Isle of Wight AONB
Management Plan
2009-2014
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I am pleased to present to you the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan for 2009 - 2014. This document has been formed through extensive consultation and the review of our previous Management Plan. The result, as I hope you will agree, is a comprehensive Plan examining all facets of the AONB landscape.

The AONB is part of a national family of designated landscapes cherished for their special qualities. The complex and diverse character of the Isle of Wight AONB provides a huge asset for those that live and work here, as well as providing many with enjoyment that in turn contributes to a strong rural economy. The richness of our wildlife and historic environment also form a valuable and integral part of this special area.

The Partnership is an independent body funded by Natural England and the Isle of Wight Council. It is made up of representatives from a range of organisations and backgrounds. This wide representation has been the great strength of our Partnership. The Management Plan binds the Partnership by outlining common objectives and policies to ensure these special Island landscapes are conserved and enhanced for future generations.

As ever there are challenges ahead for the Partnership and the Island's communities as well as the landscape. However, this Plan will form a strong foundation for balancing the needs of people with the enduring character of the AONB. Because of this, I have no doubt that the Partnership will contribute towards a healthy future for the Isle of Wight AONB, its communities and landscape.

Tony Tutton
CHAIRMAN, THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PARTNERSHIP
Introduction

What is an AONB?

AONBs were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. They are treasured places in England and Wales, where the landscape is considered worthy of protection by law for future generations.

There are 40 AONBs in England and Wales, covering some 15% of the total land area. Northern Ireland currently has 9 confirmed AONBs with 2 further areas proposed.

In planning terms AONBs are equivalent to National Parks, and must be afforded the same level of consideration and protection.¹

¹ Government response to parliamentary questions confirming equivalence of National Parks and AONBs with regard to protection afforded by land use planning - 13 June 2000 resulting in an amendment to PPG7 (Planning Policy Guidance 7 - The Countryside, Environmental quality and economic and social development, 1997, Department of Environment)
Purpose of AONB Designation

Consecutive Governments have recognised the value of protected landscapes. However, the pressures faced by AONBs have changed since their conception in the late 1940s. Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency) is the national body with responsibility for designating AONBs. In 2001, a Countryside Agency publication stated:

The primary purpose of designation is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty (which includes wildlife and cultural heritage, as well as scenery).

In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and the social and economic needs of local communities.

Recreation is not an objective of the designation, but the demand for recreation should be met, in so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other land uses.2

The designation helps to protect not just the natural features - the trees, fields and open spaces - but also settlements and working environments that are unique characteristics of the countryside. The designation allows for the development of communities and economic activity including rural businesses, in ways that further enhance the character of the AONB.

Statutory Duties for Managing an AONB

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) strengthened the profile and protection of AONBs. In particular, the Act:

Placed a duty on all public bodies and statutory undertakers to ‘have regard’ to the purposes of AONBs.3

Established a process for creating AONB conservation boards, where this is supported locally.4

Created a statutory responsibility for local authorities and conservation boards to produce and regularly review AONB Management Plans.5

Government Planning Policy Guidance states that:

‘Nationally designated areas comprising National Parks, the Broads, the New Forest Heritage Area and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), have been confirmed by the Government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should therefore be given great weight in planning policies and development control’.6

‘The primary objective of (AONB) designation is the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. Local authorities should reflect this objective in their preparation of structure and local plans, and in the exercise of development control’.6

The Isle of Wight AONB

The Isle of Wight AONB was designated in 1963, the fourteenth of the 40 areas to be confirmed. The total area designated is 191 square kilometres, which is approximately half the land area of the Island. Unusually, the AONB area is not continuous and is made up of five distinct land parcels across the Island.

A detailed record of the original designation process was published in 2003. This sets out the reasons why areas that were put forward during the extensive consultation were either included or excluded.7 The special qualities that led to designation are set out more fully in later chapters.

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2 Countryside Agency CA 24 2001
3 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S85
4 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S86 & S87
5 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S89
6 Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, Department of Communities and Local Government 2004 PPS7
7 Isle of Wight AONB Designation History, Countryside Agency, Woolmore 2003
In 1974 two areas of Heritage Coast were defined, covering half of the Island's coastline.

Tennyson Heritage Coast runs for 34km, from Steephill Cove in Ventnor to Widdick Chine at Totland.

Hamstead Heritage Coast runs for 11km, from Bouldnor through to Thorness Bay. Both include large areas inland of the coastline.

The Heritage Coast areas within the AONB are arguably those areas most readily associated with the scenic beauty of the Isle of Wight.

Although sharing many of the aims of AONB designation, Heritage Coasts are also defined for public enjoyment and appreciation, ‘improving and extending appropriate recreational, educational, tourism and sporting opportunities where they do not conflict with the conservation of the resource’, with an additional aim to, ‘maintain and improve the environmental health of the inshore waters and beaches’.8

A Heritage Coast Management Plan was written and adopted as policy by the former County and Borough Councils on the Isle of Wight in 1986. The Heritage Coast areas are also included as a specific policy in the Unitary Development Plan, adding to the protection afforded to them through their inclusion in the AONB.

In 1992, the decision was taken to incorporate issues relating to Heritage Coasts and the AONB into one overall Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan.
Isle of Wight AONB Partnership

Following the increased profile and protection afforded to AONBs by the CroW Act 2000, the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) and the Isle of Wight Council signed a Memorandum of Agreement setting out a new partnership approach to managing the Isle of Wight AONB.

As a consequence, the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership was formed in April 2002. Jointly funded by the Isle of Wight Council and Natural England, the Partnership is a broad-based independent organisation with representatives from many local, regional and national organisations and individuals with a direct interest in the AONB.

The purpose of the Partnership is to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB, in light of the AONB Management Plan and its policies.

Core functions of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership are:

- Produce and review an AONB Management Plan.
- Raise awareness and appreciation of the AONB.
- Encourage people to take account of the AONB when carrying out any actions that might impact upon it.
- Monitor and report on the management of the AONB.
- Promote sustainable forms of social and economic development that conserves and enhances the AONB. This includes commenting on development control and planning policy issues.

AONB Unit

The staff arm of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership is the AONB Unit, which consists of an AONB Lead Officer, AONB Planning Officer, AONB Communication Officer and AONB Assistant. The Unit is hosted by the Isle of Wight Council and is housed within the Planning Services section of the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate.

Further details of the current Isle of Wight AONB Partnership are given in Appendix A.
AONB Management Plan

The CRoW Act 2000 confers a statutory obligation on all local authorities or conservation boards to produce and subsequently review an AONB Management Plan for their area. The plan should “formulate their policy for the management of their Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it.”

As well as being a legal requirement, the initial preparation and subsequent reviews of the AONB Management Plan represent an opportunity to draw together all interested parties to generate long-term visions for the area, set an agenda for change and manage such change effectively. It is also a useful educational tool, helping to change attitudes and behaviours.

The first statutory AONB Management Plan was produced in 2004. This document is the result of the requisite review of that first Plan. As a result of the review, much of the original context and background information has been retained; however, this document provides updated challenges, policies and a new Delivery Plan for the coming years.

Details on the scope and processes of the review are given in Appendix B.

Purpose of the AONB Management Plan

The overall aim of AONB Management Plans is to ensure continuity and consistency of management over time and to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

The Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan:

- Highlights the distinctive qualities of the AONB.
- Identifies the changes and issues affecting the AONB.
- Presents a vision for the future of the AONB as a whole, in light of other national, regional and local priorities.
- Sets priorities incorporating specific objectives that will help to secure that vision.
- Clarifies the role of partners and other stakeholders, identifying what needs to be done, by whom, and when, in order to achieve the Plan’s objectives.
- Identifies how the objectives and actions will be measured and reviewed.
- Raises the profile of the AONB and its purpose.

In terms of its legal status the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan:

- Is statutory, in that the Isle of Wight Council is required by law to produce and review an AONB Management Plan.
- Formulates the policy of the Isle of Wight Council for the AONB and for Council functions that have an impact on it.
- Demonstrates the commitment of public bodies, statutory undertakers and other stakeholders to the management of the AONB.
- Does not override other statutory plans, strategies and land management schemes within the AONB, but seeks to support and influence them.

9 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S89(1) & (2)
How the AONB Management Plan Links With Other Plans and Strategies

A wide variety of statutory and non-statutory plans, designations, strategies and policies have an impact on the AONB. These documents inform the AONB Management Plan. In turn this Management Plan provides guidance to those producing plans, designations, strategies and policies that impact upon the AONB up to regional level. The AONB Unit liaises with those involved in developing plans, designations, strategies and policies that affect the AONB to ensure consistency.

The delivery of specific targets and policies that benefit the AONB are often the responsibility of other organisations. It is therefore not necessary (or effective) for the AONB Unit to duplicate this activity. However, there is a need to ensure the plans, designations, strategies and policies are beneficial and are delivered. This is best achieved through working in partnership.

Better public awareness of the designation and a greater understanding of landscape character and its management is required, if we are to succeed in our task. Involving local communities and visitors in conserving, enhancing and celebrating the AONB’s qualities can help us to understand issues of concern. It will also highlight the value placed on the area by those who live and work in, or visit the Island’s finest landscapes.

This Management Plan provides a strategic overview of the whole of the AONB, and links to other plans and documents are highlighted throughout. The Plan does not seek to duplicate other plans but to add to their value and influence them when they are being reviewed.

Figure 1 below outlines key plans and strategies that the AONB Management Plan seeks to influence:
Highlighted below are some of the different plans, designations, strategies and policies that impact directly upon AONB management; however, it should be noted this is not exhaustive.

**EUROPEAN**
- Landscape Convention
- Water Framework Directive
- National
- English Forestry Strategy
- Regional
- South East Plan
- South East Regional Economic Strategy

**LOCAL**
- Eco Island
- Island Plan
- Shoreline Management Plan
- Local Geodiversity Action Plan

Biodiversity Action Plan
- Minerals Plan
- Waste Management Plan
- Coastal Defence Strategy
- Historic Environment Action Plan
- Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Agenda 21 Strategy
- Parish Plans
- Village Design Statements
- Renewable Energy Strategy
- Forest Design Plans
- Tourism Development Plan
- Rights of Way Improvement Plan

**Regional and National Working**

The Isle of Wight AONB is one of nine AONBs within the South East of England. The AONB Partnership is a member of the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB). We also have regular contact with colleagues in other AONBs across the country. This networking allows us to identify common issues and approaches, share good practice and raise issues of regional and national concern to protected landscapes.

The South East region has one of the highest proportions of landscapes designated for their landscape quality. It also has one of the most buoyant economies and highest population densities. This increasingly means that regional Government has a strong influence.

All AONBs in the South East have signed a Joint Statement of Intent with our regional partners GOSE, SEERA, SEEDA, DEFRA and Natural England. These organisations, along with English Heritage (South East Region), Environment Agency (Southern Region) and the Forestry Commission, have developed and produced “People’s Landscapes”. This document is a statement on how the South East landscape contributes to quality of life and rural development in the region and details shared objectives in line with the European Landscape Convention. Our continued contribution to work at this level brings direct benefits to the Isle of Wight AONB.
04 | Statement of Significance

‘...you can spend days and days exploring the Isle of Wight, which, if you are really interested, begins magically enlarging itself for you.’ J. B. Priestley

The special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB are many, contrasting, varied and inspiring. They contribute greatly to the quality of life and well being of local communities and visitors.

From majestic sea cliffs and sweeping beaches to the quiet solitude of ancient woodland; the ever changing patchwork of worked fields to the timeless and enduring presence of the downs; the intricate inlets of tranquil creeks to the long distance views from coastal heath and downland; the planned and manicured gardens of former Royal Estates and Victorian villas to the irregular undulating hedged fields of pasture; the dark starlit skies to the bustle and colour of festivals and events; the winding paths, shutes and hollow ways in the countryside to chines and steps down cliffs to the beach; place names and dialect to poetry, literature and art; isolated houses, hamlets and rural villages to harbour towns, castles and tumuli; plants and animals to fossilised trees and dinosaur footprints.

05 | Our Vision for the Isle of Wight AONB

“In 2025, the Isle of Wight AONB has become nationally renowned as an important and treasured landscape. People who live, work and visit the area value, appreciate and understand its special qualities and support its continued conservation and enhancement. People are able to experience ‘dark skies’10, peace and tranquillity as part of the experience of living and working in, or visiting the AONB. Seascapes remain an important part of the character of the AONB and its Heritage Coasts.

Information on the natural and historic environment and landscape has enabled us to ensure that decisions and policies taken have conserved and enhanced the special characteristics of the Island’s finest landscapes, giving the AONB a strong identity and ‘sense of place’.

Farming and woodland management remain central to the beauty of the landscape. Local processing facilities and markets provide essential incomes, and allow sustainable approaches to farming and land management that conserve and enhance the AONB.

The continuation of customs, traditions and the use of dialect and local place names has added to the quality of life of local communities, and to the quality of experience for visitors.

New technologies have been accommodated through careful consideration and mitigation for their impact upon the AONB, bringing economic and social benefits and retaining the intrinsic special qualities of the environment.

Public transport, the use of non-motorised routes and the availability of goods and services in local communities, has created less dependence on the private car for transport within the AONB.

Economic benefit has been brought directly to local communities through sustainable tourism and business activities.”

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10 Dark Skies is the term used to describe areas with low light pollution.
The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have established six categories of Protected Area Management Categories, based on the primary management objective. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are classified as Category V protected areas, managed for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation. The IUCN define these designations as:

“Areas of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.”

‘Natural beauty’ is not only an aesthetic concept, and ‘landscape’ means more than just ‘scenery’. The natural beauty of AONBs partly results from nature, and is partly the product of many centuries of human modification of ‘natural’ features. Landscape encompasses everything - ‘natural’ and human - that makes an area distinctive: geology, climate, soil, plants, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings and the people who live in it, past and present, and the perceptions of those who visit it.11

Landscapes reflect the relationship between people and place in the past, today and into the future.

Landscapes have economic value as the setting for economic activity, and are often the reason for the attraction of specific business activities, particularly tourism.

Landscapes have social and community value, contributing to people’s lives and sense of wellbeing, as a source of enjoyment and inspiration.

Landscapes have environmental value as a cultural record of our past and as a home for wildlife.

Landscapes are dynamic and rely upon the continuation of farming, other land use practices and the integrity of design and pattern of settlement to give a feeling of consistency and familiarity.

11 Countryside Agency CA23 2001
The impact of the sea and our island status has a major bearing on the culture, administration, economy, and climate of the Isle of Wight. The coastal zone and the continuation of natural coastal processes provide the geological, nature conservation and scenic interest of the coastline of the AONB and in particular the two areas of Heritage Coast. The beaches, sea and landscape are a major draw for visitors and are also enjoyed by the local community for leisure and recreation.

The pace of life, peace and tranquillity of the Island also has great bearing on the quality of life and special character within the Isle of Wight AONB. Local place names, dialect, foods, customs and folklore all add to the colour and variety of our Island life.

All the special qualities of the AONB blend together to create a perceived resonance, meaning and value by the local community, and those who choose to visit the area. This can be referred to as ‘sense of place’ (see Figure 2).

Landscapes are a result of the way that different components of our environment - both natural and cultural - interact together and are perceived by us. They are not just about visual perception but are also about what we hear, smell and experience through touch and what this evokes through memory, association and emotion. Landscapes are defined by the relationship between people and place.

To enable a more structured approach to facilitate the long-term management of the designation, we have separated the different components that form and shape the landscape. These fall into nine broad themes:

- Landscape Character
- Earth Heritage
- Wildlife
- Historic Environment
- Climate Change
- Living and Working - Communities and Development
- Living and Working - Rural Economy
- Traffic and Transport
- Visiting and Enjoying

Each theme contains:

- A more detailed assessment of the relationship between people and place that has led to the special qualities of the AONB landscape we see today, and that will influence the changes faced by the designation in the future.
- A vision specific to the theme and contributing to the overall vision for the future of the AONB.
- Consultation priorities.
- AONB policies and objectives.
- Key actions.

Although policies, objectives and actions are listed in individual sections, it is important to consider them as part of an overall suite. They will all make a contribution to the conservation and enhancement of the designation. They are also of equal relevance to issues relating to management of the two Heritage Coasts within the AONB.
Introduction

As defined by the Landscape Character Network, landscape character is “‘a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse’. Put simply, landscape character is that which makes an area unique.”

The Isle of Wight AONB is a complex and diverse landscape. The underlying geology; habitats and species of plants and animals; historic and current land use and settlement; traditions, customs and cultures; peace, tranquillity and ‘dark skies’ all add to its special qualities and ‘sense of place’.

Landscape elements and features of all lowland England can be found in one small geographical area on the Isle of Wight. Being an island, the sea and its influence are a major part of the special character of the AONB. Changing seasons and weather patterns contribute to this variety, as do differences between the aspects of the south west coastline, which is subject to storms and waves, and the northern low, slumped coasts and estuaries, which experience the more gentle influence of the Solent.

Quiet enjoyment of the AONB has provided, and continues to provide, a source of inspiration and relaxation to people who visit or live in the area.

However, increasing pressure for new activities within the countryside, built development and traffic noise can all have an impact on the peace and tranquillity of the AONB. Development can also often bring associated lighting, which through light pollution can have a detrimental impact on the ‘dark skies’ at night, an important part of the AONB’s overall character.

In 1994, the then Countryside Commission published a landscape assessment of the AONB. This identified 11 landscape character types across the AONB that contribute to its overall character. In general the descriptions given in this document remain relevant today. A summary of the key characteristics of these landscape character types is given in Table 1, and their extent across the AONB is shown in Map 2. Further detailed information can be found in Appendix D. The recent Historic Landscape Characterisation of the Isle of Wight, adds a further depth of information and understanding (see section 10). Other studies such as the West Wight Landscape Character Assessment and Shorwell Landscape Character Assessment highlight landscape details at a more localised scale. These can be useful tools in highlighting the qualities, character and appropriate management considerations at a Parish level.
## Landscape Character Types within the Isle of Wight AONB

### Extent of Each Landscape Character Type

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<th>Percentage of AONB area</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sandstone Hills &amp; Gravel Ridges</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Woodland</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Improvement Zone</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbours &amp; Creeks</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Undercliff</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osborne Coast</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Coastal Cliffs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Coastal erosion at Compton Bay

© Natural England - Photographer Joe Low
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALK DOWNS</th>
<th>TRADITIONAL ENCLOSED PASTURE</th>
<th>INTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL LAND</th>
<th>SOUTHERN COASTAL FARMLAND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCT1</td>
<td>LCT2</td>
<td>LCT3</td>
<td>LCT4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open and exposed with sparse hedgerows and no mature hedgerow trees.</td>
<td>Land use predominantly pasture.</td>
<td>Large open fields.</td>
<td>Large, regular gently undulating fields.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited, windswept, scrubby vegetation on the higher downs.</td>
<td>Well preserved dense hedgerows with mature hedgerow oak trees.</td>
<td>Large-scale hedge removal with relict hedges degraded.</td>
<td>Low hedgerows with few hedgerow trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional grazing with extensive arable cultivation.</td>
<td>Irregular small fields.</td>
<td>No hedgerow trees.</td>
<td>Predominantly arable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadleaved woodlands, predominantly beech, on the lower downs.</td>
<td>Narrow enclosed winding lanes.</td>
<td>Land use predominantly rural.</td>
<td>Valleys, old drainage channels and chines cross the arable landscape associated with willow scrub and unimproved pasture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant high chalk cliffs.</td>
<td>Well wooded, with numerous small copses.</td>
<td>Large farms and farm buildings.</td>
<td>Eroding coastline of key geological interest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SANDSTONE HILLS AND GRAVEL RIDGES</th>
<th>NORTHERN WOODLAND</th>
<th>LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT ZONE</th>
<th>OSBORNE COAST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCT5</td>
<td>LCT6</td>
<td>LCT7</td>
<td>LCT10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some traditional pasture, but steep slopes mostly planted to mixed forestry.</td>
<td>Large woodland blocks, conifer and broadleaved, form the dominant feature in the landscape.</td>
<td>Traditional agricultural landscape changed by the addition of horse paddocks and stables; intensive horticulture; poultry and pig farms; waste disposal sites; extensive residential, industrial or retail developments; holiday camps, mobile homes and caravan sites.</td>
<td>Exotic ornamental planting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower gravel ridges support gorse and bracken.</td>
<td>Small enclosed fields.</td>
<td>Overall visual chaos with neglect of the agricultural landscape in a town edge setting.</td>
<td>Victorian villa architecture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunken lanes, or ‘shutes’ often with ancient woodland flora.</td>
<td>Traditional sheltered settlement in the valleys.</td>
<td>Degraded hedgerows and unmanaged woods.</td>
<td>Very limited informal public access, with the exception of seasonal opening of Osborne House and occasionally Barton Manor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional sheltered settlement in the valleys.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conveys a general feeling of neglect and blurs the setting and edges of settlements.</td>
<td>Ancient semi-natural woodland.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HARBOURS AND CREEKS</th>
<th>THE UNDERCLIFF</th>
<th>OSBORNE COAST</th>
<th>NORTHERN COASTAL CLIFFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCT8</td>
<td>LCT9</td>
<td>LCT10</td>
<td>LCT11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat exposed tidal mudflats with saltmarsh, shingle banks and grazed marshes.</td>
<td>Dramatic inland vertical craggy cliffs.</td>
<td>Exotic ornamental planting.</td>
<td>Characteristically low sloping broken and unstable cliffs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open aspect.</td>
<td>Slumped grasslands.</td>
<td>Victorian villa architecture.</td>
<td>Limited permanent development and public access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral; enclosure created by the fringing oak woodlands.</td>
<td>Coastal pasture.</td>
<td>Very limited informal public access, with the exception of seasonal opening of Osborne House and occasionally Barton Manor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victorian villa and modern suburban housing in highly manicured gardens.</td>
<td>Wooded coastline.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unmanaged natural woodland regeneration, particularly Holm Oak.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The scenic quality of key views within the AONB, often result from interaction between landscape character types and the visual contrast of differing key characteristics. An example is shown in the annotated picture below.

We need to promote the landscape character of the AONB and encourage its assessment as part of the consideration of all proposals for change (either through the land use planning process, land management practice or policy formulation). In this way we will ensure that landscape assessment has a higher profile, is better understood and helps to conserve and enhance the designation.

The Isle of Wight AONB is unusual in that it comprises five separate land parcels, rather than the more usual one or two continuous areas found in other AONBs.

There is no characteristic that is common to the whole AONB, other than perhaps its very diversity and variety. This diversity is largely due to its underlying geology, and the way that people have used the land over time.

Consultation has told us we need to:

- Increase our knowledge of the facets of the landscape and character of the AONB, and the management activities required to ensure they are conserved and enhanced.
- Share our knowledge of landscape character with others to help them to better understand the value and needs of the AONB designation.
- Support the farming and woodland sectors in adapting to market and climatic changes, to positively contribute to the character of the AONB landscape and be economically viable.
- Balance the desire to see the AONB enjoyed by people, whilst ensuring its special characteristics are secured.
- Allow for development that is appropriate within a protected landscape.
- Consider the potential and impact of new and emerging technologies, such as telecommunications and renewable energy, and their associated infrastructure requirements.
- Assess the potential impact of noise and light pollution.
- Keep alive traditions, customs, local place names and dialect, recognising these as part of the story of the AONB.
- Recognise that landscape and character of the coast is subject to change through natural processes and climate change.
Our Vision for Landscape and Character:

“In 2025 the Isle of Wight AONB has become renowned and valued for its natural beauty, tranquillity, lack of light pollution (dark skies), and diverse landscape with locally distinctive areas. This outstanding natural beauty and sense of place of the AONB, contributes to the quality of life of the community, provides for a vibrant rural economy and is enjoyed by our visitors.

We have improved knowledge and understanding of the landscape and special character of the AONB. Policies and practices are actively conserving and enhancing the AONB in a sustainable way. The designated area continues to change but in a way that retains its strong character, intrinsic natural beauty and contributes positively to its ongoing story.”

Our Policies for Landscape and Character:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWARENESS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O1 Build on partnership and stakeholder support for our work, to identify and conserve physical and non-physical elements of the AONB contributing to its special character.</td>
<td>LC-P1 Promote the outstanding natural beauty and special character of the AONB landscape to all audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O2 Be recognised as the lead body for discussions relating to the description of the character and landscape of the AONB.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O3 Encourage recognised techniques such as Landscape Character Assessment, Visual Impact Assessment, Historic Landscape Characterisation and other relevant approaches, as part of the understanding and consideration of the landscape.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O4 Identify, record and recognise the importance of the on-going relationship between a place and its people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECORDING AND MONITORING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O5 Develop mechanisms to record and monitor data about the condition and changes to the AONB landscape.</td>
<td>LC-P2 Ensure changes to the AONB landscape are researched, recorded and monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O6 Use our knowledge of the character of the landscape of the AONB to positively influence its change through seeking to influence both regulated and unregulated activities that have the potential to alter its special character.</td>
<td>LC-P3 Ensure the outstanding natural beauty and special characteristics of the AONB landscape are given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O7 Use the AONB Management Plan policies and objectives as the basis of comments on strategy and policies affecting the designation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O8 Seek to improve the character of the landscape where it has been affected by inappropriate approaches or development in the past.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC-O9 Encourage consideration of the impact of non-physical aspects of landscape character, particularly ‘dark skies’ and tranquillity, in all development and proposals for change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Actions for Landscape and Character:

The development of Management Zones to include a review of Landscape Character Assessments where necessary to ensure consistency, up-to-date methodologies and climate change issues.

Support the West Wight Landscape Partnership in delivery of the Heritage Lottery Fund Programme.

Dissemination of ‘AONB Discovery’ or similar educational programmes to more schools.

Photographic monitoring programme.

Joint initiative on ‘Dark Skies’.
What is Earth Heritage and How is it Relevant to the AONB?

Earth Heritage is the broad term given to the physical resources of the environment, and the natural processes that are required to keep them intact. Rocks, soils and minerals (geology), erosion and weathering, fossils, water and air all make up the physical environment. These are the building blocks of the historic and natural environments and landscape, which continue to dictate land use and built development. All these factors are an essential part of the character of the AONB.

Geology of the Isle of Wight

The Isle of Wight AONB has a complex geology within a small land area and is considered to be of outstanding geological significance. Since the early nineteenth century the excellence of the rocks and fossils on the Isle of Wight has been celebrated, and the Island continues to attract professional and amateur enthusiasts.

The oldest rock formations on the Isle of Wight are from the Cretaceous period; the earliest of these are the Wealden Group, which were formed between 127 and 121 million years ago. Formed by the gradual deposit of fine silts, sands and mud in an area that was at that time a broad river valley subject to periods of drought and high rainfall, this formation is rich in fossil remains. In particular there are fossilised bones, petrified tree deposits and footprints of herbivorous dinosaurs such as the Iguanodon. Particularly good examples of this geology can be seen where it is exposed on the coast at Brook Bay (Grid Ref: SZ385834) and Yaverland (Grid Ref: SZ612850). When occurring inland Wealden is associated with heavier soils, and has traditionally been used as pasture.

The next part of the geological sequence occurred between 121 and 100 million years ago. Formed when the river bed gradually flooded and became a shallow sea, the Lower Greensand, Gault and Upper Greensand are a result. Lower Greensand is the underlying geology of much of the southern part of the Island, and the light sandy soils over this rock formation provide some of the best and most fertile land on the Isle of Wight. High terraced cliffs occur where this rock meets the sea, with good examples being found at Whale Chine (Grid Ref: SZ468783) and Red Cliff (Grid Ref: SZ618854). Gault and Upper Greensand occur together close to the central chalk ridge and southern downs. Gault is dark grey clay (known locally as Blue Slipper) and Upper Greensand is pale grey sandstone. The weakness of the clay and the solid nature of the sandstone have led to some of the most spectacular landslips in Europe.

The final part of the Cretaceous period saw the formation of the Lower and Upper Chalk. Grey and white limestone formed in deep seas from microscopic algal remains. Irregular flint nodules occur in the Upper Chalk; these were used by early inhabitants of the Isle of Wight to make tools and weapons. Forming the central ridge and a plateau area of the southern downs, Chalk is an important landscape feature of the Island. The tall white cliffs at Culver (Grid Ref: SZ633853) and the sea stacks at the Needles (Grid Ref: SZ290849) are a dramatic visual element of the character of the AONB.

The Cretaceous period ended around 65 million years ago, with the gradual retreat of the sea and the gentle buckling of the rocks by earth movements.

A long period of erosion then followed between 65 and 55 million years ago. Rivers and the sea reinvaded the land and deposited multicoloured sands and clays (Palaeocene and Eocene), examples of which can be seen at Alum Bay (Grid Ref: SZ303854).

Red, grey and green clays and sands were deposited in rivers, swamps and estuaries around 30 million years ago (Oligocene), leading to the creation of the heavier soils of the north of the Isle of Wight.
The retreat of the sea and a dramatic buckling of the rock sequence caused by the formation of the modern day Alps, moved many layers of rock from lying horizontally to the near vertical position we see today.

Around 2 million years ago the climate began a series of relatively rapid changes. At times of low temperature the climate was similar to modern day arctic Canada, with glaciers forming in much of Britain and sea levels being so low that the English Channel was dry land. Lower seas caused the river valleys to deepen, and in interglacial periods the temperature was similar if not warmer to that of today, causing sea level rise and the flooding of deepened valleys.

Around 10,000 years ago the present interglacial period began, temperatures increased and sea levels gradually rose.

Around 6,000 years ago the final inundation of the Solent is thought to have taken place, creating our island status. Since then further sea level changes, coastal erosion and soil formation have all helped to produce the Isle of Wight AONB that we value today.

Many sites within the AONB are important for their geology or geomorphologic features either at a local, regional, national or international scale and are designated accordingly.

Table 2 below provides data extracted from the Geographical Information System (GIS).13

Geographic Information System (GIS) is defined as an information system that is used to input, store, retrieve, manipulate, analyse and output geographically referenced data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>SOLID GEOLOGY</th>
<th>HECTARES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OLIGOCENE</td>
<td>Hamstead beds</td>
<td>2085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bembridge marls</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bembridge limestone</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Headon beds and Osborne beds</td>
<td>740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOCENE</td>
<td>Bracklesham group</td>
<td>688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>London clay</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALAEOCENE</td>
<td>Reading beds</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRETACEOUS</td>
<td>Upper chalk</td>
<td>2662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower chalk and middle chalk</td>
<td>2141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper greensand</td>
<td>1735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gault</td>
<td>1220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carstone</td>
<td>621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sandrock formation</td>
<td>1088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ferruginous sands</td>
<td>3019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atherfield clay</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wealden group</td>
<td>1075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Landslips (mass movement)</td>
<td>1019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 GIS data interrogated October 2003
Minerals

The geology of the AONB continues to provide an important finite resource for minerals such as chalk, gravel, clay and sand. The Isle of Wight Council as Mineral Planning Authority details current and expected extraction, and sets out policies that seek to safeguard sites of importance for geology, geomorphology, nature conservation, archaeology, historic environment and landscape value.

Soil

Soil is a basic, limited resource that is essential for many human activities. It includes topsoil and subsoil to the depth of at least one metre. The biological, physical and chemical characteristics of soil need to be protected for it to perform its important functions, including the production of food, raw materials and energy. Soils provide a filtering and buffering action to protect water and the food chain from potential pollutants; they help to maintain gene pools and wildlife populations; and often cover historic and archaeological sites containing artefacts and historical indicators such as pollen. All soils need to be sustainably managed for the long term.

Water

Water is essential to life. The chalk geology of much of the Island is an aquifer collecting and storing rainwater. Abstraction rates and land use can have a major impact on the quality and quantity of water available as a physical resource. Some species and habitats are particularly sensitive to water levels and pollutants, with small changes having a marked impact on populations and ecosystems. Sustainable management of this important resource is essential to the health of the environment. Currently the Island imports 20 million litres per day from Hampshire, with increased development in South Hampshire and potential impacts of climate change, there may be growing pressure on this supply from the river Test. There is a need for the Partnership to be engaged, at an early stage, in consideration of initiatives towards greater self-sufficiency.

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14 Southern Water - Cross Solent Water Main, 2008
Air

Air is an important resource for the health of people and wildlife, its protection is essential. Land use practices, burning of materials, and greenhouse gas emissions all have an impact on the quality of this resource. The Isle of Wight is well known for its mild climate and clean air. The 2006 Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment for the Isle of Wight highlighted only two sites on the Island where air quality was an issue; these were Fairlee Road, Newport and Lake Hill, Lake, neither of which is within the AONB. There are currently no Air Quality Management Areas on the Isle of Wight.

Natural processes

From crumbling chalk stacks at Freshwater Bay or the Needles; landslides on the Undercliff; diverse Chines; or the tranquil estuarine marshland at Newtown, the way in which the sea shapes the coastline can easily be seen in the habitats and landscapes of the Isle of Wight AONB. Much of the coastline within the AONB is additionally defined as Heritage Coast in recognition of its scenic beauty and wildlife value, a direct result of the continuation of coastal processes. Eroding coastlines can also threaten land and property. The development of the second Shoreline Management Plan will be key in balancing the social, economic and environmental factors for sustainable management.

Consultation has told us we need to:

- Promote the diversity and national importance of the geology of the AONB, as the foundation of the character of its landscape.
- Consider the implications of a changing climate and varying human activities on the earth heritage resource.
- Support the farming and woodland sectors to conserve soils and use water sustainably, to ensure earth heritage resources are conserved and enhanced whilst allowing for a viable rural economy.
- Allow for the continuation of natural processes, particularly on unprotected coastline, including the Hamstead and Tennyson Heritage Coasts, identify areas of likely future discord with human networks and activities and look for potential equitable solutions.
- Assess the past, present and future contribution of the use of the AONB’s mineral resources, and the impact of extraction and quarrying.
- Promote the importance of a sustainable approach to the use of finite resources in the AONB, re-use and recycle to reduce the pressure for landfill for waste.
- Ensure restoration and enhancement of landfill sites.

Our Vision for Earth Heritage:

“In 2025 the earth heritage of the Isle of Wight AONB has become renowned and valued for its diversity, complexity and its influence on plants, animals and human activity that have shaped the landscape of the AONB. The importance of natural processes essential to maintain the earth heritage features are understood and accommodated along our two Heritage Coasts.

Our valuable mineral, soil and water resources are used in a sustainable way to ensure they are kept in good health for future generations. We have reduced the rate at which we use finite resources and increased our re-use and recycling to lessen the need for landfill for waste.”
Our Policies for Earth Heritage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWARENESS</td>
<td>EH-O1 Promote the value of geology, geomorphology, palaeontology and earth heritage on the character of the AONB.</td>
<td>EH-P1 Promote the outstanding earth heritage resource of the AONB to all audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EH-O2 Use the earth heritage resource as the basis of educational material and academic research.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EH-O3 Promote responsible recreational activities to prevent degradation of the earth heritage resource.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECORDING AND MONITORING</td>
<td>EH-O4 Develop mechanisms to record and monitor data about the extent, condition and changes to the AONB's earth heritage resource.</td>
<td>EH-P2 Ensure changes to the earth heritage resource of the AONB are researched, recorded and monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td>EH-O5 Ensure the impact of mineral extraction, and any potential landfill use, is sensitive to the purposes of the AONB designation.</td>
<td>EH-P3 Ensure the earth heritage resource is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EH-O6 Ensure the AONB designation is given due consideration, in the development of management plans.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EH-O7 Support agri-environmental schemes seeking to protect the earth heritage resources of the AONB.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EH-O8 Support initiatives that allow natural coastal processes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EH-O9 Encourage the appropriate management of redundant quarries and landfill sites, for their biodiversity, archaeology and geological exposures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EH-O10 Develop relevant approaches to address issues where the earth heritage resource of the AONB is threatened or requires active management.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Actions for Earth Heritage:

- Support the further development of the Local Geodiversity Action Plan.
- Support continued investigations into Geopark aspirations for the Isle of Wight Coastline.
- Support initiatives to increase understanding of the value of the Earth Heritage resource.
- Undertake an audit of quarry sites within the AONB to identify their extent, condition, current and potential use and impact on the AONB.
Why is the AONB Important for Wildlife?

The Isle of Wight AONB has a rich biological diversity (biodiversity) largely due to the varied geology, landform and ongoing natural processes. The areas of chalk grassland; maritime slopes and cliffs; estuarine habitats; ancient woodlands and species are of particular importance regionally, nationally and internationally.

Wildlife and the countryside have evolved with the influence of people throughout history. Since the mid-nineteenth century the pace of change has increased, which has had an impact on habitats and species. Intensification of food production in the agricultural sector driven by Government policy over the last 50 years, pressure from increased built development for transport and housing; commerce and industry have all led to change in the countryside and a decrease in biodiversity as a result of habitat change or loss. For example, Chalk grassland on the Isle of Wight has declined by two-thirds since 1850; however, a mosaic of important habitats remain. Areas of land that have poor soil, saline conditions or steep slopes have avoided the intensification associated with more productive land. The result is small areas of semi-natural habitat of high wildlife value being surrounded by a more hostile, less biodiverse, intensively farmed landscape. These may act as important sources of diversity, with the potential to re-colonise the wider countryside if farming practice becomes less intensive.

Island status has prevented the introduction of some species such as mink, grey squirrel and deer, and allowed populations of rare species such as dormouse, red squirrel and water vole to flourish. A mild climate and coastal conditions also allow species such as the Glanville Fritillary butterfly to live at the northern edge of their European range. The impact of sea level rise and the potential effect of erosion on coastal habitats is a particular area of concern, due to the limited opportunities for the migration of habitats. However, climate change presents exciting biodiversity opportunities with new species colonising from the continent.

Wildlife in the AONB

The Biodiversity Action Plan process in the UK started in the early 1990s. Key species and habitats that are of national and international importance throughout the country have been identified. The Government’s England Biodiversity Strategy, ‘Working with the Grain of Nature’, was published in 2002.

In the late 1990s English Nature (now Natural England) provided a comprehensive overview of the importance of the Isle of Wight for wildlife in its Natural Area Profile series (a summary of this is given in Appendix D). These documents give an overview of the main earth heritage features (see sections on the landscape and earth heritage themes), the characteristic habitats of the natural area, key issues, and objectives for management.

The value of the Isle of Wight AONB for wildlife is reflected in the number of statutory and non-statutory designations within its boundary. These range from locally designated sites through to the internationally important areas for nature conservation (Ramsar, cSAC, SPA, SSSI, NNR, LNR, SINC - see maps).

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15 Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan
16 Working with the grain of nature: a biodiversity strategy for England HMSO 2002
Table 3 below gives data extracted from the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) datasets and shows the composition of features of nature conservation designs within the Isle of Wight AONB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEATURE</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF OVERALL AONB AREA</th>
<th>HECTARES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ramsar</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Protection Area (SPA)</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>694.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>2156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Nature Reserve (NNR)</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>2505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Nature Reserve (LNR)</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB. SOME AREAS ARE SUBJECT TO MORE THAN ONE DESIGNATION AND THE FIGURES ABOVE INCLUDE THIS OVERLAP.

In the late 1990s a decision was taken to carry out a review then formulate an Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). The first stage of the review was to publish a detailed audit and assessment of the biodiversity of the wildlife of the Isle of Wight. Following national guidance, a review of the Island's biodiversity resource was carried out in 2008. This identified 136 national priority species occurring on the Island. In addition there are a further 451 species which are locally distinctive and a number of priority habitats. Five broad habitat types are described: giving a description; an outline of the resource; its nature conservation importance; key species; key sites and factors affecting the habitat. The objectives and targets contribute towards the delivery of the South East Biodiversity Strategy (2009). Information on the Isle of Wight BAP objectives can be found in Appendix D.

Good quality and reliable baseline data is essential to the strategic management of habitats and species within the AONB. Where possible we will work in partnership to obtain data, monitor the impact of activities and initiate project work.

There is a need for a close working relationship between the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan and the Isle of Wight BAP. As can be seen from the maps in this section, many of the most valued sites for nature conservation occur within the AONB, and are an intrinsic part of landscape character. The primary purpose of the AONB is in itself linked to the conservation and enhancement of wildlife in the area, and the BAP process will guide the future of species and their habitats. Although non-statutory, the BAP is an important consideration with regard to policy formulation and development control issues. Local authorities, together with other public authorities, now have a Duty (introduced under the NERC Act, October 2006) to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions. It is expected they will make a significant contribution towards the 2010 target to halt biodiversity loss. The Local Development Framework, the Island Plan, currently being introduced, provides the framework for proposals for development that may have any impact on biodiversity within the AONB. Opportunities to conserve and enhance wildlife should be considered in all land use and management policies.

17 GIS data interrogated October 2003
Consultation has Told us we Need to:

Promote the Biodiversity Action Plan and its partnership approach to seeking to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Isle of Wight, including the AONB.

Promote the importance of an actively managed AONB in order to create, maintain and enhance the habitat conditions required by its plants and animals. This includes an emphasis on the importance of farming and forestry activities, which are achieving these objectives.

Investigate the impact of recreational activities on the habitats and species of the AONB, in particular in areas with high levels of visitor activity and sensitivity, and work with local and regional partners to research and deliver avoidance and mitigation measures.

Ensure the duty of regard for biodiversity is considered alongside that for the AONB within the designated area as they have common purposes.

Understand the likely response of species and habitats to climate change and, where possible, assist with mitigation and adaptation measures benefiting wildlife and habitats.

Ensure that plans and projects for physical development are robust in their consideration of impact upon wildlife, particularly where they may impact upon protected sites or species.

Work to ensure/influence or encourage the enhancement of biodiversity.

Work with partners to implement a network of multifunctional green infrastructure.

Support partners towards developing an ecosystem approach for the AONB.

Our Vision for the Wildlife:

“In 2025, the Isle of Wight AONB and the diversity of its landscape provide the habitats for enhanced biodiversity. Protected species are in good health with stable or growing populations, land and water are sustainable managed, and development has enhanced the Island’s biodiversity by providing the resource to allow it to thrive. Habitats and species have been assisted to adapt to a changed climate.”
Our Policies for Wildlife:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWARENESS</td>
<td>W-O1 Promote the value of wildlife, habitats and nature conservation as an integral part of the character and purpose of the AONB.</td>
<td>W-P1 Promote the outstanding wildlife resource of the AONB to all audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W-O2 Develop opportunities to provide educational material based on the wildlife of the AONB.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W-O3 Promote community based initiatives linking people with wildlife and nature conservation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W-O4 Encourage responsible access to, and enjoyment of, the wildlife of the AONB.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECORDING AND MONITORING</td>
<td>W-O5 Develop mechanisms to research, record and monitor the extent and condition of wildlife within the AONB.</td>
<td>W-P2 Ensure changes to the wildlife of the AONB are researched, recorded and monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W-O6 Develop mechanisms to monitor the impact of people's activities on wildlife in the AONB.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td>W-O7 Ensure policies and approaches consider the wildlife of the AONB.</td>
<td>W-P3 Ensure wildlife is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W-O8 Support the farming and woodland sector to undertake sustainable land management practices.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W-O9 Encourage consideration of the impact on the wildlife in all development and proposals for change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W-O10 Support the development of a network of multifunctional green infrastructure within the AONB.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Actions for Wildlife:

- Contribute to the promotion and delivery of the local Biodiversity Action Plan and the South East Biodiversity Strategy.
- Contribute towards the attainment of ‘favourable condition’ status of SSSI’s within the AONB.
- Develop opportunities to incorporate AONB messages in wildlife partner activities.
- Support initiatives to increase awareness and understanding of wildlife and engender responsible behaviour to protect it.
- Initiate a data research audit and facilitate projects to overcome gaps in knowledge.
The Historic Environment

10 | Why is the Historic Environment important to the AONB?

The complexity of the landscape within the Isle of Wight AONB is a legacy of the intricate relationship between people and place throughout time. Closely linked with earth heritage and nature conservation issues, the historic environment comprises archaeology, the built environment and the historic landscape (in effect the whole landscape since this has been created by human interaction with the natural environment over time). It is essential the importance of this resource is understood if we are to conserve and enhance the AONB.

The AONB through the Ages

Our picture of the Island's development over the last 450,000 years is continually changing as new information comes to light. The gaps that exist within our current interpretations illustrate the continuing need to record information about the historic environment.

Early inhabitants

Within the AONB, evidence of human activity has been found dating back to a time when the land that now forms the Isle of Wight was part of a larger land mass, along with much of modern day continental Europe. Palaeolithic flint implements have been found within the AONB but early humans had little impact on the environment. In post-glacial times, from 10,000 years ago, Mesolithic hunter-gatherers operated in an environment that became increasingly heavily wooded as the climate improved.

New Stone Age people were the first to actively change their surroundings for farming (between approximately 3500 and 2200 BC). Pollen analysis suggests that small areas of natural woodland were cleared on chalky and sandy soils and the area worked for growing crops. Once soil supplies were exhausted, new areas of woodland were felled. Our current archaeological evidence is concentrated in West Wight and shows the impact of these communities on the landscape. A key feature is the Longstone (Grid Ref SZ407842), the only Neolithic standing stone on the Isle of Wight.

Bronze and Iron Age

From around 2200 BC the advent of metalworking and advances in both cereal production and livestock rearing, marked a radical change in the management and development of the landscape. Following the clearance of extensive areas of woodland on the chalk downs for agriculture, Bronze Age communities sited burial mounds in these highly visible areas on the ridgeline or on ‘false crests’ above settlements (a good example being ‘Five Barrows’ on Brook Down Grid Ref SZ390852). Today, Bronze Age barrows are significant features in the historic landscape of the AONB. Organised field systems were present in the landscape during later prehistoric times, and a particularly well-preserved example of such a field system within the AONB lies in Brighstone Forest. Prehistoric settlements of Bronze Age and Iron Age date, although known to archaeologists, have left little trace in the modern landscape, the earthworks at Castle Hill near Mottistone Longstone may have been a stock enclosure of Iron Age.

Prehistoric farming methods have sometimes led to soil erosion and degradation. Hill-wash deposits in chalk combes have been found to contain Bronze Age material. Much of the heathland that existed on the Island until relatively recently was created by prehistoric woodland clearance of poor soils, although there was also some naturally generated coastal heathland in prehistoric times. In lowland England generally, it has been estimated that around 50% of post-glacial woodland cover had been removed as a result of agricultural activity, by the earlier part of the Iron Age (c.500 BC).
Roman Vectis

With the coming of the Romans to the Isle of Wight (Vectis) the existing systems of agriculture were refined and more efficiently organised in response to a market economy. Roman building techniques and culture were introduced into some areas of the Island, while in other areas life often continued as it had before for the Iron Age farming communities. A good example of this is the villa at Brading (Grid Ref SZ600862), where a late Iron Age settlement was superseded by a simple early villa and then by a more sophisticated villa complex at its full extent dating from around AD 300. The remains of a field system on Brading Down may be associated with the nearby villa.

Anglo-Saxons & Normans

The withdrawal of Roman administration and government left Roman Britain, including the Isle of Wight, vulnerable. The culture of Anglo-Saxon settlers gradually came to dominate over that of native Romano-British inhabitants. Important Pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries of late 5th century and 6th century date were discovered on Chessell Down and Bowcombe Down in the nineteenth century, but have left no traces in the present landscape. Place-names, however, have left an enduring record of the impact made by Anglo-Saxon culture. Many surviving settlements, farmsteads and estates originated in Anglo-Saxon times, and are mentioned in the Domesday Book. Anglo-Saxon estate boundaries recorded in charters have also, in some cases, survived to the present day.

The Middle Ages

The basic rural settlement pattern within the AONB, as elsewhere on the Island, was probably well established by medieval times. It comprised a mix of small villages and dispersed settlements (hamlets and farmsteads). The Island’s four medieval planned towns included Yarmouth and Newtown within the AONB, founded in the 12th and 13th centuries respectively. During the Middle Ages and early modern period, land ownership was formalised and recorded in wills, and land terriers. Boundaries were often given further importance by being used to demarcate manorial and parish administrative areas, the integrity of which was checked annually through rogation or beating the bounds. Many can still be seen in the landscape of the AONB today.

Post medieval landscape changes include industrial and military activities, which have resulted in a wealth of structures and sites on the Island. The designed parklands still visible within the landscape of the AONB date mainly from the later eighteenth century and nineteenth century, although earlier designed landscapes are known from documentary sources (Basford 1989). The Isle of Wight’s eight nationally important parks and gardens of special historic interest recorded on the English Heritage Register all lie in or adjacent to the AONB. These are Appuldurcombe, Norris, North Court, Nunwell, Osborne, Swainston (mostly outside AONB), Ventnor Botanic Garden and Westover. In addition, 27 parks and gardens of local interest have been recorded in the now superseded Unitary Development Plan, and this local list is referred to in the Island Plan Submission Core Strategy Policy CP 8.

The agrarian and industrial revolutions saw changes in farming techniques and in the availability, transportation and production of building materials. All of these changes had an impact on landscape and settlement within the AONB.

Conservation of the Historic Environment

The Isle of Wight Council Archaeology and Historic Environment Service (IWCAHES) completed Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) across the Isle of Wight in 2006. This identified HLC types such as settlement, field patterns, open land, woodland, parkland etc. The HLC has informed the Isle of Wight Historic Environment Action Plan (HEAP), which was prepared between 2006 and 2008 with the support of the AONB Partnership and other organisations involved in conserving, managing and studying the Island’s historic and natural environments. The HEAP identifies aims, objectives and proposed actions for the conservation and management of the Island’s historic environment over the five years from 2008 to 2113. It recognises the role of farmers, community groups and the public in the sustainable management of local heritage. It also discusses historic landscape features not covered in the HLC but which form an important aspect of AONB character, including roads, rights of way, boundaries and hedgerows. The HLC and HEAP have been published on the Isle of Wight Council website. Together, they form a body of information that emphasises the historic basis of today’s landscapes and the close link between the historic environment, landscape character and local distinctiveness within the AONB.
Some protection is afforded to all archaeological features of the historic environment within the AONB through inclusion in the Historic Environment Record (HER), a database of all known historic environment information on the Island maintained by the Isle of Wight Council Archaeology and Historic Environment Service (IWCAHES). Certain archaeological features within the AONB are Scheduled Monuments and are thus afforded statutory protection.

The variety of settlement form is an essential part of landscape character within the AONB. There are small nucleated clusters at Calbourne, Niton and Shorwell, church-manor complexes such as Arreton and Gatcombe, and linear settlements such as Chillerton. Settlements often occur at the base of the chalk downs, as at Mottistone, Brighstone and Shorwell. Yarmouth and Newtown are both planned medieval boroughs and historic ports on natural sea inlets. Many of these historic settlements have Conservation Areas, which seek to retain character by controlling and influencing planned changes.

The Isle of Wight AONB is unusual in that there is no one strong vernacular building style. Various traditional designs reflect the complexity of the geology of the Island and the materials that were available locally. As with land use, much of the traditional architecture of lowland southern England can be seen on the Island - from chalk and thatch; stone and slate, brick and tile to ship lap timber clad cottages. The Countryside Design Summary (Isle of Wight Council 1998) gives further details of these distinctive building styles and an overview of their context within the Island’s landscape. Many buildings of particular merit are given Listed Building status, which brings a greater level of protection and control over any change. The Historic Environment Record maintained by IWCAHES provides a record of all pre-Victorian buildings.

Section 6 of the Unitary Development Plan, ‘Building conservation and the historic environment’, currently provides the context for the protection of the historic environment within the AONB.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport is currently reviewing the designation and management regimes for the historic environment, and the legislation that supports them. It is likely the review will make recommendations for delivering sustainable management, through the mechanisms of management plans and partnerships. Attention should be drawn to the potential of agri-environment schemes, for the sustainable management of the historic environment in rural areas of the Island.

English Heritage’s ‘State of the Historic Environment Report’ (November 2002), provides an assessment of the threats and challenges facing the historic environment both nationally and with a regional overview.
Key features and elements of the historic environment within the AONB are as follows:

- Buried archaeology and palaeoenvironments.
- Historic buildings.
- Industrial and military structures.
- Historic parks and gardens.
- Historic ports, the use of estuaries and maritime archaeology, submerged landscapes.
- Earthworks and structural remains.
- Settlement and field patterns.
- Managed and farmed landscapes.
- Ancient woodlands and commons (including downland and heathland commons).
- Trackways, paths and boundaries.
- Place names.
Table 4 below presents data extracted from the Geographical Information System (GIS)\textsuperscript{18} datasets. It shows the composition of features of the historic environment within the Isle of Wight AONB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEATURE</th>
<th>EXTENT WITHIN AONB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Area</td>
<td>266 Hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Heritage Registered Parks &amp; Gardens</td>
<td>697 Hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Environment Record - Buildings</td>
<td>1645 entries of which -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade I = 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade II* = 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade II = 482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Environment Record - Scheduled Monuments</td>
<td>= 109 (203 sites)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consultation has told us we need to:

- Promote the Historic Environment Action Plan (HEAP) and its partnership approach, in seeking to conserve the historic environment and historic landscape character of the Isle of Wight, including the AONB.
- Promote the importance of the historic environment as the story of the ongoing relationship between people and their environment that has resulted in the special character of the landscape of the AONB.
- Gain a better understanding of the main forces affecting the historic environment (i.e. development, agricultural change, coastal erosion and climate change).
- Support the work of landowners and property owners in sympathetic management of the historic environment.
- Promote the importance of an actively managed AONB as a key factor in conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- Recognise that landscape is dynamic, changes over time, and that conservation includes the management of change.
- Recognise the finite nature of the historic environment, and ensure it is recorded or protected as part of land management and proposals for development.
- Gain a better understanding of the impact of people’s recreational and leisure activities on the resource and its sustainable use for public enjoyment.
- Gain a better understanding of the historic environment through research, recording and monitoring of the resource.

Our vision for the Historic Environment:

“In 2025, the ongoing story of the relationship between people and places as told to us by the historic environment has been recognised for its valuable contribution to the character of the AONB. We have a greatly enhanced understanding of the historic environment, its condition and requirements for its management including a consideration of the likely impact of climate change on the resource. Sustainable management practices are in place and working to protect and conserve the historic environment. The importance of the historic environment within the Isle of Wight AONB and its contribution to the character of the AONB is nationally recognised.”

\textsuperscript{18} GIS data interrogated October 2003 - updated February 2008.
Our Policies for the Historic Environment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| AWARENESS                        | **HE-O1**
Promote the value of the historic environment of the AONB as an integral part of its character.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | **HE-P1**
Promote the outstanding historic environment resource of the AONB to all audiences.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                  | **HE-O2**
Encourage greater community involvement in assessment, description, management and celebration of the historic environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                  | **HE-O3**
Develop specific opportunities to provide educational material that includes information on the historic environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                  | **HE-O4**
Promote the Isle of Wight Historic Environment Action Plan (HEAP) to increase understanding and consideration of the AONB’s historic environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| RECORDING AND MONITORING         | **HE-O5**
Develop mechanisms to research, record and monitor the extent and condition of the historic environment within the AONB.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | **HE-P2**
Ensure changes to the historic environment of the AONB are researched, recorded and monitored.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                  | **HE-O6**
Monitor the impact of people’s activities on the historic environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| CONSERVING AND ENHANCING         | **HE-O7**
Ensure policies and approaches consider the historic environment of the AONB.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | **HE-P3**
Ensure the historic environment is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                  | **HE-O8**
Encourage consideration of the impact on the historic environment in all development and proposals for change.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                  | **HE-O9**
Support agri-environment and other land management initiatives seeking to protect the historic environment of the AONB.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

Key Actions for the Historic Environment:

Contribute to the promotion and delivery of the Historic Environment Action Plan.

Use the Historic Landscape Characterisation as a key component in the establishment of AONB Management Zones.

Identify joint initiatives to increase evidence base and understanding of the Historic Environment.

Investigate opportunities for Study Project(s) combining Landscape and Historic Environment - i.e. traditional skills programme highlighting traditional ploughing, woodland practices, etc.

Advocate proposals for the sensitive management of the Historic Environment.
11 | Climate Change

Introduction

Climate - the average weather experienced (typically) over a 30 year period\(^1\) - has fluctuated naturally throughout Britain’s history. Since the 1900s the amount and rate of change has accelerated, as a result of human influence through the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Over the last few years the issue of climate change has become of increasing importance, and is now considered one of the most pressing threats to the natural environment and the economy. Natural England state in their Climate Change Policy: “There is an urgent need to reduce global greenhouse gas pollution… and develop strategies to enable the natural environment to adapt to the impacts of ‘locked in’ climate change over the coming decades.”

Climate change will have influence on the AONB landscapes over the long term; its effect is already being felt. Holm Oak, a Mediterranean species, is becoming a more common sight on St. Boniface Down. Currently the Holm Oaks are well managed; however, other alien species are also beginning to making appearances on the Island, if left unmanaged they may lead to changes to the AONB.

The full extent of how climate change will affect the AONB is not yet fully understood. There are a growing number of studies that examine some of the likely impacts.

The United Kingdom Climate Impact Programme (UKCIP), provides a broad outline of the expected effects of climate change on Southern Britain, these include:

- Accelerated sea-level rise to as much as 86cm in southern England by the 2080s.
- Average annual temperature increases of by between 2 and 5 °C by 2080, with greater and more frequent extremes.
- Increase in the contribution to winter rainfall from heavy precipitation events. Winter rainfall increase of 10 - 30% by 2080.
- Increased frequency of severe windstorms.
- Sea-surface temperatures increase.
- Spring may advance by 2-6 days per decade and autumn will be been delayed by 2 days per decade.

BRANCH (Biodiversity Requires Adaptation in Northwest Europe under a Changing climate) examined spatial planning mechanisms to help wildlife, countryside and coasts adapt to climate change. BRANCH examined cliff retreat on the Tennyson Heritage coast and the inundation of salt marsh at Newtown Estuary, where as much as 43 ha may be lost due to sea level rise.

Headline Indicators on the Impact of Climate Change on South Eastern Protected Landscapes report helps to better understand the implications of climate change for the AONB. The study focussed on the effects of selected key features from the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks within the South East region. The report provides an interpretation of the impacts of climate change in the region from a literature review.

Climate change is a dynamic process that requires ongoing effective monitoring and modelling. A sound knowledge base is important for good decision making, which in turn will increase the likelihood of appropriate and timely responses to best protect the character of the AONB. While climate change presents new challenges for the AONB, it is in a good position to face these challenges because of strong community support though the Eco Island Strategy, and healthy diverse landscapes and habitats.

As there are likely to be changes to the landscape character, earth heritage, wildlife and the rural economy, it will be increasingly important to raise awareness of the likely transformation of these aspects of the landscape, in order to manage communities and visitors’ expectations and help inform behaviour change.

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\(^1\) UKCIP08: The climate of the United Kingdom and recent trends
Priorities for the AONB Knowledge Base

Landscape Character
Climate change presents new challenges for the landscape quality and character of the AONB. However, the function need not change providing there is adequate preparation and support for appropriate adaptation responses.

New technologies associated with climate change raise interesting challenges for landscape. Prudent assessment and sensitive management of new developments associated with new technologies will ensure that character is not threatened.

There is a need for further examination of the influences of climate change on the rural economy, especially implications for farming and forestry.

Earth Heritage
Climate change is likely to accelerate natural processes such as coastal erosion. It is therefore important to monitor and appropriately manage these processes sensitively to allow wildlife, communities and the rural economy to adapt to the changes.

Wildlife
The wildlife of the AONB is likely to be significantly affected by climate change through pressures on habitats, increased habitat fragmentation and coastal squeeze. These changes need recording and monitoring and, where appropriate, adaptation strategies developed to facilitate the migration of species. The adaptation strategy for wildlife would need to examine areas of existing habitat and increase the ecological resilience of these habitats by working with land owners to modify land use patterns to reduce fragmentation, improve connectivity to increase the adaptive capacity of species.

Historic Environment
There are many potential effects on the Historic Environment that will be explored in the Climate Change HEAP. The main effect on historic designed landscapes may be on parkland trees forming part of the original design; on choice of species for the replacement of historic trees; and the on-going management of historic parks.

Living and Working
Communities will need to diversify to remain resilient to climate change. The AONB presents a unique opportunity to help communities and visitors adapt to the challenges of climate change through delivering behaviour change education, this is further examined in the Living and Working section.

Consultation Has Told Us We Need To:

- Consider emerging information about future climate scenarios and their impact upon the AONB.
- Use the evolution of landscape as the basis of promoting the vision of the future of the AONB.
- Identify the ecosystem services provided by the AONB that can contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
- Support projects that identify the likely impact of climate change within the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Promote measures to influence plans and projects regarding the impacts of climate change, and the delivery of mitigation and adaptation measures.
- Develop mechanisms to examine land management issues and techniques to conserve and enhance the AONB.
- Develop planning policies for projects and plans that enhance, expand and link habitats.
Our Vision, when Considering the Impact of Climate Change:

“In 2025, although a continually changing climate has resulted in changes to the landscape, the AONB remains a special and treasured area important for its intrinsic environmental value and character and also for the qualities and benefits it provides to the economy and community. Through measures including community partnerships and behaviour change education, we have enabled adaptation and enhancement of the landscape and biodiversity as the climate changes.”

Our Policies for Climate Change:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWARENESS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC-O1</td>
<td>Raise awareness of the likely impacts upon the management and character of the AONB.</td>
<td>CC-P1 Promote how the AONB can potentially contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change to all audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC-O2</td>
<td>Encourage communities and visitors to adapt their behaviour to take greater account of climate change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECORDING AND MONITORING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC-O3</td>
<td>Develop mechanisms to research, record and monitor changes to the AONB attributed to climate change.</td>
<td>CC-P2 Ensure changes to adaptation and mitigation to climate change are researched, recorded and monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC-O4</td>
<td>Develop mechanisms to research, record and monitor projects and plans working towards adaptation to and mitigation of climate change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC-O5</td>
<td>Consider new types of economic and social activities that may be a result of climate change, and look to provide an appropriate management response as a result.</td>
<td>CC-P3 Ensure that the climate change and its influence on the AONB are given due consideration in all policies, strategies and regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Actions for Climate Change:

Investigate ways to model potential climate change in land management within the AONB.

Support initiatives that encourage changes in behaviour to take greater account of human impacts on climate.

Support the inclusion of appropriate renewable approaches within all new built development.

Investigate practical programmes that assist in understanding the management required for sensitive adaptation as species and habitats change, and highlight best practice.

Identify Ecosystem Services provided by the AONB that can contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
12 | Communities and Development (Living and Working)

Introduction

The landscape of the AONB has been shaped over the centuries by the activities of local people. It adds to the quality of life of communities within the AONB, and is the draw for the millions of visitors who come to the Isle of Wight each year.

Working with communities can lead to new and innovative approaches in resolving local problems. Involving people in active conservation, enhancement and celebration of the AONB, will raise their awareness of the value of the designation as an AONB. Local people who are more aware will support development that conserves and enhances the qualities of the AONB.

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) currently provides the local statutory basis for consideration and decision making relating to development within the designation. However, the UDP will gradually be replaced by documents within the Island Plan (Local Development Framework) on a rolling basis starting with the Core Strategy. This Plan seeks to add value to that process, and to provide guidance on the issues that have a direct influence on the AONB. It is intended that the AONB Management Plan will form one of the supporting documents within the Island Plan.

Recognition of the need for sympathetic design of new development within the AONB, reflecting appropriate vernacular style and materials, will ensure the AONB’s unique sense of place is maintained. Built development within AONBs should be required to meet a higher standard. This should provide opportunities to create examples of best practice that will help to raise the standard of development generally.

The health and vibrancy of local communities has a direct impact on pressures for development and access to goods and services. Many studies have been undertaken to assess the economic and social needs of the Island’s communities. Recently, the Rural Priorities Group undertook an in-depth study and analysis of the rural area to produce the State of the Rural Wight 2008, information from this has been used as appropriate to inform priorities within this Plan.

Eco Island, the Sustainable Community Strategy for the Isle of Wight, is a broad-based strategy for improving the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the Island. Led by the Island Strategic Partnership (ISP), Eco Island has been shaped through the involvement of a number of community sectors and residents, and identifies a number of key aspirations and targets from 2008 through to 2020. These ambitions have been detailed under four themes:

- Thriving Island
- Healthy and Supportive Island
- Safe and Well-Kept Island
- Inspiring Island

The Thriving Island theme identifies the protection and enhancement of the Island’s natural beauty as a key priority. It is likely the actions identified within this Management Plan will play a key role in supporting the delivery of the Thriving Island theme. There are also linkages between the aims and objectives within this document and the priorities within the other Eco Island themes.

20 Eco Island - Isle of Wight Community Strategy, State of the Rural Wight 2008 (Rural Priorities Group), Area Investment Framework,
21 Rural Priorities Group comprises of representatives from AONB Partnership, Isle of Wight Economic Partnership, Rural Community Council and Isle of Wight Council.
22 The ISP comprises of a number of principal organisations including the Isle of Wight Council, the Health Authority, the Police, IW College, Government Departments, the business community and voluntary and community organisations.
Population

The 2001 Census shows the total Isle of Wight population as 132,731, of this population 8% (10,835) reside within the AONB\(^2\). The chart below (figure 3) shows the age breakdown of the AONB population.

Transport provision

Although distances between settlements on the Isle of Wight are lower than in other rural areas of England, a high proportion of rural dwellers do not have access to a car during the working day. They therefore rely on public transport.

Services in decline

Private and public services have declined in rural villages. Health services have been centralised, so people now have to travel greater distances to obtain health care. Post offices, shops and pubs have declined in the face of increased competition from towns and changes in legislation.

Social exclusion

Many people who are economically poor, disabled, unemployed or housebound are excluded from community life. Although voluntary and community groups work hard to address this, pockets of rural poverty are often hidden by conspicuous affluence.

Affordable housing

There is a lack of affordable housing in rural areas. The local community is being priced out of the market because of the demand for houses in a rural setting.

Employment

The recent national trend for businesses to relocate to rural areas has not occurred to any great extent within the Isle of Wight AONB. This may be due to our Island status and the increased transport costs that this brings. There is scope to encourage sympathetic location of rural industry within the AONB, where it can be demonstrated to bring social and economic benefits and is not detrimental to the landscape or environment. In particular, farm-based diversification and processing of agricultural products and green tourism initiatives, may provide opportunities for rural employment.

Development

The impact of development on the character of the landscape and settlements within the AONB is one of the most significant issues for AONB management. In the last four financial years, 14% of all planning applications on the Isle of Wight were within the AONB. During this period 50% of development pressure within the AONB was for general householder alterations, works or extensions; 15% for dwellings (in and outside of defined development envelopes); 14% related to commercial premises; 6% for Barn/Rural Building Conversions for holiday use and 4% for farming and associated activities.\(^3\)

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\(^2\) Socio-economic profiles for the protected landscapes in South East England. Terra Consult for the Countryside Agency November 2004

\(^3\) Data interrogation of AONB Development Control Monitoring Database. Source information - IWC Planning Acolaid System
The planning process is the main regulator of development pressure within the AONB. There is a presumption against large-scale development within the AONB. Where there is no alternative to the development, a thorough assessment of its potential environmental and visual impact is required. This often triggers the need for a formal Environmental Impact Assessment.

Small-scale development is less well regulated. It may benefit from the provision of further guidance e.g. Village Design Statements and Parish Plans, and other such supplementary planning guidance. Certain activities are allowed under permitted development rights. Although this is more stringent in AONBs, the cumulative impact of such small-scale change can be damaging to the character of an area and its overall ‘sense of place’.

The agricultural sector, for example, benefits from permitted rights for some development.

Certain authorities and public bodies also have specific permitted development rights for public services such as highways and the utility companies. Such activities are covered by the duty of regard for the AONB as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, in addition to existing duties under the 1949 National Parks and Access to Countryside Act.

The AONB is often seen as a bar to all development. While it is essential that the landscape is conserved and enhanced, this does not preclude change. Development that is of high-quality design, reflects the local distinctiveness of the AONB, enhances the area, and creates jobs or services for the community, should be supported.

The AONB designation offers the opportunity to champion sustainable and innovative development where the environmental, social and economic benefits are in balance.

Resource use and waste

The level of consumption and use of resources on the Isle of Wight is related to:

- Island status (transporting goods on and off the Island).
- Natural resource availability/management.
- Lifestyle.

All of these factors have an impact on the landscape.
Two studies on the Isle of Wight, Island State - Ecological Footprint Analysis (2000) and the Renewable Energy Strategy (2002) identified how changes in local food production, waste management, energy generation and efficiency could make lifestyles on the Isle of Wight more sustainable. The Island State study suggested that the Island's ecological footprint could be reduced by 10% through a combination of measures including:

- More local food production and consumption to reduce transport to and from the Island and provide reliable markets for farmers to sell their produce.
- Greater waste recovery and minimisation - this includes developing markets for recycled goods, encouraging businesses to use resources more efficiently, education about waste, and using consumer power to influence commerce.
- More energy efficiency through, for example, insulation and by looking at ways to generate renewable energy.

**Energy**

In 2006 the Island used 3006 GWh of energy, of which; 42% was met by natural gas piped from the mainland, 20% from electricity imported from the mainland, 24% from petrol and diesel used for transport. 0.3% of the total energy used was supplied from renewable sources.25

The UK government target is to supply 10% of the UK's electricity from renewable energy by 2010. This forms part of the Government's Climate Change Programme, which aims to cut UK emissions of CO₂ to 20% below 1990 levels by 2010.

Options for meeting this target on the Isle of Wight were explored through the Renewable Energy Strategy 2002: wind, biomass, tidal currents, waste to energy plants, bio diesel, solar water heating and photo-voltaic cells were all considered.

The Renewable Energy Strategy recognises the opportunities that using the Island's renewable energy resources could have for the Island community, including:

- Reducing the environmental impact of energy generation.
- Developing and regenerating the economy.
- Diversification of rural incomes.
- Promoting the Island as a centre for green tourism.

Eco Island has expanded on these measures, opportunities have been identified and a number of targets set including; creating a centre of excellence for renewable energy; and moving towards the Isle of Wight having the lowest carbon footprint in England.

As indicated within our section on Climate Change, the foundation to successfully reducing our impact on the environment is to look practically at how we live, and take measures to adjust to living in a more sustainable manner. Adapting how we live will not just have environmental benefit, but can also have positive impacts on health and the economy.

The AONB Partnership is highly supportive of Eco Island's aspirations for renewable energy, and recognises the AONB has considerable potential to contribute to providing renewable supplies. Through collaborative working towards Eco Island, there is a real opportunity to look innovatively and inventively at piloting initiatives that can sensitively blend renewable energy production with the conservation and enhancement of the AONB landscape, natural and historic resources.

Thriving Island priorities:
- Protect and enhance our Island’s natural beauty.
- Create wealth whilst reducing our carbon footprint.
- Produce as much of our energy as possible from renewable sources.
- Support economic development and regeneration, enabling everyone to share in the Island’s economic success by increasing the skills of the whole community.

Renewable Energy within the AONB

Government planning policy on renewable energy is set out in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 22 - Renewable Energy and PPS 1 - Climate Change. This guidance strongly promotes the use of renewable technology and whilst National Parks and AONBs are not excluded from renewable development, the policy acknowledges the need to assess the sensitivities of the designation.

PPS 7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas states that major developments should not take place within nationally designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and identifies stringent assessment requirements necessary for consideration of major applications within the AONB.

Regional direction from the Draft South East Plan recognises that within sensitive and protected landscapes the development of renewable energy infrastructure, particularly wind turbines, has the potential to have adverse impacts on visual and amenity impacts, and may adversely affect biodiversity. It advises that potential development should be designed and located ‘so as to avoid conflict with landscape and wildlife conservation’.

We would therefore expect that all developers of renewable energy schemes should be required to clearly set out the impact of their proposals on the special qualities of the AONB, and how these would impact on the AONB.

Proposals need to clearly demonstrate how conservation and enhancement of the area will not be compromised and satisfactorily address the potential impacts, particularly with regard to landscape character and views. Developers of large and medium\(^{26}\) scale renewable energy proposals should, as a minimum, prepare Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments before submitting a planning application, to demonstrate how they would provide long-term, sustained support to the economic and social wellbeing of the local community. Particular consideration should be given to the effects of related infrastructure, such as grid connection, and to the cumulative impact of multiple schemes. Additionally, we would expect to see evidence that an adequate site selection process has been carried out, including proper consideration of alternative sites and options outside the AONB, and justification for the chosen site.

Wind turbines

Taking into account the high sensitivity of the AONB landscape, in our opinion, commercial-scale wind turbine developments will be unacceptable within or affecting the designated area, unless the requirements of PPS22 are fully satisfied.

Even with small single turbine applications for individual community, business or household use, a visual analysis should be required to determine turbine visibility, impact from within and outside the AONB and opportunities for the mitigation of effects.

It is acknowledged that at the current time, favourable proposals for renewable energy provision within the AONB are most likely to be limited to small-scale individual installations. Taking into account the sensitivities, size and fragmented nature of the designated area, suitable thresholds for renewable developments are undetermined and a precautionary approach has been applied within this plan.

\(^{26}\) Large Scale refers to those applications classed as major development under Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, medium scale would apply to anything above domestic size.
Wood fuels
As detailed in our section on the Rural Economy (page 56) our AONB woodlands are generally under-managed, and a lack of processing facilities mean there is currently little profitability to be made on Island timber. The development of wood fuel markets could assist in a significant increase in the management and long-term sustainability of the Island’s woodlands. Proposals for small to medium scale installations are likely to be supported by the AONB Partnership, where they do not have a detrimental impact to the designation or any components that contribute to its special character.

Solar, Ground and Air Source Heating
Proposals for these renewable energy installations are most likely to refer to small-scale applications for individual community, business or household use. In most cases, it is anticipated there will be no significant impact on the fundamental components of the AONB landscape. Assessment of the impact on the AONB will depend on the location and historic nature of individual buildings, and with regard to ground source excavation the proximity to sensitive wildlife, archaeological sites or historic parks and gardens.

Assessment of Renewable Resources
There is a need for a more detailed assessment of renewable resources within the AONB, to provide a greater understanding of the scope and scale of renewable energy production that the Isle of Wight AONB may be able to accommodate without compromising the primary purpose of the designation.

Consultation has told us we need to:

- Involve people in active conservation, enhancement and celebration of the AONB to help raise awareness of the value of the designation.
- Balance the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty with a considered approach to development within the AONB, that creates sustainable communities where people can live and work.
- Promote local services and transport provision.
- Recognise that there are pockets of deprivation.
- Support the provision of locally affordable housing with local connection criteria, so residents within the AONB are not priced out of the market.
- Support development that conserves and enhances the AONB.
- Recognise the need for sympathetic design of new development within the AONB, respecting local style and distinctiveness. This should ensure the AONB’s unique ‘sense of place’ is maintained.
- Celebrate examples of best practice that will help to raise the standard of development generally, maximising the opportunities afforded to meet higher standards and foster innovation.
- Champion sustainable and innovative development where the environmental, social and economic benefits are in balance.
- Work with partners to develop markets for recycled goods, encouraging business to use resources more efficiently.
- Work with local communities to reduce waste.
- Work with residents of the AONB to promote energy efficiency and investigate ways to generate renewable energy.
- Undertake an assessment of renewable capacity within AONB.
Our vision for communities and development:

“In 2025, people have a greater appreciation of the importance of the result of change to the character of the AONB. The AONB continues to be a vibrant and healthy place in which to live and work, with access to services, facilities, jobs and housing for local communities with suitable green space within each settlement. Change and development within the AONB has also led to its conservation and enhancement. Information technology, communications, recycling and renewable energy have brought benefits to living and working in the AONB without damaging its intrinsic character.”

Our Policies for Communities and Development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWARENESS</td>
<td>CD-O1 Encourage communities to develop a greater sense of ownership and value of the AONB designation.</td>
<td>CD-P1 Promote the importance of the AONB designation and its relationship with people to all audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-O2Develop community and educational based approaches to identify and understand local distinctiveness and sense of place.</td>
<td>CD-P2 Ensure changes impacting on AONB communities are researched, recorded and monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-O3 Encourage early consideration of the designation in all proposals affecting the AONB.</td>
<td>CD-P3 Support sustainable approaches to development and ensure that the AONB designation is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECORDING AND MONITORING</td>
<td>CD-O4 Build on mechanisms to record and monitor the viability of AONB communities.</td>
<td>CD-P4 Encourage greater involvement by local communities in the conservation and enhancement and decision making processes of the AONB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-O5 Build on mechanisms to record and monitor development affecting the AONB.</td>
<td>CD-P5 Support sustainable approaches to development and ensure that the AONB designation is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td>CD-O6 Ensure that the purpose of the AONB is correctly reflected in the Island Plan and its’ accompanying documents.</td>
<td>CD-P6 Support sustainable approaches to development and ensure that the AONB designation is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-O7 Ensure that sustainable approaches are taken to address all the issues affecting rural communities within the AONB.</td>
<td>CD-P7 Support sustainable approaches to development and ensure that the AONB designation is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-O8 Support development of a nature in and scale appropriate to its setting that does not compromise the objectives of the AONB.</td>
<td>CD-P8 Support sustainable approaches to development and ensure that the AONB designation is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-O9 Support AONB communities in ensuring they are well served with sufficient access to goods, services and facilities.</td>
<td>CD-P9 Support sustainable approaches to development and ensure that the AONB designation is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-10 Encourage greater community involvement in the formulation of parish based plans and approaches.</td>
<td>CD-P10 Support sustainable approaches to development and ensure that the AONB designation is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-O11 Support and promote exemplar approaches to living and working in the AONB.</td>
<td>CD-P11 Support sustainable approaches to development and ensure that the AONB designation is given due consideration in all policies, strategies, regulatory processes and other activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Actions for Communities & Development:

- Ensure AONB considerations are in all relevant Island Plan documents.
- Use the Sustainable Development Fund, the Rural Development Programme for England and its LEADER method of delivery and other funding streams to encourage innovative projects for sustainable living in the AONB.
- Work with Town and Parish Councils to ensure appropriate inclusion and consideration of the AONB landscape within Parish Plans and Village Design Statements.
- Endorse programmes that highlight best practice in living and working in the AONB.
- Carry out an assessment of renewable resources within the AONB.
Earlier sections of this Plan have outlined the importance of agriculture and woodland management, both in the past and as a current influence on landscape character, earth heritage, and the historic and natural environments.

Farmers and land managers have a major role to play in continuing to conserve and enhance the AONB. There is a need to raise awareness of the importance of traditional land management practice to the landscape.

More than 80% of the land area of the AONB is farmed, and large areas are covered in broadleaved woodland and coniferous plantations. The future of the Island’s finest landscapes is linked to the economic well being of the farming community and viability of woodland management.

The majority of farmland in the AONB is privately owned and managed, whether by individual landowners and farmers, tenants or non-governmental organisations such as the National Trust, or by other conservation organisations such as Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, People’s Trust for Endangered Species, Woodland Trust and Wight Nature Fund. The duty of regard does not extend to such private individuals, organisations or charitable trusts. There is therefore a need to work closely with these important partners, to ensure resources are made available to help to conserve and enhance the AONB, whilst providing a viable economic income for those who depend on income from their land. Changes to funding mechanisms and identification of new markets may offer new ways to work with farmers, foresters and land managers to identify conservation and enhancement opportunities.

Island status and the cost of transport to access processing and markets on the mainland have a major economic impact on the viability of farming and forestry within the AONB. Opportunities to create local processing and outlets for produce and products will reduce costs and potentially increase incomes.

It will be very important for the economic health of our rural economy to ensure the continuation of a wide range of economic activity. As Island businesses become increasingly national and global in their outlook, there will be an increasing tendency for these businesses to locate near our ferry gateways to improve accessibility to cross-Solent travel and beyond - both for themselves and their customers. These businesses are going to be our higher value businesses, so the AONB needs to find ways of avoiding having only the low-value sectors in its area.

Consequently, we need to improve the wealth and job-creation potential of the AONB, by improving the productivity of the larger sectors and promoting the growth of higher productivity sectors. For example, by developing higher value added tourism, we should see an improvement in the productivity of the hotels and catering sector. By encouraging and enabling the agriculture/forestry/fishing sector to explore ways of adding value to their products, this will encourage new jobs and wealth creation in these areas.

Economic development needs to link with maintaining the strength of communities. It may well be that rural productivity is lower because much of the service provision is not as profitable in small towns and villages as it would be in urban areas. However, these service businesses provide economic and social “glue” for local communities, and their successful survival needs to be promoted, encouraged and assisted.27

The State of Farming in the AONB

BSE and the Foot and Mouth epidemic had severe implications for the farming sector. This is a time of great change and uncertainty for the farming sector: changes in policy to drive farming closer to the marketplace arising from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reforms; enlargement of the European Union; World Trade talks; and decoupling of payments for food production; and cross-compliance28 all contribute to this.
Farming incomes within the AONB are dependent on farm profitability, which in turn is reliant on agricultural subsidies. The Single Farm Payment is currently the only farm subsidy. This is due to expire in 2012 and the prospects for renewal are uncertain. The level of subsidy has been falling steadily since 2005 and by 2012 it will represent in cash terms approximately 50% of its value in 2005. Agricultural commodity markets continue to be extremely volatile, with vastly fluctuating markets and profit margins.  

80% of farmed land is now farmed by 20% of the farmers. Without any diversification or subsidy an arable business needs to be in excess of 2000 acres to provide an annual profit of £50,000 (national average salary is around £23,000). With the volatility of agricultural markets and falling subsidy levels smaller farmers are increasingly looking towards other forms of business to support their farming businesses. Such ‘diversifications’ may involve the conversion of farm buildings, starting new enterprises on the farm or renting or contracting out their land to larger operators and seeking work outside of the holding.

Island farmers face additional disadvantages through the lack of local supportive infrastructure. Livestock farmers are increasingly under pressure as rising prices and changing legislation make the logistics and expense created through the lack of an abattoir or slaughterhouse and incinerator or alternative facilities for the safe disposal of ‘fallen stock’ more irreconcilable. Similarly, concerns over the long-term security of wharfage facilities currently based at Cowes, could have harsh implications for arable farmers.

The previous England Rural Development Plan, through its Countryside Stewardship, Processing and Marketing Grant and Vocational Training scheme, provided useful advice and funding. It is hoped that the current Rural Development Programme for England through Environmental Stewardship, the new Rural Development Programme for England and the LEADER method of delivery and other initiatives can build on this. The successful local farmers’ market also offers a new outlet for local produce, and helps to link local people with local landowners and farmers. Alongside the farmers market, local food initiatives and the increase in farm shops on the Island is having an impact, albeit small. There should be a co-ordinated approach to the provision of advice and help to encourage sustainable farming practice by the farming community. This should be easy to administrate, as the plethora of existing legislative paperwork for the farming community can be daunting.

The table below shows Isle of Wight AONB agricultural holdings by type and year.

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm type - cereals</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm type - general cropping</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>###</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm type - horticulture</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Farm type - pigs &amp; poultry</td>
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<td>Farm type - dairy</td>
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<td>Farm type - cattle &amp; sheep (lowland)</td>
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<td>64</td>
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<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm type - mixed</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm type - other</td>
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<td>52</td>
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<td>Size less than 5ha</td>
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<td>5 to &lt;20ha</td>
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<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 to &lt;50ha</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to &lt;100ha</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>100ha or &gt;</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEFRA Agricultural Census Data - Isle of Wight AONB

#¥ - data suppression to prevent disclosure of information about individual holdings

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29 Information provided by Country, Land and Business Association
30 Information provided by Country, Land and Business Association
31 GIS interrogation indicates 3916 hectares of land cover by Countryside Stewardship Agreement within the AONB between 1991 & 2001, approximately 20.6% of the total AONB area.
The following trends are affecting agriculture within the AONB:

A marked decrease in dairy farming.

Although there is an increase in the number of holdings for cattle and sheep, the overall stocking level of livestock is in decline.

An increase in farm types classified as ‘other’. DEFRA has confirmed this category covers all small land holdings, including those who had to register for livestock during the recent 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak for livestock movement licenses. It also includes holdings that are not actively farmed because of retirement or diversification activities.

An increase in holdings of <5 ha and in those that are owned rather than tenanted. This data has largely changed due to a change in data collection, and the need for registration for livestock movements during the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak.

An increase in equestrian use of land and the resulting pressure for stabling, fencing and equipment.

Marketing of small plots via the Internet without planning permission, for leisure and amenity use is an increasing threat to sympathetic land management and the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

Farming and Food: Our Healthy Future is a key policy document that set out a delivery plan for sustainable farming and food in the South East and London. Published by Government Office for the South East (GOSE) and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), it represents the regional approach to the Government’s Strategy for Sustainable Food and Farming (December 2002), as a result of its consideration of the Curry Report.

As signatories to the Joint Statement of Intent32, SEEDA and GOSE and the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership look at ways to help to deliver these actions, where they will be of benefit to the conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB.

The State of Woodlands in the AONB

Woodland in the AONB is generally under-managed, and timber production is now a marginal activity. Amenity use (access and for game conservancy) and the nature conservation value of woodland are of increasing importance.

The annual yield of timber on the Isle of Wight is in the order of 25,000 tonnes.33 The need for a local timber treatment plant and the lack of an Island market for woodland products causes difficulties, and reduces profit margins because of transportation costs off the Island.

Plantation forestry under the control of Forest Enterprise is largely exported to the mainland for timber and pulp for cardboard. There are two medium sized active sawmills in operation on the Isle of Wight, but the softwood market remains small. Increasing regulation in response to a more litigious society is having an impact on these small businesses. Woodland management linked to local fuel production could be of key importance for the future. New markets may emerge as the result of the need to meet targets for renewable energy production. The use of wood and woodland thinning material as biomass to supply a combined heat and power plant may prove to be an important market for woodland products.

Recent grant funding initiatives have proved to be a very successful form of agricultural diversification. There is a need to develop a strategic, long-term understanding of how such areas of new planting will impact on the landscape of the AONB.

Ancient woodlands34 are generally considered to be the most important for biodiversity but most have no statutory protection. Securing funding for their appropriate management will help to secure their future.

JIGSAW (Joining and Increasing Grant Scheme for Ancient Woodland) was one such scheme for establishing and managing new broadleaved woodland on the Island. Between 2001 and 2003, £528,000 was provided by the Forestry Commission to Island landowners to plant broadleaved woodland. A total of 142 hectares was planted, either adding to ancient woodland or forming links between two or more ancient woods.

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32 Protected Landscapes in the South East Joint Statement of Intent - November 2002
33 Figure derived using Forestry Commission estimates by yield and area woodland cover.
34 GIS interrogation indicates 1,102 hectares of Ancient Woodland within the AONB.
The scheme was steered by a partnership of the Isle of Wight Council, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, English Nature, the National Trust and the Forestry Commission. The development of woodland flora and fauna after planting will be studied for years to come. Some of these new planting areas are open for the public to walk, by permission of the owners.

**Other Rural Business**

The recently published State of the Rural Wight highlights that within the rural area other than within the farming, fishing and woodland sectors, most employment is within tourism, construction, other services, retail, manufacturing, education and health. Indications are that there has been steady growth in a number of sectors over recent years, which bodes well for the future rural economy. However, increasing productivity is a key challenge. There are a high number of economically inactive people within the rural area, and whilst the high level of retired people will account for some of this, some pockets of the AONB are within the top 5% of areas in rural South East in terms of employment deprivation.

Businesses within the AONB tend to be relatively small (less than £50K turnover\(^35\)), with a high number of lifestyle businesses. There is a lack of demand for rural business units, with many existing developments remaining empty. Indications are that future pressure will be for conversion of outbuildings or extensions for home-work units.

The rural economy has seen the expansion of a number of sectors so its foundation is now more evenly spread over a greater number of industry sectors. This should result in a more robust rural economy, although productivity in the rural area needs addressing, as it does for the Island as a whole. Larger rural employment sectors such as hotels and catering, agriculture, forestry and fishing and construction have not made much progress in improving their productivity since 1995, and this must change if the rural economy is to remain viable.

Rural firms are traditionally smaller than urban ones. In 2005 it was estimated that 50% of all businesses within the Isle of Wight AONB have business turnovers of under £50K (SE Protected Landscape Area average is 39.6%). These reports indicate that self employment is strong in rural Wight, and business is more likely to be micro-enterprises than SMEs.\(^36\)

The Rural Development Programme for England and the LEADER method of delivery will support micro-enterprises that specifically benefit the Island’s rural economy and communities.

**Consultation Has Told Us We Need To:**

- Consider the role that employment within land based industries (farming, forestry and horticulture) has to play in promoting the vision and purpose of the AONB.

- Raise awareness of the importance of the extensive grazing by livestock to the conservation of the landscape.

- Highlight difficulties created for the industry through the lack of infrastructure (abattoir/slaughterhouse and timber processing facilities). This is becoming more pressing by the additional considerations of costs/animal welfare/distance issues.

- As a priority, support initiatives to remedy fallen stock issues raised through the lack of an incinerator.

- Promote the importance of local markets, infrastructure and processing for land-based industries. Linking local consumers to local markets will help to provide a viable farming and forestry sector.

- Consider and monitor the impact of market forces on the land based sector and its resulting impact upon the landscape.

- Encourage sympathetic location of appropriate rural industry within the AONB, where it can be demonstrated to bring social and economic benefits and is not detrimental to the landscape or environment.

- Training - the need to enhance/increase skills interest in rural sector industries; training in farming now more amenity/equine focused - not fulfilling needs in modern and traditional techniques

\(^{35}\) Socio-economic profiles for protected landscapes in South East England, Terra Consult/Countryside Agency 2005

\(^{36}\) State of the Rural Wight 2008
Our Vision for the Rural Economy:

“In 2025, people have a greater appreciation of the importance of farming to the AONB and the value of the need for sustainable approaches to agriculture. Less intensive agriculture supports the conservation and enhancement of the AONB and benefits earth heritage and the historic and natural environment. Farming has become economic and has created food, landscapes and habitats that are valued by visitors and locals alike. Produce is now grown, processed, marketed and purchased locally, supported by farm diversification.

Advice and training has become readily available, and has helped to ensure that the landscape of the AONB is actively farmed, in recognition of the contribution this makes to the natural beauty of the landscape.

Forestry and woodland management within the AONB are economic and produce benefits for recreation, nature conservation, landscape character and the historic environment. Local markets have provided outlets for woodland products, reducing transport costs and increasing profitability.

Planting schemes undertaken in the past have matured to complement the landscape, new planting schemes are compatible with (and enhance) landscape character and clearance schemes are sympathetic to the potential visual impact.

Increased wealth creation in the AONB with manufacturing moving into higher value, knowledge based activities. Moving in higher value activities has brought cleaner technology, a demand for higher quality accommodation and improved competitive strengths.

Working patterns and practices allowing individuals to work from home in the AONB. This has reduced travel, kept activity in the AONB and ensured the rural economy is dynamic and not dormant.”
## Our Policies for the Rural Economy:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWARENESS</td>
<td><strong>RE-O1</strong> Raise awareness of the need for sustainable and viable farming and its importance to the AONB landscape.</td>
<td><strong>RE-P1</strong> Promote the importance of farming and woodland management to the landscape of the AONB to all audiences.</td>
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<td><strong>RE-O2</strong> Promote the need for new mechanisms to support farming and woodland management in the AONB.</td>
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<td><strong>RE-O3</strong> Raise awareness amongst farmers and land managers of the AONB and its purpose.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>RE-O4</strong> Provide advice and support to land managers on the facets of the AONB landscape and its relationship to farming and woodland management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RECORDING AND MONITORING</td>
<td><strong>RE-O5</strong> Develop mechanisms to record and monitor data about the condition and changes to the rural economy.</td>
<td><strong>RE-P2</strong> Ensure that changes impacting upon the rural economy are researched, recorded and monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td><strong>RE-O6</strong> Encourage the use of whole farm plans and forest design plans to ensure the integration of farming and forestry practice with the management of earth heritage, landscape, natural and historic environments.</td>
<td><strong>RE-P3</strong> Ensure that farming and woodland management practice and rural enterprise within the AONB, which conserves and enhances the area is encouraged and supported.</td>
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<td><strong>RE-O7</strong> Facilitate the sustainable management of farmed and wooded land by ensuring funding schemes are accessible to land managers.</td>
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<td><strong>RE-O8</strong> Support rural enterprises of a scale appropriate to its setting that does not compromise the objectives of the AONB.</td>
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<td><strong>RE-O9</strong> Support and highlight other rural industries and pastimes that positively contribute to landscape management of the AONB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td><strong>RE-O10</strong> Encourage the establishment of suitable processing infrastructure to strengthen local markets.</td>
<td><strong>RE-P4</strong> Ensure the development of local skills, markets and processing facilities to safeguard the economic viability of farming and forestry within the AONB.</td>
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<td><strong>RE-O11</strong> Support initiatives that encourage the use of local products.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>RE-O12</strong> Encourage appropriate training opportunities in both traditional and modern farming and woodland management techniques are available to farmers and landowners.</td>
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</table>
Key Actions for the Rural Economy:

- Support and promotion of the Rural Development Programme for England and the LEADER method of delivery, to add value to agricultural and forestry products and encourage micro-business development.

- Advocacy of Environmental Stewardship programmes and Woodland Grant/JIGSAW Schemes.

- Support programmes that seek to increase processing facilities for farmers, land owners and woodland managers.

- Support programmes that seek to remedy issues relating to fallen stock.

- Encourage professional business service businesses to locate in the AONB and encourage rural manufacturing to move into higher value, knowledge based activities.

- Encourage working patterns and practices allowing individuals to work from home in rural areas. Support the development of flexible working practices to meet the needs of the employer and the employee, keeping the early retired in employment where desired and appreciating / understanding the value they can offer businesses.
The highways network provides access to the diverse landscapes across the AONB. It provides the means for transporting goods and access to many services for people who live and work in, or visit the area. Public rights of way on the Island offer an unrivalled opportunity to experience the qualities that led to AONB designation by walking, horse riding and cycling. The Isle of Wight Council was acknowledged as meeting the ‘national target’ for Rights of Way in 1998. It was the first local authority to do so and is still the only local authority to have received this accolade. The Isle of Wight Council as Highway Authority is charged with the maintenance, protection and management of the highway network.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Rights of Way Improvement Plan sets out the Highway Authority’s issues and priorities.

Isle of Wight Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011

The LTP2 identifies the following broad issues that have an impact on the highway network:

- Rural transport issues - cost, availability.
- High unemployment - seasonal variation.
- Increased cross-Solent traffic - more vehicles arriving on the Island.
- Changing distribution patterns - bulk freight to lorry distribution.
- Tourism development - impact of cars in summer months.
- Social exclusion - an ageing population, pockets of deprivation resulting in inability to access facilities, goods and services.
- Cross-Solent links - frequency and cost.
- Infrastructure - deterioration in highway infrastructure, road safety issues.

Relationship to Landscape Character

The rights of way network, and to some extent the minor and unclassified road network, are often key features in the AONB landscape. Verges, hedges and historic signs all add to the local distinctiveness of the landscape. Standard approaches to signage and to the design of road schemes have a major impact on the local distinctiveness and character of an area. The design of new road schemes, signage and road furniture need to be sympathetic to the landscape to prevent this distinctiveness being eroded through a standardised approach.

Highways signage can also have an urbanising impact on the rural highway network. Traffic regulation requires signage and there are often few discretionary powers regarding its design, size and placement. Maintaining existing signage and programmes to rationalise them can help to ensure that the impact of signage is minimised. The use of temporary plastic signs, and of street furniture for fly posting, should be discouraged.

Maintaining strategic roads within the AONB is an on-going challenge, especially in areas subject to coastal erosion and/or active land movement. This will need to balance carefully the social and economic need for the road network with its potential impact on the environment. For example, the future classification and use of Undercliff Drive (Grid Ref SZ516760) is currently under consideration by the Isle of Wight Council.
Rights Of Way Network

This extensive, well-managed and well-used network offers opportunities for access on foot, horse and cycle across the whole of the AONB37. Further opportunities exist to integrate this network with the use of the broader highways network. However, illegal access by motorised vehicles to the AONB from routes that have motorised vehicular rights can cause problems and requires proper management.

Measures to reduce speeds on rural networks and in village centres may help to encourage greater non-vehicular use of the highway. The rural road network is often subject to the national speed limit, although the physical character of the road may prevent such high speeds being attempted. The ‘Quiet Road’ pilot scheme at Alverstone has had some success at attempting to persuade a more considerate approach by drivers in narrow rural lanes.

Public Transport

This needs to be regular, reliable, affordable and convenient if it is to provide an alternative to the car. With a high proportion of the rural population without access to a car (page 47), potential innovative solutions that offer sustainable transport choices, yet respect the sensitivities of the AONB landscape, should be considered. Alternatives such as walking and cycling may also offer opportunities for non-vehicular travel for work and leisure. Additionally ‘liftsharing’ programmes could reduce car use within the AONB and should be encouraged.

Health

The natural environment is important to human health not just for the physical ‘work out’ that can be enjoyed through walking, cycling or other countryside pursuits, but also for positive benefits it has on mental health and a sense of wellbeing. Being able to easily access the countryside is increasingly being seen as of key importance in raising health levels and going some way to resolving obesity issues. As well as the installation of a network of green infrastructure within and around settlements, there is a need to ensure that there are good connections with the existing rights of way network to allow for more easy access into the AONB countryside.

37 GIS interrogation indicates 217Km Public Bridleway and 185Km Public Footpath within the AONB
Traffic noise

Tranquillity is an important aspect of the special qualities of the landscape character of the AONB. Traffic noise can have an impact on this and we need to consider its management.

Consultation Has Told Us We Need To:

Advise on the design of new road schemes, signage and street furniture affecting the AONB, to ensure it is sympathetic to the landscape, and to prevent the erosion of local distinctiveness through a standardised approach.

Monitor the use of signage within the AONB and promote good practice.

Pursue opportunities to rationalise signs and ensure existing signs are maintained to a good standard.

Raise awareness of the impact that increased traffic levels and illegal and unregulated parking can have on verges, particularly at 'honey pot' sites.

Raise awareness of the impact that increased traffic levels can have on historic rural roads within the AONB, for instance by the erosion of banks.

Resist non-essential widening of historic rural roads within the AONB.

Monitor the impact of increased seasonal traffic, especially on the 'honey pot' sites.

Investigate the potential for measures to reduce speed on rural networks and in village centres. This may help to encourage greater non-vehicular use of the highway.

Consider how best to manage traffic so it does not have a detrimental impact upon the tranquillity of the AONB.

Promote sustainable transport initiatives, particularly public transport.

Make the most of opportunities to integrate the rights of way network with the use of the broader highways network.

Work with the local highway authority to manage illegal access and use of the rights of way network by motorised vehicles.

Promote the development of multifunctional green space to incorporate green ways, and improve links to existing pedestrian routes and cycleway networks.

Highlight the impact of street lighting on dark skies.

Support initiatives that investigate more sustainable road maintenance i.e. use of Island aggregates, wharf facilities, re-use of existing surfacing, etc.

Our Vision for Traffic and Transport in the Isle of Wight AONB:

“In 2025, people have become less dependent on the private car to access services, facilities, and employment or leisure opportunities within the AONB.

Traffic levels and speeds have been reduced, making walking and cycling more enjoyable and safe.

Roads have been designed to be in keeping with the local distinctiveness and landscape character of the AONB through sensitive signage, design and maintenance, providing a safe and well-managed network for both motorised and non-motorised traffic.

More visitors and local people have greater transport choice and can take advantage of an efficient, regular and affordable public transport system.”
Our Policies for Traffic and Transport:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWARENESS</td>
<td><strong>TT-O1</strong> Work with the Local Highway Authority to promote the Rights of Way network as part of the character and local distinctiveness of the AONB.</td>
<td><strong>TT-P1</strong> Promote the contribution Transport, Highways and Rights of Way networks make to local distinctiveness and as a means of access to the AONB.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TT-O2</strong> Promote the use and protection of the public rights of way network as an important means of accessing the AONB.</td>
<td><strong>TT-P2</strong> Ensure that impact from and changes to: Transport, Highways and Rights of Way Networks, affecting the AONB are researched, recorded and monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECORDDING AND MONITORING</td>
<td><strong>TT-O3</strong> Develop mechanisms to record and monitor changes to the highway and rights of way networks and any impact upon the AONB.</td>
<td><strong>TT-P3</strong> Ensure the importance of the special character and local distinctiveness of the AONB is given due consideration in all policies, strategies and highways maintenance and improvement programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TT-O4</strong> Identify the impact of traffic and opportunities to manage it, within the AONB.</td>
<td><strong>TT-P4</strong> Support sustainable transport initiatives affecting the AONB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td><strong>TT-O5</strong> Work with the Local Highway Authority to seek to ensure that the character and local distinctiveness of the AONB is conserved and enhanced through the design and maintenance of the highways network.</td>
<td><strong>TT-P5</strong> Work with the Local Highway Authority to seek to ensure that the character and local distinctiveness of the AONB is conserved and enhanced through the design and maintenance of the highways network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TT-O6</strong> Ensure the AONB designation is given due consideration in the Local Transport Plan, Rights of Way Improvement Plan and other transport strategies and plans.</td>
<td><strong>TT-P6</strong> Support sustainable transport initiatives affecting the AONB.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Actions for Traffic and Transport:

- Development of protocol with highways - to also feed into Private Finance Initiative.
- Research traffic management initiatives, including verge parking, car park provision and the availability of public transport as an alternative.
- Identify opportunities to enhance current transport networks, enabling greater access to the countryside and between settlements within the AONB.
- Promote the value of accessing the AONB for health and wellbeing.
The Isle of Wight is well known as a destination for tourists, and is most often associated with more traditional seaside holidays and the international Cowes Week sailing regatta. The resort and coach trip holiday market is still an important part of the tourism sector on the Island. The short break market is increasing, with tourists often wishing to take part in specific activities such as bird watching and walking. It is here the AONB can offer a distinct marketable resource, encompassing all the natural, historic and cultural elements that make visiting and enjoying the Isle of Wight AONB a memorable experience. By providing information, we can increase visitors’ enjoyment of the Isle of Wight AONB and secure its protection. Giving an insight into the qualities, complexity and intricacies of landscape character, will enable visitors to share in the ‘sense of place’ afforded by the designation.

Tourism contributes 28% of the GDP of the Island and in the high season provides approximately 25% of the total employment opportunities. The importance of tourism to the economic and social well-being of the local community needs to be balanced with conservation and enhancement of the AONB. The extension of the season for short breaks is advantageous for the economy and for employment opportunities, but must be balanced with the potential impact on the environment. Many visitors are attracted to the Isle of Wight because of its beaches and scenic beauty - there are opportunities for the AONB to be marketed as a ‘sustainable tourism’ destination. It is important that proposals for new activities are based on sound assessment and monitoring of the potential impacts. Sustainable tourism initiatives aim to encourage this. The following activities are already helping to achieve this aim:

- Green Island Awards - encouraging business to adopt a sustainable approach to business management.
- Voluntary visitor ‘pay-back’ schemes for environmental projects.
- Promotion of the Isle of Wight public rights of way network for walking, cycling and horse riding, including specific named trails, the Coastal Path and annual Walking and Cycling festivals.
- Round the Island Cycle route - signed circular route primarily on the minor road network.
- On-going development of off-road cycle tracks and green ways.
- Quiet Road schemes.

Tourism Market Surveys

A 2002 survey of visitors commissioned by Isle of Wight Tourism highlighted the following key findings:

- Outstanding natural beauty and beaches were considered to be the best aspects of the Isle of Wight.
- Previous experience of the Island as a destination was an important factor in the decision to visit - 33% had visited in the last year and 80% had been before.
- Half of those surveyed obtained information before their visit through Tourist Information Centres or from the Internet.
- Most activities were planned before arriving. Beaches, walking and visiting attractions were the main activities undertaken.
- Visitors surveyed were mainly families from the South East Region.

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38 Isle of Wight Tourism (2002)
39 Designate Survey for Isle of Wight Tourism (2002)
Extent

The SE AONB Sustainable Tourism Project report, Tourism supply in 10 AONBs in the SE of England: The regional picture 2002/03 has provided a baseline of facilities and accommodation available within the AONB. It also gave an overview of the awareness, business market and confidence of accommodation providers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest houses</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self catering accommodation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caravan/camp sites (not pitches)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafes/inns</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractions</td>
<td>35</td>
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</table>

The following key findings are reported:

Self catering and camping are the main accommodation providers for the AONB. Further work is required to determine the number of pitches for tents and caravans.

There is a limited level of business visitor occupancy within the AONB, and most occupants are tourists.

There is a high annual occupancy level (71%), with most businesses expecting to retain this level or increase it in 2003.

All of those questioned stated they were familiar with the term AONB, with 64% stating that they knew which AONB they were in but only 8% correctly naming this when asked. (Most incorrect responses named their local area or village such as ‘Stenbury Downs’ rather than the Isle of Wight AONB).

The countryside of the AONB is also of great importance to the whole Island community. People value the opportunities available to them for leisure and recreation in their free time: from surfing and paragliding along the Tennyson Heritage Coast to taking part in the ‘Walk the Wight’ annual cross-Island sponsored walk. Whilst only a small proportion of the population live within the designated area, there are numerous settlements that are immediately adjacent to the AONB. Bearing in mind the dispersed nature of the AONB, access to these special landscapes is a relatively short distance, even from the most built up urban areas on the Isle of Wight; sometimes, just a short walk.

The ‘sense of place’ afforded by the AONB and the pride of place experienced by local people who are involved in conserving and enhancing the local distinctiveness of their community, provides an additional facet for those visiting and enjoying the AONB. Local produce, customs, fetes and fairs all contribute to community life within the AONB and to the enjoyment to be had in visiting them.
Consultation Has Told Us We Need To:

- Assess opportunities for access and enjoyment of the landscape for all members of society.
- Continue to monitor the impact of high levels of use of paths and access points.
- Ensure that the tranquillity of the AONB is not compromised by the increasing recreational and leisure use of the countryside.
- Raise awareness of the AONB, so increased use of the landscape for leisure and recreation does not adversely impact upon the land and property of private landowners and farmers.
- Work with the local highway authority to develop links between the existing public path network and the road network, that would enable all walkers, horse riders and cyclists to have safe passage.
- Better understand how the AONB is used for leisure and recreation and use this to promote the AONB.
- Develop the potential that exists for sustainable tourism and recreation activities.
- Continue to promote the AONB through the work of IW Tourism and the Green Island programme.
- Provide measures for environmental interpretation and awareness raising.
- Balance the desire to see the AONB enjoyed by people with an awareness of potential impacts on its special characteristics, including wildlife and the historic environment.

Our Vision for those Visiting and Enjoying:

“In 2025 the AONB continues to offer opportunities for quiet enjoyment, peace and relaxation, where the complexity of natural beauty and the relationship between people and place has become more widely understood and respected. Sustainable tourism, access and recreation initiatives have brought increased social and economic stability to local communities, extended the traditional tourism season, and reduced the reliability on the private car.

There is greater understanding of the impact of access on the AONB and this has been managed to allow enjoyment of the landscape while securing its conservation and enhancement.

The AONB has become closely associated with the quality the Isle of Wight offers as a destination.”
Our Policies for Visiting and Enjoying:

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<tr>
<th>POLICY AREA</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>POLICIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWARENESS</td>
<td><strong>VE-O1</strong> Support initiatives that highlight the special qualities of the AONB to increase understanding and enjoyment of the resource.</td>
<td><strong>VE-P1</strong> Promote responsible enjoyment of the landscape of the AONB through an increased understanding of its complexity, value and management.</td>
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<td><strong>VE-O2</strong> Advocate the benefits of quiet enjoyment of the AONB on health and wellbeing.</td>
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<td><strong>VE-O3</strong> Promote sustainable tourism initiatives within the AONB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RECORDING AND MONITORING</td>
<td><strong>VE-O4</strong> Develop mechanisms to record and monitor any changes in tourism or leisure activities affecting the AONB.</td>
<td><strong>VE-P2</strong> Ensure that changes in leisure, sports and recreational activities affecting the AONB and any impacts from these are researched, recorded and monitored.</td>
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<td><strong>VE-O5</strong> Develop mechanisms to record and monitor the impact of people visiting the AONB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td><strong>VE-O6</strong> Ensure that the importance of the AONB designation is reflected in the Tourism Development Plan.</td>
<td><strong>VE-P3</strong> Support sustainable initiatives to visiting and enjoying the AONB and ensure that the purpose of the designation is given due consideration in all tourism and recreational policies, strategies and approaches.</td>
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<td><strong>VE-O7</strong> Encourage opportunities for sustainable tourism and access to the AONB for all.</td>
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<td><strong>VE-O8</strong> Ensure that marketing and management do not detract from the natural experience of the AONB.</td>
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<td><strong>VE-O9</strong> Create sustainable gateway entries to the AONB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONSERVING AND ENHANCING</td>
<td><strong>VE-O10</strong> Ensure that access and recreation within the AONB is managed to conserve and enhance the landscape.</td>
<td><strong>VE-P4</strong> Encourage people visiting and enjoying the AONB to act responsibly in order to conserve and enhance its special qualities.</td>
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<td><strong>VE-O11</strong> Support initiatives that encourage participation in the conservation and enhancement of the AONB or aspects of its special character.</td>
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Key Actions for Visiting and Enjoying:

- Contribute to schemes that promote sustainable practice in business and recreation.
- SE Protected Landscapes Regional Tourism Project.
- Work with IW Tourism, Chamber of Commerce and other partners to promote the AONB as part of the marketing of the Isle of Wight as a destination.
- Work with accommodation providers - provide simple information introducing land management to facilitate greater understanding of the countryside.
- Work to identify how tourism and leisure activities are changing and what this means to the AONB.
Monitoring and Recording

In order to assess the effectiveness of both the AONB Management Plan and the broader environmental condition of the Isle of Wight AONB, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms need to be in place. These should be: simple and easily understood; relevant to the landscape character of the AONB; capable of repetition over time so that any trends become apparent; and, where possible, based on standard procedures to enable comparison with the national family of protected landscapes.

A key policy area within this Plan has been monitoring and recording. In some areas a great deal of information already exists, and it may be possible to interrogate this with our Geographical Information System (GIS) in order to obtain AONB-specific data sets. In other areas it will be necessary to identify resources to undertake research and recording. The table below sets out some of the headline indicators being monitored and the policy to which it relates. These indicators have been set following former Countryside Agency guidance, and it is intended that this information will be used to inform an overall State of the AONB Report to be undertaken part way through the life of this Management Plan. Rather than detailing each individual action the overarching compilation of this data, is detailed within the Delivery Plan, action CR-A4, with data being provided by various AONB Partnership organisations, in conjunction with the AONB Unit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GUIDANCE THEME</th>
<th>POLICY REF</th>
<th>HEADLINE INDICATORS/DATASETS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COUNTRYSIDE &amp; LANDCOVER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Light pollution</td>
<td>LC-P2</td>
<td>% of AONB classified as ‘Dark’ under CPRE light pollution criteria.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scenic/landscape character</td>
<td>LC-P2</td>
<td>Fixed point photography of key views within the AONB as an analysis of change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land use &amp; development</td>
<td>CD-P2</td>
<td>Number of departures from the local plan relating to development control decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-P2</td>
<td>Number of masts (telecommunication and other) within the AONB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RE-P2</td>
<td>% of land subject to high tier agri-environment schemes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape features</td>
<td>RE-P2</td>
<td>Number of farm holdings by size and type.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape features</td>
<td>RE-P2</td>
<td>% of woodland subject to woodland grant scheme and/or in active management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECOLOGY &amp; ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water quality</td>
<td>EH-P2</td>
<td>River water - % achieving A grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bathing water - % beaches achieving top grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil quality</td>
<td>EH-P2</td>
<td>% area at risk from soil erosion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>W-P2</td>
<td>% of designated sites in favourable condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>W-P2</td>
<td>% Local Biodiversity Action Plan habitats in ‘favourable condition’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CULTURAL &amp; VERNACULAR</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeology &amp; SAMs</td>
<td>HE-P2</td>
<td>Number and condition of archaeology and Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listed buildings</td>
<td>HE-P2</td>
<td>Number of listed buildings, % at risk and number in positive management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIO-ECONOMIC &amp; QUALITY OF LIFE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>CD-P2</td>
<td>Number of village shops, post offices halls etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TT-P2</td>
<td>Public transport links.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>TT-P2</td>
<td>% of rights of way network in favourable condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>TT-P2</td>
<td>Change in volume of traffic at specific monitoring points in AONB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>VE-P2</td>
<td>% of people aware of the Isle of Wight AONB designation and its purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>TT-P2</td>
<td>Number of people using the public rights of way network at strategic monitoring points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land based economy</td>
<td>RE-P2</td>
<td>% AONB under sustainable land management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RE-P2</td>
<td>Agricultural economy within the AONB.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Delivery

The revised Management Plan is required to have a list of actions that the Partnership wishes to pursue, to further the vision and policies of the Plan. This ‘Delivery Plan’ will set out Partnership projects and actions to further the policies and vision of the AONB Management Plan, which we have agreed to undertake over the next five years (2009-2014).

Unlike the 2004-2009 Plan’s Action Plan, the new Delivery Plan will be updated annually. This should ensure that new actions or projects can be included for issues that arise after the revised Plan is published, and any actions that are no longer required or relevant can be dropped. This will allow the Partnership to be more flexible in setting out its priorities for work, to make the best use of the resources available to us to conserve and enhance the AONB.

Rather than listing all the actions of the AONB Unit and Partnership members that are undertaken as a matter of course, the Delivery Plan will concentrate on activities and projects that add value to the work of the AONB. In this way we can list activities, actions and projects where the AONB Partnership is coming together to work to address particular issues that benefit the AONB, and its conservation and enhancement.

Taking into account the rolling nature of the Delivery Plan, this appears as a separate document to accompany this plan.

Performance Monitoring

Progress and performance of the AONB Partnership will be reported in our Annual Review.

Specific achievements towards targets identified within the Management Plan Delivery Plan Unit will be reported in an Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan Annual Progress Report.

Targeting Our Resources - AONB Management Zones

Whilst the current structure in the Management Plan is still broadly valid, a more spatial approach is required for the future. As proposed at the Open Forum 2007, a method of targeting Management Plan delivery could be based on eleven spatial areas ‘Management Zones’, where the landscape and its character presents itself in a way which will be easily accessible to the general public.

Through consideration of the 1993 Landscape Character Assessment of the Island, the recent Historic Landscape Characterisation and emerging Historic Environment Action Plan, Draft Management Zones have been compiled.
Strong consideration will be given to creating zones which each have a distinct local identity and set of management needs, even though they may include a number of different Landscape Character Types and Historic Landscape Character Areas. For instance Zone 6 contains Landscape Character Types: Chalk Downs, The Undercliff, Traditional Enclosed Pasture and a small element of Intensive Agricultural Land. It also contains parts of the following Historic Landscape Character areas: The Undercliff, South Wight Downland and South Wight Downland Edge. Nevertheless, in terms of management objectives this Zone can be treated as a unified entity.

It is intended that Zones will be given names, but these have not yet been decided. This formation of AONB Management Zones should enable us to target the delivery of the Management Plan together with associated HEAP and BAP objectives within this spatial area, based on how the threats and challenges to the AONB present themselves and the types of activity present in the area. This will help us to be more focused on landscape character, providing information at a localised level within the AONB designated area. It is also hoped that this will enable engagement in a more meaningful way with the AONB community. It is suggested the Management Zones should include areas abutting the AONB that are important to its setting, whether being viewed from inside or outside the designated area.

This approach is still at an early stage, however, the development and implementation of AONB Management Zones is a priority action within the Delivery Plan.
Over the years there have been many changes in structure for the management of the AONB. Following the increased profile and protection afforded by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) and the Isle of Wight Council signed a Memorandum of Agreement setting out a partnership approach to managing the Isle of Wight AONB.

Consequently, the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership was formed in April 2002. It is a broad-based independent organisation with representatives from many local, regional and national organisations and individuals with a direct interest in the AONB.

The purpose of the Partnership is to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB in light of the AONB Management Plan and its policies.

Structure of AONB Partnership
AONB Steering Committee

The Steering Committee act as a catalyst and facilitator in implementing AONB policies. They also manage and allocate resources and steer, develop and support initiatives to help enhance and conserve the AONB.

The main role of the AONB Steering Group is:

- To plan and implement AONB management via the medium of the AONB Management Plan and primary purposes of AONB designation.
- To bring skills and expertise from their portfolio area to the AONB Steering Committee.

AONB Advisory Group

The AONB Advisory Group membership represent the wider interest of stakeholders within the AONB, and provides a way for partners to become involved in the future vision and management of this valued asset.

Its membership consists of representatives from organisations and stakeholders who have a direct interest in the management of the AONB. In accord with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which places a Duty of Regard on public bodies to conserve and enhance AONBs, the Advisory Group membership includes a number of public bodies.

AONB Open Forum Group

The Open Forum Group includes organisations and individuals with an interest in the management of our Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Through news sheets and occasional workshops these members are kept up to date with the work of the AONB Unit, Steering Committee and Working Groups to conserve and enhance the Island’s finest landscapes.
### Advisory Group
- Association of Town and Parish Councils
- Council for the Protection of Rural England
- Christopher Scott Chartered Surveyors
- Country, Land and Business Association
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- Footprint Trust
- Forest Enterprise
- Forestry Commission
- Government Office for the South East
- Green Island Awards
- Hampshire and IW Wildlife Trust
- Island Strategic Partnership
- IW Badger Group
- IW Bat Group
- IW Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership Steering Committee
- Isle of Wight Farmers Market
- IW Country Federation of Women's Institutes
- IW Economic Partnership
- IW Estuaries Project
- IW Farmers Market
- Isle of Wight Natural History and Archaeological Society
- Isle of Wight Tourism
- Local Access Forum
- National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- National Farmers Union
- National Federation of Sea Anglers
- National Trust
- Natural England
- Peoples Trust for Endangered Species
- Quality Transport Partnership
- Ramblers Association
- Riverside Centre
- Royal Institute of British Architects (IW Branch)
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Rural Community Council
- South East England Development Agency
- South East Protected Landscapes
- South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association
- Wight Nature Fund
- Wight Squirrel Project
- Wight Wildlife
- Woodland Trust
- Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners

### Open Forum Group
- British Association for Shooting and Conservation
- Bembridge Heritage Society
- Braden Green Group
- British Horse Society
- British Telecom
- Clifford J Matthews
- Cycle Wight
- Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Diocesan Board of Education
- East Wight History Group
- Freshwater Lifeboat
- Friends of the Earth
- Greenpeace
- Historical Association IW Branch
- Intobiz Limited
- Island 2000 Trust
- Island Waste Services
- IW Buildings Preservation Trust
- IW Foot Beagles
- IW Foxhounds
- IW Gardens Trust
- IW Grain Storage
- IW Hangliding and Paragliding Club
- IW Pond Wardens
- IW Self Catering Association
- IW Society
- Julia Margaret Cameron Trust
- Medina Housing
- Newtown Residents Association
- Office for Andrew Turner
- South East England Regional Assembly
- Scottish and Southern Power
- Southern Electric
- Southern Water
- Steephill Forestry and Arboriculture
- The Undercliff Society
- The Undercliff Defence Committee
- The Wight Against Rural Turbines
- Trail Riders Fellowship
- Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Guild
- Wight Cable Limited
- Wight Orienteers
- Wightlink Ferries Limited
- Woodland Forum
- Yarmouth Society

### Isle of Wight Council
- Councillors
- Archaeology and Historic Environment Service
- Arts Unit
- Communications Section
- Conservation Team
- County Archivist
- County Geologist
- Development Control Section
- Enforcement Section
- Head of Engineering Services
- Head of Planning Services
- Head of Property Services
- Local Transport Planner
- Parks & Countryside Section
- Planning Policy Section
- Policy Section
- Rights of Way Section
AONB Management Plan 2004-2009

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 sets out the legislative requirements for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This Act resulted in the need for all Local Authorities with AONB designation within their administrative area to work with stakeholders to formulate a statutory AONB Management Plan for its future conservation and enhancement. This Plan is also the guide for public bodies with a duty to have regard to the purpose of the designation when considering how their work and function may impact on the area.

The AONB Partnership began the process to formulate the first statutory Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan in 2002. Over the next two years a number of events were held and a stakeholder and public consultation exercise undertaken. This enabled us to establish the special qualities of the designated area; our agreed vision for its future; the threats and challenges facing the management of the conservation and enhancement of its natural beauty; AONB policies and AONB policy objectives for the area; and finally agreed Partnership actions for the five years 2004-09 to deliver the Plan, its vision and objectives.

This resulted in the required adoption of an AONB Management Plan by the Isle of Wight Council, in February 2004 and a copy of the final plan being sent to the Secretary of State by the target date of 31 March 2004.

A copy of this document is available to download on our website www.wightaonb.org.uk

The requirement for a Review

Along with the production of an AONB Management Plan, legislation also requires a review within five years of its publication. The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership commenced this review process in September 2007 at its Annual Open Forum. Being the first review of the statutory plan, it has enabled us to look critically at how effective and relevant the content, structure and objectives of the plan are some four years after its publication. Potentially the vision, issues and aims of the Plan were unlikely to have changed, however, the mechanisms, organisation and partners with which the AONB needs to work and influence may have. The review needed to consider what amendments to the Plan, if any, are required to address this. The Action Plan of the current AONB Management Plan was time limited to 2009 and as such was part of the document that would need updating to ensure that the short time actions are considered and agreed by the Partnership.

Guidance on the Scope of the Review

Prior to October 2006 and establishment of Natural England, the national responsibility for AONBs rested with the Countryside Agency. The Landscape Access and Recreation branch of the Countryside Agency published guidance on the review of AONB Management Plans in September 2006.1

This guidance document was the result of an analysis of the lessons learnt from the production of the first round of statutory AONB Management Plans, and particularly gives advice on ways to approach the review; the structure, content and presentation of revised plans; the importance of evidence and monitoring; relationships with other plans and strategies; and early advice on the Strategic Environmental Assessment process and the implications of the Habitat Regulations ruling. As guidance this document does not require AONB Partnerships to take a particular approach but provides information and advice.

1 Guidance for the review of AONB Management Plans (CA221) – The Countryside Agency 2006
Since the publication of the guidance document, there have been many other reports and best practice examples from other AONBs who are undertaking the process. More information on these can be found in the online reference library of the National Association for AONBs at www.aonb.org.uk.

In undertaking the review of the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan we have considered this guidance and other documentation and research and used it to assist us in the process.

The Review Process

How we Approached the Review

This review has provided an opportunity to look critically at the first statutory plan and make amendments, as required, to update this to reflect current challenges facing the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To ensure that we have done this effectively, focused consultation with Partnership members, key stakeholders and the Public has formed the heart of the approach we have taken. This has been overseen by the AONB Management Plan Work Group.

The Consultation process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| NOV 2007 – MARCH 2008 | Workshops & Surveys:  
- Reviewing the AONB Threats & Challenges  
- Reviewing the AONB Policies & Policy Objectives  
- Delivering the Plan |
| MAY – JULY 2008   | AONB Management Plan Review Report - Partnership Consultation:  
- Incorporating AONB Partnership Advisory Group meetings on all Management Plan themes. |
| JULY – NOV 2008   | Formulation of draft Plan through amalgamation of Former Plan and consultation responses |
Incorporating request for formal observations from Natural England and English Heritage |
| JANUARY 2009     | Amendments made in light of consultation responses |
| FEBRUARY 2009    | AONB Management Plan 2009-2014 formally adopted by Isle of Wight Council |
| MARCH 2009       | AONB Management Plan 2009-2014 submitted to the Secretary of State, with accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Evaluation. |

The reports on the AONB Management Plan Review Partnership Consultation (May 2008) and responses received as part of the Public Consultation on the Draft AONB Management Plan are available as pdf downloads on our website www.wightaonb.org.uk or via the AONB Unit.
Other requirements

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA regulations) which in turn, is derived from the European Directive 2001/42/EC (known as the SEA Directive). The SEA Regulations require the assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant environmental effects.

SEAs are an effective way to ensure that potential environmental impacts of the policies, objectives and actions are assessed during the plan making process. Appraisal of these along with consideration of options and alternative courses of action during the plan’s development should ensure avoidance or mitigation of any adverse effects.

There are five main stages of SEA process:

| STAGE A | Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope |
| STAGE B | Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects |
| STAGE C | Preparing an environmental report |
| STAGE D | Consulting on draft plan and environmental report |
| STAGE E | Monitoring significant effects of implementing the plan on the environment |

The environmental report, available as a separate document, has been compiled in parallel with the production of the Draft Management Plan.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The aim of the Habitats Regulations Assessment is to apply the tests of the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994, as set out in Regulation 48 of the Regulations, to the policies given in the plan. The requirements are such that prior to a land use plan being published, the plan-making authority must assess the potential effects of it upon European – Natura 2000 sites.

There are four stages to the Habitat Regulations Assessment (sometimes referred to as Appropriate Assessment):

| STAGE 1 | Screening |
| STAGE 2 | Appropriate assessment |
| STAGE 3 | Assessment of alternative solutions |
| STAGE 4 | Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain |

At the screening stage, a decision is made as to whether or not the plan policies will have a likely significant effect (LSE) on interest features of European sites within/adjacent to the AONB. The primary aim at this stage should be to ensure that none of the policies will have a LSE and should, if possible, be modified to ensure it does not. If this is not possible then it would have to be subject to the full rigour of an ‘appropriate assessment’.

This process was undertaken in parallel with the review and the final report of the Habitats Regulations Assessment is available as a separate document.
LCT1
Chalk Downs

An open landscape with long vistas, distinct skylines, large fields, sparse hedge or field boundaries, few mature hedgerow trees and a sense of space and exposure. This landscape character type is the most dominant within the Isle of Wight AONB. It is also the landscape type best known by the public because of the dramatic white cliffs at either end of the east–west central ridge, including the Needles Chalk stacks. There is another large area of chalk on the southern downs around Ventnor. Landmarks and seamarks such as St Catherine’s Oratory and the Tennyson Memorial occur on high vistas.

The geology of this area was laid down on a seabed during the Late Cretaceous period from 98 to 65 million years ago. It was subsequently folded and eroded to give the landform, angular flint deposits and soil base that we see today.

Chalk grassland has a very rich ecology and holds a number of important habitats for rare plants and animals. This is reflected in the Priority Habitat status for lowland calcareous grassland and within the Biodiversity Action Plan. The habitats within this landscape character type continue to be under threat from intensive farming techniques, inappropriate grazing, recreation pressures and scrub invasion. Management of this important habitat is heavily dependant upon a correct grazing regime, which is in itself linked to the economic conditions of farming for graziers.

Ancient semi-natural woodlands on northern slopes, with distinctive woodland wildlife, are an important feature of the area.

A number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) fall within this landscape character area, representing the important nature conservation value of chalk downs. Small pockets of chalk heath occur on flint gravel deposits.

Rich in archaeology, with many scheduled and non-scheduled sites and monuments, this landscape has a strong time depth. Neolithic farmers started woodland clearance. Situated on cleared chalk downland, the Afton Down Longbarrow and Tennyson Down Mortuary Enclosure are burial monuments from this time. More extensive woodland clearance on the chalk took place in the succeeding Bronze Age. Many Bronze Age round barrows are situated on the central chalk ridge and the southern chalk downs. Roman villas are situated in close proximity to the central chalk ridge and major Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have been recorded from this area. Manors and farms originating in medieval times cluster around the edge of the downs. Although traditionally grazed, with areas of common land, archaeological remains such as lynchets and ridge and furrow indicate that some chalk grassland has been ploughed in prehistory, Roman times or the Middle Ages. In the 20th century old chalk grassland was ploughed up for use as arable or reseeded as improved pasture.
Historic removal of chalk for liming of heavy clay soils and for building materials has resulted in a number of disused quarries. These are now regenerating naturally and have become a rich nature conservation resource. Place names often refer back to this former use such as Lime Kiln Shute, at Mersley.

Settlement is mainly linear in nature. It is found at the base of the chalk downs in valleys and combes where shelter and water is available from the chalk aquifer through natural springs. Place names often reflect these landscape elements (Shalcombe). Access via footpaths, bridleways and track ways along the ridge have left a strong pattern on the landscape. The modern Tennyson Trail follows part of the route of a trackway, of possible prehistoric origin, which ran along the central ridge from Freshwater Bay to Brading.

Evolving throughout history these routes are echoes of the movement of animals, a route to high ground for ceremonial purposes or as a vantage point, and as passage on horse back, horse drawn cart or carriage across the chalk ridge when lower routes were wet and impassable. Traditional build uses local hard chalk, flint and a common scale and design. Slate or thatch roofs (some tile), small windows and large walls and roofs of a simple style are typical.

High areas have been used throughout history as look out points for defence and the safety of seafarers. St Catherine’s Oratory, The Needles Battery and other smaller installations, and beacon sites were used as an early warning against invaders. Few Iron Age hillforts exist, one on Chillerton Down, together with a recently discovered defended site just north of Bembridge Down. The earliest defences at Carisbrooke Castle date from the Anglo-Saxon period, if not earlier, and the medieval castle, with its chalk cut moats, dominates the surrounding landscape.

On the southern downs, St Catherine’s Oratory provided a rather ineffectual lighthouse for medieval mariners and a chain of medieval beacons on the chalk warned of possible invaders. Victorian and later defensive sites on the chalk include the Old and New Needles Batteries at the western end of the Island and Bembridge Fort at the eastern end. History was made at the New Needles site when it was used for testing the Black Knight rocket in the 1950s and 1960s. On the southern downs, Ventnor Radar Station played a vital defensive role in the Second World War.

### Key Characteristics

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<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open and exposed with sparse hedgerows and no mature hedgerow trees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited windswept and scrubby vegetation on higher downs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional grazing with extensive arable cultivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadleaved woodlands predominantly beech and ash on the lower downs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant high chalk cliffs.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Management Aim

To retain the generally open nature and long views to and from the downs and to conserve and enhance their ecological and historic importance.

### LCT2

**Traditional Enclosed Pasture**

This landscape character type occurs most frequently on heavier soil or in wet areas where arable cultivation has remained unviable. Most of this landscape character type is found north of the central and southern chalk downs because of the geology of the Island.

To the north of the central chalk ridge is a landscape of lush green pastures with large hedges, small copses and woodlands that may be characterised as ‘ancient’ countryside. This landscape includes areas such as the pasturelands around the Newtown estuary, Farringford, Calbourne, Combley, Quarr, Nunwell and south east of Osborne.

Field shapes tend to be irregular, reflecting subtle changes in local topography, with some more regular hedgerows reflecting later enclosure. There are many mature oak trees within pasture fields and as hedge trees, giving a sense of permanence to this landscape.

Country lanes, footpaths and bridleways are winding in nature and enclosed by hedges. Some arable cultivation takes place where modern farming equipment has made this possible. Some traditional pasture has been made more intensive to produce silage.
The chalk valley pastures of the Bowcombe Valley have a different character. Grazed by sheep, they have a more open aspect and views to the surrounding chalk downs.

Other areas of this landscape character type are clustered around the foot of the southern chalk downs on the Lower Greensand or on the Upper Greensand slopes that form a part of this downland. Areas of note include Sainham, Appuldurcombe, Wycombe and Gotten.

Copses and woodland in this landscape character type are semi-natural and some may benefit from active coppicing and management to retain their integrity.

Villages south west of the central chalk ridge are either of an open linear pattern or comprise small clusters of historic settlement, usually associated with farms. To the north of the central chalk ridge the settlement pattern is more dispersed. The main traditional building material in the northern part of this area is Bembridge Limestone, with the softer Greensand employed in the southern part.

The historic landscape to the north of the central chalk ridge includes areas such as the failed medieval borough of Newtown and the landscape parks of Westover and Nunwell.

On the Greensand is situated the remains of the Island’s largest Georgian landscape park at Appuldurcombe. The landscape parks of Westover, Nunwell and Appuldurcombe are all on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Reliant on small farms, livestock rearing and woodland management, this landscape is most at threat from changes to the agricultural sector that result from economic pressures.

**Key Characteristics**

- Land mainly used for pasture.
- Well preserved and dense hedgerows with mature hedgerow oak trees in the northern part of the area.
- Irregular small fields.
- Narrow enclosed winding lanes.
- Well wooded, with numerous copses.
- Small scattered farmsteads.
- Settlement patterns mostly linear in nature or small clusters.

**Management Aim**

To ensure the retention of a viable, well farmed landscape as a buffer for urban areas and woodlands, characterised by a mosaic of permanent pasture, well managed hedgerows and copses.
This landscape character type is found in a number of areas within the AONB. The first and most significant is the large, flat lower Greensand arable plain stretching from the south west of Rookley to the Tennyson Heritage Coast between Barnes High and Walpan Chine. A second sizeable area lies to the south of Arreton Down and stretches eastwards to Alverstone. Both of these areas are sub categorised as Intensive Arable Land.

A third area is to the north of the chalk downs at Chessell and running west to Afton along with two areas both sides of the Western Yar Estuary. This area is sub categorised as Central Agricultural Belt. Finally, two small areas occur at Southford near Stenbury Manor, and in the Whitcombe Valley south of Newport.

The land in the Central Agricultural Belt involves farming on heavier soils, with greater prevalence of dairy farming and winter cereal crop production. Farming units tend to be large and associated with evergreen shelter belts. Hedgerows are scarce and, where present, often degraded.

The land in the Intensive Arable Lands exists on the Lower Greensand hills and Greensand plains, the most productive arable land on the Island. This part of the AONB has seen dramatic change due to Dutch Elm Disease. This has resulted in the loss of a former key feature of this landscape and the intensification of agriculture practices since the middle of the last century. The outcome is an open and sparsely populated landscape, with broad sweeping views, where the coastal climate has a strong influence.

This landscape changes with the seasons; the gold and brown of autumn and winter give way to the greens of spring, and the greens, yellows and blues of summer. In this part of the AONB the dynamics of the landscape are most apparent, with the use of farm machinery to turn the soil, irrigation of crops with large water canon, the use of polythene for early potato and maize production and the movement of ears of cereal crops emulating the waves along the Heritage Coast.

Although a long tradition of arable agriculture has removed whatever archaeological earthworks may have formerly existed in this landscape, the light and easily worked soils of the Lower Greensand were attractive to farmers from prehistoric times onwards.

**Key Characteristics**

- Large, open fields.
- Large-scale hedge removal and degraded remaining hedges.
- No hedgerow trees.
- Land use is predominantly rural.
- Large farms and farm buildings.
- Trees restricted to shelter belts.

**Management Aim**

To recognise and retain the open nature of this well farmed zone, but to increase its visual and ecological interest by encouraging hedgerow and watercourse management.

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**LCT4 Southern Coastal Farmland**

This landscape character type largely occurs in one area between Shippards Chine and Barnes High and inland to the villages of Brighstone and Shorwell, with a further small area at Yaverland on the east coast. It has an open and exposed feel, with a gently undulating landform.

The influence of the sea can be seen by the few mature trees, which have been bent over by the salt laden winds, and the dramatic cliff falls along the seaward edge of fields. Travelling westwards along the Military Road, there is a gradual change from arable to pastoral land use. Most fields have a regular shape, with low hedges and few trees. The existence of Chines along the coastline adds drama to an otherwise largely gentle landscape.

The continuing coastal erosion process often exposes fossil remains in the soft geology of the cliffs. Archaeological finds are also frequently uncovered by coastal erosion in this area and along the whole of
the AONB coastline. The Chines and eroding cliffs provide important habitats for rare species such as the Glanville fritillary butterfly. Willow scrub occurs in areas of wet pasture and adjacent to drainage channels such as at Sud Moor.

Ancient tracks and paths have created a dense network of public rights of way running from settlements to the coast and Chines. Settlement tends to exist in the form of small hamlets associated with formal communal grazing areas now known as greens (Marsh Green and Brook Green).

**Key Characteristics**
- Large regular gently undulating fields.
- Low hedgerows with few hedgerow trees.
- A transition from arable in the east to pastoral in the west.
- Valleys, old drainage channels and Chines cross the arable landscape and are associated with willow scrub and unimproved pasture.
- Eroding coastline of key geological and archaeological interest.

**Management Aim**
Seek to diversify habitats while maintaining the dominant mixed agricultural use. To allow natural coastal processes to occur unhindered.

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**LCT5**

**Sandstone Hills and Gravel Ridges**

This landscape character type appears primarily in small land parcels south of the central chalk ridge. The largest area is to the west of Arreton at St Georges Down, with further small ridges in the area of Knighton, Southdown at Pyle near Chale, south of Chillerton and in a long band west of Shorwell to Brook.

The high Greensand hills (Sandstone Hills), in general support pasture except on steeper slopes. These slopes are often planted with mixed forestry and occur immediately to the south of the central chalk ridge.

From prehistoric times until the twentieth century there was some heathland in this area, as at Mottistone Common. The Neolithic ‘Longstone’, a burial mound with a stone marking the former entrance, is situated here. Conifers were planted on Mottistone Common before the Second World War. However, much of the forestry plantation has now been cleared and heathland is being re-established.

Gravel ridges and terraces are often wooded or support gorse and bracken communities. Occurring as high ground in the south of the Island, they are in stark contrast to adjacent flat and fertile agricultural land.

Sunken lanes or shutes are a feature of this landscape, often on the slopes facing on to the chalk downs. These historic track ways support ancient woodland flora and give an intimate and secretive ambience.

Settlement, where present, tends to nestle in the steep sided valleys that offer shelter and access to the natural springs that filter through from the chalk aquifer.

The geological resource of this landscape character type has led to pressure for quarrying for sand and gravel extraction. This needs to be managed carefully as it can have a major impact on the visual quality of the landscape.

**Key Characteristics**
- Some traditional pasture, steep slopes planted to mixed forestry.
- Lower gravel terraces support gorse and bracken.
- Sunken lanes support ancient woodland flora.
- Traditional sheltered settlement in the valleys.

**Management Aims**
To encourage sympathetic management to ensure that the very visible, often steeply sloped areas, rich in flora are retained.

Where practical, restore former heathland and encourage management of areas that are neglected at present.

To consider carefully the visual impact of any proposals to extend quarrying activity.

To retain the character of the rural road and rights of way network.
LCT6
Northern Woodland

Occurring on the heavier soils in the north of the Island where agricultural use has been unviable, these large areas of plantation and mixed woodland are a dominant feature in the landscape. Bouldnor, Combley and Firestone Copse are managed by Forest Enterprise, with smaller areas of copse and other ancient woodland in private ownership.

In medieval times much of the Island's woodland was concentrated to the north of the central chalk ridge. Most of the Island's non-plantation woodland is still in this area. Combley Great Wood was owned and managed by Quarr Abbey in medieval times and is partly surrounded by a historic enclosure bank.

Some woodland has public access provision and is an important amenity for leisure pursuits for the local community. Active woodland management, including clearance and coppicing, is required to secure the integrity of this landscape character area.

Key Characteristics

Large woodland blocks of conifers and broadleaved species form a dominant feature in the landscape.

Small enclosed fields.

Management Aim

To retain, conserve and where possible extend woodlands and maintain the broadleaved woodland characteristics of much of the north of the Island. Conservation will require improved woodland management and public access.

To seek to develop the skills and markets for woodland products that would benefit woodland management and public access.

LCT7
Landscape Improvement Zone

This landscape character type describes parts of the AONB that have changed as a result of sporadic and urbanising development over time. Usually found at the edge of larger development, these areas blur the boundary between urban and rural. They include areas of former agricultural land that have been changed by the addition of horse paddocks and stabling; intensive horticulture; poultry and pig farming; waste disposal sites; extensive residential, industrial or retail development; holiday camps, mobile homes, caravan and campsites.

This results in an increasingly chaotic character, with a decline in the quality of management of hedgerows, woodland and agricultural landscapes.

Areas included in this landscape type are Lower Woodside Wootton, Cranmore, Pilgrims Park Thorness, Forelands, Wilmingham, Afton, Rookley, and Alverstone.

Mitigation and enhancement measures should be sought whenever there is a proposal for development in these areas. These areas are also likely to be subject to increasing development pressures. The formulation of design or supplementary planning guidance on issues of concern may help to guide change that will restore the landscape and enhance the AONB.

Early review using the new landscape character assessment guidance will help to identify ways to enhance these areas.

Key Characteristics

Traditional agricultural landscape changed and often degraded by urbanising development.

Overall visual chaos and neglect of agricultural landscape in a town edge setting.

Degraded hedgerows and unmanaged woodland.

General feeling of neglect and blur in the setting and edge of settlements.
Management Aim
To prevent the expansion of urban influence, to retain and interpret sites of ecological interest and to seek landscape improvements by focusing resources into this landscape.

LCT8
Harbours and Creeks

This landscape character type covers those estuarine environments on the Island that are within the AONB boundary, namely Wootton Creek, Kings Quay, Newtown, and the Western Yar. All have common features such as mudflats, shingle, salt marsh, reed beds, an open aspect, and fringing oak woodlands. However, each has its own distinct form and features.

Of these, the Western Yar is the largest and is subject to a number of pressures. As one of the ferry terminals linking the Island with the mainland, the Yar is a busy harbour. It is also valued as a place for quiet leisure activities, such as cycling, walking and sailing. Of high importance for nature conservation, it supports a number of important plant species (Norton Spit) and is a resource for over wintering migratory birds. Designated as an SSSI, the area needs careful and considered management. The Western Yar Estuary Management Plan seeks to fulfil this function.

Newtown estuary has great historic, cultural and nature conservation value. The only National Nature Reserve on the Isle of Wight, it is primarily within the ownership and protection of the National Trust. It has a timeless, tranquil and secluded atmosphere, with a quality of light similar to the flat lands of East Anglia. Along with Kings Quay these two parts of this landscape character type represent the finest unaltered inlets on the Island.

At Wootton Creek, the upper part of the estuary south of Wootton Bridge is within the boundary of the AONB. It is quiet, rural and surrounded by oak woodlands.

From prehistoric times these harbours and creeks have been important for trade and transport. It is no coincidence that the Island’s medieval towns are all set beside harbours and creeks, even though Yarmouth struggled and Newtown failed to become viable.

In and around Wootton Creek and along the coastline from Wootton to Ryde a major archaeological project has found evidence of trade and subsistence activities dating back to Neolithic times. The Wootton-Quarr Project demonstrated the wealth of fragile remains that exist along this stretch of coastline, and that are under threat from erosion. The project also highlighted the enormous potential to increase our understanding of the past environment and landscape change. Other parts of the AONB coastline may prove to have equal potential.

Key Characteristics
Flat exposed tidal mudflats, shingle banks and grazing marshes.
Open aspect.
Peripheral; enclosure created by surrounding oak woodlands.

Management Aim
To retain the quiet solitude of harbours and creeks.
To conserve intertidal habitats and to record archaeological material.
The Undercliff is an area of landscape character that is unique to the Isle of Wight AONB. This is the largest inhabited rotational landslip in western Europe. It is of major geological, ecological and archaeological importance. There is the added pressure of the need to maintain and protect property, business and transport infrastructure in the area.

Running from Blackgang Chine in the west to Luccombe in the east, the Undercliff sits below the southern chalk downs. The landform is the result of coastal erosion processes and landslips caused by groundwater lubrication of slip planes within the Gault Clays and Sandrock Beds. Its picturesque beauty was appreciated from the late eighteenth century, when the earliest cottages ornées were built. Several more such cottages and marine villas were built in the early nineteenth century.

Valued by artists in the early nineteenth century for its picturesque and sublime natural beauty, the Undercliff quickly became the subject of study as part of wider Victorian interest in geological development and processes. Latterly the Undercliff has been appreciated for its temperate microclimate afforded by the shelter of the inland cliff and its southern aspect. This led to the construction of more residences for the well-to-do and the formation of a ‘gardenesque’ resort in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with associated walled gardens and exotic plant species.

The modern Ventnor Botanic Garden, featuring significant plant collections, has been developed in the grounds of a Victorian hospital for the treatment of tuberculosis. The Undercliff retains all of the elements admired and created over the last two centuries, offering a varied landscape of natural elements and man made additions.

Although areas of the inland cliff remain visible there has been a gradual increase in secondary woodland particularly with Holm oak and sycamore, leading to a more enclosed and secretive ambience. The Undercliff Drive, an important through route for local traffic and tourism in the area, continues to be subject to pressure from land movement. Long-term maintenance of vehicle access needs to balance social, economic and environmental considerations if it is to be sustainable. This is also the case for maintenance of and changes to existing or proposed coastal protection schemes.

On-going natural coastal processes are of great ecological importance because the gradual re-establishment of plant species and specialist micro habitats caused by continued land slides is essential for many plant and animal species. This is reflected in the cSAC designation of this area as of great European importance.

### Key Characteristics

- Dramatic inland vertical cliffs.
- Slumped grasslands.
- Coastal pasture.
- Exotic ornamental planting.
- Nineteenth century villas and modern suburban housing with landscaped gardens.
- Unmanaged natural woodland regeneration.

### Management Aims

To maintain open slumping habitat.

To enhance the special atmosphere and architectural character of the area.
LCT10
Osborne Coast

This landscape character type is a distinct part of the coast and hinterland to the north and east of East Cowes. A planned landscape of the nineteenth century, it was largely the concept of Prince Albert, Queen Victoria’s beloved Prince Consort. Designed as a very private area screened from the town, the house and terrace afford vistas of the landscaped grounds and Solent beyond. Lying mostly within the extensive grounds of the former Royal estate of Osborne House, this landscape is characterised by rich ornamental and exotic planting, distinctive architecture in comparison to the surrounding traditional enclosed pasture agricultural land, and a wooded shoreline.

Now in the care of English Heritage, Osborne House and its grounds are being restored to their former glory. Major works have been undertaken in the gardens, and on the external fabric of the building. One of the most visited sites under the care of English Heritage, Osborne House is an important cultural and tourism resource for the Isle of Wight. The grounds are included on English Heritage’s Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The private landscape grounds of Norris Castle are also included on the Register and fall within this landscape character type.

Unusually this is the only landscape within the AONB that has no legal informal public access, with no public rights of way recorded in the area. The return to private ownership of Barton Manor Estate immediately adjacent to Osborne has further restricted opportunities for quiet informal recreation in the area.

Key Characteristics
- Exotic ornamental planting set within more naturalistic parkland.
- Victorian villa architecture.
- Very limited informal public access, the exception being the seasonal opening of Osborne House.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland.
- Wooded coastline.

Management Aims
To continue restoration of the landscape of the estate as conceived by Prince Albert, and to encourage access and interpretation.

LCT11
Northern Coastal Cliffs

A small but important landscape character type occurring along the north-west coast of the Island from Gurnard through to Alum Bay. Consists of low slumped and sloping broken cliffs of clay and gravel that were formed as a result of the effects of the action of the sea on the underlying geology. The main characteristics of this area are rough cliff edges, scrub growth, hollows in the landform and a lack of development because of the instability of the land.

Bordered by agricultural land in the east at Thorness and Gurnard and plantation forestry in the west at Bouldnor near Yarmouth, some opportunities for access are afforded by the Coastal Path and connecting footpaths running inland. Coastal access is always under pressure from erosion because of the need to realign the route.

The majority of this coastline is also designated as Heritage Coast (Hamstead), reflecting its largely unspoilt character, importance for nature conservation, geology and as an area for quiet enjoyment.

Key Characteristics
- Characteristically low sloping broken unstable cliffs.
- Limited permanent development and public access.

Management Aims
To restrict development but, where safe, to allow or extend public access to rugged slopes of scrub and heathland.
Biodiversity Action Plan

The Island should be a place where plants, animals and habitats are conserved and enhanced, both for their own sake and as an integral part of our quality of life.

The principal aim of the Isle of Wight LBAP partnership, in line with national guidance, is to maintain, restore and, where feasible, re-create the nationally and locally important priority habitats we possess and the species which depend upon them.

We will go about this by the objectives listed below:

- By 2015, we aim to maintain around 650 ha of chalk grassland; restore 85% of currently degraded chalk grassland; and re-create chalk grassland from arable and species-poor grassland on chalk.

- By 2015, we aim to protect all ancient woodland (around 1570 ha) and to manage and restore 85% of this resource. We also aim to restore unmanaged or inappropriately managed semi-natural broad-leaved woodland and re-create semi-natural broad-leaved woodland from arable and species-poor grassland.

- By 2015, we aim to maintain around 220 ha of unimproved flower-rich meadows, restore 85% of currently degraded meadows and re-create flower-rich meadows from arable and species-poor grassland.

- By 2015, we aim to maintain around 190 ha of acid grassland / heathland mosaic, restore 85% of currently degraded acid grassland / heathland mosaic and re-create acid grassland / heathland mosaic from suitable waste mineral sites.

- By 2015, we aim to maintain around 50 km of free-functioning maritime cliffs and slopes and restore 1 km of currently constrained maritime cliffs and slopes.

- By 2015, we aim to maintain around 1050 ha of estuarine habitats (mudflats, saltmarsh, sand-dune, vegetated shingle and saline lagoons) and, where possible, re-create estuarine habitats by coastal re-alignment.

- We aim to maintain and restore our existing rivers and wetland habitats and re-instate additional wetland habitats from suitable flood-plain land. We are currently working on quantifying our targets.

- We also have other important inter-tidal and sub-tidal habitats. We need to ensure their long-term well-being and survival against the background of sea level rise, but at this stage we have not set ourselves targets for achieving these aims.

- Through the BAP Partnership, we will monitor our progress in achieving these aims and report annually on success and failures.

Natural Area Profile Series

In the late 1990's English Nature provided a comprehensive overview of the importance of the Isle of Wight for wildlife in its Natural Area Profile Series.

Isle of Wight Natural Area Profile no. 76 (consistent with the National Character Area boundaries no. 76)

Characteristics

Lowland calcareous grassland, mostly chalk grasslands.

Some dry neutral grasslands on northern plain.

Fragments of well developed lowland heathland.

Coastal and floodplain grazing marshes in river valleys.

Vegetated sea cliffs.

Issues

Pressure for agricultural intensification.

Opportunities for habitat creation.

Lack of appropriate management.

Coastal development and protection works.

Objectives

Avoid further intensification of agriculture.

Encourage traditional low intensity agriculture.

Promote agri-environment schemes where changes in farming practice will benefit wildlife.

Create or restore grassland and heaths especially where this extends existing habitat or links fragments.

Create wetlands by increasing groundwater levels and/or restoring appropriate flooding regimes on floodplains.

Promote appropriate management through extensive low intensity grazing and control of scrub invasion on grasslands and heaths.

Priority Biodiversity Action Plan habitats in **bold italics**

Bluebells, Alverstone

© Natural England - Photographer Joe Low

Spotted orchid

© IW AONB Unit - Photographer John Brownscombe
Solent & Poole Bay Natural Area Profile no. 109

Characteristics

Extensive stretches of cliffs, especially chalk cliffs and soft cliffs of sand and clay.

Small number of sand dune sites.

Several shingle beaches and spits, including vegetated shingle.

Numerous saline lagoons around the Solent and the Isle of Wight.

Large areas of saltmarsh in large, shallow enclosed estuaries and embayments of the Solent.

Large areas of intertidal mudflats in estuaries and embayments.

Intertidal and subtidal rocky reefs on the Isle of Wight, including chalk reefs.

Issues

Sea level rise / climate change.

Maintenance of coastal processes (see also Landscape and Earth Heritage).

Water quality.

Fisheries.

Recreation and tourism.

Objectives

Plan for continued coastal erosion and sea level rise by having a sustainable sea defence strategy; preventing development on areas subject to coastal erosion or flooding; and creating where lost suitable maritime habitats to landward.

Allow natural and dynamic coastal processes to operate by avoiding development that interferes with natural sedimentation and erosion; minimising dredging; and mitigating harmful impacts of necessary dredging.

Maintain and restore high water quality by reducing inputs of untreated sewage effluents; and reducing contamination due to industrial discharges and agricultural run off.

Ensure that exploitation of marine wildlife resources is sustainable.

Avoid detrimental impacts on key wildlife features by promoting recreation and tourism that is environmentally sensitive and by avoiding development of tourism infrastructure that would demand unsustainable sea defence.

Priority Biodiversity Action Plan habitats in bold italics
### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AONB</td>
<td>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAP</td>
<td>Biodiversity Action Plan</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Countryside Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Common Agricultural Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Countryside Commission (now Countryside Agency)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO₂</td>
<td>Carbon Dioxide</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRE</td>
<td>Campaign for the Protection of Rural England</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRoW</td>
<td>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cSAC</td>
<td>Candidate Special Area of Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark skies</td>
<td>Dark Skies is the term used to describe areas with low light pollution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEFRA</td>
<td>Department of Food and Rural Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eco Island</td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy</td>
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<td>EN</td>
<td>English Nature</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERDP</td>
<td>England Rural Development Plan</td>
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<td>FC</td>
<td>Forestry Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographical Information System</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOSE</td>
<td>Government Office of the South East</td>
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<tr>
<td>GWh</td>
<td>Giga Watt Hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>ha</td>
<td>Hectare</td>
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<tr>
<td>HAP</td>
<td>Habitat Action Plan</td>
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<td>HEAP</td>
<td>Historic Environment Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>HER</td>
<td>Historic Environment Record</td>
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<td>HLC</td>
<td>Historic Landscape Character</td>
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<tr>
<td>HLF</td>
<td>Heritage Lottery Fund</td>
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<td>HMSO</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Stationery Office</td>
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<td>HRA</td>
<td>Habitats Regulation Assessment</td>
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<td>I2K</td>
<td>Island 2000 Trust</td>
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<td>ISP</td>
<td>Island Strategic Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>IUCN</td>
<td>International Union for Conservation of Nature</td>
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<td>IW</td>
<td>Isle of Wight</td>
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<td>IWC</td>
<td>Isle of Wight Council</td>
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<td>IWCAHE</td>
<td>Isle of Wight Council Archaeology &amp; Historic Environment Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAC</td>
<td>Joint Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>JIGSAW</td>
<td>Joining and Increasing Grant Scheme for Ancient Woodland</td>
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<td>LA21</td>
<td>Local Agenda 21</td>
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<td>LBAP</td>
<td>Local Biodiversity Action Plan</td>
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<td>LCA</td>
<td>Landscape Character Area</td>
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<td>LCT</td>
<td>Landscape Character Type</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>Local Development Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leader +</td>
<td>A grant funding stream to boost the local rural economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>LNR</td>
<td>Local Nature Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTP</td>
<td>Local Transport Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSE</td>
<td>Likely Significant effect</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAAONB</td>
<td>National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td>
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<tr>
<td>NERC</td>
<td>Natural Environment Research Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>NNR</td>
<td>National Nature Reserve</td>
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<td>NPA</td>
<td>National Park Authority</td>
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<td>PFI</td>
<td>Private Finance Initiative</td>
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<td>PPG</td>
<td>Planning Policy Guidance</td>
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<td>PPS 22</td>
<td>Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy</td>
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<td>PPS 7</td>
<td>Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramsar</td>
<td>Wetland Sites protected under the Ramsar Convention</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIGS</td>
<td>Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites</td>
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<td>SAC</td>
<td>Special Area of Conservation</td>
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<td>SAMS</td>
<td>Scheduled Ancient Monuments</td>
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<td>SAP</td>
<td>Species Action Plan</td>
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<td>SE</td>
<td>South East</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Strategic Environmental Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEEDA</td>
<td>South East England Development Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEERA</td>
<td>South East England Regional Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>SINC</td>
<td>Site of Importance for Nature Conservation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Small to Medium Sized Enterprises</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMR</td>
<td>Sites and Monuments Record</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>Special Protection Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>Unitary Development Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>UKCIP</td>
<td>United Kingdom Climate Impact Programme</td>
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