# Agenda

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CONSERVATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILTERNS CONSERVATION BOARD
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH 2011 IN THE PENN CHAMBER, THREE
RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL, THREE RIVERS HOUSE, NORTHWAY,
RICKMANSWORTH, HERTS WD3 1RL, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND
CONCLUDING AT 12.32 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

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<tr>
<th>Member</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr David Barnard</td>
<td>North Herts District Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Marion Mustoe</td>
<td>Central Bedfordshire Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Richard Pushman</td>
<td>Buckinghamshire County Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Ian Reay</td>
<td>Dacorum Borough Council</td>
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<td>Cllr Chris Richards</td>
<td>Aylesbury Vale District Council</td>
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<td>Cllr Jeremy Ryman</td>
<td>Chiltern District Council</td>
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<td>Cllr David Nimmo Smith</td>
<td>Oxfordshire County Council</td>
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<td>Cllr Bill Storey</td>
<td>Hertfordshire County Council</td>
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<th>Appointed by Secretary of State</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Fox (Chairman)</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Heather Barrett-Mold</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
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<td>Bettina Kirkham</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
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<td>Dr Simon Mortimer</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
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<td>Helen Tuffs</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
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<th>Elected by Parish Councils</th>
<th>Oxfordshire</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr John Griffin</td>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Margaret Jarrett</td>
<td>Buckinghamshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Shirley Judges</td>
<td>Buckinghamshire</td>
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<td>Cllr Barbara Wallis</td>
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<th>Officers</th>
<th>BCC and Clerk to the Board</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maureen Keyworth</td>
<td>CCB Chief Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Rodrick</td>
<td>CCB Planning Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colin White</td>
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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from John Willson, Cllr Julia Wells, Kevin Mayne, Cllr
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No members of the public were present.

6. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Members received the report of the Chief Officer.

2. The Board discussed the Risk Register and noted that the two revisions to the document related to maintaining staff morale and security of the financial situation. The Chief Officer stated that the financial situation was satisfactory but there was a need to have plans in place with regard to how the Board will cope with any changes over the next three financial years. It was not anticipated that any announcements on the Government Budget will make a difference to the Board’s financial situation.

3. The Board also noted the commitment of £20,000 to re-develop the website. This is a crucial part of the fund raising plan and any expenditure will be recovered in the long term.

The Board NOTED the matters discussed by the Executive Committee and the decisions made under delegated authority.

7. REPORT FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. Members received the report of the Planning Officer, the purpose of which was to bring to the attention of the Board the items considered by the Planning Committee and decisions taken under delegated powers. The following was noted.

2. A draft position statement has been drawn in line with other AONBs and will be put out for consultation with Board members, technical groups and local authority officers. This is in relation to pressures relating to developments
affecting the setting of the AONB. A report will be presented at the next Board Meeting. This was considered an important step forward particularly with regard to the plans for Booker Air Park and the milk processing plant at Aston Clinton, both of which will have an impact on the Chilterns.

3. The Annual Planning Forum will be held on 10 May. Members were asked to inform the Planning Officer that they will be attending. Items will include the Localism Bill and the implications with regard to Parish Plans and the Village Design Statements. The Chairman of the Planning Committee reported that she and the Planning Officer attended the Cotswold Annual Forum. David Buxton of DCLG gave a useful summary of his thinking on Neighbourhood Plans, which has been published on the Cotswold website.

4. With regard to review of the AONB and National Park boundaries, the Chief Officer said he had contacted Natural England who agreed to provide further information.

The Board NOTED the report of the Planning Committee

8. BOARD MEMBER'S ALLOWANCE 2011-2012

1. Members received the report of the Chief Officer, the purpose of which was to report to the Board on the recommendation of the Executive Committee and to seek a decision on the level of Board member allowances.

2. The options discussed by the Executive Committee were set out in the report together with the anticipated reductions resulting from each of the options. It was noted that the Executive Committee was conscious of the need to recognise that members should be able to attend regardless of their own financial situation. However, it was at each member’s discretion as to whether they wished to claim allowances. It was noted that the impact of any savings would not be seen until 2012/13.

3. Members’ allowances were introduced at the inception of the Board and were set at District Council rates. Taking into account the cost of living adjustments and the freeze in allowances in the past years, this equates to a 4% cut since allowances were introduced. The Executive Committee have recommended that the allowance should be frozen for the time being and reviewed in 12 months time.

4. The Committee felt the best policy was to retain a link between Members’ allowances and the cost of living award made to staff.

5. Members discussed payment of allowances to members of the SDF Panel, which meets six to eight times per annum plus site visits, and equates to more time than those for members on the Executive and Planning Committees.

6. It was noted that there was no mechanism for reviewing members’ allowances and members agreed on the need for an independent review of allowances to coincide with the budget review. It was suggested that this
should be in place for 2012/13. It was agreed that a mechanism be put in place to review members’ allowances in the future.

The Board AGREED

1. To accept the recommendation of the Executive Committee to freeze all members’ allowances for 2011/12

2. That allowances should not be paid to members of the SDF Panel in 2011/12

3. To seek to create an independent review mechanism for members’ allowances for 2012/13

9. BUDGET 2011-2012

1. Members received the report of the Chief Officer and Finance Officer, the purpose of which was to present a draft of the 2011/12 budget for approval.

2. The Board was informed that the budget figures had not altered greatly since the last report. Currently, not all Local Authorities had confirmed their grant allocation and the budget would not be finalised until the information had been received. The current budget was based on a 35% cut in Local Authority funding.

3. The Chief Officer suggested that it may be useful to have a Memorandum of Agreement with local authorities covering their financial contribution for the next three years. In answer to a member’s question about the notice period if an Authority wished to pull out of the Board, it was noted that a Local Authority cannot pull out of the Board, but can refuse to give support. Members were in agreement that a Memorandum of Agreement should be considered for those local authorities which express a desire to have one.

4. With regard to reducing expenditure and increasing income from other sources, as already reported it had been agreed that the website would be re-developed. Through this, sales would be promoted and opportunities would be sought for advertising and sponsorship.

5. The estimated end of year position for the 2011/12 will require a draw down from the budget equalisation reserve of £18,000. The total draw down over the next four years is likely to be between £60,000 and £70,000.

6. The Board had previously discussed whether contributions from Parish Councils should be sought, and it was noted that if the Board was to make such a request it would need to do so quickly because the Parish Council budgets would be set in the Autumn and it would be considered too late to increase the precept.

7. Work on the historic environment was also raised. He stated that the work on the Historic Landscape Characterisation, which had dominated the work
programme is recent years was now at an end—and they would need to consider the future role of the Historic Environment Group. The Chairman of the Planning Committee said that this work should continue and she would be happy to prepare a paper on the way forward, to present to the Board.

8. With regard to fundraising, a member suggested that this work could be carried out by a volunteer group rather than add pressure to staff members. The Chief Officer said the funding would only be used for operational costs and the target was not vast and should be achievable. Another member suggested setting up a ‘Friends of the CCB’ as a way of receiving donations but it was considered that this may overlap the work of other organisations such as The Chiltern Society.

9. It was suggested that the employment of an expert in fundraising should be considered. Such an experienced person could recover their costs and could also support the Board in drawing up a fundraising strategy.

The Board

1. NOTED and AGREED the budget for 2011-12.

2. NOTED that an updated version of the Medium Term Financial Forecast will be prepared once local authority contributions were confirmed.

10. REPORT ON HS2

1. Members received the report of the Chief Officer, the purpose of which was to advise the Board of the public consultation phase and seek agreement on the Board’s programme during the consultation period.
2. The consultation process had started and was web based. Copies of the main and summary reports were difficult to get but hard copies could be obtained on request. This issue had been raised with MPs and ministers.

3. The public exhibition dates had been announced with the first one held at Euston. The exhibition would not reach the Chilterns until May. It was not clear how tailored each exhibition would be to local venues and what level of expertise would be available. HS2 had said that a series of visualisations had been prepared. It was assumed that they would be in the exhibitions but the Chief Officer believed they should also be displayed on the website.

4. It was noted that there was no legal requirement to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment and only the strategic Appraisal of Sustainability had been published. The figures in the revised Business Plan also appeared to be weaker than before and most gains will go to London.

5. The knock on implications for existing rail transport were now emerging but were not apparent in the documentation. The upgrade to the West Coast mainline could be completed within a shorter timescale.
6. The anti HS2 alliance was broadening and the CPRE had now expressed its opposition. It was also noted that the Labour Party was reviewing its Transport Policy and a poll specifically on HS2, resulted in 96% voting against it. Action Groups Against HS2 (AGAST) were trying to fill the gap between high level lobbying and retaining lobbyists with expertise to get over the message that HS2 will have an impact on everyone in the country. The Conserving the Chilterns and Countryside group had employed a lobbyist but their aim was to have the route moved. In discussion the following was noted:

- It was hoped the Board’s draft response would be ready before the end of May, in order that other organisations can also use it.
- The Transport Select Committee will be examining the business case for HS2.
- The Chief Officer urged members to encourage friends and family around the country to object.

The Board AGREED to

1. Promote awareness of the consultation and encourage responses on both the overall strategy and impact of the preferred route.

2. Publish information on the local environmental impact which is not provided by DfT and HS2 Ltd

3. Continue participating actively in the Stop HS2 campaign.

4. Contribute up to £2,000 to the costs of commissioning external technical experts to assess the revised business case and environmental impacts.

5. Prepare a full draft response for consideration by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 18 May.

11. REPORT ON WATER MEADOWS - LITTLE MISSENDEN AND SARRATT

1. Members received the report of the Chief Officer which sought to inform the Board of the new partnership with the Environment Agency. The Board also received a presentation.

2. With regard to Doctors Meadow, the cost is £23,000 and it was hoped that the work would be completed by the Winter. The Environment Agency has provided further funding of £23,000 for Sarratt Water Meadows. The agreement has been signed and they are now working with the landowner.

3. A member raised concerns about Hughenden Stream, which is in poor condition. The Officer stated that work was being undertaken with Wycombe District Council through Hughenden Park. A feasibility Study has been commissioned for the rest of the stream through the Hughenden grounds. Investigations on the low flow have shown an obstruction at Mill End rather
The Board NOTED the proposed partnership with the Environment Agency to improve the water meadows at Little Missenden and Sarratt.

12. REPORT ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

1. Members received the report of the Chief Officer which sought to inform the Board of how the SDF was allocated in 2010-2011 and to seek guidance on the priority categories for 2011-12.

2. It was noted that over the years there had been 152 projects from 95 organisations, with a total of £371,000 in grants given out. Members agreed that the value that it achieves cannot be underestimated.

The Board

1. NOTED the success of the SDF in 2010-2011

2. APPROVED the priority categories for 2011-2012

13. REPORT ON THE CHILTERNs LEADER PROGRAMME

1. Members received the report of the Chief Officer, which sought to inform the Board that the budget of the Chilterns LEADER programme will be reduced and to decide whether to make representations to DEFRA.

2. The Board was informed that the programme would be reduced by 26% in future, which would mean less grants and limits to administer the fund. Currently the programme was near capacity for 2011/12 and it was hoped some applications could be deferred to the following year.

3. The Chief Officer said the feeling was that if all interested groups wrote to the Minister, they may be listened to, particularly the CLA and NFU. It was noted there is no guaranteed funding for 2012/13 and it could end up with money having to be paid back to Europe.

The Board SUPPORTED sending requests to government to reduce the scale of the cuts and to show flexibility in order to cope with them.

14. DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Conservation Board, will be held on Wednesday 15 June 2011 at 10.00am in St Giles' Church Hall, The Ride, Totternhoe LU6 1RH. Dates of future meetings:

19 October including the AGM

CHAIRMAN
Item 6  

Report from the Executive Committee

Author: Steve Rodrick  Chief Officer

Summary: At its meeting on 9th March the Executive Committee;

1. Received a report on the provisional outturn of 2010-2011.

2. Approved the performance of the Internal Auditor.

3. Discussed the Medium Term Financial Plan.

4. Considered the option of concluding a Memorandum of Agreement with local authorities to cover their financial contribution to the Board for the period 2012-2015.

5. Noted that with effect from 1st June Deirdre Hansen will be the new clerk to the Board.

6. Discussed a proposal to create a new fund - Caring for the Chilterns Fund.

7. Considered the Board's work on High Speed 2.

8. Received the Chief Officer's report.

Provisional Outturn for 2010-2011

1. The Finance Officer presented the provisional outturn for the last financial year which showed a surplus of £21,570. This was achieved by increasing income by 1.5% and reducing expenditure by 3.5%. The surplus will be added to the reserves.

Performance of the Internal Auditor

2. The accounting regulations require the Board to formally review and approve the performance of the internal auditor (Hertfordshire County Council). The Finance Officer presented a report recommending that approval be given. It was also noted that due to changes in Herts CC there may be a need to seek a new internal auditor.

Medium Terms Financial Plan 2011-2015

3. This plan will be kept under constant review. The Committee noted that changes would be made as the reduction in grant aid from the local authorities was not as severe as initially expected. In 2011-12 local authority support will be £105,085 (down from £115,877 in 2010-
2011), but £29,750 better than expected. It is still anticipated that there will be significant further reduction in each of the next 3 financial years.

Financial Memorandum of Agreement

4. The Committee discussed the option of preparing a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with all local authorities covering their financial contribution for the period 20121-2015. It was concluded that if a MoA was required by an authority one would be put in place, but at this stage it was not proposed to propose an MoA covering all local authorities. The Chief Officer was instructed to contact all authorities to investigate the need for a MoA.

Clerk to the Board

5. The Committee noted that Deirdre Hansen will be the new clerk to the Board replacing Maureen Keyworth of Bucks CC. The cost of procuring secretarial services from Buckinghamshire County Council was considered too high. Deirdre Hansen will take over from 1st June and has for several years taken the minutes of the Planning Committee. The new arrangement will save over £3,000 per annum. The Committee recorded its thanks to Maureen for so many years of dedicated service.

Caring for the Chilterns Fund

6. The committee considered the proposal to create a special fund, Caring for the Chilterns, to secure donations from all parts of the community. The fund would be used for projects to conserve natural beauty and promote enjoyment of the AONB. Such a fund would not be used to meet operating costs of the Board itself, but it would help relieve some of the pressures on its dwindling funds to support projects. It would also help harness the current high levels of public concern for the Chilterns arising from the high speed railway.

7. The Committee recommended that the proposal should be presented to the full Board but noted the particular need to be sensitive to the potential impact on bodies such as The Chiltern Society and other charities.

High Speed 2

8. The Committee discussed the public consultation on HS2 the Board’s current activities - these are covered in more detail in Item 11.

Chief Officer’s Report

9. This report was circulated for information. It has also been circulated by E mail to all members. The main current issues were:
• Finalising the budget and work programme for 2011-2012
• Income generation programme
• High Speed 2
• Major Development proposals including the new stadium near High Wycombe and milk processing factory near Aston Clinton.
• Re-development of the web site.

Recommendation

1. To note the matters discussed by the Executive Committee and the decision made under delegated authority.
Item 7: Report from the Planning Committee

Author: Colin White - Planning Officer

Summary: The Planning Committee met on 25th May. The following items were discussed:
1. High Speed 2 update
2. Position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB
3. AONB Planning Forum feedback
4. Chilterns AONB Planning Conference 2011
5. Chilterns Buildings Design Awards 2011
6. Responses to Development Plans
7. Responses to planning applications

Purpose of Report: To bring to the attention of the Board the items considered by the Planning Committee and decisions taken under delegated powers and to recommend approval of the final version of the position statement on development affecting the setting of the AONB.

High Speed 2 update

1. The Committee noted the various activities that had recently taken place including: the recent summit held in Aylesbury to discuss the consultation; the roadshows in various locations; the production of the Board’s response to the Transport Select Committee; preparation of a paper about spoil and the fact that the Board’s response was being drafted.

Position Statement on the development affecting the setting of the AONB

2. The draft position statement had been subject to a consultation exercise. The comments that had been made were reported to the Committee. The proposed responses to the comments and various suggested changes were approved. It was resolved that the position statement should be reported to the Board and that it should be recommended that the Board adopts the statement as amended. The statement is attached as an appendix to this report.

AONB Planning Forum feedback

3. The Forum had taken place in early May and had discussed the implications of neighbourhood development plans (part of the Localism Bill) and recent spending cuts on the AONB and its constituent local planning authorities. The Committee had noted that limited numbers of local planning officers had attended and that this may be due to the
pressure of other work. It was resolved that this issue be discussed between the Chairman of the Board, the Chairman of the Committee, the Chief Officer and the Planning Officer. It was also resolved that, should the Forum continue, the next one should take place on 15th November (at Aylesbury Vale DC offices).

Chilterns AONB Planning Conference 2011

4. The next Planning Conference will take place on 5th October and the Committee resolved that the event should focus on renewable energy. Various suggestions were made for speakers and locations for the site visits and these will be investigated by the Planning Officer. The Committee felt that Members should get the date in their diaries and let the Planning Officer know if they would like to attend.

Chilterns Buildings Design Awards 2011

5. Having visited 6 short listed entries (out of 10) for this year’s Design Awards scheme the judges have decided that there will be two overall winners (house extension in Speen and conversion of farm buildings to house a car refurbishment business near Chorleywood) as well as a highly commended award (refurbishment and extension of a building to house a local history museum in Tring) and a special project award (for the extension and refurbishment of a sailing club’s clubhouse at Weston Turville). The awards will be given out at a ceremony that takes place on the 8th June at the Village Hall in Chinnor. Any Members wishing to attend should inform the Admin Officer.

Development Plan Responses

6. The development plans responses detailed below were approved by the Committee.

National Grid – Proposed approach to undergrounding new electricity transmission lines

7. The Board expressed some concerns about the status of the document that was being consulted on and felt that guidelines which deal with the protection of natural beauty (the Holford Rules) should be referred to. The Board was also concerned about the lack of reference to the Section 85 duties from the CRoW Act and the need to comply with Planning Policy Statement 7.

Central Beds, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough Councils – Mineral Safeguarding Areas consultation

8. The Board’s key concern related to the mineral safeguarding area (MSA) for chalk. The Councils have a preferred option of limiting the MSA to current permitted chalk quarries using a 250m buffer zone. The buffer for Kensworth Quarry includes extensive areas in all directions
that would impact on the AONB if developed and it was suggested that this be reduced in extent. A comment was also made about one of the draft policies in order to clarify its meaning and the need to provide adequate information to enable proper assessment of the likely impacts.

**Core Strategy soundness concerns**

9. The Committee was informed about two Core Strategy exploratory meetings which had taken place to discuss the Inspector's concerns about various issues of soundness. It is understood that delays are likely in both of the examination procedures and this generally relates to housing numbers and the revocation of regional strategies.

Further details of the development plans responses and all other papers can be viewed at: http://www.chilternsaonb.org/downloads/board_meetings/PI_agenda_090311.pdf

**Planning applications update**

10. Last year details of 152 applications were received by the Board. Of these 21 were the subject of formal representations (18 objections and 3 supports). Of the 17 applications determined 12 are in line with the Board's comments.

11. This year the Board has been consulted on 33 applications with responses having been sent in connection with 19. No formal representations have been made thus far.

12. The Committee was informed that four applications had been submitted in connection with the Arla proposal at Aston Clinton for the milk processing plant and a large amount of speculative development. These will be responded to shortly. No further information was available in connection with the stadium proposal at High Wycombe.

**Urgent Business**

13. The Committee discussed the Planning Committee tour and it was resolved that this should take place at the end of July. A date would be circulated by the Planning Officer. In the past limited numbers have attended the tours and the Committee stressed that other Members of the Board should also be encouraged to attend.

14. The Chairman announced that she would not be seeking re-election as Chairman of the Committee after this year's Annual General Meeting, though is still keen to remain on the Committee.
Recommendations

1. The Board notes the report from the Planning Committee.

2. The Board adopts the Position Statement on Development Affecting the Setting of the AONB.
Chilterns Conservation Board – Position Statement

Development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB
Introduction

1. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated by the Government for the purpose of ensuring that the special qualities of the finest landscapes in England and Wales are conserved and enhanced. In policy terms they have the same planning status as National Parks.

2. The Chilterns Conservation Board is the body set up by Parliament to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB and increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB. The Board also has a duty to have regard to the social and economic wellbeing of those who live and work in the Chilterns AONB.

Purpose of this Position Statement

3. This Position Statement is intended to provide guidance to local planning authorities, landowners, developers and other interested parties in connection with the need to consider the impacts on the AONB of development and land management proposals which lie outside it but within its 'setting'.

4. The Board considers that, although it does not have a defined geographical boundary, the setting of the Chilterns AONB is the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature, size, scale, siting, materials or design could be considered to have an impact, either positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the Chilterns AONB.

5. This Statement expands upon issues raised in the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2008-13: A Framework for Action, in particular Policy L6 in the landscape chapter, key issues 8 and 9 and Policies HE2 and HE5 in the historic environment chapter and key issue 7 and supporting text for Policy D10 (renewable energy) in the development chapter.

Policy L6: Conserve and enhance the distinctive character of buildings, rural settlements and their landscape setting.

Policy HE2: Resist land use changes and management practices which would harm nationally designated and locally important historic assets and their settings.

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1 "Development" includes transport and other infrastructure as well as proposals requiring planning applications. "Land management" includes tree planting, energy crops, and drainage schemes.

http://www.chilternsaonb.org/conservation/management_plan.html
Policy HE5: Ensure the design and location of new development is sympathetic to the character of the historic environment.

Policy D10 supporting text: There may be pressure for the development of wind power in the Chilterns in the future, and full account should be taken of the potential impacts on the landscape, including the setting of the AONB.

6. Views out of the AONB and into its surrounding areas can be very significant. Development proposals that affect views into and out of the AONB need to be carefully assessed, particularly in line with Planning Policy Statement 7, to ensure that they conserve and enhance the natural beauty and landscape character of the AONB.

7. The need to consider the impact of proposals within the setting of the AONB is set out in Planning Policy Statements, relevant legislation and planning policies and in guidance from Natural England and English Heritage. Those pieces of policy and guidance that are considered to be relevant are detailed in Appendix A.

8. The setting of AONBs has been considered by Inspectors in various planning appeals. Extracts from relevant appeals are detailed in Appendix B.

9. The special qualities of the Chilterns AONB are identified in the AONB Management Plan and are briefly set out in Appendix C.

10. This Statement is intended to be used to secure appropriate policies on this issue in Local Development Frameworks and other policy documents which relate to the Chilterns AONB and assist in the decision making process with respect to proposals for development or land management outside the AONB.

11. The need to consider the potential impact of developments within the setting of the AONB on the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB itself are explicitly referred to in a number of adopted development plans in relation to the Chilterns AONB. Whilst some developments may have adverse impacts, circumstances can be envisaged where other developments or changes in land use (for example tree planting outside the AONB) could enhance the AONB by mitigating or removing unsightly existing structures which may adversely impact upon the AONB. In addition, other strategies such as Green Infrastructure plans, Biodiversity Opportunity mapping and landscape character assessments, may also provide advice about enhancement.

12. The Board will seek to ensure that the importance of considering the impact of development and land management proposals outside the Chilterns AONB on the natural beauty and special
qualities of the AONB is made clear in all Local Development Framework documents and in policies in other relevant documents.

13. The Board will expect local authorities, in accordance with their duties under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to be mindful of both the possible positive and negative impacts of a development within the setting of the AONB on the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB when determining planning applications. When significant impacts are likely the Board would like its views to be sought.

14. The setting of the Chilterns AONB does not have a geographical border. The location, scale, materials or design of a proposed development or land management activity will determine whether it affects the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. A very large development may have an impact even if some considerable distance from the AONB boundary. However, the distance away from the AONB will be a material factor in forming a decision on any proposals, in that the further away a development is from the AONB boundary the more the impact is likely to be reduced.

15. Examples of adverse impacts will include:

- Blocking or interference of views out of the AONB particularly from public viewpoints or rights of way
- Blocking or interference of views of the AONB from public viewpoints or rights of way outside the AONB
- Breaking the skyline, particularly when this is associated with developments that have a vertical emphasis and/or movement (viaducts, chimneys, plumes or rotors for example)
- The visual intrusion caused by the introduction of new transport corridors, in particular roads and railways
- Loss of tranquillity through the introduction of lighting, noise, or traffic movement
- Introduction of significant or abrupt changes to landscape character particularly where they are originally of a similar character to the AONB
- Change of use of land that is of sufficient scale to cause harm to landscape character
- Loss of biodiversity, particularly in connection with those habitats or species of importance in the AONB
- Loss of features of historic interest, particularly if these are contiguous with the AONB
- Reduction in public access and detrimental impacts on the character and appearance of rural roads and lanes
- Increase in air or water pollution
16. Adverse impacts might not be visual. The special qualities of the Chilterns AONB include tranquility. A development which is noisy may well impact adversely on tranquillity even if not visible from the AONB.

17. The Board will monitor, comment on and report relevant planning applications and decisions relating to development within the setting of the Chilterns AONB which may impact on the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB.

Avoiding Harm to the Setting of the Chilterns AONB

18. The best way of minimizing adverse impacts on the setting of the AONB is through avoidance in the first place, so that schemes bring about the conservation or enhancement of the setting of the AONB. In relation to development within or affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB, the Chilterns Conservation Board supports the following:

- Measures to consider the impact on the setting of the AONB, including where required through Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, ecological surveys or historical assessments;
- Care being taken over the design, orientation, site layout, height, bulk and scale of structures and buildings through the preparation of a design and access statement;
- Consideration not just of the site but also the landscape and land uses around and beyond it;
- Careful consideration of colours, materials and the reflectiveness of surfaces;
- Restraint and care over the installation and use of street lighting, floodlighting and other external lighting to prevent harm to the dark night skies of the AONB and its setting;
• The grouping of new structures and buildings close to existing structures and buildings to avoid new expanses of development that are visible and out of context (though any likely detrimental impact on historic buildings or groupings will need special consideration to avoid insensitive development); and
• Comprehensive mitigation measures, for example including landscaping and open space that incorporates only native species (where possible contributing to BAP targets and the provision of Green Infrastructure), and noise reduction (though landscaping in certain contexts can be damaging to historic features, deposits, landscape or character so will require careful consideration).

19. It is considered that many issues in relation to new development within the setting of the Chilterns AONB can be resolved through careful design, appropriate materials, location and layout and mitigation measures from landscaping to the use of minimal, well-directed and full cut-off street (and other external) lighting.

20. The Board is willing to enter into pre-application consultations to ensure full attention is given to these factors and to assist in the process at the earliest opportunity.
NOTES

The Chilterns Conservation Board has the statutory duty⁴ to pursue the following two purposes:

a) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB; and
b) to increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB.

In fulfilling these roles, the Board shall seek to foster the economic and social well-being of people living in the AONB.

This is one of a series of position statements published by the Board which help to expand on the Board’s policies within the Chilterns AONB Management Plan or explain the Board’s approach to new and emerging issues (renewable energy for example). Further information and advice is contained in the following: The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the associated supplementary technical notes on local building materials, the Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns and The Making of the Chilterns Landscape. All of these can be found on the Board’s website.

The Board is comprised of members nominated by the local authorities, elected parish council appointees and individuals appointed by the Secretary of State. The Board, formed in December 2004, is the only organisation that looks after the AONB as a whole.

The Chilterns AONB was designated in 1965 and extended in area in 1990. It is one of 38 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty across England and Wales. It occupies 633 square kilometres and is a landscape of equal importance to National Parks such as Snowdonia and the Lake District.

For further information contact:

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Planning Officer
Chilterns Conservation Board
The Lodge, 90 Station Road
Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX39 4HA
Tel: 01844 355507 cwhite@chiltnsaonb.org

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⁴ Section 87, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
Policy guidance on the consideration of development proposals within the setting of protected landscapes

National legislation and guidance

1. Section 85 of the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000* places a statutory duty on all relevant authorities requiring them to have regard to the statutory purpose of AONBs when coming to decisions or carrying out their activities relating to, or affecting land within these areas.

2. Guidance on how the implication of this duty and how it may be discharged was issued by Defra in 2005\(^4\). This includes the statement "Additionally, it may sometimes be the case that the activities of certain authorities operating outside the boundaries of these areas may have an impact within them. In such cases, relevant authorities will also be expected to have regard to the purposes of these areas". The Guidance includes a list of relevant authorities, although this is not definitive.

3. **Natural England** has published more detailed guidance in 2010\(^5\), including case studies. It includes a case study from the Northumberland National Park regarding “Working to ensure policies include the impact on National Parks from development beyond their boundaries”.

4. Paragraph 14 of *Planning Policy Statement 22*, Renewable Energy, states that with respect to renewable energy developments “Regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should not create ‘buffer zones’ around international or nationally designated areas and apply policies to these zones that prevent the development of renewable energy projects. However, the potential impact on designated areas of renewable energy projects close to their boundaries will be a material consideration to be taken into account in determining planning applications”.

5. This concept of the significance of setting has to be recognised with respect to protected landscapes (AONBs and National Parks). **Natural England’s published spatial planning position**\(^6\) considers, in Position 5, the protection and enhancement of protected landscapes: “Spatial planning policies and decisions should ensure the highest levels of protection and enhancement for England’s protected

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\(^4\) Duties on relevant authorities to have regard to the purposes of National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads. Defra (2005)


\(^6\) Natural England’s Spatial Planning Position (2009), see: 
landscapes, habitats, sites and species”. The explanatory text states “Natural England interprets the protection and enhancement of all sites, habitats and landscapes widely. This includes safeguarding their character, qualities and features, including where appropriate, their settings”.

6. Natural England has published ‘Making Space for Renewable Energy – Natural England’s approach to assessing on-shore wind energy development’. This includes the statement “Natural England regards the setting of protected landscapes as being potentially influential on the conservation of the special qualities of the National Park or AONB concerned”.

7. This guidance continues “Spatial plans should include policies that take into account the sensitivity of the setting of protected landscapes”, and “The potential for developments to dominate the setting of protected landscapes requires careful consideration”.

8. The consultation draft Overarching Energy National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1 includes in the background section the statement:

“Landscape and visual impacts – The Government proposes to retain and clarify the important protection that PPS 7 provides for nationally designated areas. The PPS does not refer to developments outside such areas but visible from them. In these cases outside the remit of PPS 7, the IPC [Infrastructure Planning Commission] will, as now, have to take account of the impact on the landscape but we propose that specifically, the IPC will need to be satisfied that the application will not compromise the objectives which were the basis for designation of the designated site”.

9. The concept of ‘setting’ is set out in the legislation and guidance relating to Designated historic assets. Setting is defined in Annex 2 of Planning Policy Statement 5 ‘Planning for the Historic Environment’ as “The surroundings in which a historic asset is appreciated”.

10. Helpful guidance on the consideration of the setting of heritage assets is given in the ‘Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide’ published by English Heritage in March 2010. Setting is said to be “the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and

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9 Sections 16 and 66, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
whether they are designated or not” (paragraph 113). The guidance goes on to say that “For the purposes of spatial planning, any development of change capable of affecting the significance of a heritage asset or peoples experience of it can be considered as falling within its setting” (paragraph 118), and “Transport proposals can affect the setting of heritage assets” (paragraph 124).

11. A 'Heritage asset' is defined in PPS5 as “a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions”. In view of the number, scale, quality and distribution of designated and undesignated historic features in the Chilterns AONB, the Board considers that significant parts of the AONB can be considered as heritage assets under this definition.

Regional Planning\(^\text{12}\)

12. The concept of the setting of an AONB has been incorporated into the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East which affects the Chilterns AONB. The South East Plan has a policy which includes reference to the importance of the setting of protected landscapes.

13. Policy C3 (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) of the South East Plan states:

“High priority will be given to conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in the region's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and planning decisions should have regard to their setting. Proposals for development should be considered in that context. Positive land management policies should be developed to sustain the areas’ landscape quality. In drafting local development documents, local planning authorities should have regard to statutory AONB Management Plans”.

Local Planning

The Board considers policy CS17 (Environmental Assets) in the Wycombe Development Framework Core Strategy\(^\text{13}\) is an example of good practice. The policy includes the text:

“The Council will conserve and improve the environmental assets of the District by requiring:
1. The conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting”.

\(^\text{12}\) On 31\textsuperscript{st} May 2010 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced the Government’s intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies. This was confirmed in the Localism Bill.

The Board also considers that the first part of policy CS22 (Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) in the Core Strategy for Chiltern District\textsuperscript{14} is another example of good practice. The policy includes the text:

"The principles to be followed in the Chilterns AONB are that:
1) all proposals must conserve and enhance the special landscape character, heritage, distinctiveness of the Chilterns AONB
2) all proposals must protect the setting of the AONB and safeguard views into and out of the area"

APPENDIX B

Appeal decisions

1. Consideration was given to the impacts on the setting and enjoyment of the Chilterns AONB in a joint appeal against the refusal of applications for the redevelopment of a football ground in Marlow for housing development and the creation of a new football ground at an alternative site near Little Marlow (see APP/K0425/A/09/2111436, 2010). In dismissing the appeal the Inspector wrote:

"The Chilterns AONB lies to the north on the opposite side of the road to the appeal site and the proposal would not have a direct impact on any of the key characteristics of the AONB landscape. However, the valley floor landscape plays a role in the setting of the AONB. It forms the middle ground of the public view point from Winter Hill on the south side of the river. Whilst it was suggested that the proposal was not on the 'principal viewline' across the valley, the Winter Hill view point provides a very wide panorama that is experienced by turning the head to appreciate its breadth. I do not, therefore, consider that there is a 'principal viewline'. Although the facilities would be sited on lower land to the east of the site close to an existing hedgerow and tree belt they would, in my view, add to the built form in the valley and reinforce the urban fringe character further reducing the integrity of the landscape to the detriment of the open rural character of fields and lakes."

"The pitches would be mostly used in the winter when floodlights would be needed in the evenings. At night from Winter Hill the sharp line of the lights on the A404 and Marlow beyond contrast with the almost complete darkness of the AONB on the far side of the valley. Whilst there are some lights towards the skyline they are towards the left side of the view where the road climbs the hill. There are sporadic lights on the valley floor but in my view the floodlit training area and the lighting associated with the car park and access would have a dramatic detrimental impact on the night view from Winter Hill."

\textsuperscript{14} http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/corestrategy/site/index.php
"In longer views from the AONB looking south the proposed facilities would be seen in the distance in the valley bottom and would again have a slight detrimental impact by reinforcing the encroachment of urban forms into the predominantly rural open landscape. The same effect, but with greater impact, would be seen at closer quarters by those passing along the A4155. The widened access would have a more urban appearance and the facilities would be seen through the existing boundary trees”.

2. The potential for development to impact on the setting of the Dorset AONB, and hence being a material matter in the consideration of the acceptability of a development, has been affirmed by the Planning Inspectorate in connection with an appeal against the refusal of permission for the creation of a new static caravan community of 30 bases and a reduction of 30 bases elsewhere on the park (see APP/P1235/A/06/2012607, 2007). The Inspector wrote:

“I consider that the area immediately abutting an AONB will be relevant where the appreciation of the natural beauty of the designated area may be affected by what lies outside it. In my view, this is analogous to development outside of a Green Belt, where Planning Policy Guidance Green Belts (PPG2) advises, at paragraph 3.15, that the visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by proposals for development conspicuous from the Green Belt which, although they would not prejudice the purposes of including land in Green Belts, might be visually detrimental by reason of their siting, materials or design. I therefore agree with the Council that the effect on the AONB is a material consideration”.

3. Further consideration was given to the issue of setting of the Dorset AONB by the Inspector in appeal ref APP/P1235/A/08/2072794, 2008 where he stated, with respect to a proposal for the change of use of land from existing touring caravan site to site for 45 static holiday caravans, that:

“However, given that the Secretary of State has now published the Proposed Changes to the Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), I attach significant weight to RSS Policy ENV3, which requires particular care to be taken to ensure that no development is permitted outside AONBs which would damage their natural beauty, special character and special qualities – in other words to their setting”.

4. Detailed consideration of the adverse impacts of the construction and operation of a four 100m turbine wind farm for electricity generation on the special qualities of Exmoor National Park was given by the Inspector in appeal ref APP/Y1138/A/08/2084526, 2008:

“...I turn now to views south from Exmoor, and the setting on the National Park. Although it was suggested that the evidence
presented in opposition to the proposal was tantamount to the
creation of a buffer zone to the south of Exmoor, I accept that this is
not the case. The special qualities of Exmoor include the description
of 'a landscape that provides inspiration and enjoyment to visitors
and residents alike'. In my judgment part of the enjoyment stems
from the appreciation of Exmoor in its rural setting, and the land to
the south is a significant element in that. The National Park clearly
has a setting framed by the land to the south, and proposals must
be considered individually or cumulatively in respect of the setting.
The definition of setting is difficult to pin down in many instances.
For a particular building it might involve hard boundaries such as
walls, but for a landscape it involves concepts such as topography,
land use, character, vegetation and more".

"So the effect on the character and appearance of the area, and the
setting of Exmoor, can be summarised thus. The visual experience
will vary from location to location, and will be of a major and
substantial intrusion in places. There would be serious harm to
landscape character. But from some places there would be levels of
visibility and intrusion which would not, in my judgment, be so
harmful as to weigh against the proposal. I consider that the skyline
to views and movement of blades would, notwithstanding the
separation from Exmoor, impinge upon the appreciation of the
special qualities of Exmoor to a material degree".

5. An Inspector, in dismissing appeal ref: APP/H1840/A/06/2023564,
addressed the issue of the proposed development of a **haulage depot
and storage buildings** outside the AONB that impacted adversely on
views cut from the **Cotswolds AONB**:

"From the elevated vantage point of the Cotswold Way [within the
AONB] the greater density of the development would be readily
apparent, as although the site forms part of a vast panorama, it
would be towards the front of that view".

6. And towards the Cotswolds **AONB**:

"From lower viewpoints ... the breach of the AONB skyline would
not be mitigated".
Special qualities of the Chilterns AONB

- The steep chalk escarpment
- Open, flower-rich, chalk downland
- Large tracts of beech woodland
- Areas of common land
- Locally distinctive flint and brick architecture
- A rich historic environment with many grand houses, designed landscapes, ancient routes, hill forts and chalk figures
- Extensive public rights of way network, including the Ridgeway and the Thames Path National Trails, and other accessible sites which receive 55 million leisure visits a year
- Natural features such as chalk rivers and streams which are a globally scarce habitat supporting a range of specialised wildlife including the water vole
- Tranquillity
- Arable and livestock farms managed with consideration for biodiversity, particularly farmland birds and other wildlife

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15 As detailed in the vision for the Chilterns AONB and introduction of the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2008-13: A Framework For Action
Item 8  
Statement of Accounts 2010-11

Author: Chris Smith  Finance Officer

Summary: The year end position shows an overall net surplus from all activity of £27,835.

£21,570 has been transferred to the Budget Equalisation Reserve, leaving £170,000 in the General Reserve.

Other earmarked reserves are increased by a net £7,482 and restricted reserves reduced by a net £1,217.

Purpose of Report: To present the Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2010-11.

Final results

1. The formal Statement of Accounts and associated Annual Audit Return are attached.

2. The figures show that an overall net surplus of income over expenditure of £27,835 was recorded.

3. The General Reserve is unchanged at £170,000.

4. Restricted reserves are reduced by a net £1,217 to £23,781, comprising:

   Friends of Red Kites  £7,883
   Red Kites / Getting Close to Nature  £15,898

5. Earmarked reserves are increased by a net £29,052 to £328,612, comprising:

   Budget Equalisation  £228,466
   Countryside Festival  £1,758
   Chalk Streams  £19,496
   Woodland Heritage  £56,009
   Access Publications  £8,691
   High Speed 2  £9,000
   Commons  £167
6. The Pensions Liability has decreased by £348,000 to £274,000. This represents the liability to the Board if every employee had retired on 31 March 2011 and collected their pension entitlements.

7. The decrease is due to the volatility in financial markets over the last couple of years, together with the impact of the valuation methodology and the derivation of the main financial assumptions required by Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 17.

Recommendation

1. The Board approves the Statement of Accounts and Annual Audit Return for 2010-11.
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<td>3  Balance Sheet</td>
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<td>4  Statement of Movement in Reserves</td>
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FOREWORD

This Statement of Accounts details the Board’s activities for the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011, and has been prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as modified by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006.

The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006 reduced the reporting requirements for “smaller relevant bodies” – those whose gross income or expenditure falls below £1 million. At £818,000 the Chilterns Conservation Board falls within this threshold and so the accounts have been prepared accordingly.


The Board operates to a budget based on the agreed grant aid from Natural England / Defra and local authorities. Additionally, the Board either takes the lead role or actively participates in a range of partnership schemes to secure external funding for additional project work.

The Statements included in these accounts are:

Income and Expenditure Account (pages 3-5)

This shows the costs of providing services across the various activities and projects that the Board has supported during the year and how these projects were supported from grants and income. Gross revenue expenditure for the year was £790,024, whilst income was £817,859. Taken together, these items show a net surplus for the year of £27,835. Net additions of £27,835 were made to restricted and earmarked reserves.

Statement of Balances (page 6)

This details the Board’s financial position as at 31st March 2011 listing the value of assets and liabilities.

Statement of Movements in Reserves (page 7)

This sets out the movements during the year for the reserves held by the Board.
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<td>Chalk Streams external income</td>
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<td>Chilterns Cycleway external income</td>
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<td>Ancient Woodland Survey external income</td>
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<td>Commons Project external income</td>
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**Countryside Management**

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**Planning and Development**

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<tr>
<td>Member Allowances and costs</td>
<td>36,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Support Costs</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE Landscapes Coordinator</td>
<td>1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise purchases</td>
<td>2,718</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| TOTAL EXPENDITURE                         | 790,024|
| SURPLUS FOR YEAR                          | 27,835 |
| FROM RESTRICTED RESERVES                  | 1,217  |
| TO EARMARKED RESERVES                     | 29,052 |
| TO GENERAL RESERVE                        | -     |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Restricted Reserves</th>
<th>Earmarked Reserves</th>
<th>General Reserve</th>
<th>Pensions Reserve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As at 1st April 2010</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>15,896</td>
<td>1,758</td>
<td>12,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60,825</td>
<td>60,825</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>8,691</td>
<td>8,691</td>
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<td></td>
<td>206,856</td>
<td>206,856</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>170,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>622,000</td>
<td>622,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movements in the year</td>
<td>(1,217)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7,106</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4,816)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,025</td>
<td>5,025</td>
<td>21,570</td>
<td>21,570</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(348,000)</td>
<td>(348,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As at 31st March 2011</td>
<td>7,883</td>
<td>15,898</td>
<td>1,758</td>
<td>19,496</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66,009</td>
<td>66,009</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>167</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>5,025</td>
<td>5,025</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8,691</td>
<td>8,691</td>
<td>228,466</td>
<td>228,466</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>274,000</td>
<td>274,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILTERNS CONSERVATION BOARD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATEMENT OF BALANCES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As at 31st March 2010</td>
<td>As at 31 March 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIXED ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,775 Stocks in hand</td>
<td>3,378</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24,180 Debtors &amp; accrued income</td>
<td>11,016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>628,842 Bank &amp; cash</td>
<td>686,150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>658,797</td>
<td>700,544</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(164,239) Creditors and receipts in advance</td>
<td>(178,151)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>494,558</td>
<td>522,393</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(622,000) Defined benefits Pension Scheme</td>
<td>(274,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(127,442)</td>
<td>(248,393)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS LESS TOTAL LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(622,000) Pensions Reserve</td>
<td>(274,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24,998 Reserves - Restricted</td>
<td>23,781</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>299,560 Reserves - Earmarked</td>
<td>328,612</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170,000 Reserves - General</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(127,442)</td>
<td>248,393</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>31 March 2010</th>
<th>31 March 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Balances brought forward</td>
<td>497,058</td>
<td>494,558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (+) Income from local tax and/or levy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (+) Total other receipts</td>
<td>764,025</td>
<td>817,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (-) Staff costs</td>
<td>383,120</td>
<td>411,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. (-) All other payments</td>
<td>383,402</td>
<td>378,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. (=) Balances carried forward</td>
<td>494,558</td>
<td>522,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Total cash and short term investments</td>
<td>628,842</td>
<td>686,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Total fixed assets and long term assets</td>
<td>69,675</td>
<td>70,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Total borrowings</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes and guidance:**

- Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report any NIL balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.
- Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the body’s financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
- Total amount of local tax and/or levy received or receivable in the year including funding from a sponsoring body.
- Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less income from taxation and/or levy (line 2). Include any grants received here.
- Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all body employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
- Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the body’s borrowings (if any).
- Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
- Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6).
- The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – to agree with bank reconciliation.
- The recorded book value at 31 March of all fixed assets owned by the body and any other long term assets e.g. loans to third parties and any long-term investments.
- The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2011 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of the body and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer: [Signature]

Date: 15/06/2011

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by the body on:

15/06/2011

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by Chair of meeting approving these accounting statements:

Date: 15/06/2011

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Section 2 – Annual governance statement

We acknowledge as the members of [CHILE-TEENS CONSERVATION BOARD] our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2011, that:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>We have approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>We have taken all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the body to conduct its business or on its finances.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>We have provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the body and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>We have maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the body's accounting records and control systems.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>We have considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the body and where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This annual governance statement is approved by the body and recorded as minute reference

dated 15/06/2011

Signed by:
Chair
dated 15/06/2011
Signed by:
Clerk
dated 15/06/2011

*Note: Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response that has been given and describe what action is being taken to address the weaknesses identified.
Item 9  Proposal to Create a ‘Caring for the Chilterns’ Fund

Author: Steve Rodrick  Chief Officer
        Cathy Rose  Activities and Learning Officer

Summary
An option for the Board to secure donations from all parts of the community is to create a special fund – Caring for the Chilterns Fund - which would be used for projects to conserve natural beauty and promote enjoyment of the AONB. Such a fund would not be used to meet operating costs of the Board itself, but it would help relieve some of the pressures on its dwindling funds to support projects. It would also help harness the current high levels of public concern for the Chilterns arising from the high speed railway. Initially the fund would be expected to generate at least £10,000 per annum within three years of being launched.

Purpose of the Report: To seek a decision on whether to set up the fund

Background

1. During the prolonged period when the Board, and all other parts of the public sector, will face significant cuts to their budgets there is a need to investigate how additional funds can be secured from other sources. To date the Board has not sought, or needed, donations from the public or business community. The one exception has been the Friends of Red Kites scheme which has generated donations of over £11,500 during the past 6 years.

2. On a regular basis, generally small but unsolicited, donations have been received. Recently increasing numbers of people have given small donations when taking free literature and community groups have given donations following talks given by staff members and volunteers.

3. In view of the Board’s position, and generally reduced public sector budget to support work in the AONB, it is timely to consider the possibility of creating a special fund to encourage greater financial support from the general public and business community.

4. When considering such an idea great weight needs to be given, from the outset, to the potential for this to affect charitable trusts and other community groups which depend upon public subscriptions and donations. The aim must be to increase the size of this particular cake
and not simply re-divide it. It should be a stated objective that a proportion of any funds raised would be used to support such groups.

5. A further key principle of any initiative of this kind should be that the maximum possible proportion of funds is used to support, directly, 'good works' and as little as possible is for administration. It should not be an aim of this proposal to generate income to meet the Board's day to day operating costs.

6. It is well known that the most successful fund raising campaigns are for specific purposes with relatively tight deadlines, i.e. the emergency fundraising appeal or the opportunity to buy a valued site. This type of appeal is generally not consistent with the nature of the Board's work, and is better suited to charitable organisations such as Wildlife Trusts.

7. Instead it is suggested the Caring for the Chilterns Fund is a lower key seeking smaller contributions but on a consistent basis. Similarly the funds would be used for smaller projects for which fund raising is often more difficult, in other words similar to those supported currently by the Sustainable Development Fund.

8. There is currently a high level of public concern about the Chilterns because of HS2 and, more generally, an acknowledgement that the bodies such as the Board are seriously affected by large cuts to income. This has probably enhanced the willingness of the public to provide small scale financial help, not withstanding the pressure on household income. The reputation the Board has been built up over the past 6 could help to secure donations.

9. In some protected areas there are visitor payback schemes which are used to secure donations from visitors who have enjoyed the amenity of that area. A typical example is where a B&B might add a suggested donation of £2 to a visitor's bill. Currently there is no such scheme in place in the Chilterns.

**How much would a Caring for the Chilterns fund generate?**

10. The aim should be to generate at least £10,000 net per annum within 3 years of its launch. In the first year the aim would be to cover its costs and generate a surplus of £5,000 net in its second year. These figures are only given as a starting point for discussion. If it is agreed this proposal is worth investigating further a business and promotional plan would be prepared.

**Target Groups**

11. The following are proposed as target groups:

   - General public attending events
• Web site users
• Chalk and Trees readers
• Those with specific interests e.g. red kites
• Visitors, especially staying visitors
• Those receiving free literature

12. We should not be seeking legacies – that would impinge on the territory of charities such as The Chiltern Society and Wildlife Trusts

**How would donations be solicited?**

13. To launch the fund there would need to be a special promotional programme which could include:

• Special promotional leaflet
• Web site
• Chalk and Trees
• Other literature
• Direct mailing
• Events (walk, talks, shows, Countryside festival)
• Special PR campaigns using local media

**Recommendations**

1. To set up a Caring for the Cheltns Fund
2. To launch the Fund by the end of 2011
3. To set up a sub group of Board members and staff to oversee the development and promotion of the Fund.
Item 11  Funding from Parish Councils

Author: Steve Rodrick  Chief Officer

Summary: It is proposed to request all parish and town councils to make a financial contribution to the operating costs of the Board.

If contributions of up to £500 are requested from the 117 councils in the AONB, the total amount which could be raised could be over £10,000. In practice it is more likely to be approx £-4,000 in the first year.

Purpose of the Paper: To consider the proposal to seek financial contributions from parish councils and decide whether to proceed for 2012-2013.

Background

1. Despite making cost savings of over £48,000 in 2010-2011 the Board is still facing a deficit of £22,000. To avoid further cut backs in services and the work programme it is necessary to generate additional funds from other sources. To date no request for financial assistance has been made to parish and town councils (parish meetings would not be approached). As they elect 6 members of the Board it has been suggested they enjoy representation without having to make any commitment other than the time of the Board members they help appoint - that is a personal commitment of the council members rather than the council itself.

2. Parish and town councils have been strong supporters of the Board and there are many examples of working well in partnership. The large numbers of parish council delegates attending the Annual Forum, planning conference and other events demonstrates the level of interest in the AONB and work of the Board.

Scale of Contributions Requested

3. A possible structure for requesting contributions could be:

Parish councils with more than 200 hectares (500 acres)  - £500
Town councils (9 no.)  - £250
Parish Council with less than 200 hectares (approx 28 no.)  - £100
Parish Meetings  - £ 0

n.b Neither Sarratt PC or Chorleywood PC would be approached as they are currently contributing to the financial contribution made by Three Rivers DC.
4. Based on the proposed rates, the total contribution could reach £45,000. In practice this is not attainable and initially the sums contributed may be no more than one tenth of the theoretical maximum. A target could be to seek a total contribution from parish councils of £10,000 by 2014-2015.

**Encouragement to contribute**

6. It is essential that the Board makes a full case for these contributions and explain how, collectively, they could add up to a significant sum which would help deliver the overall work programme. The Board should avoid ring fencing these funds for particular projects, but show how PC funds, together with those from other local authorities, Natural England and earned income help deliver the full range of services and the work programme. Through the PC appointed Board members the Board is already accountable to them and so there should be no need for an additional reporting structure.

7. It should be anticipated that if PCs contribute they make seek higher levels of support from the Board through requests for staff time, technical advice, free places at events, presentations, applications for grant assistance and supply of literature. All should be, generally, encouraged as signs of close working.

8. It is suggested a prospectus be provided to Parish and Town Councils explaining why the support is needed and how funds would be used.

**Recommendations:**

1. That financial contributions be requested from parish and town councils depending upon their population and area within the AONB for the financial year 2012-2013 onwards.

2. The Board should decide upon the appropriate levels of contribution to be requested.

3. To provide an information pack showing the benefits provided to parish and town councils by the Board.
Item 11  

Report on HS2

Author:  
Steve Rodrick  Chief Officer

Summary:  
The Board has been heavily involved in the anti HS2 campaign. The level of activity has increased markedly since the public consultation began on 28\textsuperscript{th} February. In addition to responding to the formal consultation a submission has been made to the Transport Select Committee. The Board is also committing staff time and resources to preparing a technical analysis of the environmental impact along the route in the AONB.

Two reports, commissioned by government and relevant to HS2 have been published and arguably undermine the case for it The McNulty Report on the value for money provided by UK railways and the UK National Ecosystem Assessment which has calculated a monetary value for various aspect of the environment.

Purpose of Report:  
To inform the Committee of current HS2 related activity.

Public Consultation

1. The formal period of public consultation began on 28\textsuperscript{th} February and runs until the 29\textsuperscript{th} July. The documents have been put on line and printed copies are available on request. However, almost printed documents have been placed in public offices such as libraries and council offices. The reliance on the web site is very great and, arguably, breaches equality legislation as it discriminates against the 20\% of the population with no access to the internet. Despite raising this issue with MPs and they, in their turn, with Transport ministers, no action was taken.

2. There is a programme of local consultation events which began at Euston Station in March. The HS2 road shows reached the Chilterns in May (Chalfont St.Giles, Amersham, Great Missenden, Wendover).

3. There is widespread concern over the way the public consultation is being handled and legal advisers retained by a number of anti HS2 groups are already assembling a possible legal challenge. The Board has been asked to endorse a letter of concern sent to the Dept for Transport.

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4. The anti HS2 campaign organised rallies at Great Missenden 8th May and at Amersham on 15th May. Both events, addressed by the Chief Officer, were a great success and attended by several hundred protestors.

5. Initially it was a target to publish the Board’s draft response by early May in order for others to use it to help with their own. However, that has not been possible as new information is being released by HS2 and as other information is unearthed. It is also clear that HS2 has not published all the information which many believe it should (e.g. the total land take or noise contour maps) which means that further work is needed.

6. Currently the Board’s staff are preparing an in depth analysis of the Appraisal of Sustainability.

7. The Board’s full draft response will be circulated to Board members for comment by the end of June.

**Spor**

8. An example of the misleading or incorrect information provided by HS2 Ltd is the volume of spoil they have stated will be excavated in or near the Chilterns. In the Appraisal of Sustainability they state that the volume of spoil generated in the section of line between West Ruislip and Aylesbury requiring disposal offline; would be 680,000 cubic metres. This figure has been checked (exhaustively) and the real figure is more likely to be 12 million cubic metres. Less than 10% can be used for embankments or other earth works which means the rest has to be taken out of the area.

9. It is likely the HS2 line itself can be used as a haul route especially for the spoil excavated from the Amersham tunnel, but most of the rest is likely to end up in a lorry on a public road. If this volume is in the order of 8-9 million cubic metres it is equivalent to over 500,000 full lorries and over 1 million lorry movements. This is equivalent to a lorry movement every 30 seconds or so for 5 working years. This may well be an under-estimate. A key issue is, where will the spoil be disposed of? Possibilities must include the dis-used quarries at Pitstone or Chinnor or further afield at Calvert in north Buckinghamshire. It is not clear whether this will require a planning application to be determined by the county councils and separate Environmental Impact Assessments.

10. This error is being raised directly with HS2 Ltd and the Department for Transport. To date HS2 Ltd has refused to discuss any matters related to construction arguing that the consultation is about the route and strategy.

**Environmental Information**
11. The Board has prepared a number of maps showing the sites along the route important for wildlife, historic environment and access. This is being combined with the landscape information held by Bucks CC. The Board has also undertaken surveys to establish the quality and species composition of all hedges and trees. This is being complemented by re-survey of all ancient woodland along the line. These surveys have identified 24 woodlands which will be destroyed (18 hectares will be lost) or fragmented of which 11 (13 hectares) are likely to be ancient woodland. In total HS2 will damage woods covering 63 hectares of which over 50 hectares are ancient.

12. Approx. 25 public rights of way will be affected, the majority of which will be closed or diverted during construction. It must be a high probability that many of these will never be re-instated. These include the Ridgeway National Trail, The Chiltern Way and The Chiltern Cycleway.

13. The Board commissioned a report from Green Balance, an environmental planning consultancy, to articulate the legislative and national planning context for HS2. The report has been circulated by E mail. The report shows that there are many contradictions between stated Government policy and legislation, and HS2. Perhaps the most recent example is the re-affirmed commitment to reducing national carbon emissions by 80% by 2050. HS2 will significantly increase carbon emissions compared to existing rail services.

Transport Select Committee

14. On 18th March the Transport Select Committee announced it intended to undertake an inquiry into the strategic case for High Speed Rail. The Board made a submission (circulated by E mail) concentrating on those areas which deal with the impacts including the claims for national environmental benefits. The Select Committee has confirmed that the Board’s submission has been formally accepted.

Visit to HS1

15. On 23rd May an invitation was received from HS2 Ltd to attend a visit to the HS1 route on 31st May. Despite the exceptionally short notice the chairman was able to attend. His notes have been circulated by e mail.

The McNulty Report - Realising the Potential of GB Rail

16. The DfT commissioned a report from Sir Roy McNulty into the value for money provided by the UK rail industry. The report concluded that costs were 40% higher than comparators in Europe and fares were similarly high. Amongst his many recommendations were:
1. The need for clearer government policy and leadership on the rail industry.

2. Using the fare pricing policies to reduce peak demand and to better match demand with capacity.

3. Move away from a predict and provide approach to managing demand better first before adding capacity.

17. He also suggests that in future intercity services might not receive a public subsidy.

18. It is arguable that none of these findings provides support high speed rail.

**UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA)**

18. The Government commissioned a report on the value of the environment as it believed that insufficient weight was being given to maintaining a healthy environment.

19. "The research forms the basis of a major new independent report – the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA) – which reveals that nature is worth billions of pounds to the UK economy. The report strengthens the arguments for protecting and enhancing the environment and will be used by the government to direct policy in future." (DEFRA 2.6.2011).

20. The business case published by DfT for HS2 places no monetary value on the environment, despite monetising other non monetary values such as overcrowding and the notional value of time. The DfT and DEFRA need to be questioned whether the publication of this report means that the business case for HS2 will be revised and a value placed on the impact on the environment.

**Carbon Emissions**

21. The Committee for Climate Change which advises government on the targets for reducing green house gases, recommended that the UK cuts emissions of carbon dioxide by 80% by 2050 with challenging interim targets. In order to achieve them the government should be ensuring that all major public investment reduces emissions.

22. HS2 will increase emissions. When HS2 was first proposed it was vaunted as being a "major plank of a low carbon economy". Such language is no longer used. At best Government refers to HS2 as being carbon neutral. It is now clear that HS2 will increase emissions directly due to its construction and higher energy demands, and by triggering the replacement of some domestic short haul flights by long haul flights.
Recommendations

1. To note the activity of the Board.

2. To note that a written submission has been made to the Transport Select Committee.

3. To request Government to review the business case for HS2 based on the principles in the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA).

4. To write to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change highlighting the likelihood of HS2 increasing carbon dioxide emissions.
Item 12  Tring Park

Authors:  Steve Rodrick  Chief Officer
          Neil Jackson  Landscape and Conservation Officer

Summary:  Tring Park is important as an historic parkland, for its chalk grassland and woodland, and as a place for quiet enjoyment. It is leased to the Woodland Trust which, with grant aid from the HLF, is embarking on a programme of improvements. This paper proposes that the Board works closely with the Trust and the local community to enhance levels of involvement and to support much need management of the site.

Purpose of the Report:  To seek comment from the Board on the proposal to work closely with the Woodland Trust on the future management of Tring Park.

Background

1. Tring Park lies within the AONB immediately to the south of Tring in Hertfordshire. It formed part of a once much larger estate. It came to prominence in the late 17th century when a house was built based on designs prepared by Sir Christopher Wren - a rare excursion into domestic architecture. The grounds were later altered substantially by Bridgeman and Gibb. After it was bought in 1872 by Sir Lionel de Rothschild it underwent its last re-incarnation and much of that landscape survives.

2. In 1945 it become the Tring School for Performing Arts. However, in 1975 the park was severed by the A41. In the early 1990’s Dacorum BC bought the site (that part without the mansion) from the Whitbread Group which had unsuccessfully attempted to develop it. In 1994 the Borough Council leased it to the Woodland Trust for 399 years.

3. The Park now extends to 104 hectares with a central area covered by grazed parkland surrounded by an extensively wooded chalk ridge topped with a magnificent avenue of lime trees. There are a number of surviving features but many have been lost, damaged or hidden from view as the woodland has re-generated.

4. The site is important for a number of reasons:
   1. It lies within the Chilterns AONB.
   2. It is a Grade II Registered Historic Park.
3. Part of the site is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
4. Part of the site is Ancient Semi Natural Woodland.
5. It is crossed by the Ridgeway National Trail.
6. It is a valuable local recreation area (25,000 + visits per annum).

5. The park has not been properly managed for many decades and looks tired with most features of importance in gentle decline. Perhaps the most successful aspect of management is the grazing of the park.

6. The Woodland Trust faces a difficult challenge in managing the park, not least as it does not have a strong local presence and its expertise does not necessarily lie in managing historic parkland. However, it recognises some of those short comings and has successfully applied for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to enhance community engagement, its educational work in combination the adjacent Tring Natural History Museum, and to undertake some work on the historic park.

7. The Board has been liaising with The Chiltern Society on how both organisations might help to enhance the long term effort invested in the management of the Park. Meetings have been arranged with the Woodland Trust and advice taken from a national expert on historic parks and gardens.

8. One outcome of the current initiative by the Woodland Trust should be the much closer involvement of local people in the stewardship of the park. This is essential as the Woodland Trust, whilst a national organisation of some standing, does not, nor is likely to have, a strong local presence. It recognises this and aims to develop a stronger pool of local volunteers.

9. The Board should seek a closer involvement. In the short term it can help deliver the HLF funded programme by offering some limited financial support and staff time, with a particular aim of strengthening long term management arrangements. This too is something The Chiltern Society wishes to achieve.

10. The historical importance of the site is immense but poorly understood. It is imperative the necessary research is undertaken and a long term management plan prepared for the historic parkland. This too is something the Board should support and be prepared to contribute directly to.

11. In the first instance the Board should encourage an application by the Woodland Trust to the Sustainable Development Fund. It may be, depending upon need, that a contribution from the Development Reserve could be considered.
Recommendations:

1. To note that a significant opportunity has arisen to enhance the management and enjoyment of Tring Park.

2. The Board should actively seek a close working relationship with the Woodland Trust, The Chiltern Society and local community groups.

3. The Board should be prepared to provide support in the form of staff time and possibly grant aid.
Item 13  

**Box Wood**

**Authors:**
- Steve Rodrick  
  Chief Officer  
- Cathy Rose  
  Activities and Learning Officer  
- John Morris  
  Chilterns Woodland Project

**Summary:**
The Chilterns is important for Box woodland, but local knowledge of its ecology and silviculture is very limited. It is proposed to develop a programme to raise awareness of this species.

**Purpose of Paper**
To seek advice on the proposed programme to raise awareness and understanding of Box.

**Background**

1. Box (*Buxus sempervirens*) is a familiar species much used in ornamental gardens, for example to create small hedges as part of a parterre. It is not widely known that it is a native species once widespread across southern England (e.g. Box Hill in Surrey) that gradually disappeared due to grazing of those areas, now characterised by chalk grassland.

2. The best surviving and largest box wood in the Chilterns, possibly in England, is Ellesborough Warren near Chequers (between Wendover and Princes Risborough). It covers 69 hectares and was designated as a SSSI in 1953.

3. Fragments of box wood are widespread in the Chilterns but often only found in small areas hidden within, for example, mature beech woodland. Perhaps it is not surprising, therefore, that knowledge of its ecology and management is poor.

4. Box trees are short, more like scrub, with a tendency to fall over. As a result its timber is little used except for some musical instruments, chess pieces and printing blocks. It has an unusual property in that it is denser than water.

**A Chilterns Box Wood Project**

5. Recently a private benefactor with a passion for music has promoted a project to plant a new box woodland to produce timber for making musical instruments. A national search for a suitable area has resulted in selection of the Chilterns over alternatives in Surrey and Kent. It may be that the north facing escarpment of the Chilterns is more suitable for Box than the south facing chalk escarpments.
6. The search for sites in the Chilterns which can be planted continues. The consultant responsible has been liaising with the Board, from which it has emerged that local knowledge of this species is negligible. It has prompted the proposal to develop an awareness programme for boxwood, for which it seems, the Chilterns is the most important area in the country.

7. The Chiltern Society is working with the private benefactor and consultant to find and plant a suitable site. It is proposed that the Board develops a wider complementary programme of awareness which could involve:

1. Seminars for a professional audience on the ecology and management of boxwood.

2. Site visits to Ellesborough Warren.

3. Coalition of survey information on the extent and condition of boxwood in the Chilterns.

4. Practical demonstrations and lectures from makers of musical instruments who use boxwood - one is based in Totternhoe.

5. Musical recitals using instruments made from boxwood.

8. The cost of such a programme need not be great. Some events can be made to pay for themselves and other elements built into the programme agreed with the Chiltern Woodlands Project, for which a budget already exists. Given that box is not confined to the Chilterns and national knowledge levels are low, interest from around the country can be anticipated.

**Recommendation**

1. To approve the creation of Chiltern Box Wood Project
Item 14  

**Education Programme**  
- Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve

Authors:  
Steve Rodrick  
Cathy Rose  
Chief Officer  
Activities and Learning Officer

Summary:  
Natural England has indicated it would like to hand over the role of promoting educational use of the Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve to the Board. This would largely be based on a programme of school visits in collaboration with the neighbouring farmer and an associated programme of public events organised by the Board on the reserve itself. The main commitment would be staff time as little actual cost is involved which cannot be re-charged to visiting groups.

Purpose of the Report:  
To seek approval of the Board for the proposed agreement with Natural England.

Background

1. Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve lies astride the M40, 3 miles west of Chinnor. It is a large area of chalk grassland managed directly by Natural England, which bases 2 wardens on site. In recent years it has promoted the reserve for educational uses and has employed an outreach officer who has worked closely with the Board. Following the re-structuring of Natural England that post no longer exists and Natural England has approached the Board to take on the role of promoting educational visits to the reserve.

2. The role is enhanced by the development of the neighbouring farm for educational visits. Murray and Sue Graham, who manage Field Farm at Lewknor have, with grant aid from Natural England, converted an out building into a first class facility to host school visits. Currently, schools that visit the farm in the morning are given the option for a visit to the Reserve in the afternoon. It is proposed to host up to 25 school visits per year, for which the Board would support the afternoon reserve visits and deal with part of the booking process.

3. The Board would also take on a low key programme of public events which it has been instrumental in developing over several years.

4. The main input would be the time of the Activities and Learning Officer with some administrative support. The total time commitment is likely to be up to 30 days per year (most visits are for less than half a day). This would therefore occupy just over 13% of the Activities and Learning Officer's work programme. Natural England may be able to provide
some additional funding for events (up to £1,000). It is more likely that any events will have to be self financing.

5. The extent to which the Board can commit itself to new events will be determined by availability of staff time and trained volunteers. The Board would 'inherit' one very experienced volunteer, with two more currently undergoing training by Natural England.

6. This presents an excellent opportunity for the Board to work in partnership with Natural England. The Board has the expertise in the necessary fields and has the opportunity of using the National Nature Reserve to develop its profile and exploit the potential for a wider public events programme (subject to Natural England’s agreement).

7. The handover of the programme would begin on 1st October 2011 and be completed by 1st April 2012

**Recommendation**

1. The Board approves the proposal to take over the education programme for Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve from 1st October 2011.
Item 15  **Education Resource Pack**

**Author:**  Cathy Rose  Activities and Learning Officer

**Summary:**  The Board has been working with the Education Dept. of Bucks CC over the last year to produce a Chilterns-wide, cross-curricular education pack which is aimed at local studies in history and geography at Key Stage 2. The pack will shortly be provided to all state schools in and immediately surrounding the AONB.

**Purpose of the Report:**  To inform the Board members of the publication of a Chilterns Education Park

**Background**

7. The Chilterns AONB's distinctive geology, varied natural features and fascinating history make it an ideal subject for primary schools to teach local studies in history and geography at Key Stage 2.

8. The Activities and Learning Officer has been working with Christine Lloyd-Staples, a geography advisor at the Bucks School Improvement Service (part of Bucks CC) over the last year to develop a pack of information and activity sheets based on different elements of the Chilterns. A 52-page printed booklet called *Understanding the Chilterns in Place and Time* is accompanied by a CD of additional resources including photographs, sound clips, extra task sheets and background guidance for teachers.

9. The pack is split into 10 units, covering the subject areas of:
   a. Geology
   b. Ancient life
   c. Anglo-Saxon settlements
   d. Woodlands
   e. Farming
   f. Streams
   g. Local industries (bricks, brewing and chair-making)
   h. Recreation
   i. Fieldwork ideas
   j. Red kites

10. The pack also contains Curriculum links, ideas for follow-up projects and contacts for places to visit.

11. The activities in the pack have been trialled with a group of Buckinghamshire teachers and learning advisors and the pack has met with a very positive response in its draft form.
12. The pack is jointly copyrighted to the Chilterns Conservation Board and Buckinghamshire County Council. All parts of the pack can be photocopied or printed by schools for individual or class use, but not for publication or re-sale.

13. Four hundred printed copies of the pack are currently in production. One copy of the pack will be provided free of charge to every state primary school in the AONB and surrounding towns (a total of 260 schools). A small number of packs will be given to local education professionals, Board members and the remaining copies (up to 100) of the pack will be available to purchase from the CCB at a cost of £20. It is anticipated that some schools will wish to purchase an additional copy to the one they receive for free, and the pack will also be offered to private schools.

14. The cost for producing the printed packs and associated CDs was £3,600 toward which Bucks CC provided £1,000.

15. Some launch events are being planned for the summer term (dates and venues to be confirmed) to encourage teachers to come together and discover the scope and breadth of the pack.

Recommendation

1. The Board notes the publication of the Education Resource pack