

“The Wild Downs and Hills”....

...creating Historic Environment Action Plans
for the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB



Thursday 12th March 2009

East Knoyle Village Hall



Aims of the Day



- * Introduce attendees to each other
 - * Introduce project to key stakeholders
 - * To create enthusiasm for the project
 - * Introduce what AONB is and its primary purpose
 - * Increase knowledge of the background to the project and its aims
- *To enable attendees to contribute initial ideas to the project ***

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The Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB



***Nationally important protected landscape –
designation through 1949 Act***

***Main purpose: ‘to conserve and enhance
natural beauty’***

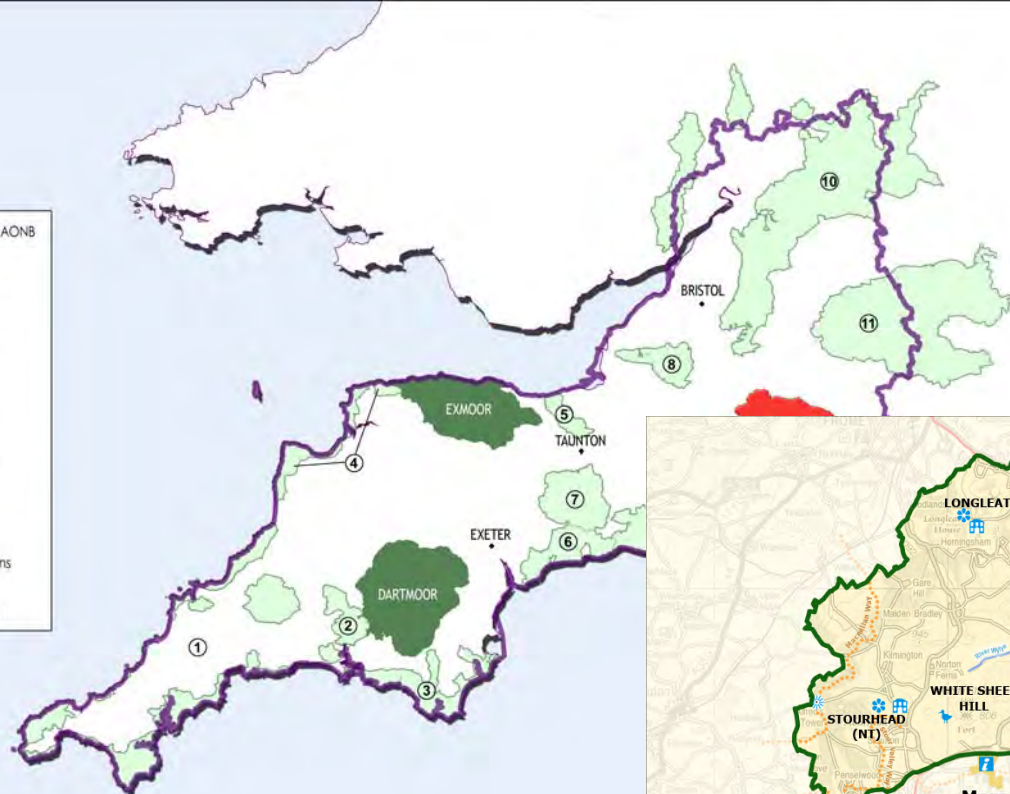
***‘Natural beauty’ – landscape features;
geology; wildlife but also rich history of
human settlement and land use***

***‘Living landscapes’ – a blend of the rich
natural and cultural heritage***



There are 41 AONB's across England and Wales

- Cranborne Chase AONB
- National Parks
- Regional AONB's
- ① Cornwall
- ② Tamar Valley
- ③ South Devon
- ④ North Devon
- ⑤ Quantock Hills
- ⑥ East Devon
- ⑦ Blackdown Hills
- ⑧ Mendip Hills
- ⑨ Dorset
- ⑩ Cotswolds
- ⑪ North Wessex Downs
- ⑫ Isles of Scilly
- South West Region



Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Designated 1981

Confirmed 1983

6th largest - 983 sq kms / 380 sq miles

6th most complex - 11 Local Authorities

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

- *Duty on local authorities to jointly prepare a statutory Management Plan*
- *Relevant authorities to 'have regard' to main purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty*





- *Wiltshire County Council - 61%*
 - *Salisbury DC*
 - *West Wiltshire DC*
- *Dorset County Council - 30%*
 - *East Dorset DC*
 - *North Dorset DC*
- *Hampshire County Council - 7%*
 - *New Forest DC*
- *Somerset County Council - 2%*
 - *Mendip DC*
 - *South Somerset DC*

AONB Partnership structure

Partnership Forum

Annual meeting of all interested parties: representatives from over 100 organisations.

Partnership Panel

Alliance of 22 local, regional and national organisations that guide the implementation of the Management Plan. The Panel includes the 11 Local Authorities involved in the AONB and meets 3 / 4 times a year.

AONB Team

AONB Manager
Project Officer
2 x Support Officers PT
P/T Communications Officer
P/T Community Link Officer
P/T Landscape & Planning Advisor

3 Topic Groups

Land Managers Advisory Forum

Planning & Transportation

Access, Recreation and Visitors

Technical Advice Group

LA Officers, Natural England
Advice and support

Biodiversity...A Few facts and Figures

- 5 candidate Special Areas of Conservation
- 3 National Nature Reserves
- 57 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- 220 miles chalk rivers
- 153 sq kms of woodland - 56% broadleaved



Agriculture...A few facts and figures



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- 89% of AONB agricultural land
- 855 holdings
- 37% holdings are less than 5 ha
- 52% of area is cropped
- Only 34% is grazing land (63% in SW)
- 88,000 sheep
- 66,000 pigs
- 50,000 cattle

Local Economy...A few facts and Figures

- Outward looking economy
- 55% work in market towns
- Only 5-10% work within rural heartland
- Concentration in administration work
- Issues of infrastructure - transport, training, broadband



Community...A few facts and figures



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- 32,000 population
- Deeply rural
- 14,567 households
- 104 parishes