



<u>Committee and Date</u> Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership  8 <sup>th</sup> November 2022	<u>Item</u>  <b>8</b>
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## **AONB TEAM ACTIVITY BRIEF UPDATE**

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### **Summary**

This paper gives members an update on recent activity of the AONB team.

### **Recommendation**

The Partnership is recommended to note the update.

### **Background**

Some recent items of note are:

- We have secured Forestry Commission funding (in partnership with the Woodland Trust) for the Ancient Woodland restoration project and will very soon be recruiting a project officer.
- Rachel Glover started with the team as Natural Environment Officer on 5<sup>th</sup> September.
- Practical works have commenced on the Fix the Fort project on Caer Caradoc. Helicopter uplift of material has been delayed several times due to weather but will hopefully be done on the coming days enabling the main repair works to be carried out.
- The Young Rangers project has had a busy programme of events for October half term.
- We are in discussion with partners on proposals for use of Defra's allocation of some capital funding for 'Access for All'
- We are intending to apply to renew the Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.
- The National Association for AONBs continues to work closely with Defra on implementation of Glover Review recommendations, including the rebrand of AONBs as National Landscapes, marking a step change in legal and delivery arrangements. The NAAONB's recent prospectus will be circulated to members separately to the meeting papers.

Full update papers are given to the Strategy & Performance Committee and are available to members on request. A summary of the team work programme is given in Appendix 1.

**List of Background Papers**

None

**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**

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Team Work Programme 2022-23 Summary

Area of work	Key actions
<b>TAKING ACTION - on the ground and in our communities - to conserve and enhance natural beauty and to promote enjoyment and understanding.</b>	
<b>Farming in Protected Landscapes</b>	Implement Year 2 of new Defra funded programme offering grants for farmers and landowners, with advice and support.
<b>Young Rangers project and Green Leaders</b>	Deliver programme of practical activities including John Muir Award for 12-16 year olds, and Green Leaders activities for 17-21 year olds
<b>Ancient Woodland Restoration project</b>	Establish and commence new project for advice and restoration of ancient woodlands, in partnership with Woodland Trust
<b>Stepping Stones project</b>	Support delivery of 'Stepping Stones' project led by National Trust, especially farmer engagement for Environmental Land Management Tests & Trials
<b>Sustainable tourism delivery</b>	Manage 2022 <b>Shuttle bus</b> and plan 2023 service Plan works to deliver the ' <b>Caering for Caradoc – Fix the Fort</b> ' project
<b>Peatlands project development</b>	Continue to develop detailed proposals, engage partners and seek funding
<b>'Our Common Cause' upland commons project</b>	Support delivery of national project led by Foundation for Common Land, including support for Area Group and Area Project Officer
<b>John Muir Award</b>	Lead John Muir Award programmes with selected participating schools
<b>Develop other new projects</b>	Including catchment and river work, nature-based solutions, health, diversity
<b>INFLUENCING OTHERS - lead and champion the delivery of public benefits from the AONB, working strategically and collaboratively from policy to grassroots level</b>	
<b>Climate &amp; Ecological Emergency</b>	Active involvement in Shropshire and South Shropshire climate partnerships, NAAONB collaboration groups, Shropshire Council Officer group Preparation of AONB Partnership <b>Climate Change Action Plan</b>
<b>AONB Management Plan</b>	Continue implementation of the AONB Management Plan for 2019-24 Publish progress report and start preliminary work on Plan review
<b>Sustainable tourism strategic work</b>	Support delivery of <b>Shropshire Hills Sustainable Tourism Strategy</b> and development of county Destination Management Plan working. Actively advocate for sustainable tourism at local, county & national levels
<b>Planning</b>	Comment on relevant <b>policy</b> documents and key <b>planning applications</b> Maintain and improve links with local authority planning staff and members
<b>Input to other strategies &amp; schemes</b>	Provide input to strategic <b>consultations</b> (non-planning) Input to work on <b>Local Nature Recovery Strategy</b> and <b>Clun catchment</b> Comment on non-planning <b>casework</b> such as EIAs, watercourses and hedges
<b>Promote special qualities of the AONB and Partnership activity</b>	Maintain and update <b>website</b> and regular <b>social media</b> output Publish <b>E-newsletters and Annual Review</b> , give <b>talks</b>
<b>Local authorities and partnerships</b>	Maintain/strengthen links with relevant departments of each local authority Input to Marches Nature Partnership, Teme Partnership and other groups Facilitate the Clun Catchment Partnership and Wrekin Forest Partnership
<b>National Association for AONBs</b>	Active involvement with NAAONB and other relevant networks
<b>Shropshire Hills AONB Trust</b>	Support the Trust to develop charitable and business fund-raising
<b>Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund</b>	Support the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust to administer and award grants, and provide advice and support for projects
<b>Friends of Shropshire Hills AONB</b>	Administer Friends scheme and work with Trust to expand membership
<b>Support initiatives led by others</b>	Support projects and initiatives and respond to requests for information
<b>MANAGING OUR BUSINESS - develop a robust, effective and financially sustainable AONB organisation</b>	
<b>Post Glover Review development</b>	Work with NAAONB, Defra, AONB Partnership, National Landscapes Partnership and local authorities to develop work and structures
<b>AONB Partnership</b>	Facilitate, support and develop the AONB Partnership and Strategy & Performance Committee advisory structures
<b>AONB Team</b>	Hold team meetings, performance reviews, training and development
<b>Finance, office, IT, Health &amp; Safety, legal requirements</b>	Manage and administer AONB Partnership finances, develop income streams, continue to modernise working practices, ensure compliance in all areas
<b>Evidence base and GIS</b>	Collect data to support forthcoming Management Plan review
<b>Volunteering</b>	Involve volunteers through AONB-led and supported activities