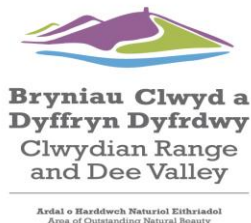



# Public Document Pack



Bryniau Clwyd a Dyffryn Dyfrdwy AHNE  
Park Gwledig Loggerheads, Yr Wyddgrug, Sir Ddinbych CH7 5LH

Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB  
Loggerheads Country Park, Nr. Mold, Denbighshire CH7 5LH

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To: Members of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee  
Date: 19 November 2018  
Direct Dial: 01824 712589  
Email: [democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk)

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **FRIDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2018** in **MEETING ROOM 1, GUILDHALL, WREXHAM**.

Yours sincerely

G. Williams  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

## AGENDA

- 1 INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 2 MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 JUNE 2018** (Pages 3 - 8)
- 3 DRAFT MINUTES OF AONB PARTNERSHIP HELD 13 OCTOBER 2018** (Pages 9 - 16)
- 4 JOINT COMMITTEE BUDGET** (Pages 17 - 28)
- 5 FUTURE LANDSCAPES WALES** (Pages 29 - 50)

To receive a verbal update of a follow-up meeting of the above on 14 November.



**6 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018**

Item for information only.

**7 GRAZING ANIMALS SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT SCHEME**

**8 NATIONAL GIRD LEI LEGACY TO MOLD AND SPEN  
(UNDERGROUNDING SCHEMES) (Pages 51 - 52)**

**9 UPDATE OUR PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE**

**10 SUMMARY OF AONB PLANNING CONSULTATIONS APRIL TO  
SEPTEMBER 2018 (Pages 53 - 58)**

Item for information only.

**11 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 59 - 62)**

To receive revised updated work programme (copy attached).

**12 FUTURE MEETING DATES 2019**

8 March 2019 – Mold

21 June 2019 – Ruthin

22 November 2019 – Wrexham

**MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor Derek Butler  
Councillor Hugh Jones  
Councillor David Kelly

Councillor Carolyn Thomas  
Councillor Tony Thomas  
Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill

**COPIES TO:**

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## **CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Friday, 22 June 2018 at 10.00 am.

### **PRESENT**

Councillors: Tony Thomas (Chair) and Julian Thompson-Hill (DCC)  
Councillor: Carolyn Thomas (FCC)  
Councillors: Hugh Jones and Carolyn Thomas (WCBC)

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Councillors Melvin Mile and Emrys Wynne (DCC)

Karen Weaver (AONB Communications Officer), Ceri Lloyd (AONB SDF Officer), Paul Mitchell (Natural Resources Wales), Helen Mrowiec (Senior Recreation Officer), Paula O'Hanlon (Senior Finance and Assurance Officer, DCC), Howard Sutcliffe (AONB Officer), David Shiel (Assistant AONB Officer), Michael Skuse (AONB Partnership and Friends of AONB), Gary Williams (Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services, DCC), Gareth O Williams (Finance Manager, DCC), and Andy Worthington (Chair of AONB Partnership).

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Derek Butler

## **1 INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Derek Butler (Flintshire County Council).

Three were no declarations of interest submitted.

The outgoing Chair asked all the attendees to introduce themselves.

## **2 ELECTION OF CHAIR**

The outgoing Chair Councillor Hugh Jones (WCBC) nominated Councillor Tony Thomas (DCC) to succeed him as Chair of the AONB Joint Committee, the nomination was seconded by Councillor Carolyn Thomas (WCBC) and the vote carried unanimously.

Councillor Hugh Jones (WCBC) expressed his pleasure to have been Chair and thanked Councillor Carolyn Thomas for the foundations she had set previously as Chair and ongoing support. He also thanked officers for their dedication and enthusiasm.

Councillor Tony Thomas thanked Councillor Jones for his service and echoed his gratitude to the officers who had assisted him from the partnerships. Councillor Thomas ruminated over the past 12 months as a Councillor, commenting at the steepness of the learning curve and visiting places he never knew existed with AONB officers.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2ND FEBRUARY 2018**

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 2 February 2018 were submitted.

#### Matters arising

Item 5, page 4, Karen Weaver (AONB Communications Officer) had successfully convinced Theatr Clwyd to use the two AONB short films presented by Helen Mroweic (Senior Recreation Officer) as trailers to their feature films.

Item 9, page 7, two grants had been agreed for signage by the Trunk Road Agency and a meeting had been held with Trefor Community to discuss the Clinker Path.

Item 11, page 7, Councillor Hugh Jones had written to the Minister requesting the frequency of litter clearance from the 3 trunk roads (A55, A494 and A5)/

The Committee discussed the state of various trunk roads and debated who was responsible financing the clearing of litter? Councillor David Kelly commented that it was the cutting of the undergrowth that revealed the litter and therefore the clean-up should come out of the Trunk Road Agency's budget. The Committee discussed the merits of reducing the amount of cutting of vegetation and instead investing that money into litter removal. It was agreed that the Councillor Hugh Jones would forward the letter sent to the Minister to the Chair to chase up.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- I. That the minutes be agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair and*
- II. The Chair seeks a response to the litter clearance query from the Minister.*

### **4 DRAFT MINUTES OF AONB PARTNERSHIP HELD 9TH MARCH 2018**

The Chair congratulated Andy Worthington (AW) for his reappointment as Chair to the AONB Partnership and asked him to update the Committee on the Partnership's work.

Referring to the Partnerships minutes (previously circulated) he commented on:

- I. Depletion of the Curlew population
- II. The division of the Recreation and Tourism Working Group into separate groups
- III. Presentation by Ceri Lloyd on the SDF
- IV. Appointment of consultant to appraise visitor sites and

V. Seeking applications for outstanding contribution for the AONB Award.

AW also brought up the recent correspondence from Hannah Blythyn AM seeking feedback from existing designated Areas of Natural Beauty whether they wanted parity with National Parks going forward. The Committee wish for a future report on the pros and cons of the designation National Park.

The AONB Partnership had asked Officers to produce a feasibility report / SWOT analysis on potential designation as a National Park to be brought back to October's meeting. The Committee were asked for an endorsement to continue research which was agreed. It was also agreed to add an item on National Parks to the next AONB Joint Committee meeting.

**RESOLVED that:**

- I. the AONB Partnership minutes be noted;*
- II. the Committee endorsed the Partnership's further research into National Park designation and*
- III. Update on research on National Park status be added as an item to the AONB Joint Committee forward work programme.*

**5 JOINT COMMITTEE BUDGET**

DCC's Finance Manager (GW) introduced the report on the Joint Committees Outturn and Accounts 2017/18 & Budget 2018/19 (previously circulated).

Members were asked to note the financial outturn for 2017/18 (Appendix 1) and formally approve the 2018/19 budget (appendix 2). Members were also asked to review and sign, the Annual Return for 2017/18 (Appendix 3) and note the Reserve Balances as at 31st March 2018 (Appendix 4).

Councillor Carolyn Thomas referred to the large discrepancy in the budget and outturn for Site Management in appendix 1. The AONB Manager (HS) explained that they were going through a transitional period, that some work from the end of the previous year had been carried forward and any unused funds were used for contingency management plans.

Members agreed that the total expenditure of £176,341 showed excellent value for money.

**RESOLVED that:**

*The Financial outturn for 2017/18 and reserve balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 be noted and the 2018/19 Budget be approved.*

**6 REPORT ON SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

The AONB Officer (HS) introduced the report (previously circulated) informing the Committee that all three local planning authorities (DCC, FCC & WCBC) had adopted the Supplementary Planning Guidance and asked that the Committee approved the attached document (appendix 1).

**RESOLVED:** *that the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Supplementary Planning Guidance be approved.*

## **7 AONB HIGHLIGHTS ANNUAL REPORT**

The AONB Officer (HS) explained that as a statutory committee there was a requirement to produce the annual report (previously circulated). Referring to the report he highlighted:

- various (average) attendance rates:
  - Joint committee meetings – 90%
  - Partnership meetings – 77%
  - AONB Officer Group meetings – 79%
- A slight increase in planning applications and
- A number of schemes completed with SP Energy – including £145k at Moel y Parc and £37k at Pontcysyllte Aquaduct.

The AONB Manager informed the Committee that Clare Pillman – Chief Executive Natural Resources Wales – had committed to liaise on their behalf with Dwr Cymru regarding the sewerage treatment works below the aquaduct.

Updating the Committee on the World Heritage Site masterplan the AONB Manager announced that the work was progressing well, particularly the engagement with local communities.

**RESOLVED:** *that the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB annual report 2017/18 be endorsed.*

## **8 HIGHLIGHTS OF WORK OF RANGER TEAM 2017-18**

The Assistant AONB Officer (DS) gave a Powerpoint presentation on the work of the Ranger Team.

In response to Member's questions he confirmed that:

- Whilst there were areas with Japanese Knotweed it was not as invasive as Himalayan Balsam in the AONB.
- The Partnership looked at all invasive species and developed a response to them.
- The Bull Toad was not yet a problem in North Wales as it has become in other parts of the UK.
- There were various group of volunteers established throughout the AONB – an exhibition of their work could be displayed at the oriel / gallery at Loggerheads.
- There had not been any incidents of Alabama Foot Rot reported in the AONB.
- Rangers spent a lot of time educating dog walkers on 'fouling', but were not responsible for fining owners who fail to pick up after their dog.
- There was not currently a policy on 'stick and flick', a discussion on the policy would be required with NRW and Coed Nercwys.

Councillor Carolyn Thomas asked if the Friends of the AONB could come in and give the Committee an update?

The Chair thanked the Assistant AONB Officer for the comprehensive presentation.

**RESOLVED that:**

- I. *the work of the Ranger Team be noted and*
- II. *the Friends of the AONB be invited to provide an update on their work at a future Committee.*

## **9 UPDATE OUR PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE**

The Assistant AONB Officer (DS) advised the Committee that the Heritage Lottery Fund had granted £2.1m to be spent over the next 5 years. In return the HLF had requested:

- amendments to the job description of the officer's roles;
- provision of further detail for the proposed first year's work;
- explanation on how the structure feeds into the AONB Joint Committee and the World Heritage Site board?

There were a number of tasks that needed completing in the first six months, including:

- the former tip site at Llangollen
- engaging communities
- considering the risk register and
- establishing accommodation for staff in the Dee Valley (Froncysyllte).

Councillor David Kelly advised that there was a vacant building at the Minera Visitor Centre that might be considered.

**RESOLVED:** *that the update be noted.*

## **10 HIGHLIGHTS AND SUMMARY REPORT 2017-18 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND**

The AONB Sustainable Development Officer (CL) gave a presentation to summarise of the activities of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB's Sustainable Development Fund relating to the Management Plan's Priorities in 2017/18

The Welsh Government provided £50k last year for activities that supported 19 individual projects, 3 jobs and over 3000 volunteer hours. The match funding contribution – public cash, private cash and time in kind amounted to almost £272,500.

The SDF was linked to the Management Plan priorities, SDF have objectives set by Welsh Government that included:

- Creation of job or jobs supported;
- Volunteering opportunities;
- Deliver training or awareness raising sessions on sustainability and
- Maintain high level funding levered in from public, private and voluntary sector.

The AONB Sustainable Development Officer went on to demonstrate how SDF projects were contributing towards the AONB's Management Plan priorities (Page 97 of Management Plan). An annual report would be submitted at the end of June, a copy of which will be shared with the Committee.

Responding to Members questions the AONB Sustainable Development Officer confirmed:

- WG had confirmed the same funding for next year, which gave an opportunity to plan further ahead than usual.
- The grant received from WG was the same as other AONB and
- Referring to the Community Transport Scheme, a log was kept that would be provided for information purposes.

**RESOLVED:**

- I. That the presentation be noted and*
- II. The Community Transport Scheme log be forwarded to the Committee*

**11 SUMMARY OF AONB PLANNING CONSULTATIONS SEPTEMBER 2017 TO MARCH 2018**

The AONB Officer (HS) referred to the report for information purposes only.

**RESOLVED:** *that the report be accepted.*

**12 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The AONB Manager (HS) presented the Forward Work Programme (previously circulated) and reported on the main items scheduled for consideration. He advised Members that contrary to usual Red, Orange and Green Status indicators, in this format red did not indicate an item in trouble but one that hadn't started.

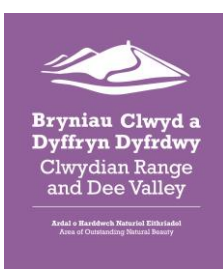
**RESOLVED:** *that the Forward Work Programme be noted.*

**13 FUTURE MEETING DATES AND 23RD NOVEMBER 2018**

The Committee were reminded that the next meeting of the AONB Joint Committee would be held on Friday 23 November at 10:00am in Wrexham.

*(The meeting closed at 12:00pm)*





The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)  
Partnership  
Minutes of the Meeting held on  
Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018  
at  
Llangollen Pavilion  
at 10:00 am

AONB Partnership Members

Representing Access and Recreation  
Andrew Worthington OBE Chair

Representing Rural Interest  
Christine Evans, Roger Cragg

Representing Business Interest  
Dewi Davies

Representing Landscape Interest  
Michael Skuse

Representing Historical Interest  
Tony King

Representing Urban Interest  
Ian Papworth, Del Roberts Jones

Representing the Natural Environment  
Les Starling

Representing Land Management  
Sandy Archdale

Representing Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB

Councillor Tony Thomas	AONB Joint Committee
Councillor Huw L Jones	DCC
Councillor Frank Hemmings	WCBC
Councillor Sonia Benbow-Jones	WCBC
Councillor Martyn Holland	DCC
Councillor Christine Marston	DCC

Howard Sutcliffe	AONB Officer
David Shiel	Assistant AONB Officer
Tony Hughes	AONB Planning Officer
Karen Weaver	AONB Communications Officer
Ceri Lloyd	AONB Sustainable Development Officer
Rhun Jones	AONB Senior Countryside Warden

Representing Denbighshire County Council  
Huw Rees Head of Countryside & Heritage Services

Representing Flintshire County Council  
Tom Woodall Head of FCC Countryside Service & ROW

Representing Wrexham County Borough Council  
Anna Irwin, Allan Forrest

Representing Natural Resources Wales  
Paul Mitchell

Apologies for absence were submitted from: -

Councillor Carolyn Thomas, Councillor Hugh Jones, Councillor David Kelly, Councillor Colin Legg,  
Councillor Paul Cunningham, Councillor Paul Jones,

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i fyw  
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{ BRYNIAU CLWYD A  
DYFFRYN DYFRDWY  
Un o'r  
Teulu AHNE

{ CLWYDIAN RANGE  
AND DEE VALLEY  
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AONB Family

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for life  
.org.uk

Phil  
Durrell,

Gareth Jones, John I Roberts, Helen Walker

### **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed members to the autumn meeting of the Partnership. He also welcomed the substitute member for WCBC, Councillor Frank Hemmings.

### Resignation of Member

The Chair said that due to family and other commitments Helen Walker had resigned from the Partnership.

## **1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Communication Officer for the completion of the minutes.

## **2. Update from Working Groups**

An update from the Chair of the Working Groups

### **2.1 Heritage, Culture & Communities Working Group**

The AONB Officer had taken over the role of lead officer for the group following Fiona Gale's retirement. The Chair of the Group, Christine Evans, reported that The Group had acquired two new members, Fiona Grant (Cadw) and Chris Jones (AONB Champion and Corwen & Dee Valley Archaeological Society CADVAS). She noted that:

- ❖ Undergrounding of Lines  
Scottish Power Energy Networks  
Undergrounding work had commenced near to the Horseshoe Falls. The area around Llangar Chapel, the Shelf and above Llangollen at Fron Bache were now being considered. National Grid were also considering the eligibility of the line between Legacy to Nercwys (this was just outside the AONB boundary but is within the setting of the protected landscape). Gillespie's would be completing a Landscape Character Assessment.
- ❖ Tomen y Rhodwydd  
The gorse has become problematic at the site, badgers were also present, and rehousing of the badgers was currently being considered.
- ❖ Our Picturesque Landscape (OPL) appointments  
The Chair explained that two appointments had been made:

#### Project Officer

Kate Thomson had been appointed as the OPL Partnership Officer. Kate started her career as part of Wrexham's Countryside Service, and was currently working with NRW as the National Co-ordinator for the Plant Initiative (this project arranges for a tree to be planted for every child born in Wales). Prior to that Kate was part of NRW's and the Forestry Commission Wales' Education Team

#### Community Officer

Sallyanne Hall had been appointed as the OPL Community Officer. Sallyanne had previously worked for High Weald AONB, Kent, and she was currently working for Groundwork in Deeside on Community Engagement Projects.

#### Communication Officer

This post was still outstanding

The Project Officer and Community Officer would commence work on November 1st.

- ❖ Drones on Scheduled Sites – Drones on Schedules Sites had been discussed and it was proposed to erect signs at certain sites to inform that drones were not allowed.

- ❖ Archaeological Dig at Chirk Castle - Ian Grant would attend the next meeting to provide feedback on the dig which was in close proximity to the Offa's Dyke Path near to Chirk Castle.

2.2

## Land Management & the Natural Environment Working Group

### Update on the Curlew Cymru Project

The Chair of the Group, Les Starling, explained that one of their key projects was the Curlew Cymru Project, and introduced Senior Countryside Ranger Rhun Jones who provided an update. Rhun, and WCBC Ecology & Biodiversity Officer, Emma Broad, were the lead officers for the project. A Task Group had been convened and a productive meeting had recently been held. A North Wales wide group were considering how farming had evolved and how this affected the Curlew population, and Rhun had a seat on this group. The RSPB were submitting a funding application to Welsh Government on behalf of the group. Rhun reported that in the North East Wales area 75 sightings of the birds had been recorded via Cofnod, and this data could now be monitored. Going forward one of the targets for the group was to work proactively with the farming communities to help maintain the habitat mosaic and vegetation structure favoured by curlew.

Discussion ensued. Rhun explained that if funding was successful two posts would be created to take the project forward, and a key role of the post would be 'effective predator control'. Debate was held regarding what effective predator control entailed, and Rhun explained that one possibility was to extend the lambing season to June/ July to assist the nesting birds, and another method was trapping, and field security enhancements through the provision of electric fencing. Rhun reiterated that predator control would not solve all of the problems associated with the Curlew.

This item was ongoing.

2.3

## Landscape Character & Built Environment Working Group

### Dark Sky Initiative

Chair of the Group, Councillor Martyn Holland reported that the Welsh Government were providing funding to explore all the Welsh protected landscapes working collaboratively towards a possible 'Dark Sky Nation'. Snowdonia National Park would lead on the project in North Wales, and a Project Officer would shortly be appointed.

### Learning Journey

A site visit was planned to the North Pennines AONB. They have 16 Dark Sky Discovery Sites, and were hosting a Dark Sky Festival at the beginning of November. Individuals that would best serve the project to be invited.

### Lighting Plan

The Assistant AONB Officer explained that a meeting had been held with all three Local Authorities regarding street lighting. He explained that LED light temperature/colour was measured in kelvin and that the recommendation from the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) was for 3000 kelvin. DCC had now changed to 3000 kelvin and it was hoped that WCBC and FCC would follow. Discussion ensued, and it was recognised that a large amount of Community Councils were responsible for street lighting. Cefn Mawr and Gwaenysgor & Trelawnyd Community Councils were currently in the process of updating their lighting and required advice.

### **Action**

- ❖ The Assistant AONB Officer to contact the Community Councils
- ❖ AONB Champions to be provided with a copy of the SPG to share with Community Councils

### Welsh Government Consultations

The group had considered the AONB's response to a large number of Welsh Government consultations over recent months including:

- ❖ Petroleum Extraction Policy Wales Consultation
- ❖ Achieving our Low Carbon pathway to 2030
- ❖ Noise and Soundscape Action Plan 2018 – 2023
- ❖ Delivery of Housing through the planning system

#### Planning Consultations

The Chair commented that the group do not often object to applications, but in many cases provide recommendations to enhance development. A recent presentation to the group by Ian Weaver, DCC Principal Planning Officer, had covered this aspect in some detail including consideration of a number of case studies. He explained that the Planning Committee had to reach a balanced view of all submitted comments, however, in his view the tone of the AONB comments was appropriate, especially with the added support of the recently adopted SPG.

The group had been reassured that the AONB comments were being considered and in most cases taken on board by the Planning Authorities.

#### 2.4 **Recreation, Enjoyment & Understanding Working Group**

The Chair of the Group, John Roberts was unable to attend the meeting and Ian Papworth delivered the update. Ian reported that one meeting of the newly formed group had been held to date, and draft Terms of Reference had been agreed.

It was agreed that the group would still work closely with the Sustainable Tourism and Business Engagement Working Group in order to meet the objectives of the Management Plan.

#### 2.5 **Sustainable Tourism & Business Engagement Working Group**

Chair of the Group, Dewi Davies reported that:

- ❖ The Terms of Reference had been agreed for the group
- ❖ The Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2015-20 would be a standard agenda item for the group

#### Visitor Appraisal Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the economic and social value of six visitor "honeypot" sites across the AONB and to balance this against environmental impacts to ecologically and culturally sensitive areas.

The sites were:

1. Loggerheads Country Park
2. Moel Famau Country Park
3. Horseshoe Falls
4. Trevor Basin
5. Panorama
6. Chirk Aqueduct and Tunnel area

The study would inform the AONB's response to increasing visitor numbers at key sites and would set out a sustainable approach to management, ensuring that the capacity and resilience of these sites was at the heart of that approach. The study would also examine how the economic and social benefits could be spread wider. New Economic Foundation (NEF) had been appointed to complete the study.

#### AONB Forum

The AONB's Annual Forum would be held at Springs, Llanrhaeadr on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

The theme was 'Sustainable Tourism and Business Engagement'. The AONB had partnered up with the Clwydian Range Tourism Group who would also hold their autumn meeting prior to the Forum,

as well as two local food and drink groups; Clwydian Range Food and Drink and the Llangollen and Dee Valley Good Grub Club. All were invited to attend both events.

## 2.6 Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) Working Group

Chair of the Group, Mike Skuse, firstly thanked the Assistant AONB Officer and the Sustainable Development Officer for all of their diligent work on SDF projects.

He went on to report that:

- ❖ £55k funding was granted by Welsh Government (£5k of this contributed to administration fees)
- ❖ Eleven projects had been approved by the SDF Group at the May meeting to a total value of around £38k
- ❖ £1,500 each was given to fund Liverpool University's dig at Penycloddiau and Oxford University's dig at Moel y Gaer Bodfari

### Local Energy and the Local Energy Club, Corwen

This application was for £7k allocated over three years. The scheme involved buying reduced electricity firstly, from the Corwen Hydro Scheme, then from other similar schemes. In order for residents to join the scheme it was essential that they had a smart meter fitted. Some members had reservations about the scheme, therefore further assistance was deferred. Cadwyn Clwyd (Co funders) completed a presentation on the scheme however, only three members of SDF Group attended, which was very disappointing. Members were reassured that the core of the scheme was to help communities, and other similar schemes were currently being developed. Moreover, the AONB could be seen as cutting edge of this new way of looking at the distribution of electricity.

### New projects

There were five new projects (that would be reported on at the next meeting):

- ❖ Flintshire Rural Skills ( joint project with FCC)
- ❖ Cilcain School Scoping Study
- ❖ Reducing the use of single use plastic
- ❖ Corwen Community Garden
- ❖ Handmade wool fleeces

## 3. Llantysilio Mountain Fire

The Assistant AONB Officer, David Shiel reiterated that his update focused solely on role of the AONB.

### Background

The fire was started as part of a planned burn by a landowner which got out of control, it was noted that the burn was outside of the Welsh Government guidelines between October and April. The fire burned from 18<sup>th</sup> July till September 4<sup>th</sup> (The fire burnt underground until September) with 730 acres of land affected. Fire watchers were problematic, and the Horseshoe Pass had to be closed and stayed closed for a month. The fire service had completed a fantastic job.

### Role of the AONB Rangers

The AONB Rangers had experience in carrying out controlled burns on the moorland (through heather burning) and had specialist equipment 'fire foggers', which the Fire Service did not have. The AONB Rangers were very familiar with the mountain and were able to guide the Fire Service on how to access certain areas, they also worked with DCC and NRW on firebreaks. The AONB Rangers assisted the fire service to try and extinguish hotspots of fire. The fire was a pressure on the AONB Staff at the time, and the fire burnt underground until September.

#### Nature Recovery

The Assistant AONB Officer had met with NRW and NFU to discuss nature recovery. In large areas bracken and gorse would grow back, however, soil loss would be a problem. A meeting would shortly be held with the graziers.

The LEI and the Curlew Project would assist in the management of the landscape.

Discussion ensued. A member said that that the general feedback from the local community was some dissatisfaction with the land management of the mountain and the lack of information and communication at the time that the fire was burning. David responded that a full Multi Agency debrief would be held and communication would be discussed, he went on to explain that it had been difficult to keep farmers farming on the mountain, however, land management had not been prevented, and both RSPB and NRW had worked with farmers to complete land management.

In Summing up the Chair said that a multi-agency report would be completed following the fire, and when the report was complete the Partnership could add to the comments.

Cllr Martyn Holland said that the AONB should be congratulated for all of the hard work that they had completed, and if any member of the group had any further comments to bring to his attention.

#### 4. **AONB Award 2019**

The Chair introduced the four nominations for this year's AONB Award:

1. Community Shop, Llanarmon yn Ial
2. North Wales Wildlife Trust
3. Llanarmon yn Ial Conservation Society
4. Corwen Community Garden

Members voted and it was unanimously decided that Corwen Community Garden should be given the award for 2018/19

#### **Action**

- ❖ Corwen Community Garden members to be informed that they had won the AONB Award
- ❖ A date to be arranged for the award to be presented

#### 4.1 **AONB Volunteer Award**

Senior Countryside Ranger Rhun Jones introduced the nomination, John Lawton Roberts, explaining that John had devoted much of his life in the pursuit of recording, watching and reporting on birds in Northeast Wales. His boundless enthusiasm and expertise had helped paint a detailed picture to the changes to bird populations in the area spanning a period over 40 years. John had been a great asset to the AONB.

#### **Action**

- ❖ That John Lawton Roberts would receive the Volunteer Award for 2018/19
- ❖ A date to be convened for John to receive the Award

#### 5. **Future Landscapes Wales**

The Review of Designated Landscapes and the Future Landscapes Wales Programme: (letter previously circulated)

The Chair explained that Hannah Blythyn AM had invited comments regarding 'Greater Parity between Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks' from the five AONB Officers of the protected landscapes in Wales and together with NRW a joint response had been submitted. Once a response had been received this item would be considered further.

This item was ongoing.

#### 6. **Our Picturesque Landscape (OPL) Project Update**

The Assistant AONB Officer, David Shiel said that the formal permission to start has taken longer than anticipated. Two appointments had been made (previously reported), and he thanked the OPL Steering Group for their assistance with the appointment process. The OPL Team would be based at Y Caban, Plas Newydd and a meeting would be held shortly.

## 7. Update from the AONB Officer

### Nature for Health

The AONB Officer informed of a joint venture by Denbighshire Countryside Services and the Denbighshire County Council Housing Department, this project promoted the well-being benefits associated with being outside in the natural environment. Based in areas of social housing and community centres (in Rhyl, Llangollen, Corwen) the scheme would use environmental social prescribing and GP referrals to encourage communities to access and enjoy their local greenspaces. It was hoped that the scheme would be extended to Cefn and Chirk areas.

### DCC Chief Executive Visit to Loggerheads

Chief Executive Officer, Judith Greenhalgh, along with Corporate Director Economy and Public Realm Officer Graham Boase, and Head of Planning and Public Protection Officer, Emlyn Jones had recently visited Loggerheads Country Park and had met with some of the Team.

### Management Plan & Governance Seminars

The AONB Officer and Assistant AONB Officer had completed several seminars to examine different Management Plans and governance. The AONB were also assisting the Sandstone Trust with governance.

### Fixed point photography

The AONB Officer had noticed fixed point photography points in Pembroke National Park and said that it was an excellent way to of monitoring landscape change.

### Pontcysyllte Treatment Works.

The AONB Officer had convened a meeting with Steve Wilson, Dwr Cymru regarding mitigation for the treatment works.

### World Heritage Site Board

The AONB Officer had attended ta WHS Board Meeting along with Allan Forrest WCBC.

### NAAONB Outstanding Week

Outstanding Week was organised by the National Association of AONB's (NAAONB) and held annually in September to celebrate all AONB's in England and Wales. It entailed all AONB's providing a week long programme of events held in all of the AONB's. As part of our contribution the AONB Officer led 3 walks covering the entire World Heritage Site and Buffer zone, and there was good attendance on all walks.

## 8. Any Other Business

Cllr M Holland noted that the Chair had to stop some of the debates held today because of time restraints and proposed if more time could be given to meetings.

### AONB Ranger – Vicky Knight

Ian Papworth extended his sincere thanks to Vicky Knight for all of her hard work in Gwaenysgor. Vicky had recently left the AONB Team in order to take up a new role as Lead Ranger in Ascension Island.

## 11. Future Meeting Dates

Date		Time	Venue
Friday 22nd March	2019	at 10 am	To be decided
Friday 14th June	2019	at 10 am	To be decided
Friday 18th October	2019	at 10 am	To be decided

DRAFT





**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

**JOINT COMMITTEE  
of the  
CLWYDIAN RANGE & DEE VALLEY  
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**

**Held on: 23rd November 2018**

**Lead Member / Officer: Gareth O Williams**

**Report Author: Paula O'Hanlon /Huw Rees**

**Title: Joint Committee Budget and Outturn 2018/19**

---

**1. What is the report about?**

The report gives details of the AONB's revenue budget outturn position for 2018/19.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the AONB's financial position for 2018/19.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

- (i) Members are asked to note the latest forecast financial outturn for 2018/19 (Appendix 1) and the progress against the agreed budget strategy.
- (ii) Members are asked to note the signed Welsh Audit Office Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2018 (Appendix 2) which reassuringly gives the accounts for the 2017/18 financial year a clean bill of health.

**4. Report details.**

The report provides a summary of the AONB's revenue budget for 2018/19 as detailed in Appendix 1. The AONB's gross expenditure budget is £440,730. The current forecast outturn is to break even across Core and Area.

**5. How does it contribute to the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Management Plans Priorities?**

Effective management of the AONB's revenue budgets will help the delivery of the agreed management plan priorities for the current year and underpins activity in all areas, particularly our relationships with funding partners and our joint priorities.

**6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

There are no direct costs associated with this report.

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

N/A

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

The proposed budget for 2018/19 was brought to the JC meeting in June and approved.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

This report outlines the latest forecast financial position for the AONB for 2018/19. Currently a small overspend is projected in the Area salary budget due to grading reviews but this is funded by a contingency budget held within the Core salary budget.

In terms of the 2019/20 financial year the early indications are that Denbighshire CC is not proposing to make any reductions to the present funding levels for the AONB. However this will not be confirmed until Full Council is asked to formally approve its budget for the new financial year.

NRW grant is agreed for 2019/20 and 2020/21. Notwithstanding this however the period of public sector austerity is likely to continue and it must still be recognised that the budgets of all public sector bodies will continue to come under increasing pressure over the coming years.

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

The current budget is dependent on income from NRW and the 3 Local Authorities. Any changes to these income levels will pose a risk to the future delivery of projects and our ability to deliver against the priorities in the AONB Management Plan.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

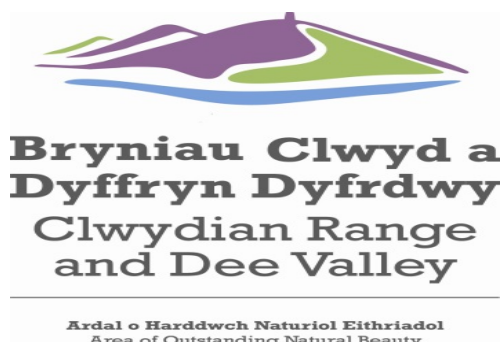
Local authorities are required under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs.

**CLWYDIAN RANGE & DEE VALLEY AONB JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**(DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM COUNCILS)**

Appendix 1

CORE - PROPOSED BUDGET 2018/19

	Budget 2018/19	Forecast Outturn 2018/19
	£	£
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	174,939	171,710
Training & Conference	2,000	2,300
Subscriptions	3,300	3,000
Insurance	1,210	1,210
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>181,449</b>	<b>178,220</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Vehicle Hire	500	500
Mileage	5,200	5,200
Use of Public Transport	500	500
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>6,200</b>
<u>Other</u>		
Protective Clothing	500	500
Uniforms	1,500	1,500
General Equipment	300	300
Event / Partnership Expenditure	4,000	4,000
Professional fees	0	578
Audit Fees	1,134	1,134
IT costs	1,800	3,400
Telephones	2,500	900
Publications	300	300
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>12,034</b>	<b>12,612</b>
<u>Projects</u>		
Grants	55,000	55,000
<b>Total Project costs</b>	<b>55,000</b>	<b>55,000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>254,683</b>	<b>252,032</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW Salary Grant	-112,000	-112,000
SDF Grant	-50,000	-50,000
LA Funding	-92,683	-92,683
Other fees & charges	0	-250
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-254,683</b>	<b>-254,933</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>-2,901</b>

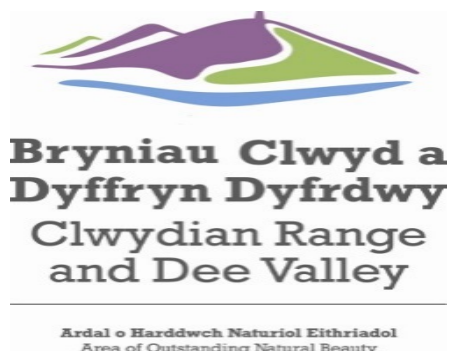


CLWYDIAN RANGE & DEE VALLEY AONB JOINT COMMITTEE  
(DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM COUNCILS)

Appendix 1

AREA - PROPOSED BUDGET 2018/19

	Budget 2018/19	Forecast Outturn 2018/19
	£	£
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	152,542	155,443
Training & Conference	600	600
Insurance	1,055	1,055
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>154,197</b>	<b>157,098</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Fuel	4,200	4,200
Fleet	17,000	17,000
Travel	2,000	2,000
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>23,200</b>	<b>23,200</b>
<u>Other</u>		
General Equipment	150	150
Site Management	3,000	3,000
IT	800	800
Telephones	2,200	2,200
Internet	0	
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>6,150</b>	<b>6,150</b>
<u>Projects</u>		
Management Plan	2,500	2,500
<b>Total Project costs</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>2,500</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>186,047</b>	<b>188,948</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW Salary Grant	-11,500	-11,500
NRW Salary Match	0	
Reserve - NRW funds for Dee Valley Warden	-8,000	-8,000
LA Salary funding	-166,547	-166,547
Sales - vehicle & plant		
Rent		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-186,047</b>	<b>-186,047</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>2,901</b>



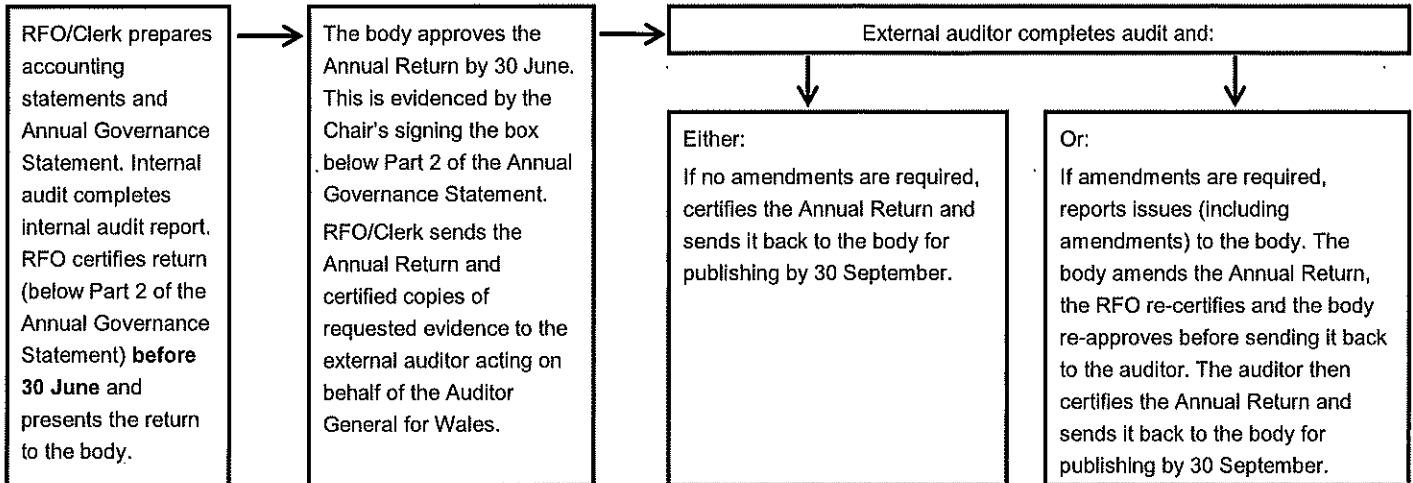


# Smaller local government bodies in Wales Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

Smaller local government bodies in Wales must prepare annual accounts following proper practices as set out in the One Voice Wales/SLCC publication **Governance and accountability for local councils in Wales – A Practitioners’ Guide** (the Practitioners’ Guide). The Practitioners’ Guide states that bodies may prepare their accounts in the form of an annual return prepared by the Wales Audit Office.

## The accounts and audit process

The accounts and audit arrangements follow the process as set out below.



Please read the guidance on completing this Annual Return and complete all sections highlighted in red including both sections of the Annual Governance Statement.

### PLEASE PRINT THIS DOCUMENT FOR SIGNATURE AND SEND IT TO YOUR AUDITOR

Incomplete or incorrect returns may require additional external audit work and incur additional costs. Send the **original** Annual Return, together with all additional information requested, to the external auditor acting on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales. Unless requested, please **do not** send any original financial or other records to the external auditor.

Audited and certified returns are sent back to the body for publication or display of the accounting statements, Annual Governance Statement and the Auditor General for Wales’ certificate and report.

## Completion checklist

‘No’ answers mean that you may not have met requirements		Done?	
Initial submission to the external auditor		Yes	No
<b>Accounts</b>	Has the RFO certified the accounting statements and the body approved the Annual Return (as evidenced by the relevant signatures), no later than 30 June 2018?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Do the accounts add up and does the balance carried forward from last year equal the opening balance this year?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Do the papers to be sent to the external auditor include an explanation of significant variations, including a quantified analysis of the changes from last year to this year?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Does the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2018 agree to line 9?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>All sections</b>	Have all red boxes been completed and explanations provided where needed?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Evidence</b>	Has all the information requested by the external auditor been included?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Accounting statements 2017-18 for:

Name of body: Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB

	Year ending		Notes and guidance for compilers
	31 March 2017 (£)	31 March 2018 (£)	

Please round all figures to nearest £.  
Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or nil balances.  
All figures must agree to the underlying financial records for the relevant year.

## Statement of income and expenditure/receipts and payments

1. Balances brought forward	67,492	77,697	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Must agree to line 7 of the previous year.
2. (+) Income from local taxation/levy	264,561	279,330	Total amount of income received/receivable in the year from local taxation (precept) or levy/contribution from principal bodies.
3. (+) Total other receipts	243,490	290,228	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.
4. (-) Staff costs	-329,492	-357,977	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and related expenses eg termination costs.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on external borrowing (if any).
6. (-) Total other payments	-168,354	-169,645	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook minus staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	77,697	119,632	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6).

## Statement of balances

8. (+) Debtors and stock balances	60,035	28,409	<b>Income and expenditure accounts only:</b> Enter the value of debts owed to the body and stock balances held at the year-end.
9. (+) Total cash and investments	23,257	99,126	<b>All accounts:</b> The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and investments held at 31 March. This must agree with the reconciled cashbook balance as per the bank reconciliation.
10. (-) Creditors	-5,595	-7,902	<b>Income and expenditure accounts only:</b> Enter the value of monies owed by the body (except borrowing) at the year-end.
11. (=) Balances carried forward	77,697	119,632	<b>Total balances should equal line 7 above:</b> Enter the total of (8+9-10).
12. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	0	0	The <b>original</b> asset and investment register value of all fixed assets and any other long-term assets held as at 31 March.
13. Total borrowing	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

14. Trust funds disclosure note	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	The body acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing (a) trust fund(s)/assets (readers should note that the figures above do not include any trust transactions).
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

## Annual Governance Statement (Part 1)

We acknowledge as the members of the Council/Board/Committee, our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2018, that:

	Agreed?		'YES' means that the Council/Board/Committee:	PG Ref
	Yes	No*		
<p>1. We have put in place arrangements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective financial management during the year; and</li> <li>the preparation and approval of the accounting statements.</li> </ul>	✓	☐	Properly sets its budget and manages its money and prepares and approves its accounting statements as prescribed by law.	6, 12
<p>2. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption, and reviewed its effectiveness.</p>	✓	☐	Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.	6, 7
<p>3. We have taken all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the Council/Board/Committee to conduct its business or on its finances.</p>	✓	☐	Has only done things that it has the legal power to do and has conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it has done so.	6
<p>4. We have provided proper opportunity for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.</p>	✓	☐	Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and to ask questions about the body's accounts.	6, 23
<p>5. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council/Board/Committee and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.</p>	✓	☐	Considered the financial and other risks it faces in the operation of the body and has dealt with them properly.	6, 9
<p>6. We have maintained an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems throughout the year and have received a report from the internal auditor.</p>	✓	☐	Arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether these meet the needs of the body.	6, 8
<p>7. We have considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the Council/Board/Committee and, where appropriate, have included them on the accounting statements.</p>	✓	☐	Disclosed everything it should have about its business during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.	6
<p>8. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from internal and external audit.</p>	✓	☐	Considered and taken appropriate action to address issues/weaknesses brought to its attention by both the internal and external auditors.	6, 8, 23
<p>9. Trust funds – in our capacity as trustee, we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s) including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.</li> </ul>	☐	☐	Has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.	3, 6

\* Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'no' response given; and describe what action is being taken to address the weaknesses identified.

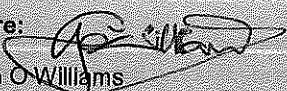

## Annual Governance Statement (Part 2)

	Agreed?		'YES' means that the Council/Board/ Committee:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have considered the adequacy of reserves held by the body in setting the budget for 2017-18 and 2018-19 and have appropriate plans in place for the use of these reserves.	✓	r	Has met the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1989 in setting the budget requirement and precept for the financial years.
2. When awarding grants under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, we have kept a separate account of such grants and considered whether or not the benefits arising from such payments are commensurate with the sums paid.	✓	r	Has kept and appropriate record of grants awarded and ensured that the expenditure is commensurate with the benefit to the community.
3. <del>The council has ensured that it has a lawful obligation to pay a service gratuity to employees* or</del> The council has no obligation or intention to pay a gratuity to employees.*	✓	r	Has ensured that where it has an arrangement to provide a gratuity to staff, it has ensured that there is a legal obligation to provide the gratuity.

\* Please delete as appropriate.

### Council/Board/Committee approval and certification

The Council/Board/Committee is responsible for the preparation of the accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 and for the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

Certification by the RFO	Approval by the Council/Board/Committee
I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return presents fairly the financial position of the Council/Board/ Committee, and its income and expenditure, or properly presents receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2018.	I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Council/Board/Committee under minute reference:
	June 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2018
RFO signature: 	Chair signature: 
Name: Gareth O-Williams	Name: TONY THOMAS
Date: 22/06/2018	Date: 22/06/2018

### Council/Board/Committee re-approval and re-certification (only required if the annual return has been amended at audit)

Certification by the RFO	Approval by the Council/Board/Committee
I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return presents fairly the financial position of the Council/Board/ Committee, and its income and expenditure, or properly presents receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2018.	I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Council/Board/Committee under minute reference:
	Insert minute reference and date of meeting
RFO signature: signature required	Chair signature: signature required
Name: name required	Name: name required
Date: dd/mm/yyyy	Date: dd/mm/yyyy



## Auditor General for Wales' Audit Certificate and report

The external auditor conducts the audit on behalf of, and in accordance with, guidance issued by the Auditor General for Wales. On the basis of their review of the Annual Return and supporting information, they report whether any matters that come to their attention give cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

We certify that we have completed the audit of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2018 of:

Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB

### External auditor's report

~~[[Except for the matters reported below]]~~\* On the basis of our review, in our opinion, the information contained in the Annual Return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

~~[[These matters along with]]~~\* Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the body and our recommendations for improvement are included in our report to the body dated \_\_\_\_\_.]

### Other matters and recommendations

~~On the basis of our review, we draw the body's attention to the following matters and recommendations which do not affect our audit opinion but should be addressed by the body:~~

(Continue on a separate sheet if required.)

External auditor's name:

ANTHONY BARRETT

External auditor's signature:



Date:

28/9/18

For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales

\* Delete as appropriate.

## Annual internal audit report to:

Name of body: Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB

a

The Council/Board/Committee's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, has included carrying out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ending 31 March 2018.

The internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Council/Board/Committee's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the following control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council/Board/Committee.

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
1. Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Reviewed the ledger accounts for the AONB.
2. Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Tested a sample of invoices, which confirmed invoices were correctly authorised and VAT accounted for correctly and complying with Financial Regulations.
3. The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	The financial and reputational risks are included in the AONB legal agreement. Any new programmes and forward planning are discussed in the committee meetings.
4. The annual precept/levy/resource demand requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Evidence of regular monitoring carried out.
5. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Evidence on budget sheets that income was received and correctly accounted for.
6. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
7. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with minuted approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Sample confirmed that NI and PAYE requirements were properly applied
8. Asset and investment registers were complete, accurate,	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	n/a

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
and properly maintained.					

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
9. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Regular bank account reconciliations carried out as well as an annual audit included in the Finance audit.
10. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments/income and expenditure), agreed with the cashbook, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Evidence of up to date records seen. Evidence of minutes of AONB Joint committee.
11. Trust funds (including charitable trusts). The Council/Board/Committee has met its responsibilities as a trustee.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	n/a

For any risk areas identified by the Council/Board/Committee (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
12. Insert risk area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Insert text
13. Insert risk area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Insert text
14. Insert risk area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Insert text

\* If the response is 'no', please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\* If the response is 'not covered', please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or if coverage is not required, internal audit must explain why not.

[My detailed findings and recommendations which I draw to the attention of the Council/Board/Committee are included in my detailed report to the Council/Board/Committee dated \_\_\_\_\_.] \* Delete if no report prepared.

**Internal audit confirmation**

I confirm that as the Council's internal auditor, I have not been involved in a management or administrative role within the body or as a member of the body during the financial years 2016-17 and 2017-18. I also confirm that there are no conflicts of interest surrounding my appointment.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: Samantha Davies  
Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: *Samantha Davies*  
Date: 31/05/2018

Hannah Blythyn AC/AM  
Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd  
Minister for Environment



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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14 May 2018

Dear Mr Sutcliffe,

I am inviting you to share your views with me on the issues which need to be addressed to provide greater parity for the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) with the National Parks in Wales.

One of the key observations made during the Review of Designated Landscapes and the Future Landscapes Wales Programme was although parity broadly exists between National Parks and AONBs in terms of planning policy, there is an inequality of status, profile and resourcing. Whilst this may be a strength in allowing flexibility of governance and the formation of partnerships in the AONBs, it is also a potential weakness in terms of the stewardship of these equally valuable landscapes. I have made a commitment to continue discussions with the AONBs to address this.

The AONB officers, along with the National Association of AONBs and colleagues in Natural Resources Wales, are best placed to advise me on how this should be addressed. I'm inviting you to work together to prepare a brief paper, for discussion with me later this year, on the action you believe necessary to address the issues observed during the review.

I am prepared to support you to overcome these issues; however, you must be realistic in your deliberations about the levels of current and future resourcing.

I am committed to ensuring our AONBs and National Parks are equally valued for their natural beauty by our people, communities and country – and, that our designated landscapes deliver rich ecosystems, vibrant and resilient communities and opportunities for outdoor recreation for all of the people of Wales.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

BSB.S

My lead official on this matter is John Watkins, Head of Landscape and Outdoor Recreation. You should contact him if you have any questions in regard to this invitation. Please send me your paper of suggested actions by early September. My office will confirm a date and venue for me to meet with you and your colleagues to discuss your proposals.

Yours sincerely,



**Hannah Blythyn AC/AM**  
Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd  
Minister for Environment

# Greater parity between the National Landscapes of Wales

## Summary

This paper has been prepared in response to the letter, dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018, from Hannah Blythyn, Minister for Environment on the issues to be addressed to provide greater parity for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) with the National Parks in Wales, particularly in terms of status, profile and resourcing, and the delivery of rich ecosystems, vibrant and resilient communities and opportunities for outdoor recreation. It is also prepared in the context of the July 2018 statement ‘Valued and Resilient: The Welsh Government’s Priorities for AONBs and National Parks’. It is a collective response prepared by the five AONB lead officers in Wales in collaboration with colleagues from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB). The twelve proposals below intend to build on the opportunities outlined in ‘Valued and Resilient’, be straightforward and robust and together address the inequality of status between AONBs and National Parks. They also recognise that there are inequalities between the AONBs in Wales.

‘Valued and Resilient’ identifies a number of key expectations of Designated Landscapes, including “the ability to function effectively at a national level to inform and influence strategic priorities and plans, whilst maintaining a credible mandate and the relationships necessary to deliver within a local area.” Currently AONB teams across Wales, individually and collectively, do not have the capacity to meet all these expectations.

The network of Designated Landscapes in Wales is fundamental to creating the connectivity needed for truly resilient ecosystems. AONBs are a key delivery mechanism for the Well-Being of Future Generations Act, the Environment Act and NRW’s statutory landscape remit, Area Statements and Natural Resources Planning. The opportunity and potential exists for AONBs to act as a focus and deliver place-based management of natural resources, if the capacity of AONB teams is enabled to do this.

**We believe the twelve proposals below will address the issues of status, profile and resourcing for AONBs in Wales. The rationale for the proposals is outlined in the subsequent sections.**

## Status

- A. A second purpose on “Understanding and Enjoyment” be pursued for AONBs at the earliest opportunity in recognition that all AONB partnerships<sup>1</sup> play a major role in delivering opportunities for outdoor understanding, enjoyment and recreation in Wales. In the interim, Welsh Government provides policy confirmation of the ‘supplementary purposes’ for AONBs.
- B. Strengthen the CRoW Act Section 85 ‘Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation’ into a ‘Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation and implementation of the AONB Management Plan’.
- C. Explore the potential for AONB partnerships to become statutory consultees for planning applications.

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<sup>1</sup> AONB partnership(s) with a lower case p, is the generic term used to refer to an AONB Partnership, Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), Joint Committee (JC) or Conservation Board or any other organisation recognised as the lead governance body for an AONB.

- D. Welsh Government to make a 'national appointment' to each AONB partnership and these appointees to also sit on the new 'National Partnership for Designated Landscapes' alongside AONB partnership chairs and lead officers.

## Profile

- E. AONBs and National Parks to be referred to generally and collectively as the 'National Landscapes of Wales' rather than 'Designated Landscapes' or 'Protected Landscapes', hence the 'National Partnership for Designated Landscapes' would become the 'National Landscapes of Wales Partnership', etc.
- F. The post-Brexit agri-environment and LEADER replacement schemes to be targeted at delivering the AONB Management Plans and AONB partnerships to have a key role in providing advice and support.
- G. The Minister convenes an annual seminar for CRoW Section 85 public bodies to share good practice on how they are delivering their 'Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation' and how the AONB Management Plan is being implemented.
- H. The Minister elevates the AONB Management Plans currently commencing their 5 year reviews by providing a Foreword, formal endorsement when adopted and ensuring supporting policy recognition in Planning Policy Wales (PPW).
- I. Welsh Government and NRW to produce data/statistics cut to each AONB as part of existing data and analysis activity, e.g. tourism, agriculture, population, state of environment, designated site condition etc., in order to inform the AONB Management Plans and support clearer understanding of the value, profile and significance of AONBs.

## Resourcing

- J. AONB partnerships commissioned and resourced on a long term basis to provide a core AONB staff team with the critical mass and capacity to deliver the AONB Management Plan and the functions outlined in Valued and Resilient.
- K. The National Association for AONBs is resourced to assist Welsh Government with the establishment and servicing of the new 'National Landscapes of Wales Partnership', co-ordinate AONB (& NLW) member training and AONB Performance Monitoring.
- L. Welsh Government, NRW, Local Authorities and NGO's to have the resilience and capacity to deliver Valued and Resilient and the statutory purpose(s) of the National Landscapes of Wales.





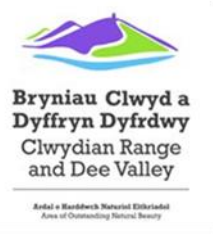
# Greater parity between the National Landscapes of Wales

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Llŷn AONB



## 1. Background and our case for positive change

- 1.1. This paper has been prepared in response to the letter (14 May 2018) from Hannah Blythyn, Minister for Environment on the issues to be addressed to provide greater parity for AONBs with the National Parks in Wales and the delivery of rich ecosystems, vibrant and resilient communities and opportunities for outdoor recreation. It is a collective response prepared by the five AONB lead officers in Wales in collaboration with colleagues from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the National Association of AONBs (NAAONB).
- 1.2. In developing this response, we have also taken into account the recent (July 2018) statement – ‘Valued and Resilient: The Welsh Government’s Priorities for AONBs and National Parks’. The proposals below are intended to build on the opportunities outlined in ‘Valued and Resilient’.
- 1.3. The ‘Marsden Review’ of Designated Landscapes and subsequent collaborative work through the Future Landscapes Wales programme have correctly highlighted inequalities between AONBs and National Parks – particularly in terms of status, profile and resourcing. However, it is also worth highlighting that there are also significant disparities between the AONBs in Wales. Consequently, we believe that measures are also needed to ensure there is a ‘critical mass’ in AONB partnerships and teams and a basic minimum/standard is established of what is expected for AONBs in Wales.
- 1.4. We have considered the issues of ‘status’, ‘profile’, ‘resourcing’, and how together they address the delivery of rich ecosystems, vibrant and resilient communities and opportunities for outdoor recreation. The proposals are segregated into ‘status’, ‘profile’ and ‘resourcing’ but apply to and/or collectively have benefits across several simultaneously. In Appendix 1 the 12 Proposals have also been divided in to ‘Long term’, ‘Medium term’ and ‘Short term’ actions.
- 1.5. It is recognised that the ‘National Park’ designation and brand is more widely understood by some than ‘Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)’, but we believe the closer parity can still be achieved through modifications to functions rather than form, particularly given the stated levels of current and future resourcing.

### *Future Landscapes Delivering for Wales – Vision:*

*Wales as a nation values its landscapes for what they provide for the people of Wales and elsewhere. The designated landscapes of Wales deliver both within and beyond their boundaries to enhance their social, economic, environmental and cultural resources; delivering the maximum well-being benefits for present and future generations whilst enhancing the very qualities that make them both distinctive and cherished.*

## *Our case for positive change*

Our proposals focus on four key areas, providing a coherent approach to raise the profile and status of AONBs, improve their ability to deliver rich ecosystems and opportunities for outdoor recreation. The four areas and our rationale are as follows:

- Updating and strengthening of the **AONB purposes** – because the current purposes are limited, the associated duties on public bodies are weak and the proposals would give genuine mandate to activities that AONB partnerships already deliver
- Strengthening and implementing the **AONB Management Plans** – because the plans are the expression of what needs to happen in the AONBs and are the core organising principle for local delivery of Well-being goals and the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources
- Improve **governance and scrutiny** – because the profile and engagement of AONB Partnerships with their local authorities is often low and should better reflect their significance as nationally important designated and protected landscapes
- Focused and secure **resourcing and capacity** building – because the current insecure, opportunistic and often ‘hidden’ resourcing position constrains the ability and potential for AONBs to deliver.



## 2. AONB Purpose(s)

*Our case for positive change: Updating and strengthening of the **AONB purposes** – because the current purposes are limited, the associated duties on public bodies are weak and the proposals would give genuine mandate to activities that AONB partnerships already deliver*

### **A. A second purpose on “Understanding and Enjoyment” be pursued for AONBs at the earliest opportunity in recognition that all AONB partnerships<sup>2</sup> play a major role in delivering opportunities for outdoor understanding, enjoyment and recreation in Wales. \* In the interim, Welsh Government provides policy confirmation of the ‘supplementary purposes’ for AONBs.**

- 2.1. As recognised in ‘Valued and Resilient’, AONBs in Wales do not have the 2nd Purpose that National Parks have to “Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public.” AONBs that become Conservation Boards under Section 86 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 also have a similar 2<sup>nd</sup> Purpose, defined under Section 87(1) – ‘increasing the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the AONB’.
- 2.2. A key component of addressing the parity of status with National Parks (and AONB Conservation Boards) is to have the same statutory purposes. This would resolve two issues:
  - i) AONBs currently have no mention of ‘special qualities’ in their Purpose and
  - ii) AONBs are not statutorily required to operate in the realm of ‘enjoyment and recreation’, although it is widely recognised that AONBs are prime visitor destinations and AONB teams do a considerable amount – on very modest budgets – engaging tourism, recreation, business and community interests in helping deliver the AONB Management Plan, and in several cases providing visitor information and managing infrastructure.
- 2.3. It is acknowledged that a new Purpose for AONBs would require legislative change. However, the provision already exists in law for Special Qualities and the recreation purpose. Therefore, this primary legislation needs to be extended to all AONBs in Wales without the necessity to become Conservation Boards. It is noted that ‘Valued and Resilient’ states “there will not be a change of this nature now without broader support or when it is clear impediments to delivery can only be overcome through new legislation”. Therefore this remains a Long term action and:-

### **\* “In the interim, Welsh Government provides policy confirmation of the ‘supplementary purposes’ for AONBs”.**

- 2.4. In 1991 the Countryside Council for Wales and the Countryside Commission published ‘Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - A Policy Statement’ (CCP: 356), in which AONBs were given supplementary purposes of *“In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment. Recreation is not an objective of designation, but*

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<sup>2</sup> AONB partnership(s) with a lower case p, is the generic term used to refer to an AONB Partnership, Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), Joint Committee (JC) or Conservation Board or any other organisation recognised as the lead governance body for an AONB.

*the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.*” These have not been recognised or endorsed recently by Welsh Government or Natural Resources Wales, although they are included in various AONB Management Plans and other AONB documents.

- 2.5. ‘Valued and Resilient’ does state that “To encourage, provide for and manage responsible outdoor recreation opportunities is an important role for AONBs and a key remit for Park Authorities.” It also states “National Park Authorities have a duty to ‘foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within their national park’ and AONB local authorities also have a similar responsibility across the whole of their authority areas.... Designated landscape management organisations need to further develop and refine their own understanding of local economic resilience and economic opportunities....”. Even when AONB partnerships were vested with delivering all of this, they have only ever been able to access specific (invariably time limited) project funding, whereas the NPAs have been funded to do so.
- 2.6. We believe the reiteration and endorsement by Welsh Government of the supplementary purposes for AONBs, or the release of a similarly succinct ‘policy statement’ is needed. This therefore is a Short term action.

**E. AONBs and National Parks to be referred to generally and collectively as the ‘National Landscapes of Wales’ rather than ‘Designated Landscapes’ or ‘Protected Landscapes’, hence the ‘National Partnership for Designated Landscapes’ would become the ‘National Landscapes of Wales Partnership’, etc.**

- 2.7. The Marsden Review recognised the value of branding the AONBs & National Parks as the ‘National Landscapes of Wales’. While the statutory re-naming of the designations was not supported, there is no reason why the general use of the phrase ‘National Landscapes of Wales’ should not be used in place of the current colloquialisms of ‘Designated Landscapes’ or ‘Protected Landscapes’. The common and regular reiteration of the ‘national’ context of AONBs alongside National Parks would help redress the balance of status and profile.



Gower AONB

### 3. AONB Management Plans

*Our case for positive change: Strengthening and implementing the **AONB Management Plans** – because the plans are the expression of what needs to happen in the AONBs and are the core organising principle for local delivery of Well-being goals and the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources*

#### **F. The post-Brexit agri-environment and LEADER replacement schemes to be targeted at delivering the AONB Management Plans and AONB partnerships to have a key role in providing advice and support.**

- 3.1. Each AONB is largely the product of farming practices, and the value of these national landscapes to the whole nation is hugely dependent on sympathetic future land management practices. It is a legal requirement that public bodies have regard to the purpose of AONB designation (CRoW Act Section 85). Any future publicly funded land management scheme must, therefore, do likewise.
- 3.2. Agri-environment investment and incentives are the biggest influence on landscape quality, natural beauty and SMNR, but are not correlated with AONB purposes nor scrutinised for delivering for these nationally designated protected landscapes. The National Parks have more direct influence on agri-environment and LEADER schemes, either through direct targeting or delivery of the schemes. The post-Brexit rural land-use policy and delivery mechanisms must actively support SMNR through Area Statements and AONB Management Plan objectives.
- 3.3. The AONB Management Plans are the mechanism by which the future of each AONB is discussed, determined, and delivered. It is a locally-designed, nationally-relevant plan that depends on the collaborative activity of multiple stakeholders for delivery and has democratic sign-off. The majority of AONB Management Plans are currently being reviewed and new plans will be in place to take these areas forward once the UK leaves the European Union. The Plans will act as a catalyst for new thinking and positive action that will sustain and improve the flow of public goods from the nation's outstanding landscapes.
- 3.4. This proposal allows, for the first time, a clear way of aligning land management with the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of our national landscapes. AONB partnerships should play a key role in helping inform the new land management framework, for example by testing/piloting new approaches and using management planning processes to engage with land managers. AONB partnerships and AONB teams can also be enabled to deliver schemes either directly or through collaborative partnerships.

#### **B. Strengthen the CRoW Act Section 85 'Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation' into a 'Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation and implementation of the AONB Management Plan'.**

- 3.5. The CRoW Section 85 'Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation' is widely recognised as not being sufficiently robust or effective, similarly the Section 62 (Environment Act 1995) duty for National Parks. There are some examples of good practice, such as OFGEM working with National Grid and the electricity Distribution Network Operators, but there are also many organisations and utilities that pay scant regard for the

National Landscapes of Wales. 'Valued and Resilient' states that there is logic to strengthening these respective duties meanwhile engagement and collaboration, led by NRW, rather than compliance, should be pursued for public bodies and other interested parties.

- 3.6. We believe a strengthened 'Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation and implementation of the AONB Management Plan' provides a robust rationale and focus. Alternatively, similar wording to the new Biodiversity Duty could be used 'that public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance the Landscape of AONBs (&/or the National Landscapes of Wales) so far as it consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of that landscape.' This would give a more direct requirement for public bodies to proactively pursue the purpose of AONBs in all planning and decision-making. The earliest legislative opportunity should be sought to achieve this. However it is recognised this will be a medium to long term action. An interim / short term action is therefore also proposed.

**G. The Minister convenes an annual seminar for CRoW Section 85 public bodies to share good practice on how they are delivering their 'Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation' and how the AONB Management Plan is being implemented.**

- 3.7. Beside the implementation of Planning Policy Wales (PPW), the statutory requirement to produce an AONB Management Plan (jointly if there is more than one constituent local authority and review the Plan every five years) is the only obligation a local authority has in relation to AONBs. There is no obligation or requirement to deliver or implement the AONB Management Plan. In contrast National Park Plans are both the Local Development Plan for the Park and the management plan for the Park Authority.

- 3.8. There is also no requirement for AONB local authorities to report on actions toward their delivery of the AONB Management Plan. Implementation and progress reporting tend to be undertaken through the NRW AONB Partnership Programme &/or work programme or project reporting to the respective AONB committee (see below). This context has led to AONB Management Plans – and consequently AONBs - having a relatively low status and profile within their local authorities. Despite opportunities to deliver the Well-being goals and SMNR, the implementation of Management Plans is not recognised as significantly contributing to the delivery of local priorities and consequently are subject to little scrutiny within the local authorities. NRW's role in guiding and advising on Management Plan content and review processes is important and valued, but the status of these Plans need greater Government endorsement.

- 3.9. The Ministerial seminar would, in the short term introduce an element of scrutiny and endorsement by Welsh Ministers and simultaneously raise the profile and status of the AONB Management Plans, with both the constituent local authorities and other public bodies, and enhance the effectiveness of the Section 85 'duty of regard' (possibly in combination with s62 duty to the Parks). This would be augmented by the following proposals.

**H. The Minister elevates the AONB Management Plans currently commencing their 5 year reviews by providing a Foreword, formal endorsement when adopted and ensuring supporting policy recognition in Planning Policy Wales (PPW).**

3.10. A Ministerial Foreword to the AONB Management Plans would raise the profile and status of the AONB Management Plan locally and nationally. It would also provide an opportunity for the Minister to reiterate the key messages about the purpose(s) of AONBs and the status of the National Landscapes of Wales. Endorsement of the Plan, when adopted by the constituent local authorities, would similarly elevate the significance of the Plan to the local authorities.

3.11. The next update of Planning Policy Wales should also recognise that the statutory AONB Management Plans identify the Special Qualities of the area.



Anglesey AONB



## 4. Governance and Scrutiny

*Our case for positive change: Improving **governance and scrutiny** – because the profile and engagement of AONB Partnerships with their local authorities is often low and should better reflect their significance as nationally important designated and protected landscapes*

### **D. Welsh Government to make a ‘national appointment’ to each AONB partnership and these appointees to also sit on the new ‘National Partnership for Designated Landscapes’ alongside AONB partnership chairs and lead officers.**

- 4.1. Governance of AONBs is through an AONB partnership<sup>3</sup>, either a local authority constituted Joint Advisory Committees (JACs) – for 4 AONBs, or a Joint Committee (JC) – with an Advisory Partnership. The AONB partnerships tend to have a broad representation of local or regional interests. However, whereas National Parks have several Welsh Government appointees, there are no formal national appointees that can act as a focus on the national designation. ‘Future Landscapes – Delivering for Wales’ encouraged Designated Landscapes to adopt the Principles of Good Governance. This has been followed by 3 of the 5 AONBs and the lack of national representation was noted as an issue. One national appointee to each AONB partnership would provide a level of ‘national’ focus without upsetting any balance of local accountability, nor undue bureaucracy for Welsh Government.
- 4.2. ‘Valued and Resilient’ identifies the intention to “establish a National Partnership to develop a robust culture of collaboration whilst also providing scrutiny and challenge on designated landscapes’ priorities and delivery”. This is welcomed, and the Welsh Government appointees could be invited to sit on the National Partnership alongside AONB partnership chairs and lead officers. However, of course, the ‘National Partnership for Designated Landscapes’ would become the ‘National Landscapes of Wales Partnership’.

### **C. Explore the potential for AONB partnerships to become statutory consultees for planning applications.**

- 4.3. AONB partnerships are not Local Planning Authorities nor executive bodies, unlike the National Park Authorities. AONB partnerships are constituted through the constituent local authorities who are the Local Planning Authorities. AONB Lead officers work within their respective local authorities and through their AONB partnerships on responses to relevant policy consultations and with the National Association for AONBs on strategic responses. However, the AONB partnership &/or the lead officer are often requested or expected to provide ‘independent’ comments on significant planning applications, especially by the public. The multi-authority AONBs (Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB and Wye Valley AONB) employ or contract planning advisors to facilitate this function, whereas the single authority AONB teams tend to be embedded in or near the Planning Department.
- 4.4. There is an expectation, from the public at least, and some local councillors, that AONB partnerships should be statutory consultees. It could be argued that AONB staff should not need to be involved in development control matters on the assumption that the Local

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<sup>3</sup> AONB partnership with a lower case p, is the generic term used to refer to an AONB Partnership, Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), Joint Committee (JC) or Conservation Board or any other organisation recognised as the lead governance body for an AONB.

Planning Authority rigorously applies AONB policies. However, the Welsh Government should investigate this dichotomous expectation and resolve whether there is a way to modify the status of AONB partnerships to balance the disparity with the National Parks. It is acknowledged that this will need some time and potentially changes to legislation.

- 4.5. In the short term more training is required of Planning Officers, Planning Committee members and the public. Some of this can be formalised and delivered centrally, potentially through a properly resourced National Association for AONBs or locally by the AONB team, or in combination, again if the capacity and capability is enabled – see *Resourcing and capacity* below.



Wye Valley AONB

## 5. Resourcing & Capacity

*Our case for positive change: Focussed and secure **Resourcing and capacity building** – because the current insecure, opportunistic and often ‘hidden’ resourcing position constrains the ability and potential for AONBs to deliver.*

### **K. The National Association for AONBs is resourced to assist Welsh Government with the establishment and servicing of the new ‘Partnership for National Landscapes of Wales’, co-ordinate AONB (& NLW) member training and AONB Performance Monitoring.**

- 5.1. AONB partnerships have been reasonably well engaged and represented at Welsh and UK levels through Welsh Government, NRW and the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB). However, the NAAONB is not currently resourced to operate effectively in Wales. A functioning ‘association’ for AONBs, collaborating closely with the National Parks, is essential for wider partnership working, strategic policy development, and as a vehicle for maintaining a ‘seat at the table’ for AONB lead officers when needing to work directly with governments and civil servants. This is ensured for National Park Officers by virtue of their status as leaders of Local Authorities but denied to AONB lead officers as a result of status disparity.
- 5.2. The National Association for AONBs would be a natural and obvious partner to help Welsh Government establish and service the new ‘National Partnership for Designated Landscapes’ or the ‘National Landscapes of Wales Partnership’.
- 5.3. There is a constant need for training of AONB partnership members and local authority members and officers (e.g. in Planning –as identified above, Highways, etc.) to raise their awareness and understanding of their role in the delivery of AONB purposes – including induction training, attendance at national conferences, shared Member training etc. The AONB teams may be able to provide some local training and CPD but there could and should be more national and collaborative training, both between AONBs and with the National Parks. The National Association for AONBs would be an obvious body to co-ordinate such activity but is currently not adequately resourced to deliver this in Wales.

### **J. AONB partnerships commissioned and resourced on a long term basis to provide a core AONB staff team with the critical mass and capacity to deliver the AONB Management Plan and the functions outlined in Valued and Resilient.**

- 5.4. ‘Valued and Resilient’ identifies a number of key ‘asks’ or expectations of Designated Landscapes, including “the ability to function effectively at a national level to inform and influence strategic priorities and plans, whilst maintaining a credible mandate and the relationships necessary to deliver within a local area.” Currently AONB teams across Wales, individually and collectively, do not have the capacity to meet all these expectations. All AONB staff are local authority posts. The largest AONB team is Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB with a contingent of 4 FTE core AONB staff overseeing a wider 16 FTE countryside team managing traditional Country Parks etc. within the AONB. The smallest AONB teams are Llyn and Gower with 2 FTE staff. This is between 10 and 100 times smaller than some National Park Authorities.
- 5.5. AONBs are a key delivery mechanism for NRW’s statutory landscape remit, Area Statements/Natural Resources Planning and the wider sustainability and well-being

agendas. The NRW AONB National Partnership Programme has enabled locally targeted coordinated activity at a strategic and landscape level; there is further opportunity and potential for AONBs to act as a focus and deliver place-based management of natural resources, if the capacity of AONB teams was enabled to do this.

- 5.6. Smaller AONB units struggle with the capacity to collaborate with others, or engage with (and influence) national matters affecting them; and all AONBs have benefitted from advocacy and representation provided by the NAAONB. This relationship has been particularly beneficial through the Future Landscapes Wales programme, but there is no formal arrangement or resourcing for this to continue. Currently there is a predicted reduction in capacity of both local AONB staff capacity and the 'national' bodies (NRW & NAAONB) to represent AONB interests. For example due to budgetary constraints the Wye Valley AONB Unit is having to reduce the hours of the AONB Information Officer, despite the recent Governance review identifying that 'communications' was a key area that needed consolidating.
- 5.7. Compared to National Parks, the profile and national importance of an AONB is often not reflected at the local level, with a need for better levels of engagement with local authorities at cabinet or senior management level. The National Park Authority and the National Park Officer are statutory requirements whereas AONB partnerships are non-statutory, non-executive bodies and the local authority employment of an AONB lead officer was only a CCW recommendation. Within a local authority direct 'AONB' activity is usually delegated down to the AONB lead officer and team, there is no requirement to report on AONB activity/delivery (beyond grant funding claims) and AONBs may not be seen as relevant to other priorities in education, social services, housing or transport. AONB teams and AONB budgets are relatively modest in terms of local authority management. Consequently, AONB lead officers do not 'score highly' in local authority Job Evaluation matrices and senior leadership hierarchies, even though they are often engaging with Cabinet members, Assembly Members, Ministers, etc. and are often recognised as 'punching above their weight'. The AONB lead officer should be recognised as an essential post within each AONB and the 'lead advisor' to his or her AONB and Local Authorities, supported by the AONB partnership.
- 5.8. Lots of work goes on in AONBs that are 'hidden' because local authorities do not necessarily recognise it as delivering on AONB purposes e.g. planning services, highways & rights of way improvements, education & youth services etc. This activity is at risk of reducing as a result of continuing budget cuts and spending restrictions. The capacity and critical mass of AONB teams and partnerships to build effective and durable cross-sector networks and partnerships is also in danger of being diminished rather than enhanced with current resourcing levels. Consequently, there is an underutilisation of opportunities provided by AONBs to deliver on Public Service Board (PSB), Well-being Plans and Well Being of Future Generation goals.
- 5.9. Security of core funding from Welsh Government via NRW and from the constituent local authorities is an ongoing concern for the AONB partnerships and lead officers. Providing certainty enables long-term planning for the AONBs and ensures the capacity to lever in significant project funding from other sources. However, the AONB teams need to build and maintain a critical mass of staff and expertise in order to manage diverse projects and prepare and submit funding applications. The current limited capacity of most AONB teams

is a barrier to greater collaboration, leverage and delivery. Ensuring each AONB team has a core of staff to deliver what is expected in 'Valued and Resilient' would help consolidate partnership working and elevate the status and effectiveness of AONBs. The 2003 WAG & CCW publication 'An Introduction to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Wales' (CCC207) reiterated the findings of a 1998 study that "a team of six people is likely to be needed for most of the AONBs, including an AONB Officer, two Assistant AONB Officers (running projects), two AONB rangers and an administrative assistant." These levels of staffing have never been achieved consistently across all the AONBs in Wales. There are currently 32 staff employed by AONB teams across Wales and many of those are working part time or on reduced hours' contracts. This includes the 16 Countryside staff in one AONB.

5.10. 'Valued and Resilient' identifies that for National Parks "Additional support for pressures and projects on a case by case basis has been supported when the opportunity has arisen; this will continue." AONB partnerships would welcome more open access to these resources, but for some AONBs the capacity is not sufficient to capitalise on these opportunities.

**L. Welsh Government, NRW, Local Authorities and NGO's to have the resilience and capacity to deliver Valued and Resilient and the statutory purpose(s) of the National Landscapes of Wales.**

5.11. NRW continue to fulfil the 'national advocate' role for and between Designated Landscapes and to a large extent also on AONB partnerships. This is in line with their statutory role as advisors on landscape issues. However, we believe the capacity of NRW staff is also becoming more stretched and less focused on designated landscapes, to the potential detriment of AONBs and National Parks and the wider landscape of Wales. AONB partnerships have relied on the support of NRW and the NAAONB whereas National Park Authorities have usually had the resources to support their own interests. Previous to the formation of NRW, AONB partnerships were supported with local and national expertise from Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), Forestry Commission Wales and Environment Agency Wales. National Park Authorities invariably had the staff and capacity to employ their own ecologists, tree officers, etc. but AONB teams were never resourced to such an extent and have relied on other local authority staff or local partners such as NRW or Wildlife Trust staff.

5.12. The Welsh AONB partnerships, NRW and the NAAONB are eager and committed to continued dialogue, engagement and collaboration with Welsh Government to ensure a realistic, pragmatic and proportionately resourced approach; adapted and adopted for the long term, and aligned with the statement in - 'Valued and Resilient' (page 5): "Designated landscapes are strategic assets and are a key delivery mechanism for the Welsh Government's environmental, social and economic ambitions". In order for the above to be realised, not only is it essential for the Welsh AONBs, NRW and the NAAONB to be adequately and proportionately resourced; it is also essential that capacity within the 'tripartite' group is proportionately maintained in the very short term and enhanced in the medium to long term. Any reduction or imbalance of resourcing and capacity within the tripartite group could significantly destabilise and impact on Welsh Government's aspirations and ambitions in the future management of the Designated Landscapes.

**I. Welsh Government and NRW to produce data/statistics cut to each AONB as part of existing data and analysis activity, e.g. tourism, agriculture, population, state of environment,**

**designated site condition etc., in order to inform the AONB Management Plans and support clearer understanding of the value, profile and significance of AONBs.**

5.13. National Parks often have 'Management Plan' teams that are larger than an adjacent AONB team. AONBs have to spend scarce time and resources to collate, cut and analyse national data and statistics. The AONBs collaborate and pool resources where possible but there remain inconsistencies and duplication in effort. However this information is crucial for the evidence base for the AONB Management Plan. Nationally gathered data should be made available for each AONB and it could also be aggregated for the designation and the nation. If this was also done for National Parks it would provide a robust evidence base for the National Landscapes of Wales.



Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB

## Appendix 1 – Short / Medium / Long term Actions

### Long term (eg within 5 years)

- A. A second purpose on “Understanding and Enjoyment” be pursued for AONBs at the earliest opportunity in recognition that all AONB partnerships play a major role in delivering opportunities for outdoor understanding, enjoyment and recreation in Wales. \*
- B. Strengthen the CRoW Act Section 85 ‘Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation’ into a ‘Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation and implementation of the AONB Management Plan’.

### Medium term (eg within 3 years)

- C. Explore the potential for AONB partnerships to become statutory consultees for planning applications.
- D. Welsh Government to make a ‘national appointment’ to each AONB partnership and these appointees to also sit on the new ‘National Partnership for Designated Landscapes’ alongside AONB partnership chairs and lead officers.
- F. The post-Brexit agri-environment and LEADER replacement schemes to be targeted at delivering the AONB Management Plans and AONB partnerships to have a key role in providing support.

### Short term (eg within 1-2 years)

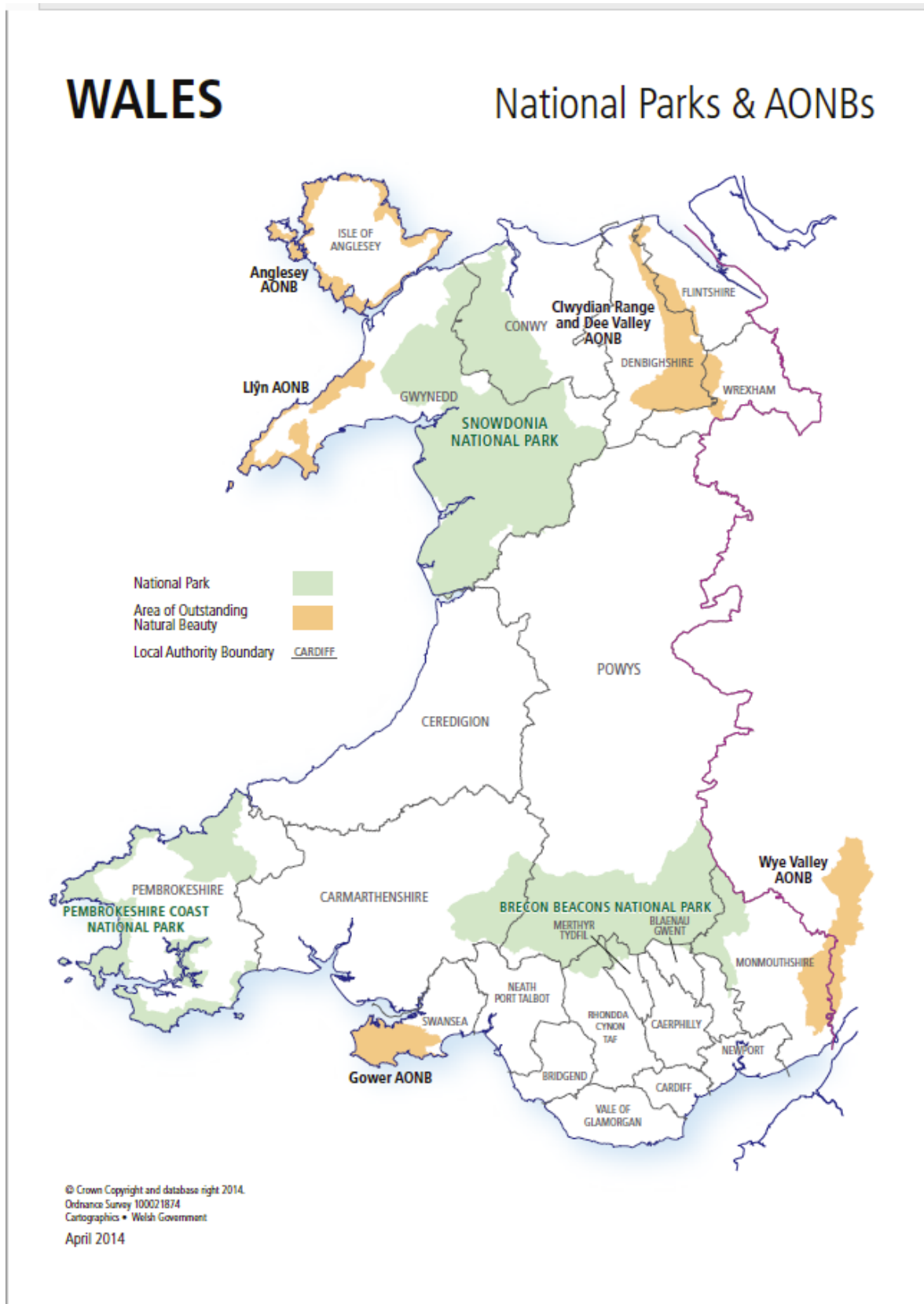
- \* In the interim, Welsh Government provides policy confirmation of the ‘supplementary purposes’ for AONBs
- E. AONBs and National Parks to be referred to generally and collectively as the ‘National Landscapes of Wales’ rather than ‘Designated Landscapes’ or ‘Protected Landscapes’, hence the ‘National Partnership for Designated Landscapes’ would become the ‘National Landscapes of Wales Partnership’, etc.
- G. The Minister convenes an annual seminar for CRoW Section 85 public bodies to share good practice on how they are delivering their ‘Duty of Regard to the purpose of AONB designation’ and how the AONB Management Plan is being implemented.
- H. The Minister elevates the AONB Management Plans currently commencing their 5 year reviews by providing a Foreword, formal endorsement when adopted and ensuring supporting policy recognition in Planning Policy Wales (PPW).
- I. Welsh Government and NRW to produce data/statistics cut to each AONB as part of existing data and analysis activity, e.g. tourism, agriculture, population, state of environment, designated site condition etc., in order to inform the AONB Management Plans and support clearer understanding of the value, profile and significance of AONBs.
- J. AONB partnerships commissioned and resourced on a long term basis to provide a core AONB staff team with the critical mass and capacity to deliver the AONB Management Plan and the functions outlined in Valued and Resilient.
- K. The National Association for AONBs is resourced to assist Welsh Government with the establishment and servicing of the new ‘National Landscapes of Wales Partnership’, co-ordinate AONB (& NLW) member training and AONB Performance Monitoring.
- L. Welsh Government, NRW, Local Authorities and NGO’s to have the resilience and capacity to deliver Valued and Resilient and the statutory purpose(s) of the National Landscapes of Wales.

## Appendix 2 – AONB Attributes

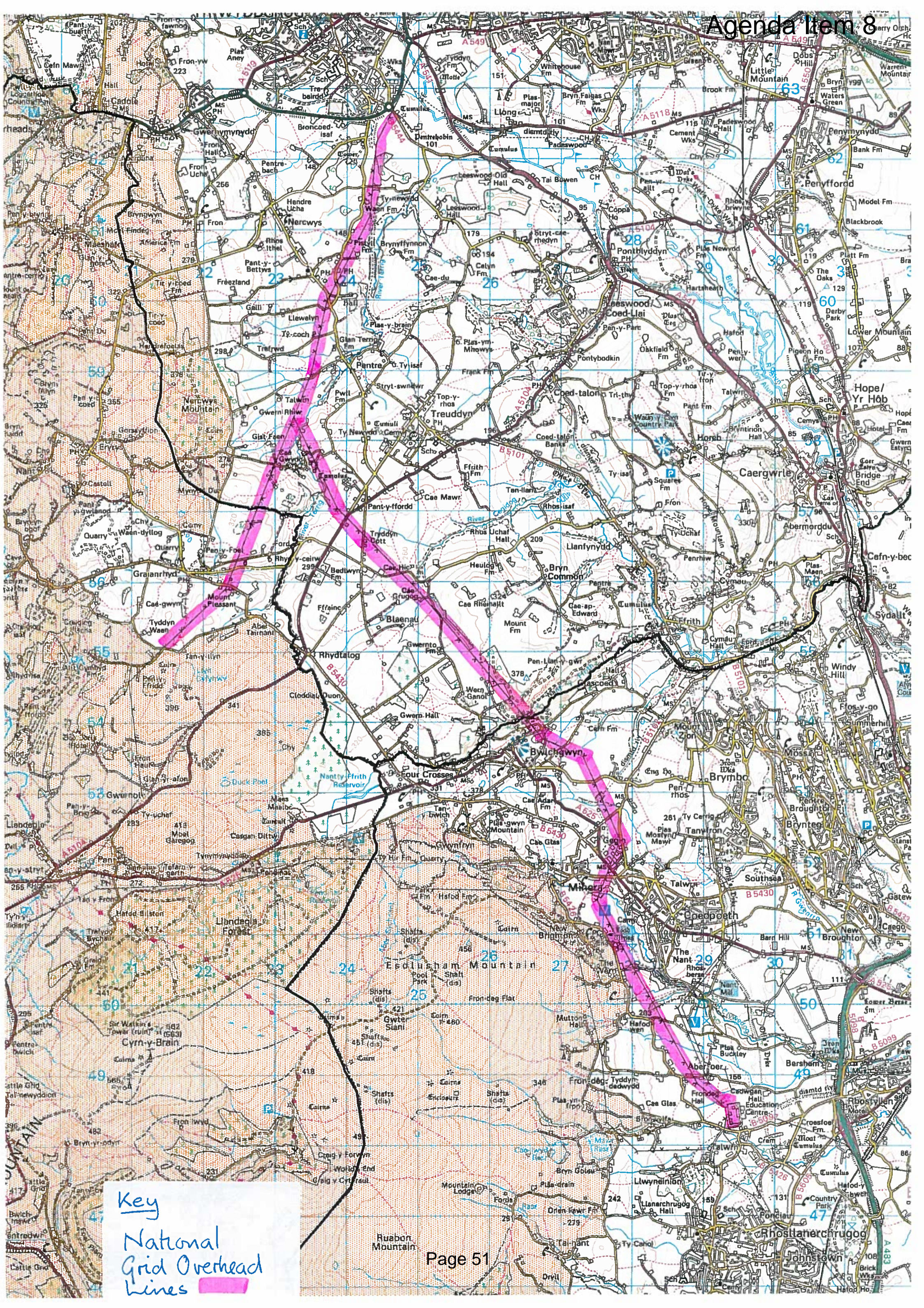
AONB	Clwydian Range & Dee Valley	Anglesey	Gower	Llŷn	Wye Valley (Wales only)
<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>					
Size of AONB(sq. kms)	390	221	188	155	117
Local Authorities	3	1	1	1	1
Population	18,960	16,556	15,800	6,108	6,341
Special Areas of Conservation	3	5	5	3	3
Special Protection Area	1	3	1	2	0
NNR	0	1	3	1	2
SSSIs	24	32	26	22	21
LNR	1	3	3	0	1
Geopark	0	1	0	0	0
RIGS	72	31	0	3	<i>tbc</i>
WHS	1	1	0	0	0
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	95	75	83	55	44
Outstanding Historic Landscapes	3	2	1	1	1
Historic Parks & Gardens	13	7	5	1	9
Conservation Areas	17	4	17	8	9
Grade 1 Listed Buildings	15	32	4	7	4
Grade II* Listed Buildings	43	42	22	12	26
Grade II Listed Buildings	583	491	105	223	171
Buildings at Risk	56	<i>tbc</i>	10	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>
Heritage Coast (km)	N/A	50	59	88	N/A
AONB LA Managed Sites	22	3	3	N/A	3
Public Rights of Way (km)	772	370	415	278	463
National Trail or <u>Wales Coast Path</u> (km)	72	<u>201</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>80</u>	5
Access Land (ha)	10,380	417	3145	2077	4,690
Common Land (ha)	6,441	521	5271	938	46
Iron Age Hill forts	10	3	9	5	4



Map: National Landscapes of Wales

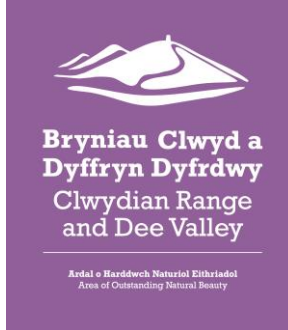


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### SUMMARY OF AONB PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

APRIL 2018 - SEPTEMBER 2018

Code No. (1)	Site Address	Brief Description of Development	Summary of AONB Comments	LPA Decision	Response to AONB Comments (2)
03/2018/0152	44 Church Street, Llangollen, LL20 8HY	Alterations to detailing of former shop front	No objection, suggest design changes	Granted 10/05/18	
03/2018/0261	Co-Operative, Llangollen, LL20 8HN	Display of advertisements/signs	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views	Granted 26/04/18	N/A
27/2018/0252	Plas Eliseg, Llantysilio, LL20 8DE	Construction of vehicular access and parking area	No objection, suggest landscaping	Granted 09/05/18	
16/2018/0249	Llwyn Dedwydd, Llanbedr DC, LL15 1UT	Retention of existing LV overhead line	No observations	Granted 09/05/18	N/A
P/2018/0218	Cross Shop, Froncysyllte LL20 7SN	Conversion to dwelling	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views		N/A
10/2018/0216	Land adjacent to Ty Isaf, Bryneglwys LL21 9LF	Details of dwelling granted outline permission (Code no.10/2017/0627)	No objection, suggest landscaping	Granted 01/05/18	
03/2018/0246	Hafan Deg, Birch Hill Llangollen, LL20 8LN	Insertion of two Velux and one window	No objection	Granted 29/05/18	N/A
17/2018/0281	Hafod Lon, Llandegla LL11 3BG	Erection of extension to dwelling	No objection, suggest natural slate roof	Granted 29/05/18	
058256	Llwyn Derw, Gwernymynydd, CH7 5JS	Change of use of garage to coffee roastery	No observations	Granted 21/05/18	N/A
058254	Land adj to Caer Go, Cilcain, CH7 5HR	Erection of accommodation for gun dog training centre	No observations, suggest further lighting details		
47/2018/0225	Brynlithrig Hall Rhuallt LL17 0TP	Removal of two dying trees subject to TPO	No objection to felling one tree but concerns about the other	Granted 25/05/18	
05/2017/0685	Car Park Green Lane Corwen, LL21 0DN	Siting of portacabin to provide temporary railway ticket office (retrospective)	No objection, suggest further details of colour and lighting required	Granted 16/05/18	
03/2017/1188	Land adjacent to Mile End Mill Llangollen, LL20 8AD	Erection of detached dwelling and associated works	No objection, suggest materials and lighting details	Granted 22/10/18	
05/2018/0188	Land adjoining Maes y Wern, Carrog, LL21 9AH	Erection of 8 dwellings, access and associated works	No objection, suggest materials, landscaping, affordable housing and lighting details		
053325	Land adj Siglen Uchaf Gwernymynydd, CH7 5LG	Outline application for erection of 10 dwellings (Amended plans)	No objection, suggest need for affordable housing		
42/2018/0250	Bryniau Isaf Dyserth LL18 6BY	Erection of replacement steel framed building	No objection in principle but concerns about scale	Granted 04/06/18	
09/2017/1125	Candy Mill Bridge Bodfari LL16 4DR	Infill of void under bridge including flood relief culverts (Amended plans)	No objection, suggest access amendments	Granted 30/05/18	
16/2018/0241	Wernog, Llanbedr DC, LL15 1YE	Erection of extensions and alterations to dwelling	No objection, but require further information on tree impact and lighting	Granted 18/07/18	
41/2018/0199	1 Derwen Terrace Bodfari LL16 4DH	Erection of first floor rear extension (Amended plans)	No observations	Granted 20/06/18	N/A
05/2018/0333	Tyn Graig Glyndyfrdwy LL21 9HN	Demolition of shed, erection of extension and internal alterations	No objection, subject to Conservation Officer views	Granted 04/06/18	N/A
05/2018/0334	Tyn Graig Glyndyfrdwy LL21 9HN	Demolition of shed, erection of extension and internal alterations (Listed Building application)	No objection, subject to Conservation Officer views	Granted 31/05/18	N/A
20/2017/1156	Genus, Green Park, Llanrhydd, Ruthin, LL15 2UP	Erection of calf rearing unit comprising two sheds, offices, storage and associated works	No objection subject to materials, lighting details and extra landscaping	Granted 18/06/18	
058312	Tirionfa, Pen-Y-Felin, Nannerch, CH7 5RW	Proposed replacement of a static caravan with holiday chalet	Concerns about scale and precedent, suggest design changes and conditions	Refused 24/10/18	

Code No. (1)	Site Address	Brief Description of Development	Summary of AONB Comments	LPA Decision	Response to AONB Comments (2)
058284	Treetops, Cadole, CH7 5LL	Erection of a boundary acoustic fence	No objection subject to height and hedge retention	Granted 24/05/18	
058361	Meliden, Gwernymynydd, CH7 5LQ	Erection of single storey extension to dwelling and garage	No objection subject to further details and materials	Granted 26/06/18	
03/2018/0374	4 Dolafon Villas Llangollen, LL20 8SU	Erection of safety railings to existing roof (retrospective)	No observations, concerns about retrospection	Granted 20/06/18	N/A
15/2018/0197	Armonfa, Llanarmon Yn Ial CH7 4QE	Erection of extension to dwelling (retrospective)	No observations, concerns about retrospection	Refused 04/06/18	N/A
058124	Land at Bayonne, Gwernaffield, CH7 5ET	Outline application for the erection of a dwelling	Object; no local need, not infill, loss of trees		
15/2018/0240	North Hills Farm, Graianrhyd, CH7 4QS	Replacement of agricultural store to provide holiday accommodation	Object, harmful impact on AONB	Withdrawn 23/05/18	N/A
058433	Afonwen Craft Centre, Afonwen CH7 5UB	Prefabricated kitchen extension to existing restaurant	No observations	Granted 26/06/18	N/A
03/2018/0284	Land at Llandyn Hall Farm, Llangollen, LL20 7UH	Change of use to holiday touring park (30 units) and associated works	No objection subject to landscaping, lighting, seasonal use and access	Granted 05/10/18	
058382	Fron House, Nannerch, CH7 5RW	Approval of details (external lighting and garage door)	No objection subject to amended light details	Granted 25/05/18	
03/2018/0391	6 Fairway View, Llangollen, LL20 7PS	Erection of extension to side of dwelling	No objection, subject to Conservation Officer views	Granted 01/08/18	N/A
058262	Windyridge, Gwaenysgor, LL18 6EP	Erection of two storey extension	No objection in principle, concerns over design, suggest changes		
058434	Post Office, Cilcain, CH7 5NW	Change of use of shop to create a one bedroom holiday let	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views and stone wall details	Granted 08/10/18	
09/2018/0337	Efail Y Waen Farm Bodfari	Removal of hedgerow and creation of new field access	Concern about loss of important hedgerow	Withdrawn 28/09/18	N/A
23/2017/1218	Bryn Morfydd Hotel Llanrhaeadr Denbigh, LL16 4NP	Demolition of hotel and construction of new 39 bedroom hotel; revisions and extension of holiday lodge park to accommodate 89 lodges, and associated works and landscaping (Amended plans)	Support amended layout and landscaping, subject to further tree protection. Concerns over lighting impact remain.	Granted 17/08/18	
47/2018/0340	Bryn Awel, Cwm LL18 6HU	Erection of first floor extension and alterations	No objection subject to design changes	Granted 13/06/18	
22/2018/0386	Ty Coch Farm Llangynhafal LL16 4LN	Extension to agricultural building	No objection subject to retention/protection of adjacent hedge	Granted 12/06/18	
15/2018/0330	Cyfnant Uchaf Llanarmon-Yn-Ial , CH7 4QD	Demolition of existing extensions, erection of new extension and repairs (Listed Building)	Concerns over design	Granted 01/08/18	
03/2018/0399	37 - 39 Hall Street Llangollen, LL20 8EP	Change of use to domestic and subdivision into two dwellings	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views, suggest design changes	Refused 26/07/18	N/A
03/2018/0491	Co-Operative Llangollen, LL20 8HN	Installation of compressor and condenser in external yard and redecoration	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views	Granted 05/07/18	N/A
058135	1 The Cottage, Gwernymynydd, CH7 5LP	Conversion of semi-detached dwelling to 2 self-contained dwellings	No objection	Granted 25/10/18	N/A
058124	Land at Bayonne, Gwernaffield, CH7 5ET	Outline application for the erection of an affordable dwelling (Amended description)	Maintain objection		
10/2018/0440	Land adjacent to Tyn-y-Bedw, Bryneglwys, LL21 9LR	Variation of conditions of planning permission 10/2015/0936 to allow further time to submit details and allow number of units to be reserved matter	No objection	Granted 29/06/18	N/A
03/2018/0492	5 Oak Mews Llangollen, LL20 8RP	Change of use from store to Micropub	No objection	Granted 25/07/18	N/A
20/2017/1156	Genus, Green Park, Llanrhydd, Ruthin, LL15 2UP	Erection of calf rearing unit comprising two sheds, offices and associated works (Amended plans)	Welcome amended landscaping scheme but overall landscaping strategy still required	Granted 18/06/18	
47/2018/0223	Benarth Cottage	Change of use of agricultural land	Concerns about principle and	Refused	

Code No. (1)	Site Address	Brief Description of Development	Summary of AONB Comments	LPA Decision	Response to AONB Comments (2)
	Tremeirchion LL17 0AR	to domestic and conversion of garage to ancillary accommodation	setting of Historic Park; alternative approach suggested.	22/06/18	
47/2018/0411	New Inn Cottage Tremeirchion, LL17 OUG	Demolition of cottage and erection of replacement dwelling and temporary static caravan	Object, loss of traditional building and design of replacement	Granted 17/10/18	
41/2018/0009	Chapel Cottage Bodfari LL16 4DW	Erection of extensions to dwelling (Amended plans)	Welcome amendments; suggest colour condition	Granted 18/07/18	
05/2018/0390	Ty Coed Glyndyfrdwy LL21 9BS	Details of landscaping, external appearance and external lighting for permission 05/2016/0115	No objection, suggest alternative lighting and solar panels	Granted 18/06/18	
15/2018/0475	Perthi Chwarae Llanarmon Yn Ial CH7 4QX	Erection of an agricultural building	No objection, further details required, design changes and tree protection	Granted 09/10/18	
058394	Trelan Newydd, Cilcain, CH7 5NX	Erection of 2no. holiday lodges	No objection, suggest re-siting and further details	Granted 26/06/18	
16/2018/0510	Robin Hill, Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd, LL15 1UT	Removal of conservatory and erection of extension to dwelling	No objection	Granted 25/07/18	N/A
03/2018/0349	Spar Stores Llangollen, LL20 8RT	Retention of ATM (retrospective application).	Concerns re retrospection but no objection	Granted 12/07/18	N/A
03/2018/0350	Spar Stores Llangollen, LL20 8RT	Retention of illuminated ATM signage (retrospective application)	Concerns re retrospection but no objection	Granted 12/07/18	N/A
03/2018/0398	Llangollen Fechan, Llangollen, LL20 7PR	Erection of extension to care home creating 17 additional bedrooms,	No objection subject to landscaping, protection of trees and lighting details		
03/2018/0412	Wynnstay Arms Hotel, Llangollen LL20 8PF	Demolition of existing extension and erection of replacement extension	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views	Granted 03/08/18	N/A
21/2018/0166	12 Bryn Artro Avenue, Llanferres CH7 5SG	Erection of single storey rear extension (Amended plans)	No objection	Granted 12/09/18	N/A
09/2018/0337	Efail Y Waen Farm, Bodfari	Removal of hedgerow and creation of new field access (Amended plans)	Maintain concern about loss of important hedgerow	Withdrawn 28/09/18	N/A
03/2018/0531	Prince Of Wales Llangollen, LL20 8HN	Conversion of accommodation above public house to form 2 flats	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views, more information required.		
03/2018/0596	22 Bridge Street Llangollen, LL20 8PF	Construction of a new vehicular access and car parking space	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views	Granted 01/08/18	N/A
05/2018/0586	Carrog Uchaf Carrog, LL21 9ET	Details of materials and floor level conditions (Code No: 05/2016/0630)	No objection	Granted 11/07/18	N/A
20/2018/0624	Pennant, Pentre Celyn LL15 2HF	Erection of extension to rear of dwelling	No objection	Granted 20/08/18	N/A
20/2018/0615	Islwyn Pentre Celyn LL15 2HD	Erection of single storey extension and balcony	No objection subject to materials	Granted 17/08/18	
15/2018/0329	Cyfnant Uchaf Llanarmon-Yn-Ial CH7 4QD	Demolition of existing extensions, erection of new extension and repairs	Concerns over design	Granted 02/08/18	
05/2018/0628	Pen Y Bryn Ucha Corwen, LL21 0BG	Erection of an agricultural building	No objection subject to materials and lighting	Granted 01/08/18	
20/2018/0518	Land adjoining Ty Famau Llanfair DC LL15 2SH	Siting of 4 glamping domes, installation of a septic tank and associated works	No objection subject to colour, landscaping and lighting	Granted 04/09/18	
21/2018/0293	16 Rectory Lane Llanferres CH7 5SR	Demolition of porch and erection of garage	No objection subject to materials	Granted 17/10/18	
058611	Rhyd Y Cilgwyn, Gwaenysgor LL18 6EW	Extension and change of use of existing holiday cottage to dwelling	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views	Refused 14/08/18	N/A
058561	Thomas Plant Hire Depot, Caerwys, CH7 5BL	Retrospective application for lighting columns and lighting hoods	Serious concerns, further detail required		
21/2018/0601	Hyfrydle Maeshafn CH7 5LU	Erection of extensions to dwelling and demolition of garage	No objection subject to materials and protection of trees	Granted 17/10/18	
47/2018/0619	The Marl, Cwm LL18 5SN	Erection of extensions to dwelling	No objection	Granted 03/09/18	N/A
41/2018/0657	The Old Post Office Bodfari LL16 4DA	Erection of front porch and single storey rear extension	No objection subject to Conservation Officer views	Granted 22/08/18	N/A
15/2018/0612	Clover Grange	Erection of extension to replace	Object to scale and design	Refused	

Code No. (1)	Site Address	Brief Description of Development	Summary of AONB Comments	LPA Decision	Response to AONB Comments (2)
	Llanarmon Yn Ial CH7 4TB	existing conservatory		08/08/18	
058581	Pen Y Bryn, Gwernymynydd, CH7 5LG	Erection of two storey extension	Object to design	Withdrawn 07/08/18	N/A
18/2018/0565	Land at Sunnycroft Llandyrnog LL16 4LR	Change of use and erection of building for construction of trailers (retrospective)	Concerns re retrospection, suggest landscaping and lighting controls	Refused 07/09/18	N/A
20/2018/0647	Genus Breeding Ltd Llanrhydd LL15 2UP	Details of revised external lighting and landscaping scheme	Welcome landscaping and reduced lighting; need to specify light colour	Granted 17/09/18	
058646	Moelfryn, Llanasa, CH8 9NE	Conversion of redundant barn to holiday accommodation	Object to design	Refused 30/08/18	
03/2018/0639	38 Castle Street Llangollen, LL20 8NH	Display of non-illuminated fascia and projecting sign	Object to design	Refused 04/08/18	
16/2018/0659	Land at Cae Glas Llanbedr DC LL15 1US	Details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of dwelling	No objection, suggest alternative materials		
22/2018/0656	Ty Newydd Llangynhafal LL15 1RU	Change of use of haulage depot to joinery workshop (Class B1)	No objection subject to noise conditions	Granted 14/09/18	
17/2018/0721	Pen Y Stryd Farm Llandegla LL11 3AH	Conversion of outbuilding to holiday accommodation	No objection subject to holiday use condition		
47/2018/0411	New Inn Cottage Tremeirchion, LL17 OUG	Demolition of cottage and erection of replacement dwelling and temporary caravan (amended plans)	Concerns with design of replacement	Granted 17/10/18	
3208218 (Planning Inspectorate)	Alwen Forest, LL21 9TT	EIA Scoping - Wind farm (9 turbines, 200 m to tip) and associated infrastructure	Recommend additional LVIA viewpoints	Opinion Issued 27/09/18	
P/2018/0598	Alexandria, Garth LL20 7YL	Erection of garden room	No objection subject to colour and lighting	Granted 13/09/18	
16/2018/0730	Machlud Haul, Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd LL15 1YF	Erection of extension to dwelling	Concerns over design	Granted 21/09/18	
47/2018/0741	1 Hen Afon Tremeirchion LL17 0UP	Erection of extension to dwelling	No observations	Granted 25/09/18	N/A
47/2018/0736	Benarth Cottage Tremeirchion LL17 0AR	Extension to dwelling for annex accommodation and extension to curtilage	No objection subject to materials, landscaping and removal of PD rights		
15/2018/0726	Bwlch Y Parc Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd LL15 1YF	Erection of extension and alterations to dwelling	No objection	Granted 28/09/18	N/A
058733	Barlows Caravan Park, Caerwys CH7 5BA	Extension of existing holiday park and additional landscaping	No objection subject to further landscaping and lighting details		
17/2018/0757	Tafarn Y Garth Llandegla, LL11 3AA	Erection of extension to agricultural building	No objection	Granted 02/10/18	N/A
20/2018/0647	Genus Breeding Ltd Llanrhydd LL15 2UP	Details of revised external lighting and landscaping scheme (Amended plans)	No objection	Granted 17/09/18	N/A
03/2018/0723	Outbuildings at Llyn Farm, Trevor LL20 7UN	Conversion of outbuildings to form 4 no. holiday accommodation units,	No objection subject to holiday use and window and lighting details	Granted 02/10/18	
16/2018/0702	Panorama Cottage Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd LL15 1YF	Erection of extension and alterations to dwelling	No objection subject to landscaping, materials and lighting details	Granted 11/09/18	
03/2018/0698	Llandyn Hall Farm Llangollen, LL20 7UH	Erection of extensions and alterations to dwelling	No objection subject to landscaping and materials	Granted 30/08/18	
09/2018/0664	Berth Farm, Bodfari LL16 4HT	Retention of replacement agricultural building (retrospective application)	Concerns re retrospection, suggest additional landscaping	Granted 11/09/18	
P/2018/0551	Kronospan Ltd, Chirk, LL14 5NT	Development of an Orientated Strand Board Production Facility	No objection subject to colour and implementation of landscape strategy		
058733	Barlow's Caravan Park, Caerwys, CH7 5BA	Extension of existing holiday park (Amended details)	No objection subject to additional landscaping and details of lighting and overall numbers		
22/2018/0801	Church Of St Cynhafal Llangynhafal LL15 1RU	Erection of extension to form a kitchenette and lavatory	No objection subject to views of Conservation Officer		N/A
058770	Thomas Plant Hire Depot,	Application for removal or	Concerns over impact on dark		



Code No. (1)	Site Address	Brief Description of Development	Summary of AONB Comments	LPA Decision	Response to AONB Comments (2)
	Caerwys, CH7 5BL	variation of operational hours condition on 052645	skies		
27/2018/0724	Blue Doors, 3 Fron Deg, Llandynan LL20 7YU	Erection of extensions and alterations to dwelling	No objection in principle but concerns re scale and design		
058595	Cimmwch Bach, Afonwen, CH7 5US	Demolition of existing barn and erection of replacement building	No objection subject to materials, landscaping and lighting details	Granted 11/09/18	
18/2018/0747	Ffin Caer, Llandyrnog LL16 4HR	Erection of extension and alterations to dwelling	No objection	Granted 17/10/18	N/A
17/2018/0828	The Gate House Llandegla LL11 3AU	Change of use of workshop to holiday accommodation	No objection subject to holiday use and materials	Granted 16/10/18	
058854	Bwlch Cottage, Cilcain CH7 5NS	Garden room extension and dormer window to roof	No objection subject to materials	Refused 26/09/18	N/A
15/2018/0810	Land at Capel Bethel Llanarmon Yn Ial CH7 4QE	Change of use of grazing land to form extension to existing burial ground	No objection subject to landscaping	Granted 08/10/18	
20/2018/0696	Hiridir, Pentre Celyn LL15 2HF	Erection of extensions, re-modelling of existing dwelling and construction of garage and new entrance	No objection, suggest materials and lighting details	Granted 19/09/18	
20/2018/0540	Land at Three Pigeons Inn Graigfechan LL15 2EU	Change of use of touring caravan site 10 holiday studios and associated works	No objection subject to landscaping, holiday use, footpath protection, and lighting details	Granted 24/10/18	
058819	Lynwood, Pantymwyn, CH7 5EP	Erection of replacement dwelling	No objection, but concerns about height. Suggest materials and landscaping.		
20/2018/0792	Outbuilding at Garreg Lwyd Pentrecelyn LL15 2HR	Conversion of building to form a dwelling, alterations to existing access and erection of car port	No objection subject to materials, landscaping and lighting details		
03/2018/0860	11 Horseshoe Pass View, Llangollen, LL20 8LU	Erection of a replacement balcony and associated works	No observations		N/A
03/2018/0771	6 Vicarage Road Llangollen, LL20 8HF	Crown reduction of oak tree subject to TPO	No objection subject to views of Tree Officer	Granted 17/10/18	N/A
05/2018/0790	Bonwm Hydro Powerhouse, Bonwm Corwen, LL21 9EG	Installation of a 100kw micro-hydro scheme with buried pipeline and cable, turbine shed and metering cabinet	No objection subject to materials and details of lighting and metering cabinet		
16/2018/0903	Maenor Plas Isaf Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd LL15 1UP	Alterations to existing garage to form ancillary accommodation	No objection subject to views of Conservation Officer		N/A
16/2018/0659	Land at Cae Glas Llanbedr DC LL15 1US	Details of parking scheme and drainage	No observations		N/A
058828	Norton Lees, Gwernymydd, CH7 5LW	Proposed decking area to front and rear extension	No objection subject to materials	Granted 02/10/18	
<b>Total Number of Applications: 116</b>					

## **Policy and Strategic Consultation Responses: March - September 2018**

Welsh Government Consultation – Draft Planning Policy Wales: Edition 10

Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 – 2028: Deposit Plan

Pre-Commencement Conditions – Letter to Chief Planning Officers

Flintshire Draft Planning Enforcement Policy

Welsh Government Consultation – National Development Framework: Issues, Options and Preferred Option

Welsh Government Consultation – Subordinate Planning Legislation Consolidation and Review

Welsh Affairs Committee Inquiry – Renewable Energy in Wales

National Grid Electricity Transmission – Environment Consultation

Welsh Government Consultation-Petroleum Extraction Policy in Wales

Welsh Government Consultation-Achieving our low-carbon pathway to 2030

Welsh Government Consultation-Noise and Soundscape Action Plan 2018-2023

Welsh Government Consultation-Delivery of Housing through the Planning System

**Notes:**

- (1.) Denbighshire planning application code numbers are shown as **12/3456/7891**, Flintshire as **12345** and Wrexham as **P/1234/5678**. Details of applications can be viewed on the Planning Portal for the relevant authority. See links below:

<http://planning.denbighshire.gov.uk/Planning/lg/GFPlanningWelcome.page>

[http://planning.wrexham.gov.uk/Planning/lg/plansearch.page?org.apache.shale.dialog.DIALOG\\_NAME=gfplanningsearch&Param=l Planning](http://planning.wrexham.gov.uk/Planning/lg/plansearch.page?org.apache.shale.dialog.DIALOG_NAME=gfplanningsearch&Param=l Planning)

<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Planning/Databases/Planning-Applications.aspx>

- (2.) LPA response to AONB comments colour coded as follows: **green** for fully accepted, **orange** for part accepted and **red** for not accepted.
- (3.) Local Planning Authority (LPA) position updated 01/11/18.
- (4.) Copies of full AONB comments on specific applications available on request.



**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Forward Work Programme November 2018 Update				
Project	Detail/Action Management Plan Reference	Timescale	Timescale Not Started or Problem =Red In Progress on track =Amber Complete =Green	Cost –ve or +ve (£ Cost) or neutral (Through existing and external budgets)
New	Updated for November 2018-New Action	New Dates		
<b>Finance</b>				
Finance and Funding	Audited Accounts for signing off	2017-18		Neutral
NRW Core AONB Funding	Future Core Funding New three year funding package approved	2018-21		+ve
<b>Strategic Plans 2017-20</b>				
AONB Management Plan	Review Actions	2018-19		Neutral
Outreach and Volunteers strategy	1x Volunteer Programme Published per annum	2018-19		Neutral
AONB Tourism Plan	Review Actions-linking into DCC Study	2018-19		Neutral
<b>AONB Joint Committee</b>				
Joint Committee Meetings	Three JC Meetings	2018-19		Neutral
AONB Forum	Tourism Presentation on findings by New Economics Foundation on their 6 place study	Llanrhaedr Springs November 8th		Neutral
AONB Meet Local Members/Town and Community Councillors	Annual Meet	Complete Meeting held 23.4.18		Neutral
AONB Town and Community Champions	To contact all Councils and request a Champion for the AONB	All invited to above meet 23.4.18		Neutral
LA Meets with Town and Community Councils	To write to LAs to get an AONB Presentation on their collective meetings with their Town and Community Councils	AONB Presented to Wrexham Association of Community councils 22.3.18		Neutral

## Forward Work Programme November 2018 Update Continued

Project	Detail/Action Management Plan Reference	Timescale	Timescale Not Started or problem =Red In Progress on track =Amber Complete =Green	Cost -ve or +ve or neutral
New	Updated for November 2018-New Action	New Dates		
<b>AONB Partnership</b>				
Full AONB Partnership Meetings	Three AONB Partnership Meetings	2018-19		Neutral
AONB Award	Agreed to present to John Lawton Roberts and Corwen Community Garden	Partnership October 2018		Neutral
<b>Partnership Working Groups:</b>				
Landscape Character and Built Environment	£1,000 for SPG development Working on Dark Skies, New Planning Applications and supporting SPG	2018-19		+ve
Land Management and the Natural Environment	£1,000 for project development Curlew Project SMS Scheme-Grazing Animals	2018-19		+ve
Heritage, Culture and Communities	£1,000 for project development for Heritage Project developed from Management Plan	2018-19		+ve
Tourism	£1,000 for project development Tourism project developed from either Tourism Plan or Management Plan	2018-19		+ve
Understanding and Enjoyment	AONB Leaflet Key View Points Recreation Study £1,000 for project development of Access Project developed from Management Plan	2018-19		+ve
Engaging with businesses(Non Tourism)	Investigate working in partnership with businesses	Presentation 11.6.18 at WG to NE Wales Powerhouse		Neutral

## Forward Work Programme November 2018 Update Continued

Project	Detail/Action Management Plan Reference	Timescale	Timescale Not Started or problem =Red In Progress on track =Amber Complete =Green	Cost -ve or +ve or neutral
New	Updated for November 2018- New Action	New Dates		
<b>AONB Special Projects</b>				
Welsh Government Funding	WG Approved Projects: £10k Dark Skies £5k strengthening AONB/WHS £24k AONB Threshold Signs £6k Clinker Path	2018-19		+ve
NRW Competitive Funding	OPL Match Bid Healthy Walking approved	2018-20		+ve
Our Picturesque Landscape	HLF approve OPL Officer appointed and community Officer	2018-23		+ve
Climate Change Education Project	To train and deliver the programme	Winter 2017-18 3rd education round commissioned 5x new schools.		Neutral
<b>Section 85 Organisations</b>				
SP Network Lines	Ty Mawr Scheme complete value £24k- 0.18km Horseshoe Falls scheme complete value £35k- 0.26km 4x new schemes being evaluated	Complete March 2019		Neutral
Landscape Enhancement Initiative (National Grid)	Phase 1 approved and underway. EOI submitted for new round			Neutral
WG Future Landscapes Wales	Parity request by Deputy Minister Hannah Blythyn	The 5 AONB Officers, NRW and NAAONB responded to Parity Letter		Neutral

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