

**Cranborne Chase  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**



**Partnership Board Meeting  
27<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

10.30 Virtual Meeting Start

**MINUTES**

<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
Mike Short	Vice Chairman	√	
Cllr Francis Hayden	Mendip District Council		√
Robert Palmer	Mendip DC Officer		
Cllr David Tooke	Dorset Council		
Cllr Spencer Flower	Dorset Council		
Cllr Piers Brown	Dorset Council		
Matthew Reeks	Dorset Council Officer		
Ed Gerry	Dorset Council Officer		
Cllr Ann Bellows	New Forest District Council		√
Martin Peacock	New Forest District Council Officer		
Cllr Lucy Wallace	South Somerset District Council		
Rachael Whaites	South Somerset DC Officer		
Cllr Bridget Wayman	Wiltshire Council	√	
Cllr Nabil Najjar	Wiltshire Council	√	
Cllr Jose Green	Wiltshire Council		
Natasha Gumbrell	Wiltshire Council Officer		
Cllr Edward Heron	Hampshire County Council		
Garry King	Hampshire CC Officer	√	
Cllr William Wallace	Somerset County Council		
Vacant	Somerset CC Officer		
Charles Routh	Natural England	√	
Zac Sibthorpe	Forestry Commission	√	
Alistair Fitzgerald	Independent		√
Vacant	Wiltshire Association of Town & Parish Councils		
Vacant	Dorset Association of Town & Parish Councils (DATPC)		

Francis Taylor		Campaign to Protect Rural England	√	
Andi Whitcombe		National Farmers Union	√	
Louise Stratton		National Farmers Union		
William Kenealy		Cranborne Chase Landscape Trust		
Paul Tory		CLA	√	
<b>AONB Team</b>		<b>Position</b>		
Linda Nunn	FT	AONB Director	√	
Richard Burden	PT	Principal Landscape and Planning Officer	√	
Shirley Merrick	PT	Team Support Officer	√	

### Leavers and New Members

Richard Broadhead, Wiltshire Council officer retired

Mike Jones, representative for Dorset ATPC retired

Paul Tory joined as the representative of the CLA

Councillor Nabil Najjar joined as a representative of Wiltshire Council

Poppy Roo joined the Chase & Chalke team as Communications Officer

Alison Marsh joined the AONB as Business Support Officer for FiPL.

#### 1. Welcome from Chairman, Mike Short

Members present for this Zoom meeting introduced themselves.

#### 2. Minutes of the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 and any matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were checked, and the actions reported on.

<b>Actions Minutes of the Meeting and Matters Arising</b>
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The Minutes of the meeting were signed as a true record and can now be placed on the AONB website.
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#### 3. Report A – AONB Budget 2021 - 2022

**Purpose:** *To inform the Panel of the situation regarding:*

- *actual core and project budget expenditure up to the end of September 2021 and*
- *predicted expenditure up until end December 2021 that accompanied the first grant aid claim to Defra at the end of September*
- *an overview of the entire AONB budget for 2021-22*

#### **AONB core and project budget expenditure to end of September 2021**

LN explained the table showing budget expenditure until end September 2021.

The total Defra core and project grant funding for 2021-22 is £223,448, Local Authority contributions of £63,961, with a total budget of £287,409.

The first estimated claim to the end of December went to Defra at the end of September and the final claim will be made at the end of December. The predictions sent to Defra of expenditure was explained.

LN needs a temporary contracted individual to finalise the 40 walks and cycle rides to celebrate the AONBs 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Also, to find someone to ease the pressure on Richard Burden. A Nature Recovery Officer is needed and with salary unspent from our Partnerships and Funding officer leaving, plus the savings on moving onto Wiltshire Council's IT system, there is money in the budget to employ a full-time officer as of April next year.

Covid restrictions has meant 'events' being held online hence much of the work that would have taken place 'in the field' has not been possible.

**Project budgets 2021-22** - Project budgets are 100% Defra grant aided.

**Biodiversity Fund £14,103** – helps to pay the Farmland Officer's salary

**International Dark Sky Reserve – £5,000**

The 2021 Star Festival.

Dark Sky accreditation.

Tisbury Rail Station International Dark Sky Reserve signage.

Grants for lighting upgrades.

**Discover Cranborne Chase – £4,000**

The Chalke Valley History Festival in June.

Design, print and the distribution of The Hart magazine.

**National Lottery Heritage Fund, Landscape Partnership (LP) Scheme – £2,300**

This will be spent on LP projects

**Landscapes Alive - £6,162**

To complete a dew pond in the Chalke Valley after Covid stopped work on it in 2020.

**Externally Funded Projects 2021-22**

- Year 3 of the Landscape Partnership Scheme due to finish June 2024
- The Environmental Land Management Test work (Defra), ended June 2021
- Facilitation of the Nadder Farmer Group (Natural England)
- Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)

**Local Authority Contributions** have remained the same for the last two years. There has been no further news on grant aid for AONBs as recommended in the Glover Review report.

**AONB Annual Forecast Table** – this was explained to members. This report lists the complete suite of budget heads and projects, internally and externally funded, and the percentage of expenditure.

<b>Local Authority Contributions</b>	£	% contributions	
Wiltshire Council	39,259.00	61.38%	
Dorset Council	18,856.00	29.48%	
Hampshire County Council	2,187.48	3.42%	
Somerset County Council	735.55	1.15%	
New Forest District Council	2,187.48	3.42%	
Mendip District Council	434.94	0.68%	
South Somerset District Council	300.62	0.47%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63,961.00</b>	<b>100%</b>	

#### **Recommendations Report A Budgets**

1. The Board notes that expenditure in core and project budgets for 2021-22 is currently less than usually expected at this time in the financial year, particularly around staffing, whilst predicted expenditure should ensure required work is carried out ahead of a Nature Recovery Officer being recruited
2. The Board notes the planned ongoing core expenditure to facilitate AONB work outlined in the Management Plan going forward
3. The Board endorses the continuing search for funds to support the PT Farm Conservation Advisor

#### **Actions Report A Budgets**

- a. LN to continue to search for external funding streams
- b. LN to advertise the Nature Recovery Officer (NRO) Post
- c. LN to ensure contingency planning in place in case the NRO post remains unfilled

#### **4. Report B – Team Update**

**Purpose:** *To update the Board on the work of the team since January 2021.*

A large amount of work has been undertaken since the last Board meeting, with staff working from home. Only specific projects below were discussed in detail. LN went through the recommendations of the report first so that discussions centred on those points that required Board attention. As a quorum was not present no votes could be taken but Richard Burden outlined his concerns regarding three planning applications. Councillor Najjar abstained from the discussions citing a conflict with discussing any Local Authority applications as he himself sits on a planning board at Wiltshire Council.

#### **Richard Burden – Principal Landscape and Planning Officer (PT 3 days a week)**

- Littledown development - issues with new developers\*

RB detailed the problems with the Littledown Development that has been caused by a change in developer. Issues include improvements to the road frontage, undergrounding of electric cables and the entry into the site. RB requested that the Board endorse the original agreement with the previous developers.

- [New Forest National Park consultation on an Article 4 Direction](#) to control pop-up camp sites\*

The issue of Permitted Development Rights for camp sites and the doubling of permitted days from 28 to 56 by the Government in response to COVID-19 and the impacts on their communities, resulted in the NFNPA issuing a consultation. Wiltshire Council are not considering this an issue in their area.

- [Blandford Waste Management Centre](#) P/DCC/2021/01597\*

Next to the Sunrise Business Park, this needs a less visually intrusive design and location on the site. The Board endorsed a few years ago that an AONB was not a place for waste treatment sites. RB has engaged in positive dialogue with the agents.

### Other Team Work

The team work completed since the last Board meeting was comprehensively covered in Report B. This work was not fully covered within this meeting, but an edited version is available to read at the end of these Minutes at Annex A.

<b>Recommendations Report B Team Work</b>
1. The Board notes the work of the team since January 2021 on the wide variety of core and project work
2. The Board recognises the potential additional pressure on the AONB from the New Forest National Parks Article 4 Direction restricting pop-up camp sites and supports in principle bringing relevant LPA staff together to initiate the Article 4 Direction for the AONB
3. The Board supports Richard Burdens ongoing work to greatly enhance the Littledown development
4. The Board discusses and agrees the most appropriate way forward regarding the Blandford Waste Management Centre
5. The Board recognises that securing long term funding for additional staff is a critical priority, particularly as the workload on the team is likely to continue to increase with additional requirements from the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme

<b>Actions Report B Team Work</b>
a. LN to write to LPA partners and other AONBs to look into an Article 4 Direction for the AONB
b. RB to ensure that the Blandford Waste LEMP needs to address landscape matters correctly for the least intrusive landscape impacts and not just the ecological issues that it currently addresses.

### 5. Report C – [Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership](#) Progress

**Purpose:** *To give an up-to-date report on the progress of the National Lottery Heritage Funded project and its twenty projects.*

The Chairman thanked Jonathan Monteith for the excellent report on the progress of the 20 projects. This report has been produced for the meeting with the Heritage Lottery representatives tomorrow, 28<sup>th</sup> October.

For the benefit of new Members LN explained the history behind being awarded the five year £2.7m project. LN went through the report on each of the 20 projects. The full details of the projects can be found on the link above and the report sent to all Members.

<b>Recommendations Report C – Chase &amp; Chalke</b>
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| 1. The Board notes the work of the Chase & Chalke Team since January 2021 on the wide variety of projects. |
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<b>Actions Report C Chase &amp; Chalke</b>
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| a. LN to report at the next Board meeting the long term plans for the Chase & Chalke Projects, and the legacy the project will leave. |
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## **6. Report D – Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Programme: 2021-22 to 2024**

**Purpose:** *To give a brief introduction to the three-year Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme; outline the allocations to Cranborne Chase AONB and recent changes from Defra.*

The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme will provide additional investment to allow farmers to deliver bigger and better outcomes for the environment for Climate, Nature, People and Place, mirroring 10 AONB Management Plan objectives. Farmers/landowners have to come up with project ideas which are put through a rigorous application process – this was explained. A specific amount of money was allocated over the three years, and each project must be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March. The Local Assessment Panel will individually ‘score’ applications and determine projects. The LAP members include individuals from Historic England, Forestry Commission, Rights of Way/Access Officers (Dorset and Wiltshire) and Environment Agency. A Member of this Board, Garry King, sits on the LAP. Applications under £5,000 can be processed individually by LN, with conditions. Members will excuse themselves if the applicant is known to them. The LAP will meet in November. So far 24 enquiries have been received. Alison Marsh is the Business Support Officer and Helena Darragh has been recruited as FiPL Officer. Monthly and quarterly reports are required by Defra.

Paul Tory welcomed the project but warned of the issue of dual funding, and other pots of money that a project may be accessing. Members queried what will happen when the three years are completed. Lobbying for a longer term plan to Defra was suggested, together with feedback on the importance of the environment and the landscape. LN thought it prudent to wait for the project to progress a while before this was actioned. Any monies not spent in each financial year is lost.

<b>Recommendations Report D Farming in Protected Landscapes</b>
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| 1. The Board recognises the unique opportunity FiPL represents in encouraging environmentally friendly farming projects within this AONB that can benefit |
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climate, nature, people and place together with the primary objectives set out in the AONB Management Plan 2019-24

2. The Board recognises the additional work undertaken by the AONB team both from the beginning of the FiPL programme and also going forward; individual applications will require a wealth of culminative knowledge from within the team to process positively, objectively and fairly.

#### **Actions Report D Farming in Protected Landscapes**

- a. Ensure an appropriate amount of funding is reapplied from year 1 to year 2.
- b. LN to bring a FiPL report to the next Board meeting.
- c. LN and the Chairman to look at lobbying Defra in six months' time for longer term funding for protected landscapes. To include a discussion with the Wildlife Trusts, and Paul Tory directly.

### **7. Any Other Business**

Councillor Najjar plans to raise the profile of the AONB with Wiltshire Council's Area Boards whose areas cover the AONB using training sessions for councillors who sit on those planning committees.

Garry King highlighted Hampshire Council's Minerals and Waste strategy that will go out for consultation in the Spring next year. The Hants Spatial Strategy is in its final stages. GK will update the Board when the final strategy is available.

The Chairman, Mike Short, thanked Linda Nunn and her team for all of the work her team has completed. The Chairman also thanked those Board Members who joined him for this Zoom meeting, and for their useful comments.

### **8. Date of next meeting**

An April meeting to be arranged.

**The meeting ended at 11.50**

Signed as a true record of the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

*Mike Short*

**Mike Short (Chairman)**

### **ACTIONS**

**Actions Minutes of the Meeting and Matters Arising**

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#### **Actions Report A Budgets**

- a. LN to continue to search for external funding streams
- b. LN to advertise the Nature Recovery Officer (NRO) Post
- c. LN to ensure contingency planning in place in case the NRO post remains unfilled

#### **Actions Report B Team Work**

- a. LN to write to LPA partners and other AONBs to look into an Article 4 Direction for the AONB
- b. RB to ensure that the Blandford Waste LEMP needs to address landscape matters correctly for the least intrusive landscape impacts and not just the ecological issues that it currently addresses.

#### **Actions Report C Chase & Chalke**

- a. LN to report at the next Board meeting the long term plans for the Chase & Chalke Projects, and the legacy the project will leave.

#### **Actions Report D Farming in Protected Landscapes**

- a. Ensure an appropriate amount of funding is reapplied from year 1 to year 2.
- b. LN to bring a FiPL report to the next Board meeting.
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#### **ANNEX A**

The work that has progressed since the last Board meeting, and not detailed at this meeting, includes the following.

#### **Richard Burden – Principal Landscape and Planning Officer (PT 3 days a week)**

- Formally responded to 256 planning applications since the last board meeting.
- Chalkway House issues – initially raised by Cllr Josie Green;
- Bonham Farm forestry planting contrary to landscape character
- Two separate Freedom of Information requests
- [Boyes Transport at Zeals 20/04569/FUL \(Wiltshire\)](#) – a problematic proposal
- Ongoing applications for fences to reduce road noise
- [Hindon Slurry Lagoon 20/02007/FUL \(wiltshire.gov.uk\)](#)
- A major housing development at Wincombe Lane, Shaftesbury
- Applications for the reuse of agricultural buildings, newer and larger ones
- C13 and Melbury Abbas very little engagement by the Highway Authority
- Cross boundary [solar farm P/FUL/2021/02046 \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](#)
- 400 glamping units at [Wimborne St Giles 3/21/0620](#) using PDR (56 days)
- Pre-application consultations including several large ones

#### **Planning Policy:**

- Wiltshire Council Local Plan Review



- Dorset Council Local Plan consultation
- New Forest District Council SPD recreational impacts and offsetting payments
- Hampshire Infrastructure and Environment Strategy
- NPPF consultation on proposed national/local design codes and revisions
- Revised NPPF with explicit reference to the setting of AONBs
- Wiltshire Council Climate Change and Green Blue Infrastructure Strategies
- Somerset Local Heritage List Project
- Government consultation on reducing controls on 5G hardware.

#### **Neighbourhood Planning:**

- Blandford Neighbourhood Plan – AONB continues to work with Pimperne Parish Council and CPRE
- Pimperne is ‘refreshing’ its 2-year-old Neighbourhood Plan
- Wimborne St Giles Neighbourhood Plan; limiting it to only parts of parishes

#### **Pro-active work:**

- Unsuccessful proposed Bournemouth University funded mobile observatory
- Early steps in forming a national Dark Night Sky group
- Concerns over planting of trees in the wrong places
- [‘Right Tree, Right Place’](#) publication now completed by Fiona Fyfe.
- South East & East Protected Landscapes Planning Officer Zoom meetings

**Buxbury Farm, Swallowcliffe** - potential site for the ‘Living Landscape Centre’.

#### **Tracy Adams – Farm Conservation Advisor (PT 3 days a week)**

- Defra’s Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund pays to run the Nadder Valley Farmer Group, an area of 3,700ha, of 25 members.
- Lord Benyon visit with seven farmer group representatives to discuss biodiversity net gain and carbon offsetting,
- LN and TA completed the Environmental Land Management Scheme test with consultants. The [Final Report](#) can be found on the AONB website.
- The Wylve Valley Farmer Group includes 12 holdings of nearly 9,000ha.
- Tracy viewed and advised on a tree planting scheme for Donhead Hall
- General on-site farm advice continues which is valued by farmers.
- The Defra funded FiPL programme initial work

#### **Mel Capper – Communications Officer (PT 3 days a week; plus 1 day per week with LP Scheme)**

- The Hart Magazine sent via Royal Mail to 21,000 households. Now looking to create a sponsorship pack to produce four editions over two years.
- Website - launched in May 2020 with over 55,000 unique users.
- Social media channels - Facebook has 1305 followers, Instagram 1283 and Twitter 1849. Stakeholder engagement has increased through our events.
- BBC Countryfile – Sunday 9 May a special Cranborne Chase AONB edition
- BBC Radio 4 Farming Today – <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000vx4n>
- One e-newsletter each month to our audience of over 2200 subscribers.

**Shirley Merrick – Support Officer (PT 3 days a week)**

- Shirley has provided the usual support for the work of the team, and includes finance work and secretarial services to Richard Burden.

**Steve Tonkin – Dark Sky Advisor (PT 3 days a week)**

- Stargazing Evenings in August and 4 planned from October to December.
- February Dark Skies Starfest reached in excess of 1500 people.
- International Dark Sky Week two events attracted 250 attendees.
- Media - 11 radio interviews, promoted to two youth groups, a Stargazers podcast, the BBC *Countryfile* programme and our e-newsletter,
- The Chalke Valley History Festival, the End of the Road Festival at the Larmer Tree Gardens, and we will be at the Marlborough Dark Skies Festival.
- Dark Sky Custodians training for events and Sky Quality Meter readings.
- Dark Sky Accreditation applications from villages, parishes, and businesses.

**Jonathan Monteith – Chase & Chalke Manager (FT externally funded by NLHF)**

JM started in October 2020 on this £2.7m scheme, of 20 new projects with five Officers. His report for the National Heritage Lottery Fund was sent to all members detailing progress to date.

**Alison Marsh** started with the team as Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Business Support Officer on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

**Linda Nunn – Director (FT)**

LN has been involved with all aspects of the team’s work. The priority remains to fill staff posts.

- The ELMS Advocacy work (£7k Defra) and closing the ELMS Test work in June, were closely followed by the launch of Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL).
- A Delivery Plan workshop was held 3<sup>rd</sup> February. The three themes were:
  - Landscapes Alive (Conservation and enhancement of natural beauty)
  - Landscapes for All (Encouraging enjoyment and learning by everyone)
  - Living in Landscapes (Supporting and encouraging the local economy and communities)

The situation regarding FiPL means that the Delivery Plan will require re-thinking.

- The Diversity and Inclusion study was completed.
- An online AONB Annual Forum takes place on November 10<sup>th</sup>
- No progress on the 27 recommendations of the Glover Review.
- Collating 40 walking, cycling and horse-riding routes to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> year
- The Farming Innovation Programme, 20<sup>th</sup> October

<b>Recommendations Report B Team Work</b>
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<p>sites and supports in principle bringing relevant LPA staff together to initiate the Article 4 Direction for the AONB</p>
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<p>9. The Board discusses and agrees the most appropriate way forward regarding the Blandford Waste Management Centre</p>
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<p><b>Actions Report B Team Work</b></p>
<p>a. LN to write to LPA partners and other AONBs to look into an Article 4 Direction for the AONB</p>
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