



# Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019 - 2024





Isle of Wight  
area of outstanding  
natural beauty



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 DEFRA and the Isle of Wight Council



# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>THE ISLE OF WIGHT AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1	MINISTERIAL FOREWORD TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-24	4
1.2	CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD	5
<b>2</b>	<b>ISLE OF WIGHT AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1	STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	6
2.2	VISION	6
<b>3</b>	<b>BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT (ABOUT THE PLAN)</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1	INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	7
3.2	WHAT IS AN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY?	7
3.3	PURPOSE OF THE DESIGNATION	7
3.4	STATUTORY DUTIES FOR MANAGING AN AONB	9
3.5	ISLE OF WIGHT AONB	9
3.6	ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PARTNERSHIP	9
3.7	AONB UNIT	9
3.8	THIS AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN	9
3.9	ISLE OF WIGHT AONB - THE ISLAND CONTEXT	12
3.10	ADAPTING TO THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE	14
3.11	WHAT THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB GIVES US (TAKING AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH)	15
3.12	STRUCTURE OF THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN	17
3.13	OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES FOR ISLE OF WIGHT AONB	17
<b>4</b>	<b>THE PROTECTED LANDSCAPES AND COASTAL AREAS OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1	ISLE OF WIGHT AONB LANDSCAPE	19
4.2	MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS AND FORCES FOR CHANGE	19
4.3	CONNECTING LAND AND SEA	22
4.4	MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	24
4.5	SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	26
4.6	POLICIES FOR PROTECTED LANDSCAPES AND COASTAL AREAS OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB	27
4.7	PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	27
<b>5</b>	<b>GEOLOGY AND GEOMORPHOLOGY</b>	<b>28</b>
5.1	KEY FACTS & FIGURES	29
5.2	SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	29
5.3	MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	30
5.4	POLICIES FOR GEOLOGY AND GEOMORPHOLOGY	31
5.5	PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	31
<b>6</b>	<b>MINERALS AND SOILS</b>	<b>32</b>
6.1	MINERALS	32
6.2	SOILS	32
6.3	KEY FACTS & FIGURES	33
6.4	SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	33
6.5	KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	34
6.6	POLICIES FOR MINERALS AND SOILS	34
6.7	PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	34

<b>7</b>	<b>AIR AND WATER</b>	<b>35</b>
	<b>7.1</b> AIR	<b>35</b>
	<b>7.2</b> WATER	<b>35</b>
	<b>7.3</b> KEY FACTS & FIGURES	<b>36</b>
	<b>7.4</b> SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	<b>36</b>
	<b>7.5</b> KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	<b>38</b>
	<b>7.6</b> POLICIES FOR AIR AND WATER	<b>41</b>
	<b>7.7</b> PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	<b>41</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>WILDLIFE</b>	<b>42</b>
	<b>8.1</b> KEY FACTS & FIGURES	<b>43</b>
	<b>8.2</b> SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	<b>45</b>
	<b>8.3</b> KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	<b>45</b>
	<b>8.4</b> POLICIES FOR WILDLIFE	<b>47</b>
	<b>8.5</b> PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	<b>47</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>FARMING</b>	<b>48</b>
	<b>9.1</b> KEY FACTS & FIGURES	<b>49</b>
	<b>9.2</b> SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	<b>50</b>
	<b>9.3</b> KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	<b>50</b>
	<b>9.4</b> POLICIES FOR FARMING	<b>52</b>
	<b>9.5</b> PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	<b>52</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>FORESTRY AND WOODLAND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>53</b>
	<b>10.1</b> KEY FACTS & FIGURES	<b>54</b>
	<b>10.2</b> SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	<b>54</b>
	<b>10.3</b> KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	<b>55</b>
	<b>10.4</b> POLICIES FOR FORESTRY AND WOODLAND MANAGEMENT	<b>55</b>
	<b>10.5</b> PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	<b>55</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>56</b>
	<b>11.1</b> KEY FACTS & FIGURES	<b>57</b>
	<b>11.2</b> SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	<b>58</b>
	<b>11.3</b> MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	<b>58</b>
	<b>11.4</b> POLICIES FOR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	<b>60</b>
	<b>11.5</b> PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	<b>60</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS</b>	<b>61</b>
	<b>12.1</b> KEY FACTS & FIGURES	<b>62</b>
	<b>12.2</b> SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	<b>62</b>
	<b>12.3</b> MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	<b>62</b>
	<b>12.4</b> POLICIES FOR CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS	<b>63</b>
	<b>12.5</b> PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	<b>63</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>TRANQUILLITY AND DARK SKIES</b>	<b>64</b>
	<b>13.1</b> KEY FACTS & FIGURES	<b>65</b>
	<b>13.2</b> SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	<b>66</b>

13.3	MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	67
13.4	POLICIES FOR TRANQUILLITY AND DARK SKIES	67
13.5	PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	67
<b>14</b>	<b>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>68</b>
14.1	AONB PARISHES	68
14.2	ROADS AND TRANSPORT	69
14.3	RURAL BUSINESS	69
14.4	WASTE	69
14.5	USE AND DISPOSAL OF WATER	69
14.6	KEY FACTS & FIGURES	70
14.7	SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	70
14.8	MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	70
14.9	POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES	73
14.10	PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	74
<b>15</b>	<b>ENERGY</b>	<b>75</b>
15.1	KEY FACTS & FIGURES	76
15.2	SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	76
15.3	MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	76
15.4	POLICIES FOR ENERGY	77
15.5	PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	77
<b>16</b>	<b>TOURISM</b>	<b>78</b>
16.1	KEY FACTS & FIGURES	78
16.2	SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	79
16.3	MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	79
16.4	POLICIES FOR TOURISM	80
16.5	PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	80
<b>17</b>	<b>ACCESS AND RECREATION</b>	<b>81</b>
17.1	RIGHTS OF WAY	81
17.2	SPORTS, HOBBIES AND PASTIMES	82
17.3	KEY FACTS & FIGURES	83
17.4	SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE	84
17.5	MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)	84
17.6	POLICIES FOR ACCESS AND RECREATION	84
17.7	PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY	85
<b>18</b>	<b>DELIVERY AND MONITORING</b>	<b>86</b>
18.1	DELIVERING THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN	86
18.2	MONITORING	86
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PARTNERSHIP</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<b>LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>APPENDIX C</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW, SCOPE AND PROCESS</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>APPENDIX D</b>	<b>DELIVERING THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>APPENDIX E</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>APPENDIX F</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>106</b>

## 01

# The Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Compton - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

## 1.1 MINISTERIAL FOREWORD TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-24

I am fortunate that England's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are part of my Ministerial responsibilities. Whether it be rolling hills, sweeping coastline or a tranquil village, spending time in an AONB can stir the heart and lift the spirit.

This is a pivotal moment for all AONBs. The Government has set its ambition in the 25 Year Environment Plan which states clearly the importance of natural beauty as part of our green future, while AONBs retain the highest status of protection for landscape through national planning policy. Leaving the EU brings with it an opportunity to develop a better system for supporting our farmers and land managers, who play such a vital role as stewards of the landscape. And the Review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty led by Julian Glover - the first of its kind for generations - will make recommendations to make sure our designated landscapes can flourish in the years ahead.

In my visits to AONBs around the country, I have been struck by the passion of many people - farmers,

volunteers, and hard-working staff - for the beautiful places they live and work. In this spirit I am delighted to welcome publication of this Statutory Management Plan for the Isle of Wight AONB. It is significant that this plan will be delivered in partnership by those who value the Isle of Wight AONB. I would like to thank all those involved in preparation of this document and wish you the best of success in bringing it to fruition.

*Lord Gardiner of Kimble*



**Lord Gardiner of Kimble**  
Undersecretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity

## 1.2 CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present to you the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan for 2019 - 2024.

The Plan is the result of extensive work, involving consultation with the public and partners, as well as a detailed review of our previous Management Plan to create a comprehensive new document examining all aspects of the Isle of Wight AONB's landscapes and seascapes. The Plan will place us on a sound footing as we enter times that will present both challenges and opportunities for our countryside. At the time of writing, the uncertainty of Brexit looms and the Glover Review of designated landscapes is getting underway.

The Isle of Wight Council is also in the process of reviewing its Island Plan, which we hope will be able to incorporate and give greater weight to policies in this Plan. Furthermore, we await the outcome of an application for the Isle of Wight to become a UNESCO Biosphere, which has been led by the Isle of Wight AONB Unit.

The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership is an independent body funded by DEFRA. It is made up of representatives from a range of organisations, covering a vast array of backgrounds and interests. This depth of variety has always been the Partnership's greatest strength. The Management Plan brings together the Partnership by outlining our common objectives and stating our policies to ensure these special landscapes and seascapes

of the Island are conserved and enhanced for future generations.

I would like to thank all those who have helped to bring the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan 2019 - 2024 together; from those on the Steering Committee representing Partner interests, to the Advisory Members and everyone who took part in the consultation process.

This document is the result of many people working together around the common goal of conserving and enhancing the complex and diverse range of landscapes that make up the Isle of Wight AONB. The landscapes provide a whole range of benefits, whether they be economic or just pure enjoyment, for those who live and work on the Island.

I trust that this Plan will provide a strong basis for supporting the needs of people within the AONB area alongside maintaining and sustaining the unique landscapes they live and work within.



**Jonathan  
Bacon**



5 Barrows - Courtesy Liz Cooke



## 02

## Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Yarmouth Sailing - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

### 2.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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.

### 2.2 VISION

**'The Isle of Wight AONB will remain a beautiful, thriving landscape cared for and appreciated by all.'**

The Isle of Wight AONB remains 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 tranquillity 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 policies and the decisions taken have conserved and enhanced the special characteristics of the Island's finest landscapes, giving the AONB a strong identity and 'sense of place'.

Climate change adaptation has, and continues, to take place in a way which conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the area whilst supporting the needs of local communities, rural businesses and the land use sector.

Farming and woodland management remain 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 has added to the quality of life of local communities, and to the quality of the experience for visitors.

New technologies have been appropriately 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, has created less dependence on the private car for transport within the AONB.

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



## 03

## Background and Context (About the Plan)

Ventnor Down - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

### 3.1 INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The international significance of the AONB is recognised through its classification as a Category V Protected Landscape by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). In 2013, the IUCN UK Committee reaffirmed the Category V status for AONBs, confirming the significant part they play in conserving the UK's biodiversity and cultural heritage.

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is a treaty for the protection, conservation, management and planning of all the landscapes in Europe. It also encourages the integration of landscape into all relevant areas of policy including cultural, economic and social policies.

In the ELC, landscape is defined as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.' The Convention also places particular emphasis on the need for co-operation for landscape management across administrative boundaries making the role of AONBs particularly relevant.

### 3.2 WHAT IS AN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY?

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are nationally important protected landscapes designated under the National Parks and Access to Countryside

Act 1949. The Isle of Wight AONB is 1 of 46 AONBs in Britain (33 wholly in England, 4 wholly in Wales, 1 which straddles the English/Welsh border and 8 in Northern Ireland) covering 18% of the countryside. Together with the National Parks they are protected in the national interest both for today and for future generations as examples of our finest countryside.

In planning terms AONBs are equivalent to National Parks, and must be afforded the same level of consideration and protection.

### 3.3 PURPOSE OF THE 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. Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency) is the national body with responsibility for designating AONBs. In 2001, a Countryside Agency publication (CA 24 2001) stated:

- 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 local communities.

# Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty





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.

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 enhances the character of the AONB.

### 3.4 STATUTORY DUTIES FOR MANAGING AN AONB

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act)<sup>1</sup> 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 AONBs.
- Established a process for creating AONB conservation boards, where this is supported locally.
- Created a statutory responsibility for local authorities and conservation boards to produce and regularly review AONB Management Plans.

### 3.5 ISLE OF WIGHT AONB

The Isle of Wight AONB was designated in 1963, the fourteenth of the 46 areas to be confirmed. The total area designated is 191 square kilometres, which is approximately half the land surface 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 was published in 2003. This sets out the reasons why areas that were put forward during the extensive consultation were either included or excluded.<sup>2</sup> The special qualities that led to designation are set out more fully in later chapters.

### 3.6 ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PARTNERSHIP

Following the increased profile and protection afforded to AONBs by the CRoW Act 2000, a new partnership approach to managing the Isle of Wight AONB between the Isle of Wight Council and Natural England was set out through a Memorandum of Agreement. This has

continued with a partnership with DEFRA including funding arrangements until April 2020.

The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership was formed in April 2002, and is a broad-based independent body with representatives from many local and national organisations and individuals with a direct interest in the AONB. The AONB Partnership is funded by Defra.

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

### Core functions of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership are:

- 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.

### 3.7 AONB UNIT

The staff arm of the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership is the AONB Unit, which consists of an AONB Lead Officer, an AONB Planning Officer, an AONB Communications and Projects Officer and an AONB Assistant. The Unit also manages the Isle of Wight Environmental Records Centre and has two Project Officers currently managing the East Wight Landscape Partnership, 'Down to the Coast'. This project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and a number of project partners and runs until December 2020. The Unit is hosted by the Isle of Wight Council and is housed within the Regeneration Directorate.

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

### 3.8 THIS AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Local authorities with an AONB in their administrative area must produce and subsequently review an AONB

Management Plan. 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.”<sup>1</sup> For the Isle of Wight AONB, this is undertaken by the AONB Partnership with a formal adoption of the plan by the Isle of Wight Council. The AONB Partnership also oversees the delivery of the Plan over its five year cycle.

As well as being a legal requirement, the initial preparation and subsequent reviews of the AONB Management Plans represent an opportunity to draw together all interested parties to generate long-term visions for the area, set an agenda for change and manage such change effectively. It is also a useful educational tool, helping to change attitudes and behaviours.

The first statutory AONB Management Plan was produced in 2004 and this will be the fourth iteration of the statutory plan.

### 3.8.1 PURPOSE OF THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

The overall aim of AONB Management Plans is to ensure continuity and consistency of management over time. It places a focus on the primary purpose of the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty with social and economic issues covered in terms of how they relate to the primary purpose.

#### 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.

### 3.8.2 HOW THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN LINKS WITH PLANS AND STRATEGIES

National and local policies already provide a considerable level of protection for the natural beauty of the Isle of Wight AONB. In addition many of the organisations in the AONB Partnership prepare strategies and plans that deal with other or specific issues that affect the area (such as land use planning, tourism, transport, biodiversity, geodiversity, estuary management *etc.*)

This plan should be used to guide and inform plans and activities of other public bodies and those organisations such as statutory undertakers (e.g. utility companies) that have a duty to have regard for the primary purpose of the AONB. It can also be used for information and as a guide for other individuals or organisations with an interest in the area.

#### National Planning Policy Framework 2018

It is important to recognise that the primary legislation in relation to AONB designation is from the CROW Act (2000) and originally from the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Policies for AONBs outside this Plan are now solely contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018<sup>3</sup>, Local Development Framework (The Island Plan see section 3.9.4) and Neighbourhood Plans.

The National Planning Policy Framework confirms the requirement in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF provides specific planning guidance for plan makers and decision takers in relation to AONBs and confirms that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty. Furthermore, AONBs have



the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Additionally it is confirmed that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in these areas. AONBs and their Management Plans are material considerations in planning. The 'great weight test' is significant and one of the most stringent legal tests that can be applied under planning law. In specific relation to major development, the NPPF states that planning permission should be refused for major developments in AONBs except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that they are in the public interest and sets a series of 3 tests they are assessed against. Major development within a heritage coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Whether a proposal is a major development is a matter for the decision-maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact of the purposes for which the area has been designated. (NPPF 2018)<sup>3</sup>.

It should, however; be recognised that the "presumption in favour of sustainable development" does not apply within AONBs as confirmed by (para 11 footnote 6) of the NPPF, due to the other policies relating to AONBs elsewhere within the Framework. Additionally AONBs are defined within the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations for specific consideration as a "sensitive area" and land within AONBs is recognised differently under the Town and Country Planning Act (2015) as Article 2(3) land (which for example restricts certain permitted development rights).

The NPPF also calls on local authorities to recognise that undeveloped land can perform a variety of functions and that consideration of the role it plays for wildlife, flood risk mitigation, cooling / shading, carbon storage and food production should all be taken into account in the planning process.

### UK Government's 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>4</sup>

Published in 2018, this Plan gives a wide ranging view of the commitments of the Government over the next 25 years including planning, environmental protection and the role of AONBs and National Parks. It aims to deliver cleaner air and water in our cities and rural landscapes, protect threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats. It calls for an approach to agriculture, land use and fishing that puts the environment first.

The Government will conserve and enhance the beauty of our natural environment, and make sure it can be enjoyed, used by and cared for by everyone. This will be done by:

- Safeguarding and enhancing the beauty of our natural scenery and improving its environmental

value while being sensitive to considerations of its heritage.

- Making sure that there are accessible, natural spaces of high quality, close to where people live and work, particularly in urban areas, and encouraging more people to spend time in them to benefit their health and wellbeing.
- Focusing on increasing action to improve the environment from all sectors of society.
- Developing a Nature Recovery Network to protect and restore wildlife, and provide opportunities to re-introduce species that we have lost from our countryside.
- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of our landscapes by reviewing National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) for the 21st century, including assessing whether more may be needed.
- Respect nature by using our water more sustainably.

The Plan seeks to embed an environmental net-gain principle for development, including housing and infrastructure; improve the way we manage and incentivise land management including designing and delivering a new environmental land management system and make greater use of natural flood management solutions to reduce the risk of harm from flooding.

The Government will be working with AONB Partnerships to deliver environmental enhancement, including demonstrator projects, and engaging with communities through their statutory management plans.

### The Glover Review

In May 2018 the UK Government launched its Review of Designated Landscapes (National Parks and AONBs) in England: 'The Review aims not to diminish the character or independence of our designated landscapes, or to impose new burdens on them and the people who live and work in the areas they cover. Instead, its purpose is to ask what might be done better, what changes could assist them, and whether definitions and systems which, in many cases date back to their original creation, are still sufficient.'

### Objectives:

In the context of meeting both local and national priorities and wider environmental governance, the Review will examine and make recommendations on:

- The existing statutory purposes for National Parks and AONBs and how effectively they are being met.
- The alignment of these purposes with the goals set out in the 25-Year Plan for the Environment.
- The case for extension or creation of new designated areas.
- How to improve individual and collective governance of National Parks and AONBs, and how that governance interacts with other national assets.
- The financing of National Parks and AONBs.
- How to enhance the environment and biodiversity in existing designations.
- How to build on the existing eight-point plan for National Parks and to connect more people with the natural environment from all sections of society and improve health and wellbeing.
- How well National Parks and AONBs support communities.

Expanding on work already underway, the Review will also take advice from Natural England on the process of designating National Parks and AONBs and extending boundary areas, with a view to improving and expediting the process.

The Review will include visits to AONBs and National Parks and will call for evidence in December 2018. It is expected to report in autumn 2019, in celebration of 70 years since the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 which established National Parks and AONBs.

### Environmental Principles and Governance Bill 2018

The amended EU Withdrawal Act includes provisions for a Bill to include a set of environmental principles and a duty for the Secretary of State to publish a statement of policy relating to their application and interpretation in the making and development of policies by Ministers of the Crown. There is also to be a duty which ensures that Ministers must have regard to the policy statement in connection with the making and development of policies by Ministers. The Bill was announced in July 2018 and is scheduled to be confirmed in December 2018.

### 3.9 ISLE OF WIGHT AONB - THE ISLAND CONTEXT

Isle of Wight AONB cannot be considered in isolation from the rest of the Isle of Wight. The very fact that the AONB consists of five distinct parcels of designated landscape spread out across the whole of the Island means that there is a strong interrelationship between the AONB and the non-designated areas. This interrelationship is: visual, in respect of views to and from the AONB (its setting) often including non-designated countryside or settlements; economic, in terms of the draw of the AONB for tourism and as a setting for other rural and land based industries; and social, in that it provides recreational space for many larger communities immediately adjacent to the area.

This proximity to the most populated areas of the Island means the AONB is easily accessed, having the ability to play a positive part in the health and wellbeing of the whole local community and contribute to the wider Isle of Wight economy.

#### 3.9.1 ISLE OF WIGHT BIOSPHERE

The Isle of Wight AONB, in recognition of the intimate relationship between those areas both inside and outside the designation, has promoted a nomination to UNESCO for Biosphere Reserve status for the Isle of Wight. This international designation will act as an accolade for the Island's community as a whole and recognise their commitment to sustainable development into the future. The retention of this important global designation will require the community, at all levels, to follow the principles beyond the 2020 vision of Isle of Wight Strategic Plan: Eco-Island.

#### 3.9.2 'START WELL, LIVE WELL, AGE WELL ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT'

The Health and Wellbeing Board includes the Emergency Services, Isle of Wight NHS, Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group, One Wight Health, the Voluntary Sector Forum and the Isle of Wight Council. The Board promotes the 'My Life a Full Life'<sup>5</sup> care model to provide safe, sustainable and quality care and health improvements for all. In November 2016 the NHS produced the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sustainability and Transformation Plan which sets out the strategic direction for health care, including My Life a Full Life, until 2021. A Health and Well-Being Strategy<sup>5</sup> was launched in 2018 with the vision: *People live healthy and independent lives, supported by thriving and connected communities with timely and easy access to high-quality and integrated public services when they need them.*



Amongst many challenges facing the community of the Island, living longer with chronic medical conditions, deteriorating mental health, obesity and finding the funding to secure services to address these needs are the most acute. Recent research<sup>6,7</sup> has shown that access to landscape and nature can improve both mental and physical health and Isle of Wight AONB, amongst other places of natural beauty, can provide the opportunity for residents and visitors to experience real health benefits.

### 3.9.3 ECONOMIC STRATEGY

#### The Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (Solent LEP)

This is a partnership organisation between the business community, the further and higher education sector, three unitary authorities, eight district councils and one county council, all of whom are actively working together to secure a more prosperous and sustainable future for the Solent area.

The Solent LEP's vision<sup>8</sup> is (in the period to 2036) to create an economic environment that will deliver economic growth and private sector investment in the area, increasing the value of goods and services in the area to £ 44bn (currently £ 28bn) contributing to GVA growth of 2 % per annum. There are currently six Strategic Priorities for the Solent LEP:

1. Enterprise.
2. Developing Economic Infrastructure: Isle of Wight Infrastructure Investment Plan.
3. Science and Innovation.
4. Inward Investment and International Trade.
5. Skills for Growth: Isle of Wight College STEM Centre.
6. Strategic Sectors.

LEPs have a key role in the distribution of European Rural Development Funding. The Isle of Wight makes up 70% of the rural area of the Solent LEP. The Isle of Wight Rural Fund, launched by the Solent LEP in 2016 and administered by Natural Enterprise, has led to the creation of 55 new jobs and safeguarded a further 45 in rural SME's on the Island<sup>9</sup>.

#### Isle of Wight Economic Development Plan<sup>10</sup>

The Isle of Wight Council published an Economic

Development Plan for 2016/17 to 2018/19. It builds upon the Isle of Wight Economic Strategy (2008- 2020)<sup>11</sup> recognising that the economic context has changed significantly since the strategy was first published, although the priorities for the Island remain unchanged. It also builds on the evidence base presented in the Local Economic Assessment (2010)<sup>12</sup> which helped to inform its targets and actions.

The plan identifies the four priority action areas in which the Council will focus its attention and resources to improve the overall economic well-being of the Island as defined by the six key indicators in the Plan's performance framework. These are:

#### Action 1: Enterprise and Jobs

To increase inward investment and support existing and new businesses, using a combination of short and long-term strategic interventions.

#### Action 2: Infrastructure

To enable progress towards key infrastructure priorities such as best use of public land and property assets; transport; new housing and next generation ultra-fast broadband.

#### Action 3: Skills

To develop the skills base in key sectors to ensure that the skills of the workforce support local competitiveness in an increasingly global economy.

#### Priority 4: Strategic Sectors

To develop strategic sectors and clusters (interconnected groups and businesses) of:

Marine; advanced manufacturing and engineering; low carbon, renewable and environmental technologies; and the visitor economy.

The Plan also looks at the development of an Isle of Wight Economic Development Board with representatives from Isle of Wight Council, Chamber of Commerce, IW College, Visit IW and IW Federation of Small Businesses.

#### Isle of Wight Regeneration Strategy<sup>13</sup>

The Draft 2018-2030 Regeneration Strategy for the Isle of Wight aims to set out how the Isle of Wight Council aims to ensure the economic future of the Island and create the Island that is a great place to grow up, live, work and visit.

Seven major elements of the Strategy have been identified:

- Physical regeneration.

- Housing.
- Infrastructure.
- Using public assets as pump primers.
- Skills and business development.
- Area regeneration.
- Communications, engagement and partnership working.

There will also be initiatives required to undertake monitoring, evaluation and resourcing this regeneration.

Whilst many of the projects outlined in the Strategy do not directly impact on the landscape designation, the outcomes include the revised Local Development Framework (see below) and will seek to provide opportunities for sustainable economic growth in a climate of public service sector reductions in capacity, skills and knowledge. When consultation has been completed and the Strategy adopted, it will replace the IW Economic Development Plan (detailed above).

### 3.9.4 ISLAND PLAN – THE ISLAND’S LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK<sup>14</sup>

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 planning process is the main regulator of development pressure within the AONB.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004<sup>15</sup> (as amended), introduced a system of plan-making – the Local Development Framework (LDF). It is not a single plan, but an overall term for a number of separate documents known as Local Development Documents (LDD), which may be prepared at different times. The Island Plan (the Isle of Wight’s LDF) provides the basis on which planning decisions are made. The Isle of Wight Council Core Strategy (including Minerals & Waste) and Development Management Policies DPD, set out how, in spatial planning terms, the Island will develop up to 2027. The Island Plan Core Strategy was adopted by the Isle of Wight Council on 21 March 2012. A revision of the Plan is now being undertaken and is planned for consultation in 2018 and for adoption in 2019.

The AONB Management Plan forms one of the supporting documents within the Island Plan. This Management Plan seeks to add value to that process, not only through its policies, but additionally through

its commitment to ensure that the AONB Partnership inputs, as appropriate, in future Island Plan Local Development Documents.

### 3.9.5 ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PLANNING POLICY (FOR INCLUSION IN THE ISLAND PLANNING STRATEGY 2019)

The impact of individual proposals and their cumulative effect on the Isle of Wight AONB and its setting will be carefully assessed. Planning permission will be granted where it can be demonstrated that all the following criteria have been met:

1. The natural beauty and locally distinctive features of the Isle of Wight AONB are conserved and enhanced;
2. Proposals reinforce and respond to, rather than detract from, the distinctive character and special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB;
3. Either individually or cumulatively, development does not undermine the integrity or predominantly open and undeveloped, rural character of the Isle of Wight AONB and its setting;
4. Is appropriate to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area or is desirable for the understanding and enjoyment of the area (where this is consistent with the primary purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty); and
5. Either individually or cumulatively, development does not undermine the policy aims of the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan.

Should, in exceptional circumstances, planning permission be approved without the above criteria being met, then compensation for remediation and improvement of the damaged designated landscapes will be sought.

### 3.10 ADAPTING TO THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Research into the implications of the predicted climate change scenarios on the environment, community and economy of the Isle of Wight was undertaken in 2011<sup>16</sup>. It specifically discusses the recommended role of the Isle of Wight Council as a lead strategic body but also sets out the key issues and suggested adaptations that may be needed:



The **principal risks** to the Island from climate change have been identified as:

- Impact of fluvial flooding and extreme weather events on communities.
- Impact of sea level rise, flooding and coastal erosion on the built environment and land use.
- Impact on communities and businesses of water shortages caused by drought conditions.
- Threats to human health due to new environmental conditions.
- Limited capability of Island species and habitats to adapt to a changing climate and extreme events.
- Economic instability caused by lack of sufficient adaptation particularly within the agricultural sector.
- Impact on infrastructure and transport threatening business continuity.
- Impact of extreme events on continuity of the Island's energy supply.
- Impacts of extreme weather on cross Solent supply chain: food, fuel, medicine.

Other considerations could include:

- Limited capability of Island species and habitats to adapt to competition with 'new' species.
- Impact on freshwater habitats of water shortages caused low flows and resultant water shortages during drought conditions.

The **adaptation actions** deemed as most critical to the safety of Island residents and continuity of public services are:

- Conduct climate vulnerability mapping to identify priority at-risk sites, settlements, developments and properties across the Island.
- Continue to monitor the state of the Island's coastline, coastal infrastructure and community.
- Introduce appropriate climate change adaptation fully in all new and reviewed Isle of Wight Council strategic policies and programmes,

and minimise future risk through effective implementation.

- Increase awareness amongst communities of how a changing climate will affect daily life and how they might adapt and prepare for sustained disturbance to routines and the acute impacts of extreme weather events.
- Develop a freely accessible Island-wide resource of comprehensive information and expertise on climate adaptation.

Climate change is likely to be a key influencing factor in the longer-term and can be taken as being relevant to all the topics in this plan. Many of the risks and adaptation actions listed in the Isle of Wight Climate Adaptation Report and other similar reports are mentioned in the later topic chapters of this Management Plan.

### 3.11 WHAT THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB GIVES US (TAKING AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH)

The Isle of Wight's natural environment includes a wide range of landscapes and seascapes made up of many factors, including the geology, climate, habitats and human influence, both past and present.

For ease of reference, from this point forward where we use the term landscape this equally incorporates seascape, other than where seascape is specifically mentioned. Moreover, reference to Isle of Wight AONB also encompasses the Hamstead and Tennyson Heritage Coasts, other than when specifically mentioned.

Landscape is more than just 'the view' from a single point. It is the result of complex interactions between natural and cultural systems, reflecting the relationship between people, place and nature. The landscape is an ever-changing backdrop to our daily lives.

The Isle of Wight's landscapes are valued by people for a variety of reasons, each is characterised by its own pattern of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement, which create areas of local distinctiveness. This is described as Natural Capital.

There are three core principles to the Ecosystem Approach:

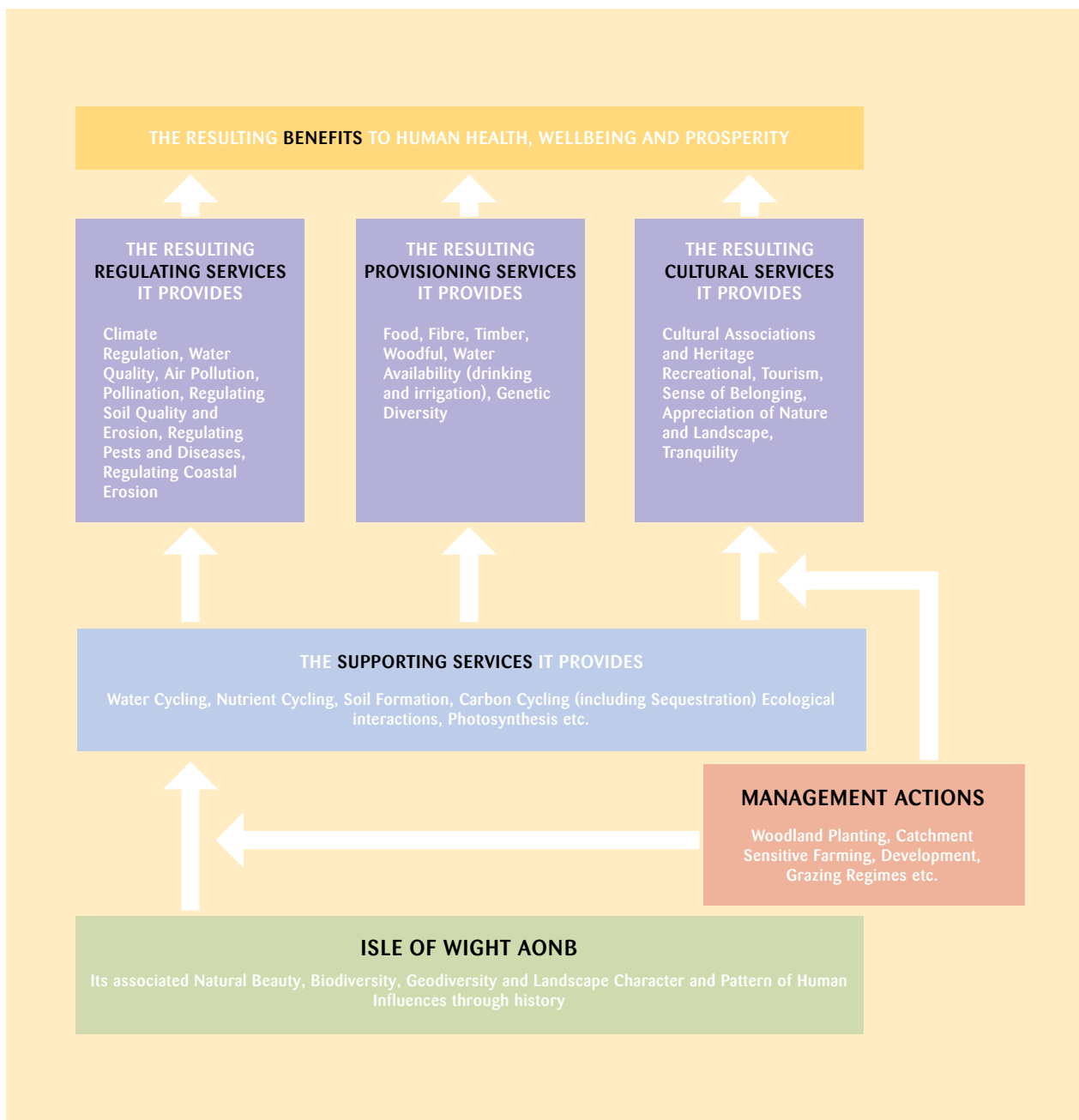
- The natural systems that operate within the Isle of Wight AONB are complex and dynamic and their healthy functioning should not be taken for granted.

- Those that live, work and visit the Isle of Wight AONB directly benefit from the services provided by the natural environment. These services underpin the social and economic wellbeing of not just the Isle of Wight AONB but the wider Island and have a direct economic value. These services are derived from the Island's Natural Capital.
- Those who benefit from the services provided by the Isle of Wight AONB and those who have an active role in the management of them, should play a central role in making decisions about them.

In the development of this Plan and its accompanying

Strategic Environmental Assessment, we have taken an ecosystem services approach. This has helped to ensure the identification of the contribution of the Island's Natural Capital, alongside the social, cultural, and economic benefits these afford the Isle of Wight AONB and to the Island as whole. This increased understanding has informed our approach to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area.

The following diagram illustrates the relationship between the Island's Natural Capital, Isle of Wight AONB and the Ecosystem Services it provides. It shows how the management decisions taken can affect the value of the Ecosystem Services and therefore the overall value to human health, wellbeing and prosperity.





### 3.12 STRUCTURE OF THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

This AONB Management Plan has been structured under a number of topics exploring the Ecosystem Services that the protected landscape provides.

These are:

- Protected landscapes and coastal areas of Isle of Wight AONB.
- Geodiversity (Geology and Geomorphology).
- Geodiversity (Minerals and Soils).
- Air and Water.
- Wildlife.
- Farming.
- Forestry and Woodland Management.
- Historic Environment.
- Cultural Associations.
- Tranquillity and Dark Skies.
- Sustainable Communities.
- Energy.
- Tourism.
- Access and Recreation.

Each topic chapter contains:

- A description of the significance of the topic to the Isle of Wight AONB protected landscape.
- Key facts and figures providing the general context and evidence base.
- Relating to the specific topic, an outline of the specific ecosystem services provided and the resulting beneficiaries.
- The key management influences and forces for change.
- AONB Management Plan policies for the topic.
- Priorities for delivery which will be outlined in further detail in the accompanying Delivery Plan.

You may also wish to refer to the accompanying Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of this AONB Management Plan<sup>17</sup>, which has influenced its formulation and policies.

It is also important to remember that although we have split the Management Plan into a number of topic chapters many of the issues, influences and policy objectives have a degree of overlap and combined influence and effect across a number of topics.

### 3.13 OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES FOR ISLE OF WIGHT AONB

The overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB apply to all aspects of the conservation and enhancement of the areas primary purpose and link to the more detailed policies in each of the topic sections of this plan.



Bloodstone Copse - Courtesy Liz Cooke

**01** Ensure the conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB according to its statutory purpose in line with the aims, objectives and policies, as detailed in this Plan.

**02** Encourage and support opportunities to enhance the landscape and seascape of Isle of Wight AONB.

**03** Promote and raise awareness of the Isle of Wight AONB, its coastline, facets of its character, the services provided by the landscape and the benefits that these give to people.

**04** Promote the understanding of the key considerations in relation to Isle of Wight AONB, through the development of guidance documents and other publications.

**05** Monitor forces for change likely to have impact on Isle of Wight AONB and its management.

**06** Encourage and support appropriate rural economic development that conserves and enhances the Isle of Wight AONB.

## Key Words in the Isle of Wight AONB Objectives and Policies

The table below gives guidance on the language in the objectives and policies in the whole Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan 2019-24. This aims to give greater understanding of the role of the Isle of Wight AONB Unit, the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership and the individual Partners.

KEY WORD	INTERVENTION PROPOSED
Ensure	The objective or policy is fundamental (due to legislation or best practice) to the continued conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB and every effort will be made by the Unit and Partnership to deliver the appropriate outcome.
Encourage	The objective or policy requires the co-operation of a number of parties to deliver the appropriate outcome including, but not exclusively, the Isle of Wight AONB Unit, Partnership or Partners.
Support	The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership will consider the use of its own time and resources to achieve the appropriate outcome with the help of other organisations.
Promote	The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership will use its influence and profile to help deliver the appropriate outcome.
Monitor	The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership will encourage organisations to collect data across the designation with a view to reporting conclusions relating to Isle of Wight AONB condition to inform the conservation or enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB.



The Needles Lighthouse - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight



## 04

## The Protected Landscapes and Coastal Areas of the Isle of Wight AONB

*Alum Bay from west High Down - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

### 4.1 ISLE OF WIGHT AONB LANDSCAPE

The Isle of Wight AONB has a complex and diverse landscape. The underlying geology; habitats and species of plants and animals; historic and current land use and settlement pattern; boundary features such as hedgerows, stone walls, hedge banks, streams and ditches; traditions, customs and cultures; peace, tranquillity 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 geographical 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 south west 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.

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, or expansion of existing, activities within the countryside, built development and traffic can all have an impact on the peace, tranquillity and character of the Isle of Wight AONB.

### 4.2 MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS AND FORCES FOR CHANGE

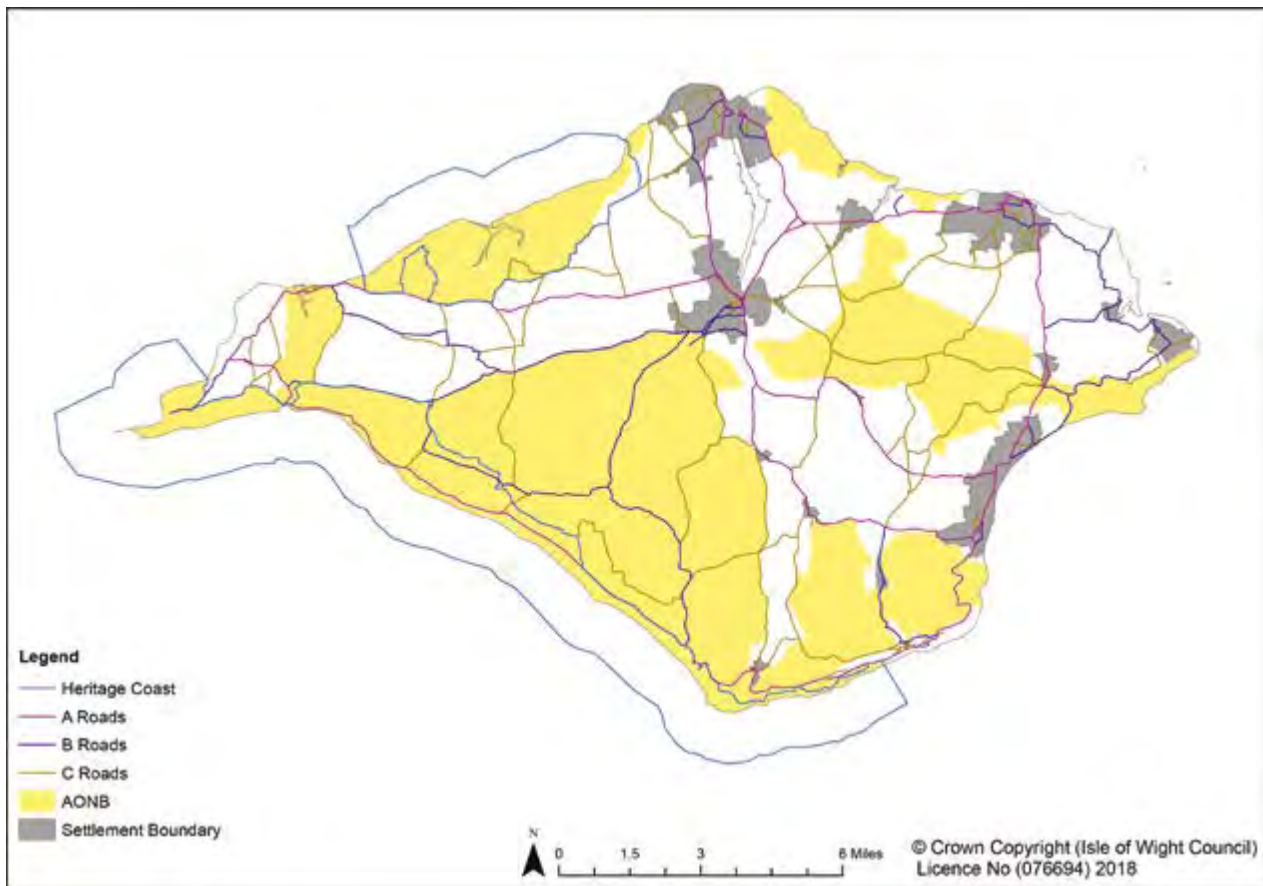
#### 4.2.1 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

As defined by the Landscape Character Network, landscape character is “...a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse. Put simply, landscape character is that which makes an area unique.”

The Isle of Wight Landscape Character Assessment<sup>18</sup> provides a useful insight into the key components and make-up of the special qualities and characteristics of an area. This is a useful tool in assisting the on-going management of the area to ensure that whilst progress is enabled the key important qualities are retained.

#### 4.2.2 NATIONAL CHARACTER AREAS

National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geo-diversity and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision making framework for the natural environment.



NCA profiles are guidance documents produced by Natural England which will help to achieve a more sustainable future for individuals and communities. The profiles include a description of the key ecosystem services provided in each character area and how these benefit people, wildlife and the economy. They identify potential opportunities for positive environmental change and provide the best available information and evidence as a context for local decision making and action.

The Isle of Wight is one distinct National Character Area (NCA127)<sup>19</sup>. It was published in May 2014. There is a synergy between the Isle of Wight NCA and this AONB Management Plan. There will be scope to explore joint actions on the opportunities identified in both documents.

#### 4.2.3 ISLE OF WIGHT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

In 1994, the then Countryside Commission published a landscape assessment of the Isle of Wight, with a specific focus on the AONB.<sup>18</sup> This identified 11 broad 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 the following table and their extent across the AONB is shown in the Map. Further detailed information can be found in Appendix B.

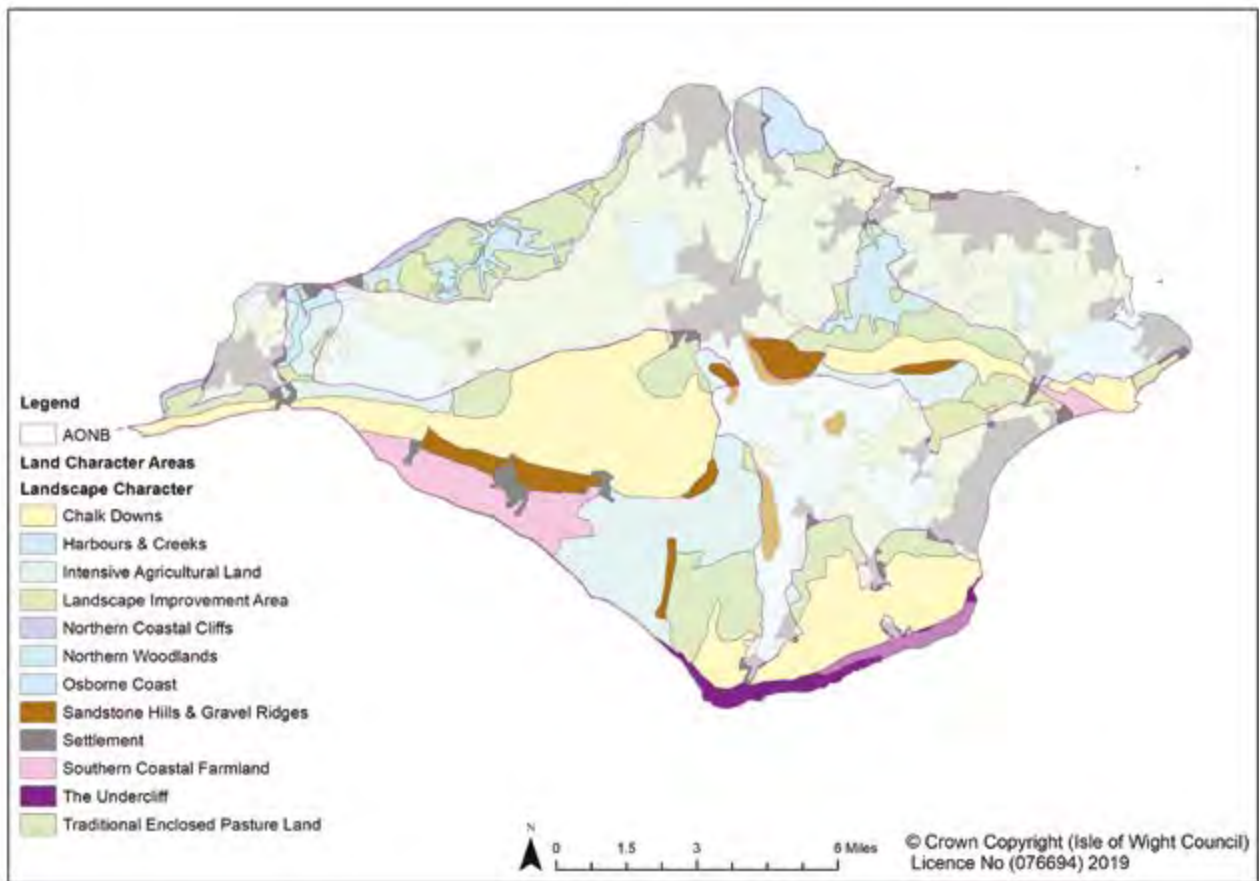
The Historic Landscape Characterisation of the Isle of Wight<sup>20</sup> adds a further depth of information and understanding (see Section 12: Historic Environment).

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. The Isle of Wight AONB is unusual in that it comprises 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.

#### 4.2.4 AONB LOCAL AREAS

Whilst information in the 1994 county level assessment regarding broad landscape types is relevant, through historic land use and cultural influences there are significant differences between areas of the AONB within the same broad type. To assist in better understanding of these differences there is a need for Landscape Character Assessments at a more localised level. These offer a better understanding of the distinctiveness of the AONB and provide evidence for the consistency of advice.

Such plans have already been undertaken in parts



CHALK DOWNS (LCT1)	TRADITIONAL ENCLOSED PASTURE (LCT2)	INTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL LANDS (LCT3)	SOUTHERN COASTAL FARMLAND (LCT4)	SANDSTONE HILLS AND GRAVEL RIDGES (LCT5)	NORTHERN WOODLANDS (LCT6)
Key characteristics	Key characteristics	Key characteristics	Key characteristics	Key characteristics	Key characteristics
Open and exposed with sparse hedgerows and no mature hedgerow trees.	Land use predominantly pasture.	Large open fields.	Large, regular gently undulating fields.	Some traditional pasture, but steep slopes mostly planted to mixed forestry.	Large woodland blocks, conifer and broadleaved, form the dominant feature in the landscape.
Limited, windswept, scrubby vegetation on the higher downs.	Well preserved dense hedgerows with mature hedgerow oak trees.	Large-scale hedge removal with relict hedges degraded.	Low hedgerows with few hedgerow trees.	Lower gravel ridges support gorse and bracken.	Small enclosed fields.
Traditional grazing with extensive arable cultivation.	Irregular small fields.	No hedgerow trees.	Predominantly arable.	Sunken lanes, or 'shutes' often with ancient woodland flora.	
Broadleaved woodlands, predominantly beech, on the lower downs.	Narrow enclosed winding lanes.	Land use predominantly rural.	Valleys, old drainage channels and chines cross the arable landscape associated with willow scrub and unimproved pasture.	Traditional sheltered settlement in the valleys.	
Dominant high chalk cliffs.	Well wooded, with numerous small copses.	Large farms and farm buildings.	Trees restricted to shelter belts.	Eroding coastline of key geological interest.	
	Small scattered farmsteads.				
	Settlement patterns predominantly linear.				



of the AONB (West Wight Landscape Partnership area and Shorwell Parish) (West Wight Landscape Character Assessment 2005)<sup>21</sup> and East Wight Landscape Partnership (East Wight Landscape Character Assessment May 2015). These plans cover all but the area of Isle of Wight AONB around Osborne near East Cowes.

These character appraisals will be accompanied by ecosystem assessments at water-bodies catchment level. The water-course's catchment is a key component of the county's Natural Capital as a source of drinking water, flood alleviation, wetland biodiversity and landscape character. Combined information will provide a valuable resource for sustainable AONB management alongside useful information to be incorporated into a Neighbourhood Planning process as relevant.

It is our intention that throughout the life of this Plan, to work with the communities and partners to explore these special qualities, help with their local planning documents and develop supplementary documents to accompany this broader AONB Management Plan.

### 4.3 CONNECTING LAND AND SEA

The coastline of the Isle of Wight AONB is an important part of its natural beauty and character often featuring

in many of the views to and from the designated area. The exposed geology on cliffs is visually dramatic and helps to illustrate the bedrock the rest of the landform and landscape of the Isle of Wight AONB. Most of the coastline is subject to natural erosion processes, being unprotected from the action of the sea and prevailing winter storms. Much of the AONB coastline is also defined as Heritage Coast (see below); however, there are some equally significant stretches of coastline which are in the AONB but not Heritage Coast (Gurnard to Thorness Bay, Yarmouth to Norton, Norris to Wootton, Fishbourne to Binstead, Whitecliff Bay to Yaverland, Luccombe and part of Castle Cove in Ventnor).

#### 4.3.1 HERITAGE COASTS

The Isle of Wight AONB also incorporates two areas of Heritage Coast. These were defined in 1974 and cover roughly half of the Island's coastline. The Heritage Coast areas within the AONB are arguably those areas most readily associated with the scenic beauty of the Isle of Wight. Their natural beauty and their enjoyment by the public give them a special claim for both protection and sensitive management.

Hamstead Heritage Coast runs for 11km and is situated on the north west of the Isle of Wight running from

LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT ZONE (LCT7)	HARBOURS AND CREEKS (LCT8)	THE UNDERCLIFF (LCT9)	OSBORNE COAST (LCT10)	NORTHERN COASTAL CLIFFS (LCT11)
Key characteristics	Key characteristics	Key characteristics	Key characteristics	Key characteristics
<p>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.</p> <p>Overall visual chaos with neglect of the agricultural landscape in a town edge setting.</p> <p>Degraded hedgerows and unmanaged woods.</p> <p>Conveys a general feeling of neglect and blurs the setting and edges of settlements.</p>	<p>Flat exposed tidal mudflats with saltmarsh, shingle banks and grazed marshes.</p> <p>Open aspect.</p> <p>Peripheral; enclosure created by the fringing oak woodlands.</p>	<p>Dramatic inland vertical craggy cliffs.</p> <p>Slumped grasslands.</p> <p>Coastal pasture.</p> <p>Exotic ornamental, 'gardenesque' planting.</p> <p>Victorian villa and modern suburban housing in highly manicured gardens.</p> <p>Unmanaged natural woodland regeneration, particularly Holm Oak.</p>	<p>Exotic ornamental planting.</p> <p>Victorian villa architecture.</p> <p>Very limited informal public access, with the exception of seasonal opening of</p> <p>Osborne House and occasionally Barton Manor.</p> <p>Ancient semi-natural woodland.</p> <p>Wooded coastline.</p>	<p>Characteristically low sloping broken and unstable cliffs.</p> <p>Limited permanent development and public access.</p>



*Descending the Cliffs at Compton - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

Bouldnor, near Yarmouth through to Thorness Bay, near Cowes. A tranquil and secretive coastline with inlets, estuaries and creeks; wooded hinterland and gently sloping soft cliffs this beautiful area offers a haven for wildlife including red squirrels and migratory birds. The ancient town of Newtown and its National Nature Reserve also fall within the area.

Tennyson Heritage Coast runs for 34km, from Steephill Cove in Ventnor to Widdick Chine at Totland. This coastline is breath-taking, with an open aspect; long distance views to the English Channel; a special quality of light; the iconic Needles chalk stacks and other multi-coloured cliffs; a fossil-rich coastline including the well-known dinosaur footprints at Brook Bay; miles of undeveloped coastline and unspoilt beaches; important wildlife habitats; memories of past islanders including smugglers; Chines and lighthouses.

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'.

Since 1973, 45 stretches have been defined, covering more than one third of the coastline of England and Wales (1,525 km in total, with 1,027 km in England). The

Countryside Commission set the following framework for these areas in *Heritage Coasts in England: Policies and Priorities* (1992)<sup>23</sup>:

The finest stretches of coast justify national recognition as Heritage Coast. They should be given effective protection and management: stronger measures should apply there than elsewhere.

The main objectives for Heritage Coasts are:

- To conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coasts, including their terrestrial, littoral and marine flora and fauna, and their heritage features of architectural, historical and archaeological interest.
- To facilitate and enhance their enjoyment, understanding and appreciation by the public by improving and extending opportunities for recreational, educational, sporting and tourist activities that draw on, and are consistent with, the conservation of their natural beauty and the protection of their heritage features.
- To maintain, and improve (where necessary) the environmental health of inshore waters affecting Heritage Coasts and their beaches through appropriate works and management measures.

- To take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry and fishing, and of the economic and social needs of the small communities on these coasts, by promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development, which in themselves conserve and enhance natural beauty and heritage features.

Both Heritage Coasts include large areas inland of the coastline and extend approximately 2km out to sea, so extending the interests of this management plan to the marine environment.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

The sea and land have separate and very different legal and institutional arrangements, different challenges and additional stakeholders. In previous plans we have focused only on the terrestrial elements of the coast there is a need for us to ensure that the special qualities of the inshore waters of the Heritage Coast areas are adequately conserved and enhanced.

#### 4.4 MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

##### 4.4.1 MARINE AND COASTAL ACCESS ACT 2009<sup>24</sup>

This Act sets out the Government's policy for delivering sustainable management of marine and coastal environments. Aspects of the Act that have a direct impact on the Isle of Wight AONB include developing a marine planning system, the introduction of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and other conservation tools, strengthening arrangements for fisheries, establishing a coastal path and researching the effects of climate change.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) was established in 2010 to perform many of the tasks coming from the Act.

Marine Planning - The South Inshore and South Offshore areas are the third and fourth areas in England to be selected for marine planning. The South Inshore area includes the coastline stretching from Folkestone, Kent to the River Dart, Devon, fully encompassing the coastline of the Isle of Wight. The MMO published these plans in 2018. The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership was fully engaged with this process and good communication with the MMO is essential to ensure that the connections between land and sea are incorporated and to retain the special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB and its Heritage Coasts.

Coastal Access and the establishment of an England Coastal Path National Trail is also considered under the Act, following a decision to include the Isle of Wight despite off-shore islands being excluded from the provisions of the Act. This process is being taken forward by Natural England (see below: Access and Recreation).

##### 4.4.2 MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 also made it possible to designate a new type of protected area around our shores, Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). Currently one MCZ has been designated on the Island's west coast between the Needles and Fort Albert into the Solent close to Hurst Spit (11km sq). Two further sites around the coastline of the Isle of Wight are recommended for the third tranche; Bembridge and Yarmouth to Cowes. Both of these have Isle of Wight AONB coastline with the Yarmouth to Cowes incorporating the Hamstead Heritage Coast.

##### 4.4.3 ISLE OF WIGHT SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2 (SMP2)<sup>25</sup>

The Isle of Wight coast will change over the next 100 years due to the impacts of marine erosion, ground instability and flooding by the sea. Current levels of risk are likely to increase through greater human activity and development in coastal areas and as a result of the predicted impacts of climate change. Responsibility for management of the Island's coastal defences against erosion and sea flooding is shared between the Isle of Wight Council, private landowners and the Environment Agency. The revision of the Shoreline Management Plan, SMP2 published in 2011, was developed as a means by which these organisations could determine, with stakeholders, the best way to look after the coast in a sustainable way for the next 100 years. It was prepared using guidelines set down by DEFRA, the Government Department with responsibility for setting national policy for defence of the coastline.

For the Isle of Wight AONB areas, the SMP2 strategy has identified various approaches to the appropriate defence of stretches of coastline from some form of protection through to allowing for natural processes to take place. The West Wight Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management Strategy (IWC 2016)<sup>26</sup> gives greater detail on these options for the north-west coast of the Island from Freshwater Bay, around the Needles to East Cowes, incorporating the estuaries at Yarmouth, Newtown and the Medina. In the Isle of Wight AONB, investment would be directed at reducing risks in areas around



Yarmouth. A coastal study covering Sandown Bay is currently being developed. The southern and western reaches of this study area includes AONB coastline at Luccombe and Yaverland.

#### 4.4.4 NATURA 2000 SITES

The EU Natura 2000 network provides ecological infrastructure for the protection of sites, which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Community.

These sites are referred to as European Sites and consist of:

- Special Protection Areas (SPAs).
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

There are a number of Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to Isle of Wight AONB. These are:

- Solent & Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC.
- Briddlesford Copses SAC.
- South Wight Maritime SAC.
- Isle of Wight Downs SAC.
- Solent Maritime SAC.
- Solent & Southampton Water SPA.

These sites benefit from Site Improvement Plans which set out the actions required to meet their conservation objectives. They are also listed as water-dependent Protected Areas under the Water Framework Directive.

It is not known how these EU designated areas will be treated in the light of the UK's decision to withdraw from the EU in March 2019. At the time of writing these sites still enjoy the protection afforded to them under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017<sup>27</sup> (incorporating provisions to comply with the EU Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1995) and the non-marine sites remain SSSIs.

The Isle of Wight AONB and Hamstead Heritage Coast also encompasses the Solent & Southampton Water Ramsar site designated as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention 1971. These sites are treated with the same protection and consideration as Natura 2000 sites under national policy but are not designated under the same legislation.

#### 4.4.5 SEASCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Seascape, like landscape, reflects the relationship between people and place and the part it plays in forming the setting to our everyday lives. It is a product of the interaction of the natural and cultural components of our environment, and how they are understood and experienced by people.

Seascape is defined by Natural England in its position statement on All Landscapes Matter (2010)<sup>28</sup> as:

“An area of sea, coastline and land, as perceived by people, whose character results from the actions and interactions of land with sea, by natural and/or human factors.”

Seascape Character Assessments (SCA) have been drawn up by the Marine Management Organisation for the Solent (MCA 5) and the South Wight (MCA 6) as part of the South Marine Planning Process.<sup>29</sup> These incorporate the Isle of Wight AONB coastline between them and provide useful information and evidence regarding the special qualities and characteristics of both the marine and terrestrial environments. They will inform future management of the Heritage Coasts to integrate their dual interest areas and make the connection between land and sea.

Also a Solent and Isle of Wight historic seascape characterisation project was undertaken by the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology (HWTMA), Bournemouth University and Southampton University. It includes the coastal area of the Solent, and Isle of Wight, (approximately a 150 mile stretch of coastline). The project is one of four pilot projects designed to apply the principles of HLC (Historic Landscape Characterisation) to the marine environment.<sup>30</sup>

#### 4.4.6 LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIPS

The Isle of Wight Council, with many partners, have been successful in the formation of two Landscape Partnerships which have brought about real landscape change as well as brought together local parishes, different departments within the local authority, national and local organisations, local experts and a large number of volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

The West Wight Landscape Partnership ran from 2008 to 2013 to include an area of six parishes west of the county town of Newport with 60% of the area within the Isle of Wight AONB. Seventy projects, large and small were delivered, creating 12 new jobs and actively involving over 45,000 people. Its legacy included the establishment of the Education Centre at Bouldnor Forest in the north-west area of Isle of Wight AONB.

The East Wight Landscape Partnership was established in 2015 and is due to end in 2020. The area covers 12 town or parish boundaries, and 60% is in the Isle of Wight AONB. To date 10 jobs have been created and 13,000 have been actively involved. Work on the valley of the river Yar has established an 8km continuous corridor of reedbeds, fen and wet grassland habitats from Newchurch to Bembridge.

Both these Partnerships could not have happened without the generous help of the Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Programme.

#### 4.4.7 A DYNAMIC COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

The importance of the unprotected coastline and the continuation of natural coastal processes cannot be underestimated. This dynamic environment is an important habitat for many species which rely on the various stages of succession from newly exposed cliff falls through to mature secondary woodland on land slip areas. The wildlife importance of the coastline of the Isle of Wight AONB is reflected in the extent of international, national and local nature conservation designations for the coastline. Cliff faces are also important for palaeontological and palaeo-environmental exposures and archaeological remains helping us to better understand environments, species, climates and peoples'

activities in the past. However, an actively eroding coastline also brings with it challenges relating to land, built property and infrastructure such as the highway network. Whenever there is a social or economic need to consider an engineering intervention, there needs to be a clear cost benefit analysis and an understanding of the impact of the development on the historic and natural environment and landscape character of the Isle of Wight AONB and the Tennyson and Hamstead Heritage Coasts.

#### 4.5 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

Landscape is the result of the varying elements of ecosystem and non-ecosystem services – the quality of our landscape is how well balance is maintained. Landscapes are a result of the way that different components of our environment, both natural and non-natural, 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. They are defined by the relationship between people and place.

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



Cowleaze Chine - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

geological, historic, nature conservation and scenic interest of the coastline of the Isle of Wight AONB. The beaches, sea and countryside 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 has great bearing on the quality of life and special character within Isle of Wight AONB. Local place names, dialect, foods, customs and folklore all add to the colour and variety of the experience.

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'.

### Secrets of the Solent and Living Coast Solent

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust were awarded a grant, in 2018, from the Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver a four year project called 'Secrets of the Solent' which will work with a wide range of partners, local organisations and a large team of volunteers, to make sure that more people appreciate, understand and support the Solent. The project aims include:

- Less pollution and plastic litter in our seas.
- More information about the local under-water wildlife, gathered through 'citizen science' and used to secure:
  - Better legal protections and management of sensitive areas of the Solent.
  - More sustainable seafood, produced by local fisheries and available in local restaurants and shops.

Natural England are taking forward a Living Coast Solent project from 2020 to:

- Encourage people to connect with nature in a way that ensures thriving wildlife and habitats.
- Develop new mechanisms for sustainable funding.
- Better understand how we can enhance health and well-being through engagement with the environment.

### 4.6 POLICIES FOR PROTECTED LANDSCAPES AND COASTAL AREAS OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P1** Ensure the continuation of natural processes and encourage strategic approaches to deal with areas where this may create potential conflict with socio-economic considerations (particularly on currently undefended Isle of Wight AONB coastlines).

**P2** Encourage the use of Landscape, Seascape and Historic Landscape Character Assessments as a tool to consider proposals for change within the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P3** Encourage traditional landscape management skills and techniques that contribute to landscape and seascape character.

**P4** Ensure that where, in exceptional circumstances, development that is considered harmful to the Isle of Wight AONB is permitted, contributions are made which deliver conservation and the enhancement of the features contributing to the special character of the Isle of Wight AONB.

### 4.7 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Develop a better understanding of the Isle of Wight AONB local areas through the completion of IW Biosphere Ecosystem Services Assessment at a water-body catchment level.
- Develop a better understanding of Isle of Wight AONB coastal areas, particularly the two Heritage Coasts.
- Investigate partnership approaches to identify priority sites for the recording of natural, historic and cultural assets subject to substantial change or loss through dynamic coastal processes.
- Encourage traditional landscape management skills and techniques that contribute to landscape and seascape character.
- Support National Character Area opportunities as appropriate where they join with AONB objectives.



## 05

## Geology and Geomorphology

*Back of the Wight - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

The Isle of Wight AONB has a very diverse geology within a condensed area. The geology of the Isle of Wight AONB is the bedrock upon which all its other special qualities and characteristics are founded. The landform of the AONB is due mainly to the faulting, folding, erosion and ground movement of the underlying geology. The topography of the landscape has influenced where people have decided to settle to access fresh water, take advantage of shelter from prevailing weather and where sites were chosen for ceremonial purposes, such as burial mounds on ridge lines. Geology has provided hard building materials for local vernacular architecture including Chalk, Limestone and Sandstone and the conditions for growing timber and reed/straw materials for thatching. All these contribute to the local distinctiveness and character of traditional buildings.

This geological complexity, in a relatively small area, has created a diverse and varied landscape much of which is important at a local, regional, national and international scale, evidenced by various designations.

Chalk is arguably the most dominant landform of the Isle of Wight AONB, with the central chalk ridge running from the eastern point at Culver to the western point at The Needles. A second area of chalk downland is located in the south above the towns of Shanklin and Ventnor and the villages of Niton, Whitwell and Wroxall. Inland areas of the chalk have an undulating form and often include secluded steep-sided combs contrasting with dramatic white chalk cliffs at the coast. Chalk downland is a key feature in most views in and from the Isle of Wight AONB.

Coastal geology is a major feature of the natural beauty of the Isle of Wight AONB including:

- A nearly complete exposure of the Cretaceous Period (formed between 126 million and 65 million years ago) along the coastline of the Tennyson Heritage Coast.
- The clays, sands and silts of the Palaeocene, Eocene and Oligocene periods (formed between 65 million to 30 million years ago), a feature of the Hamstead Heritage Coast and part of the Tennyson Heritage Coast (Alum Bay to Totland).
- The vertical multi-coloured Bracklesham Group sandstone strata at Alum Bay.
- The fossil-rich Wealden Group clays at Brook Bay and Yaverland.
- The impressive ravines or 'Chines' formed by streams incising through sandstone rocks to the sea shore.
- The dramatic land-slipped Gault and Upper Greensand picturesque landscape of the Undercliff (with its own south facing micro climate, scenic beauty and the accolade of being the most populated rotational landslide complex in north-western Europe).

North of the central chalk ridge the clays, sands and

silts create wetter heavier soils and have led to a more pastoral, gently rolling and wooded landscape in these parts of the Isle of Wight AONB. They are also associated with the low-lying slumped wet cliffs along the Hamstead Heritage Coast and the tidal inlets of the Western Yar, Newtown Creek, Kings Quay, Wootton Creek and the wetlands inland at Thorness Bay.

The coastal zone of this area is rich in archaeological evidence of human activity close to the former Solent River now submerged under the sea. The rocks are also associated with fossilised remains of Bison, Shark and Sabre-Toothed Cat (Tiger). Since the early 19th Century rocks and fossils found in the Isle of Wight AONB have been celebrated and the area continues to attract amateur and professional enthusiasts.

A series of lower sandstone hills lies immediately to the south of the central chalk downs running across the AONB from Compton in the west to Yaverland in the east. These rolling hills are often the location of spring lines; which along with the shelter they afford led to the establishment of settlements close by. Sandstone is also the underlying geology of the open, fairly flat plains between Atherfield and Rookley and beyond Arreton to Yaverland. In some parts of this area there are alluvial deposits over the free draining sandstone making them some of the best areas for cultivation. Where the sandstone meets the sea, often tall vertical red cliffs add to the character of the coastline.

Periods of rapid climate change and associated changes to sea levels (including the final inundation of the Solent around 8000 years ago) led to the creation of many of the landform features of the Isle of Wight AONB that we value today.

## 5.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES

The Isle of Wight hosts 40 Sites of Geological Conservation Review, 30 of which are in the Isle of Wight AONB.<sup>31</sup>

There are 4 Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated specifically for Geological Interest in Isle of Wight AONB.<sup>32</sup>

There are 2 Regionally Important Geological / Geomorphological Sites (RIGS).<sup>33</sup>

## 5.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

The Isle of Wight geology underpins the Island's water supply, mineral resources and leads to information about understanding the development of life on Earth.



Stag Rock - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight



Understanding the geology helps determine settlement placement, and identifying where resources such as gravel, sand or mineral and hydro-carbon (oil, shale gas) deposits could be found on land or immediately offshore. It also highlights landslide areas and areas susceptible to erosion.

Mineral extraction poses a specific threat to certain sites across the Isle of Wight AONB. Good management of these sensitive sites is paramount to ensure any finds which would advance the geological understanding of the Island are not lost (see section on Minerals).

Although the Isle of Wight AONB is protected from the direct impacts of exploration and extraction of oil and/or shale gas, indirect impacts may have an influence upon the Isle of Wight AONB and these will need to be fully considered in any development proposals (see section on Energy).

The Island's spectacular and varied geology records over 125 million years of changing climate, geography, and animal and plant life (Paleo-environments). The Isle of Wight is recognised as the best site in Europe for Cretaceous dinosaur remains, with fresh exposures revealed in the ever-eroding cliffs. Large numbers of early Cretaceous dinosaurs have been found. These factors lead to an increasing market and potential for geological and paleontological tourism and educational activities.

The greatest threat to sites is from falls and cliffs with collapsing faces. While this is inevitable, it is important to record information as it becomes available to ensure it is not lost. Climate change is expected to exacerbate the rate of site loss of certain sites, most notably along the Tennyson Heritage Coast. It is important to note that interference with natural erosion and sedimentation though coastal management techniques need to undergo the appropriate scrutiny to ensure their impacts do not extend beyond what is unavoidable to fulfil their function.

### 5.3 MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

#### 5.3.1 UK GEO-DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

The UKGAP<sup>34</sup> sets out a framework for geo-diversity action across the UK. It provides a shared context and direction for geo-diversity action through a common aim, themes, objectives and targets which link national, regional and local activities. The UKGAP is a mechanism for encouraging partnership, influencing decision makers, policy makers and funding bodies, and promoting good practice. It also establishes a shared understanding of what is happening and what needs to happen to promote and conserve geo-diversity, a process for measuring and reporting on progress and, importantly, celebrating success.



*The Longstone - Courtesy Liz Cooke*

#### 5.3.2 ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GEO-DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (LGAP)<sup>33</sup>

The primary function of the Isle of Wight LGAP is to formulate a strategy to promote the Isle of Wight through the conservation and sustainable development of its Earth Heritage.

The Plan sets objectives, targets and determines indicators that will focus resources to conserve and enhance the heritage. The secondary function is to produce for the first time an electronic database audit of the Island's geo-diversity.

#### 5.3.3 ISLE OF WIGHT SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN (SMP2)<sup>25</sup>

The Isle of Wight coast will change over the next 100 years due the impacts of marine erosion, ground instability and flooding by the sea. Current levels of risk are likely to increase through greater human activity and development in coastal areas and as a result of the predicted impacts of climate change. Responsibility for management of the Island's coastal defences against erosion and sea flooding is shared between the Isle of Wight Council, private landowners and the Environment Agency. The Shoreline Management Plan, published in 2011, was developed as a means by which these organisations could determine, with stakeholders, the best way to look after the coast in



a sustainable way for the next 100 years. It was prepared using guidelines set down by DEFRA, the Government Department with responsibility for setting national policy for defence of the coastline.

For the Isle of Wight AONB areas SMP2 strategy has identified various approaches to the appropriate defence of stretches of coastline from some form of protection through to allowing for natural processes to take place. The West Wight Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management Strategy<sup>26</sup> gives greater detail on these options for the north-west coast of the Island from Freshwater Bay, around the Needles to East Cowes incorporating the estuaries at Yarmouth, Newtown and the Medina. In the Isle of Wight AONB, investment would be directed to reducing risks in areas around Yarmouth. A coastal study to identify priority schemes for Sandown Bay and Ventnor is currently underway.

### 5.3.4 FOSSIL FINDS

Many people enjoy searching for fossils, which have been washed out from the cliffs onto the beaches. Not all finds are reported or taken to local experts for identification. This means the important record of what they are and where they have been found is lost.

Inappropriate and un-authorised excavation of cliff faces or former mineral working sites can be dangerous for those taking part, damaging to the resource and in some cases a criminal offence. Finds from this activity are rarely reported.

### 5.4 POLICIES FOR GEOLOGY AND GEOMORPHOLOGY

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P5** Ensure that AONB objectives are given full regard in the formulation and review of strategic plans and policies relating to geology and geomorphology, for example; LGAP, SMP.

**P6** Support the responsible development of promotional activities based on the complex geology of the Isle of Wight AONB, that increases peoples' knowledge and enjoyment of the resource.

**P7** Promote the importance of recording all paleontological finds and support initiatives that assist their identification by appropriate organisations.

### 5.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Support the further development of the Local Geo-diversity Action Plan.
- Encourage appropriate promotion of geological and paleontological tourism and educational activities including identifying approaches to encourage appropriate fossil collecting which prevents damage to the resource and provides information on finds.
- Support continued investigations into international recognition of the quality of the Isle of Wight AONB geology such as UNESCO Geopark status.



Alum Bay - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

## 06

## Minerals and Soils

St Lawrence Undercliff - Courtesy Liz Cooke

### 6.1 MINERALS

Mineral use in the Isle of Wight AONB can be traced back to the use of flint deposits by Palaeolithic people through to recent industrial extraction. Disused quarries, lime kilns, vernacular architecture, standing stones are all testament to the significance of minerals.

The AONB continues to provide an important finite resource for minerals such as chalk, gravel, clay and



The Undercliff - Liz Cooke

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.<sup>35</sup>

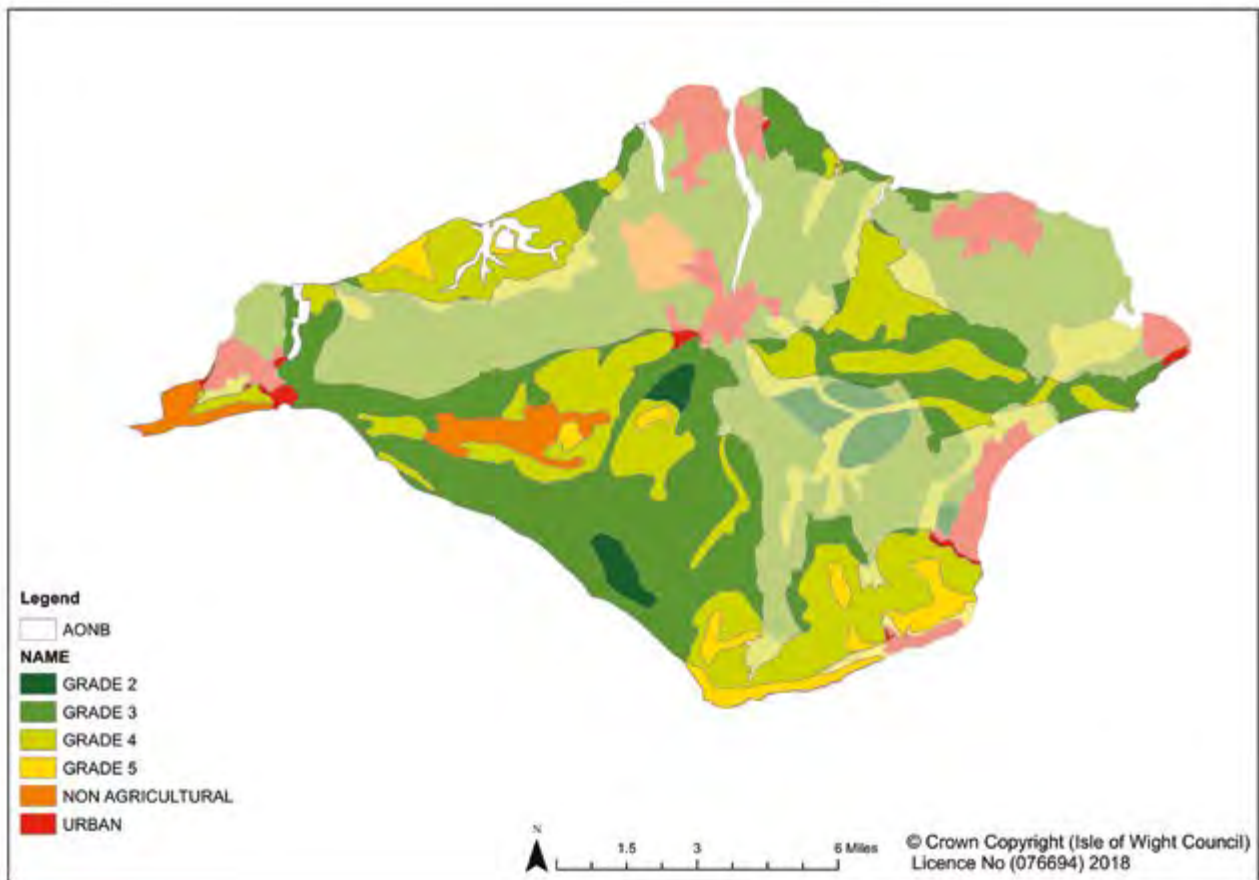
### 6.2 SOILS

Soil is a basic, limited resource that is essential for many human activities. It includes topsoil and subsoil to the depth of at least one metre. The biological, physical and chemical characteristics of soil need to be protected for it to perform its important functions, including the essential minerals required for 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 artefacts and historical indicators such as pollen. All soils need to be sustainably managed for the long term.

Wealden clay produces heavy soils and where it occurs inland, it mostly supports pasture. The light sand soils over the Lower Greensand provide some of the best arable land on the Island. The Chalk gives rise to thin lime-rich soils, which supports distinctive vegetation.



### 6.3 KEY FACTS & FIGURES



### 6.4 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

Land-won Aggregates on the Isle of Wight relate to sand and gravel with some local level chalk extraction. In 2015, 91,000 tonnes of sand and gravel were land-won from the Island, greater than the long-term average (76,000 tonnes per annum).<sup>36</sup> Land-won aggregate extraction is largely undertaken within the AONB. While this is a concern in the short term, it is hoped in the longer term the landscape will be restored to a suitable quality following the closure of the extraction site. In the south-east, marine aggregate extraction exceeds land-won by over 100,000 tonnes per annum indicating the possible impacts on the Isle of Wight AONB coastline.<sup>37</sup>

The Isle of Wight has a duty to provide a proportion of land won mineral and as a result the AONB plays an important role in helping to deliver against the Core Strategy Targets. As minerals can only be found at certain locations and these are largely found within the

AONB, there is a disproportionate impact on the AONB from mineral extraction. In looking to the future, mineral extraction sites can be a force for good, providing rich biodiverse sites, therefore the AONB Partnership need to be fully engaged in emerging minerals extraction proposals.

#### 6.4.1 SOILS

Soil is often overlooked as a vital resource. Much of the Isle of Wight has good soils for agriculture, albeit no grade 1 Agricultural land. Good agricultural practices as outlined through Isle of Wight Catchment Sensitive Farming project, run by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, will play an increasing role in improving other resources such as water quality.

The heavier soils on the Wealden clay areas are less prone to loss through both wind and water erosion; however their pastoral nature means that damage from livestock



may occur. Soils associated with the Lower Greensands produce some of the best arable land; however, the lighter nature of the soil does make it vulnerable to wind and water erosion.

## 6.5 KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

### 6.5.1 ISLAND PLAN – CORE STRATEGY (MINERALS PLAN)

This highlights current active sites, sites that are likely to expand and Mineral Safeguarding Areas for future mineral extraction. (The Plan is currently being revised).

### 6.5.2 CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

Isle of Wight Catchment Sensitive Farming programme provides advice to farmers and land managers on how to reduce diffuse water pollution from agriculture, across priority catchments. This is a partnership project involving Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Isle of Wight AONB, Island Rivers (Catchment Partnership), Natural England, Environment Agency, Countryside Landowners and Business Association and National Farmers Union.

### 6.5.3 WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Water pollution from erosion and soil run off impacts on Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives within the water bodies (see section 6 for information on the WFD).

### 6.5.4 NITRATE VULNERABLE ZONES

A large percentage of Isle of Wight AONB is designated as a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) under the Nitrates Directive 1991. The Directive aims to reduce nitrate water pollution from agriculture and prevent such pollution occurring in the future. The NVZs cover most of the Chalk and Lower Greensand areas. Once a water body has been identified as nitrate sensitive, farmers must adopt a programme of measures which includes restricting how nutrients are applied to the land.

## 6.6 POLICIES FOR MINERALS AND SOILS

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P8** Ensure that Isle of Wight AONB objectives are included in strategic plans and policies relating to mineral extraction both onshore and offshore, where it may impact upon a Heritage Coast.

**P9** Ensure proposals for mineral extraction, in both active extraction and restoration phases, fully consider the impacts on the landscape of the Isle of Wight AONB and seek contributions to deliver mitigation and the enhancement to the features that form the special character of the Isle of Wight AONB where development is considered harmful.

**P10** Support policies and programmes that encourage sustainable soil management and catchment sensitive farming.

## 6.7 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Encourage partners, industry, regulating bodies and landowners to work to ensure AONB objectives are embedded in minerals extraction proposals.
- Encourage partners, industry, regulating bodies and landowners to work to ensure AONB objectives are embedded in restoration plans.
- Monitor, record and celebrate the industrial archaeology and cultural heritage of mineral workings and develop resources and educational materials relating to vernacular architecture and mineral extraction from local geology.
- Encourage partners to reduce soil loss due to poor farming practices.

## 07

## Air and Water

Newtown - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

## 7.1 AIR

Isle of Wight AONB is well known for its mild climate and clean air. Air is 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.

The prevailing south-west winds ensure the high quality of the air on the Isle of Wight. This feature of the landscape has attracted people to the Island for centuries most notably the Royal National Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, Ventnor, which was founded in 1868 and remained open for 80 years. It also allows a vast array of lichen and other species that are particularly sensitive to air quality to thrive on the Island, especially in areas that are sheltered from the prevailing weather.

## 7.2 WATER

Water is essential for life, from wildlife through to farming, from industry and business to sustainable communities. The chalk geology of the Isle of Wight AONB is an aquifer collecting and storing rainwater. The Island's rivers and streams are relatively small in comparison to those on the mainland; however, they are of landscape importance.

The Isle of Wight is an area of water scarcity and water locally is a precious resource. 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 pollutants, with small changes having a marked impact on populations and quality of the ecosystems. This is also true for archaeological sites in wetlands.

The majority of watercourses on the Isle of Wight do not meet the good criteria for ecological quality as measured under the Water Framework Directive. This is due to a combination of historic modifications, leading to poor in-channel morphology and impediments to fish passage as well as nitrate and phosphate pollution due to domestic and agricultural factors.

In Transitional Water Bodies (where fresh and salt water meet) around the coast of the Isle of Wight AONB, there are risks to the water quality from both land and marine-based activities. All major Isle of Wight watercourses enter into European Protected Sites and two Heritage Coasts. Therefore, it is important to consider these designations when undertaking activities on land that may have a far-reaching influence on the marine environment. Furthermore methods of coastline management can have impacts some distance away.

Careful water resource management is vital to the Isle of Wight AONB and the Island, as our island status exacerbates the finite nature of this resource. There is a need to make the Island more water self-sufficient



and improve water resilience to ensure continuation of services for residents and businesses.

The large proportion of semi-natural habitats across the Isle of Wight AONB help to reduce diffuse pollution and improves surface water and fluvial water quality. Moreover, the semi-natural habitats provide a valuable resource in managing the speed at which water moves through the landscape reducing flooding.

### 7.3 KEY FACTS & FIGURES

- 78% of the Island's water is abstracted for public water supply.
- Nearly 50% of ground water on the Island is over abstracted.
- The water stress classification for the Island is classified as "serious".
- 47% of demand is supplied from groundwater, 23% from rivers and 30% from transfers from the mainland via a cross-Solent pipeline. All major groundwater extraction points are within the Isle of Wight AONB.

- It has been identified that 61% of nitrate pollution comes from agriculture and 32% sewage treatment discharges.
- 22 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (43 on the Island) are water dependent.
- There are 149km of river in the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Good bathing water beaches.

### 7.4 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

#### 7.4.1 AIR

Air as a support service is of huge importance. The impact the AONB can have on air is limited as this is a global resource; however, localised impacts can have a local effect on air quality and therefore the species found within close proximity.

Air pollution has detrimental effects on the health of both people and ecosystems. With areas of good air quality there are lower instances of respiratory disease



associated with environmental quality as well as an increase in the biodiversity. The Island is rich in species of lichen which are an indicator of clean air. e.g. Goldeneyes - *Teloschistes chrysophthalmus*.

Air provides a medium to disperse airborne pollution derived from the burning of heating or transport fuels or waste products of manufacturing. While the Isle of Wight does not suffer from poor air quality it is near the three major urban settlements of Bournemouth, Southampton and Portsmouth which are part of the Automatic Urban and Rural Network (AURN) for air quality and do periodically suffer poor air quality. Given the right environmental conditions it is possible pollution from these settlements could impact upon the Isle of Wight air quality; however, there is currently no available data to support this assertion.

A recent Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment for the Isle of Wight highlighted only two sites on the Island where air quality was an issue; these were Fairlee Road, Newport and Lake Hill, Lake, neither of which is within the AONB.

There are currently no Air Quality Management Areas in the Isle of Wight AONB.

## 7.4.2 WATER

The water cycle is one of the keystones to the ecosystems on the Island making life possible. However, it is as a provisioning service that water is most associated. The Isle of Wight AONB chalk aquifer is one of the main resources for the Island's water supply. Many of the rivers and streams suffer from low flows, which can be exacerbated by unsustainable levels of abstraction. Poor water quality is often worsened by diffuse pollution from agriculture, road run-off, misconnections and sewage treatment, as water-bodies remove a proportion of the Island's sewage, industrial and farm waste and disperse it out to sea.

The total water abstraction for public supply on the Isle of Wight is approximately 16.5 million litres per day, split between 23 per cent river water, 47 per cent groundwater and 30 per cent transfers from the mainland. The Eastern Yar provides the largest abstractions and the main aquifers on the Isle of Wight are the Chalk, the Upper Greensand and the Lower Greensand all found within Isle of Wight AONB.<sup>38</sup>

Pollution (particularly phosphates), including sediment, and low flows are considered to be the major threats to the ecological quality of the freshwater habitats on the



Freshwater Bay - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

Island. Since 2006 there has been an 8% deterioration in the ecological water quality scoring measure for the Eastern Yar.<sup>39</sup>

Sustainable management of this important resource is essential to the health of the Island's environment. Southern Water are exploring new sources of supply because, with increased development in South Hampshire and potential impacts of climate change, there may be growing pressure on this supply from the river Test. Additionally there is an energy cost associated with the pumping and balancing the water system network. There is a need for the Partnership to facilitate initiatives towards greater Island self-sufficiency.

Parts of the Isle of Wight are subject to fluvial and tidal flooding. However groundwater flooding is minimal. Flood events are typically localised and rarely affect more than a few houses. Records of historical flood events across the Isle of Wight AONB are limited. Two key rivers with flood risk problems which traverse the Isle of Wight AONB are: The Eastern Yar, suffering from rainfall runoff, blockages at structures, high winter groundwater levels causing high baseflows; and the Western Yar, where tidal locking at flood control structures cause the estuary to flood.

While waterbodies in the AONB are most known for their use as a resource or for their ecological importance,

they are used for a number of recreational purposes including angling, sailing and boating.

The Heritage Coasts extend 2 km from the shore of the Island. These coastal waters are heavily used for recreation and navigation. Some beaches are popular destinations for a range of seaside sport and recreational activities.

Pollution is considered to be a major threat to the ecological quality of inshore waters. With much of the AONB's coastline being designated as Special Protection Areas or Special Areas for Conservation, it is a requirement to keep these sites protected. Poor water quality in coastal and estuarine sites is a result of sewage effluent, nitrogen run-off and storm water effluent (this may be further exacerbated by predicted climate change scenarios).

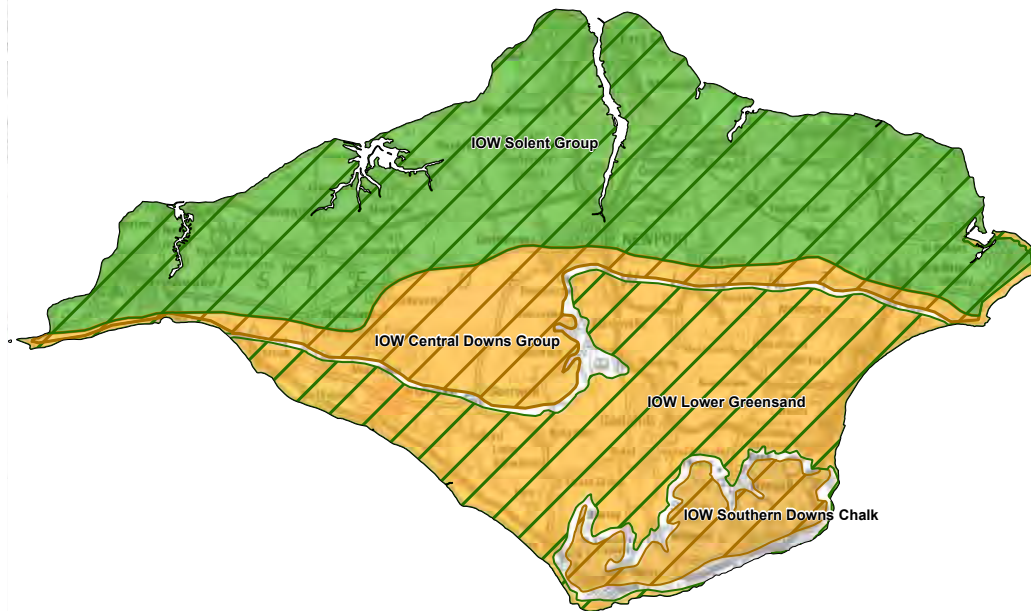
## 7.5 KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

### 7.5.1 WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE (WFD)<sup>40</sup>

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) requires that all inland and coastal waters within defined River Basin

WATERBODY	NUMBER	WFD STATUS 2009	WFD STATUS 2014	STATUS
Solent TRAC			Moderate	
Isle of Wight East TRAC			Good	
Caul Bourne	6020	Moderate	Moderate	No change
Brighstone Streams	5940	Good	Moderate	Deteriorated
Lukely Brook	6250	Poor	Moderate	Improved
Atherfield	5920	Moderate	Moderate	No change
Medina	5990	Moderate	Moderate	No change
Upper Eastern Yar	6220	Good	Moderate	Deteriorated
Lower Eastern Yar	5971	Moderate	Moderate	No change
Wroxall Stream	6210	Moderate	Poor	Deteriorated
Blackbridge Brook	6100	Moderate	Moderate	No change
Monktonmead	6120	Moderate	Poor	Deteriorated
<b>GROUNDWATER</b>				
IW Solent		Good	Good	No change
IW Central Downs		Poor	Poor	No change
IW Lower greensand		Poor	Good	Improved
IW Southern Chalk		Poor	Poor	No change

## Current Status of Groundwater



### Isle of Wight Catchment

#### Cycle 1 WFD Groundwater

##### Status 2009

- Good
- Poor

#### Cycle 2 WFD Groundwater

##### Status 2014

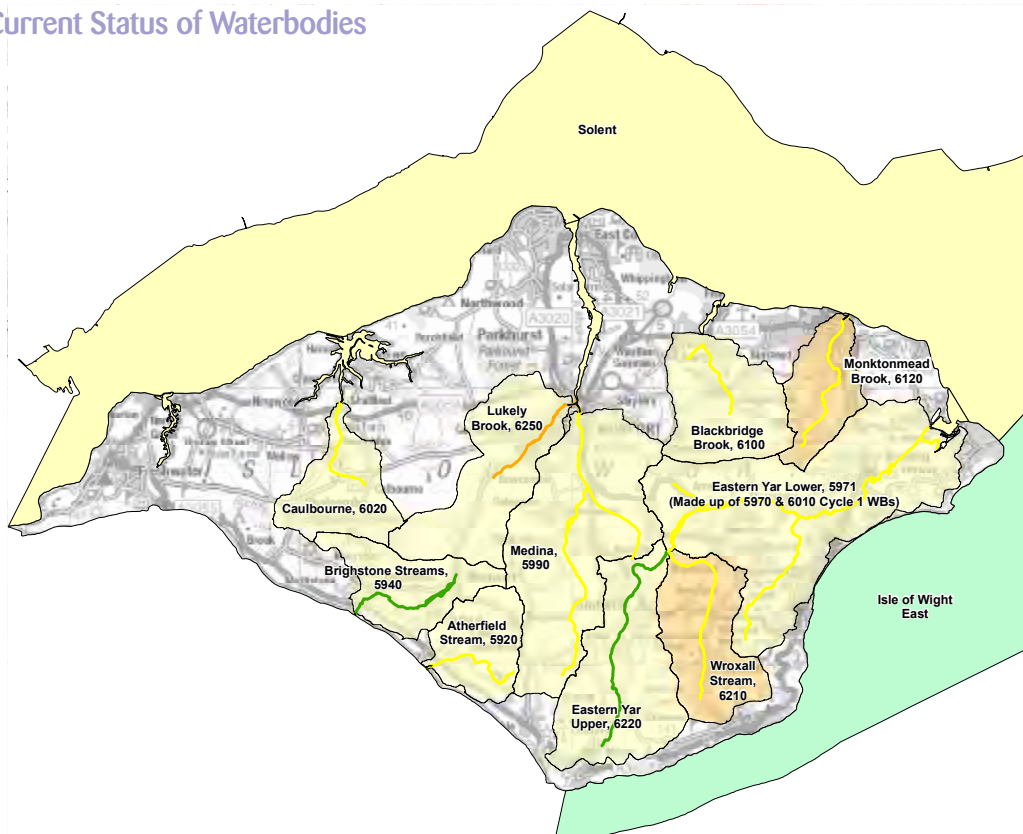
- Good
- Poor



2 1 0 2 Km

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## Current Status of Waterbodies



### Isle of Wight Catchment

#### Legend

##### Cycle 1 WFD River Status 2009

- Good
- Moderate
- Poor
- Bad

##### Cycle 2 WFD River Status 2014

- Good
- Moderate
- Poor
- Bad

##### WFD TraCs Status (No change between 2009 & 2014)

- Good
- Moderate



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Districts reach at least *Good Status* or *Good Potential*. It also defines how this should be achieved through the establishment of environmental objectives and ecological targets for surface waters. The WFD requires no deterioration in the current status of the water body. It also includes an objective to aim to improve any water body that is not presently at *Good Status* or *Good Potential*.

Urban development and engineering modifications may be the cause of these failures as much as factors found in the rural environment. The framework for delivering this directive is through River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs)<sup>41</sup> and then through local Catchment Plans.<sup>42</sup> The Isle of Wight is a catchment with a number of sub-catchments including the two Yar rivers and the Medina. A plan has been prepared and adopted by the Island Rivers Catchment Partnership to take initiatives and projects forward as resources allow.

### 7.5.2 NITRATE VULNERABLE ZONES

The Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2008<sup>43</sup> were introduced to implement the European Community's

Nitrates Directive, to reduce nitrogen losses from agriculture to water. They designate areas where nitrate pollution is a problem, known as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones. The Solent is considered to be an area particularly sensitive to nitrate pollution due to its effect on algal growth and the effect this has on feeding overwintering birds and other marine life. Priority transitional waters, which are failing their Water Framework Directive targets include eastern Yar, Wootton Creek, Medina and western Yar.

### 7.5.3 CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

The Isle of Wight Catchment Sensitive Farming (IWCSF) programme provides advice to farmers and land managers on how to reduce diffuse water pollution from agriculture, across priority catchments. This partnership includes representatives from both the farming and water supply industries and produced a five-year Catchment Plan (HIWWT 2017)<sup>44</sup> where its work programme is highlighted.



Newtown - Courtesy Liz Cooke

#### 7.5.4 SOUTHERN WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2070<sup>45</sup>

This document sets out a 5 year plan, and a longer term vision, for the provision of a reliable and healthy supply of drinking water. The plan includes:

- Receiving water from neighbouring suppliers to increase water availability.
- Introduce catchment schemes and take action to remove nitrates and protect against nitrates and pesticides.
- Planning to prepare for the droughts of the future, which may be more severe than those we have experienced in the past.

#### 7.5.5 NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT

Recently commissioned reports from Ove Arup<sup>46</sup> and Jonathan Cox Associates<sup>47</sup> have indicated the importance of increasing the level of flood control through natural flood management. Measures include appropriate ditch management, use of woody debris, restoration of meanders and water retention structures such as ponds to slow down or keep back rainwater in the upper and middle catchment of rivers. The use of these methods can help alleviate flooding further downstream where urban settlements tend to have been established. DEFRA are looking to encourage more 'low-tech' solutions to flood management and encourage their adoption.

#### 7.5.6 INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES

There are a number of species which have been introduced into the Isle of Wight AONB which thrive on the watercourses and waterbodies causing a number of issues including increased bank erosion, shading of riparian habitats and competing with native vegetation. The number of species and abundance has increased rapidly over the past few decades and a number of initiatives, such as Plant Positive, have sought to reduce the impact on the water environment by these species.

#### 7.6 POLICIES FOR AIR AND WATER

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13

**P11** Encourage catchment-sensitive land-use practices and promote the responsible use and conservation of water and responsible management of waste water to safeguard the valuable water resource.

**P12** Ensure AONB objectives are included in strategic approaches such as River Basin Management Plans and local Catchment Plans and support initiatives that deliver Water Framework Directive objectives.

**P13** Monitor the forces for change on the water resource and the implications of these for the AONB landscape.

#### 7.7 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Support initiatives and approaches that improve the quality of our watercourses including advocate greater self-sufficiency for fresh water, reduce abstraction and increased opportunities for rain water capture in larger developments and agriculture.
- Support initiatives and approaches that encourage greater landowner engagement on river and wetland management.
- Support initiatives and approaches that help to ensure good quality bathing water in the Isle of Wight AONB.



Luccombe Bay - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight



# 08

## Wildlife

*Hamstead Heritage Coast - Courtesy Liz Cooke*

The Isle of Wight AONB has a rich biodiversity largely due to the varied geology, landform and ongoing natural processes. The areas of chalk grassland; maritime slopes and cliffs; estuarine habitats; ancient woodlands and species are of particular importance regionally, nationally and internationally.<sup>19</sup>

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 and increasing recreational activity have all led 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 remain. 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. However, the Island is more fortunate than many areas in lowland Britain, in still having areas of interconnecting and wildlife-rich habitats. These may act as important sources of diversity, with the potential to re-

colonise the wider countryside if farming practice becomes less intensive.

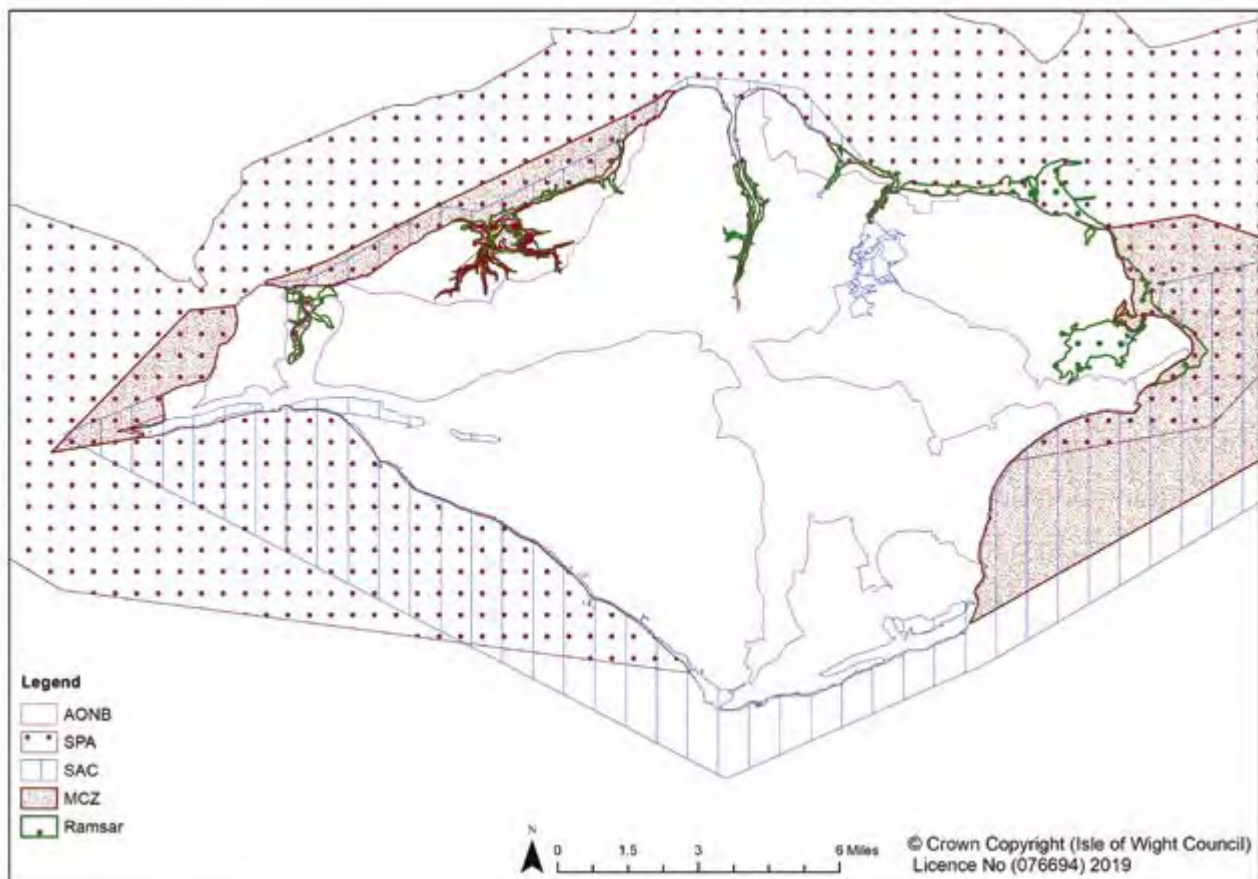
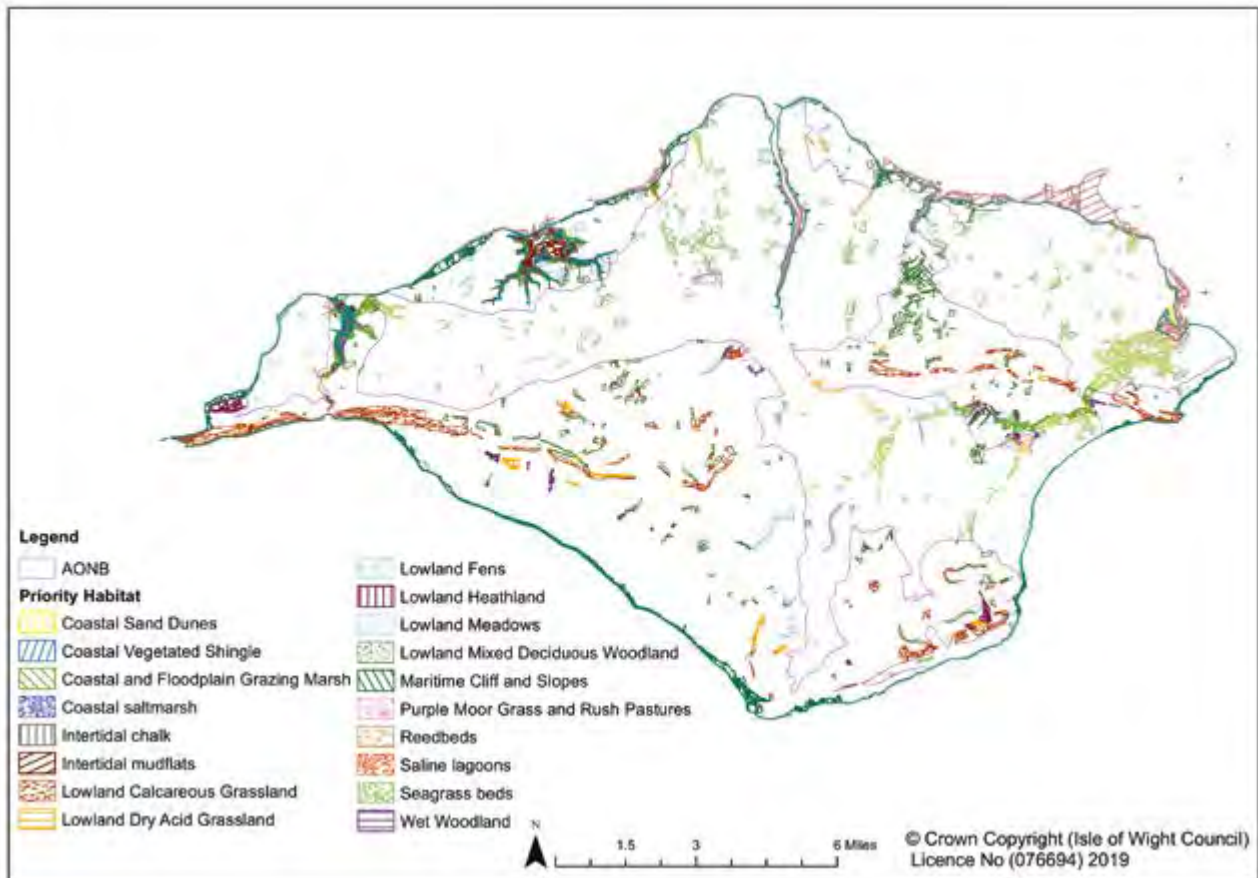
Island status has prevented the introduction of some species such as mink and grey squirrel, and, as a consequence, allowed populations of rare species such as dormouse, red squirrel and water vole to flourish. However it also prevents recolonization following local extinction. Three butterfly species have been lost from the Island in recent years and will not return without human intervention.

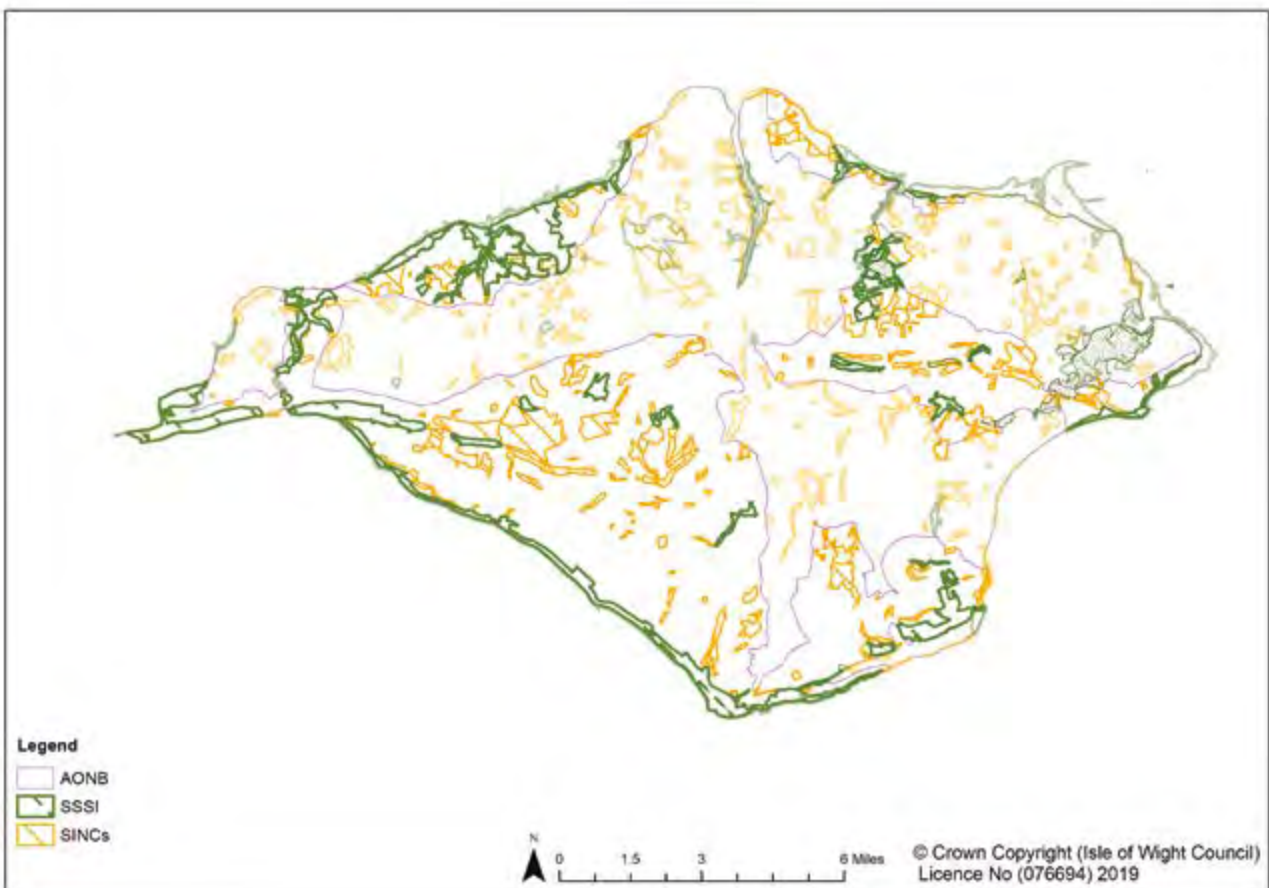
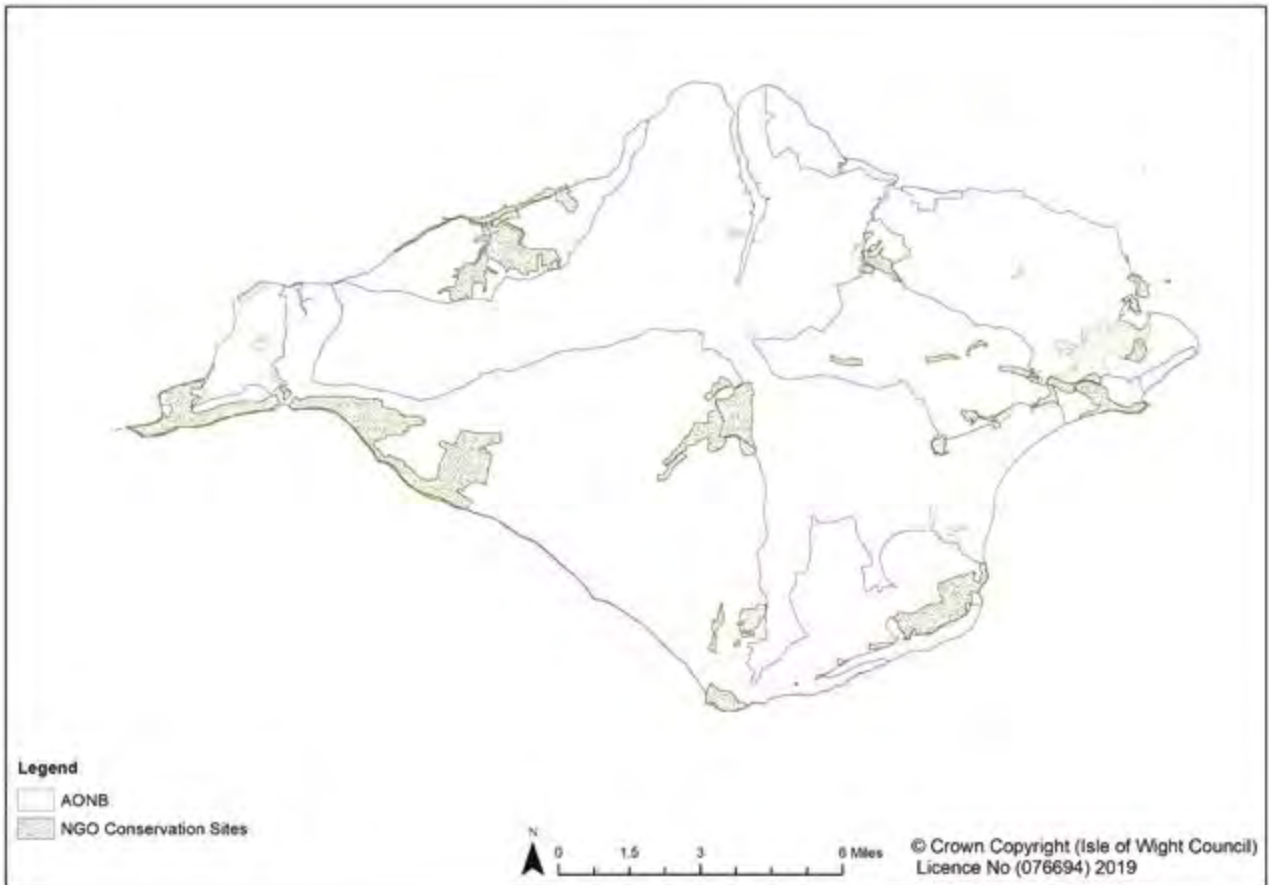
Changes to local habitats also arise from the introduction of non-native species that have flourished including; holm oak, buddleia, hottentot fig, Himalayan balsam, New Zealand pygmyweed, Japweed and a number of tree diseases. Whilst some have a long history on the Island, the local and global trade in the importing of non-native plants, and their associated fauna, will continue to bring challenges to our Island biodiversity.

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 sea level rise 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. However, climate change presents interesting and potentially challenging biodiversity opportunities with new species colonising from the continent.



## 8.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES





## Key Habitats:

HABITAT REPRESENTED IN IWAONB	AREA (HA)	% IW TOTAL
Maritime grassland	34	100 %
Calcareous grassland	622.0	97 %
Heathland	59.8	91 %
Saltmarsh	116.5	74 %
Unimproved grassland	276.1	65 %
Broadleaved woodland	626.3	56 %
Wetlands	129.3	18 %

There are 24 SSSIs in the IWAONB, 96% in favourable condition (by area). Two sites are in unfavourable condition, Thorness Bay and Alverstone Marshes.<sup>48</sup> There is also one National Nature Reserve at Newtown managed by the National Trust.

Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006<sup>49</sup> lists species in the UK of nature conservation concern which supersedes the UK BAP lists. Twenty-two of these species occur in the Isle of Wight AONB and two of these species occur in the Isle of Wight AONB and nowhere else in the British Isles – reddish buff moth and wood calamint. There are a further 178 recorded Section 41 species found on the Island.

## 8.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

Wildlife is rightly valued for its aesthetic qualities and the enjoyment people gain from visiting areas of high wildlife value. However this view sells short the true importance of wildlife on our continued health and wellbeing.

Wildlife also:

- provides genetic diversity, from which we derive our agricultural foods,
- provides the photosynthesis of plants (producing the oxygen we breathe),
- enables carbon sequestration (removal of one of the most influential greenhouse gases from the atmosphere),
- is fundamental to the pollination of flowers and crops,
- regulates the virility and spread of pests and diseases,

- reduces erosion by binding soils together, and
- Provides a 'product' for tourism to benefit from.

Without a healthy and diverse wildlife resource the landscape would look very different and many of the benefits we receive would not be possible.

The Isle of Wight AONB contains the majority of the areas designated for their wildlife importance; however, habitats are spread across the Island. To avoid fragmentation and isolation of key habitats and species, the Isle of Wight AONB needs to consider sites in this wider Island context.

## 8.3 KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

### Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network<sup>50</sup>

This review outlined that England's wildlife sites do not comprise a coherent and resilient ecological network that is capable of coping with the challenge of climate change and other pressures. To remedy this, it recommends we make space for nature through more, bigger, better and joined up sites to create a sustainable, resilient and more effective ecological network for England.

### UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA)<sup>51</sup>

This was a national assessment putting natural assets on a par with traditional economic markets by setting out both the monetary and non-monetary benefits to people provided by the environment.

### Biodiversity 2020<sup>52</sup>

The aim of this initiative is to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks with more and better places for nature for the benefit of people and wildlife. The outcomes below will be worked on beyond 2020 and incorporated into the Strategy for Nature.

The two outcomes are:

1. **Habitats and ecosystems on land (including freshwater environments)** – Measures will have been put in place so that biodiversity is maintained and enhanced, further degradation is halted and where possible restoration is underway, helping deliver more resilient and coherent ecological networks, healthy well-



functioning ecosystems, which deliver multiple benefits for wildlife and people.

2. **Marine habitats, ecosystems and fisheries** – Measures will have been put in place so that biodiversity is maintained, further degradation has been halted and, where possible, restoration is underway, helping deliver good environmental status and our vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas.

### Strategy for Nature

The Government is looking to produce a new Strategy for Nature<sup>4</sup> building on the current Biodiversity 2020 strategy. This Strategy will co-ordinate action with nature conservation and academic organisations as well as farmers and land managers. The new Strategy will protect the most important wildlife sites and species and draw in new investment alongside government funding. A major initiative in this plan will be the development of a Nature Recovery Network providing the delivery mechanism for the 'bigger, better, more and joined' principles of the Lawton recommendations.

### Conservation 21: Natural England's conservation strategy for the 21st century<sup>53</sup>

Published in October 2016 this sets out the Government's nature conservation advisers strategy for:

- Creating resilient landscapes and seas
- Putting people at the heart of the environment
- Growing natural capital.

This is underpinned by a focus on the outcomes approach, delivering better long term outcomes for the environment by understanding people's interests and needs, and working towards a shared vision. Their aim is to ensure their actions help achieve diverse, abundant, accessible nature on a landscape scale with the help of farmers and the land management industry.

Locally Natural England's focus on the Island includes the sheltered coast of the Solent and the open Channel coast. This includes an emphasis on developing access and engagement, aiding sustainable development and designating new areas of the coast and sea for birds and marine wildlife.

Unfortunately declines in biodiversity continue<sup>54</sup>. In the Isle of Wight AONB for example:

- Of the 44 common bird species recorded at Newtown NNR, 31 (70%) exhibit declines in peak numbers since 2009.

- Three butterfly species have been lost from the Island since 2010: Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Small Pearl-bordered fritillary and Duke of Burgundy Fritillary, the latter two from the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Reddish buff moth habitat has declined from 11 ha in 1996 to 4 ha in 2018.

### National Planning Policy Framework 2018<sup>3</sup>

The NPPF gives a clear mandate to identify and pursue opportunities for securing net gain for biodiversity through the planning system to ensure that development does not reduce ecological function of the AONB and adversely affect the associated island economy and tourism.

Planning gain that seeks to undertake restoration, mitigation, compensation and enhancements for wildlife should be consistent with the surrounding landscape and habitat to maintain a sense of place and build on the existing assets.

These net gain principles above would also be consistent with the local authority's requirement to conserve and enhance biodiversity under Part 3, Section 40 of the NERC Act (2006).<sup>49</sup>

#### 8.3.1 PARTNERSHIP WORKING FOR WILDLIFE

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership (HW LNP) covers Hampshire, Isle of Wight, the Solent and South-Wight Sea areas and was established to provide a vision, strategic leadership and a strong championing voice for these superb natural environments. Part of their work is the promotion of the local authority duty to achieve net biodiversity gain through the planning system, as articulated in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This will be done through the adoption of Local Ecological Network (LEN) maps in the local planning policy framework and subsequent promotion of the opportunities that the LEN identifies.

The Isle of Wight is covered by the local Natural England team's (Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Dorset) Sheltered Coast and Channel Coast Focus Areas.

The Isle of Wight Biodiversity Partnership (IWBP) is a successful collaboration of partners, who are taking forward biodiversity targets on the Isle of Wight. This Partnership has been working to help achieve national and local biodiversity priorities as part of the AONB Management Plan process. See Appendix C.

### 8.3.2 OTHER FACTORS

The following list details other factors affecting the conservation and enhancement of wildlife:

- Pests and disease have the potential to have a major impact on the plant and animal species. Climate change may alter the current geographical extent pest species which may also be vectors for disease. Global markets and import of animal and plant materials all have the ability to introduce pests and disease into the local environment.
- Invasive non-native plant species and introduced animal species have the capacity to significantly alter the balance of wildlife ecosystems impacting on our native wildlife.
- Land management practices have the ability to both benefit and cause harm to wildlife and habitats.
- Some recreational activities may be problematic where the impact on wildlife and habitats is significant either due to the individual activity or through cumulative effects. This applies to activities on land and also in the marine environment.
- Some forms of development either due to their impact on previously undeveloped land, loss of significant habitat on 'brownfield' previously developed sites or their wider effect on surrounding wildlife and its conservation and enhancement.
- Over managed approaches to areas of green space and wider countryside creating manicured verges, greens etc can have a detrimental impact on potential habitats for wildlife.
- Urban influences through disturbance from light, noise and domestic pets can impact on wildlife.
- Climate change has the potential to cause both problems such as habitat squeeze, increased incidence of forest and heath fires, increased abstraction of water but also potential opportunities for species movement.

### 8.4 POLICIES FOR WILDLIFE

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P14** Promote and celebrate the importance of the diverse habitats and species of the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P15** Support and encourage appropriate farming, forestry, land use and marine maritime activities, which contribute to wildlife and habitat objectives and create bigger, better, more joined up and resilient ecological networks.

**P16** Ensure that opportunities for net biodiversity gain are considered as part of any new development given planning permission within the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P17** Monitor the impact of forces for change (such as recreational activities, development, land use, pests, diseases, introduced and invasive species and climate change) on Isle of Wight AONB Wildlife.

### 8.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Ensure the Isle of Wight Environmental Records Centre develops regular wildlife and habitat monitoring and recording programmes and establishes ways in which the data obtained from this can be shared more effectively.
- Support the development of targeted programmes through a landscape-scale approach using ecological network mapping.
- Support Catchment Sensitive Farming for its wildlife gains.
- With Isle of Wight Council, Island Roads, parishes and community groups, recognise and encourage the appropriate management of roadside verges and hedgerows for their wildlife value and interest.

# 09

## Farming

*Evening Harvest, Arreton - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

The importance of agriculture, both in the past and as a current influence on landscape character, historic and natural environments should not be understated. 13,500 ha (70%)<sup>55</sup> of the land area of Isle of Wight AONB is farmed and the future of its landscapes is linked to the sustainability of farming.

The underlying geology and diversity of landform dictates the suitability for farming practices and has led to a mixed patchwork landscape, traditionally of small scale farmsteads. This small-scale nature contributes greatly to the character of the Isle of Wight AONB but this makes it more of a challenge to achieve economies of scale. In the 20th Century this led to increased leasing of land to larger scale operators, particularly in relation to arable cultivation. Many smaller farms continue to rely on mixed activities; however, this mix now encompasses diversification activities such as tourism (holiday lets), retail (farm shops) and more recently renewable energy production (solar, bio-fuels). The Isle of Wight AONB recognises and supports diversification that enables farmsteads to continue to have farming as their primary activity and where this contributes to the on-going management, conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB landscape.

Farmers and land managers have a major role to play in continuing to conserve and enhance the Isle of Wight

AONB. There is a need to support and encourage sympathetic land management practices for their landscape benefits. This has been partly delivered through agri-environment schemes designed to add landscape, ecological and cultural value predominately through EU funding. Local partners work closely with landowners and farmers to facilitate the maximum benefits for the landscape through advice, guidance, practical help and through the gathering and sharing of information.

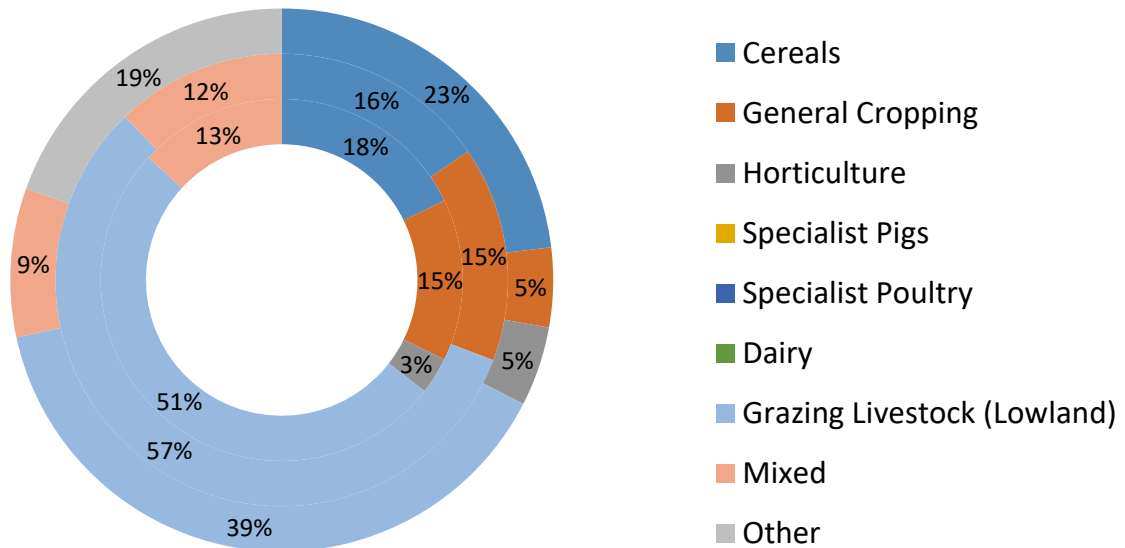
The pressure for sub-division of land for non-agricultural activities is of on-going concern. Multiple ownerships and the shift away from traditional farming can bring with it additional structures and incongruous features contrary to the character of the landscape. Piecemeal disposal of land results in even smaller land holdings and may also raise questions of long term economic viability and reduce the capacity for diversification.

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 within the Isle of Wight AONB. Island farmers face additional disadvantages through the lack of local supportive infrastructure. Livestock farmers are increasingly under pressure as rising prices and changing legislation make the logistics and expense created through the lack of an abattoir or slaughterhouse and incinerator.

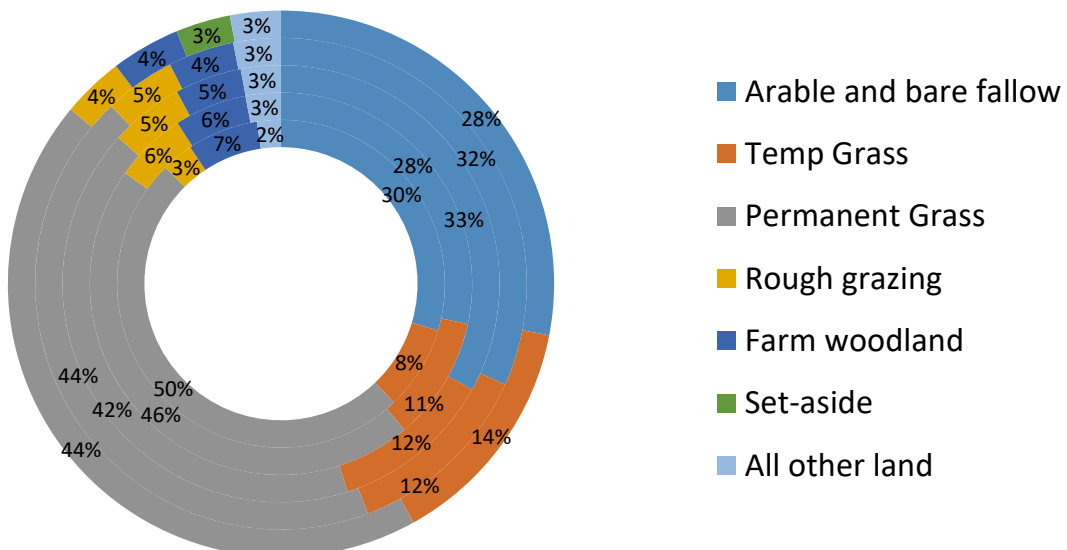


## 9.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES

**Wight AONB Farm Type**  
(Outside ring 2009, Inside ring 2013)



**Wight AONB - Land Use**  
(Outer ring 2007, Inner ring 2013)





## 9.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

Agriculture is a major economic contributor to the area as well as the dominant land use contributor. It has a direct relationship with the conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB.

Agriculture is important for food production, as well as the production of crops for the emerging biofuel industry. It also provides rural employment. The diverse agricultural industry, managed on small scale farmsteads (when compared to the mainland) results in many being heavily reliant on subsidies in the form of Stewardship (Environmental Stewardship 2005 – 2014 and Countryside Stewardship 2016 – present) or the Basic Payment Scheme.

To a lesser degree agriculture helps maintain livestock genetic diversity, through the production of rare breeds or local varieties. It is also instrumental in a high proportion of the Isle of Wight AONBs wildlife habitat conservation.

There are a number of threats to the on-going sustainability of farming on the Isle of Wight. Markets are extremely volatile and this is a concern for the Isle of Wight AONB as much of the land management is undertaken by farmers.

Recent research by the Isle of Wight AONB has shown, that since 2009, the reduction in the total number of farms (by 10%), combined with an increase in average size of holdings (from 76 ha to 86 ha) indicates that farming in the Isle of Wight AONB is still undergoing changes. Whilst the number of livestock farms has increased by 22%, the number of dairy cattle has fallen 21%. The number of farms involved in cereals alone is down 33% but cereals and general cropping is up 13% possibly reflecting the operation of biomass plants. The consequences and opportunities of these changes need to be better understood.<sup>56</sup>

## 9.3 KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

**Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit (DEFRA Feb 2018): a public consultation on the future of farming in the UK<sup>57</sup>**

Changes in policy, regulation and subsidies arising from the withdrawal from the European Union will all be the key drivers for change for this sector. It is anticipated that there will be a reduction in overall funding available for agri-environment subsidies but there may be alternative opportunities to achieve similar objectives. However, the Government has committed itself to designing and

delivering a new environmental land management system, which will reward land managers to restore and improve natural capital and rural heritage. It will be underpinned by natural capital principles.

The consultation states that the Government ‘wants a reformed agricultural and land management policy to deliver a better and richer environment in England. We will incentivise methods of farming that create new habitats for wildlife, increase biodiversity, reduce flood risk, better mitigate climate change and improve air quality by reducing agricultural emissions. We will achieve this by ensuring that public money is spent on public goods, such as restoring peat bog and measures which sequester carbon from the atmosphere; protecting dry stone walls and other iconic aspects of our heritage; and reducing disease through new initiatives that better monitor animal health and welfare’.

The importance of agri-environment for landscape and wildlife enhancements cannot be understated. 81% of Mid-Tier and 70% Higher-Tier Stewardship agreements on the Isle of Wight are on land in the AONB, covering over 1000 ha. The formation and facilitation of Farmer Clusters, groups of farmers working together on a landscape scale, will be an important alternative way of working to maximise the benefits these grants will fund.

Pests and diseases have the potential for severe implications for the farming sector and its viability. These often require a rapid response and knock on implications for wildlife and access. There is currently a voluntary code of practice to prevent the spread of Bovine Tuberculosis onto the Isle of Wight.

Climate change will stimulate the need to adapt farming practices including provision of shelter from heat and sunlight for livestock; water conservation and capture for use in periods of drought, new crops and farming techniques.

The viability of the farming sector is based upon the cost of inputs and the price realised for outputs. Costs are higher on the Isle of Wight due to the lack of local infrastructure meaning that in particular livestock has to be taken to the mainland for slaughter. Provision of local infrastructure for livestock farming and processing of meat products will help the viability of this sector.

Diversification activities such as the conversion of redundant farm buildings for tourism or appropriate rural business activities can help to supplement farm incomes and help contribute to farming practices benefitting the landscape. Additionally, farm-based renewable energy solutions are helping to meet carbon reduction targets and providing valuable farm income. There is a need to ensure diversification activities do not become the primary



Godshill in the early Autumn - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight



focus of agricultural businesses or have any urbanising influences, contrary to landscape character.

Similarly local markets and food networks have the potential to add value to farm produce and also decrease transport costs.

Agri-environment subsidy schemes play a vital role in subsidising farmers for undertaking measures which support the landscape, natural and historic environments and objectives for these on their holdings. Schemes which incentivise the facilitation of 'public goods', such as eco-system services, possibly through payment by results, are being piloted across the country.

Genuine need for farm worker accommodation for those involved in agriculture or related to succession of ownership or farm management within families has the potential to see new but small scale development.

#### 9.4 POLICIES FOR FARMING

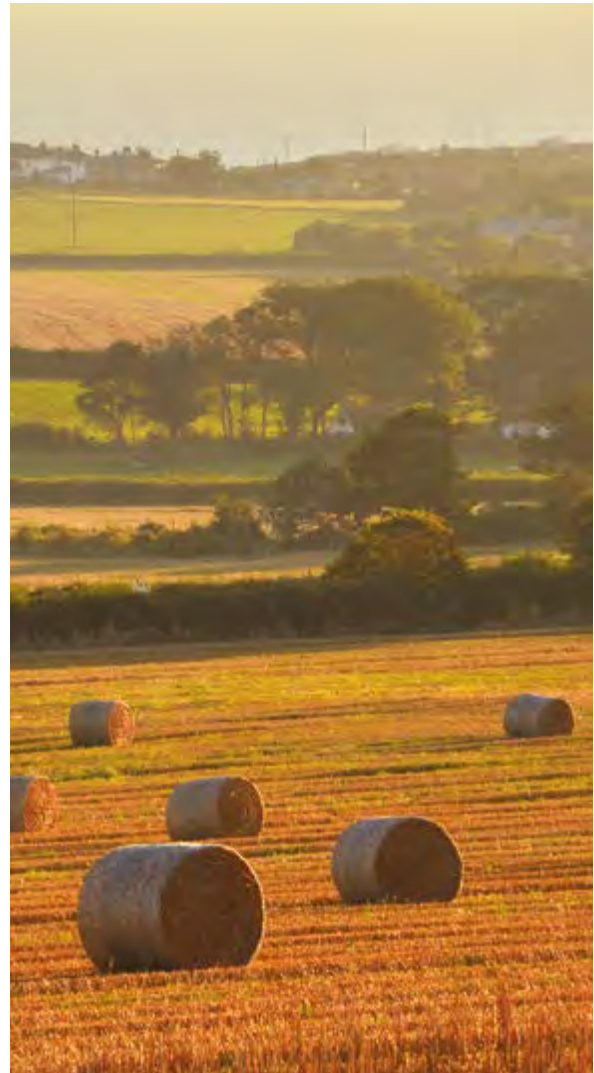
These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P18** Encourage farming practices, farm diversification and infrastructure, which contributes to the sustainability of the farming sector and respects the objectives of the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P19** Support programmes, initiatives and collaborative approaches, such as Farmer Clusters, to maximise opportunities for the farming community and delivers the Isle of Wight AONB objectives.

**P20** Support continuing initiatives to better understand all forces for change affecting farming in the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P21** Promote the intrinsic relationship between farming activities and the landscape of the Isle of Wight AONB including the development of local markets for farm produce.



*Godshill in the early Autumn - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

#### 9.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Understand the changing profile of farming on the Island (needs, pressures, opportunities) and the implications of this for the Isle of Wight AONB objectives.
- Work with NAAONB and DEFRA to maximise the potential of emerging Government rural development programmes and agri-environment subsidies for the Island following the withdrawal from the EU.
- Support initiatives that encourage young entrants into farming; that encourage innovation, enterprise and adding-value to land-based products; that provide progressive career paths for those actively involved in agriculture; and share good farming practice, taking into account the impact of climate change.

## 10

## Forestry and Woodland Management

Bouldnor Forest - Courtesy Liz Cooke

Woodland is an important component of the landscape of the AONB, covering 1537 ha (8%) of the designation, of which 644 ha is managed by the Forestry Commission. Whilst these include some plantation woodland, most are smaller broadleaved woods and copses. The majority of woodlands are located on wetter soils and are a predominant landscape feature north of the central chalk ridge. Where they do occur near the chalk downland or sandstone hills they tend to be on steep slopes that are difficult to farm. Secondary woodland areas are also found in the Isle of Wight AONB where land has been unmanaged for many years and particularly on coastal slopes where many have become important landscape features.

Woodland in the Isle of Wight AONB is generally under-managed and timber production is a marginal activity. Amenity use and the wildlife value of woodland are of increasing importance, with some woodlands being managed by charitable organisations specifically for wildlife.

A significant proportion of the Isle of Wight AONB woodland is classified as Ancient Woodland. This means woodland has been present on that site since at least 1600AD, making them an important historic landscape feature and a reflection of the continuation of the value of woodland for people. They are also considered to be important for biodiversity. The revised Isle of Wight provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory<sup>58</sup>, published in 2014, gives us an up to date understanding of the abundance and distribution of ancient woodland which contributes to the overall landscape character.

Veteran trees, wood pasture and parklands can be of great landscape, historic environment and biodiversity value, and also require sympathetic and careful management.

The absence of grey squirrel and the negligible impact of deer, has a direct benefit for the woodland flora and fauna across the Island and in the Isle of Wight AONB.

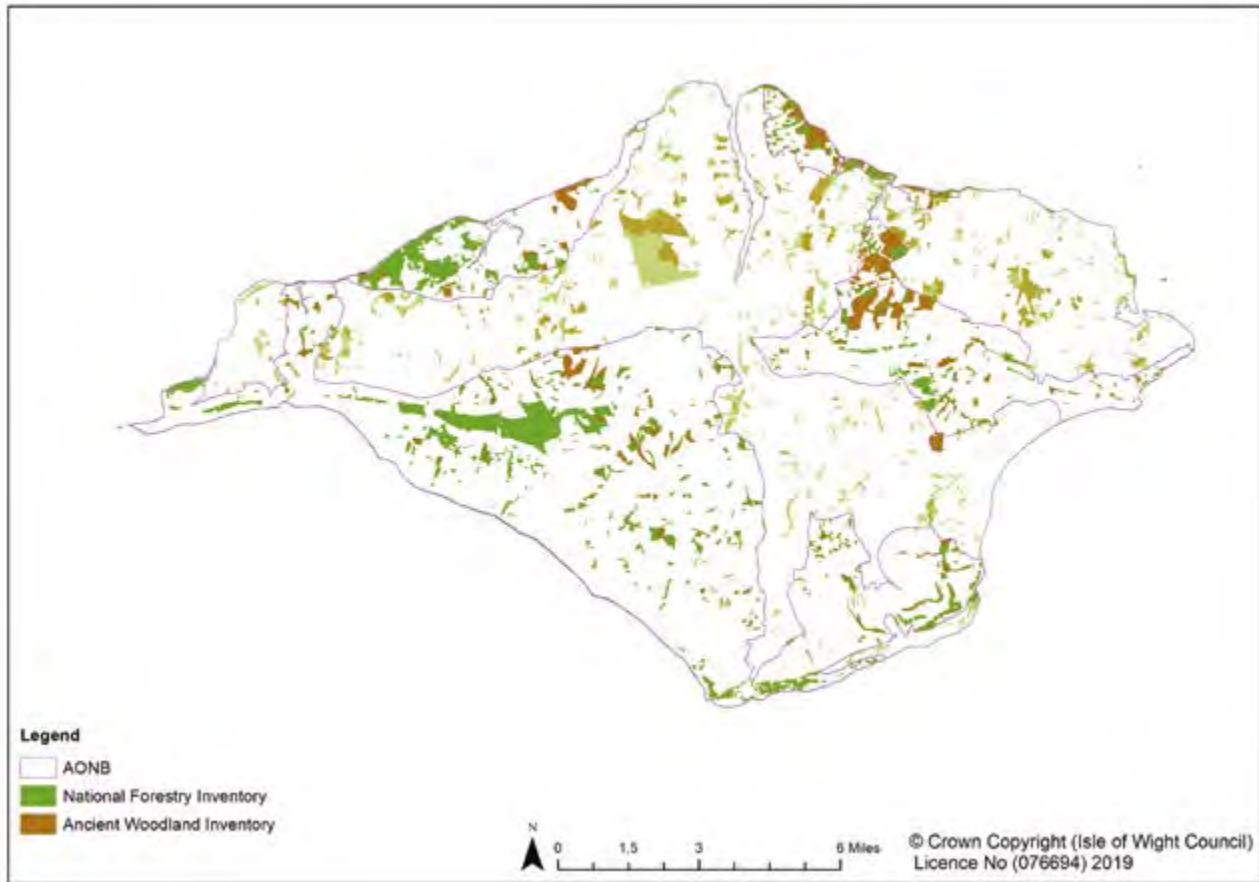
Since 2009 the amount of woodland, has increased by 34% on private land. Much of this increase is due to the classification of JIGSAW (Joining and Increasing Grant Scheme for Ancient Woodland) plantations, established in the early 2000's and now maturing into new native woodland.

Timber from plantation forestry under the control of the Forestry Commission has been largely exported to the mainland, with the contracts for this going to larger mainland companies. Through the development of a collaborative approach, local woodland contractors can now compete to work these woodlands. As a consequence of this woodland management linked to local fuel production has started to increase the viability of local woodlands. There is a need to provide necessary infrastructure and investment for enhanced wood fuel markets.

There are two medium sized active sawmills in operation on the Isle of Wight, but the local market remains small. Increasing regulation in response to a more litigious society is having an impact on these small businesses.



## 10.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES



## 10.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

Woodlands provide a range of ecosystem services these include; timber, wood for fuel, wildlife habitats (including those for rare woodland species such as Red Squirrels, Hazel Dormouse, Barbastelle and Bechstein's Bat), regulation of soil erosion, alleviation of flood risk and carbon sequestration (climate change regulation).

Well-sited trees and woods can:

- help prevent silts and nutrients from entering watercourses (both from agricultural land and sewage works where there may be potential to treat grey water by filtering through woodland);
- slow down flood flows across flood plains (which can be enhanced by using 'woody debris' dams to push flood flows onto wider floodplains);
- provide a valuable alternative land use which is not adversely affected by flooding (particularly if linked to local use of wood as a renewable fuel);

- maintain and improve fisheries by providing shade to reduce the temperature of water during summer months;
- provide the skeleton of a more resilient catchment landscape able to cope with the physical and ecological impacts of climate change; and
- help stabilise river channels, either directly via the growing trees, or indirectly by using the carbon lean woody material (e.g. faggots).

Woodlands also provide an important multifunctional recreational resource and have great cultural resonance with people.

Much of the management of woodland, outside Forestry Commission sites, is focussed on biodiversity as the value of the timber is low and transport is expensive. Undermanaged woodlands will have an impact upon elements of ground flora and invertebrate interest and will influence the availability of habitat for key species.

There is also a range of archaeological sites occurring



within woodland. Some, such as Bronze Age burial mounds and prehistoric/Romano-British field systems pre-date the planting of woodland. Others, such as wood banks, saw pits or charcoal burning platforms are associated with woodland activities.

### 10.3 KEY MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

The uptake of products from emerging wood fuel markets promotes the use of local wood products that are sustainably sourced, support woodland resilience and the local economy.

The prevalence of Ash-die back, Pine-needle blight, horse chestnut moth, Dutch elm disease and Phytophthora on oak and alder, with the threat of sweet chestnut blight will have a profound effect on the woodlands, wood pasture, hedgerows and amenity trees in the Isle of Wight AONB. There is an increasing need for mixed and resilient species and varieties within woodlands to avoid significant landscape change through individual tree species loss as a result of pests and diseases.

The Government is committed to designing a new woodland creation grant scheme, which will not only allow tree planting on marginal land but also incentivise larger scale afforestation to meet carbon goals and wider landscape benefits.

There is a need to consider the impact on the distribution of particular tree species in relation to a changing climate particularly when undertaking long term planting schemes.

There may be an increased incidence of forest fires due to the potential effects of climate change.

Any future changes to the Forestry Commission may result in changes from current approaches being taken by this national body.

Under managed woodland areas can also experience inappropriate and damaging impacts from uncontrolled leisure activities (mountain biking, skateboard jumps) and fly tipping.

### 10.4 POLICIES FOR FORESTRY AND WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P22** Encourage sustainable forestry, appropriate woodland planting proposals, woodland management practices and the development of sustainable wood fuel markets to deliver AONB objectives.

**P23** Promote funding opportunities to deliver sustainable woodland management and promote the intrinsic relationship between woodland activities and the landscape of the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P24** Support initiatives to better understand all forces for change affecting woodlands in the Isle of Wight AONB.

### 10.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Support activity that encourages the sustainability of local wood fuel markets where this benefits woodland management for landscape and biodiversity.
- Identification and recording of archaeological features within woodland so that they can be appropriately managed.



St Lawrence - Courtesy Liz Cooke

## 11

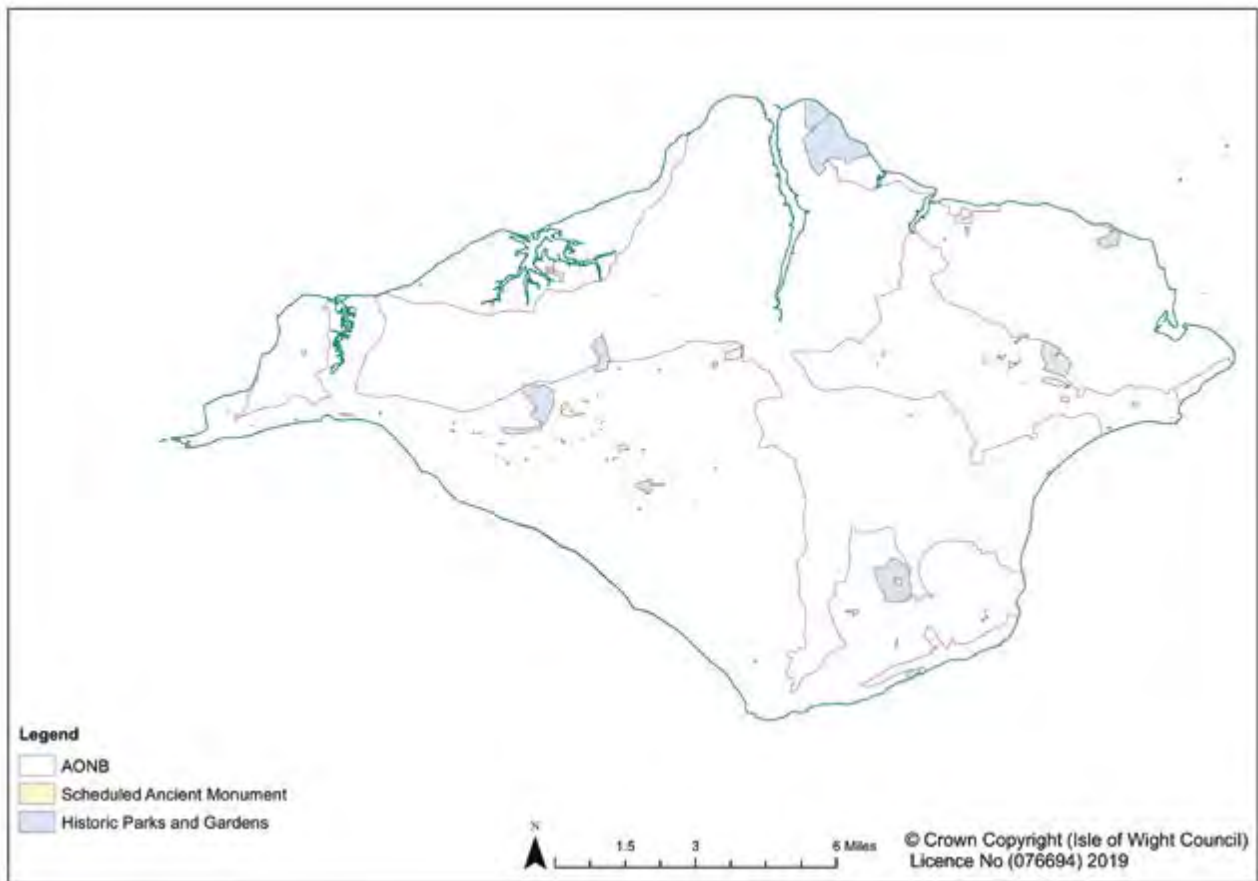
## Historic Environment

*Osborne House - Courtesy Liz Cooke*

The complexity of the landscape within the Isle of Wight AONB is a legacy of the centuries-old intricate relationship between people and place. Closely linked with geology, the historic environment comprises: archaeology, the built environment and the historic landscape; in effect the whole landscape, since this has been created by human interaction with the natural environment over time. It is essential that the importance of this resource is understood if we are to conserve and enhance the Isle of Wight AONB.

The historic environment is a major contributor to the landscape character of the Isle of Wight AONB. Set out below are some of the most significant features, from a landscape perspective but this is by no means an exhaustive list.

- Open downland and heathland dating back to the woodland clearance of these areas from the Neolithic and in particular the Bronze Age and Iron Age periods.
- Human management of semi-natural woodland over several millennia and the creation of plantation woodland in the recent past.
- Spring-line settlement and other settlement patterns directly related to landscape and landform, highlighting how people took advantage of sources of fresh water, shelter from prevailing winds and/or were linked with the local church and manor.
- Vernacular architecture embracing various traditional styles and reflecting the Island's complex geology and locally available materials. Walls may be constructed of various types of greensand, Bembridge limestone, chalk or locally made bricks, while roofs are typically slate or thatch.
- Ceremonial sites such as The Longstone at Mottistone, burial mounds on chalk downland and sandstone hills, and structures such as churches and religious houses.
- The historic enclosure of downland, heathland, open farmland, common and waste, which took place in a piecemeal fashion over a long period of time particularly from the Tudor period into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Closely associated with historic boundary features such as hedgerows, ditches, hedge banks, wood banks, and stone walls and associated field patterns. Many earthworks were used to demarcate boundaries relating to medieval parishes, manors and other land holdings and can still be seen in the landscape of the Isle of Wight AONB today.
- Features and sites associated with safety and defence such as beacon sites, lighthouses, castles, forts and World War II and Cold War structures.
- Roman Villa sites, medieval planned towns,



Tudor and Jacobean manors and farmsteads.

- Highways, byways, paths and tracks many of which are now part of the road or public rights of way network.
- Industrial archaeology sites from quarries, old salterns, brickworks through to rocket testing.
- Marine sites such as protected wrecks.
- Designed parkland landscapes and ornamental gardens associated with grand houses such as Appuldurcombe, Northcourt, Nunwell, Norris Castle and Osborne.
- The identification of the Isle of Wight and parts of what is now AONB as a place to visit as part of the English Grand Tour and the 'Picturesque' movement.
- Royal patronage and the Royal Palace at Osborne House.
- The increasing popularity of the Isle of Wight AONB as a place to visit or to move to during the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries and the associated changes to settlements and facilities at sites which became attractions.

### 11.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES

- 19 Grade I listed Buildings.
- 32 Grade II\* listed Buildings.
- 606 Grade II listed Buildings.
- 111 Scheduled Monuments.
- 8 registered historic parks and gardens on the National Heritage List for England either partially or wholly within the Isle of Wight AONB plus 11 historic parks and gardens on the Local List within the Isle of Wight AONB.
- 23 Conservation areas, partially or wholly in the Isle of Wight AONB.
- 6121 sites in the Isle of Wight AONB on the Historic Environment Record.
- 44 Local List (built structures) in the Isle of Wight AONB.

The 2018 Heritage at Risk Register has highlighted 10 sites within the Isle of Wight AONB at risk and comprises a



range of heritage assets i.e. 4 Scheduled Monuments; 4 Listed Buildings; 2 Registered Parks & Gardens.<sup>59</sup>

## 11.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

The Historic Environment provides a finite resource of evidence for past human activity. Through this we can better understand the origins of the Isle of Wight AONB landscape and the relationship between people and places. Additionally, through investigation of palaeo-environmental evidence *e.g.* pollen record we get a better understanding of how climate and land use has changed over time. This can be used to better inform current choices of land management.

The intricate relationship between people and place throughout time is visible in the historic environment. This gives people a link to the past, engenders a sense of belonging and is a practical educational resource.

The Isle of Wight AONB holds some of the finest archaeological sites, historic landscapes, buildings and structures on the Island, many are designated and protected heritage assets. There are also many non-designated heritage assets that positively contribute to the Historic Environment. Many of these are recorded on the Historic Environment record although new assets / sites may be identified and afforded weight during consideration of a planning application by the local planning authority.

These resources are finite and need careful consideration, management and in some cases protection.

## 11.3 MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

### 11.3.1 NATIONAL GUIDANCE

Historic England (formerly English Heritage) is the national body which oversees matters relating to the Historic Environment in England. It provides guidance on the best way to achieve national policy objectives for the Historic Environment to a range of stakeholders. A current list of information is available on the Historic England website and includes:

- Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance for Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (English Heritage 2008 currently being revised).
- Understanding Place; Historic Area Assessments. (Historic England April 2017).

- Heritage at Risk (2017) – current web-based national evidence base.
- GPA 3 - Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd edition) (Historic England December 2017).

## Policies and legislation affecting the historic environment

The National Planning Policy Framework<sup>3</sup> and the Isle of Wight Council Core Strategy<sup>14</sup> contain policies that enable the local planning authority to manage change to all heritage assets, including non-designated heritage assets, in a manner commensurate with their significance and contribution to the historic environment. A heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy framework as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting considerations in planning decisions because of its heritage interest'.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990<sup>60</sup> (as amended) and Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979<sup>61</sup> (as amended) legislate over works to Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Monuments and amongst other things illustrate duties and powers of the Local Planning Authority in this regard.

### 11.3.2 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

The Isle of Wight Historic Environment Record (HER), maintained by the Isle of Wight Council Archaeology and Historic Environment Service, comprises a computerised database linked to a Geographic Information System (GIS), complemented by documentary archives, historic maps, aerial photographs and an archaeological library.

The HER is continuously updated as a result of fieldwork including excavations, geo-physical surveys, research and other projects by commercial and voluntary organisations and individuals. It contains detailed information on archaeological monuments; find spots (including those from the Portable Antiquities Scheme); historic buildings and structures; coastal, maritime, military and industrial sites; parks and gardens; and landscape features.

The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership utilises the HER to obtain an accurate picture of the historic environment and its needs. HER enhancement projects are being undertaken by the Isle of Wight AONB's Landscape Partnership 'Down to the Coast' Scheme.

### 11.3.3 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Historic Landscape Character (HLC) programme, promoted by Historic England, is a methodology to describe the cultural, historic and archaeological features contributing to the time-depth and character of the landscape. Time-depth is the visible evidence in the present-day landscape for change and continuity over long periods of time.

The Isle of Wight HLC was prepared by the Isle of Wight Council Archaeology and Historic Environment Service (IWCAHES) with the support of English Heritage and the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership.<sup>62</sup>

The HLC forms an integral part of the HER as a layer within the HER GIS and a dataset within the HER database alongside monument, event, source and consultation records. It is maintained by IWCAHES. This identifies historic landscape types such as field patterns, woodland and settlement and also divided the Island into HLC Areas. It led to the development of a series of Historic Environment Action Plans (HEAP)<sup>63</sup> between 2008 and 2015. These plans relate to individual

HLC Areas (discrete parts of the Island with their own distinctive character) and HLC Types (such as settlement, routeways, field patterns, military sites, parks and gardens etc). The Rural Settlements and Rural Buildings HEAP describes the varied character of settlements and the built character of these settlements which contribute significantly to the landscape of the Isle of Wight AONB.

### 11.3.4 ISLE OF WIGHT CULTURAL STRATEGY

In July 2016 a group of heritage / cultural organisations from the Isle of Wight were successful with a collaborative bid to the Arts Council of England Museums' Resilience Fund. The bid's stated objective was to: *"... identify a new, collaborative, fit-for-purpose, business model capable of challenging and changing the Isle of Wight cultural sector's current direction of travel."*

The partnership that was formed consisted of: Carisbrooke Castle Museum (Lead), Dimbola Museum and Galleries, Quay Arts Centre, Isle of Wight Council Heritage Service, Dinosaur Isle, Cowes Maritime Museum, Newport Roman Villa and the Museum of Island History.



Appuldurcombe - Courtesy Liz Cooke

Four activity clusters were identified by the partnership as part of their Cultural Strategy to take forward the stated objective above. These were:

- Audiences.
- Cultural Learning.
- Business / Management.
- Collections.

Much of the recommended activity in the Audience Cluster is already being pursued through the ACE Resilience Fund Award ('Hidden Heroes'). Other key recommendations within the Business, Learning and Collections activity clusters are hoped to be pursued through a 2017 application to the HLF's 'Resilient Heritage' Fund. Other recommendations - primarily those without significant resource implications - are being incorporated into the Partners' respective Action Plans.

### 11.3.5 OTHER FACTORS

Land use practices have the potential to help to conserve buried archaeological remains or to significantly increase damage to this finite resource, particularly to scheduled monuments through the impact of stock erosion or arable ploughing.

Changes to weather patterns and general climate may result in increased erosion and weathering of sites and historic structures. Fluctuations in the water table and the drying out of peat deposits have implications for the palaeo-environmental record and wetland archaeology. Increased storms, mitigation for flood risk, conservation projects and rates of coastal erosion may lead to more frequent exposure of buried sites along undefended coastlines and increased risk of damage to historic built structures (even where there may be coastal defence).

Development has the potential to damage buried archaeology and raising awareness with developers and the public will help with the preservation or recording of sites.

The Portable Antiquities Scheme has encouraged the recording of finds but there may still be incidences of unreported finds which may prevent us from having a better understanding of past peoples in the landscape.

### 11.4 POLICIES FOR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

## P25

Support measures for the on-going conservation of this finite resource such as appropriate farming, forestry, land use, maritime and development activities, to ensure the Isle of Wight AONB historic environment objectives are met.

## P26

Support the positive management of change to designated and non-designated heritage assets during the consideration of planning applications affecting the Historic Environment.

## P27

Encourage opportunities to arrest the decline and improve the management, monitoring and maintenance of heritage assets identified within the Isle of Wight AONB.

## P28

Encourage opportunities for responsible access and enjoyment of the historic environment of the Isle of Wight AONB and promote and celebrate the importance of the Historic Environment of the Isle of Wight AONB.

## P29

Encourage the positive management of change to designated and non-designated heritage assets during considerations affecting the Historic Environment.

## P30

Monitor the impact of forces for change (such as recreational activities, development, land use and climate change) on the historic environment of the Isle of Wight AONB.

### 11.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Promote the recording, understanding, conservation, enhancement and interpretation of the historic environment in the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Support finding viable uses for historic buildings and sites to help secure their future survival.



# 12

## Cultural Associations

Brighstone - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

The Isle of Wight AONB includes a wealth of history contained within the landscape. These are physical reminders of our past; linked to this are the varied components that gives us our sense of history and define the distinctiveness of both the Island in its entirety and also the different areas within it. In this context we consider that cultural associations reinforce the local distinctiveness and character of the Isle of Wight AONB landscape.

This topic acknowledges the important role of dialect, customs, folklore and fable, people, writers, artists and landmarks. It is also about the communal and individual importance of landscape to people. This is a more ephemeral appreciation of the sense of belonging to the area. Change is part of the story of the Isle of Wight AONB and we need to capture past influences and embrace new stories.

Until recent times literacy was for the elite. The general population relied on song, story, dance, traditions and customs to reinforce their sense of identity and community at a highly localised scale. All these activities are still enjoyed but the scale has changed, and there is no longer the reliance on a localised reference, but where they remain, they give colour, continuity and contribute to a sense of cultural identity and belonging to the area.

The Isle of Wight AONB has been and continues to be a source of inspiration to people who have expressed this through writing, art, sculpture and more latterly

photography and film. This has led to particular associations of notable individuals with the landscape and the Isle of Wight AONB such as Lord Alfred Tennyson, Julia Margaret Cameron, John Keats, Joseph Turner, Algernon Swinburne and J.B. Priestley. Other residents and visitors from Robert Hooke, Guglielmo Marconi, John Nash and in particular Queen Victoria and her entourage have contributed to the story of the Isle of Wight AONB, often also leaving their mark on their landscape (Tennyson monument, Dimbola House, Hooke Hill, Osborne House, Marconi memorial, John Nash designed buildings). These associations were celebrated through the West Wight Landscape Partnership with walks and trails highlighting the life and work of Robert Hooke and the 'Freshwater Circle' including Tennyson, Charles Dodgson, William and Helen Allingham, Edward Lear, G F Watts, Charles Darwin and Julia Margaret Cameron.

The Down to the Coast Landscape Partnership has also highlighted the work of artists from the late eighteenth century to the modern-day such as Turner, Brannon, Daniell, Barth, King, Vickers, Gray, Kirkpatrick, Gregory, Cooper, Tomkins, Carrick, Cooke, Knowler, Richens and Samuelson who have all produced landscape paintings inspired by the Isle of Wight AONB and coast. A number of artists in the mid-19th century developed a distinctive style of landscape painting, collectively referred to as the Bonchurch School, and this effort made sure that the Island's coast was one of the most painted places in Britain.

The Isle of Wight was also home to a number of local literary characters including Sir John Oglander, a noted Isle of Wight diarist, local historian Sir John Worsley, and local poet Alfred Noyes. The 'Back of the Wight' smugglings yarns of longshoremen, lifeboatmen, mackerel fishing and smugglers, brought vividly to life by Fred Mew are all well known and loved.

As recorded by William Henry Long in his Dictionary of Isle of Wight Dialect (1886), the Island had a strong local vocabulary. Whilst some words remain in colloquial use (e.g. nammiet, nipper, caulthead, gallybagger, chine, mallishag) increased education and a standardised approach to language alongside greater mobility of the population has seen a decrease in the prevalence of local accent and the use of local dialect.

This topic is, of course, intrinsically linked with the Historic Environment and heritage. However, we have separated the two to reflect the statutory basis for the management and protection of the Historic Environment as against the less formal context for cultural association issues.

### 12.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES

The Local List also records locally important places (parks and gardens) and other smaller structures which have been acknowledged by the local community as being of significance and importance.

Nine hundred works of art featuring the Isle of Wight were exhibited at the Royal Academy or other significant London exhibitions in the nineteenth century.<sup>64</sup>

The recent Heritage Lottery funded Landscape Partnership Schemes on both West and East Wight have sought to capture oral history, experiences and stories and complement the previous 'All Our Stories' project which captured stories from people during the celebration of fifty years of designation of the Isle of Wight AONB from 1963 through to more recent times. The enthusiasm and interest in stories from the farming community was particularly fruitful.

The Isle of Wight landscape, natural and built heritage, and the cultural associations linked to these, add to people's quality of life by reducing stress, and adding to physical well-being. It is important that children and adults from the Island become exposed to cultural and natural experiences so that they are aware of the benefits and therefore appreciate and champion their continued conservation.

There is a need to develop baseline indicators to provide further facts and figures for this section.

### 12.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

Cultural Associations are a valuable contributor to local distinctiveness. They are individual and collective records of belonging and emotional responses to the Isle of Wight AONB and the part it has played in peoples' lives.

An important factor is educating and interpreting the natural and historic environment to local audiences and visitors through experiential learning such as Woodland Therapy, Forest Schools and Wildbeach run by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, archaeological activities, such as the Discovery Pack run by TimeTaxi CIC, and arts and cultural activities run by New Carnival Company, Ventnor Exchange and Quay Arts.

The Island has played host to many internationally renowned artists and writers. It is also rich in local customs and dialects.

The Isle of Wight is often associated with seaside holidays and yachting or with the Victorian Period.

The Isle of Wight was a major resource in the development of knowledge of geology and palaeontology in the 17th, 19th and 20th century.

The Undercliff was a significant part of the appeal of the Isle of Wight during the Picturesque Movement in art and architecture from the late 18th century.

The Isle of Wight AONB is perceived as quiet, traditional and safe, with a slower pace of life and high levels of tranquillity.

Residents often feel a heightened sense of identity as part of the wider Island community.

### 12.3 MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

Whilst there are methodologies which include consideration of the contribution of cultural associations to a character of an area (Landscape Character Assessment, HLC and Ecosystems Services) there would seem to be no definitive national policy in relation to this landscape service.

Society is more fluid in that people move around and are less likely to stay all their lives in one place. Conversely an increase in interest in family history and the advent



of electronic records and the internet has enabled people from further afield to investigate the history of their ancestors and the areas in which they lived and worked.

The Island Collection is an new initiative to establish the Isle of Wight as a significant cultural destination by:

- Strengthening and underpinning the Isle of Wight's cultural sector.
- Providing an expert, strategic voice that represents Isle of Wight Cultural organisations.
- Working with place-making agencies to enhance the Isle of Wight's cultural environment for living, working and visiting.

## 12.4 POLICIES FOR CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P31** Support initiatives that celebrate the relationship between landscape, its use and people, including education and health and well-being projects in the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P32** Support initiatives that seek to ensure that landscape-based cultural associations (such as names, dialect, stories, folklore, customs) are not lost.

## 12.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Support education and health and well-being programmes reconnecting people with the natural world or cultural associations.
- Encourage the capturing and celebration of the Isle of Wight AONB's cultural associations.



Godshill - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight



## 13

## Tranquillity and Dark Skies

*Milkyway over Oratory - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

Tranquillity and Dark Skies are key characteristics of the Isle of Wight AONB.

Tranquil places allow people to relax and to escape from the stresses and strains of everyday life. They contribute to people's health and well-being and allow opportunities to experience 'peace and quiet'. Tranquil areas are defined as places unspoilt by urban influences being sufficiently far away from the visual or noise intrusion of artificial light, development or traffic. Tranquillity is a human concept and does not include the impacts of the



*Milkyway over the Needles - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

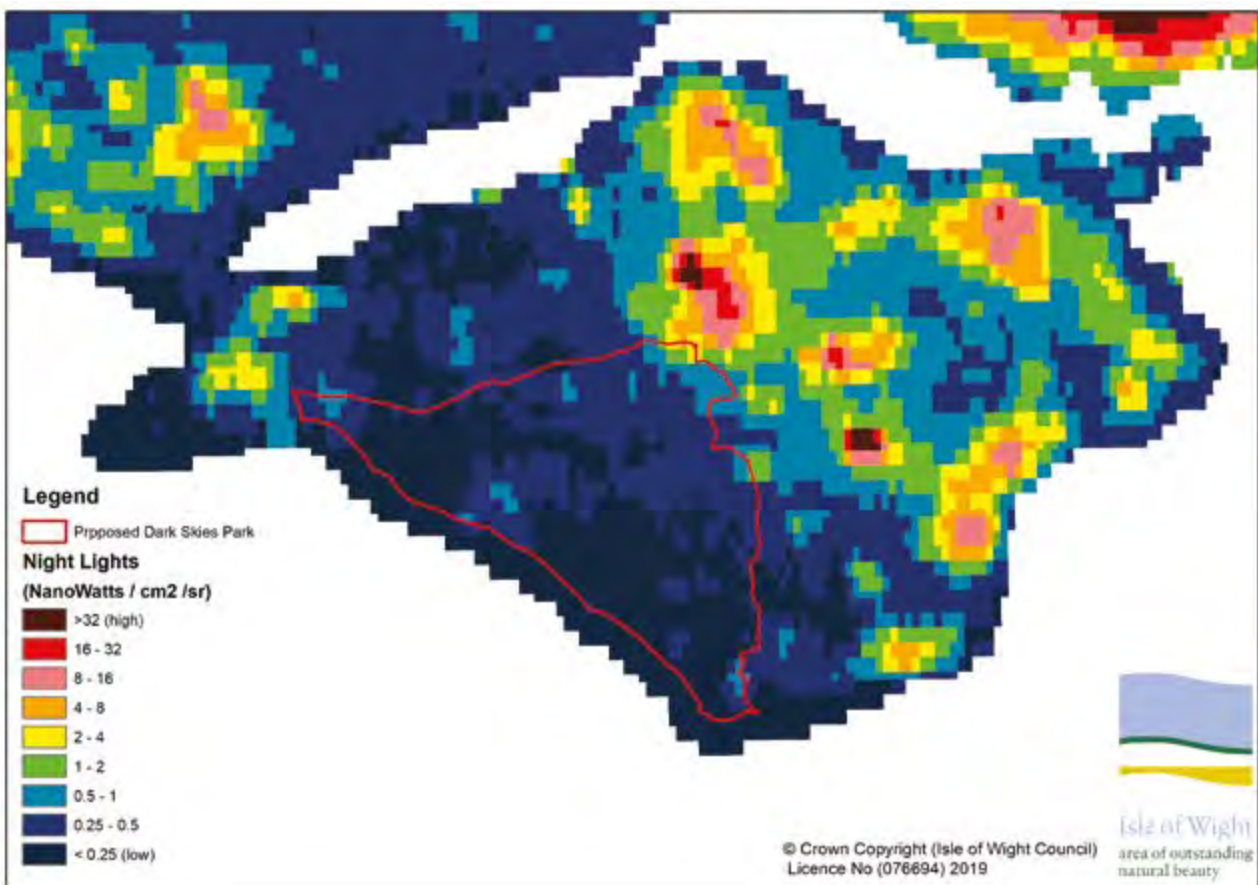
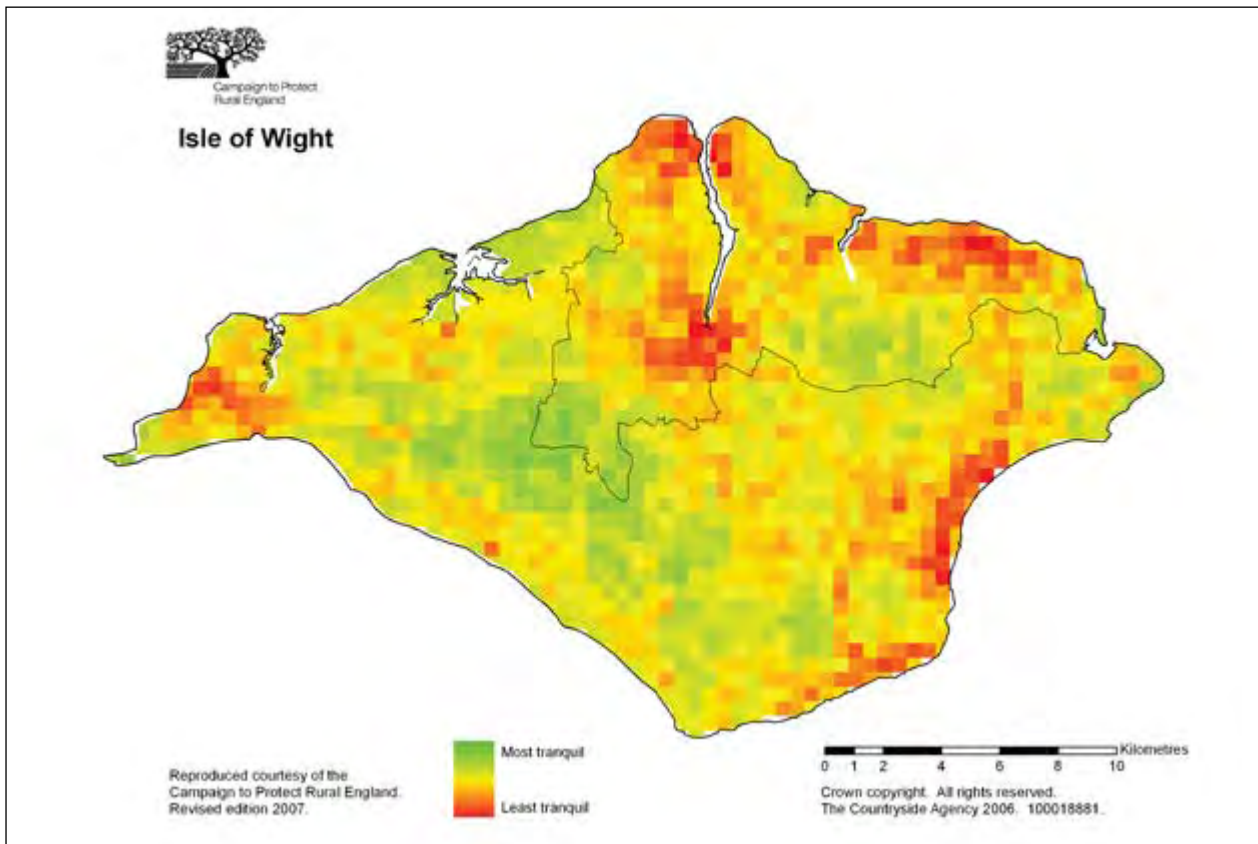
mentioned influences on the disturbance of wildlife (see Wildlife). Some noises which can be experienced in the countryside positively contribute to tranquillity, such as bird song, animal calls and the wind rustling through trees and reeds.

The Isle of Wight AONB has a low population and low levels of development, giving the opportunity to experience tranquillity. This is confirmed through the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Tranquillity Mapping<sup>65</sup> showing the Isle of Wight AONB as significantly more tranquil than other parts of the Isle of Wight and South East England. Within the Isle of Wight AONB, it is easy to find somewhere tranquil, in secretive woodlands, on top of open down land, in hidden coves or at sea.

Dark Skies are special areas where there is little ambient light pollution and on a clear night many stars can be seen. They are becoming harder to find in the UK due to increased light sources spilling into the night skies. Artificial light has done much to safeguard and enhance our night-time environment but, if not properly controlled or designed, obtrusive light (sometimes referred to as light pollution) can present serious physiological and ecological problems.

The Isle of Wight AONB is lucky to have a significant amount of Dark Skies found within the UK's Southern Region.

### 13.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES



### 13.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

A consultation for the prospective Isle of Wight Biosphere designation, conducted by the IWAONB Unit showed:

- Tranquillity, tranquil, calm, solitude, peace and quiet, were valued by 66% of people.
- Fresh air was valued by 16%.
- Scenery (Landscape and seascape) was valued by 37%.
- Nature, wildlife or flora and fauna, was valued by 14%.

Several authoritative studies have shown that the benefits of tranquillity include:

- Tranquillity helps the economy - The tranquillity of rural areas attracts visitors to the Isle of Wight AONB.

- Tranquillity is good for our health - Studies have found that experiencing the natural environment reduces blood pressure, reduces heart attacks, increases mental performance and soothes anxiety. In addition it is suggested that playing in a natural environment has a positive impact on children's development.
- Tranquillity reduces stress - A recent review of over 100 studies shows convincing evidence of the importance of the natural environment in helping people to recover from stress, and that one of the primary reasons for visiting natural environments is to escape the stress of urban areas and to experience tranquillity and solitude.

As well as contributing to the quality of life for residents, Dark Skies are an economic as well as a cultural and scientific asset, which make a valuable contribution to tourism by attracting people to the Isle of Wight AONB. Each March and October many observational astronomers travel from far and wide to attend 'Star Parties' celebrating the Isle of Wight AONB's Dark Skies.



*Stars over Compton - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*



### 13.3 MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

In 2016 National Resources Wales<sup>66</sup> defined tranquillity as:

‘An untroubled state, which is peaceful, calm and free from unwanted disturbances. This can refer to a state of mind or a particular environment. Tranquillity can be measured in terms of the absence of unwanted intrusions, or by a balancing of positive and negative factors. These include the presence of nature, feeling safe, visually pleasing surroundings and a relaxing atmosphere.’

The Landscape Institute and IEMA ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment’<sup>67</sup> define it as ‘a state of calm and quietude associated with peace, considered to be a significant asset of landscape’

The National Planning Policy Framework<sup>3</sup> looks to ‘identify and protect areas of tranquillity which remain relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason’. It also states that ‘by encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation’.

The Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP)<sup>68</sup> identifies Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty as being ‘intrinsically dark’. They categorise these designated areas as Environmental Zone 1 in their five zone hierarchy. They also set out the appropriate approach for exterior lighting design for the five Environmental Zones.

The Isle of Wight Council Street Lighting Policy for Highway Private Finance Initiative (PFI) will see the implementation of variable street lighting levels and shorter illumination periods through all street lighting changing to Light Emitting Diode (LED) technology.

There is an increasing aspiration to achieve International Dark Sky Association recognition for the Island with Isle of Wight AONB as the core ‘Dark Sky’ resource. Vectis Astronomical Society, CPRE, the Isle of Wight AONB and the local authority, are working towards an adoption of a specific Dark Skies policy and a supplementary planning document will be produced. It is anticipated that a Dark Skies Park for the Isle of Wight, should be attained within the lifetime of this plan.

### 13.4 POLICIES FOR TRANQUILLITY AND DARK SKIES

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P33** Promote and celebrate the value and contribution of tranquillity and dark skies to the landscape quality of the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P34** Ensure that appropriate considerations are given to the impact upon the tranquillity and Dark Skies in all development proposals affecting the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P35** Encourage exterior lighting design that reflects Institute of Lighting Professionals Environmental Zone 1 guidance or any superseding best practice advice.

**P36** Support the development of a better understanding of the contribution of tranquillity and Dark Skies to the enjoyment, health and well-being and the rural economy.

### 13.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Develop initiatives to engage communities, tourists and business to support tranquillity and Dark Skies.
- Ensure a Dark Skies policy is adopted by the local authority as part of its revised Local Development Framework and support formalised IDA recognition of part of the Isle of Wight as a Dark Skies park.

# 14

## Sustainable Communities

*Fishbourne Ferry - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

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

Landscape Character Assessments and Historic Landscape Characterisation help us to better understand and describe the special qualities and time depth of the individual areas that make up the wider Isle of Wight AONB.

### 14.1 AONB PARISHES

Traditional settlement patterns, vernacular design and the lack of a single predominant building style reflect the diverse geology and landform of the Isle of Wight AONB. This adds to the interest and distinctiveness of the towns and villages within and adjacent to the area. Living and working in their immediate area; historically, communities would have been more self-sufficient, reliant on what the landscape in their area could provide.

Today the Isle of Wight AONB includes communities from isolated farmsteads and hamlets, to villages of varying sizes and one small town (Yarmouth). These comprise a small percentage of the Isle of Wight's total population. Taking into account the fragmented nature of the Isle of Wight AONB, the designation can be found in many parishes.

Life in the Isle of Wight AONB today includes the following issues and opportunities:

- Globalisation – the availability of modern (often generic) commodities and communications.
- Demographics – changing age profiles.
- Services – economic viability of maintaining needed and effective rural services.
- Connection – sense of belonging, social interaction, social exclusion.
- Employment – commuting outside of the area, self-employment, home working.
- Housing – affordability, second-homes, holiday lets, age and condition of stock and supply.
- Localism – empowering local communities to decide on matters concerning their future.

## 14.2 ROADS AND TRANSPORT

The Isle of Wight AONB's road network provides access to the diverse landscapes across the area. It provides the means for transporting goods and for accessing many services for people who live in, work in or visit the area.

Highway maintenance has in recent times focused on motor traffic on all roads, reflecting the bulk of their use; however, this should not be at the expense of road users on foot, in wheelchairs, on bicycles or horseback. Alongside motor vehicles, the needs of other road users must be considered in order to encourage an increase in sustainable transport options, healthier lifestyles, better social inclusion and access to the countryside.

The minor and unclassified road network, contributes to the character of the Isle of Wight AONB and can contribute to sustainable transport approaches. Verges, hedges and historic signs all add to the local distinctiveness of the landscape. The standardisation of signage and the design of road schemes have a major impact on the local distinctiveness and the character of an area. Traffic regulation requires signage and there are fewer discretionary powers regarding its design, size and placement. The design of new road schemes, signage and road furniture needs to be sympathetic to the Isle of Wight AONB's landscape. Maintaining existing signage and programmes to rationalise signs, can help to ensure that the impact is minimised. The use of temporary plastic signs, and of street furniture for fly posting, should be discouraged.

Maintaining strategic roads within the Isle of Wight AONB is an on-going challenge, especially in areas subject to coastal erosion and/or active land movement. This will need to balance carefully the social and economic need for the road network with its potential impact on the environment.

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. This needs to be regular, reliable, affordable and convenient if it is to provide an alternative to the car.

## 14.3 RURAL BUSINESS

It will be very important for the economic health of our rural economy to ensure the continuation of a wide range of economic activity. As Isle of Wight businesses become increasingly national and global in their outlook, there will be an increasing tendency for these businesses to locate near our ferry gateways to improve accessibility to cross-Solent travel and beyond - both for themselves and

their customers. If these businesses are going to be our higher value businesses, then the Isle of Wight AONB needs to find ways of avoiding having only the low-value sectors in its area.

Consequently, there is a need to improve the wealth and job-creation potential of the Isle of Wight AONB, by improving the productivity of the larger sectors and promoting the growth of higher productivity sectors. For example, developing higher value-added tourism should see an improvement in the productivity of the hotels and catering sector. By encouraging and enabling the Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishing sector to explore ways of adding value to their products, this will encourage new jobs and wealth creation in these areas.

## 14.4 WASTE

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. A particular pressure is the disposal of waste to land fill as the Island's land fill site is located within the Isle of Wight AONB, as well as the waste sorting facility and a number of other isolated waste management sites.

The waste contract, currently held by Amey seeks to recycle 55% of the Island's household waste and prevent 90% of the remaining rubbish from being landfilled. Future increased pressure through greater waste production may lead to pressure to expand the existing land fill facility or to look for alternative methods and sites.<sup>69</sup>

Recycling rates have increased as methods have been introduced to make domestic recycling more convenient. Economies of scale for commercial and domestic waste decrease the economic viability for recycling. There is a need to work with waste operators to ensure the short term impact on the landscape is minimised and in the longer term the landscape is restored appropriately. A good example of this is at Standen Heath where parts of former landfill have been re-landscaped.

## 14.5 USE AND DISPOSAL OF WATER

The availability and use of water is an important element in the sustainable development of the Isle



of Wight AONB. Factors include levels of personal water consumption and the associated water efficiency standards in housing. This is in the light of 25% of the Island's water coming from the mainland, which, in drought conditions, could lead to increased pressure on flows in these important chalk stream habitats.

Furthermore, the removal and treatment of waste water can cause negative environmental impacts e.g. badly maintained septic tanks. However, there are positive impacts that can be derived, such as the management of rainwater including uptake of opportunities for sustainable drainage.

These issues are addressed in Chapter 7: Air and Water

## 14.6 KEY FACTS & FIGURES

Population - The 2016 Mid-2016 Population Estimate<sup>70</sup> shows the total Isle of Wight population as 139,798, of this population approximately 8% (11,184) reside within the Isle of Wight AONB. However, it is important to reiterate the interrelationship between the AONB area and the rest of the Isle of Wight. Many of the more built up and urban areas are close to the AONB area making it readily accessible. People will travel in and out of the AONB area to access work, leisure opportunities, essential services for their health and wellbeing and in order to shop.

Of the 33 parishes on the Isle of Wight, twenty-nine have the Isle of Wight AONB within their boundary – Cowes, Nettlestone and Seaview, Northwood and St Helens have no AONB. Of the rest, only three are entirely within the designated area – Shorwell, Brighstone and Chale.

Between 2012-17, 119 houses received planning consent in the Isle of Wight AONB. Of these the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership objected to 13 *i.e.* 11% of the total. This provides an average of 24 new houses per annum. Also during this period 63 new holiday units and 40 glamping pitches were given permission in the designated area.

## 14.7 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

### Isle of Wight AONB Parishes

Sympathetic development within the Isle of Wight AONB, reflecting appropriate vernacular style and materials, will ensure the conservation and enhancement of the landscape's unique sense of place. There is a need to take into account the high sensitivity of the landscape when considering development, yet also maintain healthy and vibrant local communities and enable access

to goods and services.

Landscape Character Assessments, Historic Landscape Characterisation and Ecosystem Services Assessments provide detailed information on the character of the individual parishes.

## Roads and Transport

The highways network provides access to the diverse landscapes across the Isle of Wight AONB. It provides the means for transporting goods and access to many services for people who live and work in, or visit the area. Care is required to ensure that generic approaches are avoided wherever possible to minimise their impact on local distinctiveness and the character of the Isle of Wight AONB.

## Rural Business

Economic development needs to link with maintaining the strength of communities. It may well be that rural productivity is lower because much of the service provision is not as profitable in small towns and villages as it would be in urban areas. However, these service businesses provide economic and social "glue" for local communities, and their successful survival needs to be promoted, encouraged and assisted.

## Waste

The Isle of Wight cannot move waste between authorities for treatment (such as bulking prior to processing or recycling) or share the investment costs of waste infrastructure. This increases the pressure for land fill and its impact upon the Isle of Wight AONB landscape. Smaller scale solutions are being sought on the Isle of Wight which will help to reduce this pressure for additional land fill but it unlikely to address the issue fully.

## 14.8 MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

### Isle of Wight AONB Parishes

Development Pressures - As identified on section 3.8.2 and section 3.9.3 of this document, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Island Plan set out the Policy context for development and as such has a direct bearing on the sustainability of communities within the Isle of Wight AONB. The Island Plan is undergoing a review and will be published in 2019.

The Island Plan Core Strategy (2012) clearly describes a hierarchy for the spatial location of development.

The Wider Rural Area covers the remaining countryside areas and small villages of the Island and includes much of the Isle of Wight AONB. Development here has the most restrictions, and also requirement to prove need in that location. The Island Plan does allow for appropriate tourism related development where it is contributing to sustainable (green) tourism, generally raising the quality of the tourism offer or providing a for a particular niche market. In the Isle of Wight AONB we would expect the planning application process for such proposals to fully consider the likely impact on the conservation and enhancement objectives of the designation and the other policies within this Management Plan.

There is a presumption against major development within the Isle of Wight AONB. Major development in the Isle of Wight AONB is a matter for the decision-maker taking into account its nature, scale and setting and whether it could have adverse impacts on features for which the area was designated.

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.

Five parishes have adopted Neighbourhood Plans (prepared under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012),<sup>71</sup> all of which have the Isle of Wight AONB in their boundary – Brading, Brighstone, Bembridge, Gurnard and Freshwater. Although most mention the Isle of Wight AONB, only two refer to the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan.

Small-scale development is less well regulated. 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 some development.

It is important that any development proposals within the Isle of Wight AONB are based upon a proper formal assessment of need through documents such as Housing Need Surveys and adopted Neighbourhood Plans. All proposals would still be expected to be of high quality design and be in keeping with the landscape character of the local area.

For the continued conservation and enhancement of the



Brook Bay - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

landscape, there is a need for land management practices to be maintained. There may be occasions where there is a need for agricultural, woodland and rural workers to live where they work, or additional buildings in relation to the land management sector. There is a need for the Isle of Wight AONB to better understand the future requirements for a sustainable rural economy and how this can be facilitated without having a negative impact on the designated area.

Certain authorities and public bodies also have specific permitted development rights for public services such as highways and the utility companies. Such activities are covered by the duty of regard for the Isle of Wight AONB as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000<sup>1</sup>, in addition to existing duties under the 1949 National Parks and Access to Countryside Act<sup>2</sup>.

## Roads and Transport

The Local Transport Plan 2011-2038<sup>72</sup> gives the policy context for the highways network. This sets out aspirations and targets for improved sustainable transport networks throughout the Isle of Wight AONB. Key aspirations within this plan include:

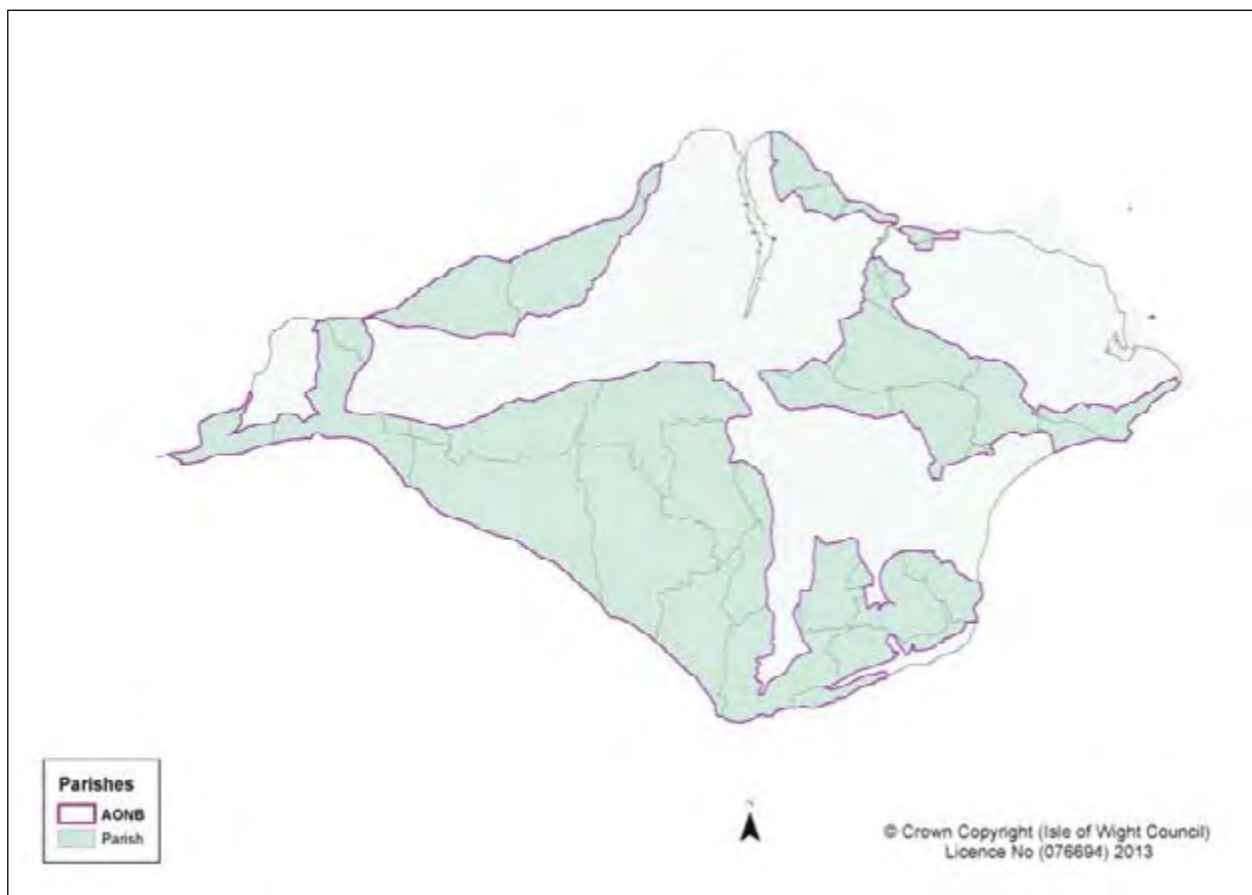
- Helping to ensure that people can get into and around the Isle of Wight AONB.

- Minimise the environmental impact of travel and transport.
- Making the best use of sustainable transport routes.
- Promoting sustainable transport to locals and visitors alike.
- Improving quality of life.

As the local Highways Authority, The Isle of Wight Council manages a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) for highways. The PFI contractor, Island Roads, is required to deliver the necessary improvements and maintenance (fence to fence) of the complete road and cycleway network. This includes works to all the Isle of Wight AONB roads over the life of this Plan. The document 'Considering the Island's landscape, natural and historic environment - Guidance for Work on the Highways and Public Realm'<sup>73</sup> was produced to inform these works.

Challenges for the maintenance of the road network include the A3054 between Bouldnor and Yarmouth, the A3055 between Brook and Freshwater Bay and A3055 between Niton and St Lawrence which all suffer from periodic landslip and ground instability.

A HEAP Report on Historic Routeways (including





Hollow Ways, also known as sunken lanes) discusses the origins and character of roads and public rights of way, making proposals for future management and study.

Access Fund for Sustainable Travel (Access Fund) – in 2016 the Isle of Wight Council was awarded £1.35 million to support access to sustainable transport for residents and visitors including cycling for school children, bus transport for employees and apprentices and to help to grow green tourism. Projects within the Access Fund fall under three main headings:

- Access to Visitor Experiences.
- Access to Employment, Training and Skills.
- Access to Education and Active Communities.

The Isle of Wight AONB is successfully running a project in this initiative and has over 2500 participants per annum in the walks and events organised by Unit staff and Isle of Wight AONB Partners.

## Rural Business

A number of funding mechanisms may be able to help with the development of small rural business in the Isle of Wight AONB, particularly where it relates to adding value to farming, forestry or is for green tourism, (such as the Isle of Wight Rural Fund).

Local Neighbourhood Plans provide the opportunity for local communities influence development within their local area based on the views of the residents, businesses and other stakeholders in the area. Bembridge, Brading, Brighstone, Gurnard, Freshwater currently have these plans in place.

The Isle of Wight Council in conjunction with a delivery partner has made available the option of a subsidised satellite broadband installation for eligible premises *i.e.* if premises do not have access to speeds of more than 2Mbps. This provides support towards the cost of equipment and installation of a satellite broadband connection so that a basic broadband service can be purchased for a fixed low first year cost. The subsidised installation can also be used to access higher cost packages with higher speeds or greater monthly data caps. This scheme was extended to 31st December 2018. It is hoped that this offer will bring benefits to local people and businesses in the Isle of Wight AONB.

Farm diversification may include small rural business units (see Farming).

## Waste

The Isle of Wight Council awarded the waste management



Quarr Abbey - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

contract to Amey Cespa in 2015 for 25 years. A target of 90% of household waste to be diverted from landfill was expressed and waste treatment works at Parkhurst Forest are being developed for readiness in 2018.

A waste processing works has also been established by Westridge Waste in the Isle of Wight AONB at Combley, opposite the Standen Heath site. The company supplies skips and containers and includes commercial tipping facilities. Waste that cannot be recycled is tipped at the Lynn Pitt Transfer station on site.

The level of public support and uptake of recycling will have an impact on the levels of landfill as will the treatment of commercial waste.

## 14.9 POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The following policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

## AONB Parishes Policies

**P37** Ensure that the Isle of Wight AONB objectives are given full regard in the formulation, review and implementation of plans and policies affecting Isle of Wight AONB Parishes, for Island Plan documents, local initiatives, etc.

**P38** Support Isle of Wight AONB Parishes and community groups to deliver local initiatives, which involve people in the appreciation of active conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB at a local level.

**P39** Ensure that appropriate development for sustainable rural communities (services, housing etc) complement the character of the area, strengthening its local distinctiveness and has provided robust evidence of need in that location.

**P40** Encourage sensitive approaches to change outside of the formal planning process (permitted development rights).

## Roads and Transport Policies

**P41** Ensure that Isle of Wight AONB objectives are given full regard in the approaches taken to road management and maintenance.

**P42** Encourage sensitive approaches and seek opportunities to strengthen the contribution of the road network (including footways, street lighting, grass verges, drainage and street furniture) to the character and the local distinctiveness of the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P43** Encourage sustainable access to the Isle of Wight AONB through the use of public transport, walking and cycling.

**P44** Support approaches that encourage better sustainable transport integration between the road network and public rights of way.

## Rural Business Policies

**P45** Support appropriate rural enterprise (and associated infrastructure development such as broadband) where it respects the objectives of the Isle of Wight AONB.

**P46** Encourage rural businesses to realise the Isle of Wight AONB objectives and provide positive benefits for their business.

**P47** Support initiatives that add value to land based products.

## Waste Policies

**P48** Encourage ways to reduce waste through encouraging more careful consumption, recycling and lower land fill rates.

**P49** Ensure proposals for landfill and waste management fully consider the impacts on the landscape of the Isle of Wight AONB and take full regard of the purpose of the designations, in both active and restoration phases.

### 14.10 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Support local communities in their understanding of the Isle of Wight AONB Objectives and their role in the delivery of these.
- Support strategic bodies and local organisations to ensure that green infrastructure opportunities are maximised throughout the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Support approaches and initiatives that encourage local sustainable transport.
- Encourage the Highway Authority and Island Roads on the implications of their management and maintenance programme within the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Encourage industry, regulating bodies and landowners to ensure the Isle of Wight AONB objectives are embedded in waste management and land fill proposals.

# 15

## Energy

*The Needles - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

The power of the sun or solar energy is a fundamental driver for many natural processes on earth. Due to its geographical location and Island status, the Isle of Wight AONB benefits from long sunshine hours, extended growing seasons and a comparably warm climate. The good sunshine hours, a mix of farmland and woodland for growing bio-fuels, coastal locations offering tidal flows, sea breezes and the underlying geology of the Isle of Wight AONB's landscapes offer an array of resources that can be used to produce energy.

Many of the communities within the Isle of Wight AONB are 'off the grid' for mains gas and are reliant on electricity, solid fuel, LPG or oil for their heating needs, which can be considerably more expensive. In fact many households are considered to be suffering from 'Fuel Poverty' as over 10% of their income is spent on fuel. Additionally, a specific problem in rural areas is that many of the properties are what are classed as 'hard to treat' meaning that they do not lend themselves to simple insulation measures.

National Planning Policy clearly states there should be a presumption against major development within or affecting the Isle of Wight AONB. The intimate and fragmented nature of the Isle of Wight AONB, the complexity of its landscapes and diversity of their character, makes the area sensitive to change and reduces its ability to accommodate large scale development.

The Isle of Wight AONB has the capacity to contribute to the Island's targets in a way that does not compromise

the designation. Whilst large scale energy development is inappropriate, this does not rule out individual householder, business or community approaches, undertaken at an appropriate scale. This enables the Isle of Wight AONB to contribute to the reduction of the Island's carbon footprint, without compromising the designated landscape. Positive examples of this include The Chale Community Project, Shorwell, St Lawrence village hall, Brading Roman Villa, National Trust Needles Old Battery and a general increase in individual householders utilising a range of renewable technologies from wood boilers through to solar PV.

Biomass, anaerobic digestion and solar PV technologies may also be able to play a part in the capture of renewable energy. It is important to ensure that the growing of biomass crops is appropriate within the landscape. This will be dependent upon the crop type chosen, the extent of the planting and whether it is undertaken as part of crop rotation with more traditional farming practice. Anaerobic digesters need to be of a size and design and in a location which is appropriate within a protected landscape. Solar PV can be used as a renewable energy production technology at a range of scales, however, careful consideration is required to mitigate landscape impact. See Section 10 for more information on woodfuels.

The Isle of Wight AONB has provided some guidance relating to renewable technologies and considerations required in the designated area, but there is a need to update this as technology changes and certainly within the life of this Management Plan.



There have been pressures for exploration of oil resources within or adjacent to the Isle of Wight AONB, this is likely to continue and be joined by exploration for shale gas through hydraulic fracturing (fracking). Whilst these operations are specifically banned from within the designated area, any proposals would require planning consent and the Isle of Wight AONB would wish to comment on secondary effects such as visual impacts to views. Strategically these impacts would be dealt with through the production of guidance of potential energy technologies in combination with the updating of our renewable technologies guidance.

### 15.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES

- There are currently 10 operational Solar PV sites within the AONB covering 853m<sup>2</sup>.
- Isle of Wight average domestic energy consumption (DBEIS 2017) = 15,645kWh per household per year representing 40% of energy consumption.
- Industry and commercial consumption was 869 GWh (36%).
- In 2015 the Island used 2440 GWh of energy, of which; 45% was met by natural gas piped from the mainland, 23% from electricity, 18% from petrol and diesel used for transport. 0.05% of the total energy used was supplied from renewable sources<sup>74</sup>.

The 2014 data tells us that the percentage of households on the Isle of Wight deemed to be in fuel poverty at 8.9%. (2014 sub-regional fuel poverty data: low income high costs indicator) This indicates that a significant number of households in the Isle of Wight AONB may be finding it difficult to heat and power their homes.

### 15.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

The Isle of Wight AONB provides a range of natural resources that can be captured to produce energy (light, air flow and temperature, crop and plant material and dynamic seas).

There is greater understanding on the finite nature of fossil fuels and for the need for us to balance their use with renewable sources. Individuals, communities and businesses should be supported to better understand their own use of energy, encouraged to be more efficient and to look at alternatives.

There has been a slow reduction of energy usage within the last decade, lower than the south east region average. The majority of renewable energy production on the Isle of Wight takes place outside of the AONB area, with

those sites inside being small scale and domestic. It is hard to quantify and monitor the extent of domestic installations as there is no central database for this information and not all installations would require planning permission.

It would be useful to develop a way to measure an uptake of domestic renewable energy technologies within the Isle of Wight AONB communities. This may be achieved through local projects such as the Green Towns initiative.

## 15.3 MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

### Government Policy and Guidance

National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) - Sets out national policy for energy infrastructure and guides the work of the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC),<sup>75</sup> as required by the Planning Act 2008.<sup>76</sup>

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy (EN-3)<sup>77</sup> – taken together with EN-1 this provides the primary basis for decisions on nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure by the IPC. As required by the Planning Act 2008<sup>76</sup>.

### 2020 Energy Efficiency Target

In 2007 the European Union set an ambitious primary energy saving target of 20% by 2020, against a 2007 business-as-usual projection. This forms part of a wider package of targets – known as the “20-20-20 targets” – which make up the EU’s 2020 climate and energy package, which includes binding greenhouse gas emissions and renewable energy targets.

The UK’s target was set at the level of 129.2 million tonnes of oil equivalent (mtoe) for final energy consumption on a net calorific value (ncv) basis. This represented an 18% reduction in final energy consumption, relative to the 2007 business-as-usual projection.

Government subsidies and Tax incentives (Feed-in tariffs, Renewable Heat Incentives, ECO, tax breaks, initiatives to tackle fuel poverty). Many houses have taken advantage of the Feed in Tariff for harnessing electricity through solar power.

There is an increased government focus on backing insulation programmes for solid wall properties, largely aimed at external wall insulation. This may have an impact on visual appearance which will need to be considered alongside the fuel poverty issues it addresses. There is a need to work with relevant organisations on a case by case basis to assess the most appropriate approach

within the diverse settlements of the Isle of Wight AONB.

The Island Plan (Core Strategy)<sup>14</sup> – Identifies a renewable energy target of 100MW and suggests this can be met from a range of proven technologies including: wind power; photo-voltaics; energy from waste and energy from biomass.

Statutory undertakers for the distribution of energy are subject to the duty to have regard to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the Isle of Wight AONB. The Isle of Wight AONB will continue to work with Scottish and Southern Electricity to remove overhead electricity cables through ‘undergrounding’ in the Isle of Wight AONB where the opportunity arises to provide an enhancement to the landscape.

## 15.4 POLICIES FOR ENERGY

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P50** Promote the responsible use and conservation of energy and support community approaches to capture energy through appropriate renewable technologies in line with the Isle of Wight AONB objectives.

**P51** Encourage sensitive approaches to the provision of infrastructure related to energy supply and landscape enhancement measures (such as undergrounding of overhead electrical cables).

**P52** Ensure development proposals relating to energy fully consider the impacts on the landscapes and seascapes of the Isle of Wight AONB and take full regard of the purposes of the designation.

**P53** Ensure a better understanding of the potential contribution the Isle of Wight AONB could make to energy targets without compromising the purposes of the designation and increase understanding of key considerations in relation to energy affecting the Isle of Wight AONB.



Afton - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

## 15.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Consider the implications of exploiting fossil fuels resources and the potential impact this may have on the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Consider the implications of energy distribution, communications and other utilities connectivity and the potential impact this may have on the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Continue to advocate the importance of energy efficiency and the potential for appropriate renewable energy solutions.
- Work with communities involved in Green Towns or Neighbourhood Plans to include measures for recording/identifying energy reduction and renewable energy uptake in their areas.
- Work with statutory undertakers to minimise the impact of energy distribution infrastructure.
- Support and work with relevant organisations seeking to address fuel poverty issues, through the use of domestic scale renewable technologies and measures to insulate properties within the Isle of Wight AONB.

# 16

## Tourism

*Sand Castle at Compton - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

The history of tourism for the Isle of Wight AONB has its roots in the 18th Century Picturesque movement and the discovery of the scenic quality of the area. It was a favoured location as part of the 'England Grand Tour' chosen by genteel explorers no longer able to tour Europe due to the Napoleonic War. As a direct result of this some people chose to build summer residences and retirement properties, the most notable of these being Queen Victoria through the building of Osborne House at East Cowes. Royal patronage and greater accessibility due to the railways led to the increased choice of the Isle of Wight as a destination.

It is the quality and diversity of the landscape and coasts and their geology, wildlife, historic environment and cultural associations, along with the ease of access of these areas and the ability to experience tranquillity and dark skies that contribute directly to the appeal of the Isle of Wight as a place to visit.

Cultural events are also a major draw for visitors. The original Isle of Wight Festival was held in the AONB (Wootton 1969, Afton 1970) and although no longer located within the area, the Isle of Wight Festival pays great homage to those early roots. Throughout the year many other events, fetes, fairs and festivals take place within the Isle of Wight AONB, celebrating local customs, arts, sports and pastimes and reflecting community pride in the landscape.

There are opportunities for people to experience the connection between the Isle of Wight AONB's beautiful landscape and farming by staying in accommodation in the rural area (including farm-based holiday lets) or through purchasing local produce in farm shops.

### 16.1 KEY FACTS & FIGURES

Information produced by Visit Isle of Wight<sup>78</sup> identified:

- Approximately 2.3m tourists visit the Island every year, (a relatively stable figure over the last 5 years).
- Approximately 1m of these visitors are day visitors, mostly originating from South East England.
- This contributed £ 286m to the Island's GDP directly with a further £234m from related services.
- Only 5% of visitors to the Island were overseas visitors.
- Most common length of stay is 4 nights or less (71%), indicating an increase in the popularity of short breaks.



- The most popular reason for coming to the Island is to visit friends and relatives, resulting in 37% of visitors staying with a friend or relatives, with self-catering accounting for a further 21% of accommodation used. Caravaning and camping accounted for 11%.

Repeat visits are high. Two thirds of visitors to the Island had visited more than once, when asked what the key influence had been for their choice of the Island for their holiday:

- 63% said attraction of Countryside/AONB.
- 60% said peace and quiet.
- 50% attraction of beaches and water activities.

**In 2016 a report was published by Visit IW based on a survey of 15,226 respondents.<sup>79</sup> The survey was a series of questions to agree or disagree with. One question asked: ‘The IoW has beautiful coast and countryside’ - 97% agree with this statement. A key observation of the report was: ‘given that this is so highly mentioned in open comments and elsewhere, it should probably be treated as the Island’s greatest asset.’**

## 16.2 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

The Isle of Wight is well known as a destination for tourists and is most often associated with more traditional seaside holidays and the international Cowes

Week sailing regatta. Whilst most of the accommodation and focus of traditional tourism has been centred on coastal resort towns, visitors use these as a base to then explore the wider attractions and countryside of the Isle of Wight AONB.

The Isle of Wight AONB offers a distinct marketable resource by highlighting the natural, historic and cultural elements of the landscape. This can contribute to the regeneration of coastal resort towns as a result. The extension of the season for short breaks is advantageous for the economy and for employment opportunities.

The importance of tourism to the economic and social well-being of the local community needs to be in balance with the conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB. Wherever possible, the Isle of Wight AONB needs to promote sustainable tourism approaches and monitor the impacts of tourism on all aspects of the AONB landscape.

## 16.3 MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

The Strategic Framework for Tourism in England 2010 – 2020<sup>80</sup> sets out the ways in which the industry can work together to achieve a 5% growth in value, year-on-year, over the next decade. This will lead to an additional £50bn in expenditure and the creation of 225,000 jobs. The Rural Tourism Action Plan within this strategy is of particular relevance for protected landscapes.

Visit Isle of Wight is the local Destination Management Organisation (DMO) – a collaborative not-for-profit marketing organisation, funded by IW-based tourism businesses and grants. They are currently operating a Wight BID (Business Improvement District), following the success of the campaign to create a fund to promote the Isle of Wight through a levy on all tourist businesses. Visit IW recently updated their Destination Management Plan.<sup>81</sup> This is a process of leading, influencing and co-ordinating the management of all the aspects of a destination that contribute to a visitor’s experience, taking account of the needs of visitors, local residents, businesses and the environment.

The key objectives in the Plan moving forward include:

- 1: Increasing the value of tourism to the Island economy.
- 2: Encourage innovation and industry investment.
- 3: Develop a year round tourism economy.
- 4: Sustain and enhance the Island’s landscape.

The Island Plan<sup>14</sup> sets out the policy context for tourism development across the Isle of Wight. It includes objectives and policies to improve the current tourism offer. In the Isle of Wight AONB there are a number of larger tourism sites (caravan parks, large attractions etc) which would benefit from improvements to soften their impact on the landscape and its character. There may also be opportunities to identify new tourism attractions and activities which fully utilise the natural beauty of the Isle of Wight AONB without compromising its conservation and enhancement.

Building on previous central government Local Sustainable Transport Fund initiatives, the Isle of Wight AONB is an active partner in the three year Access Fund for Sustainable Travel project (see Sustainable Communities – Roads and Transport), which includes measures to promote green tourism opportunities across the Island, encouraging the use of public transport, walking and cycling as means of accessing the Isle of Wight AONB landscape as well as to attractions and accommodation.

Payments for Ecosystem Services (business) and Visitor Giving (tourists) Schemes are used by protected landscapes and their partners to raise awareness not only of the importance of the landscapes for the clean air, clean water, carbon sequestration and provision of food and fuel but also the impacts that visitors can have on these areas of exceptional beauty. They can also provide a valuable source of unrestricted income for conservation and restoration projects on a landscape-scale.

#### 16.4 POLICIES FOR TOURISM

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.

**P54** Encourage the tourism sector to enable sensitive approaches to increase appreciation and enjoyment of the AONB landscape, realise Isle of Wight AONB objectives, and provide positive benefits for tourism businesses.

**P55** Encourage and support direct contribution by tourists and other visitors to the conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB through volunteering opportunities, visitor giving schemes (PES – Payment for Ecosystem Services) and through their membership of relevant charitable organisations and societies.

**P56** Support appropriate tourism activities and development that respect the objectives of the Isle of Wight AONB and also contribute to the viability of the tourism sector.

#### 16.5 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Development of monitoring programmes to understand the carrying capacity of the Isle of Wight AONB, to highlight changes in the tourism sector and to assess the potential impact of these on the Isle of Wight AONB.
- Help businesses and organisations to fully realise the potential of the Isle of Wight AONB as part of their sustainable tourism offer.
- Continued support and contribution to the development and delivery of the Destination Management Plan.
- Explore the potential of a PES / Visitor Giving scheme for the Island with partners and the local authority



Compton Bay - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

## 17

## Access and Recreation

*Old Gaffers - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight*

The Isle of Wight AONB is of great importance to the whole Island community. People value the opportunities available to them for leisure and recreation: from surfing and paragliding along the Tennyson Heritage Coast to taking part in the 'Walk the Wight' annual cross-Island sponsored walk. Whilst only a small proportion of the population live within the designated area, there are numerous settlements that are immediately adjacent to the Isle of Wight AONB. Bearing in mind the dispersed nature of the Isle of Wight AONB, access to these special landscapes is a relatively short distance, even from the most built up urban areas on the Isle of Wight; sometimes, just a short walk.

The Countryside Code<sup>82</sup> (Respect, Protect and Enjoy) provides guidance on the way we can all explore the countryside in a considerate and sustainable way. It says:

- Respect other people
  - Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors.
  - Leave gates and property as you find them, and follow paths unless wider access is available.
- Protect the natural environment
  - Keep dogs under effective control.

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home.
- Enjoy the outdoors
  - Plan ahead and be prepared.
  - Follow advice and local signs.

### 17.1 RIGHTS OF WAY

Rights of Way are an essential means of sustainable access to the Isle of Wight AONB landscape and the extensive Rights of Way network provides a protected and managed public resource. The category of Public Right of Way dictates the right of access from footpaths, bridleways and byways to areas of Open Access land.

Many of the Isle of Wight AONB's public paths are a historic record of how people have travelled across the landscape: from villages to the coast; from farms to the downs and the markets of nearby towns; and from hamlets to churches and schools. Their social importance is reflected in many of them being named (Dark Lane, Hoxall Lane, Rowdown Lane, etc). Much of the road network would have originally been of a similar character to these routeways, as described in the 'Historic Routeways'.<sup>63</sup>



The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000<sup>2</sup> brought in a statutory definition of a new public right to access on foot to open countryside. These 'Open Access' areas include extensive areas of the Isle of Wight AONB downland and woodland, much of which was already publically accessible through ownership of organisations such as the National Trust and Forestry Commission. There are 1088 ha of Open Access land in the Isle of Wight AONB.

A number of promoted routes traverse the landscape linking the Isle of Wight AONB with the adjacent rural villages, towns and urban centres of the Island (e.g. Worsley Trail, Tennyson Trail etc).

Natural England, under their obligation to establish a coastal path along the English coastline,<sup>24</sup> is actively working with landowners and the local authority to provide a National Trail along the Island's coast. Whilst much of this on the south coast of the Island is already established, there are parts of the coast which are not accessible including the east of the Newtown estuary and Osborne coast which are in the Isle of Wight AONB.

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## 17.2 SPORTS, HOBBIES AND PASTIMES

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In addition to the cultural benefits of activities within the Isle of Wight AONB; the patchwork farmland, downs, hills, woodlands, coasts and estuaries are the location for many sports and recreational activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding, paragliding, sailing, surfing, windsurfing, kitesurfing, snorkelling and fishing. The Isle of Wight AONB also provides the backdrop and space for sport and outdoor events including: The Round the Island Race, Cowes Week sailing regatta, Yarmouth sailing regatta, Walking Festivals, Isle of Wight Cycle Fest and Wight Challenge triathlon. There are so many ways the landscape can be explored and enjoyed.

Some of these activities on their own have a limited landscape impact, but cumulatively, or if under taken in large enough numbers may be problematic. For this topic, we have focused on those largely non-commercial activities which have the greatest potential to influence the landscape character of the Isle of Wight AONB.

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### 17.2.1 KEEPING OF HORSES

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Historically horses were used to farm the landscape or as a means of transport. Increased mechanisation, particularly changing farming practices in the 20th Century led to a decrease in the number of horses

actively used in farming. Increased affluence and leisure time from the 1960s onwards saw a number of farms diversifying into riding schools and then providing livery. From the 1970s individual horse ownership started to increase, initially with the horses being kept on the farm livery sites, but since the 1990s there has been growth of small paddock ownership by those who keep horses. This was helped by farms selling parcels of land; initially pasture, to help supplement the declining profitability of dairy farming. With increasing demand, paddock now commands a higher price than most types of farmland and this has led to the keeping of horses being a feature in the AONB landscape, particularly, but not confined to Traditional Enclosed Pasture areas.

Change of use towards recreational pursuits such as keeping horses has the potential to radically change the character of the landscape and if unsympathetic can cause significant harm to the conservation and enhancement of the Isle of Wight AONB. Conversely, if managed in a way which is appropriate to the landscape character, horses have the ability to continue to provide the grazing needed to prevent scrub growth and keep grasslands in a good state of management. Often the keeping of horses requires additional fencing, shelters, jumps, stabling, feed storage, sand schools, manure storage and disposal and other such paraphernalia. All of these can have a negative impact on the landscape.

There is a need for the Isle of Wight AONB to work with equestrian organisations to develop guidance on keeping horses in the protected landscape.

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### 17.2.2 SHOOTING

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There are approximately 50 shoots on the Island ranging from larger commercial operations to small scale and local recreational activities. They contribute to the rural economy and can have environmental benefits. The game shoots operate in the pheasant and partridge seasons between September and the beginning of February. Pheasants are brought to the Island to supplement birds reared locally to provide sufficient stock the shoots. Game cover has been provided through management of existing woodland, or additional woodland planting for this purpose. In addition game crops, such as maize, kale or quinoa are planted to provide habitats and cover. Management of land for shooting has the potential to radically change the character of the landscape. If landscape character appropriate, it can contribute to woodland wildlife and landscape objectives. However, there is the potential for inappropriate approaches which can cause harm by

significantly altering the landscape character.

The Isle of Wight AONB needs to continue to engage with the landowning community regarding both the positive and negative aspects to shooting.

### 17.2.3 FISHING

Small fishing boats operate from Yarmouth and a number of other smaller coves and bays around the coastline of the Isle of Wight AONB. Beach fishing, coarse fishing and sea fishing are all enjoyed with a number of coarse fishing ponds and chartered boats operating in the area.

There are fishing lakes at Nettlecombe, Thorncross and Combley which are run for members or as part of a holiday experience.

Due to the diverse nature of the angling sector on the Island, we have little in the way of detailed information regarding commercial or recreational fishing activities in

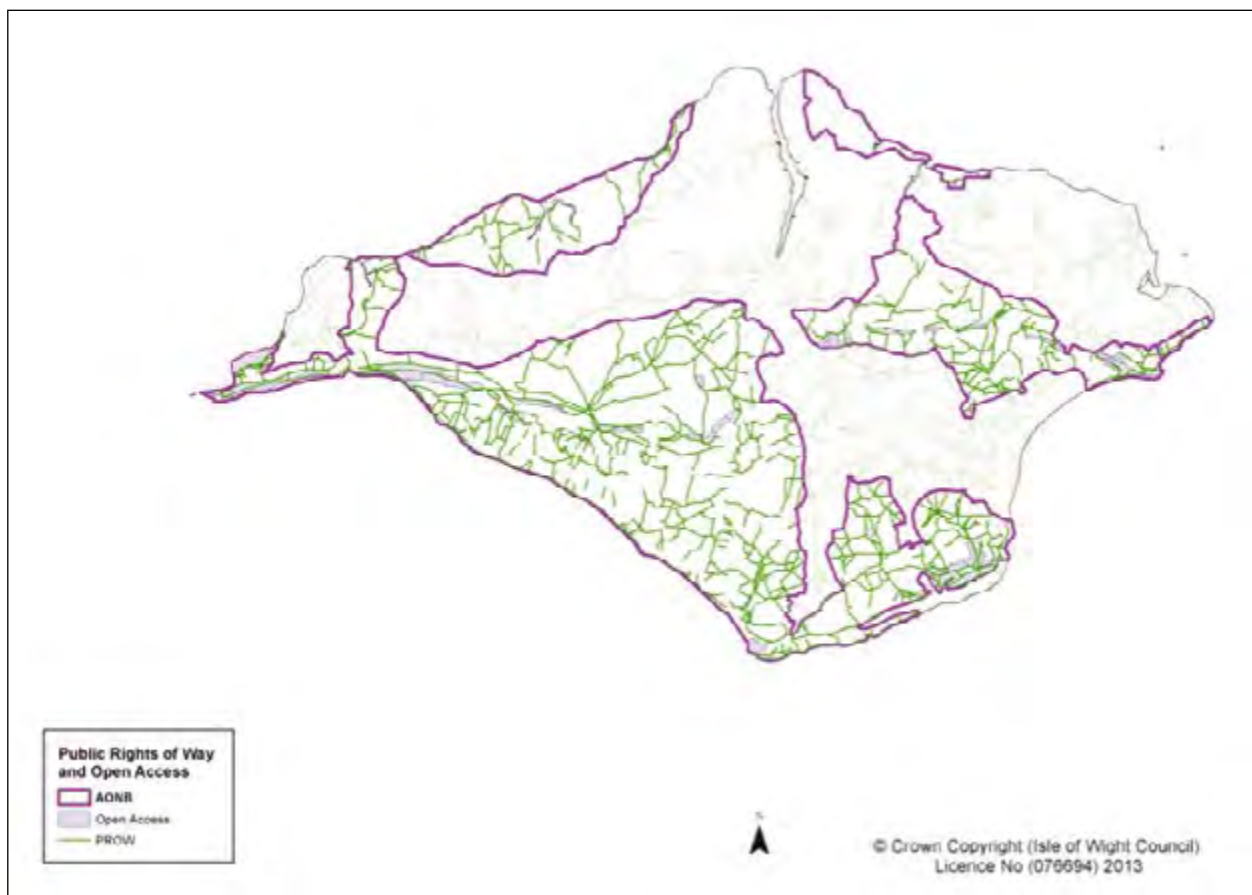
the Isle of Wight AONB or the impact or benefits they bring to the area.

### 17.2.4 HEALTH

Amongst many challenges facing the community of the Island, living longer with chronic medical conditions, deteriorating mental health, obesity and finding the funding to secure these services are the most acute. Access to landscape and nature can improve both mental and physical health and the Isle of Wight AONB, amongst other places of natural beauty, can provide the opportunity for residents and visitors to experience real health benefits.

The Isle of Wight has a statistically higher prevalence of mental illness than the English national average. The percentage of people diagnosed with a mental health problem and on a GP register is approximately 1.1%, this equates to 1,602 people; this is higher than the English national average of 0.9%. The rate of GP registered people with diagnosed depression is around 5%.<sup>83</sup>

## 17.3 KEY FACTS & FIGURES



## 17.4 SUSTAINING THE LANDSCAPE

The natural environment is important to human health not just for the physical ‘work out’ that can be enjoyed through walking, cycling or other countryside pursuits, but also for positive benefits it has on mental health and a sense of wellbeing. Being able to easily access the countryside is increasingly being seen as of key importance in raising health levels and going some way to resolving obesity issues. As well as the installation of a network of green infrastructure within and around settlements, there is a need to ensure that there are good connections with the existing rights of way network to allow for more easy access into the Isle of Wight AONB countryside.

Linear public Rights of Way can restrict the impact upon sensitive sites valued for their Wildlife, Historic and Geological importance. Conversely intensive use of linear routes can cause significant harm to Wildlife, Historic and Geological features. The Isle of Wight AONB needs to set in place a monitoring regime to target vulnerable and ‘honey pot’ sites.

Events such as the guided walks and cycles of the Walking Festival and Cycle Festival provide the opportunity for residents and visitors to learn more about the protected landscape and Heritage Coasts and gain further enjoyment though insight into our history and environment.

There are approximately 2000 horses and ponies in work on the Isle of Wight with a total population of just over 3000. There is a significant and noticeable equine presence on the Isle of Wight, which contributes to the Island’s economy and impacts rural life.<sup>84</sup>

## 17.5 MANAGEMENT INFLUENCES (FORCES FOR CHANGE)

The highways network includes roads, cycleways and Public Rights of Ways. The Isle of Wight Council, as Highway Authority, is responsible for the maintenance, protection and management of the network. The Private Finance Initiative (PFI) transferring the maintenance of cycleways and roads to Island Roads has meant that Rights of Way are now managed separately from the rest of the highway network. To maintain effective sustainable access to the Isle of Wight AONB, there is a need to ensure that integration between all parts of the highways network continues.

The three-year Access Fund for Sustainable Travel project (see Sustainable Communities – Roads and Transport) has particular objectives for improving access to walking and cycling.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2018 forms part of the Local Transport Plan and sets out a number of policies and potential projects to improve walking, cycling and riding opportunities across the Island to 2028. These include:

- A. Maintaining a high quality rights of way network.
- B. Make improvements to the existing network – working with Town and Parish Councils and developers.
- C. Creating new access – disabled access and community links.
- D. Promotion – for sustainable journeys, health and leisure.

Cyclewright have produced ‘A cycling strategy for the Isle of Wight’<sup>85</sup> ‘to make the Isle of Wight a place where people of all ages and abilities feel able to cycle safely and easily and enjoy the experience’. The Strategy includes improving links at Freshwater, Godshell and Alverstone in the Isle of Wight AONB.

The Walking Festival and Cycle Festival successfully promote the Isle of Wight as a destination of choice for these leisure activities.

Promotion of access to the countryside needs to go hand in hand with an assessment of the impact of recreation and leisure activities on the landscape and special characteristics of the Isle of Wight AONB.

The economic viability of farming and forestry has a direct link to the pressure for the subdivision and sale of land for non-agricultural or woodland management use. This increases the pressure for alternate uses for recreation and leisure activities which in some cases may have potential to impact on the character of the landscape.

## 17.6 POLICIES FOR ACCESS AND RECREATION

These policies should be read in conjunction with the overarching objectives for the Isle of Wight AONB as detailed in Section 3.13.



**P57** Promote the Isle of Wight AONB as a venue for sustainable recreation where this does not conflict with the purposes of the designation.

**P58** Encourage appropriate use of the existing public rights of way and open access areas across the Isle of Wight AONB which provide access to its diverse and beautiful landscape.

**P59** Encourage the development of initiatives with both delivery organisations and participants in educational activities, sports and pastimes in the Isle of Wight AONB to better understand the relationship between their activities and the Isle of Wight AONB objectives.

## 17.7 PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERY

- Research to better understand the pressure from leisure and recreation activities.
- Provide guidance to access and recreational users of the Isle of Wight AONB for them to have better understanding of their impact on the landscape.
- Gain a better understanding of the level of commercial and leisure fishing and any implications of this for the Isle of Wight AONB management.
- Encourage access to the Isle of Wight AONB for recreational and educational activities that improve skills, confidence and health and well-being.



Tennyson Down - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

# 18

## Delivery and Monitoring

Ventnor Down at sunset - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

### 18.1 DELIVERING THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Management Plan is accompanied by a Delivery Plan which has been devised by the Isle of Wight AONB Unit and ratified by the Steering Group. Together these documents provide a mechanism to annually monitor and measure progress of all partners towards delivering the strategic objectives of the Isle of Wight AONB.

In assembling the Delivery Plan the Partnership has sought to include a range of actions and projects that contribute to the Isle of Wight AONB policies, but can also be easily measured without becoming a bureaucratic burden. The list is therefore not comprehensive and the role played by all its partners is acknowledged, whether or not recognised within the Plan.

Whilst the Management Plan runs a five year document the Delivery Plan is focused on priority actions and associated projects likely to be delivered in the immediate 2-3 years. These actions and projects are classed as 'Doing', 'Planned' and 'Wish'. Where 'Planned' the Lead Partner has indicated the proposed partners and a timetable for measuring progress. These may change prior to commencement. 'Wishes' have been included where there is a project and lead partner, but no current means of delivery. The usual restriction in this case would be lack of funds. Other actions, where there are currently

no defined projects or lead partner, have been excluded from the Delivery Plan, even as wishes, however; they remain recorded in the Management Plan as priority actions.

This Delivery Plan can be accessed through the Isle of Wight AONB website [www.wightaonb.org](http://www.wightaonb.org). It will be updated on an annual basis following the Isle of Wight AONB AGM. At the AGM attendees will be able to review both progress and priorities for the coming years.

### 18.2 MONITORING

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 need to be in place. These should be: simple and easily understood; relevant to the landscape character of the Isle of Wight 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.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was developed in a parallel with the Management Plan 2019 – 2024. The environmental baseline presented within the SEA should be considered an overview of known data about the Isle of Wight AONB and the Isle of Wight



AONB management. Where knowledge gaps exist, it is hoped ongoing consultation and partnership working will provide suitable data. However, if there is no known baseline data for particular Ecosystem Services, it will become part of the delivery of the Management Plan to establish appropriate methodology to assess the services. A full outline of the scoped baseline is available in the Appendix 2 of the SEA.

Further examination of the Ecosystems Services delivered by the Isle of Wight AONB landscape will be undertaken throughout the lifetime of the Management Plan. Moreover, comprehensive monitoring of the Ecosystem Services will also be developed in line with appropriate indicators, over the course of the Plan.



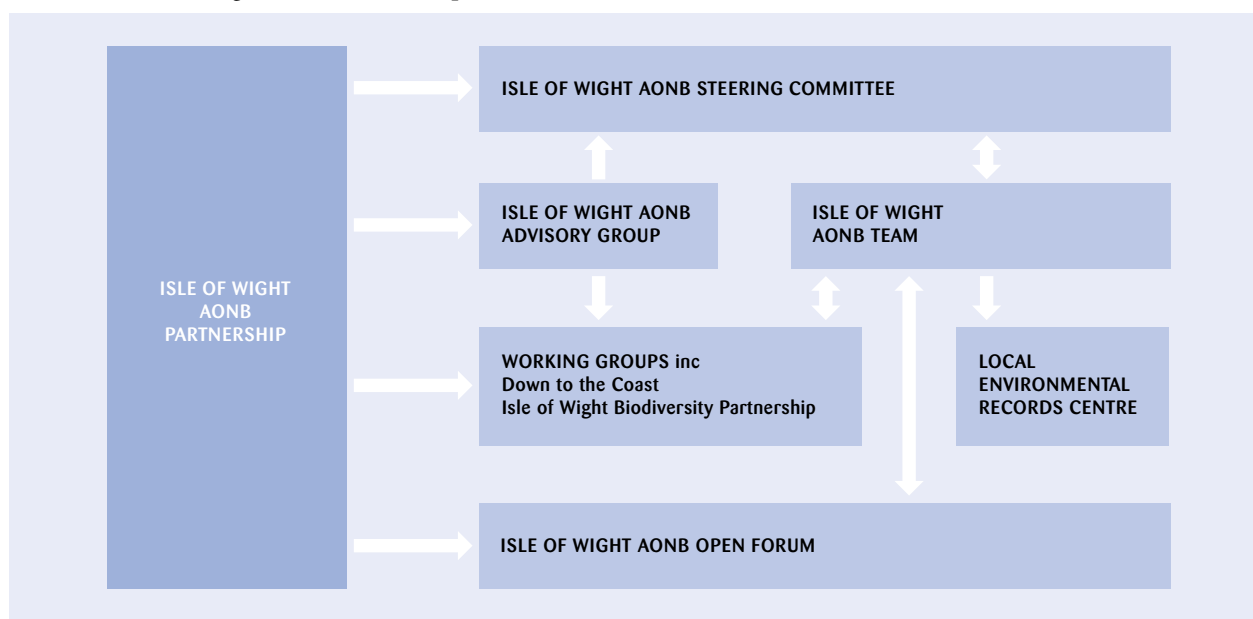
Pepperpot - Courtesy Liz Cooke



## The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership

## Appendix A

### Structure of Isle of Wight AONB Partnership



### THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee act as a catalyst and facilitator in implementing the Isle of Wight AONB policies. They also manage and allocate resources and steer, develop and support initiatives to help enhance and conserve the Isle of Wight AONB.

The main role of the Isle of Wight AONB Steering Committee is:

- To plan and implement the Isle of Wight AONB management via the medium of the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan and primary purposes of the Isle of Wight AONB designation.
- To bring skills and expertise from their portfolio area to the Isle of Wight AONB Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee is appointed by a vote at the Isle of Wight AONB AGM. It is chaired by an independent individual appointed by the Steering Group after a public advertisement and recruitment process.

### THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB ADVISORY GROUP

The Isle of Wight AONB Advisory Group membership represent the wider interest of stakeholders within the Isle of Wight AONB, and provides a way for partners to become involved in the future vision and management of this valued asset.

Its membership consists of representatives from organisations and stakeholders who have a direct interest in the management of the Isle of Wight AONB. In accord with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which places a Duty of Regard on public bodies to conserve and enhance the Isle of Wight AONBs, the Advisory Group membership includes a number of public bodies.

### THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB OPEN FORUM GROUP

The Open Forum Group includes organisations and individuals with an interest in the management of our Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Through news sheets and occasional workshops these members are kept up to date with the work of the Isle of Wight AONB Unit, Steering Committee and Working Groups to conserve and enhance the Isle of Wight's finest landscapes.

## THE ISLE OF WIGHT AONB PARTNERSHIP - CURRENT MEMBERS

### 1 ADVISORY GROUP

Amey Waste  
 Artwork  
 Council for the Protection of Rural England  
 Chamber of Commerce  
 Community Action IW  
 Country, Land and Business Association  
 CycleWight  
 Department of Environment and Rural Affairs  
 Dinosaur Isle  
 Eastern Yar Farmers Group  
 English Heritage  
 Environment Agency  
 Footprint Trust  
 Forestry Commission  
 Hampshire and IW Wildlife Trust  
 Historic England  
 IFCA  
 Island Roads  
 IW Biodiversity Partnership  
 IW Gardens Trust  
 Isle of Wight Natural History and Archaeological Society  
 Local Access Forum  
 Marine Management Organisation  
 National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
 National Trust  
 Natural England  
 Natural Enterprise  
 New Carnival Company  
 Peoples Trust for Endangered Species  
 Ramblers Association  
 Red Funnel  
 South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association  
 Scottish and Southern Electricity  
 Southern Vectis  
 Southern Water  
 Time Taxi CIC  
 Vectis Astronomy  
 Visit IW  
 Wightlink  
 Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners

### 2 OPEN FORUM GROUP

Age UK IW  
 Arc Consulting  
 Bembridge Heritage Society  
 Brading Roman Villa  
 Brading Green Group (Brading Town Council)  
 British Horse Society  
 Clifford J Matthews  
 Discovery Centre- Fort Victoria  
 Garlic Farm  
 Green Gym  
 Historical Association IW Branch  
 Island History Forum  
 IW Bridleways Group  
 IW Coppice Group  
 IW Country Federation of Womens' Institutes  
 IW Estuaries Project  
 IW Farmers Market  
 IW Grain Storage  
 IW Metal Detecting Club  
 IW Self Catering Association  
 IW Society  
 Julia Margaret Cameron Trust  
 Kitbridge Enterprises Trust  
 Landscape Therapy  
 Newtown Residents Association  
 Office for IW MP  
 Past Wight  
 Quay Arts  
 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
 Solent Forum  
 Undercliff Society  
 Vectis Housing  
 Vectis Searchers  
 Wight Fibre Limited  
 Wight Nature Fund  
 Wight Squirrel Project  
 Woodland Forum  
 Woodland Trust  
 Yarmouth Society

### 3 ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL

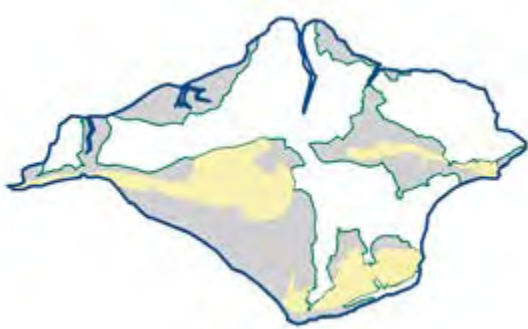
County Councillors  
 Archaeology  
 Archives  
 Estuaries Officer  
 Highways Contract Supervisors  
 Island Heritage Services  
 Planning – Arboriculture  
 Planning – Building Control  
 Planning – Coastal  
 Planning – Conservation and Design  
 Planning – Development Control  
 Planning – Ecology  
 Planning – Enforcement  
 Planning – Policy  
 Rights of Way  
 Town and Parish Councillors

## Landscape Character Types of the Isle of Wight AONB

## Appendix

# B

### LCT1 CHALK DOWNS



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 the 20th century old chalk grassland was ploughed up for use as arable or reseeded as improved pasture.

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 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 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



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.

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.

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.

### 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 Isle of Wight 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.

The land in the Intensive Arable Lands exists on the Lower Greensand hills and Greensand plains, the most productive arable land on the Isle of Wight. This part of the Isle of Wight 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 Isle of Wight 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.

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.

### 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.

## 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 Isle of Wight 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).

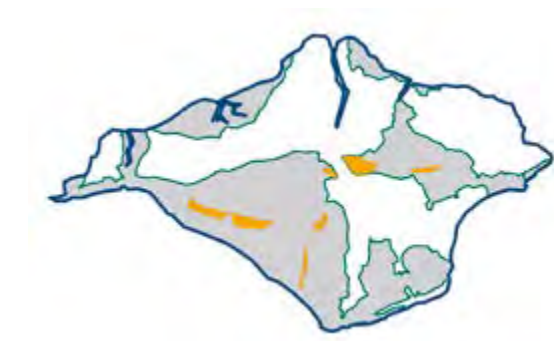
### Key Characteristics

- 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.

## LCT5 SANDSTONE HILLS & 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 Isle of Wight, 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.

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.

## 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 Isle of Wight'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.

### 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 Isle of Wight. 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 Isle of Wight 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 Isle of Wight 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

## LCT8 HARBOURS AND CREEKS



This landscape character type covers those estuarine environments on the Island that are within the Isle of Wight 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 over wintering 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 Isle of Wight AONB. It is quiet, rural and surrounded by oak woodlands.

From prehistoric times these harbours and creeks have been important for trade and transport. It is no coincidence that the Isle of Wight'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 Isle of Wight 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.

### Management Aim

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

## 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.

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.

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.

## 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.

Unusually this is the only landscape within the Isle of Wight 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.

## LCT11 NORTHERN COASTAL CLIFFS



A small but important landscape character type occurring along the north-west coast of the Isle of Wight 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.

### 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



Headon Warren - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

## Management Plan Review, Scope and Process

## Appendix

# C

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 sets out the legislative requirements for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This Act resulted in the need for all Local Authorities with AONB designation within their administrative area to work with stakeholders to formulate a statutory AONB Management Plan for its future conservation and enhancement. This Plan is also the guide for public bodies with a duty to have regard to the purpose of the designation when considering how their work and function may impact on the area.

The second statutory Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan 2009-2014 was adopted by the Council in February 2009. Along with the production of an AONB Management Plan, legislation also requires a review within five years of its publication. In line with guidance issued by The Countryside Agency, (now Natural England) “*Guidance for the review of AONB Management Plans (CA221) – The Countryside Agency 2006*” the AONB Partnership started the required review of the plan in November 2012 and this was adopted in March 2014. The Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 therefore represents the second review of the 2009 plan.

This review has provided an opportunity to look critically at the plan and make amendments, as required, to update this to reflect current challenges and opportunities facing the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

To ensure that we have done this effectively, focused consultation with Partnership members, key stakeholders and the Public has formed the heart of the approach we have taken. This has been overseen by the Isle of Wight AONB Steering Committee.

Initial consultation through a series of meetings and workshops were undertaken in November 2017. This involved Partnership members and key stakeholders including Isle of Wight Council Officers and UK Government Agencies

Public Consultation on the Draft Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan ran from 13th April 2018 to 30th June 2018

### ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

#### Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA regulations) which in turn, is derived from the European Directive 2001/42/EC (known as the SEA Directive). The SEA Regulations require the assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant environmental effects.

SEAs are an effective way to ensure that potential environmental impacts of the policies, objectives and actions are assessed during the plan making process. Appraisal of these along with consideration of options and alternative courses of action during the plan's development should ensure avoidance or mitigation of any adverse effects.

There are five main stages of SEA process:

**STAGE A:** Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.

**STAGE B:** Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects.

**STAGE C:** Preparing an environmental report.

**STAGE D:** Consulting on draft plan and environmental report.

**STAGE E:** Monitoring significant effects of implementing the plan on the environment.

The environmental report, available as a separate document, has been compiled in parallel with the production of the Draft Management Plan.

#### Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The aim of the Habitats Regulations Assessment is to apply the tests of the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994, as set out in Regulation 48 of the Regulations, to the policies given in the plan. The requirements are such that prior to a land use plan being



published, the plan-making authority must assess the potential effects of it upon European – Natura 2000 sites.

There are four stages to the Habitat Regulations Assessment (sometimes referred to as Appropriate Assessment):

**STAGE 1:** Screening.

**STAGE 2:** Appropriate assessment.

**STAGE 3:** Assessment of alternative solutions.

**STAGE 4:** Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.

At the screening stage, a decision is made as to whether or not the plan policies will have a likely significant effect (LSE) on interest features of European sites within/ adjacent to the Isle of Wight AONB. The primary aim at this stage should be to ensure that none of the policies will have a LSE and should, if possible, be modified to ensure it does not.

If this is not possible then it would have to be subject to the full rigour of an ‘appropriate assessment’.

This process was undertaken in parallel with the review and the final report of the Habitats Regulations Assessment is available as a separate document.

## Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2012 places a public duty on Local Authorities to have due regard to the need to:

**Eliminate** unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

**Advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

**Foster** good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 include age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. Whilst equality impact assessments are not a statutory requirement, in order to be able to demonstrate that this general duty has been taken into account within any decision making process, they form an essential part of the necessary evidence base.

As the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan is adopted by the Isle of Wight Council as their policy for the Isle of Wight AONB, therefore an equality impact assessment has been undertaken to identify concerns and ensure adherence to the Equality Act 2012.



Whitecliff Bay - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

## Delivering the AONB Management Plan

## Appendix

# D

This Delivery Plan accompanies the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan 2019 – 2024. It has been devised by the Isle of Wight AONB Unit and wider Partnership and ratified at its Steering Committee. Together these documents provide a mechanism to annually monitor and measure progress of all partners towards delivering the strategic objectives of the Isle of Wight AONB.

In assembling the Delivery Plan the Partnership has sought to include a range of actions and projects that contribute to the Isle of Wight AONB policies, but can also be easily measured without becoming a bureaucratic burden. The list is therefore not comprehensive and the role played by all its partners is acknowledged, whether or not identified within the Plan.

Whilst the Management Plan covers a five year period the Delivery Plan is focused on priority actions and associated projects likely to be delivered in the immediate 2-3 years. These actions and projects are classed as

‘Doing’, ‘Planned’ and ‘Wish’. Where ‘Planned’ the Lead Partner has indicated the proposed partners, start year, and where possible a means of measuring progress. These may change prior to commencement. ‘Wishes’ have been included where there is a project and lead partner, but no current means of delivery. The usual restriction in this case would be lack of funds.

Other actions, where there are currently no defined projects or lead partner, have been excluded from the Delivery Plan, even as wishes, however, they remain recorded in the Management Plan as priority actions.

The Delivery Plan can be accessed through the Isle of Wight AONB website [www.wightaonb.org](http://www.wightaonb.org). Printed copies are available from the Isle of Wight AONB Unit on request.

It will be updated on an annual basis following the Isle of Wight AONB AGM. At the AGM attendees will be able to review both progress and priorities for the coming years.



Yarmouth - Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

ABBREVIATION	ORGANISATION	ABBREVIATION	ORGANISATION
Unit	AONB Unit	Arc	Arc Consulting
AGG UK	Aggregates UK Ltd	BC	Butterfly Conservation
CEP	Cultural Education Partnership	CLA	Country Land and Business Owners Association
CycleW	Cyclewight	CPRE	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs	DttC	Down to the Coast (East Wight Landscape Partnership)
DI	Dinosaur Island	FC	Forestry Commission
EA	Environment Agency	Heritage Groups	Various Heritage Groups
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund	IWCSF	Isle of Wight Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative
FT	Footprint Trust	IWC	Isle of Wight Council
IDA	International Dark Skies Association	IWC Cons & Design	Isle of Wight Council Conservation and Design Section
IWC Roads	Isle of Wight Council Roads Contract Managers	IW Society	Isle of Wight Society
IWLRC	Isle of Wight Local Records Centre	IWC Her	Isle of Wight Council Heritage Service
IWC Arch	Isle of Wight Council Archaeology and Historic Environment Section	IR	Island Roads
IWC DM	Isle of Wight Council Development Management Section	LAF	Local Access Forum
IWC RoW	Isle of Wight Council Rights of Way Section	NAAONB	National Association of AONBs
IWBP	Isle of Wight Biodiversity Partnership	NE	Natural England
LGAP	Local Geological Action Plan	NFU	National Farmers Union
NCC	New Carnival Company	LNP	Local Nature Partnership
NEnt	Natural Enterprise	PTES	Peoples Trust for Endangered Species
NT	National Trust	RIWAS	Royal IW Agricultural Society
Partnership	All AONB Partners	RBM Group	Reddish Buff Moth Group
Ramblers	Isle of Wight Ramblers Association	SEEPL	South-East England Protected Landscapes
SERFCA	South East Reserve Forces & Cadet Association	SSE	Scottish and Southern Electricity
TPCs	Town and Parish Councils	SW	Southern Water
VIOW	Visit Isle of Wight	SV	Southern Vectis
WT	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust	UKMAB	UK Man and Biosphere
		VAS	Vectis Astronomical Society



TOPIC	ACTION	OBJECTIVE	POLICY	PROJECTS / ACTIVITIES	PROJECT LEAD	OTHER PARTNERS	DOING/ PLANNED/ WISH	MONITOR
Core	Develop, review, prepare and publish the AONB vision and the CRoW Act AONB Management Plan	O1		Man Plan review	Unit	Partnership	P	5 yrs
Core	Raise awareness of the AONB, promote the AONB vision and Management Plan to help distinguish the AONB from adjacent countryside	O3	P38, P54	All along the Riverbank/ Wolverton Fair	NCC, Age UK	Partnership	D	Annual
Core	Advise upon, facilitate and co-ordinate implementation by others of the AONB Management Plan	O1	P12, P13	Catchment Management Plan	NEnt	CLA, NE, EA,	D	Annual
Core	Advise Local Authorities and other partners on their activities within IWAONB, to encourage them to attain the highest possible standards	O6	P4, P6, P32, P41, P42, P46, P48, P49, P50, P53	LGAP / RIGS Cultural Expo	DI	IWC, Southern Vectis, RIWAS, CEP	D	Annual
Core	Monitor and report on progress against AONB Management Plan activities and projects	O5		Steering Group, AGM	Unit	FT, NT, EA, NE, WT, NEnt, VIOW	P	Annual
Core	Monitor AONB landscape condition	O5	P17, P30	IWERC/ BP Soft Cliff Research/ AONB Road verges	Unit / IWLRC	IWBP, WT, IR, NT IWC DM	P	Annual
Core	Access resources for management activities	O2	P55	Core / Project funding	Unit	NE, IWC, HLF, EA, NAAONB, DEFRA	D	Annual
Core	Work with and contribute to the NAAONB activities, sharing advice and best practice nationally and regionally	O3		National Conference and SEEPL	Unit	NAAONB, SEEPL	D	Annual
Core	Provide a management role to co-ordinate AONB protection through the actions of the AONB Unit, the AONB Partnership and other partners at a local and strategic level.	O2	P15, P44	RBM Group, IWBP, IWCSF, IW Biosphere	Unit	SERFCA, LAF, BC, PTES, NT, WT, IWC, LNP, UKMAB, FC	D	Quarter
Core	Develop greater involvement by the community in the management and monitoring of the AONB	O3	P31, P38	Parish updates and reports, environmental education and outreach	Unit	TPC's, Schools, WT, Time Taxi CIC, CAIW	D	Quarter
Core	Provide landscape-related planning advice	O4	P2, P5, P7, P8, P9, P19, P34, P35, P40, P41, P42, P44, P45, P46, P47, P49, P50, P51, P52, P55	Planning / Minerals / Waste / Roads/ SSE	Unit	IWC Cons & Des IWC DM IWC Roads IR, AGG UK	D	Quarter
Project	Deliver 'Down to the Coast' Landscape Partnership objectives	O2, O3, O6	P3, P15, P23, P24, P31, P47, P57, P58	DttC	Unit	DttC Partners	D	Quarter
Project	Support UNESCO Biosphere designation and report on progress	O2, O4	P1, P14	Biosphere / Mardi Gras	Unit	IWLRC, IWBP, NCC, FT	D	Biennial
Project	Promote responsible access to the IWAONB and deliver Access Fund outputs	O3	P28, P43, P57, P58, P59	Access Fund	IWC, Unit	WT, VIOW, CycleW, Ramblers	D	Quarter
Project	Deliver support to IWAONB farmers and landowners including promotion and delivery of the new environmental land management system (A Green Future : UK 25 yr plan)	O1, O2	P3, P16, P18, P19, P20, P21, P22, P23	Coppice group/ Farmer Cluster / Hedging Comp / Wight Farm Business	Unit	WT, NE	D	Quarter
Project	Support delivery of IWCSF initiative objectives	O3, O6	P10, P11,	IWCSF	WT	NE, EA, SW, NFU, CLA	D	Quarter
Project	Support interpretation, conservation and recording of IW archaeology and historic environment	O3	P25, P26	Time Taxi / Archaeology	Time Taxi CIC	IWC Arch	W	Quarter
Project	Promote objectives of Dark Skies Park designation	O1, O3	P33, P34, P36	Dark Skies / IDA	Unit	VAS, IW Society, IWC, CPRE	D	Biannual
Project	Support objectives of the Compton Bay and Downs Project	O1, O2, O3	P1, P6, P15, P33	CB&DP	NT	IWC, IR, NE, TPCs	P	Annual

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## Appendix

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## PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

### FRONT AND BACK COVER

Whitecliff Bay  
Courtesy Visit Isle of Wight

### INSIDE FRONT COVER

Newtown  
Courtesy Liz Cooke

### INSIDE BACK COVER

Bloodstone Copse  
Courtesy Liz Cooke



