

Arson Crimestoppers Initiative

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Crimestoppers and Cannock Chase AONB Advisory Partnership has launched a campaign to highlight the damage fires can do and also ask the public to keep an eye open for fires and report anything suspicious they see.

Eye-catching posters are in all the main car parks across Cannock Chase AONB urging everyone to be alert and if they see a fire on Cannock Chase to call 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service. If you have any information on arson or any other crime, please report it to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 and your call will be treated in confidence.



RMC to fund an interpretative artwork

Quarrying group RMC is working with a local Staffordshire artist Anthony Hammond to commission a new sculpture near its Rugeley Quarry on Cannock Chase. The work, to be sited alongside the South Street bridleway, will aim to bring to life the unique Sherwood Sandstone geology of Rugeley Quarry, featuring a combination of natural and recycled materials. Planned to be installed on site in March 2005, the idea behind the work was put forward by James Holyoak, RMC's landscape architect as a novel way of responding to the Management Plan recently launched by Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which aims to make visitors more aware of the area's rich geological and natural character. For further details contact James Holyoak on 01527 575777.

Getting to know more about our AONB

Cannock Chase AONB Unit has recently been able to investigate several new areas of work:

- Of key importance is finding funds for projects and a Fundraising Report identifies potential sources of funds for the AONB and partners, particularly related to the AONB Action Plan.
- 2 workshops brought together people working in health and the environment to explore how the AONB could be used as a "Healing Resource". A toolkit of organisations

and facilities in the AONB has been produced to help people get out more in the AONB for health benefits.

- The AONB has many characteristics that people value – peace, tranquillity, views, the heathland, history and archaeology for example. These, and other special qualities, need to be monitored and a report has been produced so that in the future this can be done. This is an on going project and, before the AONB Management Plan is renewed in 2009, a "State of the AONB"

report will be produced to check on the AONB's special qualities.

- The Chase's history and archaeology is very diverse and important. A further piece of research has collected together background information on what is available in terms of records, maps, surveys and reports. This will be used as part of a longer term project to look at the condition of sites within the AONB, as well as consider how more information and interpretation can be made available.

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is supported by:

The Countryside Agency, Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase Council, Stafford Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, South Staffordshire Council, AONB Parish and Town Councils, British Horse Society, Country Land and Business Association, Department of Food and Rural Affairs, English Nature, Forestry Commission, Friends of Cannock Chase, Hanson Aggregates, National Farmers Union, Ramblers Association, RMC Western, Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Trail Cyclists Association, Walton Chasers, West Midland Bird Club



Should you or someone you know require it, this Newsletter can also be produced, on request, in large print and other formats or languages other than English. Please telephone 01889 882613 or fax 01889 883912.

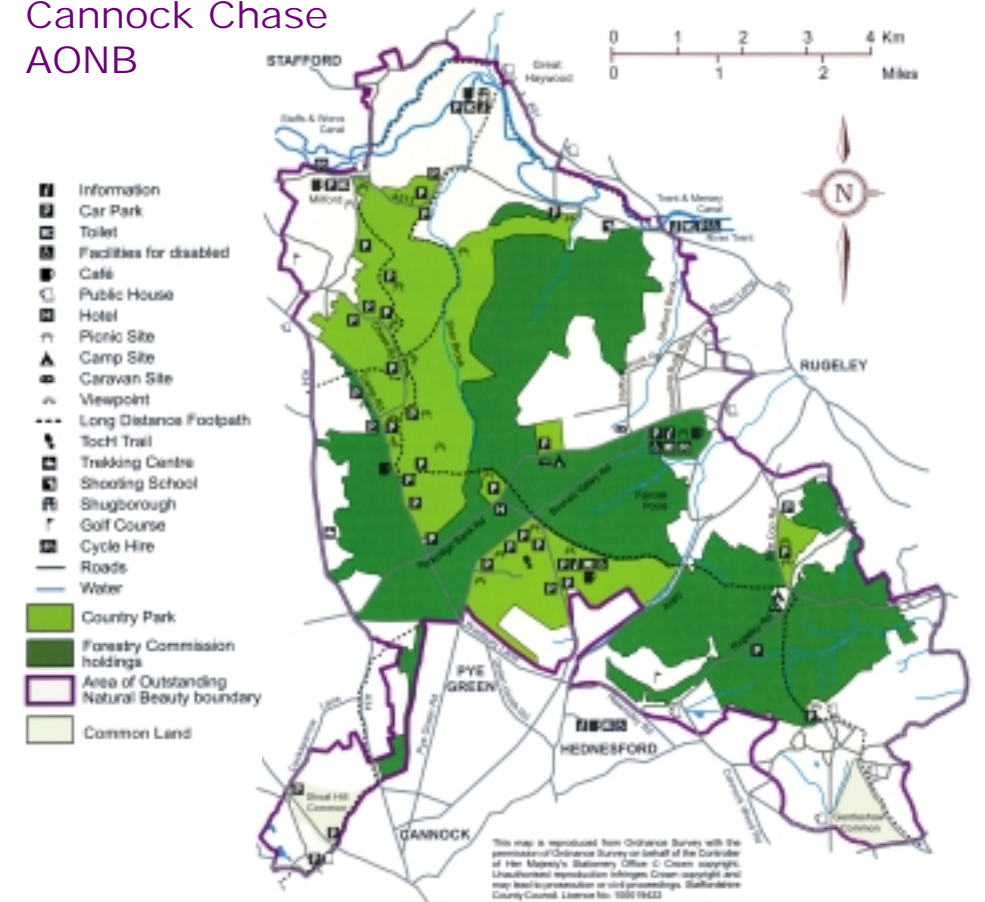
What is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)?

In England and Wales, those landscapes considered most valuable are protected as National Parks or AONBs. The purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty (including wildlife, cultural heritage and scenery) of an area. AONBs are human-influenced, living and working landscapes. Their special characteristics, habitats, flora and fauna often depend upon sensitive management and policy making.

Cannock Chase AONB was designated in 1958 because of its beautiful landscape, its history and its wildlife. Today the area consists of heathland, pine and birch woodland, historic parkland, farmland, attractive villages and remnants of ancient oak woodland.

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, required Management Plans to be published for each AONB by April 2004. These Management Plans are the responsibility of local authorities. For Cannock Chase AONB these are Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase Council, Lichfield

Cannock Chase AONB



District Council, Stafford Borough Council and South Staffordshire Council. These local authorities, along with partners such as the Forestry Commission, Countryside Agency, English Nature, conservation, farming, land owning and recreational interest groups, and Cannock Chase AONB Unit have prepared the Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2004 - 2009.

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Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan Launch



Cannock Chase AONB Annual Conference took place in June and launched the new five year Management Plan. Around 130 people attended to hear keynote speaker Professor Chris Baines and join in workshops on themes within the Plan on Managing the Landscape,

Managing Visitors, Education and Awareness and Quality. Having been encouraged to commit to actions within the Plan, delegates were then treated to a buffet lunch of locally sourced produce. In the afternoon, there were chances to visit the AONB by touring the house and grounds of

Shugborough, going on a boat trip along the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal or travelling around the route of the new Chase Hopper taxi bus service.

An AONB exhibition, accompanied by free Summaries of the Management Plan, has been on tour throughout the summer and can still be seen at:

**Monday 27th September –
Friday 1st October**

Cannock Chase Council Offices,
Beecroft Road

**Monday 4th –
Friday 8th October**

Stafford Borough Council Offices,
Riverside

For further details on next years' Conference, or to obtain a Summary please contact the AONB Unit.

Chase Hopper Taxi Bus

An innovative new taxi bus service for Cannock Chase AONB was launched at Easter. The "Chase Hopper" allows visitors to access many attractions in a sustainable and affordable manner along a circular route including Shugborough, the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Centre, Forestry Commission's Birches Valley Forest Centre, Staffordshire County Council's Cannock Chase Visitor Centre, Cannock Chase District Council's Museum of Cannock Chase and more. Initially the service is



operating on Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays for a one year period with funding from the Eastern Staffordshire Rural Transport Partnership, Western Staffordshire Rural Transport Partnership, Cannock Chase District Council and the

Countryside Agency. If you would like further information about the Chase Hopper or a timetable leaflet with details of linked walks and events, please contact: **Cannock Chase AONB Unit on 01889 882613.**

The Human Face of Cannock Chase

Volunteers working with Cannock Chase Council Countryside Service have recently completed the replacement of over 100m of boardwalks through the wet woodland at Hazelslade Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The commitment of the volunteers will allow visitors to the LNR to access woodlands safely and without damaging the delicate ground flora. The volunteers didn't just get muddy they had a sense of achievement, learnt and shared skills, made new friends and gained understanding of what it takes to manage one spot in the AONB.

Cannock Chase has a long history of people being involved in its management. 2007 will be the diamond jubilee (60th anniversary) of the Friends of Cannock Chase. Volunteering is good fun, so why not give it a go with any of the opportunities below:

Cannock Chase Council Countryside Service – contact:
Phil Armshaw on 01543 450018.

The Friends of Cannock Chase – contact:
Trevor Warburton on 01785 665440.

**The Forestry Commission –
Forest Volunteers** – contact:
Georgina High on 01889 586593.

Staffordshire County Council Ranger Service – contact:
Mick Payne on 01543 871773.

Lichfield District Council – Friends of Gentleshaw Common – contact:
Justine Lloyd on 01543 308000.

If you're in a group that does volunteer work relating to Cannock Chase AONB, why not get in touch so we can feature you in our next newsletter?



Heath Week

The Staffordshire and West Midlands Heathland Partnership has launched its first events leaflet. The events are all co-ordinated in the jointly organised 'heathweek', which is from September 11th to 19th. The Partnership is putting on a feast of events which range from education

walks to hands on practical skills required for heathland management.

The events are to be held throughout the Staffordshire and West Midlands area so there is sure to be an event near you. For more information you can contact John Smith at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust on 01889 880100 or email: jsmith@staffswt.cix.co.uk

The New Countryside Code

A new Countryside Code to update the original 1950s version and help prepare everyone for the gradual introduction of the public's new right of access to the countryside was launched in July by the Countryside Agency. The 5 key messages of the Code are:

Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs

Leave gates and property as you find them

Protect plants and animals and take your litter home

Keep dogs under close control

Consider other people

A new website, www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk, is also being launched to provide advice on the new public right of access to open country and registered common land, as well as details of national trails, national parks, rights of way and links to many related organisations. Call 0845 100 3298 or 01889 882613 to request leaflets.

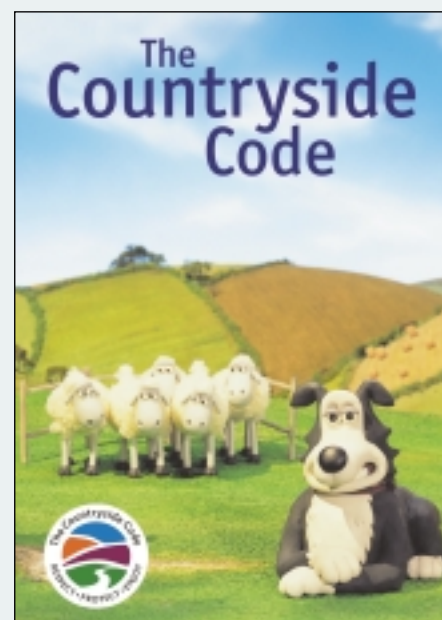


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