



FOREST OF BOWLAND

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

AONB Unit Business Plan
2018 - 2021

AONB Unit Business Plan 2018-2021

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 rural 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, Food 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 AONB Unit comprises nine staff members (8.6FTE), with additional support from Ernest Cook Trust Outdoor Learning Officer (1FTE)

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, in accordance with the AONB Management Plan 2014 - 2019:

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 2018 - 2021. 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 is 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, culture and heritage
- 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 Objectives 2018 - 2021

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 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 the local authorities, to establish development management policies, strategies and delivery, 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, which promote conservation and enhancement of the AONB landscape</p> <p>SC3 Continue to support the management of Champion Bowland Grants Funds; whilst also responding to local community requests for advice and support 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 countryside 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>

Forest of Bowland AONB Unit (see structure chart overleaf)

AONB staff

EL – Elliott Lorimer, Principal Officer (FT)

HB – Hetty Byrne, Sustainable Tourism Officer (0.8 FTE)

SS – Sandra Silk, Projects Officer (FT)

RG – Robin Gray, Development and Funding Officer (FT)

SR – Sarah Robinson, Farming and Wildlife Officer (0.4 FTE)

SD- Sarah Dornan, Countryside Access Officer (0.5 FTE)

Project staff

CH – Cathy Hopley, Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership Programme Manager (FT)

JA – Jayne Ashe, Pendle Hill LP Community Engagement Officer (FT)

SBS – Sarah Brooks-Silcock, Pendle Hill LP Business Support Officer (0.8FTE)

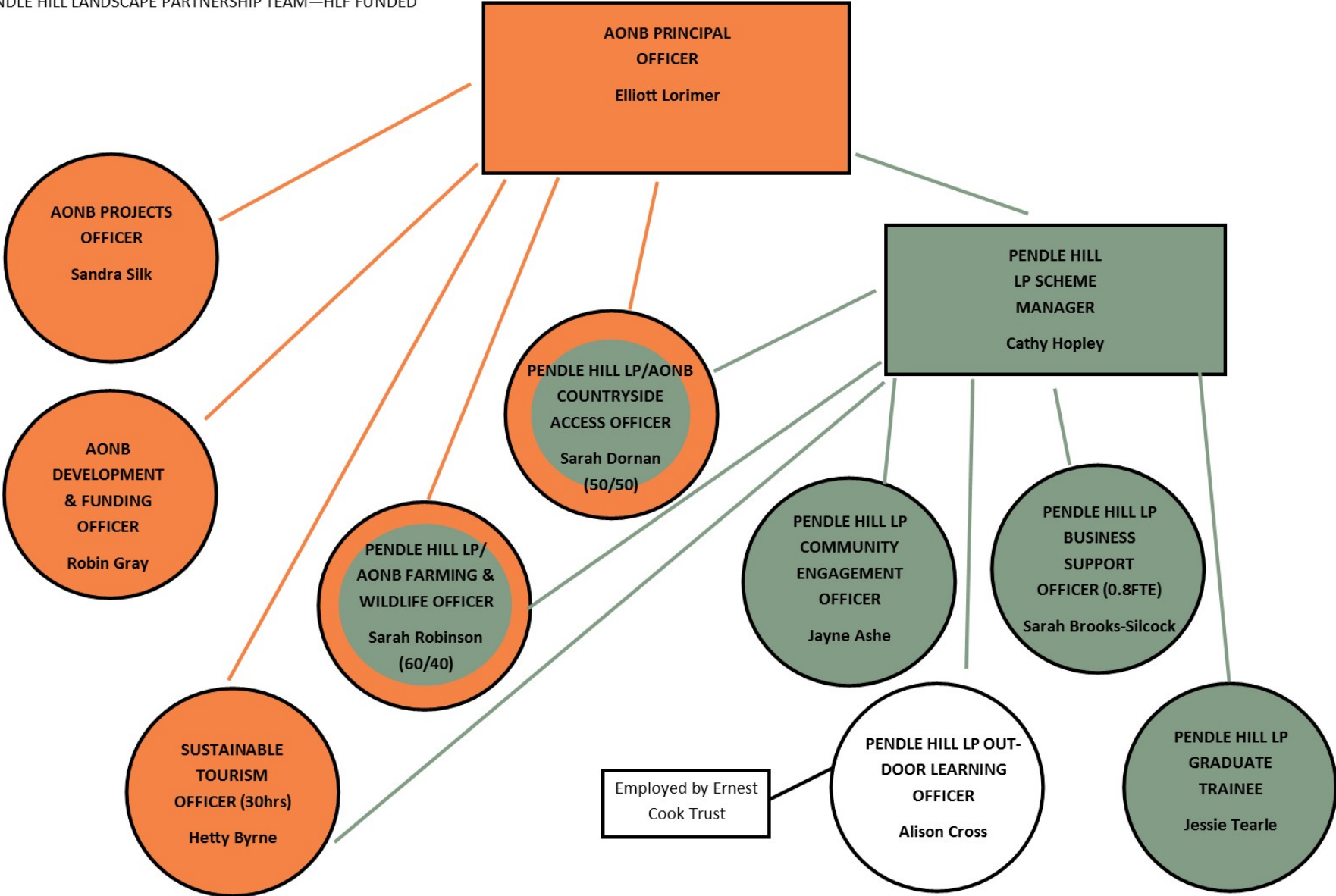
SR – Sarah Robinson, Pendle Hill LP Farming and Wildlife Officer (0.6FTE)

SD – Sarah Dornan, Pendle Hill & AONB Countryside Access Officer (0.5FTE)

AC – Alison Cross, Ernest Cook Trust Outdoor Learning Officer (FT, seconded from ECT to Pendle Hill LP)

JT – Jessie Tearle, Pendle Hill LP Graduate Trainee (FT)

- AONB TEAM—AONB FUNDED
- PENDLE HILL LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP TEAM—HLF FUNDED



An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage (OL)

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

We will:	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Unit lead and support
OL1.1 Provide advice, guidance and encouragement to land managers on sustainable land management of the AONB landscape	<p>Hold regular liaison meetings with local Natural England team</p> <p>Manage and deliver training and activity for Pendle Hill Farmers Network (CSFF) with at least 6 meetings held</p> <p>Work collaboratively with Northern Upland Chain LNP partners, Defra and NE to develop a proposal for 'tests and trials' of Defra's post-Brexit Environmental Land Management Scheme</p> <p>Provision of management advice and practical management for 3 local wildlife sites in Pendle Hill LP</p>	<p>Hold regular liaison meetings with local Natural England team</p> <p>Manage and deliver training and activity for Pendle Hill Farmers Network (CSFF) with at least 6 meetings held</p>	<p>Hold regular liaison meetings with local Natural England team</p> <p>Manage and deliver training and activity for Pendle Hill Farmers Network (CSFF) with at least 6 meetings held</p>	1.1, 1.2, 2.1	<p>SR/EL</p> <p>SR/SBS</p> <p>EL/SR</p> <p>SR</p>
OL1.2 Liaise with woodland planting and management initiatives to encourage and support appropriate woodland extension, creation and management within the AONB	Respond to Forestry Commission consultations regarding	Respond to Forestry Commission consultations regarding	Respond to Forestry Commission consultations regarding	1.1	EL

<p>OL1.3 Engage with River Catchment Partnerships for Ribble, Wyre and Lune to encourage catchment management for both biodiversity and landscape.</p>	<p>Regular attendance at River Catchment Partnership Board meetings</p> <p>Continue joint project delivery and support for 'Ribble Life Together' Project, particularly development of self-guided river walks and promotion</p> <p>Work jointly with Catchment Partnership to develop and deliver projects under the Environment Agency's Water Environment Grant programme (e.g. Ribble Life for Water, Lune from Top to Bottom and Side to Side)</p>	<p>Regular attendance at River Catchment Partnership Board meetings</p>	<p>Regular attendance at River Catchment Partnership Board meetings</p>	<p>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4</p>	<p>SS/EL</p> <p>SS/HB/EL</p> <p>SS/EL/SR</p>
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OL2 Continue a 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

<p>We will:</p>	<p>2018/19</p>	<p>2019/20</p>	<p>2020/21</p>	<p>AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives</p>	<p>Unit lead and support</p>
<p>OL2.1 Provide training opportunities and competitions in hedge-laying and walling (including support for vocational training)</p>	<p>At least 6 training days provided</p> <p>Support for Lancashire and Westmorland</p>	<p>At least 6 training days provided</p> <p>Support for Lancashire and Westmorland</p>	<p>At least 6 training days provided</p> <p>Support for Lancashire and Westmorland</p>	<p>1.1, 1.6, 2.1</p>	<p>SS</p>

Resilient and sustainable rural communities (SC)

SC1 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:	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Unit lead and support
SC1.1 Support Parish Councils to continue to fund and manage existing lengthsman schemes	AONB grant offer made to Parish Councils/Meetings	AONB grant offer made to Parish Councils/Meetings	AONB grant offer made to Parish Councils/Meetings	2.3, 4.2	SS
	Review scheme monitoring reports provided by Parish Councils/meetings	Review scheme monitoring reports provided by Parish Councils/meetings	Review scheme monitoring reports provided by Parish Councils/meetings		SS
	Periodically hold liaison meetings/site visits with Parish Lengthsman to discuss progress/issues etc.	Periodically hold liaison meetings/site visits with Parish Lengthsman to discuss progress/issues etc.	Periodically hold liaison meetings/site visits with Parish Lengthsman to discuss progress/issues etc.		SD

SC2 Support local businesses and products, which promote conservation and enhancement of the AONB landscape					
We will:	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Unit lead and support
SC2.1 Support local tourism businesses, via provision of advice, signposting, funding opportunities (e.g. LEADER), training, networking opportunities and events	One-to-one business advice / support provided	One-to-one business advice / support provided	One-to-one business advice / support provided	2.2, 2.3, 2.4	HB
	Provide tourism business support for Pendle Hill LP area, (incl. sense of place workshop, Pendlefolk, Pendle Hill Food Foray)	Provide tourism business support for Pendle Hill LP area	Provide tourism business support for Pendle Hill LP area		HB
SC2.2 Continue to provide support for Bowland Experience Network (BEx)	Monthly tourism business bulletin produced and distributed	Monthly tourism business bulletin produced and distributed	Monthly tourism business bulletin produced and distributed	2.2, 2.4	HB
	2 training events for businesses held and evaluated	2 training events for businesses held and evaluated	2 training events for businesses held and evaluated		HB
	Annual networking event held (e.g. Discovery Guide launch)	Annual networking event held (e.g. Discovery Guide launch)	Annual networking event held (e.g. Discovery Guide launch)		HB

<p>SC2.3 Continue to support the development, management and promotion of the Champion Bowland</p>	<p>Work with YDMT and new finance officer to close accounts for 'old' Champion Bowland and establish financial arrangements for 'new' CIO Champion Bowland</p> <p>Provide support and administration for Champion Bowland trustees meetings (min. 2/year)</p> <p>Manage and administer Champion Bowland Small Grants Fund</p> <p>Delivery of AONB 'Farm Visit Transport Fund' through Champion Bowland</p>	<p>Work with YDMT and new finance officer to close accounts for 'old' Champion Bowland and establish financial arrangements for 'new' CIO Champion Bowland</p> <p>Provide support and administration for Champion Bowland trustees meetings (min. 2/year)</p>	<p>Work with YDMT and new finance officer to close accounts for 'old' Champion Bowland and establish financial arrangements for 'new' CIO Champion Bowland</p> <p>Provide support and administration for Champion Bowland trustees meetings (min. 2/year)</p>	<p>2.2, 2.3, 2.4</p>	<p>RG/EL</p> <p>RG</p> <p>RG</p> <p>SS</p>
<p>SC2.5 Support the continued development of 'Bowland Land Managers Forum'</p>	<p>Forum meeting held at least annually</p> <p>Involve Forum members in the Northern Upland Chain LNP High-Nature Value Farming Group and Northern Hill Farmers Panel</p> <p>Hold Land Managers Forum meeting on the</p>	<p>Forum meeting held at least annually</p> <p>Involve Forum members in the Northern Upland Chain LNP High-Nature Value Farming Group and Northern Hill Farmers Panel</p>	<p>Forum meeting held at least annually</p> <p>Involve Forum members in the Northern Upland Chain LNP High-Nature Value Farming Group and Northern Hill Farmers Panel</p>	<p>2.1, 2.2, 4.2</p>	<p>EL</p>

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:	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Unit lead and support
PL1.1 Work in partnership with key stakeholders to manage, maintain, and improve access in the wider countryside of the AONB;	Regular meetings of local stakeholder groups (e.g. Pendle Hill Advisory Group) to address access and recreation issues or concerns	Regular meetings of local stakeholders (e.g. Pendle Hill Advisory Group) to address access and recreation issues or concerns	Regular meetings of local stakeholders (e.g. Pendle Hill Advisory Group) to address access and recreation issues or concerns	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	EL/SD
PL1.2 Carry out regular reviews of existing AONB promoted routes to maintain route condition, furniture, signage etc.	<p>Continue to support volunteer monitoring system for existing AONB promoted routes</p> <p>Contract works to carry out small-scale improvement and maintenance of promoted routes, where resources allow</p> <p>1 volunteer training event held</p>	<p>Continue to support volunteer monitoring system for existing AONB promoted routes</p> <p>Contract works to carry out small-scale improvement and maintenance of promoted routes, where resources allow</p> <p>1 volunteer training event held</p>	<p>Continue to support volunteer monitoring system for existing AONB promoted routes</p> <p>Contract works to carry out small-scale improvement and maintenance of promoted routes, where resources allow</p> <p>1 volunteer training event held</p>	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	SD SD SD
PL1.3 Review, rationalise and develop downloadable promoted routes as required	Review and prioritise promoted routes up to 2 times/year (review based on seasonal promotion, route condition, maintenance)	Review and prioritise promoted routes up to 2 times/year (review based on seasonal promotion, route condition, maintenance)	Review and prioritise promoted routes up to 2 times/year (review based on seasonal promotion, route condition, maintenance)	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	SD/HB

PL2.6 Manage and maintain stocks of printed AONB publications (including 'Take One Media' brochure and leaflet distribution service)	Quarterly reviews of Take One Media reports carried out	Quarterly reviews of Take One Media reports carried out	Quarterly reviews of Take One Media reports carried out	3.4, 4.4	SS
PL2.7 Regularly review and update the content of AONB website, in line with AONB Management Plan objectives and actions	Regular reviews and updates of web content completed	Regular reviews and updates of web content completed	Regular reviews and updates of web content completed	1.5A, 1.6D, 1.7B, 3.4, 3.5, 4.4	HB
	Quarterly website user data analysis completed and disseminated	Quarterly website user data analysis completed and disseminated	Quarterly website user data analysis completed and disseminated		HB
PL2.8 Review design of AONB website	Produce micro website for Pendle Hill LP (using existing Forest of Bowland AONB website content management system)		Carry out review/refresh of AONB website design	3.4, 3.5, 4.4	HB
PL2.9 Research good practice in use of digital technology to help interpret and promote the AONB	Continue to develop use of social media to promote AONB (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)	Continue to develop use of social media to promote AONB (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)	Continue to develop use of social media to promote AONB (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)	3.4, 4.4	All
	Develop digital technologies (apps, video content) for use in communications and interpretation to develop a wider audience for AONB projects and activity, in particular the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership	Pilot use of new technologies in communications and interpretation as part of the Pendle Hill LP			HB

A dynamic and effective AONB partnership (AP)

AP1 Work with others to maximise the successful delivery of the AONB Management Plan and effectively monitor progress

We will:	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Unit lead and support
AP1.1 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
AP1.2 Review the AONB Management Plan, in accordance with national guidance	Draft revised plan complete September 2018 Formal consultation September/October 2018 Final revised plan approved/adopted by local authorities by March 2018	Final revised plan sent to Defra Minister April 2018 Develop AONB Partnership Advocacy Strategy and action plan to help raise awareness of the AONB Management Plan amongst AONB partners and statutory undertakers		4.1, 4.4C	EL
AP1.3 Ensure effective and inclusive consultation is carried out on all major AONB strategies and activity	Statement of Community Involvement produced for AONB Management Plan Review	On-going	On-going	2.3, 4.4	EL
AP1.4 Develop and manage an interactive AONB Unit Business Plan to ensure regular monitoring of Unit delivery	Plan updated quarterly by Unit Quarterly reports produced	Plan updated quarterly by Unit Quarterly reports produced	Plan updated quarterly by Unit Quarterly reports produced	4.1, 4.4	HB/All

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:	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	AONB MP 2014 – 2019 Objectives	Unit lead and support
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 Committee for non-statutory organisations and non-funding partners	Undertake review of current JAC membership			4.1	EL
AP2.2 Hold regular meetings and correspondence with AONB funding partners to ensure AONB Partnership and Unit are delivering against partners' key corporate objectives	Regular Partnership Funders Group meetings held Arrange regular meetings/briefings for local authority officers and members on AONB Partnership activity Hold AONB conference/seminar	Regular Partnership Funders Group meetings held Arrange regular meetings/briefings for local authority officers and members on AONB Partnership activity	Regular Partnership Funders Group meetings held Arrange regular meetings/briefings for local authority officers and members on AONB Partnership activity Hold AONB conference/seminar	4.1	EL RG
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	NAAONB meetings, seminars and conferences attended, where appropriate	NAAONB meetings, seminars and conferences attended, where appropriate	NAAONB meetings, seminars and conferences attended, where appropriate	4.4	EL
AP2.4 Review fund-raising strategy for the AONB partnership	Review strategy and continue			4.2	RG

