



DRAFT LIFELONG LEARNING STRATEGY FOR THE CHILTERNES CONSERVATION BOARD

Summary

1. The Chilterns Conservation Board is committed to promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty by people of all ages. The scale and variety of landscapes, buildings and habitats in the Chilterns offer a tremendous learning resource. The Board and its partners are developing learning opportunities to meet the needs of all through a wide range of programmes supporting both formal and informal learning which aim to stimulate understanding, develop skills and encourage creative responses.
2. The countryside can be inspiring and life changing and barriers to its enjoyment and understanding must be removed. Engaging the mind and the heart through the experience of learning in the countryside enhances enjoyment and arouses a determination to protect the countryside for the future. Lifelong Learning encourages appreciation and care of the countryside and helps people to understand their own place in the world.

What is Lifelong Learning?

3. By definition, Lifelong Learning is the concept that "It's never too soon or too late for learning", a philosophy that has taken root in a whole host of different organizations. Lifelong learning is attitudinal; that one can and should be open to new ideas, decisions, skills or behaviors. Lifelong learning sees citizens provided with learning opportunities at all ages and in numerous contexts: at work, at home and through leisure activities, not just through formal channels such as school and higher education.

Aims

4. The aims of the Chilterns AONB Lifelong Learning Strategy are:
 - to provide opportunities for the widest possible audience to learn about, understand and appreciate the special qualities of the Chilterns AONB
 - to promote partnership working between the Chilterns Conservation Board and education providers across the Chilterns
 - To add value to the education projects currently provided by our partners

- To encourage visitors to and residents of the Chilterns to have direct, positive learning experiences, that may change their lives for the better, instilling a sense of guardianship.

Links to Chilterns AONB Management Plan

5. The Conservation Board's primary purposes are:
 - to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB
 - to increase the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the AONB's special qualities.

6. The second primary duty links clearly to the concept of lifelong learning, and throughout the Management Plan reference is made to our broad aims of increasing public awareness of the various aspects of the Chilterns including:
 - Nature Conservation
 - The Historic Environment
 - The Water Environment
 - Farming and Forestry

7. In addition, within the Recreation and Access section of the Management Plan, the broad aims include:
 - Provide recreation and access opportunities for all, including local communities, those living in adjacent towns and visitors, ensuring their visit is sustainable and compatible with the overriding aim of the AONB – to conserve and enhance natural beauty

 - Ensure a high quality experience for all, with special encouragement for those who are currently unable to visit the countryside.

8. Bearing this in mind, it is clear that the Board's Lifelong Learning Strategy should not only consider the subjects we wish to promote, but also the audiences we wish to reach.

Audiences for Learning

9. Potential audiences for learning in the Chilterns could include anyone, but broadly, the audiences can be sub-divided as follows:
 - Formal Education (schools, Adult Learning)
 - Community Groups (U3A, WI, youth groups)
 - Families
 - General public
 - Special Interest Groups and enthusiasts
 - Non-Traditional Countryside Users (e.g. people with disabilities, Black and Ethnic Minority groups, urban dwellers)

10. Limitations on staff and resources dictate that rather than concentrating on any one of these audiences, the Board should seek to promote a range of activities that meet the needs of as many of these groups as possible.

11. Lifelong learning should be at the heart of everything the Board does in relation to raising awareness of the special qualities of the Chilterns. Through its publications, events and website, everyone, young and old will have the opportunity to learn more about the extensive natural, cultural and built heritage of the Chilterns AONB.
12. The table below shows how the variety of work currently undertaken by the Chilterns Conservation Board provides learning opportunities for a wide range of audiences.

Area of Work	Schools / Adult Learning	Community groups	Families	General Public	Special Interest Groups	Non-Traditional Users
Education Packs	x	x				
Education Providers Directory	x	x				
Talks programme	x	x	x	x	x	x
Skills Training workshops		x		x	x	x
Volunteer-led walks programme		x	x	x	x	x
Family fun events			x	x		
'Wildlife on the Move' events		x	x	x	x	x
Wildlife Watching CCTV Initiatives	x	x	x	x	x	x
AONB Website	x		x	x	x	x
Volunteering Opportunities		x		x	x	x
Guidance on Buildings				x	x	
'People and Places' Project	x		x	x	x	x

13. The Management Plan relates to the whole AONB, and not just the work undertaken directly by the Board, and it is clear that with limited staff and resources, only so much can be achieved. It is therefore necessary to prioritise the areas in which the Board is best placed to deliver in the future.

The Role of the Board in Supporting Formal Education in the Chilterns

14. Many organisations across the Chilterns offer formal, curriculum-linked education programmes to schools on their sites. Rather than adding to these with our own programme of formal educational opportunities, it is considered that the Board would be best placed liaising with the various organisations, providing information on the wider Chilterns to be incorporated into the existing programmes. The key is to ensure that consistent messages about the Chilterns, and issues affecting the area should be delivered by all education providers.

15. It is proposed that the Board, in partnership with The Chiltern Society, aims to work as an education signposting service, helping teachers find suitable sites and education providers to meet their needs. The Board will produce a Directory of Education Providers and Resources which will be a web-based resource that will be accessible to teachers and youth leaders providing details of what educational courses and resources are on offer across the Chilterns.
16. The Board will continue to promote two Curriculum-linked Education Resource Packs which are currently being used in local schools. The Red Kite Resource Pack for Key Stages 2 and 3 is available as a paper pack and is downloadable from the Chilterns AONB Website. The Chalk Streams pack for Key Stages 2 and 3 is currently available as a CD with supporting teachers' notes, but will soon be adapted as web pages.
17. The Board will positively encourage teachers to maximise the use of existing resource material prepared by its partners to study aspects of the Chilterns natural, built and cultural heritage. Where materials are not available to cover a particular Chilterns theme, and a demand can be recognised, the Board will work with partners to produce suitable materials and promote them to the relevant educational bodies.
18. The Board receives many requests from schools to give talks, yet does not have the time or staff available to meet this demand. A CD of Power Point presentations on various aspects of the Chilterns will be provided to schools with scripts, enabling the teachers to deliver their own Chilterns-themed lessons. Should the school still require an 'expert' speaker, these requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
19. The Activities and Education Officer is registered with Bucks Adult Learning as a tutor and will offer 6 Adult Learning sessions a year. Currently the talks offered are on the subject of red kites, however this will be expanded to cover other Chilterns subjects.

Face-to-Face Initiatives

20. Volunteers registered with the Chilterns Conservation Board will offer up to 30 'on-demand' talks per year on red kites to local community groups (e.g. U3A, WI, Rotary, bird clubs etc). Once the CD of Power Point presentations (originally designed for schools) is available, volunteers will be trained to offer a wider variety of subjects.
21. Volunteers will also deliver the Board's programme of guided walks. The walks are themed around various subjects including chalk streams, red kites, butterflies and blooms, local history, woodland archaeology and farming. They are designed to be both educational and entertaining, and have added health and well-being benefits.
22. As part of the Board's 'Getting Close to Nature' project, trips will be offered that utilise various modes of transport for wildlife watching. These 'Wildlife on

the Move' trips are particularly popular with family groups and allow participants to learn about the area's wildlife and countryside in an informal, entertaining way.

23. Within the same project, in partnership with BBOWT and National Trust, a series of CCTV wildlife watching initiatives will allow the public close-up views of wildlife such as red kites, sand martins, badgers, frogs and garden birds. Volunteers staffing the displays and written interpretation make these entertaining and educational experiences.
24. Skills training will be offered to the general public and to specialist groups on a number of subjects including building skills, map reading, woodland crafts, photography and presentation skills. The Board is keen to tailor these courses to enable staff and volunteers with partners and local community groups to develop their own skills and thus be able to pass on valuable Chilterns-related messages to a wider audience.
25. Training will also be offered to our own volunteers to enable them to undertake their volunteering duties to best effect. The Board is ideally placed to help 'train the trainers', increasing the skills and knowledge of people who in turn will be able to pass this knowledge to others.
26. Many of the Board's events and initiatives are aimed at families, and whilst they provide entertainment, they also allow family groups to learn about important aspects of the Chilterns together. The Board will organise 4 family fun days per year based on different Chilterns subjects including woodland crafts, history / archaeology and wildlife.

Wider Learning Opportunities

27. The People and Places project will engage a number of volunteers in researching the stories of famous people of the Chilterns, linking them with particular places. As well as providing learning opportunities for the volunteers involved, the stories will be published on the AONB website, providing a learning resource for the general public.
28. A children's newsletter will be produced once a year. The newsletter contains quizzes, activities and information presented in a 'child-friendly' format with information for parents on places to go and things to do in the Chilterns.
29. The Chilterns AONB website provides a wealth of information, photographs and maps and is a fantastic learning resource for people of all ages. A new woodland web section concentrates on the seasonal; wildlife of Chiltern woods and their historical aspects and has been designed to appeal to a younger audience, with audio and video clips as well as written and illustrative information. This section will be promoted through our own publications, local press and through a postcard campaign.
30. A new section of the website will be developed, aimed specifically at children and young people. In addition, information will also be available to teachers

and educators. This will include the two education resource packs and the Directory of Education Providers and Resources. Children's quiz sheets will be available for download linked to five of the Chilterns Country walks:

- Angling Spring Wood
- Bourne End / Little Marlow
- Hughenden Manor
- Hambleden
- Goring

These will be promoted on the homepage of the website and in the children's newsletter.

Delivery

31. It is clear that the scale of learning-related work requires input from more than one member of staff. While the whole programme of work will be coordinated by the Activities and Education Officer, the draft work programme below indicates which members of staff will take responsibility for the delivery of the various elements of the programme.

Draft Lifelong Learning Work Programme 2007-08

Task	Output	Outcome	Time table	Resource s	Main Audiences	Responsibility	Public Awareness
Supporting Formal Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce web-based directory of education providers and sites for visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased school visits to education providers Increased teacher knowledge of resources available 	July 2007	~ £300 (Core Education, secured) Staff time	School children Teachers Education providers	Activities & Education Officer, Admin Asst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Bulletin Website Schools bulletins
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce and distribute disk of Power Point presentations for schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of Chilterns in school curricula Increased pupil knowledge of Chilterns features 	June 2007	~ £1,000 (Core Education, secured) Staff time	School children Teachers Education providers	Co-ordinated by Activities & Education Officer Input from all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Bulletin Website Schools bulletins
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 20 talks to schools per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of Chilterns in school curricula Increased pupil knowledge of Chilterns features 	On demand	Staff time	School children Teachers	Activities & Education Officer + others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On demand therefore promotion minimal
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer 5 Adult Education sessions per year Increase range of subjects offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased public awareness 	Ongoing	Staff time	Public Enthusiasts	Activities & Education Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bucks Adult Learning publications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Chiltern Society with their Lottery Bid for Education Outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chiltern Society Lottery Bid successful Education Outreach Officer Appointed 	Ongoing	Staff time		Activities & Education Officer	

Task	Output	Outcomes	Time table	Resources	Main Audiences	Responsibility	Public Awareness
	Officer						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend Chiltern Society and Thames Alliance Education Steering Group Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved partnership working 	Ongoing	Staff time	Education partners	Activities & Education Officer	
Face to Face Initiatives	Plan, promote and run: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 30 themed walks per year (red kites, woodland, chalk streams, farming, archaeology / history) Up to 30 themed talks per year (subjects as above) 3 walks per year accessible to people with mobility difficulties Taster days for BEM groups with Rainbow Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public attendance at walks & talks Increased public knowledge of Chilterns themes Increased number of disabled visitors Increased number of BEM visitors Increased volunteer participation 	Ongoing programme	Staff / volunteer time ~ £500 (not secured)	Public Speciality groups Enthusiasts People with disabilities BEM groups Volunteers	All AONB Staff involved Co-ordinated by Activities & Education Officer Black Environment Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's On Chalk & Trees Web site Leaflets Press
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 4 family days in / close to urban areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased public enjoyment / knowledge Increased attendance from families and urban dwellers 	Spaced through year	~ £3,000 (not secured) Staff time	Public BEM families Urban dwellers	All AONB Staff involved Co-ordinated by Activities & Education Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's On Chalk & Trees Web site Leaflets Press
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and promote 3 CCTV initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased public awareness of Chilterns 	Spring / summer	~ £2,000 (Friends)	Public	Activities & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's On

Task	Output	Outcome	Time table	Resource s	Main Audiences	Responsibility	Public Awareness
	(Stokenchurch, Hughenden Manor, College Lake)	wildlife <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased website usage • Increased media / tourism profile 		of Red Kites donations) Staff / volunteer time	Enthusiasts Speciality groups	Officer (in partnership with NT and BBOWT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chalk & Trees • Web site • Leaflets • Press
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop training programme for staff / volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased volunteer knowledge 	Ongoing	~ £500 (not secured)	Volunteers	Activities & Education Officer	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 building skills training days per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge / skills in building profession 	2008 - 09	~ £3,500 (not secured)	Speciality groups Enthusiasts	Planning Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's On • Trade Journals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 'Wildlife on the Move' trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased public enjoyment / knowledge 	April – September	~ HLF funded for 2007, not secured for 2008 Staff / volunteer time	Public Enthusiasts Urban dwellers Families	Activities & Education Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's On • Chalk & Trees • Web site • Leaflets • Press
Wider Learning Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop children's newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge / understanding amongst younger audience 	September	~ £1,000 (Core Promotions, secured)	Children Families	Information & Interpretation Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's On • Chalk & Trees • Web site • Leaflets • Press
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and update Woodland Web pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of website • Increased 	May / June	~ £500 (Forest Research	Public Children	Information & Interpretation Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chalk & Trees • Web site

Task	Output	Outcome	Time table	Resource s	Main Audiences	Responsibility	Public Awareness
		understanding Chilterns amongst younger audience		Budget)	Enthusiasts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postcards • Press
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop children's pages on website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of website • Increased understanding Chilterns amongst younger audience 	2008 - 09	~ £4,000 (£2,000 secured from Core Promotions)	Children / families Schools	Information & Interpretation Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chalk & Trees • Board Bulletin • Promotional postcards • Press releases
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote quiz sheets for Chilterns Country Walks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased public understanding of Chilterns historic environment 	June	Already funded from 2006 / 07	Children / families	Access Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's On • Chalk & Trees • Web site
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop 'People & Places' research project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of website • More trained volunteers 	Ongoing	£21,000 (£13,00 secured from HLF)	Public Enthusiasts Volunteers Schools	Information & Interpretation Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's On • Chalk & Trees • Web site • Leaflets • Press