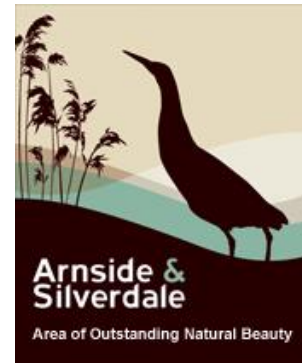


Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership

AONB Executive Committee meeting

2pm, 7th June 2023, Storth Village Hall



AGENDA

1. Welcome, apologies and introductions, including committee changes
2. Minutes of meeting held on 19th October 2022
3. Matters arising
4. AONB Budget 2022/23 and 2023/24 (report circulated) **Decision required**
5. Presentation: National Landscapes – national rebranding progress update
6. AONB Team work programme update (report circulated)
7. Planning work programme update (report circulated)
8. Farming in Protected Landscapes programme update
9. Brief updates from partners
10. Update from National Association for AONBs
11. Any Other Business
12. Dates for your diary and dates of future meetings

Latest 4pm finish

Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Executive Committee Meeting

19/10/2022

2pm

The Holt, RSPB Leighton Moss

MINUTES

Attendees

Members of the Executive Committee:

Cllr Brian Meakin (Chair)	Beetham Parish Council
Cllr June Greenwell	Lancaster City Council (from 3.45pm)
Cllr Helen Chaffey	SLDC (until 3.45pm)
Cllr Pete McSweeney	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Steve Porter	Arnside Parish Council
Sam Stalker	National Trust
Glen Swainson	Natural England
Simon Waller	CLA
Laura Partington	Friends of the Lake District
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB
Fiona Allan	Landscape Trust
Ann Kitchen	Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company
Julian Oston	Landowner Representative – Dallam Tower Estate
Brian Jones	User Group Representative – Ramblers

In Attendance:

Damian Law	Officer Representative – SLDC
Rachel Whaley	Officer Representative – Cumbria County Council
Elliott Lorimer	Officer Representative – Lancashire County Council

AONB Partnership Team:

Lucy Barron	AONB Manager
Sue Hunter	AONB Officer
Helen Rawlinson	Countryside Officer
Dougie Watson	Countryside Officer
Tonia Armer	Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer
Caroline Howard (mins)	Funding & Communications Officer

Apologies

Sarah Wilson	Natural England
Cllr Phillipa Williamson	Lancashire County Council
Dan Taylor	National Trust
Cllr James Ferguson	Silverdale Parish Council
Cllr Kevin Briggs	Warton Parish Council
Richard Camp	Officer Representative – Lancaster City Council
Belinda Barclay	Local Nature Reserves Warden
Richard Park	Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer
Julia Sier	Wildflower Nursery Co-Ordinator

Not in Attendance

Liz Cheslett-Davey	Environment Agency
David Harpley	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Cllr Iain Harbison	Yealand Redmayne Parish Council
Cllr Jane Panton	Yealand Conyers Parish Council
Alisa Gibson	User group Rep – Ramblers Assoc
Joan Jackson	NFU Rep

1. Welcome, apologies and Introductions (BM)

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone, and each person present introduced themselves. Apologies received are listed above.
- 1.2 Simon Waller has joined the Executive Committee as a representative for CLA and Cllr Steve Porter as a representative for Arnside Parish Council.

2. Annual re-endorsement of User Groups, Business and Farming representatives and election of Chair and Vice Chairs (BM / LB)

- 2.1 The user group representatives were re-endorsed.
- 2.2 A second business representative has been advertised for, but none has come forward as yet. LB asked that anyone with suggestions for a representative contact the AONB Partnership team. Further advertising will be taken via South Lakeland District Council.
- 2.3 Cllr Pete McSweeney and Ann Kitchen are stepping down as Vice Chairs. LB gave thanks on behalf of the committee for their sterling work over many years. Cllr Pete McSweeney will be stepping down as he will no longer be a councillor following the shift to a new unitary authority.
- 2.4 Cllr Helen Chaffey offered to take on the role of Vice Chair, and was proposed by Ann Kitchen, Seconded by Sam Stalker.
- 2.5 Brian Meakin is willing to continue in his role as chair, and was proposed by Ann Kitchen, seconded by Cllr Pete McSweeney.

ACTION: CH to forward business representative advert to HC to share via SLDC.

3. Mins of the last meeting held on 18th May 2022 (BM)

3.1 The minutes of the last meeting were discussed, and proposed as an accurate record by Ann Kitchen, seconded by Brian Jones.

4. Matters Arising (LB)

4.1 Actions from the last minutes were all completed except taking the Wyrms of Trowbarrow to Kendal Torchlight, which was not possible due to time constraints.

5. Budget Review – Report Circulated (CH)

5.1 Caroline Howard gave an overview of the 21-22 final outturn and the 22-23 mid-year report.

5.2 The AONB Partnership team have approached the partner authorities recently for their usual contribution, but as Defra have increased we have asked the LAs to match the increase to keep us in line with the 75% funding agreement.

Rachel Whaley discussed that Cumbria County Council may be in a position to increase the Local Authority contributions in line with the Defra uplift. Cllr Pete McSweeney offered to assist in the request for an increase.

5.3 Tonia Armer gave an update on the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme budget: This year the programme has about £127k to allocate in grants funding, and nearly £87k are approved with more in the pipeline. The application last year for Warton Crag, led by the RSPB, for gates on the crag for stock handling was rolled over from 21/22 to 22/23.

So far funded in 2022/23, with approximate values are:

- Further works to support conservation grazing at Warton Crag (AS003B, £8000)
- Training and engagement activities with the Coppice Co-op's mobile retort (AS004, £1600)
- A meadows restoration project, led by Cumbria Wildlife Trust (AS101, £25000)
- A carbon training event (AS102, £400)
- Works at Gait Barrows Farm (AS104, £600)
- Fencing at Hazelslack marsh to support conservation grazing, with a slight increase due to the need for further fencing to manage footpaths due to cattle congregating at access points (AS105A, £4000, and AS105, £1100)
- Works at Scar Close (AS106, £300)
- Further hedge planting at Arnside Tower Farm (AS108, £24300)
- The creation of some small ponds at Yealand Hall (AS110, £2000)
- The purchase of a flail mower and hurdles for Bank House (AS111, £4600)
- A regeneration farming event with Nils Corfield, focusing on soil health (AS113, £1400)

The creation of a tramper route in Eaves Wood has been approved, but is awaiting final confirmations.

There are still funds for both this year and next year and this is a time limited opportunity as it currently stands, so it is important to bring forwards applications as soon as possible. Ann Kitchen asked about the possibility of funding being spent on green energy. In general, this would be not supportable however there might be instances where this could form part of a wider project.

ACTION: CH to liaise with RW and Cllr PM regarding CCC contribution.

6. AONB Partnership Team Work Programme Update – Report Circulated (LB)

6.1 LB gave an update on the activities of the AONB Partnership team. Highlights included:

- The Meadow Makers Project, which has involved considerable work with farmers and landowners. This has helped to generate new contacts, and this has led on to a project funded by the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme. The initial project was Plantlife-led and funded by the NLHF Green Recovery Challenge Fund.
- Building from the Meadow Makers project, the AONB Partnership team has developed a small wildflower nursery to grow plug plants for future meadow projects and roadside verge projects. Cllr Steve Porter raised that Arnside Parish Council have been grateful for the support for the verges project, Cllr Brian Meakin stated the same is true of Beetham Parish Council. Bee on the Verge is currently working across three parishes, we would like to expand this in the future.
- Management of Trowbarrow and Warton Crag Local Nature Reserves continues, funded partially via Countryside Stewardship agreements. Local Nature Reserves Warden Belinda Barclay has been working hard to maintain the sites and facilitate both formal education visits and general public engagement activities. Managing these sites and juggling the competing interests of different user groups and management is a significant task.
- The AONB volunteer programme is a significant part of our work, with the 2322 hours up until the end of September across the various volunteer groups – including the weekly Tuesday Habitat & Access Management, Litter Pick, Friends of Warton Crag, Communications etc.
- The Dementia Friendly Walks for All programme has continued weekly sessions through the year. This is an important part of our work giving people the opportunity to get out into the landscape who might not otherwise be able to do so.

6.2 Cllr Pete McSweeney stated that residents of the Kent Estuary Division have contacted him as their Cumbria County Council member asking for more street lighting and asked if the AONB have a policy on this.

The AONB Partnership team are concerned about light pollution in the area and this is a growing issue. The AONB Partnership team would recommend that any new development reduce light pollution. The AONB Partnership team wouldn't say that lighting required for safety should be removed completely.

Cllr Pete McSweeney stated that residents have asked for B5282 to be lit and Milnthorpe boundary to Carnforth along A6, and commented that it would be beneficial if this was directly addressed in the management plan.

Friends of the Lake District have a Dark Skies Officer (Jack Ellerby) and the AONB Partnership team or Parish Councils could contact him to work together. A zoom or live lecture could be given to provide residents with a more nuanced understanding of the issues. Lucy Barron suggested that the AONB Partnership team could work with Jack Ellerby or support the new advisory role. Helping to shift perceptions and address safety concerns may be an important role. Simon Waller raised that updated planning guidance is available to ensure improved lighting is installed in new developments. Laura Partington raised that

both local planning authorities are due to adopt the Cumbria Good Lighting Technical Advice Note: Designing Out Light Pollution shortly.

Brian Meakin raised the point that lighting is not the responsibility of just one organisation; there may be multiple local authorities involved in the lighting and co-ordinated working is necessary.

The Bittern Sustainable Schools Programme (AONB-P / BCCIC) is currently working on a project with local schools which raises awareness of light pollution and the impact on moths in particular.

ACTION: Talking the Landscape – CH to invite Jack Ellerby from FLD / Dark Skies to deliver a talk.

6.3 Julian Oston asked what the restrictions are on the wildflower nursery.

Lucy Barron responded that the current main restriction is space. It is also necessary to create a business case for the staffing and materials etc. to ensure that the project works effectively. The AONB Partnership team are actively pursuing options and possible partners.

7. Communications Update – Report Circulated (CH)

7.1 CH gave an overview of the Communications work programme update (report circulated).

7.2 Jarrod Sneyd (RSPB) and Sam Stalker (National Trust) asked to organise meetings to collaborate with the AONB Partnership on joint events for 2023. Caroline Howard confirmed that a meeting has already been scheduled with the local National Trust Events Co-ordinator.

7.3 Lucy Barron highlighted that the national conference set the challenge of how we can improve access to nature for a more diverse range of people/groups. Funding via the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme is available for accessibility projects.

7.4 Jarrod Sneyd commented that the partnership working in the AONB and spirit of partnership was complimented during the conference field trips, two of which were hosted in Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB.

ACTION: CH to arrange meeting with RSPB Events Co-ordinator.

8. Planning Update – Report Circulated (SH)

8.1 Sue Hunter gave an overview of the planning work programme. So far there have been 43 planning responses submitted this financial year, with a total of 89 planning applications received and reviewed.

8.2 There has been an informal consultation on a development at Sandside, Quarry Lane area, featuring a contemporary urban design. We have been reviewing this and have mentioned that developments would need to be in line with the AONB DPD Policies. We also raised that 50% of new homes should be affordable housing and the potential impact of light pollution.

This development consultation was briefly discussed by the committee, who requested that if and when a proposal is submitted there be an extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee to discuss the application.

8.3 Following on from discussions about light pollution, Sue Hunter highlighted that light pollution is considered as part of planning responses.

9. A Super National Nature Reserve for the AONB (LB)

9.1 Lucy Barron gave an update on the current discussions around a possible 'Super National Nature Reserve' (Super NNR) within the Arnside & Silverdale AONB.

The concept of a Super NNR is to bring land being managed with the primary purpose of conservation together under a collaborative, strategic and landscape scale approach.

The core purposes of NNRs are:

- Nature conservation
- Science and research
- Engagement with people

9.2 Currently the potential to declare areas of land in the AONB that are managed with the primary purpose of conservation as a Super NNS is being considered. This could incorporate a range of sites, including Gait Barrows, RSPB land, National Trust land, Landscape Trust Reserves, Woodland Trust land, and land managed by some of the estates in the AONB. The approach would mean developing a management framework for these areas at a landscape scale.

9.3 Lucy Barron and other possible partners recently visited the Somerset Levels, home to the Somerset Wetlands Super NNR. The Somerset Wetlands Super NNR is a partnership of 6 organisations bringing together ecologically linked sites to think about how they can be managed for nature conservation, science and people across the much larger landscape. The AONB Partnership team have also talked to Purbeck Heaths Super NNR in Dorset. The Dorset AONB Partnership is chairing and co-ordinating that group. Another Super NNR is being developed in the Mendip Hills AONB.

At the core of discussions about the Super NNR is the concept that we need to do things differently: work smarter and think bigger about nature conservation in the context of the nature and climate crises. Arnside & Silverdale AONB already has excellent partnership working. The development of a Super NNR could build upon that and strengthen partnership working, making a landscape approach tangible and deliverable. The aim is to be inclusive and build partnerships, working together in a tangible way on priorities such as:

- Landscape scale nature recovery and climate action
- Community engagement
- Education, learning and skills
- Visitor experience and management
- Research and monitoring
- Accessibility and inclusion

The development of a Super NNR could act as a significant lever or catalyst for funding, resources and capacity.

9.4 Committee members fed back their perspectives on the concept:

Glen Swainson – Natural England has the responsibility in terms of working on the declaration of a Super NNR. Natural England want to work in partnership with NGOs and other organisations in the area. The declaration of a Super NNR needs to be more than a rebranding exercise.

Visiting the Somerset Wetlands Super NNR offered some insight into what could be done. At this Super NNR, partners felt that there were multiple benefits, and it provided a framework for better collaboration. They highlighted that it was important not be too precious about individual sites. Not every site has to do everything for every species. The Super NNR approach can also help to manage visitors and recreational disturbance. There will be opportunities for people to join up after the initial declaration.

Jarrold Sneyd – Practical benefits could include machinery sharing, staff sharing, and coming together to generate opportunities for funding. It is important that the approach is not exclusive. It's not about driving the whole AONB to be a nature reserve or alienating those that are not part of it. There may be ecotourism benefits, particularly through management of honeypot sites and adopting a strategic approach to habitat management.

Sam Stalker – The proposal isn't to declare all land a nature reserve, it's looking at what we have already and the different land uses and how we can manage that more collaboratively. It's not necessarily about marketing sites better but how can we manage visitor flow better.

Councillor Helen Chaffey – A distinction is needed between residents and visitors when thinking about different user group needs. There would be concerns about access being reduced to locals. Glen Swainson confirmed that this would not be likely. Caroline Howard raised that there are a range of audiences to account for, some people who do not live in the area still have a connection in a similar way to locals, and new residents have often holidayed in the area prior to relocating.

Ann Kitchen – Research currently falls between the gaps and the ability to co-ordinate research effectively could be a significant improvement. There are some substantial research gaps at present – the Super NNR could be an ideal vehicle for this. Glen Swainson added that habitat and species monitoring is also disjointed and could be improved.

Elliott Lorimer – The Somerset Levels is a different situation, and might have had lower levels of partnership working prior to the Super NNR declaration. The Arnside & Silverdale AONB has excellent partnership working already. There is, however, a question to be answered in terms of 'What is the next level for the AONB?' It will be important to ensure that the project achieves this. Jarrold Sneyd raised that there are still things that we've talked about making happen but do not have the framework at present for that. Some of the other declared Super NNR sites have only recently declared but they are already seeing some of the benefits. We will have to create the structures to ensure the benefits are maximised.

Julian Oston – Lancaster university could be a partner to support the research and monitoring aspects. Glen Swainson responded that NE Gait Barrows currently has partnerships with several universities, who visit the NNR. NNRs have a role as an outdoor classroom. Caroline Howard raised that a co-ordinated research project list to offer to universities would be more efficient and could manage relationships in the long term better.

Councillor Steve Porter - The reserves on the Somerset Levels looked very isolated, the Arnside & Silverdale AONB could have a much better connectivity than was shown

in the maps of the Levels. The AONB could have wildlife corridors and make space for wildlife in a wider range of habitats.

Councillor Steve Porter asked for a definition of 'landscape scale'. Lucy Barron stated that from the AONB partnership perspective it's across the landscape not site by site – considering the mosaic of landscapes.

10. AONB Management Plan Review (LB)

10.1 The AONB Management Plan is due for upcoming review. Defra have suggested that AONBs delay the review process by a year whilst changes are implemented at a national level. Local Councils would need to agree to extend the adoption of the management plan for another year.

10.2 The committee discussed this:

Laura Partington suggested it would be worthwhile undertaking a light review.

Ann Kitchen stated that the delay would allow the new local authority (replacing Cumbria County Council and SLDC) to establish before the review is necessary, which would be beneficial. It would also provide additional time to work on the Super NNR and incorporate this into the updated Management Plan.

Councillor Pete McSweeney asked if there is a there a case for looking to align the reissue of the management plan at the same time as the reissue of the DPD, which would be due for review in 2024. It would, however, be important to be clear that they are two different documents: the DPD is a planning policy document and the Management Plan is an area-based plan setting a vision for the whole landscape and considering wider issues.

There was broad agreement from the Executive Committee to postpone, dependent on discussion with the local authorities.

10.3 Following the publication of the Landscapes Review in 2019 there is a proposal to rename AONBs as National Landscapes which is now in progress at a national level. The National Association for AONBs, with the AONB network and Defra are going to be leading a rebranding exercise in 2023. The National Association have developed a prospectus to set the scene for National Landscape as a 21st Century designation. At some point there will be a job of work for this committee to do around contributing to this process. Caroline Howard is on the National Rebranding group. The change is not just a renaming exercise – it needs to also be about powers, purposes and resources for AONBs as recommended in the Landscapes Review. As part of this it is possible that AONBs will become a statutory consultee in the planning system. Defra are working on this and the NAAONBs are feeding into the process.

The committee asked if there be a wider consultation around the Landscapes Review proposals and for the timescale. The Landscapes Review and concurrent works have been delayed which will push back development, but 18 months to 2 years is a likely timescale, and information will be fed through to the Executive Committee throughout this process.

11. Partner Updates

Julian Oston, Dallam Estate – There have been significant issues recently with rural crime and trespass, including fly tipping, poaching, and livestock worrying. The head of the Neighbourhood Watch in Cumbria is setting up a scheme similar to pubwatch for land managers. This would prevent people from accessing land which they have been

banned from. There are flyers available and the AONB Partnership team agreed to get in touch to find out more.

ACTION: LB to contact new Rural 'watch' scheme.

Jarrold Sneyd, RSPB – On the 25th October at 10am – 4pm there will be drop in sessions to answer key questions or give views on nature. This is part of the People's Plan for Nature: People's Assembly. The RSPB are asking people to share what they think about nature.

Ann Kitchen, Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company – The BCCIC very pleased to be working with local schools on the Bittern Sustainable Schools Programme.

Councillor Steve Porter, Arnside Parish Council – The wildflower verges project is going well. Local schoolchildren are going out later in the week to plant seeds and plugs.

Councillor Pete McSweeney, Cumbria County Council – Recent feedback from residents is that there are not enough streetlights, there have been issues with antisocial cycling, and there is not enough parking.

Laura Partington, Friends of the Lake District - FLD have appointed a new CEO, Michael Hill who will be starting in April.

Fiona Allan, Landscape Trust – The Trust continues as usual, with a Jacobs Join and lecture evening upcoming. The Trust are still trying to get the business plan agreed. The Trust have been offered some money informally to have a little observatory on Coldwell Bank. They recently had events at night at Coldwell Bank and it's a spectacular dark sky. The Trust are looking to use the reserves more for the benefit of members and the general public.

Elliott Lorimer, Lancashire County Council – Lancashire County Council has submitted an expression of interest for an investment zone, but we do not have details as to how these might affect the AONBs.

Lucy Barron confirmed that both Cumbria and Lancashire County Councils have put in an expression of interest for the new Investment Zones. The Cumbria proposals do not impact Arnside & Silverdale AONB as yet, but we have yet to have confirmation of the Lancashire Zones. The guidance around investment zones released by the government doesn't exclude AONBs from being included in investment zone areas, which could have a significant impact on planning. The NAAONB are having discussions with the government around these issues. The AONB Partnership are aware that this is a potential issue but need to know more to come to a position on it.

Councillor June Greenwell, Lancaster City Council – June Greenwell asked for a letter of support for an investment through the Rural Prosperity Fund which would support the AONB Management Plan. Lucy Barron responded that more information is needed to confirm there are no conflicts of interest. There is also a Shared Prosperity Fund which might offer other opportunities.

Glen Swainson, Natural England – Dormouse box checks over the last few days have found 92 dormice – a substantial increase on the 15 released.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 An e-mail from Keep the Ban was read to the committee (as requested by them) and discussed.

It was agreed that when the Management Plan Review occurs in 2024 issues can be raised by the public or other stakeholders and there would be opportunities for this to be raised for review at this point. The other requests made are not within the remit of the AONB Partnership, and should be referred to relevant national bodies.

Table of Actions

Action	Assigned	Deadline
Forward business representative advert to HC to share via SLDC	CH	ASAP
Liaise with RW and Cllr PM regarding CCC contribution	CH	ASAP
Invite Jack Ellerby from FLD to deliver a <i>Talking the Landscape</i> event	CH	Next Meeting
Arrange meeting with RSPB Events Co-ordinator	CH	End 2022
Contact new Rural 'watch' scheme.	LB	Next Meeting

Dates of Next Meeting:

17th May 2023, 2pm

18th October 2023, 2pm

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Executive Committee 07.06.2023**

AGENDA ITEM 4

AONB Budget 2022-23 and 2023-24

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with details of the final outturn of 2022-23 AONB budget and the proposed AONB budget for 2023-24 for approval

RECOMMENDATION:

- (1)** that the Committee notes the 2022-23 budget outturn
- (2)** that the Committee approves the proposed 2023-24 budget

Background

The proposed 2023-24 budget is required by Defra.

Please note the AONB Budget as reported includes the Local Nature Reserves management income and expenditure, including staffing.

These figures are subject to final adjustment.

Arnside & Silverdale AONB Budget - 2022-23 outturn and 2023-24 proposed budget
Expenditure

Category	Description	2022-23 Budget (Oct 2022)	2022-23 Outturn	2023-24 Budget
Staff	Salaries, NI, Pensions (excl. adjustment)	207,500	208,040.60	225,800
	AONB Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments ¹	-	9,830.29	-
	LNR Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments	-	3,596.78	-
	Travel & Subsistence	1,100	821.99	1,100
	Training	1,500	2,873.52	1,500
	Staff Sub-total	210,100	225,163.2	228,400
Office	Repair & Maintenance etc.	3,500	5,613.87	3,500
	Electricity	400	399.48	800
	Misc. Energy Charges	700	1,329.41	700
	Rent	3,100	3,000	3,100
	Rates	2,400	2,370.25	2,400
	Water Services	100	368.23	100
	Premises Related Insurance	500	634.75	600
	Office Equipment	1,000	2,512.35	1,000
	Telephones	900	877.32	900
	Office Sub-total	12,600	17,105.66	13,100
Communications & Events	Printing & Stationery	600	411.79	600
	Exhibitions & Events	1,600	4,721.56 ²	1,600
	Communications & Publicity	3,100	4,759.65	3,100
	Comms. Sub-total	5,300	9,893	5,300
Partnership	Employee Related Insurances	1,100	1,092.7	1,100
	Repair & Maintenance of Vehicles	1,000	614.66	300
	Petrol & Derv	500	370.11	300
	Vehicle Licences	200	292.5	200
	Transport Related Insurance	1,200	109.32	100
	Equipment and Tools - General	1000	890.71	1,000
	Clothing & Uniforms	300	219.17	300
	Support - Internal Recharges (System)	16,600	16,600	16,600
	AONB Executive Support	3,900	5,258.22	3,900
	Partnership Sub-total	25,800	25,447.39	23,800
Programme	Management Plan Projects (inc. consultants)	69,900	64,294.23	40,000
	LNR Management Programme	4,300	4,743.68	11,300
	LNR Trowbarrow Interpretation ³	4,200	1,556	2,600

¹ Pension adjustments added in P13 were considerably larger than profiled; unanticipated overspend has been separated and a corresponding income line added as income from LCC.

² Included AONB 50th Anniversary Dinner – offset by additional income.

³ Funding allocation to be used exclusively for interpretation of Trowbarrow LNR – underspend rolled into 23/24.

	Programmes Sub-total	78,400	70,593.91	53,900
Reserve	Contribution to Reserve Sub-Total	2,000	2,000	2,000
	Total	334,200	350,203.16	326,500

Income

Category	Description	2022-23 Budget (Oct 2022)	2022-23 Outturn	2023-24 Budget
Government Grants	DEFRA	165,800	166,691.57	166,900
	LNR Countryside Stewardship	2,800	2,800	8,800 ⁴
	Government Grants Sub-total	168,600	169,491.57	175,700
Contributions from Local Authorities	Cumbria County Council	8,800	10,126	-
	South Lakeland District Council	11,500	13,225	-
	Westmorland & Furness Council	-	-	32,000
	Lancashire County Council	9,000	9,000	9,000
	LNR Lancashire County Council	5,600	5,700	5,900
	Lancaster City Council	37,600	37,600	41,700
	LNR Lancaster City Council	16,300	16,827.78	18,800
	AONB Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments	-	8,725.72	-
	LNR Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments	-	3,596.78	-
	Parish Council Donations	-	2,200	-
	LAs Sub Total	88,800	107,001.28	107,400
Other Income	ARETI Grants	31,200	22,245	9,000
	Meadow Makers (NHLE/Plantlife)	9,600	9,560	-
	LNR Other Income	4,200	1,556	2,600
	Parish Councils, Vol. Days & Misc.	6,500	-	6,500
	Volunteer Days	-	2,440	-
	AONB Other Income (Misc.)	-	4,059.46 ⁵	-
	Fingerpost Donations	-	1,450	-
	Other Bodies Sub-Total	51,500	41,310.46	18,100
Feed In Tariff	FIT Credits	500	467.51	500
Reserve	Transfer out of Reserve	0	0	0
Recharges	FiPL & Removing Barriers Staff Recharge	4,400	9,099.32	4,400
Host Authority In Kind	LCiC in kind support	16,600	16,600	16,600
	LCiC Property Services	1,800	4,833.87	1,800
	HA In Kind Support Subtotal	18,400	20,833.87	18,400
Reserves	LCiC Contribution to Reserves	2,000	2,000	2,000
	Total	334,200	350,203.16	326,500

⁴ Does not include CS education supplement, which will be offset against LNR Warden overtime, educational activities and habitat management works.

⁵ Includes AONB Anniversary Dinner income.

AONB reserve	23/24
Balance as at 01/04/23	£68,624.27
Annual budgeted contribution into reserve	£2,000
Less transfer out of reserve	0
Projected balance in reserve at 01/04/24	£70,624.27

Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme⁶ Expenditure

Category	Description	2022-23 Budget (Oct 2022)	2022-23 Outturn	2023-24 Budget
Staff	Salaries, NI, Pensions, Overtime	30,000	31,258.37	33,200
	Travel & Subsistence	500	186.75	500
	AONB Staff Recharges	4,400	6,581.96	4,400
	FiPL Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments ⁷	-	808.68	0
	Additional Admin/A&G Staffing ⁸	-	-	23,748
	Staffing Costs Sub-total	34,900	38,649.01	61,848
Advice & Guidance and Admin	Office	100	0	500
	Events	500	1,609.28	1,900
	Print & Postage	200	0	200
	Clothing & Uniforms	200	132	200
	Equipment	2,000	0	200
	Advice, Guidance & Admin Sub Total	3,000	1,741.28	3,000
Grants	Grants	127,200	107,727.89	176,801
Total		165,100	148,304.93	241,649

Income

Category	Description	2022-23 Budget (Oct 2022)	2022-23 Outturn	2023-24 Budget
Government Grants	DEFRA	165,100	147,754.32	241,649
Contributions from Local Authorities	FiPL Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments	-	550.61	-
Total		165,100	148,304.93	241,649

⁶ 2023/24 budget confirmed by Defra 17/5/2023, re-profiling on LCC system.

⁷ Pension adjustments added in P13 were considerably larger than profiled; the unanticipated overspend has been separated and a corresponding income line added as income from LCC. The AONB team are in discussions with LCC and Defra as to how this unexpected expenditure will be resolved.

⁸ 2023-24 Allocations for Advice and Guidance and Admin have substantially increased (confirmed by Defra in late April 2023). Based on this increase the AONB Partnership is seeking additional admin support for the programme.

Removing Barriers Grant (2022-23 Only – Capital Expenditure) Expenditure

Category	Description	2022-23 Outturn
Staff	Staff Costs (Recharged from AONB Core)	2,517.36
	Staffing Costs Sub-total	2,517.36
Project Costs	Gait Barrows Access Works (Tramper Route & Parking)	2388.45
	Golf Course Access Works (Tramper Route)	1120
	Challan Hall Back Wood Access Works (Tramper Route)	1675
	Trowbarrow Access Works (Tramper Route)	1120
	Sandside Cutting Access Works	7907.36
	Redhills Pasture Accessible Gates	3250.94
	Walks for All / Sensory Support Equipment	863.88
	Project Costs Sub Total	18,325.63
Total		20,842.99

Income

Category	Description	2022-23 Outturn
Government Grants	DEFRA	20,842.99 ⁹
Total		20,842.99

⁹ Total available grant was £25,000.

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
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AGENDA ITEM 6

AONB Team work programme update

Report prepared by: Lucy Barron (AONB Manager)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with an update on the delivery of the AONB work programme

RECOMMENDATION:

(1) that the Committee notes the report

AONB Team work programme update

Since October 2022, key activities of the AONB Team include:

Outstanding landscape rich in natural and cultural heritage

- Worked, taking a landscape-scale approach, as a key or supporting partner in projects/steering groups including the Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership, Cumbria and Lancashire Local Nature Partnerships, Back On Our Map (BOOM) project and Cumbria-wide Catchment Partnership.
- Attended the Cumbria Flood and Coast Forum, Morecambe Bay Seascape Restoration, NorthWest Coastal Forum and North West Coastal Conference about how the impacts of climate change may affect coastal management. Also attended the meeting.
- Support for and participation in activities of National Association for AONBs
- As part of the Undergrounding for Visual Amenity scheme, which involves undergrounding of powerlines for landscape benefit, Electricity Northwest have now completed the 'Warton to Barrow Scout' scheme.
- Liaison with local authorities and Natural England as preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies continues. Draft AONB State of Nature Report produced. Process of preparing AONB Nature Recovery Plan started, and consultation workshop held March 2023. Consultation draft due for completion Summer 2023. Continued work with partners to develop proposal for a Super National Nature Reserve in the AONB.
- Held annual butterfly transect surveyors meeting for the Morecambe Bay Limestones at Leighton Moss in March. Held training for online butterfly data input with 6 volunteers
- Ongoing conservation management of Trowbarrow and Warton Crag SSSIs/LNRs via Countryside Stewardship agreement:

- New joint Countryside Stewardship agreement negotiated and agreed for Warton Crag and Trowbarrow – agreement start date January 2023.
- Worked in partnership to further discussions around Crag-wide herd conservation grazing and cooperative management.
- Volunteer activities at Warton Crag included scrub and grassland management on lower slopes, construction of a water retention facility to increase grazing when rainwater is scarce, preparation works for the bottom path upgrade project in 2023.
- Volunteer activities at Trowbarrow included scrub work in grassland and woodland edge, access management, tree safety work, improvements in the tree nursery, wall and boundary repairs.
- Trowbarrow advisory group meeting held March 2023.
- Provision of independent landscape-related planning and policy advice to local authorities, including reviewing and making formal responses to planning applications according to an agreed Planning Protocol, and responding to other consultations, as detailed under agenda item 7.
- Delivery of AONB Volunteer Programme including practical conservation and enhancement works at key sites across the AONB. More details below.
- Bee on the verge project
 - Volunteers planted plug plants and bulbs with LCC staff at Cove Drive, Silverdale
 - Preparation and sowing of wildflower and grass seed at Sandside Road with the Arnside Parish Council Wild Verge Working Group and supported this group by attending meetings.
 - Plug planting on the Meadows in Yealand with Yealand PC and WI
 - Plug planting at Beechwood with Eco-gang from Arnside School
- Native tree nursery continues
- Grassland restoration work in partnership with Cumbria Wildlife Trust - worked on 2-year FiPL project and supported CWT to apply for Highways Agency funding for further restoration in 23/24
- Orchard and local fruit tree variety conservation project initiated - one orchard subsequently successfully applied for FiPL funding for planting 13 new apple trees of local variety - 3 further applications in progress
- Successful FiPL application for funding to create a wildflower community growing space in Arnside
- Assisted Lancaster City Council Conservation Officers in compiling and developing a list and interactive map of Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs) in the district, including provision of information and details about previous NDHA nominations, possible NDHAs identified during planning process, AONB list of limekilns and the A&S AONB Historic Designed Landscape Research Report.

Vibrant and sustainable communities

- Successfully delivered second year of the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme (FiPL) as detailed in agenda item 8.
- Provision of bespoke advice and support to landowners and managers on land management practices which help conserve and enhance the landscape and natural and cultural heritage of the area. Advice work on a variety of topics including species rich grassland restoration, grazing, woodland and coppicing, river bank management, future schemes. 6 different farms engaged with, some with multiple visits. Some of these will become or have already become FiPL applications.

- Continued to build relationships with farmers and land managers through Farming and Land Management Group. One edition of Land Matters published.
- Annual Westmorland Hedgelaying Association competition held with the Landscape Trust at Coldwell Meadow in January 23 - 10 volunteers assisted, 15 participants including 2 trainees, 50+ members of the public came to observe.
- Continued long-term support for social forestry initiative Silverdale District Wood Bank: supported to carry out woodland management at Trowbarrow with 5 days' work. Firewood extracted to be seasoned and distributed to members.
- Provided advice and support to partners and Parish Councils.
- Delivered the AONB Grants Fund - run jointly by the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership and the Arnside/Silverdale Landscape Trust, working together to support projects which conserve and enhance the AONB or connect people with the landscape.
- Ongoing and continued long-term support for the AONB Landscape Trust and Bittern CIC in particular support given to LT reserves management committee.
- Delivered the practical AONB Volunteer Programme
 - Volunteer tasks: Annual management at Beachwood (APC), Woodwell (SPC), Bankwell (SPC), Dobshall Wood completing coppice works, preparing and completing hedgelaying and fencing works at Coldwell Meadow, tree planting with Beetham School and volunteers including trees grown in the AONB tree nursery, tree planting at Arnside Tower Farm with school children from Arnside School, scrub management works at Hale Moss, and preparation for the AONB wildflower nursery development.
 - Held 4 inductions for new volunteers, inducting 18 across all AONB activities.
 - Litter picks - Silverdale (Nov), Silverdale (Dec), Arnside (Jan) Beetham (Feb) Yealand (Mar) Fell End (Apr) - average of 10 volunteers doing 2 hours each.
 - Visitor Welcome Volunteers - ongoing weekly meet to engage with visitors in key locations within the AONB. A welcome greeting from volunteers providing guidance and information on the local area, encouraging visitors to follow the countryside code.
 - Peregrine Watch - Encouraging wildlife enthusiasts to assist in monitoring peregrines at Warton Crag LNR.
 - Friends of Warton Crag - Monthly meet to carry out habitat works, visitor engagement and monitoring. Encouraging well being through a social group connecting with nature. The Friends of Warton Crag volunteer group continued to meet monthly. Activities included: grassland and woodland management, drystone walling repairs, visitor management, general maintenance.
 - Communications, Photography & Events Volunteer Programmes
 - The Communications Volunteers programme continues to flourish, with a mailing list of 26 volunteers and monthly meetings in the AONB office or online.
 - The Photography Volunteers programme now has a mailing list of 25 volunteers, with a workshop planned at Leighton Moss in May 2023.
 - The Events Volunteer programme has a mailing list of 9 volunteers (with other volunteers also currently assisting with events), who have been out to assist with events such as the *Walking the Landscape* guided walks and *Woodland Fun Days*.

A strong connection between people and the landscape

- AONB Info Centre open to the public Mon-Thurs to provide information and advice to visitors and local residents.

- Implemented the AONB Communications Strategy – provided and distributed a range of online, social media and printed communication and information materials:
 - Current Social Media following is as follows:
 - Twitter: 4,682 followers
 - Facebook: 3,796 followers
 - Instagram: 961 followers
 - The following streams are set up but not yet in regular use:
 - YouTube: 17 subscribers
 - TikTok: 43 followers
 - Pinterest: 2 followers
 - Posts on Facebook saw an engagement rate of 13.23%, on Instagram 7.94% and on Twitter 3.35%. A total of 902 posts were made across the three main platforms between 1/4/2022 and 31/3/2023. Social media posting has been assisted by volunteers, who contribute content via a SharePoint folder, submit photographs and also use Hootsuite (a content management system for various social media streams) to schedule and duplicate posts across platforms.
 - Between 1/4/2022 and 31/3/2023, the website had a reach of a total of 38,213 users, with 192,271 page views. We have continued to add content to the website, and are planning a full review to coincide with the national rebrand later this year.
 - AONB Publications - Arnside & Silverdale AONB Geological Story booklet published which outlines the geology of the area, telling a story of time, including photographs showing a range of geological features and highlighting some interesting places to visit. Available now from the AONB Office £5. We have recently reprinted an updated version of the Trowbarrow Local Nature Reserve leaflet (FREE).
- AONB National Rebrand – A&S AONB Funding and Communications Officer has been part of the NAAONB Rebrand Committee. The NAAONB commissioned a company called 'Nice and Serious' to work with them on the rebrand of AONBs to become National Landscapes. This has included regular meetings, giving feedback on brand story, tone of voice and design aesthetics and a workshop session on developing the brand identity.
- Delivered a series of access improvements utilising additional 'Removing Barriers' funding from Defra:
 - Carried out access improvement works at Sandside Cutting along 350m of Public Footpath creating accessible route.
 - Carried out improvement works at Trowbarrow, Silverdale Golf Course, Challan Hall/ Back Wood and Gait Barrows disabled parking area as part of developing the AONB Trammer route.
 - Funded installation of new accessible pedestrian gates at Redhills/ Arnside Knott and purchase of new sensory equipment for walks for all programme and events.
- 7 new fingerposts sponsored by members of the public installed across the AONB as part of Fingerpost sponsorship scheme. Reinstated 3 existing posts.
- Continued essential maintenance and warden duties at Warton Crag and Trowbarrow Local Nature Reserves.
- Series of visits delivered at Woodland Oasis outdoor classroom at Trowbarrow LNR including:
 - October 2022- Young people bush craft day, working alongside Lancashire Wildlife Trust (LWT)
 - February 2023 - Bushcraft/Forest School with Lancashire Youth Challenge, a dynamic charity that produces life enhancing and at times life changing opportunities for young people.

- Autumn/winter 22/23 - Completion of weekly forest school sessions over three school terms for year 2 and 3 children, working alongside LWT. This includes children with SEN and many children suffering from the aftereffects of limited social interactions during covid. Improvements seen in language skill, emotional resilience etc.
- In Oct 2022 the AONB Partnership hosted 2 sessions of *Explore the Landscape: Mawsons*
- AONB Anniversary Dinner - On the 8th December 2022 we held an anniversary dinner to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the designation of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB at Leighton Hall, the venue for early meetings held during the process of originally designating the AONB. After a warm welcome from Executive Committee Vice Chair, Cllr Helen Chaffey, guests enjoyed a meal featuring locally sourced ingredients, followed by an after-dinner speech from the Landscape Trust's Chair Fiona Allan. We were joined by many of the people who have worked so hard to protect and enhance this special place over the years including special guests who contributed to the original designation process.
- In January 23 we facilitated an Events Planning workshop, held at Leighton Hall. We invited various partners from across the area to discuss collaboration and co-ordination as well as discussing funding opportunities and partner priorities. Our 2023 events programme contains more collaborative events, and we're hoping to build on this.
- Into the Woods with Stomping Ground - Following the success of initial Into the Woods pilot with Chadwick Pupil Referral Unit, we secured funding from the Areti Trust to deliver a summer term programme in May and June 2022 and a full year programme which has supported two groups to come out to the AONB weekly in the autumn and summer seasons. Students learn to put up shelters and hammocks, create rope swings, learn to light and cook over a campfire, make land art sculptures and learn about the wildlife of the area.
- Bittern Sustainable Schools (with BCCIC)
We have continued to work with the Bittern Countryside CIC on the Bittern Sustainable Schools Programme. So far this has funded:
 - Workshops in all 6 of the AONB's Primary Schools by Larksfoot CIC, looking at moths, light pollution and climate change. This will be followed by Art workshops creating campaign materials and an exhibition at Leighton Moss as part of the Silverdale & Arnside Art & Craft Trail.
 - Arnside School: The installation of solar panels (due summer 2023).
 - Beetham School: Forest school equipment and an upgrade to sensor LED lighting.
 - Silverdale School: Forest school sessions and equipment.
 - Storth School: A new wildlife pond.
 - Yealand Conyers School: Dark sky friendly outdoor lighting LED upgrades – awaiting quote.
 - Warton Archbishop Hutton School: Wildlife pond upgrades.
 - Improved links with the schools has helped the advertising of AONB events (including woodland fun days), engagement in activities such as hedge planting with students at school sites and at the Landscape Trust's Coldwell Reserves and Arnside Tower Farm. Two teachers also attended the Forest School Leader training at Trowbarrow LNR and the programme supported equipment and transport for their forest school sessions delivered during their training.

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AGENDA ITEM 7

Planning work programme 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:

That the Committee:

(1) notes the report on planning and development management work

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, in particular the A&S AONB Development Plan Document, jointly adopted by Westmorland & Furness and Lancaster Councils. AONB designation and the AONB Management Plan are material considerations in the planning process. Management Plans are adopted statutory policy of the local authority.

Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership Planning Protocol

The AONB Planning Protocol sets out how the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership and Local Authority partners will work together regarding planning matters affecting the AONB.

Planning applications

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

A summary is given below of the total number of applications reviewed in 2022/23; 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 2022/23 (01/04/2022 to 31/03/2023)

Arnside	47
Silverdale	42
Beetham	63
Yealand Conyers	6
Yealand Redmayne	9
Warton	25
Total within AONB	192
Outside AONB	11
Total no. applications	203
Responses submitted	86

Of the responses submitted since the last Executive Committee meeting, 4 included formal objections to the proposed development. These applications are listed below, with the final planning decisions noted (where available):

- SL/2022/0893 – Hall More Lodge Caravan Site, Hale (retrospective) - **awaiting decision**
- **22/01604/FUL** – Yealand Hall Farm, Silverdale Road, Yealand Redmayne - **awaiting decision**
- **SL/2022/1160** – Beach Arbour, Redhills road, Arnside – **awaiting decision**
- **SL/2022/1177** – Land at Park Road and Quarry Lane, Sandside – **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:

- 21/00412/FUL – Application for erection of a two-storey detached dwelling and a detached garage with associated access and hardstanding and installation of package treatment plant at 25 Townsfield, Silverdale - **refused**
- 21/00899/HYB – Land between Brewers Barn and the A601 (M), North Road, Carnforth – **awaiting decision**
- 22/00106/DIS – Formed Walled Garden, Ridgeway Park, Silverdale - **awaiting decision**

Consultations responded to on behalf of the AONB Partnership

- Westmorland & Furness Validation checklist (planning)

Other planning related work

- Met with Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council (Richard Camp and Damian Law) to discuss the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document – Monitoring Report (Post Adoption to March 2022)
- Attended Marine Plan training sessions
- Attended SLDC Planning Service & Heritage Assets
- Westmorland & Furness Council Plan consultation
- Planning proposal at Sandside – an allocated site in AONB DPD

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AGENDA ITEM 7

Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) programme update

Report prepared by: Richard Park, AONB Farming Officer

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with an update on the delivery of the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee:

(1) notes the report on FiPL programme

Introduction

The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme is a Defra programme administered by Protected Landscape organisations in England. The programme provides grant funding to farmers and land managers for projects that provide outcomes in the following themes:

- Climate
- Nature
- People
- Place

In addition to the grant funding, the FiPL programme funds two part time FiPL Officers within the AONB (Richard Park & Tonia Armer), and provides some funds for administration and support from existing AONB personnel.

Defra funding for the FiPL programme is based on annual allocations. At the end of March 2023, Year 2 of the FiPL programme came to an end and Year 3 began.

Decisions about grant applications over £5,000 are made by a Local Assessment Panel, consisting of 12 locally appointed members from AONB Executive Committee, Westmorland & Furness Council, Lancaster City Council, Natural England, RSPB, National Trust, farming representatives, & NFU. Adam Briggs from NFU kindly agreed to Chair the Panel.

This report provides a brief summary of the FiPL programme in Arnside and Silverdale AONB between April 2022 and April 2023.

Duration Extension

Initially, the FiPL programme was planned to run for three years, from June 2021 until March 2024. In February 2023 Defra announced that the programme will be extended by one year, so is now planned to run until March 2025.

Budget

The total FiPL allocation of funds by Defra to the Protected Landscapes organisations are split into three funding pots:

- **Administration:** Covers personnel 'on' costs and administration and support time (can be freely transferred into the Advice and Guidance and Grants pots)
- **Advice and Guidance:** Covers FiPL Officer time for reaching out to and advising potential applicants (can be freely transferred into the Grants pot)
- **Grants:** To be allocated to the projects supported by the FiPL programme.

For Year 2 (April 2022 to March 2023) of the FiPL programme, Defra allocated Arnside & Silverdale AONB a total budget of £165,579. This was split as follows:

- Administration: up to £15,742
- Advice and Guidance: up to £23,828
- Grants: £126,009.08

For Year 3 (April 2023 to March 2024) there is a significant uplift in budget following Defra's recent announcement of the extension of the FiPL programme. The allocation has now been confirmed, as £241,649, split as follows:

- Administration: up to £24,018
- Advice and Guidance: up to £40,830
- Grants: approx.. £176,801

Programme Progress

Year 2 (April 2022 to March 2023)

As with Year 1, in Year 2 the grants budget allocated by Defra to Arnside and Silverdale AONB has been sufficient to fund all of the eligible FiPL applications received.

In February 2023 it was forecast that almost the entire grant budget of £126,000 was allocated to projects completed or expected to be completed before the end of the year. Ultimately, the total sum paid out in grants Year 2 was £108,000, with the shortfall being largely as a result of the later projects costing less than budget or being unable to deliver as much as was expected.

Year 3 (April 2023 to March 2024)

The total expected grants budget is around £176,000, of which £77,000 is already allocated to projects underway. Additionally, there are applications expected to come forward shortly for another £65,000.

Example Projects

Some examples of projects that have been allocated grant funding through Years 2 & 3 of the FiPL programme are given below:

Cumbria Wildlife Trust are underway with a two-year project (Years 2 & 3) to restore 8Ha of meadows across several land holdings to be rich in wildflowers. This will increase the area of these important species-rich grasslands that provide a critical food source for pollinators. Grant award: £44,000.

A dairy farm has planted a further 2km of hedges (with hedgerow trees) between grazing paddocks to create additional area of habitat and links between habitats. Grant award: £24,000.

A farmer has purchased an ATV-towed flail mower, funded at 80% of the purchase cost, to manage scrub encroachment on their wildlife-rich grazing land. The farmer has committed to make this available for use on other sites as well. Grant award: £4,000.

The National Trust have upgraded the existing path in Eaves Wood to be accessible to mobility scooters. This will improve accessibility to the outdoors for people with mobility difficulties. Grant award: £10,000.

Working with the estate owner, the AONB and the RSPB, a farmer has been awarded 80% of the costs to fence off an area of Hazelslack Marsh so that it can be grazed by cattle to better manage the area for the benefit of breeding waders. Grant award: £6,000.

A local estate is undertaking a project in Year 3 to restore a historic orchard, plant native wildflowers, install wildlife boxes and provide educational visits to local schools and other groups. Grant award: £17,000.

Several farmers and landowners have restored hedges and drystone walls. The grants awarded to these projects typically range from £3,000 to £5,000.

AONB Partnership Projects

In addition to the above, the AONB Partnership have secured FiPL grant funding for the following projects in Years 2 & 3:

Two workshops for farmers and land managers, covering Carbon in Soils, and Soil Health. Grant award: £1,700.

The programme of regular 'Walks for All', with a professional guide and supported by volunteers. The project provides accessible walks in nature around the AONB for individuals that would otherwise experience significant barriers to access the outdoors as a result of factors such as dementia or reduced mobility. Grant award: £16,000 over Years 2 & 3.

Development of the 'Growing Station' wildflower community growing space in Arnside. Volunteers will work at the nursery and it will grow native plants from locally-collected seed, which will be then be available for use in biodiversity-improvement projects within the AONB. Grant award: £13,000 over Years 2 & 3.