

**Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Joint Committee**

Monday 14th December 2009, 10:00am

Cannock Chase Council Offices, Beecroft Road, Cannock, WS12 1BG

A G E N D A

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2009**
- 3. Matters Arising**
- 4. Declaration of Interests**
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- 6. Management Plan Delivery Progress**
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- 7. Financial Update**
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- 8. Cannock Chase AONB Annual Conference 23.10.2009**
Report of the Chairman of the Advisory Partnership
- 9. Partners' News**
Item for Members to update all from their own part of the AONB
- 10. Any Planning Items that may require consideration**
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- 11. Calendar of Meetings 2010**
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Part Two

Exclusion of the Public and Press

The Chairman to move:

"That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the local Government Act 1972 (as amended) indicated below"

**Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Joint Committee**

Monday 14th September 2009, 10:00am

Treetops Classroom, Birches Valley Forest Centre, Nr Rugeley WS15 2UQ

M I N U T E S

Name	Representing
Members	
Cllr Dave Billson	South Staffordshire Council
Cllr Doug Davis	Stafford Borough Council
Cllr Mike Maryon	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Val Richards	Lichfield District Council
Cllr Tony Williams	Cannock Chase Council
Officers	
Jackie Biard	Cannock Chase Council
Howard Medicott	South Staffordshire Council
Steve Potter	Staffordshire County Council
John Smith	Lichfield District Council
Geoff Unwin	Stafford Borough Council
Anne Walker	Cannock Chase AONB Unit, Clerk to the Joint Committee
Advisors	
Cllr Pat Ansell	Chairman, Cannock Chase AONB Advisory Partnership
Jean Evans	Staffordshire County Council, acting for the Honorary Secretary
Juliet Hands	Staffordshire County Council, Treasurer to the Joint Committee
Ian Hickman	Forestry Commission
Ruth Hýtch	Cannock Chase AONB Unit
Sally Powell	Natural England
Observer	
Cllr Neil Roberts	Lichfield District Council
Naomi Perry	Stafford Borough Council

The meeting commenced with a presentation to Cllr Neil Roberts who stood down as Chairman and the representative for Lichfield District Council on the Joint Committee. Cllr Williams thanked him for all his hard work during his membership of the Joint Committee and was pleased that he will still have some contact through his role on the National Association of AONBs Board. Cllr Davis and Cllr Ansell also thanked Cllr Roberts. Ruth thanked Neil for his support to the AONB Unit over the years.

Two new members of the Joint Committee were welcomed to their first meeting, Cllr Val Richards representing Lichfield District Council and Cllr Mike Maryon representing Staffordshire County Council. Cllr Billson was also congratulated on his recent election to Staffordshire County Council.

Note by Clerk – Jean Evans as Honorary Secretary, took the Chair for the election of the Chairman.

Appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Resolved – Cllr Tony Williams was nominated as Chairman by Cllr Davis, seconded by Cllr Billson and agreed by all. Cllr Williams was therefore appointed as Chairman of the Cannock Chase Joint Committee up to the annual meeting of the Joint Committee in 2010.

Cllr Williams took the Chair.

Cllr Davis was nominated by Cllr Williams as Vice Chairman, seconded by Cllr Billson and agreed by all. Cllr Davis was therefore appointed as Vice Chairman of the Cannock Chase Joint Committee up to the annual meeting of the Joint Committee in 2010.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Hayden Baugh-Jones (South Staffordshire Council), Andy Goode (Staffordshire County Council) and Antony Lancaster (Cannock Chase Council).

Minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2009 – to be formally accepted

181 It was noted that the minutes and recommendations in the reports had been approved by correspondence since the meeting in July had been postponed due to not being quorate.

Matters Arising

182 On page 8, this should read **Longdon**, not Longford.

Declaration of Interests

183 There were no declarations of interest.

Memorandum of Understanding

Oral report of the Honorary Secretary to the Joint Committee

184 Jean Evans reported progress since the last meeting. A recent meeting with the local authority Heads of Legal Services discussed drafting the text for Cannock Chase's version of the Memorandum of Understanding prior to submission to the Officers Working Group. Mike Bentley is leading on this. Cllr Davis requested looking at the matter of representation from each local authority on the Joint Committee, with particular reference to nominated substitutes to ensure that meetings are quorate. Jean agreed to look at the terms of reference. Cllr Williams asked if the deadline of the end of quarter three could still be achieved and if there were any other issues from Natural England. Sally Powell reported that final details are still in draft, which may include additional clauses, but these should not be too onerous. Jean confirmed that the deadline should be achieved.

Action Plan Progress

Report of the Chairman of the Officers' Working Group

185 A report was circulated prior to the meeting and the following items were highlighted:

- Work by the AONB Unit has included development control and strategic local authority matters. A separate item was presented on proposed future solutions for the SAC.
- Gateway entry signs had been installed at three locations, which along with improved brown and white tourist information signs will foster a sense of place and direct visitors to the visitor centres in and around the AONB.
- Dog Activity Day – held in May at Birches Valley Forest Centre. This is part of a wider project that included a workshop session with land managers who are agreeing a concordat to ensure consistent messages are given about dogs and their owners across the AONB. It is hoped that similar work can be achieved with the cycling community.
- Peace and Tranquillity Study – brief had been circulated and quotes are awaited. This work is scheduled for completion by the end of the year.
- Summer Newsletter had been printed and circulated.
- Forward Planning – Ruth had held meetings with other West Midlands AONB colleagues to discuss financial management among other issues.
- Annual Action Plan – discussed with the Officers Working Group. Key priorities for 2009-10 had been agreed within the grant application to Natural England.
- Applications to Access to Nature and Natural Assets for funding will be progressed by Emma Beaman.
- The community projects contract let to the Community Council of Staffordshire is now complete. Thanks were recorded for the positive work undertaken by Sara Green.
- A post-graduate student who had worked on desktop studies for Natural England was with the AONB Partnership for 3 weeks in July.
- Audit Commission annual return had been prepared, consultation period is now closed and submission is due to be made in September.

- Natural England Regional news – Nick Young will be taking up a post that includes a role overseeing protected landscape issues regionally. He has requested an invitation to the December Joint Committee meeting to meet members and explain his role. Sally Powell will remain as our account manager.
- Paul Esrich, Malvern Hills AONB Officer, was elected to the National Association of AONBs Board at the AGM in July. He has been invited to our Annual Conference in October. As part of the Board Buddy scheme a return visit from colleagues in Lincolnshire Wolds is due to take place in November.
- The press coverage file was available at the meeting.

The Joint Committee accepted the report without additional comments.

Special Area of Conservation - Appropriate Assessment

Oral report of the Chairman of the Officers' Working Group

186 Naomi Perry from Stafford Borough Council presented this item and circulated an update at the meeting (attached for information). The Special Area of Conservation (SAC) overlaps with the AONB boundary. Stafford Borough Council, on behalf of the other local authority partners, have engaged consultants Footprint Ecology to undertake an in combination assessment of the impact that potential housing and development allocations may have on the SAC. They have previously undertaken a similar piece of work in Dorset. The visitor impact survey has caused some concern. The completion of this in combination assessment is a legal requirement. If Local Development Frameworks (LDF) are found to be unsound, a legal challenge through the European courts could be mounted.

It was noted that local authority officers are currently being consulted on the draft documents. It is anticipated that this work should be completed by the end of October.

Comments:

- Ian Hickman noted that there had been little consultation with his team in respect of this draft assessment, however it was suggested that increases in visitor numbers could be accommodated by the Forestry Commission. He had concerns that once this report had been approved it would be 'set in stone'.
- Naomi commented that in Dorset a Joint Committee had been set up which received funding from developer contributions. This funded recreation provision. It was anticipated that the Forestry Commission would be involved with proposals.
- Ruth sought legal advice from the Honorary Secretary regarding funding the proposals, if the proposals can not be delivered, will this contravene European regulations?
- Jean responded that until the proposals are finalised and costed, it would be difficult to answer the above. Technically it would be against the law.

- Cllr Davis outlined the position of Stafford Borough Council's LDF, as reported at previous meetings they had applied for growth status. It is important to have robust mitigation proposals within the LDF to avoid potential legal challenges. Cllr Williams reported similar for Cannock Chase Council.
- There is concern about the increase in commuter traffic across the AONB and the potential impact that this will have. It is important for the in combination assessment to be right as once it is in place it will be there in perpetuity.
- Cllr Roberts observed that alongside LDFs, there is also phase 3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), in which the SAC and environmental issues are part. It is essential that all local authorities submit comments on this.
- Cllr Davis asked if there was a need for the Joint Committee to meet by exception to discuss the in combination assessment further. Ruth replied that the draft document, including an executive summary, will be available to all members following the meeting (either AONB Unit or Naomi to email this). She noted that both the SAC and AONB should benefit from the mitigation measures.
- Cllr Roberts also noted that although housing and employment development are likely to have an impact, mineral extraction is also included in the RSS. A recent meeting of the Staffordshire/Stoke-on-Trent Planning Forum raised concerns about the amount of aggregates extraction apportioned to Staffordshire in Phase 3 of the RSS. The extraction companies active in the AONB enjoy a good relationship with AONB partners. It is acknowledged that minerals can only be extracted where they are. Comments on this issue are expected from individual local authorities and collectively from the Planning Forum.
- Cllr Maryon confirmed that the new administration on Staffordshire County Council had made representation regarding the amount of mineral extraction.

Conferences and Visits

Oral report of the AONB Officer

187 National Association of AONBs Annual Conference - Ruth reported that two members of the AONB Unit and Cllr Roberts attended the National Association of AONBs annual conference in Northern Ireland in July, based at the University of Coleraine (report in the current newsletter). There were presentations from three government ministers and a further nine speakers on the first day. The second day of site visits provided useful support locally for the Northern Ireland AONBs as well as a useful opportunity for exchanges of ideas and experiences. As previously noted, the West Midlands AONBs increased their representation of the National Association of AONBs Board.

Ruth outlined the financial support that the National Association of AONBs receives from membership subscriptions. To date, not all of our local authorities

had opted to be members. Cllr Roberts noted that he had attended a number of the national annual conferences in his capacity as Chairman of this Joint Committee. He confirmed that we were well treated by our Northern Ireland colleagues. Although the current Government minister with responsibility for protected landscapes is invited to attend the conference, it is often the senior civil servant who is left to make the presentation. This year, however, Huw Irranca Davies produced a DVD of his presentation. Cllr Roberts also observed that previous Northern Ireland administrations had not considered National Parks and AONBs roles as of particular importance. This view is now changing slowly and they are looking at further involvement. Our colleagues there have an even more difficult time in funding than we do!

Next year's National Annual Conference will be hosted by the Kent Downs AONB and may include site visits to National Parks in France.

Natural England Board Member Visit – Andy Wilson, who has responsibility for the West Midlands region, visited in June. He is Chief Executive of the North Yorkshire National Park. He was astonished by how much the Partnership delivers and remarked on the strong community partnerships. He agreed to raise the concerns expressed particularly the extent of the resource required to produce and review Management Plans and key indicators. Ruth thanked all who had been involved in hosting this successful visit.

Cannock Chase AONB Annual Conference – will take place on Friday 23rd October 2009 at The Barns, Huntington. The theme is Access and Recreation, guest Chairman will be Roger Owen, Regional Director of Natural England.

Financial Update

Report of the Treasurer to the Joint Committee

188 A report was circulated prior to the meeting and outlined by Juliet Hands. She confirmed that the contributions from all the local authority partners had been settled at the same level as 2008-09. Up to the beginning of September, £37,999 had been allocated of the Sustainable Development Fund and it was expected that this will be spent up by the end of the financial year

Cllr Davis remarked that all are experiencing difficult times and hoped that Staffordshire County Council would be able to continue its support at the same level as all other local authorities. The reserve fund is looking healthy. He noted that there a point at which this should begin to be spent. Juliet noted that if the level of funding remains static over the next few years it may be necessary to use this fund. Cllr Maryon confirmed that it is unlikely that funds would be reduced in the next financial year, but this may not be the case in subsequent years.

Partners' News

Item for Members to update all from their own part of the AONB

189 The Joint Committee received the following reports:

Cannock Chase Council

- Due to publish its core strategy in December 2009. Cannock Chase AONB had been acknowledged throughout the LDF process.
- The application to install three wind turbines at the former Bleak House site had been withdrawn by Haworth Power. It may be re-submitted in future by Peel Energy.
- Railtrack will be installing three new communication masts, two of which are in the AONB or its setting. Although Railtrack had consulted with a number of organisations, their proposals were not subject to the usual planning legislation.
- Cllr Williams reported that Castle Ring has been awarded Green Flag status. The assessment was being undertaken during Andy Wilson's visit in June.

South Staffordshire Council

- The toposcope had been installed on Shoal Hill. A guided walk is due to be held led by volunteers.
- It is suspected that Phytophthora may have affected the veteran beech, surveying is on-going.
- Mining faults had now been rectified.
- The annual event at Shoal Hill unfortunately coincides with the afternoon of the AONB Annual Conference

Stafford Borough Council

Cllr Davis asked if an anemometer had been included in the original Bleak House application, a similar application had been made for a site at Aston near Stone. Local authorities had been requested to look at possible sites for wind turbines. The downside is that local authorities had not yet produced a policy relating to wind farms and this may be a weakness. Cllr Maryon suggested that it may be beneficial for the local authority partners to work together on this to produce a co-ordinated policy. Severn Trent had already undertaken a desktop study of potential sites. It was noted that it is difficult to prevent the installation of an anemometer in planning terms, however the data recorded may prove that the site is unsuitable.

Staffordshire County Council

Cllr Maryon noted that he had been learning much since taking up his cabinet portfolio which included Staffordshire Highways. He therefore invited Steve Potter to report the detail matters as follows:

- Phytophthora update – 26ha of rhododendron had been removed at Shugborough where P.ramorum had been identified. The re-growth is now also being treated. It may be a number of years before the site is free of this infection.
- On the open heathland the species had been identified as pseudosyringae, little is known about this as it had not been found on bilberry before.
- Spores can survive in the soil for ten years.
- It is likely that deer movement had contributed to the spread of the disease.
- Since January infected plants had been treated by cutting and burning, £100,000 had been received from Natural England to fund this work.
- 10ha of bilberry had been cleared in small patches.
- Consent had been received from Natural England to cut and burn, however it is now known that the re-growth is also infected.
- A new approach is being suggested similar to fire breaks. Consent had been sought from Natural England to begin a process of spraying re-growth as a research programme. It is not known how successful this will be.
- Oak decline had been reported on mainland Europe associated with this disease and there are concerns of the effect it may have on the oaks in Brocton Coppice.
- Isolated outbreaks of the disease had been found in some other areas on the Chase, such as Brindley Heath. It is thought that this may be airborne spores.

Any Planning Items that may require consideration

Relevant papers circulated at the meeting.

190 Ruth reminded the Joint Committee that one of their roles is to comment on strategic and planning control matters, which is delegated to the AONB Officer. A virtual planning sub-group advises on planning applications where required and exceptional issues are immediately referred to the Joint Committee.

The following was highlighted:

- Anaerobic digester in Huntington – application approved by Staffordshire County Council, an appeal had been lodged. This is an example of the issue of development pressure on the AONB boundary and in its setting.
- Screening advice sought on a wood fired energy facility at Cannock Wood Industrial Estate.
- Network Rail application was viewed on site and comments submitted.
- If a second application is made regarding the Bleak House site, it is thought that if it is above 50 megawatts it would be submitted to a national panel rather than determined locally.
- Rodbaston application – objected to on visual impact in the AONB setting.

- Pre-application discussions on a proposed green burial site at Stile Cop Cemetery. A site visit had been proposed by the applicants. Ruth was asked to arrange this for Joint Committee members.

Cllr Davis noted that Stafford Borough Council had not made any detailed decisions regarding potential housing units in the Haywoods.

Any Other Business

191 Cllr Roberts informed the meeting that he would be happy to attend future meetings to provide updates on National Association of AONBs activity in his capacity as a Board member. He outlined the remit of the National Association and their current funding. They are looking at alternative funding sources particularly in the light of some local authorities becoming unitary leading to a drop in funding. Mike Taylor, has been Chief Executive of the organisation for the past 10 years, but will be retiring at the end of the year. This post is due to be filled by Howard Davies in the New Year.

Cllr Williams thanked Ian Hickman and his team for hosting the meeting.

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 14th December 2009, 10:00am at Cannock Chase Council Offices, Beecroft Road, Cannock WS11 1BG.

Part Two

Exclusion of the Public and Press

The Chairman to move:

"That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the local Government Act 1972 (as amended) indicated below"

None.

Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee – 14 December 2009
Report of the Chairman of the Officers' Working Group
Agenda Item 6

Management Plan Delivery Progress

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 The Committee notes the progress made since the last Joint Committee.
- 1.2 A report on the progress made on SAC mitigation strategies is brought to a future Joint Committee.

2 Progress

- 2.1 It has been a busy period of achievement since the last meeting, as shown below. The Officers' Working Group has prepared a summary table of achievements so far this year, attached to this report at Appendix 1.

Policy

- 2.2 Comments and involvement in support of the development of the **Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)** in combination Appropriate Assessment and associated Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy have continued. Drafts were circulated to Members, following the presentation on the subject at the last meeting. Consultants have amended the reports to acknowledge the context of the SAC within the AONB and to recognise the potential for impact on the wider AONB. It is understood that these will be presented to each authority's Cabinet for approval. The AONB Unit will continue to liaise with Partners about the practical implementation of the work, once local authorities have approved the reports. It is proposed that Naomi Perry from Stafford Borough Council returns to a later Joint Committee to up-date her previous report on the SAC work.
- 2.3 Input into the development of **Local Development Frameworks** has continued and is anticipated to increase in workload in the new year. Following advice from Natural England, additional support for this work is being pursued within next year's grant funding bid.

Constitutional Delivery

- 2.4 The **Annual Review** has been completed and will be available for Members at the meeting.
- 2.5 The **annual conference** took place on 23 October and is the subject of a separate report from the Chairman of the Advisory Partnership.

- 2.6 Progress to agree the **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**, first reported to the Joint Committee in December 2008, between the Partnership and Natural England has been pursued and is the subject of a separate report at this meeting.
- 2.7 The **Advisory Partnership** meeting held on 10 November received a presentation from Ian George of English Heritage. Members subsequently identified a wish to develop a LIDAR project for the AONB. Officers are currently pursuing the potential to achieve this.
- 2.8 The **Parish Councils** meeting held on 17 November identified a wish to pursue further development of signage at the boundaries of the AONB. This is being pursued via the review of the Interpretation Strategy. The meeting also expressed the wish to develop the communications strategy of the Partnership. The Officers' Working Group is currently examining options to achieve this and will report further to a later meeting. The meeting also discussed planning matters and progress on undergrounding of overhead lines.

Project Delivery

- 2.9 The Phase 2 bid for **Access to Nature funding** has been submitted to Natural England. It is hoped that news of the Panel decision will be received in the new year. If successful, the project would commence in April 2010 and last three years. The total project cost is £260,105 with a grant of £172,014. This project would achieve a part-time volunteer co-ordinator for the AONB. The outputs would be training for the participants and land management for the AONB, as well as healthy activity and awareness raising. The sustainability of the project will be ensured through the development of ten "volunteer champions" for the AONB. It targets people in the areas of Featherstone, Norton Canes and Shareshill, as these are shown in the project criteria and Index of Multiple Deprivation as being areas of need. The project introduces new delivery partners to the AONB. These are the Community Council of Staffordshire and BTCV. The three would need to formalise the project delivery arrangements, if the grant is awarded and a draft partnership agreement has been developed. Other supporting partners to the project include the Youth Probation Service, Young Carers, Beaudesert Park Farm and the Beaudesert Trust. An additional benefit of receiving the grant would mean that the Assistant AONB Officer will be able to re-direct her time from direct community working. The pursuance of further grant funding, resources and support to enable Partnership business to continue would be targeted instead.
- 2.10 As previously reported, Natural England has obtained **Natural Assets funding** from AWM, with some expressly committed to protected landscapes within the region. Development of a joint regional bid is being pursued via the West Midlands Protected Landscapes Forum.

- 2.11 A range of projects addressing condition monitoring, community involvement and awareness of the AONB are being delivered via the **Sustainable Development Fund**. These are shown in detail in the financial report at this meeting.
- 2.12 Work to produce a five year (overview) Action Plan in support of the new Management Plan is being completed and has produced the **annual action plans** for this and next year in support of the grant bidding process.
- 2.13 The **peace and tranquillity condition monitoring** was launched at the conference. It is rolling out a practicable method that can be repeated efficiently by the Partnership in future years. Twenty five community volunteers attended a briefing session on 23 November to establish a consistent approach. They are currently involved in interviewing members of the public. This includes a volunteer ensuring that young people have their say. Their reports will be collated at a second meeting on 16 December. The results will form the baseline for future surveys.
- 2.14 Work to address the **dog owning community** has continued to progress, with a common message for the public from all land owning Partners being prepared. In addition, advice has been offered to Cannock Chase Council about a dog control order (dogs on leads) that might be practically deliverable within the AONB. The Officers' Working Group is currently considering other practical options to achieve appropriate behaviours from dog owners within the AONB, following the report from Stephen Jenkinson.

Awareness Raising and Community Involvement

- 2.15 Two further **awareness days** have been held. These have continued to attract a range of new and existing community members. In addition, attendees continue to show a willingness to contribute financially to these events, rather than forgo them. A willow weaving day was held and attracted new faces from as far as Coventry. A litter pick at Rifle Range corner also took place, with a further pick planned for 11 February 2010. A look at the canal heritage and wetlands biodiversity is planned for 15 March 2010. The events prove useful to spread the word, meet stakeholders in a less formal environment and an opportunity to learn, as well as some healthy activity for the participants.
- 2.16 Members of the AONB Unit have attended a number of the monthly **business breakfasts** launched by the Cannock Business Exchange. This has enabled awareness of the AONB to reach a different audience, as well as making useful links with local businesses and media contacts.
- 2.17 The Assistant AONB Officer has continued to attend the **Children and Young Peoples' Participation Network**. She also took part in the **Speak**

Out event where 250 young people had the opportunity to have their say about issues in Staffordshire. The event covered a range of issues and afforded the opportunity to establish that previous initiatives led by the Partnership had been recognised by young people. The AONB logo was recognised and elicited a level of awareness in delegates from schools around the AONB.

- 2.18 The **6 Visitor Centres group** met on 4 November and commenced its review of the **Interpretation Strategy**, as set out in the Management Plan. An initial discussion has established that there have been a number of successes against the Strategy's Action Plan. These include the establishment of a clear corporate identity for the AONB and the installation of signage and interpretation information on sites. The group has already identified some priority actions to be developed at its meeting in February. In addition, the Assistant AONB Officer will be addressing, separately with each visitor centre, a refresh of AONB links and information.

Regional Issues

- 2.19 The regular meetings of the **West Midlands Protected Landscapes Forum** continue. The chairman is one of the AONB lead officers on a rotational basis. Following direction from the Officers' Working Group, the AONB Officer has declined to take up the Chairman's role this year. It was agreed that the Shropshire Hills AONB Manager would continue for an additional year with either the AONB Officer or the Malvern Hills AONB Manager taking up the role next year.
- 2.20 The bi-annual meetings of the regional group established to deliver projects funded by Ofgem in protected landscapes for the **undergrounding** of overhead lines have continued. The group discusses and approves project proposals. It has the AONB lead officers and representatives of Natural England and Central Networks (E.ON) as its members. Following the meeting in October, it has been confirmed that the scheme at Brocton appears to be reaching a successful implementation phase, whereas the scheme at Tixall has stalled due to land owner issues.
- 2.21 Two meetings have been held between the AONB Unit team and **Natural England**, at the request of Natural England. Roger Owen, the current Regional Director visited to up-date himself on progress and issues on 2 October. Nick Young, who has taken up a regional role relating to protected landscapes, visited to commence his work on a regional project to assess the operation of the AONB Partnerships, their delivery and relationships in relation to Natural England. Nick is expected to elaborate on this himself at the Partner News agenda item in the meeting.

Administrative Matters

- 2.22 The Officers' Working Group has continued to assess current **budgets** to ensure they are maximised. This includes an on-going review of cash and in kind contributions to the delivery of the Management Plan. The **2010/11 grant funding bid** has also been prepared and submitted to this meeting in the financial report. It is anticipated that the draft bid will be discussed and finalised with Natural England in the new year.

Appendix 1 - Summary of Delivery

Programme Item	Comments	Outcomes
Strategic		
1. Management Plan 2009-14	Submitted to Natural England and approved. Plan published and lodged with Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs.	Management Plan current and approved. Partnership has met statutory obligations. Partnership activity continues to be implemented.
2. Annual Action Plans	Five year overview and individual plans produced.	Implementation of the Management Plan set out for its period.
3. Local Development Framework consultations	Responsive task to represent AONB strategy within each local authority's timescales. A considerable number of consultations for related documents have also required attention.	Responses to consultations submitted.
4. Development control consultations	Responses to applications for planning permission in and near to the AONB. Responsive task within each local authority's timescales.	Responses to consultations submitted.
5. NAAONB consultations	Taking part in responses to national consultations via the NAAONB to ensure strategic attention to the needs of the AONB.	Consultations responded to in support of re-development of Natural England policy and the generation of new legislation.
6. Other consultations	Responses made to proposals from water and rail operators. AONB interests represented in development of proposals for SAC mitigation measure. RSS Phase III response submitted to Regional Assembly.	AONB views represented with other statutory undertakers and strategic bodies.
7. Undergrounding schemes	Working with Central Networks and other	Undergrounding schemes approved and being

Programme Item	Comments	Outcomes
	protected landscape teams to enable the undergrounding of cables to take place. Work based on the decisions of a regional panel including Cannock Chase representation.	progressed.
8. Funding bids	Detailed submission of project proposals and funding request made for Access to Nature funding.	Funding bid made. Relationships with new delivery partners developed. Flexibility of Partnership resources addressed.
9. Natural England visits	Hosting of visits from key Natural England staff to help generate understanding of its corporate delivery at a local level. Involved representatives from across the Partnership organisations: Andy Wilson – Board Member covering the West Midlands Roger Owen – Regional Director	Access to Natural England policy makers to discuss issues. Raised awareness of the AONB, the Partnership, targets and work. Recognition of ability to deliver Partnership working with few resources.
10. NAAONB annual conference attended	Attendance at event hosting the full range of AONB partners from across the 49 AONBs.	Delivery of Natural England strategic objectives for AONBs to benchmark and achieve good practice. Exchange of best practice.
11. NAAONB Board buddy liaison	Maintaining links and undertaking mutual visits/comparing projects and best practice.	Delivery of Natural England strategic objectives for AONBs to benchmark and achieve good practice. Exchange of best practice.
12. West Midlands Protected Landscape Forum	Ensuring a regional voice of all the AONBs, government agencies and the Peak District National Park through representation and discussion of strategic issues.	Joint working to develop policy and win funding. Improved understanding of context of work for the Partnership. Potential to influence strategy with more than one voice.

Programme Item	Comments	Outcomes
Project Delivery		
13. Dog projects	Development of common messages for the public to ensure consistency across the whole AONB. Expert advice given to local authority Partners. Development of practical projects to ensure appropriate behaviour from the dog owning community.	Awareness raised. Conflicts reduced. AONB protected. Best practice demonstrated. Longer term positive response from targeted audience. Project methodology trialled for roll-out with other recreational user groups.
14. Gateway signs	Gateway signs installed on the AONB boundary's roads at 3 locations.	Raised awareness and recognition relating to the AONB. Improved sense of place. Links to the brown and white tourist signage.
15. Peace and tranquillity condition monitoring	On-going work in December 09 to gather data on peace and tranquillity using the methodology established for local conditions. Work required to establish a baseline position for on-going monitoring against a national AONB indicator. Monitoring is being undertaken by community volunteers.	25 volunteers engaged in delivery of Management Plan monitoring. Monitoring data gathered.
16. Sustainable Development Fund projects	£61,666 allocated to projects.	Project managers supported. Cross-Partnership Panel operating to approve projects. Schools & young people's involvement, learning and awareness increased, businesses involved, sustainability improved, innovation in project delivery. Matched funding earned. Administration fee earned as income by AONB Unit.

Programme Item	Comments	Outcomes
Involving Communities		
17. Litter picks	Two sessions held. One further pick planned.	22 attendees. Areas not usually benefiting from clearance improved.
18. Bluebell walk	A chance to see the Beaudesert Trust swathes of bluebells and learn about the site's history and management.	25 attendees. Press coverage.
19. Willow weaving	Creating products from local sites' management. Learning skills. An opportunity to discuss AONB issues.	15 attendees. Maintaining links with the local community and learning/skills development opportunities.
20. Dog Activity Day, 9 May	Held in partnership with the Forestry Commission. Sponsored by Arden Grange dog feed company. Partners helped with staffing provision.	1000 attendees. Involved local businesses and canine charities. Four show rings, showcasing a range of canine activities and appropriate handling/training. Access roadshow, sponsored by Your Dog magazine resulting in an article in the September issue of the magazine (circulation 30,500). Representation from 3 ranger teams within the AONB and the Kennel Club. Collected small-scale donations from the public and voluntary paid entry. Businesses also paid for pitches. Excellent press coverage in local press.
21. Talks	A combination of schools and other local groups e.g. Rotary. Activity curtailed due to staff maternity leave, however other Partners also give talks and address the AONB, in particular, Friends of Cannock Chase.	4 presentations given.

Programme Item	Comments	Outcomes
22. Others' events	AONB representation at other organisations' public events. Activity curtailed due to staff maternity leave.	2 events attended. 250 young people reached.
23. Business liaison	Cannock Business Exchange networking events.	Awareness raised and local contacts made.
24. Newsletters	Regular Partnership update via hard copy and electronic media.	2000 hard copies, including individual and libraries/visitor centre circulation 500 electronic copies circulated. Posted on website.
25. Annual Review	Report of activity for 2008/09 prepared and published.	450 copies circulated and posted on website.
Partnership Management		
26. Constitutional meetings	Joint Committee, Advisory Partnership, Parish Councils, Officers' Working Group meetings scheduled, conducted and recorded.	Appropriate Partnership management in accordance with Natural England requirements.
27. Annual conference	Access and recreation theme. Held on 23 October.	73 attendees. Issues explored. Management Plan projects identified/supported. Opportunity for all elements of the Partnership to work together at one time.
28. Member briefings	Ensuring new Joint Committee Members have relevant information about the context and statutory requirements relating to the AONB.	2 members up-dated.
29. Post-graduate student hosted	Three week placement hosted by a number of individual Partners.	Future participants in protected landscape management have information and experience.
30. Audit Commission	Second year of external audit with all aspects assessed as acceptable by the Audit Commission.	Sound Partnership management.

Programme Item	Comments	Outcomes
31. Memorandum of Understanding	Required agreement with Natural England set as a grant condition.	Agreement progressed.
32. 2010/11 grant bid	Preparation of budget and Annual Action Plan in support of application for continued financial support.	Partnership maintains resources.

Local Members Interest
N/A

Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee- 14 December 2009

**Financial Update
Budget 2009-10 and Draft Natural England Bid for 2010-11**

**Report of the Treasurer to the Joint Committee
and the AONB Officer.**

Recommendations

1. a) Budget 2009/10
Progress on spend for 2009/10 is noted.
- b) Budget 2010/11

Proposals for the budget for next year are approved to be included in the draft funding bid.
- (c) Draft funding bids
The draft joint bid to Natural England for core, project grant and Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) funding in 2010/11, as well as its supporting documents Annual Action Plan and Business Plan, is approved for final submission to Natural England on a date to be confirmed. (Any amendments to the draft will be referred to the Joint Committee at a later date).

Part A

Why is it coming here – what decision(s) are required?

The Joint Committee in its role under the Partnership Agreement is responsible for:-

- The management of the core funding from the Natural England and the co- ordination of partner projects. The report up-dates the Committee on progress to date on the current year's budget.
- The approval of budget provision. The proposals for future budgets for 2010/11 are recommended to the Committee for inclusion in the draft funding bid to Natural England.
- The production of an Annual Action Plan to implement activity under the Management Plan. The draft bids incorporate both the proposed future budgets and the delivery of those actions and their approval is recommended to the Committee.

Reasons for Recommendations:

3. The recommendations represent an effective way to continue to carry forward the implementation of the Management Plan for the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership.

Part B

Background:

4. Budget Update 2009/10

The financial position which is anticipated for the end of this quarter is set out in Appendix 1 together with the overall outturn currently predicted for the year. The predicted outturn for the end of the financial year is expenditure of £162,960 against income of £171,700 which results in a slight underspend of £8,740. The majority of the underspend is due to a member of staff being on maternity leave. This underspend will be directed towards future Action Projects. The figures also include the additional funding of £5,000 received from Natural England this year which has been match funded and used to fund the Dog Projects.

The latest position available for the Sustainable Development Fund for the current year is set out in Appendix 2. Projects approved to date amount to £49,072.25. There is a project requiring approval for £2,471 currently being processed. Other projects are being pursued and full spend is anticipated. This will attract an administration fee earned by the AONB Unit of 10% of the total SDF grant.

5. Budget 2010/11

2010-11 is the third and final year of the Single Pot funding arrangement with Natural England. In 2009-10 100% of the baseline figure of grant received was awarded. The Single Pot arrangement guarantees 95% of the previous year's funding to be awarded each year.

The proposed budget for next year is set out in Appendix 3 and generally reflects an annual inflationary rise of 1% on salaries and on-costs. The proposed budget for 2010/11 is £166,142 of which £124,302 (74.8%) is requested from Natural England. Previous funding arrangements have been calculated on the basis that partner authorities paid 25% of the total budget. For the past 2 years members of the Joint Committee have agreed to maintain their own levels of contribution. It was also agreed that this would remain the case for 2010-11 and be reviewed next year.

Within the Single Pot funding arrangements, the Partnership is afforded the flexibility to transfer funds between the core funding and SDF activities. However SDF used as core funding has to be matched with at least 25% monies from other sources. This budget has therefore been calculated on the basis that the core funding is not increased in this way. The option for members to decide to increase core funding remains open throughout the financial year. Natural England encourages partnerships to maximise the opportunity to use SDF for projects rather than core activities.

If Natural England's funding does not allow 100% award, Appendix 3 shows the impact of a 95% award. Natural England have guaranteed 95% of their 2009/10 contribution with 100% payable upon reaching performance targets which have yet to be determined.

6. Draft funding bids

- a) As with last year, the application for funding bids has been assumed to be for a single application prepared by the AONB Unit on behalf of Staffordshire County Council as lead authority. The draft bid is attached as appendix 5.

- b) Core funding supports the costs of the AONB partnership activity under its Management Plan and is the responsibility of the Joint Committee. The SDF is funding available from Defra to support innovative and sustainable projects from the AONB community. SDF funding requested is £61,666 and will be administered by the AONB Unit via administrative procedures which were agreed with Natural England.
- c) The Officers Working Group has approved application drafts, as they have been formulated and recommends their approval.

7. Reserve

The reserve still stands at £16,732.76.

8. Requirement for External Audit

The requirement to get the accounts signed off by the audit commission has gone through smoothly and the Audit Commission are happy with the submission. The Internal Audit identified that a Risk Register was required for the AONB Unit. It was agreed that a report would be made to this Joint Committee meeting then on an annual basis. The Risk Register is attached as Appendix 6.

9. Equalities Implications

This report has been prepared in accordance with the equal opportunities policies of the County Council.

10. Legal Implications

Actions recommended in this report are in accordance with the provisions of the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership Agreement.

11. Resource and Value for Money Implications

This report recommends actions to ensure the continued efficient delivery of the Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan. The matched funding requirements to make up the 25% of contributions towards the core activity are set out in the Partnership Agreement. The SDF is a funding stream to be administered to partners who are able to provide the necessary matched funding for their Management Plan project proposals.

12. Risk Implications

If continuity of funding and spend are not continued as recommended to the Joint Committee, then the five authorities involved in the partnership will need to seek other methods of fulfilling their statutory obligations for the AONB under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Report authors:

Authors Name	Juliet Hands	Development Services Department	01785 276580
	Ruth Hýtch	AONB Unit	01889 882613

List of Background papers

Business Plan incorporating Annual Action Plan draft for 2010/ 11(Appendix 4 available on request)
Draft bid for 2010/11 (Appendix 5 available on request)

APPENDIX 1

CANNOCK CHASE AONB JOINT COMMITTEE

Predicted Outturn for 2009/10 for
Cannock Chase AONB Core and Project Costs

	Approved Budget	Predicted Outturn	Variation
	£	£	£
<u>AONB Core Budget</u>			
Staff Salaries and Associated costs	115,200	105,660	-9,540
Accommodation /Office Equipment	13,050	12,950	-100
Transport	5,050	4,100	-950
Partnership budget for PR events	2,300	2,300	0
Partnership running costs (In kind)	6,600	6,600	0
	142,200	131,610	-10,590
<u>Core Action Projects</u>			
AONB Website	200	200	0
AONB Annual Action Plan	1,500	800	-700
AONB Newsletters	700	700	0
Partner Awareness Raising Events	1,500	1,500	0
Annual Report	1,500	1,100	-400
Management Plan	0	2,400	2,400
Annual Conference	2,000	2,000	0
Monitoring Projects (SAONB, Peace & Tranquility)	14,400	14,400	0
Dog Projects	5,000	6,250	1,250
Implement Signs Programme	2,000	2,000	0
	28,800	31,350	2,550
TOTAL BUDGET	171,000	162,960	-8,040
FUNDED BY:			
Natural England	124,300	124,300	0
Lichfield District Council	2,100	2,100	0
South Staffordshire District Council	2,100	2,100	0
Cannock Chase District Council	8,400	8,400	0
Stafford Borough Council	8,400	8,400	0
Staffordshire County Council	20,700	20,700	0
Donations	0	600	600
Other Income	0	100	100
Additional £5,000 from Natural England	5,000	5,000	0
	171,000	171,700	700

APPENDIX 2

CANNOCK CHASE AONB JOINT COMMITTEE

**Budget Update for 2009/10 for
Sustainable Development Fund**

December 2009

	Outturn 2009/10 £
AONB SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND	
Approved Projects	
Approved Projects	
Beaudesert Park Farm - Compost Toilets	13,640
Beaudesert Trust	7,500
Mammal Group - Phase 2	9,999
Sustainable Transport Projects	1,500
River Woods sustainable project	5,000
Photo history on Cannock Chase	360
Residential trip for urban school children to learn about AONB	2,000
Chase the Seasons	6,573
Sculpture Trail phase 1	2,500
	49,072
Surveying the Depressed River Mussel	2,471
TOTAL PROPOSED/APPROVED	51,543

APPENDIX 3

CANNOCK CHASE AONB JOINT COMMITTEE

**Budget for 2010/11 for
Cannock Chase AONB Core and Project Costs**

AONB Core Budget

	Budget 2010/11 £
Staff Salaries and Associated costs	117,890
Accommodation /Office Equipment	13,450
Transport	4,150
Partnership budget for PR events	2,300
Partnership running costs (In kind)	6,600

144,390

Action Budget Awareness Projects:

AONB Website	150
AONB Annual review	1,100
AONB Newsletters	2,000
Monitoring Projects	4,000
Signage	2,000
Annual Conference	2,000
Community Involvement	1,500
Visitor Management Projects	4,000
Planning Support Projects	5,000

21,750

TOTAL BUDGET

166,140

AGREED FUNDING:

	@100%	@ 95%
Natural England	124,300	118,085
Lichfield District Council	2,090	2,090
South Staffordshire District Council	2,090	2,090
Cannock Chase District Council	8,370	8,370
Stafford Borough Council	8,370	8,370
Staffordshire County Council	20,920	20,920
	166,140	159,925

Staff	Job Title	Key Tasks	Possible Threats	Impact	Provision to Address	Financial Implications	Risk Assessment (High, Medium, Low)
Ruth Hytch	AONB Officer	Strategic policy review, planning & LDF consultation, budget holder, line management of AONB Unit staff	long term absence due to ill health	Interests of Cannock Chase AONB not represented in LDFs and associated plans, no comments on planning applications in the AONB area and setting made, no responses to national consultations, budget management implications	A virtual planning sub-group of local authority members has been established some time ago and designated planning officers would be requested to compile comments on behalf of the Partnership. Finance officers at SCC would assist with budget monitoring and SAP approval implications.	Long term it may be necessary to sub-contract work to a suitable consultant/specialist. SDF monies may be available for a discrete project in those circumstances.	Medium
Emma Beaman	Assistant AONB Officer	Grant information, community liaison, publications, press & communications, substituting for AONB Officer when required	long term absence due to ill health	Publicising grant funds such as SDF may be affected, work with the community may be diminished, less publicity of AONB activities.	The Assistant AONB Officer returned from maternity leave in September 2009. A community projects officer was in post to cover part of the work including organising the dog activity day in May and commencing work with the cycling community.	Potential loss of grant obtained through funding bids.	Medium
Anne Walker	AONB Office Manager	Secretariat for meetings, first point of contact for enquiries, general administration, procurement through SAP, administration of imprest account	long term absence due to ill health	Day to day administration, secretariat duties and financial activity may be affected.	Colleagues from the Partnership could be asked to assist, particularly with secretariat activities. Procurement through SAP can be covered by colleagues in SCC Environment & Countryside. Imprest account has 2 signatories, but processing of claims would need to be done by SCC E&C colleagues.	May need to allocate funding to cover costs of expenses for other authorities staff.	Medium
Office Accommodation		Offices are rented at Shugborough Park Farm.	Damage to equipment, etc in the building	Limit work on a temporary basis	Upkeep of the fabric of the building is the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council. Regular surveys are undertaken and an annual premises check is done by the AONB Officer and AONB Office Manager.	Buildings and contents are covered by insurance arranged through Staffordshire County Council	Low
Vehicle		A Citroen Berlingo is leased from County Fleet Care and is regularly serviced by them. The vehicle is stored either outside the offices at Shugborough Park Farm in the close season or behind the ticket office/walled garden during open season.	Vehicle damage/theft	Limit work on a temporary basis	As vehicle is leased from County Fleet Care a replacement could be obtained.	Replacement vehicle may be more expensive	Low
Intellectual Property		Electronic copies of documents are stored on SCC's 'H':Drive.	Virus threat to system	Limit work on a temporary basis	SCC's system has a disaster recovery program.	Difficult to quantify as recovery is likely to be completed very quickly	Low

Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee – 14 December 2009
Report of the Chairman of the Advisory Partnership
Agenda Item 8

Annual Conference Feedback

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 The Committee notes the conference outcomes.

2 Background

- 2.1 This AONB Partnership has an annual conference as part of its constitution. A copy of the role of the annual conference, as set out in the Partnership Agreement, is shown at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.2 Each year a specific theme is selected for the conference's attention by the Advisory Partnership. Relevant expert speakers and guest chairmen attend to help guide the theme.
- 2.3 This year the conference was held on 23 October with a theme of access and recreation. The agenda for the day is set out at Appendix 2 of this report.

3 Conference Outcomes

- 3.1 This year, 73 delegates attended the day. This is fewer delegates than in previous years but a number of external visitors commented on the excellent atmosphere and the high level of eager participation from the delegates. It is thought that the timing in the year – later than usual - and the proximity of the date to half term contributed to the attendance figures. The attendees were from a range of organisations and included elected members, parish councillors, individual interested community members and representatives from public, private and voluntary organisations.
- 3.2 The balloon debate addressed the tensions between conservation and people's wish for enjoyment in the AONB in a fun way that encouraged positive debate of all the issues without confrontation. Appendix 3 shows the winner was the bird watcher, represented by Steve Welch.
- 3.3 The topic sessions covered tourism and healthy living, led by guest speakers. Every delegate had an opportunity to identify their top three issues and solutions to each topic. These were recorded and are set out in Appendix 3. It is encouraging to note that the solutions identified are covered in actions identified in the current Management Plan.
- 3.4 A third session took the opportunity to roll out the monitoring programme on peace and tranquillity. Each delegate identified on maps the area that they considered to be the most and least tranquil. The reasons why they thought this were also recorded. This feedback was collated and presented to the delegates at the end of the day. Early results showed that weekends and clustered areas around Milford Common, Birches Valley and Marquis Drive were identified as the least tranquil.
- 3.5 Later in the conference, the opportunity was taken to look in detail at the project work undertaken to date with the dog owning community and the next steps to roll out information to

ensure that the AONB is respected while everyone enjoys the area. The approach to this work was set out in detail so that delegates could understand the long term benefits of it.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Informal feedback from delegates and speakers at this year's conference identified that the conference was found to be useful, enjoyable and a good opportunity to get involved.

Appendix 1

AONB ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1. Role and Functions

- 1.1 There will be an AONB Annual Conference with the following role and functions:
- (a) to provide a forum for the expression of views on the Management Plan and its implementation; any review of the Management Plan; and how the natural beauty of Cannock Chase AONB should be conserved and enhanced;
 - (b) to review the progress of the Action Plan and to celebrate achievements within Cannock Chase AONB;
 - (c) to provide and obtain information about Cannock Chase AONB in order to inform the AONB Advisory Partnership, the Officers' Working Group and the Joint Committee.
 - (d) to express views to the AONB Advisory Partnership on the composition and balance of the persons or bodies who should comprise the Other Representatives appointed to membership of the AONB Advisory Partnership, having regard to the need to ensure representation of heritage groups, forestry and farming interests, wildlife conservation interests, access and recreation interests, local economy interests and local community interests.
- 1.2 The AONB Annual Conference seek to achieve a consensus amongst those present ("the attenders") on any recommendation to be made by it to the AONB Advisory Partnership or the Joint Committee, but there does not have to be a consensus.

2. Composition

- 2.1 The following may attend or be represented at any AONB Annual Conference:-
- (i) the AONB Officer
 - (ii) any member of the Officers' Working Group
 - (iii) any member for the time being of the Joint Committee
 - (iv) any member of the AONB Advisory Partnership
 - (v) any Partner
 - (vi) any Associated Body
 - (vii) any member of the public either in a private or a business capacity
- 2.2 The AONB Annual Conference will meet annually on such date after the annual meeting of the AONB Advisory Partnership as shall be decided by the Officers' Working Group, in consultation with the AONB Advisory Partnership.
- 2.3 The AONB Annual Conference will be chaired by the Chairman for the time being of the AONB Advisory Partnership or, in his/her absence, by such person as the attenders may elect. If any AONB Annual Conference has a particular theme, the Chairman of the AONB Partnership, with the concurrence of the specialist presenter, may nominate that person to act as Chairman for that meeting.
- 2.4 Each attender will be entitled to speak and, if there is a vote, to vote on any item of business.

2.5 If there is a request for any issue or matter to be put to a vote, it will be decided by a simple majority of the attenders on a show of hands. The Chairman will not have a casting vote.

3. **Secretariat**

3.1 The AONB Unit will:

- (a) provide the Secretariat for the AONB Annual Conference
- (b) arrange the venue (at a convenient location within or close to Cannock Chase AONB)
- (c) convene each AONB Annual Conference and prepare and distribute the Agenda for and the minutes of each meeting
- (d) prepare, or co-ordinate the preparation of, any reports and presentations to be considered by or made to the AONB Annual Conference.

3.2 The AONB Unit will ensure that a written report of the proceedings of the AONB Annual Conference is referred to the Officers' Working Group, the AONB Advisory Partnership and the Joint Committee as soon as is practicable after the AONB Annual Conference has been held and that any recommendations made by the AONB Annual Conference to any of them are considered.

4. **Delegated Powers**

4.1 The AONB Annual Conference will not have any delegated powers. Any recommendation made by the AONB Annual Conference to the Officers' Working Group, the AONB Advisory Partnership or the Joint Committee (as the case may be) will be of an advisory nature and will not be binding on them.

Appendix 2

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Annual Conference

Theme: Access and Recreation

Friday 23rd October 2009

at

The Barns, Cocksparrow Lane, Huntington, Cannock,
Staffordshire WS12 4PB

Programme

9:00-9:30am	Registration and coffee
9:30am	Welcome by Pat Ansell, Chairman of Cannock Chase AONB Advisory Partnership
9:35am	Nick Young, Natural England, Conference Chairman
9:40am	Ice Breaker - Emma Beaman
9:50am	Balloon Debate. An entertaining way to discuss and explore our different user groups. Chaired by Nick Young. Bird watcher Steve Welch Cyclist Justine Lloyd Family person Glynis Ward Horse rider Lesley Simmons Dog walker Steve Jenkinson Orienteerer Jane Christopher
11:20am	Comfort Break
11:35am	Three short 5 minute presentations followed by 3 workshop sessions and discussions centred on important AONB issues. An opportunity for you to have your say and give us your views. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Healthy living Chris Hogarth2. Tourism Sue Prince3. Peace and tranquillity Red Kite Consultancy
1:00pm	Lunch
1:45pm	Steve Jenkinson – Dog Project Presentation and active exercise!
2:45pm	Plenary Session – Simon Lees
3:00pm	End of Conference

**Cannock Chase AONB Conference 2009
Friday 23rd October
Conference Feedback from Workshops**

Three groups were asked to discuss important AONB issues surrounding healthy living and tourism and come up with the top 3 issues and top 3 solutions. Results are shown below.

Healthy living conducted by Chris Hogarth (Natural England)

Issues - Healthy living
Good project ideas but limited cash
Long term sustainability of existing projects
Lack of resources
Lack of consistent messages, mixed messages often presented
Conflict of tourism versus landscape protection
Strategic approach in the AONB
Access
Transport
Motivation
Lack of time
Breaking of barriers – ethnic, cultural
Lost information
Being available for exercise
Safe environment
Social inclusion
Publicity
Funding
Peoples perceptions of the AONB
Cultural issues
Lack of young people involved in the AONB
Safety / risks to exploring the AONB

Top 3 Issues Relating to Health

1. Education and awareness of the AONB
2. Lack of resources
3. Access

Solutions - Healthy living
Work on existing projects and improve rather than inventing new
Push positive rather than negative messages
Publicity – direct people away from sensitive areas
More money- think outside the box- AWM, partners
Think long term, a sustainable approach
Work with agencies / partners / NHS
Promote the AONB as a product
Partnership working
Not just physical but mental health should be considered
Work with local users and community
Hand holding exercises
Allow people and develop skills to explore the AONB
Encourage local schools to get involved
Educate families what risks are however explain the potential of the AONB
Make the AONB fun – reduce the boredom factor
Make it interesting – simple pleasures
Teach adults how to play – reconnect them
Engage social networks
Build on what is interesting – Nightjar / deer
Webcams on the AONB
Ask the children what they want
Prescribe the AONB via the PCT
Work with local communities identifying barriers
Educate people about best practice
Join people / groups together so that they can work together
Provide the public with the confidence to explore the AONB
Engage the whole family

Top 3 Solutions Relating to Healthy living

1. Increase education in schools
2. Promotion of the AONB
3. Partnership working

Potential Projects - Healthy living
Promotion of what is already available in the AONB – local press
Engagement of new audiences via schools
Transport survey / strategy
Standard play equipment installed in visitor centres
DMP partnership involvement
Adult play scheme

Tourism Conducted by Sue Prince

Issues – Tourism
Lack of signage
Advertising the AONB
Do we want people in the AONB?
SAC designation and balance
Lack of coordinated marketing
Policing behaviour – crime
Parking
Erosion of paths
Litter and fly tipping
Anti social behaviour
Environmental impact
Managing access and mapping
Economic balance and appropriateness
Habitat damage
Noise (concerts and industrial)
Lack of understanding about place and issues
Services for tourists not locals
People are not shopping locally
Connecting businesses to people
Getting people to stay overnight
Quarrying
Cost to locals of management
Disjointed working
Lack of accommodation for young people and camping and lack of information relating to it
Too many day visitors
Lack of employment opportunities
Lack of information on what to do
Lack of investment in the area, always in competition with Peak District National Park

Top 3 Issues Tourism

1. Lack of signage
2. Habitat damage
3. Visitor management

Solutions - Tourism
Education
Engaging young people from urban areas
Obtaining funding
Car dump for fly tippers (cameras)
Communication with police
Volunteer neighbourhood watch
Expand AONB merchandise
Promote visitor centres more
Local foods
Marketing
Business network
Managing via communication
Facilities provision and infrastructure
Communicate to business
Identification of key message through the right media
Identification of audience
More car parks
Park and ride
Chase Hopper bus
Link to trains, seasonal special provision
Ask visitor centres to do surveys
Policing of crime
Communicate through websites, leaflets, the press, business networks, DMP
Regional co-ordinated working (outward facing)
Work with other venues

Top 3 Solutions Relating to Tourism

1. Education
2. Improved transport links
3. Publicity

Potential Projects – Tourism
Education and awareness project within schools
Development of AONB brand (marketing and branding)
Attract and disperse tourists via improved signage / interpretation

Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee – 14 December 2009
Report of the AONB Officer
Agenda Item 11

Dates for Joint Committee and Partnership meetings 2010

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 The Committee agrees the proposed meeting schedule for 2010.

2. Background

- 2.1 In order for the Partnership to meet its legal obligations under the Partnership Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding, it is necessary to hold a number of formal meetings throughout the year. As these meetings inform progress of delivery across the whole Partnership, it is necessary to programme them in a specific order to ensure that they all link correctly. For this reason, they are scheduled for the whole year. All Partners have agreed that advance notice of these commitments is effective.
- 2.2 The Partnership Agreement states that: ‘The annual meeting of the Joint Committee in each year shall be held as soon as practicable after 1 June in each year and shall amongst other things receive the closing accounts for the preceding year’. This is also the annual meeting where Chairman and Vice Chairman are elected and is scheduled for Monday 7th June 2010.
- 2.3 If any decisions are required in between meetings, this may be done by correspondence with approval required from three of the five elected members.
- 2.4 The proposed meetings schedule is attached as Appendix 1.

Appendix 1

Proposed Calendar of Meetings 2010

Advisory Partnership	Officers Working Group	Joint Committee	Parish Councils' Meeting	Annual Conferences
	Tuesday 19 th January 2010			
Tuesday 2 nd February 2010	Wednesday 3 rd March 2010			
Monday 20 th April 2010	Tuesday 11 th May 2010	Monday 7 th June 2010 (Annual Meeting)	Wednesday 21 st April 2010 (Tixall Village Hall)	Cannock Chase AONB Annual Conference Wednesday 26 th May 2010
Wednesday 30 th June 2010 (Annual Meeting)	Wednesday 7 th July 2010 (Forward Planning Meeting)			National Association of AONBs Annual Conference 12 th - 15 th July 2010 (Kent Downs AONB - host)
	Wednesday 8 th September 2010	Monday 20 th September 2010	To be determined	
Tuesday 2 nd November 2010	Wednesday 22 nd November 2010	Monday 13 th December 2010		

Meetings to commence at 10:00am, except for Parish Councils' Meeting and Annual Conference