



ISLE OF WIGHT AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY MANAGEMENT PLAN 2004-2009

PRODUCED BY THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PARTNERSHIP ON BEHALF OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL



THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PARTNERSHIP IS JOINTLY SUPPORTED BY
THE COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL



Isle of Wight
area of outstanding
natural beauty

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Section One

FOREWORD

The Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is part of a national family of designated landscapes treasured for their special qualities. The complex and diverse character of our AONB and the opportunities it provides for quiet enjoyment, peace and relaxation are equally valued today as they were over forty years ago when the area was first designated.

The AONB covers half the land area of the Isle of Wight and the two areas of Heritage Coast make up half of the Island's coastline. These beautiful land and seascapes are not separate from people's activities. The special relationship between people and place has created their character, which provides the setting for our everyday lives, from those who earn a living from the land, to those who live in rural AONB communities, to those who choose to visit the area for enjoyment. We need to ensure that the Island's finest landscapes are conserved and enhanced for future generations by balancing the needs of people today with the enduring character of the AONB.

The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership is an independent body composed of representatives of organizations and individuals with a key role in the future management of the AONB. Funded by the Isle of Wight Council and the Countryside Agency, the Partnership has been working to formulate this first statutory Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan, which provides a vision for the AONB in 2025 and the framework for working towards achieving this long-term aim over the next five years.

We look forward to working together to ensure the future well being of the Isle of Wight AONB.

Tony Tutton
Chairman of the
Isle of Wight AONB Partnership

Along with the other 40 AONBs in England and Wales, like the pastoral landscape of the Cotswolds, or the dramatic Cornish Coast, the Isle of Wight AONB represents one of the country's finest landscapes, as wonderful and important as those protected as National Parks.

The statutory duty to produce and review an AONB Management Plan now placed on local authorities, alongside other obligations on a wide range of bodies to have regard for AONB purposes as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, represents a great opportunity to strengthen and develop partnership approaches to positive AONB management.

I hope that the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan will lead to practical action to conserve and enhance one of the nation's finest areas of countryside and coastline, both for those who live there and for those that visit – now and for future generations.

Ingrid Floering-Blackman
Chairman of the Association for Areas of
Outstanding Natural Beauty

Section 2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

It is said that you can experience all of lowland England in miniature on the Isle of Wight. The impact of the sea, the quality of the light, the temperate climate and variety of cultural influences give the Isle of Wight AONB its own strong 'sense of place'.

The AONB is a mixture of landscapes, with no single character predominating. It is this very diversity and the relationship between landscape character types that gives the Isle of Wight AONB its unique and important context within the national family of protected landscapes. Complex geology, historic and current land use and settlement patterns have created the scenic and diverse landscape of today.

All of these factors mean that describing the landscape and formulating policies for its management are complex tasks.

Statutory context

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 strengthened the management and protection of AONBs in England and Wales.

The Act states that:

*'Relevant local authorities in respect of an area of outstanding natural beauty shall prepare and publish a plan, which formulates their policy for the management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it'*¹

The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership was set up in 2002 to oversee this process for the Isle of Wight. It is an independent partnership organisation, funded by the Isle of Wight Council and the Countryside Agency.

What is the Management Plan?

The Plan describes the character of the AONB today. It then provides a vision for the AONB in 2025, sets out the current threats and challenges we face in conserving and enhancing the area, and states the policies that will guide us towards our vision.

Who is it for?

The Plan is aimed at all those with an interest in, and responsibilities for, land management or for policy and decision-making processes that impact on the AONB. The Plan provides the basis to achieve a coordinated approach by all stakeholders.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000² gives for the first time a statutory responsibility to all public bodies to consider their impact on the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

This Plan's policies have been adopted by the local authority; they also have the support of members of the AONB Partnership and other stakeholders. This demonstrates a clear commitment to giving due regard both to the AONB and to the delivery of statutory and other management activities outlined in the Plan.



Traditional Enclosed Pasture, © IW AONB Unit – Photographer Fiona Hanna

¹ *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S89*

² *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S85*

Section 3

Below is our aspirational vision for the AONB in 2025. This will guide our work over the lifetime of this plan and for future reviews. Later in the plan we provide our vision within each of the individual AONB people and place themes.

OUR VISION FOR THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB IN 2025

Looking into the future, the Isle of Wight AONB has become nationally renowned as an important and treasured landscape. People, who live, work and visit the area value, appreciate and understand its special qualities and support its continued conservation and enhancement. People are able to experience 'dark skies' and peace and tranquility as part of the experience of living and working in, or visiting the AONB. Seascapes remain an important part of the character of the AONB and its Heritage Coasts.

Information on the natural and historic environment and landscape has enabled us to ensure that decisions and policies taken have conserved and enhanced the special characteristics of the Island's finest landscapes, giving the AONB a strong identity and 'sense of place'.

Farming and woodland management remains central to the beauty of the landscape. Local processing facilities and markets provide essential incomes and allow sustainable approaches to farming and land management that conserve and enhance the AONB.

The continuation of customs, traditions and the use of dialect and local place names have added to the quality of life of local communities and to the quality of experience for visitors.

New technologies have been accommodated through careful consideration and mitigation for their impact upon the AONB, bringing economic and social benefits and retaining the intrinsic special qualities of the environment.

Public transport, the use of non-motorised routes and the availability of goods and services in local communities have created less dependence on the private car for transport within the AONB.

Economic benefit has been brought to local communities directly through sustainable tourism and business activities.

Section 4

STATUS OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

What is an AONB?

AONBs are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. They are treasured places in England and Wales where the landscape is considered worthy of protection by law for future generations.

There are 41 AONBs in England and Wales, covering some 15% of the total land area.

The Government has recently confirmed that in planning terms AONBs are equivalent to National Parks and must be afforded the same level of consideration and protection¹.



Protected countryside in England and Wales
© Countryside Agency

What are the statutory duties for managing an AONB?

Government Planning Policy Guidance states that:

'the primary objective of (AONB) designation is the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. Local authorities should reflect this objective in their preparation of structure and local plans and in the exercise of development control'².

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) has strengthened the profile and protection of AONBs. In particular, the Act:

- placed a duty on all public bodies and statutory undertakers to 'have regard' to the purposes of AONBs³;
- established a process for creating AONB conservation boards, where this is supported locally⁴;
- created a statutory responsibility for local authorities and conservation boards to produce and regularly review AONB Management Plans⁵.

¹ Government response to parliamentary questions confirming equivalence of National Parks and AONBs with regard to protection afforded by land use planning – 13 June 2000 resulting in an amendment to PPG7 see reference².

² *The Countryside: environmental quality and economic and social development, Planning Policy Guidance 7, 1997, Department of the Environment*

³ *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S85*

⁴ *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S86 & S87*

⁵ *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S89*

Why is a Management Plan needed?

The CRoW Act confers a statutory obligation on all local authorities or conservation boards to produce and subsequently review an AONB Management Plan for their area. The plan should 'formulate their policy for the management of their Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it'⁶. As well as being a legal requirement, this new duty also represents an opportunity to draw together all interested parties to generate a long-term vision for the area, set an agenda for change and manage such change effectively. It will also be a useful educational tool, helping to change attitudes and behaviours.

Purpose of AONB designation

Consecutive governments have recognised the value of protected landscapes. However, the pressures faced by AONBs have changed since their conception in the late 1940s. The Countryside Agency is the national body with responsibility for designating AONBs. Its 2001 publication states:

- The primary purpose of designation is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty (which includes wildlife and cultural heritage as well as scenery).

- In pursuing the primary purpose of designation account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and the social and economic needs of the local communities.
- Recreation is not an objective of the designation, but the demand for recreation should be met in so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other land uses.⁷

The designation helps to protect not just the natural features – the trees, fields and open spaces – but also settlements and working environments that are unique characteristics of the countryside. The designation allows for the development of communities and

economic activity, including rural businesses, in ways that further enhance the character of the AONB.

The Isle of Wight AONB

The Isle of Wight AONB was designated in 1963, the fourteenth of the 41 areas to be confirmed. The total area designated is approximately 189 square kilometers, which is around half the land area of the Island. Unusually, the AONB area is not continuous and is made up of five distinct land parcels across the Island.

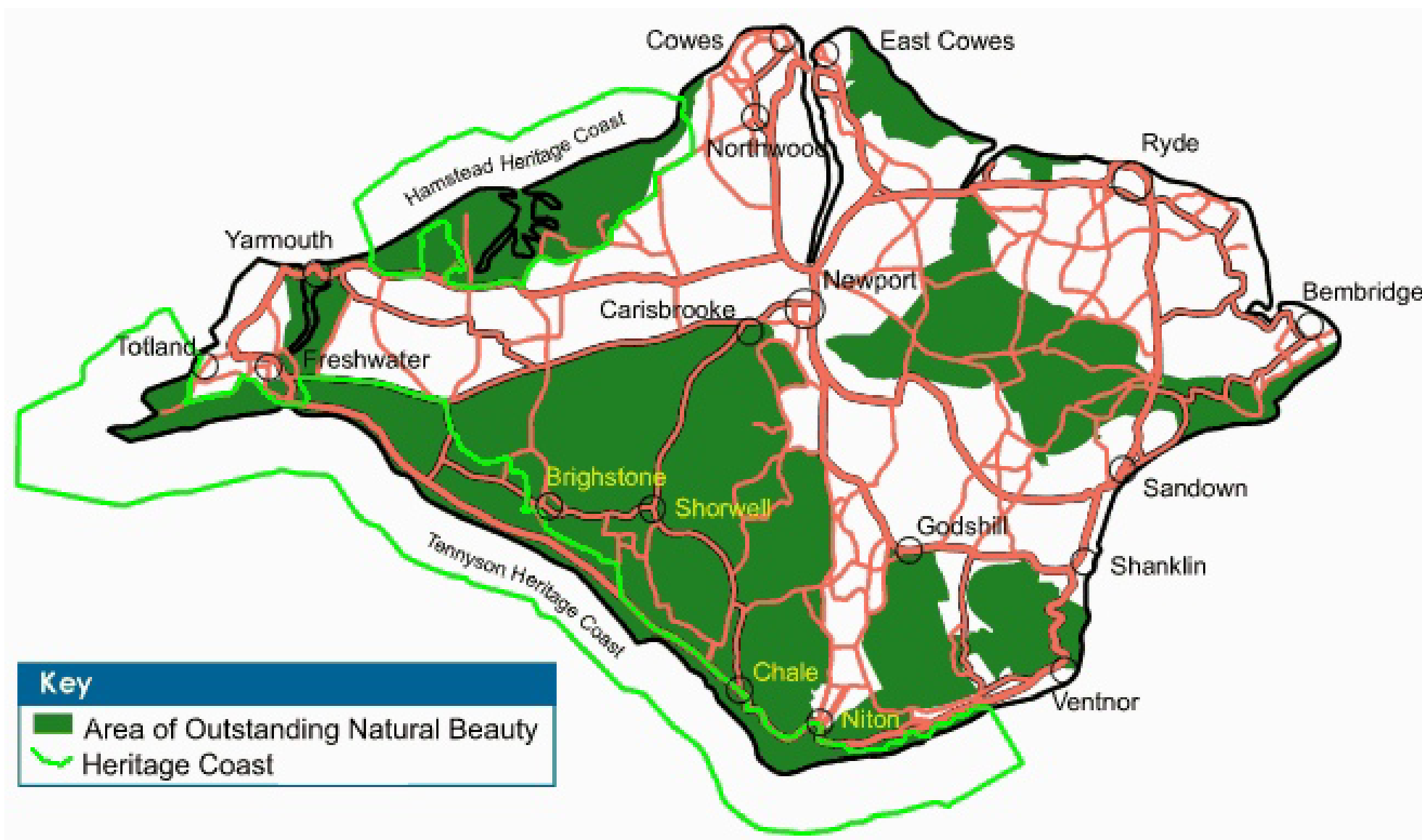
A detailed record of the original designation process has recently been published. This sets out the reasons why areas that were put forward during the extensive consultation were included or excluded⁸. The special qualities that led to designation are set out more fully in Section 8.



⁶ *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S89(1) & (2)*

⁷ *Countryside Agency CA 24 2001*

⁸ *Isle of Wight AONB Designation History, Countryside Agency, Woolmore 2003*



Tennyson & Hamstead Heritage Coasts

In 1974 two areas of Heritage Coast were defined, covering half of the Island's coastline.

The Tennyson Heritage Coast runs for 34km, from Steephill Cove in Ventnor to Widdick Chine at Totland. The Hamstead Heritage Coast runs for 11km, from Bouldnor through to Thorness Bay. Both include large areas inland of the coastline.

The Heritage Coast areas within the AONB are arguably those areas most readily associated with the scenic beauty of the Isle of Wight.

Although sharing many of the aims of AONB designation, Heritage Coasts are also defined for public enjoyment and appreciation: 'improving and extending appropriate recreational, educational, tourism and sporting opportunities where they do not conflict with the conservation of the resource', with an additional aim to 'maintain and improve the environmental health of the inshore waters and beaches'⁹.

A Heritage Coast Management Plan was written and adopted as policy by the former County and Borough Councils on the Isle of Wight in 1986. The Heritage Coast areas are also included as a specific policy in the Unitary Development Plan, adding to the protection afforded to them through their inclusion in the AONB.

In 1992, the decision was taken to incorporate issues relating to Heritage Coasts and the AONB into one overall Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan.



Towards a new AONB Partnership

Appendix A summarises the work that has been undertaken to date in managing the AONB.

The AONB Project published the first Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan in 1994. This Plan was a very aspirational document, highlighting the qualities of the AONB landscape and the issues faced in conserving and enhancing the area. It led to a number of innovative projects that demonstrated how aspirations can be turned into action by a broad range of partners.

However, the Plan had no statutory status and the AONB Project was vulnerable to changes in priorities for funding. The lack of a dedicated action plan and a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation was also a weakness.

⁹ *Countryside Commission CCP 475 1995*

Isle of Wight AONB Partnership

In light of the increased profile and protection afforded to AONBs by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Countryside Agency and the Isle of Wight Council signed a memorandum of agreement setting out a new partnership approach to managing the Isle of Wight AONB.

As a consequence, the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership was formed in April 2002. The new Partnership benefits from an increased level of funding from both the Countryside Agency and the Isle of Wight Council. It is a broad-based independent organisation with representatives from many local, regional and national organisations and individuals with a direct interest in the AONB.

The purpose of the Partnership is to ensure a coordinated approach to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB in light of the AONB Management Plan and its policies.

AONB Unit

The staff of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership make up the AONB Unit. Consisting of an AONB Officer, AONB Planning & Information Officer and AONB Assistant, the Unit is hosted by the Isle of Wight Council and is housed within the Planning Services division of the Environment Directorate.

Further details of the current Isle of Wight AONB Partnership are given in Appendix B.

Core functions of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership

- Produce and review an AONB Management Plan.
- Raise awareness and appreciation of the AONB.
- Encourage people to take account of the AONB when carrying out any actions that might impact upon it
- Monitor and report on the management of the AONB.
- Promote sustainable forms of social and economic development that conserves and enhances the AONB. This includes commenting on development control and planning policy issues.



Alverstone

© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low

Section 5

SCOPE OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Purpose of the AONB Management Plan

The overall aim of AONB Management Plans is to ensure continuity and consistency of management over time, conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape for the use and enjoyment of future generations.



Bluebells

© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low

The Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan:

- Highlights the distinctive qualities of the AONB.
- Identifies the changes and issues affecting the AONB.
- Presents a vision for the future of the AONB as a whole, in light of other national, regional and local priorities.
- Sets priorities incorporating specific objectives that will help to secure that vision.
- Clarifies the role of partners and other stakeholders, identifying what needs to be done, by whom, and when, in order to achieve the Plan's objectives.
- Identifies how the objectives and actions will be measured and reviewed.
- Raises the profile of the AONB and its purpose.

In terms of its legal status the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan:

- Is statutory, in that the Isle of Wight Council is required by law to produce and review an AONB Management Plan.
- Formulates the policy of the Isle of Wight Council for the AONB and for Council functions that have an impact on it.
- Demonstrates the commitment of public bodies, statutory undertakers and other stakeholders to the management of the AONB.
- Does not override other statutory plans, strategies and land management schemes within the AONB, but seeks to support and influence them.



Walk the Wight 2002

© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low

How the AONB Management Plan links with other plans and strategies

Many statutory and non-statutory plans, designations and policies have an impact on the AONB as a whole or on areas within its boundaries. It is important to coordinate and 'AONB proof' these plans and strategies so that they are consistent with conserving and enhancing the AONB.

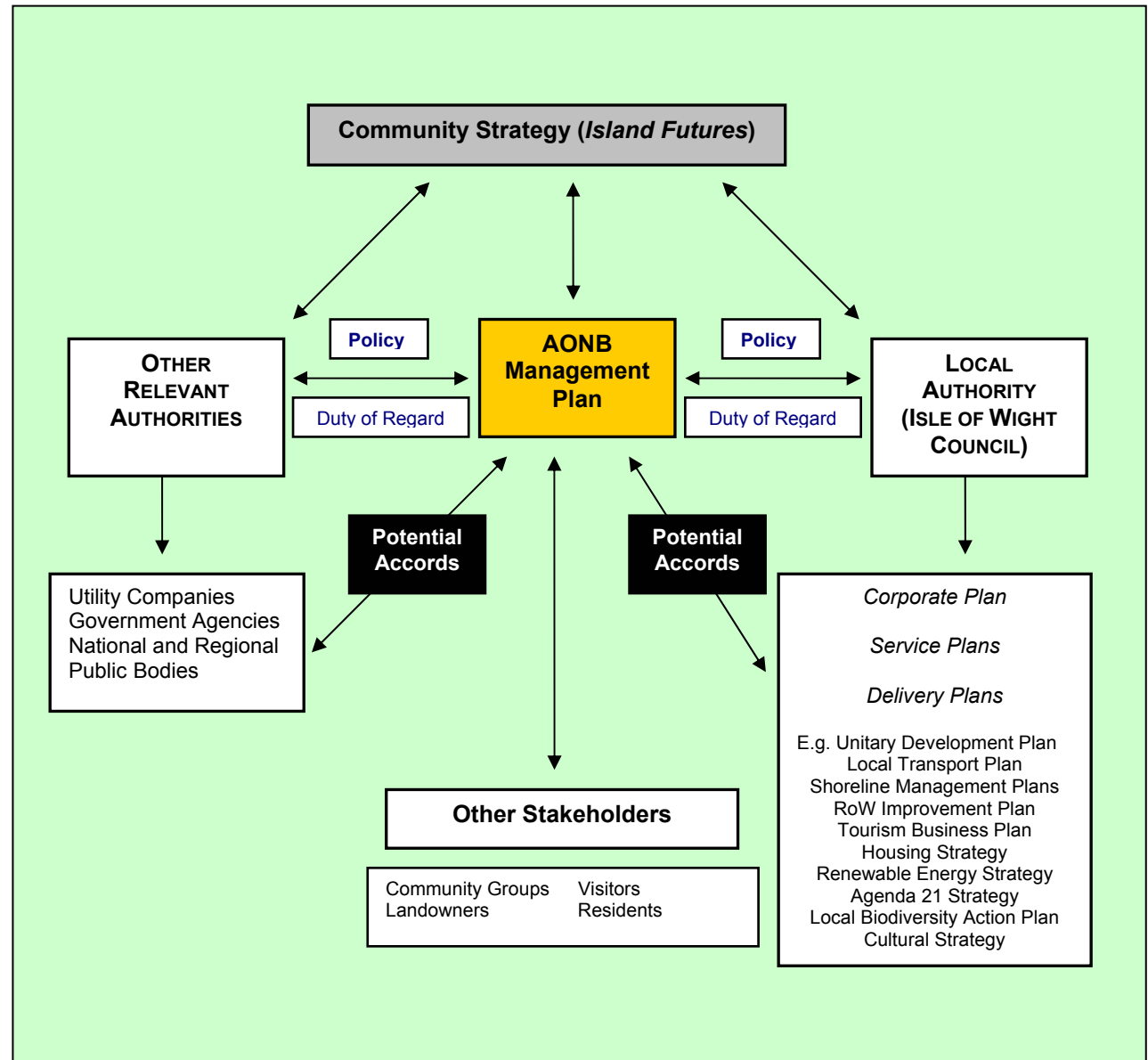
Since the first Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan was published in 1994, much progress has been made on sustainability issues. Many other organisations now have direct responsibility for delivering specific targets and policies that also benefit the AONB. It is not necessary or effective for us to duplicate this activity. However, we do need to be sure that it is both beneficial and that it is being delivered. This is best achieved through a partnership approach.

Better public awareness of the designation and a greater understanding of landscape character and its management is required if we are to succeed in our task. Involving local communities and visitors in conserving, enhancing and celebrating the AONB's qualities can help us to understand issues of concern. It will also highlight the value placed on the area by those who live and work in, or visit, the Island's finest landscapes.

This Management Plan provides a strategic overview of the whole of the AONB. Links to many other plans and documents are highlighted throughout. The Plan does not seek to duplicate other plans but to add to

their value and influence them when they are being reviewed.

The diagram below outlines the key local plans and strategies that the AONB Management Plan seeks to influence.



Regional and National Working

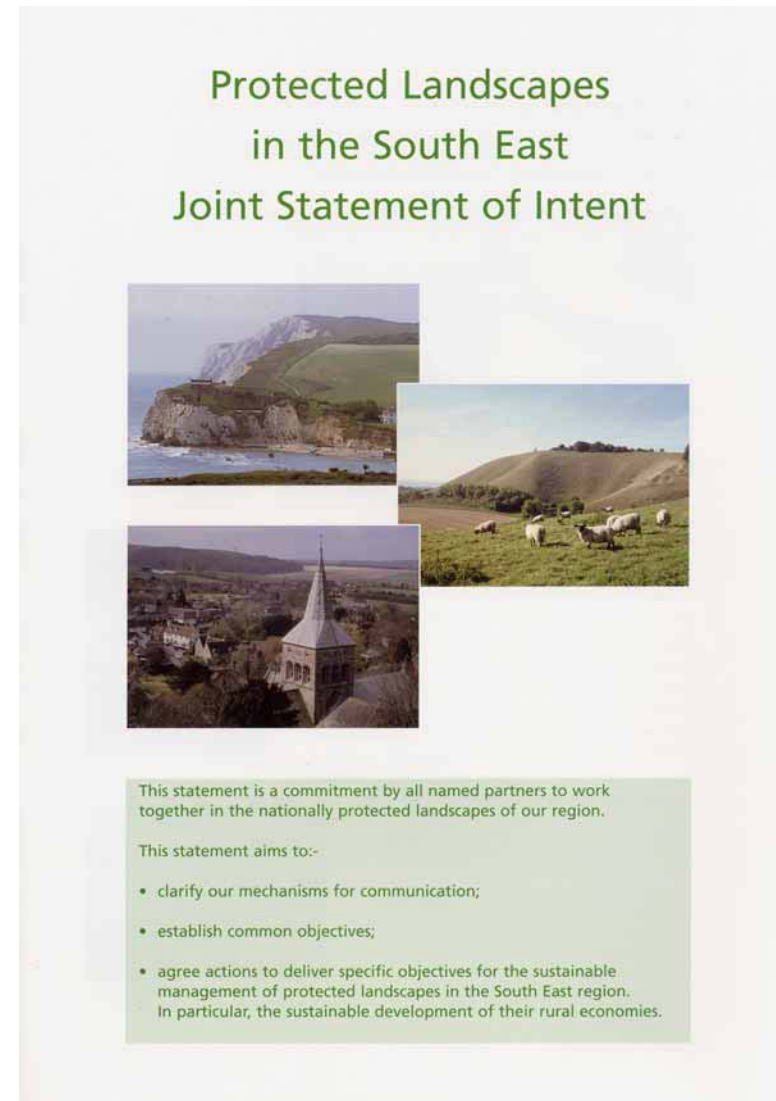
The Isle of Wight AONB is one of 9 AONBs within the South East of England.

The AONB Partnership is a member of the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB). We also have regular contact with colleagues in other AONBs across the country. This networking allows us to identify common issues and approaches, share good practice, and raise issues of regional and national concern to protected landscapes.

The South East Region has one of the highest proportions of landscapes designated for their landscape quality. It also has one of the most buoyant economies and highest population densities. This increasingly means that Regional Government has a strong influence.

All AONBs in the South East have signed a Joint Statement of Intent with our regional partners (GOSE, SEERA, SEEDA) and with DEFRA and the Countryside Agency. This will help to ensure the sustainable management of protected landscapes in the South East Region, and the sustainable development of their rural economies.

Our continued contributions to work at this level brings direct benefits to the Isle of Wight AONB.



Front Cover of Joint Statement of Intent document published in 2002

Section 6

HOW DOES THE PLAN WORK?

The Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan provides a framework for the future conservation and enhancement of our nationally recognised landscape.

By stating our agreed vision for the AONB in 2025, we are setting out a target for the AONB's long-term management. In addition, by defining the special qualities of the AONB today, we can identify the threats and challenges we face in conserving and enhancing the landscape's natural beauty. Formulating policies and identifying actions for the next five years will enable us to fulfill our vision for the AONB's future.

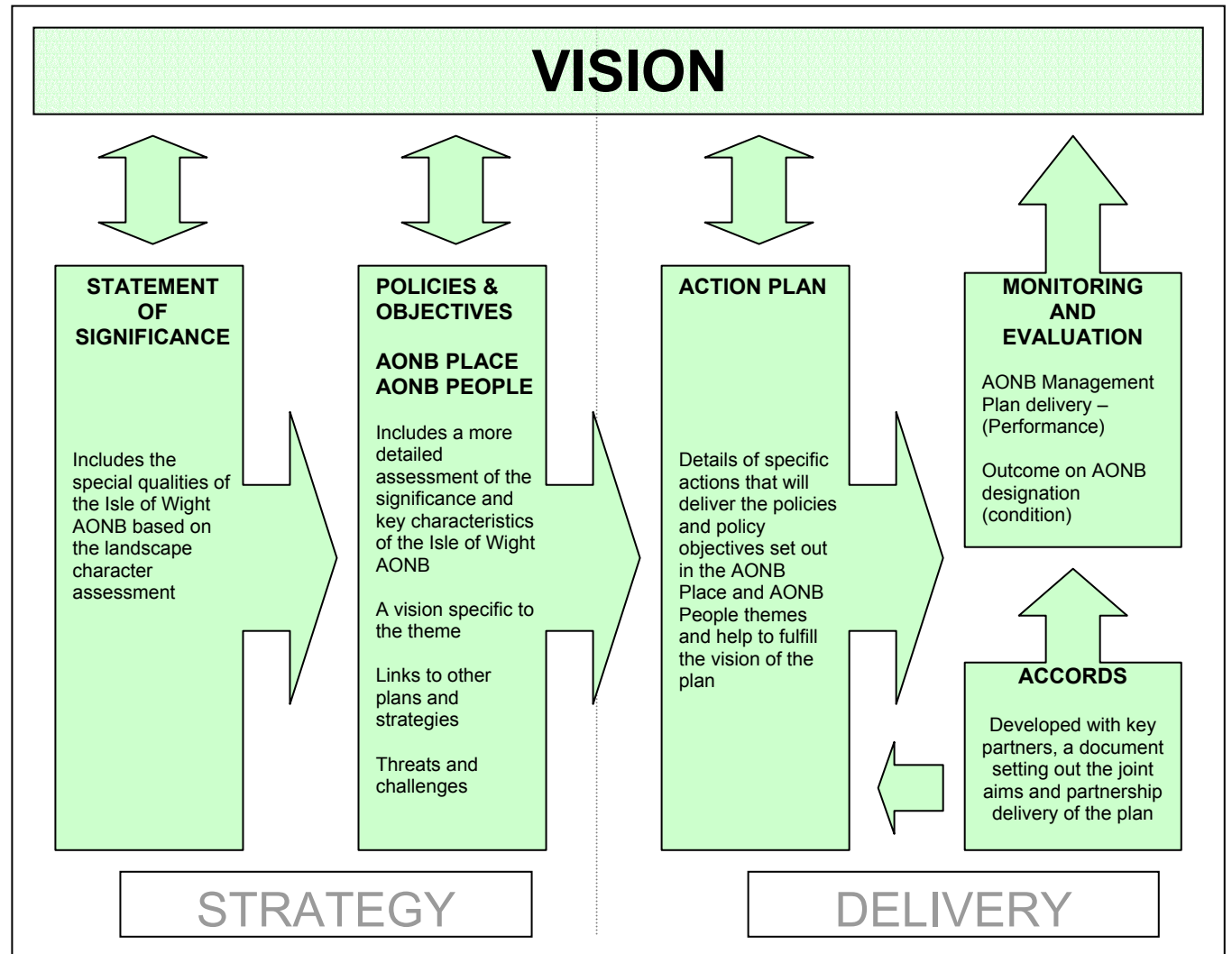
The framework for delivering the Management Plan takes account of detailed guidance provided by the Countryside Agency¹. It also incorporates the work of Arc Consultants² on the requirements of a new statutory Plan, which used the Isle of Wight AONB as a model. The Plan also encompasses a landscape character approach that is largely based on a landscape assessment completed in 1994³.

¹ *Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans – A guide. Countryside Agency CA23 2001*

² *AONB – an environmental standard. Arc Environmental Consultants 2002*

³ *The Isle of Wight Landscape – an assessment of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Countryside Commission CCP 448 1994.*

The diagram below shows the relationship between sections of the Management Plan.



Who is the plan for?

This Plan is of particular relevance to those individuals and organisations that are deemed to be relevant authorities⁴ and thus have a statutory duty to have regard for AONB purposes.

The Plan will also guide those charged with reviewing statutory plans and strategies, enabling them to consider the contribution that such documents may have on conserving and enhancing the Isle of Wight AONB.

It will help to shape the formulation of community-based approaches to strategic planning, such as Parish Plans and Village Design Statements.

And it will help to influence land management decisions within the AONB.

It is a working document for the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership. The Plan formulates the policy of the Isle of Wight Council for the AONB and for Council functions that have an impact on it.

Finally, we hope that for those with a general interest, this document will provide a useful and enjoyable overview of the importance and purpose of the Isle of Wight AONB.



A farmed landscape

© Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

⁴ *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S85*

Section 7

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation on issues

A significant amount of public consultation has taken place over the last three years to identify issues affecting the Isle of Wight. This has been carried out to inform the final publication of the Local Agenda 21 Strategy (*Island Voices*), the Unitary Development Plan, the Local Transport Plan and the Community Strategy (*Island Futures*). All have identified issues of relevance to the AONB, and in particular show support for its conservation and enhancement.

A strong existing public endorsement

Island Voices, the award winning Local Agenda 21 Strategy, revealed clear public recognition of the importance of the countryside and the environment to local quality of life.

More than 65% of those asked 'What do you like most about the Island?' responded 'Countryside, coast or environment'.

Island Voices — Isle of Wight Council & Isle of Wight Health Authority 2000

These strongly held community values are reflected in the AONB Management Plan's aim of conserving the natural beauty of the Island's finest landscapes through the adoption of sustainable processes.

From consultation on the Community Strategy, a number of major challenges emerged. The following were of particular relevance to the AONB:

Guaranteeing the quality of life and sustainability

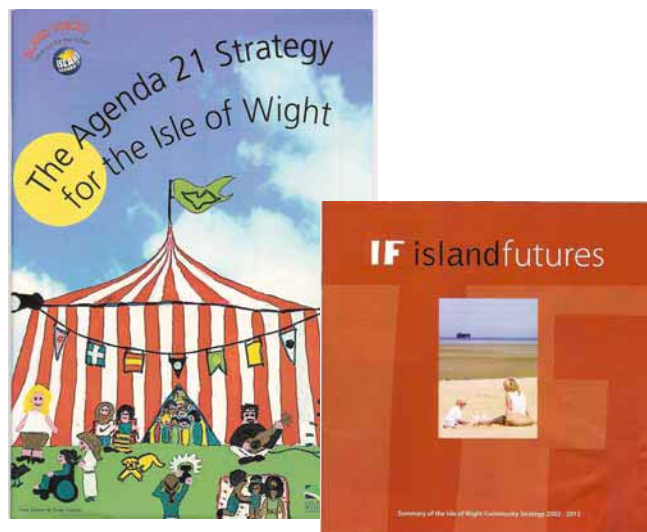
- Maintaining the Island's predominantly rural way of life, focused on market towns and villages.

Ensuring the quality of the built environment

- Design and planning, both for rural areas and towns, need to take account of the local identity and the capacity to accommodate development.
- Housing provision does not currently meet the variety of needs of local residents.

Developing tourism

- Tourism needs to conserve the Island's environment and social fabric.



Front Covers of the Agenda 21 Strategy for the Isle of Wight and Island Futures

Consultation on the Isle of Wight AONB

The AONB Partnership commissioned PR consultants J2 to prepare a communications strategy¹ as a supporting document to the AONB Management Plan. This strategy will ensure that communication activity for the AONB is consistent, coordinated and effective. As part of this work a number of one-to-one interviews were carried out with key stakeholders. Key findings from these interviews were as follows:

- There is a general lack of awareness within the Isle of Wight community about the purpose, jurisdiction, and boundary of the AONB.
- There is scope for further marketing and PR initiatives to 'get the message' across, including proactive use of the media (print/TV/radio).



Landscape Reflections – How do people value the AONB?

The landscape assessment undertaken in 1994² concentrated mainly on measurable characteristics of the AONB. It did, however, include some information about the importance of the landscape as an inspiration to artists and writers and other parts of Island culture.

To take this work further, the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership commissioned a 'Landscape Reflections' project. Communities within the AONB were asked to express the meaning of the landscape to them through arts media. Community organisations and schools within Chale, Brading and Totland were contacted and artists were commissioned to run workshops using a broad range of materials, from poetry to ceramics, dance to beach sculpture. The results of the project were exhibited in each community and at a final central exhibition in the Quay Arts Centre Newport in May 2003.

This exciting project gave us information on the perceptual and aesthetic response to the landscape by individuals and community groups. It told us that people place a high value on the landscape around them and have pride in where they live.

The project also elicited comments about the benefits and difficulties of living in a protected

¹ *Isle of Wight AONB Partnership – Communications Strategy 2003*

² *The Isle of Wight Landscape – An assessment of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty CCP 448 Countryside Commission 1994*

landscape. In addition, it enabled people to share memories and stories relating to their own or their family's past experiences in the AONB.

This project and future studies will enable us to define and celebrate the importance that is placed on the AONB by local people. Information gathered in this way can then be used when formulating policies in this and future Management Plans.



Visitor surveys

A survey of visitors commissioned by Isle of Wight Tourism³ indicated that the beaches and natural beauty of the Isle of Wight were the main reasons for its selection as a destination.

³ *Designate Survey for Isle of Wight Tourism (2002)*

Consultation on the draft Management Plan

The new statutory duty to produce an AONB Management Plan was launched to the new Partnership and wider public in September 2002, with a full day Open Forum event at Northwood House in Cowes. This event included a visioning workshop, during which people expressed their hopes and fears for the future of the AONB.

The drafting process for the Management Plan was steered by the Management Plan Work Group. This group was set up in June 2002 and comprised members of the Steering Committee and the Advisory Group of the AONB Partnership (see Appendix B).



Consultation Workshops
© IW AONB Unit – photographer Joe Low

Policy workshops

In April 2003 draft policies were presented to the Advisory Group and to Councillors of the Isle of Wight Council at an AONB Policy Workshop at Northwood House. Valuable feedback was obtained through focused workshops covering:

- recreation and tourism,
- the natural and historic environment,
- living and working,
- landscape and earth heritage.

Publication of consultation draft AONB Management Plan

A consultation draft of the AONB Management Plan was published in June 2003.

The consultation period ran from 19 June to 31 July 2003.

250 Plans were published; of these, 235 Plans were distributed to:

- Isle of Wight AONB Partnership members,
- all Isle of Wight Council elected members,
- all Parish & Town Councils and Forums,
- County Hall and Seaclose Reception desks,
- all libraries.

Copies of the Plan were also available to view and download via our website.

The draft was also publicised in *Isle of Wight County Press*, *Finest Landscapes and Partnership Update*, and in a display at the Isle of Wight County Show.

During the consultation period the AONB Unit held meetings with key 22 stakeholders. Feedback was obtained on the Plan and ideas were discussed for joint actions to be included in the Action Plan. In addition, 31 responses were sent to the AONB Unit by the close of the consultation period (see Appendix C for details).

Redrafting took place over the autumn period. It took account of all of the comments raised during the consultation period. The final draft was presented to a meeting of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership Steering Committee and the Management Plan Work Group. Final comments were made and approval was given to send a copy to the Countryside Agency and English Nature for formal observations in line with the CRoW Act.

Following amendments in light of these formal observations, the final Plan was taken to the Isle of Wight Council Executive Committee for adoption by the local authority. The final version was printed, and a copy was sent to the Secretary of State at DEFRA.

The official launch of the first Statutory Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan took place in April 2004.

Section 8

THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB – A STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

‘...you can spend days and days exploring the Isle of Wight, which, if you are really interested, begins magically enlarging itself for you.’

J. B. Priestley

The special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB are many, contrasting, varied and inspiring. They contribute greatly to the quality of life and well being of local communities and visitors.

From majestic sea cliffs and sweeping beaches to the quiet solitude of ancient woodland; the ever changing patchwork of worked fields to the timeless and enduring presence of the downs; the intricate inlets of tranquil creeks to the long distance views from coastal heath and downland; the planned and manicured gardens of former Royal Estates and Victorian villas to the irregular undulating hedged fields of pasture; the dark starlit skies to the bustle and colour of festivals and events; the winding paths, shutes and hollow ways in the countryside to Chines and steps down cliffs to the beach; place names and dialect to poetry, literature and art; isolated houses, hamlets and rural villages to harbour towns, castles and tumuli; plants and animals to fossilised trees and dinosaur footprints.

Natural beauty and landscape character

‘Natural beauty’ is not only an aesthetic concept, and ‘landscape’ means more than just ‘scenery’. The natural beauty of AONBs partly results from nature, and is partly the product of many centuries of human modification of ‘natural’ features. Landscape encompasses everything – ‘natural’ and human – that makes an area distinctive: geology, climate, soil, plants, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings and the

people who live in it, past and present, and the perceptions of those who visit it.¹



Brading Down © Alan Daysh
Landscape Reflections Project

¹ Countryside Agency CA23 2001

Landscapes reflect the relationship between people and place in the past, today and into the future. Landscapes have economic value, as the setting for economic activity and are often the reason for the attraction of specific business activities, particularly tourism. Landscapes have social and community value, contributing to people's lives and sense of well-being, as a source of enjoyment and inspiration. Landscapes have environmental value as a cultural record of our past and as a home for wildlife. Landscapes are dynamic and rely upon the continuation of farming, other land use practices and the integrity of design and pattern of settlement to give a feeling of consistency and familiarity.

In 1994 the then Countryside Commission published a landscape assessment of the Isle of Wight AONB². It identified 11 landscape character types across the Isle of Wight and listed their respective key characteristics, (these are discussed in more detail later in the Plan). In general, the descriptions given in this document remain relevant ten years later.

This complexity and variation is largely based on the extent and diversity of the underlying geology and its influence on landform, building design, settlement pattern and historic and continuing land use. It is also the

² *The Isle of Wight Landscape – an assessment of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty 1994*

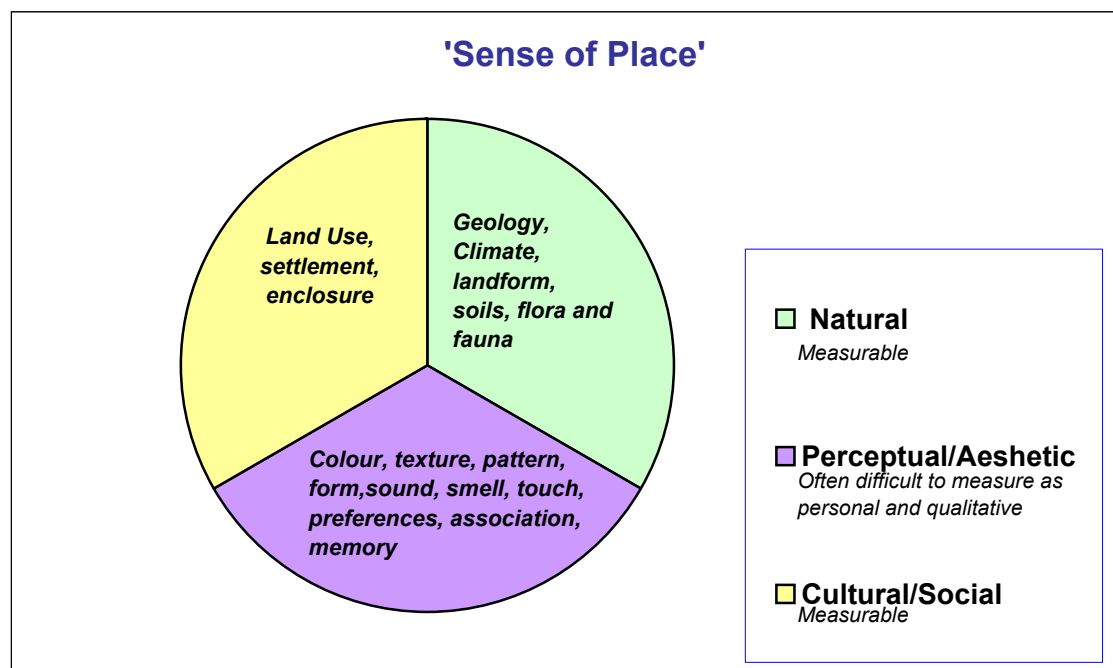
basis for the mosaic of habitats within the AONB, providing the conditions for a wide variety of species including many that are rare and protected.

Coastlines and seascapes

The impact of the sea and our island status has a major bearing on the culture, administration, economy, and climate of the Isle of Wight. The coastal zone and the continuation of natural coastal processes provide the geological, nature conservation and scenic interest of the coastline of the AONB and in particular the two areas of Heritage Coast. The beaches, sea and landscape are a major draw for visitors and are also enjoyed by the local community for leisure and recreation.

The pace of life, peace and tranquillity of the Island also have great bearing on the quality of life and special character within the Isle of Wight AONB. Local place names, dialect, foods, customs and folklore all add to the colour and variety of our Island life.

All the special qualities of the AONB blend together to create a perceived resonance, meaning and value by the local community, and those who choose to visit the area. This can be referred to as 'sense of place'.



Landscapes are a result of the way that different components of our environment – both natural and cultural – interact together and are perceived by us. They are not just about visual perception but are also about what we hear, smell and experience through touch and what this evokes through memory, association and emotion. Landscapes are defined by the relationship between people and place.

AONB people and place

Reflecting on this relationship, the complexity of the landscape of the Isle of Wight AONB is described in the following AONB place and AONB people sections of this Management Plan.

AONB place describes in more detail the natural beauty of the Island's finest landscapes and its conservation and enhancement, reflecting the primary purpose of AONB designation. This section is divided into four themes:

Landscape character
Earth heritage
Wildlife
Historic environment

AONB people describes the present activities and use of the area, including an outline of the social and economic factors and their influence on the conservation and enhancement of the AONB. In particular, it looks at change and how this should be managed to conserve and enhance the designation whilst meeting the needs of society now and in the future. This section is divided into four themes:

Living & working
Traffic & transport
Farming & forestry
Visiting & enjoying

These themed sections of the plan provide:

- A more detailed assessment of the relationship between people and place that has led to the special qualities of the AONB landscape that we see today and that will influence the changes faced by the designation in the future.
- A vision specific to the theme and contributing to the overall vision for the future of the AONB.
- A list of the threats and challenges to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty.
- Links to other key plans and strategies.

- Aspirational AONB policies are then given in three policy areas:
 - Awareness
 - Recording & monitoring
 - Conserving & enhancing

NB. Not all themes will contain all policy areas

- Policy objectives are set out to help to address these and fulfill the vision.

Although policies and policy objectives are listed in individual sections, it is important to consider them as part of an overall suite. All of them will make a contribution to the conservation and enhancement of the designation. They are also of equal relevance to issues relating to management of the two Heritage Coasts within the AONB.

Section 9

AONB place - policies & objectives

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Isle of Wight AONB is a complex and diverse landscape. The underlying geology; habitats and species of plants and animals; historic and current land use and settlement; traditions, customs and cultures; peace, tranquility and 'dark skies' all add to its special qualities and 'sense of place'.

Landscape elements and features of all lowland England can be found in one small geographic area on the Isle of Wight. Being an island, the sea and its influence are a major part of the special character of the AONB. Changing seasons and weather patterns contribute to this variety, as do differences between the aspects of the southwest coastline, which is subject to storms and waves, and the northern low, slumped coasts and estuaries, which experience the more gentle influence of the Solent.



Changing seasons and the AONB landscape – View from Bleakdown, top February, bottom April.
© AONB Unit – Photographer John Brownscombe

Quiet enjoyment of the AONB has provided, and continues to provide, a source of inspiration and relaxation to people who visit or live in the area.

However, increasing pressure for new activities within the countryside, built development and traffic noise can all have an impact on peace and tranquility of the AONB. Development can also often bring associated lighting, which through light pollution can have a detrimental impact on the 'dark skies' at night, an important part of the AONB's overall character.

The Isle of Wight AONB is unusual in that it is comprised of five separate land parcels rather than the more usual one or two continuous areas found in other AONBs.

There is no characteristic that is common to the whole AONB, other than perhaps its very diversity and variety. This diversity is largely due to its underlying geology and the way that people have used the land over time.

The 1994 landscape assessment of the AONB¹ identified 11 landscape character types across the AONB that contribute to its overall character. In general the descriptions given in this document remain relevant today. A summary of the key characteristics of these landscape character types is given in Table 1 and their extent across the AONB is shown in Map 2. Further detailed information can be found in Appendix D.

The scenic quality of key views within the AONB often result from interaction between landscape character types and the visual contrast of differing key characteristics. An example is shown in the annotated picture below.

We need to promote the landscape character of the AONB and encourage its assessment as part of the consideration for all proposals for change (either through the land use planning process, land management practice or policy formulation). In this way we will ensure that landscape assessment has a higher profile, is better understood and helps to conserve and enhance the designation.

View to southwest from Stenbury Down

October 2003 © AONB Unit – Photographer John Brownscombe

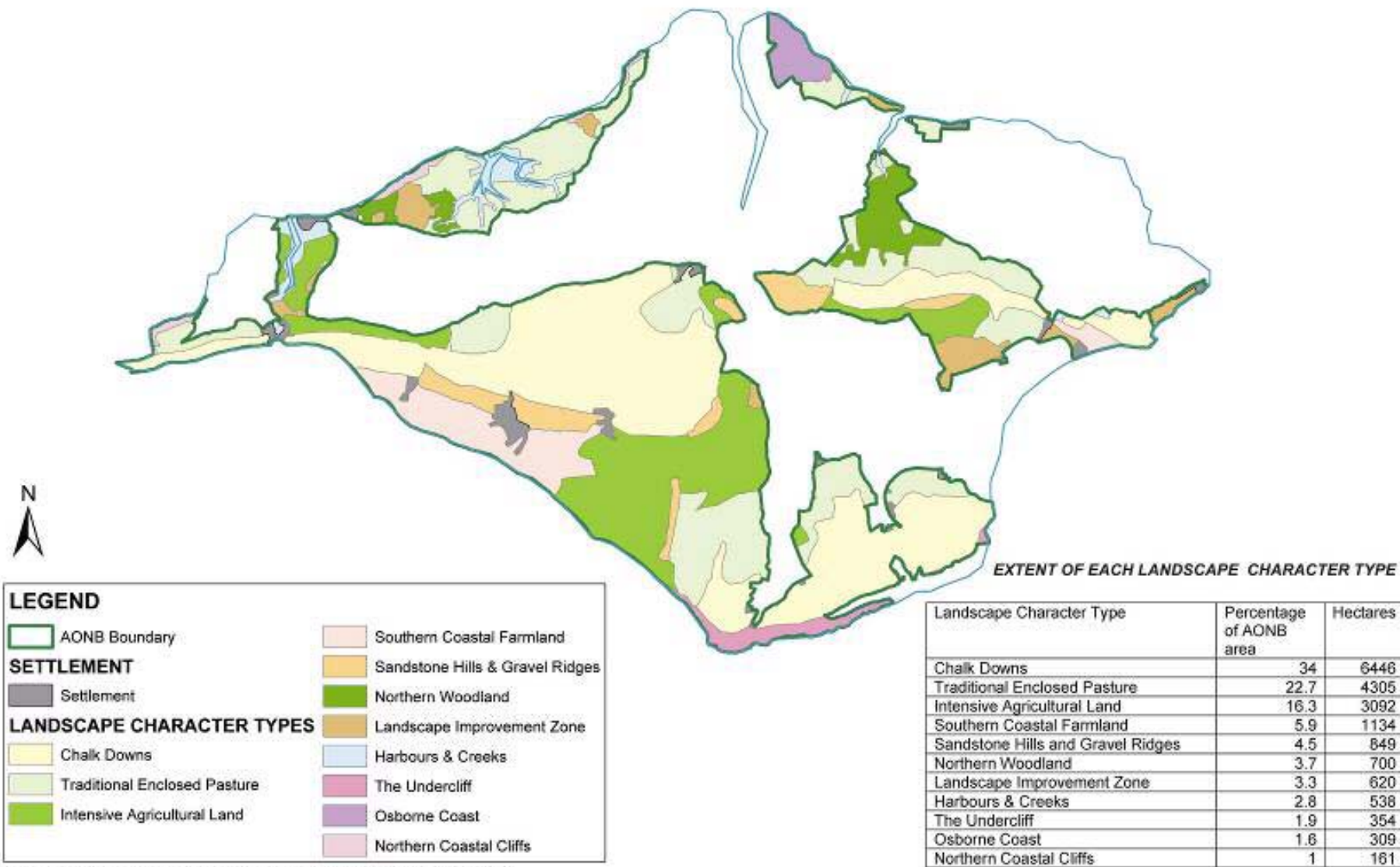


¹ *The Isle of Wight Landscape – an assessment of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty 1994 – Countryside Commission.*

Table 1 Landscape character types of the Isle of Wight AONB

Chalk downs (LCT1)	Traditional enclosed pasture (LCT2)	Intensive agricultural lands (LCT3)	Southern coastal farmland (LCT4)	Sandstone hills and gravel ridges (LCT5)	Northern woodlands (LCT6)
<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>
Open and exposed with sparse hedgerows and no mature hedgerow trees. Limited, windswept, scrubby vegetation on the higher downs. Traditional grazing with extensive arable cultivation. Broadleaved woodlands, predominantly beech, on the lower downs. Dominant high chalk cliffs.	Land use predominantly pasture. Well preserved dense hedgerows with mature hedgerow oak trees. Irregular small fields. Narrow enclosed winding lanes. Well wooded, with numerous small copses. Small scattered farmsteads. Settlement patterns predominantly linear.	Large open fields. Large-scale hedge removal with relict hedges degraded. No hedgerow trees. Land use predominantly rural. Large farms and farm buildings. Trees restricted to shelter belts.	Large, regular gently undulating fields. Low hedgerows with few hedgerow trees. Predominantly arable. Valleys, old drainage channels and chines cross the arable landscape associated with willow scrub and unimproved pasture. Eroding coastline of key geological interest.	Some traditional pasture, but steep slopes mostly planted to mixed forestry. Lower gravel ridges support gorse and bracken. Sunken lanes, or 'shutes' often with ancient woodland flora. Traditional sheltered settlement in the valleys.	Large woodland blocks, conifer and broadleaved, form the dominant feature in the landscape. Small enclosed fields.
Landscape improvement zone (LCT7)	Harbours and creeks (LCT8)	The Undercliff (LCT9)	Osborne Coast (LCT10)	Northern coastal cliffs (LCT11)	
<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>	<i>Key characteristics</i>	
Traditional agricultural landscape changed by the addition of horse paddocks and stables; intensive horticulture; poultry and pig farms; waste disposal sites; extensive residential, industrial or retail developments; holiday camps, mobile homes and caravan sites. Overall visual chaos with neglect of the agricultural landscape in a town edge setting. Degraded hedgerows and unmanaged woods. Conveys a general feeling of neglect and blurs the setting and edges of settlements.	Flat exposed tidal mudflats with saltmarsh, shingle banks and grazed marshes. Open aspect. Peripheral; enclosure created by the fringing oak woodlands.	Dramatic inland vertical craggy cliffs. Slumped grasslands. Coastal pasture. Exotic ornamental, 'gardenesque' planting. Victorian villa and modern suburban housing in highly manicured gardens. Unmanaged natural woodland regeneration, particularly Holm Oak.	Exotic ornamental planting. Victorian villa architecture. Very limited informal public access, with the exception of seasonal opening of Osborne House and occasionally Barton Manor. Ancient semi-natural woodland. Wooded coastline.	Characteristically low sloping broken and unstable cliffs. Limited permanent development and public access.	

Map 2 – Landscape character types within the Isle of Wight AONB.



LEGEND

- AONB Boundary
- SETTLEMENT**
- Settlement
- LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES**
- Chalk Downs
- Traditional Enclosed Pasture
- Intensive Agricultural Land
- Southern Coastal Farmland
- Sandstone Hills & Gravel Ridges
- Northern Woodland
- Landscape Improvement Zone
- Harbours & Creeks
- The Undercliff
- Osborne Coast
- Northern Coastal Cliffs

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What are the threats and challenges for landscape character within the AONB?

- **Lack of knowledge, detailed local description and recording of the complexity of the landscape character of the AONB** – there is a need for better understanding of the landscape at a local level, including the perception and value placed on it by the local community.
- **Lack of awareness of landscape character as a concept and its assessment as an approach** – although now more widely known, the concept of landscape character assessment to identify local distinctiveness is still under-used and techniques have evolved since the 1994 assessment.
- **Unsympathetic and generic approaches to development and design** – these can lead to an erosion of local distinctiveness. Vernacular design, historic settlement pattern and an understanding of landscape character can provide the basis for new innovative complementary approaches.
- **Changing land management and ownership which may lead to a degradation of landscape character features** – the loss of traditional skills and local knowledge, coupled with the changing desires of those purchasing land, can result in new pressures upon the landscape.
- **Rural economic factors** – the social and economic needs of communities must be considered in our primary purpose to conserve and enhance the AONB.
- **Changing technology and its requirements for structures in the landscape** – telecommunications, renewable energy and other new and emerging technologies will present new challenges and pressures on the landscape.
- **Pressure from recreation and leisure use** – increased extreme sports activities, the affordability of off road vehicles and a general increase in walking, cycling and horse riding offer both opportunities for the enjoyment of the designation but also potential threat to the fabric of the landscape.
- **Light and noise pollution and the impact that both have on landscape character and its enjoyment** – parts of the Isle of Wight AONB are amongst the few remaining areas in the South East Region where ‘dark skies’ can be experienced because of low levels of ambient light pollution and where one can be at peace, escaping the noise of traffic. Both factors are key qualities of the AONB, which are subject to continued threat.
- **A loss of knowledge and practice of traditions, customs, dialect and the use of local place names** – all of which play an important part in the local distinctiveness of the communities within the AONB.

Our vision for the landscape character of the Isle of Wight AONB in 2025

The Isle of Wight AONB has become renowned and valued for its natural beauty, tranquility and lack of light pollution, which all contribute to the quality of life for the local community and visitors alike.

Our wider understanding of landscape character assessment has actively contributed to decisions made on policy and land management. The special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB have been conserved and enhanced.

AONB Management Plan policies – landscape character

LC1 – POLICY AREA: AWARENESS

The importance of the landscape character is recognised, widely understood and taken into consideration in all proposals for change.

Policy objectives –

- *To evolve the understanding of the landscape character complexity of the AONB.*
- *To identify and recognise the non-physical elements of landscape character such as views, peace and tranquility and ‘dark skies’ which make the AONB special.*
- *To provide and update detailed information on the natural beauty and special qualities of the landscape of the AONB through the use of landscape character assessment (LCA)².*
- *To facilitate the use of LCA for community planning initiatives such as Village Design Statements, Parish Plans and Market Town Health Checks.*
- *To identify and recognise the importance of traditions, customs, language and place names to the character of the AONB.*

² *Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England & Scotland Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage CAX 84 2002*

LC2 – POLICY AREA: RECORDING & MONITORING

The impact of recreational activities, agriculture, land management, climate change and development on the landscape character and special qualities of the AONB are recorded and monitored.

Policy objectives –

- *To develop mechanisms for recording and monitoring data about the condition of the AONB’s landscape.*
- *To establish mechanisms for monitoring the impact of change upon the landscape character of the AONB.*

Links to other Plans

Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan (and its successor Local Development Framework).
Community Strategy – Island Futures
Shoreline Management Plan
Coastal Defence Strategies

LC3 – POLICY AREA: CONSERVING & ENHANCING

All features and elements of the AONB’s landscape and special character are conserved by being given due consideration in proposals for change within the AONB. Where possible, specific measures for enhancement will be sought.

Policy objectives –

- *To inform planning proposals affecting existing land use through the AONB’s landscape character assessment and any additional adopted design guidance from the AONB Unit.*
- *To seek to implement management aims identified through landscape character assessment through the AONB Management Plan Action Plan.*
- *To identify and implement ways to protect and enhance the non-physical elements that make the AONB special, including scenic views, seascapes, peace and tranquility, and ‘dark skies’.*
- *To challenge development proposals that do not conserve or enhance the natural beauty and landscape character resource of the AONB and its Heritage Coasts.*
- *To identify and implement measures that respect landscape character and provide mitigation for development which is unavoidable or has already taken place.*

AONB Place – policies & objectives

EARTH HERITAGE

What is earth heritage and how is it relevant to the AONB?

Earth heritage is the broad term given to the physical resources of the environment and the natural processes that are required to keep them intact. Rocks, soils and minerals (geology), erosion and weathering, fossils, water and air all make up the physical environment. These are the building blocks of the historic and natural environments and landscape; they continue to dictate land use and built development. All of these factors are an essential part of the character of the AONB.



Compton © Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

Geology of the Isle of Wight

The Isle of Wight AONB has a complex geology within a small land area and is considered to be of outstanding geological significance. Since the early nineteenth century the excellence of the rocks and fossils on the Isle of Wight have been celebrated, and the Island continues to attract professional and amateur enthusiasts.

The oldest rock formations on the Isle of Wight are from the Cretaceous period; the earliest of these are the Wealden Group, which were formed between 127 and 121 million years ago. Formed by the gradual deposit of fine silts, sands and mud in an area that was at that time a broad river valley subject to periods of drought and high rainfall, this formation is rich in fossil remains. In particular there are fossilised bones, petrified tree deposits and footprints of herbivorous dinosaurs such as the Iguanodon. Particularly good examples of this geology can be seen where it is exposed on the coast at Brook Bay (Grid Ref: SZ385834) and Yaverland (Grid Ref: SZ612850). When occurring inland it is associated with heavier soils and has traditionally been used as pasture.

The next part of the geological sequence occurred between 121 and 100 million years ago. Formed when the river bed gradually flooded and became a shallow sea the Lower Greensand, Gault and Upper Greensand are a result. Lower Greensand is the underlying geology of much of the southern part of the Island and the light sandy soils over this rock formation provide some of the best and most fertile land on the Isle of Wight. High terraced

cliffs occur where this rock meets the sea, with good examples being found at Whale Chine (Grid Ref: SZ468783) and Red Cliff (Grid Ref: SZ618854). Gault and Upper Greensand occur together close to the central chalk ridge and southern downs. Gault is a dark grey clay (known locally as Blue Slipper) and Upper Greensand is a pale grey sandstone. The weakness of the clay and the solid nature of the sandstone have led to some of the most spectacular landslips in Europe.

The final part of the Cretaceous period saw the formation of the Lower and Upper Chalk. Grey and white limestone formed in deep seas from microscopic algal remains. Irregular flint nodules occur in the Upper Chalk; these were used by early inhabitants of the Isle of Wight to make tools and weapons. Forming the central ridge and a plateau area of the southern downs, Chalk is an important landscape feature of the Island. The tall white cliffs at Culver (Grid Ref: SZ633853) and the sea stacks at the Needles (Grid Ref: SZ290849) are a dramatic visual element of the character of the AONB.

The Cretaceous period ended around 65 million years ago with the gradual retreat of the sea and the gentle buckling of the rocks by earth movements.

A long period of erosion then followed between 65 and 55 million years ago. Rivers and the sea invaded the land and deposited multicoloured sands and clays (Palaeocene and Eocene), examples of which can be seen at Alum Bay (Grid Ref: SZ303854).

Red, grey and green clays and sands were deposited in rivers, swamps and estuaries around 30 million years ago (Oligocene), leading to the creation of the heavier soils of the north of the Isle of Wight.

The retreat of the sea and a dramatic buckling of the rock sequence caused by the formation of the modern day Alps moved many layers of rock from lying horizontally to the near vertical position we see today.

Around 2 million years ago the climate began a series of relatively rapid changes. At times of low temperature, the climate was similar to modern day arctic Canada with glaciers forming in much of Britain, and sea levels being so low that the English Channel was dry land. Lower seas caused the river valleys to deepen. In interglacial periods the temperature was similar if not warmer to that of today, causing sea level rise and the flooding of deepened valleys.

Around 10,000 years ago the present interglacial period began; temperatures increased and sea levels gradually rose.

Around 6,000 years ago the final inundation of the Solent is thought to have taken place, creating our island status. Since then further sea level changes, coastal erosion and soil formation have all helped to produce the Isle of Wight AONB that we value today.

Many sites within the AONB are important for their geology or geomorphologic features either at a local, regional, national or international scale and are designated accordingly.

The table below provides data extracted from the Geographical Information System (GIS)¹.

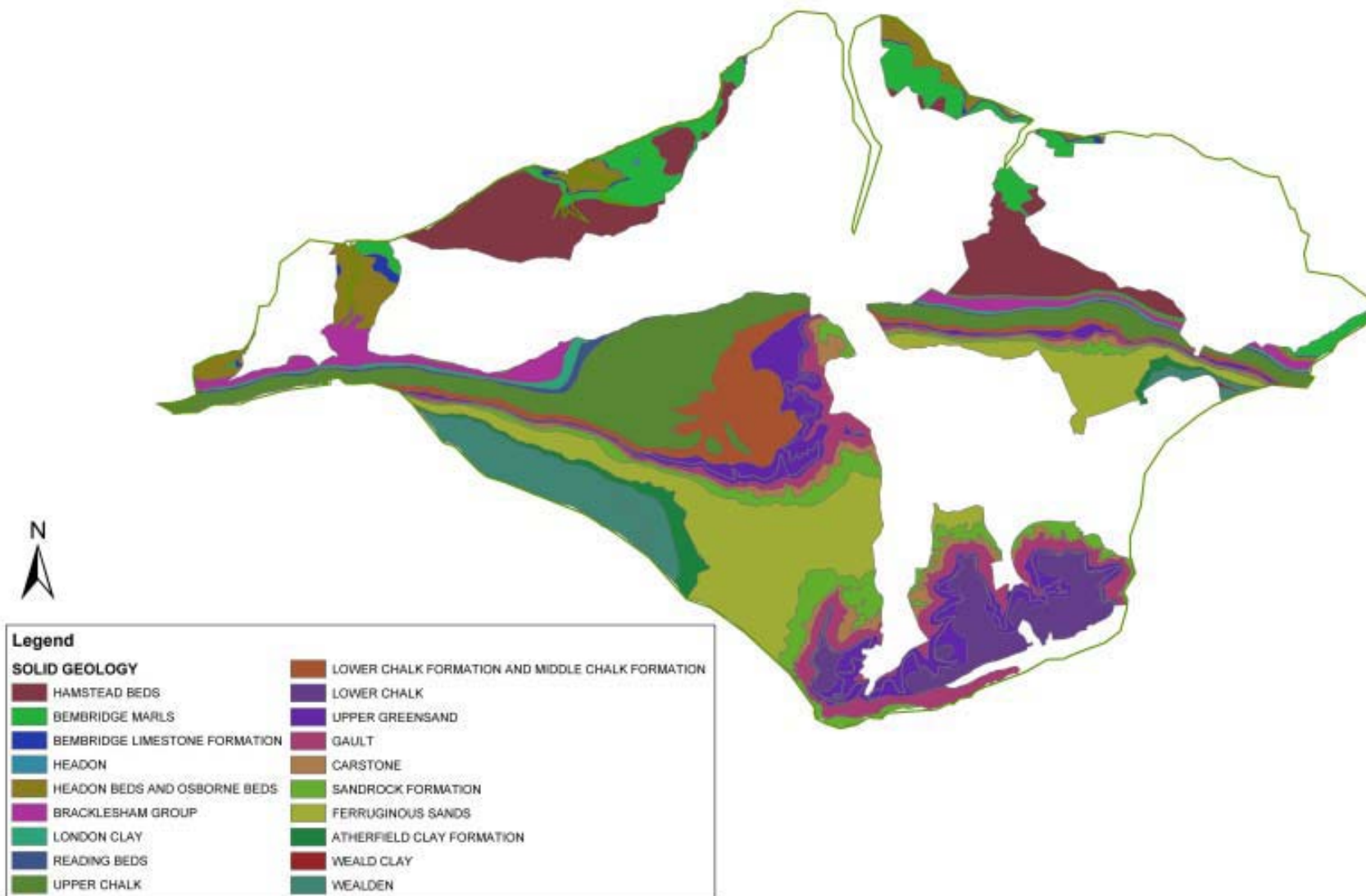
Geographic Information System (GIS) is defined as an information system that is used to input, store, retrieve, manipulate, analyze and output geographically referenced data.

Extent of lithologies within the Isle of Wight AONB

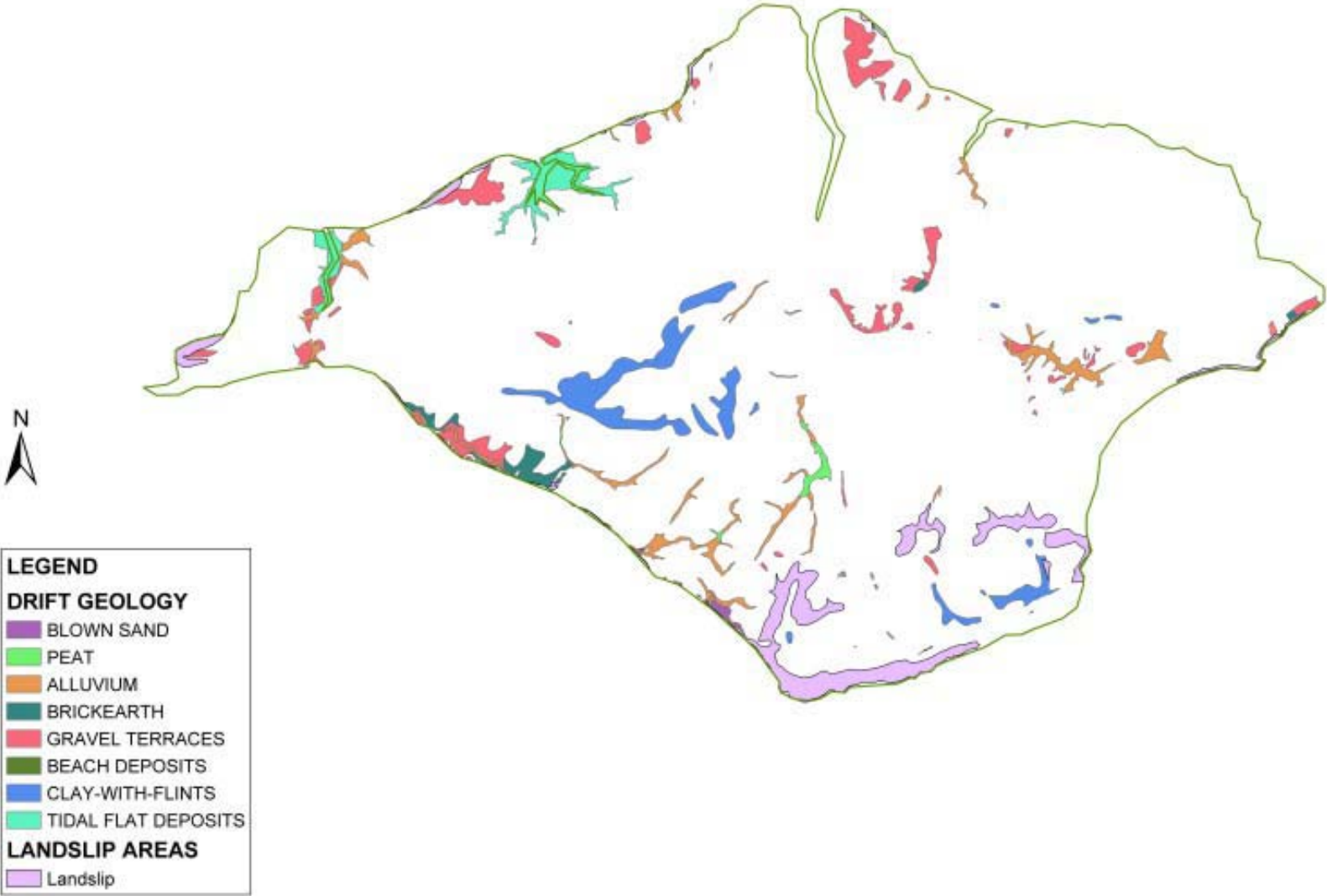
PERIOD	SOLID GEOLOGY	HECTARES
OLIGOCENE	HAMSTEAD BEDS	2085
	BEMBRIDGE MARLS	473
	BEMBRIDGE LIMESTONE	128
	HEADON BEDS AND OSBORNE BEDS	740
EOCENE	BRACKLESHAM GROUP	688
	LONDON CLAY	226
PALAEOCENE	READING BEDS	188
CRETACEOUS	UPPER CHALK	2662
	LOWER CHALK AND MIDDLE CHALK	2141
	UPPER GREENSAND	1735
	GAULT	1220
	CARSTONE	621
	SANDROCK FORMATION	1088
	FERRUGINOUS SANDS	3019
	ATHERFIELD CLAY	373
	WEALDEN GROUP	1075
	*Landslips (mass movement)	1019
	Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)	6.9

¹ GIS data interrogated October 2003.

Map 3 – Solid geology of the Isle of Wight AONB

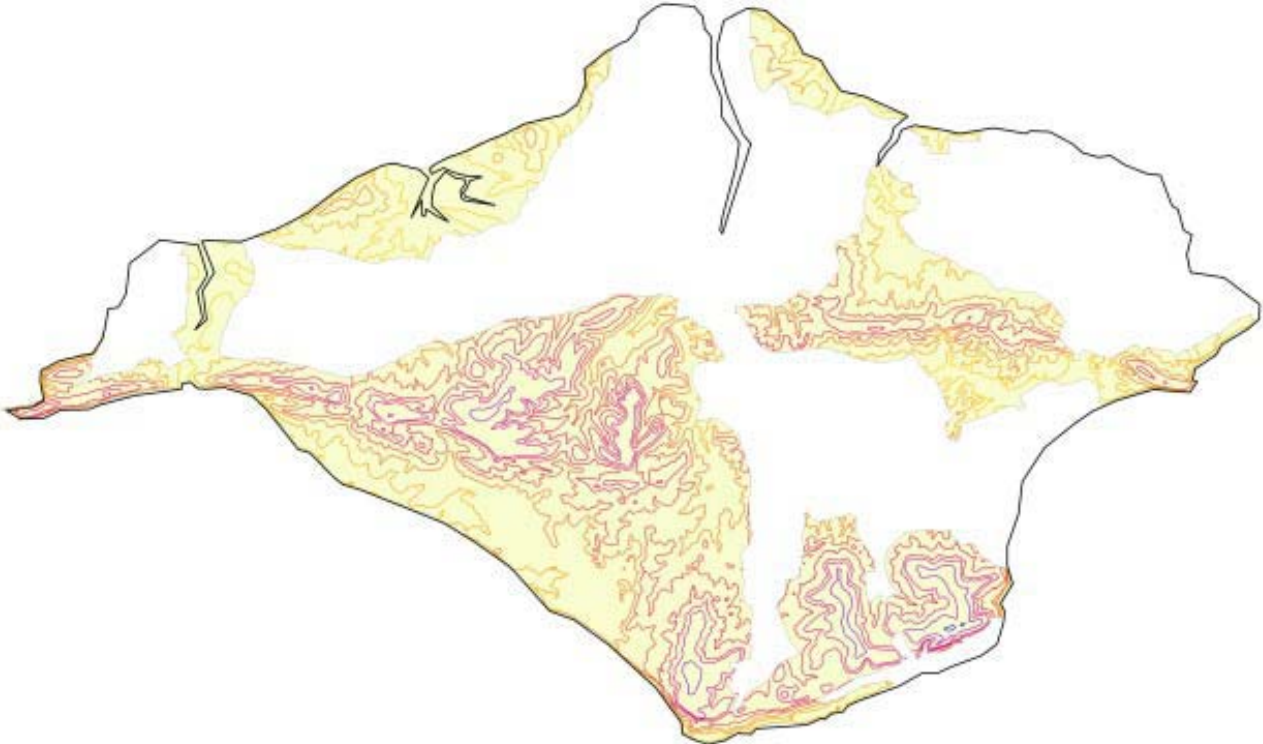


**Map 4 – Drift geology of the Isle of Wight
AONB**



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**Map 5 – Topography of the Isle of Wight
AONB**



Legend

ELEVATION metres above sea level	
— 10	— 100
— 30	— 130
— 50	— 150
— 70	— 200
	— 240

Minerals -

The geology of the AONB continues to provide an important finite resource for minerals such as chalk, gravel, clay and sand. The Isle of Wight Council as Mineral Planning Authority details current and expected extraction and sets out policies that seek to safeguard sites of importance for geology, geomorphology, nature conservation, archaeology, historic environment and landscape value.



Cheverton Chalk Quarry
© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low

Soil –

Soil is a basic, limited resource that is essential for many human activities. It includes topsoil and subsoil to the depth of at least 1 metre. The biological, physical and chemical characteristics of soil need to be protected for it to perform its important functions, including the production of food, raw materials and energy. Soils provide a filtering and buffering action to protect water and the food chain from potential pollutants;

they help to maintain gene pools and wildlife populations; and often cover historic and archaeological sites containing artifacts and historical indicators such as pollen. All soils need to be managed sustainably for the long term.

Water –

Water is essential to life. The Chalk geology of much of the Island is an aquifer collecting and storing rainwater. Abstraction rates and land use can have a major impact on the quality and quantity of water available as a physical resource. Some species and habitats are particularly sensitive to water levels and to pollutants, with small changes having a marked impact on populations and ecosystems. Sustainable management of this important resource is essential to the health of the environment.

Air –

The Isle of Wight is well known for its mild climate and clean air. An important resource for the health of people and wildlife, its protection is essential. Land use practices, burning of materials, and greenhouse gas emissions all have an impact on the quality of this resource.

Natural processes –

The way in which the sea shapes the coastline can easily be seen in the habitats and landscapes of the Isle of Wight AONB. Eroding coastlines also threaten land and property and the development of a Shoreline Management Plan is key in balancing the social, economic and environmental factors for sustainable management. Much of the coastline within the AONB is additionally

defined as Heritage Coast in recognition of its scenic beauty and wildlife value, a direct result of the continuation of coastal processes.



Whale Chine
© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low

What are the threats and challenges for earth heritage within the AONB?

- **Agricultural intensification and its impacts** – soil erosion, nitrate run off, waste products and their resulting impact on air quality are more acute when associated with intensive agricultural practice.
- **Mineral extraction and land fill** – the need to source local materials for sympathetic restoration and new buildings that reflect the local vernacular should be balanced with the impact that quarrying has on the landscape in the short and long-term. The use of land within the AONB for landfill needs very careful consideration.
- **Water quality** – agricultural practice and industrial practice (marine) can have an impact on the quality of our water resource. Quality of sewage treatment has been greatly improved on the Isle of Wight through the Seaclean Wight investment programme. This has led to more beaches reaching the 'Blue Flag' standard, an important factor for the Island's tourism market. Seasonal population change and clean water supplies are also a concern; active water conservation should be encouraged.
- **Climate change and sea level rise** – climate change and its impact upon the AONB needs to be monitored and assessed.
- **Recreation and access (fossil collecting)** – the increased reputation of the Island's Heritage Coastline and diverse geological and fossil resource have led to a rise in interest and activity. This needs to be monitored and managed to ensure that the resource is conserved.
- **Development that interferes with natural coastal processes of sedimentation and erosion** – the continuation of coastal processes is of great importance for nature conservation but can also impact upon livelihoods and property. The exposed geology of cliffs along undeveloped coastlines is a key feature of the Isle of Wight AONB. The deposition of tide-borne litter on rural beaches is a problem that requires attention, although there are no easy solutions.
- **Lack of awareness of the importance of earth heritage to landscape, historic and natural environments** – the Isle of Wight is deemed to be one of the top areas of England for geological diversity. This contributed to the early interest in geology and to the aesthetic appreciation of the landscape. The forthcoming local Geodiversity Action Plan will seek to raise awareness of this uniquely diverse resource.

Our vision for the earth heritage of the Isle of Wight AONB in 2025

People have an increased appreciation and enjoyment of the importance of geology, natural processes, soils, air quality and water resources as facets of the AONB. The relationship between earth heritage, landscape and the natural and historic environment has become understood and the use of limited resources and impact of human activity is managed effectively.

The Isle of Wight has become known as one of the top destinations in the UK for the study of geology and the effect this has had on land use, landscape and wildlife.

AONB Management Plan policies – earth heritage

EH1 - POLICY AREA: AWARENESS

The importance of earth heritage and its relationship to the character and special qualities of the AONB is widely understood.

Policy objectives -

- To promote the value of the geology, geomorphology, palaeontology, and earth heritage as an integral part of the character of the AONB.
- To develop opportunities to provide educational material which includes information on the earth heritage and geodiversity of the AONB and the contribution these make to its special qualities and character.
- To promote responsible fossil collection and other recreational activities which impact upon the condition of the earth heritage resource of the AONB.

EH2 - POLICY AREA: RECORDING & MONITORING

The impact of recreational activities, agriculture, climate change and development on earth heritage within the AONB is monitored and researched.

Policy objectives -

- To develop the practices and techniques for recording and monitoring data about the condition of, and changes to, the AONB's earth heritage resource.
- To develop partnership projects to manage change where it threatens, or could offer benefit to, the earth heritage resource of the AONB.

EH3 - POLICY AREA: CONSERVING & ENHANCING

Earth heritage issues are given due consideration in proposals for development and other change within the AONB.

Policy objectives -

- To ensure that mineral extraction, restoration and landfill proposals are compatible with landscape, historic environment and nature conservation objectives for AONB management.

- To encourage and partner management planning of the water resource and abstraction levels at a catchment area scale.
- To promote and support agri-environment schemes and whole farm plans that seek to protect earth heritage through sustainable agricultural practice.
- To ensure that there is a presumption against proposals for development that may impact upon natural coastal processes within the AONB.
- To encourage the appropriate management of redundant quarries for nature conservation (including geological features), remaining archaeological interest and, where suitable, recreational activities.
- To investigate the management of tide-borne litter along the dramatic undeveloped coastline of the Isle of Wight AONB and Heritage Coasts.

Links to Other Plans

Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan (incorporating Mineral Plan) and its successor Local Development Framework)
Forthcoming local Geodiversity Plan
Biodiversity Action Plan
Shoreline Management Plans

AONB place – policies & objectives

WILDLIFE

Why is the AONB important for wildlife?

The Isle of Wight AONB has a rich biological diversity (biodiversity) largely due to the varied geology, landform and ongoing natural processes. The areas of chalk grassland; maritime slopes and cliffs; estuarine habitats; and species are of particular importance regionally, nationally and internationally.

Wildlife and the countryside have evolved with the influence of people throughout history. Since the mid nineteenth century the pace of change has increased, which has had an impact on habitats and species. Intensification of food production in the agricultural sector driven by Government policy over the last 50 years; pressure from increased built development for transport and housing; commerce and industry have all lead to change in the countryside and a decrease in biodiversity as a result of habitat change or loss. For example, Chalk grassland on the Isle of Wight has declined by two-thirds since 1850. However, a mosaic of important habitats remains. Areas of land that have poor soil, saline conditions or steep slopes have avoided the intensification associated with more productive land. The result is small areas of semi-natural habitat of high wildlife value being surrounded by a

more hostile, less bio-diverse, intensively farmed landscape. These may act as important sources of diversity, with the potential to recolonize the wider countryside if farming practice becomes less intensive.

Island status has prevented the introduction of some species such as mink, grey squirrel and deer, and allowed populations of rare species such as dormouse, red squirrel and water vole to flourish. A mild climate and coastal conditions also allow species such as the Glanville fritillary butterfly to live at the northern edge of their European range. The impact of climate change and the potential effect of erosion on coastal habitats is a particular area of concern, due to the limited opportunities for the migration of habitats.

Wildlife in the AONB



Western Yar

© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low.



Wild flowers © Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low.

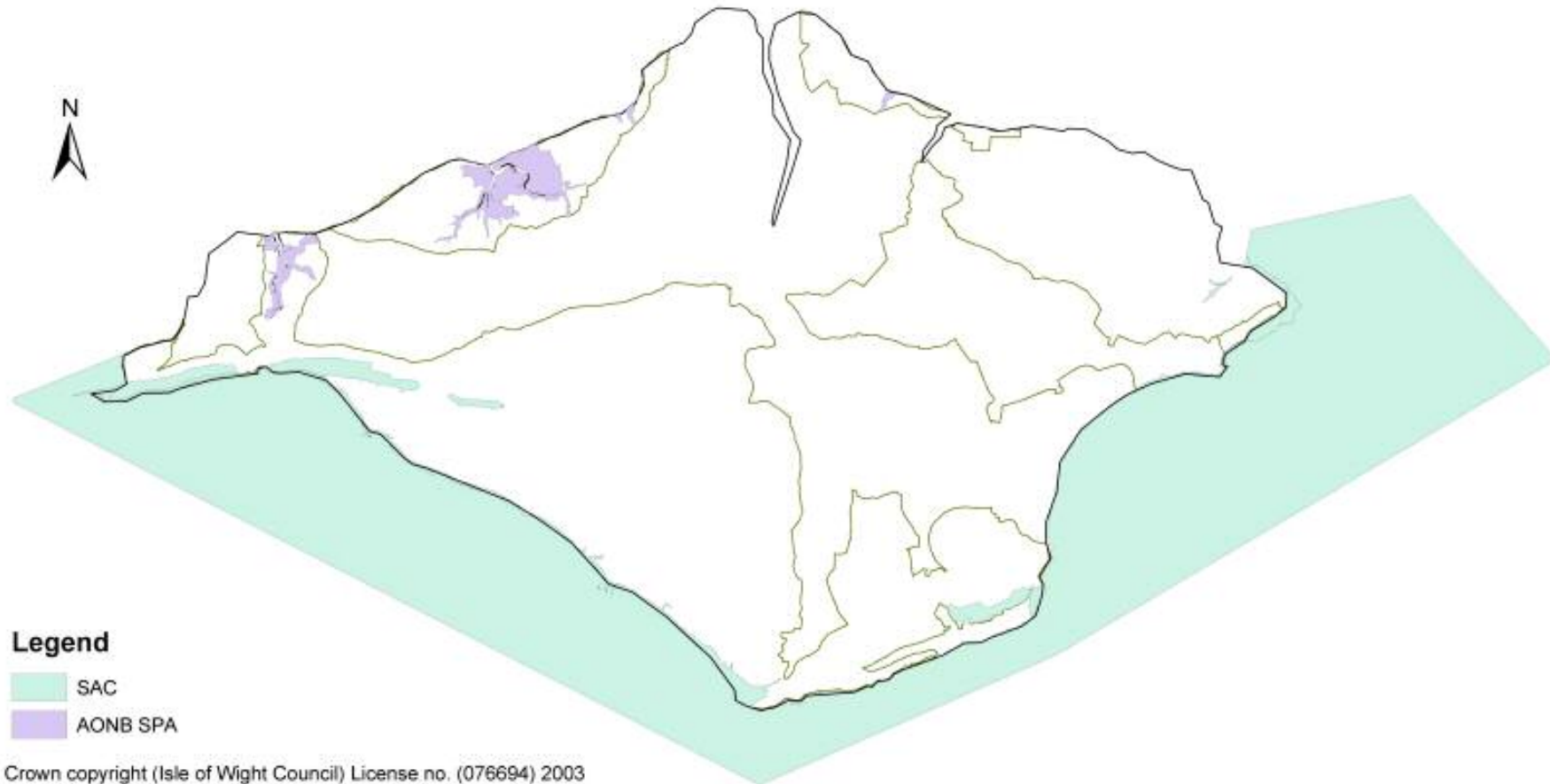
The Biodiversity Action Plan process in the UK started in the early 1990s. Key species and habitats that are of national and international importance throughout the country have been identified. The Government published its national strategy in 1994.¹

In the late 1990s English Nature provided a comprehensive overview of the importance of the Isle of Wight for wildlife in its Natural Area Profile series (a summary of this is given in Appendix E). These documents give an overview of the main earth heritage features (see sections on the landscape & earth heritage themes), the characteristic habitats of the natural area; key issues; and objectives for management.

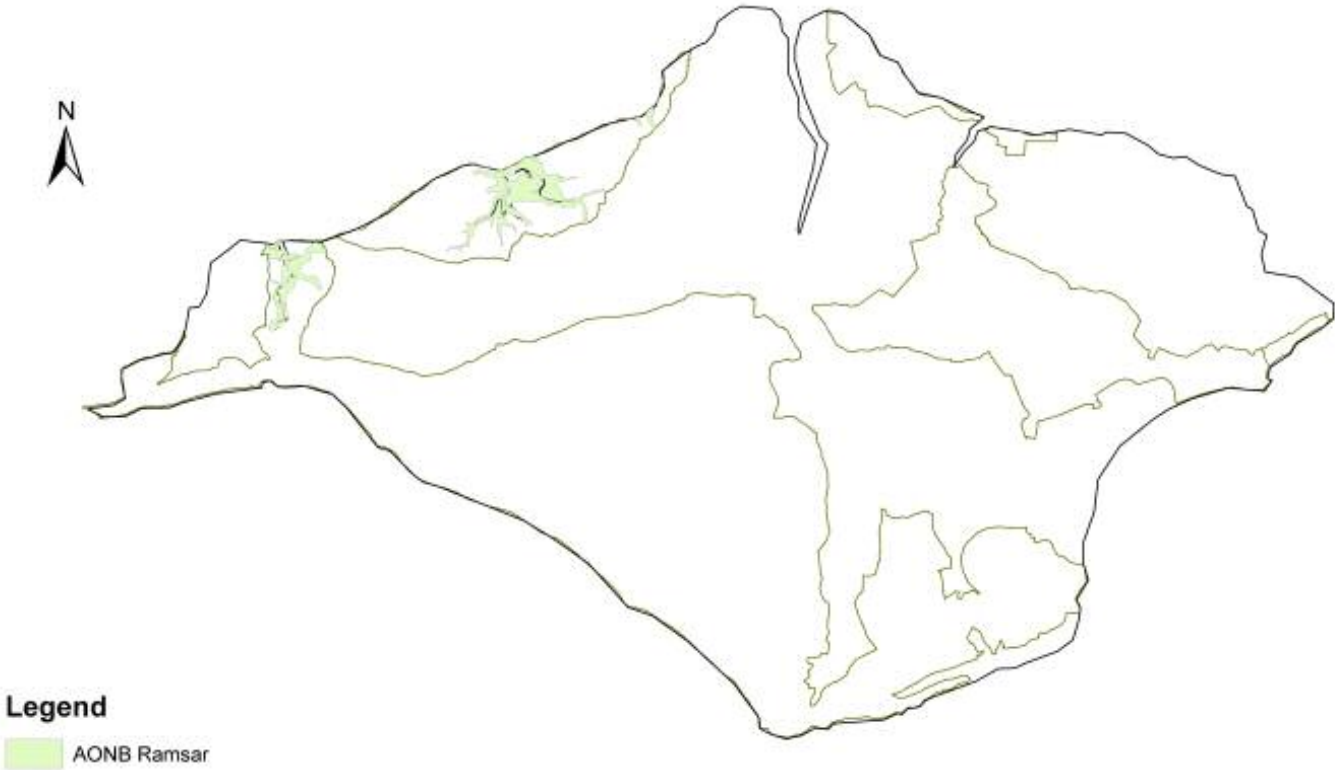
The value of the Isle of Wight AONB for wildlife is reflected in the number of statutory and non-statutory designations within its boundary. These range from locally designated sites through to the internationally important areas for nature conservation (Ramsar, cSAC, SPA, SSSI, NNR, LNR, SINC – see maps overleaf).

¹ Biodiversity The UK Action Plan HMSO 1994

**Map 6 – Special Area of Conservation SAC
Special Protection Area SPA within the AONB**



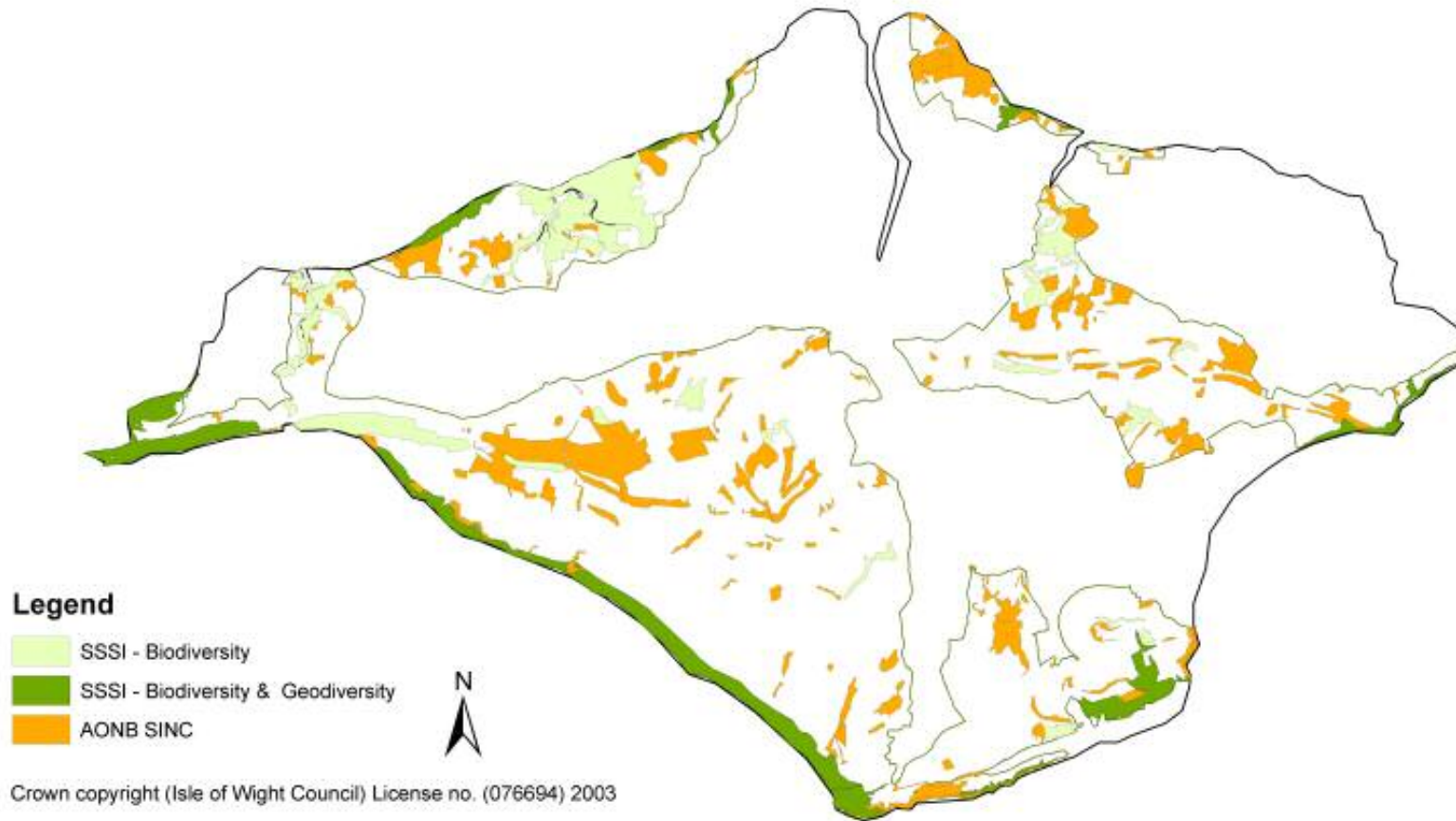
Map 7 – Ramsar sites within the AONB



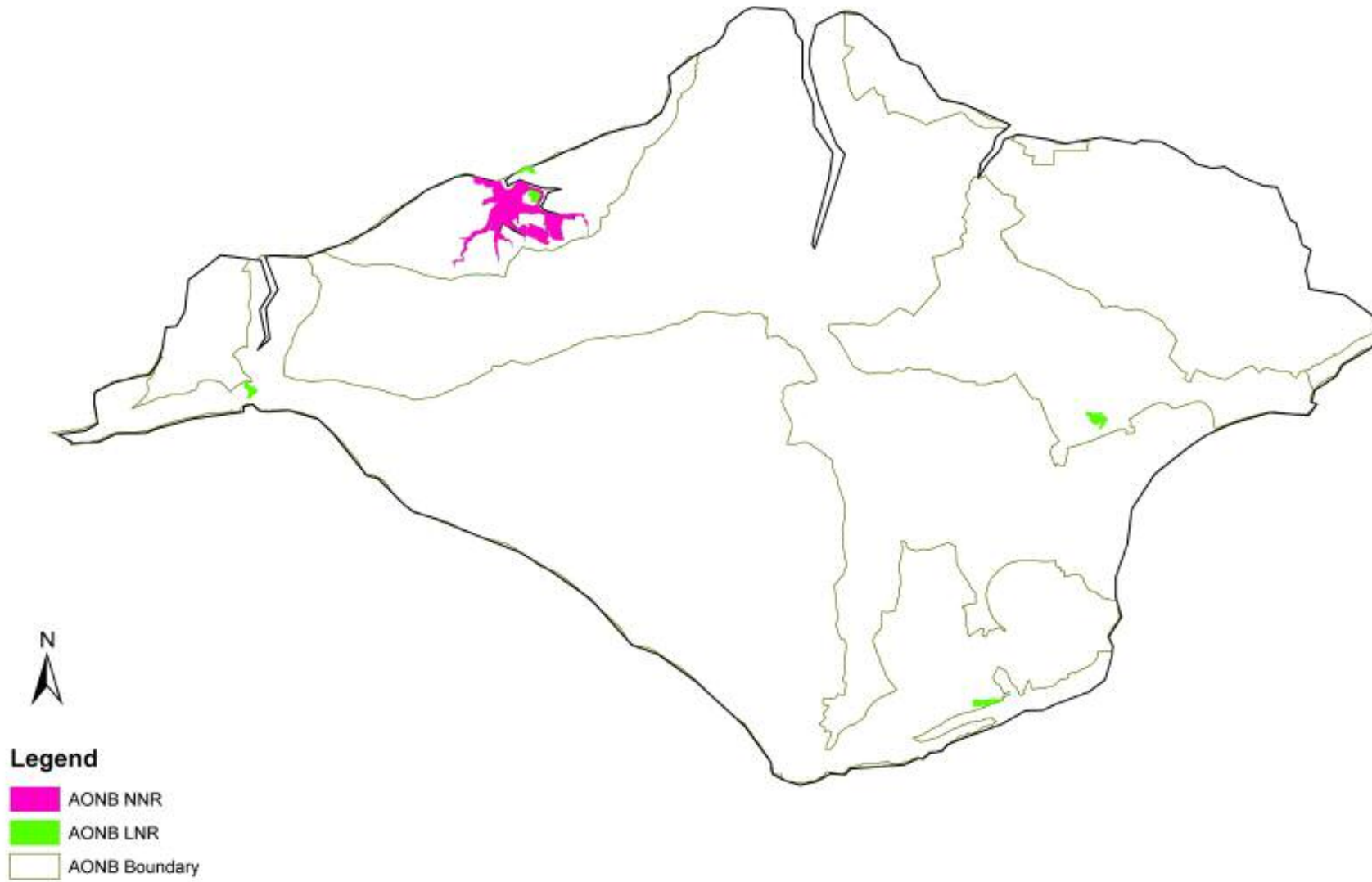
Legend
AONB Ramsar

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**Map 8 – Sites of Special Scientific Interest
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation**



**Map 9 – National Nature Reserves and
Local Nature Reserves within the AONB**



The table below gives data extracted from the Geographical Information Systems (GIS)² datasets which show the composition of features of nature conservation within the Isle of Wight AONB.

Feature	Percentage of overall AONB area	Hectares
Ramsar	2.2	412
Special Protection Area (SPA)	2.9	557
Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC)	3.7	694.5
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	11.4	2156
National Nature Reserve	1.2	228
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)	13.2	2505
Local Nature Reserve	0.2	50.4

NB Some areas are subject to more than one designation and the figures above include this overlap.

In the late 1990s a decision was taken to carry out a review then formulate an Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). The first stage of the review was to publish a

² GIS data interrogated October 2003

detailed audit and assessment of the biodiversity of the wildlife of the Isle of Wight. This identified 54 priority species occurring on the Island, with a further 180 being seen as nationally important. In addition there are a further 455 species which are locally distinctive and are a number of priority habitats. Five broad habitat types are described giving a description; an outline of the resource; its nature conservation importance; key species; key sites and factors affecting the habitat.

Good quality and reliable baseline data is essential to the strategic management of habitats and species within the AONB. Where possible we will work in partnership to obtain data, monitor the impact of activities and initiate project work.

Management Plan and the Isle of Wight BAP. As can be seen from the maps in this section, many of the most valued sites for nature conservation occur within the AONB and are an intrinsic part of landscape character. The primary purpose of the AONB is in itself linked to the conservation and enhancement of wildlife in the area. The BAP process will guide the future of species and their habitats. Although non-statutory, the BAP is an important consideration with regards to policy formulation and development control issues. The Unitary Development Plan provides the framework for proposals for development that may have any impact on biodiversity within the AONB. Opportunities to conserve and enhance wildlife should be considered in all land use and management policies.



Bluebells, Alverstone © Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

There is a need for a close working relationship between the Isle of Wight AONB

What are the threats and challenges for Wildlife within the AONB?

- **Management issues** – either inappropriate management, changes in management techniques or lack of any organised management regime.
- **Habitat fragmentation** – creating island habitats where species are restricted in their movement leads to a decrease in the genetic diversity of communities. Habitat networks are necessary to allow species migration.
- **Recreation and tourism pressures** – increased and inappropriate activities in the AONB can have an impact on wildlife and habitats.
- **Agricultural intensification** – use of fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides; monoculture; increased stock levels; changes to crop rotation can lead to a degradation of habitats. Insufficient grazing and agricultural activity can be equally impactful.
- **Economic viability of farming and reduction in traditional practices** – subsidies and changes to markets are likely to change agricultural practice. This may offer opportunities as well as challenges.
- **Lack of knowledge and awareness** – the link between consumers and land managers needs to be re-established and strengthened. The importance of farming to the quality of the landscape needs greater public understanding. There is also a need for information and advice for new small holding owners and those who have purchased land for leisure and amenity use.
- **Water quality** – pollution and nitrate run-off which cause eutrophication can have devastating impacts on the balance of water habitats.
- **Drainage and water abstraction leading to changes in the natural water table** – there is a need to ensure that water levels are maintained at a level suitable for wildlife while also providing for irrigation and drinking water.
- **Built development including coastal defence works** – the intervention of natural coastal processes should be avoided. There is a need to protect land and property but this must be balanced with the need to ensure the protection of important habitats and geological environments.
- **Climate change and sea level rise** – the impact that this will have on species and habitats has yet to be seen. Where possible areas should be provided to allow the gradual migration of species and habitats as climate and sea levels change.
- **Unknown state of fisheries** – further research is required to identify the condition and extent of fisheries off the Island coast. Historically fishing was an important economic activity for Islanders. The promotion of local produce and products may lead to an expansion in the fishery sector to provide for demand. This will need to be balanced with the need for the conservation of the resource.
- **Delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan targets** – as with all partnership approaches this requires the effort, good will and resources of many organisations. A systematic and strategic approach should provide benefits for wildlife and create a better appreciation of the importance of nature conservation to people's quality of life.

Our vision for wildlife within the Isle of Wight AONB in 2025

Internationally and nationally rare plants and animals are now thriving within the AONB. The wealth and importance of habitats and species of plants and animals and their relationship to landscape character, earth heritage, the historic environment and land use has become more widely understood and valued.

Change within the AONB takes into account the importance of conserving the wildlife resource and seeks to enhance habitats. The impact of climate and agricultural change has been addressed and funding mechanisms have enhanced, linked and created new habitats within the AONB for wildlife.

AONB Management Plan policies – wildlife

W1 – POLICY AREA: AWARENESS

The importance of wildlife and its relationship to the character of the AONB is widely understood.

Policy objectives –

- *To promote the value of wildlife, habitats and nature conservation as an integral part of the character of the AONB.*
- *To develop opportunities to provide educational material, which includes information on nature conservation within the AONB and the contribution wildlife makes to its special qualities and character.*
- *To promote community-based initiatives linking people with nature conservation practice to foster greater community involvement and ownership.*
- *To promote responsible recreational and leisure activities in an attempt to limit any detrimental impact upon wildlife within the AONB.*

W2 – POLICY AREA: RECORDING & MONITORING

The impact of recreational activities, agriculture, land management, potential climate change and development on wildlife within the AONB will be monitored and researched.

Policy objectives –

- *To develop mechanisms for recording and monitoring data about the extents and condition of habitats and species within the AONB, as part of the Biodiversity Action Plan process.*
- *To develop mechanisms to assess the impact of recreational/leisure activities and land management change on the wildlife resource within the AONB.*
- *To develop mechanisms to assess the impact of climate change on habitats and species within the AONB.*
- *To develop partnership projects to manage change where it threatens, or could offer benefit to, the wildlife within the AONB.*

W3 – POLICY AREA: CONSERVING & ENHANCING

Wildlife issues are given due consideration in proposals for development and other change within the AONB. Where possible, specific measures for enhancement of habitats will be sought.

Policy objectives –

- *To ensure the consideration of wildlife issues as part of any proposal for development or land management change within the AONB, where possible securing mitigation and enhancement measures in the process.*
- *To promote and support agri-environment schemes and whole farm plans that provide for wildlife through sustainable agricultural practice.*
- *To ensure that there is a presumption against proposals for development that may impact upon natural coastal processes within the AONB.*

Links to other plans

Community Strategy – *Island Futures*
 Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan (and its successor Local Development Framework)
 Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan
 Site Management Plans for SSSI
 Shoreline Management Plans

AONB place – policies & objectives

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Why is the historic environment important to the AONB?

The complexity of the landscape within the Isle of Wight AONB is a legacy of the intricate relationship between people and place throughout time. Closely linked with earth heritage and nature conservation issues, the historic environment is an integral part of the landscape. It is essential that the importance of this resource is understood if we are to conserve and enhance the AONB.

The AONB through the Ages

Our picture of the Island's development over the last 450,000 years is continually changing as new information comes to light. The gaps that exist within our current interpretations illustrate the continuing need to record information about the historic environment.

Early inhabitants

Within the AONB, evidence of human activity has been found dating back to a time when the land that now forms the Isle of Wight was part of a larger land mass, along with much of modern day continental Europe. One Paleolithic flint-working site found locally may date from as early as 425,000 years ago. But

early humans had little impact on the environment. In post-glacial times, from 10,000 years ago, Mesolithic hunter-gatherers operated in an environment that became increasingly heavily wooded as the climate improved.

New Stone Age people were the first to actively change their surroundings for farming (between approximately 3500 and 2200 BC). Pollen analysis suggests that small areas of natural woodland were cleared on chalky and sandy soils and the area worked for the growing crops. Once soil supplies were exhausted, new areas of woodland were felled. Our current archaeological evidence is concentrated in West Wight and shows the impact of these communities on the landscape. A key feature is the Longstone (Grid Ref SZ407842), the only Neolithic standing stone on the Isle of Wight.

Bronze & Iron Age

From around 2200 BC the advent of metalworking and advances in both cereal production and livestock rearing marked a radical change in the management and development of the landscape. Following the clearance of extensive areas of woodland on the chalk downs for agriculture, Bronze Age communities sited burial mounds in these highly visible areas on the ridgeline or on 'false crests' above settlements (a good example being 'Five Barrows' on Brook Down Grid Ref SZ390852). Today, Bronze Age barrows are significant features in the historic landscape of the AONB. Organised field systems were present in the landscape during later prehistoric times and a

particularly well-preserved example of such a field system within the AONB lies in Brighstone Forest. Prehistoric settlements of Bronze Age and Iron Age date, although known to archaeologists, have left little trace in the modern landscape but the earthworks at Castle Hill, near Mottistone Longstone, may have protected a farming settlement.



The Longstone

© IWCAHES

Prehistoric farming methods have sometimes led to soil erosion and degradation. Hill-wash

deposits in chalk combs have been found to contain Bronze Age material. Much of the heathland that was present on the Island was, until relatively recently, either naturally generated coastal heathland or created by prehistoric woodland clearance of poor soils. In lowland England generally, it has been estimated that around 50% of post-glacial woodland cover had been removed as a result of agricultural activity by the earlier part of the Iron Age (c.500 BC)

Roman Vectis

With the coming of the Romans to the Isle of Wight (Vectis) the existing systems of agriculture were refined and more efficiently organised in response to a market economy. Roman building techniques and culture were introduced into some areas of the Island, while in other areas life often continued as it had before for the Iron Age farming communities. A good example of this is the villa at Brading (Grid Ref SZ600862), where a late Iron Age settlement was superseded by a simple early villa and then by a more sophisticated villa complex at its full extent dating from around AD 300. The remains of a field system on Brading Down may be associated with the nearby villa.

Anglo-Saxons & Normans

The withdrawal of Roman administration and government left Roman Britain, including the Isle of Wight, vulnerable to attack and invasion. Jutes and then West Saxons colonized the Island. Important Anglo-Saxon cemeteries were discovered on Chessell Down and Bowcombe Down in the nineteenth

century but have left no traces in the present landscape. Place names, however, have left an enduring record of the Anglo-Saxon colonization of the Island. Many surviving settlements, farmsteads and estates originated in Anglo-Saxon times and are mentioned in the Domesday Book. Anglo-Saxon estate boundaries recorded in charters have also, in some cases, survived to the present day.



The Middle Ages

Medieval settlement patterns within the AONB consisted of small, loosely nucleated or nucleated settlements. However, the planned towns of Yarmouth and Newtown were created in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. During the Middle Ages and early modern period, land ownership was formalised and recorded in wills, and land terriers. Boundaries were often given further importance by being used to demarcate manorial and parish administrative areas, the integrity of which was checked annually through rogation or beating the bounds. Many

can still be seen in the landscape of the AONB today.

Post medieval landscape changes include industrial and military activities, which have resulted in a wealth of structures and sites on the Island. The designed parklands still visible within the landscape of the AONB date mainly from the later eighteenth century and from the nineteenth century, although earlier designed landscapes are known from documentary sources (Basford 1989). Several such sites within the AONB are recorded on the National Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest held by English Heritage (such as Appuldurcombe, Grid Ref SZ542801, and Osborne, Grid Ref SZ519949). Further locally important sites are listed in the Unitary Development Plan.

The agrarian and industrial revolutions saw change in farming techniques, and in the availability, transportation and production of building materials. All of these changes had an impact on landscape and settlement within the AONB.



Milestone, Compton Farm
© IW AONB Unit – photographer John Brownscombe

Conservation of the historic environment

The Isle of Wight Council Archaeology and Historic Environment Service (IWCAHES) is currently undertaking a historic landscape characterisation study. When completed this will describe the historic landscapes and their key features and elements across the Isle of Wight. More information about the historic basis of the landscapes that we see today will be invaluable when considering the importance of the historic environment to landscape character and the distinctiveness of the AONB.

Some archaeological features within the AONB are scheduled monuments and are thus afforded statutory protection. Protection is afforded to all of the archaeological features of the historic environment within the AONB through inclusion in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). This record is maintained by IWCAHES.

The historic settlement pattern within the AONB is a mixture of small, loosely nucleated settlements and dispersed settlements, reflecting that of the Island generally. Settlements often occur at the base of the chalk downs, such as at Mottistone, Brighstone and Shorwell. The form of these settlements varies and small nucleated clusters such as Calbourne, Niton and Shorwell, church-manor complexes such as Arreton and Gatcombe, and linear settlements such as Chillerton all occur. Yarmouth and Newtown, historic ports on natural inlets from the sea, are both planned medieval boroughs. This variety of settlement form is an essential part of the landscape

character within the AONB. Conservation Area status for many of these historic towns and villages seeks to retain this character by controlling and influencing proposed changes.

The Isle of Wight AONB is unusual in that there is no one strong vernacular building style. Various traditional designs reflect the complexity of the geology of the Island and the materials that were available locally. As with land use, much of the traditional architecture of lowland southern England can be seen on the Island – from chalk and thatch; stone and slate; brick and tile to ship lap timber clad cottages. The Countryside Design Summary (Isle of Wight Council 1998) gives further details of these distinctive building styles and an overview of their context within the Island's landscape. Many buildings of particular merit are given Listed Building status, which brings a greater level of protection and control over any change. The Buildings Record maintained by IWCAHES provides a record of all pre-Victorian buildings.

Section 6 of the Unitary Development Plan, 'Building conservation and the historic environment', provides the context for the protection of the historic environment within the AONB.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport is currently reviewing the designation and management regimes for the historic environment, and the legislation that supports them. It is likely that the review will make recommendations for delivering sustainable management through the mechanisms of

management plans and partnerships. Attention should be drawn to the potential of agri-environment schemes for the sustainable management of the historic environment in rural areas of the Island.

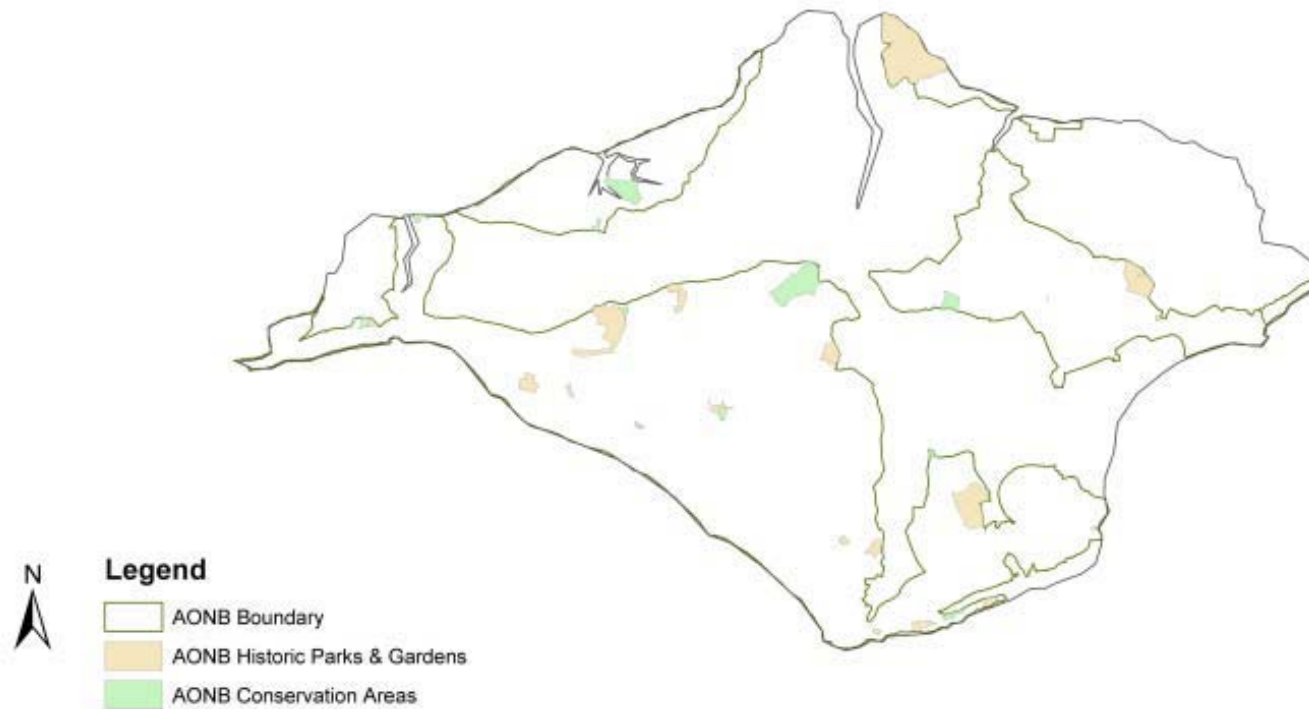
English Heritage's 'State of the Historic Environment Report' (November 2002) provides an assessment of the threats and challenges facing the historic environment both nationally and with a regional overview.

In addition, English Heritage is currently undertaking a designation review.



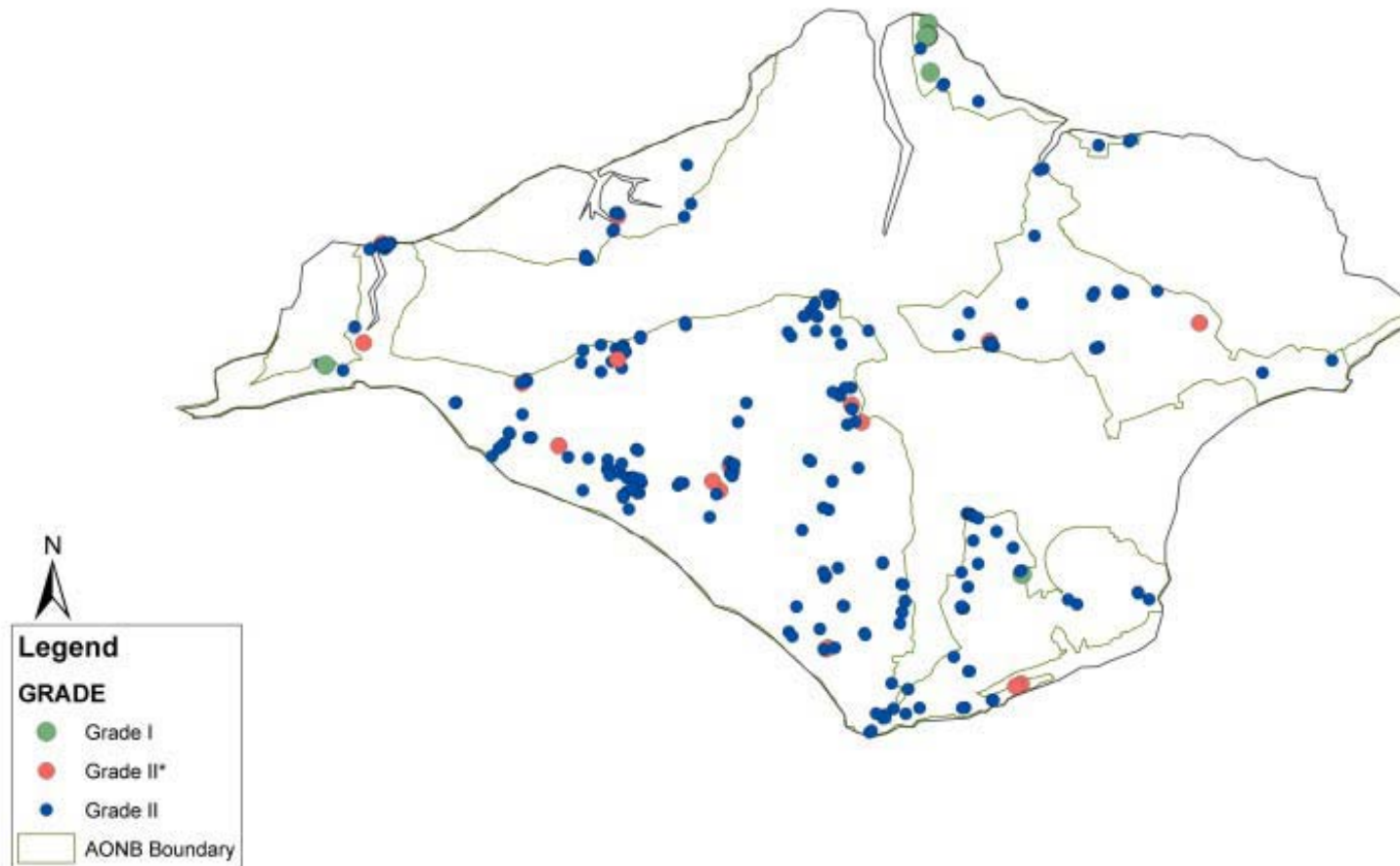
Newtown Town Hall
© Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

Map 10 – Historic Parks & Gardens & Conservation Areas within the AONB



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Map 11 – Listed buildings within the AONB





Crown copyright (Isle of Wight Council) License no. (076694) 2003

**Map 12– Sites and Monuments Record entries
within the AONB**



Legend

-  AONB Boundary
-  Sites and Monuments

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Key features and elements of the historic environment within the AONB are as follows:

- buried archaeology and palaeoenvironments;
- historic buildings;
- industrial and military structures;
- historic parks and gardens;
- historic ports, the use of estuaries and maritime archaeology, submerged landscapes;
- earthworks and structural remains;
- settlement and field patterns;
- managed and farmed landscapes;
- ancient woodlands and commons;
- trackways, paths and boundaries;
- place names.

The table below presents data extracted from the Geographical Information System (GIS)¹ datasets. It shows the composition of features of the historic environment within the Isle of Wight AONB.

Feature	Extent within AONB
Conservation Area	266 Hectares
Historic Parks & Gardens	793 Hectares
Sites & Monuments Buildings Record	1542 entries of which – Grade I = 20 Grade II* = 16 Grade II = 305
Sites & Monuments Record	2751 entries of which – Scheduled Ancient Monuments = 221



'Five Barrows', Brook Down

© IWCAHES

¹ GIS data interrogated October 2003.

What are the threats and challenges to the historic environment within the AONB?

- **Development pressures** – the historic environment should be considered in all proposals for development. All development has the potential to damage this important and finite resource. The Unitary Development Plan provides the framework for proposals for development that may have an impact on archaeology and the historic environment within the AONB. Opportunities to record and enhance the historic environment should be considered in all land use and management practices within the AONB.
- **Impact of recreation and leisure activities** – changes in the way the countryside is used for leisure and sport may place increased pressure on the historic environment.
- **Portable antiquities** – in order to maintain a true record and understanding of the historic environment, all finds should be recorded.
- **Farming and forestry practices** – some farming and forestry operations can damage the historic environment. This includes, for example, deep sloughing and plantation forestry. We need greater understanding of the

impact of these activities on the historic environment. Education also has a role, to encourage sympathetic land management such as agri-environment schemes and non-cultivation in areas of high historic environment importance.

- **Sustainability** – the needs of the historic environment must be considered in all proposals for change in order to retain the ‘time depth’ (a legacy of the activities of people throughout history) of the landscape for future generations.
- **Climate change and coastal erosion** – increased erosion as a result of changing weather patterns and the impact of sea level rise can lead to exposed archaeology and palaeoenvironments. Our knowledge of these assets will soon be lost if they are not recorded.
- **Skills and resource shortages** – funding for the recording and management of the historic environment is required if we are to ensure that its continuing contribution to the landscape and the AONB’s sense of place is retained.
- **Awareness and intellectual access** – more and more information is being compiled about the archaeology and historic environment of the AONB. We need to find ways to involve the community in this and to allow this resource to influence policy and land

management in the future. The landscape character of the AONB is rich in history. Promoting this as a fundamental element of the quality and enjoyment of today’s AONB will help us to secure support for its protection, conservation and celebration.

- **Incomplete records/knowledge of the resource** – it must be acknowledged that there will always be an incomplete record of the historic environment. Developing a research framework can help identify strategic ways to address the gaps in our knowledge. Good quality and reliable baseline data is essential if we are to understand the impact of activities that threaten the historic environment within the AONB.
- **Agencies and utilities** – permitted development rights afforded to agencies and utilities often allow works to take place without prior consultation. Public bodies whose activities may have an impact on the historic environment now have a statutory duty of regard towards the AONB. This will encourage such bodies to enter into early informal consultation prior to undertaking works.

Our vision for the historic environment within the Isle of Wight AONB in 2025

There is a high level of understanding about the intrinsic relationship between the historic environment, landscape character, earth heritage and nature conservation.

We know more about the resource and its condition and are better placed to identify the pressures and threats that it faces.

Advice, and resources have been made available to help to secure the protection and sustainable management of the historic environment – a reflection of the increased appreciation of its value to the ‘sense of place’ of the AONB.

AONB Management Plan policies – the historic environment

HE1 - POLICY AREA: AWARENESS

The importance of the historic environment and its relationship to the character of the AONB is widely understood.

Policy objectives –

- *To seek opportunities to promote the importance of the historic environment to the special qualities and character of the AONB.*
- *To encourage greater community involvement in the assessment, description, management and celebration of the historic environment.*
- *To develop specific opportunities to provide educational material that includes the historic environment and its role in the special qualities and character of the AONB.*
- *To identify where there are gaps in our knowledge base that require further research.*

- *To provide an authoritative information and advice service with regard to the historic environment within the AONB.*

HE2 - POLICY AREA: RECORDING & MONITORING

The impact of recreational activities, agriculture, land management, potential climate change and development on the historic environment within the AONB is monitored and researched.

Policy objectives –

- *To develop mechanisms to research, record and monitor the extent and condition of the historic environment within the AONB.*
- *To establish mechanisms to monitor the impact of change upon the historic environment and its impacts on the special qualities and character of the AONB.*
- *To develop partnership projects to manage and influence change where it threatens or offers an opportunity to benefit the historic environment within the AONB.*

HE3 - POLICY AREA: CONSERVING & ENHANCING

Historic environment issues are given due consideration in proposals for development and other change within the AONB. Where possible, specific measures for enhancement and protection of this resource will be sought.

Policy objectives –

- *To seek appropriate measures to record, protect and manage the historic environment within the planning process, including, where possible, mitigation and management enhancement.*
- *To provide guidance to inform decision/policy making and to influence activities that are outside of any regulatory process.*

Links to other plans

Community Strategy – *Island Futures*
Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan
(and its successor Local Development Framework)
Sites and Monuments Record
Buildings at Risk Register

Section 10

AONB people – policies & objectives

LIVING & WORKING

The landscape of the AONB has been shaped over the centuries by the activities of local people. It adds to the quality of life of communities within the AONB and is the draw for the millions of visitors that come to the Isle of Wight each year.

Working with communities can lead to new and innovative approaches in resolving local problems. Involving people in active conservation, enhancement and celebration of the AONB will raise their awareness of the value of designation as an AONB.

Local people who are more aware will support development that conserves and enhances the qualities of the AONB.

The Unitary Development Plan (and its successor the Local Development Framework) provide the local statutory basis for consideration and decision making relating to development within the designation. This Management Plan seeks to add value to that process and to provide guidance on the issues that have a direct influence on the AONB.

Recognition of the need for sympathetic design of new development within the AONB, reflecting vernacular style and materials, will ensure that the AONB's unique 'sense of place' is maintained.

Built development within AONBs should be required to meet a higher standard and inevitably will need to be more innovative.

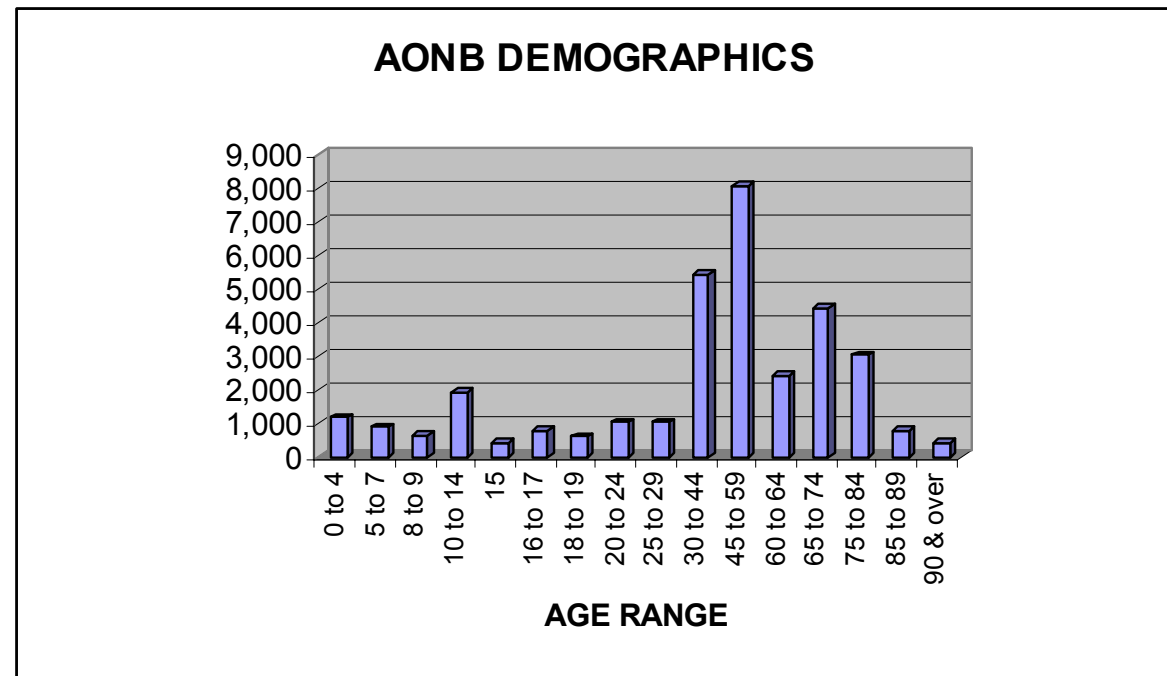
This should provide opportunities to create examples of best practice that will help to raise the standard of development generally.

The health and vibrancy of local communities has a direct impact on pressures for development and access to goods and

services. Many studies have been undertaken to assess the economic and social needs of the Island's communities¹.

Population

The graph below shows the make up in terms of age of the AONB population. Total Isle of Wight population 132,731, total AONB population 33,079 equating to 25% of the total population.



Source – Data cut to AONB boundary from 2001 Census

¹ *Island Futures – Isle of Wight Community Strategy, Isle of Wight Rural Strategy (Isle of Wight Rural Issues Group), Area Investment Framework,*

What are the threats and challenges to living & working within the AONB?

Affordable housing – there is a lack of affordable housing in rural areas. The local community is being priced out of the market because of the demand for houses in rural setting.

Transport provision – although distances between settlements on the Isle of Wight are lower than in other rural areas of England, a high proportion of rural dwellers do not have access to a car during the working day. They therefore rely on public transport.

Services in decline – private and public services have declined in rural villages. Health services have been centralised, so people now have to travel greater distances to obtain health care. Post offices, shops and pubs have declined in the face of increased competition from towns and changes in legislation.



Shorwell Post Office
© Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

Percentage of AONB households (delivery points) within set distances of key services

Service	Distance	% of population
ATMs	<4KM	84.33
	>4KM	15.67
BANKS & BUILDING SOCIETIES	<4KM	82.91
	>4KM	17.09
DOCTORS	<4KM	89.56
	>4KM	10.44
JOB CENTRES	<8KM	84.26
	>8KM	15.74
LIBRARIES	<4KM	84.86
	>4KM	15.14
PETROL STATIONS	<4KM	89.96
	>4KM	10.04
PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS POINTS	<5KM	85.51
	>5KM	14.49
POST OFFICES	<2KM	98.43
	>2KM	1.57

Source – Data cut to AONB boundary from Countryside Agency State of the Countryside Indicators

Social exclusion – many people who are less well off, disabled, unemployed or housebound are excluded from community life. Although voluntary and community groups work hard to address this, pockets of rural poverty are often hidden by conspicuous affluence.

Rural crime – increasingly, problems that are traditionally associated with urban areas, such as vandalism, are now a concern in rural areas of the Island.

Employment – the recent national trend for businesses to relocate to rural areas has not occurred to any great extent within the Isle of Wight AONB. This may be largely due to our Island status and the increased transport costs that this brings. There is scope to encourage sympathetic location of rural industry within the AONB where it can be demonstrated to bring social and economic benefits and is not detrimental to the landscape or environment. In particular, farm-based diversification and processing of agricultural products and green tourism initiatives may provide opportunities for rural employment. Income levels are given in the table below.

Income levels within the Isle of Wight AONB

	Mean income	Median income	Total households	% households below 60% median
ISLE OF WIGHT	21,474	16,546	36,086	34.09%

NB Isle of Wight AONB has the second lowest mean income level out of the national family of AONBs.

Source – Data cut to AONB boundary from Countryside Agency State of the Countryside Indicators

Development – the impact of development on the character of the landscape and settlements within the AONB is one of the most significant issues for AONB management. The graph below summarises development pressure in the AONB in the last three financial years. 65% of development pressure within the AONB during this period was for extensions, minor dwellings and listed building consents. 22% of all planning applications on the Isle of Wight were within the AONB.

The Unitary Development Plan provides the basis for considering the impact of proposed development within the AONB. The planning process is the main regulator of development pressure within the AONB. There is a presumption against large-scale development within the AONB. Where there is no alternative to the development, a thorough assessment of its potential environmental and visual impact is required. This often triggers

the need for a formal environmental impact assessment.

Small-scale development is less well regulated. It may benefit from the provision of further guidance e.g. Village Design Statements and Parish Plans, and other such supplementary planning guidance. Certain activities are allowed under permitted development rights. Although this is more stringent in AONBs, the cumulative impact of such small-scale change can be damaging to the character of an area and its overall 'sense of place'. The agricultural sector, for example, benefits from permitted rights for development.

Certain authorities and public bodies also have specific permitted development rights for public services such as highways and the utility companies. Such activities are now covered by the new duty of regard for the AONB as a result of the Countryside and

Rights of Way Act 2000, in addition to existing duties under the 1949 National Parks and Access to Countryside Act.

The AONB is often seen as a bar to all development. While it is essential that the landscape is conserved, this should not exclude change. Development that is of high-quality design, reflects the local distinctiveness of the AONB, enhances the area and creates jobs or services for the community, should be supported.

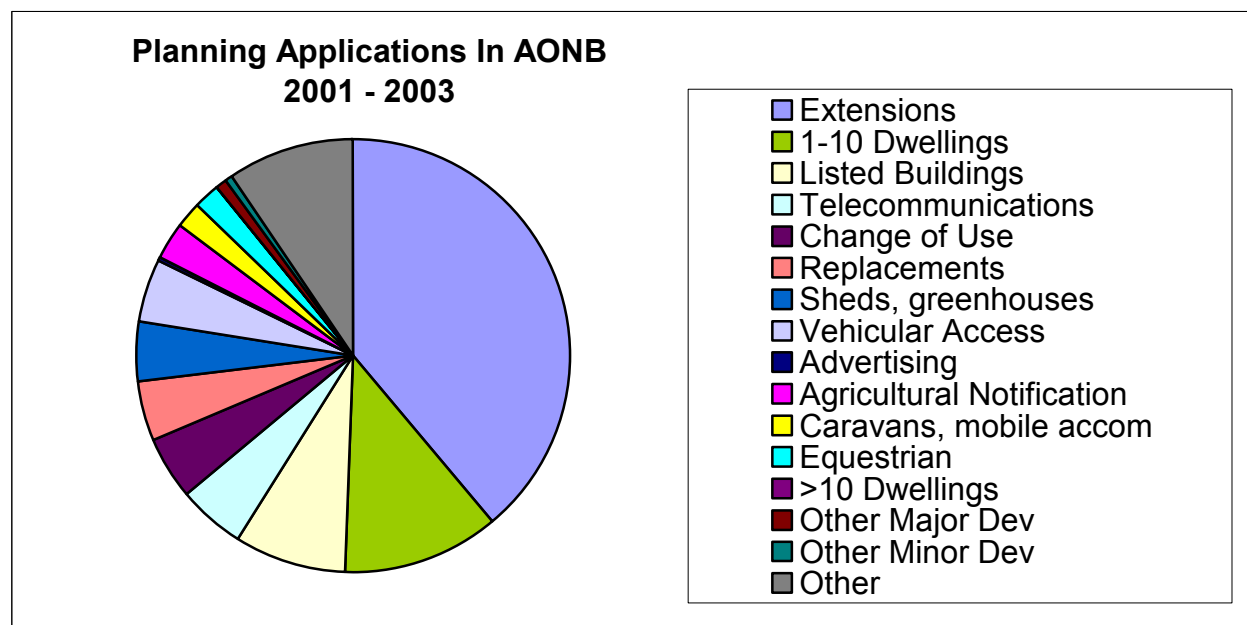
The AONB designation offers the opportunity to champion sustainable and innovative development where the environmental, social and economic benefits are in balance.

Resource use and waste – the level of consumption and use of resources on the Isle of Wight is related to:

- Island status (transporting goods on and off the Island);
- natural resource availability/management;
- lifestyle.

All of these factors have an impact on the landscape.

Two studies on the Isle of Wight, *Island State - Ecological Footprint Analysis* (2000) and the *Renewable Energy Strategy* (2002) identify how changes in local food production, waste management, energy generation and efficiency could make lifestyles on the Isle of Wight more sustainable. These changes have implications for landscape character in the AONB. We must therefore ensure that they



are assessed fully in terms of the socio-economic implications, as we support and encourage moves towards a more sustainable future.

The 'ecological footprint' for the Isle of Wight is more than twice the global average. In other words, if everyone in the world lived like the population on the Isle of Wight lives, we would need 2½ planets.

The *Island State* study suggests that the Island's ecological footprint could be reduced by 10% through a combination of measures that are currently feasible, including:

- more local food production and consumption to reduce transport to and from the Island and provide reliable markets for farmers to sell their produce;
- greater waste recovery and minimisation – this includes developing markets for recycled goods, encouraging businesses to use resources more efficiently, education about waste, and using consumer power to influence commerce;
- more energy efficiency through, for example, insulation and by looking at ways to generate renewable energy.

Government Waste Targets:

Reduce industrial and commercial waste sent to landfill by 85% of 1998 levels by 2005

Recover municipal waste: 40% by 2005; 45% by 2010; 67% by 2015.

Recycle or compost: 25% by 2005; 30% by 2010; 33% by 2015.



Yarmouth

© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low

Energy – of the total energy demand on the Island, 56 % is currently met by piped gas from the mainland, 26% from petrol and diesel used from transport, 16% from electricity imported from the mainland and 0.4% from the 'waste to energy' (RDF) plant.

The UK government target is to supply 10% of the UK's electricity from renewable energy by 2010. This forms part of the government's Climate Change Programme, which aims to cut UK emissions of CO₂ to 20% below 1990 levels by 2010.

Options for meeting this target on the Isle of Wight were explored through the *Renewable Energy Strategy 2002*: wind, biomass, tidal currents, waste to energy plants, bio diesel, solar water heating and photo-voltaic cells were all considered.

The *Renewable Energy Strategy* recognises the opportunities that using the Island's renewable energy resources could have for the Island community. These are:

- reducing the environmental impact of energy generation,
- developing and regenerating the economy,
- diversification of rural incomes,
- promoting the Island as a centre for green tourism.

WIND TURBINES IN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

The AONB designation and Heritage Coast are identified as one of the main opportunities and/or threats for renewable energy development on the Island.

There is no planning presumption against wind energy schemes within protected landscapes, and a number of sites exist in both National Parks and AONBs in England and Wales. However, for future proposals the Countryside Agency and the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have issued a position statement. This aims to ensure that a balanced approach is achieved between the need to reduce greenhouse gases and the need to protect, for future generations, the nation's finest countryside. This position statement makes the following points:

- Large commercial wind energy developments within AONBs, or in locations outside the AONB which affect people's enjoyment of the AONB, are likely to be incompatible with the objectives of the designation and should therefore be resisted in these areas.
- The character of the countryside in some parts of an AONB or its surroundings may mean that small-scale wind energy schemes (one to three turbines ranging up to 500kW, in the region of 60m height to blade tip, and with clusters no less than 10km apart)¹ could be accommodated, where they do not compromise the objectives of the designation and respect the local countryside character.
- A full environmental impact assessment should be carried out before any planning application for wind energy schemes are submitted. Particular consideration should be given to the effects of related infrastructure, such as grid connection, and to the cumulative impact of multiple schemes.

In addition to the above joint statement, the Countryside Agency advocates the following approach regarding wind energy developments.

- Adopting a sequential approach – prioritising the development's potential to complement other developments and assist regeneration. The sequential approach comprises four general categories:
 - First – brown field/regeneration sites
 - Second – non-sensitive countryside
 - Third – sensitive countryside
 - Last – designated landscapes and their margins

This is additionally supported by the Isle of Wight Renewable Energy Strategy.

It is also suggested that the landscape character based approach is used to produce guidance that identifies the potential, conditions and constraints for wind energy. This approach can help responses to proposals for such developments to be considered in an informed and strategic way, rather than having to consider each application in isolation as it arises.

There is a need to consider this in light of the recent draft Planning Policy Statement 22 – Renewable Energy which is at the time of writing this plan out to consultation. Although acknowledging the importance of AONBs PPS22 is clear in stating that sequential approaches should not be used for the consideration of applications.

Our vision for living & working in the Isle of Wight AONB in 2025

People have a greater appreciation of the importance of the result of change to the character of the AONB. The AONB continues to be a vibrant and healthy place in which to live and work, with access to services, facilities, jobs and housing for local communities.

Change and development within the AONB has also led to its conservation and enhancement.

People are less reliant on private cars because of affordable and reliable public transport and easy and convenient public paths for walking and cycling. Information technology, communications, recycling and renewable energy have brought benefits to living and working in the AONB without damaging its intrinsic character.

AONB Management Plan policies – living & working

RURAL COMMUNITY AND ECONOMY

LW1 - POLICY AREA: AWARENESS

Viable, vibrant and inclusive rural communities are supported and their relationship to the landscape character of the AONB widely understood.

Policy objectives for LW1

- *To develop a greater sense of ownership and value of the AONB designation by communities.*
- *To help to develop community-based approaches to landscape character assessment and community planning, identifying local distinctiveness and sense of place as integral to such approaches.*

LW2 - POLICY AREA: CONSERVING AND ENHANCING

People are actively involved in conserving, enhancing and celebrating the AONB and in decision-making processes for its future.

Policy objectives for LW2 & LW3

- *To seek to identify and promote the economic value of the designation to its communities.*
- *To work with partners to ensure that AONB communities are well served, with sufficient access to goods and services.*
- *To work with partners to ensure that sustainable approaches are taken to address all issues affecting rural communities within the AONB.*

LW3 - POLICY AREA: CONSERVING & ENHANCING

Sustainable development conserves and enhances landscape character and brings jobs, services and economic well-being.

Links to other plans

UDP and its successor Local Development Framework
Community Strategy – *Island Futures*
Agenda 21 Strategy – *Island Voices*
Renewable Energy Strategy
Parish Plans and Village Design Statements
Isle of Wight Countryside Design Summary
Isle of Wight Rural Strategy

DEVELOPMENT

**LW4 - POLICY AREA:
CONSERVING & ENHANCING**

Planning policies are coherent and their implementation consistent, affording the necessary protection, conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

**LW5 - POLICY AREA:
CONSERVING & ENHANCING**

Support is given to the need to recognise and reinforce local character and distinctiveness in the design, scale, setting and materials that are used when converting existing traditional buildings and new development within the AONB and its settlements.

**LW6 - POLICY AREA:
CONSERVING & ENHANCING**

Sustainable approaches to development are encouraged where they conserve and enhance the AONB.

Policy objectives for LW4, LW5 & LW6

- *To support development of a nature and scale appropriate to its setting that does not compromise AONB purposes.*
- *To ensure that planning policy and supplementary planning guidance considers the AONB and its purposes.*
- *To encourage greater community involvement in the description and formulation of locally based approaches to complement the planning process and help to conserve and enhance the AONB.*
- *To initiate preparation of guidance and other documents that seek to influence specific activities and features that have a potentially damaging impact upon the AONB designation.*

Links to other plans

UDP and its successor Local Development Framework
Community Strategy – *Island Futures*
Agenda 21 Strategy – *Island Voices*
Renewable Energy Strategy
Parish Plans and Village Design Statements
Isle of Wight Countryside Design Summary
Isle of Wight Rural Strategy

AONB people – policies & objectives

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT

The highways network provides access to the diverse landscapes across the AONB. It provides the means for transporting goods and to access many services for people who live and work in or visit the area. Public rights of way on the Island offer an unrivalled opportunity to experience the qualities that led to AONB designation by walking, horse riding and cycling. The Isle of Wight Council was acknowledged as meeting the 'national target' for Rights of Way in 1998. It was the first local authority to do so, and six years on it is still the only local authority to have received this accolade. The highway authority is charged with the maintenance, protection and management of the highway network.



Road Signs
© Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low



Cycle Stand, Island Chines Project
© Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Rights of Way Improvement Plan set out the highway authority's issues and priorities.

Isle of Wight Local Transport Plan

The LTP identifies the following broad issues that have an impact on the highway network:

- rural transport issues – *cost, availability;*
- high unemployment – *seasonal variation;*
- increased cross-Solent traffic – *more vehicles arriving on the Island;*
- changing distribution patterns – *bulk freight to lorry distribution;*
- tourism development – *impact of cars in summer months;*
- social exclusion – *inability to access facilities, goods and services;*
- cross-Solent links – *frequency and cost.*

Relationship to landscape character

The rights of way network, and to some extent the minor and unclassified road network, are often key features in the AONB landscape. Verges, hedges and historic signs all add to the local distinctiveness of the landscape. Design of new road schemes, signage and road furniture need to be sympathetic to the landscape to prevent this distinctiveness being eroded through a standardised approach.

Maintaining strategic roads within the AONB is an on-going challenge, especially in areas that are subject to coastal erosion and/or active land movement.

At the time of writing, an environmental impact assessment for a proposal to support and realign the Undercliff Drive (Grid Ref SZ516760) is being prepared. This will need to balance carefully the social and economic need for the road with its potential impact on the environment.



What are the threats and challenges of traffic & transport within the AONB?

- **Engineering/urbanisation through a standardised approach** – generic approaches to signage and to the design of road schemes have a major impact on the local distinctiveness and character of an area. Protecting an area's character has to be balanced with the need to maintain the highway and ensure that it is safe to use; this is often a difficult balance to strike.
- **Maintaining and protecting verges** – increasing traffic levels and larger vehicles can lead to verges being eroded. Illegal and unregulated parking on verges can also cause problems.
- **Proliferation of signs and road furniture** – highways signage can have an urbanising impact on the rural highway network. Traffic regulation requires signage and there are often few discretionary powers regarding its design, size and placement. Maintaining existing signage and programmes to rationalise them can help to ensure that the impact of signage is minimised. The use of temporary plastic signs and of street furniture for fly posting should be discouraged.
- **Public transport** – this needs to be regular, reliable, affordable and convenient if it is to provide an alternative to the car. Alternatives such as walking and cycling may also offer opportunities for non-vehicular travel for work and leisure.
- **Visitors and seasonal increases in traffic volume** – the contribution to the local economy by visitors to the Island is an important factor in the well-being of local communities and business. Increases in traffic volume in the summer months can have an impact on rural villages and 'honey pot' tourist sites.
- **Speed of traffic in villages and on the rural highway network** – measures to reduce speeds on rural networks and in village centres may help to encourage greater non-vehicular use of the highway. The rural road network is often subject to the national speed limit, although the physical character of the road may prevent such high speeds being attempted. The 'Quiet Road' pilot scheme at Alverstone has had some success at attempting to persuade a more considerate approach by drivers in narrow rural lanes.
- **Traffic noise** – tranquility is an important aspect of the special qualities of the landscape character of the AONB. Traffic noise can have an impact on this and we need to consider its management.
- **Rights of way network** – this extensive, well-managed and well-used network offers opportunities for access on foot, horse and cycle across the whole of the AONB¹. Further opportunities exist to integrate this network with the use of the broader highways network. However, illegal access by motorised vehicles to the AONB off routes that have motorised vehicular rights can cause problems and requires proper management.

¹ GIS interrogation indicates 217Km Public Bridleway and 185Km Public Footpath within the AONB

Our vision for traffic & transport within the AONB in 2025

People have become less dependant on the private car to access services, facilities, employment or leisure opportunities within the AONB.

Traffic levels and speeds have been reduced, making walking and cycling more enjoyable and safe.

More visitors and local people have greater transport choice, and can take advantage of an efficient, regular and affordable public transport system.

Roads have been designed to be in keeping with the local distinctiveness and landscape character of the AONB through sensitive signage, design and maintenance, providing a safe and well-managed network for both motorised and non-motorised traffic.

**AONB Management Plan policies
– traffic & transport**

**TT1 - POLICY AREA:
CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT**

The importance of the AONB’s local distinctiveness and character is recognised and given due consideration as part of maintenance and improvements to the highway network.

**TT2 - POLICY AREA:
CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT**

Sustainable transport initiatives within the AONB are supported as a way of reducing the impact and volume of traffic on the AONB.

Policy objectives for TT1 & TT2

- *To work with the local highway authority to seek to ensure that wherever possible the character and local distinctiveness of the AONB is conserved and enhanced through the design and maintenance of the highways network.*
- *In partnership, to help to identify opportunities to provide and promote public transport for rural communities and visitors of the AONB.*
- *In partnership, to identify the impact of traffic, and opportunities to manage it, within the AONB.*
- *To promote the use and protection of the public rights of way network as an important means accessing the AONB.*

Links to other plans

Community Strategy – Island Futures
 Isle of Wight Local Transport Plan
 Isle of Wight Rights of Way Improvement Plan
 Unitary Development Plan (and its successor
 Local Development Framework)

AONB people – policies & objectives

FARMING & FORESTRY

Earlier sections of this Plan have outlined the importance of agriculture and forestry, both in the past and as a current influence on landscape character, earth heritage, and the historic and natural environments.

Farmers and land managers have a major role to play in continuing to conserve and enhance the AONB. There is a need to raise awareness of the importance of traditional land management practice to the landscape.

More than 80% of the land area of the AONB is farmed and large areas are covered in broadleaved woodland and coniferous plantations. The future of the Island's finest landscapes is linked to the economic well-being of the farming community and viability of woodland management.

The majority of farmland in the AONB is privately owned and managed, whether by individual landowners and farmers, tenants or non-governmental organisations such as the National Trust, or by other conservation organisations such as Wight Wildlife, People's Trust for Endangered Species, Woodland Trust and Wight Nature Fund. The new duty of regard does not extend to such private individuals, organisations or charitable trusts. There is therefore a need to work closely with these important partners to

ensure that resources are made available to help to conserve and enhance the AONB whilst providing a viable economic income for those who depend on income from their land. Changes to funding mechanisms and identification of new markets may offer new ways to work with farmers, foresters and land managers to identify conservation and enhancement opportunities.

Island status and the cost of transport to access processing and markets on the mainland have a major economic impact on the viability of farming and forestry within the AONB. Opportunities to create local processing and outlets for produce and products will reduce costs and potentially increase incomes.



Sheep
© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low



Tractor, Arreton Down
© Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

The state of farming in the AONB

BSE and the Foot & Mouth epidemic had severe implications for the farming sector. This is a time of great change and uncertainty for the farming sector: the current change in policy to drive farming closer to the marketplace arising from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reforms; enlargement of the European Union; World Trade talks; the Mid Term Review; and decoupling of payments for food production and cross-compliance¹ all contribute to this.

The Countryside Agency has recently published interim advice on the potential impact of CAP reform to protected landscapes². It will be necessary to assess the impact of these changes on the AONB over the next five years, and to then incorporate more detailed analysis in the Management Plan review in 2009.

We have seen changes in the structure and type of farming activities across the AONB as a result of increased pressure to diversify, the division of land into smaller units, and land being rented out for arable farming with farmhouses and outbuildings being sold off separately. The lack of an abattoir and local markets for produce causes difficulties for Island farmers.

The England Rural Development Plan, and its Countryside Stewardship³, Processing &

¹ (the attachment of environmental conditions to agricultural support policies)

² Countryside Agency 2003, Author Rosie Simpson

³ GIS interrogation indicates 3916 hectares of land cover by Countryside Stewardship Agreement within the AONB

Marketing Grant and Vocational Training scheme have provided useful advice and funding. The successful local farmers' market also offers a new outlet for local produce, and helps to link local people with local landowners and farmers. There should be a co-ordinated approach to the provision of advice and help to encourage sustainable farming practice by the farming community. This should be easy to administrate, as the plethora of existing legislative paperwork for the farming community can be daunting.

The table below shows Isle of Wight AONB agricultural holdings by type and year.

Year	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002
Census item					
Farm type – cereals	34	30	35	31	32
Farm type – general	9	##	7	6	6
Farm type – horticulture	22	15	15	14	15
Farm type - pigs & poultry	5	##	7	7	6
Farm type – dairy	34	29	14	14	13
Farm type - cattle and sheep (lowland)	65	64	71	73	79
Farm type – mixed	19	20	24	31	23
Farm type – other	30	52	76	89	102
Size less than 5 Ha	46	47	95	106	122
5-<20 Ha	55	60	50	51	53
20-<50 Ha	39	42	36	38	30
50 - <100 Ha	43	41	34	38	30
>100 Ha	35	28	34	34	35
Tenanted	72	58	65	70	68
Owned	191	198	229	239	258
Total employed	553	528	461	501	468

Source: DEFRA Agricultural Census Data – Isle of Wight AONB
- data suppression to prevent disclosure of information about individual holdings

between 1991 & 2001, approximately 20.6% of the total AONB area.

The following trends are affecting agriculture within the AONB:

- A marked decrease in dairy farming.
- Although there is an increase in the number of holdings for cattle and sheep, the overall stocking level of livestock is in decline
 - Total cattle 1995 – 10,056
 - Total cattle 2002 – 6,876
 - Total sheep 1995 – 27,366
 - Total sheep 2002 – 24,966
- An increase in farm types classified as 'other'. DEFRA has confirmed that this category covers all small land holdings, including those who had to register for livestock during the recent 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak for livestock movement licenses. It also includes holdings that are not actively farmed because of retirement or diversification activities such as mushroom farming etc.
- An increase in holdings of <5 ha and in those that are owned rather than tenanted. This data has largely changed due to a change in data collection and the need for registration for livestock movements during the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak.
- An increase in equestrian use of land and the resulting pressure for stabling, fencing and equipment.

- Marketing of small plots via the internet without planning permission for leisure and amenity use is an increasing threat to sympathetic land management and the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

Farming & Food: Our Healthy Future is a key policy document that sets out a delivery plan for sustainable farming and food in the South East and London. Published by Government Office for the South East (GOSE) and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), it represents a regional approach to the Government's *Strategy for Sustainable Food and Farming* (December 2002), as a result of its consideration of the Curry Report. *Farming and Food* provides ten key recommendations and sets out a programme of action for the next five years.

As signatories to the Joint Statement of Intent⁴, SEEDA & GOSE and the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership will be looking at ways to help to deliver these actions where they will be of benefit to the conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB.



Turkeys, Rowridge Farm
© IW AONB Unit – Photographer John Brownscombe

⁴ *Protected Landscapes in the South East Joint Statement of Intent – November 2002*

The state of forestry in the AONB

Woodland in the AONB is generally under-managed and timber production is now a marginal activity. Amenity use (access and for game conservancy) and the nature conservation value of woodland are of increasing importance.

The annual yield of timber on the Isle of Wight is in the order of 25,000 tonnes. The need for a local timber treatment plant and the lack of an Island market for woodland products causes difficulties and reduces profit margins because of off Island transportation costs.

Plantation forestry under the control of Forest Enterprise is largely exported to the mainland for timber and pulp for cardboard. There are two medium sized active sawmills in operation on the Isle of Wight but the softwood market remains small. Increasing regulation in response to a more litigious society is having an impact on these small businesses. New markets may emerge as the result of the need to meet targets for renewable energy production. The use of wood and woodland thinning material as biomass to supply a combined heat and power plant may prove to be an important market for woodland products.

Recent grant funding initiatives have proved to be very successful form of agricultural diversification. There is a need to develop a strategic, long-term understanding of how such areas of new planting will impact on the landscape of the AONB. 'Visulands' is a new European partnership study into using GIS

based information to create scenarios for planting schemes, model their visual impact and assess the potential for nature conservation, in order to ensure that correct decisions are made. The Isle of Wight is one of three areas in the UK to have been selected to trial the scheme.

Ancient woodlands⁵ are generally considered to be the most important for biodiversity but most have no statutory protection. Securing funding for their appropriate management will help to secure their future.



Tree Cleaving
© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low

JIGSAW (Joining and Increasing Grant Scheme for Ancient Woodland) is one such scheme for establishing and managing new broadleaved woodland on the Island. Between 2001 and 2003, £528,000 was provided by the Forestry Commission to Island landowners to plant broadleaved woodland. A total of 142 hectares was planted, either adding to ancient woodland or forming links between two or more ancient woods.

The scheme is steered by a partnership of the Isle of Wight Council, Wight Wildlife, English Nature, the National Trust and the Forestry Commission. Bids, which are submitted by the end of each year, are judged against a set of criteria to ensure that 'best value' is obtained. In particular, the enhancement of the value for wildlife scores highly. The development of woodland flora and fauna after planting will be studied for years to come. Some of these new planting areas are open for the public to walk over, by permission of the owners. The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership is consulted via its AONB Unit on all applications to the scheme within the AONB.

⁵ GIS interrogation indicates 1,102 hectares of Ancient Woodland within the AONB

What are the threats and challenges of farming and forestry in the AONB?

- **Changed markets and economic condition** – uncertainties in the profitability of both farming and agriculture make business planning difficult and have a resulting impact on investment and management.
- **Changes in legislation and increasing regulation** – increasing paperwork and the need to meet new regulations both have an impact on the time and workload of the farming and forestry sectors.

Grant funding and subsidy – we have yet to see the impact of decoupling of subsidy for food production and the introduction of other incentives. Opportunities will be available for new approaches. Countryside stewardship take up on the Island has been good and Woodland grant schemes and JIGSAW offer strong incentives for woodland creation and management. There is still a need for easier access to advice for land management incentive schemes

- **Demographics and farm unit size** – increases in small farm units (demonstrated by the Farm Census data) and an increase in ownership rather than tenancy will both have impacts on land use. Small fields and woodland plots sell to those who may not have experience of land management or who wish to use them for leisure and amenity purposes.

- **Diversification** – identifying niche and specialist markets, and producing products or services that can bring in a higher margin are still useful ways to supplement traditional incomes. Linking those who earn a living from managing the land to emerging rural markets to ensure future sympathetic management of the AONB. The conversion of redundant farm buildings can provide income and retain buildings of local importance. Development of this nature should be sympathetic and appropriate to the historic environment and to nature conservation, and should be sustainable. It should not result in the need to provide new farm buildings, which are often less sympathetic to their location as they are of generic design. If new structures are essential they should be carefully sited and, where possible, constructed in a suitable material.
- **Recreation and access** – open access legislation is soon due to commence. The majority of areas on the Isle of Wight identified on the provisional map are within the AONB; few areas have not already experienced a degree of permissive open access on foot. Trespass and inappropriate access can still cause difficulties to the farming and forestry sector.
- **Intensification vs. extensification** – arable and mixed farming is important to the character of the AONB, contributing to the special qualities of a number of landscape character types (southern coastal farmland, intensive agricultural land, chalk downs). It is necessary to identify the impact this has on the natural and historic environments of the AONB. Stocking density of livestock, for example, is an important factor in managing chalk downland.
- **Lack of Island-based markets and processing facilities** – off-Island transport costs have profit and welfare implications. Linking local consumers to local markets will help to provide a viable farming and forestry sector. The need for an abattoir and timber treatment plant is acknowledged; both would help a local market to develop.
- **Climate change** – may open up opportunities to grow new and different crops. However, it may equally lead to irregular rainfall, with periods of drought and flash flooding which have implications for land managers.

Our vision for farming & forestry within the Isle of Wight AONB 2025

There is greater recognition of the importance of farming to the AONB and the value of the need for sustainable approaches to agriculture.

Less intensive agriculture supports the conservation and enhancement of the AONB and benefits earth heritage and the historic and natural environment. Farming has become economic and has created food, landscapes and habitats that are valued by visitors and locals alike. Produce is now grown, processed, marketed and purchased locally, supported by farm diversification.

Advice and training has become readily available, and has helped to ensure that the landscape of the AONB is actively farmed, in recognition of the contribution this makes to the natural beauty of the landscape.

Forestry and woodland management within the AONB are economic and produce benefits for recreation, nature conservation, landscape character and the historic environment. Local markets have provided outlets for woodland products, reducing transport costs and increasing profitability. Planting schemes undertaken in the past have matured to compliment the landscape, and clearance schemes are sympathetic to the potential visual impact.

AONB Management Plan policies – farming & forestry

FF1 - POLICY AREA: AWARENESS

The importance of farming and forestry to the landscape of the AONB is widely understood and promoted.

Policy objectives for FF1 –

- *To raise awareness in the wider community of the need for traditional farming practice and its important role in the character of the AONB landscape.*
- *To promote the need for new mechanisms to support farming and forestry in the AONB, where this conserves and enhances the AONB.*
- *To raise awareness amongst farmers and land managers of the AONB, its purpose.*
- *To provide advice and support to land managers on landscape character and its relationship to farming and forestry business practice.*

Links to other plans

English Forestry Strategy
Forest Design Plans
Forest Enterprise South East District Strategic Plan
South East England Forestry Framework (in development)
Isle of Wight Rural Strategy
Strategy for Sustainable Farming & Food
Farming & Food: Our Healthy Future

FF2 - POLICY AREA: CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT

Farming and forestry practice and diversification within the AONB, which conserves and enhances the area is encouraged and supported.

Policy objectives for FF2 & FF3

- *In partnership, to help to identify and support local branding and marketing of farm and woodland products to help to sustain appropriate land management.*
- *To encourage the integration of farming and forestry practice with the management of earth heritage, landscape and the natural and historic environments through the use of whole farm plans/forest design plans.*
- *To ensure that information and access to funding schemes is easily available and accessed by land managers to facilitate sustainable management of farmed and wooded land.*
- *To encourage sympathetic diversification to help maintain the viability of disused farm buildings and provide farm income where consistent with policy and the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.*
- *To promote a viable mixed farming economy based on high-quality food production, including extensive livestock rearing with high standards of animal welfare to conserve and enhance the distinctive AONB landscape.*
- *To promote a profitable, high-quality local food and wood processing economy to revitalise local farming and forestry and raise awareness among visitors and residents of the benefits of purchasing locally sourced foods.*

FF3 - POLICY AREA: CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT

The development of local skills, markets and processing facilities are recognised as being beneficial to the economic viability of farming and forestry within the AONB.

AONB people – policies & objectives

VISITING & ENJOYING

The Isle of Wight is well known as a destination for tourists, but is most often associated with more traditional seaside holidays or the international Cowes Week sailing regatta. The resort and coach trip holiday market is still an important part of the tourism sector on the Island. The short break market is increasing, with tourists often wishing to take part in specific activities such as bird watching and walking. It is here that the AONB can offer a distinct marketable resource, encompassing all of the natural, historic and cultural elements that make visiting and enjoying the Isle of Wight AONB a memorable experience. By providing information we can increase visitors' enjoyment of the Isle of Wight AONB and secure its protection. Giving an insight into the qualities, complexity and intricacies of landscape character will enable visitors to share in the 'sense of place' afforded by the designation.

Tourism contributes 28% of the GDP of the Island and in the high season provides approximately 25% of the total employment opportunities. The importance of tourism to the economic and social well-being of the local community needs to be balanced with conservation and enhancement of the AONB. The extension of the season for short breaks is advantageous for the economy and for employment opportunities, but must be balanced with the potential impact on the environment. Many visitors are attracted to the Isle of Wight because of its beaches and scenic beauty – there are opportunities for the AONB to be marketed as a 'sustainable tourism' destination. It is important that proposals for new activities are based on sound assessment and monitoring of the potential impacts. Sustainable tourism initiatives aim to encourage this. The following activities are already helping to achieve this aim:

- *Green Island Award Officer — encouraging business to adopt a sustainable approach to business management;*
- *SE AONB Sustainable Tourism Project — Finest landscapes visitor information pack for accommodation and baseline audit of tourism provision within the AONB;*
- *Gift to Nature — a voluntary visitor 'pay-back' scheme for environmental projects;*
- *promotion of the Isle of Wight public rights of way network for walking,*

cycling and horse riding, including specific named trails, the Coastal Path and an annual two-week walking festival;

- *marketing the AONB by Isle of Wight Tourism, including a pocket map, guide to the AONB, guide to eating out and 'AONB on your doorstep' guide;*
- *Round the Island Cycle Route— signed circular route primarily on the minor road network;*
- *on-going development of off road cycle tracks;*
- *Quiet Road schemes.*



Quiet Enjoyment
© Countryside Agency – photographer Joe Low

Tourism market surveys

A recent survey of visitors commissioned by Isle of Wight Tourism highlighted the following key findings:

- Outstanding natural beauty and beaches were considered to be the best aspects of the Isle of Wight.
- Previous experience of the Island as a destination was an important factor in the decision to visit – 33% had visited in the last year and 80% had been before.
- Half of those surveyed obtained information before their visit through Tourist Information Centres or from the internet.
- Most activities were planned before arriving. Beaches, walking and visiting attractions were the main activities undertaken.
- Visitors surveyed were mainly families from the South East Region.¹

¹ Designate Survey for Isle of Wight Tourism (2002)

Extent

The SE AONB Sustainable Tourism Project report, *Tourism supply in 10 AONBs in the SE of England: The regional picture 2002/03* provides a baseline of facilities and accommodation available within the AONB. It also gives an overview of the awareness, business market and confidence of accommodation providers.

Category	Number
Hotels	8
Guest houses	31
Self catering accommodation	100
Caravan/camp sites (not pitches)	8
Cafes/inns	12
Attractions	35

The following key findings are reported:

- Self catering and camping are the main accommodation providers for the AONB. Further work is required to determine the number of pitches for tents and caravans.
- There is a limited level of business occupancy within the AONB, and most occupants are tourists.
- There is a high annual occupancy level (71%), with most businesses expecting to retain this level or increase it in 2003.

- All of those questioned stated that they were familiar with the term AONB, with 64% stating that they knew which AONB they were in but only 8% correctly naming this when asked. (Most incorrect responses named their local area or village such as 'Stenbury Downs' rather than the Isle of Wight AONB.)

The countryside of the Island is also of great importance to the local community. People value the opportunities available to them for leisure and recreation in their free time; from surfing and paragliding along the Tennyson Heritage Coast to taking part in the 'Walk the Wight' annual cross-Island sponsored walk.

The 'sense of place' afforded by the AONB and the pride of place experienced by local people who are involved in conserving and enhancing the local distinctiveness of their community provides an additional facet for those visiting and enjoying the AONB. Local produce, customs, fetes and fairs all contribute to community life within the AONB and to the enjoyment to be had in visiting them.

What are the threats and challenges to visiting & enjoying the AONB?

- **Impact on the natural and historic environment** – high levels of use of paths and access points and the inappropriate pursuit of certain leisure activities can have a detrimental impact on the natural and historic resource within the AONB.
- **Reliance on cars as transport to access the countryside** – a lack of alternatives to the car to access the countryside creates pressure for parking provision, traffic management. It can also result in congestion at ‘honey pot’ sites, detracting from their scenic beauty. It also excludes people who do not have access to a car for travel.
- **Noisy or intrusive recreational activities and their impact on enjoyment by others** – changing recreational and leisure use of the countryside may place further pressure on tranquility, which is an important aspect of the character of the AONB.
- **Illegal access, trespass and damage to private property** – whether deliberate or otherwise, increased use of the landscape for leisure and recreation may have a direct impact on the land and property of private landowners and farmers.
- **Opportunities for access are restricted for people with disabilities** – access and enjoyment of the landscape of the AONB should be open to all members of society. There is a need to assess opportunities for its provision to less able and disabled people.
- **Strategic gaps in the public rights of way network** – walkers, horse riders and cyclists are at times required to use the road network. Strategic links in the existing public path network would enable these vulnerable road users to have safe passage.
- **Lack of data on the use of the AONB for leisure and recreation** – while we know that the landscape and countryside of the AONB are valued by visitors and the local community alike, we have little specific information about visitor numbers or their likes, dislikes and overall experience.
- **Potential for sustainable tourism and recreation activities** – there is the potential to extend the traditional season. This could bring social and economic well-being through sustainable tourism activities that are based on quiet enjoyment and understanding of the AONB.
- **A general lack of association of the environmental qualities of the Isle of Wight with the AONB designation** – although the qualities of the landscape of the Isle of Wight are known locally and nationally they are not immediately associated with the national AONB designation.

Our vision for visiting and enjoying the Isle of Wight AONB in 2025

The AONB continues to offer opportunities for quiet enjoyment, peace and relaxation, where the complexity of natural beauty and the relationship between people and place has become more widely understood and respected.

Sustainable tourism, access and recreation initiatives have brought increased social and economic stability to local communities, extended the traditional tourism season, and reduced the reliability on the private car.

There is greater understanding of the impact of access on the AONB and this has been managed to allow enjoyment of the landscape while securing its conservation and enhancement.

The AONB has become closely associated with the quality the Isle of Wight offers as a tourism destination.

AONB Management Plan policies – visiting and enjoying

VE1 - POLICY AREA: CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

The important potential of the AONB as a sustainable resource for sport, leisure, recreation and tourism activities consistent with its conservation and enhancement is recognised. Support for such activities should be based on a sound understanding of the potential impacts on the area.

VE2 - POLICY AREA: CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

People visiting and enjoying the AONB have an understanding of its importance, landscape character and its complexity and are encouraged to act responsibly in order to conserve and enhance these qualities.

Policy objectives of VE1 & VE2

- *To work with partners to ensure that access and recreation within the AONB is managed to conserve and enhance the landscape.*
- *To promote opportunities for sustainable tourism and access to the AONB for all.*
- *To promote responsible enjoyment of the landscape of the AONB through an increased understanding of its complexity, value and management.*
- *To market the AONB as a ‘sustainable tourism’ destination.*

Links to other plans

Isle of Wight Tourism Strategy
Isle of Wight Rights of Way Improvement Plan
Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan
Community Strategy – Island Futures

Section 11

THE ACTION PLAN 2004-2009 DELIVERING THE POLICIES OF THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Action Plan covers the next five year period (2004-2009) to coincide with the statutory duty to review and publish an AONB Management Plan at least once every five years. It is not intended to be definitive as unforeseen opportunities and difficulties will no doubt occur which will influence its delivery. The Action Plan does not list all of the current activities of organisations, Partnership members or the AONB Unit that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB. It provides a list of new actions that will be undertaken over the next five years to further this existing work.

We intend to report on progress in delivering the Action Plan on an annual basis through the *Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan - Annual Progress Report*.

How to read this Action Plan

The Action Plan has been structured to reflect the three policy areas within the Management Plan, namely – awareness, monitoring & recording and, conserving & enhancing. The following example illustrates how the headings should be read.

Policy Area	Action	Outputs	Key partners	Timescale	AONB Policy link	AONB Unit role
AWARENESS	Revise the existing landscape assessment of the Isle of Wight AONB by undertaking a new landscape character assessment at both AONB and more localised geographic levels	AONB landscape character assessment	IWAP CA	2004 - 2006	LC1, EH1, NC1, HE1, LW1, 2,3 &5, FF1	Implement

Relating back to AONB place & AONB people sections of the Plan.

When it will be done. Sometimes this will be number of times in a year or through life of the Plan.

Cross-referencing and linkage of AONB policies.

The work that is to take place in order to achieve the objectives listed under these policy areas.

Likely outputs resulting from this action.

Not an exhaustive list but those included are likely to be central in implementing this action. Abbreviations used are listed on page 88.

Implement = work the Unit does itself or with others
Catalyze = things the Unit brings other together to make happen
Advocate = things that the Unit champions and promotes as good practice for AONB management

ACTION PLAN

Policy Area	Action	Outputs	Key Partners	Timescale	AONB Policy Link	AONB Unit Role
AWARENESS	Revise the existing landscape assessment of the Isle of Wight AONB by undertaking a new landscape character assessment at both AONB and more localised geographic levels.	AONB landscape character assessment	IWAU CA	2004 - 2006	LC1, EH1, W1, HE1, LW1, LW2, LW3, LW5, FF1	Implement
		Local landscape character assessments		2004		
		Workshops & events		2004		
	Promote landscape character and a greater understanding of the dynamic relationship between people and place that has led to the special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB.	Workshops & training events	IWAU IWCAHES CPRE	2004	ALL	Implement
		Making the AONB document		2006		
		Leaflets and web based information		2004		
	Develop a community-based 'Landscape Detectives' project to identify, record and celebrate the AONB and its contribution to the quality of life of local communities.	Community events and field surveys	ALL	2004	ALL	Implement
		Leaflets and booklets as part of series for whole AONB		2004		
	Promote the Isle of Wight AONB as part of the national family of protected landscapes.	Promotional key message	NAAONB IWAU	2004	LC1	Implement
		Attendance at National Conference		Annually		
		Membership of NAAONB		Annual subscription		
	Work with Isle of Wight Tourism and other partners to promote the AONB as part of the marketing of the Isle of Wight as a visitor destination.	Copy for brochures and leaflets	IWT, GIA, I2K, IWAU	2004	LC1, EH1, W1, HE1, LW1, FF1, TT2, VE1, VE2	Catalyze
		AONB as part of Tourism Strategy		2004		
		AONB information for visitors		2004		
	Highlight the importance of the AONB as part of the Isle of Wight annual Walking Festival.	Become key partner in Festival and provide information of AONB and its purposes as part of promotional material	IWAU, WL, RA	2004	VE1, VE2	Implement
	Attend key Island events to promote the AONB e.g. Isle of Wight County Agricultural Show, Garlic Festival etc.	Display stand at key events	IWAU	As required at least 4 a year	ALL	Implement
Produce educational packs and resources for schools and teachers highlighting the use of the AONB as an educational resource.	Web based information	IWAU, IWCAHES, IWCCS	2005	ALL	Catalyze	
	Teachers' packs		2005			
	School talks and guided walks		2005			
Promote the importance of sustainable practice in land management, farming, forestry and recreational activities within the AONB.	Advice service	NFU, CLA, EA, EN, IWCAHES, WW, IWC CS, IWEP	2005	EH1, W1, HE3, LW4, LW5, LW6, FF2, FF3, VE1, VE2	Advocate	
	Guidance notes		2005			
	Whole Farm Plans		2004			
	Codes of conduct					
Develop and co-ordinate a Finest Seascapes Festival to commemorate 30 years of the Tennyson and Hamstead Heritage Coasts.	Two-three week event highlighting the qualities and management of the Heritage Coast	IWAU	2004	LC1, EH1, W1, HE1	Implement	

ACTION PLAN

Policy Area	Action	Outputs	Key Partners	Timescale	AONB Policy Link	AONB Unit Role
AWARENESS (Contd)	Provide information to interest and community groups through standard talks and guided walks, highlighting the special qualities of the AONB and our approach to their management.	Talks and guided walks	IWAU	At least five a year	ALL	Implement
	Identify opportunities for the provision of information at key AONB gateway sites.	Report on potential sites	IWAU	2005	LC1, EH1, W1, HE1, VE1, VE2	Implement
	Encourage the use of landscape character assessment as part of the Parish Plan process within the AONB.	Training events and guidance notes	RCC, CA IWC	2004	LC1, LC3, LW1, LW2, LW3, LW4, LW5, LW6, TT1	Advocate
MONITORING & RECORDING	Investigate ways to monitor the condition and extent and changes to the natural and historic environment and landscape of the AONB.	Suite of headline indicators for the AONB place themes	IWAU IWCAHES EN, NT EH, CA	2004	LC1, LC2, EH2, W2, HE2	Implement
		AONB research framework		2005		
	Investigate ways to monitor the condition and extent of changes to land use and land management within the AONB.	Suite of headline indicators for the AONB people themes	IWAU IWC, IWEP RCC, NFU CLA, CA	2004	LC1, LC2 EH2, W2, HE2	Implement
		AONB research framework		2005		
	Instigate the sharing of existing data between Partnership members and identify gaps in our current knowledge base.	Regular data exchange of existing records	IWAU All relevant partners	2004	All Policies	Implement
		AONB research framework		2005		
	Use Geographical Information Systems to record and interrogate data.	AONB GIS database and resulting reports	IWAU	2004	All policies	Implement
	Develop partnership projects to provide information on areas where there is little existing knowledge about the extent and condition of facets of AONB character.	Field surveys	IWAU IWCAHES EN, RCC IWEP EH, CA	2005	LC1, LC2 EH2, W2, HE2	Catalyze
		AONB research framework		2005		
	Collate and interpret information on the condition of the AONB and changes to it.	State of the AONB report	IWAU	2006	All policies	Implement
	Collate and interpret information on performance in delivering the AONB Management Plan.	AONB Management Plan Annual Progress Report	IWAU	5 through life of plan	All policies	Implement
	Collate and report on the work of the AONB Partnership.	AONB Annual Review	IWAU	5 through life of plan	All policies	Implement
Investigate ways to model potential change in land management and climate within the AONB, and its likely impact on the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.	Computer modeling	IWAU	2006	All policies	Implement	
	Research and reports		2005			

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Policy Area	Action	Outputs	Key Partners	Timescale	AONB Policy Link	AONB Unit Role
CONSERVING & ENHANCING	Provide comment on planning proposals and planning policy within the AONB to help with the local planning authority's determination process.	Comment on applications on weekly planning list	LPA, IWAU CPRE IWCAHES IWCCS WW, IWCRoW CA	On going	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, LW2, LW3, LW4, LW5, LW6	Implement
		Develop new LDF		2004		
	Provide AONB comment on national and regional policy.	Comment on consultation documents	IWAU	As required	LC3, LW4, LW5, LW6, FF2, FF3, TT1, TT2	Implement
		Lobby for consideration of changes to existing legislation in light of concerns regarding impact upon the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	IWAU NAAONB CA	As required		
	Develop Supplementary Planning Guidance, Design Guidance and other information relating to land use planning in the AONB.	AONB information within LPA SPG	LPA IWAU	As required	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, LW1, LW2, LW3 LW4, LW5, LW6	Implement
		Specific AONB formulated SPG. E.g. equestrian development, wind turbines	IWAU	3 during life of the plan		
		AONB Building Design Guidance	LPA, IWAU, RIBA, CPRE, IWCAHES, IBWPT	2006		
	Work with communities to help with the development of Village Design Statements, Parish Plans and other community-based approaches to the influence of land use planning.	AONB input into Village Design Statements	LPA IWAU RCC IWATPC CA	On going Target of 2 a year	LW1 LW2 LW3	Catalyze
		AONB input into Parish Plans		On going Target of 2 a year		
	Contact architects and agents involved in the submission of clients' planning applications in order to raise awareness of the AONB and its purposes.	Annual seminar for agents and architects on protected landscapes and design and encouragement of early consultation	RIBA LPA IWAU	2004	LC1, LC2, LC3, LW3, LW5, LW6	Implement
		Training programme for officers and members	LPA, IWAU	2004		
	Liaise with organisations with permitted development rights to encourage early consultation on schemes within the AONB.	Notification of works within AONB by highway authority	HA IWAU LPA	As published	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3 LW3 LW5, LW6, TT1, TT2	Implement
		Meetings/correspondence with statutory undertakers and agencies to discuss communication and liaison		At least twice a year		

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Policy Area	Action	Outputs	Key Partners	Timescale	AONB Policy Link	AONB Unit Role
CONSERVING & ENHANCING (CONTD)	Undertake a study into methods for providing mitigation for existing development within the AONB where this has had an impact on its conservation and enhancement.	Report of good practice in other protected landscapes and the identification of possible funding streams for implementation	IWAU	2006	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, LW3, LW4, LW5, LW6	Implement
	Carry out an audit and photographic record of current skyline structures in the AONB.	Record of development as a baseline	IWAU	2004	LC2, LC3, LW4, LW5, LW6	Implement
	Develop codes of conduct for activities within the AONB that are not subject to regulation.	Fossil hunting, portable antiquities, off road driving, mountain biking	IWCGeo IWAU EN, TTTG IWCRoW IWCAHES	2005	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, LW2, FF2, VE1, VE2	Catalyze
		Provide secretariat for the Tennyson Trail Task Group	IWAU			
	Contribute to the Biodiversity Action Plan process.	Delivery of targets with the AONB	IWBAPSC IWAU	On going Targets set out in BAP	LC3, W3, VE1, VE2	Advocate
	Contribute towards the attainment of 'favourable condition' status of SSSI within the AONB.	Guidance and advice to land managers and farmers	EN, WW, IWCCS, I2K	2006	LC3, W3	Catalyze
		State of the AONB report indicators		2006		Implement
	Contribute to the production of an Isle of Wight Geodiversity Action Plan.	Isle of Wight Geodiversity Action Plan	EN, IWCGeo, IWAU	2004	LC1, LC3, EH1, EH2, EH3,	Advocate
	Investigate the use of the County Sites and Monuments Record and Historic Landscape Characterisation study to guide the future recording of information about the historic environment within the AONB.	Research framework	IWCAHES	2006	LC3, HE3, LW3, LW4, LW5, LW6,	Advocate
	Carry out research into the traditions, customs, dialect and place names of the AONB to ensure their conservation.	ABC of the AONB	IWAU I2K	2007	LC1, LC2, LC3, LW1, LW2, VE1, VE2	Catalyze
		AONB place names guide	IWCART IWCARCV			
		Rekindle traditional festivals and customs that are distinctive to the AONB				
	Undertake a highways signage audit of the AONB.	Report on problem signs and locations to the highway authority	HA IWAU IWCRoW CPRE	2005	LC3, TT1, TT2	Implement
		Seek to identify funding for replacement, rationalisation and re-siting of signs				Catalyze
	Undertake a rural roads verge survey in the AONB.	Report on areas of concern and seek mitigation measures	HA IWAU	2005	LC3, W3, HE3, TT1, TT2	Implement

ACTION PLAN

Policy Area	Action	Outputs	Key Partners	Timescale	AONB Policy Link	AONB Unit Role
CONSERVING & ENHANCING (CONTD)	Contribute AONB information to the development of highway design guidance.	Isle of Wight Highway Authority design guidance	HA IWAU	2004	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, LW3, LW5, LW6 TT1, TT2	Catalyze
	Research traffic management initiatives, including verge parking, car park provision and the availability of public transport as an alternative.	Military Road traffic management audit	HA , IWAU I2K	2004	LC3, W3, HE3, TT1, TT2	Catalyze
		Village traffic surveys	IWCRow RCC, LIFT EN	2005		Catalyze
		'Honey pot' site surveys		2005		Implement
	Investigate the extension of the pilot Quiet Roads scheme in other areas of the AONB.	Assessment of current scheme	HA IWAU IWCRow IWATPC	2005	LC3, LW2 TT1, TT2 VE1, VE2	Catalyze
		Workshops with communities to identify new sites		2006		
	Identify opportunities for strategic public rights of way links to provide non-vehicle access off road routes within the AONB.	Rights of Way Improvement Plan	IWCRow IWAU	2004	LC3, W3, HE3, TT1, TT2, VE1, VE2	Advocate
	Audit quarry sites within the AONB to identify their extent, condition, current and potential use and impact on the AONB.	Audit of AONB quarries	LPA IWAU	2007	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, LW3, W5, VE1	Implement
		Identify opportunities for small-scale provision of local stone for building conservation and sympathetic new build materials	IWCAHES IWBPT EH EN	2007		Catalyze
	Work to ensure consideration of the importance of coastal processes to the natural and historic landscape of the AONB and their impact on the social and economic well-being of local communities	Shoreline Management Plan	IWCCMS IWAU SCOPAC EN	On going	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, LW3, LW4, LW5, LW6, VE1	Advocate
		Coastal Defence Strategies		On going		
	Provide resources for the continuation of the Sense of Place – Small Grant Fund.	Funding of initiatives that define, promote, manage and celebrate the special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB	IWAU CA IWC	2004-2005	All	Implement
	Survey and investigate a project to manage tide-borne litter along the coastline within the AONB, in particular the Heritage Coasts.	Set up Task Group	IWAU EN NT IWC	2004	LC3, EH3, W3, VE1, VE2	Catalyze
		Feasibility study to look at management of this issue		2005		Catalyze
	Contribute to schemes that promote sustainable practice in business and recreation.	Green Marina Scheme	EA	2004	LC3, EH3, W3, LW2, VE1, VE2	Advocate
Green Island Awards		EA, IWC, GIA	On going	LC3, LW2, VE2	Advocate	
Gift to Nature		I2K	On going	LC3, VE2	Advocate	

ACTION PLAN

Policy Area	Action	Outputs	Key Partners	Timescale	AONB Policy Link	AONB Unit Role
CONSERVING & ENHANCING (CONTD)	Contribute to schemes that promote sustainable practice in business and recreation (Contd).	Finest Landscapes Visitor Pack – Further training for accommodation providers and an assessment of scheme to date	IWAU CA I2K	2004	LC1, VE2	Catalyze
	Work to ensure that the water resource within the AONB is managed at a catchment area level.	Catchment Area Management Plans	EA	2004	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, VE1,	Advocate
	Contribute to the production of whole farm plans and forest design plans.	AONB landscape information and aims and objectives included within final documents	NFU, CLA, FE, FC, IWAU, IWEP, IWCAHES	2004 Target 2 a year	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, FF1, FF2, FF3	Advocate
	Investigate the provision of advice and guidance to land managers and the farming community.	Guidance notes on the AONB for land managers and farmers	IWAU, CLA, I2K, FE, FC, EN, EH, IWCAHES, WW, SEEDA, DEFRA	2005	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, LW5, FF1, FF2, FF3	Catalyze
	Carry out research and develop projects to link rural economies and tourism with the land management and farming sector.	Research document and project development framework	IWAU, IWEP, IWT, SEEDA, ITIA, IWT, CA, SEEDA	2006	LC3, LW5, LW6, FF1, FF2, FF3, VE1, VE2	Implement
	Carry out research to identify local markets and processing needs for island woodland products.	Research document and project development	IWAU, FE, FC, NFU, CLA, IWEP, I2K, EN, SEEDA	2007	LC3, FF2, FF3	Catalyze
	Identify the carrying capacity of the AONB for recreation and tourism activities based on data gathered under the monitoring and recording section of the Action Plan.	Report on current activities, their impact and management within the AONB and the linkage between carrying capacity and landscape character.	IWAU, IWT, IWCRoW, EN, EH, I2K, CA, SEEDA	2006	LC3, EH3, W3, HE3, VE1, VE2	Implement

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Abbreviations used for key partners listed in the Action Plan.

BAG	Badger Action Group	IWCART	IWC - Arts Unit	PTES	Peoples Trust for Endangered Species
BASC	British Association for Shooting & Conservation	IWCBBV	IWC - Best Value Team	QTP	Quality Transport Partnership
BCP	Brading Community Partnership	IWCBCMS	IWC - Coastal Management Service	RA	Ramblers Association
BemHS	Bembridge Heritage Society	IWCBCSS	IWC - Countryside Section	RCC	Rural Community Council
BLW-FBA	Business Link Wessex - Farm Business Advisor	IWCBCDC	IWC - Development Control Section	RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects (IW Branch)
BPEA	Bishop of Portsmouth Ecology Advisor	IWCBCeCo	County Ecologist	RIWAS	Royal Isle of Wight Agricultural Society
CA	Countryside Agency	IWCBCEng	IWC - Head of Engineering Services	ROOTS	ROOTS Family & Parish History Group
CJM	Clifford J Matthews Ltd	IWCBCGeo	County Geologist	RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
CLA	Country, Land & Business Association	IWCBCLTP	IWC - Local Transport Planner	SCOPAC	Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline
CIllrs	Councillors	IWCBCPlan	IWC - Head of Planning Services	SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
CPRE	Campaign to Protect Rural England	IWCBCPP	IWC - Planning Policy Section	SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly
CW	Cycle Wight	IWCBCPS	IWC - Property Services Section	SERFCA	South East Reserve Forces & Cadets Association
DBE	Diocesan Board of Education	IWCBCRO	IWC - Records Office	S&S	Scottish & Southern Distribution Plc
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	IWCBCRoW	IWC - Rights of Way Section	THWART	The Wight Against Rural Turbines
EA	Environment Agency	IWCBCWEP	Isle of Wight Economic Partnership	TTTG	Tennyson Trail Task Group
EH	English Heritage	IWCBCWEst	Isle of Wight Estuaries Project	TUS	The Undercliff Society
EN	English Nature	IWCBCWFB	Isle of Wight Foxhounds	W	Wightlink
EWHG	East Wight History Group	IWCBCWFG	Isle of Wight Foot Beagles	WEDS	Wight Equine Driving Society
FBRA	Freshwater Bay Residents Association	IWCBCWFM	Isle of Wight Folklore Group	WF	Woodland Forum
FC	Forestry Commission	IWCBCWFWI	Isle of Wight Farmers Market	WGC	Wight Green Centre
FE	Forest Enterprise	IWGW	Isle of Wight County Federation of Womens Institutes	WL	Wight Leisure
FL	Freshwater Lifeboat	IWGT	Isle of Wight Grain Storage	WNF	Wight Nature Fund
FoE	Friends of the Earth (IW Branch)	IWHS	Isle of Wight Gardens Trust	WO	Wight Orienteers
G	Greenpeace (IW Campaign Group)	IWNHAS	Isle of Wight Historical Society	WSDG	Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Guild
GIA	Green Island Award	IWPCLG	Isle of Wight Natural History & Archaeological Society	WSP	Wight Squirrel Project
GOSE	Government Office for the South East	IWPDD	Isle of Wight Police & Community Liaison Group	WT	Woodland Trust
HA	Highways Authority	IWPWW	Isle of Wight Pony Driving for the Disabled	WW	Wight Wildlife
HIWWT	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust	IWRIG	Isle of Wight Pond Wardens	WWHG	West Wight History Group
I2K	Island 2000 Trust	IWSCA	Isle of Wight Rural Issues Group	YHC	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners
ITIA	Island Tourist Industry Association	IWT	Isle of Wight Self Catering Association	YS	Yarmouth Society
IWAP	Isle of Wight AONB Partnership	JMCT	Isle of Wight Tourism		
IWATPC	Isle of Wight Association of Town & Parish Councils	LA21	Julia Margaret Cameron Trust		
IWAU	Isle of Wight AONB Unit	LIFT	Local Agenda 21		
IWBAPSC	Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership Steering Committee	LPA	Local Initiatives for Transport		
IWBG	Isle of Wight Bat Group	LSP	Local Planning Authority		
IWBPT	Isle of Wight Building Preservation Trust	NAAONB	Local Strategic Partnership		
IWC	Isle of Wight Council	NFSA	National Association for AONBs		
IWCAHES	IWC - Archaeology & Historic Environment Service	NFU	National Federation of Sea Anglers (IW Branch)		
IWCArch	County Archaeologist	NRA	National Farmers Union		
IWCArcv	County Archivist	NT	Newtown Residents Association		
		OffMP	National Trust		
			Office for Andrew Turner MP		

Section 12

THE ACCORDS DELIVERING THE ACTION PLAN & THE DUTY OF REGARD

A decision was taken early on in the formulation of the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan to incorporate the use of Accords to help with delivery of the Plan. This decision follows the recommendations of the report on the delivery of the statutory AONB Management Plan for the Isle of Wight AONB¹, an Accord between the National Association for AONBs and the Forestry Commission, and the signing of a Protected Landscapes Joint Statement of Intent by Regional Partners².

During the lifetime of the Plan (2004-2009), the AONB Unit will seek to develop similar Accords with key organisations and members of the AONB Partnership to demonstrate the joint delivery of the Action Plan. For those parties that are deemed to be public bodies as far as the Countryside and Rights of Way Act³ is concerned, this will also help to demonstrate fulfillment of the 'duty of regard' towards the purposes of AONB designation.

¹ AONB – an environmental standard. Arc Environmental Consultants 2002

² Protected Landscapes in the South East Joint Statement of Intent – November 2002

³ Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 Part IV S85

The National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Forestry Commission recently signed a Joint Accord. This sets out the two organisations' shared priorities as:

- securing an attractive and sustainable landscape,
- protecting existing woodlands,
- reversing the fragmentation of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodlands,
- promoting appropriate management practices,
- gaining public confidence and support.

It then clarifies how this will be achieved through partnership working, by:

- ensuring effective liaison;
- assisting in the preparation of AONB Management Plans;
- maximising the awareness and uptake of existing woodland incentives and identifying and securing new resources and mechanisms;
- ensuring that the Forestry Commission, through its Forest Enterprise Agency, will fully consult on the management of its own estate during the preparation of long-term Forest Design Plans;
- identifying joint priorities for research and development.

Each Accord will be no more than eight pages in length, and will provide an easy source of reference to the AONB Management Plan. It will list those policy areas, policy objectives and actions that are relevant to specific responsibilities and working practices. Accords will also set out methods of communication, areas of joint interest and mechanisms for reporting on achievements towards delivery of the Action Plan. Any changes to statute and responsibilities that occur during the lifetime of the Management Plan can be reflected in amendments to the Accord and, if necessary, the Action Plan.

The first of these documents has been agreed between the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership and the Isle of Wight County Archaeological and Historic Environment Service. A copy can be seen in Appendix F. A list of secured Accords will be placed on the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership website (and copies may be downloaded).

For organisations with which we have yet to embark on the Accord process, the policy areas, policy objectives and actions outlined in this Plan will act as guidance, influencing their work and strategic planning. In the absence of an Accord, those now subject to the statutory 'duty of regard' are required to ensure that they consider the policies of the Management Plan when carrying out their functions.

Section 13

MONITORING AND RECORDING

In order to assess the effectiveness of both the AONB Management Plan and the broader environmental condition of the Isle of Wight AONB, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be put in place. These should be simple and easily understood; relevant to the landscape character of the AONB; capable of repetition over time so that any trends become apparent; and, where possible, based on standard procedures to enable comparison with the national family of protected landscapes.

Condition monitoring

Much work has been done to identify condition indicators within National Parks. AONBs are at the early stage of considering their own suite of 'headline' indicators to monitor change in condition. A number of workshops have been held in each of the regions and the Countryside Agency intends to publish guidance on this in the near future. The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership has been closely involved in this debate.

State of the Isle of Wight AONB Report

A key policy area within this Plan has been monitoring and recording. In some areas a great deal of information already exists; it may be possible to interrogate this with our Geographical Information System (GIS) in order to obtain AONB-specific data sets. In other areas it will be necessary to identify resources to undertake research and recording. It is the intention of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership to identify indicators within each of the AONB people and AONB place themes. This information would be used to contribute to an overall State of the Isle of Wight AONB Report. The table overleaf sets out some of the headline indicators that we are likely to include in such a report.

Performance monitoring

Progress and performance of the AONB Partnership will be reported in our Annual Review.

Specific achievements towards delivering the Management Plan Action Plan by the AONB Unit and by other partners will be reported in an Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan Annual Progress Report. This report will also include an amended Action Plan and an update on the Accord process.

Countryside Agency interim guidance resource and theme	Isle of Wight AONB people & place Management Plan theme	Headline indicators/datasets
COUNTRYSIDE & LANDCOVER		
Light pollution	Landscape character	% of AONB classified as 'Dark' under CPRE light pollution criteria.
Scenic/landscape character	Landscape character	Fixed point photography of key views within the AONB as an analysis of change.
Land use & development	Living & working	Number of departures from the local plan relating to development control decisions.
Land use & development	Living & working	Number of masts (telecommunication and other) within the AONB.
Land use & development	Farming & forestry	% of land subject to high tier agri-environment schemes.
Landscape features	Farming & forestry	Number of farm holdings by size and type.
Landscape features	Farming & forestry	% of woodland subject to woodland grant scheme and/or in active management.
ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT		
Water quality	Earth Heritage	River water - % achieving A grade. Bathing water - % beaches achieving top grade.
Soil quality	Earth Heritage	% area at risk from soil erosion.
Biodiversity	Wildlife	% of designated sites in favourable condition.
Biodiversity	Wildlife	% Local Biodiversity Action Plan habitats in 'favourable condition'.
CULTURAL & VERNACULAR		
Archaeology & SAMs	Historic environment	Number and condition of archaeology and Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs).
Listed buildings	Historic environment	Number of listed buildings, % at risk and number in positive management.
SOCIO-ECONOMIC & QUALITY OF LIFE		
Community	Living & working	Number of village shops, post offices halls etc.
Enjoyment	Living & working	Public transport links.
Traffic	Traffic & transport	% of rights of way network in favourable condition.
Awareness	Traffic & transport	Change in volume of traffic at specific monitoring points in AONB.
Enjoyment	Visiting & enjoying	% of people aware of the Isle of Wight AONB designation and its purpose.
Land based economy	Visiting & enjoying	Number of people using the public rights of way network at strategic monitoring points.
	Farming & forestry	% AONB under sustainable land management
	Farming & forestry	Agricultural economy within the AONB

NOTES

APPENDIX A

The AONB Project 1992 – 1998

- 1992 Funding is sourced for an AONB and Countryside Management Service. The first AONB Officer is recruited. A Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) is created to steer his work to draw up an AONB Management Plan.
- 1993 An Assistant AONB Officer is recruited. A landscape assessment of the AONB is commenced funded by the Countryside Commission.
- 1994 The AONB Management Plan and the landscape assessment are completed and launched.
- 1995 The first AONB grant fund to landowners commences. The Isle of Wight Council is formed as the new Unitary Authority. Funding for a further three years for the AONB Project is ratified. The Countryside Section becomes a core in-house service of the new IW Council. The AONB Project continues active project work in the AONB.
- 1996 A slimline JAC is formed. Following the departure of the AONB Officer, the Assistant AONB Officer is promoted and a new Assistant AONB Officer is recruited. Active project works continue. The Community Environment Project is created. The Unitary Development Plan is started. The AONB hosts a EUROPARC conference and exchange. Successful grant aid is achieved through the European Social Fund.
- 1997 The Island Chines project is launched. Further project work is delivered. The Elm Project begins. The first discussions of the future of the AONB. Project commence with the consideration of 'Trust' status.
- 1998 The AONB Project hosts a further EUROPARC exchange student. Island 2000 Trust is formed. Funding for the AONB Project ceases.

AONB Project to AONB Partnership

- 2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act published conferring a statutory duty on IW Council to produce and adopt a new or revised AONB Management Plan by April 2004. AONB Officer recruited on a temporary contract within the IW Council Countryside Section joint funded with the Countryside Agency. Comment on Planning Applications with the AONB is actioned by Officer. Landscape Improvement Grant project is started.
- 2001 Landscape Improvement Grant funding continues. ARC Consultants commissioned to research alternative approaches to the review of the IW AONB Management Plan. AONB Officer leaves IW Council. Governance review of AONB commenced.
- 2002 AONB Officer recruited as permanent post. Website launched. Governance review completed and new funding established. Memorandum of Agreement formalizes funding of AONB Partnership between the IW Council and the Countryside Agency. New Isle of Wight AONB Partnership, Steering Committee and AONB Unit set up. Work commences on the new statutory AONB Management Plan. AONB Assistant recruited. 'Sense of Place' project started (Landscape Reflections and Small Grant Fund). AONB Planning and Information Officer recruited. Finest Landscapes newsletter launched.
- 2003 Public Consultation on the Draft AONB Management Plan. Publication of Communication Strategy for Isle of Wight AONB Partnership. First Annual General Meeting held. Production of the IW AONB Partnership First Annual Review. Planning Protocol established with Local Planning Authority. Development of First Accord. Finest Landscapes Festival held. Continuation of Sense of Place – Small Grant Fund

APPENDIX B

**A
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STEERING COMMITTEE

4 Core Members
Countryside Agency – Adam Wallace & Vicky Wetherell
IW Council – Cllr Terry Butchers & Cllr Colin Lillywhite

8 Advisory Members
Chairman – Tony Tutton
Community & Parish (Vice Chairman) – Denis Russell
Coastal – David Court
Historic Environment – Vicky Basford
Landowning & Farming – Geoffrey Case
Landowning & Rural Business – Vacant Position
Nature Conservation – Richard Grogan
Recreation & Tourism – Jill Green

Head of Planning Services – Andrew Ashcroft
AONB Unit Personnel – (see below)

ADVISORY GROUP
(See Next Page for list of members)

AONB UNIT

AONB Officer
John Brownscombe

AONB Planning & Information Officer
Marijke Ransom

AONB Assistant
Fiona Hanna

WORKING GROUPS
Management Plan; Small Grant Fund; Development Control & Planning

OPEN FORUM GROUP
(See next page for list of members)

WIDER PUBLIC

ADVISORY GROUP

	Company/Organisation
CA	Countryside Agency
BAG	Badger Action Group
CPRE	Campaign to Protect Rural England
CLA	Country, Land & Business Association
EH	English Heritage
EN	English Nature
EA	Environment Agency
FE	Forest Enterprise
FC	Forestry Commission
GIA	Green Island Award
GOSE	Government Office for the South East
HIWWT	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
I2K	Island 2000 Trust
ITIA	Island Tourist Industry Association
IWATPC	Isle of Wight Association of Town & Parish Councils
IWBG	Isle of Wight Bat Group
IWBAPSC	I W Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership Steering Committee
IWEst	Isle of Wight Estuaries Project
IWFWI	Isle of Wight County Federation of Womens Institutes
IWFM	Isle of Wight Farmers Market
IWG	Isle of Wight Grain Storage
IWNHAS	Isle of Wight Natural History & Archaeological Society
IWRIG	Isle of Wight Rural Issues Group
IWT	Isle of Wight Tourism
IWBPT	IW Building Preservation Trust
IWEP	IW Economic Partnership
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
NFU	National Farmers Union
NFSA	National Federation of Sea Anglers (IW Branch)
NT	National Trust
PTES	Peoples Trust for Endangered Species
QTP	Quality Transport Partnership
RA	Ramblers Association
RCC	Rural Community Council
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects (IW Branch)
RIWAS	Royal Isle of Wight Agricultural Society
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
SEERA	South East England Regional Agency
SERFCA	South East Reserve Forces & Cadets Association
WL	Wight Leisure
WNF	Wight Nature Fund
WSP	Wight Squirrel Project
WW	Wight Wildlife
WT	Woodland Trust
YHC	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners

OPEN FORUM

	Company/Organisation
BCP	Brading Community Partnership
BemHS	Bembridge Heritage Society
BPEA	Bishop of Portsmouth Ecology Advisor
BASC	British Association for Shooting & Conservation
BLW-FBA	Business Link Wessex – Farm Business Advisor
CJM	Clifford J Matthews Ltd
CG	Common Ground
CW	Cycle Wight
DBE	Diocesan Board of Education
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EWHG	East Wight History Group
FBRA	Freshwater Bay Residents Association
FL	Freshwater Lifeboat
LIFT	Local Initiative for Transport
FoE	Friends of the Earth (IW Branch)
G	Greenpeace (IW Campaign Group)
IWFB	Isle of Wight Foot Beagles
IWF	Isle of Wight Foxhounds
IWFG	Isle of Wight Folklore Group
IWGT	Isle of Wight Gardens Trust
IWHS	Isle of Wight Historical Society
IWPCLG	Isle of Wight Police & Community Liaison Group
IWPW	Isle of Wight Pond Wardens
IWPDD	Isle of Wight Pony Driving for the Disabled
IWSCA	Isle of Wight Self Catering Association
JMCT	Julia Margaret Cameron Trust
NRA	Newtown Residents Association
OffMP	Officer for Andrew Turner MP
ROOTS	ROOTS Family & Parish History Group
S&S	Scottish & Southern Distribution Plc
THWART	The Wight Against Rural Turbines
TUS	The Undercliff Society
WSDG	Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Guild
WWHG	West Wight History Group
WEDS	Wight Equine Driving Society
WGC	Wight Green Centre
WO	Wight Orienteers
W	Wightlink
WF	Woodland Forum
YS	Yarmouth Society

Isle of Wight Council

IWC	Isle of Wight Council
Cllrs	Councillors
IWCAHES	Archaeology & Historic Environment Service
IWCBV	Best Value Team
IWCCMS	Coastal Management Service
IWCCS	Countryside Section
IWCEco	County Ecologist
IWCGeo	County Geologist
IWCArcv	County Archivist
IWCDC	Development Control Section
IWCEng	Head of Engineering Services
IWCPlan	Head of Planning Services
LA21	Local Agenda 21
IWCLTP	Local Transport Planner
IWCPP	Planning Policy Section
IWCPS	Property Services Section
IWCRow	Rights of Way Section

Where there is no known standard convention for a group or society, one has been assigned by the AONB Unit for use within the Management Plan, Action Plan / Accord Process. Please contact us if the convention used is incorrect.

APPENDIX C

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION ON DRAFT AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Key stakeholder meetings with –

Isle of Wight County Archaeology & Historic Environment Service
Isle of Wight Council Countryside Section
Isle of Wight Council Planning Policy & Development Control Sections
Isle of Wight Council Rights of Way Section
Isle of Wight Council Property Services
Isle of Wight Council Transport Planner and Rural Transport Officer
(Rural Community Council)
Isle of Wight Council Coastal Management
Isle of Wight Council Highways Design
Forest Enterprise
Forestry Commission
Environment Agency
English Heritage
Isle of Wight Estuaries Project
Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners
National Farmers Union
Country Landowners and Business Association
The National Trust
Wight Wildlife
Association of Town and Parish Councils (Presentation also given to all
members at their AGM)
Isle of Wight Economic Partnership / Rural Issues Group
Isle of Wight Tourism
Campaign to Protect Rural England

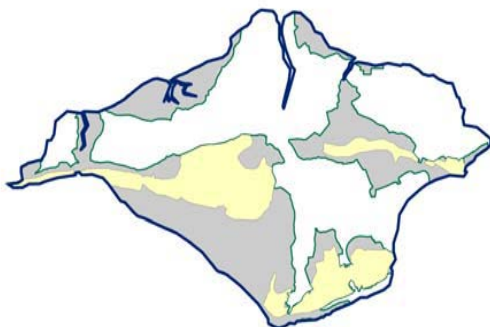
Written responses received from –

English Nature x 2
Countryside Agency
Wight Wildlife
Hants & IW Wildlife Trust
The Woodland Trust
Sandown Town Council
Newchurch Parish Council
Isle of Wight Natural History & Archaeological Society
IW County Record Office
Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners
Newtown Residents Association
ThWART
Island 2000 Trust x 2
IW Economic Partnership (Carol Flux)
Trail Riders Fellowship
Mr M Pullen
Isle of Wight Foot Beagles
SE RFCA
DEFRA
Wight Conservation
Mr D Wright
Vicky Basford (Isle of Wight AONB Partnership Steering Committee)
David Court (Isle of Wight AONB Partnership Steering Committee)
Councillor Mrs B Clough
Cycle Wight
Mr Orlik (Additional NFU submission)
British Horse Society

APPENDIX D

Landscape character types of the Isle of Wight AONB

LCT1 CHALK DOWNS



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An open landscape with long vistas, distinct skylines, large fields, sparse hedge or field boundaries, few mature hedgerow trees and a sense of space and exposure. This landscape character type is the most dominant within the Isle of Wight AONB. It is also the landscape type best known by the public because of the dramatic white cliffs at either end of the east-west central ridge, including the Needles Chalk stacks. There is another large area of chalk on the southern downs around Ventnor. Landmarks and seamarks such as St Catherine's Oratory and the Tennyson Memorial occur on high vistas.

The geology of this area was laid down on a seabed during the Late Cretaceous period from 98 to 65 million years ago. It was subsequently folded and eroded to give the landform, angular flint deposits and soil base that we see today.

Chalk grassland has a very rich ecology and holds a number of important habitats for rare plants and animals. This is reflected in the Priority Habitat status for lowland calcareous grassland and within the Biodiversity Action Plan. The habitats within this landscape character type continue to be under threat from intensive farming techniques, inappropriate grazing, recreation pressures and scrub invasion. Management of this important habitat is heavily dependant upon a correct grazing regime, which is in itself linked to the economic conditions of farming for graziers.

Ancient semi-natural woodlands on northern slopes, with distinctive woodland wildlife, are an important feature of the area.

A number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) fall within this landscape character area, representing the important nature conservation value of chalk downs. Small pockets of chalk heath occur on flint gravel deposits.

Rich in archaeology, with many scheduled and non-scheduled sites and monuments, this landscape has a strong time depth. Neolithic farmers started woodland clearance. Situated on cleared chalk downland, the Afton Down Longbarrow and Tennyson Down Mortuary

Enclosure are burial monuments from this time. More extensive woodland clearance on the chalk took place in the succeeding Bronze Age. Many Bronze Age round barrows are situated on the central chalk ridge and the southern chalk downs. Roman villas are situated in close proximity to the central chalk ridge and major Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have been recorded from this area. Manors and farms originating in medieval times cluster around the edge of the downs. Although traditionally grazed, with areas of common land, archaeological remains such as lynchets and ridge and furrow indicate that some chalk grassland has been ploughed in prehistory, Roman times or the Middle Ages. In recent times there has been an expansion of arable farming on the chalk.



Looking West from Afton Down
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

Historic removal of chalk for liming of heavy clay soils and for building materials has resulted in a number of disused quarries. These are now regenerating naturally and have become a rich nature conservation resource. Place names often refer back to this former use such as Lime Kiln Shute, at Mersley.

Settlement is mainly linear in nature. It is found at the base of the chalk downs in valleys and combs where shelter and water is available from the chalk aquifer through natural springs. Place names often reflect these landscape elements (Shalcombe). Access via footpaths, bridleways and track ways along the ridge have left a strong pattern on the landscape. The modern Tennyson Trail follows part of the route of a trackway, of possible prehistoric origin, which ran along the central ridge from Freshwater Bay to Brading. Evolving throughout history these routes are echoes of the movement of animals, a route to high ground for ceremonial purposes or as a vantage point, and as passage on horse back, horse drawn cart or carriage across the chalk ridge when lower routes were wet and



Looking East from Tennyson Down
© IW AONB Unit - Photographer John Brownscombe

impassable. Traditional build uses local hard chalk, flint and a common scale and design. Slate or thatch roofs (some tile), small windows and large walls and roofs of a simple style are typical.

High areas have been used throughout history as look out points for defence and the safety of seafarers. St Catherine's Oratory, The Needles Battery and other smaller installations, and beacon sites were used as an early warning against invaders. Few Iron Age hillforts exist, one on Chillerton Down, together with a recently discovered defended site just north of Bembridge Down. The earliest defences at Carisbrooke Castle date from the Anglo-Saxon period, if not earlier, and the medieval castle, with its chalk cut moats, dominates the surrounding landscape. On the southern downs, St Catherine's Oratory provided a rather ineffectual lighthouse for medieval mariners and a chain of medieval beacons on the chalk warned of possible



Looking East from Tennyson Down
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

invaders. Victorian and later defensive sites on the chalk include the Old and New Needles Batteries at the western end of the Island and Bembridge Fort at the eastern end. History was made at the New Needles site when it was used for testing the Black Knight rocket in the 1950s and 1960s. On the southern downs, Ventnor Radar Station played a vital defensive role in the Second World War.

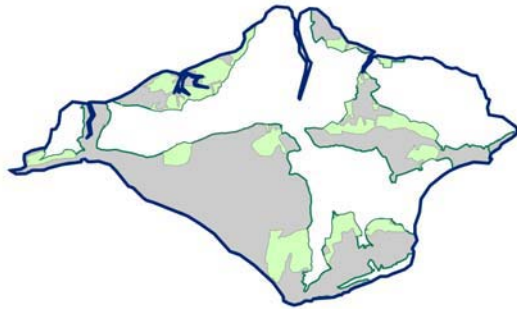
Key characteristics

Open and exposed with sparse hedgerows and no mature hedgerow trees.
Limited windswept and scrubby vegetation on higher downs.
Traditional grazing with extensive arable cultivation.
Broadleaved woodlands predominantly beech and ash on the lower downs.
Dominant high chalk cliffs.

Management aim

To retain the generally open nature and long views to and from the downs and to conserve and enhance their ecological and historic importance.

LCT2 TRADITIONAL ENCLOSED PASTURE



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This landscape character type occurs most frequently on heavier soil or in wet areas where arable cultivation has remained unviable. Most of this landscape character type is found north of the central and southern chalk downs because of the geology of the Island. To the north of the central chalk ridge is a landscape of lush green pastures with large hedges, small copses and woodlands that may be characterised as 'ancient' countryside. This landscape includes areas such as the pasturelands around the Newtown estuary, Farringford, Calbourne, Combley, Quarr, Nunwell and south east of Osborne. Field shapes tend to be irregular, reflecting subtle changes in local topography, with some more regular hedgerows reflecting later enclosure. There are many mature oak trees within pasture fields and as hedge trees, giving a sense of permanence to this landscape. Country lanes, footpaths and

bridleways are winding in nature and enclosed by hedges. Some arable cultivation takes place where modern farming equipment has made this possible. Some traditional pasture has been made more intensive to produce silage.



Traditional Enclosed Pasture
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

The chalk valley pastures of the Bowcombe Valley have a different character. Grazed by sheep, they have a more open aspect and views to the surrounding chalk downs.

Other areas of this landscape character type are clustered around the foot of the southern chalk downs on the Lower Greensand or on the Upper Greensand slopes that form a part of this downland. Areas of note include Sainham, Appuldurcombe, Wydcombe and Gotten.

Copses and woodland in this landscape character type are semi-natural and some may benefit from active coppicing and management to retain their integrity.



A Country Lane
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

Villages south west of the central chalk ridge are either of an open linear pattern or comprise small clusters of historic settlement, usually associated with farms. To the north of the central chalk ridge the settlement pattern is more dispersed. The main traditional building material in the northern part of this area is Bembridge Limestone, with the softer Greensand employed in the southern part.

The historic landscape to the north of the central chalk ridge includes areas such as the failed medieval borough of Newtown and the landscape parks of Westover and Nunwell. On the Greensand is situated the remains of the Island's largest Georgian landscape park at Appuldurcombe. The landscape parks of Westover, Nunwell and Appuldurcombe are all on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Reliant on small farms, livestock rearing and woodland management, this landscape is most at threat from changes to the agricultural sector that result from economic pressures.



Adgestone © Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

Key characteristics

Land mainly used for pasture.
Well preserved and dense hedgerows with mature hedgerow oak trees in the northern part of the area
Irregular small fields.
Narrow enclosed winding lanes.
Well wooded, with numerous copses.
Small scattered farmsteads.
Settlement patterns mostly linear in nature or small clusters.

Management aim

To ensure the retention of a viable, well farmed landscape as a buffer for urban areas and woodlands, characterised by a mosaic of permanent pasture, well managed hedgerows and copses.

LCT3 INTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL LAND



This landscape character type is found in a number of areas within the AONB. The first and most significant is the large, flat lower Greensand arable plain stretching from the south west of Rookley to the Tennyson Heritage Coast between Barnes High and Walpan Chine. A second sizeable area lies to the south of Arreton Down and stretches eastwards to Alverstone. Both of these areas are sub categorised as **Intensive Arable Land**. A third area is to the north of the chalk downs at Chessell and running west to Afton along with two areas both sides of the Western Yar Estuary. This area is sub categorised as **Central Agricultural Belt**. Finally, two small areas occur at Southford near Stenbury Manor, and in the Whitcombe Valley south of Newport.

The land in the Central Agricultural Belt involves farming on heavier soils, with greater prevalence of dairy farming and winter cereal crop production. Farming units tend to be large and associated with evergreen shelter belts. Hedgerows are scarce and, where present, often degraded.



Looking North West from St Catherine's Hill
© IW AONB Unit - Photographer John Brownscombe

The land in the Intensive Arable Lands exists on the Lower Greensand hills and Greensand plains, the most productive arable land on the Island. This part of the AONB has seen dramatic change due to Dutch Elm Disease. This has resulted in the loss of a former key feature of this landscape and the intensification of agriculture practices since the middle of the last century. The outcome is an open and sparsely populated landscape, with broad sweeping views, where the coastal climate has a strong influence. This

landscape changes with the seasons; the gold and brown of autumn and winter give way to the greens of spring, and the greens, yellows and blues of summer. In this part of the AONB the dynamics of the landscape are most apparent, with the use of farm machinery to turn the soil, irrigation of crops with large water canon, the use of polythene for early potato and maize production and the movement of ears of cereal crops emulating the waves along the Heritage Coast.



Bowcombe Valley
© IW AONB Unit - Photographer John Brownscombe

Although a long tradition of arable agriculture has removed whatever archaeological earthworks may have formerly existed in this landscape, the light and easily worked soils of the Lower Greensand were attractive to farmers from prehistoric times onwards.



Cauliflowers

© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

Key characteristics

Large, open fields.

Large-scale hedge removal and degraded remaining hedges.

No hedgerow trees.

Land use is predominantly rural.

Large farms and farm buildings.

Trees restricted to shelter belts.

Management aim

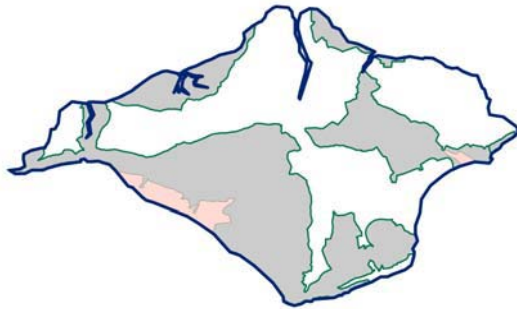
To recognise and retain the open nature of this well farmed zone, but to increase its visual and ecological interest by encouraging hedgerow and watercourse management.



Looking South-West towards Coast from Shorwell

© IW AONB Unit - Photographer John Brownscombe

LCT4
SOUTHERN COASTAL FARMLAND



This landscape character type largely occurs in one area between Shippards Chine and Barnes High and inland to the villages of Brighstone and Shorwell, with a further small area at Yaverland on the east coast. It has an open and exposed feel, with a gently undulating landform.

The influence of the sea can be seen by the few mature trees, which have been bent over by the salt laden winds, and the dramatic cliff falls along the seaward edge of fields. Travelling westwards along the Military Road, there is a gradual change from arable to pastoral land use. Most fields have a regular shape, with low hedges and few trees. The existence of Chines along the coastline adds drama to an otherwise largely gentle landscape.

The continuing coastal erosion process often exposes fossil remains in the soft geology of the cliffs. Archaeological finds are also frequently uncovered by coastal erosion in this area and along the whole of the AONB coastline. The Chines and eroding cliffs provide important habitats for rare species such as the Glanville fritillary butterfly. Willow scrub occurs in areas of wet pasture and adjacent to drainage channels such as at Sud Moor.

Ancient tracks and paths have created a dense network of public rights of way running from settlements to the coast and Chines. Settlement tends to exist in the form of small hamlets associated with formal communal grazing areas now known as greens (Marsh Green and Brook Green).



Eroding Cliffs, Brook © Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

Key characteristics

Large regular gently undulating fields.
Low hedgerows with few hedgerow trees.
A transition from arable in the east to pastoral in the west.
Valleys, old drainage channels and Chines cross the arable landscape and are associated with willow scrub and unimproved pasture.
Eroding coastline of key geological and archaeological interest.

Management aim

Seek to diversify habitats while maintaining the dominant mixed agricultural use. To allow natural coastal processes to occur unhindered.



Southern Coastal Farmland
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

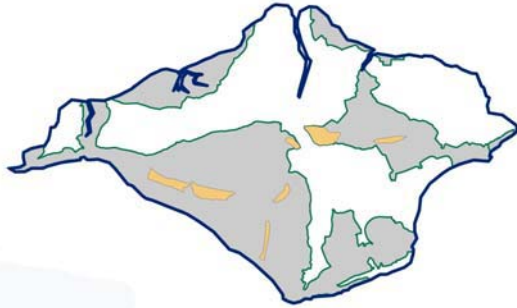


Whale Chine
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low



Looking South from Limerstone
© AONB Unit- Photographer Marijke Ransom

LCT5
SANDSTONE HILLS AND GRAVEL RIDGES



This landscape character type appears primarily in small land parcels south of the central chalk ridge. The largest area is to the west of Arreton at St Georges Down, with further small ridges in the area of Knighton, Southdown at Pyle near Chale, south of Chillerton and in a long band west of Shorwell to Brook.

The high Greensand hills (Sandstone Hills), in general support pasture except on steeper slopes. These slopes are often planted with mixed forestry and occur immediately to the south of the central chalk ridge.

From prehistoric times until the twentieth century there was some heathland in this area, as at Mottistone Common. The Neolithic 'Longstone', a burial mound with a

stone marking the former entrance, is situated here. Conifers were planted on Mottistone Common before the Second World War. However, much of the forestry plantation has now been cleared and heathland is being re-established.

Gravel ridges and terraces are often wooded or support gorse and bracken communities. Occurring as high ground in the south of the Island, they are in stark contrast to adjacent flat and fertile agricultural land.

Sunken lanes or shutes are a feature of this landscape, often on the slopes facing on to the chalk downs. These historic track ways support ancient woodland flora and give an intimate and secretive ambience.

Settlement, where present, tends to nestle in the steep sided valleys that offer shelter and access to the natural springs that filter through from the chalk aquifer.



Brook Hill House

© Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

The geological resource of this landscape character type has led to pressure for quarrying for sand and gravel extraction. This needs to be managed carefully as it can have a major impact on the visual quality of the landscape.

Key characteristics

Some traditional pasture, steep slopes planted to mixed forestry.
Lower gravel terraces support gorse and bracken.
Sunken lanes support ancient woodland flora.
Traditional sheltered settlement in the valleys.

Management aims

To encourage sympathetic management to ensure that the very visible, often steeply sloped areas, rich in flora are retained.
Where practical, restore former heathland and encourage management of areas that are neglected at present.
To consider carefully the visual impact of any proposals to extend quarrying activity.
To retain the character of the rural road and rights of way network.



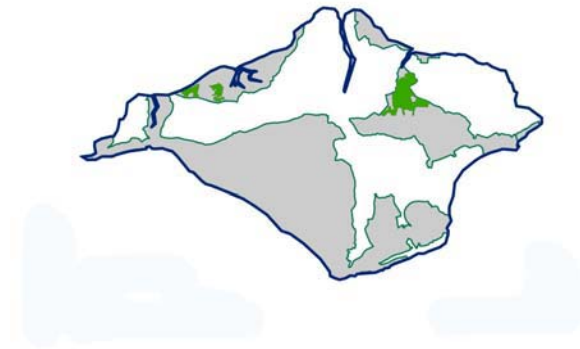
Limerstone Down from the Military Road
© IW AONB Unit - photographer Marijke Ransom



Looking East from the Longstone

© IWCAHES

LCT6
NORTHERN WOODLAND



Occurring on the heavier soils in the north of the Island where agricultural use has been unviable, these large areas of plantation and mixed woodland are a dominant feature in the landscape. Bouldnor, Combley and Firestone Copse are managed by Forest Enterprise, with smaller areas of copse and other ancient woodland in private ownership.

In medieval times much of the Island's woodland was concentrated to the north of the central chalk ridge. Most of the Island's non-plantation woodland is still in this area. Combley Great Wood was owned and managed by Quarr Abbey in medieval times and is partly surrounded by a historic enclosure bank.

Some woodland has public access provision and is an important amenity for leisure pursuits for the local community. Active woodland management, including clearance and coppicing, is required to secure the integrity of this landscape character area.



Looking at Firestone Copse from Havenstreet
© IW AONB Unit - Photographer John Brownscombe



Timber, Firestone Copse
© IW AONB Unit - Photographer John Brownscombe



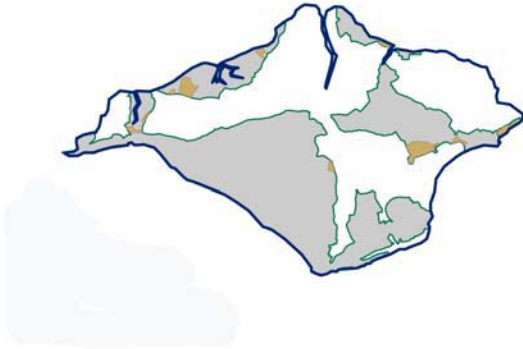
Key characteristics

Large woodland blocks of conifers and broadleaved species form a dominant feature in the landscape.
Small enclosed fields.

Management aim

To retain, conserve and where possible extend woodlands and maintain the broadleaved woodland characteristics of much of the north of the Island. Conservation will require improved woodland management and public access.
To seek to develop the skills and markets for woodland products that would benefit woodland management and public access.

LCT7
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT ZONE



This landscape character type describes parts of the AONB that have changed as a result of sporadic and urbanising development over time. Usually found at the edge of larger development, these areas blur the boundary between urban and rural. They include areas of former agricultural land that have been changed by the addition of horse paddocks and stabling; intensive horticulture; poultry and pig farming; waste disposal sites; extensive residential, industrial or retail development; holiday camps, mobile homes, caravan and campsites.

This results in an increasingly chaotic character, with a decline in the quality of management of hedgerows, woodland and agricultural landscapes.

Areas included in this landscape type are Lower Woodside Wootton, Cranmore, Pilgrims Park Thorness, Forelands, Wilmingham, Afton, Rookley, and Alverstone.

Mitigation and enhancement measures should be sought whenever there is a proposal for development in these areas. These areas are also likely to be subject to increasing development pressures. The formulation of design or supplementary planning guidance on issues of concern may help to guide change that will restore the landscape and enhance the AONB.

Early review using the new landscape character assessment guidance will help to identify ways to enhance these areas.

Key characteristics

Traditional agricultural landscape changed and often degraded by urbanising development.

Overall visual chaos and neglect of agricultural landscape in a town edge setting. Degraded hedgerows and unmanaged woodland.

General feeling of neglect and blur in the setting and edge of settlements.

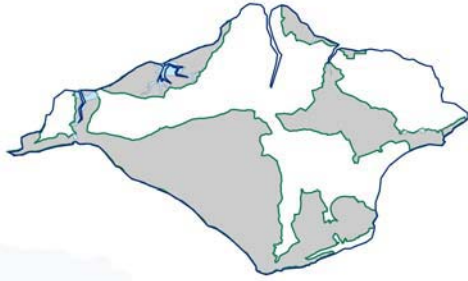
Management aim

To prevent the expansion of urban influence, to retain and interpret sites of ecological interest and to seek landscape improvements by focusing resources into this landscape



Whitecliff Bay
© Countryside Agency – Photographer Joe Low

LCT8 **HARBOURS AND CREEKS**



This landscape character type covers those estuarine environments on the Island that are within the AONB boundary, namely Wootton Creek, Kings Quay, Newtown, and the Western Yar. All have common features such as mudflats, shingle, salt marsh, reed beds, an open aspect, and fringing oak woodlands. However, each has its own distinct form and features.

Of these, the Western Yar is the largest and is subject to a number of pressures. As one of the ferry terminals linking the Island with the mainland, the Yar is a busy harbour. It is also valued as a place for quiet leisure activities, such as cycling, walking and sailing. Of high importance for nature conservation, it supports a number of important plant species (Norton Spit) and is a resource for overwintering migratory birds. Designated as an SSSI, the area needs careful and considered

management. The Western Yar Estuary Management Plan seeks to fulfil this function.

Newtown estuary has great historic, cultural and nature conservation value. The only National Nature Reserve on the Isle of Wight, it is primarily within the ownership and protection of the National Trust. It has a timeless, tranquil and secluded atmosphere, with a quality of light similar to the flat lands of East Anglia. Along with Kings Quay these two parts of this landscape character type represent the finest unaltered inlets on the Island.

At Wootton Creek, the upper part of the estuary south of Wootton Bridge is within the boundary of the AONB. It is quiet, rural and surrounded by oak woodlands.



Newtown
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low



Newtown
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

From prehistoric times these harbours and creeks have been important for trade and transport. It is no coincidence that the Island's medieval towns are all set beside harbours and creeks, even though Yarmouth struggled and Newtown failed to become viable.

In and around Wootton Creek and along the coastline from Wootton to Ryde a major archaeological project has found evidence of trade and subsistence activities dating back to Neolithic times. The Wootton-Quarr Project demonstrated the wealth of fragile remains that exist along this stretch of coastline, and that are under threat from erosion. The project also highlighted the enormous potential to increase our understanding of the past environment and landscape change. Other parts of the AONB coastline may prove to have equal potential.

Key characteristics

Flat exposed tidal mudflats, shingle banks and grazing marshes.
Open aspect.
Peripheral; enclosure created by surrounding oak woodlands.



Looking East along Clamerkin Lake from Newtown
© IW AONB Unit - Photographer John Brownscombe

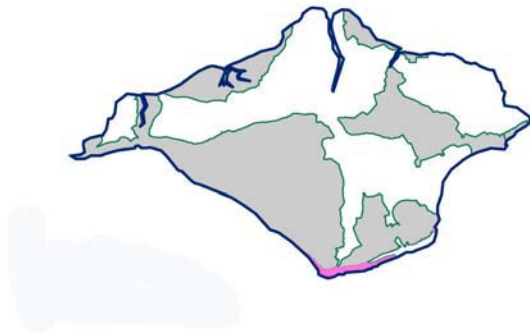
Management aim

To retain the quiet solitude of harbours and creeks.
To conserve intertidal habitats and to record archaeological material.



Looking over the Western Yar towards Yarmouth
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

LCT9 The Undercliff



The Undercliff is an area of landscape character that is unique to the Isle of Wight AONB. This is the largest inhabited rotational landslip in western Europe. It is of major geological, ecological and archaeological importance. There is the added pressure of the need to maintain and protect property, business and transport infrastructure in the area.

Running from Blackgang Chine in the west to Luccombe in the east, the Undercliff sits below the southern chalk downs. The landform is the result of coastal erosion processes and landslips caused by groundwater lubrication of slip planes within the Gault Clays and Sandrock Beds. Its picturesque beauty was appreciated from the late eighteenth century, when the earliest cottages ornés were built. Several more such cottages and marine villas were built in the

early nineteenth century. Valued by artists in the early nineteenth century for its picturesque and sublime natural beauty, the Undercliff quickly became the subject of study as part of wider Victorian interest in geological development and processes. Latterly the Undercliff has been appreciated for its temperate microclimate afforded by the shelter of the inland cliff and its southern aspect. This led to the construction of more residences for the well-to-do and the formation of a 'gardenesque' resort in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with associated walled gardens and exotic plant species.

The modern Ventnor Botanic Garden, featuring significant plant collections, has been developed in the grounds of a Victorian hospital for the treatment of tuberculosis. The Undercliff retains all of the elements admired and created over the last two centuries, offering a varied landscape of natural elements and man made additions.



St Catherine's Lighthouse
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

Although areas of the inland cliff remain visible there has been a gradual increase in secondary woodland particularly with holm oak and sycamore, leading to a more enclosed and secretive ambience. The Undercliff Drive, an important through route for local traffic and tourism in the area, continues to be subject to pressure from land movement. Long-term maintenance of vehicle access needs to balance social, economic and environmental considerations if it is to be sustainable. This is also the case for maintenance of and changes to existing or proposed coastal protection schemes.



Rocken End and Gore Cliff
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

On-going natural coastal processes are of great ecological importance because the gradual re-establishment of plant species and specialist micro habitats caused by continued land slides is essential for many plant and animal species. This is reflected in the cSAC designation of this area as of great European importance.

Key characteristics

Dramatic inland vertical cliffs.
Slumped grasslands.
Coastal pasture.
Exotic ornamental planting.
Nineteenth century villas and modern suburban housing with landscaped gardens.
Unmanaged natural woodland regeneration.

Management aims

To maintain open slumping habitat.
To enhance the special atmosphere and architectural character of the area.



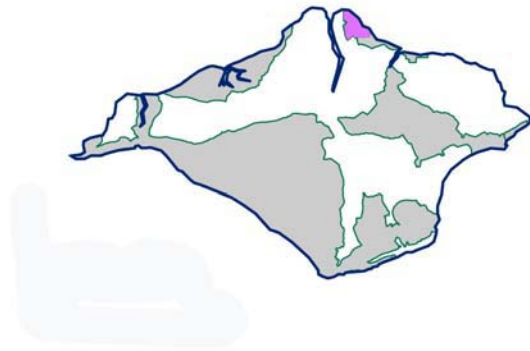
Bonchurch

© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low



A Landslip
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

LCT10
OSBORNE COAST



This landscape character type is a distinct part of the coast and hinterland to the north and east of East Cowes. A planned landscape of the nineteenth century, it was largely the concept of Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's beloved Prince Consort. Designed as a very private area screened from the town, the house and terrace afford vistas of the landscaped grounds and Solent beyond. Lying mostly within the extensive grounds of the former Royal estate of Osborne House, this landscape is characterised by rich ornamental and exotic planting, distinctive architecture in comparison to the surrounding traditional enclosed pasture agricultural land, and a wooded shoreline.

Now in the care of English Heritage, Osborne House and its grounds are being restored to their former glory. Major works have been undertaken in the gardens, and on the external fabric of the building. One of the

most visited sites under the care of English Heritage, Osborne House is an important cultural and tourism resource for the Isle of Wight. The grounds are included on English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The private landscape grounds of Norris Castle are also included on the Register and fall within this landscape character type.



Osborne House

© IWCAHES

Unusually this is the only landscape within the AONB that has no legal informal public access, with no public rights of way recorded in the area. The return to private ownership of Barton Manor Estate immediately adjacent to Osborne has further restricted opportunities for quiet informal recreation in the area.

Key characteristics

Exotic ornamental planting set within more naturalistic parkland.
Victorian villa architecture.
Very limited informal public access, the exception being the seasonal opening of Osborne House.
Ancient semi-natural woodland.
Wooded coastline.

Management aims

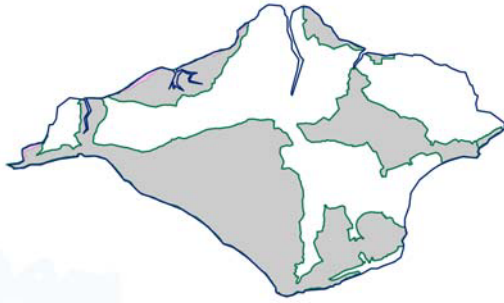
To continue restoration of the landscape of the estate as conceived by Prince Albert, and to encourage access and interpretation.



Osborne Coast

© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

LCT11
NORTHERN COASTAL CLIFFS



A small but important landscape character type occurring along the north-west coast of the Island from Gurnard through to Alum Bay. Consists of low slumped and sloping broken cliffs of clay and gravel that were formed as a result of the effects of the action of the sea on the underlying geology. The main characteristics of this area are rough cliff edges, scrub growth, hollows in the landform and a lack of development because of the instability of the land.

Bordered by agricultural land in the east at Thorness and Gurnard and plantation forestry in the west at Bouldnor near Yarmouth, some opportunities for access are afforded by the Coastal Path and connecting footpaths running inland. Coastal access is always under pressure from erosion because of the need to realign the route.

The majority of this coastline is also designated as Heritage Coast (Hamstead), reflecting its largely unspoilt character, importance for nature conservation, geology and as an area for quiet enjoyment.



Cliffs at Bouldnor
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

Key characteristics

Characteristically low sloping broken unstable cliffs.
Limited permanent development and public access.

Management aims

To restrict development but, where safe, to allow or extend public access to rugged slopes of scrub and heathland.



Cliffs at Bouldnor
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low

APPENDIX E

ISLE OF WIGHT NATURAL AREA PROFILE NO. 76 (CONSISTENT WITH THE NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA BOUNDARIES NO. 76)

Characteristics

- **Lowland calcareous grassland**, mostly chalk grasslands.
- Some dry neutral grasslands on northern plain
- Fragments of well developed **lowland heathland**.
- **Coastal and floodplain grazing marshes** in river valleys.
- **Vegetated sea cliffs**

Issues

- Pressure for agricultural intensification
- Opportunities for habitat creation
- Lack of appropriate management
- Coastal development and protection works

Objectives

- Avoid further intensification of agriculture
- Encourage traditional low intensity agriculture
- Promote agri-environment schemes where changes in farming practice will benefit wildlife
- Create or restore grassland and heaths especially where this extends existing habitat or links fragments

- Create wetlands by increasing groundwater levels and/or restoring appropriate flooding regimes on floodplains
- Promote appropriate management through extensive low intensity grazing and control of scrub invasion on grasslands and heaths

SOLENT & POOLE BAY NATURAL AREA PROFILE NO. 109 –

Characteristics

- Extensive stretches of **cliffs**, especially chalk cliffs and soft cliffs of sand and clay.
- Small number of **sand dune** sites
- Several shingle beaches and spits, including **vegetated shingle**
- Numerous **saline lagoons** around the Solent and the Isle of Wight
- Large areas of **saltmarsh** in large, shallow enclosed estuaries and embayments of the Solent
- Large areas of intertidal **mudflats** in estuaries and embayments
- Intertidal and subtidal rocky reefs on the Isle of Wight, including **chalk reefs**

Issues

- Sea level rise / climate change
- Maintenance of coastal processes (see also Landscape and Earth Heritage)
- Water quality
- Fisheries
- Recreation and tourism

Objectives

- Plan for continued coastal erosion and sea level rise by having a sustainable sea defence strategy; preventing development on areas subject to coastal erosion or flooding; and creating where lost suitable maritime habitats to landward.
- Allow natural and dynamic coastal processes to operate by avoiding development that interferes with natural sedimentation and erosion; minimising dredging; and mitigating harmful impacts of necessary dredging
- Maintain and restore high water quality by reducing inputs of untreated sewage effluents; and reducing contamination due to industrial discharges and agricultural run off
- Ensure that exploitation of marine wildlife resources is sustainable
- Avoid detrimental impacts on key wildlife features by promoting recreation and tourism that is environmentally sensitive and by avoiding development of tourism infrastructure that would demand unsustainable sea defences

NB Priority Biodiversity Action Plan habitats in ***bold italics***

APPENDIX F

ISLE OF WIGHT AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

MANAGEMENT PLAN ACCORD

Between -
IW AONB Partnership &
IW County Archaeology & Historic Environment Service



The Longstone, Mottistone Common
© IWCAHES



Carisbrooke Castle
© Countryside Agency - Photographer Joe Low,

This Accord is a commitment by the IW AONB Partnership and the IW County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service to work together to conserve and enhance the IW AONB.

This statement aims to:-

- Clarify our mechanisms for communication
- Establish common objectives
- Agree actions to deliver specific objectives for the conservation and enhancement of the IW AONB. In particular, the historic and archaeological resource.

The IW AONB Partnership:-

Is a broad based independent organisation with representatives from many different local, regional and national organisations with a direct interest in the AONB. The staff arm of the Partnership is the AONB Unit, which is hosted by the IW Council. The IW County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service (IWCAHES) is an Advisory Group Member of the IW AONB Partnership.



Milestone, Compton Farm
© IW AONB Unit-Photographer John Brownscombe.

Statutory duties:

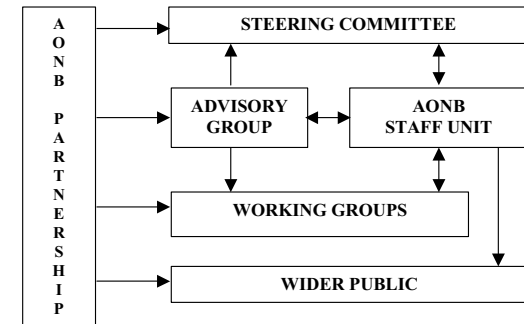
In 1963 half of the land area of the Isle of Wight was designated under section 87 of the 1949 National Parks and Access to Countryside Act as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a recognition of the national importance of the Island's finest landscapes.

Parliament has recently raised and reinforced the status and protection of AONBs through Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Statutory responsibility has now been placed on the all local authorities with an AONB within their administrative area to produce an AONB Management Plan. The IW Council and the Countryside Agency have signed a memorandum of agreement to fund the IW AONB Partnership to produce this and to encourage its implementation through partnership working. The Act has also conferred a statutory duty on all public bodies and statutory undertakers, to have regard for the purposes of designation .

Core Functions: IW AONB Partnership

- 1 Produce and review an AONB Management Plan on behalf of the IW Council
- 2 Raise awareness and appreciation of the AONB
- 3 Encourage people to consider the AONB in carrying out their daily activities, in particular highlight the statutory responsibility of public bodies and statutory undertakers to have regard for the AONB designation.
- 4 Monitor and report on the management of the AONB
- 5 Promote sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the AONB.



The IW County Archaeology & Historic Environment Service:-

Is a section within Planning Services of the Isle of Wight Council. Planning Services also hosts the IW AONB Unit.

Statutory duties:

Besides their statutory duty to have regard for the AONB designation, the IW County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service have a legal agreement with English Heritage to assist in the management of scheduled monuments under the Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. They are also the Coroner's representative for any finds deemed to be treasure under the Treasure Act 1996.



'Five Barrows' Brook Down © IWCAHES

Key tasks: IWCAHES

- 1 Contribute to the archaeological policies included in the IW Council Unitary Development Plan;
- 2 Provide a best practice archaeological service to the Isle of Wight by way of archaeological policy, methods and knowledge;
- 3 Manage, develop and enhance the County Sites and Monuments Record;
- 4 Identify, assess, investigate and sustainably manage the land based, coastal and marine archaeological resource;
- 5 Assist English Heritage in the identification and management of monuments and sites which are most worthy of statutory protection through scheduling;
- 6 Operate the implementation of the Treasure Act on behalf of the Coroner;
- 7 Provide a public identification service for archaeological finds and operate the Portable Antiquities Scheme for the reporting of metal detecting finds;
- 8 Advise the local planning authority on implementations of development and provide the equivalent advice to statutory undertakers, the Highways Authority and Environment Agency;
- 9 Provide advice on the management and conservation of the historic environment for non-statutory partners and organisations.
- 10 Communicate archaeological information and facilitate public involvement and interest in the historic environment;
- 11 Provide an archaeological contribution to the Council's education initiatives;
- 12 Provide archaeological advice to the Council's sustainable tourism proposals.



Island Chines Project Smugglers Seat
© Countryside Agency—Photographer Joe Low



Brading Roman Villa
© Countryside Agency—Photographer Joe Low

Our vision for the Historic Environment within the IW AONB

There is a high level of understanding about the intrinsic relationship between the historic environment, landscape character, earth heritage and nature conservation. We know more about the resource and its condition and are better placed to identify the pressures and threats that it faces. Advice, and resources have been made available to help to secure the protection and sustainable management of the historic environment a reflection of the increased appreciation of its value to the 'Sense of Place' of the AONB.

Shared Aims -

- **Promotion, education and awareness raising of the importance of the Historic Environment to the character of the AONB**
- **Research, recording, management and sharing of information and data relating to the Historic Environment within the AONB**
- **Provision of information, guidance and advice to the general public, land managers, policy makers, decision makers and those involved in activities which may impact upon the Historic Environment of the AONB**
- **Monitoring change and its impact on the Historic Environment within the AONB**
- **Encourage and facilitate community involvement in the conservation and enhancement of the Historic Environment of the AONB**
- **Promote and support sustainable approaches to the management of the Historic Environment within the AONB**



Newtown Town Hall
© Countryside Agency—Photographer Joe Low

Relevant IW AONB Management Plan Policies—

HE1 POLICY AREA: AWARENESS

The importance of the Historic Environment and its relationship to the character of the AONB is widely understood.

Policy Objectives:

- To promote the importance of the historic environment to the special qualities and character of the AONB.
- To encourage greater community involvement in the assessment, description, management and celebration of the historic environment.
- To develop specific opportunities to provide educational material about the historic environment and its role in defining the character of the AONB.
- To identify where there are gaps in our knowledge base that require further research.
- To provide an authoritative information and advice service with regard to the historic environment within the AONB

HE2 POLICY AREA: MONITORING & RECORDING

The impact of recreational activities, agriculture, land management, potential climate change and development on the historic environment within the AONB are monitored and researched.

Policy Objectives:

- To develop practices and techniques to research, record and monitor the extent and condition of the historic environment within the AONB.
- To establish mechanisms to monitor the impact of change upon the historic environment and its effect on the character of the AONB
- To develop partnership projects to manage and influence change where it threatens or offers an opportunity to benefit the historic environment within the AONB

HE3 POLICY AREA: CONSERVING & ENHANCING

Historic Environment issues are given due consideration in proposals for development and other change within the AONB and where possible specific measures for enhancement and protection of this resource will be sought.

Policy Objectives:

- To seek appropriate measures to record, protect and manage the historic environment within the planning process, including where possible mitigation and management enhancement.
- To provide information in the form of guidance that can help to inform decision/policy making and influence activities which are outside of any regulatory process
- Through the Accord process identify mutual interests, joint working, communication, data sharing. This will help to demonstrate public bodies fulfilment of 'duty of regard' to conserve and enhance the historic environment and its important contribution to the character of the AONB.

Joint Actions

- Promote landscape character and a greater understanding of the dynamic relationship between people and place that has led to the special qualities of the AONB.
- Develop a community based 'Landscape Detectives' project identifying, recording and celebrating the AONB and its contribution to the quality of life of local communities.
- Produce educational packs and resources for schools and teachers highlighting the use of the AONB as an educational resource.
- Promote the importance of sustainable practice in land management, farming, forestry and recreational activities within the AONB.
- Investigate ways to monitor the condition and extent of the natural and historic environment and landscape of the AONB.
- Instigate the sharing of existing data between Partnership members and identify gaps in our current knowledge base.
- Develop partnership projects to provide information on areas where there is little existing knowledge on the extent and condition of facets of AONB character.
- Provide comment on planning proposals and planning policy within the AONB to help with the determination process of the local planning authority.
- Develop Supplementary Planning Guidance, Design Guidance and other information relating to land use planning in the AONB.
- Develop Codes of Conduct for activities within the AONB not subject to regulation.
- Investigate the use of the County Sites and Monuments Record and Historic Landscape Characterization study to guide the future recording of information about the historic environment within the AONB.
- Audit quarry sites within the AONB to identify their extent, condition, current and potential use and impact on the AONB.
- Work to ensure consideration of the importance of coastal processes to the natural, historic and landscape of the AONB and their impact on the social and economic well being of local communities.
- Contribute to schemes which promote sustainable practice in business and recreation.
- Contribute to the production of whole farm plans and forest design plans.
- Investigate the provision of advice and guidance to land managers and the farming community.
- Identify the carrying capacity of the AONB for recreation and tourism activities based on data gathered under the monitoring and recording section of the Action Plan.

Details on the timescales and delivery of these Joint Actions are within the Action Plan associated with the IW AONB Management Plan 2004-2009.

Communicating Effectively

As an Advisory member of the IW AONB Partnership, the IW County Archaeological and Historic Environment Service is able to raise and be informed of AONB issues through the:

- Partnership Update (Bi monthly)
- Finest Landscapes Newsletter (Three times a year)
- Minutes of the AONB Steering Committee
- Membership on the Small Grant Fund Work Group
- Membership on the Tennyson Trail Task Group

Officers of the AONB Unit and IWCAHES will regularly use email and telephone and arrange meetings to communicate on urgent and topical issues as well as to progress joint actions. Progress on shared objectives and joint actions identified in this Accord, will be monitored and shared through annual 'activity reports' which will feed into the preparation of Annual Reports.



© IWCAHES—The Longstone, Mottistone Common

Data Exchange

The IW AONB Unit and IWCAHES operate a shared Arc View Geographic Information System (GIS). The IWCAHES retain ownership of the SMR and Historic Buildings Record databases and are responsible for their maintenance and interpretation. The IWCAHES will provide the AONB Unit with quarterly updates of the SMR and SMBR in co-ordination with any updates from other sources of shared information. No specific SMR or Historic Building Record data will be disclosed to third parties without the prior knowledge and agreement of IWCAHES.

The IWCAHES will seek to provide the AONB Unit with any relevant information that may be used in monitoring the condition of the IW AONB, and performance of the IW AONB Partnership when required.

The AONB Unit will send IWCAHES a list of which weekly planning applications they intend to provide comment on.

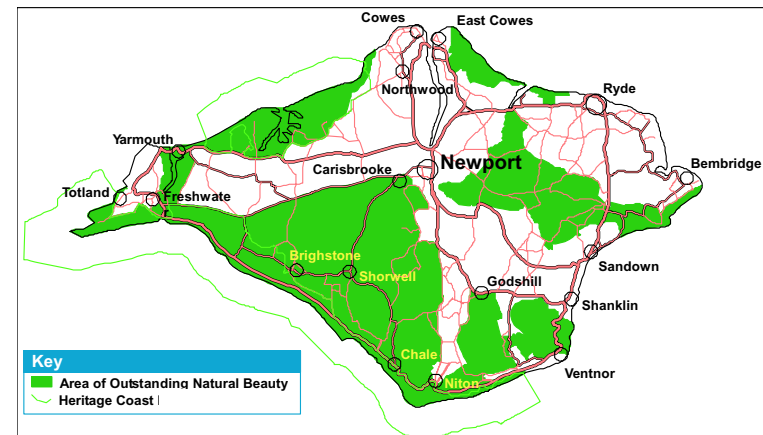
Contact Details

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SERVICE

County Archaeological Centre
61 Clatterford Road
Carisbrooke
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 1NZ
Tel: 01983 823 810
Fax: 01983 823810
Email: ruth.waller@iow.gov.uk

ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PARTNERSHIP

AONB Unit
Seaclose Offices
Fairlee Road
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 2QS
Tel: 01983 823855
Fax: 01983 823851
Email: unit@wightaonb.org.uk
www.wightaonb.org.uk



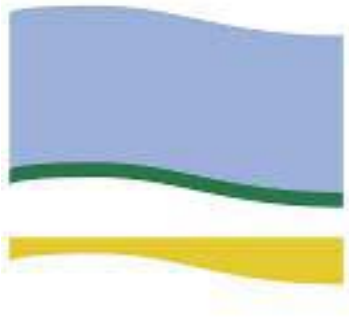
GLOSSARY

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	JIGSAW	Joining and Increasing Grant Scheme for Ancient Woodland	SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan			SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
CA	Countryside Agency	LA21	Local Agenda 21	SPA	Special Protection Area
CC	Countryside Commission (now Countryside Agency)	LCA	Landscape Character Area	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
CRoW	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	LCT	Landscape Character Type	UDP	Unitary Development Plan
cSAC	Candidate Special Area of Conservation	LDF	Local Development Framework		
DEFRA	Department of Food and Rural Affairs	LNR	Local Nature Reserve		
EN	English Nature	LTP	Local Transport Plan		
ERDP	England Rural Development Plan	NAAONB	National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty		
FC	Forestry Commission	NNR	National Nature Reserve		
GIS	Geographical Information System	NPA	National Park Authority		
GOSE	Government Office of the South East	PPG	Planning Policy Guidance		
HAP	Habitat Action Plan	Ramsar	Wetland Sites protected under the Ramsar Convention		
IW	Isle of Wight	RIGS	Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites		
IWC	Isle of Wight Council	SAC	Special Area of Conservation		
IWCAHE	Isle of Wight Council Archaeology & Historic Environment Service	SAP	Species Action Plan		
I2K	Island 2000 Trust	SEEDA	South East England Development Agency		
JAC	Joint Advisory Committee	SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly		

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Isle of Wight AONB Unit
Seaclose Offices
Fairlee Road
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 2QS

Tel: 01983 823855
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E-mail: unit@wightaonb.org.uk
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