

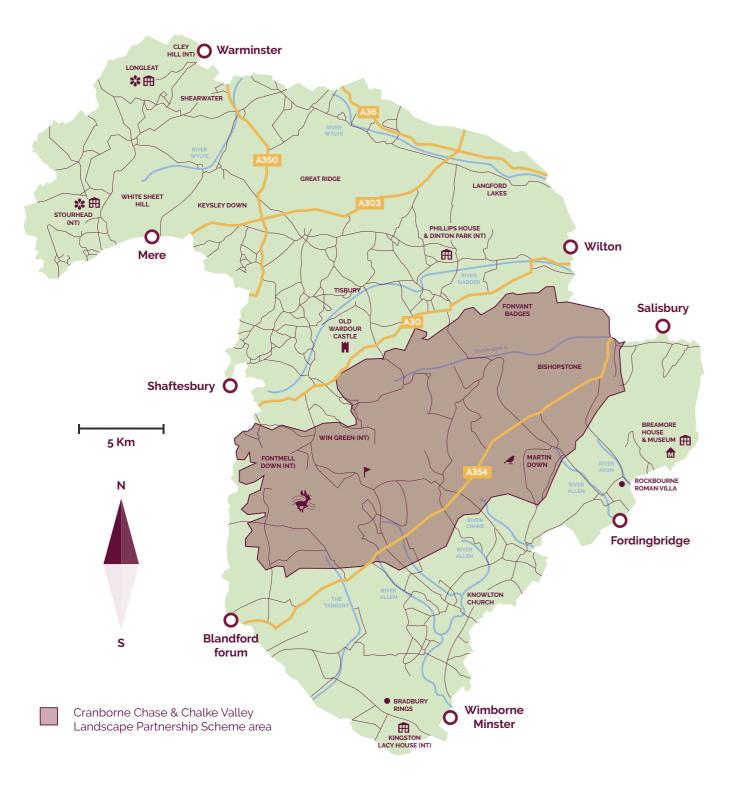
Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Hart Magazine

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Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Our area covers 380 sq miles of countryside overlapping the boundaries of Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Somerset. It is a diverse landscape offering areas of rolling chalk grassland, ancient woodlands, chalk escarpments, downland hillsides and chalk river valleys each with a distinct and recognisable character.

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Editorial

Cranborne Chase AONB

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Welcome to your **Hart Magazine**

Mike Short, Acting Chairman, Cranborne Chase AONB

The Hart is for everyone who lives and works in Cranborne Chase AONB and to all those visiting who want some tips on how to enjoy this stunning area.

There are 46 AONBs across England, Wales and Northern Ireland and we are the 6th largest. We are also an International Dark Sky Reserve, designated in 2019 thanks to our very dark skies which, with your help, we're working to make even darker.

This is huge time of change for all of us and, as an AONB, we too are in the process of changing how we're run to make us more inclusive and more relevant

to everyone's lives whether they live, work or visit us over the coming years.

RESPECT. PROTECT. ENJOY.

Your AONB is proportionately funded by Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Somerset Councils with 75% of our core funding coming from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).





As seen on social

For more head over to @cranborne.chaseaonb and follow us! #cranbornechaseaonb #chaseandchalke



A perfect nest spotted by our farm conservation advisor, probably home to a linnet.



We played host to Countryfile in April! Check it out on BBC iPlayer.



Celebrating our rural skills and crafts through our Memories Captured project.





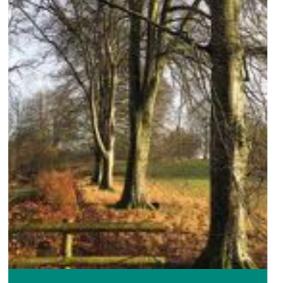


Look out for our Wild Weeks happening this July.



You don't look a year over 40...help us celebrate our 4th decade.





More trees, please

Tree planting is being widely promoted as a means of capturing carbon but there is a lot more to it than just putting any young tree into

the ground somewhere.

In the sensitive landscapes of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks, landscape character needs to be considered when working out which tree to put where.

Cranborne Chase AONB has commissioned Fiona Fyfe, an experienced landscape architect, to prepare a 'Right Tree in the Right Place' guidance, available this summer to for those organising their plans for the next tree planting season, which starts in the autumn.

Keep an eye on our website for more details www.cranbornechase.org.uk

Richard Burden. our Principal Landscape and Planning Officer



Working with you to keep this living landscape special

Cranborne Chase AONB is one of the nation's finest landscapes; an outstanding landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so precious that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them.

Our AONB Partnership works with landowners, organisations, community groups, parishes and individuals to help conserve and enhance this nationally important landscape for wildlife, people and the local economy.

Our small team works on behalf of the Partnership covering issues including planning, farming and land management, nature conservation, access, dark night skies and many more

Designated in 1981, we celebrate our 40th anniversary this year and we're looking forward to celebrating with you so look out for events coming up later this year.

Come and see us at the Chalke Valley History Festival from 23 - 27 June and find out more about this and our Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme and how you can get involved.



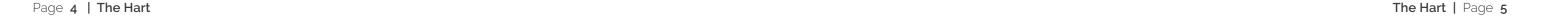
For updates on events, talks and volunteering opportunities you can sign up to our regular e-newsletter at www.cranbornechase.org.uk or email the office info@cranbornechase.org.uk



An updated Countryside Code was launched this year: respect, project and enjoy.







My favourite places

Out and about with kids in Cranborne Chase

Jonathan Monteith, dad, archaeologist, educator and Manager of the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme.

For me, the Chase & Chalke Landscape
Partnership area, which sits within the wider
Cranborne Chase AONB has some of the most
dramatic views, beautiful walks, intriguing
archaeology and stunning wildlife of anywhere
I've ever been.

- I love bringing my kids to see the extensive views from the elevated herb-rich chalk grasslands of Fontmell Down, Win Green and Winklebury Hill.
- With my six and two-year old we love heading off for a long walk from Martin Down National Nature Reserve, to try and spot some of the 36 species of butterflies, past the prehistoric earthworks of Bokerley Dyke and Grim's Ditch.
- Carrying one and encouraging the other, we can usually make it from Broad Chalke, crossing the River Ebble and climbing up to breathe in the spectacular panoramic views from the Ox Drove.
- A stroll through the water meadows and 17th century deserted village at Bishopstone with a promise of an ice cream from Chalke Valley Stores at the end.

With one of the largest concentrations of burial monuments in England and the country's largest known cursus (bigger than that at Stonehenge) we let our imaginations run wild creating stories of what our ancestors were doing and what all the earthworks are. Although they're much more interested in running off the sugar rush from their ice creams.

It's not always easy to stop kids charging through grassland and jumping around on raised humps on the ground, but with some explaining they start to understand what these features are and how important our heritage is.

Did you know?

Chettle, recorded as "Ceotel" in the 1086 Domesday Book, means a 'deep valley surrounded by hills' in Old English.



The Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme

Creating stronger connections between people and their landscape is one of the underlying aims of the Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme.

Funding for the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme comes from the National Lottery Heritage Fund thanks to National Lottery players and other partners, the vision is to ensure this distinctive landscape survives through modern day pressures and future change. To join in with one of our 20 fantastic projects and to register to volunteer www.cranbornechase.org.uk/chaseandchalke

Volunteering opportunities - how you can get involved

Become a Route Checker

Help design new walking routes and check existing routes across our Rights of Way network.

Tree planting, hedge laying...

Take part in our conservation days, working in small groups to carry out tree planting and coppicing, hedge laying and maintaining public rights of way.

Dip your toe in and become a River Warden

Receive full training to record and submit wildlife sightings, monitor river features, and act as a point of contact for local communities.

Cranborne Chase Wildlife Watch

We've installed trail cameras around the area. Look out for this project when it goes live in July 2021.

Become a citizen scientist for our Champions of the Past project.

Help us identify new archaeological features and monuments using our latest LiDAR survey data.

Watch out for our new Community Grants Scheme 'Communities Caring for Heritage' this summer.

Journey through time with our new Time Traveller App

See how the Romans defended their land from pillaging Saxons at Bokerley Dyke, and experience what it's like to have a Bronze Age warrior riding on horse back towards you. Head to Gold Hill in Shafestbury, Salisbury Musuem and Martin Down plus other locations to see for yourself!

The app is free to download from Google Play and the App Store, search Cranborne Chase AR, or scan the QR code for a quick link.

We look forward to meeting you – in the past!



Download FREE from Google Play and the App Store, search Cranborne Chase AR, or scan the QR code for a quick link.

























What's happening

1. River habitat survey and training on the River Ebble 14th & 21st July 2021

Find out about life in our chalk streams. Join our volunteers to survey a river habitat with our partners from the Wessex Rivers Trust, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group for our Crystal Clear Ebble project.

2. Chase & Chalke Wild Week

24th - 31st July 2021

Schools Out! We're hosting a series of events for young people and families across the Chase & Chalke area including bug hunts, bio-blitzes, nature trails and pollinator walks.

3. Heritage Schools Training project for teachers and home educators

1st July, 21st October & 25th November 2021

Led by our partner Historic England, we're offering a series of free training events for teachers to help embed the teaching of local heritage into a school's curriculum. If you're a teacher ask your school to get involved.

4. Silk Flag art workshops September - October 2021

Glorious silk flags are being created with local communities for our Celebration in Silk project. The vibrant (and huge!) flags will be flying over our events. Join in over the coming months.

5. Let's Go Outdoors **Photography Competition Closing date**

24th September 2021

Help us celebrate the beauty of the Chase & Chalke landscape during the 40th Anniversary year of Cranborne Chase AONB. Seek out hidden gems, beautiful views and the wonderful wildlife that make our area so unique.



Future Events

All of our events can be found on our website or our social media pages. If you would like your event publicised, email us at info@cranbornechase.org.uk

Farmer clusters

Farmer-led wildlife conservation thanks to our 'farmer clusters'

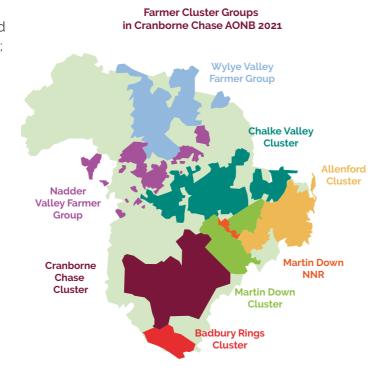
A new breed of nature conservation has emerged in the last few years and it's taking off like wildfire; the idea of forming a 'cluster' or group of likeminded farmers, who collectively generate a whole host of positive environmental, economic and social impacts.

A farmer cluster is essentially a group of neighbouring farmers that work together under the leadership of a 'lead farmer' and an environmental advisor or 'facilitator'.

Look out for the results of our Environmental Land Management Scheme test, our Nature Recovery work and details of how farming is changing at www.cranbornechase.org.uk

If any farmer is interested in joining one of our groups, please email:

tracyadams@cranbornechase.org.uk



It all started in a pub one cold November morning...

by Tracy Adams

Tracy Adams, Farm Conservation Adviser for Cranborne Chase AONB, remembers how the Nadder Valley Farmer Group got off the ground.

After several years in the planning, 100 farmers were invited by Tisbury farmer, Peter Shallcross, to a local pub in November 2018 to find out about the benefits of working together.

There was huge enthusiasm to form a group, which officially took off in 2019. I volunteered to be the facilitator to help with funding and agreeing our first few projects.

Funding initially came from member subscriptions. My time was part funded by Wessex Water and the AONB, replaced in 2020 thanks to a successful application to Defra's Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund.

The group consists of 25 farms covering 3800ha stretching from Semley in the west, to Dinton in the east of the Nadder Valley. Priorities including monitoring and improving soil health, better management of grassland to benefit Greater

Horseshoe and Bechstein bats, improving water quality in the River Nadder and enhancing farm wildlife habitats.



Over 100 disease-resistant European White Elm trees (Ulmus laevis) have been planted across the area so far for priority butterfly species, the white letter hairstreak.

The trees were sourced by elm enthusiast and Vice Chair, Peter Shallcross.

My Favourites: Linda Nunn, Director, Cranborne Chase AONB



Favourite walk: For walking and spotting

butterflies it's got to be Grovely Wood, just south of the River Wylye, west of Salisbury.



Favourite view:

The Fovant Badges. The regimental badges carved into the chalk, serve as a reminder of the thousands of men garrisoned here waiting to go to war.



So many! pair of binoculars.



Favourite stargazing spot:

Wherever it is dark and safe, including your back garden, relaxing in a deckchair with a blanket, hat, gloves and perhaps a normal



What I love about Cranborne Chase:

It's a picture book of history, wide open in front of you. Bronze Age burial mounds, signs of ancient deer parks. New LiDAR imagery will soon reveal oodles more too.



Did you know:

There are over 1,000miles (1,655kms) of Rights of Way in the AONB. Combined end to end, that's easily enough to walk from here to Edinburgh, and back again.



The Martin Down Supercluster

by Jess Brooks

Jess Brooks, Farmland Biodiversity Advisor for Southern England at the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT), tells us what's happening here.

Three farmer clusters lie conjoined around the Martin Down National Nature Reserve and are known as the Martin Down Farmer Supercluster.

These consist largely of predominantly arable farmland but with a few mixed or livestock farms. Collectively, the Martin Down Farmer Cluster, Chalke Valley Farmer Cluster and the Allenford Farmer Cluster have almost 50 farmer members and cover a whopping 236 square kilometres.

All three groups have similar conservation priorities and they engage with local communities via village talks, posters and farm walks. Follow them on Twitter @MDSuperCluster

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Love our dark skies and want to get involved?

If you love stargazing, want to learn more about astronomy and dark night skies, and would love to share your knowledge and understanding with others, become a Dark Sky Custodian and join us to:

- Discover more about the constellations
- Learn how to take Sky Quality Measurements and interpret the results
- Use the free 'Stellarium' app and pass this knowledge on
- Identify new stargazing sites and inspire others by hosting star gazing events
- Help others understand why ALAN (Artificial Light at Night) is bad for our health!

Training and ongoing support will be provided. Get in touch with our Heritage and Community Engagement Officer, Rachel Limb rachellimb@cranbornechase.org.uk to find out more.

The Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme, is seeking enthusiastic volunteers to help secure and promote its dark night skies and the fantastic health, wildlife, environmental and economic benefits they bring.

If you would like more information on how you can reduce the impact of your exterior lights, please visit www.cranbornechase.org.uk/ourwork/dark-night-skies/



Become a Dark Sky Friendly Business

In and around Cranborne Chase AONB International Dark Sky Reserve status and our relative proximity to metropolitan centres, we are ideally located for astrotourism.

It's a globally growing phenomenon, which can bring substantial economic benefits to businesses within regions that are lucky enough to be able to exploit it.

Businesses can promote being awarded with this new Dark Sky Friendly status, while we all benefit from an improved night-time environment.

The award is dependent on compliance with our Dark Night Sky Charter.

If you want to convert your lighting to being dark sky friendly, or need advice on how best to do it, we can also help.

The award is also available to community organisations, parishes, schools and individuals.



If you run a business in the AONB and act to preserve, enhance, or promote the benefits of our dark skies, we can recognise and celebrate this through our awards scheme.

Contact our Dark Skies Advisor, Steve Tonkin stevetonkin@cranbornechase.org.uk

Tisbury Station awarded 'Dark Sky Friendly' status

Tisbury station underwent a series of checks by our astronomer and thanks to changes to their lighting and help promoting our status as an International Dark Sky Reserve status, they have been awarded this new status. With thanks to South Western Railway and the Blackmore Vale Community Rail Partnership.

Getting your lights right at night

We've all noticed how many fewer insects there are. They are the lynchpin of any healthy ecosystem and essential for other animals to survive.

Recent research¹ concluded that at the current rate of decline, we will lose 40% of our insect species by 2050 and analysis of more than 200 peer-reviewed studies² demonstrates that artificial light at night is a major driver of this decline.

Most flying insects are attracted to artificial light which impacts their natural feeding, pollinating and breeding behaviour and renders them more vulnerable to predation.

The good news is that we can simply and effectively mitigate this. It's all in the mantra "Right Light, Right Place, Right Time":

- The "right light" is warm white light that is no brighter than necessary for its task.
- The "right place" is where it's needed, fully shielded so it is not wasted into the sky or a neighbour's window.
- The "right time" is when it's needed; motion sensors are ideal for this.

When a B&B cost £7 and included homemade marmalade

The Wessex Ridgeway Trail, opened in 1994, is a magnificent ridge-top route crossing Dorset's rural heartland and runs through Cranborne Chase AONB.

David Lacey, a resident of Tisbury, was one of the first people to test a suggested route of the Trail from Ashmore to Lyme Regis in 1985 with a little nudge from the area secretary for the Ramblers Association.

In the long hot summer of 1976, I met up with four former university friends to walk the Offa's Dyke path. We continued with these walks for the next 25 years with the responsibility to organise the trip coming up every five years.

My second 'turn' came up in 1985 and, looking for inspiration, I attended a talk given by Priscilla Houston, the area secretary for the Ramblers Association, about the planned Wessex Ridgeway path. I told Priscilla my plans to organise a walk from
Tisbury to Lyme Regis which would return
to Swanage on the South West Coastal Path.
Priscilla thought this was splendid as she had
written, in rough format, a path description of the
proposed Wessex Ridgeway path from Ashmore
to Lyme Regis and she would very much welcome
it being tested.

Four days later, an A4 envelope arrived, containing 16 closely handwritten notes on A4 lined sheets of paper describing the route, not only from Ashmore to Lyme Regis, but also travelling in the opposite direction.

The last Saturday in June arrived and we all set off, stopping overnight in Shillingstone, Sydling St Nicholas and Broad Windsor en route to the sea. The B&Bs didn't get much above £8.00 per night and we even found one at Lulworth that was £7.00 which included homemade marmalade and real coffee.





Two weeks after returning, I was interviewed by Priscilla, which in all honesty was more like a viva for a PhD, checking if her route description was up to the mark. She had a remarkable

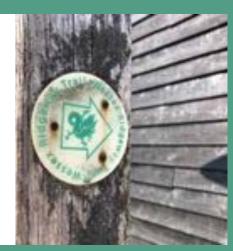
recall of features on the ground, so at times I had to be quite imaginative with my replies.

Priscilla saw the benefit of asking someone who didn't know the area to test the route and should anyone find this section of the official guidebook not quite accurate, then don't blame the original authors, but possibly the information given to them by me!

David Lacey is part of the Tisbury Footpath Club and was Chairperson from 1979-1989. The club organises local, group walks, and they have two walking guides available at various local shops or to order online.

For more details visit www.tisburyfootpathclub.org

The Wessex Ridgeway forms part of the 'Great Ridgeway', an ancient highway that was once an important trading route between the Devon and Norfolk coasts.



Memories Captured

Do you have a story to tell? Working with Blandford Museum, we're collecting oral histories of rural life, experiences, skills and trades. Email our Heritage and Community Engagement Officer, Charlotte Moreton **charlottemoreton@cranbornechase.org.uk**

Part of the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme











Archaeologist pigs dig for Roman ruins

My family have farmed here for 100 years, initially as tenant farmers before buying the farm from the Rushmore Estate in the 1980s.

The farm as it is now is very different to the farm my grandfather took on in 1921. We have moved from using horses to tractors and we now use GPS technology and data from satellite and drone images to help us farm.

I am currently an arable farmer, but the land is capable of supporting a diverse range of farming. My grandfather reared a beef suckler herd; my father had a herd of pedigree sheep; and my brother and I ran both a dairy herd and pig herd on the farm alongside the arable use which now dominates.

When we kept pigs, they rooted up what appeared to be tessera - a small block of stone or tile used in the construction of a mosaic - from the field in front of what is now the farmhouse.





This discovery led to archaeological digs by the East Dorset Antiquarian Society, Bournemouth University and the television crew from 'Time Team'.

They unearthed the remains of a Roman Villa, and we have a small shepherd's hut museum on the farm which displays some of the finds.

The field above it was taken out of crop production and is now a well-established wildflower meadow.

Providing wildlife with food, shelter and room to live has become more important and over the last 25 years or so I have actively worked to reinstate hedgerows, establish grass margins along those fields in crop and I have planted wild bird mix.

My passion for the local area had been passed on to my children. My eldest son, Bill, has established his own business on the farm making 'Cranborne Chase Cider' with each bottled cider named after a different character from the history of the Chase. Our dry cider 'The Smuggler' named after Isaac Gulliver himself, and the sweet cider named 'the White Wigs' after his men.

It is those who have lived and worked with and on the land, both in the past and present, who have made the area what it is today. I am proud to live and work in this AONB and I can only hope that the future generations of residents and visitors are given the same opportunities to enjoy all that it has to offer.

Simon is a member of the Community Stakeholder Group for the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme and you will also see him as the smuggler 'Isaac Gulliver' in our Time Traveller App which you can find on P.7



My Farming Life in Cranborne Chase: Simon Meaden



Local tip for visitors

I would encourage people to visit us and take a walk along the Jubilee Trail passing through Chettle to Tarrant Gunville stopping for food at Home Farm tea rooms.



Favourite farming season

It has to be Spring, when the landscape and wildlife start to wake up again and the blossom appears on our apple trees.



Favourite view

There is a fantastic view from our back over the wildflower Minchington & Gussage St Andrew with background.



Favourite wildflower

are out in force

in springtime

and cover our

meadows with

blanket of yellow.

farm track looking meadows towards Win Green in the



Best bit of wildlife spotting Cowslips. They

We have brown hares and barn owls on the farm and every time I see them, I realise how lucky we are to farm here.



Page 16 | The Hart Photo credit: Steeve Robinson The Hart | Page 17 Healthy by nature

Using the natural environment to support your wellbeing

Did you know that spending time in nature can help you be physically active, reduce your blood pressure, boost your mood, and increase your vitamin D levels?

Cranborne Chase AONB is blessed with many opportunities to connect to nature - from a walk, ride or cycle in the countryside; a wander along a river; a visit to a local park or nature reserve; or spending time gardening at home.

The pandemic has resulted in people exploring more of their local areas finding hidden gems they might not have found otherwise (especially during the lockdowns). Our natural spaces became our places for exercise and to meet friends while many indoor places were closed or with limited access.

Keep connected

As lockdown eases and we're allowed inside more let's stay connected to natural spaces. A number of studies show that exercising outdoors is more beneficial than at a gym.

One study showed that those exercising outdoors do so for 30mins more than those at a gym. This may be down to the variety of experiences that being outdoors gives, such as the seasons and weather. This may help you to repeat the activity so that it becomes a habit because it's always a little bit different, even if it's in the same outdoor space.

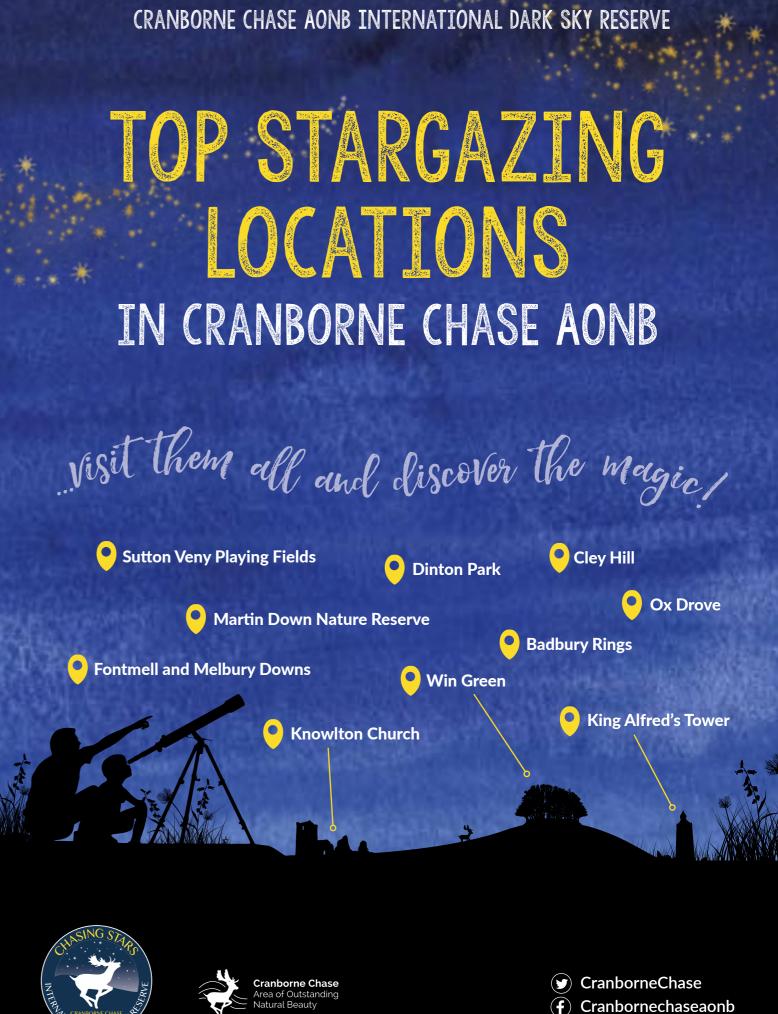


Taking notice of our natural world has huge benefits for our mental wellbeing, allowing us to be mindful, or present in the moment, allowing us to calm our thoughts and breath, great for reducing stress and anxiety.

So, get out in nature, boost your wellbeing, and enjoy! But remember to respect the environment for its wildlife and for other visitors. Follow the countryside code, leave only footprints, and take only memories.

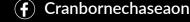
Maria Clarke is Manager of the Dorset Local Nature Partnership and is also a member of the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Board. www.dorsetlnp.org.uk

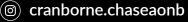


















Scan to meet people from the past and discover secrets of our ancient landscape.

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