

East Devon AONB Partnership Plan

DELIVERY PLAN – 2023-25

EAST DEVON AONB PARTNERSHIP | March 2023

THEME 1

Place

Strategic aim 1: Conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB

Theme 1 PLACE

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role /action	Partners/Comments ¹	Update March 2023
Place	Landscape and heritage	Keep under review and update landscape character assessment	On going	Fund/partner	EDDC, DCC, BHAONB	- on going liaison with Devon Landscape Policy Group regarding Devon County assessments/protocol and integrating future climate change
		Encourage appropriate woodland creation projects esp. in areas of high soil erosion	On going	Support, encourage	EDCP, BHAONB, DCC, EA, FC, DWT, WCRT, FWAG, farmers	- Natural Flood Management project in upper reaches of Coly (Southleigh valley) – exploring opportunities with WCRT - make use of developing Ancient Woodland Inventory data through partnership with DWT/DCC to guide appropriate activity when report completed
		Seek to develop farm building design guide with Devon Landscape Policy Group	2023-4	Support, partner, fund	DCC, DLPG,	- Scoping through DLPG with a view to delivery in 2023/24
		Encourage landscape enhancement schemes	On going	Encourage and support	Landowners, WPD	-Undergrounding LV power cables through National Grid funding – Lower Otter scheme completed and Fire Beacon Hill LNR proposal in development for 2023/24 delivery - review working with local communities through Nature Recovery Parish focussed project to enhance local landscapes (Newton Poppleford and Harpford/ Uplyme PCs)
		Explore/support opportunities for citizen science landscape photo monitoring projects	2019-2024	Research, develop	Landowners, Partnership members	- Support to coastal monitoring projects at Sidmouth and Branscombe - Provide mobile phone FPP brackets to a range of local projects and use in FiPL monitoring wherever possible

¹ See page 13 for details of abbreviations

East Devon AONB Partnership Plan - Delivery Plan 2023-2024

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role / action	Partners/Comments	Update March 2023
Place	Environmental quality and climate	Support and encourage environmental and energy initiatives, particularly where these are under community ownership	On going	Support, encourage, fund	Community groups, Parish Councils and associations/groups	- Make use of opportunities to promote the Communities Project Fund (CPF) as a means of encouraging local action
		Support community schemes that will help to reduce, re-use and recycle waste	On going	Support, encourage, fund	Community groups, Parish Councils and associations/groups	- Make use of opportunities to promote the Communities Project Fund (CPF) as a means of encouraging local action
		Work with partners on the East Devon Catchment Partnership to deliver climate change adaptation measures and promote sustainable management of our natural resources	On going	Partner, support, fund, encourage	EDCP, BHAONB, DAONB,	-Key focus on Axe Catchment project and links to River Axe SSSI status, EDDC Nutrient Management Plan requirements and AONBs Nature Recovery Plans -Support development and delivery of Triple Axe (x3Axe) project -develop community engagement proposal for NLHF with BHAONB/Dorset AONB (Rivers Run Through Us) - See NFM reference above
		Assist farmers in reducing impacts on clean water and air	On going	Support, encourage, promote, collaborate	NE, EA, DCC, FC, FWAG	(See farming and land management sub-theme)

Place

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role / action	Partners/Comments	Update March 2023
Place	Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Confirm and deliver actions in support of Government 25year Environment Plan in particular developing the Colchester Declaration , Natural Capital and achieving Net Gain (See also farming sub-theme for further details)	On - going	Lead, Support and encourage	NAAONB, NE, Defra, EDDC, DCC	- Delivering on AONB approaches to the Colchester Declaration pledges in particular for Nature Recovery, Species Recovery and Nature Connectedness
			2023/4		AONB & PCs	Wildlife officer in post – review trial project in Newton Poppleford & Harpford PC and Uplyme PC. Develop special species recovery plans and prioritise actions.
			2023-25		AONB team/Partnership	- Developing Nature Recovery Plan drawing on State of Nature for integration with Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy and revised AONB Management Plan (deadline 2025)
			2023-25		Various partners BCT, Dorset AONB, Exeter Uni, DBCRG	- Continue to explore follow up opportunities for meadow enhancements following Green Recovery Challenge Fund project with Bat Conservation Trust for Grey Long Eared Bat
			2023-25		NE, BHAONB	- Follow up work to NE Seed Corn funding for Bechstein Bats project
			2023-25		EDDC	- Seek to engage with EDDC Countryside and Planning officers on EDDC Net Gain Policy implementation when new Local Plan approved
		Play an active role in the Devon Local Nature Partnership	On going	Board Member	LNP	-Represent AONBs on Devon LNP board and provide support to LNP initiatives and delivery eg Right Place Right Tree guide, Nature Recovery Network mapping and proposed Devon Tree Strategy (2022-24)

East Devon AONB Partnership Plan - Delivery Plan 2023-2024

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role / action	Partners/Comments	Update March 2023
		Play an active role in the Lower Otter Restoration Project	On going	Liaison Group member	LORP SLG	- Project in delivery phase. AONB represented on the Stakeholder Liaison Group. Links to NG undergrounding powerlines project. See LORP website
		Play an active role in the East Devon Beaver Management Steering Group	On going	Mgt Group member	EDBMSG	- AONBs rep on East Devon Beaver Management Steering Group
Place	Coast	Encourage environmental and landscape improvements to existing large scale holiday sites on the coast	On going	Advise, encourage	EDDC/DCC/ Businesses	-Input into site development plans and comment on planning applications as they arise
		Support and encourage beach/marine litter and consumer/behaviour change campaigns	On going	Support, encourage	Community groups, EDDC, JCT	-Support community initiatives and events in local communities
		Support Jurassic Coast Trust initiatives and the conservation and protection of the coast in particular its setting	On going	Support	JCT	- Represent AONBs with Dorset AONB on Partnership Advisory Committee
		Engage in EDDC Beach Management Planning in Sidmouth/Seaton	On going	Consultee, Rep	EDDC	-Represent AONB on Beach management plan Stakeholder Groups at Sidmouth/Seaton

THEME 2

People and prosperity

Strategic aim 2: Encourage and support sustainable economic development, social engagement and recreational activity that conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the AONB



Theme 2

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role /action	Partners/Comments	March 2023
People and Prosperity	Farming and Land Management	Actively engage in the Catchment wide programmes	On going	Support and engage	EDCP, NE, EDFG	- Represent AONB on East Devon Catchment Partnership and support project delivery - Maintain links to East Devon Farmers Group
		Influence, support and encourage environmental stewardship schemes with farmer and landowner groups and individuals	On going	Support, encourage, coordinate	Defra, NAAONB, NE, FC, EA, EDFG, farmers, FWAG, CDE	- East Devon Farmer Group now a core AONB work stream running a series
		Deliver Farming in Protected Landscapes programme	2021-25	Deliver programme	NE, FWAG, EDDC, CDE, SWTA, YFC & farmers rep.	- Delivery of Farming in Protected Landscapes programme (FiPL) 2021-25
		Work with partners to develop and support sustainable woodland and hedgerow/ tree management	On going	Partner, support, encourage	NE, FC, farmers, woodland groups, DWT, DCC	- officer time and funding support to Devon Wildlife Trust 'Saving Devon's Treescape' project. - funding support for improved mapping of Ancient Woodland Inventory for Devon - Funding support for Devon Tree Strategy - supporting traditional hedgerow management via FiPL
		Work with partners to develop and support sustainable farming and land management practices and reduce flood risk	On going	Support and develop	Defra, NE, DCC, EA, WCRT, BHAONB, landowners, farmers, FWAG	- Continuing work initiated with Blackdown Hills AONB/DCC with focus in East Devon AONB on NFM interventions in upper reaches of Southleigh valley (River Coly). - supporting sustainable land management via FiPL
		Engage in agricultural policy development through National Association for AONBs	On going	Consultee	NAAONB	-Support NAAONB input to agr-environmental development

East Devon AONB Partnership Plan - Delivery Plan 2023-2024

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role /action	Partners/Comments	March 2023
People and Prosperity	Access, recreation and tourism	Coordinate East Devon Way Management Plan and promotion (see www.eastdevonway.org.uk)	On going	Coordinate and support	EDDC, DCC, ED Ramblers, landowners, Ambassadors, East Devon Walking Festival Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -reviewing route and linkages through volunteer support - review re-routing options from Exmouth and in river Coly - undertake route audit and produce a development plan (2022/3) - implement enhancements/proposals 2023-25 subject to funding - Support Sidmouth/East Devon Walking Festival
		Continue to promote and develop links with the tourism sector/businesses and the environment, in particular around the East Devon Way and South West Coast Path corridors	On going	Support, encourage, coordinate	EDDC, NT, CDE, NE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Maintain and expand footpath counter data recording programme at key locations across the AONB with partners (supported with Defra top up funding) -work with EDDC Tourism and other partners to support delivery of new Tourism and Cultural Strategies
		Deliver all ability access improvements across the AONB	2022-25	Fund/support	Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defra funded investment in publicly accessible access enhancements. Available in 2022/23 and 2024/25. Allocation of £48666 fully delivered in 2022/23. Allocation for 2024/25 - £57,824
		Support improvements to coastal access, in particular in the Undercliffs	On going	Support, encourage	NE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -respond to proposals for route improvements

People and prosperity

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role /action	Partners/Comments	March 2023
People and Prosperity	Planning and development	Farm Development Guidance with Devon Landscape Policy Group	2022/24	Engage, support	DLPG	- Support development in 2023/24
		Support the development of village and neighbourhood plans/guides	On going	Support, encourage, coordinate	Neighbourhood Plan groups/local councils	-Provide input into Neighbourhood Plan development and consultations as resources allow
		Respond to planning consultations in accordance with the AONB protocol as resources allow	On going	Consultee, advice	EDDC, DCC, NE	- Plans for shared planning post/officer with SD/ND AONBs starting in Apr 2023.
		To encourage use of Landscape Sensitivity Assessments in and within the setting of the AONB	On going	Encourage/ Support	EDDC, DCC, NE, scheme proposers	- Developed by EDDC as part of Local Plan review 2022-23
People and Prosperity	Transport and Highways	Contribute to the development of sustainable transport initiatives	On going	Support and engage	DCC, transport providers, local communities and businesses	-support and engage with any developing sustainable transport proposals in the AONB
		Investigate options to monitor and identify tranquil areas within the AONB (consider quiet lane network options)	2021-5	Research and develop	NAAONB, DLPG	- scope options for research project for 2022-4
		Encourage and support village gateway signs promoting the AONB	On going	Support, advise, promote	Local councils/ communities	-Promote signs to communities as opportunities arise – on hold pending outcome of AONB name change proposals as outlined in Glover review (National Landscape) .
		Encourage and support safe off-road access routes for all users	On going	Encourage, support	DCC, PCs, local groups	-Encourage/support A375 multiuser route Sidford-Sidbury
People and Prosperity	Rural Economy and Services	Work with EDDC and DCC on support programmes for the rural economy and assistance to sustainable micro-businesses	On going	Liaise, Influence, collaborate, support	DCC, EDDC,	- engage in Shared Prosperity Fund programme development/delivery and any rural development funding programmes - DCC Future Farming Resilience - link to FiPL (see farming)
		Support and encourage local produce/supply networks and support improved services for isolated rural communities	On going	Support and encourage	Local communities, businesses	-Support 'Taste' East Devon Food festival proposals and similar 'eat local' initiatives

East Devon AONB Partnership Plan - Delivery Plan 2023-2024

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role /action	Partners/Comments	March 2023
		Support local businesses in the development of the environmental economy and complementary programmes eg AONB Ambassador scheme	On going	Support, advise	Ambassadors, EDDC, DCC	-Hold annual Ambassador Networking event (Feb) and field visits (usually July) to increase awareness and connections across the AONB with business and environment.
		Work with LNP/LEP and partners to develop models demonstrating the natural capital of the AONB	On going	LNP Board member	LNP, LEP	- Natural Capital evidence being developed via AONB State of Nature report development. - NAAONB also exploring via Colchester Declaration .
People and Prosperity	Community and Culture	Actively engage local community groups and organisations in AONB projects and activities	On going	Facilitate, engage	Local groups, parishes, communities	- deliver #Savingspecialspecies programme of events and activities 2023/24 with various partners as part of Colchester Declaration work - Review Parish based Nature Recovery pilot in Newton Poppleford & Harpford and Uplyme PCs. - support community initiatives through AONB Communities Project Fund
		Support local action through the AONB Communities Project Fund (CPF) and other programmes	On going	Fund delivery, management, support	Local communities and organisations	-£20k budget fully allocated 2022/23 - Same sum to be budgeted for 2023/24.
		Support community level plan development eg neighbourhood plans	On going	Advise, consult	Neighbourhood Plan groups, local Councils, EDDC	-engage in Neighbourhood plan development

THEME 3

Communication and management

Strategic aim 3: The AONB is recognised and valued as a national, regional and local asset and is effectively managed in partnership with our stakeholders.

Seaton Down
Hillfort walk



Theme 3 - Communication and Management

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role /action	Partners/Comments	March 2023
Communication and management	Communication, education and awareness	Promote the AONB and work of the Partnership and its member organisations	On going	AONB Annual Meeting, Ambassador programme, Acland Award	Partnership, EDDC, DCC SWW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ambassador network schedule for Feb 2023 - Field event for July 2023 – plans to do with SWW - September Annual meeting and Acland Awards 27 September - Maintain AONB website and produce seasonal e-news - Test value/operation of Instagram/Facebook in AONB comms work (2020-23) - Annual photo contract for AONB landscape and events 2022/23 - Revise/update AONB display banners and develop AONB branding for 60th Anniversary - create AONB 60 things to do guide/leaflet - create 60yrs of change community exhibition with East Devon History Group
		Survey local communities on levels of awareness and understanding of the AONB	2022/23	5 yr awareness survey	Consultancy project	- survey carried out Q3/4 2022/23.
		Provide information and educational materials on the AONB to support partners across the area	On going	Support, assist	Provide information and data as required	-Provision of AONB information on demand
		Continue to develop the AONB Ambassador scheme for individuals, organisations and businesses Promote good practice in the AONB through the Acland Award	On going	Support, facilitate, encourage	Ambassadors and exemplars (Acland Award)	-Events in Feb and July and link to Annual Meeting in Sept through Acland Award
Communication and management	Management	Develop Annual AONB Business Plan, Delivery Plan and Annual Report /Review	On going	Manage, report	AONB Partnership	-Annually developed reports Business Plan/Delivery Plan – March Annual Report – May Annual Review – by September

East Devon AONB Partnership Plan - Delivery Plan 2023-2024

Theme	Sub-theme	Priority	Year	AONB Role /action	Partners/Comments	March 2023
		AONB Partnership and Executive Group meetings	On going	Reporting	AONB Partnership and partners	Meetings in person/hybrid now in operation post COVID
		Secure core funding through Memorandum of Agreement with Defra and LA partners	On going	Manage, liaise	EDDC, DCC, Defra, NAAONB	-Defra main grant offer 2022/25 and DCC/EDDC MOA to be annually confirmed
		Promote the work of the AONB Partnership and raise awareness of the AONB	On going	Promote, raise awareness	AONB Partnership, NAAONB, project partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain AONB website and produce seasonal e-news - Test value/operation of Instagram/Facebook in AONB comms work (2022/23) - Annual photo contract for AONB landscape and events 2022/23 - Revise/update AONB display banners (pending rebrand of AONBs to National Landscapes) - develop AONB branding for 60th Anniversary
		Review AONB operations and working arrangements at regular intervals	2023-5	Review, advise	AONB Partnership, NAAONB, AONBs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Terms of Reference and AONB operations reviewed biannually - Review of AONB operations 2022/23
		Review and deliver AONB Management Plan	2023-25	Review and produce	AONB Partnership, partners, local communities	Review delayed for completion 2025. Outline and commence review following production of new Management Plan guidance from Natural England scheduled for spring 2023
		Actively support and engage with the National Association for AONBs and regional/county networks	On going	Liaise, engage	NAAONB, AONBs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Engage in NAAONB staff development and collaborative projects/programmes - Development of KPIs and communications work for NAAONB

Abbreviations

AONB – area of outstanding natural beauty

AVDCS – axe vale and district conservation society

BHAONB – blackdown hills AONB

CDE – clinton devon estates

CPRE – campaign to protect rural England

CSF – catchment sensitive farming

Defra- dept. for environment and rural affairs

DBCRG – devon bat conservation & research group

DCC – devon county council

DLPG – devon landscape policy group

DWT – devon wildlife trust

EA – environment agency

EDBMSG – east devon beaver management steering group

EDCP – east devon catchment partnership

EDDC – east devon district council

EDFG – east devon farmers group

EDHG - east devon history group

FC – forestry commission

FWAG – farming and wildlife advisory group

HE – historic England

HLF – heritage lottery fund

JCT – jurassic coast trust

LEP – local economic partnership

LNP – local nature partnership

LORP – lower otter restoration project (SLG stakeholder liaison group)

NAAONB – national association for AONBs

NE – natural England

NT – national trust

PCF – princes countryside fund

ROBT – river otter beaver trial

SWTA – south west tourism alliance

WHS – world heritage site (Jurassic Coast Trust)

WPD – western power distribution

WRT – west country rivers trust

YFC – Young Farmers Club (East Devon)



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The East Devon AONB Partnership is funded by Defra, East Devon District and Devon County Council and is a member of the National Association for AONBs

