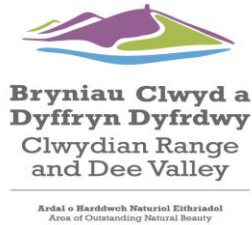




# Public Document Pack



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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**Web**: [www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/](http://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/)

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 @Clwyd\_Deer\_AONB

To: Members of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee  
Date: Friday, 16 June 2023  
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, Friday, 23 June 2023 at 10.00 am** in **Meeting Room 1, Guildhall, Wrexham** and by video conference.

Yours sincerely

G Williams  
Monitoring Officer

## AGENDA

### 1 INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

### 2 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING (HS) (Pages 5 - 10)

To consider the minutes (copy attached) of the previous AONB Joint Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

### 3 DRAFT MINUTES OF AONB PARTNERSHIP HELD ON 19TH MAY 2023 (HS) (Pages 11 - 16)

To note the minutes (copy attached) of the AONB Partnership meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

**4 SUMMARY OF OUR PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP 2020-23 (FOR INFORMATION ONLY) HS/DS** (Pages 17 - 24)

To receive a report (copy attached) for information on the key achievements of the Our Picturesque Landscape project 2018-23 from the AONB Officer.

**5 PRESENTATION ON NORTHEAST WALES NATIONAL PARK DESIGNATION PROJECT**

To receive a presentation by Programme Manager Ash Pierce (NRW).

**6 SUMMARY OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS 2022-23 (FOR INFORMATION ONLY) (DW)** (Pages 25 - 28)

To receive for information a report summary of Planning Applications received by the AONB Officer (copy attached).

**7 JOINT COMMITTEE ANNUAL RETURN FINANCIAL REPORT (STANDING ITEM) (SG AND PO)** (Pages 29 - 48)

To consider a report (copy attached) from the Head of Finance and Property, and Senior Finance and Assurance Officer.

**8 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (STANDING ITEM) (HS)** (Pages 49 - 54)

To consider the forward work programme (copy attached) from the AONB Officer.

**9 FUTURE MEETING DATES**

For information the next meeting date of the AONB Joint Committee is:

- 17th November 2023 (FCC)

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Councillors**

David Healey  
Dave Hughes  
Hugh Jones

Win Mullen-James  
Nigel Williams  
Emrys Wynne

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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 Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin and by video conference on Friday, 17 March 2023 at 10.00 am.

### **AONB JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Councillors Win Mullen-James (DCC), David Healey (FCC), Dave Hughes (FCC), Hugh Jones (WCBC) and Nigel Williams (WCBC)

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Steve Gadd (Head of Finance and Property DCC), Mike Bather (Wrexham County Borough Council), Ceri Lloyd (AONB SDF Officer), Paula O'Hanlon (Senior Finance Officer, DCC), Howard Sutcliffe (AONB Officer), David Shiel (AONB Area Manager), Ceri Lloyd (Sustainable Development Officer), (Karen Weaver (AONB Co-ordinator), Clare Lord (Solicitor/Places Team Leader), Stephanie Jones (Committee Administrator/Zoom Host) and Karen Evans (Scrutiny Coordinator/Minutes) and Marian Harvey (Translator)

Councillors Karen Edwards and James Elson (DCC) attended as observers.

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

The meeting was opened by the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer and Ranger Service Manager, Howard Sutcliffe. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and suggested to the Chair, Councillor David Hughes and Vice Chair Councillor Nigel Williams that Win Mullen-James - who was present in the Council Chamber – chair the meeting as they could see both virtual and physical attendees. Councillors Hughes and Williams agreed.

Apologies were received from Joint Committee Member Councillor Emrys Wynne (Denbighshire County Council).

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING (HS)**

The minutes of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee held on 10 November 2022 were submitted.

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising:

Item 4 – Variation to the legal agreement on increasing the membership of the Joint Committee to three per Authority. It was noted that Denbighshire County Council's constitution allowed for a substitute representative to be nominated if neither of its members could attend. Confirmation was awaited with respect to Flintshire County

Council and Wrexham County Borough Council's position. The AONB Officer to follow up with WCBC.

Item 6 – Draft Minutes of previous AONB Partnership meeting. An award was being made to National Grid for their Landscape Enhancement Initiative. Invitations to the award ceremony had been circulated.

**RESOLVED:** *That the minutes of Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee held on 10 November 2022 be approved.*

### **3 DRAFT MINUTES OF AONB PARTNERSHIP (HS)**

The draft minutes of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were received for information.

A number of Services had been involved in an action plan to avoid the congestion that had occurred at Horseshoe Falls in previous years including:

- Height barrier on car park which would restrict large vehicles entering the car park and
- Ensuring visible yellow lines.

Prestatyn Roman Bath House was featured as an exhibition at Prestatyn library that had been well attended, particularly by school groups.

**RESOLVED:** *That the minutes of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022 be noted.*

### **4 DRAFT MINUTES OF OUR PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP (DS)**

The draft minutes of Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023 were received for information.

Work had been completed at Castell Dinas Bran Gate House. The spoil removed as part of the excavation had been used to improve the zig zag access path.

The Picturesque Bus service would be running for the third year around sites within the Dee Valley area and including Llangollen Pavilion car park to help to alleviate some of the parking issues.

Preparation was underway working with local artists and communities for the final exhibition of the year at the Dory Gallery in Llangollen.

Discussions were taking place between the Partnership and Lottery funding regarding the possibility of extending the project, to make up for the 2 years lost to Covid restrictions.

**RESOLVED:** *that the draft minutes of Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023 were noted.*

**5 10 YEAR REVIEW AND UPDATE OF AONB GOVERNANCE 2023 VERBAL (HS)**

The AONB Officer and Ranger Service Manager, Howard Sutcliffe (HS) reminded the Committee that the legal agreement for the Joint Committee had been reviewed and updated 18 months previously. Going forward a review would be undertaken of the Terms of Reference for the Partnership and new terms of reference for the Champions, as well as reviewing the working groups, linking them to the chapter headings contained in the Management Plan.

A recruitment drive of AONB Champions from Community Councils to assist with practical conservation and stewarding of busy areas at weekends was ongoing. There had been a meeting at Llysfasi College that had been received well, feedback included the desire for more regular contact.

Training for AONB Champions / volunteer rangers would begin shortly.

**RESOLVED:** *that the update on the 10 year review and AONB governance be noted.*

**6 JOINT COMMITTEE ANNUAL RETURN FINANCIAL REPORT (STANDING ITEM) (SG AND PO'H)**

The Head of Finance and Property, Steve Gadd (SG) advised that the report was not the annual return – that had been approved and signed off at the previous meeting – but was a normal monitoring report.

The report showed that despite the difficult period of increased inflation there was no cause for concern. There had been no overspend and as a result of additional money from Welsh Government only a minor draw down from reserves which would be carried forward to the next financial year.

The Committee extended their thanks to the Senior Finance and Assurance Officer, Paula O'Hanlon for their continued assistance with grant applications and budgeting etc. stressing the importance that continuity had on the delivery of AONB projects.

**RESOLVED:** *that the AONB Joint Committee Outturn and Accounts 2022/23 be noted.*

**7 UPDATE ON NATIONAL PARK FOR NORTH EAST WALES (NRW)**

HS gave an update on the progress of assigning National Park Status in North East Wales from an email received from Natural Resources Wales (NRW). He explained that it was a slow legislative process but it was hoped that National Park status could be established before the end of the Senedd term (May 2026).

A full team had been appointed to the project in 2022 and had commenced work on the area of search. It was anticipated that they would soon be in a position to share

that information with stakeholders – Local Authorities and AONB Joint Committee etc. An NRW representative, Ash Pierce, would be invited to the next AONB JC on 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

Members of the Committee asked that the AONB JC be part of meaningful consultation over the agreed area of search rather than having it delivered as a fait accompli.

**RESOLVED:**

- I. The NRW email update be circulated to members of the AONB Joint Committee and*
- II. the update report on a National Park for North East Wales be noted.*

**8 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (STANDING ITEM)**

HS presented the forward work programme and gave a verbal update on progress on the items listed highlighting:

- Changes to NRW's grant allocations leading to the loss of £20k had been covered by Welsh Government's Gap Fund.
- The Tourism Plan was progressing, Snowdonia Active had been commissioned to prepare a joint view.
- Special Landscapes/Special Places had two more years to run.
- Two Farming/Engagement Officers had been appointed.
- The All Wales Dark Skies project was progressing well. Dark Skies week had seen 5 events held within the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB.
- An application had been made to the International Dark Skies Association – only 8 applications were accepted each year.
- Good Lighting Special Planning Guidance had been approved for both Denbighshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council – Flintshire County Council were still progressing its adoption.

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

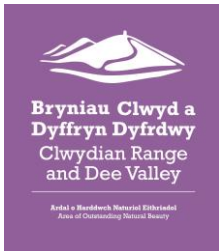
**9 FUTURE MEETING DATES**

It was proposed that the Committee hold a brief meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 to be followed by a tour around the AONB [*action Karen Weaver to seek availability and organise*]

**RESOLVED:** *that the future meeting dates be noted.*

**Meeting concluded at 10:45 am.**





Meeting of the AONB Partnership  
Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023  
at 10:00  
Coleg Cambria, Northop

In Attendance

AONB Partnership Members

Chair of the Partnership  
Andrew Worthington OBE

Councillor Dave Hughes FCC  
(Chair of the Joint Committee)  
Councillor David Healy FCC

Representing Landscape Interest  
Michael Skuse

Representing Urban Interest  
Ian Papworth

Representing the Natural Environment  
Les Starling

Representing Land Management  
Huw Morgan, Sandy Archdale

Representing Recreation & Rights of Way  
John Roberts

Representing Heritage & Rural Interest  
Christine Evans, Fiona Gale

Representing Individual Interest  
David Davies

Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB

Howard Sutcliffe AONB Officer  
David Shiel AONB Area Manager  
Karen Weaver AONB Coordinator  
Steve Williams Countryside Ranger  
& Project Officer  
Graham Berry Moorland Officer  
Ros Stockdale Development Officer  
Huw Morgan Natural Resources  
& Farming Officer

Representing Flintshire County Council (FCC)  
Tom Woodall Access & Natural Environment  
Manager

Representing Natural Resources Wales  
Richard Dearing

Representing Wrexham County Borough Council  
Sarah Brett Planning & Policy Officer

Apologies for absence were submitted from:

**Mike Bather, Cllr Paul Cunningham, Paul Evans, Fiona Grant, Cllr Jon Harland, Cllr Martyn Hogg, Del Roberts Jones, Ceri Lloyd, Cllr Win Mullen-James, Helen Mrowiec, Rajan Madhok, Cllr Rondo Roberts, Cllr Anthony Wedlake, Kate Thomson,**

1. Welcome

Apologies

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed new member Sarah Brett, (Planning and Policy Officer for Wrexham County Borough Council). Around the table introductions were completed.

## 2. Notes of Our Picturesque Landscape Project (OPL)

AONB Area Manager, David Shiel provided an update on the project:

### 2a Improving the View – Jeffrey’s Wood at Pontcysyllte

Phase 2 of the contractor works which began on 12th December had continued in January 2023 along the River Dee from Pontcysyllte Aqueduct towards to Ty Mawr Country Park. A great impact had been made on views through to the river and aqueduct pillars and the work was now complete.

Interpretation - New Interpretation panels had been installed that explained the full history of the World Heritage Site.

Engaging Communities - Workshop sessions had been held at Cefn Mawr with some disadvantaged groups.

### Camera Obscura Event - Castell Dinas Brân

An exciting community event would be held on July 1st at Castell Dinas Brân. The event would be a step back in time to discover the history of Castell Dinas Brân through the ages. There would be activities for all the family including the use of the project’s Camera Obscura, a Victorian sweetshop, actors, vintage portraits, landscape painting workshops, traditional games and more.

A final artwork exhibition would be held at the Dory Gallery, Llangollen, in the autumn.  
A book about the project was being drafted.

2b David went on to explain that two and a half years of the project time was within the covid/lockdown period, and that the project was due to end in November. Discussions were being held with the Heritage Lottery Fund regarding an extension of the project, to provide more workshops with local groups, and for further work to be done on recreational pressure.

The Chair thanked David and Hannah for all their work.

### Action

- OPL Officer, Hannah Marubbi to be asked to give a presentation at a future Partnership meeting.

## 3. Review of the AONB Working Group Membership

AONB Area Manager, David Shiel gave a PowerPoint presentation, explaining that the Management Plan (that was adopted in November) would be the focus of work for the Working Groups, with the special features and qualities of the AONB being paramount.

He added that new areas /issues had been added to the new plan including climate change, nature and climate emergencies, and rural businesses.

David explained that there were a variety of groups and projects in progress that were not reporting back to the Partnership, for example the Local Access Forum, Tourism Groups, Grazing Project, Moorland project. All this work should be steered back to the Partnership. Development Officer, Ros Stockdale had made a mapping exercise of the Working Groups and had identified that some of these had not met for some considerable time. It was presumed that they therefore did not need to meet and task and finish groups may be considered for some areas of work. She would monitor and review the actions of the groups.

3a The new proposed groups were:

1. Landscape Character & the Built Environment
2. Habitats and Wildlife
3. Historic Environment
4. Access, Recreation & Tourism
5. Culture and People

3b Mrs Archdale raised concerns that some of her comments had not been included within the document and that CLA NFU FUW had attended but had not found the workshop useful. Howard Sutcliffe responded that the AONB now had two agricultural officers in post, and that they had visited large dairy farms and sheep farms and were in

constant contact with the farming community. In summing up the Chair said that the AONB would consider all the comments including: -

- That some groups had not met due to pressing issues including Covid and moorland fires, and members had respected officer time.
- It was paramount that the AONB worked together with the big estates, farms and small holdings and forestry.
- Northeast Wales Heritage Forum, and Flintshire Tourism Association were raised as potential external groups that could feed into the Partnership.
- Focused agendas and Terms of Reference for all the Groups was essential.
- Relation with the health service - health professionals could possibly be a separate group 'Health & Wellbeing'.

The Chair asked if members would endorse the recommendation regarding the future of the Working Groups. This was both agreed and endorsed.

#### Action

- Any external groups that could feed into the Partnership to be brought to Karen's attention.
- Information on the new Working Groups to be emailed to all members, and members to identify which group that they would like to sit on.

#### 4. Review/General Update from AONB Officer including National Park for Northeast Wales Status

AONB Officer, Howard Sutcliffe, reported that National Grid had recently been presented with the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Award at Llandegla Community Shop. National Grid was now considering using the AONB as a pilot project for their infrastructure for the UK, they were also considering a new Sea Link grid. Howard commented that National Grid had provided a continuous avenue of income for the AONB, and that it was a disappointing that Ofwat and Ofcom were not so compatible to work with. A member raised the issue of the need to consider the archaeological implications of undergrounding and that this should be an important consideration in any application.

##### 4a National Park for Northeast Wales

National Resources Wales (NRW) Lead Officer, Ash Pearce, had provided a written update on the 7<sup>th</sup> March (previously circulated). Ash was meeting with Lesley Griffiths MS on a regular basis and would provide another update at the next Joint Committee Meeting due to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Howard noted that he had recently featured on the ITV news to explain some of the opportunities that a National Park would bring to the area. A local business owner and landowner that were also featured were both supportive of the proposed designation. However, a farmer had some negative perceptions of the National Park, Howard intended to meet with him to discuss the concerns that he had raised. Several site visits had been made to farms and farming communities. Howard, Mari Jones and Huw Morgan had also attended a breakfast meeting with FUW.

##### Extension of the boundary of the AONB

An area south of Powys Castle could be considered for the extension. Powys Castle was prominent in the southern section. However, the boundary had not been confirmed to date.

Discussion was held and a member enquired how the farming community could raise their concerns if they were not in favour of a National Park, and what would the planning restrictions be. The Chair responded that there would be lots of opportunities for public consultations. However, small farming communities should firstly consider the opportunities and prospects that a National Park could bring. Regarding planning permissions within a National Park, the process would not be much different to the existing planning legislation already in place with the AONB, but there would be considerably more opportunities to generate income.

##### 4b Levelling up Fund

An update was requested on the Levelling up Fund projects. AONB Area manager, David Shiel explained that currently consideration was being given to how the AONB manage Loggerheads Country Park and Moel Famau. He went on to explain that the Shepherd's hut located at Pen Barras, Moel Famau had been a huge success, and that having a staff presence had a positive impact on how visitors behaved. However, it was problematic towing

the hut to Pen Barras every day, and a permanent hub based at Pen Barras was being considered. A hub would provide much improved interaction with the visiting public. Extensive consideration would be given to sustainability, the landscape setting and design of any building proposed.

The deadline for the project was March 2025.

A member raised the Sill, National Landscape Discovery Centre, Northumberland National Park as a good example.

## 5. Any Other Business

- ✚ Welsh Government had passed a law which means that on 17<sup>th</sup> September the speed limit on all roads that have 30 mph would reduce to 20 mph – if any members had concerns now was the time to raise them.
- ✚ A member enquired why a plot of land in Llanarmon yn Ial that was included in the Local Development Plan had not been progressed. It was explained that NRW were concerned with the high phosphates levels in the rivers of Wales and that this was currently holding up many developments.
- ✚ Coed Bell Walk –Area Ranger, Steve Williams, had recently led a walk, in partnership with the Friends. It was a very successful day. The Friends now had a full events programme.
- ✚ OPL Bus – the free bus service would be running up until October all details on the AONB website. <https://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/projects/the-picturesque-bus/>
- ✚ Dwr Cymru Wastewater – a member raised concerns regarding sewage overflow into the rivers, adding that additional funding 2.4 million had been provided to Dwr Cymru to assist with the problem. He enquired how this was being addressed. Howard responded that the wastewater works at Corwen were being upgraded. It was proposed that a representative from Dwr Cymru be invited to attend a future Partnership meeting.

## 6. Chair's Summing Up

The Chair said that he was looking forward to the event due to be held at Dinas Brân and hoped that the application for an extension to the OPL project would be successful. Highlighting the issues of the Management Plan, David and Ros had drafted a plan of the Working Groups which would email to members. They could then decide which group(s) that they would like to sit on. Regarding the proposal for a National Park, the Chair said that there would be concerns, however, he hoped that the majority of people would be in favour of the status as there would be some great opportunities for the area. On the Levelling up Fund, the proposed Hub at Pen Barras sounded a great facility.

## 7.Future Meeting Dates

AONB Champions & Community & Local Members Forum	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> June	Loggerheads Meeting Room
AONB Joint Committee Meeting	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2023	WCBC / online meeting
AONB Partnership Meeting	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	To be arranged
AONB Joint Committee Meeting	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	FCC to host
AONB Champions & Community & Local Members Forum	Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	To be arranged
AONB Partnership Meeting	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	To be arranged
AONB Joint Committee Meeting	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	DCC to host



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

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

### The Our Picturesque Landscape project 2018-23 Key Achievements

The Project has brought together a strong partnership between the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB, Denbighshire County Council, Wrexham County Borough Council, Shropshire Council, Natural Resources Wales, Cadwyn Clwyd, Canal and River Trust, and the Friends of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley.

In the following table the key projects can be seen, the £2,000,000 project has been predominantly funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund, with additional funds provided by Welsh Government, CADW, Cadwyn Clwyd, CRT and both Denbighshire and Wrexham Councils.

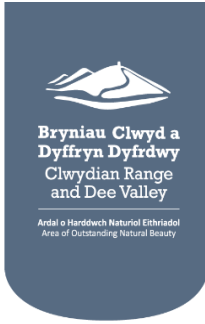
Project	Work completed	Total spend
Improving the View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant woodland management work beneath <b>Pontcysyllte Aqueduct</b>, improving the health of the woodland whilst restoring key views from the WHS inscription.</li> <li>• Improvement works at a further 6 sites, including <b>Pen y Pigyn, Horseshoe Falls, Velvet Hill, Caer Drewyn, Cefn Mawr, Berwyn Bends.</b></li> </ul>	£55,692
Dinas Brân Gatehouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First recorded <b>archaeological excavation.</b></li> <li>• <b>Restoration of gatehouse tower</b>, making it publically accessible for the first time in decades.</li> </ul>	£142,111
Restoring Industrial Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration of the <b>redundant Lengthsman's Huts</b> at Horseshoe Falls and Fron Basin.</li> <li>• Restoration of the <b>ram pump building</b> in the grounds of Plas Newydd.</li> </ul>	£55,336
Connecting Habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>9 landowners</b> in receipt of grants to improve habitat connectivity and restore traditional landscape features.</li> <li>• <b>1917m of new hedgerow</b> restored through the schemes.</li> </ul>	£40,683

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of a <b>Ffridd Habitat</b> best practice book.</li> </ul>	
Wenffrwd Llangollen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a <b>new, accessible nature reserve</b>. (Linked to the local doctors surgery)</li> </ul>	£428,478
Picturesque Bus Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Three seasons</b> of successful hop-on hop-off bus service stopping at many of the key visitor destinations in the Dee Valley.</li> </ul>	£37277
Improving Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of <b>new woodland footpath</b> linking community of Trefor to the canal towpath, with interpretation detailing the sites' historic industrial significance.</li> <li>• Creation of <b>three interpreted walking routes</b> and accompanying leaflets.</li> </ul>	£37,120
Horseshoe Falls Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a <b>new viewpoint</b>, previously inaccessible to the public.</li> </ul>	£33,394
Interpreting the Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New <b>interpretation panels</b> for the 11 miles of the World Heritage Site.</li> <li>• Production of <b>digital interpretation</b> material, including virtual flythrough of the Dee Valley over time; AR environments allowing people to see some of the key sites in the area as they once were; series of films about the lives of the Ladies of Llangollen.</li> <li>• Creation of a <b>portable camera obscura</b> for use at interpretive events.</li> <li>• <b>End of project exhibition</b> scheduled for Sept 2023.</li> </ul>	£140,058
Restoring the Dell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant <b>access improvements</b> made to the dell at Plas Newydd, Llangollen, including footpaths, railings, benches.</li> <li>• <b>Restoration of heritage features</b>, including summer house and ram pump building.</li> </ul>	£48,787
Engaging Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>13 projects</b> delivered to local schools covering a variety of activities and themes.</li> <li>• <b>18 Young Ranger days</b> supported.</li> <li>• Over <b>1300 young people</b> engaged with through the project.</li> </ul>	£12,893

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of <b>educational resources</b> for schools.</li> </ul>	
Art Inspired by Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Four artist residencies</b> resulting in diverse collection of written works and poetry in year 3.</li> <li>• <b>15 community workshops</b> and <b>10 school projects</b> led by artists, with over <b>250 people engaged</b>.</li> </ul>	£53,717
Engaging Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>90 community events</b> delivered through lifetime of project.</li> <li>• Over <b>2300 people</b> taking part in OPL events.</li> <li>• Over <b>500 people have volunteered</b> their time on OPL projects.</li> </ul>	£36,147
Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over <b>30 specific outreach events</b> with target groups have taken place.</li> <li>• Over <b>300 people</b> from target audiences have engaged with events.</li> </ul>	£7,565 Total £1,133,000

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**Our Picturesque Landscape Project**  
**Steering Group Meeting Minutes,**  
**Caffi Wylfa, Glyn Wylfa,**  
**Castle Road, Chirk.**

**Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2023 10am to 12pm.**

**Members Present**

Howard Sutcliffe (HS, **Chair**), David Shiel (DS), Alun Price (AP), Del Roberts Jones (DRJ), Hannah Marubbi (HM), Ffion Roberts (FR), Jillian Howe (JH), Kate Thomson (KT), Sallyanne Hall (SH), Fiona Gale (FG), Fiona Grant (FGr), Mike Bather (MB),

**Apologies**

Samantha Williams (SW), Andrea Fox (AFX), Huw Rees (HR), Lynne Jones (LJ), John Roberts (JR), Nicola Lewis-Smith (NLS), Rhun Jones (RJ), Paul Evans (PE),.

<b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b>	All welcomed to the meeting and apologies noted.	<b>Actions</b>
<b>2. Minutes of last meeting update</b>	The job share for the project managers is working very well between Hannah Marubbi and Kate Thomson. The management and maintenance plan for the project has not yet been produced and will be shared with the group once progress is made. The project has been appointed a new investment manager who will help to plan and develop format for this document.	
<b>3. Project Risk Register</b>	Copies of the risk register were circulated to the group. HM took the group through the document and the outstanding projects. <u><b>Dinas Bran Gatehouse</b></u>	

	<p>This project is currently behind schedule as should have been completed.</p> <p>The 1<sup>st</sup> of July Dinas Bran /Camera obscura event will take place, and it would be good if the scaffolding was removed and we were able to open up the gatehouse as intended. The use of quadbikes by the contractors has damaged the grass slopes which needs to be rectified in the autumn. The contractors have not been back to the site to complete the work. DS to contact Recclesia</p> <p><b><u>Restoring our Industrial Heritage</u></b></p> <p>Most of these projects have now been completed.</p> <p>An underspend in Restoring our Industrial heritage means that funds have been directed to the lengthsman’s hut in Froncysyllte basin that have restored the front of this building. The roof and the back of the building and the wooden doors have been left for restoration in the future. MB to investigate funding for the doors.</p> <p><b><u>Ram Pump Building</u></b></p> <p>Work is now continuing on the Ram pump building at Plas Newydd. The building will be restored but the mechanism itself will need additional funding in the future to complete. The team hope to have volunteer days working with the contractor and some dates are in the pipeline. It is hoped this will lead to volunteers to work on the bog garden around the site.</p> <p><b><u>Panorama Management</u></b></p> <p>Ranger Morgan is taking the lead on gaining owners consent and signage needs for this site. Estimates for the signs are in hand with a contractor. Manufacture and installation expected before August 2023. There are bio diversity and further clean up campaigns planned for the summer.</p> <p><b><u>Wenffrwd Pocket Park</u></b></p> <p>The park has been well received and the access to canal towpath is progressing through Levelling Up funding, tender for work currently on Sell2Wales. There is a Park Run trial on the 17<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p><b><u>Picturesque Circular Trails</u></b></p> <p>A few of the trails remain unfinished.</p> <p><i>Artists and Engineers</i> walk is almost ready to launch. The infrastructure has started to go in, and the Rangers have been working with volunteers to complete this task. The leaflet is complete. A route has been identified for the <i>Cefn Mawr walk</i>, between the Pontcysyllte aqueduct, the viaduct and to Trevor Basin visitor centre. Some of the paths along this walk will be improved using the Levelling Up fund in 2023. The leaflet is currently being developed.</p> <p><i>The Chirk Walk</i>, the route has been agreed and way marker posts delivered and to be installed with volunteers in May and June. The leaflet design complete, content is to be finalised.</p>	<p>DS</p> <p>MB</p>
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	<p><i>Discover the Dee Valley Walks</i>, which was previously the Discover Corwen booklet. JH will redesign the leaflet and is currently waiting for some maps to be designed.</p> <p>The Dee Valley AONB team plan to meet up for guided walks fortnightly so can use some of OPL's routes.</p> <p><b><u>Interpreting the Landscape</u></b></p> <p>Along the World Heritage Site, the interpretation panels have now been installed. There have been a few issues with the height of the Gledrid and Fron signs. The Steering group will be viewing the ones in Chirk Marina and Station Road, Chirk after the meeting today. The Llangollen interpretation sign may need to be re orientated after a complaint, and it may need a finger post for direction purposes.</p> <p>WOW Factor Interpretation have been appointed to deliver four interpretation panels at the Horseshoe Falls and Wharf, in a consistent style with the panels for the rest of the WHS. First drafts have been submitted.</p> <p>MB made the observation that the interpretation panel outside of the Glyn Wylfa building car park looked tatty and would be an opportunity to tie this in with all the other style of panels and could be something that may be a consideration if the project were granted an extension?</p> <p><b><u>Education Packs</u></b></p> <p>SH leading on this project and has been mindful of not replicating any of the items on the WHS website. Muddy Publishing have worked with CRT and WHS, and the aim of the packs is to compliment the work on these sites. Local schools in the project area have been trialling the packs and have received very positive feedback.</p> <p>Sue Williams at NRW – SH to make contact with her regarding cross conversations regarding this project</p>	SH
<p><b>4. Final Exhibition update.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Final Exhibition</u></b></p> <p>The gallery space in Llangollen has been booked for this event, and the team are working with a curator to help come up with a floor plan for the exhibition. The exhibition will be over 3 weeks which will showcase the artwork and other aspects produced during the life of the project. Workshops, talks and interactive projects will be arranged, and a discussion was had by the group regarding a suitable person to open the exhibition and form a suitable guest list for the first night.</p> <p>Team to source someone to open the event and a Minister responsible for Heritage Lottery Funding</p>	HM / KT / DS /SH JH/ FR
<p><b>5. The Project Legacy Book.</b></p>	<p>The final book will feature images and writing. Local writer Jessica Hatcher- Moore has been commissioned to narrate the book, bringing together writers, travellers and artists. Image licences are being sourced, quotes are in hand for the design and production, and we hope to have the book ready for the launch during the exhibition.</p>	

<b>6. Project Extension Plan.</b>	<u><b>Application for Project Extension</b></u> There is to be a meeting next month with the new Investment Manager for the Lottery to look at how the project may be continued and for how long. There is no formal method of applying for an extension, but our underspend means we would like additional time to complete all aspects of the project. We will update the group as soon as there is any news.	
<b>7. AOB</b>	HS mentioned that HM had sent him a bullet point list of all the work the project has completed. He found this a valuable tool to see at a glance all of the good work done and suggested it could be a good method of a list of achievements for the final exhibition.	
<b>7. Date of Next Meeting</b>	<b>Next meeting will be during late July /August 2023 – DATE AND VENUE TBC..</b>	<b>FR</b>



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

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

### Summary of AONB Planning Applications 2022-23

The following is a summary of Planning Applications received by the AONB Planning officer from the three local Authorities and other third parties.

All responses to consultations are undertaken in accordance with the revised scheme of delegation for the handling of planning and development related proposals, in conjunction with the AONB Partnership Landscape Character and Built Environment working Group. In the absence of any formal consultation on policy matters, relevant legislative changes and major development proposals, the working Group did not meet during the previous 12 months. However, meetings are anticipated this year due to consultation on the Denbighshire LDP Deposit Version and the determination of some major planning applications which have been held in abeyance because of issues relating to phosphorous and the impact upon the designated River Dee SAC.

#### Planning Consultations

The built environment is one of the special qualities of the AONB and contributes to the character and appearance of the area. There is pressure for new development in and around the AONB as an attractive place to live, work and visit, but particular care is required to ensure inappropriate development is resisted and new development is of the highest standard and respects the landscape quality. A key role of the Joint Committee and Partnership is to advise on development policies and proposals affecting the AONB.

The overall number of consultations referred to the AONB in 2022/23 was 251 which is a significant reduction on the 345 received during 2021/22. However, last year's figure was comparatively high when compared with recent years. Most consultations were applications referred by the three Local Planning Authorities. As expected, and in line with previous years the majority **221 (88%) were from Denbighshire**, followed by **Flintshire 25 (10%)** and **Wrexham 5 (2%)**. Other consultations comprised of an insignificant number of planning appeals (2) and a National Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) outside the designated area.

The planning consultations cover a broad range of interests as detailed below:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Proportion of Applications</b>
Householder applications	41%
Residential, including conversions	21%
Tourism related development	16%
Agriculture/Forestry	10%
Energy related applications	2%
Other, minerals, signs, telecommunications	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Pre-Application Consultations**

Despite the marginal reduction in consultations on planning applications there has been an 11% increase in the number of pre-application consultations during the previous 12 months. This has involved meetings with applicants/developers to improve the quality of development schemes prior to formal submission. It represents good practice and allows the Joint Committee to have a greater influence on improving design etc at an earlier stage of the planning process. This trend is very much encouraged as it fosters good working relationships with LPA's and key stakeholders in promoting better quality outcomes and an improvement in the appearance of new development, most notably housing schemes within and adjoining the AONB.

### **Discharge of Planning Conditions**

There has also been an increase in the number of consultations relating to discharge of conditions. This is helpful as it allows the Joint Committee to comment on the details, but more importantly ensures we remain involved, and can influence matters we have raised or requested as conditions as part of our initial consultation response.

Both the increase in pre-application consultations and discharge of conditions are positive and improve our engagement in the planning process. It allows the Joint committee to have a greater say on the decision-making process and measures are in place to ensure this trend continues.

## **AONB Responses**

The majority of decided planning applications **(83%) were granted permission**, which is comparable with the approval rate in previous years. Only **(12%) were refused**, and 5% were withdrawn by the applicant prior to determination. This would include a recent housing scheme at Graigfechan which is an example of our intervention in the planning process. The Developers are now working up a significantly amended scheme following on-going negotiations with the LPA and ourselves to improve the site layout and design.

As in previous years, the AONB raised no objections to the majority of applications, but often suggested amendments to siting, design, materials, or additional landscaping to help improve the quality of the development and to ensure it conserves and enhances the character and appearance of the AONB. However, the number of outright objections lodged to development proposals increased by over 15% in relation to the previous year.

Despite this, an analysis of LPA decisions would indicate that there was an increase in the number of cases where the LPA's accepted our response. This is higher than in previous years with only a limited number of cases when LPA's have disagreed with our response. Where this has occurred, it has been due to a difference in the interpretation of policy or a subjective opinion in respect of the impact upon the AONB. Generally, there is greater alignment and consistency between response and decision and the evidence would indicate that our responses are fully considered and influencing the final decision. Quite often this has resulted in an amended scheme or a refusal and subsequent re-submission of a new application.

## **Appeals and Enforcement**

The number of appeals referred to the AONB are down on previous years. One notable outstanding appeal is at Aberduna Farm which remain pending. A similar reduction in the number of Enforcement Cases referred to the LPA enforcement teams for investigation.

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**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: 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023**

**Lead Member / Officer: Steve Gadd**

**Report Author: Paula O'Hanlon**

**Title: Joint Committee Outturn and Accounts 2022/23 & Draft budget 2023/24**

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

The report gives details of the AONB's revenue budget outturn position as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 alongside the draft budget for 2023/24.

**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 as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and to seek approval of the budget for 2023/24.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

Members are asked to note the financial outturn for 2022/23 (Appendix 1) and the Reserve Balances as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 (Appendix 4). Members are asked to formally approve the 2023/24 draft budget (appendix 2) and review and sign the Annual Return for 2022/23 (Appendix 3).

**4. Report details.**

The report provides a summary of the AONB's revenue outturn for 2022/23 detailed in Appendix 1. The final outturn position shows an overall underspend of £40,259 which has been transferred to the revenue Reserve.

The report also provides a copy of the Annual Return for smaller local government bodies in Wales for the year ended 31 March 2023 (Appendix 3) for consideration and approval.

**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 financial position is a standing item at each meeting of the Joint Committee.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

This report outlines the financial position for the AONB for 2022/23 & 2023/24.

The approval and signing of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2023 (Appendix 3) is a statutory requirement prior to Audit Wales carrying out an audit of the accounts.

Funding from NRW has been secured until 31/03/2024.

As of the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2023, the balance in the AONB Reserve (appendix 4) stood at £943,286. Of this, £873,194 is earmarked for specific projects which will progress during the 2023/24 financial year. The balance of £70,092 is available to support the 2023/24 revenue budget, it is expected that £15,515 will be required in 2023/24.

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

The AONB budget is dependent on income from NRW, Welsh Government and the three Local Authorities. There is a risk of there being insufficient funding to cover the cost of the AONB in future years unless additional resources are found, posing a risk to the future delivery of projects and the 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.

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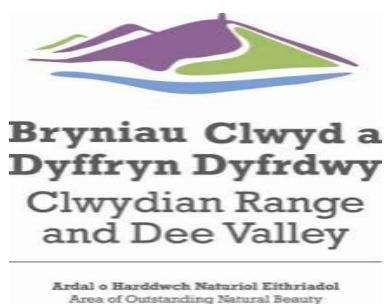
	Budget 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23
	£	£
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	203,189	217,399
Training & Conference	500	2,432
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>203,689</b>	<b>219,831</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Vehicle Hire	300	420
Mileage	2,700	2,473
Use of Public Transport		35
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>2,927</b>
<u>Other</u>		
Protective Clothing	1,500	1,293
Management Plan/Prof fees	2,500	2,500
Subscriptions	2,700	2,914
Audit Fees	1,134	1,134
IT / Communication costs	2,900	3,043
Office Expenses	200	536
Telephones	700	760
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>11,634</b>	<b>12,181</b>
<u>Projects</u>		
Grants	95,000	89,545
<b>Total Project costs</b>	<b>95,000</b>	<b>89,545</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>313,323</b>	<b>324,485</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW CRDV Grant	-108,500	-98,821
SDF Mgmt fee	-5,000	-5,000
SDF Grant	-95,000	-95,000
WG Resilient AONB grant	0	-20,310
LA Funding	-98,893	-99,277
Contributions from Reserve	-5,930	-11,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-313,323</b>	<b>-329,408</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-4,923</b>

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## (DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM COUNCILS)

## AREA - REVENUE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AT 31st March 2023

	Budget 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23
	£	£
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	177,788	185,949
Training	500	132
Physiotherapy		245
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>178,288</b>	<b>186,326</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Fuel	4,500	3,176
Fleet	19,000	10,855
Travel	1,200	977
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>24,700</b>	<b>15,007</b>
<u>Other</u>		
Protective Clothing	2,500	948
Site Management		700
General Equipment	500	142
IT / Communication costs	2,600	3,078
Telephones	550	854
Projects/Activity expenditure	4,000	2,786
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>10,150</b>	<b>8,509</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>213,138</b>	<b>209,842</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW Forestry Partnership	-30,821	-42,142
LA funding	-174,317	-203,035
Contributions from Reserve	-8,000	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-213,138</b>	<b>-245,177</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-35,336</b>



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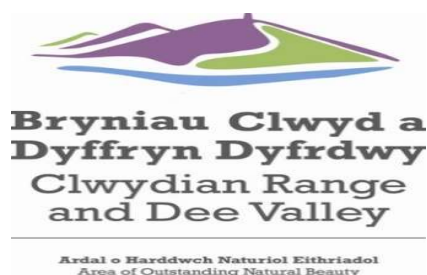
## AONB JOINT COMMITTEE

Appendix 2

(DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM COUNCILS)

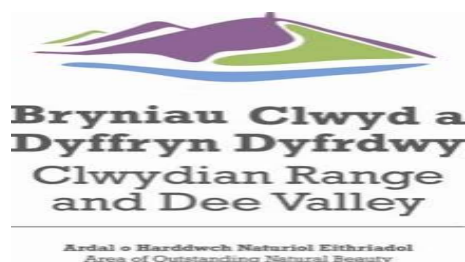
CORE -DRAFT BUDGET 2023/24

	Budget 2022/23	Draft Budget 2023/24
	£	£
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	203,189	203,692
Training & Conference	500	2,000
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>203,689</b>	<b>205,692</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Vehicle Hire	300	400
Mileage	2,700	2,500
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>2,900</b>
<u>Other</u>		
Protective Clothing	1,500	1,500
Management Plan/Prof fees	2,500	2,500
Subscriptions	2,700	3,000
Audit Fees	1,134	1,134
IT / Communication costs	2,900	3,100
Office Expenses	200	500
Telephones	700	800
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>11,634</b>	<b>12,534</b>
<u>Projects</u>		
Grants	95,000	80,000
<b>Total Project costs</b>	<b>95,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>313,323</b>	<b>301,126</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW CRDV Grant	-108,500	-93,447
SDF Mgmt fee	-5,000	-20,000
SDF Grant	-95,000	-80,000
LA Funding	-98,893	-107,679
Contributions from Reserve	-5,930	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-313,323</b>	<b>-301,126</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



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	Budget 2022/23	Draft Budget 2023/24	
	£	£	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<u>Employees</u>			
Salaries	177,788	196,747	
Training & Conference	500	500	
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>178,288</b>	<b>197,247</b>	18,959
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>			
Fuel	4,500	4,000	
Fleet	19,000	19,000	
Travel	1,200	1,200	
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>24,700</b>	<b>24,200</b>	
<u>Other</u>			
Protective Clothing	2,500	1,500	
General Equipment	500	250	
IT / Communication costs	2,600	3,100	
Telephones	550	1,000	
Projects/Activity expenditure	4,000	4,000	
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>10,150</b>	<b>9,850</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>213,138</b>	<b>231,297</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>			
NRW Forestry Partnership	-30,821	-30,821	
LA funding	-174,317	-177,325	
Contributions from Reserve	-8,000	-23,151	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-213,138</b>	<b>-231,297</b>	
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	



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# Minor Joint Committees in Wales

## Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

### Clw Accounting statements 2022-23 for:

Name of body: Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB

	Year ending		Notes and guidance for compilers
	31 March 2022 (£)	31 March 2023 (£)	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.
<b>Statement of income and expenditure/receipts and payments</b>			
1. Balances brought forward	653,659	421,384	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	298,210	355,682	Total amount of income received/receivable in the year from local taxation (precept) or levy/contribution from principal bodies.
3. (+) Total other receipts	625,372	1,063,978	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.
4. (-) Staff costs	-431,520	-512,421	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	-724,337	-386,104	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	421,384	942,520	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6).
<b>Statement of balances</b>			
8. (+) Debtors	165,666	103,283	<b>Income and expenditure accounts only:</b> Enter the value of debts owed to the body.
9. (+) Total cash and investments	263,179	860,438	<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	-7,460	-21,201	<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	421,384	942,520	<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 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).

## Annual Governance Statement

We acknowledge as the members of the 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 2023, 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>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Properly sets its budget and manages its money and prepares and approves its accounting statements as prescribed by law.	6, 12
2. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption, and reviewed its effectiveness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.	6, 7
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 Committee to conduct its business or on its finances.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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
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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect the body's accounts as set out in the notice of audit.	6, 23
5. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Committee and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Considered the financial and other risks it faces in the operation of the body and has dealt with them properly.	6, 9
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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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
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 Committee and, where appropriate, have included them on the accounting statements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disclosed everything it should have about its business during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.	6
8. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from internal and external audit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Considered and taken appropriate action to address issues/weaknesses brought to its attention by both the internal and external auditors.	6, 8, 23

\* 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.

## Additional disclosure notes\*

The following information is provided to assist the reader to understand the accounting statements and/or the Annual Governance Statement

1.

2.

3.

\* Include here any additional disclosures the Council considers necessary to aid the reader's understanding of the accounting statements and/or the annual governance statement.

## Committee approval and certification

The Committee is responsible for the preparation of the accounting statements and the annual governance statement in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the Act) and the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

<p><b>Certification by the RFO</b></p> <p>I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return present fairly the financial position of the Committee, and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2023.</p>	<p><b>Approval by the Council/Board/Committee</b></p> <p>I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Committee under minute reference:</p>
<p><b>RFO signature:</b></p>	<p><b>Minute ref:</b></p>
<p><b>Name:</b></p>	<p><b>Chair of meeting signature:</b></p>
<p><b>Date:</b> 23.06.23</p>	<p><b>Name:</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 23.06.23</p>

## Annual internal audit report to:

Name of body: Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB

The 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 2023.

The internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the 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 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
2. Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
3. The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
5. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
6. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
7. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with minuted approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
8. Asset and investment registers were complete, accurate, and properly maintained.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text



	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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text

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**	
11. Insert risk area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
12. Insert risk area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert text
13. Insert risk area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	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 Committee are included in my detailed report to the Committee dated \_\_\_\_\_.] \* Delete if no report prepared.

### Internal audit confirmation

I/we confirm that as the Committee's internal auditor, I/we have not been involved in a management or administrative role within the body (including preparation of the accounts) or as a member of the body during the financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23. I also confirm that there are no conflicts of interest surrounding my appointment.

<b>Name of person who carried out the internal audit:</b>
<b>Signature of person who carried out the internal audit:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

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**AONB Reserve M99001BC01**

	<b>2022/23</b>				
	<b>Opening balance 01.04.22</b>	<b>Revenue budget</b>	<b>Project funding</b>		<b>Closing Balance 31.03.23</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>-421,384</b>	-29,833		-391,551	
<b>Revenue <u>Underspend</u> / overspend</b>					
M01001 & M01002		-40,259			-62,092
NRW matchfunding for Dee Valley Warden					-8,000
<b>Projects</b>					
Corwen projects					-1,425
Scottish Power Overhead lines - Llysfasi					-5,500
Flintshire AONB Badge					-711
Other/Misc income/sales etc			1,080	-6,997	-6,103
WG Grant (WGHA)			600		-6,158
Whitebeam project					-1,575
Tourism Growth Plan (TGP) / Dark Skies (DARK)			4,997		-2,215
Curlew Cymru					-519
Friends of the AONB (Michael Ross, benches and habitat mgmt)					-1,193
Farm Payment Scheme BPS			9,371	-12,948	-15,245
Limestone Legacy funding (LIME)					-6,110
Loggerheads Shelter					-3,541
Community Garden SDF (COMM)					-1,581
Highways Mitigation Fund P96058				-3,469	-3,469
<b>SDF Additional funding</b>					
<b>17/18</b>					
<i>:- Collaboration with UNESCO WHS</i>					-5,000
<i>:- Gateways A5 Trunk Road and A494 signage (GATE)</i>					-23,111
<b>18/19</b>					
1803 :- Llantysilio - Moorland restoration £15k					-1,000
1806 :- 2019 - 2024 ANOB Plan £16k			2,850		3,374
1808 :- Site conservation - 3 historical sites £15k					-11,301
<b>2019/20</b>					
1901 :- Tree Planting (3 sites)£15k					-8,911
1902 :- Threshold and Welcome signs for key AONB sites . £30k					-14,573
1904 :- Heathland Management through cutting and bailing of heather £15k					-3,600
<b>2020/21 Resilient National Parks &amp; AONBs (RNPA):</b>					
DBT1 :- Climate Change and Nature Recovery			43,046	-11,270	10,000
DBT2 :- Plas Newydd Winter Opening			4,590		-5,410
DBT3:- River Access for Canoeists					1,428
DBT4:- Assistant Ranger - Community Miles			12,607		-6,499
<b>2020/21 SLSP</b>					
2001:- Visitor Impacts Resilience project (MF)			16,986		-10,527
2002:- Improving Dark Skies and local ecology (Lighting @ Loggs)			1,395		-5,872
<b>2020/21 Green Recovery: (GREC)</b>					
2003:- Graig Fawr					-95
2004:- Moel Findeg & Hen Ardd					-9,021
2005:- Loggerheads and Alyn Valley			1,196		-6,298
<b>Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places 2021/22:</b>					
2007 :- Purchase of ATV			15,469	-169	0
2008 :- Recreation & Tourism Project - New R & D studies			9,258		-29,650
2009:- Wenffrwd - Accessible links to canal (Dee Valley pocket park)					0
LUFR Levelling up Fund - Railway			324		-154
2010:- Llangollen GI Project - Sense of Place				-324	-0
2011:- Gwaenysgor etc. (Dee Valley pocket park)			6,000		-3,613

**AONB Reserve M99001BC01**

	<b>2022/23</b>				
	<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>Revenue budget</b>	<b>Project funding</b>		<b>Closing Balance</b>
	<b>01.04.22</b>				<b>31.03.23</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
<b><u>Additional WG Revenue:</u></b>					
STAF:- Staffing to support the ongoing increased pressures with tourism			11,000		-17,782
2017:- Development of programme of work for new design of existing structures for Capital Projects					-4,150
2018:- Desk top study on opportunities mapping of Moel Famau for SMNR project					-10,000
<b>RECP Recreation Plan</b>					-4,700
<b>DSDL Dark Skies Designated Landscapes Collaboration SNPA</b>			39,985	-146,352	-132,767
<b>NRW Partnership additional staff funding (NRWP)</b>			11,517		-1,809
<b>SLSF 2022 - 2025 (2225)</b>			77,965	-175,000	-97,035
<b>Corwen Garden - Cadwyn Clwyd (CG22)</b>			3,613	-5,590	-1,978
<b>NRW</b>				-1,260	-1,260
<b><u>SDF &amp; Resilient AONBs 22-25 (STAF):</u></b>			49,696	-150,000	-100,304
<b>PEAT</b>				-22,310	-22,310
<b>LEADER Cadwyn Clwyd</b>				-8,237	-8,237
<b>Snowdonia National Park</b>			19,469	-24,000	-4,531
<b>LEI</b>				-133,550	-133,550
<b>LEI</b>				-112,875	-112,875
<b>Climate Change &amp; Nature Recovery CLIM</b>				-34,730	-34,730
		-40,259		-481,643	
<b>Closing balance</b>		<b>-70,092</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-873,194</b>	<b>-943,286</b>



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

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Forward Work Programme June 2023 Update				
Project Existing	Detail/Action	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 Action	New Dates		
<b>Finance</b>				
Finance and Funding	Draft Risk Register to JC 10.11.22	2023-24		Neutral
NRW Core AONB Funding	Offer received although £20k short on revenue (£40k for two years)	2022-24		-ve
WG Gap Fund	WG Offer Accepted for £20k revenue for 22-23	2022-23		+ve
SDF Fund	WG continue fund at £100k.	2022-25		+ve
SLSP Fund	Year 2 and 3 increase to £200k	2022-25		
<b>Strategic Plans 2022-25</b>				
AONB Management Plan	Management Plan distributed at Joint Committee and Partnership	2022-25		Neutral
Central Recreation Plan	Holdings and actions to be on annotated map. Actions see SLSP 2022-23	2022		+ve
AONB Tourism Plan	Consultation underway to CRTG .October 2022	2023-24		Neutral
<b>AONB Joint Committee</b>				
Joint Committee Meetings	JC Meetings on track	2023-24		Neutral
LA Legal Agreement	All agreed and sealed by LAs for next 5 years. FCC Constitution no to subs via Leader	2019-2024		Neutral
AONB Forum	Theme Climate Change Llyfasi complete	November 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2022		Neutral
AONB Meet Local Members/Town and Community Councillors/AONB Champions	Next Meet of LA Members and AONB Community champions 15.6.23. Term of Ref being Drawn up	2023-24		Neutral

## Forward Work Programme June 2023 Update Continued

Project Existing	Detail/Action	Timescale	Timescale Not Started or problem =Red In Progress on track =Amber Complete =Green	Cost –ve or +ve or neutral
New	<i>Updated Action</i>	<i>New Dates</i>		
<b>AONB Partnership</b>				
Full AONB Partnership Meetings	<i>2 x AONB Partnership Meetings completed.</i>	<b>2023-24</b>		Neutral
10 Year AONB Working Group Review	<i>Reported back to Partnership on 19.5.23</i>	<b>2023-24</b>		Neutral
<b>Partnership Working Groups:</b>				
Landscape Character and Built Environment	<i>Under Review</i>	<b>2023-24</b>		+ve
Land Management and the Natural Environment	<i>Under Review</i>	<b>2023-24</b>		+ve
Heritage, Culture and Communities	<i>Under Review Strong attendance 2 x meets completed</i>	<b>2023-24</b>		+ve
Tourism	<i>Under Review</i>	<b>2023-24</b>		+ve
Recreation and Health	<i>Under Review 1 x Meet</i>	<b>2023-24</b>		+ve
Sustainable Development	<i>Met 1x to discuss proposals</i>	<b>2023-24</b>		+ve

## Forward Work Programme June 2023 Update Continued

Project Existing	Detail/Action	Timescale	Timescale Not Started or problem =Red In Progress on track =Amber Complete =Green	Cost -ve or +ve or neutral
New	<i>Updated Action</i>	New Dates		
<b>AONB Special Projects</b>				
SLSP	<p><i>Majestic Moorlands and Wild Woods of the AONB</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPAT Heritage work</li> <li>• Dinas Bran Improvements</li> <li>• Bryn Alyn Accessibility</li> </ul> <p><i>Enjoying our remoter landscapes 2022-25.</i></p> <p><i>Projects:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Moorlands and the traditions of the Commons</li> <li>• Woodlands Study</li> <li>• LNR/Llangollen GI/Pengwern Planting</li> </ul>	2022-25		+ve
SLSP Collaborative	<p><i>The AONB is engaged in three collaborative projects:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Wales Traditional Boundaries</li> <li>• All Wales Dark Skies Project</li> <li>• All Wales Education Project</li> </ul>	2022-25		+ve
SDF	2022-25 £100k per annum	2022-25		+ve
Special Project WG	<p>2022-25 £300k allocated to increase staffing:</p> <p><i>Farming/Engagement Officers appointed:</i></p> <p><i>Huw Morgan/Mari Jones</i></p>	2022-25		+ve

NRW Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10-year Review of Partnership</li> <li>• Overheads Meetings</li> <li>• New Hand Book</li> <li>• Highways Doc</li> <li>• SPG Revisions</li> <li>• Threshold Signs</li> <li>• New Leaflets Moel Famau/Loggerheads</li> <li>• National Park Alignment Review</li> </ul>	2022-24		
Our Picturesque Landscape Project	Coming in to final year projects progressing	2018-23		+ve
Climate Change	Appointment of Graham Berry as Climate Change and Nature Recovery Officer	March 2023		Neutral
Northeast Wales National Park Designation Project	Working with our Officers to look at the Opportunities and perceptions for farmers and residents	June 2023		



## Forward Work Programme June 2023 Update Continued

Project Existing	Detail/Action	Timescale	Timescale Not Started or problem =Red In Progress on track =Amber Complete =Green	Cost -ve or +ve or neutral
New	<i>Updated Action</i>	New Dates		
<b>Section 85 Organisations</b>				
SP Network Lines	The Shelf back on track. New schemes in consideration - Shelf, Llangar, Plas Newydd and Llangollen Water Tower.	2022-25		Neutral
Dark Skies SPG	All 3 LAs agreed Dark Skies SPG. 2 of the 3 LAs approve	2023-24		+ve
National Grid VIP and Landscape Enhancement Initiative	AONB Officer is rep for 39 AONBs on National Board. <i>4 x LEI Schemes Morwinion Valley and Minera Corwen EOI approved</i> <b>AONB Award to National Grid on 23.3.23</b> <i>NG considering CR and DV LEI as exemplar Project for NG SI UK Project</i>	2023-24		Neutral
NAAONB Lead Officer Meet	Regular Monthly Meets 1x Lead Officer's	2023-24		Neutral
<b>Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Llangollen Canal World heritage Site</b>	<i>HS appointed Vice Chair of Steering Group</i>	2023-24		+ve
Severn Trent/Dwr Cymru	<i>Joint Meet to discuss working on Land holdings 9.6.23</i>	2022-23		+ve
Highways Guidance for LAs	<i>DH and HS Joint meeting FCC Highways 19.5.23 -Area Inspectors to follow guidelines</i>	2023-24		-ve

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