

**Arnside & Silverdale  
National Landscape Partnership**

**Executive Committee meeting**

**2pm, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024**

**Arnside Educational Institute**



**Arnside &  
Silverdale  
National  
Landscape**

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome, apologies and introductions
2. Minutes of meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023
3. Matters arising
4. National update:
  - activities of National Landscapes Association for AONBs
  - national rebrand
  - legislative changes (amendment to Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill)
  - Protected Landscapes Partnership
  - Green Finance work
  - Defra funding
5. Budget 2023/24 and 2024/25 (report circulated) **Decision required**
6. National Landscape team work programme - presentation and update (report circulated)
7. Management Plan review update (report circulated)
8. Farming in Protected Landscapes summary of projects (document circulated)
9. Updates from partners
10. Any Other Business
11. Dates for your diary and dates of future meetings

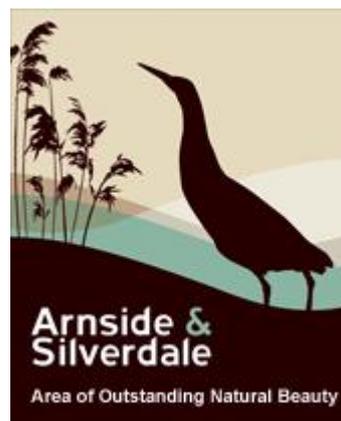
**Refreshments provided**

**4.30pm finish**

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

## **Executive Committee Meeting - Minutes**

**2pm, 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023  
Storth Village Hall**



### **In Attendance**

Cllr Brian Meakin (Chair), Beetham Parish Council  
Cllr Helen Chaffey (Vice-Chair), Westmorland & Furness Council  
Cllr Angela Metcalfe, Yealand Conyers Parish Council  
Cllr Steve Porter, Arnside Parish Council  
Cllr Kevin Briggs, Warton Parish Council  
Cllr Sue Tyldesley, Lancaster City Council  
Cllr Keith Reed, Silverdale Parish Council  
Sam Stalker, National Trust  
Mike Warren, Landscape Trust  
Jarrod Sneyd, RSPB Leighton Moss  
Laura Partington, Friends of the Lake District  
Simon Waller, CLA  
Brian Jones, Ramblers – User Group Rep  
Bridget Pickthall, Bridleways Association – User Group Rep  
Ann Kitchen, BCCIC – Business Rep  
Julian Oston, Dallam Tower Estate – Landowner Rep

Rachel Whaley, Westmorland & Furness Council – Officer Rep

Lucy Barron, AONB Manager, AONB Partnership Team  
Caroline Howard, Funding & Communications Officer (mins), AONB Partnership Team  
Dougie Watson, Countryside Officer, AONB Partnership Team

### **Apologies**

Jim Turner, Natural England  
Dan Taylor, National Trust  
Fiona Allan, Landscape Trust  
Liz Cheslett-Davey, Environment Agency  
Ailsa Gibson, Bridleways Association – User Group Rep  
Gemma Wren, Nature's Gems – Business Rep  
Adam Briggs – NFU Rep (alternate) / Farming in Protected Landscapes Local Assessment Panel Chair

Richard Camp, Lancaster City Council – Officer Rep  
Elliott Lorimer, Lancashire County Council – Officer Rep

Sue Hunter, AONB Officer, AONB Partnership Team  
Helen Rawlinson, Countryside Officer, AONB Partnership Team  
Richard Park, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer, AONB Partnership Team  
Tonia Armer, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer, AONB Partnership Team  
Belinda Barclay, Local Nature Reserves Warden, AONB Partnership Team

### **Not in Attendance**

Cllr Philippa Williamson, Lancashire County Council  
Cllr Mike Macklin, Yealand Redmayne Parish Council  
Sarah Wilson, Natural England  
David Harpley, Cumbria Wildlife Trust  
NFU Rep – Joan Jackson

### **Minutes**

#### **12. Welcome, apologies and introductions**

Cllr Brian Meakin opened the meeting, and attendees introduced themselves.

#### **13. Annual re-endorsement of User Groups, Business and Farming representatives and election of Chair and Vice Chairs**

Cllr Brian Meakin asked the committee to endorse/re-endorse the following user group, business and farming representatives:

- User Group Rep – Brian Jones, Ramblers
- User Group Rep – Bridget Pickthall, Bridleways Association
- Business Rep – Ann Kitchen, BCCIC
- Business Rep – Gemma Wren, Nature's Gems
- Farming Rep – Julian Oston, Dallam Tower Estate

All user group, business and farming representatives were unanimously endorsed.

Brian Meakin handed over to Lucy Barron, who asked the committee to elect a Chair and Vice Chair.

Cllr Brian Meakin was re-elected as Chairperson.

Cllr Helen Chaffey was re-elected as Vice-Chairperson.

Proposed by Ann Kitchen

Seconded Julian Oston

#### **14. Minutes of meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

No comments on the minutes. Minutes were accepted as a true record.

Brian Jones asked if there were any update on the planning application for a development of flats at Sandside. At present it appears to still be under consideration by the planning department at Westmorland & Furness Council.

## **15. Matters arising**

There was one outstanding action from the minutes of the last meeting – Lucy Barron was actioned to organise a meeting to discuss coordination of biological recording in the area. This hasn't happened yet, but it is planned, and will link with the Nature Recovery Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategy work.

*ACTION: Lucy Barron will progress organisation of the meeting before March 2024.*

## **16. AONB Partnership team work programme - presentation and update (report circulated)**

Lucy Barron gave a short presentation summarising work which has been undertaken by the AONB team over the last 6 months.

Ann Kitchen highlighted the work of the AONB team with schoolchildren; particularly the new Woodland Oasis development at Trowbarrow.

The Removing Barriers backpacks were discussed – Sam Stalker and Laura Partington were interested in the concept and Caroline Howard suggested that some training on supporting people with diverse access needs could be provided for organisations based in the AONB, potentially linked to the AONB rebrand.

## **17. AONB Budget 2022/23 Final Outturn and 2023/24 Mid-Year Report (report circulated)**

Caroline Howard gave a summary of the report.

Julian Oston asked about the staffing of the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme following the uplift in funding, which is being partially used to cover a new part time staff member currently being recruited. Lucy Barron clarified that the new staff member will be carrying out admin/service support activities.

## **18. Planning work programme update (report circulated)**

Cllr Keith Reed asked about the Planning Protocol, which sets out how the AONB Partnership deals with planning matters. Lucy Barron will circulate a copy of the latest version of the Planning Protocol. Brian Jones stated that Silverdale Parish Council and the Ramblers have responded to a consultation by Lancashire County Council to the proposed closure of a footpath and pedestrian rail crossing at Waterslack. Lucy Barron confirmed that the AONB team had also responded.

*ACTION: Lucy Barron will circulate a copy of the Planning Protocol.*

## **19. Brief updates from partners**

### ***Friends of the Lake District – Laura Partington***

The Good Lighting Technical Advice Note, which will cover the whole of the AONB, is being launched. This will provide guidance for new developments on suitable lighting schemes to minimise light pollution and protect Dark Skies. A platinum award was achieved at the Build Back Better Awards. Friends of the Lake District have been contributing to the Destination Management Plan from Cumbria Tourism. Has the AONB been involved? Lucy Barron confirmed that the AONB team haven't been to the steering group but did undertake an in-depth interview with the organisation doing the consultation.

*ACTION: Lucy Barron will follow up on progress on the DMP.*

### ***RSPB Leighton Moss – Jarrod Sneyd***

The RSPB have seen a considerable improvement in financial success at Leighton Moss post-covid, largely due to the café. This year there were 9 booming male bitterns across reserve, and 30-40 avocet chicks fledged. The RSPB will be replacing Lower Hide in 2024. The Evolving Leighton Moss project is looking at a sensitive redevelopment of the visitor centre and is making steady progress.

### ***National Trust – Sam Stalker***

A Tramper accessible route has been implemented at Eaves Wood and new welcome signs will be installed shortly. There have been some significant developments around Barrow in Furness which have taken a lot of time. Sizergh have a new 1 ½ km accessible trail. There are new tenants at Sizergh, and the team have been working on new Countryside Stewardship scheme and have started carbon auditing for some new tenants. Sizergh has had strong visitor numbers this year, bucking the national trend. The National Trust team have been working with partners on events.

### ***Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company – Ann Kitchen***

The Bittern Sustainable Schools Programme has been a focus, and the BCCIC are hoping to continue it and build on this year's success. The project has worked with all the schools in the AONB to carry out a variety of activities related to climate and nature, including moth workshops, installation of solar panels and LED lighting.

The botanical recording project has now identified 58 rare or threatened plants with 12 volunteers recording – this year there have been recorded sightings of 52 of the target species. Some species are doing better than anticipated, other species seemed badly affected by the droughts. The project now has a good baseline, and the next phase will involve rationalising historic data from the area, considering records from 1968 onwards.

### ***Dallam Tower Estate – Julian Oston***

Water quality assessments have been recently undertaken on the estate, and more farmers are looking into Countryside Stewardship and regenerative agriculture.

### ***Warton Parish Council – Cllr Kevin Briggs***

The parish council have been looking at flooding issues especially those relating to Warton Mires. Some effort has also been spent on Warton's small quarry – climbers have not been seeking permission and there have been some impacts by local businesses. Plug plants from the AONB are being planted out on some roadside verges as part of the Bee on the Verge project.

Jarrold Sneyd updated on RSPB involvement in the flood mitigation elements of the original Warton Mires proposal. The proposal was to install a large bund for flood mitigation however this saw escalating costs and the cost/benefit became uneven, therefore RSPB have withdrawn from this part of the project. The information and research are available to other organisations, and RSPB efforts will now focus on Countryside Stewardship and habitat improvements for Lapwing.

### ***Landscape Trust – Mike Warren***

The Landscape Trust reserves are doing well, and the Landscape Trust is in good heart. Bob Pickup has stood down this year as a trustee; the reserves management group has now taken over the work of managing the reserves. There are some succession planning issues for the trustee officers and there may be some new vacancies soon. The collaboration with the AONB team on events has been working well. The Landscape Trust Calendar 2024 is now available to buy via the website or at the AONB Office.

### ***Silverdale Parish Council – Cllr Keith Reed***

Rural Prosperity Fund grant gained for the redevelopment of the village toilets by the Parish Council. The transport and access working group is seeking to come forward with proposals to better manage

parking provision and traffic in the village. There is also a working group looking at net zero / carbon. Looking to deliver a zero carbon fair in 2024.

***Ramblers – Brian Jones***

The Ramblers have been checking additional footpaths around the AONB – this typically focuses outside the AONB as the footpaths in the AONB are generally well maintained. The England Coastal Path is progressing with the route now confirmed between Silverdale and Cleveleys. The Ramblers have been disappointed that many of their suggestions on this have not been taken up.

***Arnside Parish Council – Cllr Steve Porter***

It's now 2 years since the start of the verges project. Cumbria Wildlife Trust have assisted, including with the Planting for Pollinators project. Some apple trees have been planted at Beachwood to replace trees lost during Storm Arwen. Thanks to the AONB for providing some deer proof tree guards! The Parish Council have also been carrying out a survey on affordable housing in Arnside. There is a resident-initiated zero carbon group, which has invited the Parish Council to become involved. The Parish Council is holding an event to encourage Gardening for Wildlife in the village; there is some AONB participation in this. The first event will be 17<sup>th</sup> January – there will be drinks and nibbles.

***Beetham Parish Council – Cllr Brian Meakin***

The wildflower verge in Beetham parish has been developing well. It has seen some resistance from locals, who have needed reassurance it will be worthwhile once biodiversity recovers! Ash dieback has been an issue in the parish – Silverdale Woodbank have done an excellent job of tidying the debris from felling. Responding to the planning application for a large development at Sandside has taken a substantial amount of time.

**20. AONB Management Plan review 2024 (report circulated) Decision required**

The responsible Local Authorities are required to develop a joint management plan for the AONB. It is not a plan for the AONB Partnership team, rather a joint plan for the area and how it can be conserved and enhanced and must be developed in consultation with the local community. It is a requirement to review the AONB management plan every 5 years. The AONB team carry out this process on behalf the responsible local authorities and other partners. The current review has been delayed by a year as we were asked to do so by Defra, but the review needs to be carried out in 2024. The new Management Plan will cover the period from 2025 – 2030.

A draft of the project plan has been included in the report. The AONB Partnership team recommend that a working group be formed to support the review.

Natural England are in the process of preparing updated guidance on the review of management plans. The review process will need to start before the final version of the guidance is available, however a draft copy of the guidance has been circulated (not yet publicly available). It is proposed that the review is started using the draft guidance, amending the approach as necessary once the final document is available.

Defra's outcomes and monitoring framework for protected landscapes is also expected shortly – this will give a strong steer for the information which needs to be included. It is hoped that much of those data will be provided centrally. The timing of the release of this might impact the project plan timeline.

Conducting a management plan review takes time - the input and support of partners is essential to making it a success. The AONB Partnership Team appreciate the co-operation of all partners during the process:

Phase 1: Scoping and preparing for the review

Phase 2: undertaking the review

Phase 3: publishing and adopting the AONB Management Plan 2025-30

Cllr Helen Chaffey asked what will the public involvement be in this?

Lucy Barron responded that there will be one principal opportunity for a formal public consultation on the new plan for a 6 week period. There will also be some informal consultations earlier in the process. Documents like the special qualities report are also available for feedback.

Ann Kitchen asked if there are stages to look back at what's happened up to now, and then looking forward to 2025-30? The consultation will be once the new plan document is drafted? Lucy Barron responded that that was broadly correct. This process will consider factors which have changed over the past 5 years, such as key policy changes.

Sam Stalker asked will there be any changes in the remit of a National Landscape rather than an AONB? Lucy Barron responded that there may be, but we don't know what those will be as yet. At present the purpose of the designation has not changed but there are conversations at a national level to review this. Defra are gradually making a number of changes that were originally recommended through the National Landscapes Review, however this has been gradual.

Rachel Whaley asked about the status of the year delay – Lucy Barron confirmed that the process has already been delayed by a year at Defra's suggestion.

Keith Reed stated that the stages are similar to a local plan review, but the timescales are significantly shorter, and asked if the timescale is achievable? Lucy Barron stated that the timescales are ambitious, however have been achieved in the past. Subject to the publication of the aforementioned documents the AONB Partnership Team are confident the Management Plan can be delivered in the timeframe. Publication had a slippage of 2 months last time.

Keith Reed asked, given the rolling back of legislation from the EU, are we sure all requirements still apply? Lucy Barron responded that it is not confirmed at present, but that the team will start the process and will follow the national guidance once it is published.

Lucy Barron asked for volunteers for the review working group – meetings will be scheduled every ~3 months.

The following individuals volunteered:

Cllr Brian Meakin  
Cllr Helen Chaffey  
Cllr Sue Tyldesley  
Cllr Keith Reed  
Laura Partington  
Brian Jones

Brian Jones asked when the AONB Development Plan Document (DPD) will be reviewed (emphasising the importance of the document)?

Lucy Barron stated that there are no plans to imminently review the AONB DPD but at some point, this will need to be done. The Local Authorities will make that decision.

It was recommended that:

1. The AONB Partnership team conduct the review on behalf of the local authorities.
2. The Executive Committee approve the draft project plan.
3. A Review Working Group is established to support the process.

All recommendations were unanimously approved.

## **21. National Landscape rebrand (presentation circulated)**

The new Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape logo was shared and the national rebrand was discussed. The Rebrand will launch on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023. A Destination Management Organisations (DMO) and Partners pack is being produced by the NAAONB; this will be circulated once available.

## **22. National update – activities of National Association for AONBs, forthcoming legislative changes (amendment to Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill) and Protected Landscapes Partnership.**

Following the National Landscapes Review in 2019 there has been discussion on the role and management of AONBs and National Parks. A briefing note has been circulated regarding amendments to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, which will strengthen the role of AONB Management Plans. The wording around the responsibilities of relevant bodies to 'have regard to' the AONB designation in their decision making will become to 'further the purpose' of AONB designation.

A discussion around determining a new funding formula for National Landscapes is being progressed by Defra. Factors such as area size, population, numbers of Local Authorities etc. were originally used for the funding formula but this was approximately 30 years ago. However, this will be subject to the spending review next year. The NAAONB are being very positive about that process and are hoping that it will be a positive outcome for AONB teams.

Another key change at a national level is the establishment of a Protected Landscapes partnership – this was based on the recommendation in the National Landscapes Review to have a National Landscapes Service. The Protected Landscapes partnership is Natural England, Defra, National Trails, National Parks England, and the NAAONB. The NAAONB are hoping outcomes will include more funding opportunities, central staff support and national coherence in terms of schemes of work and opportunities.

Laura Partington asked will there be a role for the Protected Landscape partnership on management plans? Lucy Barron responded not in terms of local priorities, but potentially with regard to common national issues/guidance.

Julian Oston asked how the original funding formula was developed – was it based on the number of council tax payers? In the new formula will visitor density be considered? Lucy Barron did not have exact details about the original funding formula; it was some considerable time ago and the situation has changed considerably since then. With any new formula other factors, such as visitor numbers, may be considered but this is still to be determined by Defra.

Brian Jones asked if there is a policy that National Landscapes are less for access and engagement than National Park / National Trails? Lucy Barron responded that the purpose of National Landscapes is not currently being changed but that these are issues being discussed nationally. However, at a local level here we see access and engagement as an essential part of how we help manage the AONB, within current resourcing levels.

### 23. Bittern Award 2023

Nominations are requested for the 2023 Bittern Award. The Bittern Award is presented each year to an individual or organisation who have made an outstanding contribution to the AONB. The opportunity to put forward nominations will open shortly. The deadline will be in December. Caroline Howard suggested a youth award.

### 24. Any Other Business

Ann Kitchen highlighted that the BOOM programme is closing but the project has done a considerable amount of positive work in the area including the hazel dormouse reintroduction, green-winged orchid and spiked speedwell population reinforcement.

Ann Kitchen raised that Bank Well at Silverdale needs some work. Dougie Watson confirmed that the AONB Partnership Team and Silverdale Parish Council are aware of this.

### 25. Dates for your diary and dates of future meetings

AONB Executive Committee Meetings 2024:

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024

31<sup>st</sup> October 2024

#### **Upcoming Events:**

9<sup>th</sup> November – Talking the Landscape: The Geological Story of the AONB

18<sup>th</sup> November – Hedgelaying training (joint with Lancashire & Westmorland Hedge Laying Association)

#### **Table of Actions**

Action	Allocated to	Deadline
Organise meeting re: coordination of biological recording	Lucy Barron	Mar 24
Circulate copy of the Planning Protocol	Lucy Barron	Nov 23
Follow up on progress on the Destination Management Plan.	Lucy Barron	Next Meeting

**Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape  
Executive Committee 22.05.2024**

**AGENDA ITEM 5**

**National Landscape Budget 2023-24 and 2024-25  
Report prepared by Caroline Howard, Funding and Communications Officer**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

**To provide the Committee with details of the final outturn of 2023-24 National Landscape budget and the proposed National Landscape budget for 2024-25 for approval**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (1) that the Committee notes the 2023-24 budget outturn report**
- (2) that the Committee approves the proposed 2024-5 budget**

**Background**

The proposed 2024-5 budget is required by Defra.

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

Figures are subject to final and in year adjustments.

## 2023-4 Outturn and 2024-5 Budget Proposal

### Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape Core Budget

#### Expenditure

Category	Description	2023-4 Budget (Nov 2023)	2023-4 Outturn	2024-5 Budget
Staff	Salaries, NI, Pensions	234,500	227,579.60	269,700
	Travel & Subsistence	1,300	1,552.10	1,100
	Training	1,500	2,826.90	1,500
	<b>Staff Sub-total</b>	<b>237,300</b>	<b>231,958.60</b>	<b>272,300</b>
Office	Repair & Maintenance etc.	6,600	12,620.21	4,000
	Electricity	800	682.48	400
	Misc. Energy Charges	700	963.72	700
	Rent	3,100	3,089.58	4,000
	Rates	2,400	3,801.82	2,400
	Water Services	100	208.38	100
	Premises Related Insurance	600	466.96	500
	Office Equipment	1,100	2,610.90	1,000
	Telephones	900	2,217.94	900
<b>Office Sub-total</b>	<b>16,300</b>	<b>26,661.99</b>	<b>14,000</b>	
Communications & Events	Printing & Stationery	600	24.00	600
	Exhibitions & Events	2,400	3,595.91	1,600
	Communications & Publicity	3,100	6,094.85	3,100
	<b>Comms. Sub-total</b>	<b>6,100</b>	<b>9,714.76</b>	<b>5,300</b>
Partnership	Employee Related Insurances	1,400	1,296.17	1,500
	Repair & Maintenance of Vehicles	400	603.48	600
	Petrol & Derv	300	409.56	400
	Vehicle Licences	200	322.50	200
	Transport Related Insurance	600	566.97	700
	Equipment and Tools - General	1,000	916.76	1,000
	Clothing & Uniforms	300	902.32	300
	National Landscape Executive Support	3,900	3,928.00	3,900
	Support - Internal Recharges (System)	16,600	16,600.00	16,600
<b>Partnership Sub-total</b>	<b>24,700</b>	<b>25,545.76</b>	<b>25,200</b>	
Programme	Management Plan Projects (inc. consultants)	59,800	69,691.69	117,270
	LNR Management Programme	18,100	17,287.10	18,700
	LNR Trowbarrow Interpretation & Events	2,600	2,135.67	8,000
	<b>Programmes Sub-total</b>	<b>80,500</b>	<b>89,114.46</b>	<b>143,970</b>
Reserve	<b>Contribution to Reserve Sub-Total</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000.00</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>366,900</b>	<b>387,932.78</b>	<b>462,770</b>

## Income

Category	Description	2023-4 Budget (Nov 2023)	2023-4 Outturn	2024-5 Budget
Government Grants	DEFRA (inc. revenue uplift)	166,900	165,791.57	201,900
	LNR Countryside Stewardship	16,000	16,461.87	24,700
	<b>Government Grants Sub-total</b>	<b>182,900</b>	<b>182,253.44</b>	<b>226,600</b>
	Westmorland & Furness Council	32,000	32,000.00	32,000
	Lancashire County Council	14,200	14,200.00	14,200
	LNR Lancashire County Council	5,900	5,800.00	6,000
	Lancaster City Council	41,700	45,900.00	59,000
	LNR Lancaster City Council	18,800	18,632.05	20,900
	Parish Council Donations	-	3,126.00	-
	<b>LAs Sub Total</b>	<b>112,600</b>	<b>119,658.05</b>	<b>132,100</b>
Other Income	ARETI Grants	35,400	26,650.00	8,770
	Natural England	-	0.00	10,000
	Westmorland & Furness Grant	-	0.00	48,400
	LNR Other Income	2,600	2,019.00	-
	Misc. Income	6,500	7,482.88	15,500
	Volunteer Days	-	4,708.61	-
	Wildflower Sales	-	5,052.53	-
	Fingerpost Donations	-	800.01	-
<b>Other Bodies Sub-Total</b>	<b>44,500</b>	<b>46,713.03</b>	<b>82,670</b>	
Feed In Tariff	<b>FIT Credits</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>630.25</b>	<b>500</b>
Reserve	<b>Transfer out of Reserve</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>
Recharges	<b>FiPL &amp; Removing Barriers Staff Recharge</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>12,504.47</b>	<b>0</b>
Host Authority In Kind	Lancaster City Council in kind support	16,600	16,600.00	16,600
	Lancaster City Council Property Services	1,800	7,573.54	2,300
	<b>HA In Kind Support Subtotal</b>	<b>18,400</b>	<b>24,173.54</b>	<b>18,900</b>
Reserves	<b>LCiC Contribution to Reserves</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000.00</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>366,900</b>	<b>387,932.78</b>	<b>462,770</b>

National Landscape reserve	2023/24
Balance as at 01/04/23	£68,624.27
Annual budgeted contribution into reserve	£2,000.00
Additional budget allocated to reserve (underspend)	£2,937.21
Less transfer out of reserve	0
Projected balance in reserve at 01/04/24	£73,561.48

## Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme

	Allocation 2023/4	Actuals 2023/4	Allocation 2024/5
Grants	176,801.00	126,848.45	213,699.29
Advice & Guidance and Admin	64,848.00	64,110.87	60,824.00
<b>Full Programme</b>	<b>241,649.00</b>	<b>190,959.32</b>	<b>275,523.29</b>

### Additional Defra Grants (2024/25 Only – Capital Expenditure)

#### 24/25 Core Uplift Capital Funding

£36,090

#### 24/25 Access Capital Funding

£39,594

**Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape  
Executive Committee 22.05.24**

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**National Landscape team work programme update**

**Report prepared by: National Landscape staff**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

**To provide the Committee with an update on the delivery of the National Landscape team work programme**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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

**National Landscape team work programme update**

For the period October 2023 – end March 2024, key achievements include:

**Outstanding landscape rich in natural and cultural heritage**

- Undertook preparatory work for the Review of the AONB Management Plan including developing and updating evidence base for the State of the AONB and State of Nature reports, and planning review process.
- Worked, taking a landscape-scale approach, as a key or supporting partner, in numerous partnerships/projects notably Cumbria, Lancashire and Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnerships, Warton Mires project, Back on Our Map (BOOM), Our Future Coast and Becks to Bay Catchment Partnership.
- Participated in meetings and workshops to help progress Lancashire and Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Draft Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape Nature Recovery Plan produced.
- Continued to support Hazel Dormouse, Green-winged Orchid, Spiked Speedwell and other floral species reintroductions in the National Landscape as part of the BOOM project. Worked with BOOM project team to ensure legacy of project in the area following project closedown in early 2024.
- Supported Electricity North West with overhead wires undergrounding project. Undergrounding scheme at New Barns in Arnside completed.
- Funding received from Natural England to carry out research into attitudes of farmers and landowners to nature recovery to gauge potential of Landscape Recovery scheme application, establishing farmer clusters and linking to the Super National Nature Reserve proposal.
- Ongoing direct conservation management of Trowbarrow and Warton Crag SSSIs:
  - Continued implementation of Years 1 & 2 of Countryside Stewardship agreement including contractors managing woodland and scrub

- Established Crag-wide herd conservation grazing and cooperative management, working in partnership.
- Volunteer activities at Warton Crag included footpath maintenance, scrub management, woodland management
- Volunteer activities at Trowbarrow included access management, ride and glade management, scrub clearance.
- Trowbarrow advisory group meetings held October 2023 and March 2024.
- Warton Crag advisory group meeting held November 2023.
- Climbing Advisory Annual Meeting - promoting positive use and increased awareness of designated geological features
- Trowbarrow SSSI condition assessment site visit completed
- Provision of independent landscape-related planning and policy advice to local authorities, including reviewing and making formal responses to planning applications (priority applications only while short staffed.)
- Delivery of AONB Volunteer Programme including practical conservation and enhancement works at key sites
- Habitat & Access Management Volunteers – management at Warton Crag and Trowbarrow LNRs (see above), plug planting at Scar Close and Ashmeadow, Beachwood tree and scrub management, habitat management and seed collection at Dobshall Wood & Grubbins Wood, Coldwell hedgelaying preparation, pond management at Woodwell and Bank Well, orchard management at Clare’s orchard, assisted with Growing Station
- Monthly litter picks across the National Landscape
- Bee on the verge - continuing to support APC with verge improvements and Gardening for Wildlife initiative
- The Growing Station, the wildflower community growing space - successfully recruited Grace Holland as Community Growing Manager to lead on growing wildflower plug plants to support nature recovery across the area and develop a ‘therapeutic horticultural’ volunteer offer
- Undertook further meadow/species-rich grassland restoration at a variety of sites through a FiPL-funded project led by Cumbria Wildlife Trust and supported through the development of *The Growing Station*.
- Continuation of native tree nursery project, growing local provenance oak, elm, crab apple and rowan trees.
- Participation in and active support for activities of the National Landscapes Association, including attending the National Landscapes national launch, Chairs’ Conference in London in November 2023 and National Lead Officers’ meeting in Birmingham in February 2024.
- Supporting butterfly transect monitoring, working with Butterfly Conservation, including transect walkers’ event to start the season.
- 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 under four themes: Climate, Nature, People and Place. Since 2021, 49 projects have been supported with a grant expenditure of £315,000. 33 projects have been funded in Year 3.
- Supporting butterfly transect monitoring, working with Butterfly Conservation.
- Supported new botanical monitoring scheme, working with local plant recorders.
- Hosted a training session on Soil Health by Nils Corfield, attended by several members of the National Landscape team as well as local land managers.
- Worked with Westmorland & Furness Council to secure additional funding for nature and climate activity for 2024/25 onwards.

### **Vibrant and sustainable communities**

- 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.

- Continued long-term support for social forestry initiative Silverdale District Wood Bank.
- Rural skills: worked with Lancashire and Westmorland Hedgelaying Association to deliver a training event in autumn 2023
- Supporting Silverdale Parish Council with community-led Transport and Access working group aiming to address issues around parking, access, and connectivity of routes
- Provided advice and support to partners and Parish Councils.
- Working with Lancashire County Council to continue management of the Warton Crag Quarry Local Nature Reserve and car park site, a key arrival point in the National Landscape.
- Delivered the National Landscape Grants Fund - run jointly with the Arnside/Silverdale Landscape Trust, working together to support projects which conserve and enhance the area or connect people with the landscape. Two projects have been funded: Mawson's Garden Maintenance Project and Lichen Flora of Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape.
- Ongoing and continued support for the AONB Landscape Trust and Bittern Countryside CIC, in particular support given to LT reserves management committee.
- Completion of Bittern Sustainable Schools Programme with Bittern Countryside CIC: working with schools to develop forest school activities and supporting sustainable energy practices within the schools themselves.
- Delivered the practical National Landscape Volunteer Programme: facilitating over 95 volunteering events and activities in 2023/24 - a total of 5291 hours of volunteer time. We currently have 102 active volunteers, and 22 volunteers have completed first aid training this year. Supported Communications Volunteers, Events Volunteers, Visitor Welcome Volunteers and Photography Volunteers to offer a wider range of volunteer activities. These volunteers have contributed over 579 hours of time in 2023/24.

### **A strong connection between people and the landscape**

- Participated in NAAONB Rebranding Steering Committee, leading up to rebranding in November 2023. Implemented new brand as part of a phased approach including 'reskin' of website, design of new publications and use of new name and logo.
- Continued implementation of the Communications Strategy – provided and distributed a range of online, social media and printed communication and information materials.
- Increased following on social media. We now have 4,767 followers on X, 4,882 followers on Facebook, 1,067 followers on Instagram.
- Ongoing operation of the National Landscape Information Centre at Arnside Station.
- Addressing issues around responsible behaviour in the countryside used social media to promote the Countryside Code.
- Continued essential maintenance and warden duties at Warton Crag, Warton Crag Quarry and Trowbarrow Local Nature Reserves.
- Delivery of Dementia-friendly Walks for All Programme – a programme of weekly supported walks in different locations across the area, funded by FiPL this year.
- Launched Arnside & Silverdale Geological Story booklet to increase engagement with the geology of the National Landscape, with the booklet on sale in local businesses/attractions and an accompanying talk delivered in November.
- Full events programme for 2023/24 delivered including 5 *Walking the Landscape* events, with a total of 88 participants, a Bat Walk at Trowbarrow LNR with 24 participants, two *Explore the Landscape* events at the historic garden at Mawsons with 70 participants, and a *Marvellous Moth Morning* for families at Warton Crag with 22 attendees. We also hosted two Woodland Fun Day sessions at the Woodland Trust's Dobshall Wood Nature Reserve and Trowbarrow Local Nature Reserve, with over 100 attendees at each event. Delivered a Family Fun-gi Day with the National Trust, including grow-your-own workshops, a fungi walk and art and craft activities for children.
- Supported the Landscape Trust in the delivery of the LT events programme.
- Continued the Waymarking the National Landscape programme – 7 new posts installed in 2023/24.
- Continued to meet with Natural England to discuss implementation of King Charles III Coast Path, following approval by the Secretary of State for the Silverdale – Cleveleys section. Formation of North West Coast Path Partnership.

- Implementation of the Into the Woods Programme. Successful delivery of the *Into the Woods* project funded by Areti Trust to increase involvement of children and young people in the outdoors and nature, for the 2023/24 school year, with the autumn term successfully completed and the spring/summer programme now underway. *Into the Woods* brings students from Chadwick Pupil Referral Unit into the National Landscape on a regular basis for a range of activities to connect with nature and build confidence/skills and is delivered by experienced practitioners Stomping Ground CIC.
- Woodland Oasis outdoor classroom site at Trowbarrow LNR now available for free bookings. Local schools, home school groups and a Cancer Care group have utilised the site. Two members of staff qualified as L3 Forest School Leaders to assist with groups at the Woodland Oasis site and other sites.
- Working with landowners and partners to develop options for projects to improve access to the countryside to plan for Removing Barriers funding spend in 2024/5.

## **Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape**

**Executive Committee 22.05.24**

### **AGENDA ITEM 7**

**Report title: Management Plan Review update**

**Report prepared by: Lucy Barron, National Landscape Manager**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To provide the Committee with an update on progress with the review of the Management Plan

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

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

### **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**

At their meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023, the Executive Committee agreed to conduct the review on behalf of the three relevant local authorities (via the National Landscape team), approved a draft project plan setting out the approach to the review, and established a Review Working Group to support the process.

Due to the retirement of a key member of staff in early December 2023 and further delays to the publication of the national Management Plan Review guidelines by Natural England, there has been limited progress only. Defra's Protected Landscapes Targeting and Outcomes Framework has now been published.

Appendix 1 details progress to date and updated timescales for the project plan (please note that for this purpose we are continuing to use the term Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) for now, as this remains the legal name for the designation).

## Appendix 1

### Arnside & Silverdale AONB Management Plan Review 2024/25

#### Updated Project Plan (May 2024)

##### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Arnside & Silverdale AONB Management Plan 2019 – 2024 was published in April 2019 by the AONB Partnership on behalf of the four responsible local authorities at that time: Cumbria County Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council.
- 1.2 Under Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, the relevant local authorities must review the Management Plan within five years of the date of publication. However, in July 2022, Defra wrote to all AONB Partnerships recommending that the review could be delayed by 1 year to allow publication of new Management Plan guidance and a new Protected Landscapes outcomes framework, and to allow measures introduced in response to the National Landscapes Review to take effect.
- 1.3 The CRoW Act requires that where a local authority reviews a management plan, they shall:
  - (a) determine on that review whether it would be expedient to amend the plan and what (if any) amendments would be appropriate,
  - (b) make any amendments that they consider appropriate, and
  - (c) publish a report on the review specifying any amendments made.
- 1.4 This Project Plan outlines how the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership intends to approach the process of reviewing the current Management Plan. It explains the various stages of work involved, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) that will be undertaken as the Review develops, and the process of consultation.
- 1.5 The AONB Executive Committee will undertake the Review on behalf of the three Partner Local Authorities and will therefore have overall executive oversight of the Review and sign off the revised/amended Management Plan.
- 1.6 AONB Management Plans are statutory plans whose purpose is to provide a framework for ensuring delivery of the statutory purpose of AONBs, that of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of their designated landscapes<sup>1</sup>. The Management Plan guides the work of

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<sup>1</sup> As set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; confirmed by Section 82 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:

- The primary purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
- In pursuing the primary purpose of the designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.
- Recreation is not an objective of the designation, but the demand for recreation should be met insofar as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

the AONB Partnership. It sets the framework for action by Local Authorities, Public bodies, Businesses, Communities and Partner Organisations and informs the AONB Team work programme.

- 1.7 AONB Management Plans are not static. They must respond appropriately to new issues and challenges, and to changing political and regulatory conditions (for example, in agricultural funding or new primary legislation). Following numerous fundamental changes on the last 5 years, it is considered essential to carry out a full review of the Management Plan.

## **2. The Review Approach**

- 2.1 Natural England is in the process of producing new Management Plan guidance, however, while a draft has been made available for comment by AONB Partnerships, the final document has not yet been published. Defra is also yet to publish the new Outcomes Monitoring Framework. Therefore, at the time of writing there are some significant unknowns in terms of the detail of the approach that will be required for the review. Nevertheless, it seems prudent to begin the review process, and adapt the approach if necessary once the above information becomes available.

## **3. The Review Process**

- 3.1 This Review is the fourth Arnside & Silverdale AONB Management Plan Review. The process set out in this document, builds on the Partnership's previous experience and takes into account previous Management Plan guidance. The plan will be updated following publication of the new Management Plan guidance and outcomes monitoring framework.
- 3.2 It is considered that there is much in the current plan that can be taken forward confidently into the next five years. A revised Plan is proposed that takes into account the important context changes since the publication of the last Management Plan, not least the National Landscapes Review.
- 3.3 The AONB Executive Committee will exercise overall control over the review process and have responsibility for approving the Plan and submitting it to the relevant Local Authorities, Natural England and Government. 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. The Review Group will be responsible for agreeing new and revised content and will take general editorial control of all sections of the revised Management Plan, agree timetables, approve external contributions and oversee public consultation and participation. The Review Group will report regularly to the Executive Committee. The

AONB Team will carry out the day-to-day work of undertaking the Review in consultation with the Review Group and the Executive Committee.

3.4 The review process will comprise three broad phases from inception to publication as described below.

#### 4. Outline Review Methodology and Timetable

4.1 The Review process can be split into three principal phases:

1. Scoping and preparing for the Review
2. Undertaking the Review
3. Publishing and adopting the Management Plan 2025-30

The table below attempts to summarise the key review stages and offers an outline timetable for the review of the Plan. Several of the review stages will be open to wider comment from all interested parties, partly through circulation of review documents, but also using on-line consultation, public consultation events and local information.

#### 5. Updated Review Timetable and Progress Log

Review Stage	Date	Output	Progress May 24	Revised Date
<b>Phase 1 - Scoping and preparing for the Review</b>				
Announce the Review - formal notification to Local Authorities	Nov-Dec 2023	Approval for Executive Committee to carry out review	To be completed by end May 2024	May 2024
AONB Executive Committee consider project plan	Nov-Dec 2023	Approval of draft project plan  Review working group established	Completed Nov 2023  Completed Nov 2023	
Statutory notice issued to NE	Dec 2023	Statutory notice issued	To be completed by end May 2024	May 2024
Establish evidence base	Oct 2023 – autumn 2024	Data and maps collated and State of the AONB report produced	Started. Defra supplied various data sets April 24.	Oct 2023- autumn 2024
Review policy context – review of national, regional and local policy statements, strategies, plans and programmes	By Jan 2024	Information to inform screening and SEA	Started.	By Sept 2024

Screen the current Management Plan Initial Review	Nov 2023 – Mar 2024	Information and comments obtained about delivery of current MP and new issues, options, suggestions and priorities through workshops and questionnaire	Started.	Nov 2023 – Oct 2024
Expert input into Special Qualities report	Nov 2023 – Mar 2024	Final report produced		Sept 2024
Statement of Community Involvement	End Dec 2023	Statement produced		August 2024
Consultation on SEA Scoping Report – 5 weeks	Feb/Mar 2024	Scoping report produced and comments gathered		Summer 2024
AONB Executive Committee confirm scope of the Review	May/Jun 24	Approval of scope of the Review		Oct 2024
<b>Phase 2 – Undertaking the Review</b>				
Develop the Draft revised Management Plan	Mar - Sep 2024	Writing and testing content of draft revised Plan based on evidence and information gathered in Phase 1		Sept – Dec 2024
Undertake SEA/SA/HRA	By Jul 2024	Assessments undertaken		Autumn 2024
Produce Consultation Draft of revised Management Plan	By Sep 2024	Draft Plan produced		Jan 2025
Produce draft Environmental and HRA Reports	By Sep 2024	Reports produced		Jan 2025
Undertake Equality Impact Assessment	By Sep 2024	Assessment undertaken		Jan 2025
Public consultation on the draft Revised Management Plan, Environmental and HRA reports – 6 weeks	Sep – Nov 2024	Public consultation process		Jan – Mar 2025

<b>Phase 3 - Publish and Adopt Management Plan 2025-30</b>			
Prepare Final Draft of revised Management Plan taking account of consultation comments	Jan 2025	Final Draft Plan produced	Mar 2025
Final plan approved by Executive Committee	Feb 2025	Approval by Executive Committee	Apr/May 2025
Final Draft made available for final representations	Feb 2025	Final representations process	May 2025
Prepare pre-adoption and publication versions of the revised Management Plan	Mar 2025	Confirmation of final draft by NE required	May/June 2025
Local authorities adopt plan	Mar/Apr 2025	Approval needed from all local authority cabinets	May /June 2025
Endorsement by other partners	Apr 2025	Endorsements received	May/June 2025
Review Report published	Apr 2025	Report published	Jun 2025
Publish Management Plan and submit to Secretary of State	Apr 2025	Final Plan published	Jun 2025