

## **South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Consultation Draft Management Plan 2019-2024**

**Our vision is of an inspirational landscape that is valued, recognised and treasured forever for its nationally important natural beauty and distinctive character.**

The South Devon AONB is one of Britain's finest protected landscapes - loved for its rugged cliffs, sandy coves, peaceful countryside, picturesque villages, rolling hills, colourful hedge banks, and secretive estuaries. It is an ancient countryside with strong links to the sea and generations of human activity etched into the landscape. The AONB is a thriving and dynamic work place, a centre for active and creative community life and a popular visitor destination.

This Management Plan seeks to ensure that the area is conserved, managed and enhanced to support and benefit present and future generations. It also serves the purpose of a plan for the South Devon Heritage Coast, which is fully embraced within the AONB and, as a result, shares many of its special qualities.

## **Ministerial Foreword**

photo, signature and Defra logo to be included here

**Orientation Map** To be inserted here and including the South Devon Heritage Coast boundary and other minor amendments

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## **Contents** TBC

## **The South Devon AONB Management Plan**

This document, annexes and delivery plan respond to current pressures and opportunities in the South Devon AONB and its setting. They provide detail on strategy, policy, special qualities and the actions of others who influence or make decisions affecting the area.

The plan essentially relates to the AONB landscape and designation. It is of relevance to local authorities, local communities, businesses, landowners and farmers, organisations and groups working within, or with an interest in, the area. Use of the Plan offers a transparent means by which Government, statutory undertakers and any public body or person holding public office can ensure they are fulfilling their Section 85 'duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty' of the South Devon AONB.

The AONB Partnership Committee is committed to the delivery of this strategic plan and will work with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that the outstanding natural beauty of South Devon is conserved and enhanced for future generations. Implementing the plan is beyond the resources or remit of any single agency and will require the continued support and involvement of many organisations and partners. This plan formulates local authority policy and action in relation to the management of the South Devon AONB as required under Part IV, Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

The plan is grouped into 3 sections:

- **Place**
- **People and prosperity**
- **Communication and management**

14 themes cover the issues relevant to the whole South Devon AONB area and its setting.

The plan objectives are what we want to achieve for the AONB and its communities. The plan policies are the AONB Partnership Committee's position and approach to issues, providing a framework to guide projects and actions. The policies respond to forces for change and key policy influences, guiding partners and stakeholders towards sustainable development whilst conserving and protecting natural beauty and special qualities. How we will achieve this is detailed in the annual delivery plan.

### **The AONB Partnership Committee**

The Partnership Committee provides a strategic lead in the protection, conservation and enhancement of the South Devon AONB and consists of 18 representatives:

- Local authorities: Devon County Council, South Hams District Council, Torbay Council, Plymouth City Council
- Agencies: Natural England, Environment Agency, Historic England
- Organisations: The National Trust, Field Studies Council, Plymouth University
- Community representatives: landowning or farming community, the business community, parish councils, community or voluntary organisations, professional environmental NGOs, the tourism sector, amenity groups and an estuary and marine representative.

The AONB Unit is committed to providing value for money in delivering an efficient and effective service. It aims to be transparent and responsive to key policy influences, partners and communities whilst being open minded and embracing change.

### **Management plan purpose**

AONB Management Plans are formulated to coordinate policy, investment and action in these nationally important landscapes in order to achieve the legal purpose of 'conserving and enhancing natural beauty' for the benefit of current, and future generations. Natural England is responsible for advising on AONB designation and its 1991 policy statement confirms 'this duty should not be implemented in isolation. Socio-economic needs and recreation are to be taken into account in furthering this primary aim in an integrated approach to the management of an AONB'.

### **Plan requirement and 'duty of regard'**

Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000<sup>1</sup> consolidates earlier legislation regarding the designation and purposes of AONBs. It also adds some important provisions that require 'relevant authorities' (public bodies etc) to 'have regard' to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB<sup>2</sup>. This Plan fulfils the statutory requirement that relevant local authorities prepare and publish an AONB Management Plan and review it in not less than five-year intervals.

Statutory duties in relation to AONBs are provided for in Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Specifically, they state that, 'in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in these areas, relevant authorities 'shall have regard' to their purposes'. The AONB Management Plan is a mechanism for public bodies to support AONB purposes and demonstrate 'duty of regard' compliance.

<sup>1</sup> HMSO (2000)

<sup>2</sup> Section 114 of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act stated, "References in this Act to the preservation, or conservation of the natural beauty of an area shall be construed as including references to the preservation or, as the case may be, the conservation of its flora, fauna and geological or physiological features." Also, Section 99 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 clarified Natural beauty in the countryside as follows: The fact that an area in England or Wales consists of or includes— (a)land used for agriculture or woodlands, (b)land used as a park, or (c)any other area whose flora, fauna or physiological features are partly the product of human intervention in the landscape, does not prevent it from being treated, for the purposes of any enactment (whenever passed), as being an area of natural beauty (or of outstanding natural beauty).

## **National and regional context**

### **National**

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, our finest landscapes have been conserved through designation as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. AONBs were brought into being by the same legislation as National Parks – the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949.

### **Regional**

The richness and diversity of the South West environment differentiates it from other English regions, making it attractive as a place both to live and work. It is a rural region with some 80% of the land in agricultural use and higher than average numbers of people engaged in agricultural employment. Approximately 38% of the region is classified by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as Category V Protected Landscapes. A protected area is defined by the IUCN as "A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values".

The protected landscapes in the South West include:

- 12 AONBs and parts of 2 others cover around 30% of the region
- 638 km of defined Heritage Coast
- 60% of England's undeveloped coastline
- 2 National Parks
- The South West Coast Path National Trail
- 4 World Heritage Sites
- 2 Community Forests
- 1 Biosphere reserve and a Global Geopark

Devon's natural and historic environment is particularly notable for its high quality. Over 50% of the county is designated for its environmental quality, encompassing 5 AONBs.

### **Policy framework**

The AONB Management Plan has been reviewed and updated to take account of current policy and strategies ranging from European and national scale down to local development plans and local authority corporate strategies. Some of the most significant of these include:

- A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (DEFRA, 2018)
- Natural England Framework Document (2017)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009
- Biodiversity 2020 (DEFRA, 2011)
- The National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, 2018)
- Water Framework Directive (EU, 2000)
- European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000)
- Government Forestry Policy Statement (DEFRA, 2013)

## **Partnerships**

The AONB will require the continued support and involvement of many other organisations and partnerships. In addition to the AONB Partnership Committee, a few other significant local partnerships are critical to its future including:

### **Local Nature Partnerships**

Established in 2012, Natural Devon has been working to ensure that a healthy natural environment underpins a high quality of life across Devon, with a strong green economy and healthy communities.

### **Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership**

The Local Enterprise Partnership for Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay is a powerful economic alliance with the primary objective to improve economic growth and create jobs. The South West Rural Productivity Commission report (2017) is of particular relevance.

## **Strategic Planning and Development Management**

Strategic planning and decision-making on development applications within or affecting the South Devon AONB are undertaken by the local planning authorities - South Hams District Council, Torbay Council, Plymouth City Council, Devon County Council and the Marine Management Organisation.

The AONB Management Plan is a material consideration in plan-making and development management processes. It also provides further detail in support of planning policies specific to the South Devon AONB. See the Planning Guidance document (Annex 2).

## **What makes South Devon special**

The high level, over-arching term **Natural Beauty** includes landscape and scenic quality, relative wildness and tranquillity, natural heritage features and cultural heritage, that come together to make an area distinctive.

Special Qualities distil the key attributes that make the area special and worthy of designation as an AONB. Distinctive Characteristics are those components that define what it is that gives South Devon its sense of place and generally apply to areas smaller than the AONB as a whole. Key Features are specific and include detailed locations, places, landmarks, occurrences, events etc. that are of particular significance to South Devon and help illustrate how or where the special qualities, distinctive characteristics and natural beauty can be seen.

Each component of natural beauty identifies what is special about the landscape and should be afforded 'great weight' in planning decisions. The Plan, its policies and special qualities set criteria against which policy and actions can be assessed for compliance with Section 85 of the CROW Act 2000.

Ten special qualities define the unique "natural beauty" for which the South Devon AONB is designated as a nationally important protected landscape.

- Fine, undeveloped, wild and rugged coastline.
- Ria estuaries (drowned river valleys), steep combes and a network of associated watercourses.
- Deeply rural rolling patchwork agricultural landscape.
- Deeply incised landscape that is intimate, hidden and secretive away from the plateau tops.
- Iconic wide, unspoilt and expansive panoramic views.
- A landscape with a rich time depth and a wealth of historic features and cultural associations.
- A breadth and depth of significant habitats, species and associated natural events.
- An ancient and intricate network of winding lanes, paths and recreational routes.
- Areas of high tranquillity, natural nightscapes, distinctive natural soundscapes and visible movement.
- A variety in the setting to the AONB formed by the marine environment, Plymouth City, market and coastal towns, rural South Hams and southern Dartmoor.

## **South Devon Heritage Coast**

### **This AONB Management Plan serves as a Management Plan for the South Devon Heritage Coast**

Heritage Coasts are the finest stretches of undeveloped coastline in England and Wales. Their natural beauty and their enjoyment by the public give them a special claim for both protection and sensitive management. Since 1973, 45 stretches have been defined, covering more than one-third of the coastline of England and Wales (1,525km in total, with 1,027km in England).

The South Devon AONB incorporates the South Devon Heritage Coast, forming 77% of the AONB's coastline. This non-statutory designation was defined by the Countryside Commission in 1984: it covers the 75 kilometres (49 miles) of coastline between Wembury Beach in the west of the area and Sharkham Point in the east. The Heritage Coast boundary extends 2km out to sea. Around the Yealm and Erme estuaries the boundary reaches over 5km inland, whilst in other areas the boundary is just 300m inland.

The inshore waters and wider marine component of the designation is considered as one of the special qualities that define the unique “natural beauty” for which the South Devon AONB is designated as a nationally important protected landscape.

Heritage Coasts are given explicit mention in paragraph 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework: ‘Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 172), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.’ and the closely related footnote 55 ‘For the purposes of paragraphs 172 and 173, whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.’

### **Forces for change and key policy influences**

AONBs and their communities are dynamic and subject to constantly changing impacts and factors. Most forces for change are out of the control of the AONB partnership and are only broadly considered as part of this review. The Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan, published in March 2018, states that AONBs comprise some of our most unique, cherished and valuable natural assets, and that Government will make sure that they continue to be conserved and enhanced. However, AONBs are facing unprecedented and unsustainable pressure from development, which threatens to erode the character, special qualities, and purpose of designation of AONBs.

The large scale, long term shift in weather patterns and global temperatures is creating a far reaching change to landscape and the way people live and work. We are already experiencing more extreme weather events and noticing changes in recreation and tourism patterns whilst the natural world is suffering from more plant diseases, invasive species and habitat fragmentation.

Economic development and the market forces that surround the way we live, work and spend our time are creating tangible and hidden changes that are being felt in both the short and long term. The decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union has significant implications for how our land-based sectors are funded, with the emphasis shifting from paying farmers to farm to paying landowners to deliver ‘public goods’. This could result in major changes to the way land is managed in the AONB, potentially threatening vital family farms and traditional agricultural practices but also creating opportunities to enhance the landscape and habitats and the ability of people to appreciate it.

The Management Plan aims to help guide these changes in a way that conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB using updated objectives and policies.



## **Aims, objectives and policies**

This plan is a cross cutting strategy containing policies that relate to the statutory purpose of the AONB designation 'to conserve and enhance natural beauty' whilst recognising that the natural world underpins our prosperity and wellbeing. The policies can be used to guide environmental land management and assess the impact of development or other changes on the AONB. Where the ambition is to achieve net environmental gain, or assess potential harm, the Plan provides a framework for identifying actions that may enhance or damage the AONBs natural and cultural assets.

### **Place: To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.**

**Theme 1: Landscape Character** fundamentally links with landscape management practices and policy; what makes and maintains its character, heritage and local distinctiveness.

The landscape is changing under a host of social, economic and environmental pressures. Activities such as land use, planning and the changing climate, all have an influence on the character and condition of the landscape.

The cumulative impact of small scale changes is being felt at a landscape scale across the South Devon AONB. Approaches to change that respect distinctive local character are increasingly needed to avoid further damaging cumulative impacts. It is likely that levels of tranquillity, particularly around the urban fringes of the AONB are being reduced due to the pressures of development and growth in car usage.

Natural cyclical processes such as the shifting channels in our estuaries will give rise to future changes and the impact of our changing climate will over the period of the plan may give rise to changes in the character of the landscape.

**Key policy objective:** Improved coordination and influence in the management of landscape features to ensure they are maintained, enhanced, understood and appreciated.

#### **Lan/P1** Character

The special qualities, distinctive character and key features of the South Devon AONB landscape and South Devon Heritage Coast will be conserved and enhanced.

#### **Lan/P2** Technical assessments

The use of Landscape and Seascape Character Assessments and Historic Landscape and Seascape Characterisation will be advocated so that land use and marine planning and management decisions respect, maintain and where possible enhance the special qualities of the South Devon AONB.

### **Lan/P3** Landscape condition

Opportunities will be sought to strengthen landscape character by improving the condition of existing landscape features in poor condition and reinstating landscape features identified as missing or fragmented.

### **Lan/P4** Tranquillity

Levels of tranquillity throughout the South Devon AONB will be maintained and, where practicable enhanced, in order to ensure this special quality is not further devalued.

### **Lan/P5** Skylines & visual intrusion

The character of skylines and open views into, within and out of the South Devon AONB will be protected. Suitable alternatives to infrastructure responsible for visual intrusion will be promoted together with improvements to reduce the visual impact of unsightly past development. Priorities include protection against intrusive energy generation, transmission and communications infrastructure; external lighting that creates night time scenic intrusion; and visually dominating buildings that are inconsistent with landscape character.

### **Lan/P6** Seascape

The open undeveloped seascape seen from the coast forms a defining setting for the South Devon AONB: the long uninterrupted views, wild character and natural horizons will be protected and sustained.

### **Lan/P7** Setting to the AONB

The deeply rural character of much of the land adjoining the AONB boundary forms an essential setting for the AONB and care will be taken to maintain its quality and character.

**Theme 2: Natural resources & climate** relates to the natural capital of the AONB. The Partnership has a key role in the management of land and water but also covers the issue of air quality and climate change.

*Natural capital is the sum of our ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, soils, minerals, our air and our seas. These are all elements of nature that either directly or indirectly bring value to people and the country at large. They do this in many ways but chiefly by providing us with food, clean air and water, wildlife, energy, wood, recreation and protection from hazards.*

Climate change is having an impact on the AONBs special qualities and key features, especially shoreline and intertidal habitats. Increased extreme weather events, localised flooding, coastal erosion, sea level rise, bypasses of waste water treatment works, soil loss, low river

flows and damage to habitats and species from pests and diseases. Difficult harvesting conditions and weather damage to cereal crops is affecting the local farming community.

Development in water catchments is increasing nutrient loadings, storm water runoff rates, siltation and pollution incidents. Diffuse agricultural pollution and nutrient enrichment, algal blooms, endocrine disruptors, antibiotics, medicine by-products and local pollution from boating activities are all affecting our waters and threaten the viability of commercial shellfisheries.

**Key policy objective:** The sustainable management of the natural capital of the AONB.

**NatRes/P1** Natural capital.

A landscape scale natural capital approach will be taken where practicable to sustainably use and manage primary resources in the AONB.

**NatRes/P2** Water quality

The highest standards of water quality will be secured throughout the South Devon AONB. The effective integration of land, freshwater and estuary management will be sought at a river catchment scale, to address sustainable soil, waste and nutrient management, point source and diffuse pollution, and the abstraction, supply and use of water.

**NatRes/P3** Pollution

Effective contingency planning will be maintained to guide emergency responses to pollution incidents affecting land, sea and air.

**NatRes/P4** Climate change

Communities will be assisted to develop resilience in adapting to climate change whilst ensuring that the special qualities of the South Devon AONB are conserved and enhanced working with physical processes where practicable.

**NatRes/P5** Waste

Domestic and commercial waste reduction, management and recycling initiatives will be supported and promoted, where they conserve natural resources and enhance landscape character.

**NatRes/P6** Energy

Initiatives will be supported that increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable heat and power sources particularly from local woodfuel supply chains, where these initiatives conserve and enhance the special qualities of the South Devon AONB and promote the principal of good environmental stewardship of resources.

**NatRes/P7** Flooding & erosion

Approaches to flood risk management and erosion control which work with natural processes, conserve the natural environment and improve biodiversity will be advocated and supported.

### **Theme 3: Biodiversity & geodiversity** relates to the wildlife, habitat and geological assets of the AONB.

Some agricultural practices are thought to be contributing to a continuing gradual decline of many formerly common wildlife species and their habitats. The medium sized mixed farms traditional in South Devon are well suited to supporting diverse wildlife, but the future for these enterprises is uncertain. On the coastal and inland plateaux much of the agricultural land is highly productive and under competing pressures. Conversely, under-management of non-farmed areas and a reduction in overall livestock numbers are causing the gradual decline of some grassland, scrub and coastal habitats.

The fragmentation of habitats has reduced the ability of less mobile species to move successfully, leading to isolation and loss. The extent, condition and integrity of the network of 'local sites' that generally receive lower levels of protection, resources and attention continue to be of concern. The large number of sites, associated costs of re-survey and limited strategic support all present difficulties. As our current "climate space" moves northwards, habitats and species will be significantly affected. Invasive non-native species continue to expand and alter the balance of natural biodiversity throughout all of the habitats in the AONB.

**Key policy objective:** The biodiversity and geological assets of the AONB are conserved and enhanced as part of a bigger, better and more connected landscape.

#### **BioGeo/P1** Designated sites

Designated sites of international, national and local importance for biodiversity and geodiversity will be protected, be managed effectively to achieve their conservation objectives, and be better linked to the wider habitat network.

#### **BioGeo/P2** Priority species

Priority species will be protected and conserved. Targeted action will be taken to support the recovery of priority species whose conservation is not delivered through wider habitat-based measures.

#### **BioGeo/P3** Ecological networks

A natural capital approach will be used to conserve and enhance the area at a landscape scale.

#### **BioGeo/P4** Geodiversity

The conservation and enhancement of significant geological and geomorphological features throughout the area will be sought, underpinned by a presumption in favour of sustaining natural processes.

#### **BioGeo/P5** Reconnecting people and wildlife

Opportunities will be sought to reconnect the AONB's residents, visitors and workforce with nature, to promote appreciation of the benefits nature provides to us and to inspire positive action.

**BioGeo/P6** Positive cumulative impacts

Opportunities will be sought to maximise the benefits for wildlife from the management of all types of land and water.

**BioGeo/P7** Damage and disturbance

Increased recreational pressure will be managed at locations where unacceptable damage or disturbance to vulnerable habitats and species is likely to arise.

**BioGeo/P8** Invasive non-native species

A strategic approach to the control, or eradication where feasible, of invasive non-native species will be taken where they threaten to damage local habitats and species, and where action is practicable. The provision of guidance and advice to landowners with the most damaging invasive non-native species will be central to this approach.

**Theme 4: Historic environment** relates to improved coordination and influence in the management of the historic environment features of the AONB, to ensure they are maintained, enhanced, understood and appreciated.

Continuing neglect is damaging certain types of historic features such as field barns and estuary and coastal features with no current use. The condition of nationally important scheduled monuments within the South Devon AONB is threatened by a number of factors including cultivation, scrub encroachment, burrowing animals and climate change.

Climate change continues to affect coastal and estuarine archaeology, where much has already been inundated by sea level rise. The remaining sites are fragile and poorly documented (if at all) and some are suffering loss and damage from storm and erosion, such as Salcombe Castle and Hallsands ruined village.

A number of non-scheduled features such as ponds and wells link back to past human activity and are important historic elements which reveal time-depth within the AONB landscape. There are also many historic designed landscapes (as well as associated structures and features) which are not currently designated, and which could be at risk of deterioration or loss through a lack of management, recognition and information relating to them.

**Key policy objective:** The AONB landscape, its historic features and distinctive vernacular buildings are conserved and enhanced as part of a living and working landscape for which there are mechanisms in place to ensure their continued long-term management and care.

**Hist/P1** Cultural and historic environment

The identification, protection and active conservation of the AONB's cultural and historic environment will be promoted and supported.

#### **Hist/P2** A heritage asset

The South Devon AONB landscape will be regarded as a single unified heritage asset of national importance.

#### **Hist/P3** Public access

Public access will be encouraged to archaeological and historic sites that able to withstand visitor pressure without undue harm to their nature conservation interests and physical features.

#### **Hist/P4** Statutory protection

Statutory protection together with appropriate management will be sought for the most important historic monuments and buildings.

#### **Hist/P5** Community participation

Local community participation will be encouraged in the research, recording, celebration, promotion, care and conservation of cultural heritage and historic features.

#### **Hist/P6** Technical resources

The use of Historic Landscape and Seascape Characterisation, the Historic Environment Record, Tithe Maps and other tools and information resources will be promoted in order to inform projects, policies and activities.

#### **Hist/P7** Coastal heritage

Coastal heritage sites will be incorporated into adaptation plans and realignment measures through recording, promoting, understanding and recognising their contribution to coastal landscape character.

#### **Hist/P8** Land management

The protection and enhancement of historic environment assets shall be integrated into other land management initiatives in the AONB.

**Theme 5: Farming & land management** is concerned with the sustainable farming, forestry and land management sector that helps to conserve and enhance the character of the AONB.

The agriculture sector is entering a period of major change especially the funding uncertainty while arrangements for post Brexit environmental land management schemes are awaited. Existing government direct payments to farmers will be phased out and a new system will recognise and value the broader benefits with payments being based on the provision of public goods.

The decline in farming incomes and increased financial pressures are leading land owners to seek alternative land uses, such as the use of agricultural land for caravan parks, tourist attractions, flood alleviation and the creation of wildlife habitats.

Wider issues in the sector include the trend that farms are becoming larger, more specialised and industrialised, while the number and profitability of traditional small mixed farms continues to decline. Adapting to modern agricultural practices has the potential to damage the traditional agricultural landscape.

Concerns are expressed over the depletion of soil organic matter, soil compaction and erosion, diffuse pollution and the neglect of hedge banks. The decline in family mixed farms is accompanied by an ageing farming population, a shortage of new entrants to the industry, and an increasing burden of regulation and administration. The recent spread of plant and animal diseases represent an increased threat to business viability and the cost of precautionary measures and restocking are significant.

Prices for bulk timber are poor and provide little incentive for owners to manage woodlands productively. Most woodland in the AONB are in small units with poor road access, steep slopes and low quality timber: they are generally unprofitable although the management of Ash Dieback *Chalara fraxinea* to produce wood fuel could provide a business opportunity from some land managers.

Traditional field boundaries are suffering through lack of management, removal and amalgamation of fields, hedges are increasingly being managed by flailing as opposed to more traditional methods. The creation of horse paddocks, with associated division of fields, and infrastructure (e.g. stables, shelters, jumps, electric tape and wire fences) is affecting land which was formerly used for livestock grazing.

**Key policy objective:** A sustainable farming, forestry and land management sector that helps to conserve and enhance the character of the AONB.

**LanMan/P1** Critical to the AONB's future

A profitable, sustainable and environmentally beneficial farming and land management sector providing high quality food, fuel, timber and benefits to people and wildlife will be fostered as one of the principal means of maintaining the special qualities and distinctive landscape of the AONB.

**LanMan/P2** Farming with nature

Support will be sought for farmers and land managers who sustain land of exceptional landscape and nature conservation interest in recognition of the additional costs incurred in operating these farming systems.

**LanMan/P3** Hedgebanks, trees, woodlands and orchards

The retention and sensitive management of trees and woodlands will be promoted, especially the hedge banks, hedgerow trees, historic parkland trees, ancient woodlands, small woods, orchards, veteran and ancient trees which are of particular importance in the AONB. The planting of orchards, specimen trees and some new woods will be encouraged, subject to existing biodiversity interests and the careful selection of sites and species to reflect and strengthen local landscape character.

**LanMan/P4** Environmental land management

High quality environmental land management will be promoted to help conserve and enhance the special qualities and distinctive agricultural landscape of the AONB.

**LanMan/P5** Communities, farming and our environment

Wider community engagement with the farming and land management sector will enable a deeper understanding of the important role played by land managers in maintaining the AONB's special qualities, and providing the food, produce and natural environment services we all rely on.

**LanMan/P6** Evolving farms

The evolution of farm types, modernisation activities, diversification enterprises and added value operations that conserve and enhance the South Devon AONB's special qualities will be supported.

**LanMan/P7** Land management support

Well-co-ordinated advisory, training and contracting services will be promoted to support new and existing land managers in maintaining a productive and environmentally sustainable landscape.

**LanMan/P8** Land management support

Offer support and assistance to deliver environmental outcomes developed through collaboration and consultation, creating local priorities that deliver on national themes.

**LanMan/P9** Land management support

Support farmers and land owners to deliver locally focussed environmental outcomes from agri-environment payment schemes.

**Theme 6: Coast & Marine** relates to the conservation and enhancement of the high quality and internationally significant coastline of the AONB, including the South Devon Heritage Coast.

There is continued pressure for infrastructure and other developments, including coast defence around individual properties and highway repair. Sea level rise coupled with extreme storm events is creating significant challenges for some coastal locations in the AONB.

Some prominent coastal sites are spoiled by past poor-quality development, compounded by growing pressure for commercial activities, intensive recreational use and erosion. Recreational conflicts and disturbance of tranquil areas are sometimes caused by motorised craft and at a small number of beaches users compete for safe launch and water space.

Litter is widely perceived as a problem in the AONB, with even a small amount having a marked effect on people's perception of a wild and unspoilt coastline. High levels of beach litter is brought in by the tides, reflecting a wider issue with marine litter. Marine plastics are a growing concern, as evidence increases about the harm these cause to marine wildlife and fish stocks.



**Key policy objective:** The South Devon Estuaries Management Plan (Annex1) covers in detail the Avon, Dart, Erme, Salcombe - Kingsbridge and Yealm Estuaries.

**Mar/P1** Coastal character

The tranquil and undeveloped character of the coast will be protected. Opportunities will be sought for improvements in the condition of degraded sites.

**Mar/P2** Coast and marine management

The effective integration of AONB management with the management of the adjoining marine environment will be sought to ensure that the development of Marine Plans for the South and Southwest areas, and access to the coastal margin under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, have regard for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, special qualities and key features of the AONB.

**Mar/P3** High quality marine environment

The special qualities associated with these areas and the Heritage Coast will be reflected and promoted throughout AONB literature, campaigns, awareness and communication programmes.

**Mar/P4** Coast protection

The South Devon and Dorset Shoreline Management Plan provides a policy framework for the area and covers the next 100 years. For areas identified as requiring no active intervention, there will be a presumption that natural coastal processes will be allowed to act. For other policy areas requiring intervention and wherever practicable, soft engineering solutions that work with natural physical processes will be preferred together with the realignment of coastal infrastructure to more suitable locations where there is space to accommodate it.

**Mar/P5** Recreational pressure

Information, education and awareness campaigns will be used in managing recreational pressures and conflicts at the coast. Where demonstrable problems and safety issues remain, relevant organisations will carefully consider the most appropriate steps to be taken in order to address the situation.

**Mar/P6** Protective public ownership

The acquisition of undeveloped coastline for protective public ownership will be supported. The management of newly acquired sites will be supported where this accords with the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, special qualities and key features of the South Devon AONB.

**Theme 7: Rivers and Estuaries** relates to the conservation and enhancement of the high quality and internationally significant rivers and estuaries of the AONB, including the South Devon Heritage Coast.

The increased number of extreme storm events and sea level rise is impacting on river and estuary infrastructure and some settlements. There is significant pressure for further built development along estuary shorelines, with cumulative impacts on landscape, habitats, species and water quality. Established maritime businesses have been gradually displaced from their traditional premises, undermining the viability of essential shore-side support services and increasing pressure on other undeveloped estuary-side locations to accommodate boating uses.

There is strong recreational demand for moorings and marina spaces within the estuaries and pressure on key access points. There are requirements for improved shore-side infrastructure for the fishing and mariculture sector and better launch facilities for small recreational craft. Estuary trails offer great potential for countryside access although this has the potential to increase disturbance of sensitive wildlife.

**Key policy objective:** The South Devon Estuaries Management Plan (Annex1) covers the Avon, Dart, Erme, Salcombe - Kingsbridge and Yealm Estuaries. An Estuaries Biosecurity plan for each estuary is available via the AONB website.

#### **Est/P1** Estuary character

A thriving maritime economy contained within the existing developed harbour areas will be promoted, complimented by high quality boating facilities and infrastructure. The more remote parts of the estuaries will be managed for their tranquil and unspoiled character and safeguarded from moorings spread and development.

#### **Est/P2** Maritime services

Boat maintenance, repair and storage facilities will be encouraged within harbour areas and the loss of relevant shore-side infrastructure by conversion to other uses will be resisted through the planning system.

#### **Est/P3** Mariculture

Sustainable mariculture enterprises will be retained and encouraged in appropriate locations, both as a traditional feature of the AONB economy and as a “driver” for further improvements to water quality.

#### **Est/P4** Climate change

The adaptation of habitats and species to climate change and sea level rise will be promoted through sustaining natural processes wherever practicable, while protecting settlements from flooding.

#### **Est/P5** Coordination and management

The effective coordination and management of the rivers and estuaries will be developed through the AONB Estuaries Partnership, community forums, and the Catchment Based Approach.

#### **Est/P6** Environmental management

Harbour Authorities will be supported in maintaining effective arrangements for managing moorings, navigation, dredging and waste, underpinned with good environmental practices which ensure the conservation and enhancement of the South Devon AONB's special qualities.

**Est/P7 Fisheries management**

The populations of resident and migratory fish in the AONB estuaries and rivers will be given effective protection from poaching and over-exploitation through more effective byelaws, information, reporting and enforcement.

**Est/P8 Foreshore management**

All foreshore, seabed and tidal waters developments will be challenged to conclude with a net gain in extent health of foreshore, seabed and open water habitat. Advising and working with developers and relevant authorities is central to achieving this action.

**People and Prosperity: Encourage and support sustainable economic development, social engagement and recreational activity that conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.**

**Theme 8: Access, Recreation & Tourism** relates to sustainable activity that is compatible with the protected landscape and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

Intense recreational pressure is exceeding the carrying capacity at some popular sites during peak periods, causing erosion, landscape degradation, damage to habitats and archaeology, and conflict between users.

There is increasing demand for certain types of recreational activity imposing a greater need for maintaining infrastructure and information, and for managing safe and sustainable usage.

Many people actively enjoy the health benefits of countryside access and recreation, but significant elements of the population do not. These include people disadvantaged by poor health or disability, lack of access to information and transport, and lack of opportunity and confidence. Some noisy and intrusive recreational activities disturb the tranquillity of the AONB and spoil the enjoyment of others. Trespass, noise, disturbance of wildlife, car obstruction and the poor management of dogs continue to be a focus of concern.

The growth of housing, population and visitor numbers in the AONB continue to increase pressure on recreational facilities and vulnerable sites, at a time when there is shrinking funding to maintain and repair them. Whilst it is recognised that sustainable forms of tourism can make valuable contributions to the local economy and sustainable rural development, increasing visitor pressure also has the potential to affect the character of the area's natural and historical assets.

**Key policy objective:** Improved access to services and facilities and the active participation in community and appropriate landscape related social enterprise.

**Acc/P1** Recreation, leisure and sports

The quiet enjoyment of the South Devon AONB by the public will be promoted through recreation, leisure activities and sports that respect other users and the area's natural beauty, special qualities and land management.

**Acc/P2** Rights of Way

A well-connected network of paths and strategic recreational routes will be sensitively maintained and promoted. Opportunities will be sought to extend them and improve linkages where this is compatible with conserving and enhancing natural beauty.

**Acc/P3** Naturally healthy

Opportunities to use the natural environment resource of the South Devon AONB to benefit the health and well-being of residents and visitors will be sought and promoted, particularly where this coincides with opportunities to enhance the area's special qualities.

**Acc/P4** Noisy or intrusive recreational activities

In remote and tranquil countryside areas, noisy or intrusive recreational activities will be discouraged. The conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and the protection of vulnerable wildlife will be given priority in the promotion of access and recreation.

**Acc/P5** Access to beaches and the coastal corridor

A public right of access to beaches and the undeveloped coastal corridor will be sought in consultation with landowners that avoids disturbance and safeguards sensitive wildlife sites. Supporting coastal margin projects as part of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

**Acc/P6** Popular sites

The provision of sustainable visitor facilities, recreational infrastructure and information will be promoted at the most heavily used destinations. Management resources, promotion and marketing will be concentrated on the more popular and developed sites which are best able to accommodate and contain intensive recreational pressure.

**Acc/P7** Developer contributions

Where new developments are likely to increase recreational pressures on the countryside, coast or estuaries, developers will be expected to provide suitable recreational facilities on-site as well as contributing to improving carrying capacity and facilities in the surrounding area.

**Acc/P8** Information

Co-ordinated information and interpretation about countryside, coastal, marine and estuarine recreation and access will be promoted through a range of media, to help foster greater understanding, appropriate expectations and considerate behaviour. Car parks and principal access points such as slipways will be used as locations wherever possible to minimise signage proliferation.

**Acc/P9** Tourism

A sustainable, year-round tourism industry which benefits from and contributes to the environmental quality of the area will be supported. The loss of accommodation and facilities for visitors and recreational users will be resisted. Activities and initiatives to extend the main tourism season and to assist in promoting the area to overseas visitors will be supported.

**Theme 9: Planning and Sustainable Development** relating to its key role in the conservation and enhancement of the AONB, its wildlife and communities.

There is a recognised need for affordable housing within the AONB and to meet this need, a certain amount of new housing and development will be required. There is also pressure for market housing and other forms of development. It is very important for any development to take place in a way that minimises detrimental impacts upon the character of individual settlements and the landscape character of the AONB.

The AONB remains under intense pressure for development both inside the boundary and in the adjoining urban and rural setting. The development types currently having most impact include: new housing on green field sites and the conversion of business, tourism and employment land to other uses. The constraints on available land mean that areas both immediately adjacent to the AONB boundary and within come under increasing pressure for housing development.

The scale of new development in the sub-region is bringing a range of indirect impacts to its surrounding area including additional traffic, light pollution, waste water, recreational pressures and disturbance to wildlife.

**Key policy objective:** Applying the mitigation hierarchy and using planning policy to conserve and enhance AONB special qualities for compatible sustainable development.

**Plan/P1** Plan-making

Planning policies will give great weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty and special qualities of the South Devon AONB; while supporting small scale development that is appropriate to its setting, is in keeping with its character, and meets the economic and social needs of local communities.

**Plan/P2** Decision-taking

Development management decisions will give great weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB; and support development that is appropriate and proportionate to its setting within or adjacent to the South Devon AONB by following the mitigation hierarchy.

**Plan/P3** Planning protocol

Local Planning Authorities will consult the AONB Unit on planning policy and significant planning applications following the agreed planning protocol and use the South Devon AONB Management Plan as a material consideration to inform plan-making and decision-taking.

#### **Plan/P4** Representations

The AONB Unit will provide representations to Local Planning Authorities preparing Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks; and to the Marine Management Organisation in respect of Marine Plans; to ensure that they; have had regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB throughout the plan preparation process and secure consistent and robust policies giving great weight to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty and special qualities of the South Devon AONB.

#### **Plan/P5** Consultees

Natural England will continue to be the principal statutory consultee on planning and sustainable development matters affecting Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The AONB Unit will continue to provide a local perspective on the sensitivity to change in specific locations of the South Devon AONB's natural beauty and special qualities.

#### **Plan/P6** Providing advice

Advice on development proposals will increasingly be provided through standing advice and supporting documents including the South Devon AONB planning guidance document.

**Theme 10: Transport & Highways** relate to sustainable transport, opportunities for improved access and highway design that contributes towards conserving character and tranquility.

Intense traffic pressure, particularly in the summer months, causes congestion at certain locations and creates an intrusion into the quality of the countryside and its tranquility. The degradation of roadside hedge banks and verges continues, through direct vehicle damage, the wearing of passing places, slumping, flailing, the loss of soil and stone facings, and the spread of invasive species.

There is a legacy of obtrusive lighting, concrete post and wire fencing, missing hedge banks and unsympathetic road alignments, while modern specifications for kerbing, signage, lining and traffic calming can have a urbanising impact on the rural road network. The increase in motorised traffic has rendered many rural roads unsuitable for use by walkers, horse riders and cyclists.

**Key policy objective:** The impact on the landscape, environment and enjoyment of the AONB is considered in the planning and provision of transport networks and services.

#### **Trans/P1** Highway management

Highway network maintenance and will be undertaken in a manner which is sensitive and appropriate to the rural character of the AONB and compatible with its special qualities will be supported.

### **Trans/P2** Features of the road network

The landscape and cultural features of the AONB's road network will be protected and conserved.

### **Trans/P3** Parking

Car-borne pressures will generally be contained within existing locations and the construction of significant additional car parking capacity at remote coastal sites will be resisted. Landscape improvements will be sought for existing carparks which are visually intrusive or in poor condition.

### **Trans/P4** Green Lanes

The legal and responsible use of unmetalled roads by pedestrians, cyclists, horse-riders and carriage drivers will be promoted.

### **Trans/P5** Large vehicles

Traffic management measures will be supported which reduce the pressure of large and heavy vehicles on the most minor roads.

### **Trans/P6** Public transport

The provision of sustainable public transport services and convenient alternatives to the use of the car will be supported.

**Theme 11: Rural Economy and Services** is all about a living and working landscape, with wide range of business and economic activity taking place. The social needs of local communities vary from towns to isolated rural hamlets.

The high demand for residential development is causing a continued loss of business, tourism and service premises by conversion. The cost of living and below-average wages in the AONB create an obstacle to the recruitment and retention of a local workforce, particularly young people and skilled manual workers. This position also contributes toward a significant net daily commuter out-migration of skilled workers to nearby urban centres.

The higher cost of products and services, austerity measures and changes in global market forces have served to accentuate deep-rooted challenges already facing rural businesses in the area. The rate of closure of essential rural services continues to affect the sustainability of smaller rural settlements in the AONB.

**Key policy objective:** Improved access to services and facilities and the active participation in community and appropriate landscape related social enterprise

### **Econ/P1** Green economy

The growth of the area's green economy will be supported where sustainable economic growth and the health of our natural resources sustain each other. Employment sectors having a traditional association with the AONB and which conserve or enhance the AONB's special qualities will be promoted and supported.

### **Econ/P2** Supply chains

Improvements will be sought to the processing and supply chains of products which are sustainably harvested from the land and waters of the AONB; developing nearby markets, revitalising rural incomes and supporting the land management sector. Sustainable initiatives will be encouraged that result in residents, retailers and visitors purchasing locally sourced, high quality food, woodfuel, materials and produce.

### **Econ/P3** Rural business

Sustainable rural business and farm diversification initiatives will be supported where these maintain or enhance the special qualities or distinctive landscape character of the AONB and contribute to employment and prosperity.

### **Econ/P4** Environmental performance

High standards of environmental performance by local companies, and the development and use of “clean” technologies which create prosperity and employment with positive impacts on the local environment, will be promoted.

### **Econ/P5** Local services

The retention and improvement of viable, accessible, essential local services such as shops, post offices and pubs will be sought, together with associated community infrastructure in market towns and villages. The loss of business premises and local services by conversion to other uses will be resisted. Effective use will be made of the Community Asset Register under the Localism Act 2011 to secure the future of valued community facilities.

### **Econ/P6** Capacity and skills

Economic capacity and skills in the area will be supported through training opportunities, community enterprise, business networking and cooperation especially where these assist businesses to contribute to AONB purposes.

**Theme 12: Community and Culture** relates to opportunities to develop local community initiatives and activity in partnership with others to help develop skills, improve health, raise awareness and encourage cohesion.

South Devon continues to provide an attractive retirement and second home destination, and young adults are leaving the area to go to higher education and job opportunities elsewhere. Young people find it extremely difficult to afford a home in the AONB because of below average wage levels and the high cost of housing.

Many rural support services and community organisations are thinly stretched and face difficulty recruiting volunteers. A high quality of life does not extend to all. Social and cultural exclusion, poor health, poverty and isolation are still experienced, particularly amongst the elderly in hidden pockets of deprivation.



Communities are becoming increasingly divorced from land management and farming traditions reflected in the growing disconnection between children and the natural environment, reflected in obesity, sedentary lifestyles, and the loss of independence and confidence in decision making.

**Key policy objective:** A sustainable rural economy that serves to conserve and enhance the character of the landscape by increased local participation and volunteering opportunities.

**Comm/P1** Special qualities

Initiatives that engage local communities in understanding, exploring, celebrating, conserving and enhancing the special qualities and distinctive characteristics of the AONB will be promoted and developed.

**Comm/P2** Sustainable lifestyles

Community-based initiatives that promote sustainable lifestyles will be supported and promoted where they are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

**Comm/P3** Resilience

People will be supported in building vibrant, healthy and resilient communities enjoying a high quality of life with good access to facilities.

**Comm/P4** Cultural traditions

Activities which reinforce the cultural traditions of the AONB such as events, fairs, regattas, competitions, parish maps, clubs, arts, crafts and trades will be supported and fostered, especially where these strengthen the link between people and landscape.

**Comm/P5** Community planning

Initiatives will be supported which promote community planning and action, community cohesion and voluntary services, and which address isolation and deprivation.

**Communication and Management: the AONB is recognised and valued as a national, regional and local asset and is effectively managed in partnership with our stakeholders.**

**Theme 13: Awareness and Communication** is an activity of the AONB Partnership and its supporters helping to develop understanding of the countryside, awareness of the AONB designation, its purposes and the work of the Partnership.

South Devon does not have a clear geographical place in the public imagination or provide an obvious boundary for the AONB. Natural beauty is a difficult term to communicate effectively to different audiences, especially as most of the South Devon AONB is a cultural,

working landscape shaped and managed by people. Many residents of the area, especially the young and those in adjoining urban areas, are not engaged with the AONB for a range of reasons - cultural, financial, mobility and social exclusion.

Austerity and the emphasis on economic growth are challenging the relevance and value of the AONB designation and management amongst some decision makers.

**Key policy objective:** A greater awareness of the AONB, the purposes of the designation, the role of the Partnership and range of opportunities for engagement.

**Aware/P1** AONB awareness

Awareness and understanding of the South Devon AONB and its special qualities will be promoted amongst residents, businesses, organisations and visitors in and around the AONB.

**Aware/P2** Caring for our AONB

Awareness, understanding and respect for people actively contributing to the care of the landscape features and natural resources of the AONB will be promoted.

**Aware/P3** Ecosystem services

An improved understanding of all the benefits the AONB provides for us will be at the core of communication activity, seeking to foster decisions and actions that value our natural environment.

**Aware/P4** Lifelong learning

People of all ages will be encouraged to investigate, record and celebrate their local places, and enjoy considerate and informed experiences of wildlife and the natural environment.

**Aware/P5** Goods and services

Local communities and visitors will be encouraged to make consumer choices to support local, high quality products and services that sustain the area's special qualities, landscape and the people who manage it and make a living from it.

**Aware/P6** Involving everyone

Organisations, groups and communities will be encouraged and supported in playing an active role in conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the AONB.

**Theme 14: Management, Organisation & Partnerships** addresses operational aspects of the AONB Partnership and Unit.

Some key partner organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to engage with partnerships and forums, as staff reductions and reorganisation take effect. The continuing squeeze on public sector funding and annual cuts to the AONB Unit budget mean that more time has to be diverted into fundraising. Project work has become more opportunistic and short term.

Despite Defra guidance that relevant public bodies should regularly report on their compliance with the statutory duty to have regard for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB, this is seldom being done in practice. The weakness of the legislation, and the fact that AONB Plans are not in themselves legally binding, limits the ability of the AONB Partnership to influence change.

**Key policy objective:** The AONB Partnership will act as ambassadors, influence policy and decision making affecting the area and work to secure funding for the long-term co-ordinated management of the area and report on its work.

**Part/P1** Legal duty of regard

Relevant authorities will have regard for the purpose of AONB designation in the conduct of their functions and decision making, as required by Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

**Part/P2** Management Plan implementation

The AONB Partnership, through its member organisations and the AONB staff unit, will seek to achieve its vision for the AONB by implementing the Strategic Delivery Plan.

**Part/P3** AONB Partnership arrangements

The AONB local and statutory authorities will maintain effective partnership arrangements including a dedicated locally based staff unit.

**Part/P4** Management initiatives

The AONB Partnership will direct management initiatives inside the AONB and in those adjoining hinterland and marine areas outside the boundary which have an important bearing on the AONB.

**Part/P5** Partnerships

The AONB Partnership will foster constructive links with partnerships and strategic initiatives at local, county, regional, national and international level.

**Part/P6** National Association for AONBs

The AONB Partnership will work closely with other protected landscapes and actively support the National Association of AONBs.

**Part/P7** AONB boundary

The AONB Partnership will keep the boundary of the AONB under review to ensure that the designation remains appropriate and fit for purpose in South Devon.

## Strategic delivery framework

This strategic delivery framework shows how the plan delivers actions relating to the Defra 25 Year Environment Plan. The annual delivery plan outlines how we aim to implement this Management Plan. We will report on progress annually and use it to inform our annual business planning process each year.

Strategic delivery themes	Relevant policies	Project delivery that supports	Timescale		Priority
			S	M L	
Using and managing land sustainably	LanP1 to P7, NatRes P1 to P8 PlanP1 to P8, PartP1	Future land management system incentives	S	M L	
Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes	BioGeoP1 to P8, HistP1 to P8	Planning responses recognising NPPF 172 – 174, p55 Projects that deliver 'environmental net gain' Habitat and species management projects		M L	
Connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing	AccP1 to P8	Promoting health and wellbeing through the natural environment Providing community volunteering opportunities Maintain clean recreational waters		M L	
Increasing resource efficiency and reducing pollution and waste	LanManP1to P9 TransP1 to P9	Encouraging people to be close to nature Working with farmers on soil health, fertilisers and pesticides	S		
Securing clean, healthy, productive and biologically diverse rivers, estuaries and seas	MarP1 to P8, EstP1to P8	Developing natural flood management solutions, and improving biosecurity Reducing avoidable plastic waste and the impact of wastewater	S	M	
Protecting and improving the wider environment	NatResP1to P8	Sustainable management practices Resource efficiency and minimising environmental impact AONB Unit and Partnership leading by example	S	L	

## Measuring progress and change

A national protected landscape monitoring framework developed by Defra and Natural England involves the collection and distribution of data sets from several statutory organisations. The State of the AONB report (Annex 3) details the information currently available and progress on Management Plan implementation will be reported on the AONB website with summaries published in the AONB Unit Annual Report.

## Details of supporting annex documents

The following annexes form an integral part of the Management Plan.

1. South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan 2017 -2024
2. AONB Planning Guidance (V1)
3. State of the AONB report
4. What makes South Devon special report
5. Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulation Assessment
6. Statement of representation
7. Strategic context and background to AONBs (NAAONB 2018)

The annexes and other documents relating to AONB activity can be found on the AONB website [southdevonaonb.org.uk](http://southdevonaonb.org.uk). The AONB Unit and Partnership will refer to these and other documents in its responses to planning consultations and land management initiatives and will also seek to develop and implement the recommended areas for future research and activity.

## Acknowledgements

This Management Plan has been developed and produced by the South Devon AONB Unit on behalf of South Devon AONB Partnership Committee. All images, maps and photographs used in this Partnership Plan by kind permission and © copyright of the following: TBC

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Requests for alternatively accessible versions of this Plan will be accommodated where practical.

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