



<b>Committee and Date</b> Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership  15 November 2016	<b>Item</b>  <b>4</b>
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**PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON CONSERVATION BOARD**

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**Summary**

This paper recommends as the preferred option a 10 member Conservation Board, comprising 4 local authority appointed seats (3 for Shropshire Council and 1 for Telford & Wrekin Council), 2 Parish/Town Council appointed seats and 4 Secretary of State appointed seats.

**Recommendation**

The Partnership is recommended to endorse the option preferred by the Transition Board.

**Background**

The Countryside & Rights of Way Act Schedule 13 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/schedule/13> sets out the three categories of membership in a Conservation Board in the following proportions:

- Local authority appointees at least 40%
- Parish & Town Council appointees at least 20%
- Secretary of State appointees up to 40%

The preferred size of Board and allocation of seats is the most significant variable within the Establishment Order and therefore a key decision in the proposal. We aim to include a preferred option for this in our submission to Defra.

We have previously stated indicatively a preference for a relatively small Board size of 10-14. The maths of the % proportions means that relatively few options are available, especially at the smaller sizes. The main options relating to total Board size of 10-20 are shown below:

Total number of seats on Board	Local authority seats (min 40%)	% LA	Parish seats (min 20%)	% Parish	Sec of State appointee seats	% Sec of State
10	4	40%	2	20%	4	40%
11	5	45%	3	27%	3	27%
12	5	42%	3	25%	4	33%

Total number of seats on Board	Local authority seats (min 40%)	% LA	Parish seats (min 20%)	% Parish	Sec of State appointee seats	% Sec of State
13	6	46%	3	23%	4	31%
14	6	43%	3	21%	5	36%
14	6	43%	4	29%	4	29%
15	6	40%	3	20%	6	40%
16	7	44%	4	25%	5	31%
17	7	41%	4	24%	6	35%
18	8	44%	4	22%	6	33%
19	8	42%	4	21%	7	37%
20	8	40%	4	20%	8	40%

Sizes of 10 and 15 can give the exact 40:20:40 proportions, while those in between give slightly different proportions. Given that there is no minimum % for Secretary of State appointees, there are some additional options which provide fewer seats in this category, as shown in the second entry for 14 total seats. This may not be desirable however in achieving the expected balance.

The Transition Board unanimously supported the **option of a 10 member Conservation Board**, comprising 4 local authority appointed seats (3 for Shropshire Council and 1 for Telford & Wrekin Council), 2 Parish/Town Council appointed seats and 4 Secretary of State appointed seats. This fits the ideal 40:20:40 % balance.

A scheme for the appointment of **Parish & Town Council seats** would also need to be decided. This has been done in the existing two Conservation Board Establishment Orders by creating groupings of Councils for each seat. With the recommended option having two seats appointed by Parish & Town Councils, this requires a simple geographical division of the AONB in two, by Parish Council. An east-west split roughly along the A49 is proposed for this, and the list of parishes corresponding to this will be drawn up.

As previously discussed, **the Partnership** would continue to exist alongside the Conservation Board as an advisory body (see Appendix 1, proposed structure). This would not any longer be as a Joint Advisory Committee, but the ongoing engagement of wider partners is seen to be very important. It is proposed to draw up draft Terms of Reference for this new Partnership role in the New Year for discussion at the Transition Board and the Partnership itself.

#### **List of Background Papers**

Paper 4 and Transition Board minutes 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016.

#### **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 Diagram of proposed structure

Appendix 1  
Shropshire Hills AONB  
proposed  
structure

