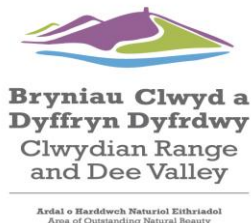


# Public Document Pack



Bryniau Clwyd a Dyffryn Dyfrdwy AHNE  
Park Gwledig Loggerheads, Yr Wyddgrug, Sir Ddinbych CH7 5LH

Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB  
Loggerheads Country Park, Nr. Mold, Denbighshire CH7 5LH

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To: Members of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee  
Date: Friday, 6 February 2015  
Direct Dial: 01824 712589  
Email: [dcc\\_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:dcc_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk)

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee, Friday, 13 February 2015 at 2.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Guildhall, Wrexham.**

Yours sincerely

G Williams  
Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

## AGENDA

### INTRODUCTIONS

#### 1 APOLOGIES

#### 2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in the business identified to be considered at this meeting.

#### 3 MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE - 14 NOVEMBER 2014 (Pages 3 - 8)

To receive the minutes of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee held on the 14 November 2014 (copy attached).

#### 4 MINUTES OF THE INTERIM JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 5 DECEMBER 2014 (Pages 9 - 18)



To receive the minutes of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Interim Joint Advisory Committee held on the 5 December 2014 (copy attached).

**5 JOINT COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING 2014/15 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2015/16** (Pages 19 - 24)

To consider a report (copy attached) on the AONB's current financial position and to approve the budget for 2015/16.

**6 DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE AONB** (Pages 25 - 118)

To consider a report presenting the AONB Draft Management Plan for endorsement and approval for public consultation (copy attached).

**7 AONB PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

To receive a verbal update on progress.

**8 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 119 - 120)

To receive the revised updated forward work programme (copy attached).

**9 FUTURE MEETING DATES**

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Councillors**

Bernie Attridge  
Derek Butler  
Hugh Evans

Hugh Jones  
Huw Jones  
Ian Roberts

**COPIES TO:**

All Councillors for information  
Press and Libraries  
Town and Community Councils

## CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Friday, 14 November 2014 at 10.00 am.

### PRESENT

Councillors Derek Butler, Hugh Evans, Hugh Jones, Huw Jones and Ian Roberts

**Observers:** Councillors Stuart Davies, Martyn Holland, Rhys Hughes, Win Mullen-James and Carolyn Thomas

### ALSO PRESENT

Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services (DCC - GW), Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer (HS), Countryside and Heritage Services Manager (DCC – HR), Head of Flintshire Countryside Services (TW), Parks / Countryside and Rights of Way Manager (WCBC – MH), Democratic Services Manager (DCC - SP), Senior Countryside Officer AONB (DS), Finance and Assurance Manager (DCC - SG), and Senior Finance Officer (DCC – PO'H)

Representative from Natural Resources Wales (PM)

#### 1 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor Bernie Attridge (Flintshire County Council).

#### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

#### 3 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Councillor Hugh Jones (Wrexham County Borough Council) was proposed for appointment as chair of the Joint Committee by Councillor Huw Jones. Councillor Ian Roberts seconded the proposal. With no other nominations Councillor Hugh Jones was appointed as chair.

***RESOLVED – that Councillor Hugh Jones be appointed chair of the Joint Committee for the 2014 / 15 municipal year.***

#### 4 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Councillor Huw Jones (Denbighshire County Council) was proposed as vice chair of the Joint Committee by Councillor Derek Butler; seconded by Councillor Hugh Evans. With no other nominations it was:

***RESOLVED – that Councillor Huw Jones be appointed vice chair of the Joint Committee for the 2014 / 15 municipal year.***

## **5 ADOPTION OF THE CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY AONB CONSTITUTION**

The Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services for Denbighshire County Council (HLHRDS) introduced a report (previously circulated) which sought the adoption of the appended Joint Committee constitution (standing orders) by the Joint Committee.

The HLHRDS advised that the appended constitution had already been approved by the legal departments of the 3 authorities and witnessed with the seal of each authority. He outlined some of the key parts of the document; that the Joint Committee's membership was drawn from the executives of each authority (i.e. Cabinet or Executive Board members) with each authority having two members, the provisions for an annual meeting and meetings every 4 months. The meeting venues would be rotated between each authority. He reported on quorum and voting arrangements shown in the standing orders and confirmed that Denbighshire as lead authority for the AONB would prepare, publish and circulate the agenda packs for each Joint Committee meeting, though the minutes of meetings would be produced by the authority hosting the meeting.

The HLHRDS pointed out an error in the standing orders whereby standing order 8.6 should refer to standing order 14 (not 4) when dealing with nuisance activity.

Councillor Martyn Holland queried standing order 13 which prohibited expressions of dissent. The HLHRDS advised that the provision prevented dissensions after a vote had been taken from being recorded in the minutes. He confirmed that dissensions could be recorded in the minutes as part of the debate and that a recorded vote could be used to record the way each member voted.

***RESOLVED that the constitution (standing orders) attached as appendix 1 to the report be approved by the Joint Committee (subject to the correction of standing order 8.6).***

## **6 OVERVIEW OF JOINT COMMITTEE AGREEMENT**

The HLHRDS introduced a report (previously circulated) which contained information on the legal agreement underpinning the Joint Committee and he referred to the following points.

- The agreement created the Joint Committee and set out its powers
- The agreement established an officer group to make recommendations on strategic direction and the budget, to implement the management plan, annual action plan and the Joint Committee's decisions; this group to include co-optees from Natural Resources Wales, officers from the 3 participant authorities and from other partners.

- Denbighshire would provide financial expertise, legal and administrative support for the Joint Committee with minute-taking support coming from the authority hosting the Joint Committee meeting
- A process for financing the Joint Committee to meet its objectives through a core budget provided by the 3 authorities and grant funding from Natural Resources Wales
- The agreement would last until 2019 and unless it was changed, withdrawn or terminated it would then roll over for a further period of 5 year.
- Any of the 3 authorities could withdraw from the Joint Committee by giving not less than 18 months' notice to each authority and the Secretary (Denbighshire's HLHRDS).

Councillor Hugh Evans referred to the stated objectives of the Joint Committee whereby it would seek to exert 'influence' in favour of the AONB's designated purposes. Councillor Evans reported that he was unclear about the definition applied to the influencing aspect and what the implications were. He advised that he'd experienced the negative effects of the AONB's activities where it had sought to influence the outcomes of decisions on properties and communities outside of the AONB itself.

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer (AONB Officer) explained that the AONB was a national designation which the 3 authorities needed to take account of. He reported that the Joint Committee was required to promote policies and decisions that conserved and enhanced the natural beauty of the AONB in line with its statutory purpose. The HLHRDS added that the agreement had already been cleared by the legal teams in the 3 authorities and had been approved by each authority's Cabinet or Executive Board.

Councillor Stuart Davies supported the concerns raised by Councillor Evans, adding that he lived in an area affected by the AONB's activities which he viewed as unfairly restricting the freedom of residents and businesses. Councillor Hugh Jones reported that the Joint Committee could only act within its terms of reference, had clear processes and would develop a forward work programme to operate within.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **7 JOINT COMMITTEE BUDGET 2014 / 15**

Denbighshire's Finance and Assurance Manager (FAM) introduced a report (previously circulated) on the AONB's revenue budgets. He reported that the budget setting process for the current year recognised that the AONB had to have had a budget to operate with up to this point which could now be formally approved by the Joint Committee. The FAM reported on the small overspend and underspend in the core and area budgets respectively and advised that the budget for 2014 / 15 was secure but warned of possible difficulties in future years.

In highlighting that the Joint Committee needed to agree a budget each year and request that each of the 3 authorities provide an appropriate contribution, Councillor

Hugh Jones advised that the Joint Committee would need to meet to discuss the draft budget in time for recommendations on funding to be made to the authorities.

Members discussed the issue of ensuring an equitable apportioning of the budget between the authorities. In response it was reported that the majority of the AONB lay within Denbighshire and the majority of work and expenditure was therefore within Denbighshire.

***RESOLVED that the report be noted and the budget set for 2014 / 15 be formally approved.***

## **8 APPOINTMENT OF PARTNERSHIP AND ASSOCIATED BODIES FOR THE CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)**

The AONB Officer introduced a report (previously circulated) regarding finalising the outstanding governance arrangements for the Joint Committee's legal agreement. He advised that as part of the legal agreement the AONB Partnership was being overhauled with the replacement of the Interim Joint Advisory Committee by the AONB Partnership (Stakeholders Group) and associated fora.

The AONB Officer reported that the production of a management plan was the main area of work for the Partnership and he referred to the list of members that would comprise the AONB Partnership as shown in the report.

***RESOLVED that the Joint Committee:***

- (i) Approves the appointment of a sub-group comprised of Councillors Derek Butler, Huw Jones and Ian Roberts to appoint the AONB Partnership (subject to the formal confirmation of the sub-group's membership by each authorities delegated decision procedures);***
- (ii) A date for the AONB Forum and Community and Town Council meeting be confirmed following a consultation with participants; with an invitation to attend being extended to the elected members of the 3 authorities.***

## **9 RECEIPT OF DOCUMENTS FROM EXISTING WORK PROGRAMME 2014 / 15**

The AONB Officer gave a verbal report and tabled a Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy had been produced by The Tourism Company following consultation workshops in order to set the scene for developing sustainable tourism.

A publicity event to promote the Strategy was to be held in Corwen the following week.

The AONB Officer also circulated a climate change work programme and advised that the document made suggestions on how farms, residents and businesses within the AONB could adapt to mitigate climate change effects. Members were advised that the programme had associated documents including one for children

that was seen to address a gap in provision and was hoped would bring families and others interested in climate change issues into the AONB.

Councillor Hugh Jones queried whether there was a distribution policy for these documents, and it was confirmed that there was a good distribution network within Denbighshire but the distribution points, such as the tourist information centres, in Flintshire and Wrexham were not as well connected.

***RESOLVED that a Communication Strategy, to include the monitoring of the effectiveness of communication, be added to the Joint Committee's forward work programme.***

## **10 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The AONB Officer introduced a report (previously circulated) on the development of a forward work programme for the Joint Committee in order to consider the committee's future priorities and areas of work. Members considered the following issues:

- The Edeyrnion Strategy was being taken forward by partners in the south of the AONB
- The Outreach and Volunteers Strategy was intended to increase the numbers of volunteers and maximise their contribution to the AONB's aims.

The production of a supplementary planning guidance for the AONB was discussed by members, with Councillor Hugh Evans concerned that the AONB was at risk of damaging its reputation when it tried to influence the outcomes of planning applications and should be carefully in this respect. The ensuing debate covered:

- Concerns that additional costs from complying with the AONB's guidance could prevent residents and businesses from making an application, leading to a stagnation of development within the AONB
- Councillor Carolyn Thomas argued that the guidance was intended to be helpful advice to be considered prior to the submission of a planning application.
- The role of the AONB in promoting its aims and the role of planning authorities in determining the merits and viewpoints of those promoting or objecting to planning applications. Councillor Derek Butler said that the Joint Committee's role was to advocate for the AONB's aims and that other bodies and individuals would do the same in respect of their aims and remits.

***RESOLVED that:***

- (i) A review of the AONB's finances and funding be added to the forward work programme; and***
- (ii) The forward work programme be approved.***

## 11 CURRENT WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION REVIEW OF DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES IN WALES

The AONB Officer gave a verbal report on the review which would examine the landscape designations and purposes and the merits of classifying Wales' designated landscapes under one type of designation. Members were advised that the review would also consider the governance arrangements of designated landscapes and take account of the Planning (Wales) Bill in respect of the future arrangements for planning in National Parks.

In response to questions, members were advised that the governance arrangements were thought to be the main aim of the Welsh Government's review. The possibility of a national park-type designation being placed on the AONB was discussed together with the possibility that the governance of national parks could be returned to local authorities.

Members were advised that members could contribute to the consultation either as the Joint Committee or as individuals and the Interim Joint Action Committee had already made written representations.

Councillor Hugh Jones thought that the Joint Committee lacked sufficient information on the review to make a response to the Welsh Government at this time.

## 12 FUTURE MEETING DATES

The Democratic Services Manager reported that the Joint Committee's forward work programme indicated that meetings in 2015 should be held in January, June and November. Members advised that they would prefer meetings to be arranged for Friday mornings wherever possible.

In light of the new chair being a Wrexham County Borough Councillor, it was agreed that Wrexham be considered as the venue for the January meeting of the Joint Committee.

***RESOLVED that meetings of the Joint Committee be arranged for January, June and November 2015.***





**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley**

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

**CLWYDIAN RANGE & DEE VALLEY AONB  
INTERIM JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE CONSULTATION SUB COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT 10:00 am on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at  
Loggerheads Country Park**

**Representing Clwydian Range & Dee Valley  
AONB**

Mr H Sutcliffe (AONB Officer)  
Mr D Shiel (Senior AONB Officer)  
Mr T Hughes (AONB Planning Officer)  
Ms K Holthofer (AONB Communications Officer)  
Mrs H Mrowiec (Senior Recreation Officer)

**Representing Denbighshire County Council**

Councillor M Holland

**Representing Flintshire Local Access Forum**

Mr D Hÿtch

**Representing Denbighshire Local Access  
Forum**

Mrs K Culhane

**Representing North Wales Wildlife Trust**

Mr T King

**Representing Ramblers Association**

Mr J Roberts

**Representing One Voice Wales (Flintshire)**

Mr J Emyr Davies

**Representing One Voice Wales (Denbighshire)**

Mrs M Davies

**Representing Flintshire County Council**

Councillor C Thomas (Chair)  
Councillor Colin Legg  
Councillor N Steele Mortimer  
Councillor N Matthews  
Mr T Woodall

**Representing Wrexham County Borough  
Council**

Councillor Hugh Jones

**Representing Natural Resources Wales**

Mr P Mitchell

**Representing Country Land and Business  
Association**

Mrs S Archdale

**Representing the Campaign for the Protection of  
Rural Wales**

Mr M Skuse

**Representing Civic Trust Wales**

Mrs H Williams

**Representing Tourism**

Mrs J Clough

**Representing National Farmers Union**

Mr RH Jones

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE WERE SUBMITTED FROM**

Councillor Huw L Jones, Councillor M Pritchard, Councillor M Parry, Mr N Williams

## **WELCOME/AONB NEWS**

The AONB Officer welcomed members to the last IJAC Meeting to be held ahead of the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Partnership being convened. The AONB Officer thanked members for all the enthusiasm and dedication they had given to the AONB over the years. The AONB Officer advised members that if they would like to apply to join the Partnership application forms would be circulated before Christmas.

### **1. URGENT CONSULTATIONS**

The Planning Officer advised that there were no urgent consultations to be considered.

### **2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

#### **IJAC Sub Committee Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

#### **2.1 Item u**

**Details of restoration scheme submitted in accordance with condition number 34 of planning permission 21/1999/0783/PF at Aberduna Quarry, Maeshafn, Mold, CH7 5EN – 21/2013/1388**

The Planning Officer reported that the minerals planning authority had agreed to convene a future site visit for the IJAC to view the restoration works at Aberduna in Spring 2015 when the planting works would be complete. The first AONB Partnership meeting was due to be held on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and it was suggested that a site visit could be undertaken after the meeting.

A member queried who would be responsible for the long term maintenance of the safety fencing around the quarry void when Hanson's liabilities end. The AONB Planning Officer agreed to refer this query to the minerals planning authority and would report back.

#### **RESOLVED**

To seek to arrange a site visit after the Partnership Meeting due to be held on March 27<sup>th</sup> 2015 if possible, and the AONB Planning Officer to contact the Minerals Planning Authority to seek clarification of long term responsibility for fencing around the quarry void.

#### **2.3 Item 1,3,4,5**

##### **Developments at Big Covert**

Councillor Holland provided a brief verbal update regarding the selling off of woodland plots at Big Covert, highlighting further activity and development outside that permitted. Enforcement Officers had been informed to discuss the matter together with Darren Millar AM, who was also taking an active interest in the matter. Denbighshire County Council had convened an Enforcement Team which would be examining the issue in more depth.

##### **Invitation to Welsh Minister to Attend IJAC Meeting**

The Chair advised that a letter had been sent to the Welsh Minister Carl Sergeant inviting him to attend an IJAC Meeting but he had responded that currently he had too many commitments to attend.

#### **2.5 Item 12**

**Rebuild 11kv overhead line using additional conductors and erect 11kv overhead lines supported by wood poles at Marian Mawr, Cwm, Rhyl**

The AONB Officer reported that a successful meeting had been held with the landowner and a compromise had been agreed. There would now be hedgerow restoration, improvement to Rights of Way and an additional viewing point would be provided.

8. **Clwydian Range Lamb**

The Senior AONB Officer reported that a successful launch of the project had been held at the Tweed Mill, St Asaph and a number of graziers and IJAC Members had attended.

8.1 **Heritage Lottery Fund Bid - Picturesque Project**

The Senior AONB Officer advised that none of the bids that had been submitted from Wales had been successful this time. However, the AONB would be submitting another application in May 2015.

10. **PLANNING CONSULTATION**

**Installation of a Wind Turbine 30.5m hub height and 45.07m to blade tip, control box and associated works at Maes Truan, Llanelidan, Ruthin, LL15 2RN – 19/2014/0702**

The AONB Planning Officer reported that planning permission had been granted for this development against officer recommendation.

11. **PLANNING CONSULTATION**

**Single Wind Turbine of maximum tip height 86.5m and ancillary development, including a crane hard-standing pad, substation equipment housing cabinet and access road at Lygan Uchaf Farm, Wern Road, Rhosesmor, Mold CH7 6PY – 052344**

Mrs Archdale referred to the application and queried whether the residents of Penbedw had been contacted prior to reference being made to the 'Historic Park and Garden' in the response. The AONB Planning Officer advised that the recommended response had been discussed at the previous meeting and had been approved by the IJAC. The reference to the impact on Penbedw 'Historic Park and Garden' was a response to information presented by the applicant which had been submitted with the planning application.

The AONB Officer commented that the Planning Officer only worked two days per week. He had limited time to communicate with applicants or other interested parties within the timescale available to respond to consultations. However, applicants or interested parties could contact the AONB Team if they required advice on applications.

*The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.*

3. **DELEGATED CONSULTATIONS**

3.1 **ITEM 35**

**Change of use of hotel (Class C1) to private dwelling (Class C3) incorporating alterations and partial demolition together with associated works at Bodidris Hall, Llandegla, Wrexham, LL11 3AL – 17/2014/1114**

Mrs Clough expressed some concerns about the loss of a quality hotel accommodation which was within the AONB. The Planning Officer agreed this was regrettable but the hotel had been closed for some time and had not been proved to be viable. Significant investment was required to secure the future of this important listed building (which was in a state of disrepair), and an application for the conversion of the outbuildings for up to eight holiday lets had been submitted and would provide some compensation for the loss of the hotel.

It was also noted that the site adjoined a public footpath which was a promoted recreational route, and members emphasised the need to ensure a practical and safe route for footpath users was maintained during construction operations.

3.2 **ITEM 56**  
**Erection of wooden tool store and shelter for managing the woodland (retrospective application) – amended plans at Big Covert, Clwyd Forest, Maeshafn, Mold – 21/2014/0032**

Members expressed concern regarding the application and queried whether the National Trust (who have covenants on the woodland) had been consulted on the application. The AONB Officer agreed to contact the National Trust.

Mr P Mitchell reported that he had raised the issue internally with NRW. Members agreed that a response was required by Welsh Government in order for policy to be changed and resolved to approach Darren Millar AM.

**RESOLVED**

Darren Millar AM to be contacted and invited to meet with members  
The AONB Officer to contact the National Trust

3.3 **PLANNING CONSULTATION**  
**Installation of 6kw wind turbine (hub height 9m, tip height 11.8m) at Y Lletty, Pen Line Road, Cilcain, Mold, CH7 5NZ**

Mrs Archdale referred to the above application and queried why the application had not been published along with the IJAC supporting documents. The AONB Planning Officer responded that the response had been sent after the papers for the meeting had been published. The Communications Officer agreed to circulate the response to members, which is as follows:

**“The JAC notes that this application is substantially the same as that which was refused planning permission earlier this year (Code No: 051227). The site is in an open and exposed hillside location in the AONB which is visible over a wide area, including the adjacent and surrounding footpath network. The JAC accepts the applicant’s argument in support of wind over the further use of solar PV and also notes that the proposed turbine is modest in scale (11.8m to blade tip). It is also understood that, whilst recognising that there would be some adverse visual impact, Natural Resources Wales do not consider the harm to be so serious as to warrant an objection to the application.**

**The JAC is still of the opinion that this is a sensitive site and would favour an alternative less conspicuous location for the turbine, preferably in the vicinity of the existing farm complex or in the enclosed pastoral area to the south-east of the farm which is less open and exposed and is characterised by hedgerows, individual trees and small woodlands which would draw the eye away from the turbine. It is noted that a wind speed of 5m per second is required to make the turbine viable, but no details of wind speeds across the farm holding have been submitted with the application which would greatly assist with selection of the most appropriate site for the turbine.**

**If the planning authority is satisfied that there is no better location on the holding which has the necessary wind speeds, the JAC would suggest resiting the turbine approximately 30-40m south/south-east of the currently proposed location which would reduce the skyline impact of views from the surrounding footpath network and wider area. The mast and turbine colour should be selected to blend in with the hillside as far as possible, and a naturalistically shaped area of locally indigenous gorse planted around the turbine to help reduce the open character of the landscape and assist with integrating the turbine into its rural setting. The JAC would also recommend that the grid connection must be undergrounded.”(AONB Management Plan Policies PCP1, PCP2, PSQ1 and PSQ2)**

#### 4. **AONB JOINT COMMITTEE (JC) Meeting 14/11/2014**

The AONB Officer provided a verbal update on the first Joint Committee meeting to be held. The meeting was attended by:-

Councillor Hugh Jones  
Councillor Huw L Jones  
Councillor Hugh Evans  
Councillor Ian Roberts  
Councillor Derek Butler

Apologies were received from Councillor Bernie Attridge.  
Councillor Hugh Jones had been appointed as the Chair of the Committee and Councillor Huw L Jones as the vice Chair.  
Councillor Hugh Jones said that the Joint Committee was a strategic Committee and the key in going forward was partnership working.

#### 4.1 **Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Partnership**

At the meeting the Joint Committee approved the formation of the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Partnership; therefore today's meeting was the final IJAC Committee meeting. The new governance arrangements for the Partnership form part of the new legal agreement. Application forms, Accord and role of the Partnership were now being finalised. An advertisement for applicants to join the Partnership would be placed in the local newspapers prior to Christmas. All existing IJAC members would be invited to apply to the Partnership along with organisations and individuals who had expressed an interest. The AONB Officer reiterated that the Partnership did not have the capacity to have representation from all organisations as it was now covering a much larger area.

#### 5. **AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW**

The Senior AONB Officer introduced the AONB Management Plan (previously circulated) and explained that some of the feedback from the workshops which were held last year would be incorporated within the policies and objectives of the Plan.

##### **The Action Plan**

The objectives of the Plan would be met by partnership working.

- 5.1 A member queried why there was extended reference to 'Access and Recreation' within the Plan. The Senior AONB Officer explained Access and Recreation had always been a key component of the Management Plan. However, reference had been expanded in the current plan to accommodate the extension area. He explained that one of the foremost pressures on protected landscapes was recreation. Everyone should be able to access and enjoy the AONB but with due consideration for the people who lived and worked in it. An Outreach Strategy was also being produced to help target underrepresented groups and Community First Groups and improve their access to the AONB.

- 5.2 Page 16

**IVCO1. – To ensure that visitors and the tourism industry understand the need for, and support the conservation and enhancement of, the special qualities of the AONB as key assets upon which tourism is based**

Mrs Clough referred to the above objective and advised that the Clwydian Range Tourism Group could assist with meeting this.

- 5.3 Discussion ensued on whether there was too much pressure on the iconic areas of the AONB because of access and parking issues and whether there should be more emphasis to other/more remote areas of the AONB to assist in the dispersal of visitors. The Senior AONB

Officer explained that visitor numbers were increasing which could cause some issues but it was equally important that the tranquillity and remoteness of the AONB was retained. The AONB Team strove to create a balance with visitors and communities to both enjoy the AONB and its array of forms.

## **6. AONB AWARD for 2014**

The Senior AONB Officer provided a verbal update on the AONB Award for 2014 explaining this year there had been seven nominations (previously circulated) and the winner for 2014 was Richard Jones – Countryside Skills

The AONB Officer said that when the AONB required something extra special it looked to Richard Jones. Richard had completed a great deal of work for the AONB including the much praised car park at Bwlch Pen Barras. Richard also provided good employment opportunities for individuals who want a career within the countryside. The award would be presented to Richard and his Team in March 2015.

### **6.1 SDF Funding**

Councillor Holland extended his thanks to the SDF Officer Nick Critchely for the work completed on the Llanarmon y Ial walls. The work had been completed with funding from: SDF, Cadwyn Clwyd and local contributions.

## **7. WELSH GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES IN WALES**

The AONB Officer introduced the report (previously circulated) regarding the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales and explained that the review had started to examine the first two aspects of the review:-

- 1. What were the purposes of AONB's and National Parks**
- 2. If there could be a single landscape designation**

The AONB Officer went on to explain that the review was also about governance. National Parks had their own Local Authority and budget. The AONB Officer said in his view the AONB had appropriate governance: the Joint Committee and the AONB Partnership. Discussion ensued and most members agreed that the National Park brand did have a higher profile than the AONB. Some concerns were raised regarding the implications that could come with any brand change e.g. planning restrictions. Members also queried whether funding would be more secure for the AONB if it achieved National Park status. It was noted that the NAAONB had responded on behalf of all of the AONB's.

## **8. AONB MEMBERS SEMINAR – Plas Tan y Bwlch**

The AONB Officer enquired if any members would like to attend a seminar at **Plas Tan y Bwlch on 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015** two places were available.

## **9. WELSH GOVERNMENT PLANNING CONSULTATIONS**

The AONB Planning Officer introduced the report (previously circulated) relating to seven current planning related consultations from Welsh Government and advised members to consider their response from an AONB perspective. Discussion ensued and most members agreed that it would be a great loss for the AONB if the Design and Access Statement (DAS) was removed. Members agreed with the pre-application notification to the AONB Partnership. It was queried whether there would be an increase in fees for retrospective applications. Members agreed for the recommended responses to be submitted in respect of three of the consultation documents.

## **RESOLVED**

### **Consultation on Design in the Planning Process**

**“Good design is vital to successfully accommodate development in protected landscapes or within their setting without undermining or harming the qualities and features that make them special places. Good design can also enhance the character and appearance of such areas. In this context, the JAC welcomes an emphasis on good design in national and local policy and supports the objective to raise design standards through the planning process and other measures.**

**However, the JAC is very concerned about the proposal to remove the need for developers to submit a Design and Access Statement (DAS) for all applications. In sensitive areas such as AONB’s the need to consider design and the context of the proposal in relation to its landscape setting is a vital consideration which is often overlooked, and the formal requirement to have regard to such matters through a DAS is an important step to secure good design. In this context the JAC also notes that many applications are not submitted by professional designers. Whilst there is scope to modify the categories and thresholds associated with the requirement to submit such a design statement, the JAC firmly believes that the need for a formal statement should be retained for sensitive areas, including AONB’s. The commonly used exception in planning legislation relating to Article 1(5) land and World Heritage Sites should be applied in this regard.”(Questions 13 and 14)**

### **Frontloading the development management system**

**“The JAC supports the principle of developers undertaking pre-application consultation with the community for major developments, and agrees that this should allow significant planning issues to emerge in advance which developers can respond to before submitting their application. The JAC notes that the proposed minimum publicity requirements comprise site notices and letters to neighbours, local ward members and town and community councils. However, the JAC considers itself a part of the local community and can raise substantive planning issues for developers to consider. The JAC would therefore suggest that pre-application notification of AONB JAC’s/Partnerships as part of this process would be beneficial.”**

### **Planning committees, delegation and joint planning boards**

**“The JAC supports that part of the proposed National Planning Committee Protocol (which it is noted will not form part of the legislative proposals) relating to mandatory member training. Avoiding unnecessary effort and duplication by preparing a national set of training materials is a sensible approach. Although details of such materials and topics to be covered have not yet been specified, the JAC would strongly recommend that local planning authorities which include nationally protected landscapes (AONB’s and National Parks) should receive specific training in planning for the conservation and enhancement of such designated landscape.”**

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10.1 Dobson & Crowther Factory, Cilmedw, Llangollen**

The AONB Planning Officer reported that a letter (previously circulated) had been sent to the Chair and IJAC from Mr Simon Collinge. Mr Collinge had expressed concern that the colour of the wall cladding of the recently erected factory was too light in colour and that the building was visually intrusive within the AONB. Mr Collinge was also concerned about the felling of trees which helped to screen the site.

Members had some sympathy with the views expressed but agreed that realistically the developer would not change the approved colour of the cladding at this late stage of the development. Members agreed that it was very disappointing that the IJAC had raised these concerns and the Planning Authority had chosen not to act on the Committee's suggestion of sample panels in the first instance. The Chair reported that she had been very concerned about the tree felling and had contacted the planning authority to seek the highest levels of mitigation to compensate for their loss.

The following letter was sent by the Chair to Mr Collinge after the meeting:

**Dear Mr Collinge**

***As requested, I reported your letter to the meeting of the Interim Joint Advisory Committee (IJAC) for the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB held on 5 December, 2014. Copies of your letter and the photographs you sent were circulated to all members prior to the meeting.***

***The IJAC are very disappointed that the planning authority chose not to act on the committee's suggestion that sample panels be erected on site to help select the colour of the cladding, and agree with you that a darker, more recessive colour would help better integrate the new factory into its rural setting. However, members accepted that the planning authority had issued an approval for the cladding as constructed and regretted that there was little that can be done at this stage to overturn a legitimately made decision. The committee did however ask for their concerns to be brought to the attention of the planning authority, hence me copying in Ian Weaver.***

***Members also share your deep concern about the loss of mature trees along the A5 which were to be protected and retained as part of the development. These helped screen the site and reduce its impact in the landscape, and their felling has resulted in the development appearing starker than it would otherwise. When they were felled I personally approached the planning authority to express my concerns and to seek as much mitigation as possible from the developers to compensate for their loss. The committee appreciates that it is difficult to fully compensate for the loss of such mature trees in the short term, but understands that the planning authority has reached agreement with the developers to secure additional planting in mitigation which, in time, will help break up views of the building.***

Yours sincerely,

**Cllr Carolyn Thomas  
Chair of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Interim Joint Advisory Committee**

- 10.2 **Mynydd Mynyllod Wind Farm**  
The Planning Officer reported that Scottish Power Renewables proposal for up to 25 turbines with a height of 110-160m at Mynydd Mynyllod near Llandrillo had been withdrawn, citing landscape and visual impacts of the necessary grid connection as one of the main reasons.
- 10.3 **Rhiannon off-Shore Wind Farm**  
The Planning Officer reported that Celtic Array's proposal for 250+ turbines up to 265m in height in the Irish Sea had also been withdrawn. Challenging undersea ground conditions and associated costs were cited as the main reasons for deciding not to proceed.
- 10.4 **AONB Planning Officer**



Councillor Hugh Jones thanked and commended the AONB Planning Officer on his efficiency; he noted that the Planning Officer who works part time (two days per week) had responded to 62 applications since the last meeting.

10.5 **Message from the Chair**

The Chair thanked all members for their contribution to the IJAC and said she had enjoyed chairing the meetings and extending her knowledge about the AONB. She had tried to promote and raise awareness of the area at every opportunity possible.

10.6 **AONB Officer**

Councillor Nancy Matthews thanked the AONB Officer for briefing members to extend their knowledge of the AONB and making members feel welcome on the committee.

**11. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The first Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Partnership Meeting

Will be held on:-

**Friday 27th March 2015**

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**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

**JOINT COMMITTEE  
Of the  
CLWYDIAN RANGE & DEE VALLEY  
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**

**Held on: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

**Lead Member / Officer: Steve Gadd**

**Report Author: Paula O'Hanlon /Huw Rees**

**Title: Joint Committee Budget Monitoring 2014/15 & Proposed Budget 2015/16**

---

**1. What is the report about?**

The report gives details of the AONB's revenue budget monitoring position for 2014/15 as well as the proposed budget for 2015/16.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the AONB's current financial position.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

Members note the progress against the agreed budget strategy this financial year (Appendix 1). Also, to formally approve the proposed budget for 2015/16.

**4. Report details.**

The report provides a summary of the AONB's revenue budget for 2014/15 detailed in Appendix 1. The AONB's gross expenditure budget is £406K. The position is a forecast under spend of £3k.

The report also provides a summary of the proposed revenue budget for 2015/16 in Appendix 2, which proposes a gross expenditure budget of £403K.

The budget is presented as 2 parts; Core and Area. The Core budget relates to those functions that are the current minimum amount required to operate the AONB activities during the current year. This budget *may* vary from year to year depending on external and internal funding. The Area budget relates to expenditure to deliver projects in the various LA areas of the AONB. The budget could include non-core

staff working on particular projects in the AONB during this year. This budget *will* vary from year to year and even within year depending on project progress and funding sources.

**5. How does it contribute to the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Management Plans Priorities?**

Effective management of the AONB's revenue budgets will help the delivery of the agreed management plan priorities for the current year and underpins activity in all areas, particularly our relationships with funding partners and our joint priorities.

**6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

We are currently projecting that the income contributions remain at the level agreed in the budget for this year.

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

N/A

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

This is the first opportunity to consult the JC regarding the 2015/16 budget. The 2014/15 budget was agreed at the last meeting of the JC held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

This report outlines the financial position for the AONB for 2014/15. If the position remains as a small under spend it is recommended that this is carried forward for use by the JC in 2015/16. The proposed budget for 2015/16 will ensure the financial stability for the JC over the next 12 months. However it must be recognised that the budgets of all public sector bodies are coming under increasing pressure due to the economic climate and that future funding levels may not be relied upon (see also section 10).

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

The proposed budget is dependent on income from NRW, Welsh Government and the three Local Authorities. Any changes to these income levels will pose a risk to the future delivery of projects and our ability to deliver against the priorities in the AONB Management Plan.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

Local authorities are required under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs.

## (DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM COUNCILS)

## CORE - REVENUE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AT 31st December 2014

	Budget 2014/15 £	Forecast 2014/15 £
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	194,483	186,422
Other Employee costs	1,544	1,364
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>196,027</b>	<b>187,786</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Travel Expenses	5,601	4,000
Other Travel Expenses	600	600
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>6,201</b>	<b>4,600</b>
<u>Other</u>		
Office Expenses	3,537	4,396
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>3,537</b>	<b>4,396</b>
<u>Projects</u>		
Grants	63,636	63,636
<b>Total Project costs</b>	<b>63,636</b>	<b>63,636</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>269,401</b>	<b>260,418</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW Grant	-103,847	-103,847
SDF Grant	-63,636	-63,636
Denbighshire County Council	-70,418	-70,510
Flintshire County Council	-26,500	-26,500
Wrexham County Borough Council	-5,000	-5,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-269,401</b>	<b>-269,493</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-9,075</b>



Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

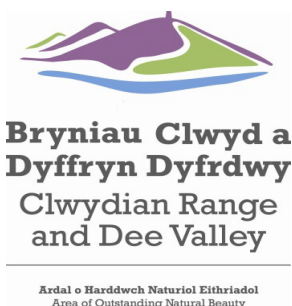
## JOINT AONB COMMITTEE

Appendix 1

(DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM COUNCILS)

AREA - REVENUE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AT 31st December 2014

	Budget 2014/15	Forecast 2014/15
	£	£
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	109,307	112,006
Other Employee costs	496	536
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>109,803</b>	<b>112,542</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Fleet	21,821	15,545
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>21,821</b>	<b>15,545</b>
<u>Other</u>		
Office Expenses	69	450
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>450</b>
<u>Projects</u>		
Management Plan AONB projects	5,000	5,039
<b>Total Project costs</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>5,039</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>136,693</b>	<b>133,576</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW Grant	-12,538	-12,538
Denbighshire County Council	-124,155	-115,226
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-136,693</b>	<b>-127,764</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,812</b>



## (DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM COUNCILS)

## CORE - REVENUE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT PROPOSED BUDGET 2015/16

	<i>Budget 2014/15</i>	<b>Proposed budget 2015/16</b>
	£	£
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	194,483	197,624
Other Employee costs	1,544	1,556
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>196,027</b>	<b>199,180</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Travel Expenses	5,601	5,000
Other Travel Expenses	600	200
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>6,201</b>	<b>5,200</b>
<u>Other</u>		
Office Expenses	3,537	3,396
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>3,537</b>	<b>3,396</b>
<u>Projects</u>		
Grants	63,636	63,636
<b>Total Project costs</b>	<b>63,636</b>	<b>63,636</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>269,401</b>	<b>271,412</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW Grant	-103,847	-103,847
SDF Grant	-63,636	-63,636
Denbighshire County Council	-70,418	-72,429
Flintshire County Council	-26,500	-26,500
Wrexham County Borough Council	-5,000	-5,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-269,401</b>	<b>-271,412</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



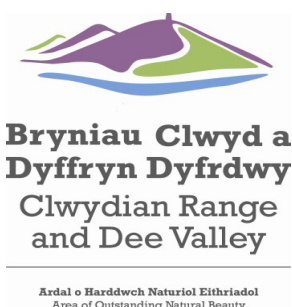
**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

## (DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM COUNCILS)

## AREA - REVENUE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT PROPOSED BUDGET 2015/16

	<i>Budget 2014/15</i>	<b>Proposed budget 2015/16</b>
	£	£
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<u>Employees</u>		
Salaries	109,307	108,845
Other Employee costs	496	536
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>109,803</b>	<b>109,381</b>
<u>Vehicle and Travel</u>		
Fleet	21,821	16,500
<b>Total Vehicle &amp; Travel Expenses</b>	<b>21,821</b>	<b>16,500</b>
<u>Other</u>		
Office Expenses	69	400
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>400</b>
<u>Projects</u>		
Management Plan	5,000	5,000
<b>Total Project costs</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>136,693</b>	<b>131,281</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
NRW Grant	-12,538	-12,538
Denbighshire County Council	-124,155	-118,743
Denbighshire County Council Project Match Funding		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-136,693</b>	<b>-131,281</b>
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>







**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

<b>Held on:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> February 2015</b>
<b>Lead Member / Officer:</b>	<b>David Shiel</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>David Shiel – Asst AONB Officer</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>To receive the draft Management Plan for the AONB and to resolve to consult externally</b>

---

**1. What is the report about?**

The Report is about adopting the draft management Plan for the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

Agreement is required to consult the externally on the on the Draft Plan.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

That the JC endorse the Draft Management Plan and approve it for public consultation.

**4. Report details.**

The Draft Management Plan is a review of the 2009 Management Plan for the Clwydian Range AONB but incorporates the area of the Dee Valley designated as AONB in 2011. It has been prepared following consultation with key partners and stakeholders. The management planning process has included consultation workshops covering the Natural Environment, Historic Environment, Access and Tourism and Planning and Development and has engaged both professional and interested bodies in the process

The plan identifies the Special Qualities and Features of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley and sets out a series of Policies for sustainable development within the context of natural beauty. It recognises the benefits that the special character of the landscape contributes to the communities and economies both inside and outside of the AONB.

Through the State of the AONB Report it makes an assessment of the key issues and factors impacting on the special character of the AONB and includes a 5 year

Action Plan that works towards ensuring that the AONB can continue to deliver key services that contribute to economic, social and cultural wellbeing.

**5. How does it contribute to the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Management Plans Priorities?**

The draft management Plan will replace the current plan which was due for Review in 2014. It will set the agenda for the AONB until 2019.

**6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

The delivery of the Management Plan will be met within existing budget arrangements

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

Appendix 6

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

The plan has been prepared following key stakeholder workshops with specialist and interest groups.

An earlier draft of the plan was approved by the Interim Joint Advisory Committee December 2014.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

"As stated above the Management Plan will be delivered within existing budgets and will also help secure existing external funding levels which form part of the proposed AONB budget."

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

There is a Statutory Duty on the Local Authorities to produce a Management Plan for the AONB

**Financial** - Failing to adopt a Plan may put external funding from Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales in jeopardy.

**Reputational** - There is reputational risk in not adopting a plan and failing to fulfil the statutory to do so.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

The countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 places a duty on Local Authorities to produce a Management Plan for AONBs within their boundary.

The Joint Committee established under Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act of 1972 and the Local Government Act 2000 has the power to act on behalf of the 3 Authorities of Denbighshire Flintshire and Wrexham in discharging this duty.



**Bryniau Clwyd a  
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Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

# **Clwydian Range and Dee Valley**

## **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**



## **Draft Management Plan 2014 - 2019**

**PART ONE  
STRATEGY**

**December 2014**



**PART ONE  
STRATEGY**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is the dramatic upland frontier to North Wales embracing some of the country's most wonderful countryside.

The Clwydian Range is an unmistakeable chain of heather clad summits topped by Britain's most strikingly situated hillforts. Beyond the windswept Horseshoe Pass, over Llantysilio Mountain, lies the glorious Dee Valley with historic Llangollen, a famous market town rich in cultural and industrial heritage.

The Offa's Dyke National Trail traverses this specially protected area, one of the least discovered yet most welcoming and easiest to explore of Britain's finest landscapes.

### About this Plan.

This Management Plan is the first overarching 5 year strategy for the newly formed Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It is a plan for all those with an interest in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley and has been prepared by the AONB Unit in close collaboration with key partners and stake holders. This is a five-year plan for the entire community of the AONB not just the AONB unit. It also recognises that the AONB has an impact on the wider region and can be affected by influences outside of its boundary. It is a Plan for the AONB, its communities, businesses, visitors and organisations and will require all who have an interest in the AONB to work together to achieve its aspirations. It will ensure that AONB purposes are being delivered whilst contributing to the aims and objectives of other strategies for the area.

This Management Plan is different from its predecessors in that it also begins to tackle the question of what the AONB can produce to meet society's needs whilst ensuring the achievement of AONB's purposes to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

## SECTION ONE

### 1..AONB DESIGNATION

The Clwydian Range was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in July 1985. In 2011 following detailed work by the Countryside Council for Wales and the three Local Authorities of Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham the AONB designation was extended to include the Dee Valley. This is the most recent landscape designation in Wales and makes the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB for largest of the 5 AONBs in Wales.

### 1.1 Purpose of the Designation

AONBs together with National Parks recognise our finest landscapes and set a framework for their protection and enhancement. The primary statutory purpose of designating a tract of Countryside as an AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. The concept of 'natural beauty' includes the protection of flora, fauna and geological as well as landscape features. However, it is very important that the cultural dimension of the landscape, including the historical, spiritual and inspirational elements, as well as the physical human shaping of the land is fully recognised. In Wales the added dimensions of the language provides an essential element of cultural richness that must be recognised too. These should all be integrated into the management of AONBs.

### 1.2 The significance of AONB designation

The power to designate an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty comes from the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949. The purposes, duties and management requirements for AONBs are set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. Section 82 of the CROW Act establishes the primary purpose of AONB designation as the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.

Section 85 places a duty on all public bodies to have regard to the purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area in undertaking any functions or actions affecting an AONB. It is not the purpose of designation to stop development but the planning authorities will consider any development proposal to ensure that it does not unduly harm the character and appearance of the AONB; it is sensitively located and designed; and it complements or enhances the special qualities and features of the area.

Section 89 requires the local authorities in whose area an AONB lies to prepare and publish an AONB Management Plan to guide policy development and management actions.

### 1.3 Who is the Plan for?

The Plan is designed to provide a framework that can inform and guide anyone who undertakes activities that may affect the AONB. These will include:

**Relevant Authorities** – All public bodies and statutory undertakers – as defined in Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 – that have a duty to have regard for the purposes of AONBs. This plan, in defining the areas special qualities and features sets out an agenda for managing change that will help these bodies to fulfil their statutory duties. The Joint Committee of the AONB represents and acts on behalf of the three local Authorities of Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham.



**Partners of the AONB** – organisations and individuals that have a key role in delivering and championing the programmes of the AONB – as represented by the AONB Partnership

**Landowners and Land managers** – The Plan seeks to work with landowners and land managers and recognises the key role they have to play in realising the overall vision.

**Local Communities** – The plan commits to working with those who live and work within the AONB and identifies the importance of communities in defining and caring for the landscape. The plan sets out an agenda for working with the communities of the AONB.

## 1.4 Governance

Since the expansion of the AONB to include the Dee Valley, parts of which fall in to Wrexham County Borough Council, a governance review has been undertaken in order to develop more appropriate working structure that reflects the joint approach between the three Local Authorities of Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham as well as the need to expand to include other partnerships in the new AONB.

### **AONB Joint Committee 2014**

The three Local Authorities of Denbighshire, Wrexham and Flintshire entered into the Legal Agreement to jointly discharge their AONB functions by means of a Joint Committee for the AONB in the summer of 2014. The Committee is made up of Lead members (members of the Authority's Executive or Cabinet) of each Local Authority and has the power act on behalf of those Local Authority's in delivering the purposes of the AONB.

### **AONB Partnership 2015**

The AONB Partnership is an effective resource in the range and depth of political and professional expertise and experience. It represents the local authorities, landowners, farmers, conservation and recreation interests. The Partnership supports the delivery of the AONB Management Plan through its expertise and experience in a broad range of fields related to landscape management. It is supported by an Officer's Working Group of relevant officers from the constituent local authorities and Natural Resources Wales.

## SECTION TWO

### Setting the Plan in Context.

#### European Context

##### 2.1 European Landscape Convention

The UK signed up to the European Landscape Convention in 2007. The Convention clearly sets out an agenda for landscape protection and management on a European level and as such is an important element in informing a strategic approach. The Convention asks member states:

- a) to recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity;*
- b) to establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning.*
- c) to establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of landscape policies.*
- d) to integrate landscape into their regional and town planning policies and in its cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, as well as in any other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscape.*

Specifically the Convention asks each country to undertake to raise awareness of landscape protection, identify special landscape characteristics, and to set and implement objectives for protection, management and planning of the landscape.

##### 2.2 International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – Category V Landscapes

AONBs together with other designated landscapes in the UK are part of a global network and sit within a worldwide category of protected areas known as “Protected Landscapes”. Category V refers to one of six categories of protected areas worldwide. Category V Landscapes recognise the significance of AONBs in global terms and ensures a consistent approach to landscape conservation internationally. The IUCN recognises that thinking on protected areas is undergoing a fundamental shift. “Whereas protected areas were once planned against people, now it is recognised that they need to be planned with local people, and often for and by them as well. Where once the emphasis was on setting places aside, we now look to develop linkages between strictly protected core areas and the areas around: economic links which benefit local people, and physical links, via ecological corridors, to provide more space for species and natural processes.”



## National Context

### 2.3 The Environment Bill

Environment Bill emphasises the importance of considering the management of our natural resources, on land and sea, in a more integrated way and places sustainable development at the heart of its approach. It sets out a new statutory framework for the integrated and sustainable management of our natural resources in order to deliver a healthier, more resilient Wales through economic, social and environmental benefits.

### 2.4 Taking the Long View

#### *Welsh Government Statement for AONBs and National Parks.*

This draft policy statement sets out the Welsh Governments policy framework for statutory designated landscapes in Wales. It requires designated landscapes to contribute to meeting the challenges of sustainable development through the delivery of their statutory purposes.

It set out a vision for AONBs and National Parks to be living, working landscapes, exemplars of sustainable development, with vibrant rural communities, extensive recreational opportunities as well as thriving ecosystems rich in biodiversity.

It calls for Protected Landscapes in Wales to be areas where new and innovative solutions to environmental challenges will be developed, tested and shared.

It specifically promotes an 'ecosystem approach' to landscape management which means considering how it regulates our environment and its key services including economic and social wellbeing.

### 2.5 River Basin Management Plans - 2015

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley falls into two River Basin Districts - the Dee and the Clwyd. Natural Resources Wales are currently consulting on the River Dee Basin Management Plan and the River Clwyd Catchment Management Plan due to be completed in 2015. Both plans outline measure to improve the water environment, its river lakes and streams, and encompass all of the issues and pressures on the water environment. The plans recognise that river basin management can deliver multiple benefits. For example the management of the uplands can not only manage flood waters but can also deliver better water quality and help in carbon capture.

## SECTION THREE

### 3.1 An Ecosystem Approach

*What is the landscape of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley delivering for us and how can we ensure that it can continue to deliver?*

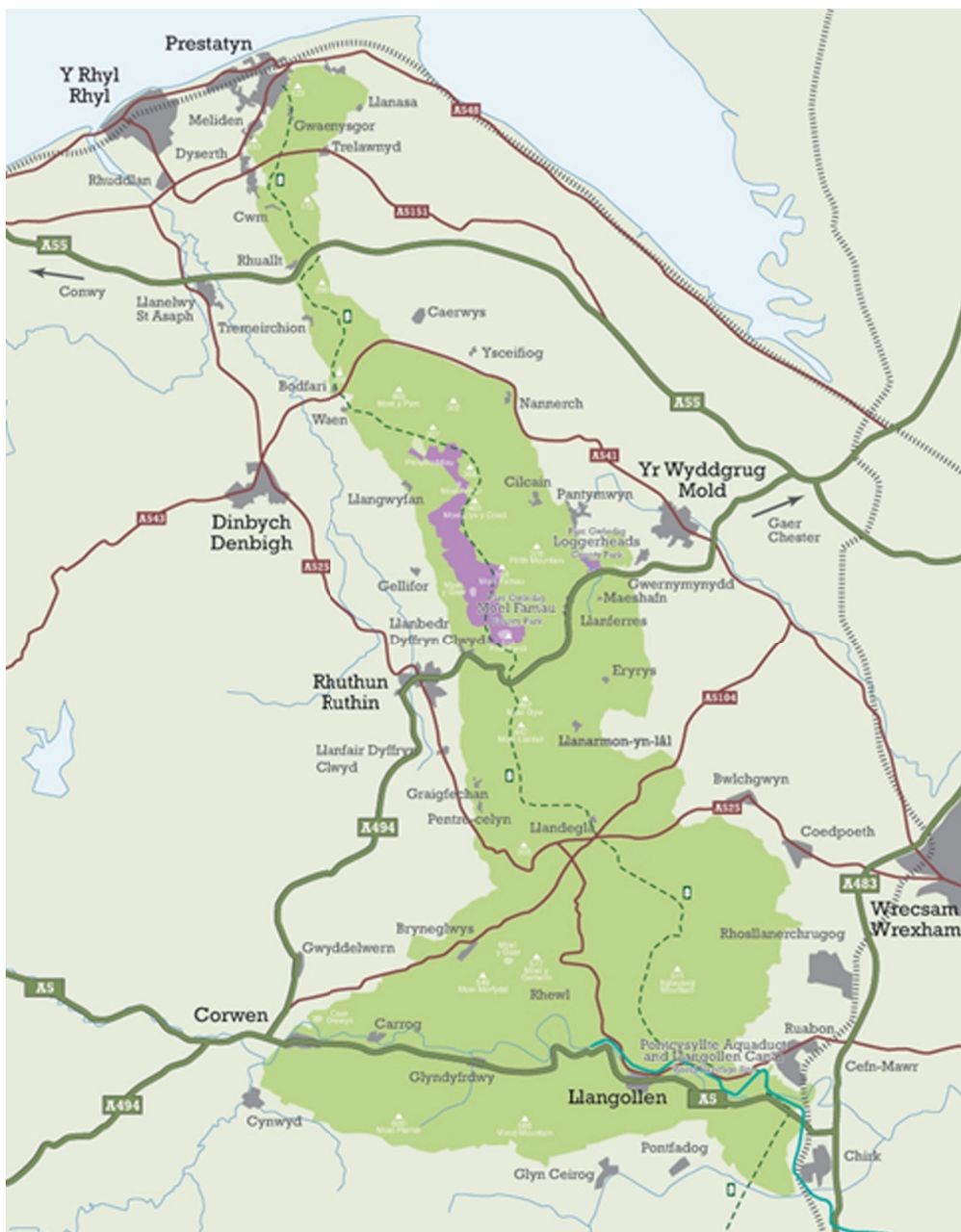
The natural systems of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley touch our lives every day. Whether living in, Mold, Wrexham or Rhyl or in the more rural areas, we rely on these natural systems to support us. They underpin our health, wealth and happiness and give us a sense of place, pride and identity.

Well looked after the AONB will continue to provide us with some of the essentials of life including clean air and water, food, fuel and raw materials. It helps to regulate our climate; stores flood waters, filters pollution, and provides opportunities for us to improve our health and wellbeing. The Plan therefore needs to consider what benefits the AONB can provide to meet the needs of society and respond to current issues such as the need to produce more food, improve health and well-being and adapt to the effects of a changing climate.

It is also recognised that the landscape of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley has an influence on ecosystems, communities and economies far beyond the boundary of the designation. For example the river catchment of the Dee has its beginnings in the Clwydian Range and the Berwyn Mountains but extends far beyond through Denbighshire, Wrexham, Flintshire and Cheshire. Activity within these catchments therefore is potentially wide reaching and so where necessary we need to consider these impacts. This is equally true of the communities and businesses outside of the AONB that nevertheless rely on the outstanding quality of the landscape on their doorstep to thrive.

Provisioning Services	Regulating Services	Cultural Services	Supporting Services
<i>Products of ecosystems such as water, food and The supply of raw materials.</i>	<i>The results of natural processes such as water purification and air quality.</i>	<i>'Non-material' benefits that result from our interaction with the natural environment.</i>	<i>Functions provided by ecosystems that underpin all of the other services.</i>
<b>Water Supply</b>	<b>Air Quality</b>	<b>Inspiration</b>	<b>Soil Formation</b>
Clean water is essential for life. The hill slopes of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley are part of the Dee and Clwyd catchments supplying water for commercial and domestic use.	Plants and trees are central to the cycle of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. They have an important role to play in regulating levels of air pollution.	The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley is renowned for the beauty of its landscapes and its sense of place. The area has provided inspiration for many famous artists and writers. The special qualities of the AONB continue to be a source of inspiration and enables people to escape and find spiritual renewal.	Soil is formed by the interaction between plants, micro-organisms and the underlying geology. We depend on healthy soils for growing food. Soils are slow to form but can be quickly degraded by poor land management, erosion and the impacts of weather and climate
<b>Food</b>	<b>Climate Regulation and carbon storage</b>	<b>Tranquility</b>	<b>Biodiversity</b>
Farmers in the AONB produce food and other raw materials. The farmed environment is a major producer of lamb, beef and dairy.	Plants and trees have an influence on climate at both local and global scales. They absorb and store carbon from the atmosphere. The peaty soils of the upland areas of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley have a key role to play in locking up carbon.	Relative tranquillity is recognised as a special quality of the AONB. It provides a resource and a benefit that is greatly valued in the context of busy population centres to the North and East.	Plants and animals drive many of the processes that result in a healthy ecosystem, and the benefits we get from it. The richness and diversity of species and habitats are vital to conserve as they support and underpin many of the processes we rely on to sustain our lives. The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley is home to a number of species particularly rare species such as black grouse, hen harrier, water vole and great crested newts.
<b>Timber</b>	<b>Water and Flood Regulation</b>	<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>Water</b>
Woodland covers around xx% of the total area of the AONB. Both broad leaved and conifer woodlands contribute to timber markets at Kronospan but many small woodland owners are engaged in coppicing and charcoal production	The water catchments, rivers and streams help regulate the flow of water and drainage of the land through storage and reducing surface run-off. The moorlands, woodlands and ffridd are particularly important and if properly managed they can help reduce flooding at times of high rainfall, and sustain river flows during droughts	It is the people of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley that give the area its distinctive character and strong sense of place and personal belonging. This heritage has been a source of inspiration to generations of landscape painters, poets and musicians and continues to inspire art, music and poetry in eisteddfodau and literature across the area.	We rely on the natural environment and its functions to provide us with fresh water.
<b>Energy</b>	<b>Erosion Regulation</b>	<b>Access and Recreation</b>	<b>Nutrient Cycling</b>
The AONB has good conditions for a range of renewable energy schemes that are compatible with its special qualities. There is scope for developing resources such as woodfuel and hydro in ways that also improve landscape quality and biodiversity.	The fragile peaty soils of the heather ridges and the thin limestone soils are prone to erosion. Erosion is reduced by tree and vegetation cover.	Recreation and tourism is a significant feature of the area with an extensive network of access routes including the Offa's Dyke National Trail, popular beauty spots at Loggerheads, Moel Famau and the and visitor attractions such as the World Heritage Site. The area attracts millions of visits each year, which makes a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of both visitors and residents	Plants, animals and micro-organisms are essential to the natural cycle of nutrients and help maintain soil and water quality. Increased levels of nutrients such as nitrates and phosphates from sewage and fertilisers can result in poor water quality.

Genetic Diversity	Water Quality		Primary Production
<p>The Bio-diversity and seed bank within the AONB are a resource for the future. Local breeds of sheep and cattle help maintain important genetic diversity and contribute to both our cultural heritage and local distinctiveness.</p>			<p>We rely greatly on processes such as photosynthesis where plant communities use solar energy to convert water and nutrient into biological growth, food and raw materials.</p>
	Pollination		
	<p>The effective pollination of crops by bees and other pollinators is vital to the life cycle of many plants. We rely on this 'natural service' for growing food crops and other and wild flowers.</p>		





## SECTION FOUR

### What makes the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Special ?

In setting out a programme of management for the protection and enhancement of the AONB it is first necessary to define those individual features and qualities that make up the special character of the area.

Whilst it is recognised that there are a number of other elements within the landscape that are of particular value it is important to identify those features within the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley that represent the finest qualities nationally. It is also recognised that this special character is made up of the unique combination of all its Special features and qualities where the features may be considered to be the physical attributes, it rolling moorland, woodlands and cliffs and the qualities are the nonphysical attributes and are related to how we interact with it. These are the sensory aspects of the landscape.

The 2009 management planning process for the Clwydian Range undertook consultation with local communities, public bodies and agencies with an interest in the area's management. The individual features and qualities that make up the special character of the area were identified and formed the basis of the 2009 Management Plan for the Clwydian Range. Similarly the work that took place to deliver the extension to the Clwydian Range into the Dee Valley in 2011 considered the special characteristics of the landscape which were then drawn together into an Interim Statement in 2012. The Special Features and Qualities identified in both pieces of work have been drawn together to form the basis of this plan.

Special Qualities of the AONB	
Landscape Character and Quality	<b>Tranquillity</b> <i>Tranquillity is associated with an atmosphere of calm and stillness; peace and quiet; and with dark night skies.</i>
	<b>Remoteness and wilderness, Space and Freedom</b> <i>Remoteness and wildness is associated with a feeling of trepidation and sometimes even danger. The sublime.</i>  <i>Space and freedom is related with access to the landscape and the uninterrupted and extensive views from the high places within it.</i>
	<b>Bro and the link between communities and their landscape</b> <i>A sense of belonging and attachment to the landscape.</i>

<b>Special Features of the AONB</b>	
<b>Habitats and Wildlife</b>	<p><b>Heather Moorland and Rolling ridges</b> <i>The dramatic moorland ridges of the central Clwydian Range, expansive Llandegla and Ruabon Moors, Llantysilio and North Berwyn.</i></p> <p><b>Broadleaved woodlands and Veteran trees</b> <i>Bishops Wood, Cwm and Wheeler Valley. Ash dominated Alyn Valley woods and the small copses of the upper Alyn and upland oak woods of the Dee Valley.</i></p> <p><b>River Valleys and the River Dee</b> <i>The dramatic and powerful river Dee contrasted with the smaller twisting and winding River Alyn and River Wheeler.</i></p> <p><b>Limestone grasslands, cliffs and screes.</b> <i>Graig Fawr, Loggereads and Bryn Alyn – Llanarmon yn Ial and the spectacular Eglwyseg Escapement</i></p>
<b>Historic Environment</b>	<p><b>Historic Settlement and Archaeology</b> <i>Historic settlement patterns and conservation areas. The diverse patterns and features in the landscape left by previous generations.</i></p> <p><b>Industrial Features and the World Heritage Site</b> <i>Limestone quarrying and lead mining, slate quarries and associated tramways and workings – the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and canal, Horseshoe Falls</i></p> <p><b>Historic Defence Features</b> <i>The dramatic chain of Iron Age Hillforts of the Clwydian Range, Castell Dinas Bran and Chirk Castle and medieval Motte and Bailys at Tomon y Rhodwedd, tomen y Fadre and Carrog.</i></p> <p><b>Small historic features</b> <i>Often unlisted or scheduled a rich mixture of small historic features that are an important part of the rich cultural layer of the landscape – wells, village pumps, boundary stones, waymarkers, milk stands and K6 telephone boxes.</i></p> <p><b>Traditional boundaries</b> <i>Drystone walls and hedges reflecting traditional skills and craftsmanship and often reflecting local styles and geology.</i></p>
<b>Access Recreation and Tourism</b>	<p><b>Iconic Visitor and Cultural Attractions</b> <i>Sites that have helped to shape the identity of the AONB as a visitor destination –Loggerheads, Mole Famau, Castell Dinas Bran, Valle Crucis Abbey, the Horseshoe Pass and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Horseshoe Falls</i></p> <p><b>The Offa’s Dyke National Trail and Promoted Routes</b> <i>Stretching from Prestatyn Hillside in the north to Llangollen in the South The National Trail makes the AONB particularly accessible. The Dee Valley Way, north Berwyn Way and a network of community paths. Together with extensive areas of Access Land the landscape of the AONB is particularly accessible.</i></p>
<b>Culture and People</b>	<p><b>The Built Environment</b> <i>The villages and towns, hamlets and scattered settlements.</i></p> <p><b>People and Communities</b> <i>A rich mix of culture and strong sense of community – the facilities and services that are essential to sustaining rural life.</i></p>

## A Vision for the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB is a dynamic landscape with flourishing communities and a thriving local economy. This landscape supports a rich biological and cultural resource delivering benefits for the communities, economies and ecosystems far beyond its boundary. The landscape of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley is cherished as a peaceful haven by those living in and visiting the AONB and is treasured for its open spaces and commanding views. Its special features and the benefits they provide are understood and appreciated by all.

The AONB is managed through sound and effective partnerships which ensure that communities and visitors are fully engaged in decision making and are empowered to have a stake in their local landscape and invest in its future.

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley is a flagship for sustainable development and forward planning and its international protection as a category V protected landscape is influential on an international, national and local stage.



# LANDSCAPE QUALITY AND CHARACTER

Great diversity of landscape, wide-open views, expansive moorland and dramatic ridges, spectacular cliffs and screes, ancient trees and rich woodland, sweeping river valleys and cascading streams; diverse heathlands and rich floristic grasslands;

Historic settlements and distinctive buildings, dramatic monuments and a tapestry of evidence of human settlement: world heritage site, canals aqueducts and waterways;

dark night skies; clear unpolluted air, peace and tranquillity, remote and wild; ruined abbeys and early churches, picturesque views and ancient ruins; thriving communities, Welsh language and Culture; artistic and literary inspiration, extensive trails and paths;

Cynefin, Belonging.

This section focuses specifically on the qualities of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley and in particular the tranquility it offers, the wide and expansive views in all directions from almost every corner. From the East however views are dominated by the conurbations of Mold, Chester, Wrexham and Merseyside. This has a significant impact on tranquility, particularly at night spilling light onto the darker skies to the West.

This section also recognises the vital role that people have played and continue to play in giving the landscape a distinctive character. Generations of communities have shaped the land, farming, building and moulding the landscape to meet their needs. It is people who give an area its flavour, its culture and its heritage, accumulated over many generations.

## Special Qualities

- **Tranquillity,**
- **Remoteness and Wilderness** - Peace and quiet with a hint of danger and surprise
- **Bro and the link between communities and their landscape** - A sense of belonging and attachment to the landscape

Policies	Landscape Quality and Character
	<p><b>PoISQ1.</b> Conserve and enhance the Special Qualities and distinctive character of the AONB’s landscape and associated features.</p> <p><b>PoISQ2.</b> Safeguard the panoramic views, tranquillity and environmental quality of the AONB.</p> <p><b>PoISQ3.</b> Secure the equitable, sustainable use of the area’s natural resources to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB.</p> <p><b>PoISQ4.</b> Protect and promote traditional cultural distinctiveness within the AONB including the Welsh language.</p>





## Objectives

- SQ01.** Ensure that the natural resources and special qualities of the AONB are recognised and valued.
- SQ02.** Ensure that the impacts of environmental change on the AONB are understood and a strategic response is developed and implemented
- SQ03.** Minimise the cumulative impacts of small-scale change that may erode the special character of the AONB.
- SQ04.** Protect the tranquillity of the AONB and take steps where possible to reduce noise and light pollution.
- SQ05.** Where possible reduce visual intrusion by screening or removing eyesores.
- SQ06.** Establish a monitoring programme from key viewpoints across the AONB

## HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

The AONB supports a wide diversity of habitats and species reflecting the local variations in geology, topography, soils, land use and climate. The dramatic moorland ridges of the Clwydian Range and rolling hills of the Dee Valley are mixed with spectacular limestone cliffs, meandering and cascading rivers and scattered woodlands. They contain some of the UK's most important habitats and the significance of these areas for conservation are recognised by designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Area for Conservation and a Special Protection Area.

### Connectivity

It is the combination and variety of features and habitats in the AONB that taken together make the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley special. It is important to consider how these various components interact and function as an overall ecosystem.

The upland areas and river valleys of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley are providing many ecosystem service benefits for people and communities both within and beyond the AONB. Some are well known such as food, fuel, water and biodiversity as well as cultural services such as recreation and tourism. Others are less apparent, but include flood regulation, soil formation and pollination and are equally critical to human well being.

The AONB contains valued landscapes and natural habitats and its soils and woodlands store carbon. It is an important source of water and food. Its landscape and natural beauty attract visitors seeking recreation and mental refreshment.

## Special Features

- Heather Moorland and Rolling ridges
- Broadleaved woodlands and Veteran trees
- River Valleys and the River Dee
- Limestone grasslands, cliffs and screes.

Policies	Habitats and Wildlife
	<p><b>PolHW1.</b> Secure natural systems and networks that provide more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.</p> <p><b>PolHW2.</b> Restore, reconnect and expand key habitats and species at a landscape scale in order to increase resilience to environmental change.</p> <p><b>PolHW3.</b> Ensure that the conservation of habitats is an integral part of agricultural and field sports management.</p> <p><b>PolHW4.</b> Ensure that the natural benefits and services of the landscape are properly understood and valued.</p>

## Heather Moorland and rolling ridges

Most of the moorland within the AONB consists of dry heath although wet heath and blanket bog are also present particularly in the South. Management is primarily for sheep with grouse management also important in the Dee Valley. Although moorland areas in the Clwydian Range are not designated they are still important habitats for protected species. Across the AONB there is a distinctive transitional zone on the lower hillsides where moorland gives way to more fertile low-lying farmland. This upland margin, often known in Wales as ffridd, has a distinctive habitat composition with elements characteristic of both upland and lowland habitats. Ffridd can often be one of the most diverse habitats within the AONB and it particularly important in connecting more fragmented areas.

## Objectives

- HMRO1.** Work with the North Wales Bionet Group to maintain or extend the current extent of heather moorland within the AONB.
- HMRO2.** To bring areas of heather moorland into positive productive management.
- HMRO3.** Continue to monitor black grouse and other upland bird species as an indicator of habitat condition.
- HMRO4.** Associate food production with ecosystem management.
- HMRO5.** Support and encourage sustainable grouse moors management where it has positive environmental and economic impacts.
- HMRO6.** Where possible restore areas of former heathland habitat within the AONB.
- HMRO7.** Provide support to farmers and landowners in upland areas to bring moorlands into management schemes.

## Limstone Grasslands, Cliffs and Screes.

Calcareous grasslands and limestone outcrops exist throughout the AONB most notably to the North around Prestatyn Hillside and the central areas around Llanarmon yn Ial and Eryrys. The dramatic Eglwyseg Escarpment dominates the Eastern end of the Dee Valley in the South and provides some of the most outstanding features of the AONB.

These areas are associated with shallow, free draining base rich soils supporting rich plant communities. This habitat type contributes greatly to the biodiversity of the AONB. These open areas have traditionally been maintained by grazing livestock but changes in farm practices have led to some areas becoming under-grazed with a subsequent loss of species diversity as scrub encroaches.

Many limestone areas within the AONB are of significant biological and geological interest and as such are afforded protection as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Special Areas of Conservation.

Traditionally these areas have been associated with quarrying and mineral extraction with a few large quarries still in operation, and a wealth of industrial archaeology associated with 19th and early 20th century lead mining.

## Objectives

- WVTO1.** Maintain the current extent of calcareous grassland and limestone pavement within the AONB.
- WVTO2.** Bring all areas of public owned / managed limestone grassland, cliffs and screes into favourable management schemes.
- WVTO3.** Provide opportunities for privately owned areas of limestone grassland and pavement to come into favourable management schemes.
- WVTO4.** Ensure that recreational pressure is minimised in sensitive areas.

## Woodland and Veteran Trees

Many of these woodlands represent a link with the landscape as it appeared following the last ice age and support a diverse range of flora and fauna. Ash woodlands are particularly important in the Alyn Valley where it has been designated SAC. In other parts of the AONB oak woods are significant. The historic parklands, particularly evident in the Dee Valley contain some of the oldest trees in the AONB and are key components of the historic landscape as well as supporting significant biodiversity.

## Objectives

- WVTO1.** To maintain the current extent of broadleaved woodland and veteran trees within the AONB.
- WVTO2.** Record the current extent and condition of veteran trees in the AONB.
- WVTO3.** To maintain and restore broadleaved woodland towards a favourable condition through the implementation of Biodiversity Action Plans for Mixed Ash Woodlands, Upland Oak Woodlands and Wet Woodlands.
- WVTO4.** Develop publically owned woodlands as models of best practice in broadleaf woodland management.

## River Valleys

In considering the River Valleys of the AONB it is important to look beyond the water bodies themselves. For example the management of the moorlands and ffridd, maintenance of woodlands and field boundaries can not only manage flood waters but can also deliver better water quality and help in carbon capture. Also we should remember that the water ultimately flows far beyond the boundary of the AONB so the impact of land management within the AONB is potentially far reaching.

The River Dee is the most dominant of the rivers in the AONB with the Dee catchment extending northwards to include the River Alyn in the heart of the Clwydian Range. The Dee is designated SAC and is important of Atlantic salmon, otter and a range of wetland habitats. The Wheeler is the other significant river forming and important part of the Clwyd Catchment.

They are dynamic systems and provide a wide range of ecological niches supporting a diverse flora and fauna. They also form important wildlife corridors, enabling dispersion and migration of species.

## Objectives

- WVTO1.** Continue to monitor the extent of key indicator species such as otter and water vole in order to gauge habitat condition.
- WVTO2.** Continue to develop a partnership of key agencies and bodies to ensure an integrated and landscape approach to management.
- WVTO3.** Support and develop a landscape scale approach to a programme of invasive species control particularly in relation to Himalayan balsam.
- WVTO4.** Raise awareness amongst the general public and landowners/managers of the importance of the river valleys for biodiversity.

# THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The AONB has a wealth of archaeological and historic remains that date from the early prehistoric period right through to the Second World War. Sites range from the massive Iron Age Hillforts to the less conspicuous crop marks and finds in the lower areas. The large number of archaeological sites in the AONB are part of the continuous imprint of human activity that contribute to the landscape character. They represent human activity from around the last ice age 12,000 years ago to the more recent but important industrial landscapes associated with mineral and stone extraction.

Many of these archaeological sites are Scheduled Ancient Monuments and are afforded protection through Cadw. Many other historic features, such as boundary stones, village wells and milestones are not protected and as such are much more vulnerable.

## Special Features

- Historic settlement and archaeology
- Industrial Features and the World Heritage Site
- Historic defence features
- Small historic features
- Traditional boundaries

Policies	Historic Environment
	<p><b>PolHE1.</b> To conserve and enhance features and sites of archaeological, cultural or historic importance within the AONB whilst recognising that the whole of the area has an historic dimension.</p> <p><b>PolHE2.</b> Increase our understanding of all aspect of the Historic Environment of the AONB.</p> <p><b>PolHE3.</b> Ensure that the World Heritage Site is conserved in the context of its setting within the AONB.</p>

## Historic Settlement and Archaeology.

### Objectives

- HSAO1.** Work towards a position where the condition/state of all archaeological sites within the AONB is known and appropriate management work is carried out. Utilise HER information, Pan Wales projects, Glastir agri-environment schemes and the planning process to facilitate this.
- HSAO2.** Encourage owners of Historic parks and Gardens within the AONB to maintain and restore existing parkland features as noted in the Register.
- HSAO3.** Increase the profile of the Historic Environment through effective and

consistent interpretation and information.

- HSAO4.** Incorporate information gathered as part of the Historic Environment Record into the continuous management process within the AONB.

## **Industrial Features and World Heritage Site.**

The tranquillity and beauty of the AONB today in many places masks the bustling and thriving industry that once dominated many parts of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley during the Industrial Revolution. The drive to win natural resources from the landscape; lead, limestone, slate and sand, saw entrepreneurs and prospectors push high onto remote hillsides and deep into wooded valleys in search of fortune. The same period saw great innovation in over-coming the natural barriers of the landscape and features such as the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, the Alyn Valley's Leete and tramways to Moel Fferna and Llantysilio and extensive lead works at Minera remain as dramatic reminders of past ingenuity and determination.

Throughout the AONB remains of winding sheds, engine houses, tramways and limekilns are an important part of the special character of the landscape and offer reminders of past communities.

## **Objectives**

- DFS01.** To secure the integrity of the outstanding universal values of the World Heritage Site.
- DFS02.** Maintenance of key views to and from the WHS and the visual and cultural setting.
- DFS03.** Take steps to limit the impact visitor pressures on the historic integrity and setting of the World Heritage site
- DFS04.** Ensure a consistent approach to interpretation, signage and quality of the experience across partnership authorities.
- DFS05.** Raise awareness of the importance of industrial sites and features within the planning and AONB.
- DFS06.** Develop an "at risk " register for key industrial historic sites and work towards programmes that will respond where action is required.

## **Hillforts and Defensive Structures**

The medieval strong holds of Castell Dinas Brân and Chirk Castle associate the Southern part of the AONB with the defence of the Dee Valley by first the Welsh and subsequently the English under Edward I. The impressive chain of Iron Age Hillforts of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley point to a much earlier occupation and defensive settlement. Later again the

association of Owain Glyndwr with Corwen and Ederynion give a strong cultural and historical root in defence of national identity.

## Objectives

- DFS01.** Ensure continuation of the Heather and Hillforts Project to maintain existing level of work at the 4 hillforts of Penycloddiau, Moel Arthur, Moel y Gaer Llanbedr and Moel Fenlli and aim to continue programme to include Moel y Gaer Bodfari and Moel Hiraddug.
- DFS02.** Ensure the structural integrity features and ensure that impacts of visitor pressure is minimised.

## Small Historic Features

The landscape and particularly the villages of the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty contain many small features which cumulatively help enhance the area and give it its character. Some still have a useful function, like post boxes and village greens and parish commons. Others like old fingerpost road signs, no longer maintained by the Highway Authority, milestones or K6 red telephone boxes no longer have a use and can easily disappear from our landscape.

These everyday features are often taken for granted but our settlement landscapes would be the poorer without them.

## Objectives

- DFS03.** Raise awareness of the importance of small historic features within both the planning and highways environments by providing training sessions to professionals.
- DFS04.** Encourage Communities to identify and map features within their communities on a standard database which is compatible with the HER.
- DFS05.** Encourage Communities to adopt these features and act as their champions by raising awareness within community councils and youth groups.

## Boundaries

Boundary features in the Clwydian Range largely reflect local circumstances and geology. In the limestone areas the boundaries are predominantly stone built, in the more recently enclosed upland areas boundaries are predominantly fence lines and in the agricultural areas of the lower slopes in both the east and west, hedges predominate.



## Objectives

- BO1.** Using SDF and other funds develop a Countryside Grant schemes to support projects which will maintain and enhance the most important boundaries in the AONB as well as other Special Features
- BO2.** In line with aspirations within *The Welsh Historic Environment Strategic Statement* (2009) raise the skills base amongst the local workforce to increase the number of people who can carry out the necessary conservation and repair work.
- BO3.** Identify the most important boundaries within the AONB.

## ACCESS RECREATION AND TOURISM

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley is an historic gateway to Wales, crossed by a number of access corridors. These corridors, including main road routes (such as the A5, A55 and A494), upland passes (including the Horseshoe Pass) and the rail routes, have varied historical significance as well as being highly important for tourism. In 2007 a Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for the Clwydian Range AONB was prepared, to run up to 2013 and beyond. It formed the basis for the award to the AONB of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas and has been actively used by the AONB team and its partners to guide their tourism related work in the area. This strategy was reviewed in 2014 encompassing the new parts of the AONB in the South. The strategy gives recognition to the value of tourism to the economy, environment and communities of the AONB and its wider area of influence. Sustainable Tourism is defined as tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.

### Health and well-being.

The trend across the UK and other developed nations is for physical activity levels to decline. This is associated with widespread use of the private car, an increase in sedentary leisure activities and greater mechanisation in the home, workplace and public places. Illness as an outcome of physical inactivity has been conservatively calculated to be £1.08 Billion per annum in direct costs to the NHS alone. Indirect costs have been estimated as £8.2 Billion per annum. Studies have shown that in a UK context for every £ spent on developing and promoting access to the countryside presents a £19 saving to the health Service. Investment in infrastructure and action to facilitate increased activity levels amongst local communities through access to the countryside is critical therefore in promoting significantly improved levels of health and wellbeing.

## Special Features

- Iconic Visitor and Cultural Attractions
- The Offa's Dyke National Trail and Promoted Route



Policies	Access, Recreation and Tourism
	<p><b>PoIART1.</b> To promote the sustainable use and enjoyment and understanding of the landscape of the AONB in a way that contributes to local prosperity and social inclusiveness.</p> <p><b>PoIART2.</b> Ensure the attractiveness of the AONB’s landscape and views as a primary basis for the areas tourism are retained.</p> <p><b>PoIART3.</b> Ensure that all visitors and residents are able to experience and enjoy the benefits of the special qualities of the AONB within environmental limits.</p> <p><b>PoIART4.</b> Ensure that the honey pots and other key access points are managed to a high standard and that they act as models of good practice in access and conservation delivery.</p> <p><b>PoIART5.</b> Ensure the Country Parks and the Offa’s Dyke National Trail provide effective gateways to the AONB in promoting understanding and awareness of its key qualities and features.</p>

### Iconic Visitor and Cultural Attractions.

Key sites such as Loggerheads, Moel Famau, Castell Dinas Bran, Valle Crucis, the River Dee and Pontcysyllte aqueduct have been reproduced by early landscape painters such as Richard Wilson, Turner and Edward Pugh, and as such have particular significance in the very early presentation of picturesque landscapes. They have, in part, contributed to a very strong tradition of tourism to these areas within the AONB.

These are the sites that help to give an area a sense of place because of the cultural attachment associated with them. The influence of Loggerheads and Moel Famau on the central Clwydian Range has been significant and spanned generations. It has in part shaped communities and been a corner stone of the tourism in this area.

Similarly Castell Dinas Brân, Valle Crucis Abbey, Pontcysyllte and the and the Horseshoe Pass combine to give the Southern part of the AONB a sense of the sublime and has provoked generations of visitors in search of the picturesque to flock to the Dee Valley.

## Objectives

- IVCO1.** To ensure that visitors and the tourism industry understand the need for, and support the conservation and enhancement of, the special qualities of the AONB as key assets upon which tourism is based.
- IVCO2.** Promote and assist convenient and sustainable access into the AONB and special places within it.
- IVCO3.** Continue to develop public transport links and develop a strategy to reduce congestion between honey-pots and with other centres of population.
- IVCO4.** Investigate ways to reduce congestion around key visitor areas.
- IVCO5.** Target information relating to the Countryside Code, behaviour and the Country Park and provide information relating to the impact of visitors on conservation and remedy works including tree felling.
- IVCO6.** Ensure that both Loggerheads Moel Famau Country Parks continue to act as exemplars in delivering projects in key areas and manage both sites towards favourable condition through sensitive ecological management.
- IVCO7.** Provide assistance to tourism businesses in the area should be helped to embrace the opportunities and responsibilities of being in a protected area, understanding more about the AONB, improving their management of resources and informing their guests about the area.

## The Offa's Dyke Trail and Promoted Routes

The Offa's Dyke Path National Trail is a key feature of the AONB, running its entire length from Prestatyn Hillside in the North to the Dee Valley in the South. It links many of the AONB's most outstanding features crossing the peaks and hillforts of the Clwydian Range, the dramatic moorland plateau of the Ruabon Mountain before crossing the Eglwyseg Escapement and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

The AONB is also well served by an extensive network of rights of way, which have been actively maintained, identified and promoted for various kinds of access, with some promoted as named trails. The River Dee provides a major facility for recreation.

## Objectives

- ODPO1.** Continue a programme of Rights of Way improvement across the AONB through the use of the Community miles Initiative and other area access improvement works focusing on increasing opportunities to access the countryside.
- ODPO2.** Provide increased opportunities where appropriate for cycling and horse riding in the AONB and promote these opportunities.
- ODPO3.** Ensure each Local Access Forum has a good understanding of the needs of the AONB through regular liaison
- ODPO4.** Raise awareness of the acknowledged health and well-being benefits provided by the AONB and develop initiatives promoting physical activity particularly walking and cycling.

- ODPO5.** Understand and work towards removing physical and psychological barriers to access.
- ODPO6.** Investigate ways to promote the trail with local tourism businesses and to develop initiatives that will strengthen business links.
- ODPO7.** Strengthen links between the Trail and nearby settlements and places of interest utilising the wider Rights of Way Network and Public Transport.
- ODPO8.** Monitor erosion in key areas and develop a programme of measures that will reduce the impact of the trail on the landscape by limiting width or depth of path as appropriate.

## THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Policies	Historic Environment
	<p><b>PolHE1.</b> Ensure that new development adopts the highest standards of design and is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the AONB.</p> <p><b>PolHE2.</b> Retain and improve essential services and facilities for local people.</p> <p><b>PolHE3.</b> Ensure that local businesses and communities feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for their surroundings.</p>

## Objectives

- BE01.** Ensure new development in and around the AONB is sympathetically located in the landscape, and is well designed to complement the character and appearance of the area and its setting, particularly in respect of visual impact, scale, materials and landscaping.
- BE02.** Conserve and enhance the character and local distinctiveness of historic villages, buildings and gardens within the AONB.
- BE03.** Promote action to reduce the visual impact of prominent existing development in the AONB.

## Culture and People

Communities need to be at the heart of any vision. Rural communities need economic and social sustainability. There are two key areas that need support. The first is local facilities such as shops, pubs, schools and youth clubs, which provide vital services for the community and local employment, and includes more recent necessities of life such as mobile phone and internet access.

The second is countering rural exclusion by which opportunities are limited by issues such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing and poor public transport. A lack of affordable housing for local people is another important factor. Communities may also have specific needs for particular groups, including older and younger people and the less able. It is also important that the local communities feel that they are part of the AONB and they have a part to play in formulating policy and the decision making process. Communities should directly benefit from being in the AONB through projects that are targeted at communities and their environs through the Sustainable Development Fund.

## Objectives

- CPO1.** Help local communities to retain and enhance access to essential community services and facilities.
- CPO2.** Support the development of affordable housing for local people in appropriate locations, whilst maintaining the highest standards of design and landscaping.
- CPO3.** Foster a sense of place and local pride to secure social well-being.
- CPO4.** Ensure that the governance of the AONB promotes effective partnerships and fosters opportunities for communities to engage in the management of the AONB.



**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

## Clwydian Range and Dee Valley

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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State of the AONB Report

2014 – 2019



In setting an agenda that will ensure the special qualities and features of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley are preserved, it is first necessary to make an assessment of their current extent and condition. It is also important that the issues impacting upon them are identified and that factors likely to impact upon them in the future are anticipated.

The State of the AONB Report identifies where possible the extent and condition of each feature and the factors impacting on them. It also seeks to identify an ideal state for these features and begins to establish indicators that will help to define what we are aiming for in pursuing the good health of the AONB. It is an on-going process that relies on constant data gathering and monitoring and should be able to respond to changing demands on the environment. There is a requirement for up to date information that will lead to informed responses to environmental change.



## Tranquillity, Remoteness and Wilderness

<p><b>Tranquillity, Remoteness and Wilderness</b></p>	<p><b>Intrusion</b></p> <p>A variety of factors can have an impact on the Tranquillity, Remoteness and Wilderness of the AONB. Traffic noise, light pollution, the impact of quarrying and utility installations can all have an effect on the tranquillity of the AONB and peoples enjoyment of the landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light from the major settlements, particularly to the east and north of the AONB, have a significant impact on dark night skies.</li> <li>• Light and noise pollution from transport, development and recreation erodes tranquillity – A55, A494, A5, A542</li> <li>• Intrusive and degrading elements such as power lines / phone lines, transmitters, masts and wind turbines can have a significant impact.</li> <li>• Cumulative effects of small scale change can lead to a degradation of landscape character.</li> <li>• Permitted development completed within the AONB could also impact the landscape.</li> <li>• Accommodating visitor access and destination sites within sensitive locations.</li> </ul>	<p>Further intrusion mapping required</p> <p>Extent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illuminated bollards and signs within Denbighshire – 80 within AONB Wrexham - unknown Flintshire - unknown</li> <li>• Street lights 1,350 directly adjacent to or within AONB in Denbighshire.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tranquillity, Remoteness and Wilderness</b></p>	<p><b>Roads</b></p> <p>The principle roads and communication routes in the AONB primarily cross the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible environmental impact of major road improvement schemes in the AONB.</li> <li>• Potential loss of rural character</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length and class of roads in the AONB: Dualled EuroRoute – 1.6km Trunk Road - 35.0km A Road - 49.2km</li> </ul>

	<p>Clwydian Range in an east – west direction, and run in an east – west direction along the Dee Valley and Morwynion Valley. The most significant road is the dualled A55 EuroRoute which passes through the narrowest part of the AONB at Rhuallt. Other important routes are the A5 and A494 Trunk Roads and the A542 Horseshoe Pass, A5104, A5151, A541, A539 and A525. However, the bulk of the network within the AONB is made up of smaller roads and lanes, many of which add to the character of the area.</p>	<p>and features as a result of highway maintenance, signage and minor improvement works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing traffic related to people working at a considerable distance from where they live, increasing commuter traffic, and use of cars for recreational visits.</li> <li>Raising awareness of the AONB through threshold / village signs.</li> </ul>	<p>B Road - 23.6km  Minor roads - 338.8km  Unclassified County Roads - 60.9km  Total length of road 509.1km</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of AONB threshold signs – 16</li> <li>No. of AONB branded village signs – 21</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tranquillity, Remoteness and Wilderness</b></p>	<p><b>Minerals</b></p> <p>The limestone and slate geology of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley has been exploited for its mineral wealth for centuries. This has left its mark on the landscape; many abandoned or worked out mineral sites have been assimilated into the landscape over time but others still scar the area. There are two active slate quarries in the AONB, other sites are dormant but</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restoration and aftercare of quarries, including these which are outside the AONB but visible from it or impact on views into the area.</li> <li>Dormant sites – need to pursue Prohibition Notices under s102 of T&amp;CP Act 1990.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Within AONB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of active quarries – 2</li> <li>Area of active quarries – 41.5 ha % of total AONB area – 0.11%</li> <li>No. of dormant quarries - unknown</li> <li>Area of dormant quarries - unknown % of total AONB area - unknown</li> <li>No. of confirmed Prohibition Orders - unknown</li> </ul> <p><b>Within 3km of AONB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of active quarries - 8</li> <li>Area of active quarries – 203.38 ha</li> <li>No. of dormant quarries - unknown</li> <li>Area of dormant quarries - unknown</li> </ul>



	<p>have old planning permissions. Given the scale of mineral operations and their potential impact on a wide area, including important views out of the AONB, there is a need to have regard to both active and dormant quarries outside the designated area.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No of confirmed Prohibition Orders – unknown</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tranquillity, Remoteness and Wilderness</b></p>	<p><b>Utilities and Energy</b></p> <p>Overhead power transmission lines and communications masts are the most prominent utility infrastructure within the AONB. The largest power lines cross the AONB at its narrowest point near Rhuallt and travel through the AONB down the Morwynion Valley. Given the topography of the AONB it is an attractive location for communications infrastructure. The most prominent installations are the masts at Moel y Parc and Cynr y Brain, but there are also prominent masts at Gwaenysgor, Moel Gelli, Craig-y-dduallt, Coed Mawr and Barber’s Hill.</p> <p>A relatively new feature of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overhead cables and wires can degrade the local landscape character.</li> <li>Reluctance to share masts leads to duplication and an increase impact on the local landscape.</li> <li>Mobile phone coverage ‘blackspots’ lead to pressure for additional communication masts.</li> <li>Cumulative impact of large scale wind farm development in the setting of the AONB degrades landscape character and sense of tranquillity.</li> <li>The need to moving towards zero carbon development without harming the AONB.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Length of National Grid high-voltage overhead cable (400kv) – 17.46km</li> <li>Length of 132kv overhead power lines – 1.38km</li> <li>Length of 33kv overhead power lines – 44.76km (87.85)</li> <li>Length of 33kv undergrounded power lines – 6.19km (12.15%)</li> </ul> <p>Communication masts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moel y Parc (TV)</li> <li>Moel y Gelli (Emergency Services)</li> <li>Gwaenysgor</li> <li>Bryn Alyn</li> <li>Cynr y Brain</li> <li>Moel Gelli</li> <li>Craig-y-dduallt</li> <li>Coed Mawr</li> <li>Barber’s Hill</li> </ul> <p>Wind turbines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 46m high wind turbine consented</li> </ul>

	regional energy infrastructure is the development of major on-shore and off-shore wind farms.		<p>within the AONB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50m+ high wind turbines within 15km – 122</li> </ul>
<b>Tranquillity, Remoteness and Wilderness</b>	<p><b>Land Management Practices</b></p> <p>Land Management Practices are continually changing, adapting to government policy, climate change and agricultural improvements. These changes in management have the ability to impact on the landscape of the AONB.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of European and Welsh Government agricultural and forestry policies can have a significant impact on landscape character and views</li> <li>It is important that habitat improvements and creation becomes a part of viable land management systems and businesses.</li> <li>Modern agricultural practices and equipment leads to larger fields with fewer internal boundaries and wider gateways, which can degrade the local landscape character.</li> <li>Geometrical forestry planting and harvesting, and heather cutting patterns can add intrusive lines into the landscape.</li> <li>Lack of buffer strips along watercourses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6,441.35 ha of the AONB is Common Land (16.55% of total AONB area)</li> <li>7,786.98ha (20% of total AONB area) of land in the AONB in Glastir Agri-environment scheme in 2013. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5,232.24ha (67%) Entry Level</li> <li>793.75ha (10%) Glastir Advanced</li> <li>1,760.99ha (23%) Glastir Commons</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Protection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8,028.37 ha of AONB designated as SAC (20.62% of AONB land area)</li> <li>9,097.34 ha of AONB designated as SSSI (23.36% of AONB land area)</li> <li>2,555.05 ha of AONB designated as SPA (6.56% of AONB land area)</li> <li>21.33 ha of AONB designated as LNR (0.05% of AONB land area)</li> <li>3,451.92 ha of AONB designated as Wildlife Sites (8.87% of AONB land area)</li> </ul>
<b>Tranquillity, Remoteness and Wilderness</b>	<p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>The AONB has evolved over time, shaped by geological</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaption and mitigation measures may impact upon the AONB and its setting.</li> <li>Reduction in air and water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9,428 ha (24.2% of AONB area) is heather moorland.</li> <li>Total area of AONB covered by woodland 5,165.24 ha (13.27% of</li> </ul>

	<p>forces, climate and human activity, and this evolution is ongoing. Climate change is expected to have a major influence in the coming decades, and we need to manage this process, taking action to adapt to the impacts and make the best of the opportunities.</p> <p>Although the global climate has been relatively stable for thousands of years, recent extreme weather events and longer terms trends suggest it is now changing due to human activity. Climate change is expected to continue, causing hotter, drier summers, warmer wetter winters, more extreme weather and sea level rise in Wales and the rest of Britain.</p> <p>Global climate change is projected to continue, causing hotter drier summers, warmer, wetter winters, more extreme weather, droughts, heat waves, heavier rainfall, and accelerating sea-level rise in Wales and the rest of Britain over coming decades.</p>	<p>quality impacting on the health of the population and ecosystem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seasonal reduction / increase in water flow.</li> <li>• Pressure for inappropriate flood defences with dredging and development degrading the local landscape character.</li> <li>• Long dry spells of weather could lead to increased fire risk, particularly on heathlands.</li> </ul>	<p>AONB area).</p>
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Resource / Special Feature	Description	Issues	State
<b>Cultural Heritage and Bro</b>	<p><b>Bro/Welsh Language</b></p> <p>'Bro' is a Welsh word which describes a sense of belonging and community cohesion within an area. It is an intangible concept which is difficult to define, but is nonetheless a valid component of sustainable Welsh communities. The Welsh language is part of the traditional character and cultural make-up of the AONB. The use of Welsh is greater than the Wales average (21.3%) and remains a significant feature of the area. The greatest proportion of Welsh language users live in the western and south western parts of the AONB.</p> <p><b>Picturesque and romantic movement</b></p> <p>The story of the picturesque movement in the AONB goes back to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in the Dee Valley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community involvement and participation in local events and traditions.</li> <li>• Inward migration is changing the makeup of communities</li> <li>• Need to raise community awareness of the AONB and the benefits it brings, especially in the south.</li> <li>• Need to raise local business awareness of the AONB and the benefits it brings.</li> <li>• Sustaining the Welsh language</li> <li>• Lack / loss of facilities to celebrate cultural associations.</li> <li>• Visitor pressure degrading landscape character at key locations.</li> <li>• Loss of significant views depicted in art or prose due to vegetation encroachment, or insensitive development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of population speaking, reading and writing Welsh in the AONB (2011): North – 26.7% West – 37.2% East – 24.2% South – 29.1%</li> <li>• No. of active community groups – Unknown</li> <li>• No. of community shows – 6</li> <li>• No. of community publications – Unknown</li> <li>• Cylch Meithryn / Ty a fi clubs – 7</li> <li>• Welsh medium primary schools in the AONB – 2</li> </ul>

	<p>around Llangollen, painted by Turner and Wilson amongst others. Richard Wilson also has close links to the Loggerheads area.</p> <p>The ladies of Llangollen established the Dee Valley as a centre for picturesque appreciation from their home at Plas Newydd.</p> <p>Poets and authors such as Wordsworth, Gerald Manley Hopkins and Mendelssohn have also taken inspiration from the AONBs landscape.</p> <p><b>Eisteddfodau</b></p> <p>Building on these artistic traditions, Llangollen is known throughout the world for the International Eisteddfod, held annually in the town since 1947. Corwen was the location of the first public national eisteddfod in 1919.</p>		
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## Natural Environment

RESOURCE/ SPECIAL FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ISSUES	STATE
<p><b>Natural Environment</b></p>	<p><b>Natural Benefits and Services</b></p> <p>The landscape of the AONB is important for the resources it offers which benefit everyone, such as water, food and locations for quiet enjoyment.</p> <p>These benefits, known collectively as Ecosystem Services indicate that the landscape of the AONB not only provides a rich variety of habitats and species, but also contributes positively towards the production of food, the control of climate and recreational provision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for natural systems and networks that are fit for purpose, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.</li> <li>• There is a need to identify all the benefits and services delivered by the natural system.</li> <li>• Lack of data and knowledge makes it difficult to manage within environmental limits.</li> <li>• There is no baseline for assigning a value to the services and benefits received from the natural system.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Natural Environment</b></p>	<p><b>Habitat Resilience</b></p> <p>Habitat resilience is a habitats ability to respond to natural or man-made disturbance through fast recovery or by resisting damage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resilience and condition of the natural system is not fully understood.</li> <li>• Attention given to priority habitats at the expense of other locally important sites,</li> </ul>	

		<p>such as road verges and other corridors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for the expansion of and connectivity between wildlife rich habitats.</li> </ul>	
<b>Natural Environment</b>	<p><b>Designations / SAC</b></p> <p>Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) are legal protections for sites of European importance for habitats and birds, to protect against damaging activities. These designations form part of a larger European network called Natura 2000.</p> <p>Sites of national importance are designated and given protection as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</p> <p>Land designated as a County Wildlife sites are often the finest local examples of habitats, and are given material consideration in the planning process.</p> <p>These and other designations provide a level of protection for important sites against potentially damaging activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to bring sites into favourable conservation status.</li> <li>• Visitor pressure in key conservation areas.</li> <li>• Designations do not address all conservation interests.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 22 SSSI's in the AONB, covering 9,097.34 ha (23.36% of total AONB area).</li> <li>• There are 3 SAC's covering 8,028.37 ha (20.62% of AONB)</li> <li>• There is 1 SPA covering 2,555 ha (6.56% of AONB)</li> <li>• There are 162 Wildlife Sites covering 3,451.92 ha (8.87% AONB)</li> <li>• There is 1 LNR covering 21.33 ha (0.05% AONB)</li> <li>• There are 73 RIGS sites covering 676.45 ha (1.74% AONB)</li> </ul> <p><b>Condition:</b></p> <p>NRW continue to monitor the condition of SSSIs, SACs and SPAs. All geological SSSIs are in favourable condition.</p>



## Natural Environment

RESOURCE/ SPECIAL FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ISSUES	STATE
<p><b>Limestone Grassland, cliffs and screes</b></p>	<p>Calcareous grasslands typically occur on shallow base-rich soils derived from the underlying limestone rocks. They are characterised by a short species-rich turf containing a variety of grasses and herbs. In the AONB calcareous grassland primarily occurs in the north from Prestatyn to Cwm, centrally along the Alyn Valley, including the second largest limestone pavement in Wales at Bryn Alyn, and in the south around the Eglwyseg rocks where large areas of scree are also located.</p> <p>Limestone pavement is an area of limestone which lies wholly or partly exposed on the surface of the ground and has been fissured by natural erosion. They can be wooded or open and both types exist within the AONB.</p> <p>There are a number of geologically and archaeologically important</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under-grazing encouraging scrub encroachment.</li> <li>• Over-grazing resulting in loss of species diversity</li> <li>• Enrichment of soils from fertilisers, herbicide application, ploughing and re-seeding from agricultural purposes.</li> <li>• Acidification and nitrogen enrichment caused by atmospheric deposition.</li> <li>• Recreational pressure bringing about floristic changes associated with soil compaction.</li> <li>• Recreational pressure on Limestone geological SSSI features such as Eglwyseg scree slopes and Panorama Drive limestone grassland.</li> <li>• Invasion by no-native plant species.</li> <li>• Limited knowledge of underground systems.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Limestone Grassland Ideal state:</b> Favourable condition will be comprised of short species-rich mixtures of herbs, grasses, sedges and mosses on lime-rich soil. Balanced management ensures a scrub grassland mosaic that supports a wide range of wildlife without the scrub spreading to replace the grassland.</p> <p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unimproved Calcareous Grassland: 292.24 ha (0.75% of AONB area)</li> <li>• Semi-improved Calcareous Grassland: 39.74 ha (0.1% of AONB area)</li> </ul> <p><b>Limestone Pavement Ideal state:</b> Limestone pavements require structural diversity to maximise transitions, shelter invertebrates and keep a variety of structural niches open. There should be a mixture of flora characteristic of rocky and woodland habitats. Wooded pavements should have clearings created naturally by clint and gryke structure or through woodland management.</p>



	<p>caves associated with the Limestone areas of the AONB. Caves studied have been found to be important archaeologically for human and animal activity. Cave systems at Tremerechion, Llanarmon-yn-Ial and Loggerheads are among the more well known. In 2015, there is currently a Cadw funded project running to discover more about Limestone caves in north east Wales.</p> <p>Scree slopes on the Eglwyseg rocks are an important geological feature, across which the Offa's Dyke National Trail passes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of Limestone rocks for rockeries.</li> <li>• Quarrying.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limestone Pavement: 1.88ha (13.82% of Limestone Pavement in Wales – Wales total 13.6 ha)</li> <li>• Scree: 22.89 ha</li> </ul> <p><b>Indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 12 SSSIs in the AONB containing Geological features.</li> <li>• There are 73 RIGS sites in the AONB covering 676.45 ha (1.74% of the AONB).</li> <li>• 315.52 ha (88.23%) within SAC, SSSI or Wildlife Site.</li> <li>• 230.3 ha (64.4%) international and national designation with commitments to maintain / restore favourable condition (SAC and SSSI).</li> </ul> <p><b>Limestone Cave systems indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. Caves in the AONB - unknown</li> <li>• 4 cave systems protected as SSSI; Alyn Gorge Caves (Alyn Valley Woods &amp; Alyn Gorge Caves SSSI), Coe Gwyn &amp; Ffynnon Beuno Caves, Tremeirchion Caves (both Ffynnon Beuno &amp; Cae Gwyn Caves SSSI) and Minera Caves (Ruabon / Llantysilio Mountains &amp; Minera SSSI).</li> </ul> <p><b>Limestone Habitats Favourable Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.05 ha (0.29% resource) are within</li> </ul>
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			<p>DCC Countryside Service owned / managed sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.47 ha (1.53% resource) are within NWWT managed sites.</li> </ul> <p><b>Condition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NRW continue to monitor the condition of SSSIs and SACs.</li> <li>All geological SSSIs are in a favourable condition.</li> </ul> <p>From 2015 to 2018 there is to be significant investment into Limestone features in the AONB through the Limestone Legacy project which has received NRW competitive bid funding.</p>
<p><b>Heather moorlands and rolling ridges</b></p>	<p>Dominated by heather, bilberry and western gorse with ideally a diverse range of age communities. It has a distinct range of bird life associated with it, including grouse, stonechat and whinchat.</p> <p>The uplands of the North Berwyn, Llantysilio, Ruabon and Llandegla mountains in the south of the AONB are predominantly heathland. Heather moorland is also found in large blocks along the ridge of the Clwydian Range between Llandegla and Bodfari.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conversion to grassland through ploughing, reseeding, liming and fertilisation for agricultural purposes.</li> <li>The division of common through internal fences and subsequent loss of hefted flocks.</li> <li>Under-grazing / abandonment.</li> <li>Localised over-grazing caused by lack of heathland management and structure.</li> <li>Poorly managed burning / wildfires.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ideal state:</b></p> <p>Upland heath in 'favourable condition' is typically dominated by a range of dwarf shrubs such as heather, bilberry, crowberry, bell heather and western gorse. They are generally structurally diverse, containing stands of vegetation with heather at different stages of growth, including areas of mature heather. This habitat supports an important assemblage of birds, a diverse invertebrate fauna and, in some cases, assemblages of rare and local mosses and liverworts.</p> <p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9,428 ha (24.2% of AONB area) (includes degraded areas / potential</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate methods of supplementary feeding.</li> <li>• Bracken invasion.</li> <li>• Heavy recreation pressure causing erosion, particularly illegal off road vehicle use in the south of the AONB.</li> <li>• Lack of appropriate rotational heather management.</li> <li>• Afforestation.</li> <li>• Nitrogen enrichment caused by atmospheric deposition.</li> </ul>	<p>for restoration / expansion).</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9,317.2 ha (98.9%) has some form of designation conferring a level of protection.</li> <li>• 7,776.6 ha (82.48%) is protected as SSSI or SAC.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Favourable management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 683.51 ha (7.25% resource) are within DCC Countryside Service owned / managed sites.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Condition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of the heathland areas in the AONB are currently being managed through cutting and burning of heather, and cutting and bruising of bracken.</li> <li>• Bracken extent unknown. Between 2008 and 2012, in the Heather and Hillforts project area, 1,029 ha of bracken were sprayed, and 270.5 ha cut / bruised. Bracken dominated heathland reduced from 788 ha to 303 ha.</li> <li>• Between 2008 and 2012, in the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio mountains, mature / degenerate heather reduced from 384 ha to 367 ha</li> </ul> <p>The Heather and Hillforts project Landscape</p>
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			Partnership Scheme ran from 2008 to 2012, focusing on the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio mountains heathland areas. Significant work was undertaken to reduce the extent of bracken through aerial spraying, as well as work with landowners and graziers to improve the condition of heathland. Heather condition surveys were carried out in 2005 and 2010, showing an improvement in the age structure of heather as well as a reduction in the extent of bracken cover.
<b>Woodland and veteran trees</b>	<p>Many of these woodlands represent a link with the landscape as it appeared following the last ice age and support a diverse range of flora and fauna. Ash woodlands are particularly important in the Alyn Valley where it has been designated SAC. In other parts of the AONB oak woods are significant.</p> <p>Veteran trees are trees which, because of their size and age are considered of exceptional cultural, landscape and nature conservation value. Veteran trees are often associated with parkland, and are usually found in more lowland areas. There are few in the north of the AONB and are found in greater</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing preventing natural regeneration.</li> <li>• Loss due to localised quarrying.</li> <li>• Lack of specific woodland management and cessation of traditional management.</li> <li>• Fragmentation of ownership.</li> <li>• Invasion by naturalised species leading to a change in structure and composition (sycamore and beech).</li> <li>• Loss of species such as red squirrel.</li> <li>• Development pressures.</li> <li>• Effects of air pollution.</li> <li>• Acidification of base-rich soils through the scavenging effect of commercial conifers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ideal State:</b> A woodland in 'favourable condition' has a varied structure with at least three age classes spread across the average life expectancy of the commonest trees, areas of open space – both temporary and permanent relatively undisturbed mature / old growth stands, understory and some build-up of fallen and standing dead wood. It should be comprised predominantly of native species and there should not be signs of rapid loss of native trees and shrubs. There should also be signs of seedlings growing through to saplings to young trees at sufficient density to maintain canopy density.</p> <p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadleaved (including mixed) woodland: 1809.43 ha (4.65% of</li> </ul>

	<p>number in the south. Some fine examples can be found on the Eglwyseg (Yew / Field Maple), at the Horseshoe Falls, at Trevor Church and Chirk Castle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many semi-natural woodlands have declined as a result of replanting with exotic conifers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pests and diseases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present / future tree diseases could have a significant impact on the local landscape character.</li> <li>• Phytophthora Ramorum – Bilberry and Larch (is listed as an EU controlled organism).</li> <li>• Chalara fraxinea – Ash dieback.</li> <li>• Phytophthora Alni – alder.</li> <li>• Canopies opened by disease may be subject to higher rates of wind-throw, and invasion by unrepresentative species becomes more likely.</li> </ul>	<p>AONB area) of which 795.8 ha (2.04% of AONB) is Semi Natural Ancient Woodland or Replanted Ancient Woodland.</p> <p><b>1. Indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 199.9 ha (11.04%) are within international and national designation (SAC and SSSI).</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Favourable Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 54.79 ha (3.03% resource) are within Country Parks and DCC Countryside Service managed sites.</li> <li>• 17.72 ha (0.98% resource) are within NWWT managed sites.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Condition:</b> Woodland SSSIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRW continue to monitor the condition of all SSSIs and SACs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>River Valleys</b></p>	<p>River valleys are not only important for the watercourse itself but also the bank and associated land or riparian zone. They are dynamic systems and provide a wide range of ecological niches supporting a diverse flora and fauna. They also form important wildlife corridors, enabling dispersion and migration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water pollution from sewage, acidification, urban drainage, agricultural run-off and mine and industrial damage.</li> <li>• Loss of bank-side vegetation through overgrazing and poaching. This can also lead to erosion of river margins</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ideal state:</b> The morphology of rivers and streams and their associated plant and animal assemblages vary according to their geographical area, underlying geology and water chemistry. However, all rivers in their natural state are dynamic systems, continually modifying their form. A healthy river will have good water quality, free from</p>

	<p>of species.</p> <p>There are three significant river valleys in the AONB. The River Dee from Corwen to Newbridge, the River Alyn from Cilcain to Llanferres and the River Wheeler from Bodfari to Melin-y-Wern.</p>	<p>and siltation of the river channel with losses of fish spawning gravels and habitat diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modification of the shape and course.</li> <li>• Potential loss of indicator species such as otters, water voles and fresh water pearl mussel.</li> <li>• Invasive non-native species such as Himalayan balsam, Chinese mitten crabs and mink competing with native species.</li> <li>• Recreational impacts such as walking, angling, boating and canoeing can cause disturbance to both the habitat and resident species.</li> <li>• Inappropriate land drainage and flood defence works.</li> <li>• Climate change may affect the habitat and species through flooding and temperature change.</li> <li>• Abstraction and discharge of water for hydro-power generation.</li> <li>• Meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and Catchment Management Plans.</li> </ul>	<p>outside pollution, and marginal and bank-side vegetation that supports an array of wild flowers and animals and provides corridor links between fragmented habitats. Rivers which display a mosaic of features such as riffles and pools and exposed sediments can support a diverse range of plant and animal species.</p> <p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 62.77 km (34.53 km River Dee, 19.55 km River Alyn and 8.69 km River Wheeler)</li> </ul> <p><b>Indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The River Dee is designated at SAC and SSSI.</li> <li>• 3.31 km (16.93%) of River Alyn are within SAC.</li> <li>• 1.43 km (16.46%) of River Wheeler passes through wildlife sites.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Favourable management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.06 km (8.16%) of the River Alyn falls within Loggerheads Country Park.</li> <li>• 1.73 km (5.01%) of the River Dee falls within Ty Mawr Country Park, and Denbighshire Countryside Sites.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Condition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Otters are known to be present on all three rivers. Water voles have been recorded on the Llangollen Canal,</li> </ul>
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			<p>and at either end of the Wheeler valley with extensive field ditches giving population potential to expand. There is only one pocket of water vole records in the Alyn valley, though further surveys may reveal more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invasive species are known to be present on all three river systems, both mink and Himalayan balsam in particular, although Japanese Knotweed is more widespread on the River Dee. The River Dee also has populations of Signal Crayfish.</li><li>• All three rivers have wet woodland and meadow habitats supported by back channels in many places providing good bank-side cover and corridors for wildlife.</li><li>• A number of rights of way cross and run parallel to all three rivers, in particular the Alyn indicating recreation pressure is present. Recreation pressure on the River Dee is significant; it is popular for fishing, canoeing and rafting. A number of businesses use and are dependent on access to the river.</li></ul>
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## The Historic Environment

RESOURCE/ SPECIAL FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ISSUES	STATE
<p><b>Historic Environment</b></p>	<p><b>Historic Settlement and Archaeology</b></p> <p>There are a number of historic settlements within the AONB. Llangollen is the largest with a population of around 3,000. The town was granted its charter in 1284 and straddles the Dee via an arched bridge built in about 1500. The historic core of the town lies on the southern side, focusing on the church and the river crossing. Later development occurred largely as a result of the woollen industry. Since early times, the town has been an important stopping place, especially for people travelling from London to Ireland. Until the early 1800s, roads were notoriously hazardous but Telford's new road to Holyhead (now the A5) had a profound effect on the development of early 19<sup>th</sup> century Llangollen and North Wales in general, allowing the London mail coaches to travel faster and more safely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deterioration and lack of funding for the upkeep of structures and monuments.</li> <li>• Erosion of sites following archaeological excavations.</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of ancient monuments and sites.</li> <li>• Lack of facilities for study groups.</li> <li>• Inappropriate land management.</li> <li>• Lack of archaeological data.</li> <li>• Damage from metal detection.</li> <li>• Off Road Motorcycle and 4x4 damage, particularly on the Llantysilio and North Berwyn mountains.</li> <li>• Historic Parks and Gardens are privately owned; dependant on landowners to maintain and enhance.</li> <li>• Not all open to the public.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Protection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduled Ancient Monuments are nationally important archaeological sites or historic buildings, afforded protection against unauthorised change.</li> <li>• There are 95 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the AONB, the protection of which are overseen by Cadw. Many of these sites provide evidence of past mining, quarrying and settlements.</li> <li>• Scheduled Ancient Monuments cover 156.04 ha (0.4% of the AONB).</li> <li>• There are 17 Conservation Areas in the AONB, covering 88.85 ha (0.23% of the AONB).</li> <li>• There are 645 Listed Building in the AONB.</li> <li>• Valle Crucis Abbey, Eliseg's Pillar and Llangar church are guardianship sites and managed by Cadw.</li> </ul>



	<p>The Cistercian Abbey of Valle Crucis lies near the confluence of the Eglwyseg and the Dee rivers, north of Llangollen. The fragmentary 9<sup>th</sup> century cross, the Pillar of Eliseg, is set on a small circular mound which is a Bronze Age Barrow, just to the north of the Abbey.</p> <p>Historic parks and gardens form an important and integral part of the historic and cultural fabric of an area. They are listed in the Cadw / ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales. The registered sites are Penbedw, Golden Grove, St Beuno's, Colomendy, Valle Crucis, Bryntysilio, Llantysilio Hall, Vivod, Plas Newydd, Trefor Hall, Chirk Castle and Argoed Hall. Although not protected in the same way as Listed Buildings they are graded in a similar way. It is anticipated that legislation in the new heritage Bill to be announced shortly will give more weight to this designation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not statutorily protected; need to engage with and support landowners.</li> <li>• No arrangements for monitoring the condition of Historic parks and gardens.</li> <li>• No Management / Enhancement Plans.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ideal state:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites are maintained in a favourable condition. Cadw are currently reappraising their monument condition surveys and are developing a Monuments at Risk methodology, as yet information is not available for the AONB but this will be extremely valuable information in the future.</li> </ul> <p><b>State:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites are visited by Cadw every 5 or 10 years.</li> <li>• SAM condition data is not consistently available yet, but Cadw are working towards this.</li> <li>• Of the 645 Listed Buildings in the AONB, 56 are considered to be 'at risk'.</li> </ul> <p><b>Understanding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent archaeological work on Elisegs Pilar has been undertaken by Bangor and Chester Universities, this has identified that the pillar sits on a pre-existing Bronze Age burial mound.</li> <li>• Excavations have also taken place at Penycloddiau by Liverpool University, Moel y Gaer Bodfari by Oxford University and at Fron Newydd near Caer Drewyn by</li> </ul>
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			<p>Bangor University.</p> <p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 12 Historic Parks within the AONB covering 611.67 ha (1.57% of the AONB). The essential settings of 14 Historic Parks are within the AONB covering a total of 1,152.01 ha (2.96% of the AONB).</li> <li>• 9 more Historic Parks and Gardens are directly adjacent to the AONB.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Historic Environment</b></p>	<p><b>Industrial Features and World Heritage Site</b></p> <p>When Thomas Telford finished Pontcysyllte Aqueduct in 1805, it was the tallest canal boat crossing in the world. On 27 June 2009, UNESCO made this masterpiece of civil engineering a World Heritage Site, along with 11 miles of canal including Chirk Aqueduct and the Horseshoe Falls at Llantysilio, near Llangollen. Pontcysyllte represents a ‘masterpiece of human creative genius’ and is an outstanding example of a construction that ‘illustrated a significant stage in human history’.</p> <p>Construction work on the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention from decay and need for on-going maintenance.</li> <li>• Inappropriate methods or materials for repairs through lack of understanding, skills or materials, or changing modern standards.</li> <li>• Vegetation growth in the World Heritage Site and the Buffer Zone affecting views in and out.</li> <li>• Maintenance of effective protection of the Site and Buffer Zone through designations and planning policies.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Protection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The World Heritage Site is afforded protection as such.</li> <li>• Much of the World Heritage site is owned by the Canal and Rivers Trust.</li> </ul> <p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The World Heritage site covers 62.62 ha within the AONB (0.16% of the AONB).</li> <li>• The World Heritage Site Buffer Zone covers 3,129.54 ha within the AONB (8.04% of the AONB).</li> </ul> <p><b>Status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently on UNESCOs list of World Heritage in Danger. 46 sites</li> </ul>

<p>Llangollen Branch of the Shropshire Union Canal began in 1795 and was completed in 1808. The canal gave access to the Ruabon collieries and stimulated the growth of the limekilns and pottery works at Froncysyllte and Tref-y-nant.</p> <p>The Vale of Llangollen Railway was opened in 1861. For nearly a century, the railway took over much of the traffic formerly carried by road and canal. The Llangollen Railway Society now operates the line between Llangollen and Corwen.</p> <p>World Heritage Status means that the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal has been inscribed on the World Heritage List, offering it increased awareness. This awareness leads to an increase in the level of protection and conservation given to inscribed sites. It is one of 28 properties inscribed in the UK. Worldwide there were 1,007 World Heritage Sites in 2014.</p> <p>Loggerheads was the focal point for lead mining in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century and remnants of this industrial past remain along the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of visitor pressure.</li> <li>• Need to develop the presentation of the Outstanding Universal Value – how to get the story across.</li> <li>• Site surveys not followed up.</li> <li>• Sites being lost to land use change.</li> <li>• Some industrial remains are in poor condition.</li> <li>• Much of the industrial heritage of the Alyn Valley is outside the public estate.</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of archaeological heritage, the relationship of quarries, inclines and associated works which together have cultural integrity.</li> <li>• Some sites unrecorded or with no scheduled protection.</li> <li>• Some sites recommended for scheduling in the Metal Mines survey of the 1990s have not taken place.</li> <li>• The vast majority of industrial (and indeed all other periods of site) are undesignated. They are noted on the HER Historic Environment Record which is set to become statutory in</li> </ul>	<p>listed in 2014.</p> <p><b>Industrial Archaeology Protection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some of the key industrial sites are protected as scheduled. The canal and many associated monuments are scheduled. The Nant y Pandy tramway and slate works at Glyndyfrdwy are scheduled but in poor condition. Parts of the Minera lead mines at Meadow shaft are a SAM as is the Hoffman kiln in the Minera Quarries.</li> </ul> <p><b>Condition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Glyndyfrdwy slate works buildings and parts of the tramway are in a poor condition.</li> <li>• Key features like the Leete at Loggerheads Country park, Cascade Woods lead mining site and others are unprotected</li> </ul>
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	<p>river and in the woods. There was extensive lead mining in the Alyn Valley, Prestatyn Hillside, Bryn Alyn, and areas of Esclusham Mountain, World's End and Minera.</p> <p>The name Loggerheads derives from a dispute over mineral rights which was eventually settled in the high court. The boundary stone adjacent to the A494 and boundary stones within the Park mark the position the legal boundary was determined to be.</p> <p>There was extensive slate quarrying in the south of the AONB, on the Llantysilio and North Berwyn mountains. Only the Berwyn quarry on the Horseshoe Pass remains open today.</p> <p>There are a number of features associated with these mines, such as the Leete at Loggerheads, and tramways from the Moel y Faen quarry to Llangollen canal, and Moel Fferna to Glwyndyfrdwy through Nant y Pandy, where there are extensive ruins relating to slate working.</p>	<p>the new Planning Bill.</p>	
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<p><b>Historic Environment</b></p>	<p><b>Hillforts and Defensive Structures</b></p> <p>The chain of Iron Age Hillforts along the ridgeline of the Clwydian Range are its most high profile and unique archaeological sites. These 6 hillforts, between Moel Hiraddig near Dyserth and Moel Fenlli near Llanferres, provide one of the highest concentrations in Western Europe.</p> <p>Moel y Gaer is one of the summits of Llantysilio Mountain, on the north side of the river Dee and west of the Horseshoe Pass. There is evidence for human activity here dating back to at least the Bronze Age (2,300 – 1,200 BC), with a large burial cairn on the summit of Moel Gamelin. Several centuries later, during the Iron Age (1200 BC – 74 AD), Moel y Gaer was chosen as the site for a small hillfort.</p> <p>Castell Dinas Bran, a medieval castle located within the earthworks of an earlier Iron Age Hillfort, towers over the town of Llangollen giving it a strong sense of place and historic context. Similarly, Caer Drewyn Iron Age Hillfort, along with the 6<sup>th</sup> century church at St Mael and St Sulien and associations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erosion to the hillforts and other defensive structures through recreation and sheep scrapes.</li> <li>• Damage through inappropriate land management, such as quarrying, tree planting and over grazing.</li> <li>• Ploughing / Agricultural pressure.</li> <li>• Damage from metal detection.</li> <li>• Increased awareness and access could lead to increased erosion issues.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Iron Age Hillforts in the AONB, covering 105.14 ha (0.27 % of total AONB).</li> <li>• 3 Motte and Bailey castles.</li> <li>• Small remnants of a 12<sup>th</sup> century castle at Dyserth.</li> <li>• 2 later 13<sup>th</sup> Century stone castles.</li> </ul> <p><b>Protection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Iron Age Hillforts are owned by the Local Authorities.</li> <li>• All Iron Age Hillforts are designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments.</li> <li>• Dinas Bran Castle, owned by Denbighshire County Council, is designated as a SAM, SSSI and it is also within the buffer zone of the WHS and within the Historic landscape of the Vale of Llangollen</li> <li>• Chirk Castle is jointly managed by Cadw and the National Trust.</li> <li>• Tomen y Rhodwydd, Tomen y Faerdre and Glyndwr’s Mount are all SAMs.</li> <li>• Remains of Dyserth Caslte are a SAM.</li> </ul> <p><b>Condition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erosion work was carried out on Moel Fenlli, Moel Arthur, Penycloddiau , Moel y Gaer Llanbedr, Moel y Gaer Llantysilio and Caer Drewyn as part</li> </ul>
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	<p>with Owain Glyndwr give the town of Corwen a strong historical root. Pen y Gaer Hillfort is located near Garth adjacent to Trefor Hall woods.</p> <p>Completed in 1310, Chirk is the last Welsh castle from the reign of Edward I that is still lived in. Features from its 700 years include the medieval tower and dungeon, 17<sup>th</sup> century Long Gallery, grand 18<sup>th</sup> century state apartments, servants' hall and historic laundry.</p> <p>Motte and Bailey castle sites are found at Tomen y Rhodwydd near Llandegla, Tomen y Faerdre near Llanarmon-yn-Ial and Glyndwr's Mount near Llidiart y Parc.</p> <p>The site of Gop Cairn at Trelawnyd, not technically a defensive structure but hinting at nearby settlement, is thought to date to the Neolithic period from about 3000BC. It is a vast mound, constructed on the top of a hill, perhaps marking burials in a nearby cave.</p>		<p>of the Heather and Hillforts scheme. Erosion repair work has taken place at Tomen y Rhodwydd and extensive stabilisation work was carried out at Owain Glyndwr's Motte.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management plans were drawn up for the six monuments within the Heather and Hillforts project area.</li> <li>• Prior to work taking place in Heather and Hillforts, condition surveys were carried out on the 6 hillforts, this work was repeated in 2012 and an improvement in condition was demonstrated at each of the sites. Continual monitoring will be needed to maintain this.</li> </ul> <p><b>Understanding:</b> The Heather and Hillforts project, from 2008 to 2012, greatly increased our understanding of 6 hillforts in the AONB. A programme of archaeological digs (at Moel y gaer Bodfari, Penycloddiau, Moel y Gaer Llanbedr) and community archaeology events have developed a greater understanding within the local community. The Clwydian Range Archaeology Group (CRAG) was established during Heather and Hillforts, and now runs successfully as an independent voluntary group who have made important discoveries on land adjacent to Moel Arthur Hillfort.</p> <p>Recent archaeological work has also been</p>
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			undertaken on Moel y Gaer Bodfari by Oxford University and Penycloddiau by Liverpool University. Bangor University have been excavating at Fron Newydd adjacent to Caer Drewyn as well as at the small defended settlement of Moel Fodig, just outside the AONB.
<b>Historic Environment</b>	<p><b>Small Historic Features</b></p> <p>These are features that are unique to the AONB. They are unlikely to be listed and conserved but they are part of the fabric of the landscape. Examples: Red telephone boxes, water troughs, milestones, stone stiles and gate posts, old wells, old road signs, named rocks, milk stands and World War I and II relics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These features tend to 'disappear' and part of this is because there is not a comprehensive list held anywhere. They also disappear through being modernised or through road improvement schemes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23 K6 Red Phone Boxes.</li> <li>• 15 Trig Points.</li> <li>• Total number of features unknown.</li> <li>• % loss of features identified unknown.</li> </ul> <p>The new Heritage Bill is likely to contain a section on proposals to produce robust 'local lists' of these types of features.</p>
<b>Historic Environment</b>	<p><b>Boundaries</b></p> <p>The main types are native hedgerows on slopes and dry stone walls in the limestone and upland shale areas. The other types are hedgerows on a stone retaining wall (Clawdd Wall). These linear features are valuable wildlife habitats, which act particularly well as wildlife corridors between habitats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of hedges and walls due to agricultural improvement.</li> <li>• Loss due to lack of maintenance.</li> <li>• Loss of skill to maintain in a traditional way.</li> <li>• Expense of maintenance.</li> <li>• Modern maintenance not suitable.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length of traditional boundaries in the AONB unknown.</li> <li>• 12 km of hedgerow have been restored through the AONB countryside grant scheme between 2007 and 2014.</li> <li>• 0.5 km of dry stone wall have been rebuilt through the AONB countryside grant scheme between 2007 and 2014.</li> </ul>

	<p>An unusual feature unique to Corwen within the AONB is boundaries using upright slate slabs – an example of this can be seen at Gro Isa just north of Corwen next to the River Dee.</p>		<p>Need survey of boundaries with those that have greatest impact on the landscape prioritised for action.</p> <p>% of boundaries in good condition unknown.</p>
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Access and Leisure

RESOURCE/ SPECIAL FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ISSUES	STATE
<p><b>Access and Leisure</b></p>	<p><b>Iconic Visitor and Cultural Attractions</b></p> <p>The Vale of Llangollen and Dee Valley forms a striking gateway to North Wales as the topography changes rapidly from flat Shropshire Plain to a steep sided Welsh Valley, with accompanying changes in building styles and materials, culture and way of life. The area has a special role as a gateway to and cultural window on Welsh life and marks the English-Welsh borderlands.</p> <p>Further north, the Clwydian Range is the first chain of hills inside the Welsh border. With strong cultural links to Liverpool and the North West of England, the area is heavily visited.</p> <p><b>‘Honey-pot’ sites</b></p> <p>The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No coherent identity for the area, there are three distinct tourism units – the Clwydian Range, the Dee Valley and the World Heritage Site.</li> <li>• There is no coordination of visitor management.</li> <li>• Interpretation and awareness of the culture and history of the area is low.</li> <li>• People pass through the area travelling to west Wales. Need to raise awareness of the area and encourage people to stop in the AONB.</li> <li>• Lack of high quality facilities – public transport, car parking, cafes, toilets, information.</li> <li>• Localised degraded environment due to congestion, litter and vandalism.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Provision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36 Caravan Parks / Camp Sites in the AONB.</li> <li>• Number of tourism businesses – unknown</li> <li>• Number of AONB threshold signs - ?</li> <li>• Number of Car Parks in the AONB – unknown.</li> <li>• Number of Public Toilets in the AONB – 8</li> <li>• 4 Country Parks in the AONB –             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Loggerheads</li> <li>○ Moel Famau</li> <li>○ Ty Mawr</li> <li>○ Minera Lead Mines</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 Country Parks covering 1,007.05 ha (2.59% of AONB).             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1 Country Park currently closed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There are 20 sites (including Country Parks) in the AONB managed by AONB / Local Authorities. These</li> </ul>

	<p>Canal is a feat of civil engineering of the Industrial Revolution, completed in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The property is inscribed as a World Heritage Site and is recognised as an innovation ensemble that inspired many projects all over the world.</p> <p>Loggerheads Country Park provides an important link to the wider Clwydian Range and is seen as a base from which to explore.</p> <p>Moel Famau is a significant tract of heather moorland in the Clwydian Range. The Jubilee Tower is on the summit.</p> <p>Ty Mawr Country Park and farm lies on the banks of the River Dee beneath the arches of the Cefn Viaduct.</p> <p>Minera Lead Mines Country Park is a starting point for the Clywedog Trail and accessing the beautiful countryside of Minera Mountain.</p> <p>Offa's Dyke National Trail and the Panorama Drive, which run along the foot of Eglwyseg Rocks, offer stunning high level views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing and new development where there has been a lack of attention to design, character, materials and integration within key views and at key locations which contribute to visitor experience.</li> <li>• Access for the less able is challenging.</li> <li>• Lack of / closure of visitor facilities.</li> <li>• Traffic management, congestion and car parking.</li> <li>• Poor public transport links and infrastructure.</li> <li>• Busy road crossings.</li> <li>• Some industrial remains are in poor condition.</li> <li>• Visitor pressure in key conservation areas.</li> </ul>	<p>cover 1075.78 ha (2.76% of the AONB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Resources Wales estate (formerly Forestry Commission) covers 1299.37 ha (3.34% of the AONB).</li> </ul> <p><b>Condition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minera Lead mines currently closed to the public.</li> </ul>
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	The Horseshoe Pass is a popular tourist viewpoint and scenic drive.		
<b>Access and Leisure</b>	<p><b>The Offa's Dyke Trail and Promoted Routes</b></p> <p>The AONB has an extensive network of paths, bridleways and byways. Some have great historical significance including the Leete Path and old Drovers' Roads. The network brings specific economic benefit to the local economy.</p> <p>There are a great many publications promoting primarily walking opportunities.</p> <p><b>Open Access</b></p> <p>Access Land comprises mountain, moor, heath and down, common land and all land over 600m in height.</p> <p>Access Land is an important component of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, and provides access to areas, particularly hilltops, not served by the Rights of Way network. It is found throughout the AONB, but the majority is found in the south, covering the large</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going maintenance of promoted routes.</li> <li>• Erosion in sensitive areas.</li> <li>• Impact of access on stock and farming, particularly by dogs.</li> <li>• Limited Rights of Way for horse riders and cyclists.</li> <li>• Congestion in honey pot areas.</li> <li>• Blocked and unusable paths restrict opportunities.</li> <li>• Number of unsupported promoted routes.</li> <li>• Uncertainty with the public to where access land areas are.</li> <li>• Disturbance to nesting birds and other wildlife.</li> </ul> <p><b>Adventure activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population health issues increasing.</li> <li>• Conflict between user groups using the resources of the area, in particular the River Dee.</li> <li>• Litter, noise, damage.</li> <li>• Mountain biking pressure on</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 772.6 km of Public Rights of Way</li> <li>• 324.4 km of Rights of Way and permissive routes promoted by AONB / Local Authority publications. (42% of the network).</li> <li>• 114 km of Promoted Cycle Routes on Public Rights of Way / permissive paths. (14.8% of the network).</li> <li>• Length of blocked / unusable paths unknown.</li> <li>• Significant car parks serving the network include Loggerheads, Moel Famau and Ty Mawr Country Parks, Car Parks in Corwen and Llangollen, and Llantysilio Green.</li> <li>• Number of Laybys suitable for parking unknown</li> <li>• 3 Railway stations serving the AONB (Prestatyn, Ruabon and Chirk)</li> <li>• 10,380.18 ha of Access Land (26.67% of AONB area), of this <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 6441.35 ha is common land</li> <li>○ 3938.83 ha are mapped as open country.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of adventure activity providers unknown.</li> <li>• Tourism spend in the AONB in 2012 - £39.4 million.</li> </ul>

	<p>extents of open moorland on the Ruabon, Llantysilio and North Berwyn mountains.</p> <p>A number of permissive access routes have been developed to guide walkers to points of interest and significance, such as Liberty Hall south of Corwen, and the summit of Moel Gyw.</p> <p><b>Adventure Activities</b></p> <p>There is growing concern that people's lifestyles are becoming too sedentary. They seek to 'de-stress' through adventure experiences such as rock climbing, caving, kayaking, white water rafting, mountain bikes, horse riding etc....</p> <p>The landscape of the AONB supports adventure activity businesses, including the mountain Biking centre at Coed Llandegla.</p>	<p>bridleway network and wider countryside.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of access on key conservation sites.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Access and Leisure</b></p>	<p><b>Health and well-being – Deprivation</b></p> <p>In general, the AONB is not an area with high levels of deprivation when assessed against most deprivation indicators, including</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining and improving access to local services.</li> <li>• People living in deprived areas do not get a benefit from the AONB.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Communities First Areas within the AONB</li> <li>• 7 Communities First Areas within 3km of AONB.</li> <li>• Percentage of LSOA's (Lower-level</li> </ul>

	<p>income levels, educational attainment, employment, health, housing quality and physical environment. Overall, the AONB is within the least deprived 25% areas of Wales (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2005). However, one aspect in which the AONB demonstrates notably high levels of deprivation is access to services, which is a result of the sparsely populated rural character of the area. As the population is older than the average, access to local and specialist health care, and support services, all contribute to a sense of community wellbeing.</p> <p>Although still below the Welsh average, levels of limiting long term illness have increased in the AONB between 2001 and 2011.</p>		<p>Super Output Areas) in AONB within the most deprived quartile in Wales for access to services – 26.3% (10 of 38)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of people with limiting long-term illness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ East 17.2%</li> <li>○ North 21.7%</li> <li>○ West 19.5%</li> <li>○ South 21.2 %</li> <li>○ Wales 22.7%</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## Culture and People – The Built Environment

RESOURCE/ SPECIAL FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ISSUES	STATE
<b>Culture and People – The Built Environment</b>	<p><b>Settlement</b></p> <p>The settlement pattern of the Clwydian Range is characterised by villages and hamlets on either side of the main ridge, such as Llanbedr DC, Cilcain and Nannerch, and along river valleys, including Bodfari and Llanferres. Most of these villages are compact and nucleated in form. These settlements are supplemented by scattered farmsteads and isolated dwellings which extend higher up the slopes.</p> <p>The settlement patterns in the south of the AONB are found primarily along river valleys. Smaller villages include Bryneglwys, Glyndyfrdwy, Carrog, Pentredwr and Froncysyllte. The towns of Llangollen and Corwen both straddle the River Dee. Similar to the Clwydian Range, scattered farmsteads and isolated dwellings are found higher up the slopes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development in the AONB and its setting is not always in sympathy with the local landscape character and settlement pattern.</li> </ul>	<p>No. of AONB villages / settlements defined in development plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denbighshire 23</li> <li>• Flintshire 6</li> <li>• Wrexham 2</li> </ul> <p>Total – 31</p>

	A number of larger settlements adjoin the AONB, including Prestatyn, Meliden, Dyserth, Gwernymynydd, Trefor, Cefn Mawr and Chirk.		
<b>Culture and People – The Built Environment</b>	<p><b>Conservation Areas</b></p> <p>Conservation Areas are designated by local planning authorities to protect areas of special architectural or historic interest where it is desirable to preserve or enhance their character or appearance. They are one indicator of the quality of the built environment. Designations should be underpinned by up to date Character Appraisals, and planning authorities should prepare Management / Enhancement Plans. Designation also brings some additional controls on development, but these can be increased via Article 4 Directions if permitted development is harming the special character of the area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incomplete / out of date Conservation Area Character Appraisals.</li> <li>• Lack of Management / Enhancement Plans for Conservation Areas.</li> <li>• No arrangements for monitoring the condition of Conservation Areas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 17 conservation areas in the AONB, covering 88.85 ha (0.23% of AONB) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Denbighshire 9</li> <li>○ Flintshire 6</li> <li>○ Wrexham 2</li> </ul> </li> <li>• % of AONB villages / settlements recognised in development plans which are Conservation Areas – 41.9% (13 of 31)</li> <li>• % of Conservation Areas with an up to date Character Appraisal unknown</li> <li>• % of Conservation Areas with a Management / Enhancement Plan unknown</li> <li>• No. of Article 4 Directions unknown</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and People – The Built Environment</b>	<p><b>Listed Buildings</b></p> <p>Buildings of special architectural or historical interest are Listed by Cadw. There are strict controls over</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns over the number of listed buildings at risk.</li> <li>• There is a need to update</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extent:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 645 Listed Buildings in the AONB</li> </ul>



	development of Listed Buildings and their setting to ensure their special character is conserved or enhanced. The number and grade of Listed Buildings in an area is another indicator of the quality of the local built environment. Local authorities are advised to undertake 5 yearly surveys of the condition of Listed Buildings in their area to identify buildings at risk.	and maintain the Buildings at Risk list for each Local Authority. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Jubilee Tower at Moel Famau is one of the most prominent and distinctive Listed Buildings in the AONB, but is in need of restoration / conservation to secure its long term future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>56 are considered to be 'at risk'.</li> <li>Significant Listed Buildings include Chirk Castle, Llangollen Bridge and the Jubilee Tower.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and People – The Built Environment</b>	<p><b>Development Control</b></p> <p>The control of development in the AONB is an important means by which the character and appearance of the area can be maintained or improved. Development proposals outside the area can also have an impact on important views in or out of the AONB.</p> <p>The three local planning authorities (LPA's) consult the Joint Committee on planning applications which might impact on the AONB.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to maintain Joint Committee activity in respect of responding to development proposals.</li> <li>Maintain and develop the Joint Committee's credibility and influence as a planning consultee.</li> <li>Three LPA's; need to ensure consistent approach across administrative boundaries.</li> <li>Urbanisation of villages and poor urban design.</li> <li>Need for a more proactive response to unauthorised development in the AONB.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of planning applications referred to the JAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2011/12 – 199</li> <li>2012/13 – 212</li> <li>2013/14 – 221</li> </ul> </li> <li>% of JAC comments adopted by LPA's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2011/12 – 68%</li> <li>2012/13 – 72%</li> <li>2013/14 – 74%</li> </ul> </li> <li>No. of possible unauthorised development cases referred to LPA's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2011/12 – 13</li> <li>2012/13 – 21</li> <li>2013/14 – 10</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Culture and People – The Built</b>	<b>Planning Policy and Guidance</b> .Within a plan led system for the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear and robust policies</li> </ul>	Local Development Plans:



<p><b>Environment</b></p>	<p>control of development, relevant and up to date planning policy and guidance is an essential component of protecting and conserving the character and appearance of the AONB.</p> <p>The local planning authorities publish Local Development Plans (LDPs). Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) notes complement development plans. The Joint Committee has prepared non-statutory Development Guidelines for the AONB. National planning policy is set by the Welsh Government, and the Joint Committee is usually consulted on proposed changes to national policy.</p>	<p>required to conserve and enhance the AONB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for Joint Committee to engage with LDP process; WG guidance no longer requires LDP's to include national AONB policies.</li> <li>• Three LPA's; need to ensure consistent approach to AONB policy and guidance across administrative boundaries.</li> <li>• No specific SPG for the AONB to conserve and enhance local distinctiveness. Non-statutory Development Guidelines cannot be adopted by the LPA's.</li> <li>• Need to maintain AONB profile and Joint Committee activity in respect of responding to planning and other policy consultations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denbighshire LDP 2006 – 2021 (adopted 2013)</li> <li>• Flintshire LDP 2015 – 2030 (In preparation: adoption planned in 2018)</li> <li>• Wrexham LDP 2 2013 – 2028 (In preparation: adoption planned in 2018)</li> </ul> <p>Unitary Development Plans (now superseded by Local Development Plan system):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flintshire UDP 2000 – 2015 ( adopted 2011)</li> <li>• Wrexham UDP 1996 – 2011 (adopted 2005)</li> </ul>
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## Culture and People – Sustainable Communities

RESOURCE/ SPECIAL FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	ISSUES	STATE
<b>Culture and People – Sustainable Communities</b>	<p><b>Sense of place</b></p> <p>Community, belonging, attachment and a sense of place. Associated with this is the Welsh language, strong community values and a sense of local pride which are all a part of the natural beauty of an area. There is an understanding that ‘the land makes us what we are’.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of awareness of the AONB and its purposes within parts of the local communities.</li> <li>• Unfocused community and voluntary actions that contribute to local distinctiveness.</li> </ul>	
<b>Culture and People – Sustainable Communities</b>	<p><b>Population</b></p> <p>The AONB is sparsely populated but there is some variation across the area, the Dee Valley is the most populous mainly due to the larger towns of Llangollen and Corwen. However, there are a number of larger and more populous settlements in close proximity to the Clwydian Range such as Mold, Ruthin, Prestatyn, Chirk and the Wrexham urban fringe.</p> <p>The age profile of the AONB shows an older population than Wales,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As life expectancy increases, there will be increasing numbers of older people in society. A sharp rise in the number of over 80s will see a generation keen to relax but potentially reluctant (or unable) to travel far.</li> <li>• Over the past fifteen years, a sustained rise in the birth rate has caused a mini baby boom.</li> <li>• Grandparents will be</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident Population (2011) -18,690 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 8,000 of these within the Dee Valley</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Population Density (2011) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ North – 0.7 (persons per km sq)</li> <li>○ West – 0.4</li> <li>○ East – 0.4</li> <li>○ South - 0.4</li> <li>○ Wales 1.5</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Families with dependent children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ North – 378</li> <li>○ West – 839</li> <li>○ East – 426</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	Denbighshire and Flintshire.  The number of families with dependent children has risen between 2001 and 2011, particularly in the western area of the AONB.	'younger' than ever before; and retiring baby boomers will priorities their leisure time.  • Pressures and opportunities arising from the close proximity of the AONB to a much larger population.	○ South - 301
<b>Culture and People – Sustainable Communities</b>	<b>Housing</b>  The AONB is an attractive area in which to live. It is also within easy commuting range of large employment centres such as Deeside, Chester, Wrexham and beyond. This influences the local housing market by pushing up house prices, often beyond what many local people can afford. The number of social / rented council and housing association properties in the AONB is limited. The problems of availability and affordability for local people are compounded by a higher percentage than the Welsh average of second / holiday homes in parts of the AONB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the number and range of affordable homes in the AONB to meet local needs.</li> <li>• High levels of demand for council / housing association accommodation in some areas.</li> <li>• Need for robust planning policies to ensure that new housing development addresses affordability and local need issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 368 Council Houses in Denbighshire and Flintshire areas of AONB. (Wrexham CBC Council House numbers unknown).</li> <li>• No. of dwellings unknown</li> <li>• Council / Housing Assoc Waiting Lists unknown</li> <li>• Second homes in the AONB unknown</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and People – Sustainable Communities</b>	<b>Employment</b>  A high proportion of AONB residents are economically active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of economic self-containment resulting in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. of working residents unknown</li> <li>• No. of jobs in the AONB unknown</li> </ul>

	<p>when compared to the Welsh average but most commute out of the area to nearby towns and other centres of employment. The area does not therefore exhibit high levels of economic self-containment, which can impact on community cohesion. The public sector is the largest source of employment, but agriculture and forestry continues to be an important employer when compared to the Welsh average.</p>	<p>fewer people 'embedded' in their local area and reduced sense of community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer local jobs than the working population.</li> <li>• Reduction in the number of active agricultural holdings and the overall increase in the average holding size.</li> <li>• Resources to deliver AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of population economically active (2011) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ East 70%</li> <li>○ North 67%</li> <li>○ West 67%</li> <li>○ South 68%</li> <li>○ Wales 66%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• % of residents living and working in the AONB unknown</li> <li>• % of residents employed in agriculture or forestry (2011) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ East 5.4%</li> <li>○ North 5.6%</li> <li>○ West 9.3%</li> <li>○ South 4%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• No. of active agricultural holdings unknown.</li> <li>• Average size of agricultural holding unknown.</li> <li>• No. of tourism related businesses supporting the AONB unknown</li> <li>• % of population retired (2011) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ East 20%</li> <li>○ North 20%</li> <li>○ West 21%</li> <li>○ South 18%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Levels of long term unemployment (2011) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ East 0.9%</li> <li>○ North 1.6%</li> <li>○ West 1.2%</li> <li>○ South 1.7%</li> <li>○ Wales 2.4%</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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<p><b>Culture and People – Sustainable Communities</b></p>	<p><b>Facilities and Services</b></p> <p>Access to local facilities and services such as schools, shops, post offices, community meeting places and public transport all contribute to a sense of community wellbeing. Access to such services in the AONB can be limited. Rural services are in decline and continue to be under threat given the economic outlook and the viability of providing such facilities in isolated and sparsely population areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining key existing rural facilities and services that meet the needs of local people, and preventing the further loss of such facilities.</li> <li>• Review of education provision and the number of rural schools.</li> <li>• Developing access to new facilities and services such as high speed broadband and mobile phone coverage.</li> <li>• Ensuring effective public transport network links to service centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 places of worship in the AONB.</li> <li>• Facilities in Denbighshire area of AONB.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 57 Pubs / hotels / bars.</li> <li>○ 118 shops.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• No. of primary schools in AONB – 14</li> <li>• Nos. on school roll unknown</li> <li>• No. of settlements with a public house – 21 (68%)</li> <li>• No. of settlements with a community hall – 17 (55%)</li> <li>• No. of settlements with a shop / PO – 13 (42%)</li> <li>• No. of settlements with a regular daily bus service – 19 (61%)</li> <li>• Broadband ‘notspots’ – Unknown</li> <li>• No. of mobile blackspots – unknown.</li> </ul>
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**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

# Clwydian Range and Dee Valley

## Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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### Draft Management Plan 2014

### SECTION THREE

#### Action Plan



## Landscape Quality and Character

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
LQCO1	Ensure that the natural resources and special qualities of the AONB are recognised and valued	Support Cadwyn Clwyd Renewable Energy Pilot projects and other appropriate community based projects which seek to mitigate the impact of climate change and reduce the carbon footprint of the AONB without harming the special qualities and features of the area or its character and appearance.	Cadwyn / AONB			
LQCO2	Ensure that the impacts of environmental change on the AONB are understood and a strategic response is developed and implemented	Engage with the National Grid's Visual Impact Provision (VIP) programme to reduce the impact of high voltage transmission in the AONB and it's setting.	AONB			
		Promote mast sharing to reduce clutter and impact on the local landscape character of the AONB.				
		Work with the industry to apply the seven 'Holford Rules' and develop guidance for mitigation measures.				
LQCO3	Minimise the cumulative impacts of small-scale change that may erode the special character of the AONB.	Prepare guidance on the introduction of renewable energy technologies into the AONB and its setting, to reduce the impact on the local landscape character				
		Encourage and support energy conservation measures in order to help meet national and regional targets for energy consumption.				
LQCO4	Protect the tranquillity of the AONB and take steps where possible to reduce noise and light pollution.	Identify those special qualities of the AONB that are sensitive to change and monitor their state.				
LQCO5	Where possible reduce visual intrusion by screening or removing eyesores.	Conduct fix point photography monitoring of key viewpoints across the AONB.				
		Establish a monitoring programme from key viewpoints across the AONB				
LQCO6	To investigate and increase our understanding of the cultural diversity of communities within the AONB.	Organise community reminiscence days to engage with communities and draw upon their wealth of knowledge about the area. - 1 per year				
		Support the research and recording of the area's social history				
LQCO7	Develop partnerships that will help to stimulate awareness of and interest in cultural diversity within the AONB.	Hold an annual AONB Forum to stimulate discussion on the areas special qualities and ensure community participation				
		Maintain an AONB Partnership as part of the governance structure for the AONB				



	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
HMRO1	To maintain or extend the current extent of heather moorland within the AONB	Where possible, restore areas of former heathland particularly around Coed Moel Famau, Coed Nercwys, Moel Findeg and Moel Famau.				
HMRO2	To bring areas of heather moorland into positive productive management.	Continue to support the graziers on the Clwydian Range, Llantysilio Mountain and North Berwyn in the management of heathland through cutting and burning.				
		Continue to work with Coleg Cambria Llysfasi to provide training courses in upland management as part of their National Diploma course – 2 events per year.				
HMRO3	Continue to monitor black grouse and other upland bird species as an indicator of habitat condition	Monitor Black Grouse populations and other upland birds every year at key lek sites across the AONB in order to inform and target specific management.	RSPB	AONB NRW	Annual	
HMRO4	Associate food production with ecosystem management.	Work with farmers and graziers to associate lamb from the upland areas with quality landscapes.	AONB	Cadwyn Graziers		
		Engage producers and retailers with the Clwydian Range Food Trail Project to promote local produce and give added value to produce associated with positive conservation works.	Cadwyn	AONB Food Trail		
HMRO5	Support and encourage sustainable grouse management where it has positive environmental and economic impacts	Support the North Wales Moors partnership on Y Berwyn	RSPB	NRW AONB		
HMRO6	Provide support to farmers and landowners in upland areas to bring moorlands into management schemes.	Attend graziers meeting where appropriate	AONB			
		Provide practical support burning in upland areas wherever possible	AONB			

## Limestone Grasslands, cliffs and screes

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
LGPO1	Maintain the current extent of calcareous grassland and limestone pavement and scree within the AONB.	Ensure that the conservation objectives of each site are understood and incorporated into project plans.				
		Plot and record cave systems in the AONB and identify features at risk.				
		Support and promote projects through the North Wales Bionet Group				
LGPO2	Bring all areas of public owned / managed limestone grassland, cliffs and screes into favourable management schemes.	Carry out targeted scrub control to restore areas of former calcareous grassland habitat at Prestatyn Hillside, the Alyn Valley and Eglwyseg.				
LGPO3	Provide opportunities for privately owned areas of limestone grassland and pavement to come into favourable management schemes.	Develop a Landscape Partnership Scheme Project for HLF to address issues of visitor impacts on areas of limestone grassland, cliffs and screes particularly around Loggerheads, Eglwyseg and the Panorama.				
		Ensure that land managers understand the importance of calcareous habitats and their sensitivity to grazing levels and the enrichment of soils from fertilisers, herbicide application, ploughing and re-seeding.				
LGPO4	Ensure that recreational pressure is minimised in sensitive areas	Reduce the impact of the Offa's Dyke National Trail on the Eglwyseg Screes through path repair and consolidation.	AONB	NRW		
		Assess the floristic changes that recreational pressure associated with soil compaction brings about.				
		Develop the Countryside Grant Scheme to include funding of all special features of the AONB including limestone grassland restoration projects.				

## Woodland and veteran Trees

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
WVTO1	To maintain the current extent of broadleaved woodland and veteran trees within the AONB.	Support measures to reduce the impacts of pests and diseases on the local landscape character ( <i>Phytophthora Ramorum</i> – Bilberry and Larch -Ash dieback, and <i>Phytophthora Alni</i> – Alder				
		Support appropriate planting programmes that strengthen woodland resilience to environmental change.				
WVTO2	Protect Veteran Trees within the landscape across the AONB	Record the current extent and condition of veteran trees in the AONB.				
WVTO3	To maintain and restore broadleaved woodland towards a favourable condition through the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plans for Upland Mixed Ash Woodlands, upland oak woodlands and wet woodlands.	Bring all areas of public owned / managed broadleaved woodland into favourable management schemes such as Glastir or SSSI Section 15 Agreements by 2013.				
		Implement actions within existing section 15 management agreements and Glastir schemes.				
		Develop the Countryside Grant Scheme to include funding of all special features of the AONB including small woodlands under 2 ha.				
WVTO4	Develop publically owned woodlands as models of best practice in broadleaf woodland management.	Develop management programmes for all Local Authority owned woodlands in particular Bishops Wood, Coed Alex, Alyn Valley Woods, Riverside Woods Llangollen, Corwen Cynwyd Railway line and Coed Pen y Pigyn and along the Dee corridor at Ty Mawr including Jeffry's Wood				

## River Valleys

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
RVO1	Continue to monitor the extent of key indicator species such as otter and water vole in order to gauge habitat condition.	Meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and Catchment Management Plans	NRW	AONB/		
RVO2	Continue to develop a partnership of key agencies and bodies to ensure an integrated and landscape approach to management.	Support the Alyn and Wheeler Living Landscapes Project and its work on riparian connectivity and invasive species.	NWWT	AONB – NRW - NEWWildlife		
		Develop the Countryside Grant Scheme to include funding of all special features of the AONB including water courses	AONB			
RVO3	Support and develop a landscape scale approach to a programme of invasive species control particularly in relation to Himalayan balsam.	Continue to work in partnership with others to control invasive species within the Alyn and Wheeler Living Landscapes Project.				
		Support the DINNS Partnership in addressing invasive species throughout the Dee catchment.				
		Support Big Dee Day to tackle invasive non-native plants and animals, such as Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam.				
RVO4	Raise awareness amongst the general public and landowners/managers of the importance of the river valleys for biodiversity.	Devise and run an exemplar demonstration project on good catchment management				
		Hold an annual workshop on pollution control and good management for landowners, local councillors and professionals.				

## Historic Settlement and Archaeology

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
HSAO1	Work towards a position where the condition/state of all archaeological sites within the AONB is known and appropriate management work is carried out. Utilise HER information, Pan-Wales projects, Glastir agri-environment schemes and the planning process to facilitate this.	Produce a schedule of historic site enhancements to prioritise works and promote good practice across all types and ages of assets. Target Project Action by the use of an 'At risk' register.				
		Conduct CPD sessions with planners and Highway officers to explain Archaeology and the Planning system and the importance of these small features in maintaining the character of settlements				
		Work with Denbighshire Agricultural Estate at Caer Drewyn to establish an appropriate stocking rate and continue to control scrub around the hillfort.				
HSAO2	Encourage owners of Historic parks and Gardens within the AONB to maintain and restore existing parkland features as noted in the Register.	Work with registered Historic parks and gardens landowners and other relevant agencies to undertake appraisals and to prepare and implement management plans to conserve and enhance the sites.				
HSAO3	Increase the profile of the Historic Environment through effective and consistent interpretation and information.	Raise awareness of the importance of industrial sites and features within the planning and AONB.				
		Through the Our Picturesque Landscape Project devise and run an engagement programme for both residents (including schools, Town and Community Councils and Community Groups) and visitors, promoting awareness and understanding of the Historic Environment of the AONB and the historical links between sites.				
HSAO4	Incorporate information gathered as part of the Historic Environment Record into the continuous management process within the AONB.	Ensure all decisions regarding the Historic Environment are evidence based.				
		Ensure LANDMAP data and the Historic Environment Record are utilised to guide the determination of planning applications and inform agri-environment schemes.				

## Industrial Features and World Heritage Site.

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
WHSO1	To secure the integrity of the outstanding universal values of the World Heritage Site.	Work in partnership to achieve the aspirations of the World Heritage Site Landscape Management Plan.				
WHSO2	Maintenance of key views to and from the WHS and the visual and cultural setting.	Establish an HLF project with Canal Rivers and Trust and Wrexham County Borough Council to preserve the key views from and into the WHS				
WHSO3	Take steps to limit the impact visitor pressures on the historic integrity and setting of the World Heritage site	Work with Cadw and local landowners to formalise access to the Horseshoe Falls from Llantysilio.				
WHSO4	Ensure a consistent approach to interpretation, signage and quality of the experience across partnership authorities.	Work with the World Heritage Site partnership to develop an Interpretation and strategy for the whole corridor.				
WHSO5	Raise awareness of the importance of industrial sites and features within the planning and AONB.	Through the Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership project assess and restore key features associated with lead mining limestone quarrying particularly around Loggerheads, Minera and Eglwyseg.				
		Work towards the reconsolidation of industrial features on Prestatyn Hillside.				
		Through the Our Picturesque Landscape Project provide high quality interpretation for key industrial sites within the AONB – in particular the Leete at Loggerheads, Devil’s gorge and Minera Lead mines.				
WHSO6	Develop an “at risk “ register for key industrial historic sites and work towards programmes that will respond where action is required.	Establish an HLF project to identify and respond to sites at risk.	AONB	LAs Cadw		

## Hillforts and Defensive Structures

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
DFS01	Ensure continuation of the Heather and Hillforts Project to maintain existing level of work at the 4 hillforts of Penycloddiu, Moel Arthur, Moel y Gaer Llanbedr and Moel Fenlli and aim to continue programme to include Moel y Gaer Bodfari and Moel Hiraddug.	Monitor the impact of the Offa's Dyke National Trail on the Hillforts of the Clwydian Range.	AONB	NRW DCC /FCC		
		Continue to support a partnership approach to tackling off road vehicular trespass and its impacts on the hillforts, particularly on Llantysilio Mountain - work with Police, NRW and Local Authorities.	DCC RoW	AONB NWP NRW		
DFS02	Ensure the structural integrity features and ensure that impacts of visitor pressure is minimised	Complete the reconsolidation of the masonry at Castell Dinas Bran around the gatehouse.	DCS	AONB Cadw		
		Through the Our Picturesque Landscape project take steps to minimise erosion into Castell Dinas Bran particularly from the eastern access point.	AONB	Cadw DCS		

## Small Historic Features

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
SHFO1	Raise awareness of the importance of small historic features within both the planning and highways environments by providing training sessions to professionals.	Ensure LANDMAP data and the Historic Environment Record are utilised to guide the determination of planning applications and inform agri-environment schemes.				
		Conduct CPD sessions with planners and Highway officers to explain Archaeology and the Planning system and the importance of these small features in maintaining the character of settlements				
SHFO2	Encourage Communities to identify and map features within their communities on a standard database which is compatible with the HER.	Encourage the use of the Civic Trust Wales historic characterisation tool kit in the AONB's settlements.				
		Visit Local Communities to discuss recording of features				
SHFO3	Encourage Communities to adopt these features and act as their champions by raising awareness within community councils and youth groups.	In line with <i>The Welsh Historic Environment: a Celebration</i> (2009) Establish an Historic Environment Champion from within the AONB Partnership.				



## Boundaries

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
BO1	Using SDF and other funds develop a Countryside Grant schemes to support projects which will maintain and enhance the most important boundaries in the AONB as well as other Special Features	Continue to support through SDF a grant scheme to facilitate boundary improvement.	AONB			
BO2	In line with aspirations within <i>The Welsh Historic Environment Strategic Statement</i> (2009) raise the skills base amongst the local workforce to increase the number of people who can carry out the necessary conservation and repair work.	Continue to work with Llysfasi College students and staff to provide training courses in Countryside Skills	AONB			
		Continue to offer training days for Countryside Volunteers in hedge laying and dry stonewall construction.	AONB			
BO3	Identify the most important boundaries within the AONB within an historic context.	Gather information on current condition of boundaries within the AONB.				

### Iconic Visitor and Cultural Attractions.

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
IVCO1	To ensure that visitors and the tourism industry understand the need for, and support the conservation and enhancement of, the special qualities of the AONB as key assets upon which tourism is based.	Maintain Sustainable Tourism Charter status for the AONB.	AONB	Cadwyn FCC / DCC WCBC		
		Co-ordinate the development and implementation of Destination Management Plans that affect the AONB.	DCC FCC WCBC	AONB VW		
		Hold an Annual Tourism Forum				
		Work with Visit Wales and other Protected Landscapes to promote sustainable tourism in Wales				
IVCO2	Promote and assist convenient and sustainable access into the AONB and special places within it.	Utilise countryside sites such as Ty Mawr Country Park and Loggerheads to act as gateways to the AONB through good quality interpretation and information provision.	AONB	Cadwyn CRT WCBC DCC FCC		
IVCO3	Continue to develop public transport links and develop a strategy to reduce congestion between honey-pots and with other centres of population.	Work with the public transport staff and companies to co-ordinate public transport to and from AONB access hubs.				
IVCO4	Investigate ways to reduce congestion around key visitor areas.	Prepare a Visitor Management Plan for the World Heritage Site and consider ways to reduce congestion that will reduce the impact on residents and improve the visitor experience.	CRT	AONB WCBC DCC		

		Implement the scheme for the development of additional car parking at Loggerheads and implement car park improvements at Ty Mawr country Park	AONB	Cadwyn DCC		
IVCO5	Target information relating to the Countryside Code, behaviour and the impact of visitors on conservation status of key sites.	Collect and disseminate data on actual and potential users recreational needs and aspirations.	AONB	NRW NFU FUW		
IVCO6	Assist tourism businesses to embrace the opportunities and responsibilities of being in a protected area	Develop an AONB Tourism Ambassador scheme.	AONB	DCC FCC WCBC		
		Provide support to business groups in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley and continue to develop the Sustainable Tourism Forum of businesses and officers.	AONB	DCC FCC WCBC		

The Offa's Dyke Trail and Promoted Routes						
	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
ODPPRO1	Continue a programme of Rights of Way improvement across the AONB through the use of the Community miles Initiative and other arera access improvement work focusing on increasing opportunities to access the countryside.	Seek safe and convenient access for horses, cyclists and walkers when creating new routes in the AONB.	AONB	DCC RoW		
ODPPRO2	Provide increased opportunities where appropriate for walking, cycling and horse riding in the AONB and promote these opportunities	Crete digital files of all promoted routes within the AONB and make them accessible on the web.	AONB	DCC FCC WCBC		
ODPPRO3	Work with the Local Access Forums to ensure an effective partnership with access users and landowners.	Provide support to farmers and landowners in dealing with recreational pressure.	AONB	FUW NRW NFU		
ODPPRO4	Raise awareness of the acknowledged health and well-being benefits provided by the AONB and develop initiatives promoting physical activity particularly walking and cycling.	Continue to develop through partners volunteer and events programme activities that encourage the use of the countryside Develop and promote Health Walks and Green Gyms close to AONB settlements	AONB			
ODPPRO5	Understand and work towards removing physical and psychological barriers to access enabling all sectors of society to participate in and benefit from	Ensure least restrictive access is applied on all promoted trails in the AONB	AONB	DCC FCC WCBC NRW		

	outdoor access and recreational opportunities.	Continue to provide opportunities for underrepresented groups to experience the special qualities of the AONB.	AONB	NRW		
ODPPRO6	Investigate ways to promote the trail with local tourism businesses and to develop initiatives that will strengthen business links.	Through the Walking with Offa project provide support to tourism businesses in order to ensure that they are able to maximise the potential of the National Trail to the economy of the area.	AONB	Cadwyn DCC CRT WCBC		
ODPPRO7	Strengthen links between the Trail and nearby settlements and places of interest utilising the wider Rights of Way Network and Public Transport.	Through the Walking with Offa cross border collaboration project with other Protected Landscapes work with business groups to increase awareness of the Offa's Dyke Path as a gateway to the AONB.	AONB	Cadwyn DCC CRT WCBC		
ODPPRO8	Monitor erosion in key areas and develop a programme of measures that will reduce the impact of the trail on the landscape by limiting width or depth of path as appropriate.	Carry out erosion control measures on the Offa's Dyke National Trail at Cynr y Brain, Egwyseg, Moel Famau and the hillforts of the Clwydian Range in order to reduce the impact of the trail on the landscape and conservation features of the area.	AONB	NRW		
ODPPRO9	Identify key indicator sites to monitor visitor user numbers within the AONB	Produce an annual monitoring report for key sites such as Ty Mawr Country Park, Loggerheads and People Counter data for the trails in the AONB.	AONB	DCC NRW DCC		

## THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
BEO1	Ensure new development in and around the AONB is sympathetically located in the landscape, and is well designed to complement the character and appearance of the area and its setting, particularly in respect of visual impact, scale, materials and landscaping.	Prepare guides for development at gateway locations to complement the AONB and strengthen local landscape character.	AONB			
		To work with the local planning authorities to prepare and adopt formal Supplementary Planning Guidance and design guides for development in the AONB.				
		Facilitate an annual meeting with interested parties on the built environment.				
		Undertake characterisations studies of all settlements, initially focusing on the larger settlements and pressure points, to identify sensitivities and opportunities for change				
		Consider and comment on >100 planning applications and other development proposals in and around the AONB each year, and to seek >85% adoption of the JC's views.				
		Increase awareness and understanding of development issues in the AONB by assisting with planning committee member training and development programmes and continued professional development for officers.				
BEO2	Conserve and enhance the character and local distinctiveness of historic villages, buildings and gardens within the AONB.	Work with the local authorities to undertake 5 yearly reviews of the Buildings at Risk register and condition surveys covering the AONB and take action to reduce the number of buildings at risk	AONB			
		Carry out and/or updating Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for all Conservation Areas within the AONB,	AONB			

		including boundary reviews and an assessment of the overall condition of the areas.				
		To promote the use of Article 4 Directions to control permitted development in Conservation Areas which is harmful to the character and appearance of the area as identified by Conservation Area Appraisals.				
		Ensure that Historic Parks and Gardens are protected from inappropriate development which would harm the character or recognised special features of the registered site				
BEO3	Promote action to reduce the visual impact of prominent existing development in the AONB.	Develop guidance for the siting and design of agricultural and forestry buildings in the AONB to enhance local landscape character				
		Work with National Grid to reduce the impact of pylons in the Molwynion Valley and Tremeirchion area through their Visual Improvement Project				
		Work with Scottish Power to under- ground overhead lines where-ever possible				



Sustainable Communities						
	Objectives	Actions	Lead	Partners	Timescale	Priority
SCO1	Help local communities to retain and enhance access to essential community services and facilities.	Support and promote appropriate social / community ownership and enterprise projects and initiatives such as 'The Pub's the Hub' which will maintain and improve access to local facilities and services.	AONB			
		Resist development proposals that involve the loss of community facilities such as local shops and public houses.				
		Identify current broadband provision across the AONB and work with communities and other agencies to secure the best possible coverage/speed of service, address broadband 'not-spots', and to promote the WAG Superfast Scheme				
		Promote a profitable, high quality local food processing economy as a way of revitalising rural incomes; and to raising awareness among residents, businesses and visitors about the benefits to the landscape, economy and social fabric of purchasing locally sourced goods.				
SCO2	Support the development of affordable housing for local people in appropriate locations, whilst maintaining the highest standards of design and landscaping.	Support the local authorities in carrying out housing needs and affordability surveys in areas of high demand for affordable housing indicated by LA/HA waiting lists.	AONB			
		Work with local planning and housing authorities to promote affordable housing schemes for local people, to secure affordable units as part of any new market housing development, and to encourage the provision of affordable housing for local people through	AONB			



		<p>conversions and the development of individual new dwellings in villages and hamlets.</p>				
		<p>Promote opportunities to encourage local businesses to become more environmentally and economically sustainable, particularly in ways that conserve the special qualities of the AONB</p>				
SCO3	Foster a sense of place and local pride to secure social well-being.	<p>Promote opportunities to encourage local businesses to become more environmentally and economically sustainable, particularly in ways that conserve the special qualities of the AONB</p>				
		<p>Support a Community Ambassador Scheme to improve communication with communities</p>	AONB			
		<p>Liaise with community and Town Councils on an annual basis</p>	AONB			
		<p>Hold an annual Forum</p>	AONB			
		<p>Produce an volunteer programme of events twice per year</p>	AONB			

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# AONB Management Plan

## 28/01/2015

Equality Impact Assessment

## <Title of the proposal being assessed>

**Contact:** David Shiel, Clwydian Range and Dee Valley  
AONB - Environmental Services>  
**Updated:** 28/01/2015

### 1. What type of proposal / decision is being assessed?

A strategic or service plan

### 2. What is the purpose of this proposal / decision, and what change (to staff or the community) will occur as a result of its implementation?

The adoption of the Management Plan for the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. This is a statutory Plan which sets out an agenda for the management of the Special Qualities and Features of the AONB for the period 2014 - 2015. The Plan has been prepared following consultation with key stakeholders on behalf of a partnership of the 3 local authorities of Denbighshire Flintshire and Wrexham.

The Proposal is to take the draft plan to public consultaion.

### 3. Does this proposal / decision require an equality impact assessment? If no, please explain why.

*Please note: if the proposal will have an impact on people (staff or the community) then an equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken*

No

The proposal relates solely to the administrative process of moving the plan to public consultation stage.

### 4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken

*(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)*

N/A

### 5. Will this proposal / decision have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?

*(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)*

N/A

**6. Will this proposal / decision have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics (age; disability; gender-reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation)?**

N/A

**7. Has the proposal / decision been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate negative impact? If no, please explain why.**

<Please Select> | N/A

**8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?**

<Please Select> | N/A

Action(s)	Owner	By when?
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<Unrestrict editing to insert additional rows>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>

**9. Declaration**

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal / decision will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

<b>Review Date:</b>	following Public consultation
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Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
David Shiel	28/01/2015

**Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.**

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<b>Forward Work Programme February 2015 Update</b>			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Detail/Action Management Plan Reference</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Cost –ve or +ve or neutral (Through existing and external budgets)</b>
<b>Finance</b>			
Finance and Funding	To be a standing item on the Forward Work programme	Report to each JC	Neutral
<b>Strategic Plans 2014-16</b>			
Communications Strategy	To assess monitoring and effectiveness of AONB Communication	Spring 2015	Neutral
Friends of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley	Launch of an independent 'Friends Group'	Summer 2015	Neutral
AONB Management Plan	To support the Policies of the AONB through contribution to consultations. To implement the AONB Action Plan	Summer 2015	Neutral
Outreach and Volunteers strategy	To provide a policy statement, engagement plan and action plan	Summer 2015	Neutral
Business Plan	To write a five year business plan	Autumn 2015	Neutral
<b>Projects 2015-16</b>			
Clwydian Range 30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Celebration of Anniversary		Neutral
AONB Tourism Strategy	To Implement the action plan	Autumn 2015	Neutral
Climate Change Programme	To implement and promote the new literature	Summer 2015	Neutral
Edernion Tourism Strategy	To implement the action plan	Autumn 2015	Neutral
<b>AONB Icons</b>			
World Heritage Site	Collaboration between the two designations	Autumn 2014	Neutral
<b>Section 85 Organisations</b>			
Planning	To produce an SPG for the AONB	Spring 2016	-ve
Tranquillity	To investigate improvements to Dark skies	Spring 2016	-ve
Urbanisation	To enter into an agreement with NEWTRA and LA Highways to respect the rural nature of the AONB	Spring 2016	-ve
Tourism	Investigate how best to integrate the NE Wales and AONB Brands	Spring 2016	Visit Wales E4G Neutral

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