

# From the Chairman

This year has been marked by the ebb and flow of significant losses and gains. I must start by noting the sad death of our Vice Chairman, Clr Doug Davis. Doug never started in vocalising what needed to be said and with very good humour. He was always steadfast in his support and became a good friend. We will all miss him. We also lost funding after the start of our financial year. Whilst some projects have been scheduled for later in the Management Plan period, most of our targets were met and the Sustainable Development Fund supported 12 projects for a range of community partners. These provided opportunities to manage the area, improve it and involve our young people in sustaining those gains.

Gains have far outweighed our losses. Too many of you have been involved in the delivery of our core work to mention. Our thanks are very much due. Around 100 people committed themselves to help out on the 2010-11 visitor survey and are providing highly valuable data to help manage the place to the best of our ability. You are the best members of our team.

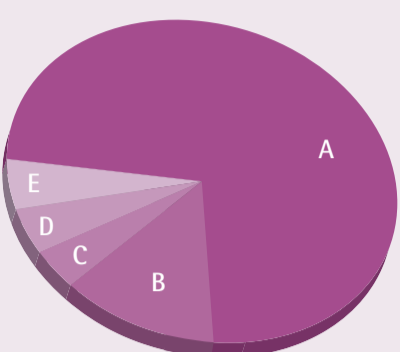
The Membership Scheme was also launched, bringing our first corporate member, Veolia Environmental Services. Its staff volunteer on the ground for 10 days across the year. Aidan Burley, MP for Cannock Chase, signed up as our first individual member and did voluntary survey work for us. The Scheme is growing, so why not join our happy band too?

Whilst we have not lost our working links to Natural England, we have lost them as principal funding partner. In the new financial year we will gain new funding relationships with Defra, as part of the national protected landscapes family alongside National Parks. The government has placed confidence in the model of AONB Partnerships and we do not intend to let anyone down locally. We will deliver against those expectations.

Regrettably, I will not be continuing as Chairman and my best wishes go to my successor Clr Frances Beatty MBE who inherits a healthy and thriving Partnership and a sound delivery team, who although small seem to be everywhere, doing everything, and have an air of invincibility about them. I will however still be out there with the team, proudly wearing my AONB Volunteer badge on the occasions that I am summoned to do so.

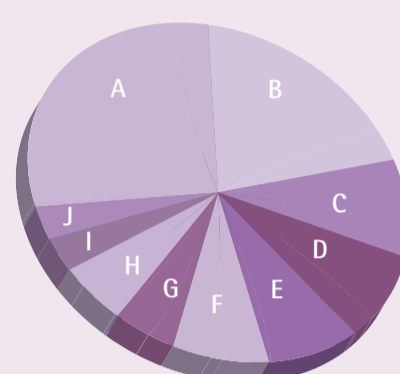
## Finances 2010/11 for Cannock Chase AONB Core and Project Costs

### AONB Core



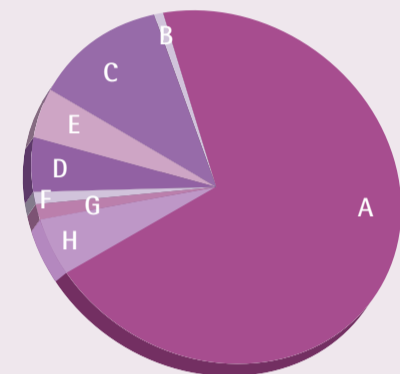
- A) Staff Salaries and Associated costs - £116,670
- B) Accommodation / Office Equipment - £11,414
- C) Partnership budget for PR events - £2,733
- D) Transport - £4,756
- E) Partnership running costs - in kind £6,600

### Core Action Projects



- A) Planning Consultant Project - £6,435
- B) Monitoring Projects - £5,170
- C) Dog Projects - £3,942
- D) AONB Membership Project - £3,729
- E) Interpretation Strategy - £3,378
- F) AONB Newsletters - £2,479
- G) Annual Conference - £1,240
- H) Partner Awareness Raising Events - £871
- I) Annual Report - £482
- J) AONB Websites - £160

### AONB Funding



- A) Natural England - £126,800
- B) Transfer from Reserve - £921
- C) Staffordshire County Council - £21,212
- D) Stafford Borough Council - £8,368
- E) Other Income - £10,662
- F) South Staffordshire District Council - £2,092
- G) Lichfield District Council - £2,092
- H) Cannock Chase District Council - £8,368
- I) Transfer to Reserve - £10,460 (not shown)

### Management & Governance

#### Members

- Cannock Chase Council - Clr Tony Williams – Chairman
- Stafford Borough Council - Clr Doug Davis – Vice Chairman
- Lichfield District Council - Clr Val Richards
- South Staffordshire Council - Clr Dave Billson
- Staffordshire County Council - Clr Mike Maryon

#### Advisors

- Cannock Chase AONB Officer - Ruth Hytch
- Natural England - Sally Powell
- Forestry Commission - Ian Hickman
- Cannock Chase AONB Advisory Partnership Chairman - Clr Pat Ansell
- Staffordshire County Council, Honorary Secretary - Jean Evans
- Staffordshire County Council, Honorary Treasurer - Juliet Hands

#### Officers

- Cannock Chase Council - Antony Lancaster
- Lichfield District Council - John Smith
- South Staffordshire Council - Hayden Baugh-Jones
- Stafford Borough Council - Naomi Perry
- Staffordshire County Council - Andy Goode
- Cannock Chase AONB Unit, Clerk to the Committee - Anne Walker

#### Advisory Partnership

- Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association - Clr Pat Ansell – Chairman
- Forestry Commission - Ian Hickman – Vice Chairman
- British Horse Society - Doug Smith
- CEMEX UK Operations Ltd - Shaun Denny
- Country Land & Business Association - Barbara Golder
- Forestry Commission - John Winterbourne
- Friends of Cannock Chase - Trevor Warburton/June Jukes MBE
- Hanson Aggregates David Southgate
- National Farmers' Union - Mary Cope
- Natural England - Sally Powell and Eleanor Pickard
- Ramblers Association - David Cashmore
- Staffordshire Wildlife Trust - Guy Corbett-Marshall
- Walton Chasers Orienteering Club - Jane Christopher/Ian Jones
- West Midland Bird Club - Frank Gribble MBE
- Cycling Representative: Swinerton Cycles Forest Centre Ltd - Mark Swinerton
- Dog Owing Community Representative - Bernard Perry
- Local Business Representative: Silvertrees Holiday Park - Trevor Barber
- Young People's Representatives: CASS Young Carers - Michelle Edwards
- Local Authority Representatives:
  - Cannock Chase Council - Clr Pat Ansell and Karen Ward
  - Lichfield District Council - Clr Gwyneth Boyle and Justine Lloyd
  - South Staffordshire Council - Clr David Heseltine and Hayden Baugh-Jones
  - Stafford Borough Council - Clr John Francis and Naomi Perry
  - Staffordshire County Council - Clr John Bernard and Andy Goode
  - Parish Councils' Representatives - Clr Steve Welch and Clr Bob Lee
  - Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association - Clr Mac Harris and Vivien Evans

#### Officers Working Group

- South Staffordshire Council - Hayden Baugh-Jones – Chairman
- Cannock Chase Council - Antony Lancaster – Vice Chairman
- Lichfield District Council - John Smith
- Stafford Borough Council - Naomi Perry
- Staffordshire County Council - Andy Goode
- Forestry Commission - Ian Hickman
- Natural England - Sally Powell

#### Cannock Chase AONB Unit

- AONB Officer - Ruth Hytch
- Assistant AONB Officer - Emma Beaman
- AONB Office Manager - Anne Walker

# Management and Governance

## What is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)?

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland there is a huge variety of scenery and landscapes, from dramatic coasts to remote mountains. Those landscapes considered most valuable are designated as National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). These landscapes are protected by law and managed to maintain their special character for now and the future.

Natural England is responsible for English AONBs. The primary purpose of designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty (which includes wildlife and cultural heritage as well as scenery). In pursuing this, agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and social and economic needs of local communities are taken into account. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 highlighted the importance of AONBs, raising their status and confirming their importance in Government policy.

### Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

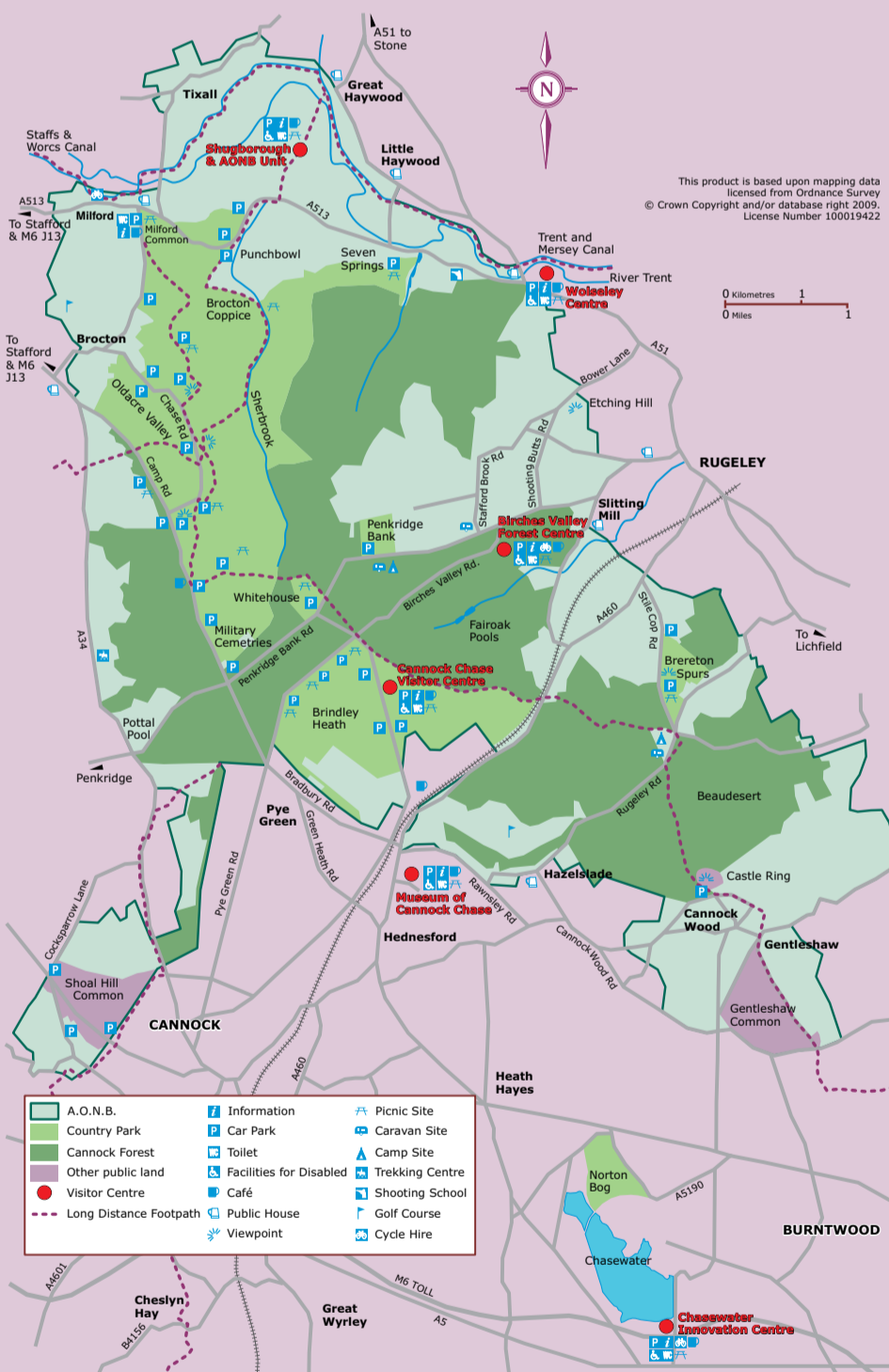
Cannock Chase was designated as an AONB in 1958 because of its beautiful landscape, its wildlife and its history. AONBs are some of our finest countryside and, as part of a family of 46 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland the Chase is important both locally and nationally. At 6800ha, it is the smallest mainland AONB and is much cherished and visited by local people.

1380ha of the AONB's heathland, woodland and valley wetland habitats are protected as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with 1237ha of the SSSI being designated as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC). 1500ha of Cannock Chase AONB form one of England's largest Country Parks. Much of Cannock Chase SSSI overlaps with the Country Park.

With significant areas of lowland heath, extensive areas of forestry (around 40% of the AONB is forest and woodland, 2500ha of this being Forestry Commission holdings) and also designed parkland, sand and gravel quarrying, mixed agriculture and water abstraction, Cannock Chase AONB consists of a comprehensive mix of land uses.

Currently, around 3900ha (58%) of the AONB has public access and the Cannock Chase AONB Visitor Survey in 2000 estimated there were 1.5 million visits per year with around 70% of these from within a 10 mile radius. (The AONB has 464km of public bridleways, 62km of public footpaths and 267m of byways open to all traffic).

Nearly 12,000 people live within Cannock Chase AONB in 13 parish and town council boundaries. 60% of these people are between 16-59 with 20% being under 16 and the other 20% over 59.

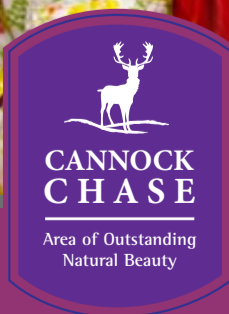


There is considerable economic and recreational pressure on this beautiful landscape and the Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan aims to ensure the right balance is maintained to conserve and enhance the area whilst maintaining it as a living, working environment.



#### Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is supported by:

Defra, Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase Council, Stafford Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, South Staffordshire Council, AONB Parish and Town Councils, British Horse Society, Cemex UK Operations Ltd, Country Land and Business Association, Forestry Commission, Friends of Cannock Chase, Hanson Aggregates, National Farmers Union, Natural England, Bernard Perry, Ramblers, Silvertrees Holiday Park, CASS Young Carers, Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Swinerton Cycles Forest Centre Ltd, Walton Chasers, West Midland Bird Club.



#### Cannock Chase AONB Unit

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Web: [www.cannock-chase.co.uk](http://www.cannock-chase.co.uk) and <http://aonb-blog.co.uk>  
Facebook page : Fredas Footsteps or Cannock Chase AONB  
Follow CannockAONB on Twitter

Images courtesy of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Graham Walker and Steve Welch

## Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Annual Review 2010 - 11







## 2010 Annual AONB Conference Study Tour

Our Annual Conference took a change of format with a tour of the Peak District National Park, on 26th May 2010. The tour provided an opportunity for everyone to visit a similar protected landscape and look at tourism from a different angle.

35 delegates attended and visited a number of venues including Manifold Valley Visitor Centre, Ilam, Hartington and Parsley Hay cycle centre. The presentations in the visitor centre were followed by a stroll to the neighbouring Tea Junction Café. Delegates also listened to presentations from the National Trust and National Park Authority on the management of the Dovedale and Ilam tourism hot spots, and on the rollout of the National Park's cycling project.

All delegates took valuable messages home about how to effectively manage visitor numbers and car parking, whilst managing a protected area. A fun day was had by all.



## We all love the Chase however we enjoy it!



## Volunteering

### Fixed Point Photography Monitoring Report

Monitoring is one of the key aspects of our Management Plan to enable the partnership to assess the landscape condition of the area. The original Management Plan (2004 – 2009) stated under Managing the Landscape that the monitoring objective should record the 'extent, condition and change in characteristic landscape features' and that this should be done through the use of 'a fixed point photography programme'. Consequently, in 2004 the partnership identified 50 fixed point locations within the AONB where photographs would be taken. Initially a professional photographer (Steve Welch) took the photographs and established a methodology.

In 2005, 6 more points were added to the programme and volunteers were trained to conduct the photographic work. Now, over 30 volunteers are involved in the programme taking photographs twice a year (February and October).

Although evidence had been collated, no formal monitoring assessment report had been produced. In November 2010 a consultant was appointed to undertake the Condition Monitoring Study of all 56 fixed point locations covering the period October 2004 to October 2010. The report has now been produced, a copy of which can be viewed at the AONB Office or on our website [www.cannock-chase.co.uk](http://www.cannock-chase.co.uk)

In addition, a display has been produced containing some of the work of the photographers and is currently on tour around the visitors centres in the AONB to allow the public to see the work of the volunteers. Without the volunteers, valuable pieces of monitoring work like this could not be produced.

### Cannock Chase AONB Visitor Survey 2010 – 2011

The 2010 – 2011 AONB Visitor Survey commenced in October 2010. The original survey was conducted in 2000 and this piece of work will provide up to date figures of the volume of visitors coming to the AONB, the distance they have travelled and many other variables.

Over 100 volunteers are responsible for collating the data in 30 different sites throughout the AONB. They monitor 4 time periods a day throughout weekdays and weekends and over five different seasonal periods throughout the year.

In parallel with this a car park survey is being conducted 4 times each season to monitor the number of cars at 105 different car parks and pull-ins, again at different times of the day.

The survey work is due for completion at the end of August 2011 when the results will be analysed by external experts. The final report will be an analysis of the data and management recommendations for the next five years. The report will be available January 2012.



## Continuing support by our local community



## Sustainable Development Fund 2010 – 2011

Between 2010 and 2011 the SDF fund supported 12 projects totalling £48,037.80. The total match funding generated from these projects was £60,8802 (56%).

This year there was a wide variety of different projects which varied from the restoration of Lord Lichfield's Arboretum at Shugborough to allow the public to view the site, to providing 20 young adults with mental health issues the opportunity explore the forests.

### In total:

- 9 sculptures created at Shugborough
- The publication of a mini-beast discovery book and a cycling leaflet
- 24 young adults with autism accessed the local environment
- 3 new walking trails created at Gentleshaw Common
- New attraction to the public has opened
- 420 students involved in an AONB Masterclass
- 40 people got involved in stream monitoring
- New toposcope installed at Shoal Hill Common
- 86 girl guides involved in volunteering on site

Project Title	Project Lead	Project costs	Award
Shugborough Sculpture Trail phase 2	Shugborough Hall	£6,000	£3,000
Open spaces, open places	Short Street Community and Learning Centre	£10,500	£3,500
Retaining the heritage of the AONB	Beaudesert Scout Camp	£23,638	£9,575
Healthy Heaths	Lichfield District Council	£13,650	£5,915
Cycling in the AONB	MIAS	£2,895	£1,895
AONB masterclass	Young Enterprise	£4,000	£2,777
Art on the island – arboretum project	Shugborough Hall	£30,600	£9,999
Streams project	Staffordshire Invertebrate Group	£8,270	£5,025
Urban to rural streams project	Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	£5,070	£3,803
AONB mini beasts discovery book	Staffordshire Arts & Museum Service	£2,592.55	£1,192.55
Toposcope at Shoal Hill Common	South Staffordshire Council	£712.50	£356.25
Fixed point photography project	Steve Welch photography	£1,000	£1,000



## Awareness Days

**Bluebell Walk** – Hosted by Mike Street OBE at Beaudesert, 15 members of the local community enjoyed a walk around this wonderful site.

**Dog Walks** – Phil Armshaw, Countryside Officer from Cannock Chase Council, led two dog walks at Etching Hill and Hazel Slade Nature Reserve. 20 people and 24 dogs attended.

**Litter picks** – 4 undertaken during the year at Shoal Hill Common, Shugborough and at Etching Hill, where Veolia volunteers were joined by members of the local community. The latter has inspired the local community to set up their own Friends group.

**Willow Weaving** – 15 people attended the event hosted by Riverwoods and created baskets, trugs, Staffordshire knots and ended the day with competitive hoopla!

**Farm Walk** – Hosted by Mary Cope at Beaudesert Park Farm, 20 people enjoyed a walk and talk about the farm and the Higher Level Stewardship agreement with Natural England.

**Himalayan balsam removal** – 15 volunteers from Veolia 'enjoyed' a few hours removing this invasive plant from an area at Shugborough.

**Shugborough Familiarisation Visit** – the visit in October to the newly restored apartments was so popular we held another in February. All enjoyed the informative tour.

**Armistice Day** – 20 people and their dogs attended a small ceremony at 2pm on 11th November to commemorate service and support dogs at Freda's Grave.

## Our People are Our Strength