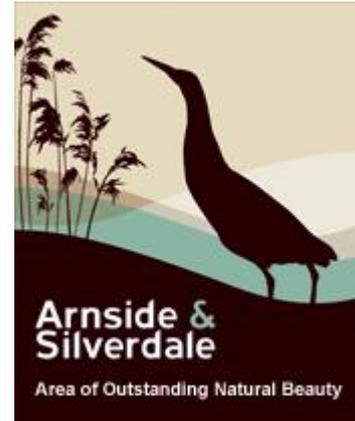


# Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership

Executive Committee meeting 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018

Leighton Moss education room, Silverdale at 2pm



## AGENDA

1. Welcome, apologies and introductions
2. Presentation: TBC
3. Minutes of meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017
4. Matters arising
5. Election of landowner/farmer representatives
6. AONB Team Business Plan 2018/19 (report circulated) **Decision required**
7. AONB Budget 2017/2018 and 2018/19 (report circulated) **Decision required**
8. AONB Development Plan Document progress update (report circulated)
9. AONB Management Plan Review (report circulated) **Decision required**
10. Planning work programme update (report circulated)
11. Volunteer work programme update (report circulated)
12. AONB Grants Fund update (report circulated)
13. AONB Communications work update (report circulated)
14. AONB Delivery Plan update by partners
15. Update on the work of the National Association for AONBs
16. Any Other Business
17. Dates for your diary and dates of future meetings

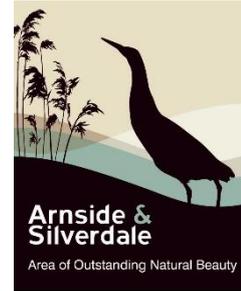
Tea and coffee will be served  
4.30pm finish

# Arnside & Silverdale

## Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

### Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 2.00pm  
RSPB Leighton Moss



### MINUTES

#### Attending

#### Members of the Executive Committee:

Fiona Allan	Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust
Andrew Frankish	Environment Agency
Eve Hall	Local User Group (North Lancashire Bridleways Society)
Joan Jackson	NFU
Brian Jones	Local User Group (Ramblers)
Ann Kitchen	Local Business (Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company)
Cllr Mike Macklin	Yealand Redmayne Parish Council
Cllr Pete McSweeney	South Lakeland District Council
Cllr Brian Meakin	Beetham Parish Council (Chair)
Cllr Keith Palmer	Silverdale Parish Council
Maggie Robinson	Natural England
Craig Russell	Local Business (Beetham Holiday Homes)
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB
Cllr Phillippa Williamson	Lancashire County Council

#### In attendance:

Lucy Barron	AONB Manager
Paul Haggin	Cumbria County Council
Barbara Henneberry	AONB Communications & Funding Officer
David Porter	Lancaster City Council
Tony Riden	AONB Countryside Officer
Lorayne Wall	South Lakeland District Council

#### Apologies:

Ruth Ainsworth	AONB Funding & Communications Officer
Cllr Nigel Goodrich	Lancaster City Council
Sue Harrison	CLA
Sue Hunter	AONB Officer
Elliott Lorimer	Lancashire County Council
Cllr George Taylor	Arnside Parish Council
Gemma Wren	National Trust

## **1 Welcome and apologies**

1.1 Apologies are listed above.

## **2 Introductions**

2.1 The Chair welcomed everyone, in particular two new members - Cllr Phillippa Williamson from Lancashire County Council and Paul Haggin from Cumbria County Council. It was noted that Cllr George Taylor would be the new representative for Arnside Parish Council. Each person present introduced themselves.

## **3 Presentation: Places and Spaces**

3.1 The formal business was preceded by a presentation by Elena Gifford of Deco Publique and Clare Mander of the Royal British Society of Sculptors who are working with Morecambe Bay Partnership on the 'Places and Spaces' project, part of the Heritage Lottery funded Headlands to Headspace scheme.

As part of the Project, Morecambe Bay Partnership wishes to commission a number of artistic works inspired by Morecambe Bay's unique heritage and landscape. They are looking for new artworks or creative projects that use, celebrate, engage with and interpret the Bay's landscape and heritage, either on a temporary or permanent basis. These contemporary artworks are aimed at encouraging people to visit and engage with the heritage of the Bay.

Three sites with potential for artistic intervention have been identified - Heysham Head, Arnside Knott and Birkrigg Common – but the importance of consulting with and engaging with local communities at an early stage in the process is recognised.

A brief has been sent out to artists and a series of site visits and interviews is to be arranged over the coming weeks. The commissioned artworks should be in situ by June 2018.

Ann Kitchen asked about the potential damage to Arnside Knott, a particularly sensitive and important site for many rare flowers, plants and insects. It was confirmed that these considerations formed an important part of the project brief, and that any proposals would need to be fully compatible with the management of the SSSI and may require consent from Natural England.

## **4 Changes to the Executive Committee membership**

4.1 As above (2.1).

## **5 Annual re-endorsement of user Groups, Business and Farming representatives**

**5.1** Under the terms of the Constitution, representatives of the local interests are subject to annual re-endorsement by the other members. The current members – Eve Hall (User Group NLBS); Brian Jones (User Group Ramblers); Ann Kitchen (Business BCCIC) and Craig Russell (Business Beetham Holiday Homes) - were re-endorsed en bloc.

**5.2** The AONB Manager advised members that we still do not have a farming/landowner representative and requested help in filling the vacancy. Several local farmers were suggested.

**ACTION: to promote the vacancy via the e-newsletter and to contact suggested farmers/landowners**

**AONB Manager**

## **6 Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

**6.1** Under the terms of the Constitution, the Chair is to be elected from among the voting members of the Executive Committee. Nominations for the position were requested. Cllr Brian Meakin (Beetham Parish Council) was proposed by Cllr Phillippa Williamson (Lancashire County Council) and seconded by Craig Russell (Tourism/Business). This was the only nomination. Cllr Brian Meakin was elected unanimously as Chair. The appointment is for one year.

**6.2** Nominations for the position of Vice Chair were requested. Ann Kitchen (Bittern Countryside CIC) indicated she was willing to stand for a further year. Proposed by Cllr Phillippa Williamson (Lancashire County Council) and seconded by Craig Russell (Tourism/Business). This was the only nomination and Ann Kitchen was elected unanimously as Vice Chair. The appointment is for one year.

## **7 Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

**7.1** The minutes were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

## **8 Matters arising from the minutes**

**8.1** (5.2) Brian Jones (Ramblers) reported that a meeting had taken place with Jarrod Sneyd (RSPB) and the AONB Manager and requested an update on the availability of the AONB Trampler to members of the public. The AONB Manager reiterated that it is the intention to make it more widely available in the future, but this is a work in progress and there are still a number of challenging operational issues to overcome. In the meantime, the Trampler is available 7 days a week for members of the public to use on the Leighton Moss reserve and is also available for other partner organisations to hire by agreement. Discussions have also been held with Morecambe Bay Partnership to consider it being promoted as part of the wider 'More to Explore' network.

**8.2** (6.2) The AONB Manager reported that discussions had been held with the National Trust and it has been proposed that part of the role of their forthcoming ecologist post to be recruited for the area will be to pull together the various bits of biodiversity research and monitoring being carried out by different organisations and to develop a more coordinated approach.

- 8.3** (8.2) Further clarification was sought on the use of brownfield sites, what development is permitted and the definition of 'curtilage' of the property (is this just the footprint of the actual building or does it include any hard landscaping?)

**ACTION: to forward SLDC's policy wording to the AONB Manager for circulation to members**

**9 Proposed HLF Resilient Heritage Application (report circulated)**

- 9.1** The AONB Manager reported that since the meeting in March when members were advised that Defra is encouraging AONB Partnerships to look at adding value in terms of income generation and diversifying funding streams to help deliver AONB Management Plans, an opportunity has arisen to submit an Expression of Interest to the HLF Resilient Heritage Scheme which focuses on investing in organisations to put them on a more sustainable footing for the future. An HLF officer has been allocated to help us with an application and the support of Lancaster City Council, as our host authority, has been obtained. It is hoped that this piece of work can run alongside the Management Plan review so that the AONB Partnership can be in a strong position to deliver the new plan from the outset.

**AGREED: to note the preparation and development work undertaken so far; to note the opportunity to provide feedback to the AONB manager on initial proposals; and to approve the proposal that the AONB Team proceed with the further development and submission of an application to the HLF Resilient Heritage grant programme, under the host authority's financial regulations and procedures.** (proposed by Ann Kitchen (Bittern CCIC), seconded by Cllr Pete McSweeney (SLDC) and unanimously AGREED by the members)

**10 AONB Revised Budget 2017/18 (report circulated) and 2016/17 outturn (tabled)**

- 10.1** The 2017/18 budget has been revised to take into account a number of changes and to enable effective delivery of the AONB Business Plan.

**AGREED: to note the report and approve the revised 2017/18 budget** (proposed by Cllr Pete McSweeney (SLDC), seconded by Cllr Keith Palmer (Silverdale Parish Council) and unanimously AGREED by the members)

**11 AONB Development Plan Document (report circulated)**

- 11.1** Lorayne Wall of South Lakeland District Council updated members on progress made with the AONB DPD to date. Key points included:

- 231 responses from 193 people were received by the end of the pre-publication consultation
- The Final Plan includes
  - 14 policies to guide new development in the AONB and
  - 11 policies (including site mini briefs) allocating 9 sites for development
- The Final AONB DPD has now been approved for publication by both Councils

- A 6 week consultation period on the Final Plan is due to start on 2<sup>nd</sup> November
- In addition to any representations relating to the soundness or legal compliance of the DPD, comments supporting the Plan would be welcome
- The timetable for the remainder of the plan preparation is
  - Autumn 2017: Publication of the DPD
  - Early 2018: Submission of the DPD to the Planning Inspectorate
  - Spring 2018: Public Examination of the Plan and Adoption of the DPD

**AGREED: to note the report on progress of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document.**

11.2 A stakeholder meeting planned for 16<sup>th</sup> October had to be rearranged due to severe weather warnings. It is hoped this will now take place the week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> November. In the meantime, the AONB Manager offered to send out the link to the documents on the Council websites.

**ACTION: to send out the link to the DPD documents**

**AONB Manager**

**12 AONB Management Plan Review Draft Project Plan (report circulated)**

12.1 The current AONB Statutory Management Plan requires review, in accordance with section 89(9-10) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; it is a requirement of the Act that the relevant local authorities jointly carry out a periodic review. It was proposed that the AONB Executive Committee formally conducts the required Review on behalf of the four relevant local authority partners, as was the case for previous AONB Management Plans.

12.2 The AONB Manager outlined the proposed approach, process and timetable for the review process.

12.3 A Review working group is to be established which will have delegated responsibility from the Executive Committee to oversee and direct the review process. It is anticipated that the Review Group will comprise the Chair of the Executive Committee, one representative of each of the principal local authorities and Natural England, the AONB Manager and the AONB Officer and up to 3 other representatives. Jarrod Sneyd (RSPB) stated that he would like RSPB to be represented and Brian Jones (User Group – Ramblers) also volunteered to be part of the working group.

**AGREED: that the AONB Executive Committee conducts the Review on behalf of the four relevant local authority partners; that the AONB Management Plan Review Draft Project Plan is approved; that a Review Working Group is established to support the AONB Team with the day-to-day work of the review process**

(proposed by Craig Russell (Beetham Holiday Homes), seconded by Fiona Allan (Landscape Trust) and unanimously AGREED by the members)

**13 AONB Delivery Plan update from the AONB Team and partners – verbal updates**

### **13.1 The Landscape Trust**

reported that their 'Story of Silverdale' weekend of walks, talks and exhibitions spread over 4 days had been very successful. A review of how the Trust communicates with its members (currently 1150) is being undertaken and they are pleased to have been given the opportunity to get involved in other projects in the AONB such as the RSPB Warton Mires Project and the England Coast Path.

### **13.2 The NFU**

reported an increase in the number of incidents of livestock worrying by dogs. Members were asked to help highlight the problem and to encourage people to observe the Countryside Code at all times.

### **13.3 Ramblers**

reported they have also been involved with the England Coast Path consultations and the Natural England led project to try and 'Discover Lost Ways'. Legislation in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 means that any historic footpaths not recorded on the definitive map by 2026 will be extinguished and no longer accessible to the public. Ramblers are carrying out research to try to identify any historic routes in our area.

### **13.4 The Environment Agency**

reported that two follow up visits had taken place following earlier farm inspections and were pleased to report that improvements to silage plants, slurry stores etc. had been made.

### **13.5 RSPB**

reported that progress is being made with the feasibility study and fundraising for the Warton Mires Project which is looking to include flood alleviation, habitat creation and community benefit. They are also hoping to carry out further conservation management work on their Warton Crag reserve for the benefit of the High Brown Fritillary.

### **13.6 Cumbria County Council**

Paul Haggin is new to the post but expressed support for the AONB Partnership, pointed out that his team in Development Control and Countryside Management also has responsibility for heritage and PROWs and offered his help in these areas.

### **13.7 South Lakeland District Council**

Cllr Pete McSweeney stated that more information on the work of the AONB Partnership would be welcomed by SLDC Councillors. Members were advised that in addition to the AONB DPD consultation, there is also an opportunity to comment on the district-wide development policies.

**ACTION: to work with SLDC to provide the information required**

**AONB Manager**

### **13.8 The Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company**

reported that they had begun a project to install low energy lighting in community buildings and had also been pleased to support the new community information panels which the AONB Team has been working on with the parish councils.

### **13.9 Beetham Holiday Homes**

Craig Russell reported on the joint Kendal Torchlight/AONB project which saw local artists working with children from Beetham, Storth and Arnside schools to make 'woodland' lanterns which were also on display at the AONB Apple Day. Moth surveys are continuing on site, with 98 species recorded so far.

### **13.10 Silverdale Parish Council**

congratulated the Landscape Trust on their 'Silverdale weekend' which had proved to be very popular and thanked SLDC and Lancaster City Council for their work on the DPD. It is hoped that problem with the Moss Lane entrance to Trowbarrow LNR will be resolved in the near future. (The AONB Manager confirmed that responsibility for this rests with Lancashire County Council but that the AONB Team is continuing to press council officers on this matter).

**13.11** The AONB Countryside Officer reported on the continued success of the volunteer programme, with a good number of volunteers turning out regularly for the Tuesday tasks. Volunteer tasks over the summer have included erecting new fingerposts to maintain the AONB's well sign-posted PROW network; permissive path vegetation cutting; restoration work in the historic gardens at the Hyning; grassland management on Warton Crag LNR; and monthly litter picks. Other volunteering opportunities have arisen through species monitoring and assisting with events such as the AONB Apple Day, which attracted over 800 people in September.

### **13.12 Natural England**

reported that a major project is proposed at Gait Barrows National Nature Reserve, an important internationally designated site. The site's marl grasslands, marl lake, fen and limestone grassland and pavement habitats are particularly important and distinctive for their biodiversity. The proposal is designed to restore priority habitats and bring the site into favourable condition status; it includes raising the water levels in Little Hawes Water through the installation of a sluice, felling an area of beech plantation, scrub clearance works, implementing an improved grazing regime and replacing two old boardwalks with a single improved structure for walkers and Trumper users. 4 public guided walk events had taken place in October to explain and discuss the scheme and a special AONB e-newsletter was distributed. Further information about the proposals is available from Maggie Robinson or Glen Swainson, site manager. NE is also working with the University of Cumbria on a Species Reintroduction project funded by the Heritage Lottery. Progress continues to be made with the section of the England Coast Path which will pass through the AONB.

## **14 AONB Planning work update (report circulated)**

**14.1** An update on planning and development management work carried out by the AONB Team on behalf of the AONB Partnership since the last meeting in March was provided. Some important consultations to which the AONB Team has provided responses were highlighted – South Lakeland proposed Main Changes to Draft Development Management Policies; AONB DPD Pre-publication consultation; Lancaster City Council's Sustainable Settlements Review Draft methodology; and Draft Cumbria Minerals and Waste Local Plan main Modifications.

**AGREED: to note the report on planning work**

**15 Bittern Award 2017 – request for nominations (report circulated)**

**15.1** Each year the Bittern Award is presented to a group or individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the AONB. The AONB Manager asked for nominations for the 2017 award to be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> December. The final decision will be made by the AONB Team and Chairman, with the award to be presented at the AONB Annual Conference in January.

**ACTION: to submit nominations for the Bittern Award by 1<sup>st</sup> December All members**

**16 Update on the work of the National Association for AONBs**

**16.1** The AONB Manager advised members that the National Association Chairman met with Defra Under-Secretary of State to discuss Defra’s 25 year environment plan and the role of the AONB Family. The National Association is also working with a large number of environmental organisations to secure a sustainable future for the UK’s landscapes post-Brexit. Further information can be found at [www.landscapesforlife.org.uk](http://www.landscapesforlife.org.uk)

**17 Any other business**

**17.1** Brian Jones stated that in 2005, the Countryside Agency undertook a review of protected areas and it was agreed that Farleton Knott and Hutton Roof were worthy of AONB designation. Has any progress been made on this extension to the Arnside & Silverdale AONB?  
The AONB Manager advised that the NAAONBs is working with Government on the designation of new areas. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

**18 Dates for your diary**

**2017**

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November** AONB Hedgelaying Competition at Beetham Hall

**2018**

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January** AONB Annual Conference, The Gaskell Hall, Silverdale

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March** AONB Executive Committee meeting  
**2pm** Education Room at RSPB Leighton Moss, Silverdale

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October** AONB Executive Committee meeting  
**2pm** Education Room at RSPB Leighton Moss

Signed ..... Date: .....

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Executive Committee 21.03.18**

**AGENDA ITEM 6  
AONB Business Plan 2015-18**

**Report prepared by: Lucy Barron, AONB Manager**

**Decision required**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

**To provide the Committee with the opportunity to consider the reviewed and updated AONB Team Business Plan 2015-18**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**(1)** that the Committee approves the AONB Business Plan 2015-18 (2018/19 version)

**Introduction**

The AONB Team Business Plan details how the AONB Team will act to contribute to the implementation of the statutory AONB Management Plan and its associated Delivery Plan.

The Business Plan 2015-18 was approved by the Executive Committee in March 2015 and a reviewed version in March 2017. It has now been reviewed and updated once again to produce a 2018-19 version. Please note that a new Business Plan for 2019-22 will be produced this year which reflects the revised AONB Management Plan 2019-24.

**Background**

The Business Plan sets out how the AONB Team will contribute to achieving a long-term Vision for the AONB as set out in the current AONB Management Plan:

*Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a landscape of international importance, whose distinctive character is conserved and enhanced for future generations.*

*It is a place that is much loved and highly valued, for its strong sense of place, unique geology, rich wildlife and cultural heritage and the benefits it provides to society.*

*Its distinctive landscape character - an intimate mosaic of low limestone hills, woodland, wetland, pastures, limestone pavements, intertidal flats, coastal scenery and distinctive settlements - is enjoyed, cherished and conserved by those who live in, work in and visit the area.*

*The high quality landscape supports and is supported by the area's thriving rural economy and vibrant diverse local communities. There are many and varied opportunities for people to access, enjoy and understand the area's special qualities, and participate in their conservation, creating a strong connection with nature and the landscape.*

*Challenges and pressures are effectively and sensitively managed in an integrated way through a partnership approach. The area's natural and cultural assets are managed and used wisely for future generations.*

In order to do this the AONB Partnership is aiming for 4 key outcomes:

- An outstanding landscape rich in wildlife and cultural heritage
- A thriving sustainable economy and vibrant communities
- A strong connection between people and the landscape
- A dynamic and successful AONB Partnership

The Business Plan sets out the operating context of the AONB Team, and details a work programme for 2015-18, including proposed actions that require further resources to be delivered, targets for delivery in 2018/19, a 3-year budget summary, the 2018/19 budget and risk analysis.

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Executive Committee 21.03.18**

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**AONB Budget 2017/18 and 2018/19**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

**To provide the Committee with details of the revised 2017/18 AONB budget and proposed budget for financial year 2018/19**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**(1) that the Committee notes the report and approves the budget for 2018/19**

**Background**

The 2017/18 budget has been revised to take into account of a number of changes and to enable effective delivery of the AONB Business Plan. An approved 2018/19 budget is required by Defra as part of the application for allocation of funding.

## Arnside & Silverdale AONB Budget 2017/18 and 2018/19

	2017/18 agreed Oct 2017	2017/18 budget final in-year adjustments	2018/19 proposed Mar 2018
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			£
<b>Staff Costs</b>			
Salaries, NI, Pensions	138900	138100	141084 <sup>1</sup>
Travel and subsistence	1600	1600	1600
Training	1000	1000	1500
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>141500</b>	<b>140700</b>	<b>144184</b>
<b>Accommodation / office equipment</b>			
Repair and maintenance	1300	500	500
Host authority central property charges	4500	5200 <sup>2</sup>	2200
Cleaning	1000	1000	1000
Electricity	400	400	400
Other energy charges	700	700	700
Rent	3100	3100	3100
Rates	2100	2100	2100
Water services	100	100	100
Premises insurance	400	400	400
Telephones	2300	2000	2000
Office equipment	1000	1000	1000
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>17100</b>	<b>16500</b>	<b>13500</b>
<b>Communications and events</b>			
Printing and stationery	600	600	600
Exhibitions and events	5200	5200 <sup>3</sup>	1600
Communications and publicity	2500	2500	3100
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>8300</b>	<b>8300</b>	<b>5300</b>
<b>Partnership running costs</b>			
Executive Committee support inc Annual Conference	1400	1400	1400
NAAONB Membership	2500	2500	2500
Host authority recharges – Accountancy, internal audit & ICT	7600	7400	7900
Host authority recharges – other (provided in kind)	6100	7200	6900
Employee related insurance	1900	1900	1900
Repair and maintenance (vehicles)	1200	1200	600
Petrol and derv	400	400	400
Vehicle licence	200	200	200
Transport related insurance	600	600	600
Equipment and tools	500	500	2000

<sup>1</sup> Higher superannuation costs – set by LCC/Lancs CC

<sup>2</sup> Higher R&M budget required in 2017/18 to cover costs of repair work on AONB office windows (covered centrally by Lancaster City Council Property Services)

<sup>3</sup> Higher Events budget required in 2017/18 for the AONB Apple Day – partly offset by income generated through donations, grants and gate money on the day.

PPE (clothing and uniform)	300	300	300
Consultants	4600	6600 <sup>4</sup>	4600
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>27300</b>	<b>30200</b>	<b>29300</b>
<b>Other Management Plan Implementation</b>			
AONB projects and community engagement programme	9580	11680	6587
Local Nature Reserves management programme	12400	12400	19850 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>21980</b>	<b>24080</b>	<b>26437</b>
<b>Reserve</b>			
Contribution to reserve	2000	2000	2000
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>217980</b>	<b>221780</b>	<b>220721</b>

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2017/18 agreed October 2017</b>	<b>2017/18 budget final in-year adjustments</b>	<b>2018/19 proposed March 2018</b>
<b>Local authority financial contributions</b>			
Cumbria County Council	8805	8805	8805
Lancashire County Council	8275	8275	8275
Lancaster City Council	15600	15600	16000
South Lakeland District Council	11500	11500	11500
Income in advance b/f from previous year	1800	1800	
Less Income in advance c/f to following year			
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>45980</b>	<b>45980</b>	<b>44580</b>
<b>Other income</b>			
Defra grant	137800	137800	140191
Parish Council contributions and contracting income	10700	10700	6500
LNR grants income	12400	12400	19850
Natural England	-	2000	-
FIT payments	500	500	500
Income in advance b/f from previous year			
Less Income in advance c/f to following year			
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>161400</b>	<b>163400</b>	<b>167041</b>
<b>Reserve</b>			
Transfer out of reserve	0	0	0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Host authority in kind</b>			
Lancaster City Council in kind support	6100	7200	6900

<sup>4</sup> 'Landscape evidence and local monitoring' project able to go ahead with contribution of £2k from Natural England

<sup>5</sup> In addition to the Countryside Stewardship agreement we have for Warton Crag LNR, we have now secured a new agreement for Trowbarrow LNR worth £28000 over 5 years

Lancaster City Council Property Services funded R&M	4500	5200	2200
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>10600</b>	<b>12400</b>	<b>9100</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>217980</b>	<b>221780</b>	<b>220721</b>

<b>AONB reserve</b>	<b>17/18</b>
Balance as at 31/03/17	17757
Annual budgeted contribution into reserve	2000
Projected balance in reserve at 31/03/18	19757

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Executive Committee 21.03.18**

**AGENDA ITEM 8**

**Title of report: Update on progress regarding the preparation of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document.**

**Report prepared by: Lorayne Wall (South Lakeland District Council) and David Porter (Lancaster City Council)**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To brief the Executive Committee on progress and next steps regarding the preparation the Development Plan Document for the Arnside & Silverdale AONB.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

(1) That the Executive Committee notes the key matters arising from the report.

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council are preparing a joint Development Plan Document (DPD) for the Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – the AONB DPD. When adopted, the AONB DPD will establish allocations of land for development, as well as consistent designations and policies to guide new development in a way that supports the conservation and enhancement of the AONB for the next 15 years. It will also be a key element in the delivery of the AONB Management Plan, which was adopted in April 2014 and is currently under review.
- 1.2 The Management Plan sets the overall vision for the AONB, whilst the main purpose of the DPD is to manage development. The DPD will undergo an independent examination by a government appointed planning inspector, and when adopted the Plan will form part of the statutory development plans for both Lancaster and South Lakeland Districts. It will have great weight in making planning decisions.
- 1.3 Previous reports presented to the AONB Executive have explained and provide updates on the process of preparing the Arnside & Silverdale AONB DPD.
- 1.4 This report summarises progress achieved since the last update in October 2017, including the results of the Publication period during November and December 2017 and submission of the DPD to the Planning Inspectorate (Secretary of State).

**2.0 Consultation**

- 2.1 Following extensive consultation throughout the process, the two Councils Published the AONB DPD for formal, final representations between 2 November 2017 and 14

December 2017. The Published DPD set out policies, designations and allocations including:

- A Vision and Objectives for the AONB DPD;
- Policies
  - AS01 Development Strategy
  - AS02 – Landscape
  - AS03 – Housing Provision
  - AS04 – Natural Environment
  - AS05 – Public Open Space and Recreation
  - AS06 – Key Settlement Landscapes
  - AS07 – Historic Environment
  - AS08 – Design
  - AS09 - Economic Development and Community Facilities
  - AS10 – Infrastructure for New Development
  - AS11 – Camping, Caravan and Visitor Accommodation
  - AS12 – Water quality, sewerage and sustainable drainage
  - AS13 – Energy and Communications
  - AS14 – Advertising and Signage
  - AS15 – Proposed Housing Allocations
  - AS16 – Proposed Mixed-Use Allocations
- Allocations, each set out in a mini-brief identifying key aspects to be addressed
  - AS17 – A6 Land off Queen’s Drive, Arnside
  - AS18 – A8/A9 Land on Hollins Lane, Arnside
  - AS19 – A11 Land at Briery Bank, Arnside
  - AS20 – B108 Land at Church Street, Beetham
  - AS21 – W88 Land North West of Sand Lane, Warton
  - AS22 – W130 Land North of 17 Main Street, Warton
  - AS23 – A26/A27 Station Yard, Arnside
  - AS24 – S70 Railway Goods Yard, Silverdale
  - AS25 – B35/B38/B81/B125 Land at Sandside Road and Quarry Lane, Sandside

2.2 Formal, final representations were invited from statutory consultees, parish councils, relevant organisations and those who had expressed an interest in the AONB DPD, including everyone who had previously been involved in the process. At this formal stage, representations had to relate to the soundness and legal compliance of the DPD – general comments were followed up with a request for clarity to be given on whether the representation was raising a soundness or legal compliance issue and, if so, what the issue was.

### **3.0 Summary of issues raised by representations**

3.1 A total of 174 duly made representations were made by 99 representors. Two representations were very late and could not be accepted. A full summary of the representations made and the Councils’ response to these is provided in the representations statement (available at [www.southlakeland.gov.uk/aonb-dpd](http://www.southlakeland.gov.uk/aonb-dpd)). The majority of responses received were made by members of the community, parish councils and representatives of the development industry.

3.2 73 people / organisations explicitly stated that they consider the AONB DPD to be sound and/or legally compliant. Grounds for this included support for:

- Vision and aims
- Landscape capacity-led approach / weight given to landscape protection
- Overall approach, including not identifying an OAN or setting a housing requirement and that sites must specifically contribute to meeting the needs arising in the AONB
- Reflection of the statutory and primary purpose of AONB designation and the special qualities of the AONB
- Consistency with National Policy and relevant Acts
- Evidence base and site assessment process
- Policy topics and content
- Selection of appropriate sites that are consistent with the policies
- Approach to and extent of community consultation/engagement, conduct of the process and joint working, compliance with the Duty to Cooperate
- Not allocating any housing sites in Silverdale as no appropriate sites were found

3.3 26 respondents stated that the DPD is unsound. The main reasons for considering the document to be unsound relate to:

- Requirement in AS03 for 50% affordable housing on all sites
- Restrictiveness of policy AS11
- General viability concerns
- Site specific viability concerns
- Omission of specific sites
- Specific wording challenges in terms of the accuracy of their reflection of the NPPF

3.4 Several people made suggestions for minor wording changes to the policies, most of which were intended to improve clarity or strengthen requirements rather than to fundamentally change the thrust of the policies. The representations statement and Schedule of Minor Amendments (also available at [www.southlakeland.gov.uk/aonb-dpd](http://www.southlakeland.gov.uk/aonb-dpd)) set out the detail of these changes.

3.5 Four of the representations stating that the DPD is unsound came from key organisations: Natural England, Historic England, the National Trust and United Utilities. Since the representation period ended, we have worked closely with these key organisations and have made minor amendments to the DPD in order to address their concerns. All these organisations have now confirmed that they no longer find the DPD unsound.

3.6 No comments were made challenging the soundness of the following policies meaning that they can now be given at least moderate weight in planning decisions. Comments were, however, made on AS09, AS10, AS12, AS13, AS20 and AS24 regarding minor amendments:

- Policy AS05 - Public Open Spaces and Recreation
- Policy AS09 - Economic Development and Community Facilities
- Policy AS10 – Infrastructure for New Development
- Policy AS12 - Water Quality, Sewerage and Sustainable Drainage
- Policy AS13 - Energy and Communications
- Policy AS14 - Advertising and Signage

Policy AS15 - Housing Allocations  
Policy AS16 - Mixed-Use Allocations  
Policy AS20 - Land on Church Street, Beetham  
Policy AS22 - Land North of 17 Main Street, Warton  
Policy AS24 - Railway Goods Yard, Silverdale

- 3.7 However, both of the late representations came from landowners of sites proposed for allocation. The landowner of Land on Church Street, Beetham now wishes the site to be removed from the DPD. The landowner of Railway Goods Yard, Silverdale would prefer to develop the site for housing and car parking as opposed to employment and car parking. Although these representations could not be formally accepted, given their importance to the content of the DPD, they will be forwarded to the appointed Planning Inspector and dealt with at his discretion.

#### **4.0 Planning Implications and Next Steps**

- 4.1 The Councils submitted the DPD, along with all representations and supporting documents and evidence to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) on 28 February 2018. Planning Inspector Philip Lewis has been appointed to undertake the Examination into the soundness of the DPD and the Examination has therefore now technically begun.
- 4.2 We now await correspondence from the Inspector regarding the likely dates for the Public Hearings element of the Examination and detail of the main issues he feels need to be covered. All correspondence regarding the Examination should be made through the Programme Officer, Kerry Trueman  
[dpdprogrammeofficer@southlakeland.gov.uk](mailto:dpdprogrammeofficer@southlakeland.gov.uk) and telephone on 01539 793560.
- 4.3 It will be important for Parishes and local people to continue to be aware of the process. Anyone who made representations seeking changes to the Plan and who requested to do so may speak at the Examination hearings. In addition, there may be people that the Inspector wishes to hear from who did not request to speak. Those who did not make representations may attend the hearings but do not have the right to speak. Several people who supported the DPD also requested to speak. It will be up to the Inspector whether these people can participate as the standard approach is that only those who are challenging the DPD have the right to speak.
- 4.4 We currently expect the hearings to be in early June, which would mean receipt of the Inspector's report over the summer and adoption of the DPD in September 2018. The timetable and agenda for the hearings will be issued once known.
- 4.5 The Councils and the Programme Officer will keep relevant parties up to date with the process as the Examination progresses.

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Executive Committee 21.03.18**

**AGENDA ITEM 9**

**Report Title: AONB Management Plan Review**  
**Report prepared by: Lucy Barron, AONB Manager**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To provide the Committee with an update on progress with the Management Plan Review and an opportunity to consider the proposed Scope of the Review recommended by the Review Working Group.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Committee:

- (1)** notes the progress to date with the AONB Management Plan Review; and
- (2)** approves the proposed Scope of the AONB Management Plan Review

**Introduction**

The current AONB Statutory Management Plan requires review, in accordance with section 89(9-10) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; it is a requirement of the Act that the relevant local authorities jointly carry out a periodic review.

**Background**

The AONB Executive Committee agreed at their October 2017 meeting to formally conduct the required Review on behalf of the four relevant local authority partners.

It was agreed that a Review Working Group be established to support the AONB staff team to carry out the day-to-day work of the review process according to the approved Project Plan.

**Review Working Group**

A Review Working Group has been established comprising the Chair of the Executive Committee, one representative of each of the principal local authorities and Natural England, the AONB Manager and AONB Officer and up to three representatives of the Executive Committee. The current membership of the group is as follows:

Chair of AONB Executive Committee: Cllr Brian Meakin

Executive Committee representative: Brian Jones

AONB Manager: Lucy Barron

AONB Officer: Sue Hunter

Natural England: Elizabeth Knowles

Lancaster City Council: David Porter

South Lakeland District Council: Lorayne Wall

Cumbria County Council: Paul Haggin/Rachel Whaley

Lancashire County Council: Elliott Lorimer

The group has met twice: in December 2017 and February 2018, terms of reference agreed and key early steps of the review process completed.

### **Progress with the Management Plan Review**

The following key steps have been completed as part of Phase 1 (Scoping and preparing for the Review):

- Announcement of Review – formal notification to Local Authorities – October 2017
- AONB Executive Committee approved Project Plan – October 2017
- Statutory Notice issued to NE – November 2017
- Review Group established and terms of reference agreed – December 2017
- Statement of Community Involvement completed – February 2018
- SEA Scoping Report completed and consultation started – March 2018
- Expert input into Special Qualities Report – received February 2018
- Consultation workshop at AONB Conference – January 2018
- Online consultation survey completed February 2018
- Evidence Base preparation – key data received from SLDC, EA, LCC and BC - work on mapping/additional data collation ongoing with Lancaster City Council

### **Scope of the Review**

While the Review Group agrees that there is much to be taken forward from the current Management Plan, taking into account preparation work to date, local and national policy context and recommendations from the national level it is proposed that the Review process should focus on:

- Responding to consultation responses
- Updating key issues and forces for change
- Setting out in detail what the delivery of the AONB primary purpose (i.e. to conserve and enhance natural beauty) means on the ground in this area
- Taking a clear ecosystem approach to ensure that the Plan results in a more resilient landscape
- Setting out a framework for delivery of the Defra 25-yr environment plan and post-Brexit agri-environment scheme(s)

- Restructuring and amending objectives and actions according to a 'logic framework' style approach

**Next steps**

The Review process will be continued in accordance with the approved Project Plan.

Phase 2 – Undertaking the Review is due to start shortly. We will write and test content of the draft revised Management Plan based on evidence and information gathered to date and with the support and involvement of the Review Working Group and key partners.

It is anticipated that the Draft revised Management Plan and supporting documents will be available for public consultation from September 2018.

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Executive Committee 21.03.18**

**AGENDA ITEM 10**

**Report title: AONB Team planning work update  
Report prepared by: Sue Hunter, AONB Officer**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To provide the Committee with an update on planning and development management work carried out by the AONB Team on behalf of the AONB Partnership

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**(1)** that the Committee notes the report

**Introduction**

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and development management and planning are a key element in achieving this.

**Background**

The AONB Executive Committee is a consultee on planning matters, both planning policy and planning applications; it is not a decision-maker. Planning decisions are made by the relevant local planning authority.

Planning policies for AONBs are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. AONB designation and the AONB Management Plan are material considerations in the planning process. Management Plans are adopted statutory policy of the local authority.

The role of the AONB Partnership is to provide independent advice on matters relevant to the AONB Management Plan, to local planning authorities, to assist with the formal decision-making process.

**Planning applications**

All planning applications within the AONB are reviewed by the AONB Team along with any applications outside, but potentially impacting on, the AONB. Records are kept of all applications reviewed by the AONB Team and the responses made.

Responses are made according the approved Planning Protocol and in consultation with the Planning Sub-group.

A summary is given below of the total number of applications reviewed in 2017 and also in 2018 to date; the number of applications per individual parish is given. The number of formal responses submitted to the planning authorities is also given.

Planning applications reviewed in 2017

Arnside	44
Silverdale	47
Beetham	30
Yealand Conyers	5
Yealand Redmayne	9
Warton	24
<b>Total within AONB</b>	<b>159</b>
Outside AONB	10
<b>Total no. applications</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Responses submitted</b>	<b>62</b>

Planning applications reviewed so far in 2018 (to 28/02/2018)

Arnside	8
Silverdale	5
Beetham	7
Yealand Conyers	2
Yealand Redmayne	1
Warton	5
<b>Total within AONB</b>	<b>28</b>
Outside AONB	0
<b>Total no. applications</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Responses submitted</b>	<b>6</b>

Of the responses submitted since the last Executive Committee meeting, 2 included formal objections to the proposed development. These applications are listed below, with the final planning decisions noted (where available):

- 17/01292/FUL Change of use of land for the siting of three static caravans for holiday use and two lodges for residential use, provision of an associated hardstanding for access track and landscaping at Land rear of Kingdom Hall of Jehovahs Witness - **withdrawn**
- SL/2017/0935 Outline application for erection of five dwellings at Land to rear of Redhills Road, Arnside - **refused**
- 18/00077/FUL Creation of hardstandings for 11 caravan pitches and associated access roads at Gibraltar Farm Campsite – **awaiting decision**

Formal objections made to applications reported at the last Executive meeting but where a planning decision had not been made at the time include:

- 17/00736/OUT Outline application for the erection of nine dwellings at land north of 17 Main Street. Warton, Carnforth, Lancashire. An amended application has also been submitted and we objected to this too – **granted**.

### **Consultations responded to on behalf of the AONB Partnership**

- Written representation submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for the Publication version of the AONB DPD.

### **Other planning related work**

- Written representation submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the AONB Partnership regarding the appeal against the refusal by SLDC for the demolition of camp buildings and siting of 25 static caravan pitches and manager's dwelling and site reception at Leeds Children's Holiday Camp at Far Arnsdale, Silverdale.

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Executive Committee 21.03.18**

**AGENDA ITEM 11**

**Planning work update**

**Report prepared by: Tony Riden, AONB Countryside Officer**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To provide the Committee with an update on the practical tasks and work carried out by the AONB volunteer team on behalf of the AONB Partnership

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**(1)** that the Committee notes the report

**Introduction**

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and the volunteer work programme is a key mechanism in achieving this.

**Background**

The volunteer work programme is managed by the AONB Countryside Officer. Practical management tasks are delivered by the volunteer team once a week on a Tuesday at numerous locations and sites throughout the AONB.

A litter pick around various lanes or sections of shoreline, and recycling, is carried out on the second Thursday every month.

Volunteers are recruited and registered by the AONB Countryside Officer and allocated to the most appropriate voluntary role to help achieve the community involvement and practical management elements of the AONB Management Plan. Practical tasks that are undertaken have public benefit including: public access improvements, management of Parish Council land and Lancaster City Council Local Nature Reserves, nature conservation management for key habitats and species, community wood-fuel initiatives, community orchards, events, monitoring and recording.

**Seasonal work programme and commitments**

October to March:

- Scrub-cutting
- Species-rich limestone grassland restoration
- Woodland management
- Pond management work

April to September:

- Orchard management
- Dry-stone wall repairs
- Finger-post installation
- Vegetation cutting on permissive paths
- Species monitoring and recording

The AONB Team and volunteers are committed to looking after, maintaining and carrying out practical site management tasks on two Local Nature Reserves owned by Lancaster City Council at Warton Crag LNR and Trowbarrow LNR, both of which are managed with Higher Level Countryside Stewardship agreements on behalf of LCC.

We also help to manage, conserve and enhance:

- Ashmeadow and Crossfield Wood, Arnside on behalf of the Barnes Charitable Trust
- Beachwood, Arnside on behalf of Arnside Parish Council
- Bank Well and Woodwell on behalf of Silverdale Parish Council
- Sandside Cutting on behalf of Beetham Parish Council
- Dobshall Wood and Hyning Scout Wood on behalf of the Woodland Trust
- Arnside station platform wildflower grassland
- Orchard Barn orchard in Arnside
- The Hyning historic garden
- Alder's Watering Place and wells and ponds in Yealand Redmayne
- Millom Court pond and wildlife garden, Arnside
- Landscape Trust reserves when required

#### **Other volunteer work**

- Butterfly transect surveys, with this area having one of the greatest concentrations of transects in the country

#### **Rural Skills Events and Training**

- The AONB annual Hedgelaying Competition was held last year at Beetham Hall on 4th November 2017 as part of the Lancashire & Westmorland Hedgelaying Association Grand Prix.
- A third successive arrangement working in partnership with the local National Trust team based in Silverdale, saw the appointment of Andy Mills in November 2017 for a 6-month apprenticeship working 1 day a week (Tuesdays) with the AONB team and 3 days a week with the NT. Andy has recently been successful in securing a 5 year contract of employment with Fylde Borough Council and Lancashire Wildlife Trust, but has been a great team member and we wish Andy well in his new job when he is due to start on 19th March 2018.
- Outdoor Emergency First Aid training is being organised for 24th April 2018 for up to 12 volunteers.
- Drystone walling training with the Cumbria Branch of the DSWA is being planned again for a group of up to 6 AONB volunteers.
- Floral, wildlife and habitat survey and management training workshops are also being arranged

**Charging Policy**

There is currently a charge of £130 plus VAT for landowners for a supervised day's volunteer team task, which contributes to the costs of salary, vehicle, tools and equipment, insurance etc. However, this charge does not reflect the true costs of delivering a task and is heavily subsidised. The charge is therefore currently under review and a new charging policy will be put in place during 2018.

**Arnsdale & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Executive Committee 21.03.18**

**AGENDA ITEM 12**

**Title of report: Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Grants Fund**

**Report prepared by: Ruth Ainsworth, AONB Funding and Communications  
Officer**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To provide the Committee with an update on progress with delivering the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Grants Fund

**RECOMMENDATION:**

(1) That the Committee notes the report

**Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to give the committee information about operation over the second year of the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Grants Fund.

**Background**

The Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Grants Fund, run jointly by the AONB Team and the Arnsdale/Silverdale Landscape Trust has now been in operation for two full years. The Arnsdale/Silverdale Landscape Trust holds the Fund monies and the Fund is administered according to a formal signed Memorandum of Agreement between the parties. In the first year of operation, the Fund received six applications, of which five received funding offers, totalling £4,784.90.

**2017-18 update**

The Grants Fund received five applications during 2017-18, as well as three additional project enquiries which may develop into full applications.

One application, from the Lancashire Wildlife Trust for publication of a book about Untamed Lancashire was unsuccessful. It was deemed to be a commercial venture which goes against the terms of the Grants Fund.

Three applications were successful, totalling £3,300:

- i) Swifts in the Community for £600 to improve their database. The database can now upload sightings directly to the BTO website, and spotters are able to upload their sightings directly to the database, rather than this

information being handed to a project coordinator as hard copy and then uploaded. The funding also covered a workshop day at Arnside School to create swift boxes, and update and print of Swifts in the Community leaflets. The sum of £600 represents the full amount requested.

- ii) RSPB for £1,500 for habitat improvements to support High Brown Fritillary populations on Warton Crag – the Grants Fund money leverages a significant amount of funding from the Lancashire Environment Fund and extends the habitat created by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust on their area of the Crag under an earlier successful application to the Grants Fund. The sum of £1,500 was the full amount requested by the RSPB.
- iii) Westmorland Red Squirrels for £1,200 for the services of a professional trapper to further their positive work during 2016-17. No further applications from WRSS will be considered for a period of two years unless there is a significant change in conditions. £1,200 represents a reduced funding offer. WRSS initially requested £2,499.95.

One application, from Arnside Archive, is still under consideration. This is for £1,000 to design, create and site an interpretation panel about Arnside's maritime and boat building history to sit alongside a successful Heritage Lottery Fund application by Arnside Sailing Club to return a Crossfields Sailing Yacht to Arnside.

Other enquiries have been received from Swifts in the Community, Arnside School and Arnside Minibus and application forms have been issued.

### **Financial statement for the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership Grant Scheme as at 1 March 2018**

The Financial Year of the Partnership Grant Scheme is from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Income was as planned, being £2,500 each from the two parties to the Agreement.

The total income for the year was £5,000 with the addition of £215.10 from the previous financial year.

Total income: **£5,215.10**

In the 11 months of the current year the following grants have been made:

Westmorland Red Squirrel Society	£1,200
Swifts in the Community	£ 600
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	<u>£1,500</u>
Total grants issued	<b><u>£3,300</u></b>

Present balance held by the Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust as designated funds: **£1,915.10**

**Arnsdale & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Executive Committee 21.03.18**

**AGENDA ITEM 13**

**Title of report: AONB Communications activity update**

**Report prepared by: Ruth Ainsworth and Barbara Henneberry, AONB Funding and Communications Officers**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To provide the Committee with a short update on communications activities carried out by the AONB Team

**RECOMMENDATION:**

(1) That the Committee notes the report

**Introduction**

The day to day communications at Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB are coordinated by AONB Communications and Funding Officers Barbara Henneberry (0.6 FTE) and Ruth Ainsworth (0.4 FTE).

**Details**

There are various regular communications channels used by Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB:

- Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- E-newsletter
- Events
- Leaflets
- Press releases Media

2017-18 has seen the AONB's Twitter follower numbers increase by almost 600 to around 2500. Our monthly tweet impressions for February 2018 (the number of times our tweets appeared in people's Twitter feeds) was 45,000. We regularly attain monthly tweet impressions of at least 30,000 now. This represents a significant increase since 2016 when we would get a maximum of 10,000 impressions. We put this down to increased numbers of followers, better use of hashtags and our regular involvement in Outstanding Hour (one hour each week when all AONBs are encouraged to tweet using the hashtag #OutstandingHour, retweeting each other's tweets, and tagging relevant organisations such as Defra – the idea of this is to

'trend', which results in more people clicking and finding out about the work of AONBs, raising our profile) which takes place each Wednesday from 1-2pm.

Facebook likers now stand at 1520, up from 1300 a year ago.

Six editions of the bi-monthly e-newsletter have been issued this year, as well as occasional additional issues on WILD! children's activities for half term, and invitations to the AONB conference. We have around 1200 registered subscribers.

The AONB's annual conference at the end of January was well attended and took a different approach than in previous years. We used the conference to kick off the face to face consultation on our new Management Plan for 2019-24 and ran a short workshop for attendees to give their views on what our priorities should be, which generated useful feedback.

The communications officers were also involved in publicising the online Management Plan review surveys. We created a detailed, and a summary survey, which together generated over 100 responses.

Into 2018-19, the communications officers will be revisiting the communications strategy in conjunction with the Management Plan review and looking at ways to create more opportunities for interaction with the AONB through social media. The National Association for AONBs has now developed a lexicon for landscapes – the A&S AONB team had good input into this piece of work, and the A&S AONB communications strategy will also be take the national approach into account. We also plan to conduct evaluation work to assess how well our communications are received and what improvements we can make.

BH is creating new exhibition panels for use at AONB events and available for other organisations to use at conferences/fairs etc. to give more information about the AONB and what the team do to conserve and enhance the area.

The website and e-newsletter will be undergoing some fine-tuning to functionality and (in the case of the newsletter) look and feel.

We continue a positive relationship with local media such as The Westmorland Gazette, Lancaster Guardian and Radio Lancashire and regularly receive coverage of AONB events and stories.

Data protection rules are changing and we are working with Lancaster City Council Information Governance Team to ensure we are compliant with the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by the required date of end of May 2018. This will affect all organisations sending e-communications and may mean we see a drop in our circulation numbers if subscribers miss re-subscribe requests.