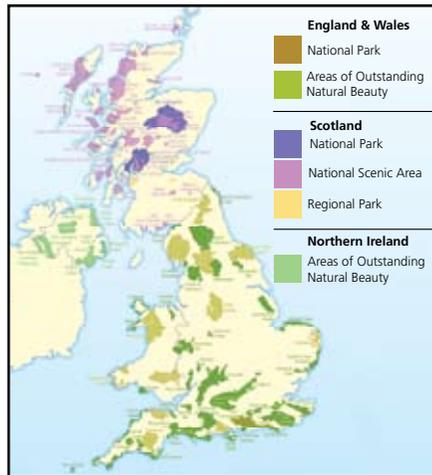




The North Devon Coast

North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Management Strategy 2009 -14

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England, Wales and Northern Ireland



Map 1. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

In England and Wales, our finest landscapes have been conserved through designation as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were brought into being by the same legislation as National Parks - the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. They have been described as fine landscapes, of great variety in character and extent. The North Devon AONB is one of 40 AONBs in England and Wales that have been designated under the 1949 Act.

from other English regions making the region attractive as a place both to live and work. It is the most rural region in England with some 80% of the land in agricultural use and nearly double the national figure engaged in agricultural employment at 3.3%.

A total of 38% of the region is classified by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as Category V Protected Landscapes.

The richness and diversity of the South West environment differentiates it



Map 2. South West AONBs and National Parks

These protected landscapes are:

Twelve Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and parts of two others extend to 30% of the region. This is twice the proportion covered by AONBs in England as a whole.

Two National Parks - Dartmoor and Exmoor, covering some 7% of the region.

Other key South West environmental assets are:

- 638 km of defined Heritage Coast, and 60% of England's undeveloped coastline
- 65% of the South West Coast Path National Trail runs through AONB landscapes
- 6 UNESCO designated sites
- 2 Community Forests

North Devon Coast

An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

“They were walking through a combe half full of high old furze in gay bloom that ran up to a fringe of brambles and dense wood of mixed timber and hollies. It was as if one half of the combe were filled with golden fire to the cliff’s edge. The tough stems parted before them and it was a window opened on a far view of Lundy, and the deep sea sluggishly nosing the pebbles a couple of hundred feet below. They could hear young jackdaws squawking on the ledges, the hiss and jabber of a nest of hawks somewhere out of sight; great grey and black gulls screamed against the jackdaws, the heavy scented acres of bloom were alive with low nesting birds, singing or silent as the shadow of the wheeling hawks passed and returned, and on the naked turf the combe rabbits thumped and frolicked”

Kipling R. Stalky and Co. 1899

Gorse at Baggly Point



A Vision for the North Devon Coast

North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The North Devon Coast is one of England's finest landscapes made special by its unique mosaic habitats influenced by the sea. It has a legacy of human heritage woven into a farmed landscape and fringed by dramatic Atlantic coastal scenery. Its vibrant resorts and villages offer opportunities for active recreation with pristine waters and golden beaches. They are set in an inspirational, tranquil and accessible landscape which gives respite from the pressures of daily life. The landscape is valued by thriving local communities and visitors. Forces for change, including development, agricultural and the threat posed by sea level rise are managed in ways that integrate the needs of local communities with the conservation and enhancement of a nationally important landscape.

Foreword

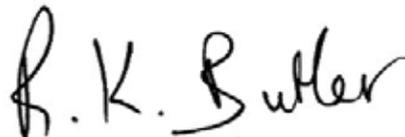
Letter from the Chairman

For the North Devon AONB a holistic approach to management is essential to achieve environmental conservation and local sustainable development. We believe that only through the equal consideration of the environment, local economy, and community will changes be truly sustainable and this is why the new strategy had strong public and specialist consultation.

Six external guidance reports were commissioned. Our own staff researched other specialist areas and public consultation was encouraged throughout the development of this plan with several events supporting participation at all stages.

The past five years have been a very successful period for our AONB. Our Sustainable Development Fund has supported 69 local community projects and distributed over £280,143 since its creation, the launch of the new and innovative Explore Braunton project, and the completion of a Community Profiling Project.

Just as the past five years have been a great success, the new Management Plan looks forward to even greater achievements. We are confident that this will be the case because of the continuing high level of support you have always given, without which our efforts would have been so much the poorer.



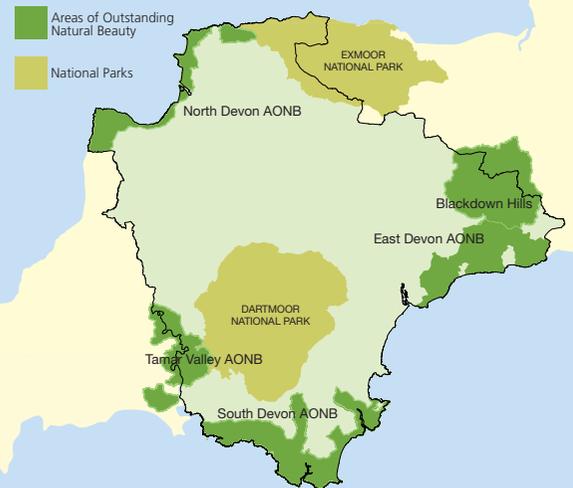
Richard Butler MBE
North Devon AONB Chairman



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Protected Landscape of Devon



Map.3

Devon's natural and historic environment is notable for its high quality. Over 50% of the land in Devon is covered by environmental designations with the National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty together covering approximately 38% of Devon's area.

North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Biosphere Reserve



Map.4

1. 1. The North Devon Coast

North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Strategy 2009-14

1.1 An Introduction to the North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 171 square kilometres (66 square miles) of mainly coastal landscape from the border with Exmoor National Park at Combe Martin, through the mouth of the Taw & Torridge Estuary to the Cornish border at Marsland Mouth. The extensive dune system at Braunton Burrows has an immense diversity of wildlife and has earned North Devon the accolade of UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Status. The whole of the AONB is within the Reserve including the core and much of the buffer zone.

Statement of Significance

The North Devon Coast has a surprising diversity of scenery within a small sliver of England including some of the finest cliff scenery in the country; tall, rugged cliffs and wave-cut platforms contrast with wide sandy bays and sand dunes. In the north, steeply dipping rocks form hogsback cliffs at varied heights in a natural continuation of Exmoor's coastline. To the south, facing the full force of the Atlantic, sheer crags and razor-like reefs present the coast at its sternest. The AONB reaches inland to the Hartland plateau, scored by deep valleys, which reach the coast as steep hanging gaps in the cliffs, often foaming with spectacular waterfalls. In contrast is the broad sweep of Bideford and Barnstaple Bay, a mixture of low cliffs, long sandy beaches and the huge dune system. Inland a pastoral landscape of hedged fields complements the steep-sided wooded combes and valleys where villages shelter from the Atlantic winds. Whilst skirting the larger settlements, the AONB boundary takes in bustling holiday resorts and picturesque fishing villages along this spectacular coast.

Distinctive coastal scenery with rare features and qualities

Walking along the South West Coast Path across the open, windswept cliff tops, and gazing westward across the seemingly infinite expanse of ocean, one is struck with a timeless sense of raw nature devoid of human influence. The

humbling feeling is sharpened when Atlantic storm waves crash against the twisted strata of exposed rocky cliffs, sending thunderous sprays of surf into the air. Dropping down into a coastal combe from the cliffs or farmland, a strong sense of refuge and shelter is felt, made more striking by the presence of enclosing woodland in the combes and the abrupt drop in wind speed. Where stretches of coastline are distant from the coast road, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness is strong. Such qualities are increasingly uncommon in the wider countryside, but even more rare is a quality found in some areas - that of wilderness. In Braunton Burrows this is perhaps most striking, comprising a vast sand-dune system, the infinite sky and an expanse of sandy beach and estuary bordered by tranquil marshland. Likewise, the Hartland Coast possesses a sense of wilderness, but this is a fragile quality, which can dissolve with the sight of a wind turbine or mast on a skyline, or a car parked in an open combe. Coastal landforms provide classic examples of erosion and deposition, as well as rare and characteristic landscape features.

A landscape and seascape of high visual quality

Panoramic views from elevated areas across rolling countryside within and outside the AONB are an important feature of the AONB. Within the combes, framed sea views are characteristic, and coastal vistas across to Lundy are wide and empty; further north the vista is framed by an intimate view of the Welsh coast. The countryside backdrop, much of it undesignated, is a defining element to the visual quality of the AONB providing a variety of open views. The coast path provides long views along the coast across the estuary and inland to undeveloped skyline and downland.

A Significant Wildlife Resource

The rarest AONB habitat is the Culm Grassland, small fragments of which are found on the wet inland moors. Elsewhere are mosaics of maritime grassland, heathland and scrub along with sea cliffs, rocky shores, estuarine salt marsh

and internationally important sand dunes; hundreds of miles of hedgerows provide extensive havens throughout the inland area. Western oak woodland is found along the Clovelly coast and within the combes, whilst excellent air quality, constantly freshened by Atlantic westerlies, is a particular asset and supports a proliferation and variety of lichens, with straggling clumps of “Sausage lichen” contributing to the local landscape character.

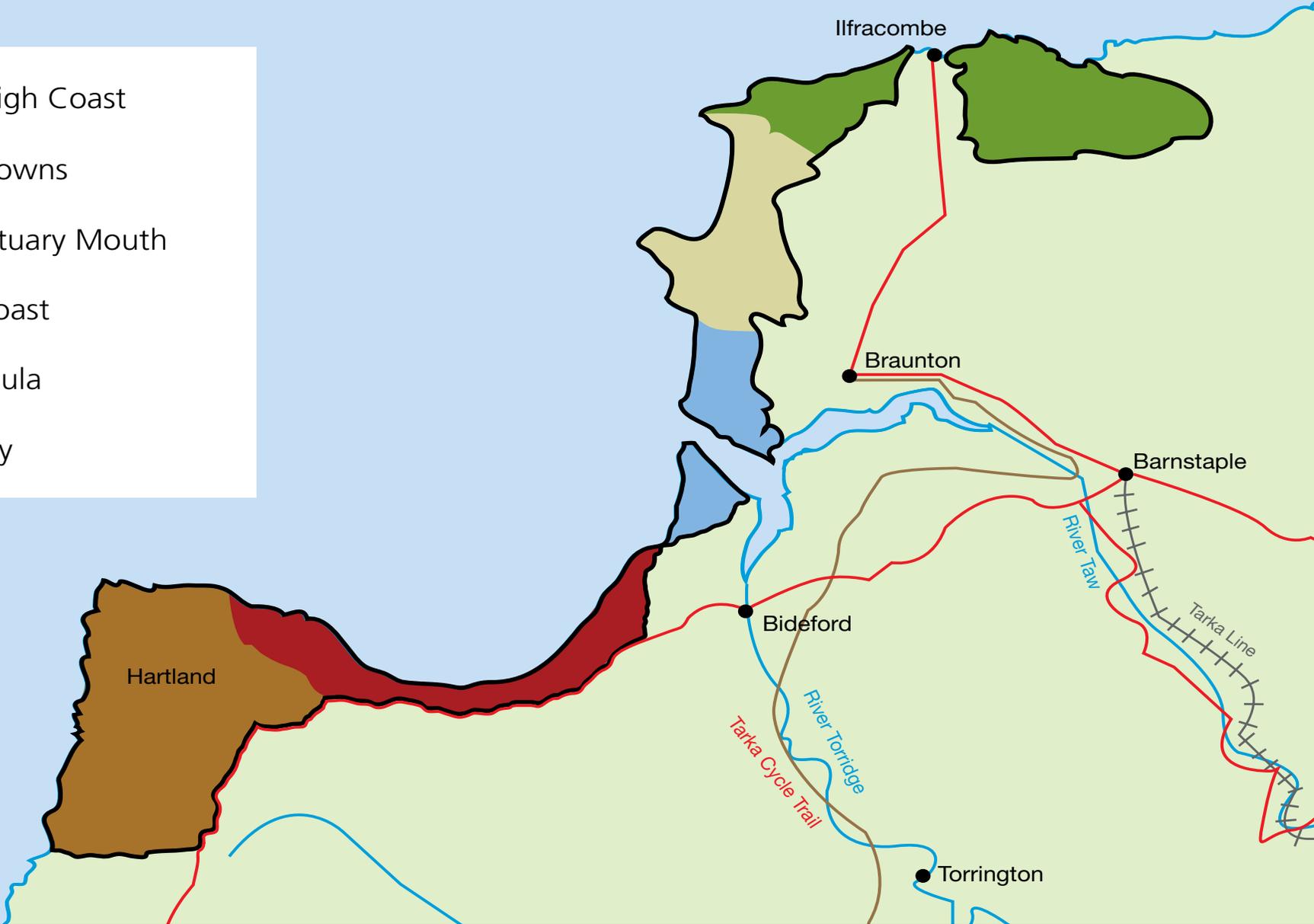
A remarkable heritage

The legacy of a long history of human habitation in the area is woven into the landscape, with some threads tracing back to pre-historic times. The most extensive historic landscape features are the enclosed fields defined by ancient hedge-banks, their patterns reflecting centuries of agricultural change and made more appealing by the historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages, and the winding lanes which connect them. Inland, the skyline is marked by ancient burial mounds whilst along the coast, promontory sites have been home to strategic defences from the Iron Age to the 20th Century. Devon’s seagoing heritage is represented by, for example, historic quays and fishing villages of Clovelly with lime kilns in almost every inlet.



North Devon Landscape Character Areas (after Pearson)

-  North Devon High Coast
-  North Devon Downs
-  The Torridge Estuary Mouth
-  Bideford Bay Coast
-  Hartland Peninsula
-  AONB Boundary



1.2 The Landscape Character of the North Devon AONB

1.2.1 Joint Character Areas

Characterising a landscape is challenging but is necessary to understand and conserve the distinctive and special qualities which we celebrate. At a national level, the area of the North Devon AONB is divided into two Joint Character Areas namely Exmoor and the Culm. These depict the natural and cultural dimensions of the landscape, as well as combining the wildlife and natural features.

1.2.2 The North Devon AONB Landscape Character Appraisal

In 1999, the Countryside Agency commissioned a Landscape Character Appraisal Study of the North Devon AONB by Nicholas Pearson Associates¹. It was the first comprehensive landscape study of the North Devon AONB to identify key landscapes and features and describes five Landscape Character Areas and four recurring Landscape Feature Types which are distinctive to the AONB

Landscape Character Areas

1. Hartland Peninsula Forming the westernmost part of the AONB is a remote and sparsely populated rural landscape. Exposed to the full force of the Atlantic weather, the sea has eroded the high coastal plateau to form a continuous sequence of vertical cliffs. The plateau is scored by deep wooded combes. The crushed and folded strata of the underlying rocks has provided spectacular coastal landforms. Livestock farming dominates the area, with tall hedge-banks and poorly drained clay soils creating poor rushy pastures, known as culm grassland, and fine examples of maritime heath.

2. Bideford Bay Coast This is a gentle and rounded landscape sheltered from the winds. The picturesque fishing villages of Clovelly and Bucks Mills nestle amongst the predominantly oak-wooded combes, heath and cliffs. Coastal

combes extend up into farmland, and large tracts of woodland provide a striking landscape feature and valued wildlife habitat.

3. Taw Torridge Estuary Mouth Sandwiched between the parallel ridges of Westward Ho! and Saunton Downs is a landscape dominated by sand dunes, wide sandy beaches and tidal riverscapes. It is an area of exceptional importance for wildlife and scenery, which is reflected in the many designations, e.g. UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, covering the Burrows and the estuary. The low-lying topography, coupled with its open windswept character, provide expansive views out to sea, with the undeveloped skyline of North Devon forming a backdrop.

4. The North Devon Downs To the north of the estuary, areas of high open farmland with broad rounded ridges and small valleys slowly rise in altitude. The exposed high ground of the North Devon Downs is pastoral, with large open fields, with stone-faced and closely-flailed hedge banks. Surrounding the high ground are some areas of more intensive mixed agriculture and the distinctive villages of Croyde and Georgeham. Wide sandy bays are flanked by large headlands of coastal downland and maritime heath.

5. North Devon High Coast The north coast is dominated by a variety of rugged cliff scenery, distinctive headlands and small rocky coves pierced by steep combes which support ancient semi-natural woodland. However some areas are dominated by recent conifer plantations. Settlements have developed along the narrow valley floors of the combes flanked by high coastal farmland which is less windswept than that of the coastal downs. To the east, the field patterns are large and rectangular with straight alignments of hedge-banks, indicating later parliamentary enclosure. Conversely, around Combe Martin, the narrow enclosed fields, with field boundaries interspersed by sunken lanes, represents a remnant enclosed medieval strip-field system.

Landscape Features

Coastal features Dramatic cliffs, treacherous headlands, wide sandy bays, rocky shore platforms and coastal waterfalls are perhaps some of the most striking and memorable features of the North Devon AONB. The diversity of coastal scenery adds to the area's distinctiveness, and includes many unique features such as the vast dune system of Braunton Burrows, and the pebble ridge at Northam Burrows.

Devon Hedge-banks The tall Devon hedge bank is a fundamental feature of the AONB landscape and is still valued greatly by farmers for the provision of shelter and stock control. The hedge bank defines the historic field patterns which stretch across the countryside, and provide valuable wildlife habitats and refuges within an otherwise intensively-farmed landscape. Local variations in hedge-bank construction are sometimes apparent, adding to the distinctiveness of specific areas. For example, stone-faced banks are a feature around Hartland Quay and St. Catherine's Tor, where the cliffs and beach provided a plentiful supply of stone. Around Morteheo, the nature of the rock has meant that hedge-banks are faced with small flat stones in pronounced 'herring-bone' patterns.

Trees and Woodland Significant belts of woodland are found within the AONB, notably along the Clovelly coast and into the adjacent combes, and also in the sheltered middle and upper reaches of combes along the Hartland and the North Devon High Coast. These woodlands are important landscape features, providing enclosure and contrast with adjacent open cliff tops and farmland. They comprise a significant proportion of ancient woodland, providing an irreplaceable wildlife resource of historic significance. In post-war years, some woodland has been clear felled and replanted with conifer. Single trees and tree groups are important landscape features and appear in hedgerows, in clusters around farmsteads and hamlets, or in the more sheltered crevices of the upper combes. Proximity to the coast creates the characteristic wind-pruned hedgerow tree, and species tolerant of salt spray and strong

winds, e.g. Monterey cypress, have been favoured, and are now characteristic of exposed houses and farms.

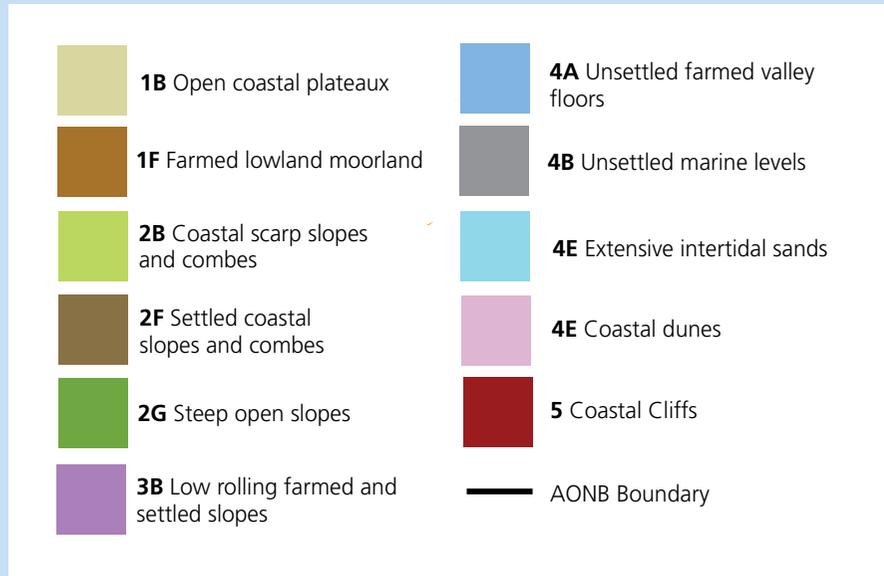
In some landscape types within the AONB, it is the lack of trees and woodland, and the consequent openness and smooth skylines, which make them distinctive, especially close to the west-facing coast. The high ground and impeded drainage of Hartland's inland moors provides a natural check to woodland with grey willow being the predominant broadleaf.

Traditional buildings and settlements

Scattered historic villages, hamlets and farms of stone, cob, thatch and slate are characteristic of the AONB landscape, with settlements spreading along the base or sides of sheltered combes with their high church tower prominent in local views. Coastal headlands have provided historic sites for landmarks such as lighthouses and defence sites, while sheltered coastal locations have been favoured for country houses and religious establishments such as Hartland Abbey. Sheltered accessible seaside positions around Saunton Sands, Croyde Bay, Woolacombe Bay and Combe Martin have seen a growth in tourist hotels, villas and retirement homes, and more recently, static and touring caravan parks.



North Devon Landscape Character Types (after Diacono)



1.2.3 Landscape Character Assessment

In 2006-7 Devon County Council, in partnership with Natural England, the Devon AONBs and other local authorities, has commissioned a study of landscape led by Mark Diacono Associates ². This project took the approach of building up landscape description from the small local units. As a result the AONB has been classified into 11 Landscape Character Types (LCT) fitting into a Devon-wide classification system. Contained within them are 43 Landscape Description Units (LDU). The key landscape characteristics for each LCT are highlighted; it is an aggregation of a number of individual Landscape Description Units, which have common characteristics, such as land form, land cover and cultural pattern. This process facilitates the derivation of landscape management guidelines at a very local level.

This work is in an early stage of development for North Devon AONB and needs further refining, including a better integration of the Pearson Landscape Character areas with the Diacono landscape character types and historic landscape characterisation. Together with the Natural Areas we will then have a management tool of four tiers from local to strategic with objective descriptions. We have draft management guidelines for each LCT which need refining and adopting locally for use by land managers and conservation objectives. The LCT's and LDU's can also be used to inform policy makers and planners on the capacity of the landscape to absorb development and enable more sensitive management of change necessitated through changes in agriculture and climate.

1.2.4 The Historic Environment of the North Devon AONB

In the last five years, our knowledge of the historic landscape has increased considerably and research has included the following:

- A baseline Archaeological Survey ³ 2006
- Historic Landscape Characterisation ⁴ 2007
- Historic Environment Topic Paper ⁵ 2008

The baseline survey is in need of verification and further research through practical field studies. However, together with the other papers, it is a useful starting point to inform local planners, developers and the local community about the importance of the historic environment within the AONB.

Although scant, the information and evidence we have on historic environment in the AONB gives us a glimpse of the area's substantial and fascinating resources and the gaps in our knowledge indicate a lack of research. The majority of recent field research (in Hartland, the Estuary, and in Combe Martin) has been entirely as a result of voluntary effort and a major challenge for the next few years is to ensure that there is at least an equivalent level of effort from the statutory sector.

Summary information on the historic environment has been integrated with summary descriptions of the Diacono landscape character types on the next pages.

LCT1B Open coastal plateaux

Location

Along the Atlantic Coast between Bude and Ilfracombe, frequently interrupted by lower-lying landscape types, especially between Westward Ho! and Woolacombe. Individual LDUs extend up to 2.5KM/1.25 miles inland. They may be separated from the sea by a narrow band of cliffs but their land use and vegetation remain strongly influenced by the coast location and climate.



Key Characteristics

- High open plateaux dissected by combes and river valleys
- Windblown vegetation Regular medium to large field pattern
- Dense low hedges (often elm) with occasional hedgerow oaks
- Mixed land use, mainly pastoral
- Little woodland
- Few roads but many rights of way
- Very low settlement density
- Influence of geology on land form
- Extensive views along coast

Historic Environment

Finds of flint and chert tools (Baggy Point, Hartland, and Abbotsham) suggest Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation. Bronze Age barrows are found on Berry Down and elsewhere standing stones can also be found. There is also an Iron Age hillslope enclosure at North Hill Cleave, Bittadon.

Hartland is the only large settlement on high land within the AONB and is more akin to villages found in Cornwall. It became a borough in the late 13th Century and the high tower at Stoke church and nearby folly (perhaps a warren's tower dating to the 16th or 17th Century) are important landmarks. There are strong early Christian associations e.g. St Nectan's church, which probably originates from a 7th Century monastery. Names such as Berry, Blegberry, Tosberry and Titchberry may also indicate former enclosed settlements.

The plateau was historically a farmed landscape with enclosed fields systems, hamlets and small villages. Some fields, especially on the higher land, were clearly marked out by surveyors in the 18th and 19th centuries. Others are based on the medieval strip field system with some showing their s-curved form having resulted from the amalgamation of strips in post medieval times.

LCT 1F Farmed lowland moorland

Location

This plateau lies inland from Hartland Point, between Clovelly and Welcombe. Along its northern edge it is subject to some coastal influence.



Key Characteristics

- Very flat moorland plateau without natural vertical elements
- Predominantly inland character with small coastal fringe
- Mainly pastoral cultivation with dominant conifer plantations
- Notably regular field pattern with areas of unenclosed moorland heath and scrub
- Open and exposed
- Many shallow streams and rush-dominated roadside ditches indicative of impeded drainage
- Sparse settlement pattern of hamlets and isolated farms, with some tourism and leisure uses and occasional isolated stone barns
- Sparse highway network of narrow straight lanes
- Crossroads marked by signposts
- Hedgebanks present, with low hedges in variable condition

Historic Environment

At Bursdon and Welsdon Moors there are extensive barrow cemeteries but otherwise the LCT is largely unenclosed pasture. Within the more enclosed farmland is Clovelly Dykes which covers an area of 8 hectares and is a classic example of a 'south western' hillfort with widely spaced earthwork defences.

LCT 2: SCARP SLOPES

Location

Mainly at intervals along the western Atlantic coast to the south of Hartland Point; one LDU lies to the east along the north coast from Hartland.



Key Characteristics

- Narrow, steep individual or multiple branching valley systems
- Coastal influence in exposure, vegetation and extensive views
- Densely wooded, predominantly with broadleaf trees
- Small areas of pasture and scrub with irregular small-scale field pattern marked by low hedgebanks
- Small to medium irregular fields
- Extremely sparsely settled, with stone as dominant building material
- Limited or absent road network, with variable path network
- Limited vehicle access to coast and coastal rights of way
- Intimate, small-scale and enclosed in combes
- Tranquil and remote
- Coastal influence and sea views, often restricted by narrowness of combe mouth

Historic Environment

This represents the most intensively settled areas with many farmsteads and hamlets originating during the medieval period. They nestle within an intimate landscape still dominated by enclosed medieval field systems, however, centuries of use have resulted in an intricate pattern with orchards, woodlands, formal gardens at Hartland Abbey, watermeadows, and a possible deerpark upstream.

LCT 2F: Settled coastal slopes and combes

Location

North-facing Atlantic coast of North Devon, around Ilfracombe and Clovelly



Key Characteristics

- Steeply sloping narrow valley systems
- A mix of unenclosed woodland and small to medium irregular fields with wide hedgebanks
- Pasture, with frequent wet pasture and horse paddocks
- Extensive linear settlement just above narrow, flat valley floor, with Victorian architecture and small-scale 20th Century 'resort' development
- Sparse winding narrow lanes, with SWCP present along coastal edge and many other rights of way
- Coastal influence, even where sea views restricted by narrow combe mouth
- Small scale, confined and sheltered
- Lushly vegetated

Historic Environment

Combe Martin with its comparative mineral wealth contains the main concentration of industrial archaeological evidence within the AONB. Here there are significant remains relating to silver and lead mines which were worked at intervals from the medieval period through to the late 19th Century. There is also a concentration of limekilns around the quarries south of the town. The other settled combes are more pastoral, e.g. Berrynarbor, a traditional farming village characterised by cob

LCT 2G: Steep open slopes

Location

West-facing North Devon coast between Morte Point and Braunton, overlooking series of extensive sandy beaches.



Key Characteristics

- Upper sloping hillside below plateau edge Adjoining but not part of coastal cliffs
- Open pastoral farmland without woods or trees but with low hedges and hedgebanks
- Mix of pasture, rough grazing and low scrub
- Regular field pattern of variable size, giving an unenclosed appearance where very large
- Limited network of sinuous minor roads
- Small hamlets of vernacular style or extensive small-scale coastal settlement with much leisure-related development
- Medium to large scale, open but partly protected from exposure by headlands
- Extensive coastal views

Historic Environment

Strip fields and other medieval and post-medieval enclosed fields substantially overlaid by settlement at Woolacombe which is strongly Edwardian in character and largely developed following the local arrival of the railway in 1874.

LCT 3: VALLEY SLOPES

LCT 3B: Lower rolling farmed and settled slopes

Location

Small areas above beaches and dunes at Croyde and Braunton.



Key Characteristics

- Gently rolling landform, sloping up from valley floor
- Small fields with medium to tall boundaries and a regular pattern
- Pastoral land use and settlement
- Variety of building ages, styles and settlement size, given some unity by presence of stone and thatch
- Much leisure-related development with strong influence of coastal or marine activities
- Much use of stone
- Winding narrow lanes
- Streams • Tranquil and intimate out of season
- Enclosed and sheltered

Historic Environment

At Croyde and Saunton this LCT has a strong remnant medieval form. Croyde especially has retained its medieval village core and its character is enhanced by several groups of fossilised strip fields. Nearby, Saunton has surviving medieval lynchets but takes much of its character from the strong architectural statements of the 1930s Saunton Sands Hotel and other 20th Century tourist facilities. Nearby the listed building Saunton Court has gardens designed by Lutyens.

LCT 4: VALLEY FLOORS

LCT 4A: Unsettled farmed valley floors

Location

Braunton Great Field and Braunton Marsh, set back from river Taw to the south and protected from westerly maritime influence by Saunton Sands and Braunton Burrows.



Key Characteristics

- Open flat landform, often with distinct vegetated floodplain edge
- Shallow watercourses screened by riparian vegetation
- Hedges, not banks, generally on the boundary with rising land
- Pastoral or arable land use, generally not mixed, with variable field sizes
- Rare survival of medieval open field strip system (Braunton Great Field)
- Unenclosed or with stone walls and hedges as well as drainage ditches
- Unsettled
- Narrow winding lanes
- Open internally, with views out screened by boundary vegetation
- Estuarine or river valley character
- Tranquil

Historic Environment

This LCT is not part of the designated AONB but it is one of the most important historic landscapes in the region

The Great Field, although much eroded, is one of only two surviving medieval field systems in the England and is still farmed in strips separated by low earthen baulks and marked by bond-stones. However many of the strips were amalgamated in the twentieth Century, Braunton and Horsey Marshes were carved out of the estuary by entrepreneurs in the 19th Century and are packed with historic engineering works and field barns.

LCT 4B Unsettled marine levels

Location

Skern mudflats on southern flank of Taw/Torridge estuary.



Key Characteristics

- Flat unsettled river valley
- Marine influence on terrestrial habitats, such as mudflats, reedbed and saltmarsh

- Unsettled and unenclosed
- Proximity of roads and settlements in adjoining areas reduces tranquillity
- Traditional floodplain habitats of high biodiversity value
- Open water, its extent varying with the state of the tide
- Strong sensory characteristics: colour and texture of habitats, smell of mudflats, sound of seagulls,
- Sight of sunlight reflecting off sea

Historic environment

Evidence is limited in this area to a fish trap near Crow Point and skeletal remains of abandoned boats.

LCT 4E Extensive intertidal sands

Location

Either side of the Torridge Taw estuary mouth and further north along north-western Devon coast (Woolacombe, Croyde, Saunton and Westward Ho! beaches)



Key Characteristics

- Enormous flat sandy beach
- Extensive recreational use
- Protected by pebble ridge, low rocks, cliffs or dune system
- Unenclosed, unsettled and without roads
- Good access but few footpaths
- Exposed to west
- Extensive views along coast

Historic environment

Subjected to the extreme tides of the Bristol Channel at first glance this zone would appear to be devoid of any historic interest. However this area has historically been a relatively easy source of food. At Westward Ho! there is evidence of very early occupation including a submerged forest, a shell midden from Mesolithic times, possible Neolithic timber stakes which may have marked an ancient trackway, and possibly Romano-British timber fish traps.

LCT 4F Coastal dunes

Location

Along north-western Devon coast, to east of extensive beaches (Braunton to Woolacombe).



Key Characteristics

- Extensive dune systems
- Variety of heights and habitats
- Internationally important biodiversity
- Extensive recreational use
- Some rush-dominated pasture
- Dominant features in local landscape
- Unenclosed
- Almost entirely unsettled and without roads; a few tracks through; widely accessible
- Open but not exposed except along western edge

Historic environment

At Braunton Burrows the vast dune system (designated for its wildlife as the core of the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere Reserve) may well conceal remains from almost any period, and 18th Century maps, for example, indicate a lost chapel site. The use of the Burrows for rabbit warrens was important in the 18th Century, however, it is the internationally-important Second World War evidence which really marks the historic character of this landscape. As the Allies prepared to invade Normandy, the coastline from the Taw Estuary to Morte Point was appropriated by the US Army and the remains of training structures are still present; the most notable being the five replica landing craft in Braunton Burrows.

LCT 5: CLIFFS

Location

Northern and western coasts of North Devon, excluding Taw-Torridge estuary.



Key Characteristics

- Near-vertical, steeply sloping cliffs
- Unenclosed, unsettled and inaccessible
- Narrow shingle beaches, small stony

coves or rocky foreshore at foot of cliffs

- Accessible only along cliff top via South West Coast Path
- Very sparsely settled on less steep slopes
- Scrub or pasture on less steep landward slopes
- Clearly expressed variable geology
- Extensive views along coastline from cliff-top
- Wild and exposed with dominant marine influence

Historic environment

At Hartland Quay, immense chunks of rusting ironwork from one of around 130 shipwrecks on this dangerous coast bring home the scale of past disasters, and at Rapparee and Croyde, human remains, believed to be drowned sailors, have been found in the cliff edge.

The cliff edge has always been a major line of defence with the earliest remains being dramatic Iron Age cliff castles and hillforts. Hillsborough is the largest but others include Newberry, Peppercombe, Embury and Windbury. More recent remains include a Victorian gun battery, again at Hillsborough, World

War II radar stations at Hartland and Northam, and transmitter masts along the coast.

Lime took the place of sand as the main agricultural aid from the 16th Century and limekilns are commonplace in the area: those at Bucksmills are especially fine. Some have the remains of channels carved out to give better access by ship with evocative names such as the Peppercombe Lear and Blackpit at Lee. At Greendcliff, the kiln took advantage of a local outcrop of culm as fuel.

The villages of Clovelly and Bucks Mills are built into the steep cliff and together with Hartland Quay have harbours which sheltered herring fishing fleets from the 16th Century. Fishing was an important industry until the early 20th Century .

The rocky foreshore and cliffs are also home some more unlikely features associated with the rise of tourism, the famous tunnels with sea water bathing pools cut into the foreshore at Ilfracombe are a fine example.



Listed Buildings, Ancient Monuments, and Listed Parks and Gardens

-  Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments
-  Scheduled and Listed Parks & Gardens
-  Braunton Great Field and Marsh
-  North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty





2. Context

2.1 The Purpose of AONB Designation

The North Devon AONB was designated under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, and is one of a family of nationally Protected Landscapes, which include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks designated by Natural England. The primary purpose of AONB designations is:

- To conserve and enhance natural beauty
- In pursuing the primary purpose, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment
- Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses⁶

AONBs are of equal status to National Parks in terms of scenic beauty and landscape protection

2.2 History of Designation

The North Devon Coast was first considered to require some form of national landscape protection as early as 1953 and was originally intended to be part of the Exmoor National Park. The Torrington Section was to be part of the proposed Cornwall Coast National Park. This was not to be, and by 1956 Devon County Council had agreed that the North and South Devon Coasts should be considered as AONBs. Messrs Ritchie and Watson for the National Parks Commission were asked to draw up a proposed boundary to submit to the County Council and there was consultation with the Urban and Rural

District Councils concerned. Initially, it was proposed that most of Combe Martin village be excluded because of bad disfigurement by electricity and telephone cables. The suggested boundary largely followed the Area of Special Landscape Value, which was a County Council designation. There followed a period of consultation and modification e.g. Northam Burrows was added. Following public advertisement only one representation was received this was from a resident concerned about his proposal to develop a holiday camp at Watermouth. Ultimately, in September 1959, the North Devon AONB was the first AONB in Devon to be designated and confirmed in May 1960, just two months ahead of South Devon.⁷

For many years, the AONB had no specific management service, however in the early 1990s, a Heritage Coast Service managed the two defined Heritage Coasts which have similar boundaries to the AONB.

In 2002 Braunton Burrows, within the AONB, was re-designated as the core of a Biosphere Reserve under the revised UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, providing international recognition for this special area. This was closely followed by the establishment of the North Devon AONB Partnership in 2004 with a small staff unit to support it. There is a close relationship between the AONB management and that of the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere Reserve with reciprocal partnership membership and integrated staff teams. The Biosphere Reserve Strategy brings with it opportunities for sustainable development and an Ecosystem Services approach across the hinterland of the AONB.

2.3 A new Strategy for North Devon AONB

2.3.1 Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) consolidated earlier legislation regarding the designation and purpose of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It also added some important new provisions:

- Section 85 requires relevant Authorities (public bodies) to “have regard” to the purposes of conserving and enhancing that natural beauty of the AONB
- Section 89 requires AONB Local Authorities to prepare and review a management strategy at intervals of not less than five years.

The first North Devon AONB Strategy was adopted in March 2004 and its first five-year action plan is now nearing completion. In the years since its adoption, priorities have changed and new issues, for example climate change have come to the fore. The time is, therefore, right for a review and the North Devon AONB Partnership has been asked to carry out the review on behalf of North Devon Council, Torridge District Council and Devon County Council.

2.3.2 Need and Purpose

The AONB is the major environmental asset for the north of Devon and its natural beauty contributes substantially to the economy, as well as to the enjoyment and healthy active lifestyles of nearly two and a half million people who visit it annually. The Strategy highlights this mutual dependency and sets our goals for sustainable development based on five principles; living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; using sound science responsibly; promoting good governance

It has five key purposes:

- To highlight the special qualities and issues of the area and the value of its different features
- To present an integrated vision for a sustainable future of the AONB as a whole in the light of local, regional and national priorities
- To set out agreed policies and objectives with specific targets, which will help secure that vision

- To identify what needs to be done to deliver these objectives, by whom and when, in order to achieve these outcomes in an action plan
- To state how the condition of the AONB and the effectiveness of its management will be monitored.

The Strategy will be of interest to the communities, parishes, residents, businesses, landowners and farmers, agencies, authorities, utilities, organisations and amenity groups operating within, or with an interest in, the area. In this sense, it is a shared strategy that has been influenced by, and will continue to be developed through, extensive consultation and partnership working.

This management strategy complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Section 89
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations 2004
- The Conservation (Natural Habitat etc.) Regulations 1994 (as amended by The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) (Amendment) Regulations 2007
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans: A guide CA23
- Guidance for the Review of AONB Management Plans published by the Countryside Agency CA 221



The following organisations are represented on the North Devon AONB Partnership:

Countryside Landowners and Business Association
Devon County Council
English Heritage
Environment Agency
Exmoor National Park
Forestry Commission

National Farmers' Union
National Trust
Natural England
North Devon's Biosphere Reserve Partnership
North Devon Council
North Devon +

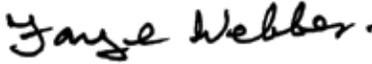
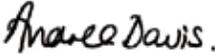
South West Forest
Tarka Country Trust
Biosphere Foundation
Taw Torridge Estuary Forum
Torridge District Council
Members of the public (2)

The North Devon Coast

North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Strategy 2009 –14

2.4 The North Devon Coast AONB Partnership

This Management Strategy has been prepared by the North Devon AONB Partnership on behalf of Devon County Council, North Devon and Torridge District Councils. It fulfils the statutory requirement of Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

					
		Community Representative			
					
					
					
					
					

2.5 The AONB Management Strategy in Context

The North Devon AONB Partnership operates within a complex statutory and policy framework and complements a range of guidance, plans and policies produced by the European Parliament (EU), national and regional bodies. A comprehensive list can be found in the Strategic Context Topic Paper⁸. These relate to land-use, landscape and biodiversity in the AONB.

At an international level, the AONB is classified as a Category V landscape by International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) managed mainly for landscape and seascape protection and for recreation. Additional status is given to the area through North Devon's UNESCO Biosphere designation and strategy, which provide an overarching conservation, research and development framework for the AONB.

A variety of EU conventions and directives influence the management of the AONB amongst the most important being the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy which has changed the way farmers are paid and has links to environmental management.

Nationally the Department for Environment Farming and Rural Affairs has launched its Ecosystems Approach Action Plan 2007 and highlights the co-dependency of natural processes. This approach is embodied in the Management Plan and will become increasingly important over the next five years. This is closely related to the Natural England suite of policies including their strategic direction 2006-9 and its refresh. The main funding organisation and the umbrella body for AONBs is Natural England and this strategy aims to ensure that where appropriate Natural England goals are delivered locally.

North Devon and Torridge Local Development Framework

Local Plans have been produced for both North Devon and Torridge District by the District Councils and apply the strategy of the Devon Structure Plan at a local level. The Plans set out the policies and proposals to guide development and the use of land within the area. However Local Development Frameworks (LDF) for Torridge and North Devon are replacing Local Plans and there will be some joint documents for the two Districts, e.g. The Core Strategy. Planning policy and the way it is applied is crucial for the AONB landscape and throughout this strategy there are targets for influencing the LDF as far as the Coastal area of North Devon is concerned.

The North Devon and Torridge Sustainable Communities Strategy

2008-18 is being prepared following the merger of the two local strategic Partnerships, a new joint strategy is in development and will be consulted upon shortly. This fits within a similar strategy for the whole county will provide a framework for joint action of key stakeholders within the two districts. An early draft indicates that there will be strong policies supporting the AONB and Biosphere Reserve designations. It is closely linked with Local Area Agreement targets, especially for biodiversity, which will give political support for many of the objectives within this strategy.

More locally still there are Parish and Community Plans for each AONB Parish which have influenced this strategy.



Volunteers at work

3. A 20 Year Vision for the North Devon Coast

North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

A number of vision statements were adopted in our first AONB Management Strategy, however early consultation for the production of this draft suggested that the language of our “visions” was complex and did not fully reflect the identity and intended direction of the AONB. This new vision, as set out below, addresses those concerns, and aims to set the context for the remainder of this consultation draft. Discussions with the Partnership suggested that the individual theme visions in the Management Strategy 2004-9 were an unnecessary layer.

The new vision should be seen as an ideal for 20 to 30 years’ time. All those concerned with the future of the North Devon coast can contribute by working towards achieving this vision, and the following section of this report outlines the issues facing the AONB and the policies which will serve to guide us all in ensuring a thriving future for the AONB.

The North Devon Coast is one of England’s finest landscapes made special by its unique mosaic of habitats influenced by the sea. It has a legacy of human heritage woven into a farmed landscape and is fringed by dramatic Atlantic coastal scenery. Its vibrant resorts and villages offer opportunities for active recreation with pristine waters and golden beaches. These are set in an inspirational, tranquil and accessible landscape, which gives respite from the pressures of daily life. The landscape is valued by thriving local communities and visitors alike. Forces for change, including development, agriculture and the threat posed by sea level rise, are managed in ways that integrate the needs of local communities with the conservation and enhancement of a nationally-important landscape.



4. Management Plan Themes

Introduction

Planning for the future of the AONB needs an approach that integrates social, environmental and economic issues. In order to make this strategy manageable four themes have been chosen as follows.

- **Landscape:** environmental quality and climate, biodiversity and geodiversity, historic environment and local distinctiveness, farming and land management, marine and coastal.
- **Sustainable Development:** access, recreation and tourism, planning and development, transport and highways, rural economy and services, community and culture
- **Management:** Communication, Education and Awareness, Management Organisation and Partnerships.
- **Implementation and review:** Delivery Plan and Performance Indicators. This last section will be prepared following the public consultation exercise.

This strategy is supported by a five-year delivery plan, which demonstrates how the Partnership will achieve the objectives set out in this strategy.





4.1 Landscape

4.1.1 Landscape Character and the Historic Environment

Description

The special qualities that make up the distinctive landscape of the AONB are the fundamental reason for its designation and underpin the quality of life for local people and support the land-based and tourism economy. The relationship between people and the landscape is enshrined in the European Landscape Convention. Ensuring that the AONB landscape is outstanding in national and international perception is the fundamental principle behind this strategy.

Background and evidence

The AONB landscape has been described in detail on pp11-23 of this strategy. The coastal landscape owes its origins to the geology and to the sculpting effect of the sea, wind and climate whilst, further inland many centuries of agricultural practices have given the AONB its distinctive appearance. Small hamlets and settlements are common, and more recent influences on the landscape primarily relate to recreation and tourism activities. The majority of the area is farmed privately and there are several large estates, two of the most extensive of which are under the conservation management of the National Trust and its tenants.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- English Heritage has recently undertaken a nationwide review of Scheduled Ancient Monuments as part of the new Heritage at Risk Register, which also includes Grade I and II* listed buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens etc. Details of specific sites within the AONB are not yet available.
- The English Heritage National Mapping Programme for Exmoor will be completed in 2009, but there is currently no commitment or timetable for bringing the North Devon AONB into this programme. In general, the Historic Environment is in need of more research and field verification.

- Adjacent and nationally-important historic landscapes, such as Braunton Marsh and Braunton Great Field are within the Heritage Coast but not within the AONB.
- There is great variation across the AONB and no single set of characteristics define local distinctiveness. Farm diversification and new uses for traditional buildings may erode the local distinctiveness unless there is better understanding and guidance the landscape will be subject to climate change, which will alter its appearance and necessitate new management practices.
- The take up of Environmental Stewardship schemes within the AONB is low however the revised scheme is likely to be better targeted at the AONB and its natural and historic landscapes and features.
- The potential for renewable energy production, especially wind farms, present threats and opportunities for the landscape conservation and views within and from the AONB. The strong coastal winds mean that there is pressure for large scale wind turbines offshore and onshore close to the AONB boundary. The proposed 23 x 110m to hub wind turbines at Fullabrook will have an impact upon the tranquillity of views from the AONB and there has been a flurry of applications for single and small groups of turbines close the AONB boundary.

Objectives

- LH1** By 2014, there will be improved understanding and protection of the historic landscape of AONB.
- LH2** By 2014, Landscape Character Assessment will be used to assist in the determination of planning applications.
- LH3** By 2014, there will be local distinctiveness guidance encompassing at least 15 Landscape Description units adopted within the Local Development Framework.
- LH4** By 2014, the number of holdings in Environmental Stewardship and Woodland Grants Schemes will be increased by 30%

Policies

A1 To maintain and enhance landscape character and to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

A2 To understand the pressures for change (including climate change) and enable action for mitigation or adaptation to these pressures.

A3 To develop community action and understanding of the special features of the AONB and Heritage Coast and improve their management.

A4 To ensure that land managers have access to necessary resources to enhance the landscape and natural beauty of the AONB.

Measures for progress

- Decrease in number of Listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments at risk.
- Percentage increase/decrease of land in Environmental Stewardship and Woodland grant schemes.

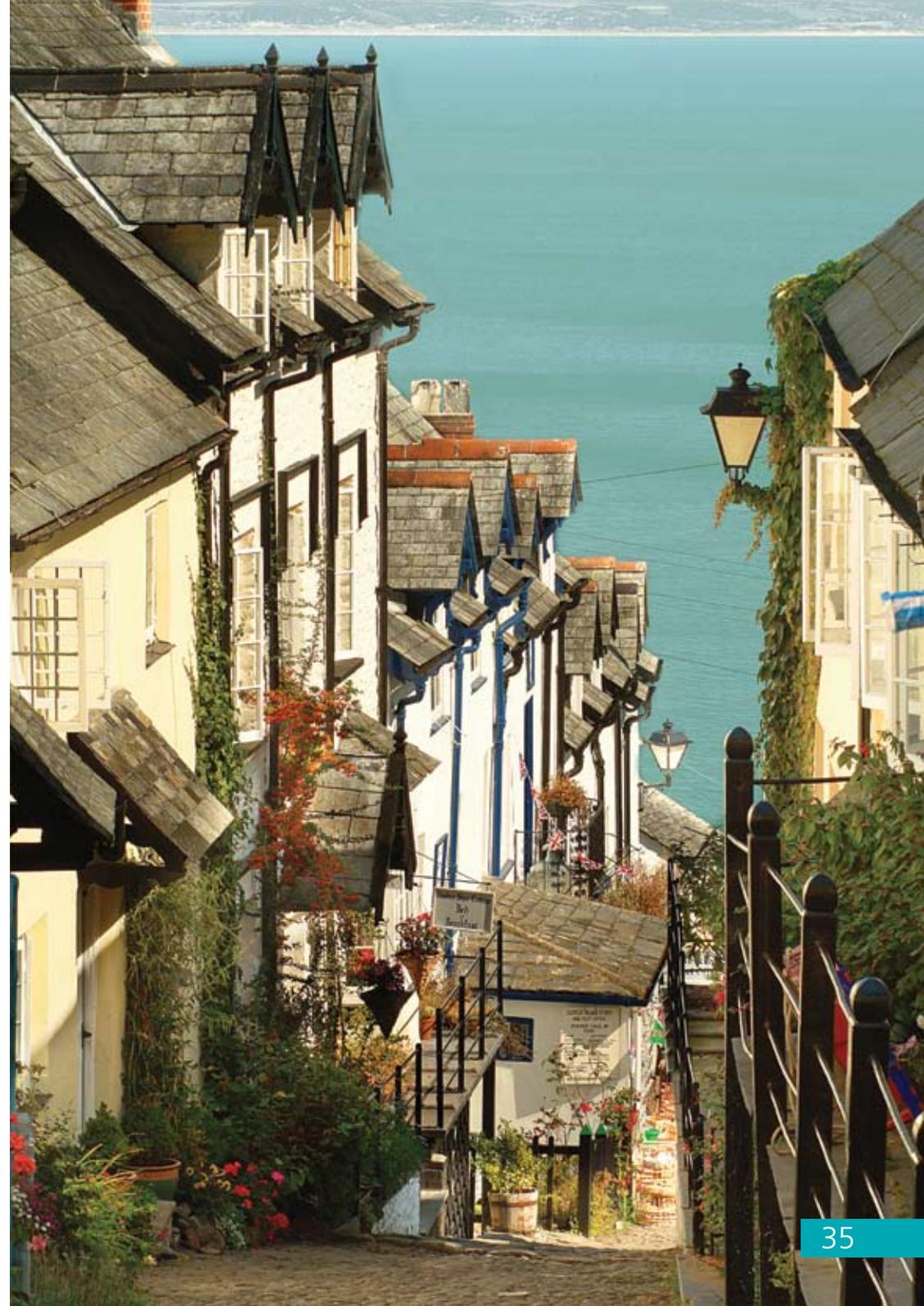
Success 2004-09

- A detailed Landscape Character Assessment was carried out in 2006/7
- A quarterly fixed-point photography survey to facilitate landscape monitoring commenced in 2007
- Historic Landscape Characterisation available on DCC website from 2007
- Tithe Maps for AONB Parishes digitised 2008
- Joint consultation events for AONB Management and Local Development Framework 2007-8
- Number of Entry Level Stewardship schemes increased from 29 in 2005 to 62 in 2008
- Number of Organic Level Stewardship increased from 2 schemes in 2005 to 22 in 2008

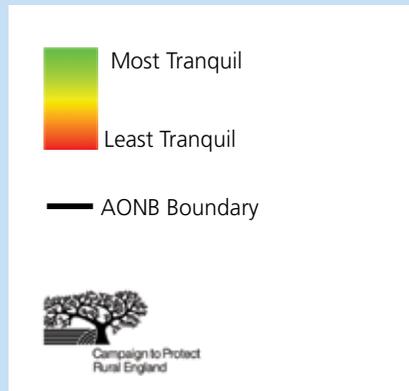
Fact and Figures

In 2008

- 1700 ha of coastal landscape is in National Trust Ownership
- 21 Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- 407 Listed Buildings
 - 6 Grade 1
 - 23 Grade II*
 - 378 Grade II
- One Listed Historic Park or garden
- 28% of AONB in Entry Level Stewardship
- 9% of AONB in Organic Level Stewardship



North Devon AONB Tranquility areas



Reproduced courtesy of the Campaign to Protect Rural England. Revised edition 2007.

4.1.2 Environmental Quality & Climate

Introduction

The cleanliness of the air, land and waters, combined with tranquillity and fine landscapes, are vital for the quality of life enjoyed by those living in and around the AONB. This high environmental quality helps to attract over two million visitors, who gain enjoyment and health benefits from their visit, whilst contributing to the local economy.

Background and Evidence

Government air quality statistics show that air quality in the South West is generally good in comparison to the rest of England⁹ and water quality in rivers and coastal waters has improved significantly in recent years¹⁰. The AONB is one of the most tranquil areas in the country, with the Hartland Peninsula having the greatest proportion of remaining dark skies. However tranquillity levels have been eroded in the last decade.

Temperature shows a seasonal variation, but due to the modifying effect of the sea, the range is less than in most other parts of the UK. July and August are the warmest months in the region, with mean daily temperature ranges from 19°C in coastal areas to 21°C in inland areas. The average monthly rainfall for the AONB ranges from 68 mm-196 mm and the average monthly duration of sunshine ranges from 50-250 hours¹².

Issues, trends and forces for change

- Climate change is the most important pressure on the environment of South West. Hotter and drier summers, warmer and wetter winters with more extreme weather, increased flood risk, sea-level rise and along the main rivers predicted¹³.
- The ability of the AONB to contribute to the mitigation of the effects of climate change is minimal in global terms. However the Partnership can, and should, support local adaptation and mitigation initiatives which will have

multiple benefits.

- The installed renewable-energy within the AONB remains small,¹⁴ but there is much potential capacity from small woodlands¹⁵, fast flowing streams¹⁶, the large tidal range and high winds which puts pressure on the AONB.
- Recent CPRE “Tranquillity”¹³ research (noise and light pollution) demonstrates that the AONB remains a stronghold of tranquillity and remoteness, but that there has been some decline.
- AONB beaches have a considerably higher density of litter compared to other UK beaches, much of it tourist- or sewage-related¹⁸.
- The Environment Agency is producing River Basin Plans as a requirement of the Water Framework Directive which impose high standards on water management.
- The proposed Environment Agency Strategic Environment Plans will set out the state of the environment and propose actions.
- The North Devon Biosphere Reserve Strategy¹⁷ will support efforts to improve environmental quality.

Objectives

EQ1 By 2014, there will be improved tranquillity within the AONB.

EQ2 By 2014, the LDF will have guidance to support the production of onshore and offshore renewable energy and low-carbon living which respects the designated landscape and historic environment.

EQ3 By 2014, there will be an improved understanding of the possible impact of Climate change on the AONB and its biodiversity.

EQ4 By 2014, all AONB funded projects will aim to be carbon neutral.

EQ5 By 2014, bathing water quality standards within the AONB will have been maintained or improved.

Policies

B1 To ensure that dark skies and the peace and tranquillity within the AONB are preserved.

B2 Support and encourage the production of renewable energy and ensure that offshore and onshore technologies are developed in a way which conserves or enhances the landscape and natural environment of the AONB.

B3 To ensure that water quality and the state of the environment generally supports the biodiversity and economy of the AONB as well as health of its residents and visitors.

Local Measures for progress

- No decline in CPRE Tranquillity measures.
- Increase in small-scale renewable energy production.
- CO2 saved as a result of AONB funded projects.
- Percentage of all designated bathing beaches meeting Bathing Water Directive standards.
- Increase/Decrease in litter indicated by Beachwatch reports.

Successes 2004 - 9

- Two wood pellet and one wood heat projects have been supported by SDF grants
- SDF has provided support for feasibility studies for micro hydro, and small scale wind turbines
- 21 farms took part in a project to reduce pollution in the river UMBER catchment near Combe Martin

Fact and Figures

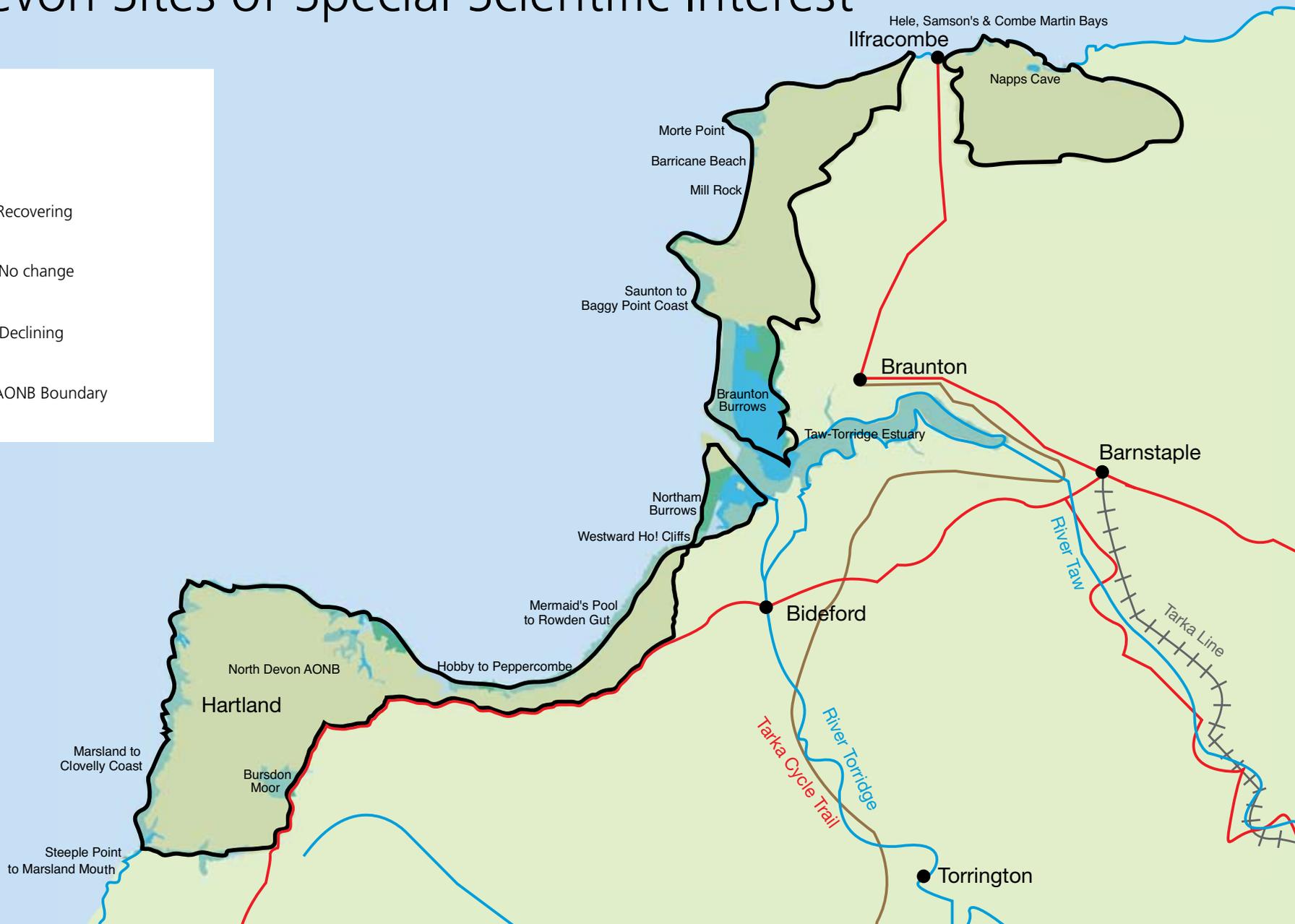
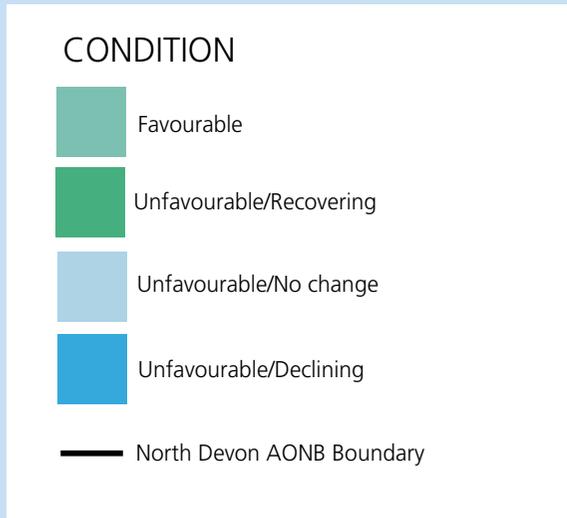
- Wind speeds near AONB are estimated at 6 to 9 metres per second at 45m above ground
- In 2007 there was approximately 0.14MW installed Renewable energy capacity from all sources within the AONB
- In 2006, there were 17 water pollution incidents in the AONB 3 of which were classed as significant
- In 2006, 100% of the 9 open-water beaches met the imperative standard and 66% met the guideline standard for bathing water

Surfers at Woolacombe





North Devon Sites of Special Scientific Interest



4.1.3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity³⁶

Introduction

The North Devon AONB is enhanced by its rich and varied wildlife. In spring, woods full of bluebells and hedgerow primroses are spectacular but, for those who care to explore further, there are numerous rare and protected species and sites. The underlying geology and soils define the nature of the wildlife and farming whilst contributing to the land-form and scenery.

Background and Evidence

The AONB has a plethora of designations which protect this precious resource, the most important of which are the two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Braunton Burrows has a spectacular dune system with over 400 plant species and is the heart of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The Tintagel-Marsland-Clovelly Coast SAC is home to western oak woodlands, vegetated seas cliffs and coastal heath. Small and precious fragments of Culm grassland survive in the Hartland Peninsula.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- There has been significant improvement in the understanding of the AONB wildlife resource within the last 4 years e.g. County Wildlife Sites¹⁹ and RIGS, ^{20,21} and the North Devon BAP²² is currently under review. Concerns include fragmented and declining habitats e.g. Oak forest to wood pasture, and there is still a level of intensive farming with its consequent adverse effect on wildlife.
- The impact of visitor pressure, recreational use and the trend for outdoor partying has potentially adverse impacts on the ecology but is not documented. There are also hotspots of introduced and invasive species threatening native wildlife.
- The South West Nature Map identifies woodland and coastal habitats as the most important Strategic Natural Areas within the AONB,²³ and CAP reform and the targeting of grants for conservation management will provide

opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.

- The Devon Local Area Agreement strengthens support for Biodiversity and Geodiversity enhancements and there is a duty for biodiversity imposed by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) Act 2006 and National Indicator 197²⁴.
- 78.38% by area of the AONB SSSI is in favourable or unfavourable-recovering condition.
- Climate change: Rising sea levels will squeeze and put pressure on coastal habitats and species. Inland habitats and species will have to cope with new and changing seasonal temperatures and rainfall patterns²⁵.
- Proposals for a Biodiversity Monitoring System are being developed which should benefit the AONB.

Objectives

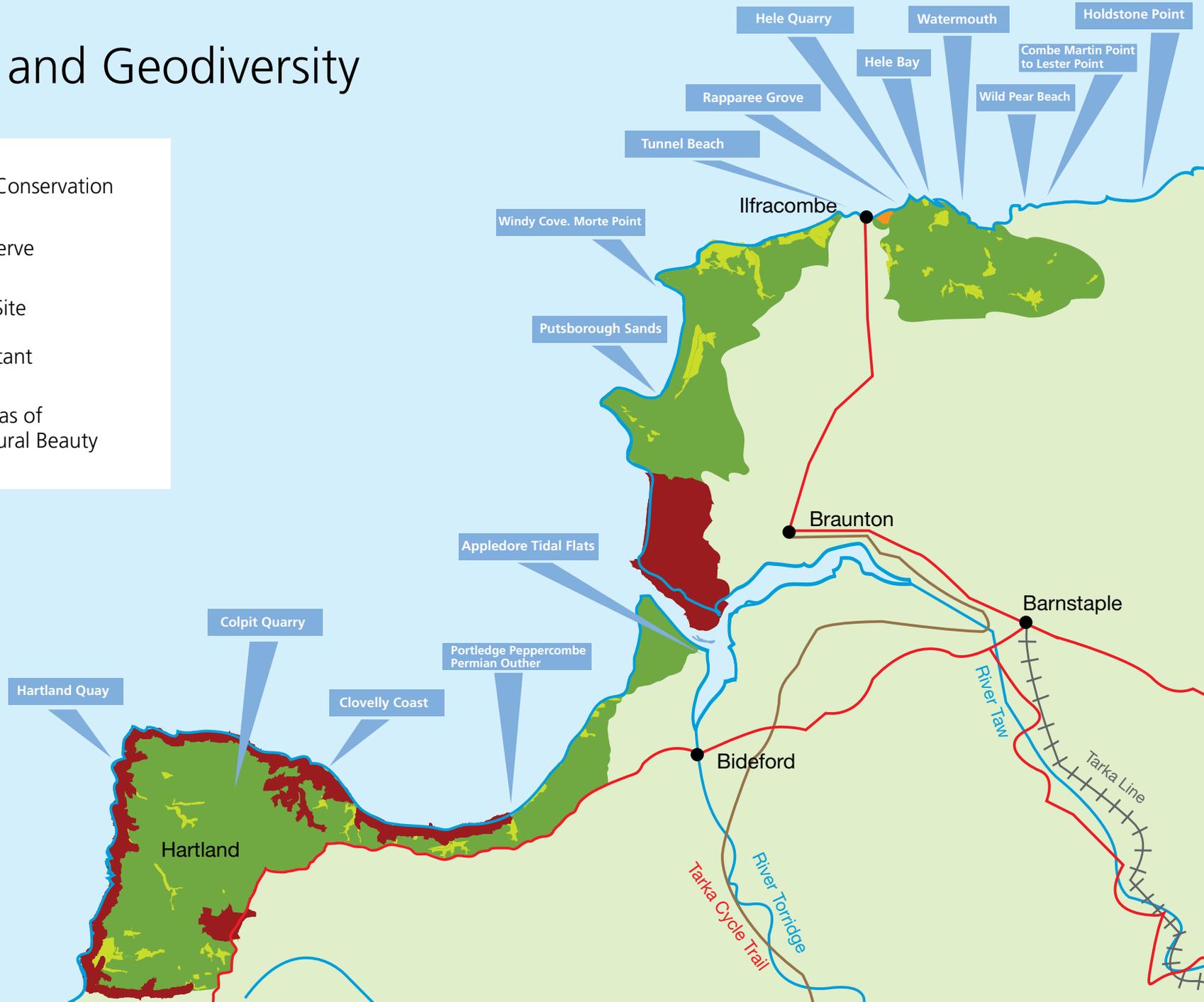
- BG1** By 2014, at least 80% of County Wildlife Sites and ancient semi-natural woodland will be in conservation management.
- BG2** By 2012, there will be an improved understanding of visitor impacts on the ecology and geology.
- BG3** By 2014, potentially vulnerable soils will be mapped and action plans in place.
- BG4** By 2014, 95% of SSSIs will be in favourable or recovering condition.
- BG5** By 2014, there will be two green infrastructure networks within the AONB.

Policies

- C1** To conserve and enhance the special wildlife habitats and species of the North Devon AONB.
- C2** To facilitate climate change adaptation measures which will allow wildlife to "move" within the landscape in response to changes in local climate.
- C3** To support initiatives which increase greater public awareness, appreciation

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- Special Areas of Conservation
- Local Nature Reserve
- County Wildlife Site
- Regionally Important Geological Sites
- North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty



and action for biodiversity and geodiversity.

C4 To understand actual and potential adverse impacts on our biodiversity and geodiversity and to prevent or mitigate these, e.g. visitor pressure, invasive species.

Measures for Progress within the AONB:

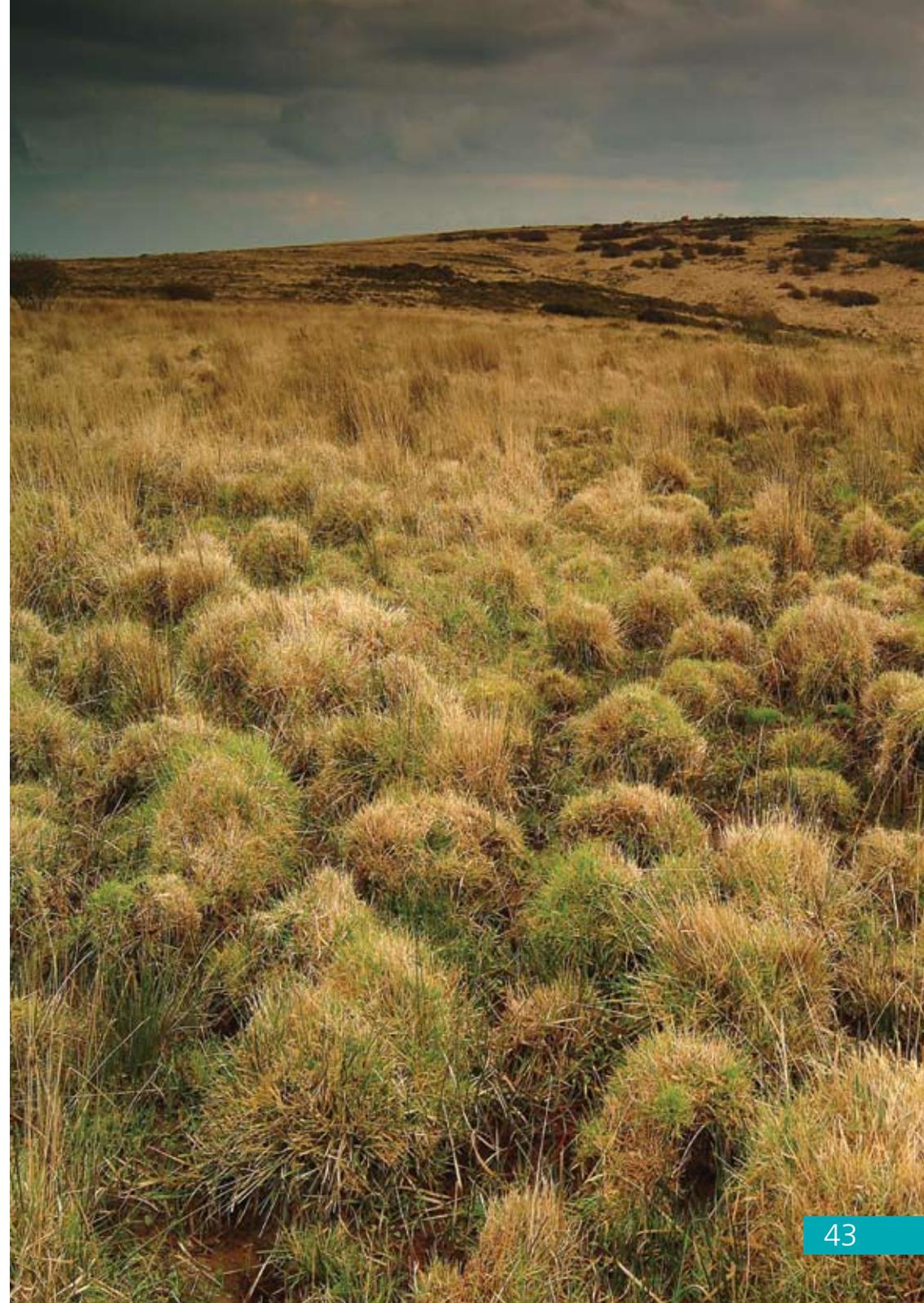
- % of SSSIs in favourable condition.
- % change in BAP habitats:
- Proportion of Local sites where active conservation management is achieved, National Indicator 197:
- Other measures which may be adopted for Biodiversity and Rigs Monitoring which are relevant and cost effective to collect.

Successes 2004 - 9

- A full survey of sites of Regional Geological Interest has been carried out with technical and access details available from the AONB web site.
- A comprehensive survey of the AONB to identify County Wildlife Sites has been completed and management advice given to all CWS owners.
- SSSI condition has improved from 50% favourable or recovering condition in 2005 to 78% in 2008.

Fact and Figures

- There are 15 designated SSSI geological and biological sites²⁶ and 57 designated County Wildlife Sites¹⁹
- 16 designated Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS)²⁰
- The coast from Combe Martin to Croyde has Voluntary Marine Conservation Area (VMCA) status.
- There is one Local Nature Reserve at Hillsborough in Ilfracombe
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats found within the AONB are:
Western Oak Woodland, Parkland, Purple Moor Grass and Rush pasture (Culm), Sea Cliffs and Slopes, Estuarine, Sand Dunes and Shingle Banks, Rocky Shore.
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan species found within the AONB include:
Dormouse, Greater Horseshoe bat, Otter, Devon Whitebeam, Rock Sea Lavender, Sea Stock, Round-headed Club Rush, Water Germander, Petalwort, Lichen communities and a range of rare maritime species including Sea Squirts and Sea Anemones



4.1.4 The Coast

Introduction

The coast is a vital asset for North Devon's economy and sense of identity and for the welfare of its residents. The sea has major impacts on the beauty and interest of the adjacent landscape and many people are drawn to its edge to experience its dynamism and power, and to enjoy the ephemeral changes of tide, weather and season. Therefore an important role of the AONB Partnership will be to ensure that on-shore and off-shore coastal development contribute to the protection or enhancement of its special qualities.

Background and Evidence

Land ownership within the AONB is complex, with a range of organisations, from private landlords and trusts through to statutory bodies, managing the area. This complexity has led to the loss of opportunities for a holistic approach to issues of concern. This situation is set to improve with the Marine Bill. Despite this difficult national situation, our AONB coastal assets remain strong. Community interest in the coast is robust with a Voluntary Marine Conservation Area, the Taw Torridge Estuary Forum and North Devon Coastwise group.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- Climate Change will cause a rise in sea level leading to a loss of important and defensive habitats by increased erosion and 'coastal squeeze', and an increase in localised coastal and catchment flooding and may provide opportunities to create new habitats.
- Balancing the desire to protect property, historic and geological sites, and livelihoods, whilst maintaining the coastal landscape, will require tough decisions and creative solutions through Shoreline Management Planning. Northam Burrows, and the former waste disposal site is especially vulnerable to sea-level rise and National Trust property at Woolacombe has been identified as at risk ²⁷.
- The proposed Marine Bill is likely to designate Marine Protected Areas, and the Finding Sanctuary project is testing methodologies for design and selection

processes. Existing protections e.g. Lundy National Marine Nature Reserve and "no take zone" and the North Devon VMCA indicate that the waters off the AONB are valuable havens for biodiversity.

- Renewable Energy: proposals for an offshore windfarm, north of Lundy Island, local interest in a Marine Current Turbine; proposals for a Tidal Barrage in the Taw Torridge Estuary; and the proposed Severn Estuary Barrage present opportunities not only for the mitigation of climate change, but also potential seascape impacts for the AONB.
- A large number of agencies, voluntary organisations and partnerships working to protect the coastal environment, with the consequent potential for confusion and inefficiencies. There are also concerns about the future resourcing of the Taw Torridge Estuary Forum.
- Potential adverse effects on landscape and habitats from proposals for ferries between Ilfracombe and South Wales and in the Taw Torridge Estuary.
- Lack of understanding of the individual and cumulative impact of development on our seascape and its consequent effect on the economy.

Objectives

CO1 By 2014, Shoreline Management Plans for the North Devon will pay full regard to the statutory purposes of AONB designation.

CO2 By 2014, we will have a strong independent but co-ordinated voice for the Taw-Torridge Estuary and the North Devon Coast and clear lines of responsibility for its conservation management.

CO3 By 2014, Biodiversity Action Plans will have robust policies and programmes for coastal habitats, including a response to climate change.

CO4 By 2014, there will be an accepted tool, in use locally, to help evaluate the individual and cumulative visual impact of offshore and coastal development.

Policies

D1 To develop a good understanding of how marine processes and climate change will affect the AONB

D2 To ensure that landscape character, natural beauty and, where they contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB, community interests are taken into account in the forthcoming Shoreline Management Plan

D3 To ensure that the Marine Environment adjacent to the AONB is valued locally and considered for Marine Protected Area Status, and ensure that local coastal and marine species and habitats are conserved and enhanced.

D4 To understand and develop the role of the AONB Partnership and Staff Unit in the implementation of the Marine Bill.

D5 Ensure that offshore and inshore developments are fully evaluated for any adverse impacts on the AONB by use of a tool such as Seascope Assessment.

Measures for progress

- Shoreline Management Plan 2 support for AONB purpose.
- Strong active membership of Taw Torridge Estuary Forum or similar.
- Maritime habitat actions plans in place.

Successes 2004 - 9

- 18 landowners offered advice on conservation management via the Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh project.
- Marine litter recycle facilities in place
- Quarterly Marine Litter surveys at 5 beaches in the AONB
- Flood plan and grazing marsh enhancements around Taw Torridge Estuary
- Estuary Modelling Study carried out by Professor J Pethick
- More than 50 members of the North Devon Coastwise Group involved in learning and research
- NDCCS Baseline survey of Sabillaria on AONB beaches in 2008 as a potential indicator of the effects of warmer seas
- Lundy No Take Zone case studies show proven benefits e.g. to the lobster population
- 3 Blue flag beaches in the AONB in 2008

Fact and Figures

- Sea level is predicted to rise by up to 800mm by 2080¹⁶
- England's only National Marine Nature Reserve is found close to the AONB around Lundy Island
- The National Trust has identified its property at Woolacombe as being at risk from sea-level rise in the medium term²⁷
- Low-lying land around the Taw Torridge Estuary mouth is potentially vulnerable to sea-level rise and storm events e.g. Northam Burrows



4. 2 Sustainable Development

4.2.1 Farming and Land Management ²⁸

Introduction

The landscape within the AONB is largely the way it is because of historic and current farming and forestry activity. Farming and land use is continuing to change, which will impact on the AONB. It is important for the AONB to anticipate these changes and to work with the sector to embrace opportunities.

Background and Evidence

Over 80% of the AONB area is agricultural land, most of which is managed by owner occupiers. The National Trust and a number of large estates own significant areas. Farms are typically small and focused on livestock. In 2004, there were 344 registered holdings in the AONB²⁹. The sector has endured difficult periods as a consequence of outbreaks of disease, increases in the cost of raw materials e.g. feed and energy costs, coupled with reduced profits for farmers.

Reform of the CAP is encouraging the uptake of Environmental Stewardship schemes. More than 22% of the AONB is covered by Environmental Stewardship payments with over £500K awarded in 2007/8. Less than 4% is at the higher level of payment and more than 30 of the schemes are for organic schemes²⁹.

Just under a tenth of the AONB is woodland with areas managed for sport, public access, recreation, education and wood fuels. Some areas of wood pasture are managed unsustainably.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- Continued instability within the livestock sector and the break-up of traditional farm units.
- Increased encouragement for wider land management – CAP reform and new directives, which could have a positive impact. However there are local

concerns that ELS and HLS would provide insufficient return to make farming viable in marginal areas and there could be abandonment of land.

- Climate change will affect growing seasons, yields, viable crops and stock; but will lead to other opportunities - energy fuels and non-traditional crops.
- Farmers will come under pressure to reduce their own carbon footprint.
- Variety of projects providing support to the industry e.g. Ruby Country and South West Forest.
- Increasing customer interest in food, provenance, quality food security and 'food miles' and potential for support from the £3.8m Local Action Fund.
- Agricultural run-off can adversely affect water quality.
- Farm management is changing - farming is an ageing industry, with a trend towards 'hobby farming' and loss of traditional skills.
- The real and potential impact of animal disease: Blue Tongue, Foot and Mouth, Bird Flu.
- Tensions between farming and tourism in some areas.

Objectives

FL1 By 2014, the number of holdings in Environmental Stewardship and Woodland Grants Schemes will be increased by 30%.

FL2 By 2014, the area of sustainably managed woodland will have increased by 10%.

FL3 By 2014, there will be no reduction in the number of farmers markets within the AONB.

Policies

E1 To ensure that farmers have access to grant aid and advice resulting in the best possible outcome for both farmers and the landscape.

E2 To increase the amount of woodland available for multiple purposes and to ensure the best possible outcome for both farmers, the local community in a way that is compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the environment and landscape.

E3 To make the North Devon AONB an exemplar of successful farming with a minimal 'carbon footprint' and environmental impacts and with a catchment sensitive approach to farming sustainable way that enhances the landscape and natural beauty and increases sales to visitors.

Measures for progress

% of AONB under Environmental Stewardship

% of AONB under Woodland Grant Scheme

Successes 2004 - 9

- 20 AONB farmers have joined the Organic Environmental Stewardship Schemes since 2005
- Grazing Links Project to increase grazing on previously neglected areas
- Farmers' Markets held monthly in 4 AONB communities
- SDF support to open Indicknowle Farm shop
- AONB Food Safari encouraging consumption of local food
- The SWF Rural Development Forestry project was funded by SDF and increased community participation in woodland management
- 1500 free trees provided to farmers

Fact and Figures

AONB Farm Types 2004	Number	Percentage
Cereals	10	2.80%
Dairy	37	10.72%
General cropping	3	0.86%
Grazing stock (LFA) – cattle, sheep, goats	38	11.00%
Grazing stock (lowland) – cattle, sheep, goats	88	25.50%
Horticulture	18	5.21%
Mixed	23	6.60%
Other	119	35.00%
Pigs	0	0.00%
Poultry	8	2.31%

In 2007 there were:
 407 farmers in the AONB: 43% full-time and 57% part-time. 74 permanent employees:
 63.5% full-time, 36.5% part-time, 29 people provided casual labour.



4.2.2 Access, Recreation & Tourism³⁰

Introduction

Tourism and recreation have historically been important to the North Devon economy. The AONB has played a very significant role in this success as a key resource for visitors and residents alike.

Background and Evidence

There are 284km, of Public Rights of Way and 82km of South West Coast Path within the AONB, with wide sandy beaches popular for beach activities and water sports along the coast from Westward Ho! through to the Exmoor Border. Along the coast path, there are wide stretches of land where there is open access. The quality of beaches, environment, tranquillity, and the Coast Path are key attractions. The SWCP is part of a strategic long-distance route of considerable economic value to the AONB and to the South West in general. This popularity has led to direct and indirect impacts on the local environment arising from transport, visitor activity and tourism-related businesses, all of which present risks for the AONB.

Whilst there is a high usage of the AONB amongst local residents, there is also a need to reach out to vulnerable groups to increase their access to the AONB.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- The nature of tourism is changing to shorter, more frequent visits, and an increased interest in farm tourism and outdoor activities (e.g. surfing, cycling, and horse-riding) which will change how the AONB is used and also have landscape impacts.
- The increase and success of local festivals (e.g. Oceanfest and Appledore Arts) bring economic benefits and raise awareness of environmental concerns but adversely increases car journeys, pressure for camping, and localised noise.
- Pressure from high visitor numbers and length of season on habitats and footpaths, and some local signage issues.

- Proposed new ferry links to South Wales may increase visitors to the parts of the AONB close to Ilfracombe.
- Increasing emphasis on sustainable tourism.
- Significant concentrations of vulnerable and excluded groups within and close to the AONB.
- Potential to increase economic opportunities for the AONB from the SWCP, Ruby Country, Bude Canal, Tarka Trail and the Devon Coast-to-Coast Route.
- Limited opportunities for off-road cycling and horse-riding and carriage driving, concerns about maintenance of cycleway between Morteheo and Ilfracombe.
- Localised but important safety issues on some key routes e.g. SWCP near Watermouth harbour.
- The coastal corridor contains a wealth of historic landscapes and sites, which are ripe for improved management, interpretation and access. A regional bid for funds to remedy this is in preparation.
- Disabled access to beaches and footpaths is limited.
- Natural England's proposals for coastline access.

Objectives

ART 1 By 2014, the number of easy access routes will have increased to 10.

ART 2 By 2014, Four new community woodland or LNRs created.

ART 3 By 2014, PRoW network within the AONB will be 100% Easy-to-Use.

ART 4 By 2014, management, access and interpretation to at least 8 historic sites along the coast path corridor will have improved.

Policies

F1 To increase sustainable and sensitive access to AONB footpaths and green spaces for all, including off-road cycle links and bridleways.

F2 To enhance the historic environment along the SWCP corridor and increase access and interpretation in a way that is compatible with the natural beauty

and environment of the AONB.

F3 To maximise the health, recreation learning and potential of the SWCP, cycle routes and the value of other strategic footpaths, without compromising the purpose of designation.

F4 To support businesses in gaining value from the AONB without impacting on the environmental resource.

Measures for progress

- The number of easy access routes.
- The number of businesses with Green Accreditation.
- Public Transport usage on main AONB routes.

Successes 2004 - 9

- North Devon was the "Best Maintained Section" of SWCP in 2006
- Devon PRoW met "Easy to Use" PSA target in 2005
- 4 Easy Access routes have been developed in the AONB since 2005
- Cultural trails in 8 Parishes have been developed and are available for download from the AONB website
- The Explore Branton Project includes three Node Explorer trails and six downloadable walks (www.explorebranton.org.uk)
- SDF support for green tourism projects including Natural Assets and Green Tourism Business Scheme
- SDF provided start up funding for the North Devon Leisure Guides co-operative

Fact and Figures

- More than three quarters (78%) of all holiday trips to the South West are motivated by the conserved landscape
- The total economic value of the Coast Path to Devon has been calculated at £124 million p.a.
- There are 284.4 km of public footpaths and bridleways in the AONB and an additional 92.6 km of Coast Path.
- Cycle tourism is a high value and growth market, growing at an estimated 12% per annum



4.2.3 Planning & Development³¹

Introduction

New land-use developments are one of the main ways through which change can take place within the AONB. Planning policy and control are, therefore, of central importance to the core aim of the AONB.

Background and Evidence

Since 2004, the AONB has adopted a planning protocol with Local Authorities, developed its own policies and commented on major applications. However, the statutory duty lies with the Local Authorities through the adopted Local Plans and the emerging Local Development Framework. AONBs, alongside National Parks, have the highest status of statutory protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.

The main development pressures within the AONB are residential and tourism-related and the AONB team is developing tools such as Landscape Character Assessment, to inform decision-making.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- The planning system is changing to a development management system.
- Pressures for luxury living on the coast, which are vulnerable to rising sea levels, interrupt views and devalue the seascape.
- The nature of agriculture and tourism is changing, which will affect land-use needs and how the AONB is used.
- The area has a high demand for affordable housing and pressure for second homes, high prices and low supply.
- Increased online business activity leading to more working from home.
- Climate change will impact on land use, and behaviour.
- The regeneration of key settlements within, and adjoining, the AONB will generate new pressures for development.
- No Local Distinctiveness guidance for the AONB.
- Demand for more telecommunications masts.

- The AONB is very narrow, has long open views and therefore development close to the boundary can have significant adverse impacts on the special qualities.
- Landscape Character Assessment of the AONB has the potential to inform high-quality development, which respects the landscape.
- There are over 3,000 planning applications annually within the AONB and the Partnership lacks resources to respond to all but a very few.

Objectives

P1 By 2014, there will be strong policies for the AONB and a supporting evidence base within the LDF which might include a Coastal Areas Action plan and design guidance for small-scale renewable-energy production.

P2 By 2011, the LCA will provide a mechanism for evaluating the impact of adjacent development on the special qualities of the AONB.

P3 By 2014, Parish Councils will have an improved understanding of the special qualities of the AONB and their role in its protection and enhancement.

Policies

G1 To encourage planning applications to be of high-quality and sustainable, design and sustainable planning decisions which support sustainable living and local distinctiveness.

G2 To facilitate the development of green infrastructure and biodiversity within the AONB.

G3 To inform and encourage sustainable living and working within the AONB in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

G4 To develop the understanding and application of LCA in LDF preparation and in deciding individual planning applications.

G5 To support the production of renewable energy in or close to the AONB in a way that conserves and enhances the designated landscape, tranquillity, views within and from the AONB, or quality of life of residents.

Measures for progress

- Landscape Character Assessment used as a tool to inform Development Control decisions within the AONB (see also 4.1.1)
- AONB related design guides and evidence adopted or supporting the LDF.

Successes 2004 - 9

- A detailed Landscape Character Assessment was prepared in 2007
- AONB Planning Policies adopted by the AONB Partnership in 2005/6
- AONB Local Distinctiveness project commenced 2008
- Come Martin Conservation area adopted in 2006
- Woolacombe and Morteohoe conservation area appraisal were prepared in 2008
- Consultation events for this strategy and for the Local Development Framework were held in partnership with the AONB team and Torridge District and North Devon Councils

Fact and Figures

- There are an average of 3,000 Planning Applications in the AONB every year
- Only 16 Planning applications with AONB Partnership responses in 2007/8
- There have been approvals for large-scale luxury developments on the coastal edge
- A proposal for 22 x 110m-to-blade wind turbines close to the border of the AONB has been approved by DTI



4.2.4 Transport & Highways³²

Introduction

In an isolated rural area, transport and highways are essential to the everyday lives of residents and the large number of visitors to North Devon and the AONB. The transport infrastructure on land and sea constitutes an important element of the cultural history and local distinctiveness of the area.

Background and Evidence

Public transport is limited in the AONB. Consequently, there is high dependence on private cars. Numbers of cars increase dramatically during the holiday season, bringing problems of congestion and parking, particularly in coastal areas and increasingly in remote areas.

There are conflicting demands on the management of highways within the AONB - to encourage access whilst maintaining what are often narrow country lanes and retaining tranquillity. An associated issue is the impact of signage, lighting and other safety measures on the landscape and tranquillity.

Although there is growing visitor interest in car-free activities, the limited bus network and problems with buses accommodating bicycles and surf boards does not encourage changed behaviour – there is a need for new approaches to reduce the travel-related carbon footprint of the AONB.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- The promotion of sustainable-transport options, including more community transport.
- Limited public transport and introduction of free OAP bus passes.
- Number of cars accessing popular beaches has implications for landscape and for the carbon footprint of the AONB.

- Increasing demand for greater access to the countryside.
- Impact of road improvements and increased demand for signage.
- Increased pressure of car-related tourism at key points e.g. Woolacombe and Braunton, linked to the growth in water sports.
- Proposed new ferry links with South Wales and across the Taw Torridge Estuary.
- Impact of the regeneration of key settlements within and adjoining the AONB.
- There is potential tension between improvements for road safety and maintaining traditional signage and local distinctiveness.

Objectives

TH1 By 2014, there will be at least two community based green travel plans which reduce adverse impacts on the AONB.

TH2 By 2012, all walking and cycling trails on the AONB web site will have public transport links promoted.

TH3 By 2012, a protocol and procedures for highways management, to include signage design, locally distinctive and historic signage, wayside features, signage clutter and opportunities for biodiversity will have been agreed.

TH4 By 2014, there will have been 2 road safety improvements related to the SWCP.

Policies

H1 To encourage the provision of sustainable, integrated public and community transport, including initiatives which enable people to explore the AONB.

H2 To ensure highways improvements and management practices enhance the landscape, tranquillity and local distinctiveness

Measures for progress

- Decrease in traffic on AONB roads as measured by traffic counts.
- Highways protocol signed and implementation commenced.
- Number of walks and trails where sustainable transport links are promoted on AONB Web sites.

Successes 2004 - 9

- Transport links identified on 8 trails on AONB website
- Survey of traditional wooden signs in Hartland Peninsula completed and supplier for replacement located
- Promotion of Car-Free Days Out in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty by the Discover Devon Naturally project

Fact and Figures

- There are 13 public transport routes within the AONB
- There are only 5 routes providing an hourly daytime service
- There is no rail access to the AONB
- There is one off road-cycle route within the AONB
- Traffic flows in Devon increased by 3% between 2000 and 2006



4.2.5 Rural Economy & Services³³

Introduction

North Devon is a priority area for economic regeneration, which presents challenges and opportunities for the AONB both in realising its economic potential and in delivering key services.

Background and Evidence

Through its rural nature and location, the local economy varies from that of the region, with greater dependence on agriculture, manufacturing and tourism. Self-employment is high and most businesses are very small with incomes amongst the lowest in the country. The area is attracting migrant workers into low-skill, low-wage sectors.

Several local regeneration initiatives in progress within the market towns may impact on the economy and services in the AONB. Key strategies for economic development encourage diversification and improved competitiveness, developing added-value sectors, and encouraging environmental sustainability and the environmental economy. This focus offers opportunities to encourage sustainable economic activity within the AONB, including wood fuel, sustainable construction, heritage businesses, energy efficiency and sustainable tourism. Connectivity to broadband is especially important in remote rural areas where home working is becoming more common.

The significance of tourism has contributed to fairly high levels of services for a remote rural area. Community transport services provide access for vulnerable groups.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- Emphasis on diversification/competitiveness within business sector.
- Tourism growth with more out-of-season and short visits.
- Changing skills requirements and changing working patterns including high levels of working from home.
- There is an outward migration of young workers.
- Increasing work to encourage local purchasing and raise quality of products.
- The Biosphere Reserve Designation and policy framework brings an increasing emphasis on environmental sustainability with potential for local accreditation.
- Potential of the environmental economy in protected landscapes.
- Devon and North Devon and NAAONB “Brand” initiatives bring increased opportunities promote the AONB in a way that supports the landscape.
- Destination Devon and Biosphere Reserve proposals for “Visitor Investment” schemes may bring much needed funds to local projects.
- Local regeneration initiatives and the formation of North Devon Plus (see Section 4.2.2).
- There are pressures for essential housing, public transport and other services to meet the needs of a poor and ageing population in some parts of the AONB.
- The Rural Development Programme in England brings a £3.8m Local Action Fund (Leader for North Devon and Torrington, L4ND) and encourages joint working across the UK and Europe. There is the potential for joint local initiatives with organisations such as the Biosphere Reserve Partnership as well as pan-AONB work.

Objective

RES 1 By 2010, the LDF will have policies which support the provision of local services whilst respecting the statutory purpose of the AONB.

RES 2 Between 2009 and 2014, the North Devon AONB will maintain a prominent brand image in local and regional campaigns.

RES 3 By 2014, the AONB will benefit from visitor pay back schemes.

Policies

J1 To ensure that the Local Development Framework has policies which support the provision of local services, whilst respecting the statutory purposes of the AONB.

J2 To ensure that L4ND supports a sustainable coastal economy which takes into account the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB.

J3 To encourage environmentally-sustainable businesses/lifestyles.

J4 To develop opportunities based on the area's natural assets, particularly through the environmental economy where these are compatible with AONB purposes.

Successes 2004 - 9

- SDF support for Ilfracombe Farmers Market
- SDF support for Village Halls at Welcombe and Hartland
- SDF support for E:base project to reduce carbon footprint of selected AONB communities
- SDF support for a farm plastic bailer and recycling facilities
- SDF support for Wood pellet boiler at Braunton Community Resource Centre
- SDF support for micro-hydro study

Fact and Figures

- Tourism accounts for 14% of the local economy
- Average incomes in 2006: gross annual earnings of £13,114 in Torrridge and £15,059 in North Devon compared to £19,814 for England.
- £3.8m Leader 4 North Devon and Torrridge Local Action Fund approved for 2008-2013
- There is an estimated 1.4 million overnight stays and a further 1.4 million day visits to the AONB
- The value of tourism within the AONB is estimated at £79 million



4.2.6 Community & Culture³⁴

Introduction

The AONB is a living and working landscape, dependent upon vibrant communities and their (and visitors') activities, understanding and commitment to the area.

Background and Evidence

The resident community is very diverse; from very affluent areas to some of the most deprived in Devon, with great dependency on Barnstaple for employment. The AONB has high proportions of older residents and low numbers of young people, with significant populations of other disadvantaged groups, especially those with mental health issues within the wider catchment.

The community has opportunities to participate in the AONB through the AONB Partnership, and through volunteering, consultation processes and benefiting from the Sustainable Development Fund.

The summer population increases tenfold in some parishes through tourism. A number of heritage centres and museums have an important communication and interpretation function for the AONB.

The area has a tradition of strong creative industries which, together with a diverse range of festivals and events, play a key role in raising awareness of the AONB, past and present.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- Changing population characteristics and associated access issues – ageing population, decline in young people, surf culture, increase in migrant workers.
- Climate change - increasing public awareness, higher fuel costs impacting

tourism/recreation, concerns regarding coastal erosion and traditional landscapes, impact on water sports.

- Increasing requirements for community engagement at all levels.
- Increasing emphasis on sustainable approach to developments and activities.
- Strong tradition of volunteering in North Devon.
- All AONB Parishes have village plans but few have strong landscape actions.
- Growth in cultural tourism and creative industries.
- Number of Parish Plans with AONB-related actions.

Objectives

CC1 By 2014, there will be increased opportunities for under-represented and excluded groups to enjoy the AONB.

CC2 By 2011, the AONB 50th Anniversary will have raised the profile and understanding of the special qualities of the AONB

CC3 By 2014, there will be better understanding of and accessible information about cultural and local distinctiveness within the AONB

CC4 By 2014, there will be strong community engagement in future planning and action for the AONB.

Policies

K1 To support cultural traditions and diversity especially through the AONB 50th Anniversary celebrations.

K2 To engage local people at all levels in the delivery of the Management Plan objectives.

K3 To promote community engagement in sustainable activities and volunteering.

Measures for progress

- Number of volunteer events and total days worked annually on landscape conservation and related activities.
- Number of individuals from under-represented or excluded groups engaged on AONB projects or at events.
- Access and opportunities improved for under represented groups.
- Numbers Participating in AONB events.
- Number of Parish Plans with AONB-related actions.

Successes 2004 - 9

- 4 Easy-Access trails have been created in the AONB since 2005
- Over 80 volunteers joined in the AONB Community Profiling project
- 11 beaches were registered for the voluntary Adopt-a-Beach and Beach - Watch schemes in 2008
- SDF support for the Green Gym outdoor health class
- SDF support for the Mental Health and Outdoor Recreation project delivered by Tarka Foundation

Fact and Figures

- Five Festivals are held annually within or close to the AONB
- The numbers of people joining guided walks in the North Devon Walking Festival increases annually.
- Every AONB Parish has a Parish Plan
- SDF support for Bideford Venture Craft (special needs group) and Northam Youth Group to access the coast for environmental art, visits and other activities
- SDF support for the Green Ambassadors project which creates landscape management and outdoor experiences for disadvantaged young people
- SDF support for Appledore Arts festival



4.3 Management

4.3.1 Communication, Education and Awareness

Introduction

Education, interpretation and communications play a prominent role in environmental management and in the work of AONBs. It is apparent that for an area to be properly cared for, the people living in, working in and visiting the area need to recognise and understand its relevance and importance. With a huge array of tools and techniques - ranging from very expensive and time consuming to the work of a moment, and from leaflets to highly technical internet-based approaches - it is important that they are well planned and budgeted.

Background and Evidence

In 2004, it was felt that few people were aware of the nature, extent and purpose of the AONB designation in North Devon. Since then a great deal of effort has gone into raising the profile of the North Devon AONB and objectives, and a sample survey in 2007³⁵ indicated that one-third of respondees had become aware of the designation within the last two years and a further third having known of the designation for some years.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- Resources for AONB communications: There are limited resources for communications and yet there is a need to ensure that the special qualities of the designation are understood and valued.
- There is now a strong awareness of the North Devon AONB and a need to avoid 'stakeholder fatigue'.
- The AONB Communications Plan is in need of review and its print/media identity needs updating.
- New technology can be used as a communications and interpretative tool.
- Promotion of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Designation could lead to

confusion and perceived devaluing of the AONB, likewise the plethora of valued organisations working on the coastal area is confusing to the non-expert

- The UNESCO Biosphere Designation has strengthened awareness of climate change and sustainable development needs.
- The linear nature of the AONB means that its cultural identity is weak e.g. as compared to the Cotswolds or Cannock Chase.
- An interpretation plan for the whole Biosphere Reserve including the AONB has been adopted.
- The benefits of working with the national and regional "Protected Landscape Family" on communications have been proven.
- There is a drive for a national brand identity for AONBs to give a much needed boost for AONBs nationally. However, a balance needs to be made to ensure that the AONB is seen as integral to more local brands and promotions and still retains its own identity.
- A Biosphere Schools project has improved educational resources for key sites within the AONB.
- In the last two years the local community alliances made up of Parish Councils and interest groups within the AONB have become less active and communication opportunities have been reduced.
- Need for all to have a better understanding of issues faced by farmers in the AONB.

Objectives

CEA1 By 2014, there will be an increased awareness of the designation and its special qualities amongst residents and visitors.

CEA2 By 2013, there will be improved resources about the AONB publicly available for education and research.

CEA3 By 2012, there will be improved communications between the Partnership and the local community.

Policies

L1 To raise the profile and understanding of the AONB among residents and visitors and encourage positive attitudes to its management.

L2 To increase community participation in action and decision making for the AONB which enhances the landscape and natural beauty.

Measures for progress and policies for the reviewed plan

- Number of successful media releases in the press.
- Numbers participating in AONB events and competitions.
- Number of visits to the AONB website.
- Number of individuals recognising the designation in surveys.

Facts and figures

Designations and projects in or near the AONB include:

- SSSI, SAC, Biosphere Reserve, Local Nature, Reserve Heritage Coast, National Park, Tarka Country, Ruby Country South West Forest, Voluntary Marine Conservation Area.
- 2009 is the 60th Anniversary of the Act which established national Parks and AONBs
- 2009 -10 is the 50th Anniversary of the North Devon AONB

Successes 2004-9

- 70,000 visits per year to AONB web site
- Attendance at AONB managed events range from 700 to more than 5000
- Strong participation in AONB promotions e.g. photographic and poetry competitions
- 182 children and 367 adults responded to an AONB money game questionnaire
- Improved Interpretation at Ilfracombe and Mortehoe
- An innovative "Explore Braunton" project which includes a website and "node explorer" trails has been delivered
- An Arts based "Audioscapes" website for the AONB was supported by the SDF
- SDF support the development of a new Museum at Combe Martin which will open in 2009
- Successful Biosphere School project which provides educational material on the AONB and Biosphere Reserve supporting the geography curriculum has been delivered as a state and public school partnership

Rock Pooling at Westward Ho!



4.3.2 Management, Organisation and Partnerships

Introduction

The first Partnership and staff unit dedicated to the AONB was put in place in 2004 and was charged with the responsibility of preparing and co-ordinating the delivery of a Management Plan for the AONB. There are many agencies with duties and responsibilities the future of the area and many individuals who depend on it for their livelihood and quality of life.

Background and Evidence

The statutory responsibilities for AONBs lie with Natural England and the Local Authorities, however it is recognised that only through partnership-working will key goals be achieved. Policy direction for the AONB is guided by a voluntary Partnership comprising funding agencies together with local and regional agencies and committed individuals. The Partnership is supported by a core staff unit of two full-time officers and part-time administrative support. The staff unit has had considerable success in drawing down external funding have employed a number of temporary project staff. The majority of core funding for the Partnership and staff unit is provided from Natural England, with approximately 25% contributed by the three Local Authorities.

The team is hosted by Devon County Council and nested within the Northern Devon AONB and Biosphere Service which has four core purposes, each with separate funding streams:

- Coordination and management of the Biosphere Reserve
- Coordination and management of the AONB
- Management of the SW Coastpath between Exmoor and Cornwall
- Management of the biodiversity and visitor use of the Tarka Trail

Other organisations, especially the National Trust, the Tav Torridge Estuary Forum, South West Forest, Devon Wildlife Trust and the new North Devon Coastwise group, all have a major influence on the management of the

AONB. Where possible, within constraints of funding agreements, a co-ordinated approach to delivery is sought.

The Partnership is also a strong supporter of regional and national AONB structures, such as the South West Protected Landscape Forum and the National Association of AONBs, and has worked hard to support co-ordinated working, funding bids and efficiencies between the Devon cluster of Protected Landscapes.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- New and strong relationships with the Exmoor National Park Authority, Devon AONBs and SWPLF, leading to efficiencies and economies of shared workload and the potential to unlock funding for landscape-scale projects.
- The AONB, through its SDF has brought in £250,000 to the AONB over a three-year period. The £3.8 million Local Action Fund, recently awarded for North Devon, provides new opportunities for joint funding of initiatives for a sustainable economy.
- Local Government Boundary Review may affect funding and line management of the AONB staff unit and may provide opportunities.
- Short-term funding agreements, recruitment issues and late notification of grants to the AONB result in management problems and staff uncertainty. Natural England is reviewing its mechanism for funding AONBs and has indicated that it intends to provide three-year funding security, but this is unlikely to increase within the next two years.
- There is a lack of clarity amongst the general public, funders and staff as to the different but complementary functions of the Biosphere Reserve and the AONB designations.
- New relationship with English Heritage and local archaeological groups is being developed.

Objectives

MOP1 By 2014, resources available for delivery of the AONB management plan will have increased.

MOP2 By 2014, the AONB Partnership will be strongly supported by member participation and maintenance of core funding.

MOP3 By 2014, there will be at least one Partnership project delivered annually within the AONB.

MOP4 By 2014, funders and the local community will understand and value the complementary but distinct designations of the AONB and the Biosphere Reserve.

Policies

M1 To ensure that the AONB Partnership has a well funded and skilled staff structure with the necessary resources to co-ordinate delivery of the Management Plan.

M2 To encourage partnership and joint-working arrangements with the national and regional "Protected Landscape Family" and other organisations within or affecting the AONB, which offer efficiencies and increased resources to deliver the AONB Management Plan.

M3 To maximise the benefits of National Funding and EU streams and external sources.

Measures for progress

- Amount of funding achieved through joint working
- Natural England Performance Indicators for AONBs met
- Management Plan meets statutory requirements and timetable
- Performance against the agreed set of indicators for the South West

Facts and figures

- There are 12 parishes within the AONB
- The AONB Population was 9569 in 2001
- There are 5 main partnerships operating within the area:
 - The Local Strategic Partnership, the AONB, South West Forest, Biosphere Reserve Partnership, North Devon +
 - The AONB team comprises 2.4 full-time equivalent staff
 - The AONB team is placed within the Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service which has 6.6 full-time equivalent staff. They deliver a range of services including: access, interpretation, landscape, biodiversity, education and environmental sustainability across the AONB and the wider Biosphere Reserve

Successes 2004-9

- Developed a strong AONB Partnership of 19 members
- Successful partnership projects e.g. with Exmoor e.g. (Green Ambassadors), South West Protected Landscape Forum (wood fuel project), and the Biosphere Reserve (Interpretation strategy) have been delivered
- There is an excellent track record of AONB team's ability to draw down funding, for example: In 2007/8
 - The staff unit secured £304,000 through their own budget and the Sustainable Development Fund of £61,000 supported external projects valued at £353,000
 - For every £1 contributed by Local Authorities to the Partnership a further £8 was raised from other sources to benefit the AONB
- All of this money supported environmental and community based work

4.3.3 Boundary Issues

Introduction

The North Devon Coast and the Taw Torridge Estuary form a dramatic landscape, which is a national asset as well as being an essential component of the economy and the quality life of residents of the two districts within which they fall.

Background and Evidence

A number of designations have been applied to the coastal hinterland of North Devon including; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Area of Greater Landscape Value, Heritage Coast, Coastal Preservation Area, Biosphere Reserve (Core and Buffer Zone), SAC and SSSI. These designations are overlapping, but with common boundaries in some places, and there are separate sets of Planning Policies applying to them. Of these, the strongest for landscape protection are the AONB and the SACs in ecological terms.

The AONB boundary excludes the majority of the Taw Torridge Estuary and there is no current Management Plan for the Estuary. Funding for an Estuary Officer was withdrawn some years ago; however some estuary-related work is carried out by the Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service. There is reciprocal membership between the Taw Torridge Estuary Forum and the AONB Partnership. The AONB partnership role within the Estuary is primarily concerned with the impacts that Estuary-related activities have on the special qualities of the AONB and other valued coastal landscapes.

Issues, trends and forces for change

- Local desire to rationalise boundaries, and to afford protection at AONB level to a wider area considered to be of equal importance in landscape terms. E.g. Braunton Great Field and Marsh and the River Yeo at Bideford.
- Representations received have suggested that in places the AONB is considered too narrow to be viable in planning terms.

- There is now a body of evidence, in the form of Landscape Character Studies and site-specific studies, on which to assess robust boundaries.
- The seaward boundary of the AONB is not robust.
- The Taw Torridge Estuary Forum is entirely voluntary and lacks funds to meet its aspirations and Estuary partnerships in Devon are under review.
- The Estuary is an evocative landscape but is outside the AONB designation.
- Unknown impact of the proposed Marine Bill on spatial planning and marine environment.
- The North Devon Biosphere Strategy has policies for conservation management at a catchment level which will benefit the estuary and coast.

Objectives

B1 By 2014, there will a robust suite of planning policies which support the AONB and related designations.

B2 By 2014, there will be improved cohesion between boundaries of the different designations affecting the coast.

B3 By 2010, the operational area for the AONB Partnership will include the Heritage Coast and Coastal Preservation Area.

Policies

O1 To ensure all relevant agencies review their policies for designated areas applying to the North Devon Coast and, where possible, reduce them to a single suite of policies applying to the AONB, Coastal Preservation Area and Heritage Coast.

O2 The AONB Management Plan policies shall apply equally to the Heritage coast and staff unit operational area, which will be taken to be the whole of the Parish Council area where only part of the Parish is designated AONB.

O3 To ensure an appropriate level of management for all valuable coastal areas.

Successes 2004-9

- A management study of the Braunton Marsh was funded by SDF and produced by the Tav Torridge Estuary Forum
- Explore Braunton operates outside the AONB Boundary
- Appledore Arts, based outside of the AONB boundary is an important partner
- Joint consultations and working with LDF team and AONB team on policy issues
- Reciprocal membership between AONB Partnership, Tav Torridge Estuary Forum and Biosphere Reserve Partnership



5 Implementation and Review

5.1 Delivery Plan and Monitoring

A delivery plan has been developed following the consultation period on this document using the standard format suggested by the Countryside Agency in their guidance documents. This provides more detail on how the management plan objectives will be achieved. It builds detailed actions and targets on to the policies which have been agreed and subjected to SEA and Habitat Regulation screening in the Management Strategy. Any specific targets or actions that may have potential for a negative environmental impact or effect will be appropriately assessed on a case by case and site by site basis as recommended or required by legislation. The Delivery Plan will be annually updated by the AONB Partnership as part of the on-going delivery of the Strategy and a copy will be made available on the AONB web site. A 2009 copy of the Delivery Plan will be produced alongside this strategy

There are two sets of indicators against which performance is measured:

- The Natural England Performance Indicators for AONBs nationally to measure the effectiveness of the staff units and partnerships
- The South West Protected Landscape Forum Environmental Indicators to measure the success of the Strategy.

North Devon AONB will continue to work with other protected landscapes and Natural England to refine these standards, develop monitoring systems and will report on progress towards achieving them. Where specific objectives within this plan require cost-effective monitoring systems will be put in place

5.2 State of the AONB Indicators

Table of Primary Indicators

Landscape

HEADLINE	TOPIC	COMMENT
Landscape character	Historic features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % SAMs in favourable condition • Listed and unlisted buildings at risk 	Data available from EH Data partly available from planning authorities and partly will have to be collected locally
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % change in locally distinctive field boundaries 	Importance to be locally determined, and much of the data collected locally
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in key ridges and views 	Sites to be locally determined following baseline survey work, and data collected locally (photographic evidence from fixed point photography)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other locally distinctive features, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extent of woodland type(s) - condition of old routeways - historic gardens - length of undeveloped coastline (development within 300m of mean high watermark) etc 	Key indicators of local distinctiveness need to be locally determined. Some data readily available (e.g. from Forestry Commission) and some will need to be locally collected (e.g. unspoilt coastline)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of land managed under higher tier agri-environment schemes 	Data available from DEFRA

Biodiversity

HEADLINE	TOPIC	COMMENT
Habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % change in BAP habitats 	Baseline survey work nearing completion by EN and will be able to be supplied to AONB boundaries
Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require local identification 	Characteristic species will need to be locally determined; data availability depends on species chosen and likely to involve substantial local data collection

Water quality

HEADLINE	TOPIC	COMMENT
Rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % change in pollution incidents 	Type of incidents to be used in monitoring requires local determination. Data currently available from Environment Agency and is regularly updated
Sea water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of all designated bathing beaches meeting Bathing Water Directive 	Data currently available from Environment Agency and is regularly updated

Access

HEADLINE	TOPIC	COMMENT
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of RoW in good condition 	Data should be available from RoW team

Table of Additional Indicators

Social

HEADLINE	TOPIC	COMMENT
Affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new homes built annually, in the AONB, which are affordable housing 	Data can be collated from the Local or County Planning Authorities and should include net new affordable dwellings completed per year, including new build and conversions. This may require analysis of housing data by AONB unit
Access to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of AONB population in x km of a convenience food shop 	Data is available from the Countryside Agency as part of their monitoring for the State of the Countryside. The data has been cut to an AONB level but may contain inaccuracies as it is based on ward boundaries

Economic

HEADLINE	TOPIC	COMMENT
Employment changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % change in key employment sectors 	Categories to be locally selected. Data available from NOMIS database and DEFRA. Smallest unit of disaggregation is ward, and sometimes larger to protect confidentiality. Will require data manipulation
Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % change in relevant farming types + geographically specific data if required 	Categories to be locally selected. Data available from DEFRA

5.3 AONB Performance Indicators

Table of Partnership and Staff Unit Performance Indicators

REF	THEME	MEASURE FOR THE INDICATOR	RESPONSE
1	AONB Management Plan	The AONB Unit has a current Management Plan which meets the requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.	Yes/No
2	AONB Partnership	The AONB has an active and effective governance structure.	Yes/No
3a	AONB Staff Unit	The AONB Unit has staff resources to undertake its work.	Number of staff (in f.t.e.)
3b		AONB Unit staff invests in continuous professional development.	Number of staff (in f.t.e.)
4a	Financial resources	The AONB Unit secures direct income to fund its work.	Total £
4b			%
4c			Total £
5a	Leverage and "added value"	Additional resources mobilised by AONB unit through its partnership work.	Total £
5b			%
6a	Financial management and reporting	Agreed timetable and requirements for financial management and reporting with Natural England met by the AONB unit.	Yes/No
6b		Natural England met the agreed timetable and requirements for financial management and reporting with the AONB Unit.	Yes/No
7a	Partnership working with management communities	The AONB Unit is an active partner in the work of the National Association of AONBs.	Yes/No
7b		The AONB Unit actively involved in partnership working at a local level.	Number of local partnerships
7c		The AONB Management Plan is formally endorsed and supported by partner organisations.	Number of organisations endorsing plan
8a	Business Plan targets	Achievement of the targets set out by the AONB unit in its annual business plan or equivalent.	Yes/No
8b	Management Plan progress	The AONB Management Plan actions were implemented to schedule.	%

6. Appendices

6.1 Review Process Summary

Since the adoption of the North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Strategy and Action Plan in March 2004, there has been a continuing engagement with the local community and key stakeholders, both formally through consultation events and informally through Partnership working and attendance at meetings. This has informed the thinking and revision of policies for this review. The AONB Partnership has followed Countryside Agency Guidance for the Management Plan Review and acted in accordance with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Consultation at Watermouth Castle 8th October 2006

182 children and 367 adults played a money game, which demonstrated that local priorities were affordable housing and activities for young people, with low-wage levels being of major concern. 156 people also completed more detailed questionnaires about the AONB.

- The beach was deemed to be the most popular place to visit within the AONB with 43% of respondents indicating they visit the beach weekly.
- 94% of people felt it was important to preserve the traditional features of the AONB.
- 88% of people felt that it was important for new buildings and extensions to respect traditional styles.
- 63% of people felt that measures should be taken to reduce the number of cars in the coastal area.
- 68% satisfied with the service provided in managing the AONB.

Partnership Review

In May 2007, the AONB Partnership members took part in a workshop to conduct a rapid review of the plan and policies to be carried forward in this review.

In the autumn of 2007 staff joined in five Core Strategy consultation events and held discussions with the Devon Maritime Forum and with the North Devon Coastwise Project. This was a loosely-structured consultation and comments were wide-ranging. Approximately 180 responses were received. There was concern about

- Technical language and jargon in the original plan.
- Inappropriate development and loss of tranquillity.
- The need to review the AONB boundary.
- Public transport.
- The need to do more work in deprived wards and on inclusion issues.
- The importance of working with local communities.
- Need for the partnership to operate down to at least Mean Low Water Mark.
- Need for the reviewed plan to address climate change.

Community Plans

A review of 13 published Parish Plans has shown an average of 53% of households had responded to parish plan-based consultation. The majority of them acknowledged their geographical relationship to the AONB. However specific landscape-related actions were limited and there is a need to address this. Some of the plans did have actions for biodiversity, access, interpretation and sustainable development.

Consultation on the Draft Management Strategy

From July until the end of October 2008, there was a public consultation period. The Consultation Draft and the supporting documentation was placed on the website and sent out to AONB stakeholders and networks electronically and in print. Consultation workshops for Parishes, farmers and the tourism sector were held and a survey of young people's attitudes to

the landscape and climate change was undertaken. More than 80 individuals and organisations responded and 72 young people filled the on-line survey. There was general concern about climate change and the tension between renewable technologies and protected landscapes. Young people especially were aware of climate-change issues. The business sectors of farming and tourism were concerned about long term stability and incomes. Access issues were also raised with a desire to increase access for disadvantaged groups. Other comments were around the evidence base and a desire for “smarter” objectives.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

A draft Scoping Report for the SEA was prepared by an external consultancy “Crimson Beetle” and circulated to stakeholders and placed on our website for June and July 2008. Two responses were received and these were incorporated into the final version. An Environmental Report was also prepared and was available during the main consultation period. No comments were received. The recommendations of the Environmental Report were incorporated into the final Strategy.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment has also been prepared in accordance with guidelines agreed by Natural England.

Background papers are available on the AONB technical website.



Katie researching on the website

6.2 Bibliography and references

The following North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Reports and Topic Papers were prepared as an evidence base for the publication of this Review and should be considered part of this strategy.

Access, Recreation and Tourism 2007
Biodiversity and Geodiversity 2007
Community and Culture 2007
Economy and Services 2007
Environmental Quality 2007
Farming and Land Management 2007
Historic Environment 2008
Planning and Development 2007
AONB Atlas 2008
Strategic Context 2008
Review Report 2009

North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Review of Management Strategy and Action Plan 2004-9: Strategic Environmental Assessment Report and Executive Summary 2008.

Available from www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk

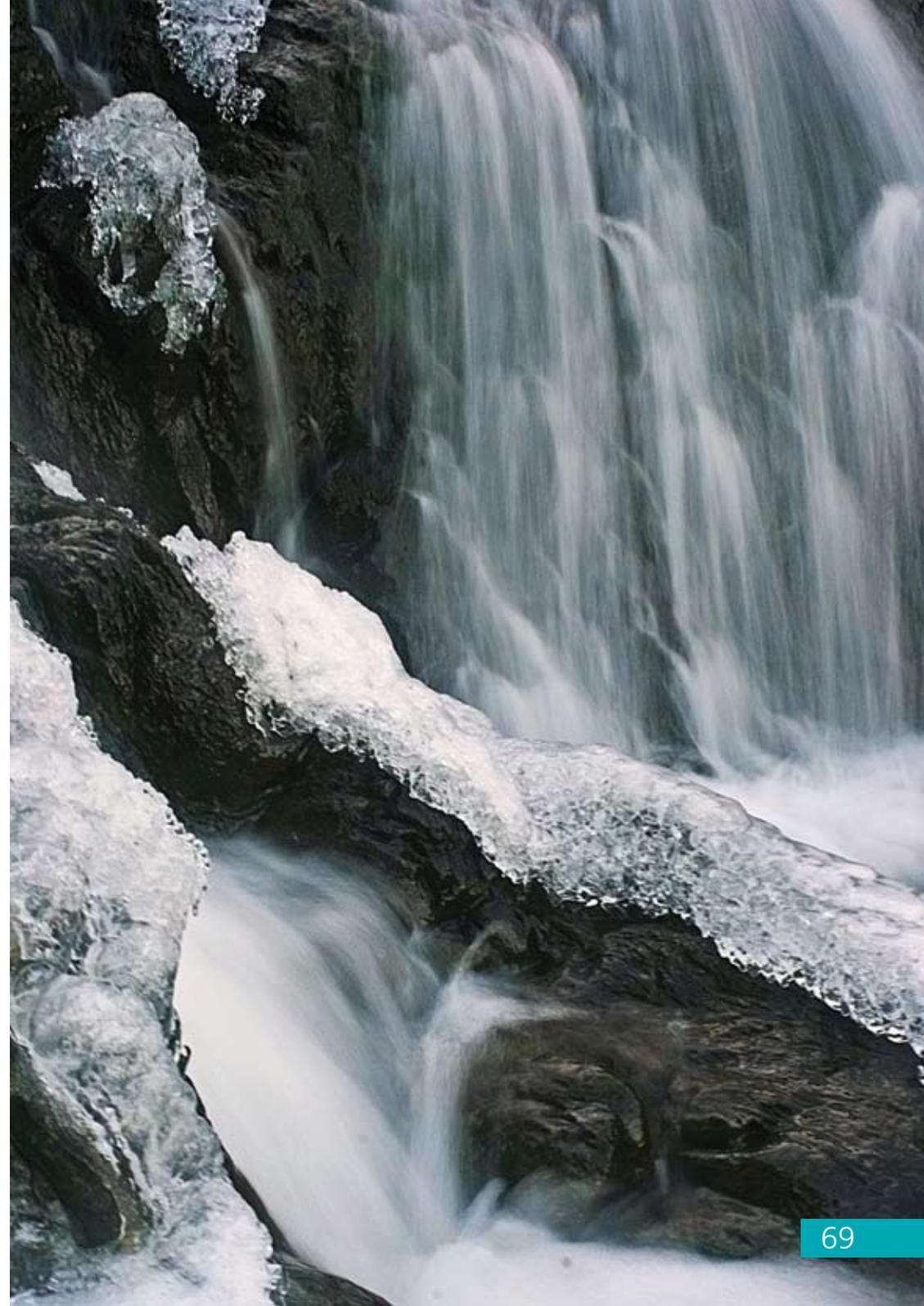
- 1 Pearson, N. 1999. The North Devon AONB Landscape Character Appraisal Countryside Agency. Available from www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk
- 2 Diacono M. 2007. Landscape Character Assessment of the North Devon AONB (unpublished).
- 3 A Baseline Archaeological Survey 2006. North Devon AONB Unpublished
- 4 Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation. Available from <http://www.northdevoncoast.org.uk/>
- 5 Details and references to be found in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Topic Paper Historic Environment 2008. [www.northdevon-](http://www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk)

[aonb.org.uk](http://www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk)

- 6 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans: A guide CA23 and Guidance for the Review of AONB Management Plans published by the Countryside Agency CA 221
- 7 North and South Devon AONBs Designation History 2003 (unpublished)
- 8 North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Strategic context Topic Paper. <http://www.northdevoncoast.org.uk/>
- 9 Figures Supplied by South West Observatory
- 10 Figures Supplied by South West Observatory
- 11 Map available from Council for the Protection of Rural England: <http://www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/landscape/tranquillity>
- 12 Figures supplied by the Met Office 2007 <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/>
- 13 UK Climate Change Impacts Programme available from www.ukcip.org.uk/
- 14 RegenSW South West Renewable Energy Projects Map available from <http://www.surveys.energysw.com/REGENSW>
- 15 The Devon Biomass Opportunities Statement. 2007 Available from Devon Association for Renewable Energy (DARE): <http://www.devondare.org/boh.htm>
- 16 Micro-hydro Study of former Mill sites in the North Devon AONB, Devon Association for Renewable Energy (DARE): 2006 Unpublished
- 17 North Devon Biosphere Reserve Partnership: Our Strategy for Sustainable Development. 2008-2012
- 18 NDCCS Beach litter survey 2007 (unpublished)
- 19 County Wildlife Sites in the North Devon AONB (in preparation)
- 20 Regionally Important Geological Sites Reports in the North Devon AONB 2004 -2006
- 21 Hereford and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust 2008
- 22 Details of the UK, Devon North Devon Biodiversity Action Plans can be found at <http://www.ukbap.org.uk>
- 23 South West Nature Map available from www.swenvo.org.uk/nature_map/index.asp

6.2 References continued

- ²⁴ National Indicator 197 Audit Commission National Indicators: Available from: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/performance/ni-guidance.asp>²⁵ County Wildlife Sites in the North Devon AONB (in preparation)
- ²⁵ UK Climate Change Impacts Programme available from www.ukcip.org.uk/
- ²⁶ Available from Natural England: <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>
- ²⁷ Shifting shores in the South West. National Trust 2008
- ²⁸ Details and references to be found in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Topic Paper Farming and Land Management 2007. <http://www.northdevoncoast.org.uk/>
- ²⁹ Figures supplied by Natural England 2008
- ³⁰ Details and references to be found in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Topic Paper Access and Recreation 2007. www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk
- ³¹ Details and references to be found in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Topic Paper Planning and Development 2007. <http://www.northdevoncoast.org.uk/>
- ³² Details and references to be found in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Topic Paper Transport and Highways 2007. www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk
- ³³ Details and references to be found in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Topic Paper Rural Economy and Services 2007. <http://www.northdevoncoast.org.uk/>
- ³⁴ Details and references to be found in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Topic Paper Community and Culture 2007. <http://www.northdevoncoast.org.uk/>
- ³⁵ Pers Com. Management Plan Consultation event at Ilfracombe (9th November 2007)
- ³⁶ Detail and references to be found in North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Topic Paper Biodiversity and Geodiversity available from <http://www.northdevoncoast.org.uk/>



6.3 Glossary

AAONB	Association of AONBs	Natura 2000	EC Birds Directive Legal framework for nature protection
AONB	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	NDCCS Service	Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service
BAPs	Biodiversity Action Plans	NDC	North Devon Council
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy	NE	Natural England
CPRE	Council for the Protection for Rural England	NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
CRoW 2000	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	NNRs	National Nature Reserves
CWS	County Wildlife Sites	NT	National Trust
DCC	Devon County Council	RDPE	Rural Development Programme England
DoT	Department of Transport	RegenSW	Renewable Energy Agency South West
DPD	Development Plan Document	RIGS	Regionally Important Geological Sites
DWT	Devon Wildlife Trust	RPG10	Regional Planning Guidance
EINA	Equality Impact and Needs Assessment	RSS	South West Regional Spatial Strategy
EU	the European Union	SAC's	Special Areas of Conservation
FTE	Full- time equivalent	SDF	Sustainable Development Fund
FWAG	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group	SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
GIS	Geographical Information System (computerised mapping)	SOE	State of Environment Reporting
HLS	Higher Level Stewardship:	SAC	Special Area for Conservation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology	SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
IFMS	Integrated Farm Management System	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
Interreg 4	European Funding stream	SWCP	South West Coast Path
IUCN	The International Union for Conservation of Nature	SWF	South West Forest
LAA	Local Area Agreement	SWO	South West Observatory
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment	SWPLF	South West Protected Landscapes Forum
LCT	Landscape Character Types	TDC	Torridge District Council
LDF	Local Development Framework	UKCIP	United Kingdom Climate Impact Programme
LDU	Landscape Description Units	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation
LEADER+	European funding stream	VMCA	North Devon Voluntary Marine Conservation Area
L4ND	Leader for North Devon and Torridge	WFD	Water Framework Directive
LNRs	Local Nature Reserves		
NAAONB	National Association of AONBs		

6.3 Glossary continued

AFFORDABLE HOUSING - Housing provided for those whose incomes do not allow them to compete in the open market for house purchase, or for whom private sector economic rents are too high.

AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB) - Area designated by the Countryside Commission and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Environment to conserve the natural beauty of the area.

BIODIVERSITY – The range of plant and animal species present in an area.

CONSERVATION AREA - An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE - sites identified by the Devon Wildlife Trust for their significant wildlife features and identified in local plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP - a grant scheme which aims to make conservation part of the farming and land-management practice of the countryside.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREA - Area designated by the Department of Food and Rural Affairs within which financial assistance is available to farmers to help maintain traditional farming practices in areas where landscape and wildlife are under threat from the intensification of agriculture.

HERITAGE COAST - Stretches of undeveloped coastline defined by the Countryside Commission as being of outstanding scenic value where resolution of conflicts is needed between recreation, conservation, public access and agriculture.

HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS - Parks and gardens listed in the Register of Historic Gardens first produced by English Heritage in 1984.

LISTED BUILDINGS - Buildings of special architectural or historic interest listed by the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

LOCAL NATURE RESERVE - Owned or controlled by local authorities, some are also Sites of Special Scientific Interest. They are designated after consultation with Natural England.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - A written statement and Proposals Map formulating the District Planning Authority's detailed policies for the development and use of land in its area.

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – Plan produced by the Highway Authority setting out transport policies and proposals.

NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE - Sites declared by English Nature or its predecessors under National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They are owned or controlled by Natural England or held by approved bodies such as Wildlife Trusts.

NATURA 2000 – An EU wide network of nature protection areas established under the 1992 Habitats Directive. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It is comprised of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated by Member States under the Habitats Directive, and also incorporates Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT - Published notes setting out Government Policy on a variety of matters (e.g. Housing, The Countryside, Tourism). They are the principal source of policy guidance on planning matters and must be taken into account in the preparation of plans.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY - Public footpaths, bridleways and cycleways along which the public has the right to travel.

REGIONALLY IMPORTANT GEOLOGICAL SITE – Promoted by Natural England and the Geological Society, RIGS are locally important geological/geomorphological sites of value for educational, geological research or aesthetic reasons.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - SEA is a process to ensure that significant environmental effects arising from policies, plans and programmes are identified, assessed, mitigated, communicated to decision-makers, monitored and that opportunities for public involvement are provided.

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN (SMP) - A non-statutory document which sets out strategic level guidance designed to assist sustainable coastal defence decision-making over the next 50 years.

SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST - Areas designated by Natural England as being of special interest by reason of their flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features.

SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SACs) – Areas designated under the European Union directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna (The Habitats Directive) to afford protection to flora and fauna.

SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPAs) – Areas classified under the European Community Directive on the conservation of wild birds.

STRUCTURE PLAN – A strategic plan, produced by the County Council and joint Structure Plan Authorities, providing a county-wide policy framework and providing a background to which Local Plans are to conform.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE - Guidance to developers additional to that contained in the Local Plan applying to a localised area or individual site. It highlights options, acceptable and unacceptable uses, and sets out guidelines.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Contact Details

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Main site	www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk
Technical site	www.northdevoncoast.org.uk
Biosphere Reserve	www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk

