

## Forest of Bowland Joint Advisory Committee

Monday, 11th April, 2011 at 2.00 pm in Dalesbridge Centre, Austwick, Near Settle, North Yorkshire LA2 8AZ

### Agenda

No. Item

#### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Tea, Coffee, Biscuits available at Dalesbridge from 9.30am onwards.
- Coach leaves Dalesbridge at 10.00am and tours Settle and surround areas.
- Coach returns to Dalesbridge at 12 – 12.30pm approx for Buffet Lunch.
- Committee meeting to commence at 2pm at Dalesbridge Conference Room.

Directions to the venue can be found here:

<http://www.dalesbridge.co.uk/findus.htm>

1. **Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2010** (Pages 1 - 6)
3. **Matters Arising**
4. **Defra, Natural England and the NAAONB** (Pages 7 - 10)  
(*Don McKay*)
  - Update on Defra's new strategic 'oversight and funding responsibility' and key role of the NAAONB.
  - Natural England's to provide 'technical advice and jointly work with AONBs to deliver AONB management plans.
5. **Budget update 2011/12 & Staff Changes** (Pages 11 - 20)  
(*Don McKay and Kate Lee*)
  - a) 2011/12 Annual Budget and Defra Memorandum of Agreement
  - b) AONB Staff Changes.

**6. Looking forward**

*(Verbal report Elliott Lorimer)*

- Prioritising future delivery of the AONB management plan objectives and actions jointly with partners;
- Preparing a Business Plan.

**7. Minor amendments to Management Plan following publication of revised and updated Strategy for Sustainable Tourism**

(Pages 21 - 24)

*(Hetty Byrne)*

**8. Position Statement on Renewable Energy**

(Pages 25 - 36)

*(Cathy Hopley)*

**9. Delivering the AONB Management Plan**

(Pages 37 - 44)

- a) Presentation on Community Engagement – Martin Charlesworth, Sandra Silk
- b) Headline achievements and added value (Report) – Natural and Cultural Landscape; Enjoyment; Health and Wellbeing; Economy; Community; Working in Partnership; and Responding to Climate Change.

**10. Date of next meeting**

TBC – October 2011

**11. Any Other Business**

- Bailey Lane, Tosside (verbal report)

I M Fisher  
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall  
Preston

# Agenda Item 2

## Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 11 October 2010, 2pm at  
Goosnargh Village Hall, Longridge, Preston.

### Present

#### Members

County Councillor Albert Atkinson	Lancashire County Council
Councillor Lin Barrington	Craven District Council
Councillor Roger Brooks	Wyre Borough Council
Councillor John Browne	Preston City Council
County Councillor Susie Charles	Lancashire County Council
Councillor Rosemary Elms	Ribble Valley Borough Council
Andrew Gouldstone	RSPB
Ian Grindy	United Utilities
Michael Helm	Lancashire Association of Councils
David Kelly	Ramblers Association
Sam Marsden	Natural England
Councillor Colin Price	Yorkshire Local Council Association
County Councillor David Smith	Lancashire County Council
Councillor James Starkie	Pendle Borough Council
County Councillor Richard Welch	North Yorkshire County Council

#### Officers

Hetty Byrne	Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Martin Charlesworth	Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Andrew Coombe	Lancashire County Council
Cathy Hopley	Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Vaughan Jones	Pendle Borough Council
Don McKay	Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Andy Milroy	Lancashire County Council (Clerk)
David Oyston	Lancashire County Council
David Padley	Lancashire County Council
Mike Pugh	Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Martin Putsey	Preston City Council
John Rhodes	Lancashire County Council
Greg Robinson	Wyre Borough Council
Sandra Silk	Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Tarja Wilson	Lancashire County Council

#### Other Attendees

Tim Graham	Lancashire Biodiversity Partnership
Councillor Linda Brockbank	Craven District Council
Anne Shaw	Bowland Tourism Environment Fund

## **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Joyce Pritchard (Lancaster City Council)
- Thomas Binns (Member – Bowland Landowners and Farmers Group)
- Andrew Taylor (Member – Bowland Landowners and Farmers Group)
- Andrew Dobson (Officer – Lancaster City Council)
- Colin Hurst (Officer – Ribble Valley Borough Council)
- Susan MacDonald (Officer – Forest of Bowland AONB Unit)

## **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

Nominations were received, and duly seconded to appoint County Councillor Albert Atkinson as Chair, and County Councillor Susie Charles as Vice Chair.

1. **Resolved:** The Committee resolved to appoint County Councillor Albert Atkinson as Chair, and County Councillor Susie Charles as Vice Chair for the 2010 / 11 municipal year.

## **Welcome, introductions and apologies**

County Councillor Albert Atkinson assumed the role of Chair at this point and welcomed all to the meeting. Round table introductions were done and apologies presented and noted as above.

## **Constitution, Membership and Terms of Reference**

The updated Constitution, Membership and Terms of Reference of the Committee were presented. It was confirmed that Councillor Roger Brooks is the representative for Wyre Borough Council.

2. **Resolved:** The Committee resolved to agree the Constitution, Membership and Terms of Reference of the Committee for the 2010 / 11 municipal year.

## **Minutes of last meeting – held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2010**

3. **Resolved:** The minutes of the last meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2010 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **Matters arising**

Don McKay reported that there was a possibility that a new planning application would be submitted for a wind farm on or near Claughton Moor. As yet a planning application has not been submitted, however if one does come in, the Committee may have to consider holding an emergency meeting to comment on the proposal.

- 4. Resolved:** The Committee discussed proposals for wind turbine construction and agreed to note that an emergency meeting may be required if a planning application is submitted.

### **Budget Report and Appendices 'A' and 'B'**

John Rhodes presented the report which detailed revised estimates 2010/11 and details of the revenue budget 2011/12.

John gave some background to the budget provision for the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee and explained that it is funded by eight constituent local authority partners and a grant from Natural England and is enhanced by additional contributions from partner organisations, e.g. United Utilities.

A core team of four full time equivalent posts is established from this budget provision, to deliver the statutory AONB Management Plan on behalf of the Joint Advisory Committee and the local authorities.

In summary John detailed the revised estimates for 2010/11 and outlined the revenue budget for 2011/12 (circulated in the report, at Appendix 'A').

- 5. Resolved:** The Committee discussed the future budget proposals and then resolved to:

- a) note the 2010/11 Revised Estimates.
- b) approve the 2011/12 Revenue Budget as set out in the report,
- c) subject to the approval of (ii) above, to request the funding authorities to make appropriate provision in their revenue budgets

The Committee also wished to record that John Rhodes would be moving on from his role as Senior Accountant to the Forest of Bowland Joint Advisory Committee after more than 19 years supporting the Committee. The Committee thanked John for all his work over the years.

### **PowerPoint Presentations**

#### **a) International Year of Biodiversity - Dr Tim Graham**

Dr Tim Graham gave a presentation on the International Year of Biodiversity. Tim gave details of the Government legislation in place regarding Biodiversity and how Biodiversity is implemented in Lancashire through the Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP). Tim also explained about his role which includes establishing and maintaining a broad partnership, delivering BAP locally, fundraising for BAP delivery, reporting and monitoring, integrating BAP into policy, promoting BAP and representation.

Tim highlighted project development through the BAP which included the

Lancashire Uplands Peat Project and also future plans for securing biodiversity.

**b) Websites Demonstration**

Hetty Byrne gave a presentation on a number of new websites including the Bowland Wildlife Blog Website, the Lancashire Wildlife Blog Website and the main Forest of Bowland website which has been updated with more downloadable information.

**c) 'Landscape Stories' HLF project - Sandra Silk**

Sandra Silk updated the Committee on achievements of the HLF Landscape Stories project.. Sandra explained that the project was looking at industries specific to the Forest of Bowland area, including cheese production, furniture, lime and archaeology. Sandra explained how the project has got young people involved by doing school archaeology projects, classroom excavations and "Lancashire's Treasure Chest". The work has involved 6 schools in the area.

Sandra summarised her presentation by showing how new webpages have been created with lots of information, including "how to guides" and information about the work of the HLF project.

**6. Resolved:** The Committee thanked all presenters for their presentations and noted the content.

**Delivering the AONB Management Plan and Annual Programme: April - September 2010**

**Section 1: 'Natural and Cultural Landscape'**

**Section 2: 'Enjoyment'; 'Health and Wellbeing',  
'Sustainable Tourism' and 'Recreation'**

**Section 3: 'Economy'; 'Community', 'Working in Partnership'**

Various authors presented the reports (circulated) which provided a number of updates on activities in the AONB Management Plan and Annual Programme.

A correction to Section 3: 'Economy, 'Community' and 'Working in Partnership' – page one, first paragraph within "Economy: Business Development (MP)" It was confirmed that Bowland Experience Ltd now has 54 members instead of 53 as reported.

Councillor Lin Barrington, Craven District Council, was interested in a presentation being given to Craven / North Yorkshire Councils to update on work being done. It was agreed that Don McKay would make a presentation about activities in Craven / North Yorkshire for Craven Councillors. Councillor Barrington to discuss with colleagues with a view to arranging a briefing.

7. **Resolved:** The Committee agreed to note the AONB Management Plan and Annual Programme: April - September 2010 and the request from Councillor Barrington regarding a briefing for colleagues in Craven / North Yorkshire.

### **Any Other Business**

It was noted that Councillors and Officers at Wyre Borough Council were developing their Local development Framework. The Committee discussed ways to co-ordinate planning between all authorities, and it was agreed that all members of each authority would ask their relevant planning departments to contact each other to discuss co-ordination of their framework.

### **Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 11 April 2011, time and venue to be confirmed.





## **Defra, Natural England and the NAAONB**

### **Issue for Consideration**

New roles for Defra and Natural England and key role of the National Association for AONBs (Appendix 'A')

### **Information**

From 1 April 2011, the resources and responsibility for funding and strategic oversight of the AONB Joint Advisory Committees, the two Conservation Boards and the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) transferred from Natural England to Defra, whilst leaving Natural England with resources to continue to provide technical expert support and advice at the local level, and to deliver their statutory role with respect to AONBs.

In a letter written in late November 2010 to the Chief Executive of the NAAONB, Howard Davies, the Minister for Natural Environment and Fisheries, Richard Benyon MP, made clear his intention that there should be an effective tripartite relationship between Defra, Natural England and the NAAONB which sees AONBs thrive and prosper, with appropriate support from central government and minimal interference.

This streamlining of arrangements reflects the growing maturity of AONBs as effective and well managed partnerships. It demonstrates "the importance the Government ascribes to AONBs as part of the network of our protected landscapes, and to the successful delivery of AONB management plan objectives." "This local action and accountability alongside the demonstrated results has helped secure the commitment of central government."(Open letter to NAAONB from Andrew Wood, Executive Director Science and Evidence, Natural England).

The support of successive governments has been won by the success of AONBs in delivering environmental and social benefits at the local level largely because this has been most effectively and efficiently communicated to government through the work of the National Association for AONBs, its successive Chief Executives and support staff.

Working closely with Natural England the NAAONB has performed a key role in negotiations with governments both current and previous to seek the best outcome for AONBs nationally and to ensure government ministers are well informed on matters affecting AONBs and can obtain speedy and reliable information when required. The NAAONB receives many consultations on national plans and policy documents every month and is able to respond to these taking on board the information and views of members. This is a remarkable cost saver to individual AONBs and the county, district and unitary councils charged with stewardship of these national landscapes. Since its inception the organisation has been stretched by the demands placed upon it and with government expectations growing there is a need for the organisation to raise sufficient funding from subscriptions to respond to this

growing demand. The subscription rate in 2010 was only only £600.00 whereas the UK Association of National Park Authorities was £7,000.00. All councils with AONBs in their areas are urged to support the National Association for AONBs by becoming full members - email Jill Smith, Communications and Development Officer at [jill.smith@naaonb.org.uk](mailto:jill.smith@naaonb.org.uk) to request membership.

### **Decision required**

To note the changes, commend the effectiveness of the National Association of AONBs (NAAONB) in securing government support and urge all councils with AONBs in their area to become full members of the NAAONB to ensure its continuation.

### **Background Information**

**AONBs** were brought into being by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 strengthened the conservation and management of AONBs in partnership with local authorities.

Natural England and the Countryside Council for Wales are responsible for designating AONBs and advising government on policies for their protection.

The administration of planning and development control in AONBs is the responsibility of those local authorities within whose boundaries they fall. Section 89 of the CRoW Act 2000 required all AONBs to prepare and publish a management plan for their area.

The Act also requires the plan be reviewed every five years, consideration given to whether any changes need to be made and amended if necessary.

There is a general statutory duty on all relevant authorities to have regard to the purposes of AONBs when making decisions affecting these areas.

A guidance note explaining the duties (PDF 100 KB) is available: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/documents/protected/npaonb-duties-guide.pdf>

### **The National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB)**

Lancashire County Council and the Forest of Bowland AONB originally initiated and sponsored the founding of the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) in 1998 as an independent organisation to act on behalf of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales.

Its membership is largely composed of representatives from local authorities whose boundaries include AONBs and who are concerned to improve their management and funding arrangements. The NAAONB is administered by an Management Board and holds an Annual Conference, which provides an

opportunity for those working in AONBs to join together and address issues of current concern.

Recently, the NAAONB has been raised to new prominence as central government have established a new tripartite working relationship that recognises the key role of the NAAONB alongside Defra and Natural England in forming strategic policy and overall management of AONB landscapes. The NAAONB has performed a key role in negotiations with governments both current and previous not only to seek the best outcome for AONBs nationally but to ensure all political parties and government ministers are well informed and can obtain speedy and reliable information when required. The NAAONB receives many consultations on national plans and policy documents every month and is able to respond to these taking on board the information and views of members. This is appreciated by government as a valuable mechanism for consultation and is a remarkable cost saver to individual AONBs and the county, district and unitary councils charged with stewardship of these national landscapes.



## **Budget Update 2011/12 & Staff Changes**

### **Issue for consideration**

This report presents the revised and updated Budget and sets out the arrangements for dealing with changes in the AONB staff unit resulting from staff leaving on Voluntary Redundancy and the need to ensure a strong, sustainable and effective AONB service in the coming years.

### **a) Budget Update 2011/12**

#### **Information**

##### Revised Budget

The revised and updated Budget at Appendix 'A' below takes account of the more generous settlement from Defra than had been previously been anticipated, AONB grant having suffered a slightly less severe cut than the Defra budget overall. This has resulted in an additional £14,000 grant offer from Defra over and above that anticipated in the JAC Budget presented to the Committee in October.

The additional grant has been used to increase the budget provision for Projects.

The updated budget figures are shown in column 3 in the table below. The grant for 2011/12 from Defra allows £213,000 against core costs and £41,000 to fund the Forest of Bowland AONB Sustainable Development Fund. This allows £78,000 for the annual programme of projects to conserve and enhance landscape, biodiversity, heritage; access, enjoyment and healthy outdoor activity; community schemes and economic regeneration. Projects funding will also be used as match to attract additional income to better deliver the AONB Management Plan.

Defra have written to all AONBs confirming that they will continue with the existing Memorandum of Agreement template as a condition of payment of grant and all funding partners will be invited to continue their existing commitment to an updated MOA for the Forest of Bowland AONB. A letter/email will be sent by the AONB Manager to all councils enclosing the blank MOA template suitably updated with revised dates and requesting reaffirmation of their support by signing and returning the same.

### **b) Staff Changes**

In October 2010 the LCC Environment Directorate restructure was implemented and the AONB Manager became AONB-Rural Manager in the Environmental Projects Section.

However, in seeking to achieve necessary budgetary cuts without compulsory redundancy LCC invited staff to consider Voluntary Redundancy.

Both the AONB Manager and the Community Projects Officer applied for VR and their applications were approved. Both leave employment this April under the voluntary redundancy terms offered and funded by LCC. More recently the Communications Officer has also applied for VR and her request is currently being considered by LCC.

Approval was sought from LCC to ensure no loss of continuity of AONB Management. This had to be achieved within the restrictions agreed for staff leaving on VR. Continuity of proper AONB management has been achieved through bringing the Environment Directorate's AONB-Rural team and Site Access team under one Manager and further integrating the work of the AONB-Rural Team. The proposals were agreed by Natural England as being within their requirements for AONB grant. The changes were approved by the County Council and agreed by the JAC Chairman under Chairman's action.

The existing Site Access Manager, Nick Osborne therefore takes over the higher level management responsibilities of the current AONB-Rural Manager Don McKay on his retirement (for the sake of calculating eligible grant from Defra, it has been calculated that one day a week equivalent would be spent on higher level AONB duties). In addition the existing senior officer in AONB-Rural, Elliott Lorimer (lead officer in West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee) takes over the lower level management responsibilities and tasks (4 days a week equivalent). Elliott also represents LCC on Arnside & Silverdale committees and is lead officer to Pennine Prospects. (Details of the reapportionment of management responsibilities are set out at the end of the item following 'Decision to be taken').

The two officers taking on AONB Management responsibilities have extensive experience as lead officers of both councillor and officer countryside area joint committees with NGO and private sector involvement, have experience of managing budgets and in the case of the Site Access Manager responsibility for sizeable budgets for assets and staff including the County Ranger Service and volunteer rangers, access areas and facilities such as Beacon Fell Country Park and other countryside picnic, parking and information facilities throughout Lancashire including Bowland.

The savings made by the two existing AONB officers going on VR mean the AONB Unit is able to fund the AONB Sustainable Tourism & Website Development Officer wholly within AONB core funding as opposed to being partly dependent on temporary external funding as in recent years. The post will take up the additional role of communications officer at the end of September when the Lancashire Green Tourism project ceases.

As resources are reduced the AONB Unit posts need to become more generic and multi tasking and the former HLF project officer has shown aptitude and a range of skills and abilities in particular in budget management, working

with communities, schools, and voluntary groups and in successfully organising a two year programme of participatory events and training.

The officer has shown the ability to play a key role in the AONB team delivering the AONB Management Plan and contributing positively to the wider work of the AONB Unit. The recent application by the Communications Officer to go on VR means that if approved the budget would be sufficient to allow the former HLF Projects officer to be retained giving continuity of expertise in working with communities, schools, heritage and the arts that would otherwise be lost.

### **Decision to be taken**

The committee is asked to note and agree:-

1. The voluntary retirement of the AONB Manager and the Community Projects Officers and the application for VR by the Communications Officer.
2. The transfer of higher level AONB Manager responsibilities for the AONB to the LCC Site Access Manager and the transfer of lower level management responsibilities and tasks to the principal officer in the current AONB–Rural Team.
3. The AONB Sustainable Tourism & Website Development Officer post being brought wholly within AONB core funding and taking over the communications tasks of the former Communication officer.
4. To request LCC as the AONB Unit staff employer to agree that the former HLF Project Officer be slotted into the vacated post of former Communications Officer as and when vacated and that the post be made a generic AONB officer post within the AONB Unit.
5. To request the funding authorities to reaffirm their commitment to the AONB Partnership by signing the updated Memorandum of Agreement to be circulated by the AONB Manager.





**FOREST OF BOWLAND AONB JAC BUDGET 2011/12 & 2011/12 UPDATE**

(1)	Cont. Estimate 2011/12 (Out-turn prices) (2) £	Updated Estimate 2011/12 (Out-turn prices) (3) £
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Core Costs		
Salary, N.I. and Superannuation	174,600	174,600
Out-based premises	24,400	24,400
Travel and subsistence	8,900	8,900
Central, Departmental & Tech. Support	60,800	60,800
Core Activities	22,300	22,300
Sub total of Core Costs	291,000	291,000
Non Core Costs		
Employees	0	0
Travel and subsistence	0	0
Projects Budget - conserve & enhance landscape, biodiversity, heritage, access, enjoyment and healthy outdoor activity; community schemes and economic regeneration.	105,250	78,000
Sustainable Development Fund	0	41,000
Sub total of Core Costs	105,250	119,000
	396,250	410,000
Natural England Grant	240,250	254,000
Heritage Lottery Fund	0	0
Contributions		
United Utilities	6,800	6,800
Other Project Contributions	0	0
County Councils		
Lancashire	40,800	40,800
North Yorkshire	6,800	6,800
Craven	6,800	6,800
Lancaster	6,800	6,800
Pendle	6,800	6,800
Preston	6,800	6,800
Ribble Valley	6,800	6,800
Wyre	6,800	6,800
	335,450	349,200
Contrib to support costs (LCC in kind)	60,800	60,800
	<b>396,250</b>	<b>410,000</b>



**REAPPORTIONMENT OF MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES & TASKS**

<p><b><u>Responsibilities</u></b>  <i>(1 day a week equivalent) –  AONB/Site Access Manager Nick Osborne</i></p>	<p><b><u>Tasks</u></b>  <i>(4 days a week) Principal AONB-Rural  Officer Elliott Lorimer</i></p>
<p>Manage AONB team to ensure the delivery of effective and responsive AONB service.</p>	<p>As the senior officer in the AONB team support the line manager and give guidance and advice to AONB Team on a day to day basis.</p>
<p>Resource AONB service, manage and motivate the team and resolve complex problems. Be responsible for securing annual Defra funding for FOB AONB</p>	
<p>Be responsible for preparation and review of AONB statutory Management Plan</p>	<p>Co-ordinate the preparation, review and implementation of the Statutory FOB AONB Management Plan.</p>
<p>Be responsible for the AONB Annual Programme to the JAC and funders and be accountable for its delivery on time and to budget.</p>	<p>Prepare draft AONB budget and Annual Programme to submit to Defra and JAC. Manage AONB Budget to ensure delivery of annual AONB programme on time and to budget.</p>
<p>Be responsible for representing AONB interests on behalf of LCC. Represent and provide guidance to Forest of Bowland Joint Advisory Committee. Be responsible for the provision of guidance to county and district members, government ministers, national, international and regional agencies including NAAONB and EUROPARC Federation and NGOs on AONB matters.</p>	
<p>Ensure delivery of <b>Core Functions*</b> of the AONB Unit in accordance with Defra requirements and subject to available funding</p>	<p>Chair or participate in working groups, theme groups and task and finish groups as appropriate.</p>
	<p>Respond to strategic consultations from National Association for AONBs, Natural England, government agencies and councils</p>
	<p>Respond to non strategic consultations or delegate to other team members</p>
	<p>Co-ordinate response to development control consultations</p>
	<p>Premises Manager</p>

\* Core Functions

## **EXTRACT FROM DEFRA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH AONBs**

### **PART 2 - STAFF UNIT CORE FUNCTIONS**

#### **1. MANAGEMENT PLAN**

- 1.1 Developing reviewing, preparing and publishing the AONB vision and the Management Plan
- 1.2 Promoting the AONB vision and Management Plan to help distinguish the AONB from adjacent countryside
- 1.3 Advising upon, facilitating and co-ordinating implementation by others of the Management Plan
- 1.4 Accessing resources for management activities
- 1.5 Developing an involvement by the community in the management of the AONB
- 1.6 Providing a management role to co-ordinate AONB protection through the actions of the AONB unit, the AONB Partnership and other partners at a local and strategic level
- 1.7 Problem solving with the unit acting as co-ordinator and facilitators

#### **2. ADVISORY / ADVOCACY**

- 2.1 Advising Local Authorities and other partners on their activities within AONBs, to encourage them to attain the highest possible standards in AONBs
- 2.2 Working with and contributing to the NAAONB activities, sharing advice and best practice nationally and regionally.
- 2.3 Providing landscape related planning advice (to local planning authorities and in conjunction with Natural England as appropriate in line with, and underpinned by protocols)
- 2.4 Financial support for NAAONB
- 2.5 Contribution and support to activity between AONBs and protected landscapes to strengthen the status of the AONBs individually and collectively.

**3. MONITORING**

- 3.1 To monitor and report on progress against Management Plans and Annual Business Plans to the Partnership.
- 3.2 To provide monitoring and reporting information to Defra in accordance with any guidance issued by Defra



# Agenda Item 7

## **Minor amendments and updates to Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan following publication of revised and updated Strategy for Sustainable Tourism**

### **Information**

A number of minor changes in the detail of the text are proposed to improve, update and ensure consistency between the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan (2009 – 2014) and the Sustainable Tourism Strategy (2010 to 2015). The latter having been written after the AONB Management plan was published. The ST action plan has been developed interactively in the same way as the Management Plan on the Forest of Bowland website, and can be accessed as an annexe to the main Management Plan.

Several of the actions in the management plan and in the ST action plan are the same, so to ensure consistency and effectiveness in reporting the two plans have been linked so that updating one plan automatically updates the other. However, to use the interactive facility consistency in wording is needed between the two plans, therefore some changes in wording have been made. The majority of word changes have been made to the sustainable tourism action plan however there were a few instances where it was more appropriate to change the wording in the Management Plan.

The detailed changes to the AONB Management Plan are set out at Appendix 'C' below and the updates to the Sustainable Tourism Strategy are available to view on the Forest of Bowland AONB website.

### **Decision Required**

To agree the changes and updates to the text of the AONB Management Plan as set out at Appendix 'C' and note that the changes to both the Management Plan and to the Sustainable Tourism Strategy are available to view on the Forest of Bowland AONB website.





**Changes in wording in Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan:-**

**7.5C**– wording changed from *Develop and promote Clitheroe as the principal gateway for sustainable tourism - including retaining and improving existing public transport routes* to **1.3 Point 5 from ACTION PLAN** - Encourage promotion of the AONB by Gateway Town TICs and businesses (and Gateway businesses such as Forrest Hills and Dalesbridge); and in return actively promote these places as service centres to AONB visitors.

- **7.1H** – wording changed from *Provide information targeted to specific recreational uses of the AONB (e.g. via leaflets and the website).* to **1.4 Point 2 from ACTION PLAN** - Develop new publications based on walking, cycling and riding – in the style of Bowland by Bike/Fishing in Bowland, as funding becomes available.
- **7.1F** - sentence added at end from **2.1 Point 3 from ACTION PLAN** Support the programme of guided walks led by local experts (including those organised as part of the ‘Bowland Transit Club’) and *encourage more local people to lead walks or share their local knowledge.*
- **7.1I** - wording changed from *Promote access to and understanding of the historic environment as a form of quiet and responsible enjoyment.* To **2.3 Point 3 from ACTION PLAN** - Promote access and understanding of the historic environment via projects, such as Landscape Stories and Bowland Arts Festival.
- **9.3D** - wording changed from *Support the development of a cross-Pennine cycle route between Lancashire and Yorkshire* to **3.2 Point 3 from ACTION PLAN** - Work with Sustrans and partners on developing the Way of the Roses coast to coast cycle route and opportunities for Bowland businesses.
- **7.1B** - wording changed from *Support opportunities to develop the Gisburn Forest as a destination for mountain biking* to **3.2 Point 5 from ACTION PLAN** Support opportunities to develop and promote Gisburn Forest as a cycling, walking and riding destination.
- **8.3C**– wording changed from *Ensure the continued improvement of visitor management at Beacon Fell, Stocks Reservoir, Pendle Hill and Gisburn Forest, aiming to maintain these sites as high quality ‘honeypots’* to **3.4 Point 1 from ACTION PLAN** - Ensure good visitor management at Beacon Fell, Stocks Reservoir and Gisburn Forest – aiming to maintain these places as high quality destinations.
- **7.5F** – wording changed from *Facilitate and promote sign-up to the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) by tourism businesses* to **4.4 Point 1 from ACTION PLAN** - Continue to offer the opportunity and support to businesses to enter a green accreditation scheme (GTBS),

and to maximise the benefits this brings through preferential marketing to Charter Businesses and links with LBTB and YDHTP.

- **14.3C** – wording changed from *Continue to support and resource high quality services that are delivered by existing initiatives and organisations* (e.g. Lancashire Countryside Service; Parish Lengthsman Scheme; Wyre Countryside Service) to **5.2 Point 1 from ACTION PLAN** - Identify new local experts, especially land managers and offer them training and support to lead events and guided walks.
- **11.2E** – wording changed from *Maximise use of existing networks to collect and share information on the rural tourism market, for use by businesses* to **7.3 Point 1 from ACTION PLAN** - Develop a framework with key partners to improve the collection and analysis of visitor information, occupancy data, trends, future markets etc to provide excellent intelligence for all partners to share and use.

## Renewable energy in the Forest of Bowland AONB: A position statement

### Background

The Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan states that the JAC should:

*Provide guidance on the siting and development of appropriate small-scale renewable energy (ie. assuming the purposes of AONB designation are not contravened). – objective 19.3B - and*

*Develop a renewable energy policy for the AONB in partnership with local authorities – objective 19.2F*

We have therefore drawn up the attached position statement, and carried out consultation with the organisations listed below:

- Lancashire county council – senior landscape architect and strategic planning manager
- The planning departments of the councils of Ribble Valley, Lancaster City, Wyre Borough, Pendle Borough, Craven District and Preston City

### Information

The position statement (Appendix 'D') sets out the suggested considerations of the JAC in view of the UK Government's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and to increasing the percentage of power generated from renewable sources; and also in the light of their Planning Policy Statement on renewable energy (PPS22).

The document sets out the purposes of a position statement, and offers general guidance on renewable energy developments within the AONB. In particular that:

***3.3 The Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee considers that medium to large scale renewable energy development is not appropriate within the Forest of Bowland AONB (or in locations beyond the boundary where development would affect its setting and character) as it has significant potential to adversely affect the natural beauty of the AONB and to compromise the purpose of the statutory designation.***

***3.4 However, the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee considers that micro and small scale renewable energy development may be appropriate within the designated area.***

The document then goes on to deal with different types of renewable energy development and how micro and small scale schemes might best be sited within the AONB.

NB Definitions of micro, small, medium and large scale developments are set out in paragraph 3.2

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the JAC approve this position statement on renewable energy development in the AONB, and publish it on the AONB website.

In addition the statement should be circulated to the local planning authorities within the AONB, and they should be encouraged to refer to the statement within their individual planning policies.

## Renewable Energy in the Forest of Bowland AONB: A position statement

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Under the Climate Change Act of 2008 the Government is committed to delivering an 80% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, including a 34% reduction by 2020<sup>1</sup>. In order to achieve these reductions a number of actions will need to take place, notably improving energy efficiency and reducing the demand for power. In addition the UK is committed to increasing the percentage of power that it produces from renewable sources to 20% by 2020, and reducing its dependence on fossil fuels. Supporting micro-renewables, i.e. small scale and local power generation, is an important part of this equation.

1.2 The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a statutory protected landscape, and as such each local authority within the Forest of Bowland AONB has a duty of care to ensure that the landscape is not affected by unsightly development. Current legislation (section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) requires that *'in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect land' within the designated landscape an 'authority shall have regard to their statutory purposes'; i.e. to 'conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.'*<sup>2</sup>

1.3 The Government's Planning Policy Statement on renewable energy (PPS22) states that *"planning permission for renewable energy projects should only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the objectives of designation would not be compromised and any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by the environmental, social and economic benefits."*

1.4 The Forest of Bowland AONB, like everywhere else, is affected by climate change, and its impact will increase as greenhouse gas emissions continue to build up in the atmosphere. It is important that the Forest of Bowland AONB plays its part in reducing emissions and this includes the small scale generation of energy from renewable sources.

### 2. The purpose of this Position Statement

2.1 This document sets out the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee's position with regard to the siting of renewable energy developments, both within and adjacent to the boundaries of the Forest of Bowland AONB. This guidance is intended to assist in the determination of planning applications submitted to the planning departments of local authorities in the AONB partnership i.e. the districts of Craven, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, and Wyre.

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<sup>1</sup> These emissions are based on 1990 levels

<sup>2</sup> Ref 'England's statutory landscape designations: a practical guide to your duty of regard' ISBN 978-84754-200-7 or Natural England publication catalogue code NE243

2.2 The document is also intended to offer advice to potential developers, and any business, community or resident who is seeking to install micro or small scale renewable systems within the Forest of Bowland AONB.

2.3 The Forest of Bowland AONB is a designated landscape not a planning authority. This role remains with the relevant local authority and it is they who are expected to carry out the duty of care mentioned in paragraph 1.2 and ensure that development within the AONB is in accordance with the requirements of national, regional and local planning policy

2.4 This document should be read in conjunction with:

- a) Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan.
- b) Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment<sup>3</sup>.
- c) Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development in Lancashire
- d) A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire
- e) Landscape and Heritage Supplementary Planning Guidance

2.5 Development and other activities within the Forest of Bowland AONB is guided by a partnership comprising six local authorities (see paragraph 2.1), plus Natural England, other statutory agencies, voluntary groups, communities, businesses and landowners with an interest in the area. The partnership is managed by a Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) which is made up of representatives of these partners and which meets twice a year. A small number of staff are employed to prepare, implement and review the statutory Management Plan, in conjunction with the partnership.

2.6 Within the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan, chapter 19 is devoted to 'Responding to Climate Change' with an overall vision: *unpolluted air, soil and water to allow the landscape and wildlife of the AONB to be sustained; reduce CO2 emissions that exceed Government targets; the Forest of Bowland AONB is recognised as a place of best practice in responding to climate change.*<sup>4</sup>

### **3. General Guidance**

3.1 Renewable energy developments can take the form of both heat and power generation:

Electricity can be generated by hydro systems (water), photovoltaics (solar) and by wind turbines.

Heat can be generated via the burning of wood fuel and other biomass products; using anaerobic digestion; solar thermal; and by using underground, water, and air source heat pumps.

3.2 For the purposes of this position statement the following definitions are used:

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<sup>3</sup> [www.forestofbowland.com](http://www.forestofbowland.com)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.forestofbowland.com/cons\\_managementplan](http://www.forestofbowland.com/cons_managementplan)

Technology	Micro	Small scale	Medium scale	Large scale
Wind turbines	25m tall or less to blade tip	25-60m to blade tip	60-90m to blade tip	90m+ tall
Wind farm	single	1 -5	6-10 turbines	11+
Hydro power	< 100kW	< 10MW	Over 10MW	Over 10MW
Biomass	household	Household, business or farm based	Over 10MW Electricity not consumed on site	Electricity not consumed on site
Photovoltaics	Household, c 5kW	Household, business or farm based < 10kW	10 - 50kW arrays. Electricity not all consumed on site	Over 50kW Electricity not consumed on site
Anaerobic Digestion	Household or farm based	Cluster of farms, site < 0.5ha	Site over 0.5ha, serving many farms	
Heat Pumps	household	Business or farm based		

**3.3 The Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee considers that medium to large scale renewable energy development is not appropriate within the Forest of Bowland AONB (or in locations beyond the boundary where development would affect its setting and character) as it has significant potential to adversely affect the natural beauty of the AONB and to compromise the purpose of the statutory designation.**

**3.4 However, the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee considers that micro and small scale renewable energy development may be appropriate within the designated area.**

3.5 It is essential that renewable energy is developed in a way that is consistent across local authority boundaries, is in harmony with the landscape and in the interests of those who live and work in it, or visit it for pleasure

3.6 Obviously some of these developments are considered to be more suitable to the Forest of Bowland AONB landscape than others. However, **this position statement is not intended to discourage the development of any form of micro and small scale renewables within the Forest of Bowland AONB.** In all instances, the acceptability of specific renewables development proposals in landscape terms should be demonstrated by developers through detailed investigation, analysis and careful siting, layout and design to ensure that they are done in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

#### **4. Guidance for micro and small scale renewable energy schemes to be sited within the Forest of Bowland AONB**

4.1 The Government's Planning Policy Statement on renewable energy (PPS22) states that as part of a national policy framework "*small scale development should be permitted within AONB's provided that there is no serious environmental detriment to the area concerned.*" In addition the PPS confirms that "*planning permission for renewable energy projects should only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the objectives of designation of the area will not be compromised by the development*".

4.2 When reviewing applications for micro and small scale renewable energy installations within the Forest of Bowland AONB: ***our advice is to view any scheme on its own merits.*** Being sited within, or near to, the Forest of Bowland AONB should not be the ***sole*** reason for refusal of micro or small scale renewable energy schemes, unless significant environmental impacts are envisaged.

4.3 This guidance is for micro and small scale schemes only as ***the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee will object to all plans to develop medium and large scale schemes.***

This guidance is therefore provided for:

- Single micro wind turbines (up to 25m to blade tip) and small scale wind energy development
- Micro hydro schemes (up to 100kW)
- Small scale photovoltaics (up to 10kWp array)
- Small scale biomass (up to 10MW) and AD systems, and small scale heat pumps

#### **4.4 Wind turbines**

4.4.1 Where appropriate, micro and small scale wind energy development may be accommodated within the Forest of Bowland AONB landscape. Micro scale wind energy development particularly in locations where there would be a strong functional relationship with existing development such as farm buildings and views of it would be constrained by the topography is likely to be the most appropriate form of wind energy development for the AONB. ***Small scale wind farms may be appropriate for the AONB provided that they do not cause unacceptable harm to the natural beauty and special quality of the landscape.*** In all instances, micro and small scale wind energy development should:

- be of a form and design that is appropriate for the landscape and visual characteristics of the location.
- be an appropriate scale for the location.
- not be sited on a skyline or close to a prominent feature or within the setting of important historic features or landscapes
- not have significant cumulative impacts with other operational or consented wind energy development.



4.4.2 The Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment<sup>5</sup> and the Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development in Lancashire study<sup>6</sup> should be consulted when assessing suitable sites.

4.4.3 Environmental impact assessments will usually be required if the application is for more than two turbines or if height exceeds 15m.

## **4.5 Micro hydro**

4.5.1 The Forest of Bowland AONB has relatively high rainfall, fast flowing streams and rivers and a history of water power. This suggests that there may be some potential for micro hydro (less than 100kW) and smaller scale (up to 3MW) electricity generation within the Forest of Bowland AONB. A feasibility study prepared by Inter Hydro Technology will report in summer 2011 on the most favourable sites.

4.5.2 A micro hydro scheme would be likely to be acceptable in landscape terms where it appears as a minor, isolated feature within a large scale landscape or in locations where there is a direct relationship with existing development such as settlements and access routes.

4.5.3 Buildings and other associated developments should be of an appropriate scale, be carefully sited and be sympathetic to the local vernacular. Where existing historic structures are to be used and/or the site is in a designated Conservation Area, advice should be sought from the local planning authority's building conservation officer. Buildings, access roads, water transporting systems and power lines should be carefully sited.

4.5.4 Whilst mitigation of landscape and visual impacts is encouraged, care should be taken to ensure that screen planting, for example, does not highlight the development in an open landscape.

4.5.5 Environmental impact assessments will be required for schemes generating over 500kW, and consents from the Environment Agency must be obtained in all cases.

## **4.6 Biomass**

4.6.1 Business and domestic scale biomass systems can normally be assimilated into existing buildings and as such may not require planning consent. New buildings housing biomass systems will require planning permission, and should be of an appropriate scale, be carefully sited and constructed in a vernacular style. Where existing historic structures are to be used and/or the site is in a Conservation Area, conservation advice should be sought from the local planning authority's building conservation officer.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.forestofbowland.com/landscape\\_character](http://www.forestofbowland.com/landscape_character)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/landscape/landscapewind/index.asp>

4.6.2 Systems utilising locally sourced woodfuel can be seen as having a positive impact on the local landscape as they are generating a supply for wood products from positively managed woodlands.

4.6.3 Whilst mitigation of landscape and visual impacts is encouraged care should be taken to ensure that screen planting for example does not highlight the development in an open landscape.

4.6.4 Environmental impact assessments will be required if the site exceeds 0.5 hectares.

## **4.7 Photovoltaics and Solar Thermal**

4.7.1 Small scale photovoltaics (PVs) are now within permitted development for residential buildings.

4.7.2 Small scale installations, usually up to 10kW arrays, on commercial, farm or community buildings that have minor landscape and visual impacts should not normally be objected to within the Forest of Bowland AONB. Careful siting can minimise the visual impact of arrays, and panels can be integrated into the building design, especially on new build properties. Planned installations on historic buildings, or within conservation areas, should seek advice from the local planning authority's building conservation officer.

4.7.3 Solar farms, or large numbers of PV arrays set up at ground level or on large scale farm roof systems, which may or may not move to track the sun, and which normally export electricity generated away from the site, will not normally be suitable for installation within the Forest of Bowland AONB as reflection of the sun's rays is likely to make such installations highly visible, detracting from the natural landscape character of the area.

4.7.3 Solar thermal systems, which heat domestic hot water using flat panes or evacuated tubes mounted on a roof, are usually classed as permitted development. Larger scale schemes heating water for use on site, for example for dairy farms, will normally be considered to be appropriate within the AONB and will not be objected to by the JAC provided they are of an appropriate scale, are not visually intrusive and suitable mitigation of landscape and visual impacts are provided which ensures the natural beauty of the area is not adversely affected.

## **4.8 Anaerobic Digestion**

4.8.1 Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plants, serving a single or small number of farms, may be sited within the Forest of Bowland AONB provided that the development can be incorporated within the farmstead, is of an appropriate scale, is not visually intrusive, is constructed from appropriate materials and suitable mitigation of landscape and visual impacts is provided which ensures the natural beauty of the area is not adversely affected.

3.8.2 It is important that the level of traffic associated with the installation does not markedly increase vehicle movements to and from the site, and that land use in the proximity is not altered to 'feed' the plant with crops such as maize which are not normally cultivated in the area.

#### **4.9 Heat Pumps**

4.9.1 Heat pumps, using ground or water, are usually classed as permitted development for a residential dwelling, However air source pumps do currently require planning permission.

4.9.2 If purpose built associated buildings are required, eg to house the pumps, these may require planning permission. These developments should be of an appropriate scale, not be visually intrusive, and be constructed from appropriate materials. Suitable mitigation of landscape and visual impacts must be provided to ensure the natural beauty of the area is not adversely affected, and any such developments would normally be deemed appropriate to the AONB if they are within the area of an existing development, and use traditional materials in the vernacular style.

4.9.3 If extensive excavation is required for a ground source it is important that both historical and biodiversity experts are consulted as to the suitability of the area, and in any case that excavated areas are sensitively restored.

### **5. Additional advice, contacts and guidance for the siting of renewable energy developments within the Forest of Bowland AONB**

5.1 General advice from the Forest of Bowland AONB is to locate developments:

- where they are appropriate to the landscape character type that they are situated within
- where they would not be a dominant feature in the landscape
- well back from upland edges or scarps
- away from viewed skylines, summits, prominent landforms and other distinctive landscape features
- away from remote and wilder areas
- where they make sympathetic use of existing buildings, tracks and other infrastructure
- where there would be no significant cumulative impacts with similar or other developments
- where there are opportunities to mitigate landscape and visual impacts and compensate for any unavoidable losses
- away from key amenity and heritage assets
- where they respect and are sensitive to important cultural associations
- away from public view – i.e. roads, footpaths or public open space – if at all possible

- within existing built areas – e.g. farmstead or settlement – where a strong functional relationship would be established rather than in isolated locations away from other built structures

5.2 The exact physical siting of micro renewable energy technologies on domestic, community, farm or business premises; be it hydro, solar or wind power, will determine its efficiency. For example, solar thermal panels and PVs work best on south facing roofs; whilst wind power will be maximised in more exposed and open sites. However, within the AONB, the distinctive natural beauty, landscape tranquillity, highly scenic views, biodiversity and historical features are all important elements of landscape quality and the impact on these will need to be balanced against maximising the efficiency of an installation.

5.3 Specialist advice and guidance from the Environment Agency, Lancashire County Council, English Heritage<sup>7</sup> and local authority planning officers should be sought as appropriate. In addition the AONB's own Landscape Character Assessment<sup>8</sup> should be used to identify the landscape character type/area of the location and its key features/forces for change and to note and act on any limitations listed within the management guidance for that classification.

5.5 A Landscape Impact Assessment may be required for some developments, and a consideration of other potential sites and opportunities for mitigation and compensation will be required as part of any application.

5.6 The Forest of Bowland AONB Manager, and Lancashire County Council's Landscape Unit may be contacted for advice at the addresses below.

5.7 In addition, the following guidance has been adopted by the grants panel of the Forest of Bowland AONB's Sustainable Development Fund. It is suggested that this stance is also adopted by planning authorities when viewing planning applications for small scale renewable energy projects within the AONB.

- Ensure all renewable energy technologies are investigated so that the most appropriate system is installed to meet the needs of the applicant and the specific location. Technologies should also be quality assured by the Microgeneration Certification Scheme<sup>9</sup> as this ensures quality products and installation, and provides eligibility for the Feed in Tariff and the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme.
- Evidence should be provided to show that energy efficiency of the development has already been maximised – via insulation, energy efficient appliances, and waste minimisation measures

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk/live/what\\_approvals\\_saving\\_energy.aspx](http://www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk/live/what_approvals_saving_energy.aspx)

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.forestofbowland.com/landscape\\_character](http://www.forestofbowland.com/landscape_character)

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/>

- Monitoring of the installation should be encouraged in order to evaluate its efficiency – e.g. by recording the energy generated and calculating any savings made

5.8 In addition to this position statement the Forest of Bowland AONB will also be including examples of good practice in the siting of photovoltaics and solar thermal roof panels as part of its forthcoming Design Guide.

Contact Details:

Forest of Bowland AONB  
The Stables  
4 Root Hill Estate Yard  
Dunsop Bridge  
Clitheroe, Lancashire  
BB7 3AY  
01200 448000

Lancashire County Council  
Landscape Unit  
Senior Landscape Architect  
Steven Brereton  
[Steven.brereton@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Steven.brereton@lancashire.gov.uk)  
01772 534135



# Agenda Item 9

## **SECTION (B): DELIVERING THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN: HEADLINE ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Information**

#### **MANAGEMENT PLAN THEMES:-**

##### **A. Economy; Natural & Cultural Landscape**

#### **Forest of Bowland AONB / RSPB Outreach Education Project (SM)**

The Forest of Bowland AONB / RSPB Outreach Education Project has worked with over 1000 school children in 27 primary schools in and around the Forest of Bowland AONB since it began in 2008.

By the end of the project, children:

- Know that the Forest of Bowland is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - a nationally protected landscape.
- Have learnt about the AONB's key habitats.
- Understand that the area is special place for wildlife, especially hen harriers, lapwings and curlews.
- Know that farmers and land managers look after the landscape.
- Are able to recognise the birds in their garden.

This project gets children on to local farms and involves schools in the big schools birdwatch.

This year (2010.11) the project is working with the following schools:

- Bleasdale CE Primary, Bleasdale
- Caton Community Primary, Caton
- Caton St Paul's CE Primary, Caton
- Hornby St Margaret's CE Primary, Hornby
- Newchurch-in-Pendle St Mary's CE Primary, Newchurch-in-Pendle
- Roughlee CE Primary, Roughlee
- Sabden Primary, Sabden
- St Joseph's RC Primary, Hurst Green
- St Mary's RC Primary, Chipping
- St Mary's RC Primary, Sabden
- Thorneyholme RC Primary, Dunsop Bridge.

#### **Bowland wildlife bloggers (HB)**

Momentum continues as green accredited accommodation providers continue to post wildlife sightings to the Bowland wildlife and Lancashire wildlife blog websites. These visitor websites have been developed by Barrie Tyrer web consultancy working with the Lancashire Green Tourism project to highlight the wildlife hotspots of this beautiful area, and most importantly to entice visitors to take a look for themselves. Visitor numbers to the website continue to grow (over 9,000 unique visitors to each site per month) and word is

spreading. Promotional postcards with images highlighting the wonderful wildlife and the website have been produced for businesses to spread the word. Visit the wildlife blog websites at [www.bowlandwildlife.org.uk](http://www.bowlandwildlife.org.uk) and [www.lancashirewildlife.org.uk](http://www.lancashirewildlife.org.uk)

## B. Enjoyment; Health and Wellbeing

### **Festival Bowland 2011 (SM)**

Festival Bowland is a year round calendar of events that celebrates the birds, landscape, wildlife and culture of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Festival Bowland events allow us to showcase the area's special qualities and share with others what makes it such a special place for people and wildlife. Events are led by local experts, landowners and businesses and provide a wealth of opportunities for people to explore the area's special qualities throughout the year.

Festival Bowland is coordinated by the Forest of Bowland AONB. The steering group includes: RSPB Birds of Bowland Project, United Utilities, Lancashire County Council, Wyre Borough Council and Bowland Arts Festival. Also supporting the festival are: Natural England, The Wildlife Trusts of Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside, Heritage Lottery Fund as well as local businesses, landowners and farmers.

A copy of the Festival Bowland calendar of events can be viewed and downloaded at [www.forestofbowland.com](http://www.forestofbowland.com)

### **Website Developments (SM/HB)**

Updates are continually made to the website, but the following are recent developments:

- Introduction of a feedback functionality for the walking page: [www.forestofbowland.com/walking\\_routes](http://www.forestofbowland.com/walking_routes)
- New arts, crafts and rural skills visitor directory: [www.forestofbowland.com/producerlist\\_arts](http://www.forestofbowland.com/producerlist_arts)
- Interactive sustainable tourism action plan linking to the interactive management plan [www.forestofbowland.com/sustainable\\_tourism\\_actionplan](http://www.forestofbowland.com/sustainable_tourism_actionplan)
- Artist and producer spotlights on the homepage to complement the popular walk of the month: [www.forestofbowland.com](http://www.forestofbowland.com)



## C. Sustainable Tourism

### **Bowland Tourism Environment fund (BTEF) & Bowland Experience (BEx) (MP)**

- Bowland Tourism Environment fund (BTEF) was formed in 2009 and has so far raised £11,163 from visitor donations and a lottery grant to purchase the Trampler for Bowland Experience. At the present times, Ribble Valley Inns (3 fishes at Great Mitton) is running a Visitor Payback scheme to invite diners to contribute 20p each towards the Trampler scheme. The Fund continues to make small grants (maximum £500) for local community projects. In the last year this had included restoration of traditional paving in Dunsop Bridge, wildlife interpretation in the children's playground in Scorton and the RSPB primary schools outreach education project.
- Bowland Experience Limited (BEx) was formed in 2010 and now has 59 members. The company has already been involved in organising business training and publicity leaflets. It is about to launch a new "Trampler for Hire" scheme for the members to use the company's own Trampler for their visitors with limited mobility. Currently, we are looking at how the AONB and BEx should work together to provide visitor information by using websites, Smartphone "apps" etc. In its first trading year, the company made a profit of £1300 which has been donated to the Bowland Tourism Environment Fund.

### **EUROPARC Charter Partners (HB/MP)**

- There are currently 35 tourism operators which have completed the Green Tourism Award and have been given the EUROPARC Charter Partner certificate. These are now included amongst about 200 similar businesses across the EUROPARC Charter Network

### **Lancashire Green Tourism Project (HB/MP)**

Since commencement in October 2008 the main achievements of the Lancashire Green Tourism project to date are:

- 37 Green Tourism Business Scheme awards (12 Gold, 19 Silver and 6 Bronze), there are an additional 12 businesses awaiting grading.
- The project has produced 10 business case studies for those businesses achieving a gold GTBS award, these are excellent examples of good practice and are also useful for the businesses themselves for marketing their green credentials
- A total of 92 businesses have received the following support – GTBS advisory and grading visits, one to one support from Hetty Byrne and Mike Pugh and website support. 82 individuals have attended green marketing training days and have participated in a green ideas day
- Sustainable Tourism Network now had 121 members who have signed up to the principles of the EUROPARC charter. 47 of these (39%) have started in the tourism business since 2006.

## D. Economy; Community; Working in Partnership

### **The National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) (DM)**

Lancashire County Council and the Forest of Bowland AONB originally initiated and sponsored the founding of the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB). Recently, the NAAONB has been raised to new prominence as central government have established a new tripartite working relationship that recognises the key role of the NAAONB alongside Defra and Natural England in forming strategic policy and overall management of AONB landscapes.

Following a series of consultations with officers and Board members the National Association for AONBs have set out a new draft strategic plan setting out their direction for the NAAONB over the next four years. A draft Business Plan translates the Strategic Plan into a detailed programme with a set of draft budgets. The consultation period ends 6 May. The Forest of Bowland AONB Manager participated in a national meeting in February to progress the text of the plans.

Both drafts and accompanying annexes can be downloaded by clicking [NAAONB Business Plan 2011-2014](#) and following the link.

A second draft will be available for comment between Friday 3rd June and Friday 8th July 2011. As part of this consultation period there will be a discussion meeting on Tuesday 5th July at the NAAONB 11th Annual Conference in Cornwall. The final draft will be available as part of the papers for approval at the NAAONB AGM on Friday 14th October 2011.

The verbal report to be given at Item 6 in today's agenda is about how the Forest of Bowland AONB Unit intend working with the FoB AONB partners to review priorities and similarly draw up a Business Plan for the coming years in accord with the new government expectations on AONBs and indicative government funding for AONBs over the coming years.

### **Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership Annual Report 2009.10 (SM)**

Work for the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Annual Report 2010.11 is now underway. Articles are requested to demonstrate the work of the partnership in the Forest of Bowland AONB. Please submit your articles to Susan MacDonald [susan.macdonald@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:susan.macdonald@lancashire.gov.uk) and cc to Sandra Silk [sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk)

### **Forest of Bowland AONB Interactive Management Plan (SM)**

At [www.forestofbowland.com](http://www.forestofbowland.com) you can view the action plan section of the Forest of Bowland AONB Management plan and see what progress we are making as we are making it.

## **Forest of Bowland AONB Boundary Signs (SM)**

Six black and white painted cast aluminium signs, similar in style to traditional fingerpost signs, have been produced and will soon be ready for installation. These signs will replace existing boundary signs that are in disrepair in key locations in the main upland block of the AONB as well as the Pendle outlier.

- Copy of design of boundary signs attached
- A map of these locations will be tabled at the meeting.

## **Forest of Bowland AONB Printed Literature (SM)**

20,000 copies of the following AONB literature have been printed and is now available through on-line distributor Brochurelink. We have some stocks at Dunsop Bridge but are unable to post out large quantities.

- Discovery Guide
- A Taste of Bowland
- General Information Leaflet
- Fishing Leaflet
- Birding in Bowland Leaflet
- Website Flyer

Copies of all of these will be available at the meeting.

## **E. Responding to Climate Change: Update (CH) (Chapter 19 of the AONB Management Plan)**

With support from the climate change theme group, key activities the AONB Unit has been engaged in for the last six months are:

### **1. Micro Hydro Feasibility Study (CH)**

19.3A Secure funding to research the potential for small-scale renewable energy (aka a 'microgeneration') production in the AONB.

£40,000 of external funding for the micro hydro feasibility study was finally secured in the autumn and a small steering group was set up to oversee the project. The steering group comprises representatives from the funders – Ribble Valley and Lancaster & District local strategic partnerships, Pendle Borough Council and LCC – plus the AONB and the Environment Agency. The consultants, Inter Hydro Technology, were appointed in September and have since carried out 36 stage 1 feasibility studies at identified sites across the AONB and within the districts of Pendle, Ribble Valley and Lancaster.

The steering group is now in the process of studying the report and meeting with site owners to decide which 5 or 6 sites should be taken forward for a more detailed stage 2 study.

A copy of the report will soon be made available on line and to all stakeholders, and a meeting will be held to inform them of the findings and to offer support and information to enable them to take their individual projects forward.

The full report, including the stage 2 studies, will be available in the summer, and a Festival Bowland event, visiting a number of the proposed sites is to be held on Saturday 16 July – enquiries and bookings to Cathy Hopley please.

## **2. Climate Change Adaptation Plan (CH)**

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19.2A Influence national policies and planning guidance to create a conducive environment for action on climate change, sustainable transport and energy including:

- Ensure the AONB makes an appropriate contribution to Climate Change Bill emission-reduction targets.
- **Support the Natural England Joint Character Area (JCA) climate change adaptation study - i.e. encourage forward thinking in habitat creation and protection.**

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A climate adaptation plan is an action plan for dealing with the impacts of climate change on the landscape, biodiversity and 'ecosystem services' of the AONB. Supported by funds from Natural England and Ribble Valley borough council, we have been able to contract Atkins to undertake this study for us and it has also involved partners from the JAC climate change and natural and cultural landscapes theme groups.

The study will be published online in early April and will be disseminated to all partners. Draft reports suggest that our most vulnerable areas are blanket bogs, upland hay meadows, purple moor grass and rush pastures, wet woodlands, ponds and open water, and designed landscapes.

The hope is that most of the adaptation actions can be delivered via Higher Level Stewardship and by individual landowners and managers. Strategic actions should also be incorporated into the AONB Management Plan when it is next reviewed.

## **3. Renewable Energy Position Statement (CH)**

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19.3B Provide guidance on the siting and development of appropriate small-scale renewable energy (ie. assuming the purposes of AONB designation are not contravened).

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19.2F Develop a renewable energy policy for the AONB in partnership with local authorities

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Working closely with Steve Brereton, LCC's landscape specialist, and consulting with the local planning authorities, the AONB Unit has drawn up a position statement and gained support for its principles. These are that whilst small and micro scale renewable energy developments are appropriate to and acceptable within the AONB, medium and larger scale renewable energy developments are not considered appropriate within the Forest of Bowland

AONB. We are now asking for the JAC's approval of this position statement - please see item 8 on the agenda.

#### **4. AONB Carbon Reduction Plan (CH)**

19.1J Reduce the carbon emissions of the AONB Unit team in line with the Lancashire Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets.

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19.3D Support businesses in adopting renewable energy sources

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As part of the AONB Unit's carbon reduction plan the whole team took part in smarter driving lessons in January. These taught us the principles of more efficient driving – to reduce fuel costs and consumption, and to reduce our collective carbon footprint.

As part of the plan we also recommended the installation of photo voltaics on our office roof, and it now appears that at our suggestion the Duchy of Lancaster is now seriously investigating this as part of an estate wide sustainability plan.

#### **Decision Required**

The Committee is asked to note the report.

