



## **QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020**

at

**2.15pm**

in the

**North Petherton Bowling Club**

To: The members of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Quantock Hills AONB Communication and Support Officer, Amanda Sampson on:  
Telephone 01823 451884 or Email [\*\*asampson@somerset.gov.uk\*\*](mailto:asampson@somerset.gov.uk)

Guidance about procedures at the meeting is given on the last page.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	
1.	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Alan Hughes (Friends of Quantock)
2.	<b>Declarations of interest</b> – an opportunity for members of the JAC to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter being considered at this meeting.
3.	<b>Accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February</b> (copy appended) <b>and to consider any matters arising.</b>
4.	<b>Public question time</b> – The Chairman will allow members of the public to ask questions or make statements about any matter on the agenda for this meeting or present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit.
5.	<b>Paper A - Team and Partnership Report</b> (Chris Edwards)
6.	<b>Paper B - Ranger Report</b> (Andy Stevenson)
7.	<b>Paper C - Quantock Hills AONB Finance highlight report</b> (Iain Porter)
8.	<b>Paper D - Quantock Hills AONB Short term funding scenarios</b> (Iain Porter)
9.	<b>Paper E – Draft Quantock Hills Delivery Plan 2019-2024</b> (Iain Porter)
10.	<b>Any other business of urgency – Future dates and locations JAC – 13<sup>th</sup> August 2019 Enmore Village Hall</b>
	<b>Note :</b> Further information about any of the reports for this meeting may be obtained from the report authors based at the Quantock Hills AONB Service, The Quantock Office, Fyne Court, Broomfield, Bridgwater, TA5 2EQ. Tel No 01823 451884 or e-mail : <a href="mailto:quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk">quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk</a>

## THE MEETING – GUIDANCE NOTES

### 1. Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect Minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact Quantock Hills AONB Communication and Support Officer Amanda Sampson: telephone 01823 451884 or email [asampson@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:asampson@somerset.gov.uk).

### 2. Notes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed, and decisions taken at the meeting will be set out in the Minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting. In the meantime, details of the decisions taken can be obtained from Quantock Hills AONB Communication and Support Officer Amanda Sampson: telephone 01823 451884 or email [asampson@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:asampson@somerset.gov.uk).

### 3. Public Question Time

At the Chairman's invitation you may ask questions and/or make statements or comments about **any matter on the Committee's agenda**. You may also present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit. **The length of public question time will be no more than 20 minutes in total.**

A slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been signed. If you wish to speak, please tell Amanda Sampson, the committee administrator, **before the meeting**.

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chairman. You may not take direct part in the debate.

The Chairman will decide when public participation is to finish. If there are many people present at the meeting for one particular item, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting to allow views to be expressed more freely. If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

An issue will not be deferred just because you cannot be present for the meeting.

**Remember that the amount of time you speak will be restricted, normally to two minutes only.**

### 4. Substitutions

Committee members can appoint substitutes if they are unable to attend the meeting.

## QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee held at Spaxton Village Hall on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

### Present:

West Somerset Council	Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew (Chairman)
Taunton Deane Borough Council	Tim Burton
Somerset County Council	Cllr Hugh Davies
Sedgemoor District Council	Cllr Alan Bradford Cllr Mike Caswell (Vice Chairman) Julie Cooper
Forestry Commission	Mr Nick Salter
Friends of Quantock	Mr Philip Comer Mt Alan Hughes
Parish Representatives	Mr Julian Taylor (North Petherton)
Quantock Hills AONB Service	Mr Chris Edwards (AONB Manager) Mr Iain Porter (AONB Project Officer)

### Also Present

Mr Colin Falla (Nether Stowey PC), Steve Dury (SCC), Mo Young (Holford PC), Terry Ayre (Holford PC), Alan Hall (WMPC), Jo Pearson (Cheddon PC), Julian Anderson (Quantock Eco), Chris Pearson (Nether Stowey PC), Katy Coate (AONB Comms & Admin, notetaker), Amanda Sampson (AONB Comms & Admin).

#### 1. Apologies

Jo Chesworth.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

Anthony Trollope-Bellew declared being a member of Friends of Quantock, Quantock Eco, Crowcombe Parish Council and a Quantock Landowner.

#### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

With the addition of Robert Milton's attendance, the minutes were signed off as a true representation of the meeting.

#### 4. Matters Arising

JT - fracking would still have an impact even though going underground. CE – this is an area of concern because boundary so tight, wellheads close by would have an impact. Beyond being prepared, until there is application there is nothing to address. JT – there are boundaries around the nuclear sites so if applies to Hinkley should apply to AONB. JT - quad bikes a problem on the hills. ATB - some have

common rights. AH – legally only supposed to ride if checking stock. CE - rangers talk to people and develop relationships, if actually illegal they contact the police. ATB – some will have landowner's permission.

## **5. Public Question Time**

- 5.1 TA – requested that if the planning officer is going to make comments, don't put in comments that aren't correct. When applications are outside the boundary how far will you comment on? CE - regarding the AONB boundary line on the map, the law says things that have an effect on the AONB should be carefully considered. Applications can be outside but still significant and have an impact on the natural beauty. TA – important that they understand the application.
- 5.2 MY – Strawberry fields planning application, AONB and NT strong letters. Looks like it will go through, can these organisations have more clout? TB – permitted development has been discussed before, the principle of a building here is permitted. Committee on Thursday, all appropriate consultations have taken place - not necessarily pre-determined, debate will occur at the committee. ATB -reinforced that committee doesn't always go with recommendation. MY - not just building it's the damage from the access.

## **6. Quantock Hills Team and Partnership Update**

- 6.1 Broadband: ATB - a visit from Gigaclear would have been beneficial to realise what was required for the rollout.
- 6.2 Big lottery bid for Nature and wellbeing project: hear outcome in the autumn, application going in the summer. AH – FofQ have regular meetings with the Exmoor Society, it's very good to hear that contact with Exmoor National Park happens at other levels. Recommendation to note report.

## **7. Planning report**

CE - future work: Alex would like to engage with Local Planning Authorities re article 4 direction. TB – this would overcome some of the issues. CF – both Nether Stowey applications of concern have been withdrawn. JAC supports 6 monthly report and notes report.

## **8. Management Plan Review**

Management policies will remain the same, subject to very minor amendments. Nearly ready to be adopted by the LA's.

## **9. Finance Report**

- 9.1 Current year 2018/19 – overspend in core, (miscoding income under wrong code), overspend in projects as money will be carried over into next year. End of year 23k carrying forward leads into next FY. SCC hasn't upped their income it's just showing differently.
- 9.2 Nature and wellbeing – public health given another contract for additional piece of work till September. Ring-fenced projects: Hinkley C, LPS Heritage Lottery Fund, and amenity land. Earmarked reserves to cover redundancies.
- 9.3 Budget 2019/20 – Defra report to be put in end of next week. SCC figures received, main point core expenditure is more than the income. RIA and cost recovery was used to cover this in previous years. ATB - at the next JAC, CE and IP to bring a proposal on how to close the gap in 2020/21. CE - fluid at the moment with the LPS in the pipeline, core staff time could be given to that, more complex than in previous

years. ATB - worst case scenario what will happen if bids don't happen. MC – is the discussion useful if still don't know bids? ATB - assume the worst and then have a plan which can be modified if bid comes off.

## **10. Landscape Partnership Scheme**

- 10.1 Postponed submission had another meeting with the lottery which had better feel, it was more pragmatic and positive. People side inclusion happier with where that is now, how much of the budget and staff time can we allocate. About balancing a lot of engagement with few or minor engagement with many. Concern – timings of practical side of things, orchards, planting hedgerows etc. LCA action plan in design stage, happy with the progress.
- 10.2 Questions – CE there is a lot more information in Bill's report so do have a read.

## **11. NP and AONB Review update**

- 11.1 Discussed heavily at the last JAC – response enclosed in the papers. Re planning issues brought up at public Q time, Reinforcing AONB planning powers was mentioned.

## **12. AOB**

- 12.1 Julian Taylor - CPRE article Guardian the impact of NP AONB and access, relevant to all that was discussed earlier regarding access for all and transport links. CE zoom into the map, there is lots of information available. ATB and CE thanked Tim Burton for his involvement and support for the AONB and JAC over many years, as he was retiring from his post within Taunton Deane and West Somerset Councils before the next JAC meeting.

Meeting closed at 3.05 pm

**To:** Quantock Hills JAC

**Author:** Chris Edwards, AONB Manager

**Date:** 04/06/19

**Subject:** Team and Partnership Report

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## 1. Team

**1.1** Katy Coate, our job-share Communications and Support Officer will be leaving us in early June to work for the Royal Mail as a Postie (we agreed Postperson doesn't sound right!). Amanda Sampson who forms the other half of this job-share has offered to cover the whole of the post for a trial period of up to three months, this is much appreciated and may become the permanent situation. Our thanks go to Katy for her years of great work and support to the whole team and we wish her all the best in ensuring the mail gets through.

**1.2** Shortly after the last JAC in February our Volunteer Coordinator Sammy Fraser advised us that she had been offered a post with the National Trust as part of their highly successful demonstration Natural Flood Management initiative on Exmoor. Sammy left us mid-April and since then our volunteers are being looked after largely by the Rangers and our Nature and Wellbeing Officer Kristen. In this they are supported by our new Community Outreach Lead Volunteer, Verity Jones who joined the team in March. Recruitment to the post is well advanced. This was a joint post we managed on behalf of 3 AONBs – Mendip, Blackdown and Quantock, however the Mendip Hills AONB are developing their own Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator role and we have agreed with the Blackdown Hills to recruit this post between us to work on a 50/50 basis.

## 2. Partnership

**2.1** There is potential for change in District Council representation on the JAC with the commencement of the new Somerset West and Taunton Council and results from the recent council elections. At the time of writing any post-election changes to District Council representatives have not been decided. As agreed by the JAC the Statement of Intent has been extended by a year to allow time for a review of contributions and representation from our Local Authorities (see Appendix 1).

**2.2** Work on our bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for a £2.6m Landscape Partnership Scheme has been progressing well and there is a key meeting with NLHF representatives in June that should give us the go-ahead to submit in September this year.

**2.3** The Quantock Hills Facilitation Fund group has been active in the last quarter with a number of training events and workshops supporting local land managers. One event focussed on a senior Defra representative who came to the Quantocks to talk about and give advice on the future of farming from the Defra perspective. The Environmental Land Management tests and trials project that we have been awarded is currently stalled with Defra who are currently, with apologies, trying to work out the funding for this work.

**2.4 Defra** have recently reviewed the way they help fund AONBs and are looking to reduce the burden on host local authorities by paying their 75% payment up front rather than in arrears. There will also be revision to the terms and conditions as the current T&C are out of date. The new grant aiding approach is due to be rolled out this month but there has been a slight delay as AONBs have raised some questions about the new T&Cs.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**1. The JAC considers the implications of changes outlined in section 2.1 and advises the AONB Manager of any actions to be taken**

**4. The JAC notes the report**

**Chris Edwards**

**May 2019**





**To:** Quantock Hills JAC  
**Author:** Owen Jones, Partnership Ranger & Andy Stevenson, Ranger  
**Date:** 20/05/2019  
**Subject:** Rangers Biannual Report

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## INTRODUCTION

The Rangers continue to carry out a very diverse range of activities across the hills by leading public events, doing practical work, supervising volunteers and contractors, and being a general point of contact. During the wet and windy months, the Rangers were out checking the condition of trees beside the road at Cothelstone Hill, and between Quarry Breach and Dead Woman's Ditch; as a result remedial safety works were carried out by the Rangers and contractors. A short period of snow also led to access problems across the hills for a few days.

## Habitat Management

- 1.1 Hedgelaying – the Rangers helped to run the competition with the Somerset hedge Group at Cothelstone Manor at the end of November with Open, Novice and Novice Pairs categories being judged. There was a large turn out with over 30 competitors despite the wet weather. Sponsorship from local companies meant that cups and prizes could be given out as well as excellent catering provided.
- 1.2 Cothelstone Hill – volunteers from various groups have carried out further gorse and scrub clearance to allow more of the grassland to be available for the Exmoor ponies to graze.
- 1.3 Supported by the Rangers, our Volunteer Rangers and Estates Team carry out regular practical tasks and patrols as well as talking to the public. Practical work has included hedgelaying in Lydeard Hill car park, litter picking, removing rhododendron regrowth at Wills Neck and digging out the drainage grips beside the Crowcombe to Nether Stowey and Dead Woman's Ditch to the Counting House road.
- 1.4 General work with the volunteers has included cutting and burning rhododendron along the stream in Ramscombe, hedgelaying along the Quantock Greenway in Bicknoller, auditing and upgrading the signage on the Quantock Greenway, litter picking and tree planting/scrub clearance at Stowey Woods.
- 1.5 Work with the monthly Working Well group continues to attract more attendees and helpers. Projects since the autumn have included dry stone walling, coppicing the trees along the rides to allow more light to reach the ground and hedgelaying near Cothelstone Manor.
- 1.6 Swaling – we had a busy swaling season and managed two burns before Christmas. 13 blocks were burnt at various locations across the hills including

sites on Aisholt Common, Lydeard Hill and Great and Marrow Hill. During the exceptionally dry and hot conditions at the end of February we had one burn that got away and required support from the fire service. Despite being an awakening of potential future climate changes, the incident has prompted us to review the health and safety measures in place for swaling. Regular trained volunteers were supplemented with help from trained Commoners.

- 1.7 Slow the Flow – the third year of water management in the upland areas around Wills Neck and Lydeard Hill has helped to reduce the run off of water from the hills into narrow lanes and gullies; the work included installing woody dams by cutting silver birch regrowth on the common and anchoring the logs/brash to allow the build up of leaves and silt, and installing a further section of coir matting to allow a bare patch of ground to re-establish the vegetation.
- 1.8 Further practical tasks allowed the Rangers to work with the Greendays day centre, school Duke of Edinburgh groups and corporate teams from a range of organisations.

## 2.0 Visitor Management

- 2.1 The Rangers helped at a number of public events throughout the winter including the annual Stargazing event at Crowcombe Village hall and a whittling course at Cothelstone Hill and have supported guided walks led by the trained Volunteer Rangers.
- 2.2 Organisers of public run events have been better at communicating such as the Quantock Quake, Duke of Edinburgh groups and horse rides, but there is always scope to improve.
- 2.3 Monitoring of nuisance and damaging activities is a regular part of the role and throughout the winter 4 raves occurred in Forestry England land at Great Wood.
- 2.4 Communications with the Police and PCSO's continues to improve with regular patrols carried out with the Rangers at different times of the week and day. In addition 5 Motor Vehicle Offence Forms were submitted to the Police that were followed up – the offences ranged from illegal off road access to accessing the common to steal conifer trees.
- 2.5 There were 6 cases of fly-tipping reported to or by the AONB Service since November. Reporting to the relevant District Council has resulted in relatively swift removal of the litter.
- 2.6 Rangers attended two schools over the winter; Nether Stowey Primary school hosted a tree themed week. The Rangers helped with a whole school assembly and a tree health survey around the school grounds in March and then a Quantock mammal ID session at Crowcombe and Stogumber Primary School in April.

### 3.0 Wildlife Monitoring

- 3.1 The Rangers and volunteers from Somerset Ornithological Society have started the annual surveys of the pied flycatcher boxes in the combes around Holford. Over 25 new boxes have been built and installed since the spring. Early indications suggest that the numbers of blue tits and pied flycatchers using the boxes are similar to previous years.
- 3.2 The annual deer count took place on the first Sunday in March. The weather conditions were poor with dense fog and drizzle but we managed a turn out of more surveyors (over 50 individuals) than before. The overall count numbers were down on previous years. See attached document for results.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

##### **1. The JAC notes the report**



**To all deer count helpers, landholders and members of QDM&CG**

The 29<sup>th</sup> annual end of winter deer count took place on **Sunday 3rd March 2019**. The weather conditions were poor with patches of fog and drizzle, but all planned back-up dates had similar or worse forecasts. Nevertheless 59 counters took part on the count day with some larger areas being divided up to increase the likelihood of sightings.

After exclusion of probable duplicate sightings (e.g. deer noted to move between blocks during the count) **320** different **red deer** were recorded, of which 40 were prickets or stags. The poor visibility and unusual weather conditions in the weeks and months leading up to the count (exceptionally dry and warm weather in late February) may also have contributed to this comparatively low count this year.

As always, it is important to note that for this annual one-day count we do not presume to see the entire Quantock red deer herd, as some will be missed in concealing cover and a proportion of stags move further off the hills by late winter. The greatest value of the count lies in it being done in the same way year on year, to provide long term trends (see graph overleaf), minimum numbers and a guide to deer distribution.

Whilst the count is designed primarily to record red deer, sightings of **123 Roe** (including at least 19 bucks) were also logged. In addition, two muntjac were recorded in the northern part of the Hills.

Many thanks are due to all volunteers who participated, all Quantock landholders for their continued co-operation, the Quantock Hills AONB/FC staff for their organisational role and to Jochen Langbein for compiling the results.

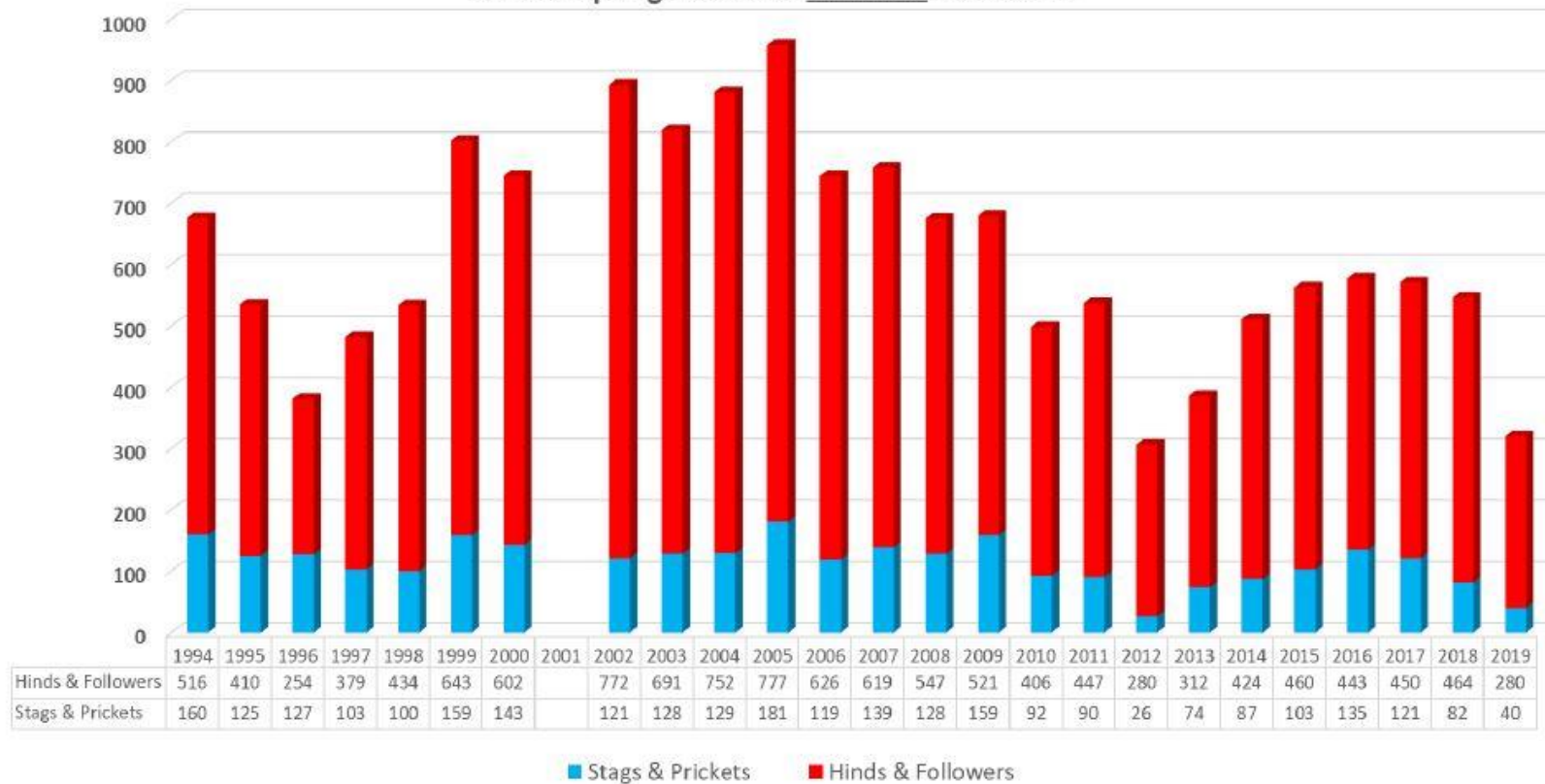
#### Quantock Deer Count - Summary of deer count 3 March 2019

<b>Red Deer</b>	Hinds & Calves (of both sexes)	Prickets	Young Stags	Older Stags ( > 4 yr old)		<b>Roe Deer</b>	<b>Fallow Deer</b>	<b>Muntjac Deer</b>
<b>320:</b>	280	8	26	6		<b>123</b>	0	2

#### Comparison of Red deer counted March 2019 with 4-year average by region:

<u>Year 2019</u>			<u>Average 2015 – 2018</u>		
<b>Total</b>	Hinds & Followers	Prickets & Stags	<b>Total</b>	Hinds & Followers	Prickets & Stags
<b>320</b>	280	40	<b>565</b>	454	110
<b>A: North</b> (all count blocks lying north of the Crowcombe to Overstowey road)					
<b>252</b>	226	26	<b>380</b>	309	71
<b>B: Central:</b> (South of Crowcombe to Overstowey Road to Lydeard Hill, incl. Great Wood, Aisholt)					
<b>66</b>	52	14	<b>166</b>	127	39
<b>C: South-East</b> (all areas south-east of Lydeard Hill – incl. Cothelstone, Broomfield to Kings Cliff.					
<b>2</b>	2	0	<b>10</b>	8	2

**Quantock Deer Management & Conservation Group**  
**Annual Spring Counts of Red deer 1994-2019**



**RED DEER : Totals by Year**

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total	676	535	381	482	534	802	745	FMD	893	819	881	958	745	758	675	680	498	537	306	386	511	563	578	571	546	320

# Paper C



To. Quantock Hills JAC

Status: Quantock Hills AONB Service 2018/19 Budget Outrun Report (mth 12 – 100%)

Date: 04/06/2019.

Author: Iain Porter

	Measure	Budget	Performance	Comments	RAG
CORE	£ / % spent to date	£271,995	£285,018 / 105%	Factoring future commitments predicted £1k overspend in core to be drawn from RIA	😊
	£ / % spent to date [salaries, NI, SA]	£216,133	£224,872 / 104%	Higher expenditure due to pension deficit and apprentice levy being shown in budget. Recharge from SCC received	😊
	£ / % spent to date [training]	£1,550	£1,455 / 94%		😊
	£ / % spent to date [rent, rates, electricity, water, premise insurance]	£13,428	£14,695 / 109%	Increased rent payment in-year	😐
	£ / % spent to date [stationary, post, phones, printing]	£2,400	£3,093 / 129%	Increased printing and phone charges.	😐
	£ / % spent to date [travel, vehicle costs]	£17,484	£18,321 / 105%		😊
	£ / % spent to date [Equipment, maintenance, clothing, uniform]	£4,100	£3,966 / 97%	Expenditure high. Monitor and reduce spend	😊
	£ / % spent to date [Literature, publications, publicity]	£600	£2,852 / 475%	Expenditure high, associated with Management Plan and website	😐
	£ / % spent to date [Meeting costs, hospitality]	£800	£1,176 / 147%	Increased cost associated with Man Plan and LPS consultations	😐
	£ / % spent to date [Management fee, insurance]	£8,700	£8,896 / 102%	Slight overspend due to increase insurance charge	😊
	£ / % spent to date [Memberships]	£2,500	£2,693 / 108%	Slight overspend due to membership of Europarc AI.	😐
	£ / % spent to date [Research & Development]	£4,300	£2,998 / 70%		😊
	£ / % income [core]	-£263,922	-£280,623 / 106%	Increased income from service charges and recoupment from SCC	😊
	<b>Summary</b> – Core Budget deficit was expected to be £8,000 which was to be met from surplus in RIA. End of year balance to be met from RIA is £4,396.				



PROJECTS	Project		Budget	Performance	Comments	RAG
	£ / % spend to date [Nature & Wellbeing Project]		£94,577	£80,582 / 85%	Yr 3 of 4yr project. Public Health provision of additional grant of £17.5k Sept 2018 & £5k March 2019.	😊
	£ / % spend to date [HE-CB]		£5,286	£2,146 / 41%	Yr3 (final year). Historic England Capacity Building Project. Project timeline run over additional works planned 2019/20.	😊
	£ / % spend to date [FWAG-SW/SRA - HTL]		£8,762	£8,287 / 95%	Expenditure from 2017/18 project. New 2019 project to be shown in 2019/20 budgets.	😊
	£ / % spend to date [Access]		£1,000	£0 / 0%	Expenditure on target	😊
	£ / % spend to date [Quantock Views]		£0	£1,013 / 1013%	Residual expenditure from 2017/18. No further expenditure expected.	😊
	£ / % spend to date [HPC - GQLDF]		£152,103	£84,238 / 55%	Yr 5 of 7 yr project. Revised timeline for expenditure to take account of potential link with QH LPS. 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase budget released autumn 2017. Current allocation at 88%.	😊
	£ / % spend to date [HPC - LIS]		£349,005	£245,000 / 70%	Yr 4 of 7 yr project. Expenditure rear loaded due to planning work needed. 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase budget released autumn 2017	😊
	£ / % spend to date [Landscape Partnership]		£101,300	£73,882 / 73%	Contracts and revised expenditure on track. Considering committed expenditure requirement to find additional £3k	😊
RIA	Carry forward (b/f 2017/18)		-£62,654	-£75,792		😊
	LMSS recharge		£0	-£10,800	Miscoded should be income in core	😊
	Viament to Amenity Land		£9,100	£9,252		😊
	Viament to Landscape Partnership		£9,451	£9,451		😊
	Recoupment – SCC HR charges			-£5,932	Recoupment from SCC to cover Pension Deficit and Apprentice Levy	
SUMMARY						
	Budget	Expenditure	Income	Balance	Final figures based on 2018/19 accounts supplied by SCC finance team. Project figures shown for in-year budgets only.	
	Core	£285,018	-£280,623	£4,395		
	Projects	£30,985	-£33,369	-£2,384		
SUMMARY	Landscape Ptn Scheme		£72,833	-£55,101	£17,732	2 <sup>nd</sup> grant claim due May 2019.

	Projects [HPC]	£129,050	-£129,000	£50	
	Amenity Land	£5,715	-24,367	-£18,652	Ring-fenced for management of SWHT / SCC landholdings.
	RIA	£18,703	-£92,524	-£73,820	Includes recoupment from SCC to cover additional HR costs
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£423,938</b>	<b>-£496,618</b>	<b>-£72,680</b>	
			<i>Earmarked Reserve</i>	£24,100	To cover redundancy costs of whole team.
			<i>Carry forward</i>	£18,652	Move to Amenity Land budget
			<i>Carry forward</i>	£14,010	Move to Project (Nature & Wellbeing)
			<i>Accrual</i>	-£17,732	From HLF claim
			<b>Surplus / Deficit</b>	<b>-£33,650</b>	



**To:** Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee

**From:** Iain Porter, Development Officer

04/06/2019

## **Quantock Hills AONB – Short term funding scenarios**

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### **1. Introduction**

- a. This report looks to present the current funding situation for the Quantock Hills AONB Service to aid discussion by the partnership. It sets out the short-term funding model of the AONB Service and identifies the approximate levels of saving / income raising that is required to ensure financial stability.

### **2. Funding history**

- a. In 2009 Quantock Hills AONB Service undertook a piece of work called Quantock Futures. This was in response to the potential reduction in 'core' funding from national and local governments.
- b. Quantock Futures concluded that the present operation and partnership model was the most appropriate but that the Service should look to reduce Core expenditure where possible and look for moderate levels of cost recovery / income generation to supplement national / local government contributions.
- c. From the period 2009 – 2015 core funding from traditional sources to the AONB decreased. From national government the decrease was 26% and from local authorities the decrease was 46% reflecting the increasing pressures the local authorities were facing. Table 1 show the summary core income for the Quantock Hills AONB Service.
- d. During this period the AONB Service looked in to increase funding from 'non-traditional' sources which included
  - i. Cost Recovery – For work undertaken by the AONB Service to other local authorities or organisations. For the Quantock Hills this included land management activities undertaken on behalf of other organisations
  - ii. Charging – For discretionary services such as pre-application planning advice.
  - iii. Philanthropy
- e. During the same period the AONB Service has looked to reduce its core expenditure while maintaining the high level of service delivery expected by the Partnership. This has included minor reductions in staffing levels and reductions in budget areas such as promotions / publications. However core costs continue to increase such as inflationary increases on salaries, apportionment of costs from the host authority and vehicle and travel costs.
- f. To a certain extent the AONB Service has been able to manage the reduction in core income through use of reserves. These reserves had been secured in the period 2006-09 through retaining underspend in project budgets, which had been achieved while achieving the required outputs. This had been agreed in advance with the funders concerned and with the host authority.

- g. These reserves have decreased over the past nine years as core expenditure has exceeded core income. This approach has been the partnerships preferred approach to manage delivery against available income. However due to the level of reserves this situation is not sustainable and the partnership asked the AONB Service to look at the short-term funding scenario to allow informed decisions to be made over core expenditure.

Table 1: Historic Core funding contributions 2009-2018

Source of Income	2009 - 10	2010 - 11	2011 - 12	2012 - 13	2013 - 14	2014 - 15	2015 - 16	2016 - 17	2017 - 18
Core grant (Defra)	207,941	207,941	186,877	176,249	165,621	153,133	153,133	155,767	158,446
Local Authority	89,554	75,500	51,500	53,007	52,957	52,957	48,000	55,931	63,900
Charging / cost recovery	1,000	1,500	1,520	1,498	8,954	5,327	14,503	10,328	7,189
Philanthropic	0	0	0	0	0	600	300	2,610	3,000
Total	298,496	284,941	239,897	230,754	227,532	212,017	215,936	224,636	232,535

### 3. Assumptions

- a. In looking at funding scenarios it is necessary to make assumptions for future years. The following assumptions have been made:
  - i. Core staff unit remains at present level (in terms of number of staff and hours)
  - ii. Core expenditure is comparable to 2018/19 levels in terms of accommodation, vehicle and travel costs and partnership running costs.
  - iii. Inflationary increase of 2% is applied to salaries
  - iv. Local authority contributions remain at current levels
  - v. National government (defra) contributions remain at current levels

### 4. Funding Scenarios

- a. There is currently a lot of uncertainty over how the medium-term funding 'landscape' will look. The Glover Review into National Parks and AONBs, Brexit and the local authority structure in Somerset all have the potential to change how the AONB is funded and operates.
- b. Due to the level of potential change the funding scenario looks at the next two years of AONB budgets. This also corresponds with the timescale for current reserves to reduce unsustainably.
- c. Table 2 identifies that for the current financial year there will be a surplus of approximately £25,000 which will reduce to a deficit of approximately £3,400 by 2020/21. It can be seen that the main reason is the imbalance in expenditure and income in the core., or operating, budget.
- d. To increase sustainability of the AONB budget there is a requirement to either

- i. Reduce AONB core budget by £15,000 in year one with continued reductions to counter inflationary increases in staff costs
  - ii. Increase AONB core budget income by £15,000 in year one with continued increases in income to counter inflationary increase in staff costs
  - iii. A mix of reduction in expenditure and increase in budget to achieve a net balance of £15,000.
- e. The AONB Service is seeking the views of the partnership to achieve a sustainable funding model while acknowledging the significant potential for change in the medium and longer term.

Table 2: AONB budgets 2019-21

<b>Core</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
Salaries, NI, SA	241,542	254,779
Training	1,500	1,500
Rent, rates, electricity, water, premise insurance	13,305	13,305
stationary, post, phones, printing	3,000	3,000
travel, vehicle costs	18,300	18,300
Equipment, maintenance, clothing, uniform	3,500	3,500
Literature, publications, publicity	0	0
Meeting costs, hospitality	800	800
Management Fee, Insurance	8,900	8,900
Memberships	2,500	2,500
Research & Development	300	300
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>293,647</b>	<b>306,884</b>
Income Defra	-163,944	-163,944
Income Local Authorities	-50,200	-50,200
Income Cost Recovery	-11,500	-11,500
Income Friends of Quantock	-1,000	-1,000
Recharge - staff posts	-32,900	-32,900
Recharge - SCC Pen Def & AL	-18,800	-19,000
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>-278,344</b>	<b>-278,544</b>
<i>Balance</i>	<i>15,303</i>	<i>28,340</i>
<b>Projects</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
Expenditure	10,949	0
Income	-11,191	0
<i>Balance</i>	<i>-242</i>	<i>0</i>
<b>HPC Projects</b>		
Expenditure	100,000	30,000
Income	-100,000	-30,000
<i>Balance</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<b>Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme</b>		
Expenditure	27,216	0
Income	-27,216	0
<i>Balance</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<b>Amenity Land</b>		

Expenditure	25,750	15,100
Income	-25,750	-15,100
<i>Balance</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

<b>Receipts in Advance / Reserves</b>		
Expenditure	32,662	0
Income	-72,680	-24,957
<i>Balance</i>	<i>-40,018</i>	<i>-24,957</i>

<b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT</b>	<b>-24,957</b>	<b>3,383</b>
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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The JAC notes the report and comments/advises the AONB Office



# QUANTOCK HILLS

## AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY



### DELIVERY PLAN 2019 – 2024

## Version Information

Version	Date	Consultation	Amendments / Comment
1.0	26/10/18	None	
1.0.1	07/01/2019	Team. Cross checking with LPS, N&W 2 and other projects where delivery will have significant crossover with Delivery Plan.	New objective LM2. Minor amendments to policy wording BWHP1. Change in policies in Development, Planning & Infrastructure theme.
1.1.0	11/02/2019	Wider partnership meeting (5 <sup>th</sup> Feb) feedback on LPS and Delivery Plan	New priority for PRoW / Promoted route signing and waymarking
1.1.1	19/03/2019	Staff feedback round.	Separate column for LPS role to see if document reads better. Inclusion of actions from team.

### **How will the Quantock Hills AONB Management Plan 2019-24 be delivered?**

The Management Plan brings together the actions of many partner, all of which contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The policies contained within the Management Plan outline the task that need to be undertaken in the next five years

The Delivery Plan identifies the actions required to deliver the policies from the Management Plan and who will be involved. It also highlights clearly the anticipated role of the AONB Service.

Resources for delivery are limited and there is much uncertainty into future funding mechanisms, so some actions should be viewed as being aspirational. However the Quantock Hills AONB Partnership has a strong track record on delivery of previous Management Plans and has helped secure significant funding to make more projects and actions outlined achievable.

Building on previous experience the AONB Partnership will secure new funds from a variety of sources to achieve delivery of the Management Plan. The Partnerships' role and sources of funding are reviewed annually and presented in the AONB Partnership's Business Plan. This allows flexibility to prioritise funds and resources as well as realise opportunities when they arise.

### **How does the AONB Partnership Operate?**

The AONB Partnership works together to conserve and enhance the Quantock Hills. Individual partners will engage in the following ways

- Advisory – Providing advice to the AONB Service in delivery of the AONB Management Plan.
- Influence – influences other partners or their own organisations in the work they are undertaking to ensure good practice with regard to the AONB designation
- Promoting – There are two elements to promotion. There is promotion of the Quantock Hills as a AONB and the requirement to conserve and enhance it. There is also promotion of the work of the partnership and the AONB Service

The AONB Partnership also works to share good practice and influence policy development.

### **The Quantock Hills AONB Service**

The AONB Service is a small team who work under the direction of the AONB Partnership. The AONB Service has three roles when it comes to delivering the Quantock Hills AONB Management Plan. These are:

- Lead –The AONB Service takes the lead role in developing, managing and implementing a project or area of work including securing and managing the funds and staffing required to take it forward.
- Partner – The AONB Service is actively involved in the project or area of work maybe by helping to develop or steer it or by providing funding or staff time but the initiative is led by another organisation.
- Promoter – The AONB Service is not actively involved in a project or area of work but may promote it as a delivery element of the Management Plan.

The AONB Service works with many organisations, communities and individuals both within and outside of the partnership.

## **Landscape Scale Delivery – the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme**

During 2019 the Quantock Hills AONB Partnership, along with a number of other partners, is developing a Stage 2 Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS) application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (Heritage Lottery Fund). The application, if successful, will deliver £2.6m of funding through 24 projects which will enhance the natural and historic heritage of the wider Quantock landscape as well as engaging with more people from both local communities and neighbouring urban centres.

The LPS area is based on the landscape character type as identified through the Quantock Hills and Quantock LPS Landscape Character Assessments. The size of the LPS area is approximately 195km<sup>2</sup> nearly double this size of the AONB. The LPS will be delivering projects both within and outside of the AONB and it is difficult during the period of the development to predict outputs within specific geographical areas for many of the projects.

For the purpose of the Delivery Plan actions / projects for which the LPS has a role are identified in the LPS Role column. As the LPS application is going through a competitive process, the outcome of which will be known in March 2020, there are projects / actions which may appear to duplicate LPS projects. Once the outcome of the LPS application is known the Delivery Plan will be reviewed along with relevant Business Plans.

## **Delivering for Land Management**

The Quantock Hills AONB Service is currently one of 12 AONBs across England looking to trial a new approach to agri-environment schemes. Currently called ELMS (England Land Management Schemes) the scheme aims to replace the current Countryside Stewardship Schemes after the UK leaves the EU.

The Quantock Hills proposal is a comprehensive scheme aiming to deliver across all six policies areas as identified by Defra. As already identified the AONB landscape types and therefore farming influence extends beyond the current AONB boundary and the proposal does recognise the need to include the agricultural fringes outside the AONB.

The Quantock proposal does include a request for additional resources to manage and deliver any scheme, which would need to be additional to those existing resources Defra provides.

As of spring 2019 Defra is looking to trial and test a number of the proposals put forward by AONBs and other organisations with the aspiration that the ELM's scheme is fully tested prior to being launched possibly in 2023/24. Actions have been identified which may be delivered by ELMs, though during this Management Plan period, these are expected to be limited to the trial and test phase.

## **Delivering for Wellbeing**

The Somerset AONB's (Blackdown's, Mendips and Quantocks) have been working with Somerset Public Health (Somerset County Council) since April 2016 on a joint project which aimed to encourage non-traditional users to access the protected landscape for health and wellbeing benefits.

The project has been hugely successful and the outputs and outcomes have been significant considering the level of resource allocated to the project.

All project partners are keen to see a further project which builds on the lessons learnt. In partnership with Somerset Wildlife Trust, which has also been delivering a similar Nature and Wellbeing Project, the Somerset AONB's are looking to submit a larger scale bid for a three-year project. The bid is expected to be submitted in spring 2019 with the outcome known autumn 2019.

A number of actions could be delivered by a new project and these are identified through the Delivery Plan.



DRAFT

## The Delivery Plan

The delivery plan draws together all the Objectives from the Quantock Hills AONB Management Plan 2019-24. The Delivery Plan is designed to be a standalone document to allow for ease of reading and should be read in the context of:

- 'A Special Landscape' which sets out the special qualities of the Quantock Hills and some of the issues affecting them.
- The earlier sections of the Management Plan which sets out the background to AONBs and their Management Plans, identifies the natural capital and benefits to society the Quantock Hills provides and establishes the common principals which run through the plan.
- The Delivery Plan takes the Objectives and Management Policies from the Statutory AONB Management Plan and sets out how they will be achieved / reached. The Delivery Plan will be updated annually through the AONB Business Plan and reviewed fully after three years. Some actions will cover the whole five year period of the AONB Management Plan, others are delivered through time limited projects. Due to the potential projects / initiatives covered in the prior section there is inevitable overlap in some areas.

The Delivery Plan presentation:

**Objective** –  
something we want  
to achieve

**Lead** –

Organisation that will start the process of making the action happen

**Partner** –

Not an exclusive list, but list those central to delivering the action. Note – All land management works are assumed to be with the consent and participation of farmers / landowners, so they are not named against each action

**Timescale** –

Years of delivery or  
'number per year'

### Landscape Character & Quality

LM1: To support sustainable land management to improve and extend the special wildlife, landscape and ecosystem services of Quantock Commons and farmland.

Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners / AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
LP1: To protect, understand and enhance the landscape and character of the AONB and support those delivering these elements management in respect of landscape beauty, natural capital and ecosystem services for all land uses.	Relevant AONB Partners to report on an annual basis how decision making has demonstrated 'Due Regard' in relation to decisions made which could impact the AONB	Partnership / All relevant AONB partners	Catalyst Advocate	Annual	2

**Action** –

Work towards meeting  
the objective

**AONB Team Role** –

**Executive** – work it does itself and with others

**Catalyst** – Bringing others together to achieve actions

**Advocate** – promoting and championing

**AONB Team Role** –

As the AONB role  
but for the dedicated  
LPS team

**Priority** –

1 high – 3 low

## Landscape Character & Quality

L1: To encourage and deliver understanding, conservation and enhancement of the character and quality of the AONB landscape through land use and development management that supports its special qualities.

Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>LP1:</b> To protect, understand and enhance the landscape and character of the AONB and support those delivering these elements	<b>LP1/1</b> Relevant AONB Partners to report on an annual basis how decision making has demonstrated 'Due Regard' in relation to decisions made which could impact the AONB	Partnership / All relevant AONB partners	Catalyst		Annual	2
	<b>LP1/2</b> Pursue LEI funding to deliver a project which enhances landscape strength currently impacted by National Grid infrastructure	Partnership / LPS	Executive		2019 - 22	2
	<b>LP1/3</b> Undertake visual intrusion assessment based on 2017 Quantock Hills LCA and 2019 Quantock LPS LCAs	Partnership / LPS	Executive		2020	3
	<b>LP1/4</b> Restore heathland currently used as a car park at Crowcombe Park Gate and provide parking at alternative location	LPS / FoQ, QCA	Catalyst		2022	2
	<b>LP1/5</b> Undertake consultative research into communities views on the special qualities of the Quantock Hills and how these should evolve into the future (25, 50 and 100 years ahead)	Partnership / LPS, NE, HE, FC	Executive		2023	1
<b>LP2:</b> To promote the highest standards of landscape management in respect of landscape beauty, natural capital and ecosystem services for all land uses.	<b>LP2/1</b> Ensure assessment of AONB Business Plan to prioritise actions that achieve objective	Partnership	Executive		Annual	1
	<b>LP2/2</b> Ensure engagement with Defra NELMs targeting promoting special qualities and evidenced based approach at the local level	Partnership	Executive		?	1
	<b>LP2/3</b> Engagement with Quantock Facilitation Fund ensuring special qualities are promoted through events.	Partnership / FWAG-SW	Catalyst		2019-21	2
<b>LP3:</b> To encourage public understanding and support for landscape conservation and	<b>LP3/1</b> Undertake an annual programme of public accessible walks, talks and events ensuring events promote special qualities of the AONB	Partnership / NT, FC, LPS	Executive		Annual	2

enhancement.	<b>LP3/2</b> Publish articles / blogs etc through social media and e-newsletter that discuss importance of landscape as a concept	Partnership	Executive		Annual	3
	<b>LP3/3</b> Run campaign exploring the importance of views and landscape through photographic competitions or similar events	Partnership	Executive		Annual	3
<b>LP4:</b> To further develop, promote and utilise the landscape character approach in AONB management and policy, including development of LCA-based design guidance.	<b>LP4/1</b> Embed Quantock Hills LCA in AONB Partnership Business Planning process.	Partnership	Executive		Annual	1
	<b>LP4/2</b> Include LCA section on the AONB website.	Partnership	Executive		2019	3
	<b>LP4/3</b> Develop design guidance	Partnership / LPS, LA	Catalyst		2023 - 2024	2
<b>LP5:</b> To continue to offer landscape character advice to Local Planning Authorities in strategic and development management consultations.	<b>LP5/1</b> Employment of a Landscape Planning Officer	Partnership	Executive		Annual	1
	<b>LP5/2</b> Renew / seek agreement with local planning authorities to provide costed pre-application advice.	Partnership / LA	Executive		Annual	1

Land Management: Farming, Forestry & Catchment						
LM1: To support sustainable land management to improve and extend the special wildlife, landscape and ecosystem services of Quantock Commons and farmland.						
Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS tole	Timescale	Priority
<b>LMP1:</b> To protect, maintain and where appropriate extend the dry acid grassland, acid flushes/mires, open moorland and upland oakwoods with their important bird assemblage, of Quantock Common.	<b>LP2/2</b> Ensure engagement with Defra NELs targeting promoting special qualities and evidenced based approach at the local level	Partnership	Executive		?	1
	<b>LP2/3</b> Engagement with Quantock Facilitation Fund ensuring special qualities are promoted through events.	Partnership / FWAG-SW	Catalyst		2019-21	2
	<b>LMP1/1</b> Explore option trial sites for management in SAC oak woodlands	NE / Partnership	Catalyst		2022	2
	<b>LMP1/2</b> Undertake summer heathland breeding bird survey, using results to feed into NE SSSI management plan	Partnership / NE, RSPB, SoS	Catalyst		2024	2
	<b>LMP1/3</b> Ensure SSSI targeting through NELMs to allow feasibility of continued management of heathland	NE / Partnership	Advocate		?	1
	<b>LP1/4</b> Restore heathland currently used as a car park at Crowcombe Park Gate and provide parking at alternative location	LPS / FoQ, QCA	Catalyst		2022	2
<b>LMP2:</b> To encourage and support the positive management of Quantock farmland, woodland and water catchment through engagement with the development and delivery of a high quality locally responsive land management scheme.	<b>LMP2/1</b> Engage with Defra in the running of NELMs trials / tests to ensure Quantock Hills special qualities are included in future schemes.	Partnership / FWAG-SW	Executive		2019	1
	<b>LMP2/2</b> Provide workshops for local farmers / landowners to support them to access CS / NELMs funding	FWAG-SW / Partnership	Catalyst		Annual	1
<b>LMP3:</b> To support the understanding, conservation and proper management of Quantock hedges and associated banks.	<b>LMP3/1</b> Undertake parish level hedge survey	LPS / Partnership	Advocate		2020-25	2
	<b>LMP3/2</b> Ensure targeting of beech hedgebanks through NELMs.	Partnership	Executive		?	1
	<b>LMP3/3</b> Undertake 'showcase' examples of beech hedgebank restoration at key sites throughout the	LPS / Partnership	Catalyst		2020-23	2

	Quantock Hills to promote appropriate management					
	<b>LMP3/4</b> Provide third party grants for appropriate hedge management / creation.	LPS	Advocate		2020-24	3
	<b>LMP3/5</b> Support volunteer / community training in appropriate hedge management techniques	Partnership / FWAG-SW	Catalyst		2019-24	2
<b>LMP4:</b> To support the sensitive management of woodland and plantations to enhance and extend the distinctive character, landscape and wildlife of the Quantocks.	<b>LMP4/1</b> Undertake surveys and assessments of appropriate woodlands to identify and record lichens, mosses and liverworts	Plantlife / Partnership	Advocate		2019-21	2
	<b>LMP4/2</b> Deliver a series of workshops / training events to cover appropriate management of woodlands through the Quantock Facilitation Fund and Plantlife's Building Resilience Project	FWAG-SW / Plantlife	Advocate		2019-21	1
	<b>LMP4/3</b> Influence Woodland Management Plans to ensure Quantock special qualities are enhanced through woodland management	FC	Advocate		Annual	2
	<b>LMP5:</b> To encourage and support the creation and positive management of privately owned woodland and orchards, bringing more into management to increase the wide range of ecosystem services provided.					
	<b>LMP5/1</b> Undertake connectivity study to identify and prioritise woodland / hedgerow creation opportunities.	Partnership / LPS	Executive		2021-23	1
	<b>LMP5/2</b> Ensure targeting of Quantock Hills for woodland creation and management grant	FC	Advocate		Annual	1
	<b>LMP5/3</b> Support Community Groups undertaking woodland management through provision of advice, grants and training	LPS / FC	Catalyst		2020-24	2
	<b>LMP4/2</b> Deliver a series of workshops / training events to cover appropriate management of woodlands through the Quantock Facilitation Fund and Plantlife's Building Resilience Project	FWAG-SW / Plantlife	Advocate		2019-21	1

## Biodiversity: Wildlife & Habitats

BWH1: To maintain and enrich the biodiversity and ecosystems of the Quantocks at the landscape scale.

Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>BWHP1:</b> To engage with development of land management, agri-environment and/or other innovative schemes to protect, connect and expand valuable Quantock habitats both inside and outside the AONB boundary.	<b>LMP5/1</b> Undertake connectivity study to identify and prioritise woodland / hedgerow creation opportunities.	Partnership / LPS	Executive		2021-23	1
	<b>LP2/2</b> Ensure engagement with Defra NELs targeting promoting special qualities and evidenced based approach at the local level	Partnership	Executive		?	1
	<b>LMP2/1</b> Engage with Defra in the running of NELMs trials / tests to ensure Quantock Hills special qualities are included in future schemes.	Partnership / FWAG-SW	Executive		2019	1
	<b>LMP2/3</b> Ensure targeting of NFM initiatives include measures to protect and enhance the landscapes and habitats of the AONB	Partnership / FWAG-SW / SRA	Executive		Annual	1
<b>BWHP4:</b> To support the managed conversion of plantations (wholly or in part) to heathland or semi-natural woodland where this strengthens the existing network of habitats.	<b>BWHP4/1</b> Ensure Woodland Management Plans realise opportunities for conversion to open / broadleaf woodlands	Partnership / FC	Advocate		Annual	1
	<b>BWHP4/2</b> Undertake conversion of plantation to open habitat and / or broadleaf woodland where appropriate through the LIS Project	FC / Partnership	Catalyst		2019-23	2
BWH2: to increase knowledge and understanding of the biodiversity and ecosystems of the Quantocks and their linkages to the surrounding area.						
Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>BWHP2:</b> To monitor biodiversity through regular surveys of key species across the AONB.	<b>BWHP2/1</b> Work with SERC and recorder groups to undertake gap analysis of monitoring	Partnership / LPS, SERC	Catalyst		2020	2
	<b>BWHP2/2</b> Maintain existing monitoring schemes (deer, pied flycatchers, bats, butterflies, dormice) through provision of training, resources and support	Partnership / SERC, LPS	Executive		Annual	1

	<b>BWHP2/3</b> Develop species monitoring schemes to support existing schemes.	LPS	Catalyst		2020-24	2
<b>BWHP3:</b> To monitor and manage harmful invasive species and diseases across the AONB.	<b>BWHP3/1</b> Ensure funding is prioritised for invasive species control over priority habitats through existing or new schemes	NE / Partnership	Advocate		Annual	2
	<b>BWHP3/2</b> To undertake, where appropriate, invasive species control and management through AONB task groups, such as the QCV.	Partnership / NE, FC	Executive		Annual	3
<b>BWHP5:</b> To research and monitor the populations and ecological networks of key Quantock species and use the information gained to inform management actions that will maintain or restore robust populations of these species.	<b>BWHP5/1</b> Undertake rapid woodland assessments and ensure records of monitoring are used to inform appropriate management of woodlands	Plantlife / FC	Advocate		2019-22	2
	<b>BWHP5/2</b> Host a biological Recording Day presenting monitoring results, ensuring relevant organisations such as NE and FC are present	Partnership / LPS, SERC, FoQ	Catalyst		2020, 2022, 2024	2

Historic Environment and Cultural Influences						
HE1: To ensure the historic and culturally significant landscape and features of the AONB are protected, conserved and understood in detail.						
Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>HEP1:</b> Support the protection, conservation and reinstatement of historic and culturally significant Quantock landscapes and features, particularly assets on the Heritage at Risk Register.	<b>HEP1/1</b> Undertake conservation works on heritage at risk assets	LPS / HE	Advocate		2020-24	1
	<b>HEP1/2</b> Engage with the Somerset Highways Parish Signs project to train volunteers in restoration of traditional roadsigns	PC / LA, LPS, Partnership	Catalyst		Annual	2
<b>HEP2:</b> Promote public understanding of the significance of the Quantock historic and cultural landscape through community engagement and appropriate interpretation.	<b>HEP2/1</b> Undertake archaeological events aimed and public engagement to promote importance of historic heritage of the Quantock Hills	SWHT / LPS	Advocate		2020 2022 2024	3
	<b>HEP2/2</b> Undertake schools-based arts programme increasing knowledge of romantic poetry movement and role of landscape in its formation.	LPS / SPAEDA,	Advocate		2020-24	2



	<b>LP3/1</b> Undertake an annual programme of public accessible walks, talks and events ensuring events promote special qualities of the AONB	LPS / Partnership, NT, FoQ	Catalyst		Annual	2
<b>HEP3:</b> The further investigation and recording of historic and culturally significant Quantock landscapes and features.	<b>HEP3/1</b> Continue monitoring of Scheduled Monuments through support of Heritage Monitoring Volunteer Group	Partnership / LPS, HE	Executive		Annual	2
	<b>HEP3/2</b> Develop and support monitoring of estate parkland and associated heritage features	LPS / Partnership, HE	Advocate		2020-24	2
	<b>HEP3/3</b> Endure the collation, recording and appropriate storage of Quantock heritage articles, documents, pictures etc	FoQ / LPS SWHT	Advocate		2020-24	3

Geology & Climate						
GC1: To maintain, protect and promote understanding of the coastal SSSI and a representative sample of other visible Quantock geology.						
Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>GCP1:</b> To maintain representative example exposures of Quantock geology with public access where safe, and interpret them for the public where appropriate.	<b>GCP1/1</b> Work with key landowners to interpret geological exposures where publicly accessible and of interest	Partnership / SERC	Executive		2021-23	3
	<b>GCP1/2</b> Update and produce digital version of Geological Information Leaflet	Partnership	Executive		2022	3
<b>GCP2:</b> To protect the high quality of Quantock coastal landform and their distinctive landscape contribution from inappropriate development and activities.	<b>GCP2/1</b> Undertake Seascape Assessment to support the Quantock Hills LCA providing better understanding of the coastal fringe in terms of impacts of development	Partnership / LA	Executive		2021	2
	<b>GCP2/2</b> Ensure importance of geological SSSI is promoted through interpretation and specific public events	Partnership / NE, LPS	Catalyst		Annual	2
GC2: To identify and reinforce adaptation strategies and resilience to climate change in respect of the special qualities of the AONB.						

Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>GCP3:</b> To assess the climate change adaptation priorities and possibilities in respect of the special qualities of the AONB through implementation of the Natural England Climate Change Adaptation Manual (NE546).	<b>GCP3/1</b> Undertake climate change adaptation assessment for relevant habitats of the Quantock Hills	Partnership / NE	Executive		2021	1
	<b>GCP3/2</b> Ensure learning from adaptation assessment is built into NELMs advice / support	Partnership / NE, FWAG-SW	Catalyst		2022	1
	<b>GCP3/2</b> Provide a series of workshops providing adaptation / resilience advice to landowners / farmers	FWAG-SW / Partnership, NE	Catalyst		2022-24	2
<b>GCP4:</b> To take a strategic landscape scale approach to the creation, restoration and maintenance of habitats in the AONB to maximise Quantock wildlife and landscape resilience to the impacts of climate change.	<b>LMP5/1</b> Undertake connectivity study to identify and prioritise woodland / hedgerow creation opportunities.	Partnership / LPS	Executive		2021-23	1

Development, Planning & Infrastructure						
DPI1: To ensure development and infrastructure conserves and enhances the AONB; that it is compatible with its distinctive character described by the LCA, not compromising the special qualities of the AONB outlined in the Statement of Significance						
Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>DPIP1:</b> Protect the special qualities of the AONB through appropriate recognition in forward planning documents and significant planning applications reflecting AONB Service consultation, comments and advice.	<b>DPIP1/1</b> Consult partnership and other relevant organisations on forward planning strategies and significant development	LA / Partnership	Catalyst		Annual	1
	<b>DPIP1/2</b> Provide adequate resource / professional capacity to respond to consultation from LAs on strategic planning and significant development	Partnership / LAs	Executive		Annual	1
<b>DPIP2:</b> Ensure development and infrastructure in the AONB is	<b>DPIP2/1</b> Ensure development and infrastructure within the AONB is assessed with regard to the	LA / Partnership	Advocate		Annual	1

appropriate in location, landscape sensitivity, scale and design respecting its distinctive character described by the LCA and its special qualities outlined in the Statement of Significance.	purposes of the AONB					
	<b>DPIP2/2</b> Ensure professional / relevantly skilled resources are available to undertake appropriate assessment of impact of development / infrastructure upon the Quantock Hills AONB	LA	Advocate		Annual	1
<b>DPIP3:</b> Protect local distinctiveness in AONB settlements and Quantock lanes and roads.	<b>DPIP3/1</b> Produce and promote design guidance, ensure adoption by relevant local authorities	Partnership / LA	Executive		2023	2
	<b>DPIP3/2</b> Develop a partnership agreement with relevant local authorities for development of highways within the AONB	Partnership / LA	Executive		2023	2
<b>DPIP4:</b> Consider the impacts of Permitted Development on the special qualities of the AONB and whether they can be mitigated	<b>DPIP4/1</b> Undertake impact assessment (special qualities) of all known GPDO structures since 2015	Partnership / LA	Executive		2022	2
	<b>DPIP4/2</b> With evidence from GPDO impact assessment seek appropriate planning direction	Partnership / LA	Catalyst		2023	2
<b>DPIP5:</b> Ensure development in the AONB maintains or delivers net gain in biodiversity, protects significant trees and other important landscape features and promotes the conservation of the historic environment.	<b>DPIP5/1</b> Undertake sample assessment of gain / loss for biodiversity / landscape features / historic assets through development in the AONB, ensure learning informs decisions of local authorities in regard to development	Partnership / FoQ, NE, HE	Executive		2022	1
	<b>DPIP5/2</b> Run annual workshop for local authority planning staff to promote AONB purpose, good and bad practice.	Partnership / LA	Executive		Annual	2
<b>DPIP6:</b> Ensure development in the setting of the AONB does not harm the natural beauty, character and special qualities of the AONB or otherwise prejudice the delivery of AONB purposes.	<b>DPIP3/1</b> Produce and promote design guidance, ensure adoption by relevant local authorities	Partnership / LA	Executive		2023	2
	<b>DPIP2/2</b> Ensure professional / relevantly skilled resources are available to undertake appropriate assessment of impact of development / infrastructure upon the Quantock Hills AONB	LA	Advocate		Annual	1
<b>DPIP7:</b> Protect the dark skies and tranquillity of the AONB.	<b>DPIP7/1</b> Promote the CPRE Dark Skies and Tranquillity research and reports through public events and information	Partnership	Executive		Annual	2
	<b>DPIP3/1</b> Produce and promote design guidance, ensure adoption by relevant local authorities	Partnership / LA	Executive		2023	2
<b>DPIP8:</b> Protect the views in to and out	<b>DPIP1/2</b> Provide adequate resource / professional	Partnership /	Executive		Annual	1

of the AONB through involvement in the planning process	capacity to respond to consultation from LAs on strategic planning and significant development	LAs				
	<b>DPIP8/1</b> Undertake public consultation and feedback on importance of views. Produce report and ensure learning enhances decision making on relevant development	Partnership / LA, LPS	Executive		2024	2

Local Economy & Visitors						
LEV1: To support tourism and economic activity across the AONB where it is environmentally sustainable and benefits businesses in local communities.						
Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>LEVP1:</b> To work with local businesses and support new markets for farmers that promote sustainable growth and the special qualities of the AONB.	<b>LEVP1/1</b> Investigate potential of 'Quantock' brand in adding value to appropriate products.	Partnership	Executive		2023	2
	<b>LEVP1/2</b> Run workshops for farmers / landowners that demonstrate appropriate diversity opportunities with regard to the special qualities of the AONB	FWAG-SW / Partnership	Catalyst		2019-21	2
<b>LEVP2:</b> To provide evidence for decision making through monitoring visitor trends and activities, including economic benefits and impacts on the special qualities of the AONB.	<b>LEVP2/1</b> Collate quantitative visitor data being gathered by various landowners at key visitor locations in the AONB	Partnership / NT, FC	Executive		Annual	3
	<b>LEVP2/2</b> Undertake online user survey allowing comparable analysis with 2018 User Survey	Partnership	Executive		2021, 2023	2
<b>LEVP3:</b> To Support landscape-sensitive delivery of fast broadband throughout the AONB.	<b>LEVP3/1</b> Lobby government / local authorities to ensure delivery of fast broadband to rurally isolated areas	Partnership	Executive		2022	2
	<b>LEVP3/2</b> Produce report of good practice case studies in alternative fast broadband provision from other rural areas to inform Quantock local communities.	Partnership	Executive		2022	3

Access, Recreation & Wellbeing						
ARW1: To provide high quality public access in appropriate areas of the Quantocks, promoting the health and wellbeing benefits of recreation in the AONB while minimising adverse environmental impacts.						
Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>ARWP1:</b> To actively seek opportunities that maximise the health	<b>ARWP1/1</b> Support the development of new Nature & Wellbeing project working in partnership with	SWT / Partnership,	Catalyst		2019-21	1

and wellbeing benefits the AONB can offer through partnership working and projects.	other protected landscapes and relevant organisations	SPH				
	<b>ARWP1/2</b> Provision of relevant advice and information to allow access and confidence for groups and individuals to use the Quantock Hills for health and wellbeing purposes	Partnership / SPH	Executive		2020	2
	<b>ARWP1/3</b> Provision of events / volunteering opportunities that will enhance the wellbeing of recipients	Partnership / LPS, NT, FC	Catalyst		Annual	2
<b>ARWP2:</b> To pursue high quality sustainable access to popular AONB visitor locations through the Active Travel Routes approach.	<b>ARWP2/1</b> Investigate non-car routes from Stockmoor and west Bridgwater utilising walking / cycling infrastructures associated with HPC ancillary developments	LA / Partnership	Catalyst		2023	2
	<b>ARWP2/2</b> Support provision of non-car route from Taunton North developments to Quantock fringes where provision would not be detrimental to the special qualities of the AONB	Partnership / NT, LA, HGT	Advocate		?	2
<b>ARWP3:</b> To ensure public access areas, Rights of Way and promoted routes are useable and maintained to a high standard.	<b>ARWP3/1</b> Undertake sample access audits at sites and on rights of way to assess useability	Partnership / LA, NT, FC, SWHT	Catalyst		Annual	2
	<b>ARWP3/2</b> Provide relevant and up to date accessibility information through websites and other relevant outputs	Partnership / NT, SWHT, FC	Catalyst		Annual	2
	<b>ARWP3/3</b> Monitor and prioritise maintenance of key promoted routes	Partnership / NT, FC	Executive		Annual	2
	<b>ARWP3/4</b> Support parish council to develop Parish Paths projects with Somerset County Council to monitor condition of Rights of Way and to improve signage and waymarking,	SCC / Partnership	Catalyst		Annual	2
	<b>ARWP3/5</b> Undertake audit of Rights of Way signage off of Quantock Common	Partnership / SCC	Executive		2020	3
<b>ARWP4:</b> To reduce user conflict and limit damage to rights of way and landscape quality from recreational uses including off-road driving.	<b>ARWP4/1</b> Continue to manage events notification programme	Partnership / FC, NT	Executive		Annual	1
	<b>ARWP4/2</b> Co-ordinate liaison of conservation and enforcement organisations to address user conflict	Partnership / FC, NT,	Catalyst		Annual	2

	and access issues	Police, NE				
	<b>ARWP4/3</b> Promote key education messages at appropriate times of the year to raise awareness of relevant issues (e.g. sheep worrying, summer fires, bird nesting etc)	Partnership / FC, NT, NE	Catalyst		Annual	1
<b>ARWP5:</b> To maintain practical AONB staff on the ground to support volunteers, manage Rights of Way misuse and reduce access problems such as sheep worrying and summer fires.	<b>ARWP5/1</b> Ensure adequate resource to maintain practical AONB Staff on the ground	Partnership	Executive		Annual	2

## Community & Volunteering

CV1: To support and promote active communities and volunteer involvement in the AONB.

Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>CVP1:</b> To support sustainable village and rural projects which address AONB Management Plan related issues.	<b>CVP1/1</b> Secure external funding to provide small grants fund available to parishes / community groups for projects which address AONB Management Plan related issues	Partnership / LPS	Executive		Annual	1
	<b>CVP1/2</b> Ensure adequate resource to support parishes / community group in securing funding for projects which address AONB Management Plan related issues	Partnership	Executive		Annual	2
<b>CVP2:</b> To support, within available resources, Quantock communities in the development and delivery of Community and Neighbourhood Planning where there is no conflict with AONB objectives.	<b>CVP2/1</b> Undertake initial screening of Community and Neighbourhood plans and where resources allow support development	Partnership	Advocate		Annual	3
	<b>CVP2/2</b> Produce guidance for local communities looking to produce Community / Neighbourhood Plans promoting special qualities of the AONB	Partnership	Executive		2020	2
<b>CVP3:</b> To further develop the role of community groups and volunteers in the management of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.	<b>CVP3/1</b> Ensure adequate resource to manage existing and in-development volunteer groups	Partnership	Executive		Annual	1
	<b>CVP3/2</b> Develop new volunteering opportunities in support of health & wellbeing, Heritage and wildlife monitoring work streams	LPS / Partnership, NT, FC, SERC	Catalyst		2020-2024	2
	<b>CVP3/3</b> Support the development of community supported forestry and woodland management groups through provision of training, resources and equipment	LPS / Partnership	Catalyst		2020-2024	2



Public Understanding & Interpretation						
PUI1: To continually update and improve the relevance, quality and accessibility of Quantock information and interpretation for AONB visitors and local communities, within available resources.						
Management Policy	Action	Lead Partners /	AONB Team Role	LPS Role	Timescale	Priority
<b>PUIP1:</b> To maintain varied, regular and stimulating social media outputs, promoting core messages.	<b>PUIP1/1</b> Run SM campaign on annual basis based on one core message ensuring partners engage	Partnership	Catalyst		Annual	1
	<b>PUIP1/2</b> Undertake SM relevant training for partners to enhance efficiency and impact of SM use	Partnership / SWHT, NT, FC, FoQ	Catalyst		2020	3
<b>PUIP2:</b> To further develop and populate the AONB website as a public source of information and interest.	<b>PUIP2/1</b> Run annual photographic competition providing updated promotional content for website	Partnership / LPS	Executive		Annual	2
	<b>PUIP2/2</b> Investigate potential for community led population / development of AONB website content	Partnership / LPS	Catalyst		2020-24	3
<b>PUIP3:</b> To develop and deliver interpretation and activities that increase visitors' understanding of the landscape and heritage of the Quantocks and encourage them to actively care for the area.	<b>LP3/1</b> Undertake an annual programme of public accessible walks, talks and events ensuring events promote special qualities of the AONB	Partnership / LPS, NT, FC	Executive		Annual	2
	<b>PUIP3/1</b> Undertake annual 'Big' event aimed at family groups which will celebrate the Quantock landscape	LPS / Partnership, NT, FC, SWHT	Catalyst		2020-24	2
	<b>PUIP3/2</b> Engage schools through Building Resilience Project in the importance of	Partner	Advocate		2019-22	2
	<b>HEP2/1</b> Undertake archaeological events aimed and public engagement to promote importance of historic heritage of the Quantock Hills	SWHT / LPS	Advocate		2020 2022 2024	3

	<b>PUIP3/3</b> Develop the interpretative impact of the main visitor locations of Fyne Court, Kilve Beach and Great Wood	NT / FC / Partnership, LPS	Advocate		2020-24	2
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## Glossary / Key

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Defra	Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs
CPRE	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England
FC	Forestry Commission / Forestry England
FoQ	Friends of Quantock
GPDO	General Permitted Development Order – allows certain works that would normally require planning permission to be permitted as scale or type of works are generally not likely to have an unacceptable impact.
HGT	Hestercombe Gardens Trust
LA	Local Authorities
LPS	Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme
NE	Natural England
NELMs	New Environmental Land Management Scheme
PC	Parish Councils
QCA	Quantock Commoners Association
Plantlife	Plantlife – Organisation delivering the Building Resilience Project
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SoS	Somerset Ornithological Society
SPH	Somerset Public Health
SWHT	South West Heritage Trust
SWT	Somerset Wildlife Trust

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