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| <u>Committee and Date</u><br>Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership<br><br>19 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 | <u>Item</u><br><br><b>8</b> |
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## **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR AONBS UPDATE, INCLUDING COLLABORATIVE WORK ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

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### **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.

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