



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 are taken into account.

What is an AONB?

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

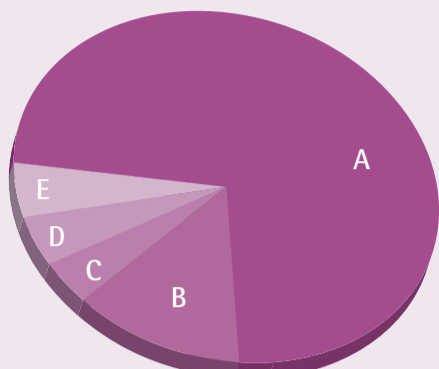
The AONB has significant areas of lowland heath, extensive areas of forestry (around 40%) and also designed parkland, sand and gravel quarrying and mixed agriculture. Around 58% of the AONB has public access. Around 12,000 people live within the AONB, with thousands more living within a 15km radius of the place.

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 sustaining it as a living, working environment.

Cannock Chase AONB

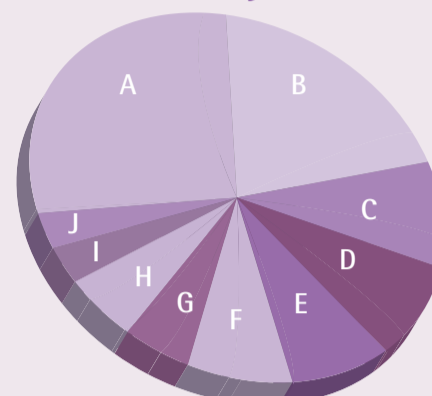
Finances 2010/11 for Cannock Chase AONB Core and Project Costs

AONB Core



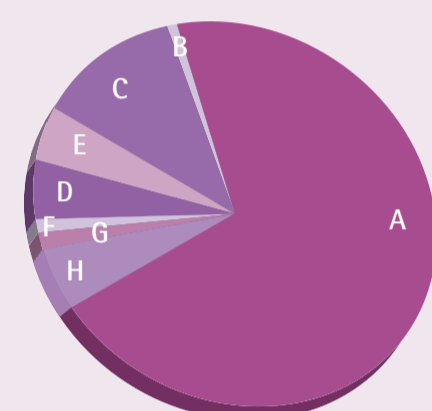
- A) Staff Salaries and Associated costs - £116,670
- B) Accommodation / Office Equipment - £11,414
- C) Partnership budget for PR events - £2,733
- D) Transport - £4,756
- E) Partnership running costs - in kind £6,600

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) Defra - £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

Stafford Borough Council - Cllr Frances Beatty MBE – Chairman
 Lichfield District Council - Cllr Val Richards – Vice Chairman
 Cannock Chase Council - Cllr Janos Toth
 South Staffordshire Council - Cllr Dave Billson
 Staffordshire County Council - Cllr Mike Maryon/Cllr Mark Winnington

Advisors

Cannock Chase AONB Officer - Ruth Hytch
 Natural England - Hazel McDowall
 Forestry Commission - Ian Hickman
 Cannock Chase AONB Advisory Partnership Chairman - Cllr Pat Ansell
 Staffordshire County Council, Honorary Secretary - John Rowe
 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/Noreen Moore
 Cannock Chase AONB Unit, Clerk to the Committee - Anne Walker

Advisory Partnership

Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association - Cllr 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 - Hazel McDowall and Adam Dempsey
 Ramblers Association - Bryan Phillips
 Staffordshire Wildlife Trust - Guy Corbett-Marshall
 Walton Chasers Orienteering Club - Ian Jones
 West Midland Bird Club - Frank Gribble MBE
Cycling Representative: Swinnerton Cycles Forest Centre Ltd - Mark Swinnerton
Local Business Representative: Silvertrees Holiday Park - Trevor Barber
Young People's Representatives: CASS Young Carers - Michelle Edwards
Local Authority Representatives:
 Cannock Chase Council - Cllr Graham Burnett and Karen Ward
 Lichfield District Council - Cllr Gwyneth Boyle and Justine Lloyd
 South Staffordshire Council - Cllr David Heseltine and Hayden Baugh-Jones
 Stafford Borough Council - Cllr John Francis and Naomi Perry
 Staffordshire County Council - Cllr John Bernard and Andy Goode
 Parish Councils' Representatives - Cllr Steve Welch
 Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association - Cllr 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 - Hazel McDowall

Cannock Chase AONB Unit

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

Management and Governance

From the Chairman



The last year has been one of continuing achievement for our AONB team, our volunteers and partners, in the face of lean financial times. Like others across the public sector, business, charities and the community, we have had to adjust to the economic climate without putting at risk our awesome responsibility to conserve this special place.

We have been able to set a balanced budget for the coming year, despite economic constraints. With careful financial planning we remain able to commit to our priority work, including monitoring the condition of the area, supporting local organisations to manage the area and development of resources for our Management Plan. We have also been able to earn additional income for project work that directly supports the AONB.

We have worked particularly hard on forging new partnerships that will reap mutual benefits. We have created closer links with the Forest of Mercia and the Central Rivers Initiative – together forming the Green Heart Partnership. Within this Partnership we responded to the Natural Environment White Paper and supported the Staffordshire Local Nature Partnership in its bid for formal status.

We continue to develop our relationship with local businesses and have begun an active programme of engagement to explore ways in which the AONB can add value to local companies. To that end, as a member of its decision panel, we have supported Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership in the development of its Environmental Quality Mark; and will continue to encourage applicants from the AONB and surrounding areas to sign up to its high standards.

I am delighted that our Cannock Chase supporter membership has continued to grow. We welcome the strong support of our parish councils; including parishes from outside the area, who are joining this growing Membership Scheme, along with local businesses and individuals.

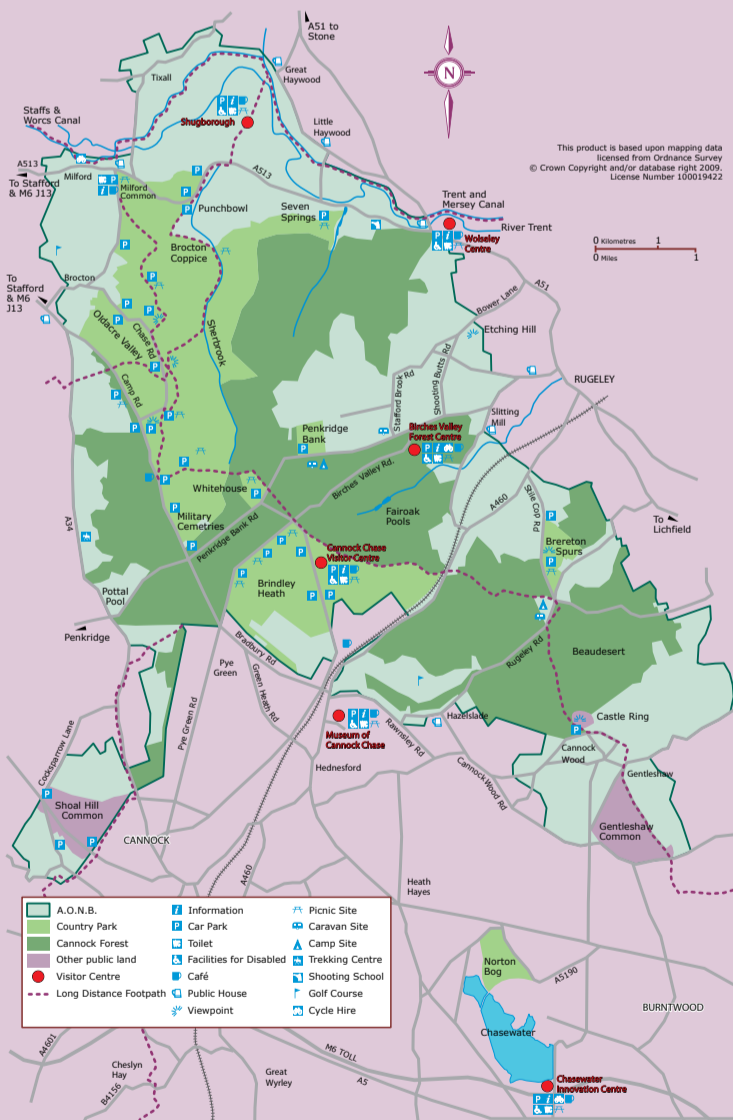
To the people and businesses living in and around Cannock Chase, planning is a key issue. Our involvement ensures that we protect the AONB, ever recognising that it is also a working landscape, maintained by a range of owners, both private and those in the public arena, who are part of the vision and delivery. We have had a busy year looking at planning matters in and around our area and recognise the importance of working hard to explain how our responses are arrived at. We lodged a response on HS2 consultation and to the Independent Panel on Forestry, as well as to emerging Local Plans being prepared by our constituent district councils.

Special thanks are due to the many Chase volunteers who dedicate so much of their time to an amazing range of activities - to conserve habitats, record landscapes, safeguard important species and who make it a fascinating place for visitors of all ages to come to. We particularly congratulate Fred and Glynis Ward who became our first Cannock Chase AONB Volunteers of the Year (2010). Without our volunteers the Chase would be infinitely more difficult to manage as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

I particularly thank Staffordshire County Council for hosting the AONB Unit; Stafford Borough Council for housing us this past year; our Officers Working Group, ably chaired by Hayden Baugh-Jones, which has given sound direction at a time of great change; and also to our Advisory Partnership which gives a most helpful steer to our work; and finally to Ruth Hytch and her team of Emma Beaman-Green and Anne Walker for all their hard work, dedication and achievement.

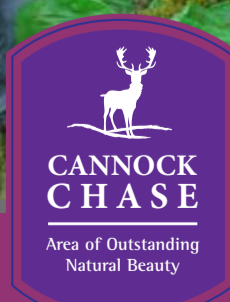
Next year we will be undertaking the important task of reviewing our Management Plan. It will offer an opportunity to build on the foundations of our good work and take forward new plans and projects. I will be taking the lead to ensure that our Partnership is in the right shape to meet the challenges and fulfil our commitment to the Chase to safeguard its landscape, maintain its heritage; conserve its fauna and flora; and that we reconcile those prerogatives with the demands of people.

Cllr Frances Beatty MBE – Chairman of the Joint Committee 2011-12



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, Swinnerton Cycles Forest Centre Ltd, Walton Chasers, West Midland Bird Club.



Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Annual Review 2011-12



Cannock Chase AONB Unit

Stafford Borough Council
 Civic Centre, Riverside,
 Stafford ST16 3AQ

Tel: 01785 619185

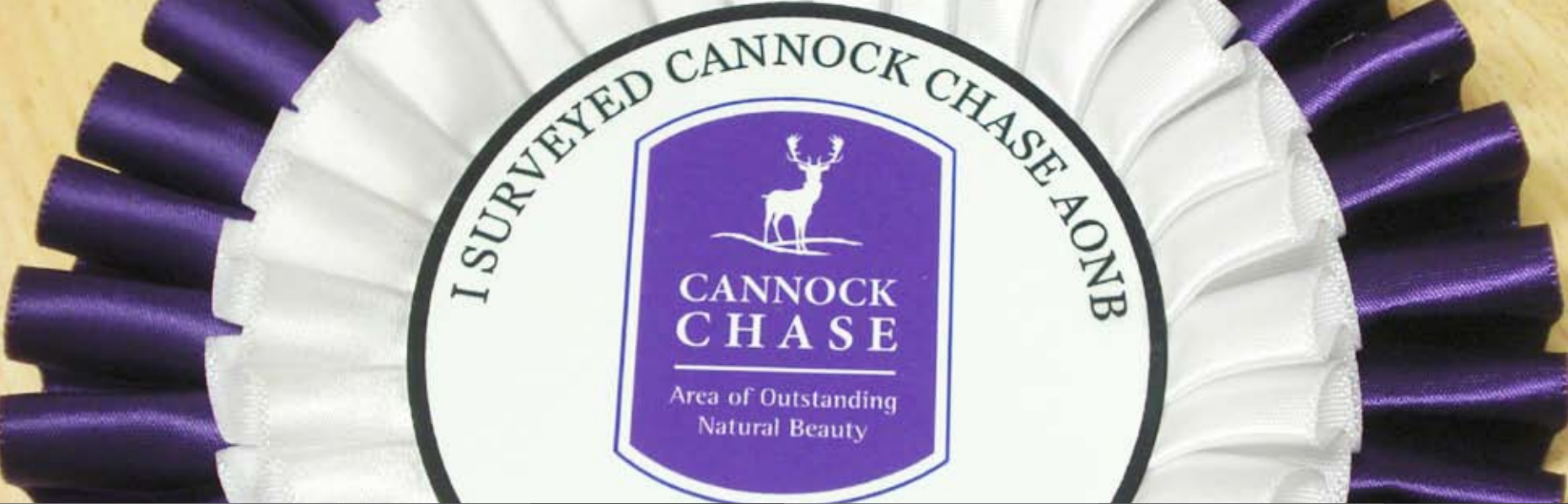
Email: cannockchase@staffordshire.gov.uk

Web: www.cannockchase.co.uk and <http://aonb-blog.co.uk>

Facebook page : Fredas Footsteps or Cannock Chase AONB

Follow CannockAONB on Twitter

Images courtesy of: Graham Orrell,
 Dick Turton, Graham Walker and
 Steve Welch



Visitor survey

- The AONB-wide assessment of visitor numbers was completed by 100 volunteers on 31 August.
- 4,809 interviews were completed at 30 survey points.
- 105 car parks and pull-in points were observed on 19 occasions throughout the year.
- Recreational activities were recorded and information gathered on visitors' favourite sites.
- Data collation by expert independent consultants commenced, including an examination of the practical implications of the results.
- The survey will be used by partners and land managers to examine a range of management needs for the AONB and support the Management Plan review looking towards the 2014-19 Management Plan.



Moving forward on projects



Focus on projects

Walking in Cannock Chase

Members of the Ramblers group from Walsall work within Cannock Chase AONB, supporting its Advisory Partnership. Their involvement has grown to extend to supporting land management works through volunteering events and to helping deliver core Management Plan projects. Walking remains the most popular activity in the AONB and the Ramblers team wanted to focus more on the conservation of the AONB, combined with encouraging people new to the area to walk responsibly and safely. The project they proposed is to develop walk leaflets with a circuit of the AONB, allowing for smaller circuits from it, using only recognised rights of way.

Bryan Phillips and Dick Turton developed the walks and then worked with other AONB volunteers to test the walks and refine the details for information leaflets. The project has also identified some areas where there will be a need to refresh way markers into the future and this is now being addressed.

The walks will be launched in 2012 to coincide with Walsall Ramblers 21st anniversary.



Planning

The Partnership works with local planning authorities to ensure that the AONB is recognised and developed appropriately. During the year we retained an expert adviser who worked on commenting on 30 development applications and 3 emerging Local Plan policies. In addition, the Partnership submitted responses to 2 national consultations, attended a planning appeal hearing and commented on 3 other planning and policy matters.

Continuing support by our local community

Sustainable Development Fund 2011 – 2012

Between 2011 and 2012 the SDF fund supported 14 projects totalling £39,471. The total match funding generated from these projects was £200,764.

In total:

- 5 interpretation boards installed
- A woodland explorer trail created
- 50 – 60 volunteers engaged in photography in the AONB
- Creation of an outdoor classroom on Gentleshaw Common
- 600 young people from local schools learnt about the AONB via the AONB Masterclass
- 88 Young Carers enjoyed the AONB



Project Title	Project Lead	Project costs	Award
Boardwalk Installation	Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	£80,611	£3,500
Cannock Chase AONB Youth Challenge	Young Carers	£2,898	£1,449
Etching Hill Clean up	Friends of Etching Hill	£674	£674
AONB Photography project phase 1	Fixed point photography group	£3,140	£1,485
AONB Photography project phase 2	Fixed point photography group	£3,720	£1,750
Valley Woodland Explorer project	Beaudesert Trust	£13,750	£8,420
Our AONB	Young Enterprise	£10,900	£8,000
Volunteering on Shoal Hill	Shoal Hill Joint Committee	£4,330	£1,080
Volunteering work	Friends of Cannock Chase	£2,380	£283
Tixall Interpretation project	Tixall Parish Council	£3,138	£1,820
Declining Woodland Bird Study	Woodland Bird Group	£22,432	£1,227
Two Saints Way Project	Two Saints Way Group	£88,000	£5,000
Etching Hill Interpretation boards	Friends of Etching Hill	£3,400	£2,910
Wild Learning	Lichfield District Council	£3,772	£1,872

Awareness Events

A total of 250 people took part in events throughout the year focused on developing awareness and practical action in the AONB.

Walks – led by 7 different Partners, focused on bluebell woodland; heathland management; habitat and folklore; cliffs and geology; Shugborough arboretum; management of ancient woodland and the alternative recreation venue of Chasewater.

Action – 3 litter picking sessions focused on venues that local communities had identified as having a strong need for improvement.
2 sessions of work tackled Himalayan balsam removal.

Ragwort removal took place near to bridleways but also examined the need for some habitat for the cinnabar moth to be retained.

Willow weaving focused on the transition from woodland management activities into making new products.

An Armistice Day ceremony was led by Rev Jane Nash and June Jukes MBE. It welcomed 50 people and 40 dogs remembering the work of animals in wartime and honouring the work of current day service dogs at Freda's Grave. We particularly welcomed an ex-serviceman and his support dog, along with Pets as Therapy volunteers and other support dogs.

AONB Partners sign up for the future

On Friday 20 January 2012, members of the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership gathered together to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with Defra.

The agreement seals the financial future of the partnership until 2015, with local authority partners agreeing to match Defra's substantial contribution to the work of the AONB. The agreement sets out how all the parties will work together to make sure the AONB is conserved, enhanced and promoted for the benefit of all.

While it is a statutory duty of all the authorities involved to deliver the objectives of the AONB Management Plan, signing the Memorandum of

Agreement formalises how the partners will pool their funds and expertise to make an on-going impact in preserving and improving the special qualities of Cannock Chase AONB that are key to its survival.

Steve Preston, Policy and Sponsorship Officer for Defra, said: "We are delighted that the local authorities within the AONB area are playing a strong part in managing the AONB and we're very happy to continue to support the partnership over the next four years through the Memorandum of Agreement."



Our People are Our Strength