



**Agenda for Board Meeting to be held at 10.30 am on
Wednesday 10 October 2007 in
The Council Chamber, Chesham Town Council, Chesham**

Agenda Item	Timing	Page No
1. Apologies for Absence / Changes in Membership	10.30	
2. Declarations of Interest To declare any personal and prejudicial interests	10.31	
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2007, to be confirmed.	10.32	1 - 12
4. Matters Arising	10.35	
5. Public Question Time	10.38	
6. Report from the Executive Committee	10.40	13 - 16
7. Report from Planning Committee	10.55	17 - 22
8. Creating a Carbon Offset Scheme	11.10	23 - 28
9. Working with Parish Councils	11.30	29 - 32
10. Report on People and Places Project	11.50	33 - 40
11. Report on Land Use Changes	12.10	41 - 46
12. Date of Next and Future Meetings The next meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday 22 January 2008 at a venue to be advised.		

***PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE A DISCUSSION ON THE MANAGEMENT PLAN
AFTER LUNCH, WHICH WILL LAST UNTIL APPROXIMATELY 3.30PM***

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TO: MEMBERS OF THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 19 JUNE 2007 IN MID-BEDS DISTRICT COUNCIL, CHICKSANDS, BEDFORDSHIRE, COMMENCING AT 10.02 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.50 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Member

Appointing Body

Appointed by Local Authorities

Cllr David Barnard	North Herts District council
Cllr Roger Emmett	Wycombe District Council
Cllr Rhys Goodwin	Bedfordshire County Council
Cllr Marion Mustoe	South Beds District Council
Cllr Ian Reay	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Chris Richards	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Jeremy Ryman	Chiltern District Council
Cllr Bill Storey	Hertfordshire County Council
Jules Thomson	South Oxfordshire District Council

Appointed by Secretary of State

Sir John Johnson (Chairman)	Secretary of State
Dr Heather Barrett-Mold	Secretary of State
Bettina Kirkham	Secretary of State
Dr Simon Mortimer	Secretary of State
John Willson	Secretary of State

Elected by Parish Councils

Mary Goldsmith	Bedfordshire
Barbara Wallis	Buckinghamshire
Julia Wells	Oxfordshire

In Attendance

Officers

Maureen Keyworth	BCC and Clerk to the Board
Steve Rodrick	CCB Chief Officer
Chris Smith	CCB Finance Officer
Colin White	CCB Planning Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Margaret Jarrett, Mike Fox, Cllr Brian Golby, John Griffin, Shirley Judges, Kevin Mayne, Cllr Richard Pushman and Mike Render.

Changes in membership are as follows:

Luton Borough Council: Cllr Don Worldling replaces Cllr Andy Strange
Three Rivers District Council: Cllr Brian Norman replaces Cllr Chris Brearley
Chiltern District Council: Cllr Jeremy Ryman replaces Cllr Susan Howkins

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 June 2007 were confirmed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Item 7: Report from the Executive Committee

Members noted that the Accord with the Chilterns Woodland Project had been amended in accordance with members' comments, and signed.

Item 10: Hedgerow Survey Report

This project has been awarded a further grant by Defra to continue with the work.

Members were reminded of the visit to Hampden Bottom Farm on 9 July 2007.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No members of the public were present.

6. APPROVAL OF STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2005-06

Members received the report of the Finance Officer, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the revised presentation of the 2005/06 accounts and accompanying Statement of Assurance.

Although the Audit Commission should have commented on the Annual Return by the end of 2006, they have only just done so. The Accounts have been approved with a request for an amendment on how the Pension Liability is presented.

Members were also asked to approve the Statement of Assurance, which was not available last year.

RESOLVED

- 1. The Board NOTED the changes to the Annual Return required by the Audit Commission and APPROVED the revisions.**
- 2. The Board Authorised the Chairman and the Chief Officer to initial changes to the Annual Return (Section 1).**
- 3. The Board APPROVED the Statement of Assurance (Section 2).**

7. APPROVAL OF STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2006-07

Members received the report of the Finance Officer, the purpose of which was to seek Board approval to the 2006/07 Statement of Accounts.

The Committee noted that the Statement of Accounts is subject to external audit by the Audit Commission.

The following was noted:

- There is a surplus for the year of approximately £19,000 as a result of underspends in some projects. As a result, approximately £12,000 has been put into earmarked reserves and approximately £6,180 into general reserve.
- Total core expenditure amounted to approximately £570,000
- Core income included £454,000 from Natural England, £102,000 from Local Authorities, £14,862 in interest earned and £6429 from merchandise activity.
- Ongoing projects, and reserves supporting them (£82,737) have been carried forward into 2007/08.
- With regard to the Historic Landscape Characterisation project, members noted the final draft would shortly be published and had come in on budget.
- The Pensions Liability has improved. The Pension Fund is managed by Buckinghamshire County Council and the figure published in the accounts is the AONB share of the potential liability. The Pensions reserve is also managed by BCC. The LGPS is re-valued every three years and the BCC Scheme revaluation will be published in December 2007. By then it was hoped that the Fund will have increased and the deficit will have reduced further.

RESOLVED:

The Board APPROVED the Statement of Accounts

8. APPROVAL OF STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Members received the report of the Finance Officer the purpose of which was to secure Board approval for:

- The revised Statement of Internal Control (SIC)
- The Service Assurance Statement, which is a measure of organisational health
- The revised Risk Assessment

and to accept the Internal Audit Report and recommendations, subject to members' comments.

The Committee noted that there was a statutory requirement to complete these documents under the Accounting and Audit Regulations 2006. The SIC was required to be updated annually to reflect any changes. The Internal Audit Report from Hertfordshire County Council was good, with minor recommendations. However, the final recommendation – a Five Year Programme – was difficult to provide given future uncertainties regarding finance. Instead a three year forecast will be prepared.

Plans were already in place for issues relating to Internal Control. With regard to improvements to cash flow forecasting, Officers were aware this was an area which needed improving. It will be monitored on a regular basis and reported to each Executive Committee as well as monthly reports being provided to the Chief Officer.

With regard to measuring risk assessment, a member suggested an extra column to show the calculation which brought about the level of risk.

The use of Microsoft Project software as a monitoring tool was supported. It was important that projects were monitored because much of the funding was dependent on the project being completed within a designated timescale. It was normal for one person to be responsible for managing the software, with regular meetings with staff involved in the projects.

RESOLVED:

The Board:

- 1. APPROVED the Statement of Internal Control**
- 2. APPROVED the revised Service Assurance Statement**
- 3. APPROVED the revised Risk Assessment**
- 4. ACCEPTED the Internal Audit Report and recommendations, subject to the comments above.**

9. APPOINTMENT TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Cllr Chris Brearley did not stand for re-election at Three Rivers District Council and, therefore, there was a Local Authority vacancy on the Executive Committee.

Cllr Richards, Cllr Ryman and Cllr Mrs Mustoe all expressed an interest in sitting on the Executive Committee. Cllr Richards and Cllr Mrs Mustoe gave a brief statement on their interests and reasons for wanting to sit on the Committee.

A ballot took place and Cllr Mrs Mustoe was elected to the Executive Committee.

RESOLVED:

The Board APPOINTED Cllr Mrs Marion Mustoe from South Beds District Council to fill the Local Authority vacancy on the Executive Committee.

10. APPOINTMENT TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Mrs Susan Howkins did not stand for re-election at Chiltern District Council and, therefore, there was a Local Authority vacancy on the Planning Committee.

Cllr Storey and Cllr Ryman each expressed an interest in sitting on the Planning Committee. Each gave a brief statement on their interests and reasons for wanting to sit on the Committee.

A ballot took place and Cllr Storey was elected to the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED:

The Board APPOINTED Cllr Bill Storey from Hertfordshire County Council to fill the Local Authority vacancy on the Executive Committee.

11. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members received the report of the Chief Officer, the purpose of which was to report decisions made under delegated authority and to seek agreement to aim for carbon

neutrality for the Board by 2011.

Key points were:

- There was a small surplus on the core budget of approximately £15,000.
- Natural England made a core grant offer of £467,620 which is a 3% increase on 2006/07.
- The application for grant aid from Natural England of £12,000 for additional costs for the revised management plan was refused. It was agreed to re-allocate some of the core budget to create a budget of up to £20,000 over two years towards the production of a revised plan.
- Natural England offered grant aid of £32,000 which represented a 55% cut compared to that offered in 2006/07. NE also indicated it will only provide £70,000 towards the Sustainable Development Fund (£80,000 in 2006-07). However, bids had been invited of up to £100,000. The National Association of AONBs will be raising this issue with NE, and Barry Gardiner at Defra. The AONB also issued a press release with regard to the loss of funding which received good media coverage. The Chairman has written to the Chairman of NE.
- An interim cost of living award of 2% was awarded to staff, backdated to 1 April 2007, pending the outcome of national negotiations with local authorities.
- Under the Sustainability Plan it was agreed that the Board should aim for carbon neutrality by 2011. Once the photo voltaic cells have been installed at the office, the carbon emission will reduce from 20 tonnes to 15 tonnes per annum. More tree planting was also suggested. The Chief Officer reported that a carbon offset scheme based on giving away low energy light bulbs was being investigated.
- It was decided to support the submission of a bid to the LEADER programme, which was co-funded by the EU and the Treasury. Buckinghamshire County Council would take on the role of lead bidder with the proposal being prepared by the Board. Cross regional bids are being encouraged and the Chilterns bid is, therefore, likely to be considered favourably. The Board will know this time next year whether the bid has been successful. The money would be used to create a framework based on themes, such as tourism. The programme will be useful for the voluntary sector and charities. Matched funding would be applicable in some areas.
- The Access Officer would be going on maternity leave from July 2007 to April 2008. In her absence it was decided to reduce the number of projects and appoint a Consultant to help deliver the rest. The Committee also agreed the request of the Access Officer to return to work on a part time basis.

RESOLVED:

1. The Board NOTED the discussion and decisions of the Executive Committee.

2. AGREED to adopt the target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2011.

12. REPORT FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members received the report of the Planning Officer, the purpose of which was to bring to the attention of the Board the items considered by the Planning Committee and decisions taken under delegated powers and seek comments on a planning application. Key points were:

The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide

Advice had been sought from DCLG and the Planning Inspectorate with a view to

ensuring that the Design Guide became a supplementary planning document. The Inspectorate had suggested that the Board should prepare the Guide on behalf of the Local Authorities acting as their agents to ensure that it became SPD. A meeting will be held in the near future with key planning officers to discuss the Guide and the Management Plan.

AONB Management Plan Review

The Committee had discussed the Plan and compiled a Table based on the comments made, which will be used at the meeting with planning officers. The current indicators in the plan were considered to be still appropriate.

DCLG Consultation – Changes to permitted development (Householder Microgeneration)

Members were informed that one of the key issues in the consultation was the removal of AONBs and National Parks from the protection afforded to them under Article 1(5) of the GPDO. It was suggested that only Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites would be protected. The Board has made strong representation for AONBs and National Parks to be included and for the protection to be extended to cover more open land.

Members also noted that the planning application submitted for the photovoltaic cells at the Board's office had been approved. A grant application had been made for 50% of the costs.

Aylesbury Vale Growth

Subsequent to the meeting of the Planning Committee the District Council announced that growth would take place to the south and east of Aylesbury Town. Public consultation would take place from mid-July to the end of August.

Planning Applications Update

Last year the Board received details of 167 applications. Formal representations were made on 26, with 25 objections and one support.

With regard to the planning application for development at High Heavens Waste Site on the edge of High Wycombe, representations were made on behalf of the Board, objecting to two very large buildings, one for waste reception and one for maturation of green compost waste. These buildings would be visible off-site. The Planning Officer had met with Bucks CC officers who explained the need for the buildings and for waste material to be enclosed to prevent odour. Although planting does screen much of the site, the buildings will have an impact on the landscape. The application had been forwarded to the Secretary of State because it departs from the Development Plan..

Members discussed the need for such sites in and around AONBs and the difficulty in finding sites which did not impact on the AONB. The original colour suggested for the covering of the buildings was white in order to allow the maximum amount of light to the interior, but the colour on the sides could be darker.

RESOLVED:

- 1. The Board noted: the progress made in connection with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide; the suggestions made for planning training; the responses made on the DCLG Consultation and other Development Plan documents; the current situation regarding responses on planning applications, and the details of the Planning Committee Tour.**

2. **The Board considered what additional comments, if any, should be made in connection with the proposal at High Heavens.**

13. REPORT ON THE PLANNING WHITE PAPER

Members received the report of the Planning Officer, the purpose of which was to propose and approve responses to the Planning White Paper and associated public consultation exercises. This was brought to members' attention because the consultation period ends on 17 August and the Planning Committee would not meet again until September. The report contained the key issues in the White Paper and the suggested response on behalf of the Board.

The main aim of the White Paper is to streamline the planning system and introduce new systems to make decisions on major infrastructure projects more timely and efficient, as well as setting certain policies at national level for those projects as well as improving engagement in the system. Although there were very few major infrastructure projects relating to the AONB there are some that will have an impact.

The White Paper suggests that key infrastructure projects should be dealt with by an Infrastructure Planning Commission, separate from government, who will pass any decisions on these projects based on national policy statements. The process will be simplified and made clearer. Public participation is fundamental to the process. It was important that the Environment should receive greater recognition.

Included in the suggested representation from the Board is the need for AONB Boards to be considered as statutory consultees. Currently only National Parks are included.

The current policy framework will be reviewed. This includes removal of the requirement for all SPDs to be listed in the LA local development scheme. Removal of this requirement means it should speed up the process particularly for items such as the Design Guide. It is also proposed that the blanket requirement for sustainability appraisal should be removed.

Two other consultations are also being considered:

Planning Performance Agreements – a new way of managing large scale major projects.

Government has suggested changes in the way that these are dealt with. There are no major implications for the AONB.

The consultation report divides major development into two areas – large-scale major and small-scale major applications. Only large-scale major applications would be removed from the 13 week determination requirement.

Changes to Permitted Development – permitted development rights for householders

In this consultation Government proposes that restrictions in conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites should also apply to designated areas. It is suggested that the restrictions applicable to Article 1(5) land should be extended to cover open spaces and other areas.

With regard to paved gardens, Government suggests it is not necessary to introduce restrictions because it is not a national problem. The Planning Officer considered that

it was a national problem and that no gardens should have a hard surface of more than 50% because water is not able to soak into the ground and this could result in flash floods.

In discussion the following was noted:

- The need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment could be the threshold for what constitutes a large scale major development.
- The Chairman considered that proper status should be given to the Board's comments when planning authorities make planning decisions, and another member suggested that the contents of the White Paper should be used to remedy the situation towards having AONBs as statutory consultees.
- The advent of an Independent Infrastructure Planning Commission was welcomed. The Commission will have knowledgeable experts in certain fields, but will have the flexibility to draw on further expertise as needed. However, concern was expressed that an Independent Commission may not be accountable to anyone. It was proposed that an amendment be made to paragraph 4 of the response to say that the Commission should not make decisions but make recommendations to the Secretary of State. The Planning Officer agreed to build this into the response.
- The Planning Officer emphasised the need to support the Government's intention to review the current approach to retail development and introduce a new test which has a strong focus on the town centre first policy. It would protect the AONB and encourage revitalisation of Town Centres.
- Members agreed that this was a good and balanced response and noted that it would be circulated to other AONBs, and other colleagues, in the south and eastern regions, as well as the National Association of AONBs.

RESOLVED:

The Board APPROVED the responses to the Planning White Paper, and associated consultation documents as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report. The response to include those suggestions made in the meeting.

14. REVISED PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2007-08

Members received the report of the Chief Officer.

Members were aware that the Natural England grant was less than applied for. It was noted from the figures in table 1 of the report that very little support had been received from NE with regard to project grants, except for Chalk Streams.

The Executive Committee suggested that the £30,000 set aside for the Land Management Scheme to be re-allocated to support some of the projects. This would leave approximately £10,000-£15,000 for the Land Management Scheme. The Chief Officer suggested they carry on like this for the rest of the year without giving up hope of receiving further funding.

Members noted that the core grant funding was received in May 2008 and the rest of the funding has only just been sent. With regard to 2008/09 NE was proposing a funding review of protected areas this autumn. It was hoped the review would not take long and that funding would be available at the beginning of the new financial year.

RESOLVED:

- 1. The Board NOTED with regret the impact of the shortfall of grant aid from Natural England and supported the adjustments to the work programme proposed by the Executive Committee.**
- 2. The Board AGREED to reallocate reserves allocated to the Land Management Fund to support the grant shortfall for projects, but to retain the scheme funded by the balance expected to be approximately £10,000.**
- 3. The Board AGREED that letters should be sent to all MPs within the AONB.**

15. LIFELONG LEARNING STRATEGY

Members received the report of the Activities and Education Officer, the purpose of which was to present the Board with a draft Lifelong Learning Strategy document for discussion.

The appendix to the Report gave an indication of the current status of the strategy. In the context of resources, there is a large army of volunteers to draw on and further develop.

It was suggested that Dunstable Gateway be included in the strategy and it was noted that there are teams working there already. SR asked members to consider to what extent the Board should engage directly with schools and groups in light of current resources. If further work was to be done, more people would be needed.

With regard to People and Places, It was suggested that people linked to monuments could be identified and that information placed on the website. Placards could then be put up to explain the importance of the monument However, time would be a constraint to this.

RESOLVED:

The Board APPROVED the Lifelong Learning Strategy subject to any amendments.

16. STATEMENT ON ENERGY CROPS

Members received the report of the Countryside Officer, the purpose of which was to seek the Board's approval of the draft Energy Crop Scheme Guidance document. A presentation was also given.

A member informed the Committee of his involvement with Thames Valley Energy working with Didcot. TVE wanted the crop to be produced on the best land in order to give the best yield. He had visited another power station which will burn anything with a renewable energy certificate, including palm kernel extract.

Government was under pressure to increase development and other stations will want products. This was an opportunity to help in setting guidelines. Crops such as Miscanthus would be visible and harvesting involves heavy duty equipment. There are also associated works with crops, such as widening of lanes and field access.

Last year four applications were made in the Chilterns for energy crops. It was suggested that the situation be reviewed in 12 months to see whether applications

increase and whether there are any further impacts not already noted.

RESOLVED:

The Board ENDORSED in principle the draft guidance and the approach to production of future guidance.

17. ASSESSMENT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Members received the report of the Chief Officer the purpose of which was to recommend that the Board adopt the initial assessment of the potential impact of climate change on the Chilterns AONB.

The Chief Officer referred to discussion at the last Board meeting and suggested that the hierarchy in paragraph 2 of the report be adopted. Although there may not be a dramatic change in the Chilterns as a result of climate change in the short term, there should be monitoring for warning signs

RESOLVED:

The Board AGREED

- 1. to adopt the initial assessment of the potential impact of climate change on the Chilterns, and the associated action plan.**
- 2. to develop its policy on renewable energy options.**
- 3. that the Climate Change Group review the assessment at least twice per year.**

18. INTRODUCTION TO REVIEW OF AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Members received the report of the Chief Officer, the purpose of which was to advise the Board on the programme, appointment of a consultant and introduce the afternoon session on the Management Plan.

The Committee noted that Alan Wheeler, an environmental and planning consultant, has been appointed to support the Board in production of the AONB Management Plan.

Members were referred to the four themes adopted by NE and the need to consider how to intertwine them through the various chapters in the Management Plan.

RESOLVED:

The Board AGREED to advise on the basic structure for the reviewed Management Plan.

19. DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday 10 October 2007 at 10.00am at Chesham Town Council, Chesham.

Future Dates:

22 January 2008

20. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

Members discussed the revised format and contents for the AONB Management Plan Review.

CHAIRMAN

Report from the Executive Committee

Author: Steve Rodrick Chief Officer

Summary: The Executive Committee met on 19th September.

1. The Annual Return for 2006-07 was approved for submission to the Audit Commission.
2. The financial report was approved for the year to date.
3. Amendments to the Board's Financial Regulations were approved.
4. It was agreed to take out a policy to provide financial support to staff for medical treatment.
5. A flexible retirement policy was adopted based on that of Bucks CC.
6. A report was noted that general HR support is being sought.
7. A carbon offset scheme was approved to assist the Board to become carbon neutral by 2011.
8. A report was noted on the Board's involvement with the LEADER and Interreg IVb programmes, both EU funded to promote sustainable rural development.

Purpose of Report: The Executive Committee operates with delegated authority from the full Board, but is required to make a report to each Board meeting.

Finance

1. The Executive Committee approved the Annual Report for 2006-07 to be submitted to the Audit Commission. The audit fee is likely to be in the order of £2,500. There were no unusual items reported and an unqualified report is expected.
2. The Executive Committee approved a report on the financial position to the end of September from the Finance Officer. There were no unusual items to report.
3. The committee approved amendments and additions to the current Financial Regulations which were prepared in 2004 and adopted by the Board in January 2005. Good practice requires these regulations to be reviewed at least every three years.

Health Care

4. The Committee approved a health care policy which provides financial support to staff for a range of medical treatments. The cost to the Board will be £1,800 per annum.
5. All staff who have their position confirmed following the initial probationary period will be eligible. The cost is £15 per month per person.

Flexible Retirement Policy

6. The Board is a member of the Buckinghamshire Local government Pension Scheme. Following changes to the Age Equality Regulations the managers of the fund have required all members to adopt a flexible retirement policy consistent with the new guidance (in effect if an employee is capable of fulfilling their duties they can continue working beyond what was a previously considered to be their normal retirement age). The fund managers recognised that smaller organisations which are members of the scheme have not yet developed their own policy and invited them to use the Bucks CC policy as a model. This model is similar to that already in place for the Board, which was that of Wycombe DC when the Board was established. The Executive Committee approved a slightly amended version of the Bucks CC model.
7. The Committee also decided that the Board should prepare its own policy within twelve months.

Human Resources Support

8. The Board has been without specialist human resource support since the agreement with Bucks CC was terminated in 2006. Wycombe DC and South Oxon DC were approached to provide the Board with support based on a Service Level Agreement. Both declined and recently consultants have been approached to provide the Board with support. A number of expressions of interest have been received and interviews will take place at the end of October.
9. The Board urgently needs to bring its personnel policies and terms and conditions of employment up to date. Once this has been done most HR support will be called upon only when needed.

Carbon Offset Scheme

10. The Executive Committee approved the proposed scheme to offset the net carbon emission of the Board after it has undertaken all other practical measures. This issue is dealt with more fully in Item 8.

LEADER and INTERREG Programmes

11. The Committee received a briefing report on these two EU funded programmes. Both are at the bidding stage and the Board is heavily involved.

12. The Board prepared the expression of interest for the LEADER programme which was approved in July. An invitation was issued to submit a full bid by January 2008. This programme is designed to support rural development and in particular farming and forestry. Business Link has agreed to co-ordinate the bid and if successful will be the accountable body. Board staff and members are heavily involved. The total budget has still not been finalised but up to £3million may be available for the Chilterns for the period 2008- 2013. All the Chilterns AONB will be included in the bid.
13. All the AONBs in the south east, the New Forest National Park authority together with the French regional parks around Paris will be developing a joint bid to the Interreg IVb programme which will run from 2008 – 2012. The total sum being sought will be up to £3m (approx. £70,000 per AONB per annum). The aim of the programme will be to promote sustainable development in protected areas close to London and Paris. The bid will be prepared by the SE AONB co-ordinator and Kent County Council. The match funding will be the Sustainable Development Fund (n.b. Natural England need to keep providing this grant in order to support this proposal).

Recommendation

1. **To note the report from the Executive Committee.**

Report from the Planning Committee

Author: Colin White Planning Officer

Summary: The Planning Committee met on 12th September. The following items were discussed:

1. Updates for the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the AONB Management Plan reviews;
2. Provision of an information leaflet and training for Parish Councils;
3. Provision of affordable housing;
4. A response to the Luton and South Beds Core Strategy consultation;
5. Other Development Plans responses;
6. Feedback on the annual Planning Committee Tour;
7. An update on responses to planning applications,
8. The calendar of meetings for 2008.

Purpose of Report: To bring to the attention of the Board the items considered by the Planning Committee and decisions taken under delegated powers.

Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and AONB Management Plan

1. An update was given in connection with the Buildings Design Guide Review (the 1st edition was published in 1999) and the issue of Supplementary Planning Document status. Despite previous advice there are still differing opinions about whether the guidance can have SPD status.

Information leaflet and Parish Council training

2. It was agreed to publish guidance for parish councils and other community groups on planning matters and the AONB.

3. The leaflet would be delivered as part of a training programme for Parish Councils (also see Item 6 above). The Committee felt that this should take the form of three sessions (Oxon, Bucks and Beds/Herts) on either Saturday mornings or evenings during the week.

Provision of affordable housing

4. The Committee discussed what the Board should be looking for in connection with affordable housing schemes and it was resolved that the best approach would be to treat each case on its merits rather than to produce detailed policies and guidance notes.

5. Some issues were considered to be of vital importance for each case:

- Demonstration of local need.
 - Adequate infrastructure.
 - Best site within the chosen settlement.
 - Best designs and use of local materials.
 - Compliance with the Board's advice and guidance.
6. The Board will need to consider the implications of higher density development and the effects on local character resulting from the loss of back gardens and associated trees.

Luton and South Bedfordshire Core Strategy Issues and Options Response

7. Many of the options proposed would involve significant implications for the AONB – the Luton Northern Bypass and large housing allocations in particular. One aspect that caused significant concern was the mention of providing a country park in the AONB as a development gain for allowing large scale development within the AONB. Strong representations have been sent.

Oxfordshire CC Minerals Site Proposals Issues and Options

8. The Board sought greater recognition of the likely implications for development in close proximity to the AONB, welcomed the exclusion of certain sites that had previously been assessed from within the AONBs, and expressed confusion about the inclusion of various sites within and adjacent to the Chilterns AONB that have been subject to previous consideration.
9. Two annexes detailed various options for sharp sand and gravel and secondary and recycled aggregate sites – many of the possible sites are located close to or within the Chilterns AONB and concern was expressed about the implications for the AONB. The Board has also sought to ensure that adequate policy protection is included for the AONBs within the County.

Buckinghamshire CC Minerals and Waste LDF Waste DPD Preferred Options

10. This response relates to the Council's Waste DPD. The Board has objected to the lack of recognition of, and reference to, the Chilterns AONB and has sought consistency in terms of the terminologies used. The DPD has identified two preferred areas for development within the AONB on existing waste related sites – London Road, Amersham and High Heavens, High Wycombe. The potential uses identified are waste transfer facility, materials recycling facility (at both) and in-vessel composting (only High Heavens).
11. The Board was concerned that certain operations will result in the need for more buildings and has sought to ensure that the full implications of such developments on the AONB are fully addressed. The Board has requested that full account is taken of the AONB and that mention is made of the need to ensure that any development which takes place in the Chilterns AONB should conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.

Buckinghamshire authorities – Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Needs Stakeholder Consultation

12. The consultation arose from a partial review of the regional spatial strategy and the need to identify 91 additional permanent pitches in the County to 2011. The responses will feed into the RSS review.
13. A series of questions were asked. The Board strongly agreed with the following statements (amongst others): ‘any additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers should be outside the Green Belt’; ‘any additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers should be outside the nationally designated Chilterns AONB’, and the Board disagreed with the following statement: ‘any additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers should be outside existing built-up areas’ as they can as easily be accommodated here as anywhere else.

Aylesbury DC – Core Strategy DPD Preferred Options

14. The Board generally welcomed the recognition given to the importance of the landscape and the Chilterns AONB, but objected to the fact that the AONB was not specifically mentioned as one of the most sensitive landscapes. The Board made specific comments about the settlement hierarchy and the fact that certain settlements are identified (or not) on the key diagram without proper reference to their proximity to the AONB.
15. The Board supported the statement that employment would be provided in the same locations as the housing development, and the inclusion of a policy that will set a framework for identifying all infrastructure requirements and how they will be funded and delivered. The Board welcomed the inclusion of policies and supporting text in connection with affordable housing, house sizes and types and rural exceptions sites.

Aylesbury DC – Aylesbury Allocated Sites DPD Preferred Options

16. The Board expressed concerned that growth to the south of Aylesbury will have implications for the Chilterns AONB which is no more than about 2.5 kilometres away. The Board objected to Policy AAS4 which proposes an employment allocation at College Road North, because it is located over 6 kilometres from the town centre of Aylesbury, and at least 2 kilometres from the nearest part of the proposed southern growth arc. If development was to take place this would lead to a significant increase in car borne commuting.

Bedfordshire CC and Luton BC Waste DPDs Initial Scoping Paper

17. The Board recommended that reference should be made to the AONB Management Plan and any aims, objectives and visions should incorporate the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.
18. The Board suggested that all sites should preferably avoid the Chilterns AONB and its setting. However, in very special circumstances very limited

local and small scale facilities may be appropriate, provided that the purpose of the AONB is strictly adhered to (conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty).

Buckinghamshire CC Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD Issues and Options

19. This response relates to the Council's Minerals and Waste Core Strategy. The Board generally welcomed the recognition given to the Chilterns AONB and the fact that the saved policy which addresses the Chilterns AONB will form part of the Core Strategy DPD. The Board welcomed and supported the existing waste and minerals planning objectives, particularly those designed to ensure protection of the natural heritage in Buckinghamshire and support for the Chiltern brick industry.
20. In connection with the issue of supply of aggregate for future growth the Board considered that the County Council should strive to be self-sufficient in meeting aggregate for development in the growth areas, though this should not lead to huge increases in transport of materials. The use of imports that are closer to the areas of development should receive proper consideration. Greater use should also be made of materials recycled within the county where this is appropriate.
21. The Board considered that the Chilterns AONB should be added to the series of sites of national importance as it is designated at the national level and the resultant policy should incorporate text to ensure that any development satisfies the tests outlined in PPS7 and 'conserves and enhances the natural beauty' of the AONB.
22. The Board considered that restoration and after care should be planned to provide benefits to the wider local area. Such benefits should address all aspects including economic, social and environmental.

Three Rivers DC Core Strategy DPD Supplemental Issues and Options

23. The Board noted that at present there are no potential growth locations within the AONB or its setting and, as drafted, the Board had no objection to the locations. However, the issues and options ask the question – 'are there other areas of the district that should be considered as options for broad housing locations?' The Board had no sites to suggest but made the point that the Chilterns AONB should not feature as a potential location for growth (for housing, employment or retail) as it is considered that any development proposed would fail to meet the tests set out in PPS7.

Further detail on the development plans responses can be found in the Committee report which is available on the AONB website. See the following link.

http://www.chilternsaonb.org/downloads/board_meetings/Planning_agenda_papers_120907.pdf

Feedback from the Annual Planning Committee Tour

24. The annual planning committee tour took place on 12th July. Various sites were visited in South Oxfordshire and Wycombe districts looking at successful diversification schemes including the offices at Crowmarsh Battle Barns, the letting accommodation at the Crown Inn at Playhatch, near Caversham and the polytunnels at Grange Farm, Widmer End near High Wycombe. The first two were thought to be very good examples of diversification, though the polytunnels at Grange Farm were considered to be a significant discordant feature (in line with the Board's objection to the original planning application).

Planning applications update

25. In the year since 1st April 2007 details of 90 planning applications or appeals have been brought to the attention of, or requested by, the Planning Officer. Responses have been submitted to 89, 23 of which were the subject of formal representations (21 objections). At the time of writing 11 of these applications have been determined (or have been withdrawn) and all are in line with the Board's comments.

Recommendations

1. **The Board notes the report from the Planning Committee**
2. **The Board considers what additional issues, if any, it should consider in connection with the provision of affordable housing schemes.**

Creating a Carbon Offset Scheme

Author: Steve Rodrick Chief Officer
Colin White Planning Officer

Summary: The Board adopted a policy in June 2007 of aiming to achieve carbon neutrality by 2011. To do this it is proposed to set up a carbon offset scheme based on planting trees and giving away low energy light bulbs. This will offset a net annual carbon emission by the Board of approx. 15 tonnes. The annual cost will be in the order of £2,000. The Executive Committee approved the proposal. At its meeting on 19th September 2007.

Purpose of Report: To advise the Board to establish a carbon offset scheme.

Background

1. It is essential the Board is seen to do all it can to reduce its carbon emissions as part of its response to climate change. Many practical measures have already been put in place or are planned. It is now proposed that the Board set up its own carbon offset scheme, a proposal approved by the Executive Committee in September. Carbon Offsetting has attracted some adverse publicity and it is important the full Board endorses the views of the Executive Committee.

This paper is based on the report submitted to the Executive Committee.

1. The carbon emissions in 2006-07 were:

Source	Carbon Emissions	Dioxide
Gas use for offices	7.6 tonnes	
Electricity Use for Office	4.1 tonnes	
Staff and Board member travel	9.2 tonnes	
Sub Total	20.9 tonnes	
Travel generated by attendance at Board events and meetings	10.5 tonnes	
Total	30.5 tonnes	

2. The planned phased reduction in emissions against the 2006-07 base line:

Year	Reduction	Net Emissions
2007-08	25% reduction	23.0 tonnes
2008-09	50%	15.2 tonnes
2009 - 2010	75%	7.6 tonnes
2010 - 2011	100%	0 tonnes

Measures planned to reduce emissions in 2007- 08

3. The loft insulation in the offices was significantly enhanced in spring 2007. The cost was approx £500 and met from the 2006-7 budget. The energy saving (gas) could be up to 10%. Drafty windows have been repaired and central heating system cured of its air lock problem. The combined carbon saving could be up to 700 Kg annually.
4. The solar PV cells will be installed during September. Maximum generation capacity will be up to 1.7KW. In practice over the year the output is estimated to be 1500 KWh which will save 500 kg of carbon. The part year saving for 2007-08 will be 200 kg, equivalent to a 2% reduction on total Carbon emissions for 2007-08.
5. In the spring of 2007 the amount of lighting was reduced which could save up to 30 Kwh over the year reducing emissions by approx 400 kg per annum.
6. The aim is to reduce staff and Board member travel by up to 10% thus saving 900 kg of carbon.
7. The total saving of these measures will be 2.3 tonnes, a 11.0% reduction compared to 2006-07 from emissions directly generated by the Board in its offices and travel by staff and members. The target of 25% requires a total reduction in emissions of carbon of 5.22 tonnes in 2007-08 leaving a deficit of 2.7 tonnes. The balance can only be covered through a carbon offsetting scheme.
8. The cost of installing the solar PV cells will be approx £11,000. A grant from the Energy Saving Trust has been secured of £4,900. The balance will be met from reserves. The other measures are likely to save the Board up to £500 per annum.
9. In September 2008 the Board's current three year electricity supply agreement will end, providing an opportunity to switch to a green tariff. This will save up 3.5 tonnes per year (2.00 tonnes in 2008-09)

Proposed Carbon Offsetting Scheme

10. Carbon offsetting schemes have attracted poor media coverage recently. This has primarily been for two reasons. Firstly it is believed that some may resort to offsetting without also reducing carbon emissions. Secondly some of the estimated savings through offsetting have been hard to prove, for example because the tree planting had been planned in any event or because the savings over a longer period cannot be ensured. The Board must ensure that if it creates an offsetting scheme that it can counter both of these possible charges.
11. The options open to the Board to achieve carbon neutrality are limited and most of the major steps to reduce emissions have already been taken or are planned. Further reduction in day to day emissions will be increasingly hard to

achieve. It is almost certain the Board will need to resort to carbon offsetting. In view of the uncertainties and poor media coverage it is proposed that the Board create its own scheme rather than investing in an existing scheme operated by others, of which there are many. It is also worth considering giving it a title which avoids the use of the term carbon offsetting, e.g. Climate Investment Scheme

12. The Board has planted 100 trees in each of the past two years which provides a possible basis for an offsetting scheme.
13. The Board's direct emissions are approximately 21 tonnes of carbon per year. This is increased to 31 tonnes when the emissions generated by travel to events organised or promoted by the Board are taken into account. The estimate is that in 2007-08 emissions will be reduced by approx 2.3 tonnes. Given the limited scope for further reductions it is estimated that by 2011 a total reduction of up to 6 – 7 tonnes of carbon might be possible. This leaves a net carbon footprint of 12 tonnes per annum resulting from direct activity and 22 tonnes based on all activity. Carbon offsetting provides a potential means of covering this figure.
14. It is proposed that the Board operates its own carbon offsetting scheme based on a combination of giving away low energy light bulbs to community buildings, and tree planting. Offsetting up to 25 tonnes per year could be achieved by giving away approx 210 11watt low energy light bulbs or planting 500 trees each year. A combination might be 150 low energy light bulbs and planting 150 trees. The calculations are given in Appendix 1. The cost of both approaches is similar. The cost of planting and maintaining a tree will be £5 and the cost of a light bulb will also be approx £5. The light bulbs offer more immediate and greater carbon reduction for the cost. On the other hand the tree planting provides additional landscape and biodiversity benefits. It is, therefore suggested that a combination approach be adopted.
15. The tree planting would be a continuation of the current scheme. The Board has planted trees in a field now owned by the Common Wood Group (Tyler's Green near Hugh Wycombe). These are trees which would not otherwise be planted; they would be planted and maintained directly by the Board. There is an additional environmental benefit arising from the new planting linking two existing woodlands.
16. The low energy bulbs would be offered to village halls and other public buildings. They could also be given away at events as prizes.
17. The total cost per annum (excluding staff time) will be approx £1,500. This could be covered by £500 in reduced operating costs arising from energy savings and reduced travel claims. It is proposed to cover the balance through delegate fees for events. All delegates will be told that a proportion of the fee has been used to invest in carbon offsetting scheme. Attempts will also be made to find a sponsor.

18. If this approach is successful it could be increased in scale to ensure the Board achieves a zero net carbon footprint by 2011.

Recommendations

1. **The Board creates its own Carbon Emissions Offsetting Scheme based, in 2007- 08, on planting 100 native trees and giving away 150 low energy light bulbs.**
2. **That a budget of £2,000 be created based on £500 savings on energy and mileage costs, £1,000 raised from delegates fees for events the Board organises and £500 allocated from the core budget.**

Proposed Chilterns Carbon Offsetting Scheme

Low Energy Light Bulbs

It is proposed to give away 11W low energy light bulbs (suitable to replace either 60W or 100W traditional bulbs). The calculations are based on replacing 60W bulbs.

The industry calculates that the average light bulb is on for 1700 hours per year. This calculation assumes only 800 hours.

Low energy light bulbs have a predicted lifespan of 8000 hours - 10 years.

1 Kwh of electricity use results in approx 0.3 kg of carbon dioxide

The carbon saving over 10 years resulting from replacement of a 60W traditional bulb by an 11W low energy bulb would be:

49 Watts x 800hours x 10 years = 392 KWH x 0.3Kg CO₂ = **117 Kg of CO₂**

100 bulbs would result in a carbon saving of 11.76 tonnes over 10 years.

Tree Planting

A fully grown mature native hardwood tree will absorb approx 0.5 tonnes of carbon over a lifespan of 100 years.

It has been assumed that of each 1000 trees planted only 100 will reach maturity (10%).

Based on a survival rate of 10%, each tree planted will ultimately result in 50Kg of carbon absorption if those trees which survive live to 100 years or more (this will depend upon the species thus long lived species such as oak will be preferred).

100 trees planted could result in 5.0 tonnes of carbon being absorbed.

Working with Parish Councils

Author: Steve Rodrick Chief Officer

Summary: This paper summarises how the Board currently works with parish councils and introduces some ideas on how a closer relationship could be developed.

Purpose of Paper: To seek views on how the Board could work more closely with parish councils.

Background

1. There are 117 parish and town councils operating within the Chilterns AONB all of which are entitled to participate in the elections of 6 parish councillors to the Board. The Board's establishment enables serving parish and town councillors to seek election to the Board via the county electoral colleges of parish and town councils. Two can be elected by each of Buckinghamshire and one each from Beds and Hertfordshire (this broadly reflects the number of parishes in the AONB in each county).

Board Member	County
Mary Goldsmith	Beds
Barbara Wallis	Bucks
Shirley Judges	Bucks
Margaret Jarrett	Herts
John Griffin	Oxon
Julia Wells	Oxon

2. The direct election of parish councillors in this way to Conservation Boards is a unique arrangement for protected landscapes in England.
3. In creating the Board a close relationship with parish councils was deliberately sought to help develop a strong sense of involvement by local people. To underpin this objective the Board's establishment order requires all committees set up by the Board to include members elected by parish councils.
4. To date those members elected by parish councils have been involved heavily with the Board's work and all committees requiring parish councillor members have a full complement. All those originally elected in 2004 remain members of the Board. Several members of the Board not elected by parish councils are also past or serving parish councillors but have been appointed by a local authority or the Secretary of State.
5. With so many parish councils and the variability in the way they operate the Board needs to work with them at many different levels. Whilst it is hoped that all councils are aware of the Board and the AONB it must be assumed that the depth of that knowledge varies widely, not least as some parishes fall into

the AONB fully and others have only a small area of AONB. (Many parishes along the escarpment were deliberately planned to include a part of the plateau, escarpment and vale to provide a range of resources such as woodland, grazing and arable land together with water supplies from scarp foot springs).

6. Inevitably parish councils are most concerned with matters of specific relevance to their parish - wider Chilterns issues are of less interest. This creates a challenge for the Board.
7. The issue for the Board is how to develop its relationship with parish and town councils in order to:
 1. Learn about the issues local people are concerned about which the Board should respond to.
 2. Receive feedback on what the Board is doing or plans to do.
 3. Disseminate information about the AONB and Board's activities
 4. Foster a sense of local pride and stewardship
 5. Involve parish councils and local people in activities to help meet the objective of the AONB designation.
8. Currently the Board sends to all parish councils:
 - Annual Report
 - Annual accounts
 - Newsletter
 - Information about new publications
 - Notice of the Annual Forum
 - Notice of other events
 - Consultation drafts of relevant reports and publications
 - The Board's E bulletin
- 8, In 2006-07 the Board created a special fund to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Chiltern's designation as an AONB. Thirty seven parish councils received grants totalling over £7,600.
9. Despite this solid foundation there is scope to forge closer relationships with parish and town councils. The Board needs to bear in mind that parish councillors are volunteers, that some parish councils meet monthly or less and often, have a summer recess, have full agendas and are often overwhelmed by literature from many other bodies. Finally many have very efficient and easy to contact parish clerks. Some do not and a few suffer from rapid turnover over of clerks. The clerk is the key individual on whom rests the task of disseminating literature and information from the Conservation Board to individual members of council. A long standing problem has been timely dissemination from clerks to parish councillors. The Board should aims to

send all communications in electronic format – glossy publications are highly likely to stay in the clerk’s office.

10. In view of the Board’s preferred way of operating, partly dictated by resources, of seeking to extend influence and fostering a sense of stewardship, working with local people must be a top priority and a good relationship with parishes is an excellent way of achieving this. The question is what other ways can the Board achieve this? The following are suggested as options:
 1. Offers to parish councils to attend meetings.
 2. Special events for parish councils.
 3. An annual event for all parish councils (or by county)
 4. Special publications for parish councils, e.g. on planning and building design issues.
 5. Small grant scheme
 6. Best kept village/parish award.
 7. Involvement in specific initiatives, e.g. Land Use Survey.
11. There will be cost implications for all of the above, but most are likely to be affordable. Perhaps a bigger issue is the availability of staff and Board member time to attend meetings with parish councils.
12. Board members elected by parish council have contributed to this paper. It is also suggested that parish councils are contacted to seek their views.

Recommendations

1. **The Board seeks to work more closely with Parish and Town Councils.**
2. **The Board identifies how its wishes to achieve this aim to enable proposals to be incorporated in the budget for 2008-09.**

Report on People and Places Project

Author: Claire Forrest Information and Interpretation Officer

Summary: The People and Places project, which was awarded a grant of £13,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund in January 2007, is now underway and is seeking volunteer help to create a collection of profiles of famous people and places connected with the Chilterns. The profiles will be displayed on the AONB website along with information on places to visit in the area.

Purpose of Paper: To seek suggestions of famous figures to include in the project and for recruitment of more volunteers.

Background

1. The People and Places project aims to raise awareness of famous people associated with the Chilterns and to encourage visits to those areas associated with those people. This will be achieved by preparing at least 100 profiles of famous people and places connected with the Chilterns and to display these profiles in a new section of the AONB website.
2. The aim is to create a unique resource on the history and culture of the Chilterns that is not only educational but acts as a promotional tool for the countryside and local attractions of the area. By increasing people's understanding and appreciation of local history it is hoped they will make more of what the Chilterns has to offer and feel a deeper connection with it.
3. Information is being gathered not only on the lives and times of historic figures but also on what people can visit in the Chilterns today connected with them.
4. The project needs volunteers to carry out the research, write the profiles and identify related places which can be visited by the public

Support and timescale

5. In January 2007 the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded the Board a grant of £13,200 towards the 'People and Places of the Chiltern Hills' project. This grant is 44% of the total project cost of £30,065.
6. The other sources of funding for the project are: £3,000 from the Board, £2,000 from The Chiltern Society (to be confirmed), £3,000 from local authorities and £8,850 representing the value of volunteer time.
7. The project is being managed by the Board, in close co-operation with The Chiltern Society.
8. The project began in March 2007 and will continue until November 2008.

List of profiles to be included

Name	category	Where
Eric Gill	Artist	North Dean, Nr. High Wycombe
John Nash	Artist	Several
John Piper	Artist	Several
Stanley Spencer	Artist	Cookham
John le Carre	Author	Several
John Bunyan	Author	Beds
John Milton	Author	Chalfont St.Giles
Roald Dahl	Author	Gt.Missenden
Enid Blyton	Author	Beaconsfield
Graham Greene	Author	Berkhamsted
Mary Shelly	Author	Marlow
Jerome K Jerome	Author	Eweleme/Thames
Oscar Wilde	Author	Goring
Shardeloes House	Building	Amersham
Missenden Abbey	Building	Gt.Missenden
Ashridge House	Building	Asridge
Berkhamsted Castle	Building	Berkhamsted
Chequers	Building	Nr.Princes Risborough
Greys Court	Building	South Oxon
Mapledurham House	Building	South Oxon
Katherine Ferrers (The Wicked Lady)	Folklore	Markyate
Bomber Harris	Historic figure	Cryers Hill near High Wycombe
Earl Cardigan	Historic figure	Hambleden
Capt James Cook	Historic figure	Chalfont St.Giles
John Hampden	Historic figure	Several
Benjamin Disraeli	Historic figure	Hughenden Manor
Clement Attlee	Historic figure	Prestwood
Black Prince	Historic figure	Princes Risborough
William Penn	Historic figure	Penn/Jordans
Liberty family	Historic figure	The Lee, Gt.Missenden
W H Smith	Historic figure	Hambleden
Sir Francis Dashwood	Historic figure	West Wycombe
Henry VIII	Historic figure	Several
Elizabeth I	Historic figure	Several
William the Conqueror	Historic figure	Berkhamsted
Rothschild family	Historic figure	Several
Clementine Churchill	Historic figure	
Duke of Bridgewater	Historic figure	Asridge/Great Union Canal
Maharajah of Benares	Historic figure	Stoke Row
Lord Camoys of Stonor	Historic figure	Stonor
Humphrey Gainsborough	Historic figure	
Jethro Tull	Historic figure	Crowmarsh
Lord Nuffield	Historic figure	Nuffield, South Oxon
Civil War	Historic event	Several
World War II	Historic event	Several
Ewelme	Historic place	Ewelme, South Oxon
Dusty Springfield	Musician	Henley
George Harrison	Musician	Henley
Rupert Brook	Poet	Lacey Green nr. Princes Risborough
John Betjeman	Poet	
Percy Bysshe Shelly	Poet	Marlow
Wilfred Owen	Poet	Dusden, near Caversham

Name	category	Where
Steve Redgrave	Sports	Marlow/Henley

9. A draft profile of Wilfred Owen, the First World War poet is attached as Appendix 1


Progressing the project

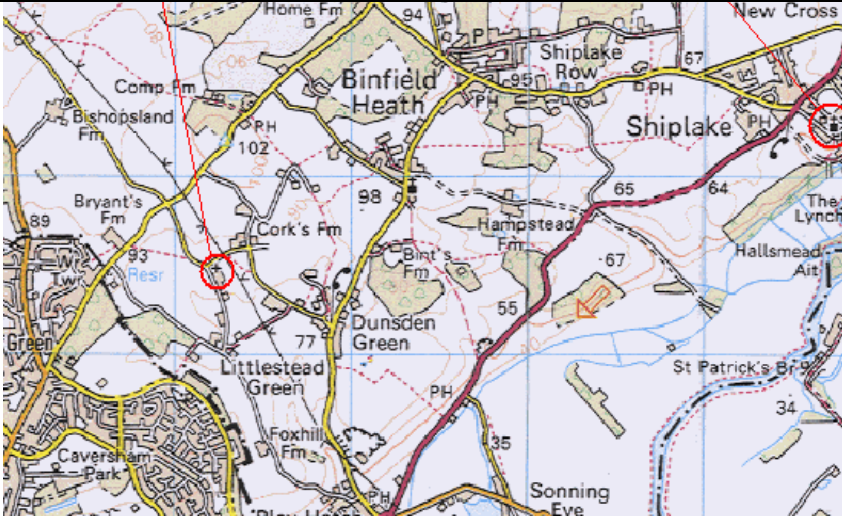
10. A number of volunteers are already involved with the project, but more are needed. The Board could help by taking on profiles to complete or suggesting potential volunteers that could be asked to get involved.
11. Suggestions of further people and places to be included would also be welcome.

Recommendations

1. **The Board suggests potential volunteers to help with the project**
2. **The Board identifies further famous people and places that should be included.**

Example profile

<p>Name</p>	<p>Wilfred Owen</p> 
<p>Description</p>	<p>First World War Poet</p>
<p>Link with the Chilterns</p>	<p>Worked as lay assistant to the Revd. Herbert Wigan in Dunsden Parish near Caversham from 1911 - 1913</p>
<p>Born</p>	<p>18th March 1893 in Oswestry</p>
<p>Died</p>	<p>4th November 1918, Sambre Canal near Amiens, France</p>
<p>Biography</p>	<p>Wilfred Owen is one of the best known poets from the First World War. His works include Anthem for Doomed Youth, The Sentry and Dulce et Decorum Est.</p> <p>His father worked on the railways and his family moved from Oswestry, where he was born, to Birkenhead and finally to Shrewsbury in 1906. Having failed to gain entrance to the University of London, on 20th October 1911 he took up the post of Lay Assistant to the Reverend Herbert Wigan of Dunsden Parish, just to the north east of Caversham near Reading. He remained in this post until 7th February 1913 following a physical and mental breakdown.</p> <p>During his stay in the Chilterns he had already begun his interest in poetry which he developed considerably when he met Siegfried Sasson and Robert Graves in Craiglockhart Hospital in Edinburgh whilst recovering from shell shock in 1917.</p> <p>He returned to the western front in France to be killed in action on 4th November 1918, only a week before the Armistice.</p>

<p>Further Information</p>	<p>War Poetry Site http://www.warpoetry.co.uk/owen1.html</p> <p>Wilfred Owen Association http://www.1914-18.co.uk/owen/</p> <p>BBC website on Historic Figures http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/owen_wilfred.shtml</p> <p>BBC web pages on Wilfred Owen with Audio clip of his poems http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwone/wilfred_owen_gallery.shtml</p> <p>Parish church web site with information about services at Dunsden church http://www.geocities.com/ship_dun2003/index.html</p> <p>Dunsden village web site with a wide range of information about the village and surrounding area. http://www.ukvillages.co.uk/ukvillages.nsf/villages/976B8C71B662A506802568D5003D9844</p>
<p>What you can visit</p>	 <p>Dunsden remains a small settlement in a rural parish but only a mile or so to the east of Caversham.</p> <p>The church and church hall in which he spent his time can be found easily in the village.</p>



During his time in the Chilterns he lived in the vicarage in Dunsden, now a private residence which is not open to the public although it can be seen from the public road.



There are number of public rights of way around the village which Owen must have used in the course of his duties which included visiting parishioners in their homes.

How to Get There

This web site gives information of getting to Dunsden by road and public transport

<http://www.ukvillages.co.uk/ukvillages.nsf/villages/976B8C71B662A506802568D5003D9844>

Web site providing location maps for churches

<http://www.achurchnearyou.com/activemap.php?V=5299&z=2>

DULCE ET DECORUM EST

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
 Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
 Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
 And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
 Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
 But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;

Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime . . .
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.
In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est
Pro patria mori.

8 October 1917 - March, 1918

Report on Land Use Changes

Author: Steve Rodrick Chief Officer
Dr.Simon Mortimer Board Member
Tracy Adams Farming and Land Use Officer

Summary: The Land Use Survey has been completed for 2007. The analysis comparing data from 2005 and 2006 has also been completed.

A number of changes have taken place recently which are likely to change land use in the next few years. These include; prices increases, food shortages and variable harvests. Climate change and related energy policy influences will be significant, e.g. the US drive to grow cereals for biofuel. Changes to set aside rules will affect the area under cultivation. These will all change the landscape and habitats of the Chilterns. In light of these changes the Board needs to take a view on these trends and assess the mechanisms available to influence change.

Purpose of Paper: To advise the Board of factors currently and likely to influence land use in the next few years, which need to be taken into account in reviewing the AONB management plan.

Background

1. The Board is undertaking an innovative programme of monitoring land use change and has carried out surveys in 2005, 2006 and 2007. The results from 2005 and 2006 have been analysed and published. The main findings were:

Comparisons between the 49 squares surveyed in both 2005 and 2006 showed the following:

1. The largest change in land use was from cropped to uncropped arable land (4.9%). (Uncropped refers to set-aside and arable land out of production under the Single Payment System.)
2. The next most common type of land use change was a switch from arable to agricultural grassland (4.1%) and agricultural grassland to arable (2.6%). This is probably due to normal farm rotations.
3. There appears to have been an increase in land managed for horse grazing and livery stables, largely as the result of conversion of agricultural grassland (2.9%) and arable land (0.8%). However, this result needs to be treated with some caution as in 2006, the surveyors recorded evidence of equestrian activity, whereas in 2005 they only recorded the presence of horses.

4. Wooded land has increased by 0.2%, mainly from creation of small areas of farm woodland on arable and grassland, and the planting of tree belts to landscape large residential properties.
5. Rough unmanaged land (rough grassland and bracken) has increased by 1.1%, primarily from the abandonment of management on agricultural land.
6. Built areas which include gardens, have increased by 0.4%, largely as a result of small areas of grassland and woodland being incorporated into the boundaries of gardens, or more extensive areas being managed as the extended grounds of large residential properties.
7. A total of 924 boundary sections were surveyed in all 105 squares. Of these, 532 (58%) had a hedge. Of the remainder, the principal boundary feature was a fence in 28% of cases, especially in areas of improved agricultural grassland and pony paddocks.
8. Hedgerow condition varied. In terms of continuity, only 18% were described as continuous and in excellent condition. More detail is available from the Hedgerow Survey Report.

Conclusions

2. Some of the changes recorded only affect small areas, and are not apparent in the summary statistics presented in this report; however potential for impact on landscape impact is high.
3. Change in the way farming is subsidised has contributed to the rise in uncropped agricultural land and possibly rough unmanaged land too. Prior to 2005, agricultural support payments were linked to crop production levels or numbers of livestock. In 2005 the Single Payment System removed the link between production and subsidy. Farmers now receive a Single Farm Payment regardless of whether they grow crops or not, providing they keep the land in good agricultural and environmental condition. If the market for cereals and oilseeds is poor, which it until recently, farmers may decide it is not economic to crop the land, hence a rise in the amount of uncropped land. However a rise in the price of wheat/barley/oilseed rape may see this land come back into production.
4. The cessation of production on agricultural land and purchase by non farming landowners has resulted in changes in land use, particularly around settlements. New uses include establishment of small-scale livestock enterprises, pony paddocks and livery, regularly involving the subdivision of large fields into smaller paddocks.
5. The increase in the area of former agricultural land being absorbed into gardens and grounds is very small but can have a significant impact on the character of the village edge, where it most commonly occurs. Features recorded include close-boarded fencing, non native hedges, large areas of

mown lawns and new tree planting, some of which are inappropriate in a rural setting.

6. These findings highlight the importance of engaging with new entrants to land ownership in order to ensure that the natural beauty and character of the Chilterns' landscape is conserved. The Chilterns Landowners' Guide is an important tool in this work.

2007 onwards

7. The results of the survey for 2007 have not been fully analysed yet. Raw data from the 2007 survey suggests that there has been a small increase in arable land which is being cropped, rather than being left as either land out of production or set-aside. There have been few changes in grassland and other categories
8. The most common crop was wheat and percentages of crops grown differ little from last year, except for increases in oats and non food crops such as poppies and borage.
9. The record sheets continue to show evidence of new fencing especially subdividing agricultural fields for horse grazing and new house building/renovation with accompanying landscaping works.
10. As most farming land uses are determined by decisions made in the previous year the issues identified to date are likely to remain prevalent and the trends will have continued.
11. However several factors have changed in 2007 which have the potential to change the landscape of the Chilterns.
12. Grain prices have increased significantly. For example wheat prices are £160 per tonne or higher. This is approximately £100 per tonne higher than only a few years ago. Prices may remain at this higher level.
13. The US has decided not to export grain and maize surpluses; these will be used for the production of biofuels. This has restricted supply within the world market thus driving up prices.
14. Food stocks are at a low level, which has prompted the EU to lift its requirement for at least 5% of land to be put in set aside.
15. Milk prices have increased, partly as a result of increased demand for dairy products in China. This may not result in an increase in dairy herds but it may stem the decline of this sector.
16. Targeting of the agri-environment scheme budgets may restrict the area of land on which Higher Level Scheme applications are successful. HLS agreements attract higher payments for environmental work and those in the scheme may benefit significantly compared to those outside.

17. Land prices remain high and are influenced by general affluence and, for example, city bonuses. This will increase the pressure to sell land for non farming or forestry purposes.
18. After many years of decline the price of timber is rising, which may renew interest in woodland management.
19. The demand for pony paddocks shows no signs of slowing down.
20. The mainstream livestock sector continues to struggle, fuelled by increasing grain prices, hay shortages and foot and mouth disease. However there is an increasing number of smallholdings rearing animals for niche markets
21. These changes have to be considered in the context of:
 - a. Loss of land to non productive uses
 - b. Loss of landscape character due to urbanisation
 - c. Desire to conserve and re-introduce wildlife to farmland
 - d. Lack of management of woodlands
22. The Board needs to take these factors into account in reviewing the management plan and developing policies to conserve and enhance natural beauty. It would be timely to discuss the changes likely to take place and to consider whether and how these changes should be influenced in order to achieve the purposes of designation. For example:
 - Should the plan seek to restrict further the loss of farmland to other uses?
 - How should farming be influenced to maximise environmental benefits given that farming profitability may improve in the next few years?
 - How should the impacts of climate change be incorporated? For example some forecasts suggest that the south of England will no longer become increasingly unsuitable for sheep farming but will be suitable for a range of new crops?
 - How can environmental benefits be secured when land use changes to a garden, horse paddock or leisure use?
23. Society may well place a higher value on the security of supplies of food and prices than it has done in recent years. There is also unlikely to be significantly increased public funding for agri-environment schemes in the short term. The balance between commodity prices and the value of grant schemes will change to favour commercial activity. Identifying the means to influence land use change will be more important than ever.

Recommendation

- 1. The Board considers likely changes to land use and possible means of influencing those changes which it wishes to be incorporated in the review of the AONB Management Plan.**

