

**HOWARDIAN HILLS
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
30 MARCH 2006**

50th ANNIVERSARY OF DESIGNATION OF FIRST AONBS

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide details of the work being undertaken to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the designation of the first AONBs in England and Wales.

2.0 DISCUSSION

- 2.1 The first AONBs in the country were designated in 1956 – in Gower and the Quantock Hills.
- 2.2 The National Association for AONBs is holding a year-long celebration of this milestone, tying into various activities and events throughout the year. A new logo has been developed, new exhibition panels have been produced and the brochure giving details of all the AONBs in England and Wales has been updated to include the Northern Ireland AONBs. The panels will be used at the AONB Conference in July and will also be available for use by other AONBs – we hope to include them as part of our display and activities at the Ryedale Show in July. We also plan to use the 50th Anniversary logo on publications and letterheads throughout this year, as appropriate and when opportunities arise.
- 2.3 The programme of events and publicity began at the Ordnance Survey Outdoors Show at the NEC in Birmingham in mid-March, which the AONB Officer attended for 1 day in order to help man the NAAONB stand.
- 2.4 A new website – www.visitaonb.org.uk – detailing events happening in all AONBs was also launched at the Outdoors Show. This will be used both during and after the celebration year, to provide a resource that details all the activities being planned within AONBs nationwide. This complements the NAAONB's main website – www.aonb.org.uk – which provides background information on AONB management, Management Plans, etc. The programme of events contained on the new website largely consists of what AONBs are planning for this year anyway, but it brings them together in one branded location and reinforces the concept of a family of AONBs, as well as the significance of the year 2006. The Howardian Hills has contributed details of 3 guided walks we are holding and will also publicise the Young Ranger Club days held in August as part of the AONB Discovery Project.
- 2.5 The NAAONB also plans to designate one weekend in August as a National Weekend of AONB activity. This weekend will be chosen to co-incide with the maximum number of events that are already planned. AONBs not currently planning to hold an event on that weekend can then decide whether to organise additional activities and slot into the national programme. It is proposed to await the announcement of when the Weekend will be and then consider holding an additional event in the Howardian Hills if we do not have anything planned already.

- 2.6 The theme of the NAAONB Conference in July will be the 50th Anniversary of the designation – looking back at achievements over the last 50 years and looking forward to what the next 50 years might bring.
- 2.7 The Europarc Atlantic Isles conference in September, hosted by the Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs AONBs, will continue the theme of the anniversary year. The Europarc organisation acts as an umbrella body that brings together all areas within Europe that are covered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources' (IUCN) Category 5 Landscape designation. This includes AONBs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 2.8 Members of the JAC are asked to promote the fact that the national AONB designation is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, at meetings or other events that they attend and where the opportunity arises. Publicity material, logos, etc are available from the AONB Unit should anyone require them.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the report be noted.