the national rebranding initiative for AONBs to become known as National Landscapes.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to support the national rebranding initiative and endorse the new logo for the Shropshire Hills National Landscape.

Background

Rebranding to National Landscapes, as part of a range of measures to update and strengthen the AONB designation, was proposed in the Glover Review report of 2019. It has been taken forward since then by Defra and NAAONB including consultations with various stakeholders. Specific new branding proposals have been developed over the last year by consultants contracted to the NAAONB and funded by Defra. This was to have been shared with AONB teams and Partnerships at a regional workshop in Shropshire in March but uptake was low and these meetings were cancelled.

As well as a brand strategy and communication guidelines, the work has involved developing a new identity for NAAONB as the National Landscapes Association, and for the family of National Landscapes, both collectively and individually. New logos for each AONB have been designed as part of a coherent set, taking inspiration and cues from photographs and information supplied by the teams on the special characteristics of each area. Over the last couple of months there has been the opportunity for the team to provide input and the Strategy & Performance Committee to comment, but this is the first real opportunity we have had to share the new branding with the Partnership. The work is nearing completion now, so the recommendation is for the Partnership to endorse the new logo and support the overall rebranding initiative and the advantages that this will bring.

List of Background Papers

NAAONB briefing slides on rebranding to be circulated separately in advance of the meeting. A shortened version of these will be shown and talked through at the meeting.

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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AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

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

Summary

This paper briefly introduces a workshop session to be held at the meeting to start generating a new Management Plan vision.

Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to contribute ideas to the workshop.

Background

The Management Plan vision developed for the 2009-2014 plan has been used for the two subsequent plans and it is felt to be time to review and refresh this for the new plan. The 44 word vision statement probably contains elements we may wish to keep, but in a workshop session we will start from a blank sheet with what members think are the most important things to include. This will be a more creative process than starting with the existing words. Members may choose to look back at the existing vision before the meeting if they wish, but we won't look at it in the meeting until we have generated new ideas. We won't try to draft a vision statement in the meeting in committee, but will capture the ideas to develop this over time for comment and refinement. The ideas generated will hopefully also inform other areas of what the plan review needs to focus on. Please note that the vision is for the future of the Shropshire Hills as a designated landscape area, it isn't an organisational vision for the AONB Partnership (though clearly one we will want to get fully behind).

List of Background Papers

Agenda item on Management Plan Review at last Partnership meeting 23rd March 2023.

Current AONB Management Plan 2019-24 <https://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/a-special-place/aonb-management-plan>

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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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STRATEGY

Responsible Officer Nigel McDonald, Sustainable Tourism Officer
e-mail: nigel.mcdonald@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254744

Summary

This paper sets out some background on the review of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy.

Recommendation

Partnership is recommended to contribute ideas to the workshop session.

Background

The Sustainable Tourism Strategy for 2018-23 is reaching the end of its term. This period was greatly affected by the Covid pandemic but progress has been made on various actions and topics. The Strategy is complementary to and connects to the AONB Management Plan. There is no absolute requirement for us to have a Sustainable Tourism Strategy, but for the last 10 years the two strategies have been very useful to guide both the work of the AONB team and that of partners towards sustainability in tourism. The current Strategy has been effective in raising the profile of sustainability within the Shropshire Destination Management Plan, which is soon to go for formal Council approval. The Strategy is also one of the main requirements of the Europarc Federation Sustainable Tourism Charter which we have held for over 10 years. The process of evaluation for this helps greatly to ensure a thorough and effective approach to partnership working in sustainable tourism, and pushes us to achieve good practice across a wide range of topics and criteria. The Charter has value as an accolade for the area, and also through the networking and learning opportunities with other areas.

The AONB team are now initiating an in-house review towards the production of a new five year Sustainable Tourism Strategy which will support our reapplication for the Charter in December this year. Quite a lot has changed in five years. The strategy for tourism and structures at county level have developed through the Destination Management Plan and evolution of Visit Shropshire. It is important that activity supporting the tourism sector in the Shropshire Hills relates strongly to these county level initiatives. The Shropshire Hills Destination Partnership which we used to facilitate to support the Strategy and Charter has fallen away, partly due to the centre of gravity shifting to county level, plus interruptions of Covid and other factors. This next Sustainable Tourism Strategy will be supported by different partnership arrangements, within which the AONB Partnership itself will become more important. Though not everyone on the Partnership is closely connected with tourism,

this topic falls within the overall AONB remit and the scope of the AONB Management Plan, and the Partnership is well placed to support this integration.

The team have set out a process of stakeholder engagement and consultation over the coming months, and this Partnership meeting starts that process. At the meeting we will present some further information and then seek from members their views on what issues are pressing in relation to sustainable tourism (including recreation by day visitors), and what action needs to be taken by various partners. We are particularly interested in what has changed or is changing, and what needs to be done differently looking to the future.

Some of the issues affecting sustainable tourism in the Shropshire Hills include:

- The higher bar of sustainability now demanded by net zero commitments, affecting both tourism businesses and travel aspects of tourism.
- Connections to diversity and inclusion and broadening the benefits of tourism and visiting the countryside to all parts of society.
- Pressure on highly visited sites, and opportunities for dispersing visitors.
- Ongoing rise in use of digital information and social media, with some people excluded.
- Ways of influencing visitor behaviour to encourage a sensitive and environmentally friendly approach.
- Changing patterns of accommodation provision and demand.
- Planning issues around tourism developments, and the potential for farm diversification.
- Financial limitations on maintenance and investment in infrastructure supporting tourism including countryside sites and rights of way.

List of Background Papers

Current Shropshire Hills Sustainable Tourism Strategy at

<https://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/our-work/area-initiatives/destination-partnership>.

Shropshire Destination Management Plan consultation draft

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/25328/shropshire-dmp-2023-25-jan-2023.pdf>

<https://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/help-to-look-after/farming-in-protected-landscapes>

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