

**Mendip Hills AONB Unit**  
**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**  
**Annual Review 2009-10**



Image:Top of Burrington Combe looking across toBlack Down and Roberrow forest

## **Chairman's Foreword**

Welcome to the Annual Review 2009-10 in which we highlight the work undertaken and key achievements of the AONB Unit and its Partnership activity.

Despite staff changes and the vacant Development Officer post this did not impact significantly on the Partnership Delivery Plan 2009-10 due to the commitment of the Unit. Of the 76 actions, 57 were completed. Ten have not been achieved and 9 were partly achieved. The Mendip Hills AONB Unit led on 37 actions and completed 30 of these. Two were not progressed and five are still in progress. *The outcomes are shown on attached Delivery Plan table.*

A review of the AONB Partnership Committee structure has been undertaken this year. The review was undertaken to ensure an appropriate and sustainable partnership structure for the delivery of the Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan, and ensure clarity and appropriate engagement for all relevant stakeholders. The report presented to the March Committee by David Haffey, Countrywise Consultants was recognized as a well-researched and thorough report. The Committee agreed the majority of recommendations and will consider draft Terms of Reference at its July meeting. The Somerset Association of Local Councils is currently administering the election of the three parish council representatives who will be part of a 17 member committee.

Key points made in the report were the need for improved communication about Partnership and Unit activities, the need for Partners be more actively involved in the Partnership - to set out how they contribute to the delivery of the Management Plan and report progress. The need for the AONB staff to be more visible in the community and have greater contact with those who have a management role was identified but will only be possible if administration including reporting to partners and servicing the Partnership can be reduced. This is particularly challenging in the current year as the staff unit is reduced in number and has reduced funding.

A further challenge in the year ahead is to renew the current Memorandum of Agreement 2005-2011 between the funding partners. Natural England are seeking a new 3 year agreement from the local authority partners that will allow the Partnership to plan with a degree of certainty, delivery of the statutory Management Plan by a dedicated staff unit.

With recent Partnership focus having been on restructuring and financial issues we must not forget the reason for the existence of the Partnership is to ensure that this nationally designated landscape is conserved and enhanced and can be enjoyed by current and future generations.

I wish the new Partnership Committee well in all its efforts

**Steve Pilkington, Chairman (March 2006-10)**

## **AONB Unit Key Achievements**

- Review of the Mendip Hills AONB Partnership undertaken
- Sustainable Development Fund awarded £64168 to 17 projects totaling a value of £100,114.17 (see attached table of projects awarded grants)
- 50 people attended the Mendip Hills AONB Annual Forum on Geopark status
- 80 people attended the Mendip Hills AONB Annual Historic landscape day February 27<sup>th</sup> 2010
- 60 volunteers attended People and Places Volunteer Celebration March 6<sup>th</sup> 2010
- 12 volunteer rangers trained and equipped with uniform, regular patrols undertaken
- New Young Ranger intake – 15 from 4 local schools
- Advanced Young Ranger Programme launched
- Black Down Advisory Group established
- Black Down Project proposal produced following public consultation and pre - application submitted to Heritage Lottery Fund
- SW Horse related development guidance produced
- 24 press releases and 12 monthly email updates sent out
- 190 press articles appeared in local and national media
- AONB web site expanded due to number of downloads
- Monthly article produced in Mendip Times
- Rob Spraggon, AONB Volunteer awarded SCC staff award for Can Do approach to work
- Responses submitted to National Grid Hinkley C & Bristol airport consultation
- Responses to 5 major documents including SDC, B&NES, N.SOM core strategies
- 18 planning application considered and 6 applications commented on
- 3 enforcement matters referred to LPA

## Somerset Wildlife Trust Living Landscapes Project

<p><b>Lowland Meadow:</b> 36.85ha of BAP habitat was identified, with a further 36.18ha with potential for restoration. 176.27ha was of low biodiversity value</p> <p><b>Limestone Grassland:</b> 4.38ha of BAP habitat was identified, with a further 4.10ha with potential for restoration.</p> <p><b>Heath:</b> no further heath habitat was identified in this year.</p> <p><b>Woodland:</b> A total of 29.60ha of woodland was surveyed.</p>
<p>This year a further 4 Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) agreements were agreed and 5 Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) applications were submitted resulting in 5 agreements. One English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) agreement was made.</p>
<p>For HLS, ELS and EWGS figures see above. In addition a further 7 landscape schemes were co-funded with Somerset County Council</p>
<p>The My Mendip Hills project involved 673 school children with 73 staff and 9 volunteers from 10 schools around the Mendips.</p>

## Avon Wildlife Trusts, Wildflower Grasslands Project

	Chew Valley SNA	Stowey Sutton SNA	Other Mendip SNAs: Burrington, Bleadon, Shiplate Hill & Dolebury
Total area to survey	370ha	270ha	94ha
Survey completed by Sept 2009	227ha	198ha	0
% surveyed	61%	73%	0
Landowners contacted	41	18	8
Agri-environment schemes	2	2	2
Other management advice	2	0	0
<p>Reports sent to landowners            Local site work being undertaken for North Somerset Council            Newsletter produced            2 events held to promote environmental stewardship and positive management of wildflower meadows</p>			

**Notes:** These figures are running totals, so include survey work from 2008 & 2009.

## **The AONB Unit, Volunteers and the AONB Partnership**

Hosted by Somerset County Council the Unit is jointly funded by Natural England, Somerset County Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, North Somerset Council, Mendip District Council and Sedgemoor District Council.

Manager	Sarah Jackson (F/T)
Development Officer	Gail Graham (F/T Until October 2009 - post since vacant)
Planning Liaison Officer	Jonathan Richards (P/T 18hrs)
Project Officer	Andy Mallender (F/T, new post Aug 2009)
Support Officer	Norma Newby (F/T)

## **People and Places Project**

People and Places Project Officer    Merryn Nisbet (until March 2010)

The PPP was a 2 year project funded by Natural England, Somerset Wildlife Trust, National trust, AONB Unit to increase volunteering opportunities in the AONB. The project has now ended and a report produced that suggests ways forward. The PPP partners will be meeting in 2010 to agree way forward to continue some of the good practice that emerged through the PPP work. The report will shortly be available on the AONB web site.

## **Volunteers**

Rob Spraggon	Cannington College Countryside Management student awarded the SCC individual award 2009 for can Do attitude. Rob has assisted with range of projects including fixed post photography, surveys and ..
Kate Vantreen	Administration assistance with Young Rangers programme 1 day per month
John Freeman	Assistance with Young Ranger programme
12 Rangers	Assistance with range of activities including events, Young rangers, patrols, surveys, litter picks

## **Sustainable Development Fund Panel**

Nicola Epps (Chair)	Mendip District Council Arts Officer
Sheila Petherbridge	Mendip District Council ROW Officer, farmer, local resident
Martin Grass	Private business(tourism), Priddy Folk fair, local resident
Chris Head	CEO Community Action, local resident
Rachael Clark	local resident, Priddy Folk fair
Ian Chedgy	private business (aboriculturalist), local resident

## **Partnership meeting and events**

19th November 2009 Partnership committee and Annual Forum Cheddar Caves & Gorge

8<sup>th</sup> February 2010 Partnership Committee (members) review meeting, Coombe Lodge

27<sup>th</sup> February 2010 Annual Historic Environment day – Shipham Village Hall

18th March 2010 Partnership Committee, Ubley Village Hall

## **Resources Steering Group**

19<sup>th</sup> May, 16<sup>th</sup> July, 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 26<sup>th</sup> February

## **Heritage Group**

13<sup>th</sup> October and 9<sup>th</sup> March,

## **Partnership Committee**

Chairman	Steve Pilkington CBE
Somerset County Council	Cllr Dawn Hill and Cllr Gloria Cawood, Barry James (Officer)
North Somerset Council	Cllr Ann Harley, Mark MacGregor (Officer –Feb10) John Flannigan (Officer)
Bath and North East Somerset	Cllr Shirley Steel, Sue Murtagh (Officer)
Mendip District Council	Cllr Roy Wills, David Clark (Officer)
Sedgemoor District Council	Cllr David Joslin, Julie Cooper (Officer)
Mendip Hills AONB Unit	Sarah Jackson
Natural England	Steve Marston
Forestry Commission	Dick Gossling
Mendip Society	Paul Harley
NFU	James Small
National Trust	Andy Mayled
Somerset Wildlife Trust	Cath Shellswell
CPRE	Mary de Viggiani
Parish Councils	Compton Bishop, Loxton, Bleadon, Hutton, Winscombe and Sandford, Shipham, Churchill, Priddy, Cheddar, Axbridge, Westbury sub Mendip, Rodney Stoke, Wells, St Cuthbert Out, Butcombe, Nempnett Thrubwell, Burrington, Blagdon, Chew Stoke, Stowey Sutton, Compton Martin, West Harptree, Ubley, Litton, Chewton Mendip, East Harptree, Hinton Blewett

## **AONB Unit Financial Summary 2009-10**

### **AONB Unit core income**

Natural England	136459
Somerset County Council	33500
North Somerset Council	22000
Bath and North East Somerset	22000
Mendip District Council	13517
Sedgemoor District Council	11430
<b>Total</b>	<b>238906</b>

### **AONB Unit core expenditure**

Staff costs	158417	(inc early retirement payment, travel, vehicle, training)
Office costs	19720	
Partnership costs	23870	(inc Meetings, Forum, Heritage Day, Mendip Times monthly page, membership fees (NAAONB, SWPLF,EUOPARC))
Core Project	40051	(inc; SWT Living Landscapes, EH Research project, Black Down, Young Rangers, and SW Equestrian guidance)
<b>Total</b>	<b>242058</b>	

### **Sustainable Development Fund** (see table attached for grant detail)

Grants awarded	64168
Admin cost	832
<b>Total</b>	<b>65000</b>

### **AONB Unit Project income**

Natural England Sustainable Development Fund	65000
Natural England Project funding	5000
National Trust and Somerset Wildlife Trust (People and Places Project)	2000

*Note: Figures are rounded to nearest pound.*

**Further information**

The Mendip Hills AONB web site holds Partnership agendas papers and minutes of meetings

SDF Guidelines, application forms and dates of meetings

## Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan– Delivery Plan 2009–10 (Completed April 2010)

Objective	Action	Task	Lead body	Partners	Targets	Timescale	Outcome
Climate Change							
CC2 The likely impacts of climate on the character of the Mendip Hills are understood	CCA2.2 Monitor and analyse climate change research findings and their implications for the special qualities of the Mendip Hills	Coordinate monitoring information on change in habitats and species	AONB Unit	NT, WT, FWAG, BW	Identify key species and habitats through BAP	March 2010	Low priority - AONB Project Officer priorities has focused on delivery on the ground.  See BA1.1 for work undertaken on current BAPs.  Data is being gathered by various orgs but not yet coordinated.
		Initiate climate change monitoring project in AONB via Young rangers	AONB Unit	HOT and Specialist Nest Boxes	To include in Young Ranger programme	September 2009	Young Rangers made bird boxes and placed in Blackmoor Reserve.
		Examine impact of climate change on woodland/forestry through on going study	FC Forest Research	-	To provide update to AONB Unit	January 2010	

		Review data on climate change	CPRE		To provide update to AONB Unit	January 2010	
CC3 Measures are taken to mitigate the causes of climate change	CCA3.2 Provide and promote advice on energy conservation measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the Mendip Hills	Undertake assessment and produce action plan for reducing carbon footprint of AONB unit	AONB unit		Identify ways of reducing negative impacts on the environment	September 2009	Had planned to undertake with move to Callow rock but problem with lease has delayed move.
		Assess SW National Parks approach to reduce carbon footprint	TBC	NT, AONB unit, FWAG	Identify targets to be promoted across the AONB Partnership	2010/11	No action taken due to other priorities
Landscape quality							
L2 Promote appropriate management to ensure that the distinctive Mendip Hills AONB landscape is	LA2.3 Remove significant eyesores and undertake appropriate restoration work	Promote CPRE 'Stop the Drop' to reduce litter	CPRE	AONB Unit			No contact/info from CPRE

maintained and enhanced.		Organize regular litter picks at key sites in peak visitor periods	AONB Unit	AONB vols	Rota of volunteer litter picks undertaken	August 2009 on wards	Started September 2009
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	LA2.4 lead by example in the management of local amenity sites	i) Review AONB amenity land management as part of SCC led review of amenity land	AONB Unit & SCC		Review completed with AONB position established.	March 2010	AONB role confirmed as project work not day to day management. AONB Volunteers to continue patrols.
		ii) Produce management plans for Blackmoor Reserve and Deer Leap that will deliver best practice for site management, including interpretation, access, biodiversity and heritage	AONB Unit	SCC	Management plans produced identifying roles and responsibilities future work and costs	March 2010	Project Officer progressing Deer Leap with SCC staff.  Blackmoor will be completed 2010/11
	LA2.5 promote the restoration of dry stone walls using the information obtained from Lifelines	Provide information to landowners of 'priority' walls and agree programme of works	AONB Unit	NT, DWA	Identify walls to be restored and by whom	March 2010	Provided info to DSWA. Programme to be developed for 2011/12

L4 Increase awareness and appreciation of the purposes of designation and the special qualities of the AONB to residents and visitors	LA4.1 Produce on and off site interpretative material. Hold events aimed at a wide range of different audiences to raise awareness of the Mendip Hills AONB	As part of AONB Communication strategy - Provide visitor information	AONB Unit				Completed
		i) Revise free visitor guide			Guide reprinted	September 2009	
		ii) Organize volunteer programme to provide presence on site and provide information	AONB Unit	AONB vols	Volunteers trained		Completed
					Identified key sites and rota	September 2009	Completed
					Produce boards/banner for use on site		Completed

		<p>Promote major landscape events:</p> <p>i) 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949</p> <p>- Use anniversary logo on all events</p>	AONB unit	Partnership	<p>Mendip Times article</p> <p>AONB unit email signatures</p>	May 2009	Completed
		<p>- Contribute walks to 60 walks for 60 years national programme</p>	AONB unit		Wild Walks publication	April 2009	Completed
		<p>Promote web site <a href="http://www.diamondsinthelandscape.org.uk">www.diamondsinthelandscape.org.uk</a></p>	AONB unit	Partnership	Promote on AONB website and articles	December 2009	Completed

		ii) Year of Astronomy Promote CPRE dark skies campaign and AONB statement	Partnership			December 2009	No Action
		Ancient Tree Hunt  Distribute information to Partnership  www.AncientTreeHunt.org.uk	WT		Ancient tree identified in AONB	On going	On going national campaign but no evidence of activity in AONB
	LA4.2 Produce parish maps showing AONB boundary	AONB Boundary maps	NE	AONB unit	Provide total of 28 maps one to each parish	September 2009	Natural England plan to revise and update their large scale digital maps 2010. Once these are available the AONB will assist distribution.

	LA4.4 Encourage Parish Plans(PP) to include references to how the village relates to the AONB	i) Organise programme of talks to parish councils to engage with Partnership and management plan	AONB unit	PCs	6 talks per year	March 2010	<p>Litton - May</p> <p>Cheddar - Sept</p> <p>North Somerset Ass of Local Councils - Oct</p> <p>All requests met</p>
		ii) Identify which parishes have PPs	AONB unit	PCs, Community councils, LAs	List of parish plans highlighting ref to Mgt Plan	March 2010	Information sought from PCs
L5 Increase awareness of supporting local products and services that help to conserve and enhance the landscape	LA5.1 Promote local products that have a clear link to conserving and enhancing the landscape	<p>i) Promotion of conservation grade beef and other products associated with the positive management of BAP habitats</p> <p>ii) Work with land holders to help diversify income strands that will have biodiversity benefit</p>	AWT			On going for 2010/11	

			SWT			On going	
Biodiversity and Geodiversity							
B1 UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats and species in the Mendip Hills AONB are maintained or enhanced	BA1.1 Produce a strategy and BAP for the Mendip Hills AONB	Produce overview of BAPs covering the AONB and agree approach for the AONB	AONB unit	NT, WT, NE,FWAG, BW	Agree brief  Agree recommendations/ outcomes	March 2010	Work to review current local authority BAPs completed.  Key habitats and species list on web site.

	BA1.2 Extend and enhance ecological connections between habitats at an appropriate landscape scale	Deliver Living Landscapes programmes	SWT and AWT	AONB unit, NE			Majority of target fields surveyed in Chew Valley and Stowey Sutton. Reports sent to landowners
		Survey grassland habitats within SNAs	AWT		Use info to enhance and reconnect habitats at a landscape scale.	2009-2013	
		Carry out in-depth habitat survey of Mendip Hills in Somerset	SWT		AS ABOVE	2009-2012	
		Create new native woodland to buffer and extend ancient woodland wherever appropriate	WT	FC	(Conditional on funding and landowner interest)	Report progress March 2010	No current applications in AONB
		Forest Design Plans –felling and thinning planned at Stockhill and Roberrow	FC			December 2009	Thinning at Stockhill. Roberrow felling work has been undertaken

	BA1.3 Encourage and support measures under agri-environment schemes targeted towards the protection and enhancement of the Mendip Hills AONB priority habitats and species	Target agri environment schemes that lead to positive management of lowland meadow and calcareous grassland within SNAs in Avon.	AWT	NE		2009-2013	AWT working closely with NE to prioritise targets for schemes
		Work with NE advisors to implement agri environment schemes	NE	SWT		2009-2012	NFU/CLA through Campaign for the Farmed Environment actively encouraged landowners to engage with the schemes.
B2 All Mendip Hills SSSIs are in favourable or unfavourable improving condition and sites of local importance are in positive management	BA2.1 Agree target sites for improvement and identify work to be undertaken	AWT reserves and SSSIs in Avon SNAs		AWT			Applications progressed for HLS agreements for all AWT reserves within the AONB.  Local sites work being undertaken for North Somerset Council

B3 Recognise, conserve and enhance significant geological sites and features	BA3.2 Assess feasibility of additional designations eg Geoparc status	Outline Geoparc approach to Partnership at annual forum event - see also MA2.1	AONB unit	NT	Partnership decision on whether to progress application	Nov 2009	19 <sup>th</sup> November Annual Forum.  Progress ideas subject to Partners interest
Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage							
H1 Identify, record, protect and conserve the historic environment and cultural heritage	HA1.1 provide support and assistance for the conservation, and interpretation of significant local features within the Mendip Hills AONB	Produce archaeological management plan for Blackmoor reserve	SCC	Bristol University	Archaeological management Plan	December 2010	University student has completed study for SCC to consider
		Produce archaeological management Plan for Black Down	EH/SCC	NE,AONB Unit	Archaeological Management Plan	March 2010	EH Monument Warden progressing

		Submit planning application for lean to barn in Blackmoor reserve	SCC	AONB Unit	Obtain planning permission	March 2010	SCC has decided due to costs to manage site as ruin.
		Undertake conservation work on Blackmoor lead flues – removal of veg and pointing	SCC		Site conserved	September 2009	AONB Unit supervised work including boulders to stop illegal vehicle use
		Undertake historic building conservation work at Deer Leap	SCC		Meet EH historic building requirement	September 2009	SCC staff resources limited unable to commission work
H2 The historic resources in the Mendip Hills are better understood	HA2.1 Review Mendip Hills Strategy for the Historic Environment Strategy (2001)	Review strategy	AONB Unit	AONB Heritage Group	Identify priorities for research  Revised strategy produced.	2010/11	Agreed with Heritage Group not a priority  English Heritage work is being concluded and will suggest future research priorities.
	HA1.2 Support the provision of training to build up skills in the	East Harptree excavation	EH		Local people trained in field	20 <sup>th</sup> April for 4 weeks	Completed - well attended by local

	local community that care for the local heritage				archaeology		groups
	HA2.3 Ensure that research work is made available, interpreted and made accessible	i) Publication of English Heritage AONB publication	EH	EH Advisory Group	Publication	2010/11	Text to be complete by June 2010. Launch in 2011
		ii) Annual Heritage Days event	AONB Unit	AONB Heritage Group, NT, FC	2 day event	February 2010	February 27 <sup>th</sup> 2010 Shipham Village Hall  Heritage Group agreed it should be one day event and assist organize events linked with National Festival of Arch in July 2010.

		iii) Identify projects from the above research that will interpret landscape to a wider audience	AONB Unit		Projects and funding identified		SDF funding Festival of Arch coordinator at Wells and Mendip Museum.  Caring for Gods Acre project  Interpretation on Blackmoor
		iv) Publication of 2007 Wells conference The Archaeology of Mendip and its Environs	WU		Publication	July 2009	Due to be published
		vi) National Festival of Archaeology  - event at Cheddar Caves and Gorge	CC&G		Events	July 2009	
Farming and land uses							
F1 Recognise the importance of farming and support land management that conserves and	FA1.1 Encourage and support take up of agri environment schemes	i) Promote Entry (ELS) and Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreements	SWT,AWT , FWAG	NE		March 2010	NFU/CLA through Campaign for the Farmed Environment actively encouraged landowners to

<p>enhances biodiversity and other natural resources, that contributes to landscape character and aids public awareness and enjoyment of the Mendip Hills AONB</p>		<p>ii) Approve ELS and HLS schemes in AONB</p> <p>iii) Promote additional capital funding opportunities under existing countryside stewardship agreements</p>	<p>NE</p> <p>SWT,AWT , FWAG,NE</p>		<p>6-8 HLS new agreements approved in East Somerset team area</p>	<p>March 2010</p>	<p>engage with the schemes.</p> <p>AWT assisted with 6 schemes, 2 events held to promote schemes. Newsletter produced.</p> <p>NFU/CLA also supporting Resources for Farming scheme through Business Link and which encourages farms to look at energy use</p>
	<p>FA1.3 Pursue the adoption of land management policies and funding regimes at the national and regional level that reflect AONB priorities</p>	<p>Promote ecosystem services approach in dealing with issues and specific site problems i.e Black Down (see A1)</p>	<p>AONB Unit</p>		<p>Set up advisory group to consider findings and agree future management</p>	<p>May 2009</p>	<p>Advisory Group set up. Scoping and project development work commissioned.</p>

F4 The use of natural resources is managed to minimize harm to the distinctive characteristics of the AONB	FA4.2 Support appropriate measures to protect water resources ..	Deliver the catchment sensitive farming programme in the AONB.	NE, EA				NFU/CLA also supporting Resources for Farming scheme through Business Link and which encourages farms to look at energy use
Access, recreation and tourism							
A1 Ensure that recreational activity and use of the Mendip Hills is compatible with its conservation purposes	AA1.3 Monitor visitor numbers and impact on PROW and at key sites	i) Progress Black Down erosion monitoring project via steering group piloting DEFRA ecosystem services approach	AONB Unit	NE, Wills Estate, EA, ROW authorities			Monitoring completed – see FA1.3 above – the group will ecosystem services approach in seeking solutions
		Promote new Pathwatch scheme to address illegal use of PROW by motorized vehicles.  i) distribute publicity	Avon and Somerset Police	AONB Unit			Poster distributed  Questionnaire survey currently in circulation as part of

		across the AONB	AONB Unit				Scoping project
		ii) organize AONB patrols of Black Down to promote awareness of issues and hand out information		Vols and Black Down Advisory Group			Volunteer patrols underway  Barriers installed at key locations to stop illegal vehicle use.
A3 Opportunities will be sought to meet the needs of all sectors of the community, paying particular regard to under represented groups in accessing the Mendip Hills AONB	AA2.4 Promote activities and informal access in the AONB to increase diversity of users	Develop and promote Walking to Health opportunities	LAs	AONB Unit	Trained volunteers	March 2010	AONB -Two walks at Deer Leap and Blackmoor. Volunteer Rangers to lead in conjunction with LA. MDC have gained Accreditation
		i) Train volunteers to lead these walks and obtain accreditation  ii) Establish links with new groups  iii) coordinate AONB programme	LAs, AONB unit	volunteers	leading regular walks.  Pilot in North Somerset	March 2010	See above

		Deliver AONB Communication Strategy to address meeting more diverse audience	AONB unit	NE CC&G	Communication Strategy outcome achieved	March 2010	Completed inc Festival of Nature attended, 11 articles in Mendip Times, 3 Mendip Society, monthly email updates etc
		Contribute to SWPLF to secure funding for 1SW Off Road Cycling project	SWPLF	AONB unit	Funding obtained		Mapping stage agreed  Surveying will take place in Autumn
		4 <sup>th</sup> CragAttak climbing festival	CC&G		Event held	4/5 <sup>th</sup> July 09	
		Publish Cheddar Gorge Climbing Guide	CC&G		Published guide	September 2009	
	New AA3.2  Undertake visitor monitoring to identify types of visitors and level of satisfaction	Undertake visitor satisfaction survey at key sites	AONB unit	NT, Volunteers	Feedback from visitors on quality of their visit	March 2010	Visitor survey underway at Black Down as part of scoping work.  April wider survey will take place
A4 Support the development of day visits and tourism that conserves and enhances the	New AA4.5  Develop ideas for the improvement of visitor facilities in Burrington	Agree proposal for improvement of facilities and interpretation for visitors at Burrington	Black Down Advisory Group	PC, community		2010/11	Scoping and project development work commissioned Feb-March 2010. pre application

landscape and improves understanding of the Mendip Hills and benefits the local economy	Combe	Combe and identify funding					submitted to HLF.
		Review Mendip Hills Emergency Plan	Avon and Somerset Search and Rescue	Active Mendip,	Revised Plan	November 2009	Review underway headed by Inspector Mark Nicholson Wells Police and community liaison officer
Development and Transport							
D1 All Local Development Framework documents and planning decision making processes will use the criteria set out on page 27	DA1.1 Respond to consultation on Core Strategies to seek inclusion of objective D1		AONB Unit LA partners		Inclusion in core strategies	March 2010	
	DA1.6 promote equestrian and agricultural guideline publications and other means of encouraging good design	Support development of SW regional appendix to national guidance on the impacts and management of equestrian related development in protected	SWPLF	AONB Unit	Appendix to national guidance	March 2010	PDF SW summary launched April 2010

		landscapes					
Participation							
P1 Increase the opportunities for volunteering and the range of people participating, to benefit the environment, people well being and the local community	PA1.1 Develop partnership projects and joint working	People and Places Project i) Expand People and Places Project to promote opportunities in other orgs	AONB Unit NT, SWT and NE	WT		April 2009	Other orgs included on programme and attended training
		ii) Review People and Places Project	AONB Unit NT, SWT and NE		Review and propose way forward	Nov 2009	March 6 <sup>th</sup> PPP event attended by 60 vols. Report produced.
		iii) Deliver a range of volunteer activities across SWT reserves and in the wider countryside	SWT			On going	50 volunteer task run 6 training days attended by 77 vols

		iv) Volunteer conference	PPP	organisations with volunteers		March 2010	March 6 <sup>th</sup> 2010 Shipham – 60 vols attended, report produced
	New PA1.2	Restructure AONB Rangers as part of wider AONB volunteering	AONB unit	Volunteers	Identify structure that provides rewarding volunteer experience and assists delivery of the Management Plan	Sept 2009	Completed. New volunteers recruited and more opportunities promoted.
P2 Link people with their immediate area through community projects that have mutual environment and community benefit	PA2.1 Identify local projects through Parish Plans and other parish council led consultation	Tree survey (tbc)	Litton PC		Projects identified	March 2010	
	New PA2.2	Continued promotion Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) and projects that have received funding	AONB unit	SDF Panel	Allocate SDF funding and promote successful projects	March 2010	All funding allocated to 17 projects
P3 Promote the Mendip Hills as an	PA3.1 Support development of	Develop Mendip Hills Young Ranger	AONB	NT	Run recruitment day for new	July 2009	New Young

educational resource for all ages	facilities and projects that provide educational resources	scheme as part of umbrella Young Ranger scheme that extends beyond AONB boundary	Unit/ GC		intake  Pilot new intake with Goblin Combe	Sept 09- July 2010	Rangers recruited.  Goblin Combe are working with the AONB on Europarc camp.
	PA3.1	Identify continuing programme for Advanced Young Rangers eg volunteering, careership, rural skills, countryside diplomas	AONB unit	GC	Outline programme	November 2009	Event on 5 <sup>th</sup> December agreed new programme that is now underway
	PA3.1	Europarc Camp 2010	AONB Unit/ GC/AM	CC	Secure sponsorship  Promote and administer camp	April – Nov 2009  24 <sup>th</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup> July 2010	Working with EUROPARC Federation.  Bookings opened 15 <sup>th</sup> March
Making it happen							

M2 The Mendip Hills AONB Partnership coordinates the implementation of the Management Plan and monitors progress	MA2.1 Hold 2 Partnership Committee meetings each yr and hold annual forum event	Organise Annual Partnership Forum - Geoparc/geology focus- Cheddar Gorge	AONB Unit			October 2009	Completed
	MA2.3 Produce updates on delivery on web site and report on end of year delivery	Develop and update State of the AONB Report information	AONB Unit		Update annual figures where available	March 2010	Completed
		Produce Partnership Annual Report	AONB Unit		Annual report available as Pdf	June 2009	Available on AONB web site

M3 The Mendip Hills AONB Partnership secures the funding for the AONB Service to develop projects and carry out activities in accordance with the Management Plan	MA3.1 Ensure that a funding agreement is in place between key partners	Consider draft NE Memorandum of Understanding	RSG	AONB unit	Respond to NE	April 2009	RSG have considered new template but have yet to agree
		Agree Mendip Hills MOU	RSG	AONB unit	New 2 yr MOU signed	March 2010	NE new template under consideration by local authorities that is retrospective agreement that includes 2010/11.
		Review Partnership Terms of Understanding including working groups;  Transport, Heritage and Planning	Partnership	RSG & AONB unit	Terms of Understanding updated	Nov 2009	Consultant commissioned. March meeting agreed recommendations. July 2010 will agree Terms of Refence
	MA3.2 Review the Business Plan regularly	Revise the Business Plan	RSG	AONB Unit		June 2009	AONB Unit Business Plan agreed by RSG - working document

## Key

AM Active Mendip

BW Bristol Water

DSWA Drystone walling Association

FWAG Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group

HOT Hawk and Owl Trust

NE Natural England

PCs Parish Councils

SWPLF South West Protected Landscape Forum

WT Woodland Trust

AWT Avon Wildlife Trust

CC&G Cheddar Caves and Gorge

FC Forestry Commission

GC Goblin Combe

LAs Local authorities (Somerset CC, B&NE Somerset, N.Som, MDC, SDC)

NT National Trust

RSG Resources Steering Group

SWT Somerset Wildlife Trust

WU Worcester University

## Sustainable Development Fund 2009/10 – Grants awarded

Project title (CAPITALS:Management Plan Ref)	Applicant	Grant	% of total costs	Outline
0910-001 PARTICIPATION P3 Barton Camp Teachers Packs	Bristol Children's Help Society	£4138	72.1%	To develop and produce teachers and children's packs in connection with the newly developed nature trails
0910-003 PARTICIPATION P3 Children's Walking Guide	Su Gearing & Les Davies	£3,500	48.1%	Walking guide for children aged 6-11 with additional activities
0910-004 BIODIVERSITY B1 SWT Green Hay	Somerset Wildlife Trust	£398.75	42.5%	To achieve lowland meadow recreation through spreading "green hay"
0910-006 ACCESS/REC/TOURISM Cheddar Interpretive Sign	Cheddar Parish Council	£890	69%	Interpretive sign within Garden of Fragrance highlighting geology/biodiversity of the Gorge
0910-008 LANDSCAPE L2 Parish Acre Project	Loxton Parish Council	£5350	89%	To renew fences, provide gates and increase accessibility and interpretation
0809 -008/0910-009 LANDSCAPE Removal of hut in Velvet Bottom	Somerset Wildlife Trust	£5260	63%	To remove redundant hut in Velvet Bottom SSSI . <i>Note: Grant offer renewed from 08/09.</i>

0910-010 PARTICIPATION P3 International Junior Ranger Camp	Mendip Hills AONB Unit	£3000	49%	To prepare for the camp in July 2010 - one day event for Young Rangers to input ideas, set up web site, publicity and other preparation costs
0910-012 ACCESS/REC/TOURISM Circular route leaflet for horse riders and mountain bikers	The Trails Trust (Mendip and Wansdyke branch)	£808	73%	Surveying, design and production of laminated leaflet for route near Priddy.
0910-013 BIODIVERSITY B1 Mendip Hills Community Owl Project	Hawk and Owl Trust	£2090	30%	Train local people to survey long eared owls and coordinate a series of night surveys.
0910-014 ACCESS/REC/TOURISM Black Down Access Management Phase 1	Mendip Hills AONB Unit	£5125	50%	To install barriers to stop illegal vehicle access on Black Down as part of wider project work
0910-016 LANDSCAPE L2 Volunteer Ranger training	People and Places Project	£1120	52%	To provide specialist training to 15 volunteers who provide ranger/warden functions within the AONB for NT,SWT,NE and AONB Unit
0910-017 LANDSCAPE L4 Communal Shepperding	Sophie Courtiour Artist	£3200	86.49%	Create willow sheep with 5 schools in Cheddar Valley and then place them in favourite sites in the AONB.

0910-018 LANDSCAPE L2 Sladers Leigh stock fencing and gates	Mendip Society	£1730	50%	To stock proof the Reserve that is adjacent to the Strawberry Line with fencing and gates suitable for all users.
0910-019 LANDSCAPE L2 Purchase of St Cuthberts leadworks	Bristol Exploration Club	£1175.25	100%	Grant to cover costs of 3 independent valuations of the site
0910-020 LANDSCAPE L4 New Landscape archaeology exhibition and events	Wells and Mendip Museum	£4000	85%	Exhibition to accompany touring Treasures from the earth exhibition, family day and other events and Mendip Hills Festival of Arch Coordinator.
0910-021 CLIMATE CHANGE CC3 Photovoltaic cells on Priddy Village Hall	Priddy Village Hall	£17158 contingency	75%	Project initiated by Priddy school council. Will enable hall to use renewable energy. Children can monitor use.
0910-022 HISTORIC ENV H1 Lime wash St Hughs		£5225	60.5%	Lime wash external walls of 100 year old listed chapel
<b>Total awarded</b>		<b>£64168</b>		
		£832		Claimed as admin
<b>Total SDF</b>		<b>£65000</b>		