

**Cranborne Chase
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**



**Partnership Board Meeting
30th May 2022**

10.30 Sixpenny Handley Village Hall

MINUTES

Representative	Organisation	Present	Apologies
Mike Short	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		
Vacant	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		
Lynn Trigwell	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		
Stuart Waite	Dorset Association of Town & Parish Councils (DATPC)		√

Francis Taylor		Campaign to Protect Rural England	√	
Ed Humbar		National Farmers Union		√
Vacant		National Farmers Union		
William Kenealy		Cranborne Chase Landscape Trust		
Paul Tory		CLA	√	
AONB Team		Position		
Linda Nunn	FT	AONB Director	√	
Richard Burden	PT	Principal Landscape and Planning Officer	√	
Shirley Merrick	PT	Team Support Officer	√	

Leavers and New Members

Lynn Trigwell replaced Natasha Gumbrell - Wiltshire Council
Ed Humbar has replaced Andi Whitcombe NFU

1. Welcome from Chairman, Mike Short

Members introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 27th October 2021 and any matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were checked, and the following actions from the last meeting were updated

<p>Budgets Aa. An extra 14.7% has been awarded to all AONBs by DEFRA for 2022-23 and for the next two years. LN to continue to search for external funding streams. A Wessex Water meeting was attended by team members RB and HD to check out potential for possible future project work and funding.</p>
<p>Budgets Ab. LN to advertise the Nature Recovery Officer (NRO) post. Ab – this post has now been evaluated and is being advertised. Going onto the Wilts IT system has resulted in a significant saving that can be put towards funding that position.</p>
<p>Budgets Ac. LN to ensure contingency planning in place in case the NRO post remains unfilled Ac – answered above</p>
<p>Team work Ba. LN to contact LPA partners and other AONBs to look into an Article 4 Direction for the AONB Ba – An Article 4 Direction can remove Permitted Development Rights. The New Forest NPA put this in place for camping when Covid resulted in PDR for 56 days instead of 28 days. The AONB has not pursued this; would require the LPAs to put in place as we are not a planning authority.</p>

Team work Bb. RB to ensure that the Blandford Waste Management Centre scheme, if it goes forward for approval, is the least visually intrusive, and that the LEMP is amended to address landscape matters correctly to achieve speedy screening for the least intrusive landscape impacts, together with sustained long term landscape integration, and not just the ecological issues that it currently addresses.

RB attend the Planning Committee where the application was approved. AONB concerns were only half addressed.

Actions Minutes of the Meeting and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting were signed as a true record and can now be placed on the AONB website.

3. Report A – Constitutional/Governance Issues

Purpose: *To inform the Board on current constitutional/governance issues regarding the Cranborne Chase AONB Partnership*

Recommendation 1. LN reported that the Partnership Agreement is currently with the Wiltshire Council Legal team for review. LT added that this was to ensure all governance matters are up to date.

Recommendation 2. LT thanked Mike Short for standing in as Acting Chairman. The Council is now in a position to advertise for a new chairman and MS is welcome to apply. MS highlighted that the appointment is unremunerated and does not attract Transport and Subsistence (T&S).

Recommendation 3. DEFRA is looking at a new funding agreement. A 14.7% increase in the grant payment is expected for the next three years. DEFRA has also allocated year 2 FIPL funding. Once LN has been informed of the outcome of the grant funding she will inform members and prepare the budget for 2022-23.

DEFRA have agreed extra funding for this year which ideally needs to be matched (25%) by LA partners. If LAs could increase contributions to a total of £10,916.84, then together with the additional monies from DEFRA, a total of £43,667.36 could be added to the AONB core budget. This extra funding from DEFRA was notified to LN very late. Hampshire and Somerset County Council's have both agreed to that extra 25% contribution funding. Wiltshire Council's Area Boards were looking at providing that funding for this year but that is no longer possible. The Council cannot commit to that extra funding as its budgets have already been set. WC could agree to that extra funding for the next two financial years.

That extra funding of £32,750.52, if matched, would contribute to one or two more members of staff, but if not matched it has to be used for projects. GK reported that the North Wessex Downs AONB has also had similar issues with this extra funding requirement.

Recommendation 4. The Glover Review reported on the structure of AONBs. This AONB has lost its topic groups over the years and has just two Board meetings a year. Paul Tiplady has been commissioned to do a review of the governance of this AONB.

It was suggested that the Tiplady report includes a timeline. GK reported that the NWD AONB currently has a good governance model.

Recommendation 5. LN reported on the reasons for potentially delaying the review of the AONB Management Plan, due to be completed in 2024, because of the Government's response to the Landscapes Review, the proposed Landscape Strategy, an outcomes framework for evidencing implementation of Management Plans and the publication of refreshed Management Plan Guidance by Natural England. Outcomes need to feature highly in delivery plans. If agreed, the next Management Plan will be for 2025 – 2030.

As the Management Plan is a statutory document for all LA partners, this would require them to sign up to extending the 'material consideration' status of the Plan. GK suggested this could be done by producing a short document to just bring the Plan up-to-date. LT said that document should set out the proposed changes looking forward. Out of date policies would need to be identified, and then partners consulted to ensure that document was sound.

Recommendations Report A – Constitutional/Governance Issues
1. The Board notes that the revised Partner Agreement will be sent to all partners as soon as it is received from Wiltshire Council legal team.
2. The Board endorses and supports the decision by Wiltshire Council to start the process of recruiting a Chairman
3. The Board notes that Defra and Wiltshire Council will be signing a new funding agreement for Cranborne Chase AONB for the period 2022-25
4. The Board recognises the value of, and welcomes, a governance review during 2022-23 as recommended by the Protected Landscapes Review
5. The Board recognises the potential and pragmatic need to delay the AONB Management Plan 2019-24 review for one year, dependent on further information on national initiatives and after Local Authorities have discussed internally, the ongoing status of the Plan for the intervening year.

Actions Report A – Constitutional/Governance Issues
a. LN to send out the Partner Agreement to Members
b. WC to start the process of appointing a new chairman
c. LN to bring a report on the governance of this AONB to the next Board meeting.
d. LN to produce an interim document to ensure the integrity of the AONB Management Plan if/when its review is delayed.
e. GK to send a copy of the short document he has to LN

4. Report B – AONB budget updates

Purpose: *To inform the Board of the final AONB core and project expenditure up to the 31st March 2022*

Recommendation 1. WC finance department is currently short staffed and under pressure from Government to make refunds to council tax customers. Our appointed finance officer spends just one day per month on reports for both NWD AONB and ourselves. The end of year figures has not yet been received. The structure of the

reports and the amount of cost centres, currently 32, were discussed and how changes could be made to improve the reporting process. LT agreed to an action to investigate how WC could provide adequate financial support to the CCAONB. MS stated that he would seek to instigate an independent financial review of CCAONB in order to ascertain why there was always a financial discrepancy between CCAONB and WC. LN reported on the extra funding received from DEFRA of £35,992 and how it was spent.

Recommendation 2. LN is unable to provide the budget forecast for 2022 – 2023 until she has had confirmation from LAs regarding funding for this year

Table 1

Local Authority Contributions	£	% contributions	Additional 2022/3 confirmed / potential
Wiltshire Council	39,259.00	61.38%	6,700.76
Dorset Council	18,856.00	29.48%	
Hampshire County Council	2,187.48	3.42%	373.36
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%	51.31
TOTAL	63,961.00	100%	

Table 1. Yearly contributions requested over the last three years, and the additional requested amounts agreed.

Recommendations Report B – AONB budget updates
1. The Board notes the indicative expenditure of core and project budgets for 2021- 22, including the additional Defra grant monies of £35,992 given in January 2022.
2. The Board notes the potential for increasing the core budget in 2022-23 to allow additional team capacity and to inform the Director should any further contribution be at all possible this financial year.
3. The Board notes the expectation from Defra that Local Authorities increase their contributions at least as of 2023-4 and 2024-5 to match its ongoing additional allocation to AONBs

Actions Report B – AONB budget updates
a. LN to send budget report (P13) when the EOY figures are received.
b. Members to confirm whether authorities can match fund the extra DEFRA funding for this year.
c. Members to seek the extra funding contributions DEFRA expects from their authorities for the next two financial years.
d. LT to discuss with the AONB finance officer and ways found to see if the system can be improved.
e. MS to investigate having an independent financial review.

5 Report C – AONB Teamwork Update

Purpose: *To inform the Board of the work of the team since November 2021*

The recommendations for this item were reported on by RB.

Recommendation 1. The Board thanked all staff members for their hard work. A lot of that work has been published in the Hart magazine which was sent out to all householders in the AONB recently. A summary of the team work can be found at Annex A.

Recommendation 2. The new Position Statement No.12 Biodiversity Net Gain in New Development requests that developers incorporate a bat box, bird box, and a bee brick into any the new build. The developer would fund that within the cost of the development.

Recommendation 3. Bonham Plain – RB detailed the issues regarding this tree planting scheme of 87 hectares (circa 214 acres) of new woodland. This will significantly change the landscape character with woodland not typical of the terraced area. Neither the Forestry Commission nor the land owner are following national guidance, with no LVIA or EIA produced.

Recommendation 4. [Right Tree, Right Place Guidance](#) – this document is available on the website. LT reported on the [Wiltshire Council's Community Environmental Toolkit](#) which details funding streams that are available and where to go to get more information.

Recommendation 5. Consistent lighting policies would be ideal across all local authority partners, with possibly an SPD. The International Dark Sky Reserve Status is at risk and a seminar will be held on 16th June for council CEO's and other groups who can influence lighting to be compliant with that status. The International Dark-Sky Association has granted an extension to the AONB until March 2024 to achieve 67% compliant lighting in commercial and domestic lighting. RB reported that WC's highways lighting is fully compliant.

Three grants were issued in February for local groups to install compliant lighting. There is now a Dark-Sky Accreditation system, with certificates for local B&B's, camping sites, businesses, schools or farmers who qualify. Grants are available to improve lighting o achieve accredited status.

RB detailed the issues with a planning application at Kingsdown Farm, Longbridge Deverill. BW agreed to attend the planning committee on behalf of the AONB. AF endorsed RB comments and the issues regarding the creeping development at this site.

Recommendation 6. The Board thanked Shirley Merrick for her 15 years service with the AONB and wished her well when she leaves at the end of June.

Recommendations Report C – AONB Teamwork Update

1. The Board notes the broad range and depth of work undertaken by the team during 2021-22 and on into 2022-23.

2. The Board endorses the Position Statement No: 12 – Biodiversity Net Gain with New Development with these words

*The Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership **strongly recommends** to all of its partner local authorities that the provision of facilities to enable biodiversity net gain should automatically be applied to all new developments in this AONB in the scale set out in this Position Statement with immediate effect.*

3. The Board expresses its extreme concern that a proposal of the scale such as Bonham Plain that will result in a change in the landscape of such magnitude, that there is no EIA nor LVIA

4. The Board commends ‘Right Tree, Right Place’ to all owners, managers and communities

5. The Board endorses the work of the team to promote consistent lighting control policies as a mechanism to avoid the threat of losing the IDSR status

6. The Board sends sincere thanks and best wishes to Shirley Merrick as she leaves the team after many years diligent service to the Partnership

Actions Report C – AONB Teamwork Update

a. Send out Simon Williams’ lighting document to Board Members

b. The new Position Statement No. 12 to be quoted in all planning consultation responses for new developments.

c. LT will speak to Georgina Clampitt-Dix regarding a policy for the AONB on lighting to get this incorporated into the local plan

d. BW to attend the planning committee meeting on behalf of the AONB regards Kingsdown Farm application.

6. Report D – [Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership](#)

Purpose: *To inform the Board of progress with the Chase & Chalke, Landscape Partnership Scheme*

Board members had previously received the latest quarterly report on the Chase & Chalke project.

A half day visit to some of the projects could be arranged in August for Board members. Covid has delayed many of the projects, but the work is progressing well now. The legacy from the projects is to leave a large volunteer force to keep the good works going that the projects have created.

FT mentioned the Friends of Ancient Monuments (FOAM) and their potential interest in the LIDAR work.

Recommendations Report D Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership
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1. The Board commends the work undertaken by the Chase & Chalke team over the period of this quarterly report

Actions Report D Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership
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a. JM to attend the next Board meeting.

b. LN to arrange a Doodle Poll of dates for a ½ day visit to C&C projects

c. LN to provide details of the LIDAR work to FT
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7. Report E – Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)

Purpose: *To inform the Board of outcomes for year one of the programme.*

The project is now in year 2 of a three year project. LN and TA worked on the project initially before Alison Marsh and Helena Darragh joined them late last year. All of the projects that were successful in being awarded grants were listed in the report. The project has many rules and regulations that have to be met by applicants. Due to these rules there was an underspend of £30,272.30 which was removed from the year 2 budget. FiPL outcomes are required for categories of: place, people, nature and climate. LN showed photographs of some of the projects.

[Farming in Protected Landscapes - Cranborne Chase AONB](#) see link for more details.

Just three projects that applied, failed to get the grant requested. There is £230,000 of funds for this year's projects. Projects will be required to have more focus, and with the demand each project may get awarded less this year; there will certainly be no underspend. The amount of initial allocation that LN returned to DEFRA in year one has been added equally back into years 2 and 3. The projects also have to comply with AONB aims and objectives from the Management Plan. The awards are decided upon by the Local Assessment Panel. LT reported that councils have CIL funds to award, as well as environmental net gains funds and it may be possible to link up these pots of money.

The AONB would like to apply for access to the Rural Land Registry database so that they are able to contact all of the farmers in the AONB area but there remains an issue with IT/GDPR compliance.

The next Local Assessment Panel meets on 21st June.

Recommendations Report E Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)
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1. The Board recognises the extensive amount of work undertaken in Year 1 by Helena Darragh and Alison Marsh to facilitate the 19 successfully grant awarded FiPL projects, especially having been in post for only 6 months
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2. The Board recognises that at least 4 additional members of the AONB team spent considerable time initiating FiPL in the early days and enabling Helena and Alison to gain as much knowledge as possible in a short period, at the start of the programme

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| 3. The Board recognises and supports the increased number of 'nature, climate, people and place' outcomes that have been made possible by the FiPL programme and endorses the trust placed in Protected Landscapes teams by Defra to manage such a programme |
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Actions Report E Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)
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| a. No actions. |
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8. Report F - A Wider Focus (to be presented via PowerPoint only)

Actions Report F A Wider Focus

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| a. LN to send out the PDF of the Power Point Presentation. |
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9. AOB and date of next meeting

PT reported on the insufficient energy generation, slurry pits and the visual impacts of solar farms.

RB commented on the Landscapes Review and that AONBs need to be kept separate from National Parks.

AF commented on the current lack of fertilisers for farmers.

GK reported on the Hampshire Council Minerals and Waste Plan and the Transport Plan 4 are both out for consultation. He will prepare a report for this Board as he does for the NWD AONB.

The meeting ended at 12.45

Signed as a true record of the meeting on 30th May 2022.

Mike Short

By Mike Short (Chairman)

ACTIONS

Actions Minutes of the Meeting and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting were signed as a true record and can now be placed on the AONB website.

Actions Report A – Constitutional/Governance Issues

- a. LN to send out the Partner Agreement to Members
- b. WC to start the process of appointing a new chairman
- c. LN to bring a report on the governance of this AONB to the next Board meeting.
- d. LN to produce an interim document to ensure the integrity of the AONB Management Plan if/when its review is delayed.
- e. GK to send a copy of the short document he has to LN

Actions Report B – AONB budget updates

- a. LN to send budget report (P13) when the EOY figures are received.
- b. Members to confirm whether authorities can match fund the extra DEFRA funding for this year.
- c. Members to seek the extra funding contributions DEFRA expects from their authorities for the next two financial years.
- d. LT to discuss with the AONB finance officer and ways found to see if the system can be improved.
- e. MS to investigate having an independent financial review.

Actions Report C – AONB Teamwork Update

- a. Send out Simon Williams' lighting document to Board Members
- b. The new Position Statement No. 12 to be quoted in all planning consultation responses for new developments.
- c. LT will speak to Georgina Clampitt-Dix regarding a policy for the AONB on lighting to get this incorporated into the local plan
- d. BW to attend the planning committee meeting on behalf of the AONB.

Actions Report D Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership

- a. JM to attend the next Board meeting.
- b. LN to arrange a Doodle Poll of dates for a ½ day visit to C&C projects
- c. LN to provide details of the LIDAR work to FT

Annex A Team Report Notes for the 30th May 2022 Board Meeting

Team Work Update

The team started back in the office to work at the beginning of March and the office is now connected to the Wiltshire Council IT system.

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

the Principal Landscape and Planning Officer role should be a full time post and needs reviewing.

157 planning applications since the last board meeting in October.
felling/planting applications via the Forestry Commission.

- Blandford Waste Management Centre – approved by Dorset Council
- The Bellway housing at the Brewery Roundabout at Blandford
- Large 800 house development, just outside AONB at Fordingbridge;
- Solar farm proposals just outside the AONB
- Pre-application comments given e.g. Tisbury Station housing
- Seeking compliant lighting for summer and winter events and updating the Good Lighting Guides
- Potential Living Landscape Centre site meetings
- SPD consultations from constituent LPAs
- Neighbourhood Plan consultations
- Using a consultant to follow up undergrounding of cables at Tollard Royal
- Policies to support the International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR) criteria for good lighting;
- National consultations and engagement:
- Maintaining regional links with East, South-East, and South-West protected landscapes
- Initial engagement in M4 to Dorset Coast highway study
- C13 and Melbury Abbas transport issues
- ‘Right Tree Right Place’ booklet to help ensure correct tree planting locations
- Nature Recovery Strategy – assisting Michele Bowe
- Responded to Land Use Consultants’ ‘permeability’ study
- Local Heritage Listing pilot studies engagement with Somerset CC.
- Forestry Felling Licence and replanting consultations
- Wessex Water’s new pipeline from Littledown Reservoir [Shaftesbury] to Fonthill,
- Presentation to North Dorset CPRE AGM
- Addressing the threat to the Cranborne Chase IDSR, seminar on June 16th

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

- Since January 2020, Defra’s Countryside Stewardship **Facilitation Fund** pays for Tracy’s time one day a week to run the Nadder Valley Farmer Group of 28 members covering an area of approximately 3,800ha. TA is paid two days a week via the 100% Defra Biodiversity Fund monies directly from the Defra grant.
- In November 2021, 16 members attended a woodland event led by Steve Russell
- In February, regenerative farming expert Niels Caulfield ran a workshop on agroforestry attended by 17 members at Pythouse Social Club.
- Supported the new Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Officer, Helena Darragh
- Supported RB by providing input into 6 felling and replanting applications from the Forestry Commission.
- Assisted Michele Bowe with background information on the biodiversity priorities for her report
- Nominated Nadder Valley Farmer Group Vice Chair and Tisbury dairy farmer Peter Shallcross for a Wiltshire Life Conservation Award which he won in March 2022

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

- The Hart magazine was published in May 2022 and sent to 22,000 households within the CCAONB.
- Since October 2021 35,000 unique users have used the website, which is regularly updated.
- the *Chalkeboard* BLOG helps with engagement levels and includes information about *FIPL*.
- **Facebook** has 1644 followers, **Instagram** 1418 and **Twitter** 1931. These are steady increases.
- Publicity for the recipients of our Dark Sky Friendly Awards to promote Astro-tourism, awarding Dark Sky Friendly plaques and certificates.
- Farming in Protected Landscapes publicity materials to be promote at the Chalke Valley History Festival and via our e-newsletters.
- New 40th Anniversary Walks and updating the current ones to go on the website and will be made available in various places across the AONB in the coming months.
- two e-newsletters issued each month, one for AONB work and the other for 'Chase & Chalke' LPS, with over 2250 subscribers.
- Communication contacts across the AONB national network to support the NAAONB and vice versa.
- Production of an educational dark sky animation film. The script is ready to go.
- 200 bird box kits have been offered to communities for their jubilee celebrations. An A4 leaflet has been prepared and designed to accompany each kit.

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

- International Dark Sky Reserve - the International Dark Sky Association has granted an extension to our initial target of having compliant outside lighting at 67% by the end of October this year to April 2024.
- Sky Quality Meter readings have been completed to maintain our IDSR status.
- Since January 2022 we have conducted 5 public stargazing events and 7 public online sessions.
- meetings held with a number of parish and town councils and their representatives.
- Dark Sky Friendly accreditation scheme - the first awards in April this year, and with several more in the pipeline, including our soon-to-be first Dark Sky Friendly villages.
- We have part-funded three newly compliant lighting schemes through our Lighting Grant Scheme.
supported the Chase & Chalke 'Starry Starry Nights' project and provided training for their Custodians.
- worked alongside Simon Williams to produce improved lighting guidance for planners

Jonathan Monteith – Landscape Partnership (LP) Scheme Manager (FT externally funded)

- JM started work in October 2020 and manages the £2.7m LP, known as 'Chase & Chalke', delivering 20 projects over the five years of the scheme.

- The National Lottery Heritage Fund case officer and monitor have been very understanding and supportive in finding alternative ways to undertake and deliver some of the projects.
- The latest quarterly report for the National Heritage Lottery Fund was sent to members with the meeting reports.

The team consists of:

- Roland Hughes (FT) Ranger and Volunteer Coordinator
- Rachel Limb (Job share 2.5 days) Heritage and Community Engagement Officer
- Charlotte Moreton (Job share 2.5 days) Heritage and Community Engagement Officer
- Poppy Rooou (PT 2 days a week) – Communications Officer
- Sarah Forwood (PT 3 days) left in December 2021 and interviews were held just last week to find a replacement.

Alison Marsh started with the team as Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Business Support Officer on 11th October and **Helena Darragh** began as FiPL Officer mid November 2021.

Linda Nunn – Director (FT)

- LN has been involved one way or another with most of the work outlined in the reports.
- The Job Profile has been completed for a Nature Recovery Officer and passed the Wiltshire Council Evaluation Panel at Grade K. Michele Bowe put together the draft Nature Recovery Plan in 10 weeks.
- LN will continue to search for funding to recruit to areas of work such as Access and Engagement, Responsible Tourism and for a ranger service to provide the crucial link between visitors and the AONB landscapes. Also funding for Tracy's post that loses a day of funding in December as the three years of facilitation funding for the Nadder Farmer Group comes to a close. Attempts to find means to relieve the pressures on the Principal Landscape and Planning post remains a high priority also.

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

- Shirley provides all the financial and administrative services for the AONB team and provides the secretariat for all meetings. a further half day a week to her time to assist the Chase & Chalke team
- Shirley is leaving in June after 15 years of service.