

Progress Report on Reviewing the AONB Management Plan

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Summary: Steady progress is being made, but lack of Chilterns specific information and summer holidays have meant the timetable has slipped slightly. The Scoping Report for the Strategic Environmental Assessment is being prepared. A number of workshops have been held. It is proposed to hold further events after the next meeting of the Board on Oct 10th and Annual Forum of 9th Nov.

Background

1. The Review Timetable is attached as appendix 1. At this stage the Board should be consulting on the Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report. In fact the scoping report is being drafted but progress is slower than anticipated due to the shortage of Chilterns specific information. In practice much of the assessment will have to be based on the best available information. (The SEA is a requirement to ensure the AONB Management Plan does not have a damaging impact on the environment.)
2. The next significant stage will be to review the AONB Management Plan and to assess the preferred policy options and actions against the SEA. This stage is likely to take about 4 months and end in Jan/Feb 2008. A special meeting of the Land Management Group attended by over 20 organisations was held in July to discuss the issues and changes which may affect the review of Management Plan. The general view was that whilst the context may have changed the main issues remain as identified in earlier plans.
3. A series of topic specific workshops will be organised during the next few months. It is proposed to hold two particular events to concentrate on the broad issues:

10th October Conservation Board meeting incl. an afternoon session.

9th November Annual forum - afternoon session

Recommendation

1. **To note that the process of reviewing the plan has begun.**