

**HOWARDIAN HILLS
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
16 NOVEMBER 2017**

AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the suggested programme for reviewing the AONB Management Plan.

2.0 CONTEXT

- 2.1 AONB Management Plans are statutory plans which provide a framework for delivery of the statutory purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the designated landscape.
- 2.2 The first statutory AONB Management Plan for the Howardian Hills was published in 2004 and it has subsequently been reviewed and revised twice (2009 and 2014), to comply with the five year review period stipulated by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

3.0 GUIDANCE ON MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

- 3.1 In 2012, prior to the last review, the National Association for AONBs and Defra published an "Advice note to AONB Partnerships, Conservations Boards and Relevant Authorities on Management Plan Reviews".
- 3.2 The guidance highlights that the CRoW Act 2000 provides the statutory basis for the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of AONBs. The Act also:
- Defines the role of the statutory agencies, in particular their responsibilities for the designation of AONBs and as consultees in planning matters.
 - Requires local authorities and Conservation Boards to state their policies for management of their AONBs through preparing and publishing a Management Plan.
 - Requires all relevant authorities to demonstrate their commitment to AONBs by having regard to AONB purposes in their plans and activities.

Specifically, and in relation to Local Authorities, Section 89 of the Act requires the relevant authority [i.e. the local authority, or local authorities acting jointly as part of a joint committee] to "prepare and publish a plan which formulates their policy for the management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for carrying out their functions in relation to it", within three years. The plan must be reviewed within five years of its original publication and at similar intervals thereafter.

- 3.3 The Defra/NAAONB Guidance goes on to indicate that "individual AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards should decide the extent of the review required. An appropriately "light touch" approach may be taken by some AONBs, whilst others may decide that a comprehensive review is needed and justified. AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards will know those areas of their Plans or themes which are constants and do not need re-visiting. They will also have a good idea of the deficiencies and issues to be addressed under the review. Actions will be more readily refreshed in the Management

Plan Action Plan / Business Plan, which are more responsive documents for dealing with transitory or emerging issues.'

- 3.4 In light of the flexibility offered by Defra in its advice on the scope and extent of Management Plan review, it is proposed that where the current Objectives and Actions are well-established and agreed upon by AONB partners then a 'light touch' approach will be adopted. Other sections, where it is felt that more significant changes are needed in order to reflect current policy, legislation or other changes, more in-depth review and scrutiny is likely to be needed.

4.0 **TIMETABLE**

- 4.1 Appendix 1 gives a suggested timetable for the review of the current Plan in order to achieve formal Adoption by the required date of 31st March 2019. This follows a similar path to the process used for the last review in 2013/14.
- 4.2 The Topic Group meetings will discuss the most recent evidence available for each subject, relevant new strategy documents from other organisations, threats and opportunities. Each section will then be revised to incorporate new evidence and policy, resulting in updated Objectives and Actions for the 2019-2024 Plan period.
- 4.3 The revised chapters will be scrutinised by the Topic Group members and the JAC, following which the document will be prepared for public and stakeholder consultation. At the same time the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment of the new Plan will be reviewed/updated.
- 4.4 The formal consultation period is proposed as 1st October 2018 to 16th November 2018.
- 4.5 Following the end of the consultation period all the comments received will be compiled into a table, showing the comment and the amendments proposed to the Plan (if applicable). This table will be circulated to the JAC and Core Partners Group in January 2019, for their comments.
- 4.6 Following any comments received from this final consultation, the final revisions will be made to the Plan. These will be discussed with the JAC Chairman, who will provide the final sign-off of the revised Plan.
- 4.7 The Plan will then be sent to the three constituent Local Authorities in time for formal adoption by 31st March 2019, and to Defra.

5.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

That the suggested timetable for the AONB Management Plan review as detailed in Appendix 1 be approved and implemented.

APPENDIX 1

2019 – 2024 AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW TIMETABLE

Date	Action	Who
October 2017	Timetable and scoping for new Plan	AONB Manager & Core Partners Group
November 2017	Provisional timetable approved	JAC
November 2017	Notice to Review letter issued to Local Authorities	AONB Manager
January/February 2018	Revision of Key Facts and General Principles for each Topic section	AONB Unit
April 2018	Book timeslot with Print Unit for design and production of Consultation Draft	AONB Manager
April/May 2018	Topic Group meetings. Update Evidence Base statistics	AONB Manager AONB Team
May – 13 th July 2018	Preparation of Draft Plan; review of SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessments	AONB Manager; NYCC
13 th July 2018	Draft Plan chapters circulated to JAC and Topic Groups for comments	AONB Manager
August 2018	Revision of Draft Plan, following feedback	AONB Manager
31 st August 2018	Text to County Print for design/artwork	AONB Manager
1 st October – 16 th November 2018	Formal public and stakeholder consultation	JAC, Local Authorities, partner organisations
November/December 2018	Compilation and assessment of comments received from consultees	AONB Manager
January 2019	Circulation of proposed amendments to Core Partners Group and JAC (by email)	AONB Manager
January/February 2019	Revision of final Plan, following feedback	AONB Manager
15 th February 2019	Approval of final Management Plan	JAC Chairman
February & March 2019	Adoption of new Plan by constituent Local Authorities	NYCC, HDC. RDC
31 st March 2019	Deadline for Plan to be adopted by constituent Local Authorities and sent to Defra	NYCC, HDC, RDC; AONB Manager
May – September 2019	Final formatting, artwork, printing and distribution of Management Plan document/CDs	AONB Manager