CHAIRMAN’S FOREWORD

A visitor survey commissioned by the Conservation Board has shown that 55 million leisure visits are made to the Chilterns annually. This is a much higher figure than visits to individual National Parks and reflects recognition of the intrinsic quality of our countryside by the large population living within and close to it.

So the Board certainly has a worthwhile job to do. The management of the Chilterns is a partnership. We rely heavily on The Chiltern Society and its volunteers, the National Trust, local authorities who have been steadfast in supporting us and the many organisations and societies, national and local, who work with us. We will continue and expand our links with them and have found parish councils in particular to be a valuable channel to and from the people of the area.

This year was a difficult one financially for all government bodies and local authorities. Natural England (NE), which is our main source of funding and advice, had its budget cut and had to retrench. It was unable to fund the projects which we have built up in common: chalk grassland and woodland management. Fortunately, NE was able to maintain support for the Chalk Streams Project which is vital for people and wildlife in the Chiltern valleys. NE also continued to provide us with a Sustainable Development Fund which is important in promoting local conservation action.

The challenge, therefore, is to find funding from other sources. The Heritage Lottery Fund has enabled us to develop on the internet a guide to famous people and interesting places in the Chilterns. This will provide a greater understanding of the background to this area, so closely linked with the development of London. The Board’s great strength lies in bringing people together. This enabled us to arrange successful networking events on commons, on chalk grassland, on access and on planning. We held a Woodlands Conference with the Chiltern Woodlands Project. In the important area of farming and land use we concentrated on advisory work, notably for new landowners, and on farmers’ forums. Our annual Chilterns Forum provided a fruitful two way debate.

I pay tribute to the work of Board members and our small team of officers based at Chinnor. They are all totally committed to the enhancement of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding National Beauty. Increasingly, the Board is engaged in managing our resources at a time of restricted funding. The Chief Officer and his team, with careful planning, have kept most of our work programme on the road despite the funding cuts.

Sir John Johnson, Chairman

REPORT FROM THE CHIEF OFFICER

We achieved a great deal last year, everything from holding a highly successful Countryside Festival with the National Trust at Ashridge to restoring the Meades Water Gardens in Chesham in partnership with the Town Council.

It is rare for the Board to go it alone as we achieve so much more by working with partners. The Board has successfully forged excellent working relationships with individual landowners, tourism businesses, councils, government bodies and community groups. The Chilterns is fortunate in having such a large resource of skilled and enthusiastic people willing to work for a better environment and to help millions of visitors to enjoy it.

In 1997 we undertook a major visitor survey which established that the Chilterns was amongst the most popular areas of countryside anywhere for leisure with 52 million visits a year. It seemed an extraordinarily high figure. However, the survey was repeated in 2007 and came up with the figure of 55 million visits, and remember 2007 was a year of poor weather. This is testimony to the attractiveness of the Chilterns for walking, cycling, horse riding and a host of other activities. Of course, this places great pressure on a special place and that pressure will grow as many thousands of new houses are built on the fringes of the AONB.

Climate change remained a hot topic. At our woodland conference Mark Broadmeadow, head of climate change for the Forestry Commission, suggested that our beech woods, so often put forward as a national litmus test of change, might not disappear as so many have predicted but their range would contract as other species cope better with the changed climate.

The Board itself has made great strides to reduce its carbon footprint. The solar PV cells on the office roof are working well and producing 15% of our electricity. Last year we managed to reduce our carbon emissions by 25% - it wasn’t as difficult as we thought it would be.

Steve Rodrick, Chief Officer
The Chilterns - An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Chilterns was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1965, in recognition of its beautiful landscape which is amongst the finest in the country.

The Chilterns AONB covers 833 sq kms and stretches from Goring in south Oxfordshire through Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire to Hitchin in Hertfordshire. It has a population of 80,000.

The primary duties of the Chilterns Conservation Board are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB and, in so doing, to increase the understanding and enjoyment by the public of its special qualities and to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities.

Trends in the Chilterns environment 2007-2008

The very wet summer of 2007, one of the wettest on record, provided a great contrast to the hot, dry weather of summer 2006. The rain and subsequent flooding brought misery to many nationally, but in the Chilterns the rain was good news for our chalk streams, continuing the re-charge of the aquifer begun during the winter of 2006-07. Flows in most streams improved greatly.

Other external influences affected the Chilterns environment. Higher prices for cereal and oilseed crops encouraged farmers to turn over more land to wheat and other crops, but were bad news for livestock farmers as feed costs went up. Farming and forestry were also affected by reductions in the budgets for the Woodland Grant Scheme and the Environmental Stewardship Scheme. Combined with the long-term decline in timber prices, the area of Chilterns woodland being actively managed may be decreasing.

The trend towards greater sustainability of new developments was reflected in the revisions to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, the next edition of which will be published in 2009. Despite high levels of awareness of the impact of climate change and the need for sustainable development the Chilterns continued to be vulnerable to the pressures of development, as evidenced by proposals for a third runway at Heathrow and changes in the use of airspace in south east England.

The public’s interest in the natural environment showed no sign of abating, with very good attendance at wildlife and countryside-themed events. The popularity of the Chilterns as a place to relax and enjoy natural surroundings was confirmed by the figure of 55 million leisure visits during 2007, the headline statistic from the 2007 Visitor Survey. The increase in visits compared to the 52 million visits recorded in 1997 shows that the area is bucking the national trend of declining visits to the countryside.

The rich historic environment of the Chilterns grabbed the public’s imagination very strongly, with good support for an archaeology-themed day at Cholesbury and great interest in woodland archaeology courses. The continuing success of the Special Trees and Woods project highlighted the importance to local communities of natural features with historical associations.

View from Pitstone Hill
The winter of 2006/07 brought significant rainfall ending the severe drought of the previous year. Exceptional rainfall in the first three months of summer 2007 brought about a very unusual second recharge period to the south Chilterns area. The north however, received no such bonus, the middle section of the R. Misbourne remaining dry and flow in the R. Ver ceasing well short of its recognised source. The second half of the year brought much quieter weather and with it an average winter recharge season, ensuring good flows for 2008.

- The main focus of the Chalk Streams Project during the year was the second phase of the Meades Water Gardens Regeneration Project on the R. Chess in Chesham. The largest component of this £62,000 project, the reinstatement of the chalk stream channel, was completed in February.

- The tree management initiative continued during the winter months with pollarding/coppicing undertaken on the R. Bulbourne at St. John’s Well in Berkhamsted.

- The latest in a series of biennial water vole surveys of the R. Chess, carried out in September, revealed a 74% increase in water vole numbers since 2005 and the population has now recovered to 32% of its size in 2001.

- A survey of invasive weeds along the R. Chess was completed in September. Prompted by the serious problems being caused by invasive species such as Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam along river corridors throughout the UK, the survey was the first of its kind in the Chilterns.

- A pilot project to introduce Trout in the Classroom to the Chilterns was developed over the winter. Working with a fishery owner on the R. Chess and Rickmansworth Park School, the scheme will teach pupils about the lifecycle of Brown Trout and the chalk stream environment in which they live.

- Over 60 delegates attended the 10th Annual Forum of the Chilterns Chalk Stream Project, at the Village Hall, Benson, near Wallingford, in June.

- Over 450 people attended a Family Fun Day in August, at Hughenden Manor near High Wycombe, organised by the Chalk Streams Project and the National Trust.

- 5000 of the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project leaflet were re-printed and the Project worked closely with Chesham Town Council on the production of their Himalayan balsam advice leaflet.

- A new partnership project ‘Revive the Wye’ was developed focusing on the Rye and King’s Mead areas of High Wycombe. The project aims to bring about real improvement to the river by working with key stakeholders and local community groups to improve the river.
A considerable increase in world cereal and oilseed prices resulted in a greater acreage of arable crops being grown in 2007. In contrast, livestock farmers were hit hard by the rise in input prices, particularly feed and energy costs, which effectively negated the modest rise in the value of livestock products and continued to put pressure on this vital farming sector.

The area given over to horse pasture remained significant in landscape terms with almost a fifth of grazing in the AONB given over to horses, ponies and donkeys.

Chiltern farmers continued to take advantage of Natural England’s Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS), but in the face of higher returns from arable farming and a reduced budget making the Higher Level Scheme more competitive, interest in the scheme was reduced.

- 309 people in total attended 18 walks for the public held on a number of farms across the Chilterns. Five Chiltern farms opened to the public on Open Farm Sunday on June 10th with over 2800 attendees.

- 75 Landowners’ Guides were distributed to landowners.

- Advice was provided to 22 landowners and managers on a variety of subjects including increasing species diversity in horse pasture, pond restoration and hedgerow management.

- An on-farm training event for farmers and land managers on identification of farm wildlife was attended by 11 farmers despite torrential rain.

- A horse pasture management workshop was attended by 27 horse owners and equestrian business managers.

- A hedgerow management workshop partly funded by Defra was held in Britwell Salome, Oxfordshire and attracted 35 farmers, land owners and parish council representatives. Another 12 people were put on a waiting list as the event was fully booked.

- In February, the Chilterns Farmers’ Forum was held in Prestwood on the theme of Year of Food and Farming, concentrating on connecting schoolchildren with food and farming. It was attended by 30 farmers and three who attended expressed interest in organising school visits to their farms.

- 420 public information panels on different aspects of farming and farm wildlife were produced in conjunction with the Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) Project and were distributed to 26 farmers for display on their farms.

- The Chilterns Land Use Survey initiated in 2006 continued with surveyors recording the different land uses in 105 randomly selected 1km squares across the AONB.

- A £2200 Defra grant was obtained to continue the survey of hedgerow condition in more of the 105 squares used for the Land Use Survey which started in 2006.

- Over 600 questionnaires were sent to farmers in the Chilterns to gather information for a new grazing database entitled ‘Sheepkeep’, partly funded through the Chilterns AONB Sustainable Development Fund. The aim of the database is to match those with land needing grazing and those with livestock needing grass keep.
**Woodlands**

The Chilterns is one of the most heavily wooded areas in the UK with 21% cover of which 59% is ancient. The area of private woodland covered by Forestry Commission grant schemes was approx. 6,500 hectares (out of a total of 16,500 hectares) but with reduced levels of grant-aid available from the Forestry Commission, concerns about certification and a long term decline in prices for timber, the area being actively managed is not increasing and may even be decreasing.

A survey was undertaken which identified the possibility that there may be up to 18% more ancient woodland than previously thought.

- The Board commissioned, with the Forestry Commission and Woodland Trust, a survey of ancient woodland cover based on a sample of 20 one kilometre squares. The purpose was to identify whether the national Ancient Woodland Inventory was accurate. The results showed that there may be as much as 18% more ancient woodland than previously thought and identified the need for a full re-survey of all woodland.

- The winner of the 2007 Chiltern Woodland Award, offered jointly by the Board and Forestry Commission, was Woolmans Wood near Bourne End in Buckinghamshire, owned by the Rushworth family and managed by Rik Pakenham of Chiltern Forestry.

- Over 70 delegates attended the Woodland Forum, organised jointly with the Chiltern Woodlands Project, on the subject of “Chiltern beech woods in a changing world”. The conference heard from Dr Mark Broadmeadow, Head of Climate Change for the Forestry Commission, that the Chiltern beech woods are unlikely to disappear as many forecast, but they won't continue to dominate the landscape as they have done for centuries.

- The Board provided office accommodation and grant aid to the Chiltern Woodlands Project. With this support the Project:
  - Published 3 editions of News of the Woods;
  - Organised a visit to the 2006 Woodland Award winner at Bix Estate.
  - Recruited and trained 50 volunteers;
  - Identified over 400 special trees and 70 woods;
  - Held a conference attended by 180 delegates addressed by Dr Tony Kirkham, Head of the Arboretum at Kew Gardens;
  - Organised regular monthly events for volunteers;
  - Published newsletters;
  - Hosted an art exhibition inspired by Special Trees;
  - Created a special section on the AONB website which provides locations and details of the special trees and woods: www.chilternsaonb.org/caring/stwp.html

- Gave advice to 39 owners of woods covering 306 hectares;
- Arranged 8 walks and talks;
- Organised 2 sawmill visits for woodland owners and managers;
- Held 5 woodland archaeology training sessions;

*Ancient woodland in Hills Wood near High Wycombe*
Conservation

The Board had a key role to play in promoting best practice and providing advice and support to land managers for the benefit of wildlife, landscape and historic environment. A host of activities were aimed at those managing land, with particular focus on common land and chalk grassland. The Chilterns Commons Network continued to thrive, with the new Commons Act (2006) and the efforts in some parts of the area to reintroduce grazing bringing renewed impetus. Practical and financial support was also given towards the management of a number of key sites.

- Commons events and activities included:
  - Commons Day: 'The Commons Act 2006 – implications for Chilterns Commons'. This very successful event was fully subscribed with over 50 participants. It was hosted by the National Trust at Hughenden Manor, High Wycombe.
  - The first two of a series of Chilterns Commons factsheets were published - 'What is Common land?' and 'Common land – rights and responsibilities'.
  - Four commons visits and one training session were held, with over 45 people attending.
  - Funding was provided for management work at Oughtonhead Common, Studham Common and Tylers Green.
  - 250 copies of the Commons Newsletter were produced and distributed.

- The Board organised a programme of events for chalk grassland site managers, with a total of 76 people attending visits to Totternhoe Quarry (in partnership with the Bedfordshire Wildlife Trust) and Aldbury Nowers (in partnership with Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust).

- Over 20 people attended a scrub bash at the National Trust’s Pitstone Hill site to clear ground for a new fence which will enable grazing to take place.

- Financial support was provided to a number of projects including:
  - Fencing around chalk grassland area at Seer Wood, North Dean to enable cattle grazing.
  - Purchase of a sheepdog by Beds Wildlife Trust to help manage a flying flock of 180 sheep.
  - Purchase of 12 Shetland sheep by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust to graze Aldbury Nowers and Alpine Meadows Reserves plus training of volunteer stock-checkers.

- A meeting of landowners was held in the Oxfordshire biodiversity target area between Watlington and Woodcote to promote enhanced management for biodiversity and landscape. Further meetings are planned.

- The Chilterns Conservation Award went to Ken and Julia Wise for their restoration and management of Saunderton Railway cutting – a small but highly important chalk grassland site near Princes Risborough.

A walk on Downley Common for Commons Day 2007
Activities and Education

Activities and events with a specific wildlife theme continued to attract good audiences, particularly the ‘Wildlife on the Move’ programme.

The unusually wet spring and summer unfortunately led to the failure of the popular red kite ‘Nestwatch’ initiative, but the CCTV equipment provided at Hughenden Manor and College Lake made up for the disappointment. Red kites continued to capture the public imagination both locally and nationally, with particular interest in the debate over whether or not to feed them. The Chilterns once again provided chicks for re-introduction programmes in Gateshead and Aberdeen.

- Over 3,000 visitors attended the first Chilterns Countryside Festival at the Ashridge Estate, jointly organised by the Board and the National Trust. Family fun days at Cholesbury Common and Hughenden Manor attracted a further 700 people.

- Over 200 people attended 21 guided walks with themes including woodlands, red kites, butterflies, wild flowers and chalk streams. Three Access for All walks were held at Bledlow, Cookham and Ashridge.

- Nearly 1,000 people attended 32 talks given to local organisations.

- Four workshops for the public were held on map reading and compass use.

- 24 ‘Wildlife on the Move’ events were held: seven cruises on the Thames were organised in conjunction with Hobbs of Henley Ltd, 12 train rides with Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway and five horse and cart rides with Country Ways. Over 750 people attended these trips.

- A series of CCTV cameras were set up at National Trust’s Hughenden Manor, showing images of great tits, kestrels and badgers. The CCTV equipment provided to BBOWT’s College Lake Reserve continued to be popular with visitors.

- Talks and educational activities were provided for 16 schools and six Bucks Adult Learning lectures were given.

- A CD of presentations for schools on different aspects of the Chilterns was produced.

- The range of red kite-themed merchandise generated a net income of nearly £4,000 which was invested in wildlife awareness-raising work.

- The ‘Friends of Red Kites in the Chilterns’ donation scheme, combined with donations from walks and talks, generated a net income of nearly £4,750.

- The group of 30 active volunteers helped to run the programme of walks, talks and events.

Chainsaw carver at the Countryside Festival
Historic Environment

The Chilterns has a rich historic environment with much more still to discover. The Board’s priorities have been to raise awareness of the historic environment and to support local groups to identify, conserve and interpret their local heritage. The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) of the Chilterns was the major piece of work undertaken in 2007-08. This included additional work to include the survey of settlement character, largely undertaken by volunteers from The Chiltern Society, roads and track ways and woodland boundaries.

- The Historic Landscape Characterisation has been a major piece of work and will be published in 2008. It has added a great deal to the understanding of the Chilterns and identified many areas of importance, for example, the Bronze Age field systems north of Chesham and that the road network largely pre-dates the Romans.

- The historic environment was a theme for the annual Chilterns Commons Day at Hughenden Manor and Downley Common.

- Over 250 people attended a family fun day with an archaeology theme at Cholesbury in July.

- Downloadable sheets with notes on the archaeology and history to be found along four promoted walking routes were added to the AONB website.

- The Board continued to support the Special Trees and Woods project which has identified over 400 trees and 70 woods of local significance for their social and historical associations.

- With the Board’s support the Chiltern Woodlands Project held 5 training courses on woodland archaeology attended by 79 trainees and gave 3 talks to a total audience of 140.

- Grants were given for a number of community-based projects including:
  - Interpretation Trails at Dunstable Downs;
  - Restoration of the historic sheep wash pond near Prestwood;
  - Hedgerow management around the churchyard at Lewknor;
  - Interpretation of the Iron Age House at the Chiltern Open Air Museum.
Planning and Development

The Board played its part in reducing carbon emissions by installing photovoltaic cells to generate electricity at its office in Chinnor. The cells were officially 'opened' by Boris Johnson in November and grant aided by the Energy Saving Trust through the Low Carbon Buildings Programme. The next edition of the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, which is currently being revised, will reflect the impacts of climate change on the built environment. Towards the end of the year significant proposals to add runway capacity at Heathrow airport and change the use of airspace, particularly around Luton airport, were published which would have significant consequences for the AONB. The Board is fully involved in making responses in connection with such consultation exercises.

- The overall winner of the Chilterns Buildings Design Awards was The Crown Inn at Playhatch for an extension to the 16th century pub to provide separate letting accommodation. Two commended awards were given to: a two storey extension to a family home in Gerrards Cross and five new affordable housing units in Bledlow. A special project award was given to the new Hospice of St. Francis building in Berkhamsted. 13 entries were received for the competition which was jointly organised with The Chiltern Society.

- The Board was consulted on 50 development plan documents and the Planning Committee submitted comments on 32 of them, including: eight national consultations (White Paper, Green Paper, Planning Policy Statements and supplements); nine Strategic Plans (minerals and waste); eight Local Development Documents, and seven supplementary planning documents. The Board was represented at the public examination into the Wycombe Core Strategy.

- A proposal for undergrounding overhead powerlines in Little Missenden was approved at an EDF Undergrounding Overhead Lines in Protected Landscapes Project steering group. The work is likely to take place in 2009 subject to landowner and other consents being in place.

- Training and other education work was undertaken with talks being given to: local authorities (councillors and officers); other local organisations (Friends of the Earth, countryside and conservation area groups) and universities (Reading and Oxford Brookes) (in total twelve talks were given).
Information and Interpretation

The public's appetite for information on the countryside and countryside activities continued to increase, as evidenced for example by the rapid distribution of leaflets from the new Chilterns Gateway Centre at Dunstable Downs. This was accompanied by a growing awareness of the Conservation Board, made clear in the feedback slips received from the household newsletter sent out in the spring.

- The AONB website remained very popular and was continuously updated. There were 34,000 downloads of leaflets and other publications during the year. A new interactive section on the history and wildlife of Chiltern woodlands went live in June.
- 21 profiles of famous people were researched and written up for the People and Places of the Chiltern Hills history project with 26 volunteers getting involved. A new People and Places section was developed on the AONB website.
- Over 140 delegates representing 53 organisations attended the Chilterns Annual Forum in November 2007 at the Green Park Conference Centre near Aylesbury.
- 15,000 each of two editions of the Board's magazines Chalk and Trees and What's On in the Chilterns were distributed.
- Over 120,000 walking, cycling and general information leaflets were distributed via libraries, information centres, visitor attractions and at events.
- The Board had stands at six major local events during the summer.
- 30,000 copies of a newsletter promoting the AONB and the Board were distributed to households in the Chilterns in April. 34,000 copies of a second edition of the newsletter were distributed to households the following March.
- 37 press releases generated at least 100 press articles and mentions, 19 radio interviews and four TV interviews. 19 articles written by the Board were published in the local media.
- Five electronic Board newsletters were circulated during the year. Two editions of a farming newsletter and two editions of a Commons Network newsletter were emailed and posted to distribution lists.
- The Board continued to support the National Association of AONBs and provided materials for the Association's stand at The Outdoor Show and articles for its Outstanding magazine.

Ashridge House, profiled for People and Places
Recreation and Access

There was an improvement in visitor facilities and accessibility at several of the popular countryside sites in the Chilterns. New visitor developments included the opening of the Chilterns Gateway Centre at Dunstable Downs and the opening of Go Ape at Wendover Woods. It is hoped that these facilities will attract new and younger visitors.

The shortage of budget/youth accommodation in the Chilterns was made worse with the closure of Ivinghoe Youth Hostel in autumn 2007. The one remaining youth hostel in the Chilterns, at Jordans, is too small to accommodate groups, which restricts opportunities for field trips and school visits.

There was a further increase in routes for those with limited mobility, in particular stile-free routes.

- The 2007 Chilterns Leisure Visitor Survey was completed and the results revealed there were 55 million visits to the Chilterns. The survey provides valuable information on the value, volume and nature of leisure visits to the area.

- The Chilterns Access Conference, held in January 2008, attracted 71 delegates from local authorities, Local Access Forums, The Chiltern Society, government bodies and a wide range of user groups. In total 30 organisations with an interest in access to the countryside were represented. The conference looked at a range of themes including leisure trends in the Chilterns in the last decade, walking in AONBs and the cycling economy. In addition, updates were given on the work of the Local Access Forums and on a number of new access initiatives in the Chilterns.

- The first stage of the Ashridge Cycling Strategy was implemented, with improvements in the quality and safety of cycling routes in and around the Ashridge Estate. The first of the cycling routes was signed and information boards installed at either end of the route. Leaflets were printed showing cycle routes to the Estate from nearby towns and railway stations, along with cycling trails in and around the Estate taking in the many attractions in the wider area. Speed restrictions were introduced on roads through the Estate which should contribute to safer cycling.

- Progress was made on the development of a Chilterns-wide Cycle Route. A provisional 120 mile on-road route was drawn up with input from the CTC and The Chiltern Society Cycling Group. There will be many opportunities for shorter circular rides (both on-road and off-road) from the main gateway towns along the main Chilterns Cycle Way promoted loop.

- Several of the Chiltern Country Walks were updated and reprinted: the Red Kite Walk (10,000 copies), Views of the Vale (10,000), Chinnor Circular Walk (5,000), Beacon View (5,000), Ashridge Drovers (5,000) and the Iron Age Fort Walk (5,000).
The three experimental traffic management projects set up five years ago have all been completed. They have resulted in reduced speed limits, better designed village gateways and traffic calming measures. After much deliberation Quiet Lanes as defined by the Department for Transport have not been created due to the complexity and cost. The highway authorities were also not convinced they would be effective.


- The experimental measures to reduce vehicle deer collisions at Ashridge were completed with a 19% reduction achieved. This was due to a combination of special measures including deer activated road signs and reduced speed limits.

- A successful conference supported by the Board, highway authorities, National Trust and Highways Agency on the problem of deer casualties on roads was held in October at the Ashridge Management College and was attended by over 80 delegates.

- The implementation of the Ashridge cycling strategy, one outcome of the Three Counties Traffic Management Project, began with improved routes, signing and new information leaflets.

Road verge near Whipsnade
The pot of money which funds sustainable projects to enhance the Chilterns was active again during 2007-08. The Chilterns AONB Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) made grants totalling £63,163 to support 25 local projects. The total value of projects supported was £210,731.

Examples of projects supported include:

- £3,000 to the Rivertime Boat Trust to help build and equip a boat to take disabled and disadvantaged children and adults on trips on the River Thames.
- £1,750 to the Soil Association to help fund workshops for schoolchildren in which farmer Virginia Deradour from Prestwood taught them all about how food is grown and the importance of farming to local landscapes.
- £2,510 to Lilley Parochial Church Council near Luton helped to train 26 volunteers in the art of hedgelaying and also funded a contractor to coppice 132m of hedge around the churchyard.
- £2,000 to Bedfordshire County Council towards two interpretation trails on Dunstable Downs, starting and finishing at the new Gateway Centre.
- £2,921 to the National Trust for equipment for the Ashridge Estate sawmill. The sawmill produces timber products using sustainably-harvested wood from the Estate which are sold to provide an income for the Trust.
- £3,300 to Chesham Community Vision helped to fund the development of six circular walking routes starting from the town centre and going out into nearby countryside.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

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CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2007/2008

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Cllr Mr W A Storey*

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Vice Chairman

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Nominated by
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Oxfordshire

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Richard Brown  Hertfordshire County Council
Mike Woods  Buckinghamshire County Council

Planning Committee  
Board members marked with a + plus:
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Richard Bossons  Architect
Gill Gowing  Chiltern District Council
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Mr M Fox  Dr S Mortimer
Sir J Johnson  Dr M Render
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Caring for the Chilterns
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in South East England

London and the South East Region
National Park
South Downs National Park, designated but not yet confirmed
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Main Urban Areas

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Cover photos - i) River Thames near Goring
ii) Archery stand at the Countryside Festival
iii) Comma butterfly

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Cymdeithas Genedlaethol AoHNE
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