



Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

Thursday, 24th April, 2014 at 1.30 am in Bentham Town Hall

Agenda

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 09:45am – Tea / Coffee available from 37 Main Street Café Bar, address: 37 Main Street, High Bentham LA2 7HQ
- 10:00am – Mini Bus tour of the surrounding areas (pick up from 37 Main Street Café Bar at 10am)
- 12noon – Mini Bus drop off at Bentham Town Hall, Station Road, Bentham, LA2 7LH
- 12.30pm – Lunch, served at Bentham Town Hall
- 1.30pm – Forest of Bowland AONB Committee Meeting also held at Bentham Town Hall
- 4.00pm latest – Finish

Presentation from Stephen Murphy, Natural England on 'Hen Harrier Conservation'

- 1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests**

Members are asked to consider any Pecuniary Interests they may have to disclose to the meeting in relation to matters under consideration on the Agenda.
- 3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 February 2014** (Pages 1 - 6)
- 4. Matters arising**

- 5. Budget 2014/15 update**
Verbal update.
- 6. AONB partner updates**
- 7. Delivering the AONB Management Plan** (Pages 7 - 56)
 - a. AONB Report – presentation on headline achievements over the last six months
 - b. AONB Unit Business Plan 2014/15
- 8. AONB Management Plan Review** (Pages 57 - 58)
- 9. Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership Scheme update** (Pages 59 - 60)
- 10. AONB 50th Anniversary update**
To be tabled at the meeting.
- 11. Urgent Business**

An item of Urgent Business may only be considered under this heading where, by reason of special circumstances to be recorded in the minutes, the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency. Wherever possible, the Chief Executive should be given advance warning of any Members' intention to raise a matter under this heading.
- 12. Dates of Next Meetings**
 - tbc Thursday 9th October 2014 (Ribble Valley)
 - tbc Thursday 23rd April 2015 (Lancaster district)

Stuart Benson
Principal Executive Support Officer

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston



Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 10th February, 2014 at 11.30 am in Forest Hills, Hazelrigg Lane, Ellel, Lancaster, LA2 0PL

Present:

Chair

County Councillor Albert Atkinson

Committee Members

County Councillor Mrs Susie Charles
Councillor Roger W Brooks, Wyre Borough Council
Neil Clark, Natural England
Helen Dix, Environment Agency
James Lloyd, United Utilities plc
Michael Helm, LAPT
David Kelly, Ramblers Association
Councillor Colin Price, Yorkshire Local Councils Association
Councillor Roger Sherlock, Lancaster City Council
Councillor James Starkie, Pendle Borough Council
Mr Andrew Taylor, Bowland Land Managers Forum
Barrie Tyrer, Bowland Experience Limited

Officers

Elliott Lorimer, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Nick Osborne, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Tarja Wilson, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Dave Oyston, United Utilities plc
Alison Boden, Wyre Borough Council
David Porter, Lancaster City Council
Graham Jones, RSPB

Apologies

County Councillor Kevin Ellard
Councillor Lin Barrington, Craven District Council
Councillor John Browne, Preston City Council

County Councillor Richard Welch, North Yorkshire County Council
Martin Putsey, Preston City Council
Phil Johnson, Ribble Valley Borough Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair, County Councillor Albert Atkinson, Lancashire County Council, welcomed all to the meeting, round table introductions were made.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were noted from County Councillor Kevin Ellard (Lancashire County Council, Councillor Lin Barrington (Craven District Council), Councillor John Browne (Preston City Council), County Councillor Richard Welch (North Yorkshire County Council), Phil Johnson (Ribble Valley Borough Council) and Martin Putsey (Preston City Council).

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

None disclosed.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 October 2013

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2013 were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

An update was provided on Hen Harriers. Elliott Lorimer, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit, is arranging for someone from Natural England to attend the April meeting of the Committee to provide an update.

5. AONB Management Plan Review Update

Elliott Lorimer, presented the AONB Management Plan Review Update (circulated).

AONB Management Plan – Final Draft

Elliott highlighted the key aspects of the report and explained that since the last meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee, formal consultation on the draft AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019 was held from Monday 4th November 2013 through to Friday 13th December 2013.

The AONB Unit received 27 formal responses from local authorities, statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations and individuals. A summary of these responses is available on request from the AONB Unit.

Revision of the draft Plan took place during January 2014, and, were based on formal responses and any known changes to projects/organisations etc. This involved numerous minor amendments, additions and corrections. More significant changes included:

- change to the structure and ordering of the report to include section called 'Policy Context for the Management Plan'
- five additional actions on:
 - SSSI condition targets within the AONB
 - support for local actions to provide suitable conditions to re-establish hen harrier as a breeding species in the AONB
 - identification and management of designated heritage assets 'at risk'
 - raising awareness and improving understanding of the historic environment of the AONB
 - monitoring of geodiversity actions within the AONB

An initial Environmental Report (including a Sustainability Appraisal [SA]) was completed during January 2014 to meet statutory requirements for the review relating to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

The AONB Management Plan puts the environment at the heart of the plan-making process and it was agreed during the SEA/SA scoping consultation that alternatives to the draft objectives and actions would only be developed and assessed if they were identified as resulting in partial or significant negative effects on the environmental and/or sustainability objectives. None of the draft objectives and actions has been assessed as having any negative effects, so no alternative policies have needed to be developed or assessed.

The Environmental Report will be published for formal consultation shortly, concluding in early March 2014."

A Screening Report for Habitat Regulations Assessment and an Equality Impact Assessment have both been completed and forwarded to the appropriate authority (Natural England) for consultation.

Revised AONB Management Plan Review Timetable

Elliott also explained that the review timetable (attached at Appendix 'B' to the report) sets out both completed stages/milestones in the review process and also the next steps towards completion of the review.

Committee members sought assurances that policies on wind turbines, heritage and landscapes, traditional boundaries, landscape features and geomorphology were included in the Management Plan. It was confirmed that they are included in the Management Plan.

Resolved:

The Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the report and offered comments on the review of the AONB Management Plan;
- (ii) approved the final draft of the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan (2014 – 2019), to proceed for final approval by partner funding authorities and statutory agencies, as set out.

6. AONB Budget 2014/15

Elliott Lorimer presented the report (circulated).

Defra AONB Contribution 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Elliott explained that Defra advised the AONB Unit in December 2013 that the Government's contribution to the AONB Partnership budget for 2014/15 has been set at £208,143, a reduction of £16,974 (or 6.25% reduction based on 2010/11 grant funding levels). This is a slightly larger reduction than the 5.38% reduction anticipated (and outlined in the AONB Memorandum of Agreement in 2010/11).

However, the Department also advised that their contribution for 2015/16 would remain unchanged at £208,143 (no reduction). This is an excellent result, particularly given that Defra anticipate making overall departmental reductions of 9.6% in 2015/16. The National Association for AONBs and AONB Partnerships have worked very hard to achieve this outcome and should be commended for their efforts in making the case to Government of the importance of its continued support for AONBs. The net effect of this change to the AONB Revenue Budget is detailed in the item (b) below.

Defra went on to state that wherever possible they will seek to avoid further adjustments to the budget and the AONB Partnership should plan on the above numbers unless advised otherwise.

Revised Revenue Budget 2014/15

Elliott also presented the Revised Revenue Budget for 2014/15. This section sets out the costs associated with the Partnership's projects and management service in 2014/15, including estimated pay and price levels. The estimates are based on a continuation of the level of service agreed by the Committee at the October 2013 meeting.

Total Partnership income from contributions is also included, based on estimated/revised contributions from Defra, local authorities and United Utilities.

Thus, the level of provision for 'Projects' (£83,711) is based on the resources estimated to be available to the Partnership after providing for the staffing of the AONB Unit at Dunsop Bridge, plus related core activities costs (e.g. JAC meetings, communications and publicity).

Resolved:

The Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the report.
- (ii) note the 2014/15 Revised Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix A to the report.

7. Urgent Business

It was noted under Any Other Urgent Business that Councillor James Starkie was still awaiting the installation of AONB boundary signage within Pendle. Elliott explained that

the signage is due for installation (to be arranged by Dave Padley at LCC) as soon as possible.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved: It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 24th April 2014 at a venue to be confirmed in North Yorkshire.

Andy Milroy
Principal Executive Support Officer

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston

Agenda Item 7

Delivering the AONB Management Plan

Issue for consideration

The report and appendices summarise progress made towards delivery of the AONB Management Plan, alongside the draft AONB Unit Business Plan for the coming year:

a) AONB Unit activity report

This report is a summary of some key AONB projects developed and delivered by the AONB Unit over the last six months.

b) Draft AONB Unit business plan 2014/15

An annual review of the AONB Unit business plan is now complete and a draft of the plan is appended.

Decision to be taken

The Committee is asked to:

- i. note the reports and offer comments on AONB Unit activity report.
- ii. approve the AONB Unit business plan for 2014/15.



FOREST OF BOWLAND

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage

Bowland Hay Time Project

The Bowland Hay Time project which came to a close at the end March 2014 has enabled practical restoration work to take place on over 50 hectares of meadow land in Bowland; 25% more than the target area, and has surveyed 92 grassland sites throughout the AONB area as a contribution to the BHS project. The project has delivered public facing events throughout 2012 and 2013 far in excess of the target of 10 events, and has gathered a dedicated group of volunteers.

Other project successes:

- 24 people trained in identification skills
- 55 volunteers involved
- 209 attendees at public events
- 21 volunteer days for young people
- 26 people taught to mow

To view a copy of the final project report visit www.forestofbowland.com/haytimeproject

For further information contact sarah.robinson@lancashire.gov.uk

Networks for Nectar

Leading on from the successful Bowland Hay Time Project the new Networks for Nectar project is looking at improving biodiversity by restoring and conserving small, species-rich grasslands to link up with the area's best wildflower meadows and providing a haven for invertebrates such as bees. This is a partnership project between the Forest of Bowland AONB and the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, supported by the Lancashire Environment Fund. The project will run for 18 months and involves local volunteers working on meadow management, seed harvesting/propagating, and planting plug plants. This project is building on the work of the successful Hay Time project which has restored wild flowers to 25 traditional hay meadows across Bowland over the last two years. The outcome - which we hope to see and build on over the next few years - is meadows with increasingly valuable habitat, providing new homes for bees, butterflies and other pollinators.

For further information contact sarah.robinson@lancashire.gov.uk

Wolf Fell Peat Restoration and Public Access Improvements

As part of a new Higher Level Stewardship agreement with Natural England the upper parts of Wolf Fell has been fenced off and associated bare peat restoration work carried out. The eroding path across the top of the fell has been restored using a sub-soil path technique.

For more information contact tarja.wilson@lancashire.gov.uk

Priority Peat and EU LIFE Bid

Over the last six months Sarah Robinson has been working for the AONB in a consultancy capacity to increase our knowledge of the state of the moorland peat in the area and also across the West Pennine Moors and Rossendale, the latter study was on behalf of the Lancashire Peat Partnership and funded by the Environment Agency. The work has built on a desktop study carried out earlier, and it provides us with a detailed information matrix identifying where work is still required, and in particular the area of bare peat, and the length of grips and gullies, which need restoring. The study includes detailed GIS mapping, aerial and site photographs, and will be available to download from the AONB website shortly.

This information, together with outline costings and discussions with landowners, will enable Bowland and the rest of Lancashire to be included in a wider Pennine Peat Partnership bid for European funding under the LIFE programme

which comes on stream this year. This funding would enable the AONB to manage a further programme of peatland restoration work, bringing all of our fells and this vitally important habitat back into good condition – providing an ideal site for wildlife, reducing run off and the risk of flooding and discoloured water, retaining a vital carbon store and in the future enabling more carbon to be sequestered from the atmosphere.

For further information contact sarah.robinson@lancashire.gov.uk

Undergrounding for Visual Amenity Programme

The natural beauty of Beacon Fell Country Park, which welcomes more than 200,000 visitors a year, has been successfully restored thanks to the removal of electricity poles and power lines.

Further to the earlier schemes reported, Electricity Northwest working alongside the Forest of Bowland AONB and Lancashire County Council Countryside Service have successfully replaced the power lines with 2.5km of underground cable to improve the views from the fell close to the Bowland Visitor Centre.

The work forms part of a £5.4m five-year OFGEM Undergrounding for Visual Amenity (UVA) programme to replace lines identified as being most visually intrusive in the North West.

For further information contact elliott.lorimer@lancashire.gov.uk

Resilient and sustainable rural communities

Bowland's Artistic Talent Soon to be "Revealed"

Lancashire Arts Development, Ribble Valley Arts Development and the Forest of Bowland AONB have successfully appointed an artist manager for the community engagement element of Bowland Revealed – the exciting new arts offer being developed as part of the AONB's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Following consideration of a number of inspiring and creative bids from professional arts organisations, Melling-based Green Close Studio have been contracted to deliver their proposal entitled, "50 years in the making". The project, which will run from June to December, will work to engage and involve local communities, visitors, schools and artists through a series of workshops and events. Keep an eye on the website for updates and the chance to bring out your inner artist!

We are also preparing to send out a brief for the second strand of Bowland Revealed known as "Landmarks". The brief will lead to a major, outdoor, visual arts commission in the form of an ambitious, temporary artwork sited within, and drawing inspiration from, the landscape. Whilst looking to challenge and delight audiences, proposals will need to demonstrate a real awareness, understanding and respect for the nature of the AONB environment, its habitats and wildlife.

We are currently awaiting the outcome of a bid to Arts Council England's Grants for the Arts programme which, if successful, will allow us to offer commissions to both an established, and an emerging, artist. Without ACE support the Landmarks project will still go ahead, but on a smaller scale. The brief(s) will be circulated in early May so, if you are an artist interested in submitting a proposal, or know someone who might be, then do get in touch.

For further information contact sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk

Champion Bowland

A number of small grants have been awarded since October 2013, these include:

- "By Hodder and Beyond" - book of poetry by J. M. Breaks (Slaidburn) - £330
- Dunsop Green Footpath Restoration - £654
- Bowland Best Kept Village Competition 2014 (covering Lancashire and Yorkshire) - £500
- Gisburn Forest Labyrinth - £600

£5,422 is available for grant applications. Visit www.championbowland.org.uk for further information.

For further information contact mike.pugh@lancashire.gov.uk

Bowland Experience

The main income for the last 6 months has been generated as follows:

- 50th Anniversary Calendar sales and advertising in the AONB Anniversary Discovery Guides - £4,300
- Business promotion within AONB leaflets (re-printing of Bentham village leaflet and Gisburn Forest Mountain Bike trails leaflet) - £1,362

Membership

- 6 new members in last 6 months
- Total now 109

Business Monitoring

The aim of the project is to provide data on business performance amongst the members of the Bowland Experience on a regular basis. The research has been carried out biannually since November 2012 by consultants QA Research. Results from November 2013 found that:

- Visitor Numbers – 62% reported an increase (vs. 42% in November 2012)
- Business Performance – 86% Quite or Very satisfied (vs. 74% in November 2012)
- Next 6 months' prospects – 92% Fairly or Very confident (vs. 82% in November 2012)

Sustainable Tourism

Our congratulations go out to a number of Bowland businesses who have not only excelled at the regional Marketing Lancashire Tourism awards, but who have been announced as finalists in the prestigious VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2014. Very well done to Bleasdale Self Catering Cottages, named as a finalist in the Sustainable Tourism Award Category; The Parkers Arms, in the Taste of England Category and the Visit Garstang Centre, in the Information Provider of the Year Category.

These finalists now go forward to the glittering awards ceremony which is being held on Monday 12 May 2014, at Cheltenham Racecourse. They will have to wait until the ceremony to find out which award they will receive, but all finalists are guaranteed to receive a Gold, Silver, Bronze or Highly Commended Award. We wish them all the very best for the event.

Hetty Byrne was invited to speak at the 8th International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations on 3 April organised by Manchester Metropolitan University and Visit England, which was held for the first time in the UK. Hetty presented a case study about the Forest of Bowland and the successful work of the partnership in developing a sustainable destination, as part of a panel addressing 'What Does Success Look Like?' Projects such as Access for All, Visitor Giving, and the Bowland Wildlife Blog were all highlighted as examples of good practice, delivered by the AONB unit with partners and the sustainable tourism business network – The Bowland Experience.

For further information contact hetty.byrne@lancashire.gov.uk

Sustainable Development Fund

Last year SDF supported nine projects:

Applicant	Project	Grant awarded
Bowland Experience	Electric Bicycle Network	£1752
Anita Burrows (artist)	Bowland Now and Then	£230
Dunsop Bridge village hall	Insulation, windows, zoned heating	£4000
Yorks Dales Millennium Trust	Pilot community outreach project	£2735
Bleasdale parish hall	Buffer tank for wood pellet boiler, energy seminar for community groups	£2492
LESS	Energy efficiency advice	£4337
Diane Hubbard	Energy efficiency research	£1000
RSPB	Long Preston Wet Grassland: bird hide	£1500
Thornley community space	Village hall renovation: insulation & glazing	£5000
		£23,046

As reported in October, we have set up an arrangement with Champion Bowland so that they are now the grants distributor for SDF, although an independent grant panel is still run for the scheme by the AONB Unit. This arrangement has enabled us to offer all projects a 12 month period in which to spend their grant money, thus overcoming the pressure on applicants having to complete works for the end of our financial year. This has meant that four projects have not yet claimed their grants, and these monies will continue to be held by Champion Bowland for them until the end of December 2014. If for any reason grants are unclaimed then the money will be retained and re-distributed in the following fund year.

This year the SDF grant scheme has £16,490 available for projects, plus an under-spend of £2154 which will be added to it. The scheme will open for business at the end of the month and we look forward to some good applications.

For further information contact cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk

Stony Fold Farm Educational and Tramper Access

New educational and Tramper access around Stony Fold Farm, Nr Beacon Fell has been set up and is due to be launched Spring 2014. It includes a purpose built education barn with an outside toilet available for passing Duke of Edinburgh groups and walkers. The network of access with associated interpretation across the farm provides opportunities to see how the land is being managed for wildlife; including nesting waders and hedgerow dwelling species. Support has been provided by Lancashire County Council, the Forest of Bowland AONB and Natural England through Higher Level Stewardship. An on-line farm profile is being developed which will soon be downloadable from www.forestofbowland.com/farm-profiles

For more information contact tarja.wilson@lancashire.gov.uk

A strong connection between people and the landscape

Festival Bowland 2014

Wyre Council's Brown Hare Walk, LCC's Winter Tree ID and RSPB's first Moorland Safari of 2014 all proved popular – getting Festival Bowland 2014 off to a fine start. Still to come this spring – bluebells, brass, birds and much more!

Don't miss the chance to spot whimbrel as they break their long journey from Africa to Iceland right here in Bowland! Or why not explore some of the AONB's beautiful woodlands as they come into leaf – events are happening at both Backsbottom Farm in Roeburndale and Wyresdale Park near Scorton? Garstang Walking Festival's "Bowland to Bay" runs from Saturday 10th to Sunday 18th May with everything from family-friendly wanders to a 14 mile trek; whilst Cobble Hey Farm and Gardens are offering the chance to find out all about the work they do with schools.

Get back to basics with a geology walk in the Trough and discover the famous landmark of Pendle Hill in the company of one of LCC's rangers.

If you prefer to view the countryside without getting your boots muddy then Maiden Bridge Gallery offers a great alternative when, from 24th May, this Tatham-based venue hosts an exhibition of work featuring the landscape and wildlife of the Bowland hills.

Rounding off the Festival's spring events, Slaidburn Silver Band will stage the first of a series of free "Brass at the Bounty" concerts at Slaidburn's Hark to Bounty Inn. And to get well and truly in the mood for summer (fingers crossed for the sunshine!) why not join us for our Bowland Picnic at Stephen Park on June 8th?

Full details, and booking information where needed, for all Festival Bowland events can be found in the 2014 booklet or at www.forestofbowland.com/festivalevents or by contacting the AONB team on 01200 448000. The Festival programme booklet is also available from tourist information centres and local venues throughout the area.

For more details contact sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk

Forest of Bowland AONB 50th Anniversary Launch

Over 70 people came together at our launch event on February 10th to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the designation of the Forest of Bowland as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The gathering included steering group members and partner organisations along with AONB staff old and new and took place at Forrest Hills, a family-run, eco-friendly venue near Lancaster.

Guests were treated to a special edition "AONB" beer brewed for the occasion by Richard Baker of Bowland Brewery. Several of those who enjoyed a glass would have remembered the "Hen Harrier" ale which Richard produced to celebrate the AONB's 40th Anniversary back in 2004! And, to mark this milestone year, for every bottle of the new brew sold, Bowland Brewery have pledged to donate ten pence to Champion Bowland. A very big thank you to them!

During the afternoon event, the audience also heard extracts from a new book by local author, Jane Routh. Having published several collections of poetry, Jane's recently published creative, non-fiction book, *Falling into Place*, reflects on her life on the northern edge of the Forest of Bowland over four decades. Her readings evoked some wonderful images of landscape, wildlife and local characters. Thank you Jane!

The AONB's anniversary year has also gained publicity in a number of publications to date, including the 2014 Visitor Guides for both Ribble Valley and Wyre, the 2014 Lancashire Destination Guide, Walks and Wildlife Magazine and Lancashire Magazine along with articles in local press.

For information relating to the Anniversary year visit www.forestofbowland.com/50years

Real Ale Guide to Bowland

The AONB have been working with the East Lancashire branch of CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) to develop a Real Ale Guide to Bowland. The guide will feature over 40 pubs that champion real ale in Bowland and the fringes, and will also promote the opportunities from the pubs for walking and cycling.

The annual Clitheroe Beer Festival organised by East Lancashire CAMRA group have taken the AONB's Golden Anniversary year as the theme for this year's festival, and the AONB will be at the event on 16th and 17th May to jointly launch the new real ale guide.

For further information contact hetty.byrne@lancashire.gov.uk

A Leap in the Park

This project drew to a close for Christmas 2013 and we were delighted with the new mobile app developed with funds from Heritage Lottery, which also enabled us to produce a number of other interpretation materials for the medieval deer parks at Leagram and Radholme. The project also drew a considerable amount of interest from the local press, and additional financial support from the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund.

Four new interpretation panels, beautifully illustrated by Jennie Anderson, have been installed at Hall Hill, the Inn at Whitewell, Chipping wildlife garden and Laund Farm. So next time you are out and about in the area, download the app and explore the hidden history of this ancient landscape! www.forestofbowland.com/deerparks

Garstang/River Wyre Access for All Path

The AONB are supporting the Garstang Millennium Green Committee to develop a scheme to carry out improvements to riverside footpaths that extend from the existing network of access for all routes across the Millennium Green. The Committee has appointed Proffitts Ltd to project manage the scheme. Grant aid is being provided through the Lancashire Environment Fund (LEF), Wyre Borough Council and Lancashire County Council.

For more information contact tarja.wilson@lancashire.gov.uk

Monitoring promoted routes across Bowland

Over the winter months local volunteers have been assisting us manage the promoted routes by walking these routes, carrying out minor maintenance works and reporting back on the condition of the access furniture along these routes. This has enabled us respond with follow up access improvement works. A big thanks to all the volunteers involved.

For more information contact hetty.byrne@lancashire.gov.uk or tarja.wilson@lancashire.gov.uk

A dynamic and effective AONB partnership

Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan (2014 – 2019)

In February 2014, the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee approved the final draft of the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan (2014 – 2019) to proceed for adoption by partner funding authorities and approval by statutory agencies.

The AONB Unit received notification of Natural England's approval of the final draft of the Plan on 21st March 2014. The Defra agency has responsibility for managing the review of the AONB Management Plans in England.

The final designed version of the Plan (including images, maps and illustrations) is now complete and has been uploaded to the AONB website: www.forestofbowland.com/cons_managementplan

For further information contact elliott.lorimer@lancashire.gov.uk



FOREST OF BOWLAND

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

AONB Unit Business Plan 2014-2017

Introduction

The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of England's finest landscapes and is internationally important for its heather moorland, blanket bog and rare birds. The special qualities of the area which contribute to its distinctive 'sense of place' can be summarised as:

- Wild open spaces
- A special place for wildlife
- A landscape rich in heritage
- A living landscape
- Delicious local food and drink
- A place to enjoy and keep special

The AONB designation means that the natural beauty of the landscape should not only be conserved and enhanced, but also that recreation and sustainable development should be promoted to help to sustain the landscape and its communities.

The AONB Partnership and Unit

The AONB is managed by a partnership of local councils, utility company, landowners, farmers, voluntary organisations, wildlife groups, recreation groups, and government agencies, who work to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of this special area.

The Partnership is funded by eight local authorities (Craven District Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council, North Yorkshire County Council, Pendle Borough Council, Preston City Council, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Wyre Council), United Utilities and the Department for Environment Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra).

The AONB Unit is the staff team, who are employed on behalf of the AONB Partnership, to prepare and implement the statutory AONB Management Plan. The team comprises six people (4.4 full-time equivalents), with additional support from the 'Networks of Nectar' Project Officer (funded up to September 2015), two LCC Senior Environmental Project Officers and LCC Ranger Service.

A Plan for the Future

This business plan sets out how the AONB Unit will contribute to the work of the Partnership in achieving the long-term vision for the AONB:

"The Forest of Bowland AONB retains its sense of local distinctiveness, notably the large-scale open moorland character of the Bowland Fells, traditional buildings and settlement patterns of villages, hamlets and farmsteads. Natural and cultural heritage is sympathetically managed and contributes to a sustainable and vibrant local economy. The management of the AONB has improved the quality of the landscape for all."

The AONB Unit is working towards four key outcomes:

1. An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage

2. Resilient and sustainable communities
3. A strong connection between people and the landscape
4. A dynamic and effective AONB partnership

The Business Plan

This plan will guide the work of the AONB Unit from 2014 - 2017. The actions within it link directly to the implementation of the statutory AONB Management Plan and links are shown against each action. It is designed to be a rolling 3-year plan, which will be reviewed and updated annually.

The AONB Unit aims to work with the following values at the core of its operation:

- We are knowledgeable and passionate about the AONB - its landscape, biodiversity and culture
- We care about the environment and sustainability
- We work together with others to achieve success
- We value people and are approachable and responsive
- We communicate clearly and effectively

It should also be recognised that this plan relies on the work of other partner organisations, communities and individuals to achieve the successful delivery of the AONB Management Plan and the long-term vision for the area.

Strategic Priorities 2014 - 2017

An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage	Resilient and sustainable rural communities	A strong connection between people and the landscape	A dynamic and effective AONB Partnership
<p>OL1 Provide and seek advice, training and support to promote sustainable land management practices; helping to safeguard the natural and cultural landscape of the AONB.</p> <p>OL2 Continue a strategic programme of restoration and re-establishment of traditional boundaries (e.g. hedgerows, dry stone walls, railing fences); allied to provision of training opportunities to promote skills associated with these traditional boundaries.</p> <p>OL3 Co-ordinate partner activity in conserving and enhancing biodiversity and in developing better understanding and management of ecosystems services with the AONB.</p> <p>OL4 Work with others, in particular local authorities, to establish development management and other policies/strategies, which result in positive outcomes for the landscape quality of the AONB.</p>	<p>SC1 Continue to support and develop local parish lengthsmen schemes within the AONB to assist in the management and maintenance of key community assets.</p> <p>SC2 Support and promote local businesses and products to maintain their viability.</p> <p>SC3 Continue to promote and manage the Sustainable Development Fund; whilst also responding to local community requests for advice on funding, project management and volunteering.</p> <p>SC4 Continue to develop, support and promote local tourism businesses; building on the AONB's reputation as an internationally-recognised destination for sustainable tourism.</p>	<p>PL1 Develop, improve, and promote access and recreational opportunities for a diverse range of people.</p> <p>PL2 Provide high quality information, communications and events to enable people to enjoy and understand the landscape of the AONB and the work of the AONB Partnership.</p> <p>PL3 Support local communities and visitors to conserve, restore, enjoy and learn about the heritage of the AONB, and develop programmes of activity which provide opportunities to engage people with the landscape.</p>	<p>AP1 Work with others to maximise the successful delivery of the AONB Management Plan and effectively monitor progress.</p> <p>AP2 Achieve excellence in the governance and management of the AONB Partnership and Unit, its people and resources; and helping to identify sustainable future funding to support these.</p>

AONB Unit

CH – Cathy Hopley, Development and Funding Officer

EL – Elliott Lorimer, Principal AONB Officer

HB – Hetty Byrne, Sustainable Tourism & Web Development Officer

MP – Mike Pugh, Business Development Officer

NO – Nick Osborne, Countryside Sites & AONB Manager

SS – Sandra Silk, Projects and Events Officer

Networks for Nectar Project

SR – Sarah Robinson, Project Officer

Lancashire County Council Environmental Projects and Countryside

DP – Dave Padley, Environmental Projects Officer (covering Craven, Pendle and Ribble Valley)

TW – Tarja Wilson, Environmental Projects Officer (covering Lancaster, Preston and Wyre)

AG – Andrew Greenwood, Head Ranger

An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage (OL)

OLI Provide and seek advice, training and support to promote sustainable land management practices; helping to safeguard the natural and cultural landscape of the AONB					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
OLI.1 Provide advice, guidance and encouragement to land managers on sustainable land management of the AONB landscape	On-going Regular meetings with local NE Land Management Team Ensure involvement in consultation on NELMS targetting for NW England	On-going Regular meetings with local NE Land Management Team	On-going Regular meetings with local NE Land Management Team	1.1, 1.2, 2.1	DP/TW CH/SR/TW/ DP/EL
OLI.2 Support traditional woodland management skills	1 traditional woodland management skills course held	1 traditional woodland management skills course held	1 traditional woodland management skills course held	1.3, 2.1	DP/TW
OLI.3 Liaise with woodland planting and management initiatives to encourage and support appropriate woodland extension, creation and management within the AONB	On-going Regular meetings/	On-going Regular meetings/	On-going Regular meetings/	1.1	DP/TW/EL

landscape	liaison with Forestry Commission re: landscape and WGS	liaison with Forestry Commission re: landscape and WGS	liaison with Forestry Commission re: landscape and WGS		
OL1.4 Develop design guidance notes for riverside and moorland fencing	Draft guidance notes developed	Guidance notes published		1.1	DP/EL
OL1.4 Engage with newly established River Catchment Partnerships for Ribble, Wyre and Lune to encourage sensitive management of riverbank habitats for biodiversity and landscape.	Regular attendance at RCP meetings Invite RCP members to attend planning and development seminar	Regular attendance at RCP meetings	Regular attendance at RCP meetings	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4	EL/TW/CH/DP
OL2 Continue a strategic programme of restoration and re-establishment of traditional boundaries (e.g. hedgerows, dry-stone walls, railing fences); allied to provision of training opportunities to promote traditional rural skills					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
OL2.1 Deliver an annual programme of traditional boundaries projects	At least 3 projects delivered Develop fund-raising plan for traditional boundaries programme (possible inclusion in HLF LPS)	At least 3 projects delivered	At least 3 projects delivered	1.1, 1.6, 2.1	DP/TW/EL

<p>OL2.2 Promote training opportunities and competitions in hedge-laying and walling (including schools and vocational training)</p>	<p>2 training opportunities promoted 1 event held</p>	<p>2 training opportunities promoted 1 event held</p>	<p>2 training opportunities promoted 1 event held</p>	<p>1.1, 1.6, 2.1</p>	<p>DP/TW</p>

OL3 Co-ordinate partner activity in conserving and enhancing biodiversity and in developing and better understanding and management of ecosystem services within the AONB					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
OL3.1 Hold regular meeting of the AONB Biodiversity Working Group to support the delivery of Biodiversity 2020 'outcomes'.	<p>At least 4 meetings held</p> <p>Annual Delivery Plan developed</p> <p>At least 2 local species recovery plans developed</p> <p>Carry out surveying for agreed priority habitat to help develop opportunity mapping for restoration and creation</p> <p>Carry out ecosystems approach self-assessment toolkit</p>	<p>At least 4 meetings held</p> <p>Annual Delivery Plan reviewed</p> <p>At least 2 local species recovery plans developed</p>	<p>At least 4 meetings held</p> <p>Annual Delivery Plan reviewed</p> <p>At least 2 local species recovery plans developed</p>	1.2, 1.3, 1.4	<p>CH/SR</p> <p>EL</p>

<p>OL3.2 Utilise the AONB Peatland Restoration Plan to identify and secure funding for priority peatland and blanket bog restoration works in the AONB.</p>	<p>Attend Lancashire & Pennine Peat Partnership meetings</p> <p>Ensure inclusion AONB priority peatland areas for restoration included in Pennine Peat LIFE+ funding bid</p> <p>One peatland restoration project commenced (subject to funding)</p> <p>Continue monitoring programme at Bleasdale Restoration Project involving local volunteers</p>	<p>Attend Lancashire & Pennine Peat Partnership meetings</p> <p>One peatland restoration project commenced (subject to funding)</p> <p>Continue monitoring programme at Bleasdale Restoration Project involving local volunteers</p>	<p>Attend Lancashire & Pennine Peat Partnership meetings</p> <p>One peatland restoration project commenced (subject to funding)</p> <p>Continue monitoring programme at Bleasdale Restoration Project involving local volunteers</p>	<p>1.2, 1.3, 2.1</p>	<p>SR/CH/TW</p>
<p>OL3.3 Encourage the restoration of areas of exposed and eroded peat and the conservation and restoration of blanket bog and mosaic of moorland dwarf shrub species, as part of NELMS</p>	<p>Regular meetings with NE HLS advisors and landowners</p>	<p>Regular meetings with NE HLS advisors and landowners</p>	<p>Regular meetings with NE HLS advisors and landowners</p>	<p>1.2, 1.3, 2.1</p>	<p>DP/TW</p>
<p>OL3.4 Encourage good practice in upland heather burning and</p>	<p>Hold regular AONB-</p>	<p>Hold regular AONB-</p>	<p>Hold regular AONB-</p>	<p>2.1, 3.2</p>	<p>NO/AG/DP/</p>

<p>alternatives; helping to develop a fire prevention strategy and fire plans for the area</p>	<p>wide fire operations group meetings and exercises</p>	<p>wide fire operations group meetings and exercises</p> <p>Hold Upland Management Seminar, including good practice information on burning</p>	<p>wide fire operations group meetings and exercises</p>		<p>TW</p>
<p>OL3.5 Delivery of 'Networks for Nectar Project' (successor to Bowland Haytime up to end September 2015)</p>	<p>Carry out monitoring of 'Haytime Project' sites</p> <p>Commence work with farmers, landowners and community groups to develop species-rich grassland small sites projects</p> <p>Hold 5 community engagement events</p> <p>Develop advice and guidance for species-rich grassland</p>	<p>Carry out monitoring of 'Haytime Project' sites</p> <p>Conserve, restore and create 10ha of species-rich grassland</p> <p>Hold 5 community engagement events</p>		<p>1.3, 2.3</p>	<p>SR/CH</p>

	managemnt for small sites				
OL3.6 Support Bowland Land Managers Forum to develop collaborative land management project	Develop and agree priority project for year Identification of potential funding and applications made.	Delivery of project commences, subject to availability of funding		2.1	EL
OL3.7 Develop proposals for AONB 'Social Forestry' project to involve woodland owners/managers and communities in improving and increasing woodland management, supporting traditional skills and development of local woodfuel economy	Organise visit for local woodland owners/managers and community groups to Arnside and Silverdale AONB 'Social Forestry' and NIA woodlands projects	Establish small-scale pilot 'social forestry' pilot project in AONB.		1.2, 1.3	TW/DP/EL
OL3.8 Support local actions to provide suitable conditions to re-establish hen harrier as a breeding species in the AONB, in line with the government's emerging national species recovery plan	Work with partners to develop local actions with partners to support the re-establishment of breeding hen harrier in the AONB			1.4	EL

	Active participation in the 'Northern England Protected Landscapes Hen Harrier Group'				
OL4 Work with others, in particular the local authorities, to establish development management and other policies/strategies, which result in positive outcomes for the landscape quality of the AONB					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
OL4.1 Provide appropriate advice, support and formal responses to development proposals and consultations on policies/strategies that will affect the AONB and its setting (in particular planning applications, local plan consultations and other local, sub-national and national strategies)	Appropriate responses provided	Appropriate responses provided	Appropriate responses provided	1.1, 1.7	EL
OL4.2 Continue a programme of undergrounding of power lines in the AONB with Electricity Northwest	At least 2 UVA projects delivered	At least 2 UVA projects delivered	At least 2 UVA projects delivered	1.1, 1.7	EL/DP/TW
OL 4.3 Develop an AONB design guide (based on the Landscape Character Assessment) to ensure development is in keeping with and conserves or enhances landscape character (i.e. in terms of appropriate materials, form, setting, scale etc)	Include as discussion point for planning and development seminar Re-convene working group if agreed	Outline design guide developed Partner consultation held	AONB design guide published Awareness- raising event(s) held	1.1, 1.7	EL

<p>OL4.4 Liaise with local authority planning officers on relevant AONB planning concerns (landscape character, wind energy, tourism business development, energy efficiency in older buildings)</p>	<p>Planning and development seminar held</p>		<p>Planning and development seminar held</p>	<p>1.1, 1.2, 1.7</p>	<p>EL</p>

Resilient and sustainable rural communities (SC)

SCI Continue to support and develop local parish lengthsman schemes within the AONB to assist in the management and maintenance of key community assets					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
SCI.1 Support Parish Councils to continue to fund and manage existing lengthsman schemes	<p>AONB grant offer made to Parish Councils/Meetings</p> <p>Develop funding plans with Parish Councils to accommodate reduction in AONB contributions</p>	AONB grant offer made to Parish Councils/Meetings	AONB grant offer made to Parish Councils/Meetings	2.3, 4.2	TW/DP
SCI.2 Work with Parish Councils to develop best practice (e.g. record-keeping) to help demonstrate best value	Scheme monitoring information received from Parish Councils/Meetings	Scheme monitoring information received from Parish Councils/Meetings	Scheme monitoring information received from Parish Councils/Meetings	2.3	TW/DP

SC2 Support and promote local businesses and products to maintain their viability					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
SC2.1 Support local businesses, via provision of advice, signposting, training (e.g. access for all, business skills, sense of place), networking opportunities and events	One-to-one business advice provided 2 training events provided and evaluated	One-to-one business advice provided 2 training events provided and evaluated	One-to-one business advice provided 2 training events provided and evaluated	2.2, 2.3, 2.4	MP/HB
SC2.2 Continue to provide support for Bowland Experience Ltd. (BEx)	BEx board meetings held (min. 2/year) Secretariat provided for BEx Regular tourism business bulletin produced and distributed 2 BEx training events held	BEx board meetings held (min. 2/year) Secretariat provided for BEx Regular tourism business bulletin produced and distributed 2 BEx training events held	BEx board meetings held (min. 2/year) Secretariat provided for BEx Regular tourism business bulletin produced and distributed 2 BEx training events held	2.2, 2.4	MP/HB/EL
SC2.3 Continue to support the development, management and	Secretariat for	Secretariat for	Secretariat for	2.2, 2.3, 2.4	MP/CH

<p>promotion of the Champion Bowland (formerly Bowland Tourism Environment Fund)</p>	<p>Champion Bowland provided</p> <p>Champion Bowland trustees meetings held (min. 2/year)</p> <p>Work with trustees to review Champion Bowland grant-giving (alongside AONB SDF) to maximise effectiveness and value</p> <p>Delivery of AONB 'Farm Visit Transport Fund' through Champion Bowland</p> <p>Launch 50th Anniversary 'visitor-giving' schemes for AONB</p>	<p>Champion Bowland provided</p> <p>Champion Bowland trustees meetings held (min. 2/year)</p> <p>Continue to develop 'visitor-giving' schemes for AONB</p>	<p>Champion Bowland provided</p> <p>Champion Bowland trustees meetings held (min. 2/year)</p> <p>Continue to develop 'visitor-giving' schemes for AONB</p>	<p>2.1, 2.2, 4.2</p>	<p>CH</p> <p>SS/MP</p> <p>HB/MP</p>
<p>SC2.5 Support the continued development of 'Bowland Land Managers Forum'</p>	<p>Regular Forum meetings held</p>	<p>Regular forum meetings held</p>	<p>Regular forum meetings held</p>	<p>2.1, 2.2, 4.2</p>	<p>EL</p>

	Involve Forum members in the development of RDPE/LEADER LAGs, targeting for NELMS and collaborative project development	Forum members involved in relevant RDPE/LEADER LAGs	Forum members involved in relevant RDPE/LEADER LAGs		
SC2.6 Raise awareness of the AONB's 50 th Anniversary by encouraging partners, communities and business to celebrate and link with the anniversary year.	Organise fund-raising activities to raise £5000 for Champion Bowland Involve businesses and communities in delivery of at least 3 anniversary events/activities			2.3	MP
SC3 Continue to promote and manage the Sustainable Development Fund; whilst also responding to local community requests for advice on funding, project management and volunteering					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
SC3.1 Manage the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) to	Implement			2.2, 4.2	CH

<p>support appropriate, small-scale projects within the AONB, aiming to increase 'match-funding' from external sources; whilst seeking to promote the fund and individual projects and good practice.</p>	<p>recommendations following review of management arrangements for SDF with Champion Bowland</p> <p>SDF panel meetings held</p> <p>Funded projects complete and return monitoring information, as required</p> <p>SDF Annual Report produced</p>	<p>SDF panel meetings held</p> <p>Funded projects complete and return monitoring information, as required</p> <p>SDF Annual Report produced</p>	<p>SDF panel meetings held</p> <p>Funded projects complete and return monitoring information, as required</p> <p>SDF Annual Report produced</p>		
<p>SC3.2 Provide support to communities seeking project development and funding advice and assistance (e.g. projects to improve provision of rural services, renewable energy projects and local community events)</p>	<p>10 community groups advised/supported</p> <p>Develop and deliver a programme of awareness-raising activities to promote</p>	<p>10 community groups advised/supported</p> <p>Continue programme of awareness-raising activities</p>	<p>10 community groups advised/supported</p> <p>Continue programme of awareness-raising activities</p>	<p>2.2</p>	<p>SS/CH</p> <p>HB/SS</p>

	work of the AONB within communities				
SC4 Continue to develop, support and promote local tourism businesses; building on the AONB's reputation as an internationally-recognised destination for sustainable tourism					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
SC4.1 Promote the strong 'brand identity' for AONB visitors, working closely with tourism organisations, visitor information centres, businesses and gateway towns	<p>Sense of Place themes and branding used in variety of formats (e.g. website, exhibition panels, pop-up banners)</p> <p>Continue collaboration with Marketing Lancashire, Visit Yorkshire and district tourism partners to effectively promote AONB as a sustainable tourism destination</p>	<p>Sense of Place themes and branding used in variety of formats (e.g. website, exhibition panels, pop-up banners)</p> <p>Continue collaboration with Marketing Lancashire, Visit Yorkshire and district tourism partners to effectively promote AONB as a sustainable tourism destination</p>	<p>Sense of Place themes and branding used in variety of formats (e.g. website, exhibition panels, pop-up banners)</p> <p>Continue collaboration with Marketing Lancashire, Visit Yorkshire and district tourism partners to effectively promote AONB as a sustainable tourism destination</p>	3.4, 3.5	HB
SC4.2 Support sustainable tourism projects and continue to support GTBS with tourism businesses in the AONB	4 sustainable tourism projects delivered, (including 'business	3 sustainable tourism projects delivered, (including 'business	3 sustainable tourism projects delivered, (including 'business	2.2, 2.4	HB

	cluster' projects) 6 GTBS business supported within AONB and 2km buffer	cluster' projects) 6 GTBS businesses supported within AONB and 2km buffer	cluster' projects) 6 GTBS businesses supported within AONB and 2km buffer		
SC4.3 Continue to support and develop appropriate elements of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, including support to Charter partners, the Sustainable Tourism Forum, networking within Europarc (particularly within the Atlantic Isles section)	ST Forum held Attend EAI/Europarc meetings, as appropriate AONB JAC decision on continued involvement in EUROPARC Charter for Sustainable Tourism	ST Forum held Attend EAI/Europarc meetings, as appropriate	ST Forum held Attend EAI/Europarc meetings, as appropriate	2.2, 2.4	MP/HB
SC4.4 Carry out evaluation and monitoring of visitor and tourism enterprise information, in particular visitor pressure, patterns and future markets (including occupancy and satisfaction data)	Evaluate effectiveness of AONB visitor survey and if appropriate develop new approach.	Implement new approach to AONB visitor survey, if carried forward.		2.2, 2.4	HB/MP

	Continue tourism business monitoring research on tourism business 'health-check' data	Continue tourism business monitoring research on tourism business 'health-check' data			
SC4.5 Deliver familiarisation visits and study tours for tourism businesses and organisations	One familiarisation visit held	One familiarisation visit held	One familiarisation visit held	2.2, 2.4	HB
SC4.6 Promote and share good practice of the AONB, as a lead partnership in supporting sustainable tourism within Europe's protected areas	Work with NAAONB & Visit England to develop sustainable tourism collaboration amongst AONBs			2.2, 2.4, 4.4	HB
SC4.7 Continue to promote local produce and farming	Manage, review and update local produce database AONB attendance at at least 5 agri. shows/ local produce events for 50 th Anniversary 'Bowland Scrapbook' Project (subject to funding)	Manage, review and update local produce database Regularly review AONB future involvement in agri. shows/ local produce events	Manage, review and update local produce database Regularly review AONB future involvement in agri. shows/ local produce events	2.1, 2.2	HB

A strong connection between people and the landscape (PL)

PL1 Develop, improve and promote access and recreational opportunities for a diverse range of people					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
PL1.1 Work in partnership with key stakeholders to maintain and improve access in the wider countryside of the AONB; including support for implementation of PRoW Improvement Plans	Regular meetings of local advisory groups (e.g. Pendle Hill, Upper Hodder) to consider access and recreation issues Active participation in the planned review of the Lancashire RoWIP	Regular meetings of local advisory groups (e.g. Pendle Hill, Upper Hodder) to consider access and recreation issues	Regular meetings of local advisory groups (e.g. Pendle Hill, Upper Hodder) to consider access and recreation issues	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	NO/DP/TW /EL
PL1.2 Carry out a review of existing AONB promoted routes	Continue to support volunteer monitoring system for existing AONB promoted routes Prioritise promoted routes and rotate twice a year (remove	Continue to support volunteer monitoring system for existing AONB promoted routes Prioritise promoted routes and rotate twice a year (remove	Continue to support volunteer monitoring system for existing AONB promoted routes Prioritise promoted routes and rotate twice a year (remove	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	HB/TW/DP

	and re-instate where appropriate based on download stats) Annual review of routes completed and acted upon	and re-instate where appropriate based on download stats) Annual review of routes completed and acted upon	and re-instate where appropriate based on download stats) Annual review of routes completed and acted upon		
PLI.3 Review, rationalise and develop downloadable promoted routes as required	Review and rationalise downloadable promoted route cards 3 new routes cards completed	Review and rationalise downloadable promoted route cards 3 new routes cards completed	Review and rationalise downloadable promoted route cards 3 new routes cards completed	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	TW/DP/HB
PLI.4 Develop strategic bridleway links within the AONB (e.g. Gisburn Forest to Settle, Lune Valley track and North Lancs Bridleway Phase 2 western sections)	Continued Development of Gisburn Forest to Settle route Hold meeting to discuss development of Lune Valley track between Farleton and Hornby	Commence construction of first sections of GF to S bridleway		3.1, 3.2	TW/DP

PL1.5 Develop 'tramper' access projects	1 project/route delivered	1 project/route delivered	1 project/route delivered	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	TW/DP
PL1.6 Investigate opportunities to extend access and habitat improvements on Bowland Fells (e.g. flagged paths, stiles, gates to assist in habitat restoration).	Access and habitat improvement project delivered (subject to funding availability)	Access and habitat improvement project delivered (subject to funding availability)	Access and habitat improvement project delivered (subject to funding availability)	1.3, 3.1, 3.2	TW/DP/SR
PL1.7 Ensure use of appropriate PRow signposts and access furniture in the AONB	Initial meetings held with PRow	Guidance note and agreement in place		3.2	NO/TW/DP
PL2 Provide high quality information, communications and events to enable people to enjoy and understand the landscape of the AONB and the work of the AONB partnership					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
PL2.1 Co-ordinate and review Festival Bowland (FB)	Co-ordinate FB Steering Group Evaluation of customer feedback completed (via incentivised postcard scheme) At least 10 FB events organised by AONB	Co-ordinate FB Steering Group Evaluation of customer feedback completed (via incentivised postcard scheme) At least 10 FB events organised by AONB	Co-ordinate FB Steering Group Evaluation of customer feedback completed (via incentivised postcard scheme) At least 10 FB events organised by AONB	3.4, 3.5	SS

	Unit Annual review and evaluation of aims and content of FB completed and acted upon	Unit Annual review and evaluation of aims and content of FB completed and acted upon	Unit Annual review and evaluation of aims and content of FB completed and acted upon		
PL2.2 Publicise Festival Bowland programme	50 th Anniversary FB brochure produced Monthly FB events posters produced and distributed 10 press releases/year produced to promote FB events Update Google calendar and LOIS database with FB events	FB brochure produced Monthly FB events posters produced and distributed 10 press releases/year produced to promote FB events Update Google calendar and LOIS database with FB events	FB brochure produced Monthly FB events posters produced and distributed 10 press releases/year produced to promote FB events Update Google calendar and LOIS database with FB events	3.4, 3.6	SS

<p>PL2.3 Support and promote external events and tourism businesses that help to deliver AONB objectives</p>	<p>Agree new arrangements for AONB listings of accommodation, 'eateries', attractions and activities listings with Marketing Lancashire through LOIS</p> <p>Maintain LOIS database for partner-led events and accommodation</p>	<p>Maintain LOIS database for partner-led events and accommodation</p>	<p>Maintain LOIS database for partner-led events and accommodation</p>	<p>3.4, 3.6</p>	<p>HB</p>
<p>PL2.4 Management and implementation of the Forest of Bowland AONB brand and graphic standards</p>	<p>Review current printed publications and update/rationalise as appropriate</p> <p>Develop AONB 'wildlife' leaflet to replace current 'birding' leaflet</p> <p>Training on branding guidelines for partner</p>	<p>Review current printed publications and update/rationalise as appropriate</p> <p>Training on branding guidelines for partner</p>	<p>Review current printed publications and update/rationalise as appropriate</p>	<p>3.4, 3.5, 4.4</p>	<p>HB/SS</p>

	<p>organisations and businesses, where required</p> <p>Create web-friendly downloadable leaflets when producing new print and add guidelines to graphic standards</p> <p>Review communications strategy</p>	<p>organisations and businesses, where required</p> <p>Create web-friendly downloadable leaflets when producing new print and add guidelines to graphic standards</p>			
PL2.5 Update and replace AONB boundary signs at key visitor 'gateways' to the AONB	2 boundary signs replaced	2 boundary signs replaced (if funding allows)	2 boundary signs replaced (if funding allows)	2.3, 3.5	DP/EL
PL2.6 Manage and maintain 'Take One Media' brochure and leaflet distribution service	Periodic review of Take One Media reports carried out	Periodic review of Take One Media reports carried out	Periodic review of Take One Media reports carried out	3.4, 4.4	HB

<p>PL2.7 Regularly review and update the content of AONB website, in line with AONB Management Plan objectives and actions</p>	<p>Periodic review and update of route downloads completed</p> <p>Website data analysis completed and disseminated</p>	<p>Periodic review and update of route downloads completed</p> <p>Website data analysis completed and disseminated</p>	<p>Periodic review and update of route downloads completed</p> <p>Website data analysis completed and disseminated</p>	<p>3.4, 3.5, 4.4</p>	<p>HB</p>
<p>PL2.8 Review design of AONB website</p>	<p>Web design support contracted</p> <p>Web design 'refresh' completed, including mobile-friendly companion site.</p>			<p>3.4, 3.5, 4.4</p>	<p>HB</p>
<p>PL2.9 Research good practice in use of emerging technology to help interpret and promote the AONB</p>	<p>Continue to develop use of social media to promote AONB (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)</p> <p>Develop 'apps' to help widen audience for AONB generally and for specific project information and interpretation, where</p>	<p>Continue to develop use of social media to promote AONB (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)</p> <p>Develop 'apps' to help widen audience for AONB generally and for specific project information and interpretation, where</p>	<p>Continue to develop use of social media to promote AONB (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)</p> <p>Develop 'apps' to help widen audience for AONB generally and for specific project information and interpretation, where</p>	<p>3.4, 4.4</p>	<p>HB</p>

	appropriate	appropriate	appropriate		
PL2.10 Source and promote newsworthy stories that promote the AONB and work of the partnership	Quarterly e-bulletin produced and promoted Contacts maintained within local, regional and national media 6 AONB press releases per year produced	Quarterly e-bulletin produced and promoted Contacts maintained within local, regional and national media 6 AONB press releases per year produced	Quarterly e-bulletin produced and promoted Contacts maintained within local, regional and national media 6 AONB press releases per year produced	3.4, 4.4	HB/SS
PL3 Support local communities and visitors to conserve, restore, enjoy and learn about the heritage of the AONB; and develop programmes of activity which provide opportunities to engage people with the landscape					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
PL3.1 Support the development of the 'Friends of Bowland', to co-ordinate and support volunteers for the AONB	AONB representative attend 'Friends' committee meetings as advisor Assist 'Friends' in development of events/activities	AONB representative attend 'Friends' committee meetings as advisor Assist 'Friends' in development of events/activities	AONB representative attend 'Friends' committee meetings as advisor Assist 'Friends' in development of events/activities	2.3	CH

	programmes Develop at least one joint project/event with 'Friends'	programmes Develop at least one joint project/event with 'Friends'	programmes Develop at least one joint project/event with 'Friends'		
PL3.2 Identify funds and partners to help deliver AONB-wide programmes of activity to research, conserve, enhance and interpret the landscape heritage of the AONB	<p>Prioritise and develop Heritage Lottery Fund bids to support and deliver landscape heritage projects, inc. Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS)</p> <p>Development of Stage I bid ot HLF LPS</p> <p>Deliver AONB 50th anniversary 'Bowland Scrapbook' Project, (subject to HLF funding application)</p>	<p>Commence HLF LPS development phase if approved.</p>	<p>Submit HLF LPS Stage 2 bid</p> <p>Commence delivery of HLF LPS</p>	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5	CH
PL3.3 Produce on-line resources for use by schools and other	Review uptake of	Review uptake of		3.4, 3.6, 4.4	SS/CH

groups for AONB educational farm visits	<p>online educational resources and improve/amend as appropriate</p> <p>Review work carried out with schools on using AONB for fieldwork and outdoor education for 14-18 year olds in the AONB, and develop further if appropriate</p>	<p>online educational resources and improve/amend as appropriate</p>			
PL3.4 Continue development of community outreach activities to encourage new audiences that traditionally do not know about or visit the AONB	<p>Review pilot 'Bowland Outreach' project</p> <p>Funding secured for continuation of community outreach activities, if agreed following review</p>	Deliver community outreach activities		3.6	SS
PL3.5 Hold a series of special events and activities celebrating the 50 th Anniversary of the designation of the Forest of Bowland AONB	Launch event held on designation date (10 th February 2014)	Arts 2014 legacy project delivered (subject to funding)		2.2, 2.3, 2.4	All

	Arts 2014 project delivered				
	AONB 50 th Anniversary Awards				
	Clitheroe Real Ale Festival and special Bowland Brewery 'AONB 50 th Beer' visitor-giving scheme				
	Closing Gala event held				

A dynamic and effective AONB partnership (AP)

API Work with others to maximise the successful delivery of the AONB Management Plan and effectively monitor progress					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
API.1 Participate in a range of fora and networks to represent AONB interests (e.g. Local Nature Partnerships, Local Enterprise Partnerships, RDPE/LEADER LAGs)	On-going	On-going	On-going	4.1, 4.4	All
API.2 Review the AONB Management Plan, in accordance with national guidance	AONB Management Plan adopted by local authorities and published			4.1	EL
API.3 Ensure effective and inclusive consultation is carried out on all major AONB strategies and activity	On-going	On-going	On-going	2.3, 4.4	EL
API.4 Manage and promote the interactive management plan (IMP) to ensure regular monitoring of partnership delivery of actions	Implement review of IMP functionality and reporting IMP updated by Unit and partners	IMP updated by Unit and partners	IMP updated by Unit and partners	4.1, 4.4	HB/EL/CH
API.5 Produce a clear and concise AONB Annual Report	Annual Report	Annual Report	Annual Report	2.2, 3.4, 4.4	SS

	produced	produced	produced		
API.6 Produce quarterly progress reports on business plan delivery	Quarterly reports produced	Quarterly reports produced	Quarterly reports produced	4.4	EL
API.7 Develop a 'State of the AONB' Report to monitor and evaluate landscape change within the AONB, monitor delivery of the AONB Partnership outcomes and provide a sound evidence base for future project development and funding bids	Agree priority baseline datasets and develop indicators Commence data collation and produce early draft report	Produce 'State of the AONB Report'		4.3	CH
API.8 Work with, and support National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) and other protected areas to share best practice and strengthen the status of AONBs locally and nationally	NAAONB and Northern Group events attended Support and assist in organisations of NAAONB Annual Conference and Northern Group visit to AONB in 2014 Responses made to NAAONB information	NAAONB and Northern Group events attended Responses made to NAAONB information and consultation	NAAONB and Northern Group events attended Responses made to NAAONB information and consultation	4.4	All

	and consultation requests, where appropriate	requests, where appropriate	requests, where appropriate		
API.9 Support and maintain co-ordinated delivery of services and projects in the AONB in partnership with local authority countryside and environmental projects teams	LCC E&C Projects staff attend AONB team meetings, where appropriate Periodic meetings held with local authority and United Utilities countryside staff	LCC E&C Projects staff attend AONB team meetings, where appropriate Periodic meetings held with local authority and United Utilities countryside staff	LCC E&C Projects staff attend AONB team meetings, where appropriate Periodic meetings held with local authority and United Utilities countryside staff	4.1, 4.4	EL/NO
AP2 Achieve excellence in the governance and management of the AONB Partnership and Unit, its people and resources; and helping to identify sustainable future funding to support these.					
We will:	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Staff lead(s)
AP2.1 Ensure effective and productive functioning of AONB Joint Advisory Committee and its working groups, with agreed terms of reference	2 JAC meetings, 3 to 4 partnership funders group and regular working group meetings held	2 JAC meetings, 3 to 4 partnership funders group and regular working group meetings held	2 JAC meetings, 3 to 4 partnership funders group and regular working group meetings held	4.1	EL
AP2.2 Review membership of the AONB Joint Advisory	Review of current JAC			4.1	CH/EL

<p>Committee for non-statutory organisations and non-funding partners</p>	<p>membership for non-statutory organisations and non-funding partners completed</p> <p>Develop induction information for new JAC members</p> <p>Investigate potential for JAC members to act as portfolio-holders and AONB champions</p>				
<p>AP2.2 Hold regular meetings and correspondence with AONB funding partners to ensure AONB Partnership and Unit are delivering against partners' key corporate objectives</p>	<p>Regular Partnership Funders Group meetings held</p>	<p>Regular Partnership Funders Group meetings held</p>	<p>Regular Partnership Funders Group meetings held</p>	<p>4.1</p>	<p>EL</p>
<p>AP2.3 Continue to support and liaise with NAAONB (as part of the tri-partite agreement with Defra and Natural England) to lobby for retention of secure, long-term funding arrangements for AONBs</p>	<p>NAAONB meetings, seminars and conferences attended, where appropriate</p>	<p>NAAONB meetings, seminars and conferences attended, where appropriate</p>	<p>NAAONB meetings, seminars and conferences attended, where appropriate</p>	<p>4.4</p>	<p>EL/NO</p>
<p>AP2.4 Ensure that 'Memorandum of Agreement' (MoA) is in place between Defra and AONB funding partners</p>		<p>New MoA signed by all partners</p>		<p>4.1, 4.4</p>	<p>NO/EL</p>

AP2.5 Develop a fund-raising strategy for the AONB partnership	Monitor and update fund-raising strategy implementation on-going	Review strategy and continue implementation, as appropriate		4.2	CH
AP2.6 Aim for excellence in management of the AONB Unit	Productive fortnightly team meetings, 1-to-1 meetings, employee PDRs and team building activities carried out	Productive fortnightly team meetings, 1-to-1 meetings, employee PDRs and team building activities carried out	Productive fortnightly team meetings, 1-to-1 meetings, employee PDRs and team building activities carried out	4.1	NO/EL
AP2.7 Provide structured training opportunities to AONB Unit and representatives	Staff training identified and attended	Staff training identified and attended	Staff training identified and attended	4.1	NO/EL
AP2.8 Annually review and update three-year AONB Unit business plan	Annual review and update completed	Annual review and update completed	Annual review and update completed	4.1	EL
AP2.9 Promote good practice in project management (incorporating best value, monitoring and evaluation, sustainability and involving volunteers)	Staff training identified and attended.	Staff training identified and attended.	Staff training identified and attended.	4.1	NO/EL
AP2.10 Implement AONB Unit environmental policy and action plan	Review AONB Unit Environmental Policy, with new actions and	Review AONB Unit Environmental Policy, with new actions and	Review AONB Unit Environmental Policy, with new actions and	4.1	CH

	targets set Carbon reduction targets achieved (including move to new premises)	targets set Carbon reduction targets achieved (including move to new premises)	targets set Carbon reduction targets achieved (including move to new premises)		
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AONB Management Plan Review Update

Issue for consideration

The following report summarises progress towards completion of the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan review, adoption by partner local authorities and formal submission to Defra.

Background

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 established the requirement for all AONBs in England and Wales to have an up-to-date Management Plan in place, and provided a timetable for the review and updating of plans. The Act also required that the local authorities are responsible for the production of the Plan and are required to establish a long-term vision for the AONB.

In February 2014, the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee approved the final draft of the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan (2014 – 2019) to proceed for adoption by partner funding authorities and approval by statutory agencies.

Progress update

The final stages completed since the last AONB JAC meeting in February 2014 are set out below:

1. The AONB Unit received notification of Natural England's approval of the final draft of the Plan on 21st March 2014. The Defra agency has responsibility for managing the review of the AONB Management Plans in England.
2. The consultation on the Environmental Report (including a Sustainability Appraisal) for the Plan was completed in March 2014. During the consultation, the AONB Unit received one response (from Natural England) approving the content and conclusion of the report. Thus the statutory requirements for the review relating to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) have now been met.
3. The Screening Report for Habitat Regulations Assessment was approved by Natural England on 18th March 2014, following the provision of the additional information to support the report's conclusions. The statutory requirements for the review relating to Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) have now been met.
4. The final designed version of the Plan (including images, maps and illustrations) is now complete and has been uploaded to the AONB website: http://www.forestofbowland.com/cons_managementplan
5. At the time of writing this report, three partner local authorities (Lancaster City Council, North Yorkshire County Council and Preston City Council) have formally adopted the Plan.

Final submission to Defra

The AONB Unit understand that the remaining local authorities are planning to consider the Plan for adoption during April/early May 2014. Once notification is received from these partners of this adoption, the Plan will then be formally submitted to the Under-secretary of State for Defra with responsibility for AONBs, Lord de Mauley.

Decision to be taken

The Committee is asked to:

- i. note the report and offer comments

Agenda Item 9

Update on development of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme

JAC members may remember a year ago when we met in Barley village hall and the AONB Unit presented their new fundraising strategy which set out the need to raise significant external funds. This was followed up at our meeting in October where the JAC agreed that a Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme bid should be developed for the Pendle Hill area.

A Landscape Partnership Scheme is a collection of projects set within a cohesive landscape unit, focussing on developing outcomes around heritage, people and communities. The focus for our bid is obviously Pendle Hill itself, and to begin with we have been looking at what needs and issues there are in the area. These include:

- There is increasing bracken on the hill, to the detriment of heather and grassland
- A need for more tree planting, especially in cloughs and along rivers and streams
- Loss of village character and mistreatment of some historic buildings and landscapes
- Lack of knowledge or recordings about pre-industrial archaeology
- Loss of traditional farming methods and consequent loss of wildlife value
- Neglect of traditional boundaries
- Some visitors lack understanding of, and respect for, the farmed landscape
- River water quality is moderate and there are some areas at risk from flooding
- Poor connection between urban and rural communities

We have also been looking at what themes could run through the bid and what the overarching vision should be. Suggested themes are:

1. Restoring and recording the natural heritage
2. Understanding historic landscapes
3. Exploring Pendle Hill's cultural heritage
4. Re-connecting people with the landscape

We are currently working on developing a 'programme vision' and we think this will focus on how Pendle Hill inspired George Fox in 1652, and his vision of a great gathering of people. This could link to other gatherings of people, water, wool etc.

To date a number of discussions have been held with a variety of groups and organisations, a steering group has been set up and an advisor appointed to support the bid development process. I have also met with Lancashire County Council's outdoor education centre at Whitehough near Barley to discuss how we might work together to find some accommodation for an eventual project team. We are also continuing to liaise with key match funding opportunities, particularly European

ERDF LEADER funds and Natural England's new agri-environment scheme which will both be launched early in 2015.

Our next steps are to continue to gather evidence of needs and issues, but also to begin to pull together project ideas which will begin to build up a programme of activity. To this end we will hold a stakeholder event in June to which JAC members will receive an invitation. For further information contact

cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk or elliott.lorimer@lancashire.gov.uk

Decision to be taken

The Committee is asked to:

- i. note the reports and offer comments