

Business Plan Appendix 2: Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 Partnership Delivery Plan (Feb 2014)

Delivery objective	Delivery Action	Partners	Delivery milestones 2014 -2019
Landscape Quality Objectives;			
L1 Promote appropriate management to ensure that the distinctive Mendip Hills AONB landscape is maintained and enhanced	L1.1 Create a stronger and more integrated approach to the Mendip Hills natural environment through mechanisms like Local Nature Partnerships and a Nature Improvement Area Partnership	West of England and the Somerset Local Nature Partnerships, Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan objectives are recognised within LNP documents March 2014 A Mendip Hills Nature Improvement Area Partnership established Dec 2014
L2 Provide opportunities to acquire and develop skills required to care for and promote the landscape and its special qualities.	L2.1 Organise rural skills training events	Local societies including Wrington and Burrington Hedging Society, Mendip Ploughing Society, North Somerset Agricultural Society	Ploughing, hedging, walling and training events held during 2014/15
	L2.2 Extend links with colleges, youth organisations and land managers to develop and run training events/programmes	Bridgwater College, Bristol City College, Somerset Rural Youth Project (SRYP), Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Bridgwater College and SRYP achieve Black Down Project milestones March 2015
L3 Increase awareness and appreciation of the purposes of designation and the special qualities of the AONB	L3.1 Update the Mendip Hills AONB Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) by collating the existing LCAs to form one comprehensive document.	AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	Complete 2014/15
	L3.2 Produce an AONB Sensitivity Map		Complete 2015
	L3.3 Complete Cheddar landscape character assessment and or sensitivity study.		Complete 2014
	L3.4 Develop and maintain Mendip Hills AONB web site with appropriate information	AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	Mendip Hills AONB web site maintained and reviewed March 2015

L4 Increase awareness of the benefits of supporting local products and services that help conserve and enhance the landscape.	L4.1 Promote Greentraveller's Mendip Hills AONB online guide	Greentraveller Ltd, local businesses, Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Greentraveller Mendip Hills online guide promoted via local authority and tourism organisation web sites
Biodiversity and Geodiversity Objectives;			
BG1 Ensure that there is no net loss of characteristic habitats and species.	BG1.1 Ensure local input to updating of National Character Areas Statements of Opportunity and respond to any implications.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Interpretation of monitoring data collected by NE/Defra/SWT/AWT as part of Management Plan review in 2018
	BG1.2 Build on improvements in Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) condition to date by moving SSSI land from Recovering to Favourable condition	Sites of Special Scientific Interest owners and managers, Natural England	Achieve 5% shift from Recovering to Favourable condition per year. Retain at least 96% of SSSI land in Favourable or Recovering condition
BG2 Promote a landscape scale approach to the conservation and expansion of coherent and resilient ecological networks within and adjoining the AONB.	BG2.1 Pursue a locally determined Nature Improvement Area for the Mendip Hills NCA.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership and other organisations and businesses	NIA Partnership established by December 2014 (ref BG4.1)
	BG2.2 Demonstrate best practice by the use of pilots and case studies	Mendip Hills NIA Partnership (ref BG4.1)	Case studies produced 2018
	BG2.3 Support farmers and land managers to increase land in the Mendip Hills covered by agri-environment schemes where possible	Natural England	
BG3 Increase awareness and monitoring of the biodiversity resource of the Mendip Hills AONB so that it is sufficiently understood to continue to guide the successful conservation of the characteristic habitats and species.	BG3.1 Promote ecological network information available for the Mendip Hills in an easily accessible form	Somerset Wildlife Trust and Avon Wildlife Trust Local record centres	Information on the biodiversity resource is available on line as a map by March 2014
BG4 promote a holistic approach to implementing the AONB Management Plan objectives, National Character Area Statements of Opportunity and a locally determined Nature Improvement Area's	BG4.1 Pursue a locally determined Mendip Hills NIA for the Mendip Hills NCA incorporating Management Plan objectives and NCA opportunities	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership and businesses/other organisations as identified	NIA Partnership established by December 2014

objectives.			
BG5 Recognise and celebrate geological sites and features of the Mendip Hills AONB to ensure the successful conservation both of the geology and wildlife habitat they provide.	BG5.1 Organise annual Mendip Rocks! festival	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership, Wells and Mendip Museum and Somerset Earth Science Centre	Programme of events held annually Aug-Sept
	BG5.2 Implement Discovering Black Down 'what lies beneath' school and youth group caving activity/learning programme.	Discovering Black Down Project	Discovering Black Down Project milestones
	BG5.3 Develop a Mendip Rocks Framework Plan that identifies and implement priorities for the conservation and interpretation of geological sites and features.	Mendip Rocks! Partnership	Mendip Rocks Framework Plan – priorities and projects identified by Dec 2014 Workshop session Sept 2014
	BG5.4 Produce two geological trails in the AONB	Mendip Hills AONB Unit NT/NE/Black Down Advisory Group	Ebbor Gorge and Burrington Ham
BG6 Increase awareness of the Mendip Hills geology, particularly cave systems in relation to the importance they play in water management and water supply.	BG6.1 Linked with BG5.2 produce information on the importance of the Mendip Hills geology in providing a water resource	Mendip Rocks! Partnership, Bristol Water, Wells and Mendip Museum	Researched interpretation options by December 2014
Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage objectives;			
H1 Improve the recording, interpretation and understanding of all aspects of the AONBs historic environment to ensure local communities and visitors enjoy a rich experience of the sense of place.	H1.1 identify opportunities for people to learn about and visit cultural heritage assets- sites, monuments, buildings, landscapes	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	Revise 'Visiting' page of Mendip Hills AONB web site Development of 'Somerset Hills'
	H1.2 Forge better connections to heritage materials held in collections outside the AONB	Local authorities Historic Environment Records, Wells and Mendip Museum, Weston super Mare Museum, Bristol Museum, Axbridge Museum, Museum of Somerset	Delivery of Mendip Rocks! framework – milestones identified

	H1.3 Raise awareness amongst communities and groups about how to access and learn about cultural heritage	Local authority heritage services	Delivery of Black Down project milestones
	H1.4 Support delivery of final phase of Quarry Faces project including publication of book and digital archiving of material.	SESC / Mendip Hills Partnership	Book published with access to archive live October 2014
H2 Increase awareness and communicate the significance of the high quality historic environment of the Mendip Hills AONB.	H2.1 Develop Mendip Rocks! framework for research, interpretation and management of extraction industries and cave exploration.	AONB Partnership/ SESC/Wells and Mendip Museum – Mendip Rocks! framework	Mendip Rocks! framework partnership established March 2014
	H2.2 Work with communities to promote, develop and deliver community events across the AONB.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership, Wells and Mendip Museum, Discovering Black Down project	Annual Heritage Seminar held Mendip Hills cluster of events as part of Festival of Archaeology July 2014 Discovering Black Down Project milestones
	H2.3 Publish English Heritage Mendip Hills AONB Publication	English Heritage	Mendip Hills AONB publication published April 2015
H3 Promote appropriate management of sites, structures and landscapes designated for their international, national, regional or local importance in the historic environment to ensure no further loss of heritage assets.	H3.1 Work with local communities to develop and deliver externally funded community based projects	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership, English Heritage	
	H3.2 Use a range of tools eg planning permissions, management agreements, grant aid and conservation initiatives to deliver positive conservation.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership, English Heritage, LAs, parish councils	Complete restoration of additional 10 traditional highways signposts by 2015
Recreation, Access and Tourism objectives;			
R1 Maintain, improve and promote public access and quiet recreational activities with measures to ensure access for all in accordance with the purposes of AONB designation.	R1.1 Continue to promote Mendip Hills AONB Partnerships ' <i>Code of Conduct for managing recreational and fundraising events in the Mendip Hills AONB</i> '	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	Annual monitoring of specific site impact eg Black Down Project
	R1.2 Continue to deliver Conserving Black Down project to repair and restore heavily eroded paths	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	Delivery of Conserving Black Down Project

			milestones.
	R1.3 Deliver planned network improvements through Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Green Infrastructure Strategies	Bath and North East Somerset Council, North Somerset Council and Somerset County Council	Improvements delivered in line with Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Green Infrastructure Strategies
	R1.4 Manage, maintain and promote the Strawberry Line, The Mendip Way and Limestone Link routes as key recreational routes into the AONB.	North Somerset Council, Bath and North East Somerset	Annual monitoring/reporting of condition or routes agreed by Sept 2014
	R1.5 Respond to development of 1SW Cycle Adventure project as a as means to promote cycling activity in SW protected landscapes	Mendip Hills AONB Unit	Agreed future involvement
R2 Support the development of tourism and day visits that benefits the local economy, conserves and enhances the landscape and improves understanding of the Mendip Hills.	R2.1 Continue to work with Greentraveller Ltd to ensure online guide is effective and is developed including pilot of Young Ambassadors to review and write articles	Mendip Hills AONB Unit, Greentraveller, local businesses	Revise 'Visiting' section of the Mendip Hills web site March 2014 Review Greentraveller online guide with businesses Sept 2014 build results into Mendip Hills Tourism Strategy (R2.3)
	R2.2 Annually review and reprint Mendip Hills AONB Visitor Guide	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	Mendip Hills AONB Visitor Guide published annually
	R2.3 identify specific tourism business needs and develop solutions	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership and VisitSomerset	Business needs surveyed and built into Mendip Hills Tourism Strategy December 2015
	R2.4 Set up tourism business familiarisation day as part of STA promoted days to all Somerset protected landscapes	VisitSomerset, Mendip Hills AONB Partnership and other protected landscapes	Day event held in Mendip Hills AONB Autumn 2014
R3 Develop and promote more sustainable methods of travel to and around the AONB for enjoyment and recreation.	R3.1 Provide up to date information on sustainable travel to and within the AONB direct to visitors and businesses to provide to their visitors.	Local authorities, Greentraveller on line guide, businesses	Assess visitor counter data on Strawberry Line (N.Som) annually.
R4 Support healthy lifestyles by encouraging more people to use the	R4.1 Build partnerships with Health and Well Being Boards to identify, coordinate opportunities and	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Joint initiative identified in the Mendip Hills AONB

Mendip Hills for sustainable outdoor activities	implement projects		
Natural Resources objectives:			
N1 Recognise and promote the benefits and relevance of the AONB as a valuable source of ecosystem services, economic and health benefits.	N1.1 Ensure that all relevant strategies and plans reflect the importance of the AONBs natural services and benefits	LNPs, LEPs, Health and Well-Being Boards, local authorities	
	N1.2 Develop and or identify training resources to enable parish councils and volunteers to gain a better understanding of ecosystem services and use through existing volunteering/Young Ranger and parish council activities.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Development of training resources by March 2015
N2 Promote conservation of water resources and enhance water quality, taking measures to reduce low flows and flooding by appropriate management and use.	N2.1 Implement and monitor the North and Mid Somerset and the Bristol Avon Catchment Flood Management Plans	Bristol Water, Environment Agency, local authorities	Regular reviews
	N2.2 Promote the Catchment Based Approach initiative aiming to improve the quality of the water environment	EA and FWAG SW	
N3 Promote sustainable management of soils in accordance with best practice to minimise erosion and water pollution and maximise resilience to drought.	N3.1 Continue to implement catchment sensitive farming for the Somerset Levels and Moors and North Somerset Moors Sensitive Farming Priority Catchments	Environment Agency, NFU, Natural England	
	N3.2 Continue BW Metaldehyde project to reduce use of pesticides containing Metaldehyde .	BW, Metaldehyde Stewardship Group	Regular monitoring continued
	N3.3 Promote use of nitrate leaching model and uptake of mitigation measures to reduce nitrate leaching from agricultural land.	FWAG SW and farmers	Model adopted by farmers with monitoring of effects and practicalities of measures
Land Management objectives:			
LM1 Support sustainable farming to ensure it remains as the principle land and contributes to maintaining the special qualities of the AONB	LM1.1 Maximise opportunities to respond to and influence the Governments thinking on agricultural support payments in particular seeking a financial return for provision of ecosystems services.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Identify case studies by March 2015
LM2 Support and promote rural land management that conserves and enhances natural resources, including biodiversity, landscape character the	LM2.1 Carry out a survey to identify Calaminarian grassland and current state	Somerset Wildlife Trust	March 2015 complete survey

historic environment and aids public awareness and enjoyment of the Mendip Hills AONB.			
LM3 Promote a sustainable woodland economy that enhances the Mendip Hills AONB woodlands and wider landscape with targeted woodland management and creation in appropriate locations supporting wood fuel and local community opportunities.	LM3.1 Promote the Woodland Trusts 'Community Woodland Network' providing information on community woodland management and ownership	Woodland Trust	3 communities networked.
	LM3.2 Promote the Woodland Trust's a) free community and school planting packs - weblink: http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/take-part/plant-trees/Pages/priority.aspx	Woodland Trust	
	LM3.3 Promote the Woodland Trust's MOREwoods scheme, to help and facilitate landowners to plant trees - weblink: http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/planting-woodland/funding-and-planting-grants/woodland-trust-grants/Pages/default.aspx	Woodland Trust	
	LM3.4 Monitor ash trees for Chalara fraxinea and report and communicate information as appropriate	Forestry Commission, Mendip Hills AONB Partnership, all woodland owners	Regular updates provided on AONB website with links to Forestry Commission site
	LM3.5 Promote Forestry Commission grants and other appropriate funding schemes eg ELMS to bring woodland into management	Forestry Commission	
LM4 Influence the use, restoration and after use of all quarries to minimise the impact on the landscape and to be compatible with the purposes of the AONB designation.	LM4.1 Apply the ecological approach to restoration as set out in the SCC Somerset Minerals Plan for the Mendips Hills NCA	Somerset County Council	
Development and Transport Objectives;			
D1 Working with local planning authorities, ensure that development in the AONB and its setting, is of a nature, scale, location and design that meets community need without compromising the special qualities of the Mendip Hills AONB	D1.1 Establish robust detailed policies in Local Plans and in Neighbourhood Plans which support the purposes of AONB designation.	Mendip Hills AONB parishes, local authority partners	
	D1.2 Review the Partnership Dark Skies Statement to take account of revised data and sensitivity studies.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Review complete by 2015
	D1.3 Ensure that the ' <i>Agricultural Building Design</i>	Local authorities	Monitoring of planning

	<i>Guidelines for the Mendip Hills AONB (2013)</i> ' and <i>'Guidelines for horse related development for the Mendip Hills AONB (2012)</i> ' are applied in all appropriate cases.		application decisions
	D1.4 Support and facilitate local planning authorities working together to achieve consistency and good practice in the consideration of planning in the AONB.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	Hold regular Planning Officer meetings
	D1.5 Provide landscape advice for planners to encourage opportunities to be taken to conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape and other qualities of the Mendip Hills AONB including its ecosystem services	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	
	D1.6 Monitor development in the Mendip Hills AONB identifying any trends that require addressing	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	Monitoring of planning applications/decisions for annual review summary
	D1.7 Produce proposals for securing S106 agreement funding via Local authorities secure funding for management and enhancement of the AONB	Mendip Hills AONB Unit	Proposal submitted to National Grid
D2 Working with local highways authorities, ensure that the special qualities of the AONB are fully respected in the planning, design, provision and management of all types of transport and associated infrastructure.	D2.1 Highways authorities will seek to minimise the impact of road schemes including signage, junction design, traffic calming measures and lighting.	Highways authorities Mendip Hills AONB Unit	Complete restoration of 10 traditional highways finger posts (also ref H3.2)
D3 Encourage reduction in Carbon emissions within the AONB through reducing energy consumption, applying energy conservation measures, encouraging more sustainable patterns of development, and utilising renewable energy generation technologies that are of an appropriate type and scale for their siting.	D3.1 Promote position statements and guidance on renewable energy.	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership/AONB Unit	
D4 Ensure issues of importance for the management of the AONB landscape are fully reflected in strategies and plans produced by other agencies and local	D4.1 Encourage and support parish councils producing Neighbourhood Plans and other local plans to address importance of landscape	Local authorities and Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	

communities.			
Participation objectives;			
P1 Increase the opportunities for volunteering and the range of people participating, to benefit the environment, peoples health and well being and the local communities in and around the AONB	P1.1 Continue to develop partnership projects and joint working including the Mendip Rocks! festival, Black Down Project,	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Delivery of Black Down project milestones
P2 Encourage the involvement of local people and the wider community in the Management of the AONB.	P2.1 Continue the Mendip Hills AONB Volunteer task programme	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Delivery of AONB annual task programme
	P2.2 Identify local projects through Parish Plans and other parish council led consultation	Mendip Hills AONB Parish Councils	
	P2.3 Support projects appropriate to a protected landscape and that assist delivery of the AONB Management plan	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Mendip Hills Fund to award grants
	P2.4 Develop Young Ambassadors as part of Greentraveller /tourism on line promotion of the Mendip Hills	Mendip Hills AONB Young Rangers	Have trained and have the services of 2 Young Ambassadors
	P2.4 Develop and promote the Mendip Hills Fund including setting up Visitor thank you scheme	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership	Launch held May/June 2014 Set up new Mendip Hills Fund Panel
	P2.5 organise Stargazing events to promote awareness of dark skies and need to retain dark skies.(See D1.2)	Mendip Hills AONB Unit	Two Stargazing events held
P3 Promote the Mendip Hills as an educational resource for all ages and encourage sharing of research and learning tools	PA3.1 Support development of facilities and projects that provide educational resources eg Mendip Hills AONB Young Rangers, Wells and Mendip Museum, Farmlink, Charterhouse Centre, Somerset Earth Science Centre	Mendip Hills AONB Partnership, Wells and Mendip Museum, Somerset Earth Science Centre.	Deliver Mendip Hills AONB Young Ranger programme 14/15 Review of Young Ranger scheme and funding completed March 2015 Discovering Black Down Project milestones.

