



**EAST DEVON**

*Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*

# NATURE RECOVERY

Our commitment to nature

An outline of our proposals for nature recovery  
in the East Devon AONB



# Nature Recovery

Our proposed approach to nature recovery has come about as a result of the National Association for AONBs Colchester Declaration (2019), where AONBs have collectively committed to doing more for nature and pledged:

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***That each AONB will prepare a Nature Recovery Plan, by July 2020***

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## What we have done so far

Since its establishment in 2002 the AONB Partnership has delivered and supported a variety of habitat and species-related activity across the AONB, but we have never adopted a particular species to champion.

During 2019/2020 the NAAONB has outlined a framework for Nature Recovery Plans and is developing a project proposal, through which a series of approaches to nature recovery planning will be piloted in five distinct AONB clusters.

Projects will encompass landscape-scale restoration planning, targeted species recovery, citizen science approaches to monitoring/research and engaging new audiences. These will be agreed in mid-2020 and funding sought to enable delivery, starting ideally in 2020.

East Devon, Blackdown Hills and Dorset AONBs will be one of the proposed pilot areas, focusing on the land contiguous to the three AONBs in the Axe valley as part of a 'fragmented landscape' pilot.

We expect to learn different lessons from each cluster, enabling us to better understand both the challenges to nature recovery and the ability of protected landscapes to engage a diverse range of people.

## Our commitment

- We will work with a range of partners as part of our approach; it is important that local action complements the developing Devon-wide Local Nature Recovery approach that Devon LNP is developing with Devon Wildlife Trust and the Devon Biodiversity Record Centre.
- Our approach to nature recovery will integrate with our Species Action Plans and our Nature Connectedness approaches.
- As part of our approach to nature recovery planning, we will address further pledges made in the Colchester Declaration to:
  - Embed an ecosystems services approach into all AONB Management Plans **by 2024**
  - Ensure our AONB management plan includes meaningful measures around climate
  - change mitigation and adaptation, including clear, measurable targets to support Net Zero **by 2024**
  - Get our proportion of SSSIs in East Devon AONB in **favourable condition by 2030**
  - Get our proportion of 100,000 ha of wildlife-rich habitat outside protected sites created/ restored to further support the natural movement of plants and animals **by 2030**
  - Get our proportion of 36,000 ha of new woodland planted or allowed to regenerate
  - following the principle of the right tree in the right place **by 2030**

## A Nature Recovery Plan Framework – a work in progress

Nature Recovery Plans are a key commitment of the [Colchester Declaration](#), made by the country's AONBs in 2019. They aim to engage partners and inspire and inform positive action, to conserve what remains and reinstate what's been lost.

The plans will relate to AONB Management Plans as a spatial expression of our shared vision for resilient landscapes, rich in wildlife. The AONB family will strive to ensure incentives such as the new Environmental Land Management Scheme are a key part of resourcing these plans.

AONB Nature Recovery Plans will relate to land outside the protected landscape boundaries where appropriate and where AONBs share a boundary, they will link. Their compilation will relate to the development of county-scale Local Nature Recovery Strategies, which will be a statutory duty on Local Authorities arising from the Environment Act.

AONB Nature Recovery Plans will be developed through collaboration with our partners and stakeholders.

### Key purposes of AONB Nature Recovery Plans

- Set out a strategic and spatial approach to nature recovery within the AONB
- Encourage engagement of agencies and communities
- Integrate with the National Nature Recovery Network and Local Nature Recovery Strategies
- Help direct / target investment in nature

### Guiding principles

- Nature recovery first - but where possible achieving wider ecosystem services e.g. carbon capture, flood management, pollination, climate change resilience, enhanced landscape character, improved connection between people and nature
- Designed around Lawton's principles of bigger, better and more joined up landscapes
- Collaborative approach at the core
- Inclusive – aiming to move all land managers along a spectrum of positions

### Draft Plan structure

It is expected that AONB Partnerships will develop their Nature Recovery Plans at different paces.

We will make a start on our framework in 2020/21 with a view to having a plan to feed into the next review of the AONB Management Plans in 2024.



A framework of the plan is shown below based on an outline proposed by the NAAONB.

Section	What needs to be done	Process
Context, scope and purpose	Define the rationale for the plan, its scope, how it fits with the AONB Management Plan. Cross reference to key documents e.g. LNP NE, 25YEP	Develop through AONB Team/Partnership/NAAONB Pilots
Vision	Define a vision for nature recovery	Develop through AONB Team/Partnership/NAAONB Pilots
State of nature in the AONB	Status/condition of sites, habitats and species within the AONB; their significance within regional, national and international contexts; trends and pressures. Highlight data and evidence issues and gaps that need to be addressed.	Use existing AONB Mgt Plan data/ monitoring + confirm data/info with NE, EA, FC, Wildlife Trusts and Local Record Centres.
Statement of priorities for nature	Agree sites, habitats and species to prioritise linking to existing species action plans where established	Confirm through advisory panel drawn from NE, EA, FC, Wildlife Trusts, Local Record Centres and inc. neighbouring AONBs.
Strategy	Strategic model for expanding and linking priority areas for nature including spatially mapped areas required to create functioning and resilient ecosystems within the landscape	Confirm through advisory panel.
Delivery Plan	Process, priorities, targets, timelines, partners, resources, funding	Liaise with partners over mechanisms for delivery – NE, FC, EA, LNP, Local authorities, landowners.
Monitoring & evaluation	Key metrics and mechanisms	Link to existing/developing monitoring frameworks for AONB Management Plans, Local Nature Recovery Strategies, ELMs, 25YEP.

\*This is a work in progress, and we will develop our approach and plans iteratively with our partners and stakeholders.



Sid Valley