



QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 21st January 2020

at

2.15pm

in the

North Petherton Bowling Club

To: The members of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee

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

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

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

Agenda Item No.	
1.	Apologies for absence:
2.	Declarations of interest – an opportunity for members of the JAC to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter being considered at this meeting.
3.	Accuracy of the minutes for the previous meeting held on Tuesday 22nd October 2019 at Holford Village Hall (copy appended). Matters arising.
4.	Public question time – The Chairman will allow members of the public to ask questions or make statements about any matter on the agenda for this meeting or present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit.
5.	Paper A - Team and Partnership Report (Chris Edwards)
6.	Paper B - Landscape Planning Report (Alex Meletiou)
7.	Paper C - Quantock Hills AONB Finance & Funding (Iain Porter)
8.	Paper D - Nature & Wellbeing Update (Kristen Lambert)
9.	Paper E - Constitution & Statement of Intent (Chris Edwards)
10.	Presentation - Quantock Landscape Schemes update – (Iain Porter)
11.	Any other business of urgency – Future dates and locations JAC – Tuesday 21 st April 2020 (location TBC) Tuesday 21 st July 2020 (location TBC)
	Note: Further information about any of the reports for this meeting may be obtained from the report authors based at the Quantock Hills AONB Service office: Fyne Court, Broomfield, Bridgwater, TA5 2EQ Telephone: 01823 451884 or Email: quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk

THE MEETING – GUIDANCE NOTES

1. Inspection of Papers

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

2. Notes of the Meeting

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

3. Public Question Time

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. Substitutions

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

QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee held on:

Tuesday 22nd October 2019 at Holford Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew (Chair)	- Somerset West & Taunton Council (SWT)
Cllr Mike Caswell (Vice Chair)	- Sedgemoor District Council (SDC)
Chris Edwards	- Quantock Hills AONB Service
Iain Porter	- Quantock Hills AONB Service
Alan Bradford	- Sedgemoor District Council (SDC)
Hugh Davies	- Somerset West & Taunton Council/SCC
Julian Taylor	- North Petherton Town Council (JAC Rep)
Dixie Darch	- Somerset West & Taunton (SWT)

Also Present:

Amanda Sampson (AONB Comms & Admin, notetaker), Andy Stevenson (AONB Ranger), Owen Jones (AONB & Forestry England Partnership Ranger), PCSO Sue Thompson, PCSO Sue Marks, Mo Young (Holford Parish Council), Mike Copleston (Holford Parish Council), Barry Whitehead (Kilve Parish Council), Roger Craddock (Quantock Orienteers) and Judy Craddock (Quantock Orienteers).

1. Apologies:

Hugh Warmington (Country Land & Business - CLA), Gwil Wren, Kristina Luxton (National Trust - NT), Nigel Garnsworthy (National Trust - NT), Jonathan Doyle (Somerset County Council - SCC), Jo Chesworth (Natural England), Jo Pearson (Holford Parish Council), Michael King (Kings Estate).

2. Declarations of Interest:

Anthony Trollope-Bellew declared himself to be a member of Quantock Eco, Friends of Quantock, Quantock Deer Management Conservation Group, the President of the Quantock Stag Hounds and a Quantock Landowner.

3. Minutes of the last meeting:

The previous minutes were signed off as a true representation of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising:

Anthony – Gigaclear were sacked on the 12th September. Gigaclear had not actually been to visit the area, and on reflection had not realised that the lanes did not have verges and so they would have to dig the roads up, which would have a great impact on their finances. Mike – The contract for delivery of fast broadband to Devon and Cornwall is going very well overall. Gigaclear to their credit have done a good job north of Sedgemoor, but unfortunately the other areas have not. The contract now has to go out

to re tender for the areas that Gigaclear were supposed to be doing and that will take some considerable time because of regulations.

5. Public Question Time:

Mike Copelston (Holford Parish Council) – Mike thinks it would be a good idea for the Quantocks to have a planning document like many other AONB's have.

Chris - agreed that it would be a very useful thing to have but can be very costly to put together. It is subject to funding, but it would be good to find a way to develop our own planning guidance.

Alan Bradford – Interesting idea and we do need some sort of planning guidance, especially areas that are adjacent to the AONB boundary. What contributions have the AONB made towards local planning for Somerset, West Somerset and Sedgemoor?

Chris - we commented on Local Plans and all relevant planning applications at appropriate stages within the boundary, where resource allows, and we have seen amendments made on those applications based on our comments.

6. Paper A - Team and Partnership Update (Chris Edwards):

6.1 Team

Bill Jenman's contract as Development Officer for the LPS ended in September 2019. Since this time Bill has moved to a short term 3-month project officer role and is tasked with working on the Landscape Development Fund. Hannah Worthington, our Volunteer Coordinator, has unfortunately resigned her post after 3 months for health reasons. The post has been re advertised, the closing date was 20th October 2019 and interviews are being held on Wednesday 6th November 2019.

6.2 Partnership

Chris has contacted SALC to arrange the election for Parish Council members. Constitutionally 2 representatives per local authority will be maintained with equal financial contributions from District Councils and a contribution of twice that amount from the County Council. Somerset West and Taunton Councillors Anthony Trollope-Bellew and Dixy Darch will continue as JAC members Cllr Hugh Davies remains on the JAC representing the County Council and Cllr Gwil Wren has stood down from the JAC. Chris will draft a revised constitution for the winter JAC alongside preparing the revised Statement of Intent for agreement by JAC Councils.

Environmental Land Management Tests and Trials: Defra are expected to sign the "Farming for the Nation" contract with the National Association of AONBs very soon and a kick-off meeting in London is planned for October 31st. Chris highlighted the excellent opportunity this is to get to know Quantock farmers a lot better and ensure they have a strong voice in helping develop the next Agri-Environment Scheme.

The JAC agreed the following Recommendations:

1. The JAC endorses the staff management items in 1.1 and 1.2
2. The JAC supports the ELMs Progress described in 2.1
3. The JAC notes the report

Paper B - Ranger Report & Presentation (Andy Stevenson/Owen Jones):

7.1 Habitat Management

The Rangers describe a range of habitat management tasks carried out over the previous 6 months including: Hedgelaying training, Cothelstone Hill tasks have included track clearing, ragwort pulling and coppicing. General work with the volunteers has included litter picking, non-native species clearing, patrolling and several sessions of dry-stone walling. Swaling season will begin 1st November 2019 - since the last swaling season the Rangers have carried out a thorough review of the processes involved in the activity. This has included a review of equipment being used, alongside additional training for all involved. Rangers have also been working with the emergency services to provide them with an emergency vehicles access map and an Emergency Plan and Fire Plan are being drafted with the Fire Service. Anthony – *Hurley Beacon burned in 1959, an unintentional burn which took a long time to completely put out and took around 20 years to fully recover, if you don't burn when you want to burn, it will burn when you don't want it to burn.*

Further practical habitat management tasks allowed the Rangers to work with the Greendays day centre, school Duke of Edinburgh groups and corporate teams from a range of organisations including Hinkley Point and Somerset County Council, and a 6-week program with students from Taunton School joining us every Friday coppicing at Cothelstone Hill as part of their curriculum.

7.2 Visitor Management

The Rangers had a busy summer with both large and small scale events organised on the Hills including the Quantock Quake, orienteering events and horse rides. Progress has been made with organisers of events such as school Duke of Edinburgh groups, the Sea Cadets and 40 Commando to ensure there is as little conflict as possible. Andy – *there has been a large increase in groups like DofE using the Hills and this is putting some pressure on parking areas, also schools from further afield have started to use the Quantocks and have not been letting us know.* The second year of the family beach day in early summer proved a huge success including two expert-led geology/fossil walks, rock pooling and a small-scale beach clean. Rangers attended the Quantock Show and Nether Stowey Party in the park resulting in some excellent discussions with locals and visitors to the area.

Fly-tipping remains an issue with several cases reported since June, these are either cleared or more commonly reported to the District Council resulting in relatively swift removal of the litter. The Rangers are involved in several steering groups to ensure the interests of the Quantocks are maintained - high quality access combined with protection from overuse. Rangers attended a Quantock mammal ID session at Fire Beacon with children from Crowcombe and Stogumber Primary Schools.

7.3 Wildlife Monitoring

The Rangers reported on a range of summer species surveys and monitoring exercises carried out with AONB volunteers including: pied flycatchers, nightjars, butterflies and bats. a slow start the number of butterflies has been high across the transects at Fyne Court and Cothelstone Hill.

The Rangers have hosted the second meeting between the Police and relevant conservation organisations on the Quantocks to discuss current issues. Training opportunities and joint patrols will be an ongoing priority. The Rangers with help from the

Commoners and landowners have been promoting through various media the issue of dog worrying livestock and overnight camping in car parks and on the commons.

Owen – *we have been out with the PCSO's patrolling the areas to try and prevent overnight camping.* **Andy** - *Dogs on leads, we need to keep trying to enforce the message and continue to put the message out on our social media pages and by word of mouth.* **Hugh** – *reference overnight parking, has the use of cameras been thought of.* **Owen** – *we haven't done this as it is a complicated matter (we come under the local authority and we cannot put cameras up unless we put a sign up clearly stating there is a camera in place).*

The JAC noted the report

7. Paper C - Management Plan Delivery Plan (Iain Porter):

Iain provided a report on the development of the Management Plan Delivery Plan (with a link to the document) which went out for consultation in August - Anthony asked if everyone was happy to sign this off and all agreed to this. Recommendation agreed: The Quantock Hills JAC adopts the Quantock Hills AONB Delivery Plan 2019-24 (v1.1.3)

8. Paper D - Quantock Hills AONB Finance Update (Iain Porter):

Iain – Summary (year to date) as expected there have been variations within AONB budgets but they within tolerances.

Iain - Funding scenarios based on known commitments and best guess assumptions (see JAC Report 04/06/2019) have identified that by year end of 2020/21 (31st March 2021) the AONB Service overall balance will be at £0 (no surplus or deficit). With the current level of core expenditure this will mean that the AONB Service will be running a deficit budget in 2021/22.

Iain indicated that he would like to set up a small task and finish group to look at options to address this including increasing grants and reducing costs, potential change in structure of AONB's from the Glover Review which we are hoping to find out more about later this year. Iain asked for any thoughts or comments from the JAC about setting up this group.

Mike Caswell - would like to nominate Mandy Chilcott as she is very good with figures and may be a great asset to the group. Alan Bradford - Julian Taylor as a good person also. Chris – this would need to be a small group of around 4/5 people, so it doesn't get complicated. Mike - would like the JAC to formally write to Mandy Chilcott and ask her if she would be interested. Anthony – suggested that Chris writes or emails Mandy about this.

Anthony – asked if everyone was happy to have this small task group set up and all agreed.

9. National Lottery Landscape Partnership Verbal Update (Iain Porter):

The application was submitted in 20th August this year, which was a month earlier than expected which is great news. Bill has worked very hard for a number of weeks to get the required documentation together for a very significant application process. Stage 2 application beech hedgebanks and hedgerows project is a project under the LPS - the National Lottery officers were concerned that there was a high level of funding going in to

the beech head banks in relation to the output. We argued that these things were incredibly important for the landscape and also very expensive to do, but Bill managed to make an adjustment by about 25%. *Anthony - the really expensive bit about beech head banks is if you stone face them.*

Car park project planning permission is in and open to consultation until Friday 25th October. *Anthony – wanted to declare so that everyone was aware, if they don't already know that the new Crowcombe park gate carpark project is on Anthony's ground, but he does not stand to gain from the proposed works.*

On the 4th November we have a visit from the national lottery heritage fund people. Bill is helping with this on the day and Friends of Quantock, commoner/farmer Rob White and Julie Cooper from SDC will be attending, among many others. By the 29th/30th November 2019 we should be notified of success or failure with a letter - hopefully with permission to start (if successful). *Anthony – Asked if any of the work or learning could be applied if we are not successful with the bid. Iain – We would use evidence and work undertaken to apply to other funding pots, either for discrete projects or larger schemes of work.*

10. Paper E - The Glover Report (Chris Edwards):

The final report of the Review of England's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) was published by the Glover Review Panel on Saturday 21st September. It has been welcomed by the National Association of AONB's and individual AONB's - there are significant elements to be questioned but fundamentally this report is very supportive of the points made by this and other AONB Partnerships and Management Committees around the country.

Chris - This is an independent review that Michael Gove set in place, now reporting to new SoS Theresa Villiers who has commented "We think it's an excellent report and we're going to be carefully considering its recommendations. There are a lot of great ideas which are consistent with our determination to remedy the disastrous loss of biodiversity and nature habits we've experienced in this country over recent years." Ms Villiers also said that Mr Glover's idea to have school visits to protected landscapes echoes the government's aims.

Anthony – there is some good stuff in this report, but what concerns him is the National Landscapes Service, they are talking about the chairman being nominated by the secretary of state with only one member from local authorities. A lot of the land is around 90% privately owned and doesn't feel that some people from outside of the protected landscapes and national parks don't fully understand that. Concern is that while groups should be encouraged, we will have more damage, thereby reducing the biodiversity.

Julian – objects to the increasing number of people and centralisation. Chris – the overall feeling does seem like a centralisation. Alan – people are switching jobs far too often and then you end up with people who do not have enough experience to understand things as they are. Centralisation is not always a good thing. Anthony – Chris has served with the AONB for 30 years, if there was a national service, how long would you stay in one place. Chris – back then there was no progression and if you loved what you did, you would be happy to work on your patch, but the opportunity to move around and have new opportunities may be welcomed. Dixie – the material in the report is not just about the Quantocks but all over the country wider participation and if you look at the work rangers have been doing with groups with mental health and DofE ect, we are doing a really good job and doubts that the Quantocks would be a target area for getting more visitors.

Anthony – the fact is that the Quantocks already has a lot of people visiting. At a county committee meeting Anthony attended, it was discussed that Exmoor works alright, but not all the other National Parks do. There are people on Exmoor who are already not happy and if you get a chairperson brought in from outside, people are not going to be happy.

Anthony – Sarah Mukjerhee who came down, thought that the AONB's are working better than the national parks. Chris – the government have said they are going to comment by the end of the year. Anthony - Rebecca Pow is one of the ministers in Defra and Anthony has already asked for a chat with Rebecca when things have quietened down.

11.AOB:

Chris – The Quantock Hills Annual Report for last year 2018-2019 text version is now available.

The meeting closed at 15.57pm

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 21st January 2020 at 2.15pm - North Petherton Bowling Club
Petherton Park
North Petherton
Bridgwater
Somerset
TA6 6PR



Joint Advisory Committee 21st January 2020

AONB Team and Partnership Report

1. Team

1.1. After an effective recruitment process the successful candidate, Verity Jones, started work as Volunteer Coordinator for the Quantock and Blackdown Hills AONBs on Monday Jan 6th. Verity is hosted by our AONB Team and will work specific days on the Quantocks and the Blackdowns.

1.2. Recruitment of a Landscape Partnership Project Manager has begun (see below)

2. Partnership

2.1. On Jan 9th the National Lottery publicly announced that we have been successful in our efforts to secure significant project funds under their Landscape Partnership programme. There are many people and organisations who have had a significant hand in this success, and we thank them and look forward to delivering these projects in partnership with them, I should particularly mention Friends of Quantock and the South-West Heritage Trust here. The recruitment of Bill Jenman to take all the developing links and threads and expand and weave them into the final, successful bid was the major culmination of this process and I thank Bill for his focussed and detailed work that has ensured this happy outcome.

The driving force however behind this lengthy and detailed exercise (with many twists and turns), has been our Development Officer Iain Porter and I would like to recognise his sustained efforts over a four-year period in achieving this outstanding result. His work on this, from the initial interest and concept to the Stage 1 application, ensuring all the elements and agreements to take it forward were in place and not least the recruitment of the Landscape Partnership Development Officer to develop and write the full bid has been of the highest standard.

Iain received the following communique (along with much information on what needs to happen next) from the National Lottery towards the end of last year:

Congratulations, your application has now been assessed and I am delighted to inform you that we have decided to award a grant of up to £1,810,800.00 one million, eight hundred and ten thousand and eight hundred pounds (69% of the total eligible project cost of £2,635,086.00) towards delivering the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme. More specifically, we will monitor your progress against the following Approved Purposes:

- As a partnership, deliver the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme as set out in your LCAP.***
- Deliver eight projects under the theme 'Inspire'.***
- Deliver ten projects under the theme 'Live'.***
- Deliver five projects under the theme 'Learn'.***

2.2 ELMS

Tom from the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group has started work for us on our Environmental Land Management Tests and Trials project. There will be a launch meeting at Fyne Court on February the 11th, see attached flyer. JAC members are invited to the launch which is particularly targeted at Quantock farmers and landowners.

2.3 As requested by the JAC a revised Constitution and Statement of intent are provided with this report with changes tracked for the consideration and agreement of the Committee.

Chris Edwards
January 2020



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. The JAC considers, amends and agrees the updated Constitution and Sol attached, subject to parent authority agreements**
- 2. The JAC notes the report**

To: Quantock Hills JAC

Author: Alex Meletiou, Quantock Hills AONB Landscape Planning Officer

Date: 9th January 2020

Subject: Planning Report

Planning applications

From 25th July to 31st December 2019 the AONB received 34 planning applications for consideration which have either been followed up from the published lists provided by the individual LPAs or by direct 'invitation' to comment. This number is below average which possibly reflects the relative political and economic uncertainty of the last few months.

The distribution of applications between each LPA is set out below: -

Sedgemoor – 13
SWT – 21

These are made up of the following categories: -

New agricultural buildings - 4
New residential development (domestic) - 5
Agricultural conversion to holiday let – 1
Agricultural conversion to residential - 3
Major residential development - 4
Minor works to residential properties – 8
Significant extensions to residential properties – 6
Telecommunication mast – 1
Car parks - 2

21 of these applications received a written 'considered but no comment' response as the proposals were considered unlikely to have an adverse or significant impact on the AONB.

Current Issues

The main concern at present is the application for a telecommunications mast for use only by the Emergency Services at Broomfield. Objections cannot be raised concerning the requirement for the mast as Permitted Development rights apply but concerns were raised regarding the chosen location and the way in which the site investigation was conducted. The application has currently been withdrawn and a revised one will no doubt be submitted.

Hopefully this will contain a fuller and more detailed analysis of the various locations considered and the consequential impact on the landscape.

A revised application has been received for the retention of an agricultural building at Holford which was refused consent last year. This is a relatively complicated case but the AONB has again objected to this proposal.

Very recently an appeal has been lodged regarding the refusal of permission for a new dwelling on the outskirts of Kingston St Mary (but outside of the settlement limits). The AONB originally objected to this proposal and will do so again if required. One of the arguments for

allowing this development is the precedent set by the Wellington case where planning permission was granted outside of defined settlement limits.

A new 'revised' application for the Cheddon Road development (where the Wellington case was quoted in the Planning Report to the JAC last August) has also been submitted following Committee refusal last year. The application is for again for 180 houses on a site with an allocation of 40-45.

Training

A training day was held in Bridgwater on 3rd December organised by the Mendip Hills AONB on 'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments'. Many planning officers attended from a number of District Councils and the day was considered to be very useful. LVIAs are submitted predominately for major developments and used to indicate how a proposed development might impact a landscape. The use of photo montages was discussed with emphasis on the use of correct camera lenses to truly reflect the visual scene and how a development might sit in the landscape. Different lenses can produce surprisingly different results!

Alex Meletiou
Landscape Planning Officer

9th January 2020



RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The JAC notes the report

Paper C



To: Quantock Hills JAC
Status: Quantock Hills AONB Service 2019/20 Budget Highlight Report Quarter 3

Date: 21/01/2020
Author: Iain Porter

Summary (year to date): AONB Budgets are on track. Core budget is showing some minor variances which are to be managed within budget. Project budget has increased due to notice of further £10,000 from Public Health for the Nature & Wellbeing Project. The expenditure has been increased to reflect the increase costs of delivery.

Reserves are expected to decrease by £2,300 to cover over spend in the core budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

1) The Quantock Hills JAC note the report.

SUMMARY	Budget	Budget (expenditure)	Income	Balance (exp – income)	
	Core	£295,686	£272,144	-£23,542	Using £23,540 of reserves to cover shortfall in income, though this likely to decrease as cost recovery for some contracts higher than budgeted in April.
	Projects	£24,995	£25,695	£700	
	Landscape Ptn Scheme	£27,216	£47,590	£20,374	2018/19 year end was £23.858 overspent as accrual did not go through due to uncertainty of HLF payment date. This has the effect of this year's budget appearing to underspend. Budget will be £3,484 overspent at end of project. This will be met from reserves.
	Projects [HPC]	£75,000	£75,000	£0	Income claimed retrospectively from SCC under S106 / DCO agreement
	Amenity Land	£14,750	£14,858	£108	Ring-fenced fund to manage Cothelstone Hill on behalf of SWHT / SCC.
	Total	£437,647	£435,287	-£2,360	
	Reserves (b/f 2018/19)		£51,827	£51,827	
	Earmarked Reserves	£24,000		£24,000	To cover whole team redundancy as agreed in the core funding partners Statement of Intent.
	Reserves			£25,467	Budget is in surplus.

	Measure	Budget	Performance (Qu 3)	Comments	RAG
CORE / REVENUE	£ / % Budget line	£295,676	£222,101 / 75%		
	£/% [salaries, NI, SA]	£243,826	£168,822 / 69%	The budget includes a pension deficit amount and an apprentice levy. This is apportioned by SCC (host authority) and will be funded at year end.	😊
	£/% [training]	£1,500	£1,473 / 98%	No further expenditure expected.	😊
	£/% [rent, rates, electricity, water, premise insurance]	£13,250	£10,355 / 78%	On track	😊
	£/% [stationary, post, phones, printing]	£3,000	£3,415 / 114%	Need to check as a number of mis-coded expenditure items on budget	😐

	£/% [travel, vehicle costs]	£18,300	£17,375 / 95%	Looks high due to ranger vehicle lease (£10.5k) which came out of budget in July and increased costs due to issue with vehicle hire / insurance (disputed repair)	😊
	£/% [Equipment, maintenance, clothing, uniform]	£3,500	£5,679 / 162%	Over spent. Further investigation to see what expenditure has gone through budget line.	😞
	£/% [Literature, publications, publicity]	£0	£200 / 200%	Design and print costs associated with AONB Management Plan.	😐
	£/% [Meeting costs, hospitality]	£800	£1,064 / 133%	High expenditure. Look to move budget from stationary budget line.	😞
	£/% [Management fee, insurance]	£8,700	£9,656 / 111%	SCC management / hosting fee. Insurances include property, terrorism & computer / Employer Liability & Public Liability.	😐
	£/% [Memberships]	£2,500	£2,709 / 108%	Membership of National Association of AONBs (NAAONB) and Europarc Atlantic Isles.	😐
	£/% [Research & Development]	£300	£1,038 / 364%	Research undertaken for joint Nature & Wellbeing bid. Additional income due in to cover cost.	😐
CORE / REVENUE INCOME	£ / % Grant – Defra	£163,944	£122,958 / 75%	Defra Grant Agreement being finalised. This has delayed advance payment of grant	😊
	£ / % Contributions – Local Authorities	£42,900	£22,500 / 52%	SWT and SDC contributions received. SCC due end of financial year.	😊
	£ / % Contributions – Friends of Quantock	£1,000	£1,585 / 159%	Additional income from provision of contract management services and donation towards bird boxes	😊
	£ / % Contributions – Other landowners	£1,000	£0 / 0%	Still be received.	😊
	£ / % Cost Recovery - Contracts	£10,000	£17,727 / 177%	Increased cost recovery from contracts (HPC Landscape schemes).	😊
	£ / % Recharge – Contributions to staff posts	£32,900	£20,303 / 62%	These are received in October and January	😊
	£ / % Recharge – SCC Pen Def & AL	£19,900	£0 / 0%	To be received at end of financial year.	😊
	£ / % Income – AONB led events	£500	£48 / 10%	Further income to be vied across from holding account	😊

PROJECTS	Project (in-year budget / spend only)	Budget	Performance	Comments	RAG
	£ / % [Nature & Wellbeing Project]	£23,995	£14,285 / 60%	Yr. 4 of 4. Budget carried forward from 2018/19 and includes £10k allocation July 2019.	😊
	£ / % spend to date [Access]	£1,000	£1,095 / 110%		😐

LPS	£ / % spend to date [Landscape Partnership]	£28,746	£33,552 / 117%	Project (development phase) closed. Additional £4,800 to be found from reserves.	😊
HPC	£ / % spend to date [HPC - GQLDF]	£50,000	£8,790 / 18%	Anticipated full allocation of fund by March 2021. Claims to be finalised by March 2022. Estimated budget from projects in pipeline and applications received to date	😊
	£ / % spend to date [HPC - LIS]	£25,000	£0 / 0%	One contract released for Ramscombe 1 work, one contract to be released. Expenditure now expected 2020/21	😊

Amenity	£ / % Contractors	£11,000	£3,010 / 27%	Majority of contract work undertaken in late summer and winter. Contracts currently being released	😊
	£ / % Materials / equipment	£3,500	£468 / 13%	Miscoding to other budget codes shows this line as underspent	😊
	£ / % Travel / fuel	£250	£107 / 43%		😊
	£ / % Income (carry forward 2018/19)	£6,858	£6,858 / 100%		😊
	£ / % Income (Agri-environment schemes)	£8,000	£6,387 / 80%		😊

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The JAC notes the report

1. The budget below will be submitted to DEFRA at the beginning of February in support of the AONB Service's annual grant application.
2. The budget is based on SCC HR figures for salaries, NI and SA. Pension deficit and apprentice levy payments are factored into the budget and the appropriate SCC recharge budget line increased to cover the expenditure. SCC base contribution to the AONB Service has not increased.
3. In Core (Revenue) budget the office and depot rent, and vehicle costs have been increased to take account of new leases. These are estimated based on previous lease changes.
4. SCC Finance team require that where RIA (receipts in advance) budget is being used to fill a gap between a budgets income and expenditure it is shown going into that budget code. In previous year's their preferred approach was to keep all surplus in RIA and show the overall balance of all budget lines.
5. Surplus being carried forward from 2019/20 is currently estimated as £40,000. Note that the expected surplus to be carried forward into financial year 2021/22 has decreased to £14,784 meaning the budget in its current form is unsustainable from 2021/22. The working group, recommended at the last JAC, will be convened and look to investigate further this spring as we are hopeful to have a greater understanding of the direction of travel from Defra and the national funding agreement.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) The JAC agree the submission of budgets as detailed to Defra in support of the Quantock Hills AONB Grant Application.

Table 1: Quantock Hills AONB Service 2020/21 Budget Summary

Budget Line	Expenditure	Income	Balance to be met from RIA	Comments
Core (Revenue)	294,917	270,674	24,243	
Projects (HPC Landscape)	40,000	40,000	0	
Projects (Landscape Partnership)	545,046	545,046	0	
Projects	50,485	49,485	1,000	
Amenity Land	13,800	7,720	6,108	The Amenity Land budget runs from January – December years not financial years therefore some budget is put into RIA budget line on 31 st March and taken back out on 1 st April each year.
Receipts in Advance (budget line used for surplus)	31,351	46,108	0	Expenditure is associated with using surplus to cover expenditure in core and project budgets. Income figure includes surplus brought forward (£40,000) and carry over from Amenity Land budget (£6,108).
Total	926,115	909,548	31,351	
Balance (surplus carried forward)			14,757	RIA Income – RIA Expenditure

Table 2: Quantock Hills AONB Service 2020/21 Core (Revenue) Budget

Item / Description	Budget	Comments
Salaries, NI, SA	241,600	Budget now includes pension deficit and apprentice levy payments. The recharge from SCC is shown below.
Training	1,600	
Rent, rates, electricity, water, premise insurance	11,920	Rent increased as new lease agreement for both office and depot will come into effect in new financial year. This is a RPI increase.
Stationary, post, phones, printing	2,150	
Travel, vehicle costs	18,898	Budget has been increased to take account of increased insurance costs from SCC and new leases for AONB Service vehicles.
Equipment, maintenance, clothing, uniform	4,600	
Literature, publications, publicity	1,110	
Meeting costs, hospitality	1,200	
Management Fee, Insurance	9,040	
Memberships	2,800	NAAONB & Europarcs
Research & Development	0	
Income Defra	166,800	Anticipated grant amount.
Income Local Authorities	42,900	Includes Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council and Somerset West & Taunton
Income Cost Recovery	7,000	Includes recharge for services such as swaling, delivery of HPC projects.
Income Friends of Quantock	1,000	
Recharge - staff posts	34,174	Recharge to Forestry England (Partnership Ranger) and Blackdown Hills AONB (Volunteer Coordinator)
Recharge - SCC Pen Def & AL	18,800	

Table 3: Quantock Hills AONB Service 2020/21 HPC Landscape Projects (RINGFENCED)

Item Description	Budget	Comments
Greater Quantock Landscape Development Fund (GQLDF)	15,000	Anticipated to be final year of GQLDF though expenditure (from project claims) will continue into 2021/22.
Quantock Landscape Improvement Scheme (QLIS)	25,000	Associated with Ramscombe contracts.
Income - SCC	40,000	S106 / DCO funded via SCC.

Table 4: Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme Budget 2020/21. (Estimated based on start date of 1st April 2020)

Item / Description	Budget	Comments
Salaries, NI, SA & staff training	148,674	Employment of new team (FTE 4.2). Include Pension Deficit & Apprentice Levy which will be recharged at year end
Rent, rates, electricity, water, premise insurance	4,790	New office accommodation based out of Nether Stowey Library
Travel, vehicle costs	16,392	Hired transport costs for project delivery, staff travel costs.
Equipment, materials	45,082	
Stationary, printing, postage, uniform, phones, hosp, sub	3,094	
Fees & Hired	5,300	
Professional / Technical Services	124,464	
Contractors	176,000	
Publicity & Promotion	8,150	
Research & Development	12,500	
Income – National Lottery Heritage Grant	304,927	
Income – S106 / DCO	169,000	Match funding from S106 / DCO
Income – Contributions (others)	54,419	Match funding from other QLPS Partners
Recharge - SCC Pen Def & AL	16,700	

Table 5: Quantock Hills AONB Service 2020/21 Project Budget

Projects	Budget	Comments
Defra ELMS Test & Trials	49,485	New project. All expenditure and income due in FY 2020/21
Access	1,000	
Income – National Association of AONBs	49,485	DEFRA funded project coming via NAAONB.

Table 6: Quantock Amenity Land Budget 2020/21 (RINGFENCED)

Item / Description	Budget	Comments
Contractors	12,000	
Equipment & Materials	700	
Travel costs	300	
Equipment R&M	800	
Income B/f 2019/20	6,108	Agri-environment schemes run calendar years and therefore payments made in March will need to be carried forward into the new financial year.
Income – HLS, CS, BPS Payments (RPA)	7,720	

Table 7: Receipts in Advance (RIA).

Receipts in Advance (RIA)	Budget	Comments
Cross budget viament	24,243	Budget via to core to cover shortfall
Cross budget viament	1,000	Budget via to project to cover shortfall
Cross budget viament	6,108	Budget from 2019/20 Amenity Land via back into Amenity Land Budget
Reserves brought forward from 2019/20	40,000	Estimated from month 9 figures.
Income – B/f Amenity Land	6,108	

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The JAC notes the report

To: Quantock Hills JAC

Author: Kristen Lambert, Quantock Hills AONB Nature & Wellbeing Officer

Date: January 2020

Subject: Nature & Wellbeing Update

Somerset's Nature and Wellbeing Project Evaluation - 2016-2019

'Nature is the most beautiful thing and makes me feel my best' (Henry, Year 6)

1. Project Overview

1.1 Background

In February 2016, Public Health at Somerset County Council funded a two-year, Nature and Wellbeing project which was later extended, running for four years in total. Managed by the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the project also worked in partnership with the Blackdown and Mendip Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) to provide opportunities for county wide engagement.

The project aimed to tackle some of the barriers that prevent groups and individuals experiencing the health and wellbeing benefits that Somerset's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty offer. The Project supported people to access these top-quality natural spaces, with a particular focus on supporting mental wellbeing and physical activity, working with groups and individuals who may benefit from such engagement. Project activities focused both on linking people to existing provision and setting up new activities and events.

This evaluation document has been written between October-December 2019, as the project nears its end. Stories and surveys were collected throughout the project and during the autumn/winter of the project's final year.

1.2 Nature and Wellbeing Project in numbers

Evaluation was completed throughout the project by the Project Coordinator in an informal and flexible way – suiting the needs of participants.

Totals 2016-2019	
Total people engaged in Nature and Wellbeing Activity Sessions/Projects	2345
Total Number of Project Sessions	515
People benefitted from Training/Awareness Raising	211
People presented to at Meetings/Engagement events	1126
AONB Community Engagement Volunteers Recruited/Trained Working on the Project	9

2. Nature and Wellbeing Project outcomes

2.1. Feedback from Individuals

Information was gathered from 40 individuals* representing around 10 groups who had engaged with the project (some were involved with more than one group). Not all interviewees answered all the questions.

The majority of people interviewed were working age adults. Interviewees were selected based on willingness and ability to participate and obviously reflect the beneficiary experience, at the time of the interview. However, it is believed that they are a broadly representative sample.

When asked about pre-existing conditions, there were consistently around 50% positive responses about a variety of issues that can be broadly categorised as mental health concerns. The specific questions related to explicit mental health problems, loneliness and depression. The data format makes it very hard to determine if this indicates that, at one extreme, half the clientele had multiple mental health issues resulting in multiple positive responses (someone with a diagnosed mental health condition was also like to be taking medication and feel lonely, for instance), or at the other extreme all the clients had mental health and wellbeing issues of some kind which they reported in different ways. That said, it can be confidently concluded that the participant group included a majority identifying themselves as having a significant mental health or wellbeing need.

Lying behind these overt mental health and wellbeing needs were a range of contributory factors such as physical health issues (19%), homelessness, and caring responsibilities (10 – 12%). A similar number explicitly and spontaneously mentioned Brexit anxieties. (50%) also reported a learning disability of some kind.

All respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that the project had improved their mental wellbeing, and all but one (97%) agreed or agreed strongly that participating in the Nature and Wellbeing Project had made them feel more positive about the future. 100% of participants also reported that participation had made them appreciate Somerset's countryside more.

All but 3/4 participants agreed or agreed strongly with a range of other positive indicators; feeling less lonely, less anxious, having more energy and having more confidence. The small number of negative responses were from individuals in groups that work with people with more serious mental health difficulties (e.g. inpatient wards). They probably reflect this client group's poorer baseline mental health rather than the programme's content.

There were 37 free text reactions, all positive and expressing happiness, a sense of calm, enjoyment, social engagement, and valuing the countryside experience.

Participants reported an overwhelmingly positive experience and impact. Despite the reservations about the data collection (see 5.6) it can be confidently concluded that, from the perspective of the participants involved, the project was very successful in meeting their needs and improving their lives.

The project successfully targeted those with poor mental health wellbeing and adults with learning disabilities. Individuals found the project positive, helpful and welcomed the opportunity to engage with nature as part of the project's special appeal. The

delivery model works, and does result in improved mental health and wellbeing of participants

Quotes from Participants

“Being part of the group has improved my confidence so much.”

“It gave me hope and got me back into doing things again.”

“It made me feel whole again – I’m not frightened anymore”

“Sessions were calming and satisfying”

**Some respondents were involved in both Somerset Wildlife Trust and Nature and Wellbeing Projects*

2.2 Feedback from Partner Organisations

The 12 partners completed the questionnaire of a total They are a sample of the 26 total partner organisations the Nature and Wellbeing project has worked with.

The organisations all came from the mental health or learning disability sectors, with a significant overlap into services for people with significant long-term physical health or social exclusion issues. This reflects the multifactorial nature of poor mental health and wellbeing. Five of the 12 were already taking groups outdoors in some form but the rest were not.

For two thirds (8) of them a lack of knowledge about suitable sites had been a significant barrier to working in the countryside. Lack of transport, lack of availability of suitable staff, skills, and/or knowledge were also important factors (5/12 mentioning each of these).

All 12 strongly agreed that engagement with the Nature and Wellbeing Project had improved participants mental wellbeing. There was some variation between strong agreement and agreement about reducing loneliness, improving physical health, anxiety, positivity, and other measures but there was consistently a 100% strongly agree or agree response across all positive indicators. There is no doubt that all the partners believe the project to be extremely beneficial to people they work with and support.

There was similar 100% agreement that the project had helped the organisations concerned to build their own skills, knowledge, and confidence. They experienced the project not only as being of great benefit to their clients but as empowering and developing their own organisational capacities and ambitions. This is an important finding in terms of sustainability and value for money invested.

All of the organisations would strongly welcome more training opportunities to embed the nature-based approach in their own work, if the AONB’s and SWT partnership can secure further funding.

Quotes from Partners:

“The whole group reported being more physically active since getting involved in the project”

“...within our group there have been improvements to both mood and engagement since involvement in the project”

“The group say that the sessions make them feel good, proud, and tired.”

3. Project Stories

3.1 Rydon at Timbercombe Lodge 2017-2019 (Quantock Hills)

'It's the first time I have felt joy in many months' Quote from participant

For the past 2.5 years Somerset Partnership's (NHS) Rydon Ward made weekly visits to a privately-owned farm on the Quantock Hills. Two Occupational Therapists (OTs) supported no more than 4 participants to work with the Lodge's gardener. Task's included looking after organic vegetable patches, clearing, burning and learning about the land. These sessions will hopefully continue beyond the project as it is totally self-sustaining now.



'As an occupational therapist, I am aware of the importance being in nature has for our health and wellbeing. This is why as an inpatient OT on an acute mental health ward I encouraged service user participation in the Nature Group that we were running with The Quantock Hills AONB and Timbercombe Lodge.

This was by far our most popular group. Every service user who attended the group said they **felt less anxious** and **less stressed** post group. The relaxed atmosphere, the very human approach taken by staff, to just BE in nature was a huge benefit to the wellbeing of our service users (and staff). In fact, the junior doctors all fought each other for a place in the group to attend with the service users as they too benefitted from the experience.

There is something so healing about being in nature and engaging in tasks which promote mindfulness and awareness of the world around you, as well as the ability to get lost in the flow of what you are doing. Whether that be chopping wood to build a bonfire, pulling up vegetables, weeding the vegetable patch; it was all so naturally therapeutic.

We enjoyed the **rewarding experience** of harvesting veg that we had planted and using it to cook with on the ward the next day.

Our service users returned to the ward with arms full of roses they had picked for their rooms and vegetables ready to cook with.

I always returned to the ward covered in mud and felt like a very happy OT indeed!'

Emily – Senior Inpatient Occupational Therapist

3.2 Eastover Primary School at Fyne Court 2016-2019 (Quantock Hills)

For three years pupils from Eastover Primary School have been visiting Fyne Court during the Spring and Summer Terms. It has now become part of the school's annual programme with the school funding some of the transport costs themselves.

Classes make weekly visits that are supported by the National Trust offering children the opportunity to connect with nature



within their local community and experience free play and exploration within the quality natural environments of the Quantock Hills AONB. During year one over half the children hadn't visited Fyne Court before, despite being less than 10.

The environment allowed for plenty of physical activity and opportunity for children to develop their confidence through trying new things and challenging themselves in exciting and unfamiliar surroundings. 95 % of pupils felt they got to move around more than they would on a normal day. The children were given pedometers to measure the difference between a day at Fyne Court and a normal day at school. The average steps taken at school were 3423 and at Fyne Court 6933 – more than double the steps.

93% of pupils felt that they got to spend more time with friends, talking and having fun together than they would on a normal school day. 95% of pupils felt that they were able to play outside with nature more than they would on a normal school day with 95% saying they would like to visit Fyne Court again.

Quotes from pupils:

"I took my dad there (after the project visit) but he wasn't as good at building dens as me though"

"I enjoyed jumping in muddy puddles with friends"

"I learnt that there are sticky plants....I loved being in nature."

3.3 Watch at Folly Farmyard 2017-2019 (Blackdown Hills)



The Watch Project in Chard have been visiting Folly Farmyard on the Blackdown Hills for the past 2/3 years and have confirmed funding for transport for these visits to continue into 2020. Watch is a voluntary group set up to reach out and engage with adults who, because of various conditions and issues, are socially isolated and who face barriers within their community and surrounding areas.

Folly Farmyard is privately owned and farmed using traditional methods to conserve and enhance nature and wildlife. Participants assist farmer Jonathan with basic tasks such as brash clearance, ditching as well as butterfly and other wildlife monitoring. This year the group may also take on the John Muir Award.

Joan has been attending sessions at Folly Farmyard for the duration of the project and wrote a Poem to describe her experiences and the impact her time on the farm has had on her life.

“What can I say about this place, to help you understand?

It's not what you expect to see, in today's farming land.

Orchids, flower meadows, birds all around

and number of dormice that truly astound.

Orchards, a pond, cows and a deer,

views of the Blackdowns and hearts full of cheer.

I love to go ditching, not a lot I know,

but I'm doing my bit to 'Slow the Flow'.

Surrounded by hedges bursting with life,

a place to forget all you trouble and strife.

We stop for lunch and Jonathan makes tea

We all chat, and we laugh and are happy to be.

In a place full of beauty and wonder and more,

With no chemicals, it's returned to how it was before.

We head home, tired from all the fresh air

The walking, the work and the wind in our hair.

But above all else, we feel alive

and for this we give Jonathan a big high five”

3.4 Discovery at Mendip Hills AONB and Yeo Valley Farms 2016-2019 (Mendip Hills) Case Study Written by Chris Parker Discovery Support Worker

“For nearly three years I have been bringing a group to the Mendip Hills every Thursday. We alternate weeks at Yeo Valley Farms where we dismantle and rebuild dry stone walls and Mendip Hills AONB in Charterhouse where we are volunteers. The projects were originally set

up by Kristen Lambert as part of the Nature and Wellbeing Project. They now run without her direct assistance although she occasionally comes to see how we are getting on. Our clients on these projects mostly have moderate learning disabilities.



The dry-stone walling has produced three completed walls around 70 metres in length and our team have made good friends with other workers on the farm and our trainers. The walls are in a very picturesque spot and we all appreciate the regular contact with the land and the animals and birds around us. Being in the middle of such peaceful countryside has made its mark on our interactions and our clients enjoy the tranquillity and calm.

Our volunteering days with Mendip Hills AONB have enabled us to address many different jobs and my team have become quite skilled. We have cleared paths of any litter and overgrowth; we have repaired benches and cleared old buildings. We have worked out in the snow and in the heat of summer and our Thursday trips have become a much-valued part their activities. We have recorded the activities on camera and reviewing these pictures is a great aid to those of the party who have difficulty remembering things. The pride, the skills acquired and pleasure at meeting with the staff and other volunteers is evident in these reviews with photos.

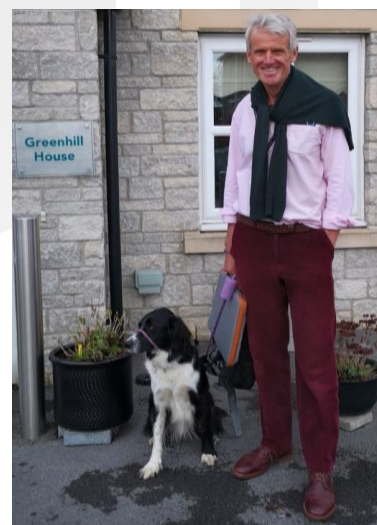
Recently our group have been making bug houses and nesting boxes in the grounds at Charterhouse. My group always like to see the mentions they get on the AONB Twitter pages for doing this. At present the only space to construct these is outside when the weather is OK so a workshop would be a great improvement especially in the winter. The chance to introduce our clients to more woodworking skills would be much appreciated.

Below are some of the benefits I observe in my clients. Sometimes not until many weeks' months later. In no small measure this all contributes to Wellbeing.

Pride:	In clearing a shed or that our wall shows on a Google map. Telling others what they do.
Friendship:	In the people they meet officially and meet out and about. Also working together.
Happiness:	In the environment and the company.
Fitness:	From considerable physical work.
Skills:	In wall building, woodwork and conservation.
Memory:	Reviewing previous tasks with pictures and stories.
Stability:	Knowing what they will be doing and how to do it."

3.5 Somerset Care – Green Hill House 2017-2019 (Mendip Hills)

For nearly 2 years Mendip Hills Volunteer David Knight has been making regular visits to Green Hill Care Home in Cheddar where he shares stories, artefacts and photographs about the history, landscape and current activities on the Mendip Hills. This has been very well received by those living there and has sparked interest and nostalgia. David will continue to visit Green Hill House into 2020. He is now registered as a Mendip Hills and Somerset Care Volunteer. His beautifully behaved dog Molly also attends and is a big hit with the residents at Green Hill. Community Ranger Lauren is looking at extending this offer to other Somerset Care Homes across the Mendip area as a result of the success of this model that was established during the project.



3.6 Wellness Walks with 'Carry me Kate' 2019 (All three AONBs)



In 2019 the project coordinator made links with Carry Me Kate Parenting Services, a Community Interest Company, supporting parents through breastfeeding peer support, social meets and consultancy services for people wanting to try out different types of baby carriers in Somerset. As a new parent herself the coordinator was keen to support post-natal mental wellbeing through offering opportunities for new mums and dads to get out and connect with nature and experience the mental and emotional benefits of baby wearing for both carrier and baby.

We started by hosting 3 meets at Fyne Court on the Quantock Hills – all of which were really successful, with some sessions involving over 30 parents/carers and their babies. People told us that there was gap in projects that offer new parents' opportunities to get outside and reap the benefits this allows and that going on these walks really supported their wellbeing – in particularly telling us that on walk days – their mood positively shifted during and after the walk. Following the success of the 2019 programme of walks a full Programme (of 11 sessions) have been agreed for 2020. This project will continue to be supported by all three AONB teams, Plantlife, Exmoor National Park and Carry me Kate.

3.7 Working Well 2016-2019 (Quantock Hills)

This practical conservation volunteering group was set up during the first year of the project in partnership with the Quantock Hills AONB team and Mind in Somerset. Following funding bids to Somerset Community Foundation this project will continue to run in 2020 (and hopefully beyond) with a full programme of 12 dates in for 2020.

The project continues to take referrals from Mind in Somerset with over 30 people currently registered with the project. There are 4 Community engagement volunteers that support the project to run and one project lead - AONB ranger Andy Stevenson. Tasks include dry stone walling, hedge-laying, coppicing, gauze clearance and burning.



3.8 Somerset Partnership Community Mental Health Team 2016-2019 (Quantock Hills)

An Occupational Therapist based in Taunton approached the project within a few months of it starting back in 2016. She had studied the impact nature connections can have on mental health and recovery and was keen to pilot some work with people she and her colleagues were supporting via the community mental health service. Before we started any direct work with individuals/groups we worked on ensuring the paper work was in place (including risk assessments, transport plans, monitoring and evaluation plans). A 6 week trial took place at Fyne Court with the National Trust as our partners. The group focused on supporting with practical tasks – such as painting, weeding and planting. Taking on board feedback we then moved to a private farm on the Quantock Hills called Huntstile. Here, those taking part helped to maintain the organic gardens, helped with the animals and more general support around the farm. The project ran in 10-week blocks and had between 5-8 people attending at any one time. Some people continued beyond the 10-week block while others moved on to other volunteering opportunities or groups – including the working well group (6.3)

3.9 Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS) 2017-2019 (Quantock Hills)

As a direct result of our successful work with Somerset Partnership CMT the Children's Team were keen to set up a similar project. We worked with two senior Occupational Therapists who were very keen to support young people they were

working with to better connect with natural environments. Originally, we closely supported visits – linking the staff up with different sites and activities on the Quantock Hills. As staff got more confident with running sessions for young people on the hills – they began to visit independently and more frequently too. These visits continue to happen, and staff see this as a key part of the support they offer young people.

3.10 Young Carers 2019 (All three AONBs)

The Somerset County Council Public Health Team funded a specific piece of work with Somerset Young Carers. This piece of work took place during the last 6 months of the project as was added to the coordinators work programme in May 2019. The Project Coordinator worked with Mendip, South Somerset, Taunton and Bridgwater groups.

- Taunton Young Carers were linked up with Otterhead Lakes Forest School on the Blackdown Hills
- Bridgwater Young Carers were linked up with Kilve on the Quantock Hills
- Mendip Young Carers were linked up with Mendip AONB
- South Somerset Young Carers were linked up with Wilder Woods and Frogmary Green Farm

These links have been established in a way that they will go beyond the one-off visits that took place between 2019 and 2020.

Problem

There was a long delay to this work beginning due to uncertainty within the Young Carers Team as the work was recommissioned between July and September so youth workers were reluctant to put meetings/sessions in the diary for Autumn 2019 because they weren't sure whether they would maintain the contract. This meant that the summer period (which is obviously the easiest period to run outdoor engagement activities in for young people) was missed and that we were attempting to engage new audience to step outside and connect with local natural environments during the colder, wet, winter months.

4. Other work

4.1 National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

During the project the Nature and Wellbeing Coordinator was asked to speak and run workshops at the National Association of AONBs Annual Conference two years running. This provided the project the opportunity to share learning and participant feedback with other AONB teams looking to start similar projects in their area. Since speaking at these conferences – the North Devon AONB have started a project called Nature's Tonic – which the Nature and Wellbeing Project in Somerset has also supported further by offering the newly appointed coordinator opportunities to come and visit projects, speak to volunteers, participant and staff.

4.2 Mapping

During the project's final year time was spent working with partners to collate information to form the basis of a Somerset Nature and Wellbeing Map/list. It is intended that the information will be used by individuals and support staff who may be seeking nature and wellbeing opportunities across the county – having an online 'hub'

will hopefully help to ensure this projects legacy in some way. The list of key providers will be hosted on Somerset Wildlife Trusts Website and one of the project's final tasks will be to work with their Communications and Marketing Team to get the map up and functioning. It will then need to be promoted by health and nature-based partners. There are currently over 30 organisations registered to feature on the map.

4.3 Somerset Nature and Wellbeing Network

Another key aspect of work that took place in the projects final year was establishing the Somerset Nature and Wellbeing Network. Made up of nature-based delivery teams/individuals as well as some working in the health sector in Somerset – the network plans to meet 4 times a year (2 gatherings have already taken place in 2019) and have agreed their purpose and initial actions. See **Appendix A** for the full network description.

5. Lessons Learnt

5.1 Transport

Problem

Because the project was managed by the AONB's a key element of the work was to support people to experience and connect with the bio-diverse and top-quality landscapes the AONB's have to offer, away from urban spaces. Simply getting people to these spaces was always going to be a barrier and from day one was identified as such. The annual transport budget for the project was quite low and many of the groups and individuals that the project was tasked with engaging didn't have access to transport. Furthermore, public transport doesn't tend to work well for most AONB sites and therefore has very rarely been used to transport groups and individuals during the project

What we did

We helped groups to write small grant bids that were used to pay for transport. This worked well in the short term (1-2 years) but became trickier when groups want to continue with work beyond this point.

As soon as people become volunteers and start mixing/socialising with other volunteers, people start to offer each other lifts which worked well as a longer-term solution but is still not ideal, as they can rely on volunteers who may choose to move on to other things and any time.

We worked closely with the Transporting Somerset Team to ensure that low cost transport options were available to groups we support, to engage in nature and wellbeing opportunities.

We provided groups with free activities and opportunities so that the only cost to them was transport, making this a more affordable option. This worked well for groups like the Young Carers, who are able to access some funding for transport.

5.2 Geography

Problem

The project coordinator was tasked with working across the three AONBs within Somerset. This large geography proved to be difficult to cover with the 2-4 days a week that was funded across the 4-year project.

What we did

Inevitably, the host AONB, the Quantock Hills, where the Project Coordinator was based, were more involved in directing and supporting the project. They provided additional staff time and project support (for example line management, 2 rangers assisting with project delivery and more comms and marketing time) which led to this AONB getting more out of the project in terms of numbers of groups and activities. Sadly, this did mean that the other two AONB got less out of the project – particularly Mendip because of the significant distance from the coordinators base.

Because of the large project geography, during the first year, we realised that in order to have the best impact in terms of health and wellbeing outcomes for participants – we would need to reduce the project focus in terms of audiences/groups. In years 2-4 we started to focus much of our attention on Mental Health and Wellbeing outcomes/support more specifically with less of a focus on physical activity (although most sessions/activities that are run as part of this work inevitably involve physical activity anyway).

5.3 Long Term Focus

Problem

The project was originally funded for two years. Because of its short-term nature, many of the objectives related to putting on one off events for groups and schools. In terms of 'impact' this just didn't work for many of the groups we were tasked with supporting. Furthermore, the originally funded two year project didn't allow for much time to do the ground work that was needed to ensure that nature based partners felt equipped to better assist groups who may have additional support needs or, to help group leaders bringing groups to the hills, to develop the confidence and skills needed, to encourage and engage with individuals in natural environments away from urban centres.

What we did

After discussing this with key partners and funders during the early stages of the project, it was felt that in order to impact positively on people's health and wellbeing, we would need to first build up trust with groups and individuals by visiting projects within towns/villages surrounding the AONB's. So, we spent time visiting projects and getting to know what group leaders and those attending groups needed before supporting staff to bring groups and individuals to the AONBs.

We also spent time developing better links between the nature and health and social care sectors. This included putting on training sessions for staff in both sectors as well as running talks and attending meetings where information, advice and alike was offered to teams wanting to get involved.

5.4 Focus on referral process/links with health care providers

Problem

Improving links between nature and health care providers was always something this project had intended to do but because there wasn't a specific objective regarding

referral processes or even green prescribing – it made it difficult for this to be a key focus, with such limited time over the wide project geography.

What we did

During the first year – the project coordinator spent time attending Clinical Commissioning Group meetings across the county, talking about the Public Health funded projects and the links with the AONBs in Somerset as well as other nature-based providers. This was well received and some relationships with health care providers were developed – for example the Community Mental Health Team in Taunton.

In the final year of the project we set up a Nature and Wellbeing Network – running two meet up days and communicating with over 60 providers – this group are keen on looking into the referral process in Somerset and the links between health and social care providers and nature-based delivery teams. This will hopefully be something that continues to develop as a legacy to the project.

The Blackdown Hills AONB team have recently moved offices and are now based at the Healthy Living Centre in Hemyock

5.5 Evaluation

Problem

Unlike other Nature and Wellbeing projects funded by Public Health locally (Moor to Enjoy with Exmoor National Park) there wasn't a specific budget for evaluation or a dedicated team to organise and manage this aspect of the project from the outset. This was recognised as a potential issue by funders and managers early on and it was agreed that the Project Coordinator would need to do what they could to manage this potential issue.

As the project developed, we also found it difficult to monitor different groups in a measurable/comparable way, as participants were so varied in age and demographics.

What we did

At the end of the project we joined forces with our colleagues and long-term project partners at Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) and agreed to work on an evaluation together as we had been working with similar groups in a similar way, just at different locations (us more rural and SWT more urban). This worked well as we were able to use data collected for project evaluation and for future bids to build upon what had been achieved during the Nature and Wellbeing Work that had taken place between 2016 and 2020.

Throughout the project we worked with health and nature-based partners to monitor the successes and learning points of different projects that were established as a result of the work we were doing. We ensured that we adapted projects locations and partnerships when things weren't working quite right.

5.6 Questionnaire Design and Final Data Collection

Problem

Because we worked with a project partner (Somerset Wildlife Trust) and a consultant for a future bid, to collect final questionnaires the way it was worded and structured wasn't necessarily how we would have done if working alone. The questions asked

created a bias towards positive responses. While a client might express disagreement with a question about positive outcomes, there was no prompt to give them an opportunity to say that the experience had had a negative effect. This seems unlikely but, for instance, someone with anxiety might have been made more anxious by having to worry about being asked to work in a social setting with others. Any future survey should allow for negative responses as well as positive and neutral ones, not least because there may be some individuals for whom this isn't the right form of intervention.

The collected feedback is from only a sample of the 180 participants/partners, and so by its nature may be subject to sampling bias. It is in any case too small to undertake statistical analysis. A more rigorous quantitative assessment of outcomes might be possible if built into a future project from the start but only at a significant additional cost. An external consultant would probably need to be commissioned to do this work. Given the vulnerable nature of the participants, care would need to be taken that the assessment did not itself generate negative outcomes. Such an in-depth evaluation is probably not justified unless the resulting data were to be used as part of a much wider study.

What we did/Would like to do

The questionnaire did allow participants to note if there had been 'no change'. This has been a key learning point for future projects. It would also be useful to follow up, perhaps in spring 2020 (i.e. a year or so after this survey was undertaken) to see if the organisations who felt empowered by engagement with the project do indeed go on to deliver more nature-based activities independently, and if those who were already doing so before the project have expanded their scope or found new sites to work on compared to what they were accessing before.

Kristen Lambert
Nature & Wellbeing Officer

January 2020



RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The JAC notes the report

QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (JAC)

Constitution & Terms of Reference ~~January 2020~~ November 2011

1.0 Constitution

1.1 The Committee is set up as a Joint Advisory Committee under Section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to advise the constituent local authorities. The JAC does not have executive powers over the funding partners rather it acts in an advisory and consultative capacity to the funding partners.

1.2 The term the 'constituent local authorities' applies to the ~~four~~three principal local authorities whose areas wholly or partly comprise the Quantock Hills AONB (i.e. Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council, and Somerset West and Taunton Council~~Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council~~). These local authorities, plus Defra, are also the 'funding partners'.

1.3 Committee

1.3.1 The Committee shall be constituted as follows:-

Principal Local Authorities:

Somerset County Council:	2 representatives
Sedgemoor District Council:	2 representatives
<u>Somerset West and Taunton Council:</u>	<u>2 representatives</u>
Taunton Deane Borough Council:	2 representatives
West Somerset District Council:	2 representatives

Other voting members (see appendix 1):

Parish Reps (see appendix 2)	4 representatives
Natural England	1 representatives
Forestry <u>England</u>	1 representative
Quantock Commoners	1 representative
Friends of Quantock	1 representative
Country Land and Business Association	1 representative
Somerset Local Access Forum	1 representative
The National Trust	1 representative
Defra	1 representative

1.3.2. The Chairmanship and Vice-Chairmanship shall rest with the County and District Councils elected annually

1.3.3 The Committee shall meet 4 times a year. Special meetings may be called as and when required.

1.4 Meetings

1.4.1 Meetings shall be subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and shall be open to the press and public, where the public will be able to present questions to the Committee.

1.4.2 A quorum for a JAC meeting will comprise a minimum of six voting members, of which a minimum of ~~four~~two will be representatives of funding partners.

1.5. Decisions of the Committee shall be reached by consensus where possible. Where a formal vote is necessary, voting shall be restricted to the voting members. When it is considered by any funding partner (the Principal Local Authorities and Defra) that the decision would have financial implications for that or all the funding partners, voting would be restricted to the representatives of the Principal Local Authorities and the representative of Defra.

1.6 Funding

1.6.1 The funding arrangements for the AONB Partnership will be set out in a 'Statement of Intent' (Sol) between the ~~five~~four funding partners which sets out a shared vision for the

AONB, provides a framework for the delivery of the duties and obligations of the different parties and, so far as possible, will give the Partnership a secure financial future.

1.6.2 The annual budget will be agreed by the funding partners in accordance with their Sol. Decisions regarding the annual strategic priorities for this budget will be the responsibility of the Quantock Hills JAC. Day to day management of the budget will be the responsibility of the AONB Manager who will follow the financial standing orders of the host authority. The OWG will monitor the budget quarterly and provide guidance/advice to the AONB Manager as required.

1.7 Officers Working Group (OWG) (see Appendix 2: OWG Terms of Reference).

1.7.1 The principal roles and responsibilities of the OWG will be:

- (a) to provide support to the AONB Manager and the JAC;
- (b) to agree with the AONB Manager the form and content of the agenda for JAC meetings and the process through which the decisions will be implemented.

1.7.2 The membership of the OWG will comprise: one officer from each of the ~~four~~three constituent principal local authorities; one officer from Defra, the Chair of Friends of Quantock, a representative of Forestry England, the Chair of the JAC, the Vice Chair of the JAC and the AONB Manager.

1.7.3 The OWG will elect a Chair from amongst its members (neither the Chair or Vice-Chair of the JAC nor the AONB ~~m~~Manager are eligible for this post). The Chair will be elected on an annual basis.

1.7.4 The OWG will meet at least 4 times a year.

1.7.5 Should a vote be required, each member present will have one vote, with the Chair having a second or casting vote if required.

2.0 JAC Terms of Reference

2.1 **These Terms of Reference will operate alongside the time periods of the Statement of Intent (Sol), signed by the funding partners, and will be subject to review by the JAC at the same time the Sol is reviewed. Subject to the agreement of all funding partners and a majority of the JAC, these Terms of Reference may be reviewed at any time.**

2.2. The JAC shall:-

2.2.1 act as a forum for the discussion and investigation of issues affecting the Quantock Hills AONB and adjacent areas; and to promote action by the constituent Local Authorities and relevant bodies to further the interests and purposes of the AONB and to recommend action to its constituent organisations;

2.2.2 enable the relevant local authorities, 'acting jointly', to fulfil their duties under Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Quantock Hills AONB through the production of a Management Plan. In addition, the JAC will encompass a wider membership in order to engage an appropriate range of relevant national, regional and local interests in the management of the area; ~~through the implementation of approved and existing Local Plan policies;~~

2.2.3 oversee the implementation of the AONB Management Plan and associated Service and Action Plans;

2.2.4 guide the operation of the Quantock Hills AONB Service (line-management of the AONB Manager to be undertaken by Somerset County Council);

2.2.5 make and delegate observations on development control matters referred to the Committee for its views by the relevant Local Planning Authorities.

2.2.6 establish working groups on an ad hoc basis; to provide specialist advice and guidance on issues relating to any matter where the Committee decides that it would be expedient. Working Groups will normally be established on a 'Task and Finish' basis with specific and time-limited role. Terms of Reference will be prepared for each Working Groups, to include details of: its purpose and goals; its membership; the frequency of meetings; Each Working Group will elect a Chair from amongst its current membership.

2.2.7 Whilst each member of the Partnership Committee represents an organisation or stakeholder group, such interests should be considered in context with the Committee's collective goal of conserving an enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB. The principal role of individual Partnership Committee members is to bring their knowledge, skills, experience and expertise to this process and to assist the Partnership in the delivery of the Management Plan.

3.0 Accountability

Nothing in this Agreement or the performance or observation of any of its objectives conflicts with or may result in any breach of any constitution, standing orders, law or enactment or any deed, agreement or other instrument, obligation or duty to which that Partner is bound.

Appendix 1: Parish Council Election Process

With regard to the representation of Parish Councils, it is agreed that the Quantock Hills JAC has four Parish Councils members. Parishes that lie within or abut the Quantock Hills AONB Boundary (see table 1) will be eligible to put forward a member for election.

- (a) Sedgemoor District Council (7 parishes)
- (b) ~~Somerset West and Taunton Deane Borough Council~~ (614 parishes)
- (c) ~~West Somerset Council~~ (8 parishes)

The eligible parishes within each of these three local authority areas are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Parish and Town Councils whose boundaries that lie wholly or partially within the boundaries of the Quantock Hills AONB		
Sedgemoor District Council	Somerset West and Taunton Deane Borough Council West Somerset Council	
Broomfield	Bishops Lydeard & Cothelstone	Bicknoller
Enmore	Combe Florey	Crowcombe
Goathurst	Kingston St Mary	East Quantoxhead
Nether Stowey	Lydeard St Lawrence	Holford
North Petherton	West Bagborough	Kilve
Over Stowey	West Monkton	Sampford Brett
Spaxton		Stringston
		West Quantoxhead

The elections will be administered by Somerset Associations of Local Councils.

Each candidate will be required to currently hold a position as a parish councillor on one of the parish councils within their local authority area and should not be intending to stand down at the next parish council elections.

Candidates should preferably not be an elected member of a principal local authority: it is hoped that this will ensure that those elected to the Quantock Hills JAC will be better able to focus on issues at the parish council level and give the necessary time and commitment to the work of the JAC Committee.

Each of the four parish councillors elected to the Quantock Hills JAC would hold the post for a ~~five~~four year term ~~from the date of the Parish Council elections. (i.e. through the 2011 parish council elections and on until the parish council elections in May 2015). Elections for the next four year term on the Partnership Committee (i.e. 2015 – 2019) would be held after the parish council elections in May 2015.~~

Role of Parish Council Members on the JAC Committee.

The role of parish council members of the Committee will be as follows: 'A parish member will be regarded as broadly representative of parish interests but is not a delegate, so cannot be mandated by the parish councils concerned. The involvement of parish members is to ensure that the Quantock Hills JAC takes full account of the needs of their local communities and to improve the links between the JAC and local residents. Parish members should not just be spokespeople for the local issues, but ambassadors for wider concerns. Parish members are appointed to reflect 'truly local concerns' but, in that, to represent the wider AONB view, not just that of their own parish.'

Appendix 2: OWG Terms of Reference

OFFICERS WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP (Core Funding Partnership), TERMS OF REFERENCE, STRUCTURE AND OPERATION

Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Officers Working Group – Terms of Reference

Membership

1. Somerset County Council – ~~Senior Environmental Manager~~
2. ~~Somerset~~ West ~~and Taunton Somerset~~ Council – ~~Economy & Climate Change Officer~~
3. Sedgemoor District Council – Regeneration and Landscape Officer
~~Taunton Deane Borough Council – Heritage and Landscape Manager~~
4. Forestry ~~England Commission~~ – ~~Quantock Forest Officer~~
5. Joint Advisory Committee – Chairman
6. Joint Advisory Committee – Vice-Chairman
7. Quantock Hills AONB Service – Manager*
8. Defra – ~~officer as appropriate~~

* Other team members as appropriate

Meeting Notes: Quantock Hills AONB Service

Purpose

To provide a liaison, support and monitoring body of Core Funding Partners in respect of management and financial matters for the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and to support partner organisations in fulfilling the statutory requirements set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Responsibilities

- To advise on and keep under review the management, liaison and staff structure for the Quantock Hills AONB Service.
- To make recommendations to the AONB Joint Advisory Committee (**JAC**) on its structure and membership and advise on methods of engaging members and the wider AONB partnership including Quantock communities, to ensure their active involvement in AONB work.
- To initiate and oversee appointment of the AONB Service Manager.
- To advise on the 5-yearly review of the AONB Management Plan.
- To maintain focus on the delivery of the Management Plan by the AONB Team and JAC.
- To ensure that the work of the AONB Partnership is appropriately integrated with the functions and policies of its partners.
- To monitor and ensure that all resources available for AONB management are used to their best advantage.
- To actively promote and support the aims and objectives of the AONB with partner organisations.
- To support JAC members at their quarterly meetings and propose JAC agenda items.

Frequency of meetings

The Officers Working Group should meet no less than four times a year and its meetings should be timed so that they link with the meetings of the JAC.

Location of meetings

The venue for the meetings of the Officers Working Group is the AONB Service HQ at Fyne Court, Broomfield.

Chairing the Group

The OWG will elect a Chair from amongst its members (neither the Chair or Vice-Chair of the JAC nor the AONB manager are eligible for this post). The Chair will be elected on an annual basis.

Voting

Should a vote be required, each member present will have one vote, with the Chair having a second or casting vote if required.

Secretariat

The Secretariat for the Steering Group will be provided by the AONB Service.

Quantock Hills AONB Partnership

Draft Statement of Intent 1/4/2020 – 31/3/2024 31/3/2015-1/4/2019 – One Year Extension for the period April 1st 2019 – March 31st 2020

~~This document extends the agreed Quantock AONB Core Funding Partners Sol 31/3/15-1/4/2019 by one year to allow the transfer of power from Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council to the new Somerset West and Taunton Council to become established prior to re-negotiating this Sol for the period starting 1st April 2020. The statements agreed by TDBC and WSC in this Sol will be deemed in good faith to apply to SW&T Council for the extended year.~~

As local authorities covering parts of the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty we; Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council~~Taunton Deane Borough Council, West Somerset Council~~ and the Forestry Commission are committed to the purpose and functions of the AONB Partnership as set out in Schedule 1 – Quantock Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

To deliver duties and obligations arising from Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 including the operation and management of an AONB Partnership (“the Partnership”), a Staff Unit (as defined in Schedule 2) to act on behalf of the Partnership in the publishing, monitoring and review of the Management Plan. We commit together with the other partners to provide to the best of our abilities the following contributions which include a 2% annual increase for inflation (contributions are indicative and may not be confirmed until the preceding January of the financial year):

(years 2016/17—2018/19 are indicative and cannot be confirmed until the preceding January of the financial year).

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>FY 2020/21</u>	<u>FY 2021/22</u>	<u>FY 2022/23</u>	<u>FY 2023/24</u>
<u>SCC</u>	<u>£23,000</u>	<u>£23,460</u>	<u>£23,929</u>	<u>£24,407</u>
<u>SDC</u>	<u>£11,500</u>	<u>£11,730</u>	<u>£11,964</u>	<u>£12,204</u>
<u>SWT</u>	<u>£11,500</u>	<u>£11,730</u>	<u>£11,964</u>	<u>£12,204</u>
<u>FC</u>	<u>£20,754</u>	<u>£21,788</u>	<u>£22,376</u>	
<u>Defra</u>	<u>£?</u>			

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>FY 2015/16</u>	<u>FY 2016/17</u>	<u>FY 2017/18</u>	<u>FY 2018/19</u>
SCC	£21,500	£TBC	£TBC	£TBC
SDC	£11,500	£11,550	£11,550	£11,500
TDBC	£10,000	£10,000	£8,000	£8,000
WSG	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
FC	£17,868	£18,386	£19,000	£19,000
Defra	£142,505	£131,877	£121,249	£110,621

Contributions will be paid to the Host Authority by June 30th in each year. The host authority is Somerset County Council and thereby responsible for administration of the Partnership's finances and employment of AONB staff.

In case of redundancy

Whilst it is envisaged that Defra and Local Authority partners contributions will be sufficient to maintain the AONB staff unit and core functions, in the event of a redundancy situation the following will apply :

- Any redundancy payments legally due to AONB Core Staff under Part XI of the Employment Rights Act 1996 or other relevant legislation on termination of employment will be part covered by an existing specific/ring fenced Partnership budget (Earmarked Reserves) that has been allocated to cover 50% of such costs. If this is insufficient the deficit will be met through in-year partnership

~~budget met by an existing specific / ring fenced Partnership budget (Earmarked Reserves) that has been allocated to cover 100% of such costs.~~

- The ~~is reserve~~budget will be maintained at a level to cover ~~50%+100%~~ of AONB Unit costs, excluding 50% redundancy cost of the Partnership Ranger (detailed in the Forestry Commission/Quantock Hills AONB Memorandum of Understanding ~~2014 – 2017~~), ~~currently £26,050 for FY 2015/16~~, to cover compulsory redundancy costs of the current team. This figure will be reviewed annually and the budget amended accordingly, using additional funds if required, from partner (excluding Forestry Commission) contributions.
- Any redundancy payments legally due to the Partnership Ranger postholder under Part XI of the Employment Rights Act 1996 or other relevant legislation on termination of employment will be met as outlined in the Forestry Commission / Quantock Hills AONB Memorandum of Understanding ~~2014 – 2017~~.

Reduction in contributions

Any anticipated intention to reduce funding, from the contributions indicated on page 1, should be given to the AONB and host authority no less than ~~nt~~ 6 months before the end of the financial year (31st March).

Signed:

Name:

For and on behalf of

Schedule 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The JAC shall:-

(a) act as a forum for the discussion and investigation of issues affecting the Quantock Hills AONB and to promote action by the constituent Local Authorities and relevant bodies to further the interests and purposes of the AONB and to recommend action to its constituent organisations;

(b) co-ordinate the decisions of the local authorities in the exercise of their powers in the AONB, ~~through the implementation of approved and existing Local Plan policies;~~

(c) oversee the implementation of the AONB Management ~~Plan~~Strategy and associated ~~Service and Action~~Delivery Plans;

(d) guide the operation of the Quantock Hills AONB Service (day to day management of the Service to be undertaken by Somerset County Council);

(e) make and delegate observations on development control matters referred to the Committee for its views by the relevant Local Planning Authorities.

SCHEDULE 2

STAFF UNIT CORE FUNCTIONS

1. MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

2. ADVISORY / ADVOCACY

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

3. MONITORING

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

Farming for the Nation

Quantock Hills Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMs) Tests & Trials

Fyne Court, Music Hall, Broomfield, Bridgwater, TA5 2EQ

Tuesday 11th February 2020, 11am - 2pm

DEFRA is currently designing a new Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs) which will replace the current rural grant system including the Basic Payment Scheme and Countryside Stewardship Scheme. As part of the development of ELMs, the Quantock Hills AONB is running a Test and Trial to inform and support DEFRA in co-designing ELMs with landowners in the Quantock area.

Key aspects of ELMs will be working towards national goals outlined in the 25-year environmental plan as well as local targets to preserve and enhance the character and natural beauty of the Quantock Hills. This will be achieved through the development of whole holding land management plans.

During this introductory event we will cover;

- Introduction to ELMs
- Farming for the Nation - Test and Trial
- Identifying and addressing local priorities
- Co-design of Land Management Plan
- Measuring success
- Feedback session

Following the event, we will be looking to recruit landowners to help co-develop the different aspects of the scheme and lead the development of the ELMs to address local priorities in the Quantock Hills area. Financial incentives are available for participants of the Test and Trial.

Booking is essential for this free event. To book call 01823 660684, email info@fwagsw.org.uk or you can book via the FWAG SW website by clicking on the 'Events and Workshop' dropdown under the 'What's on' tab (click on the event page and follow the booking instructions).
Please advise of dietary requirements upon booking.

