Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership

Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership Plan 2025-2030

The Statutory Management Plan for the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Final Draft
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Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership Plan 2025-2030

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Introduction

1. Management Plan – context

What is a National Landscape?

1.1. A National Landscape is the everyday name for what is set out in legislation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). National Parks and National Landscapes are designated under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act.

1.2. There are forty-six National Landscapes in the UK, including thirty-four in England. Their primary purpose is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty[1]. Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.'[2]

1.3. Designation of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape[3] was in 1981 and extends over 983 square kilometres (Map 1). This National Landscape is the sixth largest and is one of thirteen National Landscapes in the South West (Map 2). The majority of the National Landscape lies within the South West though 6.8% (the Hampshire section) falls within the South East. In the South West, together with the two National Parks (Exmoor and Dartmoor), the family of protected areas cover some 38% of the countryside. Further information on designation is provided in Section 2 and information on 'natural beauty' is provided in Appendix 1.

International Context IUCN Protected Landscape

1.4. The National Landscape is also of international importance. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recognise it as a Category V Protected Landscape (Appendix 2). In 2013, the IUCN UK Committee reaffirmed the Category V status of all National Landscapes, confirming the significant contribution they make to conserve the UK's biodiversity.

European Landscape Convention

1.5. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is a Treaty devoted exclusively to the protection, management and planning of all landscapes in Europe (Appendix 3). Crucially, the Convention encourages the integration of landscape matters into all relevant areas of national and local policy, including cultural, economic and social policies. The ELC defines landscape as "An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors." (Council of Europe 2000).

1.6. There is a particular emphasis on the need for co-operation in undertaking programmes of landscape work that cross administrative and national boundaries. This National Landscape is in a prime position to display the UK's commitment to the Convention.

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[1] Section 82, Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) and Planning Practice Guidance
[2] Countryside Commission Policy Statement on Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty 1991
[3] The legal title of the area is 'Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)'. At the Partnership Panel meeting of 9th January 2014, it was resolved that the shorter name 'Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)' would be used on a day-to-day basis, that has now become 'Cranborne Chase National Landscape'.

What is the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Management Plan?

1.7. The National Landscape Management Plan is a statutory plan that sets out the Partnership's policies for the management of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape[4]. It is a strategic over-arching document that coordinates and integrates other policies, plans and strategies where these relate to the purpose and duties. The Local Authorities with a National Landscape (the Responsible Authorities[5]) are required by law to produce and review a plan every five years. Management Plans are of national importance. No major decisions should be taken affecting the future of the National Landscape without reference to its Management Plan. The Management Plan, in its entirety, establishes the management policy of the Responsible Authorities for the designation.

1.8. The Management Plan does not formulate land use planning policies. It provides evidence to assist in the policy and decision-making process in planning. The status of the Management Plan, combined with the formal process of plan making and review, means that the National Landscape Management Plan is a material consideration in planning matters. Therefore, it should be afforded weight in decisions. The National Planning Practice Guidance confirms this, stating that 'AONB Management Plans may contain information which is relevant when preparing plan policies, or which is a material consideration when assessing planning applications.'[6]

Why do we have a Management Plan?

1.9. The Management Plan is the only plan to guide the management of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape as a whole. The Management Plan aims to:

- Describe the significant attributes of the designation
- Summarise the trends in the condition of the landscape and quality of life for people living and working in it
- Briefly describe the drivers for change and issues acting on the designation
- Present an ambition and strategy to achieve the purposes of the designation
- Establish management principles to guide the activity and decisions of others
- Establish measures of progress and success
- Identify the who, how, and when of delivery

1.10. The review of the Management Plan and the day to day management of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape is a shared task for all. The review process is vital in securing commitment to act jointly to conserve and enhance the landscape, galvanising collaborative action. As well as being a statutory requirement, a five-year review of the National Landscape Management Plan is necessary to ensure continuing relevance considering changing circumstances, new drivers, and adaptive learning from implementing the plan.

[4] Section 89, Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) as amended by the NERC Act (2006).
[5] The Responsible Authorities are Wiltshire, Dorset and Somerset Councils; Hampshire County Council, and the New Forest District Council.
[6] Planning Practice Guidance paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 8-040-20190721

Who Approves the Plan?

1.11. Many people and organisations commented on this Management Plan during its preparation. The plan was subject to assessments under European directives and to public consultation between April 2024 and February 2025. The National Landscape Partnership endorses the plan and relevant local authorities have formally adopted it. It is published with the assistance of the partners who are responsible for much of the plan's delivery.

1.12. This Management Plan, the Strategic Environmental Assessment, the Habitat Regulations Assessment, and supporting documents are all available on the Cranborne Chase National Landscape website: add hyperlink

1.13. You can make enquiries about these documents to the Cranborne Chase National Landscape team through the website or via info@cranbornechase.org.uk

Who will deliver the Management Plan?

1.14. The Management Plan is for the geographic area, not just for one authority or body. It is the principal vehicle for ensuring that the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty is met. Delivering the vision and outcomes contained in this plan will require action from all those with an interest in the National Landscape.

1.15. A Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership exists to bring people together and encourage a strong sense of 'ownership' to care for the area. Its membership is wide-ranging. The Partnership Board is, technically, a Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) that advises the relevant local authorities[7] on the development and implementation of the management plan.

1.16. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership will play an important role in delivering the vision and outcomes of the Management Plan. However, its successful delivery is also dependent on other stakeholders, including local authorities and other public bodies, land owners and land managers, non-government organisations, developers, businesses, residents and people who benefit from the area.

Duty to further the purpose of designation

1.17. It is a legal requirement that 'relevant authorities'[8] must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape[9]. This legal requirement is known as the 'seek to further' duty. This duty applies to relevant authorities in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the National Landscape. More information about the 'must seek to further' duty is provided in Appendix 4.

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[7] CRoW Act 2000 Section 89 (11) "relevant local authority" means:
(a) in the case of an area of outstanding natural beauty which is wholly comprised in one principal area, the local authority for that area, and
(b) in any other case, the local authorities for all the principal areas wholly or partly comprised in the area of outstanding natural beauty, acting jointly.

[8] CRoW Act 2000 Section 85 (2) The following are 'relevant authorities' for the purposes of this section,
(a) any Minister of the Crown,
(b) any public body,
(c) any statutory undertaker, and
(d) any person holding public office.

[9] Section 245 of the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023

How will the Management Plan be delivered?

Working together

1.18. This Management Plan is a **place-based plan** for the Cranborne Chase National Landscape, not just the National Landscape Joint Advisory Committee. The JAC is unable to deliver the plan by itself. The Plan helps inform the activity of a multitude of partners, stakeholders, landowners, communities and visitors to contribute to the purposes of the protected landscape designation.

1.19. The legal requirement that 'relevant authorities' must seek to further the purpose of National Landscape designation (the 'seek to further' duty) provides an important mechanism for conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape. There are several relevant authorities and other key stakeholders making decisions that affect the Cranborne Chase National Landscape. This makes it very challenging to develop and deliver a consistent approach to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, including its special qualities and increasing the understanding and enjoyments of its special qualities. However, the potential benefits are huge, including better coordination of planning, development, rural support schemes, nature recovery planning, tourism and recreation.

1.20. Taking a consistent approach means being consistent regarding (and, ideally, being compatible with): the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape; national policy relating to national landscapes; the policies of the Management Plan; and the guidance and position statements published by the National Landscape Partnership. However, this does not necessarily mean that decisions made or actions taken will always be the same across the whole of the National Landscape, as these will vary depending on local social, economic, and environmental circumstances. With respect to development, a planning protocol was agreed in 2005 that sets out how the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership and the relevant Local Planning Authorities will engage on planning matters that affect the National Landscape.[10]

1.21. The new duty to seek to further the purposes of designation combined with a statutory Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF) act as a powerful driver for relevant authorities, including public bodies, to continue working collaboratively towards the outcomes in the plan and to contribute even more.

Working in partnership

1.22. A successful partnership requires an agreed delivery plan that translates the strategy and outcomes into actions. It is the working document of the Protected Landscape, used through the implementation period to track progress on targets and measures of success. Importantly, it identifies the expected deliverers so that partners can be held accountable and is also the place to establish the 'how' of delivery.

1.23. Once the Management Plan is finalised and the implementation phase begins, activity springs from the Delivery Plan, which timetables the objectives and policies across the life of the Plan. The Delivery Plan can also give an estimate of the resources required for each outcome, assisting with an understanding of the necessary budgetary requirements in the delivery phase. Measures of success should also be evident in the related outcome statement.

[10] See https://cranbornechase.org.uk/our-work/planning/planning-protocol/

Delivery Plan

1.24. How the Partnership will contribute to the delivery of the Management Plan itself, as well as encourage and support other stakeholders, is set out in a 5-year Delivery Plan that is regularly reviewed.

1.25. The Delivery Plan will be developed as a partnership project between the local authorities, other key stakeholders and local communities who wish to take part, supported by the National Landscape Team, once this Management Plan is adopted. The Delivery Plan will identify the key actions but that list is not intended to be exhaustive. In essence, stakeholders are asked to:

- have regard to the Management Plan, including its vision, outcomes and, perhaps most importantly, its policies;
- incorporate the Management Plan's vision, outcomes and policies into their own plans, policies, proposals, work programmes and decisions, where appropriate.

How will the delivery of the Management Plan be monitored?

Performance monitoring

- Performance monitoring will occur by assessing the success of partners in implementing actions. This will be documented in an Annual Review produced each summer.

Condition monitoring

- Condition monitoring is about the state of the land itself. A core suite of indicators measure change in the condition of the key attributes of the area. These include its landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and built heritage. Information on these indicators is used to produce a full State of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape report. New indicators are adopted for monitoring purposes as and when improved data becomes available and to reflect changing priorities, for example, in relation to nature recovery and climate change adaption.
- Defra and its agencies provide environmental and social data cut to the National Landscape boundary. Natural England leads in this work, in close partnership with Defra, the English National Park Authorities Association, Historic England and the National Landscapes Association. Recently, Defra published a new Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF). In May 2024, it released its first set of national data, though several data sets are to follow. The framework includes 10 target indicators supported by 24 additional statistic sheets. These targets are listed in Appendix 5 where a suite of additional monitoring indicators that have been developed for each policy are also listed.

1.26. Implementation of this National Landscape Management Plan is intended to improve the condition of the area. Condition monitoring will be used to assess whether the management plan has succeeded or failed. Results from condition monitoring activities will also be used to inform future strategies, plans and management activity.

Adaptive management planning

1.27. An adaptive approach to implementing a Management Plan involves closely monitoring the impacts and effects of activity and then changing the approach if other courses of action are deemed more effective. Adaptive management planning, therefore, involves a cycle of act-monitor-learn-change, altering the course of action if there is an identified need for adaptation.

How does the Management Plan fit with the Policies and Plans of others?

1.28. National and local policies already provide a considerable level of protection for the natural beauty of the National Landscape. In addition, many partner organisations prepare strategies and plans that deal with a range of other issues that affect the area (such as the management of development, transport, tourism, recreation, energy, water resources and biodiversity).

1.29. These policies, plans and strategies will inform the National Landscape Management Plan. Implementation of this Management Plan will complement them and influence the preparation and delivery of other key policies, plans and processes affecting the area. This covers, for example, Local Plans and other planning documents. An explanation of the policy context is set out in Appendix 6.

Management Plan – review of the 2019-2024 plan

1.30. Engagement internally and with our local authority and other partners took place over the course of 2024. A summary of the timetable and key outputs from this consultation is set out in Appendix xx

Management Plan – structure and use

Structure

1.31. Building on the purposes of designation, the issues affecting the National Landscape are presented under three themes:

Conserving and enhancing - Outstanding Landscapes

Conserving and enhancing - Living and Working Landscapes

Conserving and enhancing - Special Landscapes to Enjoy

1.32. These themes are separated into eleven topics:

OUTSTANDING LANDSCAPES

- Landscape (chapter 4)
- Nature Recovery (chapter 5)
- Climate Change (chapter 6)
- Water (chapter 7)
- Historic and Cultural Heritage (chapter 8)
- Dark Night Skies (chapter 8)

LIVING AND WORKING LANDSCAPES

- Rural Land Management (chapter 10)
- Planning and Transport (chapter 11)
- Sustaining Rural Communities (chapter 12)

SPECIAL LANDSCAPES TO ENJOY

- Awareness and Understanding (chapter 13)
- Wellbeing, Involvement and Learning (chapter 14)

1.33. For each of the eleven topics, the plan includes:

- Features that make this National Landscape special with regard to (topic).
- The Ambitions combine to form the 'Vision' for the National Landscape – Achieving the ambitions will make a significant difference to the area.
- Key Achievements – Work the National Landscape and partners have already undertaken.
- The Key Issues – Many issues affect the National Landscape. The key issues are those to address during the life of this plan. They are considered under four categories set out by Natural England (nature-climate-people-place)
- The Issues Explained – This is information that explains the key issues in more detail.
- Outcomes – Specific things (not in any order of priority) to achieve to make progress towards the ambition. Wherever possible, these are measurable, with a realistic timescale for completion. The links to 'Nature, Climate, People, and/or Place' is marked.
- Policies – How to achieve the outcomes.

1.34. The ten sections are not a checklist of all the activities that affect the National Landscape. Rather, they provide a framework for setting out the range of topics relevant to the statutory purpose for designating the area as a National Landscape.

1.35. The National Landscape Team and Partnership are catalysts for action. The National Landscape Team will prepare, with partners, a 5-year Delivery Plan, reviewing that plan annually.

1.36. Maps referred to in the plan are at the back of this document.

Use

1.37. None of the sections of this plan operates in isolation. There are many connections between them. Many of the outcomes and policies relate to more than just the topic in which they appear. Tackling the issues identified depends upon integrated action. Action taken to achieve one set of outcomes should complement and reinforce the achievement of outcomes elsewhere in the Plan. This is particularly true in relation to development and rural land management. When a development is being proposed in the National Landscape, the developer and the local authority should have regard to all the plan's policies, not just to those under Living and Working Landscapes.

1.38. One of the areas that the Management Plan relates to is in the policy-making and decision-making of local planning authorities (LPAs). They are obliged to seek to further the statutory purposes of protected landscapes. Therefore, LPAs should demonstrate how they have taken into account the Management Plan policies when reviewing and developing their own policies, including those within their development plans. The Management Plan policies are aspirational and as such, they might go further than current policies in individual development plans. It is intended that these aspirations will aid in helping to develop and evidence new local plan policies.

1.39. In addition, the local planning authorities have the power to take all such action as appears to them expedient for the accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape, or so much of it as is included in their area[11].

[11] CRoW Act 2000 Section 84(4).

1.40. The Management Plan is a material consideration in planning decisions. However, it is recognised that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the LPA's development plan (unless material considerations indicate otherwise).

1.41. The forthcoming Defra guidance on the 'must seek to further' duty may provide guidance on how National Landscape Management Plans should be taken into consideration in relation to this duty. In the meantime, it is important to note that Natural England's view, in this regard, is that proposed measures 'should align with and help to deliver the aims and objectives of the designated landscape's statutory management plan'.

1.42. Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act makes provisions for the Secretary of State to require relevant authorities to contribute to the preparation, implementation or review of national landscape management plans and to set out how a relevant authority may or must do so.[12] These provisions could potentially come into effect, via secondary legislation, as early as 2025.

2. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape

The special qualities of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape

2.1. The 'special qualities' of a National Landscape are those aspects of the area's natural beauty that make the area distinctive and which are considered valuable, especially at a national scale. They embrace distinctive characteristics and key features that make it special and appealing; and worthy of protection[13]. They are the key attributes on which the priorities for its conservation, enhancement and management are based. They bring out the essence of the National Landscape as an evocative description of the area rather than as a statistical account.

Statement of Significance

2.2. Forming part of the extensive belt of chalkland that stretches across southern central England, the Cranborne Chase National Landscape is a landscape of national significance. Its special qualities flow from the historical interaction of humans and the land. They include its diversity, distinctiveness, sense of history and remoteness, dark night skies, tranquillity; and its overwhelmingly rural character. With mists slowly forming over expansive downlands, it can be a moody, evocative landscape. The sights and sounds of bygone times never far away. It is an unspoilt and aesthetically pleasing landscape.

2.3. Natural beauty is not just the visual appearance of the countryside. It includes the flora, fauna, geological and physiographical features; and the historic and cultural associations and our sensory perceptions of them. The combinations of these factors give each locality its own sense of place, contributing immensely to the quality of life.

2.4. The National Landscape designation embraces a collection of fine landscapes, each with its different landforms, soils and wildlife habitats. Whilst the chalk downland is a dominant feature, the escarpments, valleys, greensand terraces and clay vales reflect the geomorphology and impact of the

[12] Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.
[13] The special characteristics are the unique components that give the area its sense of place; the special features are the physical elements in the landscape that are regionally distinctive, as described under each topic.

underlying geology. Sometimes the changes between these landscapes are slow and gentle; in other cases, such as above and below escarpments, they are quite swift and obvious. Views across and along these landscapes can be wide and expansive whilst in the valleys they are more focussed and channelled. Unspoilt and panoramic views are characteristic of this National Landscape.

2.5. Hilltop earthworks, monuments, and tree clumps are features of the chalk downlands. They serve as landmarks to help orientate ourselves in these extensive landscapes. In historic terms, the landscapes of the area today are extraordinarily rich. Evidence of successive eras of human activity and settlements can often be lost: but not in this National Landscape. The landscapes offer up evidence of the imprint of man, carved out over the centuries; a continuous timeline throughout British history. Prehistoric monuments of national importance, historic borderlands, ancient field systems, the Dorset Cursus, Ackling Dyke, droves and routeways all have stories to tell. The pioneering excavations and findings of General Pitt-Rivers, of the present-day Rushmore Estate in Cranborne Chase, led to him being known as the 'Father of Modern Archaeology'.

2.6. Eight thousand years ago, Neolithic peoples first started to change and manage this land. They built burial mounds and mysterious constructions, with many still seen today. The Bronze and Iron Ages saw the creation of large areas of pasture and arable farmland. The pastures on the downs date from this period. During the Anglo-Saxon period, large landholdings began to change rural society. This was already a royal hunting area when the Normans invaded. They imposed forest law on the area then known as Cranborne Chase. However, agricultural expansion continued outside the Chase and by the fifteenth century, hedges and walls divided the land into large blocks. This trend continued as sheep production became very profitable and the wealthy built large houses with extensive parks. Forest law persisted in the Chase until 1829, leading to the retention of a high proportion of woodlands.

2.7. Since then, agriculture has changed rapidly but the settlement patterns are very similar to those that existed in the eighteenth century. There are more than 550 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, over 2,000 Listed Buildings and 17 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens within the National Landscape.

2.8. The National Landscape is of great ecological importance. It has 5 internationally, and 60 nationally, protected sites. These range from ancient downland, chalk rivers and meadows to scattered semi-natural ancient woodland, which include remnants of the medieval Cranborne Chase royal hunting area and the former Royal Forests of Selwood and Gillingham. There are also around 520 sites of local importance for wildlife comprising just over 9% of the National Landscape.

2.9. Large, rectangular fields emphasise the open character of the chalk downs. The chalkland valley floors of the Rivers Wylye and Ebble are mainly in permanent pasture, with many copses and hedgerows, whilst the ridges and valley sides are predominantly arable. In the northwest, the sandstone fringe of wooded ridges and valleys includes rich parklands such as Longleat and Stourhead. The greensand terraces comprise high quality farmland. Agriculture, and its associated businesses, is still a significant employer together with commercial forestry and limited mineral extraction. In fact, the paucity of mineral extraction is a feature of this National Landscape.

2.10. The lush, wooded clay Vale of Wardour, harbouring the River Nadder, forms a broad wedge through the centre of the area, separating two large and distinct areas of largely arable chalk downland. To the south, there is the unusually wooded downland of Cranborne Chase itself, with its steeply cut coombes and dry valleys so typical of chalk landscapes. To the north, the West Wiltshire Downs are

generally more elevated, rising to Great Wood and Grovely Wood on the eastern ridge and from where, on a clear day, the huge chalkland plateau that is Salisbury Plain can be seen stretching northwards in the distance.

2.11. Both local communities and visitors hold the immense cultural, historic and ecological riches in high esteem. These aesthetic assets, together with iconic panoramic views of open and expansive downlands together with the more enclosed and sheltered views in valleys, dark skies awash with stars, the wealth of wildlife, plethora of historic sites, ancient droves and route ways, all offer opportunities for exploration, relaxation, walking and cycling. Residents and visitors alike turn to the landscapes and scenic beauty of the National Landscape to refresh the spirit as well as enhancing health and well-being.

2.12. This National Landscape is one of the darkest night skies in the United Kingdom affording a sky astoundingly full of stars and, depending on the time of year, a view of the Milky Way with the unaided eye.

2.13. This National Landscape is a deeply rural area with widely scattered hamlets, villages and narrow roads. This mainly agricultural landscape is sparsely populated, tranquil, and has no large settlements within its boundaries. Nearby market towns such as Salisbury, Shaftesbury, Blandford, Fordingbridge, Wimborne and Warminster are growth areas.

The setting of the National Landscape

2.14. The setting of a National Landscape is the surroundings in which the influence of the area is experienced. If the quality of the setting declines, then the appreciation and enjoyment of the area diminishes. The construction of high, expansive, or industrial structures, or a change generating movement, noise, odour, vibration or dust over a wide area, will affect the setting. As our appreciation of the relationships between neighbouring landscapes grows, so our understanding of what constitutes the setting continues to evolve.

2.15. Views are one element of setting, being associated with the visual experience and aesthetic appreciation. Views are particularly important to this National Landscape. This is because of the juxtaposition of high and low ground and the fact that recreational users value them. Without husbandry and management, views within, across, from and to the National Landscape may be lost or degraded.

Landscape Character Assessment

Integrated Landscape Character Assessment

2.16. Landscape Character Assessment draws together the features and attributes that contribute to the distinctive and outstanding character of the National Landscape. The 2003 Integrated Landscape Character Assessment and the briefer Sustaining Landscape Character (2006) were reassessed during 2024[14]. A revised Cranborne Chase Character Assessment now explores the physical, ecological, visual, historic and cultural forces that shape the present-day working landscape, encompassing its social, economic and recreational characteristics. It identifies eight Landscape Types, each with distinct and relatively homogenous character with similar physical and cultural attributes, including geology, landform, land cover, and historical evolution. Four cover the chalk landscapes, two the

[14] See CBA (2024) Cranborne Chase National Landscape - Landscape Character Assessment at https://cranbornechase.org.uk/our-work/publications/planning-resources/

greensand areas, and one each the clay vale and the hills between the chalk and the heathland outside the National Landscape. The individual characteristics of the eighteen geographical Landscape Character Areas are set out in the LCA. (A précis of the eight Landscape Types is set out in Appendix 7)

Landscape Sensitivity Study

2.17. The inherent sensitivities of the landscapes of this National Landscape are set out in the Landscape Sensitivity Study (2007). Landscape sensitivity relates to the intrinsic fragility or robustness of a particular landscape to any type of change. This study identifies and addresses the broad issues and pressures for change within the National Landscape, and how these might have an impact on the landscape character areas.

Historic Landscape Characterisation

2.18. The Historic Landscape Characterisation (2008) describes and maps the historic and archaeological dimensions of the present-day landscape. Together with the Historic Environment Action Plans (2011), these two documents are a huge educational and management resource, charting the ever changing, living landscapes and the lives of those who made, and make, this their home; in essence a 'living library' and 'countryside encyclopaedia'.

Cranborne Chase & Chalke Valley Landscape Character Assessment

2.19. The Heritage Lottery funded (HLF) Cranborne Chase and Chalke Valley Landscape Partnership scheme supported a more detailed LCA (2018) of this middle section of the National Landscape. It has fourteen Local Landscape Character Areas, which nest within the broader character areas of the 2003, and 2024, assessments.

You can download all these documents from the Cranborne Chase National Landscape website.[15]

The condition of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape

2.20. Understanding how and why the National Landscape is changing is key to our work in caring for it. Data is needed to establish the current condition of key features and aspects of the area and to provide a baseline against which future change and success or failure can be assessed. The National Landscape website provides a summary of the target indicators and data currently in place and being used to monitor changing condition in the Cranborne Chase National Landscape. This combines new national targets and data sets published by Defra in 2023/24 with more established, local indicators, set out.

Key issues

2.21. After considering Defra's Environmental Improvement Plan goals[16], the National Landscape Partnership finds three key issues that will have a significant effect on achieving the purpose of designation and the ambitions of this management plan. These can be summarised as follows:

Key issues
Key Issue 1 - Nature's decline and the ecological crisis

[15] See https://cranbornechase.org.uk/our-work/publications/planning-resources/
[16] Defra (2023) Environmental Improvement Plan

Growing a resilient network of land and water that is richer in plants and wildlife.

- Defra's apex goal is 'Thriving plants and wildlife', which all the other goals will help to achieve. The Government's Environmental Improvement Plan states that "over the last century, the state of nature in our country has declined dramatically as the pressure of our demands has made our habitats increasingly degraded and fragmented, and brought species to the brink of extinction". Wildlife loss is well documented and understood, see for example https://stateofnature.org.uk/ Climate change is threatening the loss of already diminished wildlife at an even greater scale and pace. There is a need to create a robust and resilient nature recovery network – a landscape rich in joined up and well managed habitats. The need for action is urgent.
- Growth in global demand for food is leading to worries about food security and the need to intensify food production. Many woodlands in the area are small, fragmented and difficult to access. There is often no infrastructure to make sustainable woodland management viable. A lack of management in most traditional orchards is hastening the demise of these very valuable wildlife habitats. Within the National Landscape, 80% of traditional orchards present in the 1930s have gone, unenclosed heathland has declined by 30% and the vast majority of the flower rich meadows have been replaced by agriculturally improved pasture and arable. Many remaining areas of habitat have become isolated, disconnecting their small populations of plants and animals.
- National Landscapes collectively signed up to the Colchester Declaration in 2019 to demonstrate their readiness to act to reverse wildlife decline and habitat reduction as part of a wider strategy to tackle climate change. The declaration contains commitments to produce nature recovery plans and restore habitats and populations of endangered species. The Recovery Plan was published during 2024. It represents a detailed look at the species and habitats of this National Landscape and what should be done to enable their recovery and adaptation to climate change, in a timely manner.

Key Issue 2 - The climate emergency

Mitigating and adapting to climate change whilst conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape.

2.22. Climate change was identified by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) as one of the direct drivers of biodiversity loss. Building the resilience of our environment, by creating more joined up and buffered places for nature as well as tackling hazards that are increased by climate change, is crucial to leaving our environment in a better state. Climate change is happening, and its impacts are unavoidable. There is already experience of the impacts of a rapidly heating climate and this threatens many of the defining characteristics and Special Qualities of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape. The habitats most susceptible to harm are the rivers and streams within this National Landscape. Examples of the impacts also include pest and diseases (Ash Dieback being an ongoing and highly visible example); changing timings of seasons; low summer river flows; and damage to vegetation from high winds.

2.23. The Landscapes Review emphasised the importance of the role National Landscapes should play in mitigating and adapting to climate change. The National Landscape Partnership endorses this, in line with the commitments in the Colchester Declaration .

2.24. National Landscapes are also now required to embed climate adaptation plans within future Management Plans, and will be expected to contribute to climate change targets in the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF). The intention is to produce a Climate Change Adaptation Plan and embed it within this Management Plan by the end of 2028.

- Land use and management practices must address climate change issues. Farming needs to adapt to focus on improving soil health to continue producing food, whilst reducing soil loss, sequestering carbon and providing better water quality and flood management; and tree cover needs to increase to capture carbon. Other areas such as energy and transport, and food and drink will also need to be addressed, with much more of our energy needs met through low carbon energy technologies, buildings becoming more energy efficient and greater resilience built into our infrastructure; and community food networks being created to link farmers, businesses and consumers.

Key Issue 3 - Health and peoples' engagement with the natural environment

Ensuring the National Landscape helps to support and sustain livelihoods and realises the health and wellbeing benefits of accessing its natural beauty.

- Defra wants everyone to be able to enjoy nature and national heritage across the country. In line with the Countryside Code, we need to respect and conserve nature, and encourage managed access – so that everyone can enjoy and secure those treasures for every generation to come.
- We recognise a high-quality environment attracts and supports economic and social viability so we must respond quickly and vigorously to environmental challenges and do so in a way that supports livelihoods and communities. The solutions must work in social and economic terms as well as environmental if they are to have a lasting impact. Development maintains economic viability, sustains the population and supports those who manage the land. The National Landscape covers several administrative areas. There is a need to coordinate policy to make sure that it is consistent across the area.
- There is a need to sustain village facilities and services as well as providing more affordable homes and employment for local people. Achieving suitable infrastructure is a challenge due to the requirements to conserve and enhance the special nature of the environment. There is a need to retain the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- There are declining farm and forest incomes. Land managers must find either additional or new sources of income. They may grow new crops and/or move into other sectors, such as tourism and recreation. This can help to maintain a viable business and improve the products and services on offer to the community and visitors.
- Connections within the National Landscape and with its setting are important. The mental and physical health benefits of accessing natural beauty are becoming increasingly

understood and appreciated. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on human behaviour. People are more aware of the importance of green and blue spaces.

- 'Green prescribing' is becoming increasingly popular and can help encourage many to actively explore the countryside and gain health and wellbeing benefits from accessing Cranborne Chase National Landscape.
- It is accepted that not everyone has access to nature or landscapes hence outreach to wide and diverse audiences is supported.
- For some people, particularly the less mobile and those with mental and physical health conditions it can be difficult to explore parts of the area. Standard practices sometimes create obstacles, like steps and stiles. There is a need to remove obstacles, promote routes that are suitable for people with limited mobility and horse-riders as well as to use technology to help all parts of society to benefit from this special place.

The impact of these key issues on the natural beauty of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape were considered during the development of the vision and the outcomes.

3. A Vision for the Cranborne Chase National Landscape

What is the Vision?

3.1. In 2030, the Cranborne Chase National Landscape will be an inspirational example of sustainable management in action. A nationally appreciated place where:

- its distinctive local landscapes, historic heritage, and wildlife are conserved and enhanced by those who work and manage the land, nurturing a valued and treasured countryside for future generations;
- its healthy soils, clean air and water are appreciated, prized and respected by all;
- its characteristic vibrant villages, profoundly rural character, local economies and sense of pride are tangible to all who live and visit here, or just pass through;
- the breadth and depth of historic land use offers up its stories in the landscape today;
- its cultural heritage is conserved, understood, enhanced, valued and enjoyed;
- the aesthetic qualities of the landscape and environment, Rights of Way and Open Access, along with the sense of wonder and enjoyment, are appreciated by all; and
- the quality of life remains high and the aspirations of those who live and work here are supported.

3.2. The National Landscape Partnership has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance natural beauty. This Partnership identifies the following three components:

Components		Our Ambitions
1 Outstanding Landscapes	A	• The unique character, tranquillity and special qualities of the National Landscape are conserved and enhanced. • The area's special qualities are widely understood.

		• Informed decision-making strengthens the special qualities. • When change happens, it is consistent with the character of the landscape and the setting of the National Landscape. • We will take opportunities to restore landscape features that require it.
	B	• All natural resources in the National Landscape are sustainably managed. • Wildlife thrives in the National Landscape and can move freely around the area. • The natural environment will be healthy and resilient to the effects of climate change.
	C	• The historic and cultural environment of the National Landscape is conserved and enhanced. • Everyone understands, values and enjoys its cultural and heritage assets. • The story of the area's evolution over time should be clear to everyone. • Light pollution will be minimised to benefit of human health, wildlife, reducing expenditure and carbon emissions, bringing new opportunities for education and rural tourism.
2 Living and Working Landscapes	A	• Our rural land is managed regeneratively. • This will meet the demand for food, fuel and other produce in ways that conserve and enhance the landscape character of the National Landscape and deliver increased public benefits.
	B	• A thriving rural economy ensures economic and social wellbeing and helps sustain the landscape. • Local communities appreciate and care for the National Landscape and residents enjoy a high quality of life.
	C	• Planning and transportation strategies, policies and decisions that affect this nationally important National Landscape, conserve and enhance its special qualities. • Where development is, on balance, deemed necessary, we want it located and designed to integrate fully with the landscape character and natural beauty.
	D	• All management of, and improvements to, roads enhance the distinctive character of the area. • A range of more sustainable options for transport reduces the effects of transport on tranquillity and the natural environment of the National Landscape
	E	• Partners' policies and actions reflect National Landscape values and their national status. • Communities appreciate and care for the National Landscape. • Residents enjoy a high quality of life

3 Special Landscapes to Enjoy	A	• The area's special qualities and landscape character, its traditions, and its historic and natural assets are understood and valued by all. • Everyone understands what the National Landscape designation means and why the area was designated. • Everyone promotes and supports the National Landscape.
	B	• People are engaged with and learn about the natural, historic, and cultural heritage of the National Landscape
	C	• People of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can take up countryside skills, training, and volunteering in the National Landscape.
	D	• The physical and mental wellbeing of people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds is improved through connecting with and experiencing the high-quality environment of the National Landscape for physical activity, relaxation and inspiration.

3.3. By the end of this Plan period, substantial and measurable progress will have been made in four priority areas of work:

1. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership will take all collaborative action necessary to achieve its apportioned targets within Defra's Protected landscapes Outcomes and Targets Framework (PLOTF) (including acting upon its 2024 Nature Recovery Plan and Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Plan due by 2028 latest)
2. The dark night skies of this International Dark-Sky Reserve will continue to be conserved and enhanced with the benefits valued and appreciated by communities and visitors alike.
3. Extensive collaboration with farmers, foresters, landowners, relevant agencies and local communities will champion integrated, enhanced management of the area's landscapes delivering measurable enhancements to the National Landscape's natural and historic environment, highlighting partnership working within a designated landscape.
4. Led by field-based staff and as the continuing legacy of the Landscape Partnership Scheme there will be ongoing, multiple opportunities for volunteers of all ages and abilities to engage with, learn and appreciate the landscapes of this area, removing barriers to access, both physical and social, whilst improving health and wellbeing.

Who is going to make it happen?

3.4. The National Landscape Partnership developed and agreed this Vision after listening to the many people who care about this very special place. The National Landscape Partnership is an alliance of sixteen national and local organisations and it steers the implementation of the Management Plan

3.5. Wiltshire Council contains the largest proportion of the National Landscape and is host Authority for the National Landscape Team. The Team prepares the Management Plan on behalf of the Partnership. The team also delivers a considerable number of projects within the Delivery Plan. In addition, the team undertakes the overall facilitation and coordination of Management Plan implementation by partners.

The Vision is a call for action.

3.6. Landowners, farmers, local people, visitors, and the many organisations working in the National Landscape, or who have a contribution to make to it, must unite and work together to achieve the Vision.

Outstanding Landscapes

4. Landscape

4.1. The topography, geology, and vegetation, and the ways they have evolved with the climate and human usage, come together to form the landscapes we experience around us today. All landscapes have character; however, that character is more substantial, obvious, and extensive in the nationally important National Landscapes, (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty). We use characteristics to describe and assess those cherished landscapes.

Characteristics and features that make this National Landscape special with regards to landscape:

- A peaceful, tranquil, deeply rural area; largely 'unspoilt' and maintained as a living agricultural landscape.
- The scale of the landscape is often grand and dramatic with the 'intensity' of landscape character almost palpable.
- The open downland offers wide expansive skies, dominant skylines, dramatic escarpments and panoramic views.
- Unity of the underlying chalk expressed in the distinctive and sometimes dramatically sculpted landforms, open vistas, escarpments and coombes.
- A rich land use history with many ancient hilltop forts, barrows and Roman roads.
- A bountiful mosaic of habitats playing host to a myriad of wildlife.
- Overlain by a woodland mosaic – including the eye-catching hill-top copses, veteran parkland trees and avenues, extensive areas of wooded downland and ancient forest together with more recent game coverts.
- Three major chalk river valleys with their individual distinctiveness.
- Distinctive settlement pattern along the valleys and vales, and small Medieval villages along the scarp spring line.
- Local vernacular building styles include the patterns of knapped flint, brick, cob, clunch, clay tiles and straw thatch.
- Strong sense of place and local distinctiveness represented by the use of local building materials and small-scale vernacular features such as the sunken lanes and distinctive black and white signposts.
- Strong sense of remoteness.
- Expanse of dark night skies and ability to see the Milky Way.

Ambition

4.2. The unique character, tranquillity and special qualities of the landscapes in the Cranborne Chase National Landscape are conserved and enhanced for future generations. There will be a widespread

understanding of the area's special qualities, and informed decision-making will strengthen these qualities. When change happens, it is to be consistent with the character of the landscape and the setting of the area. Everyone will take opportunities to restore landscape features that require it.

Key Achievements

- Publications – The effective use of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Integrated Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Sensitivity Study, and Tranquillity Study by planning policy and development management officers within the nine local planning authorities. The National Landscape team clearly identifies landscape character in all planning application responses.
- Landscape protection – Avoided potentially negative impacts on the landscape through advice, research and authoritative reports; and input to specific development applications and appeals.
- Landscape enhancement advice – Detailed discussions with Wessex Water led to a four-year funding package to enhance the farmland landscapes surrounding a strategic pipeline installation and associated pumping and storage facilities.
- A Landscape View of Trees and Woodlands – offers woodland owners, farmers and advisors a fuller understanding of the landscape character context in which they are working; Right Tree, Right Place offers guidance on tree planting in terms of landscape character whilst Trees in the Landscape details that guidance further.
- AONB Tranquillity Study – The methodology behind the Tranquillity Study is now valued as good practice. This is now being used by the New Forest National Park and other Protected Areas in the southwest to determine their own levels of tranquillity.
- Undergrounding of power lines – Power lines have been laid underground to enhance the landscape from the viewing area in front of the Fovant Badges (eight military badges cut into the chalk) and around the site of the 13th Century chapel at Fifield Bavant and in the conservation area of Horningsham.
- Cranborne Chase and Chalke Valley Landscape Character Assessment – This study provides a more refined understanding of the landscape character of this Landscape Partnership Scheme area. It will support a 5-year programme of activities to enhance the understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the landscape by all ages, resident or visitors from outside area, through a range of natural, historic and cultural projects across the area. Its ambition is to provide a significant landscape legacy.

Key Issues

1. Understanding and sustaining landscape character – It is crucial that all decision makers, policy makers, and their advisors, together with landscape managers, planners, and project officers understand, appreciate, and use the Landscape Character Assessments.
2. Monitoring landscape change over time – Long-term, objective monitoring of landscape change takes time and resources. Fixed-point photography locations have been installed to track changes although it will be a while before it helps to determine long-term trends. Such trends may be a result of global issues such as climate change, food prices and/or demand affecting rural land management, and development.

3. Enhancing tranquillity and Dark Night Skies – National data shows the general loss of dark night skies and the risk of light pollution encroaching on the dark skies of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

   However, 90% of the National Landscape falls in the top 2 categories of darkness, as evidenced by CPRE research in 2016 and our own data gathering. This makes this area the last dark area in central southern England (See also Chapter 8 Dark Night Skies).

The Issues Explained

4.3. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape is a large area with both a consistent character, for example the downlands of West Wiltshire, and considerable diversity and contrast. There are the ancient forests and woodland of Cranborne Chase that contrast with the deeply incised chalk coombes close by. In addition, there are the more intimate and secluded chalk river valleys with their distinctive pattern of settlement.

4.4. Its special qualities include its diversity, distinctiveness, sense of history and remoteness, dark night skies, and tranquillity. It is deeply rural and largely free from development outside settlements, although the increasing scale of agricultural buildings, and the use of inappropriate materials, can be intrusive. Landscapes are sensitive to many factors to a greater or lesser degree. Agricultural crops create a cycle of change that lasts a few months while the planting or felling of woodland can cause landscape change that evolves and persists for decades. Built development can introduce changes that are rather more permanent and urbanising. There are declines in the quality of some characteristic features. Some are brought about by machine trimming of hedgerows; the planting of hedges contrary to landscape character; or tree and hedgerow planting that block or cuts out views.

4.5. A greater understanding of the character of the landscapes is crucial to helping everyone make informed decisions that contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, or may have adverse impacts upon them.

4.6. Meaningful analysis of landscape change over time can use considerable resources, depending on the aim of any such study. A tried and tested methodology using fixed-point photography in Devon produces a series of repeatable images through time. This is in use in this National Landscape but there is a need to take photographs at regular times in consistent light and weather conditions. There are now twelve fixed-point locations with landowner permissions.

4.7. Tranquillity is important for our mental and physical well-being. It improves our quality of life. Power lines, masts, cars, roads, light pollution and building developments can erode the tranquillity that means so much to all of us. We want to ensure the dark starry skies of much of the National Landscape remain that way and continue to be seen and appreciated. However, inappropriate lighting can waste energy and reduce landscape quality. This is explained in detail in chapter 8 – Dark Night Skies.

Outcomes and Policies

LAN A The landscape character, tranquillity and special qualities of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape are fully understood and accurately valued by decision-makers at all levels.

LAN1 Promote awareness and use of 2024 Cranborne Chase National Landscape Integrated Landscape Character Assessment and the 2018 Chase and Chalke Landscape Character Assessment to:

- Develop guidance for the Landscape Character Types/Areas to inform land use planning and landscape management, to include updating the landscape and planning and landscape and land management documents.
- Promote and champion the conservation and enhancement of the landscape character, tranquillity and special qualities of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape and its setting, particularly those that are sensitive to change.
- Promote understanding of the factors that contribute to, or detract from, tranquillity to ensure that policies and actions will more effectively conserve and enhance levels of tranquillity.
- Provide appropriate training across the range of landscape matters to relevant partners and stakeholders.

LAN B The landscape character, tranquillity, and special qualities of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape and its settings are conserved and enhanced (particularly those that are the most sensitive to, or have little capacity for, change).

LAN2 Proposals that are likely to impact on, or create change in, the landscape of the National Landscape must seek to further the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape with reference to key documents such as the 2024 Cranborne Chase National Landscape Integrated Landscape Character Assessment, the 2018 Chase and Chalke Landscape Character Assessment, the 2008 Historic Landscape Characterisations and National Landscape Partnership guidance documents:

- There should be a presumption against the loss of key characteristics identified in the landscape character assessments.
- Degraded distinctive landscapes and landscape features should be restored.
- Positive landscape change should be promoted to landowners, managers, government and all those with an influence over land.
- Planting and amenity projects should conserve and enhance landscape character.
- Opportunities should be pursued to underground and remove visually intrusive power and telecommunications lines, poles, and masts, and other incongruous features, especially where they detract from the Special Qualities.

LAN C Understand the rate and degree of landscape change within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

	LAN3 Encourage, support and analyse research on landscape issues affecting the Cranborne Chase National Landscape and its surroundings to inform policy formulation and the consequent action required: • Undertake fixed point photography biennially to identify areas where landscape character, condition, or quality has been or is being lost. This will inform potential restoration and enhancement measures.

5. Nature Recovery

5.1. Biodiversity, or the variety and abundance of wildlife, is in serious decline. It is widely accepted that the UK is the most depleted country in Europe for biodiversity.

5.2. The government has tasked National Landscapes to play their part in nature's recovery in line with its international declarations to protect 30% of our land and sea for nature by 2030 (30x30) and the national targets set through its Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF), emanating from its Environmental Improvement Plan 2023. There are ten targets in total with three of these specifically apportioned to each National Landscape (see Appendix 5)

5.3. The variety, abundance and proliferation of biodiversity helps underpin ecosystem services, and vice versa. Our natural capital, such as geology and soils, clean air and water, provide those ecosystem services; the fundamentals of life itself. Ecosystem services are the basis for a rich diversity of wildlife and must be conserved and enhanced to support nature's recovery whilst also addressing the uncertainties caused by a changing climate.

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to nature recovery:

- Rich ecological character expressed in the diversity of habitats, including the distinctive species-rich chalk downland, clear fast flowing chalk streams and rivers, ancient and calcareous woodlands, and rare chalk heath and water meadows.
- An abundance of both emblematic wildlife species and those suffering decline such as the greater horseshoe bat, Adonis blue and Duke of Burgundy butterflies, tree sparrow and skylark.
- Clear streams and rivers supporting wild trout, grayling, dace and chub, together with the endangered water vole and aquatic species that rely on high quality water such as the white-clawed crayfish, seriously threatened by the introduction of non-native crayfish.
- Extensive tracts of arable land supporting the six most nationally threatened farmland birds; the grey partridge, lapwing, turtle dove, yellow wagtail, tree sparrow and corn bunting and rare arable plants, such as the prickly poppy and pheasants' eye.
- The historic status of Cranborne Chase as a royal hunting area is evidenced by its unusually high proportion of ancient woodland within a chalk landscape, boasting assemblages of bats, woodland birds, fungi and rare lichen.

Ambition

5.4. The National Landscape will be a place where habitats are restored, expanded, created and connected allowing wildlife to thrive and move freely across the area. Its natural capital assets will be underpinning healthy and resilient habitats, able to adjust to the effects of climate change.

Key Achievements

- This National Landscape has a key role to play in the hugely ambitious Big Chalk initiative, aiming to build a dynamic nature recovery network that will be central to the UK's pledge to protect 30% of land and halt the decline of nature by 2030. Comprehensive mapping and modelling at different spatial scales will support decision making and guide targeted interventions at a National Landscape and wider strategic level.

- The National Landscape is also a partner in the collaborative Wiltshire Wildlife Trust led Wiltshire Chalk Project.
- The Defra-funded Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme, started mid 2021, has seen a total of 147 grants awarded to farmers and landowners within this National Landscape, totalling £2,019,845. Forty percent of those grants awarded included specific actions to enhance nature recovery.
- Farmer clusters - There are currently eleven farm clusters comprising xx h and covering around two-thirds of the National Landscape. These clusters effectively facilitate farmer-led landscape-scale conservation of soil, water, and biodiversity. Clusters have the capacity to help meet Sir John Lawton's key aim of achieving 'more, bigger, better and joined up' wildlife habitats as outlined in the 2010 report 'Making Space for Nature' and should help achieve the PLTOF targets.
- A Draft Nature Recovery Plan 2025-30 has been produced for Cranborne Chase National Landscape during 2023-24. The final Plan will be endorsed by the NL Partnership during 2025.
- The National Landscape has engaged with four Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) consultations from the four County level Local Authorities.
- A Landscape Permeability study was undertaken by consultants during 2023 to determine the prime areas where targeting effort to increase habitats and associated species could be most effective from a wildlife perspective.
- The Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme, running from 2000-2025, successfully concluded work within 20 projects, four of which were natural heritage projects that trained volunteers in species ID, survey methods and practical conservation tasks to enhance habitats.
- This National Landscape was the lead partner in the South Wiltshire Farmland Bird Initiative (2009-15). Although long finished, this culminated in an additional 1000h of habitat specifically created to begin reversing the decline in numbers of the six most threatened farmland bird species; grey partridge, lapwing, corn bunting, yellow wagtail, turtle dove and tree sparrow. It evidenced the willingness of arable farmers to take positive action to benefit biodiversity.
- Forty-four bird species were monitored up until 2016; 19 that make up the Farmland Bird Index and a selection of other 'Birds of Conservation Concern' plus the brown hare. This scientific monitoring showed that 42% of species assessed showed a significant positive population response to Farmland Bird Project management compared to population trends on plots with no such management. Other 'spin off' wildlife beneficiaries were rare arable plants and the brown hare.
- Rare arable plants – Populations of rare arable plants have declined dramatically over the past 60 years and they are the most critically threatened group of plants in the UK. A Wessex Water funded study pinpointed rare arable flora 'hotspots' together with indications of where good arable flora communities were likely to be present. The report consequently determined 39% of this National Landscape as an Arable Flora Target Area, where focused management for arable plants would be likely to be most effective.
- Cranborne Chase Ancient Woodland Priority Area – one of four areas in the South West. The Forestry Commission undertook a mapping and targeting exercise to identify robust habitat networks centred around clusters of ancient and native woodlands, where landscape connectivity and permeability offered the best opportunity to link and extend ancient woodlands. By working on a landscape scale

the resilience of these habitats to climate change and other threats can be enhanced. An Ancient Woodland Priority Area was established in Cranborne Chase.

Key issues

1. At the time of writing the four Responsible Authorities (one County Council and three Unitary Authorities) are in the process of producing their Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs). Most are about to produce their mapping of priority areas for nature recovery and the National Landscape has inputted to that mapping[17].

   The Cranborne Chase Nature Recovery Plan 2025-30 has identified wildlife rich habitats and species within each landscape character area that could be created or restored, enlarged, and connected. Achieving the national nature recovery targets will require greatly increased collaboration and liaison between those that own and manage land here.

2. Fragmented and isolated habitats – This National Landscape has some of the most extensive, best, and last remaining chalk grasslands in Europe. Nevertheless, much of it exists as a patchwork of isolated sites. While supporting a vast diversity of plant, animal and invertebrate species, its fragmented nature often denies those species the opportunity to flourish through expanding their range or populations. The fragmentation of priority habitats also extends to ancient woodland, other deciduous woodland, semi-improved grassland and lowland meadows.

   Wildlife species decline – Many species of birds, butterflies, plants and mammals that were once common across the National Landscape, remain in serious decline despite past initiatives that showed considerable success in increasing numbers.

3. Valuing the benefits we receive from the natural environment – There is a need to demonstrate that the natural environment provides benefits of measurable value to society and everyone understands those values (explored further in Chapter 13, Wellbeing, Involvement and Learning.

4. Unintended consequences – generalised conservation measures, such as tree and hedge planting, applied without attention to the landscape character and local situation can also priority habitats and provide cover for predators.

5. Limited means to conserve and enhance natural environment, habitats and species - through close working relationships with farmers and landowners over the years, the will to conserve certainly exists; the combination of time, knowledge or experience to undertake necessary work may not necessarily always be present (explored further in Chapter 9 Rural Land Management and Chapter 13, Wellbeing, Involvement and Learning. Over and above national agri-environment schemes and special initiatives (eg Farming in Protected Landscape or Species Recovery Scheme) there are other means by which the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity may be possible. Each needs ongoing research, investigation and how these might be used in an integrated way:

   - **Biodiversity Net Gain** (BNG) is an approach to development. It makes sure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development took place. In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. BNG is administered by the five Local Planning Authorities of this National Landscape.

[17] Links to the councils' LNRS pages: Wiltshire Council ; Dorset Council ; Hampshire ; Somerset

Some of the Local Planning Authorities have set BNG at 20% in an attempt to secure increased biodiversity gain. There are 3 ways a developer can achieve BNG; this is known as the BNG gain hierarchy:

  - They can create biodiversity on-site (within the red line boundary of a development site).
  - If developers cannot achieve all of their BNG on-site, they can deliver through a mixture of on-site and off-site. Developers can either make off-site biodiversity gains on their own land outside the development site or buy off-site biodiversity units on the market.
  - If developers cannot achieve on-site or off-site BNG, they must buy statutory biodiversity credits from the government. This should be a last resort. The government will use the revenue to invest in habitat creation in England. There are also exemptions to the provision of BNG and this National Landscape's Position Statement on the subject seeks to ensure any development contributes to BNG.

- **Green finance** is a relatively new term that refers to the private financing of environmental projects. This can mean any number of things from a single one-off trade to a longer-term investment that earns returns. Traditionally, environmental projects are funded through finite pots of money that might be one-off grants or funding schemes with fixed end dates. The problem with this is quite obviously the lack of longevity. We can lose the often-hard-won benefits of restoration work if the resources are not there to maintain them. Private investment could help more to be done over a much longer period. Green finance can be complex and the National Landscape team and partnership needs to investigate the potential of green finance more fully in the near future.
- **Conservation covenants** are private, voluntary agreements between a landowner and a 'designated, responsible body' to deliver lasting conservation benefits by ensuring the protection of natural or heritage features on the land for public good. Again, these conservation covenants need further research by the National Landscape team to assess the exact requirements and whether conservation covenants might be an avenue to pursue for conservation gain.

6. Alien species, pests, and pathogens – These pose risks to native wildlife and increase uncertainty for all land managers.
7. Government's Agricultural Transition Plan 2021-27 has seen the introduction of the Environmental Land Management Scheme with an overall aim of enhancing nature recovery, together with improved animal welfare and tackling the effects of climate change. The Environmental Land Management Scheme is covered more fully in the Rural Land Management chapter but being based on the ethos of 'public goods for public money' the potential to provide greatly enhanced biodiversity is a key driver of the new scheme.
8. The new and dynamic nature of these grant schemes and their introduction over the past few years has led to feelings of insecurity and uncertainty for many in the farming sector (explored further in Chapter 9, Rural Land Management).
9. A significant proportion of the River Avon System is within the National Landscape. It holds two Natura 2000 sites; the Hampshire Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Avon Valley

Special Protection Area (SPA). Agricultural and septic tank diffuse pollution can be an issue to address in rivers across the whole landscape.

The Issues Explained

5.5. Local Nature Recovery Strategies – The four LNRSs are not yet, at the time of writing, published for Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Somerset. The LNRSs will help guide funding, particularly via Biodiversity Net Gain payments, towards those areas best able to benefit. The four Responsible Authorities are keen to ensure their Strategies reflect the Nature Recovery Plan for the National Landscape and equally the latter needs to align with similar priorities to the LNRSs. The national landscape team have been involved in the collaborative process of preparing these strategies for each council. Their involvement has ensured key points from the national landscape's own nature recovery plan and management plan are reflected in the LNRS, which will support greater partnership working and focus on delivering a shared vision for nature recovery. Each are being developed at different Landscape Character scales however, hence the need to avoid conflicting priorities for nature recovery. The National Landscape and the Responsible Bodies need to work in a reciprocal way to ensure nature recovery plans remain aligned.

5.6. It must be remembered that the apportioned targets in the PLTOF for increasing wildlife rich habitats outside protected sites and increasing tree canopy and woodland, are for Cranborne Chase National Landscape as a place and not for the National Landscape Partnership and team themselves. As a non-landowning entity, the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership can encourage, advise and guide decisions of those who own and/or manage land. It can also input to the development of ELMS options together with any future new funding mechanisms and highlight instances where options are not having the desired effect. It is imperative that close collaboration and liaison is developed between the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership and all those owning land to move towards achieving those targets whilst conserving and enhancing the landscape character and special qualities of this area.

5.7. The chalk grasslands and rivers of the National Landscape, with their rare wildlife, are of international importance. A significant proportion of the woodland is of ancient origin and the area contains some of the best stands of ancient trees in Europe. The extensive tracts of arable land support islands of rare arable plants and can be a stronghold for farmland birds. However, the areas of habitat favouring these important species are often fragmented and isolated. Wildlife habitats need to be big enough and sufficiently well connected for wildlife to thrive. Species need corridors to move through the landscape in response to a changing environment.

5.8. During past decades, management regimes that were focused on creating higher crop yields have led to habitat change and the loss of wildlife. Since the 1970s, the UK populations of many of our farmland birds have been in steep decline. In the south-west, farmland bird numbers fell by 45% between 1970 and 1994; and a further 8% between 1994 and 2007. Though the current rate of decline is not as steep as during the 1970s and 1980s, a short-term decline of 9% since 2010 shows that farmland birds, and especially farmland specialists, are still in trouble. For example, Turtle Dove numbers have declined by 93% since 1994 and may well be at risk of global extinction. However, the results from the Farmland Bird Project referenced above in Key Achievements show that with targeted management of sufficient habitats, reversing the decline is possible.

5.9. Even once common species are also suffering unprecedented and drastic declines. Hedgehog numbers have plummeted by over 50% since 1994, voles by 30% over the last ten years and dormice are vulnerable to extinction in the UK (see Appendix x). Populations of rare arable plants have declined dramatically over the past 60 years. They are the most critically threatened group of wild plants in the UK. The report, 'Assessing the Distribution of Rare Arable Plants in the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (2010)', identifies the important arable plant hotspots and will help refine targeting, surveying and promotion of seminatural habitat restoration, creation and management.

5.10. The four County Environmental Records Centres hold incomplete records for species presence and/or distribution in the National Landscape. Farmer clusters have been frustrated to date by their lack of knowledge of species present on their holdings. The Nurturing Nature project within Chase & Chalke LP Scheme has now actively encouraged the training and involvement of volunteers in identifying, recording and surveying fauna and flora; extending that work across the National Landscape would greatly improve the knowledge base across the area.

5.11. The Lawton review of ecological sites and networks 'Making Space for Nature' advocates for the creation of more effective ecological networks through the establishment of more, bigger, and better-quality wildlife sites that are better connected. This vision remains a key aspiration in this Plan. Most of the land needed to achieve this is currently under some form of agricultural, forestry or game management. It is, therefore, vital that habitat creation, enhancement, and improved connectivity become a part of financially viable land management systems.

5.12. The natural capital of the National Landscape, the elements of the natural environment which provide valuable goods and services to people such as clean air, clean water, healthy soils, food and recreation, are high in quality and quantity. The Natural Capital Committee is an independent committee that advises the Government on the sustainable use of our natural assets. This committee reported that the elements of the natural environment that provide valuable goods and services to people are in long-term decline. This decline will continue, and is likely to accelerate, unless there is some radical departure from the approaches of the past. This now includes biodiversity net gain (considered in chapter 10 Planning and Transport) as a key planning principle and a landscape-scale / catchment-based approach to conservation. It may also include widespread payments for the services the landscape provides (also known as ecosystem services) or the routine application of natural capital accounting (considered in Chapter 9 Rural Land Management).

5.13. Relatively straightforward agri-environment options such as tree or hedge planting can sometimes take place in inappropriate locations that can lead to a change in landscape character, the reduction or destruction of remnant grassland habitat, and a reduction in the suitability of the area for ground nesting birds. This National Landscape has commissioned a piece of work to site alongside 'Right Tree, Right Place' published in 2023, that looks more closely at 'Trees in the Landscape'; due to be published 2025. This attempts to offer clear guidance on where tree or hedge planting or habitat enhancements are most likely to have beneficial effects whilst conserving and enhancing the landscape character of this National Landscape.

5.14. Evidence from the farmer cluster work, has highlighted the strong desire of landowners and farmers to help conserve and enhance the natural environment. However, effective and timely conservation work might well compete with priority work on the farm. Additional knowledge and experience of conservation techniques needs to be delivered through training opportunities open to farmers and

volunteers and through practical input from conservation professionals, such as rangers, with the assistance of volunteers.

5.15. There is latent demand from communities to become involved in the conservation and enhancement of the area's natural environment. Engagement with countryside management professionals can help protect endangered species, maintain the balance of ecosystems, and raise awareness about the need to preserve biodiversity. Voluntary support is covered further in chapter 13 Wellbeing, Involvement and Learning.

5.16. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership values and advocates the full use of paragraphs 192/193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that set out the principles to protect and enhance biodiversity and when determining planning applications, including net biodiversity gain.

5.17. There is an increase in the number of alien species, pests and pathogens entering the natural environment, with new ones being recorded almost monthly. The Forestry Commission noted at least 30 new pests and diseases affecting livestock, and 15 affecting trees in the UK just a few years ago. These can have a devastating effect on the natural environment and livelihoods. The dangers to woodland from pests and diseases is growing, with Dieback of Ash (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) and Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) two of the most recent examples.

5.18. Dieback of Ash may have a very serious effect on the ash trees in this National Landscape; whilst opinions vary, there is broad consensus that there is a reasonable chance that we will lose a significant portion of ash trees, a substantive loss to our landscapes and heritage. The damage caused by deer and grey squirrels is also of increasing concern, they eat young shoots and strip bark, which can result in tree loss. Missing bark patches are like an open wound that makes a tree more susceptible to infections. These wounds can restrict the future use of the tree and any timber produced, or they may kill the tree.

5.19. Farming requires a profitable future to stay in business, sustain farming families, safeguard and enhance the environment. For centuries, land managers and farmers have incidentally shaped the landscape and environment, including its wildlife, soil and water quality, as they went about their work. If wildlife is to thrive in the National Landscape, farmers and landowners should look to these new schemes below.

5.20. There are now three new schemes to pay for environmental improvements known collectively as the Environmental Land Management Scheme:

- the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) will pay farmers to adopt and maintain sustainable farming practices that can protect and enhance the natural environment alongside food production, and support farm productivity (including by improving animal health and welfare, optimising the use of inputs and making better use of natural resources)
- Countryside Stewardship (CS) will pay for more targeted actions relating to specific locations, features and habitats. There will be an extra incentive through CS Plus for land managers to join up across local areas to deliver improved results

- Landscape Recovery will pay for bespoke, longer-term, larger scale projects to enhance the natural environment[18]

Outcomes and Policies

NR A There is concerted unified action for a widespread recovery of nature by establishing a coherent and resilient nature recovery network across the National Landscape and its setting.

NR1 Biodiversity in the Cranborne Chase National Landscape should be conserved and enhanced by establishing a coherent and resilient nature recovery network across the designated area and in its setting:
• This should be achieved in accordance with the outcomes, priorities, targets and measures within the Cranborne Chase Nature Recovery Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and focus on the key habitats and species listed as special features in this management plan.
• Strategic documents or initiatives that are likely to impact on the biodiversity of the National Landscape should seek to further the Cranborne Chase Nature Recovery Plan. This would include, but is not limited to, the following:
  • Local Plans.
  • Neighbourhood Development Plans.
  • Green Infrastructure Strategies.
  • Tree and Woodland Strategies.
  • Climate Change Strategies.
  • Local Nature Recovery Strategies
• National and local guidance (including guidance from Government Agencies and the Non-Native Species Secretariat) on invasive non-native species, pests and diseases should be followed and appropriate biosecurity measures promoted, for example;
  • The population of grey squirrel and deer in the National Landscape should continue to be controlled and managed. This should be undertaken and coordinated at a landscape scale.
  • National guidance on Ash Dieback should be followed to ensure any measures implemented will conserve and enhance the qualities of the landscape.
  • Programmes should be developed at an appropriate scale to control the spread of invasive non-native plants

NR2 All stakeholders should work towards the delivery of the relevant targets for nature recovery within the national Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework. The apportioned targets for the Cranborne Chase National Landscape have been set out at a local level. At the time of publication, the targets are: • Target 1 - Restore or create more than 1,946.8h of a range of wildlife-rich habitats outside protected sites by 2042 (from a 2022 baseline). • Target 2 - 80% Percent of SSSIs in favourable condition by 2042

[18] A practical guide by Natural England: Nature Networks Evidence Handbook - NERR081

- Target 3 - 60% Percent of SSSIs assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition by 31 January 2028.
- Target 4 - Continuing favourable management of all existing priority habitat already in favourable condition outside of SSSIs (from a 2022 baseline) and increasing to include all newly restored or created habitat through agri-environment schemes by 2042.
- Target 5 - 65% to 80% of land managers adopting nature-friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land by 2030.
- Target 8 - Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 3% of total land area in Protected Landscapes by 2050 (from 2022 baseline) .

Note: changes to targets will be shown in the on-line version of this plan.

NE B The benefits and services provided by the natural environment are understood and accurately valued by decision-makers at all levels.

NR3 The natural and cultural capital* of the National Landscape, and the services they provide, should continue to be assessed and evaluated by the responsible authorities:

- The use of natural and cultural capital accounting should inform policy, investment, development and management decisions.
- The financial and non-financial benefits of natural and cultural capital and the services they provide should be promoted.
- Continue to build and sustain a robust environmental records base for the National Landscape and its surrounds through expanding the network of biological recorders and transferring their records to the four Environmental Records Centres.

* *the stock of natural and cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) assets*

6. Climate Change

6.1. Since the industrial revolution there has been an increase in the amounts of carbon dioxide (CO_2) we release into the atmosphere. CO_2 is a greenhouse gas (a gas that traps heat). As a result, the earth's temperature is rising at a much faster rate than naturally occurs. This means the earth heats up and this causes long terms changes to the climate. There is now more CO_2 in the atmosphere than at any time in the last two million years. Over the last two centuries it has risen by 40 per cent. Earth temperature has increased by 1 degree centigrade since the mid-1800s[19].

6.2. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports on climate change. Their most recent assessment shows that human activity is the cause of climate change. We are already seeing the impacts of climate change across the globe, with observed increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Even with global targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it is still necessary to adapt structures and systems to reduce the impacts of climate change. This includes critical infrastructure, the built and natural environments, water use and food production. In July 2023 the UK government published its third National Adaptation Programme, setting out a commitment to take clear and decisive action over the next 5 years to maintain our country's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

6.3. Climate change mitigation and adaptation are two different but complementary approaches to addressing climate change:

- Mitigation aims to reduce, absorb or prevent the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere to slow or stop the rise in global temperatures. This can help make the impacts of climate change less severe. Mitigation strategies can include growing trees in places that enhance the landscape character and reducing fossil fuel emissions.
- Adaptation involves adjusting to the current and future effects of climate change by altering systems, behaviours, and ways of life. This can help people and governments protect themselves, their economies, and the environment from the negative effects of climate change, while also taking advantage of any opportunities that arise.

6.4. Temperatures have shown definite trends over the years. The average annual temperatures are now approximately 1.3º C higher than a hundred years ago. New records in all parts of the UK are being set. A warmer atmosphere can hold more moisture that can lead to more intense and frequent downpours.

6.5. The potential change in habitat that comes from changes in climate is significant for the future of many species. This may affect not only their distribution but, for some, their very existence within the National Landscape. Many native tree species cannot germinate, or fruit, without a bout of cold weather. Changes in climate may restrict the distribution of important habitats and keep wildlife populations apart. This will limit their chance to breed. In addition, some species may die if climatic conditions are unfavourable at critical stages in their life cycles. Drier conditions may lead to water shortages, a vital commodity for all wildlife. Changes in climate may allow new species and diseases to colonise the UK. This will sometimes be to the detriment of existing biodiversity, especially if

[19] IPCC, 2023: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, H. Lee and J. Romero (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, pp. 1-34, doi: 10.59327/IPCC/AR6-9789291691647.001

species are under stress due to changes. Some species may thrive as the climate changes, either due to conditions that are more favourable or because the stress of change makes them more resilient.

6.6. There is a need to develop a landscape that is resilient and adaptable to change. Creating a network of wildlife corridors is crucial. Using species appropriate to changing conditions in any future planting schemes is crucial. Our knowledge of climate change is evolving and land management practices must adapt as new information emerges. There are opportunities to create habitats in key areas to buffer or offset potential losses.

6.7. The National Planning Policy Framework expects the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure[20].

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to climate change:

- Methane (CH_4) levels in 2022 are below 5 kt CO2e[21] per sq km
- Nitrous oxide (N_2O) levels in 2022 are very low (less than 0.4 kt CO2e per sq km)
- Particulate matter (PM2.5) levels in 2022 levels are relatively low in the area (less than 0.1 tonnes per sq km)
- Sulphur dioxide (SO_2) levels in 2022 are low across the area (less than 0.01 tonnes per sq km)
- The soils in the National Landscape hold the equivalent of 100-150 tonnes of carbon per hectare.
- There is a 91.5-millimetre increase in annual rainfall and a rise of 0.8°C in annual mean temperature over the last 60 years. Recent years are wetter, with the period 1991-2020 having 5.4 more annual days of rainfall than each of the preceding periods.

Ambition

6.8. The National Landscape will be a place where stakeholders are on target to achieve net zero (or better) by 2050 (or sooner) by implementing a clearly defined pathway to net zero and adapting to the consequences of climate change, utilising nature-based solutions wherever possible and whilst also conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the area.

Key issues

6.9. There is a need to enhance nature's ability to store carbon. Nature plays a major role in regulating the climate by storing carbon dioxide. By conserving woodlands and wetlands, permanent pasture, adding regenerative practices to agriculture, we can unleash nature's full potential to stabilise the climate.

6.10. By growing food in ways that support nature, carbon emissions can be greatly reduced. For instance, healthy soils have enormous potential to store carbon. Moves are needed towards planet-friendly food production systems.

[20] National Planning Policy Framework 2024: Paragraph 161
[21] Internation standard for reporting greenhouse gases is in kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (kt CO2e)

6.11. Restoring habitats that reduce the impact of severe storms can bolster resilience and so help communities adapt to climate change. There is a need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the National Landscape through a clearly defined pathway to net zero whilst also adapting to the consequences of climate change. The average annual temperature is now about 1.3º C higher than a hundred years ago[22]. This may lead to short term landscape effects such as drier areas being prone to fires as well as changes in vegetation patterns and agricultural land use that may affect the visual appearance and character of the National Landscape. With a warmer climate, habitats may change. New species may enter the area, some bringing disease or pests that will harm native species or competing with the native species for food and shelter. Visitor activity patterns may also change leading to greater erosion of land and heritage assets; and more conflicts with land management. Agriculture may be affected by both droughts and floods.

6.12. The Government has committed to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050[23]. It plans to do this by moving to a more energy efficient, low-carbon economy. Cranborne Chase National Landscape is a deeply rural area and unlikely to be emitting large amounts of CO_2 from any industrial sources although emissions from agriculture may be significant.

6.13. Power generation from renewable sources of energy is an important element in the development of a low-carbon economy. There is a range of technologies available producing electricity, heat or both. Without sensitive location and good design, their use in the National Landscape may well harm the special character of the area, for example through their scale and through the introduction of extraneous, and industrial elements into the landscape. Some technologies, such as large-scale, commercial wind turbines or field scale solar farms, are not appropriate in Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

6.14. Many types of woodland within the National Landscape are either under-managed or not managed at all. A demand for wood fuel could bring more woodland into active management. Conversely, the conversion of grassland into biomass crops would be far less desirable, adding extraneous elements to the landscape that have significant effects. Any tree planting should be in line with the Right Tree, Right Place guidance developed by this National Landscape alongside Trees in the Landscape due early 2025.

Outcomes and Policies

CL A Mitigation actions are taken to help lessen the severity of climate change effects by encouraging the reduction of greenhouse gases and preventing their release into the atmosphere.
CL1 Greenhouse gas emissions should be minimised through a range of measures, including: • Recognising and highlighting the whole lifecycle carbon footprint in policies and decision making associated with housing and any other development proposals • Recognising the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the destruction or removal of soil and vegetation for development. • Reducing energy demand in existing and new buildings and infrastructure

2 Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, HMSO October 2021

	• Reducing energy demand by supporting the transition to zero emission vehicles and public transport options and active travel[24] • Generating energy from low carbon sources only in a manner consistent with the purpose of conserving and enhancing the National Landscape designation • Supporting the development of various initiatives such as community food and heat networks, linking farmers and businesses to each other and consumers; Green Infrastructure plans, promoting the purchase of locally produced food products and services and encouraging small-scale vegetable growing in gardens and allotments.
	CL2 Climate change mitigation, including the role natural systems play in carbon sequestration, should be a key component of land management practices and rural development support mechanisms in the National Landscape, using accepted forms of emissions calculations
	CL3 Climate action should be undertaken in ways that must seek to further, and is compatible with, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the National Landscape.
	CL4 Stakeholders should work towards the delivery of the relevant targets for climate change within the national Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework. The apportioned targets for Cranborne Chase National Landscape to be achieved are: • Target 6. Reduce net greenhouse gas emissions in Protected Landscapes to net zero by 2050 relative to 1990 levels. • Target 8. Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 3% of total land area in Protected Landscapes by 2050 (from 2022 baseline).
CL B Systems, behaviours and ways of life in the National Landscape are adapted to help people and the environment withstand the current and future effects of climate change.	
	CL5 Climate change adaptation should be a significant driver in all new development, infrastructure and transport provision.
	CL6 Climate change adaptation should be a key component of land management practices and agri-environment/rural development support mechanisms, in the National Landscape
	CL7 By the end of 2028, the National Landscape Partnership will adopt a Climate Change Adaptation Plan that: i. Identifies the key assets and features of the landscape. ii. Assesses the vulnerability of these assets and features to the impacts of Climate Change. iii. Considers sectoral impacts for principal land uses such as farming and forestry, as well as the natural, built and historic environment. iv. Assesses the impacts based upon current climate change projections.

[24] Active travel: increasing levels of walking and cycling in England https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmtrans/1487/148704.htm

	v. Scores these risks and opportunities based on their likelihood, impact and risk over the short, medium and long term. vi. Identifies possible high-level mitigation actions. vii. Identifies existing policy responses and identify any gaps. viii. Identifies relevant local stakeholders that can support or lead the action. ix. Assesses the acceptability of these options, their interdependencies, and potential barriers to delivery. x. Sets out planned actions for the short, medium and long term. On adoption, the Climate Change Adaptation Plan will be embedded within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Management Plan.

7. Water

7.1. The Water Framework Directive (WFD)[25] requires the preparation and publication of river basin management plans; the setting of environmental objectives for groundwater and surface waters and the devising and implementing of programmes of measures to meet those objectives. Under the WFD Regulations, a river basin management plan must be developed for each river basin district and reviewed and updated every six years. The river basin management plans also tackle the climate and biodiversity crises to ensure a sustainable water supply and mitigate the effects of natural hazards such as floods and drought.

7.2. The National Landscape lies mainly within the catchments of the River Avon and River Stour. Several rivers and streams run through the National Landscape such as the Frome, Wylye, Nadder, Sem, Ebble, Stour, Allen and Moors. There are approximately 320 kms of chalk streams that run through the National Landscape.

7.3. The rivers of the AONB, particularly in the catchment of the Hampshire Avon, are some of the finest trout streams in the world, valued highly by fishermen. However, climate change and other factors threaten this heritage and the benefits that flow from it. Water flows in rivers and streams could become more erratic; or too much water can be abstracted. In addition, diffuse pollution occurs through poor land management practices, reducing water quality

7.4. A significant proportion of the River Avon System is within the AONB. It holds two Natura 2000 sites; the Hampshire Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Avon Valley Special Protection Area (SPA). The Hampshire Avon was one of four demonstration test catchments in England, a Government-funded project designed to study how to control diffuse pollution from agriculture to improve and maintain water quality in rural river catchments areas.

7.5. There has already been much good work undertaken such as the river restoration work of the Wessex Chalk Streams Project. Additionally, the Wessex Rivers Trust continues to be very active in its river restoration work delivering innumerable benefits to water quality and conservation. Much more remains to be achieved however, if our world-class fisheries are to be sustainable in the face of climate change and other challenges.

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to water

- The National Landscape lies mainly within two main river catchments (Avon and Stour). In the north west of the National Landscape water drains into the River Frome and a small element to the River Brue.
- 320 kms of clear chalk rivers and streams
- A network of streams, ponds and wetland areas
- Internationally important streams and rivers supporting wild trout, grayling, dace and chub, together with the fast-disappearing water vole and aquatic species that rely on high quality water such as the white-clawed crayfish, seriously threatened by the introduction of non-native crayfish

[25] The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (referred to as WFD Regulations) provides a framework for managing the water environment in England.

Key issues

1. The Environment Agency reports on the ecological status of watercourses and water bodies within the National Landscape[26].
2. The proportion of pollutants from wastewater and sewage, agriculture, and towns, villages and roads vary across and within the different river catchments. A significant issue caused by a combination of new development and lack of investment in waste water treatment is sewage treatment works operating beyond their designed capacity. The issue is exacerbated by ground and surface water ingress. The result is storm overflow discharges releasing untreated sewage into the watercourses.
3. New developments often lead to less permeable surfaces and more surface water running into the sewers. Reduction in storm overflows is complex, but sustainable urban drainage has a part to play to reduce overflows.
4. Storm overflows may run for a few hours or days but phosphorous from sewage treatment works, even during normal operation, is a constant. Downstream flooding may increase. The need for alternative drainage such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments is likely to increase to meet environmental challenges such as climate change and population growth.

Keys Issues explained

7.6. Challenges such as climate change and population growth will need to be addressed regarding water drainage and quality. Provision for SuDS and the national standards required for their design, construction, maintenance and operation is included in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Sustainable drainage systems are drainage solutions that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses. Diffuse pollution from towns, villages and roads comes from run-off, commerce e.g. car washes, drainage misconnections e.g. domestic appliances connected to the surface water network and inappropriate disposal of domestic materials.

7.7. Sewage and diffuse pollution contain nutrients, chemicals including heavy metals, pathogens, microplastics and sediment resulting in eutrophication, loss of biodiversity, risks to human health, increased cost of water treatment and harm to tourism and recreation.

7.8. Often driven by rainfall and how land is managed, agricultural diffuse pollution occurs when nutrients, pesticides, faecal bacteria, chemicals and fine sediments are lost from the land into local water courses and groundwater. Risks occur when:

- fertilisers and pesticides are spread at the wrong time or too close to a water course;
- cultivation takes place too close to a watercourse and/or there is no adequate buffer strip so increasing the risk of soil loss or field runoff getting straight into water courses;
- soil loss occurs around water courses and sedimentation covers gravels and surfaces that may be used, by example, for invertebrates and fish; and
- slurry or dung enters water bodies or courses, these risks creating polluting runoff, wastes valuable nutrients, and cost money.

[26] Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework - Additional statistic 5: Ecological status of watercourses and water bodies within Protected Landscapes © Environment Agency copyright and database rights 2024.

7.9. The water courses in the National Landscape are important for nature and for people. They provide a range of habitats that rely on specific water flow and levels. However, some stretches of the area's water courses are already prone to low flows, resulting in damage to riverine habitat, concentration of pollutants and less water for abstraction. Over-abstraction can have a detrimental impact on these factors. Summers are predicted to become drier, which would exacerbate this problem even further. The Corfe Mullen to Salisbury Transfer Main Scheme was undertaken by Wessex Water 2016 onwards in response to this threat of reduced abstraction.

7.10. The National Landscape is not, at present, an area widely prone to flooding. However, in extreme rainfall events, some villages have been affected by flooding from rivers or because of limited drainage. Climate change is likely to increase the risk of flooding and the frequency of such extreme rainfall events. It will also give rise to sustained hot and dry periods which can devastate aquatic life.

7.11. The water courses that flow downstream through the National Landscape can play a key role in helping to reduce flood risk downstream. Natural flood management works with natural processes to 'slow the flow' of flood waters, for example through 'leaky' or 'debris' dams. Several 'leaky dams' have been funded through the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme. This helps to reduce the maximum water height of a flood (the 'flood peak') and/or delay the arrival of the flood peak downstream, increasing the time available to prepare for floods. Sustainable drainage systems, and ecological river restoration projects are important components of natural flood management.

7.12. There are some large water bodies within the National Landscape, such as at Wardour, Crichel, Longleat and Stourhead but with the anticipated drier summers and wetter winters, there is likely to be an increased demand for rainwater harvesting and storage. The need for reliable sources of water for agriculture may grow and it is recognised that winter storage of water can benefit local wildlife, not least by reducing the need for abstraction from water courses. There may be a desire to create bodies of water for irrigation. Care in the scale, siting and design of such features is essential if they are to fit well into the landscape, appear natural, and make a valuable overall contribution to the National Landscape.

Outcomes and Policies

WA A The water stored, particularly in the chalk aquifers, and flowing within and from the National Landscape is clean and safe, helping to restore nature, improve people's health and well-being, and contribute to the local economy; flooding is managed in harmony with nature.	
	WA1 Water resources should be carefully and legally managed and conserved to the highest of standards within this National Landscape to: • improve water quality; • ensure adequate aquifer recharge; • ensure adequate flows; • avoid flooding; and • contribute to natural flood management systems.
	WA2 Development (new and existing sites) must assess and minimise flood risk and implement sustainable drainage schemes, adopt high water efficiency standards in line with RIBA 2030 Climate

	Challenge targets, and water conservation measures, for example rainwater harvesting and/or water recycling and grey water systems.
	WA3 Sewage pollution from storm overflows and continuous outfalls must be minimised and be well within legal and regulatory requirements.
	WA4 Practical opportunities to improve water quality should be implemented including: • The restoration of water courses and wetland habitats. • New wetland habitats could be sited to intercept runoff from roads and reedbeds could be created to filter potentially polluted water from settlements before it is discharged to rivers: i. Minimising soil erosion and run off by implementing soil conservation measures. ii. Minimising pesticide and fertiliser use and implementing measures to reduce pollution from agriculture. iii. Promote individual measures and behaviours in the home and workplace that protect water volume and quality in rivers. iv. Citizen science programmes to monitor water quality.

8. Historic and Cultural Heritage

8.1. The way the land has been used over the centuries has influenced the character of the landscapes we see around us today. The remnants and artefacts of working life, together with the layout of settlements, routeways, and buildings, contribute to the historic character of an area. This includes buried archaeology, buildings, designed landscapes and cultural features. Many acclaimed writers, artists, poets and photographers are associated with this NL.

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to the historic and cultural heritage:

- A landscape etched with the imprint of the past - visible archaeological features including prehistoric earthworks, former settlements, field systems, water meadows, Roman roads and Ackling Dyke.
- The former Medieval hunting areas of Selwood Forest, Grovely Forest, and the Cranborne Chase.
- A rich legacy of landscape scale prehistoric archaeological features such as the Neolithic Dorset Cursus, as well as later historic features including the Saxon Bokerley Dyke.
- Historic borderlands, with important Saxon and even Roman roots, once marginal land and often subject to late enclosure.
- A rich land use history, with areas that have a concentration of ancient enclosure, ancient woodland, and former common land.
- An historic settlement pattern (pre1750), which has seen minimal infilling, associated with a dense concentration of historic listed buildings.
- A concentration of historic parklands, estates, and manor houses together with Historic Parks and Gardens of national and county importance.
- Literary, artistic and historic connections of national and international distinction.
- Huge potential for previously undiscovered features.

Ambition

8.2. The historic and cultural environment of the National Landscape is conserved and enhanced. Everyone understands, values and enjoys its cultural and heritage assets. The story of the area's evolution over time is clear to all.

Key Achievements

- Publications – Historic England continues to promote our Historic Landscape Characterisation 2008, and the subsequent Historic Environment Action Plans (HEAPs) 2012, as exemplar documents. These provide an evolving targeted framework for ongoing historic environment action and a dedicated web site.
- Volunteer engagement – building on the former success of the Foundations of Archaeology project, the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme (2019-24), the 'Champions of the Past' project

has seen over 200 volunteers sign up and undergo training in understanding and interpreting LiDAR images of the Chase & Chalke area (covering a third of the National Landscape). This project will continue after the Scheme ends, spreading out to look at the whole of the National Landscape.

- Well attended seminars – Events exploring different aspects of the historic and archaeological treasures of the National Landscape, such as the Dorset Cursus offered opportunities to hear well renowned speakers. The event was oversubscribed.
- The Heritage Schools project within Chase and Chalke LP Scheme trained nearly 20 teachers in how to recognise and investigate local heritage sites or features close to their schools, giving them the tools to develop engaging heritage sessions with their classes.
- Churches database – all the parish churches of the NL have been visited, described, and photographed by an academic consultant.
- Somerset Council have undertaken an intensive consultation to establish an accountable system to create a Local List of Heritage Assets whilst Dorset Council has engaged consultants in a data sieving exercise with a similar objective. Hopefully these will lead the way in providing protection for heritage assets of regional or county significance that do not quite make the national listings.
- Input to planning – Consultation responses have influenced the drafting of national and local planning policy. Advice given to planning authorities on proposals affecting heritage assets has been effective.

Key issues

1. Knowledge and subsequent appreciation of the historic environment is growing - The National Landscape has a vast and precious historic heritage. Greater knowledge and promotion of this heritage legacy will underpin practical action to conserve and enhance it. The Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme raised the profile of many cultural characters and the artistic heritage through nine projects focussing on infamous characters, poetry, music and artistic talent through involvement of the public in participatory events and activities.
2. In some areas of the National Landscape however, there remains limited awareness of the contribution of art, literature and folklore to local identity – Heywood Sumner, Thomas Hardy, Desmond Hawkins, Cecil Beaton, Lucien Freud and Elisabeth Frink all took inspiration from Cranborne Chase and its hinterland. There is a profusion of authors, broadcasters, musicians, sculptors, photographers and artists closely connected to this National Landscape, both in the past and today. For many, their work is either little known or not widely enough appreciated by resident and visitor communities.
3. Heritage at Risk – The National Landscape has heritage assets that Historic England considers to be vulnerable or ‘at Risk’. There is a need for partners to take practical action to conserve and enhance these assets. There is a sparse record of historic farmsteads, especially those not recognised by the Listed Building processes.
4. Inappropriate management of the historic environment – Ploughing, planting or unsuitable grazing can seriously damage historic sites and features. Ancient and veteran trees are found within wood pastures, historic parkland, hedgerows, orchards, parks or other areas. They are often found outside ancient woodlands. They have biodiversity, cultural and heritage value (see chapter 5 for Nature Recovery).

5. Funding for the historic environment – Pressure on specific funds to safeguard and enhance the historic environment is high. Some funding for this area of work has been offered through the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, offered within all Protected Landscapes since mid-2021 but funding remains generally difficult to find. Funding may be possible through Historic England grants and Countryside Stewardship.

The Issues Explained

8.3. Awareness of sources of information on historic resources remains limited. There is a need to promote better awareness of Historic Environment Action Plans (HEAPs) as a key source (while acknowledging that these often record some types of heritage better than others, so other sources should also be used). The 'Buildings at Risk' register of Historic England is not widely known nor its local relevance appreciated. There is not a record of all the historic sites. Those sites without records are almost certainly being damaged or lost. The partner LPAs can prepare local lists of heritage assets which have protection in the planning processes, but that does not guarantee that those assets will be actively conserved.

8.4. The HEAPs identify ways in which the National Landscape can work with the Historic Environment Records (HERs) to enhance knowledge and understanding, for example for the Medieval and Post Medieval period and in woodland. It also identifies areas where the significance of particular heritage is not well known.

8.5. Government has recently extended the 'special' regard to Listed Buildings when considering development proposals to Registered Historic Parks and Gardens [s.102 LURA 2023] so there is now added protection to those elements of our landscapes.

8.6. There is a need for greater knowledge of the location and importance of the heritage assets of the NL. The ongoing promotion of the Historic Landscape Characterisation, HEAPs and Champions of the Past (LiDAR) project can help deal with this.

8.7. The HERs in Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire are an essential source of information for managing, caring for and understanding the historic environment. They select and present information on all known heritage assets. These include landscapes, buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas and archaeological finds. There is also information on previous archaeological and heritage work in each county. No such record is ever complete.

8.8. The quality of information about, and interpretation of, the historic environment of the National Landscape can continue to be improved through Champions of the Past project of Chase & Chalke. There is a wealth of historic riches throughout the area; a visible legacy of human involvement with the landscape through time.

8.9. One aim of the NLHF funded Chase & Chalke LP Scheme was to support wide-ranging, innovative and inspiring volunteer engagement through projects such as Champions of the Past, Heritage Schools, Curious Dorset Cursus, the Communities Caring for Heritage grant scheme and the augmented reality Time Traveller App. These projects invited involvement, enjoyment and learning from the widest range of audiences throughout 2019-24 and its legacy will be to continue this engagement into the future. Projects also provided a range of opportunities for people to get involved in practical tasks such as ground-truthing the LiDAR and taking part in archaeologist led digs, encouraging meaningful learning about the historic and cultural heritage of the area.

8.10. Nevertheless, the National Landscape needs to access more resources to develop educational and interpretative media across the whole area to increase awareness, understanding and appreciation of this National Landscape's historic and cultural environment.

8.11. The landscapes of the National Landscape are an expression of the interaction between people and the land over thousands of years. Every part of these landscapes has a history that contributes to the special qualities of this Protected Area. The landscapes of the National Landscape bear the mark of successive periods of human activity. This is one of the richest and most closely studied parts of prehistoric Wessex. It was the haunt of General Pitt-Rivers, Heywood Sumner, Richard Bradley and today, Martin Green of Down Farm, which the Dorset Cursus traverses.

8.12. Important literary figures associated with the area include poet and barrister Sir John Davies, naturalist and writer W H Hudson, and author and broadcaster Desmond Hawkins, amongst many. Thomas Hardy based some scenes of Tess of the d'Urbervilles in Cranborne Chase National Landscape. Other artistic and cultural connections include the architect Sir Christopher Wren and renowned photographer, designer, socialite, writer, Sir Cecil Beaton.

8.13. The work of Augustus John, Henry Lamb, Ben Nicholson, John Craxton, Lucian Freud, Stanley Spencer, Elisabeth Frink, William Nicholson and over 25 other artists connected with Cranborne Chase have been celebrated as part of an exhibition at Salisbury Museum. The Museum states that artists 'have found in Cranborne Chase and its hinterland a landscape of inspiration, seclusion and 'bare-boned' beauty'; and that the National Landscape 'has always had an air of isolation which has attracted an exceptional array of artists and writers'.

Nationally designated heritage in the National Landscape

8.14. Designation is a way of marking that a building, monument or landscape is of 'special architectural or historic interest' in a national context. Historic England makes the recommendation for designation. It is a stage that identifies a site as being architecturally or historically important before any planning stage that may decide its future.

8.15. In 2023, in the National Landscape there were:

- 402 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
- 2,064 Listed Buildings, 78 of which are Grade I and 108 Grade II*.
- 18 Registered Parks and Gardens.

8.16. When Historic England says that a Listed Grade I or II* Building is 'at risk', they mean it is vulnerable through neglect or decay rather than alteration or demolition. This leads to the 'At Risk' Register. Historic England prepares and publishes an annual Register of Heritage at Risk of those nationally designated heritage assets that are at risk of being lost through neglect, decay or inappropriate development.

8.17. In 2023, in the National Landscape there were:

- 3 Buildings at Risk.
- 59 Monuments at Risk.
- 0 Parks and Gardens at Risk.

8.18. Some local authorities produce their own registers that record all buildings and structures 'at risk', irrespective of grade. As Historic England (formerly English Heritage) only lists Grades I, II* and II in the Register of Heritage at Risk, the total number of buildings or structures 'at risk' is much greater than the register might at first suggest.

Local heritage designations and records

- 56 designated Conservation Areas.
- 16 Historic Parks and Gardens of county importance.
- Historic designed landscapes of local importance.
- The four County Archaeological Services record and protect the archaeology within the National Landscape, and each maintains an Historic Environment Record/Sites and Monuments Record.

8.19. The Historic Environment Action Plans (HEAPS) identify the key issues affecting the heritage assets of the National Landscape. They summarise the key characteristics of the historic environment at a landscape scale. They set out the significance, condition and pressures affecting the heritage assets, including those 'at risk'. They identify the actions needed to conserve and enhance these special characteristics. These provide the central actions to enable the National Landscape partners to conserve and enhance its historic environment assets.

8.20. Incorrect ploughing of land can destroy buried and extant archaeological features. Lack of grazing leads to the development of scrub. Historic sites are harder to recognise when overgrown and are prone to severe root damage if trees or shrubs establish themselves. Overgrazing can cause erosion and destroy sites. Burrowing animals, such as badgers and rabbits, can damage underground remains. Planting and harvesting trees and energy crops may also cause damage to sites. Badly designed buildings and structures may spoil the setting of many sites and monuments. The historic cohesion of the landscape may be lost.

8.21. Funding - Historic England commissioned a research report in 2019 to review the issues facing local authorities as they manage their heritage assets at a time of acute financial stress. The funding available through both Historic England and Local Authorities has greatly diminished over recent years. The research found a wide variation in the ways that local authorities manage their heritage properties. It describes the issues that are affecting them, including the economic downturn, declining budgets, changing patterns of use and fewer conservation officers.

8.22. Some external funding programmes target the historic environment. The National Lottery Heritage Fund has recently reviewed its funding programmes within a new Strategy to 2033. There will no doubt be intensive competition to all funding programmes which may lead to insufficient funding to fully protect and conserve the historic wealth of this National Landscape. The Chase & Chalke LP Scheme, as mentioned earlier, has begun to greatly increase understanding of the historic and cultural heritage and has directed relatively small amounts towards its protection.

Outcomes and Policies

HE A By the end of the Plan period, we will ensure that the historic environment, cultural heritage and traditions of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape are much better understood; and are being valued and celebrated by all.

	HE1 Promote opportunities to increase awareness and understanding of the historic environment using existing resources such as: • Historic Environment Records • Conservation Area Appraisals • Historic Landscape Characterisation • Historic Environment Action Plans and • Heritage Assessments. These should be used to improve the identification, recording and management of the distinctive historic landscapes of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape and encourage positive action regarding the management of the National Landscape's historic environment and cultural heritage.
	HE2 Promote greater public understanding of, and engagement with, the conservation of the historic environment of the National Landscape and celebrate it in arts, cultural, and social activities across the area.
HE B The historic and cultural heritage of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape is conserved and enhanced by all those whose work programmes may affect it.	
	HE3 Proposals that are likely to impact on the historic environment and cultural heritage of the National Landscape should be compatible with, and seek to further, the conservation and enhancement of these heritage assets and their setting. This should include: • seeking to sustain and enhance the significance, and minimising any harm to, the area's historic assets. • respecting the historical elements of landscape character including features such as; buildings, sites, archaeological monuments, layout and context, including the relationship between the existing feature or settlement and the landscape. • ensuring the sustainable use of historic buildings and other heritage assets, particularly those identified as being at risk.
	HE4 Stakeholders should work towards the delivery of the relevant targets for heritage assets within the national Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework. The apportioned targets for Cranborne Chase to be achieved are: • Target 10 - Decrease the number of nationally designated heritage assets at risk in Protected Landscapes.

9. Dark Night Skies

9.1. Cranborne Chase National Landscape has the darkest night skies in central southern England. The awe-inspiring Milky Way can be readily viewed here; something that over 90% of the UK population can rarely see due to light pollution. Unlike ancient historic settlements, rivers, soils, wildlife, and our outstanding landscapes, the night sky has no legal protection, which explains why, in just six years, light pollution has increased by 24% across the UK.

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to dark night skies:

- Cranborne Chase National Landscape is one of the darkest places in England.
- Dark night skies with a myriad of visible stars have always been an outstanding, memorable and remarkable feature of this National Landscape.
- A topography that facilitates stargazing with open, elevated downland, wide panoramic, unobstructed views all with relatively easy public access.
- Lack of major towns and a low NL population limits the incidence of light pollution and sky glow.
- Cranborne Chase National Landscape was designated the 14th International Dark Sky Reserve in October 2019.

Ambition

9.2. Everyone aims to maintain the International Dark Sky Reserve status in perpetuity, continuing to reduce light pollution into the future to enhance further the night-time environment for the benefit of human health and wildlife. It will also reduce expenditure and carbon emissions from unnecessary lighting, and offering new opportunities for education and regenerative rural tourism.

Key achievements

- International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR) status was achieved in October 2019. The International Dark Sky Reserve protects an area possessing exceptional starry nights and nocturnal environment for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural, heritage and/or public enjoyment.
- The prevention and avoidance of light pollution has been consistently inputted to national and local planning policy consultations and detailed development management advice since the 2008 Position Statement on Light Pollution.
- The first specialist, dark night skies and good lighting National Landscape Planning Seminar was held in 2014, another in 2018 whilst an Annual Forum was held in association with the coordinator for the British Astronomical Association's Commission for Dark Skies.
- Good Lighting Guides were provided by the National Landscape Team and Commission for Dark Skies in 2016; a Developers' Guide to Good Lighting was added in 2018.
- Partnerships have been established with the British Astronomical Association, Wessex Astronomical Society, Fordingbridge Astronomers, Starquest Astronomy Club and Cranborne Chase Astronomy Club to record sky darkness, facilitate events, and promote good lighting practice. 10 public stargazing sites have been negotiated with landowners and promoted through this 'Chasing Stars' initiative.

- Sky Quality Meter (SQM) readings have been taken throughout the National Landscape since 2015 and on a more systematic square kilometre grid basis from 2017 to 2022 to map the darkest areas of the area. From 2023 the DarkSky International protocol, which requires a maximum of 12 locations, has been used.
- Since being designated as an international Dark Sky Reserve, except for "Covid winter", a minimum of six public stargazing evenings per year have been scheduled and Annual StarFests have been held. The Dark Night Skies team has exhibited at festivals and fairs and given talks and seminars. The Chase & Chalke team has arranged for 'Space Detectives' workshops to be delivered to schools. From 2021 to 2023, more than 10,000 people were reached by these activities.
- Some LPAs now consistently place conditions on planning approvals that ensure new lighting complies with National Landscape Partnership guidance, which echoes Commission for Dark Skies and International Dark-sky Association (IDA) best practice.

Key issues

1. Exposure to artificial light at night presents significant risks to human health – Humans evolved with the rhythms of the natural light-dark cycle of day and night. Natural light helps set our clocks to Earth's 24-hour day-night cycle. Exposure to artificial light at night disrupts this process, increasing our risks for cancers and other potentially deadly diseases. Glare from poorly shielded outdoor lighting limits our ability to see. Aging eyes are especially affected
2. Outdoor lighting impacts wildlife, especially in or near sensitive habitats – Bad lighting policies can have lethal consequences for wildlife but good policies can maintain healthy ecosystems. Nocturnal habitats do not receive the same attention as daytime habitats.
3. Producing artificial light consumes energy – Promoting dark skies can reduce energy consumption and promote efficient outdoor lighting technologies. There is a need to influence the types and levels of outdoor lighting installed in the National Landscape.
4. Poorly designed and/or installed outdoor lighting is a hazard to motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians in transit at night – The same policies that keep night-time skies dark reduce glare and put the right amount of light in the right place and at the right time to ensure the safety of all.
5. Over-lighting outdoor spaces at night can create favourable conditions for crimes of opportunity – Bright flood lighting creates shadows that can mask a crime. Policies that protect dark skies enhance security by reducing glare and preserving night-sight.
6. Dazzle, glare and light spilling in all directions reduces the visibility of the stars and hence the opportunities to perceive a special part of the environment.
7. Awareness and understanding of the implications of seeking IDSR status needs to be raised – People living and working in the area need to be a part of this initiative. Although large parts of the area remain free from light pollution, the gradual encroachment of street, house and security lights means that starlight, which may have travelled for hundreds or even millions of years to reach our eyes, is stolen at the last moment - by sky-glow. The ongoing information and engagement programme aims to reach a consensus for limits and controls on outside lighting.

8. An absence of detailed lighting policies within current Local Plans can be a barrier to LPAs implementing good lighting practice when determining planning applications. However, some lighting issues (Permitted Development / installation of blinds) fall outside planning control.
9. Planning consultants and developers need to adopt good lighting practices as standard.
10. The significant potential to attract and increase additional astro-tourism visitors to this National Landscape, particularly in the 'shoulder' and winter months, is not fully appreciated.

The Issues Explained

9.3. Whilst awareness and understanding of the multiple benefits of IDSR status is increasing, the potential improvements to human health, an enhanced environment for nocturnal wildlife, financial savings, carbon emission reductions and a much-enhanced tourism offer requires ongoing promotion.

9.4. The advent of LEDs, which offer welcome and considerable cost and energy savings to domestic and business users, can emit a harsh, bright white light with a substantial blue element within it that can often dazzle onlookers, and if fixtures are incorrectly fitted, emit this unnecessary light upwards and sideways.

9.5. Some of the LPAs are including conditions regarding lighting issues in line with the National Landscape's policies on lighting and others have yet to put this in motion. The Local/Development Plans for the five Local Authorities cover different time periods. This means some may be willing to consider adding specific lighting policies relatively quickly whilst others suggest they are not able to do so for some time.

9.6. The highway authorities in Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire each operate light dimming schemes. Dorset has a highway policy of no lights in rural areas except in special situations (for example, at major traffic junctions) and a policy that restricts upwards and sideways emission of light. Wiltshire highway lights are now all IDSR compliant.

9.7. Many planning consultants and developers are unaware of the light pollution caused through ill-designed lighting schemes. The Institution of Lighting Professionals has developed guidance dedicated solely to excellence in lighting. Plans for new developments frequently comprise floor to ceiling glass 'walls', and roof lights are not automatically fitted with blinds or louvres; understanding of the need for these to prevent night-time emission of light pollution needs to be increased.

9.8. DarkSky International requires <500 lumens (equating roughly to a 60W incandescent bulb), or fully shielded fittings to limit sideways and upwards light spill, preferably incorporating an infrared motion sensor, in a Dark Sky Reserve. Much of the outside, security lighting utilised on both domestic and business premises is not currently IDA compliant, with many unshielded fittings and lamps/ bulbs emitting higher than the required 500 lumens.

9.9. Another factor contributing to unwanted light spill can be the inappropriate installation of light fixtures. They should be angled downwards to only light the area to be illuminated. This requires fixtures to only shine light below the horizontal. The National Landscape has developed a 'Big Dipper' campaign to encourage people to make existing and future exterior lighting compliant with Dark Sky Reserve principles.

Outcomes and Policies

DNS A Protect and enhance the night-time environment and dark skies across the Cranborne Chase National Landscape so that current and future generations can experience the wonder and tranquillity of a truly dark sky, and to benefit wildlife and human health.

DNS1 All stakeholders should actively seek to retain International Dark Sky Reserve status through the continuous improvements to lighting/retrofitting schemes. Lighting schemes should be kept to a minimum and only installed where it is necessary.

The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership will:

- Submit an annual report of activities to maintain the International Dark Sky Reserve status.
- Support parish councils in promoting good practice lighting to their residents and businesses, offering Dark Sky Friendly Parish Awards.
- Investigate the potential for sponsorship/ provision of low-cost good practice outside light fittings within the National Landscape

DNS2 Proposals that are likely to impact on the dark skies and tranquillity of the National Landscape should be delivered in a way that is compatible with, and seek to further, the conservation and enhancement of these dark skies, by seeking to avoid and, where avoiding is not possible, minimise lighting.

- Such proposals should have regard to, and be compatible with, best practice standards and guidance, in particular the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Guidance on Lighting[27] as well as that published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals, the Bat Conservation Trust and the Commission for Dark Skies.
- The Local Authorities should embed good practice lighting guidance within their Local Plans and require substantial lighting schemes, such as those for schools, businesses and sports areas, to be competently designed to meet Dark Night Sky and other environmental criteria.

DNS B The multiple benefits of dark night skies are understood, valued and enjoyed by all.

DNS3 Actively promote the benefits of International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR) status to all partners and communities to elicit appropriate action and support for the IDSR.

- Support tourism and related businesses to jointly promote, and benefit from, the area as a prime destination for stargazing holidays. Continue to implement a Dark-Sky Friendly Accreditation Scheme for local tourism and allied businesses.
- Develop a Cranborne Chase National Landscape observatory to offer regular stargazing activities together with educational and study opportunities for residents, visitors and schools. Determine a potential location, design criteria and funding requirements necessary to establish an NL Observatory within the time-frame of this Plan.

[27] Guidance on lighting criteria: International Dark Sky Reserve - Cranborne Chase National Landscape

	• Work with other UK ‘Dark Sky Places’ and related organisations to improve awareness and understanding across the country of the need to reduce light pollution.

LIVING AND WORKING LANDSCAPES

10. Rural Land Management

10.1. Rural land management encompasses farming, forestry, fisheries and game management. In this deeply rural National Landscape landowners, farmers and managers have been the custodians and sculptors of the landscape for centuries. Cranborne Chase National Landscape has a wealth of natural capital (geology, minerals, soil, air, water, plants, animals, habitats) that provide goods and services, often called ecosystem services, that benefit wider society. Today and tomorrow, landowner activities will continue to shape and mould the landscapes we see around us. They will deliver the food security we need through the regenerative management of soils; they will help with the supply of clean air and water.

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to rural land management:

- The agricultural character of the National Landscape is typified by arable cropping (52% in 2021), especially the south-eastern sector and on the West Wiltshire Downs.
- There are many large estates within the National Landscape resulting in consistent agricultural regimes over large areas, over time.
- The Vale of Wardour and the north-western edge of the area are mostly grasslands.
- A typical farm is slightly larger than the regional average and consists of predominantly arable land with some permanent pasture and woodland. It is the mixed nature of the holdings that contributes significantly to the special qualities of the landscape and its biodiversity.
- There are currently 10 farmer clusters within the National Landscape covering over 51,000h or 52% of the area.
- The mosaic of broad-leaved (9.2% of National Landscape area in 2024), mixed and coniferous woodland (3.2% in 2024), shelterbelts, copses, hedgerows (4,800 km) and veteran trees is a distinctive element in the National Landscape. 75% of all woodlands are under active management. Many ancient woods and woodland are still under active coppicing management.
- Land management practices – Intensive, or changing, land management practices can lead to a decline in wildlife and reduced soil and water quality.
- This Protected Area is one of the most intensively managed game landscapes in the country. This reflects the heritage of the area as an historic hunting Chase and the character of the downlands. Historically there were early cereal crops making way for early season partridge shooting. Much of the focus is now on pheasant shooting which contributes to the social and economic development of rural businesses and communities.
- The legacy of previous land management adds to the historic dimension of the landscape.

Ambition

10.2. The management of the rural land of this National Landscape should be regenerative. This will meet the demand for food, fuel and other produce in ways that conserve and enhance the landscape character, deliver increased public benefits from natural capital and lay the foundations for long term nature recovery.

Key Achievements

- Farming in Protected Landscapes – a Defra-funded programme to offer grants to farmers applying for projects on their land that benefit one or more of the four criteria: Nature, Climate, People, Place. In this National Landscape over £2 million has been distributed as grants to farmers and/or landowners from mid-2021 to end March 2025.
- 'Raising Our Game' – Production of the first integrated landscape management advice for game managers in a protected landscape. Research conducted and analysed with game managers by the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust. A repeat research project 10 years on may yield informative trends.
- 'A Landscape View of Trees and Woodland' – Guidelines for tree planting for each landscape character type within the National Landscape. This remains valid today.
- A joint consultation response was prepared with Dorset National Landscape on the Forestry Commissions Draft Forest Plan for woodlands of Cranborne Chase and North Dorset 2016-2026.
- Farmer 'clusters'– Three farmer clusters originally had considerable input from the National Landscape as they were initiated; there are now ten clusters in existence. 'Clusters' are groups of neighbouring farmers coming together to develop and agree landscape-scale biodiversity enhancements across their holdings.

Key issues

1. To ensure the sustainable management of the National Landscape's rural land, it is essential that farmers are encouraged to adopt good environmental and agricultural practices. The nation can then achieve the aims of improved soils, more wildlife, and sustainable food production.
2. Land management practices – Intensive, or changing, land management practices can lead to a decline in wildlife and reduced soil and water quality. The 'best and most versatile' land should always be retained for food production, alongside biodiversity enhancements
3. The area once had a thriving dairy industry but the number of dairies has declined. Cattle and sheep numbers however have remained steady over the past decade whilst pig figures show a drastic reduction from 29,000 in 2010 to 15,500 in 2021. The shelters associated with pig rearing can have a detrimental visual impact in our open landscape areas.
4. Many woodlands are either under-managed or do not have a coherent management plan. The wood-fuel market continues to offer an opportunity to bring more small woodlands into positive management.
5. Deriving from the history of the Chase, deer are an iconic feature but management of herding species, such as fallow, is becoming a pressing issue.

6. The National Landscape is one of the most intensively managed game landscapes in the country and the effects of this are not fully appreciated and valued. This sector can create significant social, environmental and economic benefits but, if poorly managed, can have negative impacts.
7. The impact of pests is a major issue for forest managers, landowners and nature conservationists. There is an increase in the number of alien species, pests and pathogens entering the natural environment, with many being recorded almost monthly. In May 2018, the Forestry Commission noted 30 new pests and diseases affecting livestock, and 15 affecting trees in the UK. These can have a devastating effect on the natural environment and livelihoods.
8. The rivers of the National Landscape, particularly in the catchment of the Hampshire Avon, are some of the finest trout streams in the world, valued highly by fishermen. However, climate change and other factors threaten this heritage and the benefits that flow from it. Water flows in rivers and streams could become more erratic; or too much water can be abstracted. In addition, diffuse pollution occurs through poor land management practices, reducing water quality.

The Issues Explained

10.3. Farmland covers over 86% of the National Landscape; together with woodland cover this rises to 96%. The 'best and most versatile land' should be used for food production. The landscapes we cherish are the result of the interactions of nature and human activities over centuries. The stewardship of land managers over past generations, and the commitment of many today, is critical to sustaining, and enhancing, these landscapes into the future.

10.4. The current uptake of environmental stewardship schemes within the National Landscape is nonetheless above the national average with 44% of the 'utilisable agricultural area' under Environmental Stewardship Schemes. The 229 agreements in place in the area cover over 45,500 hectares.

10.5. The UK left the European Union in March 2019. From 2022 onwards, a new environmental land management system will be the cornerstone of the UK agricultural policy, achieving improved biodiversity, water, air quality, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and cultural benefits that improve our mental and physical wellbeing and the safeguarding of the historic landscapes. Before Brexit, farming was supported through the European Union Common Agricultural Policy and the main payment was the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS). England is creating its own schemes but has introduced a transition period. The 2023 scheme year was the last year of BPS and from 2024, transitional delinked payments are replacing BPS payments. Delinked payments will be made each year from 2024 until 2027, with the value decreasing each year through progressive reductions.

10.6. Apart from the National Landscape administered Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL),the new grants of particular interest in the National Landscape are:

- the Environmental Land Management scheme that helps farming to be productive in a way that benefits the environment; there are also access and engagement options to improve public access to their land, particularly in areas where access over Rights of Way is limited
- the Woodland Grants and Incentives.

10.7. There are three Environmental Land Management schemes.

- The Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme pays farmers and land managers to take up or maintain sustainable farming and land management practices that:

    - protect and benefit the environment
    - support food production
    - improve productivity
- The Countryside Stewardship scheme provides financial incentives for farmers, foresters and land managers to protect and enhance the natural environment by:
    - increasing biodiversity
    - improving habitat
    - expanding woodland areas
    - improving water quality
    - improving air quality
    - improving natural flood management
- The Landscape Recovery scheme (the current round has closed) pays groups of farmers and land managers to do long-term, large-scale projects together. Land must be in England and consist of at least 500 connected hectares. The scheme supports:
    - net zero carbon emissions
    - protected sites
    - wildlife-rich habitat

10.8. The England Woodland Grants and Incentives schemes are:

- The England Woodland Creation Offer that provides funding to create new woodland on areas that are at least 1 hectare
- The Woodland Creation Planning Grant that provides funding to prepare a Woodland Creation Design Plan that complies with the UK Forestry Standard.
- Protecting tree health seeks to test different ways of slowing the spread of pests and diseases affecting trees in England. Grants are available for ash with ash dieback; diseased larch, spruce and sweet chestnut; and oak with oak processionary moth.

10.9. The National Landscape designation provides a platform for integrating the support provided to the sector with wider environmental, social and economic opportunities. In doing so, the areas could be vital test beds in helping develop a more sustainable approach to agriculture in England.

10.10. There is a move to develop nature friendly and regenerative type farming systems. Regenerative farming refers to an approach that seeks to work with natural systems to restore and enhance the biodiversity, soil fertility and ecosystem service provision (such as carbon sequestration and water retention) of farmed land. Regenerative models focus on increasing the resilience of ecological systems and conserving soils, rather than extracting from these systems solely to achieve market returns. Regenerative farming not only focuses on the resilience of natural capital, but social capital too, with the goal of supporting rural communities and wider supply chains. There are many practices that can be adopted by farmers that will bring environmental and commercial benefits, such as:

- sustainable utilisation of soil, minimising erosion;
- effective water catchment management;
- avoidance of direct pollution and measures to reduce diffuse pollution;
- farm waste minimisation and recycling.

National and local policies must support and encourage farmers in making decisions that bring these "win-win" solutions to the challenges of the future.

10.11. The research for 'Raising Our Game' document (2011) highlighted the importance of game shooting as a reason for acquiring, retaining and managing land. It has a significant effect on the local economy through providing significant employment and housing. It attracts large numbers of day and weekend visitors to the area and supports a significant hospitality service outside of the main tourist season.

10.12. Many shoots in the area are of modest size whilst a few shoots are larger concerns with the turnover of a medium-sized company.

10.13. A significant proportion of the River Avon System is within the National Landscape. It holds two Natura 2000 sites; the Hampshire Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Avon Valley Special Protection Area (SPA). The Hampshire Avon is one of four demonstration test catchments in England, a Government funded project designed to study how to control diffuse pollution from agriculture to improve and maintain water quality in rural river catchments areas.

10.14. There has already been much good work undertaken such as the river restoration work of the Wessex Chalk Streams Project. Additionally, the Wessex Rivers Trust continues to be very active in its river restoration work delivering innumerable benefits to water quality and conservation. Much more remains to be achieved however, if our world-class fisheries are to be sustainable in the face of climate change and other challenges.

Outcomes and Policies

RLM A Land managers understand landscape character and are aware of how their activities can impact on the landscape and environment of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

RLM 1 Identify good agricultural practices that that are appropriate to the challenges facing the land managers of the National Landscape:

- Disseminate case studies through networks and information hubs.
- Support the formation of further farm clusters across the area.
- Offer National Landscape focused landscape and land management familiarisation and training, as appropriate.

RLM B Land management in the National Landscape integrates productive commercial activity with the conservation of cultural, natural and social heritage.

RLM2 Rural land management practices in the National Landscape and its setting should be compatible with, and seek to further, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area. Land managers should have:

- access to clear and consistent sources of advice, guidance and support (including on regenerative and nature-friendly practices);
- fair access to markets including the promotion of local and seasonal produce and the development of local services and markets; and

- payments for environmental services that benefit the distinctive natural and historic environment of the National Landscape.

The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership will:

- work with partners, such as the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust, to disseminate appropriate information and advice on how game management practices can positively contribute to National Landscape purposes, and support research to this end.
- Support and encourage environmental enhancement of the best and most versatile land being maintained in regenerative food production.
- support and encourage landscape sensitive and appropriate woodland management, encouraging skills training, reconnecting supply chains and increasing biodiversity, including PAWS restoration.
- work with, and support partners such as the Wessex Rivers Trust, Environment Agency, private landowners, fishery managers, Wildlife Trusts and Natural England, to deliver programmes and projects that bring environmental benefits to water catchments while securing a viable future for fisheries.

11. Planning and Transport

11.1. Intrinsically built development can impact adversely on flora and fauna. Development within this nationally important landscape should be limited [National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 189] and biodiversity net gain is a requirement for larger projects. Cranborne Chase National Landscape takes the view that all built development should contribute to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and the principles of our Position Statement on BNG should be applied to all development.

11.2. The demographics indicate Cranborne Chase National Landscape has an above average preponderance of older people which puts pressure on limited services. Younger families have significant distances to travel for work and education. People are, however, needed to manage the land and sustain the characteristics of the living landscape. Although there are 4 major tourist attractions, the wildlife, scenic, and cultural attractions of the area are not widely known and tourism pressures are concentrated on a few locations.

11.3. National landscapes are attractive places to live but costs are high. Local and Neighbourhood Plans, and development management decisions, should sustain rural character and qualities whilst supporting the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty. A balance must be struck between providing the affordable homes, the facilities and services for modern life and the conservation of nationally important landscapes. Cranborne Chase National Landscape does not contain large settlements and the acknowledged need is for affordable dwellings for those whose work sustains the living landscapes.

11.4. With a relatively small population spread over a large area the scope for adaptation and mitigation in the face of climate change is limited. Where there are no conflicts with heritage designations Cranborne Chase National Landscape encourages the utilisation of roofs for the capture and utilisation of renewable energy. However, in an area renowned for its scenic beauty field scale solar

and wind turbines conflict with the national designation and the conservation and enhancement of scenic beauty.

11.5. Land use and development topics are inherently central to 'conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape'. The planning functions of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership, including transport matters, naturally interlink very closely with landscape and rural economy issues. The Environment Act 2021 introduced a mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement for new development along with Local Nature Recovery Strategies to target the best places for nature recovery and wider environmental benefits. Biodiversity Net Gain will mean that developments leave habitats in a better state for wildlife than they were in before, whilst Local Nature Recovery Strategies will better equip local planning authorities to incorporate nature recovery objectives into local plans and development decisions.

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to planning and transport:

- Organisationally complex; there are currently five Local Planning Authorities, four Highways Authorities together with National Highways, and Network Rail.
- A largely rural, open, and undeveloped area comprising landscapes sensitive to change.
- Predominantly agricultural land uses but with an unusually high proportion of woodlands and forestry in parts.
- Landscapes of considerable scenic beauty, with extensive views, and hosting important habitats and species.
- The landscapes are rich in history with significant visual and archaeological features.
- Distinctive settlement patterns with historic elements readily visible and central to the character of settlements.
- Architectural styles vary considerably throughout the National Landscape, dependent on availability of building materials.
- The built environment forms an integral part of local character and distinctiveness and adds to the diversity of the area's landscape as a whole.
- Large historic country houses at the centre of historic parklands and gardens and other characteristic buildings.
- Two separate railways converge on Salisbury through this National Landscape but only a single station within the area.
- Limited public transport, and special buses are needed to get students to and from schools.
- A single north/south main road route and four roughly east/west roads, two of them Trunk Roads.
- A minor road network of narrow and frequently twisty routes that reflects the deeply rural, tranquil character of the National Landscape, with few realignments and improvements.
- One of the darkest skies in southern central England, designated as 14th International Dark Sky Reserve in the world, with lighting criteria to allow the stars to be seen by current and future generations.

Ambition

11.6. Planning and transportation strategies, policies, and decisions that affect this nationally important National Landscape always both conserve and enhance its special qualities. Where development is necessary, it is located and designed to integrate fully with the landscape character and natural beauty. Potentially intrusive energy generation and communications development are located outside the Cranborne Chase National Landscape. All management of, and improvements to, roads enhance the distinctive character of the area. There will be a range of more sustainable options for transport that reduce its effects on tranquillity and the natural environment of the area.

Key Achievements

- Planning Protocol – signed by All local planning authorities in 2005 and refined in September 2006 (Appendix XX) continues to ensure the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership is a consultee on Local Plan / Neighbourhood Plan documents as well as Minerals and Waste Plans. All planning applications over a certain size, or any applications that may have an adverse impact on the National Landscape, are sent to the Partnership for comment.
- National Policies – Both independently and in combination with other National Landscapes, the Partnership has contributed to, and influenced, 20 national policy and practice consultations since 2019.
- Guidance Documents – The Partnership has eleven National Landscape Position Statements, and twelve Fact Sheets and Good Practice Notes (See Appendix AA). They provide information on topics of relevance to the landscape and planning within and around the National Landscape. Their purpose is to guide and assist applicants, communities and planning officers at both the policy and development management levels.
- Planning policy and applications – Since 2019, Local Planning Authorities have received relevant National Landscape information in response to 37 policy documents and 1,041 planning applications. This input enabled them to take account of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape and its setting.
- Appeals and Inquiries – The Partnership has provided 38 planning appeal responses to the Inspectorate since 2006; given evidence at major appeal Inquiries securing successful outcomes for the National Landscape and its setting; and contributed to future strategies at five Plan Examinations in Public.
- Planning and Transportation Seminars – Despite Covid-19, there have been 6 annual seminars since 2019 with, on average, over thirty delegates at each. In addition, 5 bespoke seminars have been provided. Focusing on a topic relevant to the time, these seminars are highly valued as continuing professional development.
- Mitigation of Major Development – In addition to mitigating the impacts of major developments, the Partnership has achieved agreement to financial compensation for the wear and tear of additional recreational use flowing from large developments close to the National Landscape and the unquantifiable disruptions to the landscapes and tranquillity of the area.
- Section 85 leaflet – Provides guidance on the duty that 'relevant authorities' 'must seek to further the purposes of AONB designation' for public bodies, organisations, and persons in public office. It is an example of good practice in Natural England's advice on the topic.

- Landscape Character – The Historic Landscape Character Assessment, the Historic Environment Action Plans and the detailed Landscape Character Assessment for the Cranborne Chase and Chalke Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme area supplement the Landscape Character Assessment which was reassessed in 2024. Planning staff have been offered specific training to enable them to incorporate landscape matters into their work and decisions.
- Landscape Sensitivity – This seminal study (2007) of the inherent sensitivity and robustness of the landscapes of the National Landscape continues to guide and inform decision making.
- Tranquillity – The team has taken forward the CPRE data, supplemented by field surveys, to relate the findings more precisely to the landscape character areas of this National Landscape. Our work has been presented as good practice internationally as well as being taken as the basis for further work in two National Parks.
- A Guide to Conserving and Enhancing the Setting of the Rural Road Network of the AONB – Acutely aware that the public most frequently perceive the landscapes around them from roads, this document provides guidance on the landscape management of the highway corridors across the National Landscape.

Key issues

1. Development pressures – There are frequent proposals for renewable energy generation, communications masts, waste treatment, large-scale agricultural storage and general warehousing and distribution. There is an inconsistent approach to replacement dwellings and additional 'essential worker' dwellings across the National Landscape; and a shortage of affordable housing for local people. Proposals for replacement dwellings are leading to a higher proportion of larger, less affordable, dwellings. The annual requirement on Local Planning Authorities to invite the identification of housing sites, along with the current round of Local Plan consultations, can encourage speculative market housing proposals from landowners or developers. Neighbourhood Plan groups feel under pressure to identify development sites, and boundary market towns are required to provide more dwellings.
2. Sustainability – There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework. However, awareness and understanding of the exception in the case of National Landscapes[28] needs to be raised. At a more detailed level, developers are still reluctant to provide appropriate renewable energy generation and adequate storage space for recycling in domestic and commercial, new build and extension situations. Many developments within this National Landscape fall outside the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain criteria and therefore development is not contributing to environmental gains.
3. Diversification – Diversification on a farm can help the local rural economy, particularly if this puts redundant farm buildings to a good use. However, the new use must be right for the National Landscape and its setting. Increasingly, proposals are coming forward that are not apt. This can relate to an increase in traffic and loss of tranquillity as well as changes to form, scale and appearance that affect the special qualities of the area.
4. Understanding Landscape Character - Despite our LPAs having landscape staff, the significance of, and weight to be given to, landscape matters in national landscapes is not always adequately

[28] NPPF 2024 Paragraph 11 b)i

appreciated or implemented; LPA Landscape Institute trained staff are not always asked to comment on applications.

5. Transport – Effective and frequent public transport for an extensive area with a low population is prohibitively expensive. The result is that buses are few and private vehicle ownership is high. There is a shortage of affordable parking at transport nodes to facilitate greater use of public transport. A lack of stations on the two railways through the National Landscape means they are an underutilised resource.

6. Roads – Highway management and maintenance does not always reflect the special characteristics of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape. Run off from roads can cause serious pollution in rivers. The routing of freight traffic through the area has a negative effect on tranquillity.

7. Lighting nuisance – National data shows the general loss of dark night skies and the risk of light pollution encroaching on the dark skies of the National Landscape[29]. Poorly directed or excessive lighting can cause sky-glow. This reduces the ability to see and enjoy the night-sky. The Environmental Protection Act 1990, as amended by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, makes it possible to deem artificial light emitted from premises to be a statutory nuisance under certain conditions. However, this is only relevant regarding light as a nuisance to a particular household(s). Much stronger, wide ranging lighting policies are required. Some of the Local Planning Authorities include conditions in planning consents regarding lighting issues in line with this National Landscape's policies on lighting, others have yet to put this in motion. (See also Chapter 8 Dark Night Skies).

8. Resources – Our LPAs continue to suffer staff shortages and the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership only has a single, part-time Landscape and Planning Officer.

9. Uncertainty - The Government has recently revised the NPPF (Feb 2025) and also aspires to build hundreds of thousands more houses in England. At the same time, Government reviewed its 25-year Environment Plan, and put greater emphasis on conserving and enhancing the natural environment nationwide. Government has only implemented part of the recommendations of its review of English National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Issues Explained

11.7. Five local authorities are responsible for planning policy, transport policy, development management decisions, and enforcement within this National Landscape. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape team supplies specialist professional expertise and informed advice and judgements to the LPAs. Neighbourhood Plans can refine the policy details for a parish or group of parishes. Planning authorities, and their Planning Committees, are under a legal duty to seek to further conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape. They also have statutory power to take all such action they need to accomplish this.

11.8. In terms of land-use planning this requires two principal actions. Firstly, there must be consistent and coherent policies in place to achieve the purpose of designation. Secondly, there must be

[29] Román, M.O., Wang, Z., Sun, Q., Kalb, V., Miller, S.D., Molthan, A., Schultz, L., Bell, J., Stokes, E.C., Pandey, B. and Seto, K.C., et al. (2018). NASA's Black Marble nighttime lights product suite. Remote Sensing of Environment 210, 113-143. doi:10.1016/j.rse.2018.03.017.

understanding and timely use of these policies. One role of the National Landscape Partnership is to share good practice.

11.9. Applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the Local Planning Authority's Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Appendix x) does not change the legal status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision-making. At the heart of the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development although restrictive policies apply to National Landscapes, Green Belts, SSSIs, and similar designations.

11.10. The reviewed National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) continues to instruct local planning authorities to make a distinction between Protected Areas and 'other' countryside. In a National Landscape, great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty (Appendix xx). Planning permission should be refused for 'major developments' (Appendix xx), except in exceptional circumstances; and only where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. All relevant local planning policy must distinguish between this National Landscape and non-designated countryside.

11.11. NPPF paragraphs 185 and 186 seek net biodiversity gains in plans and planning decisions in addition to the legal requirement for biodiversity net gain; a similar approach to landscapes should apply in the National Landscape.

11.12. Despite the weight given to National Landscape matters in the NPPF, there is a tendency for LPAs to give particular weight to the views of statutory consultees in both policy formulation and development management decisions. The Government's review of English National Landscapes and National Parks currently provides an opportunity to promote, at the national level, that National Landscape partnerships should be statutory consultees for all planning and transportation matters affecting their area or its setting.

11.13. The need for development proposals both to conserve and enhance natural beauty in the NL is not fully recognised or implemented. Despite the NPPF stating that 'great weight' should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes, decision makers have a range of guidance to take into account. When judging the merits of applications, it should be borne in mind that a National Landscape has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The s.85(A1) duty to seek to further the purposes of designation must be considered on an equal footing with other duties. For example, the Highways Act 1980 does not trump s.85, neither does s.85 trump the Highways Act.

11.14. Development proposals need to be in appropriate locations and of an appropriate form, scale, and materials. This will enable them to integrate with landscape character both within and adjacent to the National Landscape. All Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) should, from a National Landscape perspective, include Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) to demonstrate that potential landscape impacts, including both location and integration within the landscape, have been taken into account.

11.15. The sense of place is easily lost. Suburbanisation and the cumulative effect of 'permitted development' can break down local distinctiveness. Replacing small-scale, locally distinct features with ones of a standard design erodes local character.

11.16. There are repeated, and occasionally temporary, changes to the General Development Order (Appendix xx) extending Permitted Development Rights. This can potentially lead to increases in traffic and changes to the appearance of buildings and land, especially when additional agricultural buildings do not follow Cranborne Chase National Landscape guidance or new roof lights add to light pollution.

11.17. The cumulative effect of house extensions and larger replacement dwellings is twofold; it changes the character of the locality and it reduces the supply of smaller, potentially more affordable, dwellings. The latter exacerbates a serious social issue, and the former may impact adversely on the 'conserving and enhancing natural beauty' criteria.

11.18. The one County Council and three Unitary Authorities within the National Landscape produce Minerals and Waste Local Plans.

- Whilst there is generally very little mineral extraction from within this National Landscape, there is a long history of providing locally distinctive building materials. This is mainly from greensand and sandy limestone (Chilmark stone). The need to safeguard local identity and distinctiveness by using local materials is understood. This strengthens the local vernacular. However, there is a need to take account of the potential disruption, visual and other impacts resulting from the extraction of materials to achieve this.
- National Landscapes have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. In October 2016, the Partnership endorsed the principle that such landscapes are not places for the importation of waste for treatment, processing, or disposal.

Mineral and waste HGVs have the capacity to disrupt the tranquillity of the National Landscape as well as causing physical damage to the verges and structures of the roads.

11.19. Developments in the setting of the National Landscape can also have significant impacts on the area. Their consideration must be in relation to the purposes of designation. Construction of high or expansive structures, other development, or any change generating movement, noise, odour, vibration or dust over a wide area will affect the setting. As our appreciation of the relationships between neighbouring landscapes grows, so too does our understanding of what constitutes the setting.

11.20. Planning applications for development proposals within this National Landscape or its setting all too often do not demonstrate an understanding of the importance of supplying all the relevant information. To assist applicants in making their applications the Partnership has endorsed (6 April 2016) a Position Statement on 'Good enough to approve in an AONB'.

Sustainability

11.21. There is continuing pressure to erect wind turbines and telecommunication masts in the National Landscape or its setting. These are very tall or substantial structures. They can detract from scenic beauty within the area and impair significant views to or from it. Similarly, extensive farm scale photo-voltaic arrays reduce the area of productive farmland. These types of developments can introduce a sense of 'industrialisation' into an otherwise scenic, unspoilt, or tranquil landscape. They are frequently visually intrusive and fail to harmonise with the scale and character of the area. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership has produced a Position Statement on Renewable Energy, and one on Field Scale PVs.

11.22. Recycling storage space, composting areas, and roof-based PV installations should be integral to the design of all new build, extension, and conversion projects.

11.23. The government has provided exemptions from 'net environmental gain' in relation to the small-scale development most common in this National Landscape. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership is of the view that all development should provide environmental gains and has produced a Position Statement to that effect. However, embedding the idea that development should help achieve the 'conserving and enhancing natural beauty' criteria into the planning processes is still some way off.

11.24. Being within this National Landscape appears, from house price surveys, to add a significant premium to property prices. It therefore seems appropriate that such properties, when constructed or extended, should contribute to the management of the high-quality landscapes that are enhancing their values. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (Appendix xx) is a mechanism that could allow a contribution towards National Landscape management; however, this has not happened. Compensation should be paid to the National Landscape for its on-going management whenever development takes place. Furthermore, planning authorities must seek to further conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the National Landscape. In addition, they have the power to take all such action they need to accomplish this. There needs to be a consistent but effective approach across the National Landscape that delivers a high-quality landscape at a fair cost to all who benefit.

11.25. One way would be for the Local Planning Authorities to show how their use of CIL meets their duty to conserve and enhance the National Landscape. The chapter on Sustainable Communities considers the setting of a separate Developer Contributions scheme to direct a proportion of the enhanced value to conserving and sustaining the character, qualities, and landscapes of the National Landscape.

Farm Diversification

11.26. Some farm diversification proposals risk industrialisation of the countryside and a loss of tranquillity. There is potential for National Landscape locations to be viewed as cheap options for activities that should be in a business park close to where potential employees live and outside the National Landscape e.g. storage and distribution, waste processing or treatment.

11.27. The Partnership supports the diversification and re-use of redundant rural buildings for economic activities where it sustains the local economy and benefits the communities of the National Landscape. It must, of course, conserve and enhance natural beauty and not damage the rural roads or tranquillity. A challenging example is composting and anaerobic digestion. Local schemes that minimise transportation can fit with the National Landscape purposes. To do so they must comply with the three elements of 'from the farm, on the farm, for the farm'. Such schemes are not apt if the materials are not local; if processing is not at source; and if the product is not used on site. The Partnership has endorsed a Position Statement on Farm Diversification.

Roads and Transport

11.28. Most people see and appreciate the landscape from roads. The highway corridor often echoes the adjacent landscapes. Both factors are particularly important in National Landscapes. Therefore, the highway environment warrants special attention to reflect and sustain the special qualities and characteristics of the area. The effects of transport in the National Landscape are managed through

the policies and programmes in the Local Transport Plans of the highway authorities, and the programmes of National Highways.

11.29. These plans aim to:

- improve access to key services;
- integrate transport provision and infrastructure improvements; and
- promote sustainable forms of transport.

11.30. This National Landscape has four A-roads running east to west (A354, A30, A303, A36) and one (A350) running north to south on its western edge. The A303 and A36 are trunk roads managed by National Highways. On B and C roads, 'rat runs' develop avoiding the busy A roads. Heavy vehicles, their vibrations, and traffic flows on these more rural roads, especially through daily commuting, can cause congestion, pollution and loss of character and tranquillity; and damage to verges, the roads themselves, and buildings.

11.31. Road design that does not consider the special qualities of the landscape can harm the character of the National Landscape. Road safety will always be a prime concern but that does not preclude sensitive design of schemes and street furniture, or over-ride the duty to seek to further conserving and enhancing natural beauty. Traffic management schemes, usually involving reduced speed limits and physical structures, have the potential to urbanise rural situations and have not reduced the daily 'rat runs' caused by those avoiding A-road congestion. The safety of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders remains an issue in this National Landscape.

11.32. There is little incentive to use public transport. There are infrequent bus services and just one rail station in the National Landscape, with parking limited and costly. The use of public transport would increase if there were better and affordable parking facilities near-by. Village 'hubs' could be created to provide parking, easy access to public transport and village facilities. This merits further research.

Lighting Nuisance

11.33. To retain International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR) status, there must be a comprehensive Lighting Management Plan in place within the reserve. This sets criteria to limit the upwards and sideways emission from external lighting for private and public landowners within that area. An absence of detailed lighting policies within current Local/ Development Plans is a hindrance to implementing good lighting practice when determining planning applications, although some Neighbourhood Plans do now include dark sky policies. The Local/Development Plans for the five Local Authorities cover different time-periods. This means some may be willing to consider adding specific lighting policies relatively quickly whilst others suggest they are not able to do so for some time. (See also chapter 8 Dark Night Skies).

Outcomes and Policies

PT A Strategic and local decisions are formulated taking full account of the purposes of designation and are implemented in a comprehensive, coherent and consistent way with regard to the character and quality of the area and its setting, together with views into and out of the National Landscape, such that these decisions result in no net detriment to the special qualities of the area.

	PT1 All development and transport policies and proposals in the National Landscape and its setting must seek to further the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area. Justification for policies and proposals within the area should either have regard to, or be based on convincing evidence of, local need arising from within the national landscape. In doing so, they should be compatible with the National Landscape Management Plan and guidance produced by the National Landscape Partnership, including the: i. Landscape Character Assessments; ii. Landscape Sensitivity Study; iii. Historic Landscape Characterisation; iv. Guide to Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape Setting of our Rural Highways; v. Nature Recovery Plan; vi. International Dark Sky Reserve designation criteria; vii. Climate Change Adaptation Plan (when published); and viii. Its Position Statements and Good Practice Guides / Notes.
	PT2 The purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape and increasing the understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities should be identified as strategic priorities in Local Plans (including Minerals and Waste local Plans), Neighbourhood Plans, Local Transport Plans and other relevant plans and strategies. These plans and strategies should explicitly identify the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (AONB) Management Plan as a material consideration and recognise National Landscape guidance documents and position statements as appropriate.
	PT3 The cumulative impacts of development and transport proposals on the natural beauty of the National Landscape should be fully assessed and addressed in accordance with the National Landscape's Landscape Character Assessments, Sensitivity Study and any relevant position statement or guidance published by the Partnership.
	PT4 A landscape-led approach should be applied to development and transport proposals in the National Landscape and its setting, proportionate to the type and scale of development being proposed, whereby proposals: a. address the natural beauty of the National Landscape as primary consideration at all stages of the development process (including design), from initial conception through to implementation; b. address all the factors that contribute to the natural beauty of the area; c. protect and/or enhance key views to and from the National Landscape; d. address access to natural beauty, including the character of the public rights of way network and its role within wider green infrastructure; e. reflect and enhance the character of the local area;

	f. avoid adverse effects where possible and, if adverse effects cannot be avoided, minimise them; g. seek opportunities to enhance the natural beauty of the National Landscape; and h. deliver substantially more beneficial effects than adverse effects for the natural beauty of the National Landscape. This landscape-led approach is particularly important for major development.[30]
	PT5 Proposals that are likely to impact on the local distinctiveness of the National Landscape should be compatible with, and seek to further, the conservation and enhancement of this local distinctiveness. This should include: • being informed by the National Landscape's Landscape Character Assessments and any relevant position statement or guidance published by the Partnership. • being designed and, where relevant, landscaped to respect local and historic settlement patterns, building styles, scale and materials and in accordance with design guidance adopted by local planning authorities and as part of Neighbourhood Development Plans. • being compatible with the conservation and enhancement of dark night skies, by seeking to avoid and, where avoiding is not possible, minimise lighting. The reuse and redevelopment of existing buildings should be supported where this helps retain the distinctive character of the National Landscape. There should be a presumption against the loss of distinctive qualities and features.
	PT6 Planning Authorities will ensure that development associated with existing permanent buildings in the National Landscape and its setting are only supported where all the following criteria are met: i. replacement buildings are not materially larger than the ones they replace; ii. replacement buildings are in the same use as the ones they replace; iii. proposed buildings do not materially impact on the special qualities of the National Landscape, especially through height or bulk, the size and scale of any proposed extension is not disproportionate to the existing building; iv. the proposed development will incorporate all additional ancillary development including storage, parking and hard surfacing. v. any proposed permanent dwelling does not replace a temporary structure or one where the residential use has been abandoned. vi. the size and scale of any garage or outbuilding within the curtilage of a dwelling is proportionate to the dwelling.
	PT7 Development proposals should aim to provide a net gain in biodiversity of at least 20% particularly regarding the priority habitats listed in the Cranborne Chase Nature Recovery Plan* *viability justification set out in Appendix 8 of this National Landscape Management Plan

[30] 'Major development', in this context, equates to the definition provided in Footnote 67 of the NPPF 2024

PT8 Local communities should be inspired to engage with the good planning of this National Landscape by being encouraged and assisted to:

- prepare and adopt Neighbourhood Plans and other similar initiatives, such as Village Design Statements, that respect the special landscapes and dark night skies of the National Landscape and the objectives of this Management Plan.
- identify local needs / environmental projects that help offset impacts of development, conserve and enhance local character and distinctiveness, and utilise the Neighbourhood proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy.

PT B Policies and schemes aimed at meeting local needs enhance the special qualities and characteristics of the National Landscape, including its built heritage.

PT9 Support the provision of a variety of housing that is appropriate to the character of the area and meets evidenced local community needs. The priority is to meet affordable housing requirements, particularly housing that is affordable in perpetuity, such as social rented housing. In doing so, development policies and development proposals should be compatible with the National Landscape Partnership's Position Statement 10 – Housing within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

When considering proposals for housing development in the National Landscape, LPA partners will give emphasis to affordable housing, and will treat the National Landscape as a rural area (NPPF Dec 2024 Para 65) where the government's restriction on the requirement to provide affordable housing does not apply.

PT10 Consideration should be given to supporting local employment opportunities that conserve and enhance the National Landscape, maintain and enhance local community amenities and services, ensuring improved access to these amenities and services.

PT11 Provide a quality public realm with good access and accessibility by:

- developing and promoting an integrated system, whereby roads, railways, public transport and Rights of Way networks are more accessible and interconnect, minimising the impact of traffic on the National Landscape and encouraging a safer and more attractive environment for walking, cycling and horse riding, to include parking provision for trailers/horse-boxes.
- minimising freight transport through the National Landscape to help protect tranquillity, the rural nature of settlements, and the special qualities of the area.
- providing affordable parking facilities at public transport nodes, car sharing and community transport initiatives to enable and encourage a reduced reliance on private cars.

12. Sustaining Rural Communities

12.1. The low population density, absence of large settlements within the National Landscape and daily commuting outside the boundary mainly for work, all potentially threaten the economic viability of remaining local services such as post offices, pubs, doctors' surgeries, village shops and village halls. Alongside the key land-based industries of farming, forestry, game management and related businesses, the rural economy of the National Landscape comprises a range of small to medium sized businesses. The high-quality environment offers immense opportunities for the further development of low impact, regenerative rural tourism.

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to sustaining rural communities:

- Sparsely populated National Landscape with an absence of large-scale settlements, reinforcing a deeply rural 'sense of place' amongst communities.
- Community spirit is strong in many settlements, as demonstrated through participation in 'Village of the Year' competitions, restoration of lost parish features and organisation of annual fetes, festivals or traditional events.
- Many National Landscape Parishes have taken the opportunity to express their aspirations by producing Neighbourhood Plans.
- Community enterprise thrives through a range of initiatives, including the development of several Community Land Trusts and at least nine community owned and run village stores, each providing other services in addition to retail.
- Generally, however, most employment opportunities are either outside the National Landscape in the boundary towns or further still afield, with a concentration of employment through a few large employers.
- The diverse landscapes, wildlife, historic and cultural features are very attractive to visitors, along with several notable visitor attractions and the Rights of Way/Open Access network.
- Artists, authors and musicians are also known to be attracted to this stunning landscape to work.
- The seasonal game sector supports several high-end hospitality businesses, primarily 'boutique' style public houses and accommodation providers.
- With a high proportion of the National Landscape under agriculture or forestry, there are several locally based allied services such as vehicle repair/servicing businesses, currently two livestock markets on the periphery, various timber yards, feed millers/merchants and local craft / food producers.

Ambition:

12.2. A thriving rural economy, with key services accessible to all, ensures economic and social wellbeing and helps sustain the landscape. Local communities appreciate and care for the National Landscape; residents enjoy a high quality of life.

Key Achievements

- Community shops – East Knoyle, Hindon, Maiden Bradley, Semley, Coombe Bissett, Wylye, Dinton, Witchampton and Broadchalke have community shops, primarily run by volunteers. Five were supported with AONB Sustainable Development Fund grants and several won LEADER support. The award winning Chalke Valley Stores in Broadchalke has a multi-functional 'hub' comprising a community shop, post office, café, archive area and office space through the multi-use of the United Reform Chapel.
- Several communities (of either place or interest) have received grants from the Chase & Chalke LP Scheme through the 'Communities Caring for Heritage' project, to carry out local improvements to their natural or historic heritage.
- All the parishes within the Chase & Chalke LP area have participated in the 'Champions of the Past' project, receiving training in the understanding and interpretation of LiDAR data followed by ground truthing or investigating previously unknown archaeological features in their local landscape

Key Issues

1. Regenerative tourism can provide an income for local people and support the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the landscape. Increased income from tourism may be hampered by a lack of variety of visitor accommodation available.
2. There remains a lack of consistent and focussed marketing promoting the wealth of local products and services on offer within the National Landscape.
3. There are a considerable number of local businesses that rely on the land-based sector (farming and forestry) together with those built around the seasonal game industry.
4. In this National Landscape, high speed broadband has increased although many still cannot access an acceptable level of broadband service. Without careful design, location, and planning, and the consideration of wider technologies, the infrastructure to deliver improved services (e.g., mobile masts) can degrade natural beauty.
5. Housing needs – Local people have a range of housing needs. Property values in the National Landscape are generally, and noticeably, higher than just outside it and there is a lack of affordable housing within this designated area.
6. Local facilities and services - Many communities value and prefer to use local facilities that they can access easily, without the need to use a car. It can be difficult to supply facilities and services cost effectively to a dispersed and sparse population. It is a major challenge to secure a full range of services for all to access.
7. Influencing the planning system - Local people want to influence the future of their Parish and the outcomes of the planning system. Individual development proposals can create divisions. Neighbourhood plans, village plans and village design statements are all ways for local people to get together and set out a vision for their area. Communities do need support in putting these plans together.

The Issues Explained

12.3. Regenerative tourism – During 2023, the 'Enhancing the Visitor Economy of the National Landscape' was reviewed ten years on from the original research, offering new insights into how best to promote the area to potential visitors through the development of regenerative tourism. A definition of regenerative tourism is: *An approach to tourism that aims to restore, replenish, and enhance the natural, cultural, and social environments of a destination. It goes beyond minimizing negative impacts and focuses on actively creating positive contributions to local ecosystems, communities, and economies.*[31]

12.4. The National Landscape intends to work closely with and through local communities to initiate the concept of regenerative tourism that essentially aims for visitors to have a positive impact on their holiday destination, meaning that they leave it in a better condition than how they found it. It goes beyond "not damaging" the environment, aiming to actively revitalise and regenerate it, thus having a positive impact on local communities and economies. There is a very strong business case to have the National Landscape at the heart of regenerative tourism. Many businesses depend on the high quality, natural environment that the landscape provides, but they can also help maintain and enhance those environments.

12.5. Attracted by the qualities of this landscape, creative businesses such as arts and crafts enterprises, also flourish. There are many low impact tourism opportunities in the area including walking, cycling and horse riding, visiting historic sites or enjoying the range of local events. The International Dark-Sky Reserve status offers a huge boost to the 'astro-tourism' sector with stargazing events and an annual StarFest attracting ever increasing numbers of visitors, many from outside the area.

12.6. Past campaigns such as 'Taste the Chase' increased consumers' understanding of the countryside; how food is produced; and where food comes from. Several thriving community shops stock and promote mainly local produce and promoting local produce should be an area of work the National Landscape focusses on through the regenerative tourism initiative.

12.7. Land based employment within this National Landscape is mainly focused within the productive aspects of farming and forestry, the seasonal game sector and the allied service/product businesses. Other employment comprises those businesses that provide a range of services to local communities and some largely tourism focused attractions that gain their income mainly from visitors from outside the area.

12.8. Good communications are essential if the local economy is to grow. Superfast broadband allows easier and more efficient ways to do business and makes it possible to work from home. Good communications can also help reduce rural isolation and digital exclusion. People can be in touch with family and friends. They can find new ways of receiving public services. The challenge is to encourage provision without the use of intrusive masts, or other infrastructure in the landscape that would have a detrimental effect on the scenic beauty of this National Landscape.

12.9. There is a lack of affordable housing for youngsters or those wishing to come into the National Landscape for work. People with higher-than-average incomes are attracted by the beauty of the landscape as a desirable place to live. This has led to a consequential rise in house prices; there is a

[31] https://www.sustainablejungle.com/regenerative-travel/

premium by being in a protected landscape. A percentage of that gain should be utilised to help manage the landscapes of the area.

12.10. In 2023, the median house price for residential properties in the National Landscape was £283,800 (£248,400 for all rural England); local houses are 14% more expensive. In 2021, the average annual earnings in this National Landscape were £25,800. This compares to an average of £27,600 for all rural England. Dividing house prices by annual earnings creates a housing affordability ratio. In 2023, the National Landscape house-price affordability ratio was 11 (the average for all rural England was 9). This means that full-time employees could expect to spend 11 times their earnings on purchasing a home in the National Landscape. Full-time employees in rural England could expect to spend around 9 times their annual earnings buying a home, making the National Landscape a less affordable area.[32]

12.11. Affordability is an acute issue for newly forming households and many young people move away to find more affordable properties in the bordering market towns or further afield. This can lead to an imbalance in the age and social structure in rural communities, with less support for services such as schools, shops and a loss of social networks. There have also been changes in consumer behaviour (e.g. online shopping) and cuts to public funding (e.g. public transport routes). Both can lead to the closure of local facilities and services with fewer people using services and facilities.

12.12. The loss of a rural Post Office can also work against small local businesses that use postal/ delivery services to receive materials and to distribute services and products. However, some of the community-run village shops have taken some of the stand-alone Post Offices in-house.

12.13. Many people want to exercise their right to get involved in development decisions that affect them. People can have more input to the development of their local area through the creation of Neighbourhood Plans or Neighbourhood Development Orders. Support and encouragement continue to be needed to enable communities engaging with the planning process and their local planning authority, to ensure that they meet statutory requirements and take account of all aspects of what makes rural communities viable. This National Landscape has offered advice and helped input to 11 Neighbourhood Plans to date.

Outcomes and Policies

SRC A Local communities benefit from a thriving rural economy, based on the natural, historic and cultural resources of the National Landscape, that also conserves and enhances its landscape character and special qualities.	
	SRC1 Work collaboratively with landowners, farmers and allied businesses to improve the land-based sectors' resilience and profitability whilst helping to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Landscape.
	SRC2 Seek new, inventive and sensitive solutions to the retention of local shops and provision of viable local services, for example, through the integration of local service delivery and through the delivery of universal high-speed broadband.

[32] House price statistics for small areas in England and Wales: year ending March 2023 https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housepricestatisticsforsmallareas/yearendingmarch2023

SRC3 The development of suitably located and appropriate recreation and tourism facilities, including a range of quality accommodation, including B&B specifically for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders, will be supported that enables a thriving visitor economy whilst promoting and enhancing the special qualities of the National Landscape.

SRC B By the end of this plan period, the National Landscape will become a high quality Regenerative Rural Tourism destination where visitors have a positive impact on their destination, leaving it in a better condition than how they found it.

SRC4 Stimulate and support regenerative tourism practices* in the National Landscape that sustain its natural beauty, support nature recovery and enhance the well-being of local communities. This will include:

i. Ensuring that the tourism sector recognises the benefits of conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the National Landscape and minimising the emission of greenhouse gases, reflecting this in policy and practice.

ii. Visitors, residents, local businesses and communities should be provided with opportunities to contribute directly to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape and improve access to the area through local individual, community, and employee volunteering opportunities; and visitor-gifting schemes.

iii. Developing collaborative and joined-up working between public, private and voluntary sector tourism organisations across the National Landscape, enabling greater overall efficiency and use of resources.

iv. Visitors (particularly walkers, cyclists and horse-riders[33]) should be provided with a variety of accommodation options over a range of prices. The siting and design of visitor accommodation should be compatible with conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape, including its special qualities.

v. Directing tourism businesses to information and skills training to promote better the special qualities of the National Landscape to visitors.

vi. Exploring the potential for a public art trail for 2027 to encourage increased footfall to businesses within and around the National Landscape whilst raising the profile of the area.

* *visitors have a positive impact on their destination, leaving it in a better condition than how they found it*

SRC C Proactive and cohesive communities enjoy a high quality of life.

SRC5 Developers and Local Authorities must commit to increasing the provision of affordable housing in and around the National Landscape where that is consistent with the primary purposes of its designation.

SRC6 By the end of 2026, initiate discussion to formulate a developer contribution scheme to secure monies from the enhanced property values to support the management of this National Landscape's character, qualities, and landscapes which bring about those heightened values.

[33] Changing Lives through Horses https://www.bhs.org.uk/support-us/our-campaigns/changing-lives-through-horses/

	SRC7 Support community initiatives that promote sustainable lifestyles, such as those embracing community shops or combined/mobile community facilities, appropriate renewable energy schemes, energy efficiency, community woodlands, recycling and community transport, that conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Landscape to encourage and maintain the viability and diversity of rural community life.
	SRC8 Support the production of community-led plans, strategies and statements (such as Neighbourhood Plans) that conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the National Landscape and encourage and maintain the vitality and diversity of rural community life.

SPECIAL LANDSCAPES TO ENJOY

13. Awareness and Understanding

13.1. The National Landscape comprises living, working landscapes shaped and managed by people. The natural beauty, historic and cultural heritage has long provided inspiration for artists, crafts people, writers and musicians; many of whom have made the area their home. To ensure that all recognise, enjoy and value the landscapes, it is vital to improve awareness and understanding of the National Landscape.

Features that make this National Landscape special regarding awareness and understanding:

- This National Landscape is an inspirational area; a 'hidden gem' with a wealth of visual, natural, historical and cultural characteristics.
- Cultural footprints through the ages are visible throughout the landscape.
- The diverse and distinctive elements that comprise the National Landscape are a valuable, mainly untapped, educational resource.
- Many local people and visitors value the special qualities of the area, including its tranquillity and dark night skies.
- There are nearly two thirds of a million people within thirty minutes' drive of the National Landscape in surrounding market towns, and the Bournemouth and Poole conurbations.
- The National Landscape boasts a wealth of myths, mystery and legends.

Ambitions

13.2. Everyone understands and values the area's special qualities and landscape character. This will include its historic and natural assets, its traditions, mystery and mythical qualities. They will understand what the National Landscape designation means and why the area was designated. They will want to visit and encourage others to do so. We want everyone to promote and support Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

Key Achievements

- Branding – In November 2023, the new name of 'National Landscape' was launched. This came in tandem with a national rebranding exercise where a 'family' of logos for all 34 National Landscapes in England was created, led by the National Landscapes Association. Cranborne Chase formally adopted a new logo in March 2024, which was supported by associated brand guidelines, creating a cohesive brand identity for National Landscapes nationally. The rebrand has been rolled out across communications outputs including website and social media with a gradual approach to printed material.
- The Cranborne Chase National Landscape website – The website aims to promote the designation, geographical area and landscape character of the National Landscape, coupled with the activities

and work of the team, plus news of events, ways to explore the area, funding and projects. It acts as the primary point of public information for the National Landscape. The website is continually evolving, with work underway to incorporate elements of the National Landscape's historic 'family' of websites.

- Leaflets – Cranborne Chase National Landscape has a package of leaflets promoting the area, its highlights and top stargazing locations in the IDSR, designed for and to be made available in tourist information centres, especially those in the border market towns of Blandford, Salisbury, Shaftesbury, Warminster and Wimborne. In addition, there is a suite of information and guidance notes on development topics, including landscapes, neighbourhood planning and guidance on responsible lighting. Furthermore, many walk leaflets produced for the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership form a legacy of the project; there are now approximately 60 new walks leaflets available across the whole National Landscape.
- National Landscape Forums – The Partnership holds a forum annually, with presentations and workshops focusing on aspects of the National Landscape's work and priorities. Approximately 80 attendees come from different interest groups, both from within and outside the area. In addition, the National Landscape hosts an annual Planning Forum, attracting around 35 attendees, engaging them with planning policy that may affect the landscape.
- The Hart – The National Landscape publishes 'The Hart Magazine' annually, distributing it to almost 23,000 homes and businesses across the area, and it is a highly successful way of communicating with communities. It covers the work of the Partnership, promotes the National Landscape area, celebrates projects in the landscape and shares events.
- Online Newsletter – A monthly online newsletter is distributed to over 3,000 subscribers, presenting an array of stories including the Partnership's work, events and news from closely related organisations. Subscribers are largely an active community of supporters of the National Landscape's work and is an effective way of regularly communicating with them.
- Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme – This National Lottery Heritage funded project generated a significant community interest, sharing key communications outputs with the National Landscape including social media platforms, the website and online newsletters. Following the end of the project in June 2025, a legacy has been outlined in a Communications Strategy to continue to engage audiences created throughout the project.
- Social media – The National Landscape manages social platforms aimed at different audiences including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. A plan to improve followers and engagement with these platforms is outlined in the Communications Strategy.
- Press Coverage – The National Landscape submits regular news releases locally, including regular items to the New Blackmore Vale Magazine. It received significant coverage locally and nationally following the launch of the new branding of National Landscapes in November 2023. An approach to improving national coverage is outlined in the Communications Strategy.
- Chalke History Festival – The National Landscape has an annual presence at the Chalke History Festival, a week-long event which enables engagement with approximately 7,000 visitors, increasing awareness of the National Landscape, its role, the Partnership and its activities.

- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) - The National Landscapes Association's rebrand programme placed its central mission as to 'Protect and regenerate our landscapes and make sure everyone can enjoy them', encouraging more people to build a connection with the landscape. The rebrand and messaging was developed following consultation with underrepresented groups and following its launch the team has been involved in the Defra supported Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) training from the Protected Landscapes Partnership (comprising of National Landscapes Association, Natural England, National Parks England and National Trails UK) called 'Inclusive Landscapes for Everyone'.
- Boundary Signs - It has been a long-held ambition of the National Landscape to erect 'Cranborne Chase National Landscape; An International Dark Sky Reserve' signs on trunk, 'A' and 'B' class roads. In 2024, using Defra funding to support the rebrand project, several signs on 'A' & 'B' roads in Wiltshire and Dorset are under development. The aim is that this is the beginning of a more widespread National Landscape awareness signage roll-out, including an approach to parishes in the area re potential signage at entrances to villages.
- Numerous presentations are requested by Parish Councils, natural and historic interest groups, University of the 3rd Age.

Key Issues

1. Embedding the national significance and name change from 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' to 'National Landscape' into the mindset of the public, partners and the media.
2. A lack of awareness among some of the population of the National Landscape of the designation purpose and boundaries. Residents, businesses and landowners are at times unaware of the benefits gained from the designation, such as the high-quality environment, recreation, and health and wellbeing opportunities, or the role they can play in caring for the area.
3. Significance of the National Landscape and its designation to partners and other organisations.
4. The National Landscape lies across the borders of four counties; Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Somerset. This generates an 'edge effect'. Other partners and organisations do not always have a full understanding of the designation; or of the work undertaken by the Partnership.
5. Engaging young people – up until the Chase & Chalke LP Scheme, it was difficult to engage with young people. They will be the future custodians of the National Landscape, hence their awareness and involvement in it is vital.
6. It is challenging to engage underrepresented groups and encourage them to the landscape. In part, opportunities are restricted due to the lack of infrastructure (no visitor centre, lack of parking, toilet facilities etc.)
7. The lack of, and complex nature of, public transport links in the National Landscape creates a challenge when promoting this as means of reaching the area.

The Issues Explained

13.3. Despite Cranborne Chase National Landscape being designated in 1981, and having a small team in place since 2000, the National Landscape Partnership continues to find that there is a limited understanding of:

- where the National Landscape boundaries are;

- why the area was designated;
- what the National Landscape's legal designation means; and
- the benefits that it brings.

13.4. On learning more about the National Landscape's existence and extent, a very frequent and familiar comment is one of surprise as to its size. The National Landscape has historically had no signage on any roads leading into the area. Work has begun to install a small number of signs, however a desk study determined that to sign each Trunk, 'A' and 'B' class road together with some minor, yet frequently used roads, between 36 and 41 signs would be required due to the frequency that these roads cross its boundary. The exact locations require some further discussion with the four Highways Authorities.

13.5. The many dispersed small villages and hamlets of the area might also be offered a National Landscape sign or logo to add to their village entrance signs to help raise the National Landscape profile, while the concept of adding the logo to Rights of Way way-markers has already begun.

13.6. Awareness of the National Landscape will also improve with regular, consistent and engaging promotion, using a strong brand image and easily accessible information whether via hard copy, web sites or comprehensive use of all social media channels.

13.7. Knowledge of the area's special qualities, landscape character, its traditions and historic and natural assets is not as widespread as the Partnership would like, especially outside of the recent Chase & Chalke LP Scheme. Innovative digital or site-based interpretation would increase understanding and appreciation of the National Landscape's special qualities. Regular engagement with residents and visitors of all ages (through annual programmes of walks, events and activities, competitions and/or a 'Pride of the National Landscape' award scheme) would also positively increase involvement and pride in, and enjoyment of, the area as well as raising its profile.

13.8. The National Landscape team consults with, and works alongside partners, parishes, farmers and interest groups as part of its ongoing work programme and through Management Plan reviews. However, this wide-ranging and extensive promotion and outreach work requires additional resources to be secured, if the critical link between the Partnership and the communities of the National Landscape is to be improved. The Chase & Chalke LP Scheme has significantly raised awareness and understanding of this National Landscape; its legacy will be to extend that awareness across the whole National Landscape.

13.9. It is well understood and accepted that Local Authority and other National Landscape partners have changing and/or increasing demands placed on them; they also inevitably have personnel changes. The National Landscape Partnership is aware of the need to consistently re-iterate or re-enforce information regarding its designation purpose and the duties of others towards it[34]. On its behalf, the National Landscape team should consider if further information needs to be drawn together that would be specifically helpful to different departments or partners and how that information might be most effectively disseminated, e.g. a regular planners' bulletin, parish training workshops or 'surgeries' for communities.

13.10. Aimed at businesses and parishes, the 'Sense of Place' promotional toolkit shows all the special places, views, activities and wildlife of the National Landscape. Local people chose all. Anyone is free

[34] CRoW Act 2000 S 85

to copy the text and pictures to use in their own marketing material. This sends out consistent messages about the area in which the businesses are based, offering businesses and community groups the chance to promote their business or parish events, and the National Landscape, in parallel and with one voice. This resource needs to be regularly reviewed and updated.

13.11. Social media is a key communications tool for the National Landscape to raise its profile and promote its activities, news and encouraging feedback. However, changes in algorithms on Facebook has led to an increased need for commercial 'paid for' promotions to successfully reach its audience, whereas the formerly active audiences of Twitter are now in decline. To successfully engage with a younger audience, video content on Instagram and the use of TikTok should be investigated further. However, due to limited staffing, the creation of a high volume of engaging content for these platforms is a challenge. Specific support on social media content creation is an area to be explored further.

13.12. The Chase & Chalke LP Scheme was designed to attract, engage and involve all ages, backgrounds and abilities in discovering, learning about and enhancing the heritage of the scheme area, which covers just over a quarter of the National Landscape. Many opportunities were devised specifically to attract and engage youngsters. Exciting, creative projects with innovative digital interpretation have been developed to bring the National Landscape 'to life'. This scheme, currently extended to June 2025, still has the potential to significantly increase both the profile of the area, and appreciation of everything the National Landscape has to offer all residents and visitors. The National Landscape intends to grasp any opportunity to expand these projects across the whole area as its legacy.

Outcomes and Policies

AU A The purposes of National Landscape designation are known and understood by all partners, stakeholders and other organisations whose programmes of work may affect the natural beauty of the area.

AU1 All partners, stakeholders and other organisations operating in and around this National Landscape will be working actively to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area by:

- developing relevant professional development information and learning opportunities (training, seminars) to increase their understanding of the purpose of designation.
- developing a co-ordinated approach to information, interpretation and marketing activity to promote the special qualities of the area and appropriate behaviour within it.
- promoting the designation, its meaning and special qualities of the area to their internal and external audiences

13.13. progressing the distinctive National Landscape signage at boundaries of the area, and within it.

AU B By the end of the Plan period, the purposes of National Landscape designation are known and understood by all partners and stakeholders; and the landscapes, natural beauty and high-quality environment are better understood, valued and supported by the widest range of stakeholders, local communities and visitors.

AU2 Visitors, residents and local communities should be provided with opportunities to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Landscape:

- Secure a team of knowledgeable rangers to help plan, manage and deliver an array of outreach activities and practical conservation work throughout the National landscape.
- Provide easily accessible online, downloadable and onsite resources to help promote access to the National Landscape and understanding and appreciation of its special qualities.
- Promote awareness, understanding and engagement with the area to young people, continuing the legacy of the Chase & Chalke LP Scheme
- Develop strategies to reach people or communities with protected characteristics such as people without English as a first language (including the Deaf community), people with disabilities, diversity of ethnicity and those with cognitive/learning and other hidden disabilities.
- Promote the Countryside Code to educate visitors and communities to act appropriately in the countryside and to improve understanding between visitors and those living and working in the area.
- Promote products and services that support the special qualities of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.
- Provide arts and cultural experiences to encourage people to deepen their emotional connection to the landscape and support the engagement of new and existing audiences.

14. Wellbeing, Involvement and Learning

14.1. Experiencing a deeply rural and tranquil area refreshes the mind, body, and soul. Community activities and volunteering are means of becoming more personally involved in the local area whilst developing a range of practical and personal skills to help conserve and enhance it. Using the National Landscape as an educational resource for schools and colleges will continue to help youngsters gain a better insight into environmental issues and experience the countryside around them. The vast network of Rights of Way offers opportunities for all to enhance their health and wellbeing in the 'great outdoors'.

Features that make this National Landscape special with regards to wellbeing, involvement, learning:

- A peaceful, tranquil, deeply rural area, with far reaching panoramic views uncluttered by industrial intrusions, a strong sense of remoteness and expanses of dark, star filled night skies supports the wellbeing of local communities and visitors.
- The National Landscape is close to nearly two thirds of a million people; they can reach its borders in just 30 minutes.
- The Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme ran from 2020-2025, offering community engagement, training and a multitude of events and activities within 20 different projects focussed on the natural, historic and cultural heritage of this National Landscape. Many signed up as volunteers through the Chase & Chalke scheme, providing a solid foundation to expand the legacy of the scheme to ensure that community effort extends across the whole National Landscape into the future
- The National Landscape has an extensive web of countryside access (Rights of Way, open access, permissive and named routes); the combined length of which would take you from Southampton to Edinburgh and back again.

Ambition

14.2. Peoples' physical and mental health and wellbeing is improved through connecting and experiencing the high-quality environment, landscape character, places and heritage of this National Landscape for physical activity, learning, relaxation, and inspiration.

14.3. The community involvement, engagement and volunteering legacy of Chase & Chalke continues to grow and strengthen across the whole National Landscape and beyond.

Achievements to date:

- From 2020-25, the Chase & Chalke LP Scheme has delivered a variety of 20 different projects focussing on the natural, historic and cultural heritage of the Chase & Chalke area (approximately one third of the National Landscape). Each project targeted specific improvements of the heritage itself whilst equally needing to engage with and involve a wide range of communities, interest groups, schools, the public including under-represented and hard to reach groups together with the diverse array of people who do not usually engage with the National Landscape nor indeed even know that it exists. These projects were:

Natural Heritage:

- Nurturing Nature – species ID and survey training; undertaking practical conservation tasks
- Greater Grazing – biodiversity improvements to Martin Down NNR
- Crystal Clear Ebble – protecting and restoring the River Ebble
- Wonderful Woodlands - bringing woodlands back into active management
- Starry, Starry Nights - celebrating the international Dark Sky Reserve

Historic Heritage

- Champions of the Past – exploring the remarkable archaeology of the Chase & Chalke area
- Bringing the Landscape to Life – an AR Time Traveller App
- Heritage Schools – Equipping teachers to understand and teach the local heritage

Cultural Heritage

- Roman Rally Living History – re-enacting Roman life in the Cranborne Chase
- Words in the Landscape – bringing together writers, poets and storytellers
- Voices in the Landscape – musicians engaging with the landscape with songs, old and new
- Characters of the Chase – characters brought to life through performance storytelling
- Artists' Residencies – inspiring works reflecting the landscape, history and culture of the area
- Celebration in Silk – working with artists to produce colourful silk flags
- Communities Caring for Heritage – grants scheme to assist communities celebrate heritage
- Memories Captured – capturing the true stories of local communities
- Ancient Ways – improving footpaths, cycle ways and new tramper routes
- Curious Dorset Cursus – celebrating the ceremonial and ritual use of the Neolithic earthwork
- ChalkEscape Walking Festival – annual walks and talks connecting people to the landscape

- More than 700 people have signed up as volunteers to undertake training, attend regular work parties or to assist with events related to the projects above, whilst many thousands more have attended events and activities.
- An ambitious desk exercise mapped a potential Long-Distance Heritage Trail around this National Landscape. comprising 360 miles in total; this has now been ground truthed and is ready to move forward after a range of consultations.
- In part through Chase & Chalke but also through the work of the National Landscape team, over sixty additional round walks and cycle routes have been produced, many focussed around local villages and hamlets.
- The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme and the generous funding through the governments Access for All funding in 2024/5 resulted in considerable investment in improving the accessibility and facilities of five environmental education establishments and local farms and parishes, all offering bespoke opportunities for the less able, under-represented or hard to reach groups to access, learn more about and enjoy the farmland or countryside of the National Landscape.
- 2022-24, first year students from Kingston Maurward Agricultural College have enjoyed walks, talks and workshops within the National Landscapes as an introduction to their Countryside Management course.

- National Landscape Annual Forums have taken place with up to 100 representatives from local organisations attending each one, to hear about the work of this National Landscape and to encourage future involvement.
- The National Landscape team gives many presentations to parishes and interest groups.

Key issues

1. The Governments Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 set out multiple goals regarding the environment and its connection to people, one being: '*We will conserve and enhance the beauty of our natural environment, and make sure it can be enjoyed, used by and cared for by everyone*.' Their Action Plan will:
    a. Improve access to nature
    b. Protect our landscapes and their heritage
    c. Nature for wellbeing
    d. Connecting children and nature
2. The Chase & Chalke Scheme has achieved much to assist with the above. The legacy of the scheme will be to expand the reach of the Scheme to continue to conserve and enhance heritage through the engagement of communities and volunteers throughout the remainder of Cranborne Chase National Landscape. The main issue with that ambition centres on drawing down additional funding to enable that to take place. The Chase & Chalke team comprised 4.5 FTE who will leave after June 2025. There is a need for several knowledgeable, experienced rangers to plan, coordinate and lead this activity on the ground.
3. There is certainly great potential in Cranborne Chase National Landscape to achieve the above ambition as Cranborne Chase National Landscape is accessible in half an hour to two thirds of a million residents from the major conurbations of Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch with a further 120,000 people on its doorstep in the surrounding market towns. This potential is restricted for many however by very scarce public transport.
4. Relevant health professionals may not currently be aware of the breadth of opportunities the National Landscape offers for improving physical and mental health and wellbeing. It can be difficult finding and engaging with the most relevant health professionals with ongoing pressure on the National Health Service.
5. Working with schools and youth groups has been a substantial part of Chase & Chalke, increasing awareness of the natural classroom on the doorstep of the many schools and higher education establishments in and around the National Landscape. To continue this work, the capacity of the National Landscape team must increase.
6. The Rights of Way across the National Landscape do not form a true 'network'; there remain gaps where routes could be linked up. Neither signage nor maintenance is consistent across the area, which can lead to a variable quality of experience. Reduced County Council budgets for maintenance results in a greater reliance on local groups and volunteers to undertake practical work. The Rights of Way teams have some volunteer engagement and the National Landscape can now help build on these initiatives. Accessing the countryside sustainably implies the need for more effective provision and use of public transport by rail and road.

7. There is a growing interest in learning and developing traditional rural skills with communities suggesting hedge laying, scything, charcoal burning, thatching, weaving and stone carving, are of interest. There is a recognised loss of traditional countryside skills in the National Landscape including the skills needed to repair or restore historic buildings. From the success of the Chase & Chalke team, evidence shows the extensive interest in actively learning about the area's natural, historic and cultural heritage; there is potentially much latent interest also. The National Landscape Partnership retains a desire to have a centre or hub for academic and life-long learning and volunteering within the National Landscape. Those colleges offering such learning are too distant from the National Landscape and those interested cannot attend daily without personal transport.

The Issues Explained

14.4. Rural public transport is scarce within and around the National Landscape. There are regular, if infrequent, bus routes east/west between Shaftesbury, Blandford and Salisbury that do take in some villages however north/south routes are rare. Visiting Cranborne Chase National Landscape from the conurbations to the south (Bournemouth/Poole) is prohibitive without private transport.

14.5. For those who may visit more regularly for informal walking or cycling, the promotion of day-visits and longer packages have been assisted by the 60 new routes defining length of walk, difficulty, refreshment stops and 'nuggets' of innovative interpretation along the way. Throughout the 983 square kilometres however, much more of this is required. It is important that the Health and Wellbeing Boards, together with the relevant professionals, are made aware of the potential opportunities for improving lives through access to the quality environment of this National Landscape. Key benefits can include better physical and mental health and guarding against future illness; therapeutic and restorative qualities which enhance recovery; reduced social isolation, greater community cohesion, and opportunities to establish lifelong healthy behaviours. Outdoor activity, contact with nature including stargazing can also help improve sleep patterns, reduce stress, improve mood and self-esteem, and provide meaningful social contact.

14.6. The National Landscape and relevant partners should encourage communities to take the opportunity to 'refresh mind, body and soul' here, through promoting the area as a 'natural health centre'. The green gym concept, developed by The Conservation Volunteers, provides people with a way to enhance their fitness and health while taking action to improve the environment. Developing regenerative rural tourism within the National landscape and communities would assist in enhancing physical and mental wellbeing.

14.7. 'Green social prescribing' is a concept becoming popular with GPs. This should be developed and promoted by the National Landscape together with the Health and Wellbeing Boards and relevant partners. A full annual programme of guided walks, talks and activities by knowledgeable, experienced and appropriately trained staff or volunteers would tempt more frequent visits from both within and outside the National Landscape as shown by the ChalkEscape Walking Festival over the past four years.

14.8. There is acknowledged support for a central hub or community base, for all types of volunteering, countryside skills training, together with an information and interpretative centre for visitors. This could be achieved through a multifunctional National Landscape 'Living Landscape Centre'. This concept has generated interest from a wide range of people and organisations, many of whom

would become partners. As partners, they would help devise training and volunteering programmes that will harness the knowledge, experience and enthusiasm of many.

14.9. As well as providing a focus for this nationally important landscape, a Living Landscape Centre could offer:

- Accredited training opportunities in countryside management skills, conservation, agriculture, forestry, livestock/animal husbandry and a variety of rural industry skills (e.g. blacksmithing).
- A wide range of volunteering opportunities including natural history ID and surveys, further historic research, and countryside management tasks.
- Exciting recreational opportunities such as guided walks, dark night skies events, and utilising all terrain mobility scooters for the less able.
- An opportunity to take part in or attend various art-based activities or events focussed on the special qualities of the National Landscape.
- Professional, environmentally related CPD training courses for environmental professionals locally, regionally and from further afield, which could include for example, countryside, agricultural, forestry and land agency staff, those attached to the Protected Areas family, the renewable energy sector, and teachers/lecturers. Participants would be encouraged to stay locally.
- A Living Landscape Centre for the area would provide information, interpretation, what there is to see and do in the National Landscape and surrounding market towns, encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more locally.
- A facility for hire to external companies or organisations wanting to hold their own events or seminars.
- Environmental play schemes during the holiday periods, encouraging exchange of town/ country experiences for young people.

14.10. Countryside management tasks led by competent and experienced staff, complimented by volunteers, will help to conserve and enhance the landscape of the National Landscape. The construction and running of the centre will demonstrate best practice. The intent is to use a variety of sustainable construction techniques and methods. It will demonstrate the use of green energy sources such as wood chip and solar power. Where feasible, volunteers or trainees will complete some of the construction work. The skills gained through the centre will improve the job prospects of trainees.

14.11. The loss of traditional skills is a significant issue for the future management of the landscape. A revival in such skills, and the ability to make a living from using them, should be encouraged.

14.12. Young people in the area must travel a long way to attend county agricultural colleges and other training centres. For many potential students of all ages, the lack and cost of public transport mean that accessing countryside skills training can be very difficult. Access to accredited training needs to be made available closer to their homes.

14.13. The Chase and Chalke LP Scheme had involvement and learning embedded as a key element of all the individual projects but it should also be the foundation of the scheme legacy. Such a Living Landscape and Centre would enable lifelong involvement and learning for all.

Outcomes and Policies

WIL A Improved health and well-being opportunities for everyone within and around the National Landscape are further developed and promoted throughout the area and beyond.
WIL1 Opportunities for improving health and wellbeing in the National Landscape should be created, improved and promoted, removing barriers to access, including where appropriate, the provision of: green and blue spaces within easy reach of communities; walking, cycling and riding routes, including routes for less able people, those with pushchairs or mobility scooters; opportunities to access and interact with nature; and volunteering and personal development opportunities.
WIL2 NHS Boards, networks and partnerships, relevant health professionals, Local Nature Partnerships and relevant funding initiatives should make greater use of the benefits that the National Landscape provides for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors. Green prescribing can include supporting exercise and activities in the area's countryside; the popular Walking Festival and other opportunities to improve health and wellbeing of communities and visitors alike
WIL3 The National Landscape Team and partners should investigate further funding opportunities to enhance the Rights of Way / countryside access network for all, including enabling better and more inclusive access for the less able.
WIL B A wide range of opportunities exist for schools, residents and visitors to learn more about the area, volunteer, or develop heritage and countryside skills that conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the National Landscape, while improving people's mental and physical health.
WIL 4 Children and young people resident within and around the National Landscape should be provided with environmental education opportunities to experience the area through direct contact with the natural environment that will: • support confidence building by overcoming challenges; • build social skills through team-working; • improve mental well-being by reducing stress and anxiety, and improving mood; and • reinforce learning and improve memory retention by involving multiple senses, such as touch, sight, and hearing. Activities should develop an appreciation of the area and introduce an understanding of how to conserve it. WIL5 Support and encourage effective voluntary activity, in all its shapes and forms, that helps deliver the National Landscape Management Plan. • Develop an Involvement and Learning Strategy to increase learning, training and volunteering opportunities, improving countryside and heritage skills, throughout the National Landscape by the end of 2026. • Develop and support networks of volunteers able to assist in specialist activities.

	• Engage a team of rangers to harness community and volunteer commitment and community engagement in the National Landscape and to develop programmes of volunteer and community activities. • Establish an environmentally and financially sustainable 'Living Landscape Centre' to act as the resource hub for the National Landscape Partnership, volunteers, trainees, students, residents and visitors. • Develop citizen science programmes to monitor the condition of the National Landscape. • Encourage and support Parish Councils to achieve high standards in working closely with each other, and with voluntary and community groups and meeting local needs and aspirations within the National Landscape.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Meaning of Natural Beauty

The concept of natural beauty is one of the cornerstones of legislation to protect landscapes in the UK. It has been the basis for the designation of national landscapes (AONBs) and National Parks since the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act.

Natural beauty goes well beyond scenic or aesthetic value. It encompasses everything that makes an area distinctive: geology, climate, soil, plants, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings, the people who live in it, past and present, and the perceptions of those who visit it[35]. It is widely accepted that natural beauty is, in part, due to human intervention, such as agriculture[36].

Natural England has developed a list of natural beauty criteria[37] to be used when assessing landscapes for designation as AONBs or National Parks, as outlined in the table below. It is Natural England's view that the practical application of the natural beauty criteria is identical for National Park and AONB designations, despite there being differences in the degree to which the criterion is clarified in the legislation[38]. So, for example, the extent to which wildlife and cultural heritage are factored into natural beauty assessments by Natural England is the same for both AONBs and National Parks. It is also the Government's formal position that the natural beauty required of an AONB and a National Park are the same[39].

The list is not intended to be exhaustive and other factors may be relevant in some circumstances. Not all factors will be relevant in every case.

***Table of factors related to natural beauty*[40]**

Landscape quality - This is a measure of the physical state or condition of the landscape.

Scenic quality - The extent to which the landscape appeals to the senses (primarily, but not only, the visual senses).

Relative wildness - The degree to which relatively wild character can be perceived in the landscape makes a particular contribution to sense of place.

Relative tranquillity - The degree to which relative tranquillity can be perceived in the landscape.

Natural heritage features - The influence of natural heritage on the perception of the natural beauty of the area. Natural heritage includes flora, fauna, geological and physiographical features.

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[35] Countryside Agency (2001) *Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans*. A guide. Countryside Agency Publications. West Yorkshire

[36] Natural England (2011) *Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England*.

[37] Natural England (2011) *Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England* (see Table 3 and Appendix 1).

[38] Natural England (2011) *Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England*.

[39] See Lords Hansard 20 Mar 2006 (Col 51) and Commons Hansard 13 June 2000 (Col 556W).

[40] Table extracted from the Natural England guidance Natural England (2011) *Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England*.

Cultural heritage - The influence of cultural heritage on the perception of natural beauty of the area and the degree to which associations with particular people, artists, writers or events in history contribute to such perception.

Appendix 2: International Union for the Conservation of Nature

The International Union for Conservation of Nature is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organisations. It is a global organisation made up of many thousands of members. These members fall into three groups: State governments, non-governmental organisations, and individuals. It seeks to work with all these constituents to promote conservation and sustainability in the world. It is influential on global and national policies in these areas through a partnership approach.

The IUCN National Committee for the United Kingdom (IUCN NCUK) works as a convening body, aiming to bring together members from across the IUCN spectrum and from outside in order to share information and to discuss approaches to influencing conservation policy and practice. IUCN NCUK also seeks to add value to UK conservation work by developing projects linked to IUCN activity.

IUCN Protected Areas Categories System

IUCN protected area management categories classify protected areas according to their management objectives. The categories are recognised by international bodies such as the United Nations and by many national governments as the global standard for defining and recording protected areas and as such are increasingly being incorporated into government legislation. National Landscapes come under Category V Protected Landscape/ Seascape.

A Category V Protected Landscape is defined as a protected area where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant, ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.

You can find out more about IUCN at http://www.iucn.org/

IUCN UK reconfirms the value of National Landscapes (AONBs) - 5th July 2013

The reconfirmation followed three years of work with the IUCN UK by the National Landscape Association (NLA) consisting of input to developing IUCN's guidance on categorisation (The Putting Nature on the Map Project), open forum discussion and the drawing up of a Statement of Compliance, supported by evidence from across the National Landscape Family. This statement was accepted by the IUCN panel in June 2013.

Each individual National Landscape partnership provided further evidence to demonstrate that they meet the high standards demanded by the IUCN. The NLA compiled all evidence and presented this as an accompaniment to the Draft Statement of Compliance to the World Commission on Protected Areas UK Protected Areas Assessment Panel.

Appendix 3: European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention is a Treaty of the Council of Europe - not the European Union - that is freely entered into by individual state governments.

This landscape convention builds upon earlier European Conventions, such as Berne (1997) aimed at conserving wildlife and Granada (1985) and Valletta (1992) protecting architectural and archaeological heritage, and the international Rio Convention on biological diversity (1992).

The European Landscape Convention was adopted on 20 October 2000 in Florence (Italy) and came into force on 1 March 2004 (Council of Europe Treaty Series no. 176). It was signed on behalf of the UK government in 2006 and came into force in the UK 1st March 2007.

It starts from the fundamental acknowledgement;

> 'that the landscape is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas.'

Importantly, it defines landscape in relation to people;

> 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors.'

The aims of the convention are;

> 'to promote landscape protection, management and planning, and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues.'

At a **national** level that means;

- Recognising landscapes in law as 'essential components of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity,'
- Establishing and implementing 'landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning,'
- Establishing procedures for the participation of the public, and local and regional authorities, in defining and implementing landscape policies,
- Integrating landscape into 'regional and town planning policies and in its environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies.'

Doing these things will require specific measures, set out in the Convention, covering;

- awareness raising,
- training and education,
- identification and assessment,
- landscape quality objectives, and
- implementation.

International co-operation should include;

- landscape dimensions within other programmes,

- mutual assistance and information exchange,
- cross-border landscape programmes, and
- a Landscape Award of the Council of Europe.

It is of particular significance that all landscapes are recognised in this Convention, and not just those that are already have some wildlife or natural beauty designation.

The Cranborne Chase National Landscape derives much of its beauty from its qualities of tranquillity, remoteness, and cultural heritage. It is also a living and working countryside that is very rural with relatively few householders for such a large area, and with substantial and significant settlements just outside its boundary.

National Landscapes in general, and Cranborne Chase National Landscape in particular, are well placed to demonstrate the three-pronged approach of protect, manage, and plan of the Convention in action:

- the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 provides a legislative and funding framework for the nationally important landscapes, with a requirement for each National Landscape to have a Management Plan with policies for conserving and enhancing natural beauty
- the composition of this National Landscape Partnership and its consultative working style enables wide participation of local people and organisations in defining and implementing landscape policies
- this National Landscape has established a Planning Protocol with its Planning Authorities to facilitate the incorporation of landscape matters into planning policies and practice
- CCNL is raising awareness that 'landscape matters' through our Landscape Character (2024) and Landscape Sensitivity (2007) assessments, our Management Plan covers policies for landscape protection, management, and planning, and our publicity and events
- the Historic Landscape Characterisation has been completed and the Historic Environment Action Plans are being implemented.

There are, however, still more things to be done.

The full text of the Convention, and further information about European Conventions can be found on the web at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/home

The rules for the European Landscape Award can be found at:

https://www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/landscape-award-alliance

Appendix 4: The 'seek to further' duty

Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration (LUR) Act 2023[41] places a duty on relevant authorities[42] that they must seek to further the statutory purposes of protected landscapes[43] (the 'seek to further' duty). With regards to national landscapes, this requirement has been incorporated into Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act, which now states:

> 'In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty'.[44]

This replaces the previous version of Section 85 of the CROW Act, which required relevant authorities to have regard to the statutory purpose of national landscape designations.

The 'must seek to further' duty is intended to ensure that the natural beauty of protected landscapes (including national landscapes) will be enhanced (i.e., left in a better state) because of relevant authorities exercising or performing their functions.

The LUR Act confers powers on the Secretary of State to make provisions for how a relevant authority is to comply with the 'seek to further' duty, including what the authority may, must or must not do to comply with the duty. It is also anticipated that the Government will provide guidance on how the duty should be applied in due course. However, the duty is not dependent on these provisions or on this guidance – it is in force now, and must be complied with as part of any decision or course of action that has implications for these protected areas.[45]

Natural England states that:[46]

- The duty 'must seek to further' is an active duty, not a passive one. Any relevant authority must take all reasonable steps to explore how the statutory purposes of the protected landscape (A National Park, the Broads, or an AONB) can be furthered.
- The new duty underlines the importance of avoiding harm to the statutory purposes of protected landscapes but also to seek to further the conservation and enhancement of a protected landscape. That goes beyond mitigation and like for like measures and replacement. A relevant authority must be able to demonstrate with reasoned evidence what measures can be taken to further the statutory purpose. If it is not practicable or feasible to take those measures the relevant authority should provide evidence to show why it is not practicable or feasible.
- The proposed measures to further the statutory purposes of a protected landscape, should explore what is possible in addition to avoiding and mitigating the effects of the development, and should be appropriate, proportionate to the type and scale of the development and its implications for the area and effectively secured**.** Natural England's view is that the proposed measures should align with and

[41] Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (link).
[42] 'Relevant authority', in this context, includes any Minister of the Crown, public body, statutory undertaker or person holding public office.
[43] 'Protected landscapes' means national parks, the Broads and national landscapes.
[44] Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (link).
[45] Landmark Chambers (2024) *Re: section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.* Instructed by the Campaign for National Parks. (Link). Paragraph 2a.
[46] This advice (link – Annex 2) was submitted, in December 2023, by Natural England, as a statutory consultee, to the Examining Authority for the examination of the Lower Thames Crossing, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

help to deliver the aims and objectives of the designated landscape's statutory management plan. The relevant protected landscape team/body should be consulted.

Appendix 5: Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework

The Government's Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework identifies 10 targets, specifically for protected landscapes:[47]

Thriving plants and wildlife	
TI 1	Restore or create more than 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats within Protected Landscapes, outside protected sites by 2042
TI 2	Bring 80% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes into favourable condition by 2042.
TI 3	For 60% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition by 31 January 2028.
TI 4	Continuing favourable management of all existing priority habitat already in favourable condition outside of SSSIs (from a 2022 baseline) and increasing to include all newly restored or created habitat through agri-environment schemes by 2042.
TI 5	Ensuring at least 65% to 80% of land managers adopt nature friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land by 2030.
Mitigating and adapting to climate change	
TI 6	Reduce net greenhouse gas emissions in Protected Landscapes to net zero by 2050 relative to 1990 levels.
TI 7	Restore approximately 130,000 hectares of peat in Protected Landscapes by 2050. (Not applicable to the Cranborne Chase National Landscape)
TI 8	Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 3% of total land area in Protected Landscapes by 2050 (from 2022 baseline).
Enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment	
TI 9	Improve and promote accessibility to and engagement with Protected Landscapes for all using existing metrics in our Access for All programme.
TI 9a	Metres of accessible path as a % of total path
TI 9b	Number of accessible toilets and rest stops
TI 9c	Number of disability accessible parking spaces
TI 9d	Number of accessible gates and gaps
TI 9e	Number of visits and volunteer days facilitated by new equipment
TI 9f	Number of schools engaged (primary and secondary) both inside and outside the Protected Landscape boundary
TI 9g	Number of volunteer days
TI 9h	Number of accessible or easy access routes for which wayfinding has been created or improved

[47] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protected-landscapes-targets-and-outcomes-framework/protected-landscapes-targets-and-outcomes-framework

TI 9i	Policies in place to ensure Protected Landscapes are taking positive action to widen the diversity of their staff, boards and volunteers
TI 10	Decrease the number of nationally designated heritage assets at risk in Protected Landscapes.

Appendix 6: Policy context

This Management Plan has been prepared within an international, national, regional and local framework of other strategies and plans. How does it 'fit' within the array of current and emerging plans?

Integration

This Plan seeks to integrate with other statutory plans and strategies that have influence over the area. It can highlight those policies that have direct bearing on the primary purpose of National Landscape designation, emphasising their importance and relevance to the area. It is a two-way process, through which the National Landscape Management Plan and other strategies can reflect, inform and support each other. All plans and policies that relate to the National Landscape and surrounding areas have been consulted in the preparation of this Plan that seeks, in turn, to influence other plans and policies where appropriate.

Shared aspirations

The Plan does not seek to over-ride other strategies and plans, but to build on them, presenting the highest shared aspirations for the National Landscape. Whilst incorporating and supporting best practice from other plans, the National Landscape Plan endeavours to go beyond other plan objectives and policies in the best interests of the National Landscape.

Sustainability

The primary purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty, whilst accommodating the social and economic needs of local communities, is very close to the concept of sustainability. Sustainability can be defined as the management of change to meet equitably the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

In the context of this Plan, sustainability means ensuring that environmental, economic and social needs can be met whilst conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape.

Policy Context

INTERNATIONAL
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International importance, especially waterfowl habitat (1971) www.ramsar.org
Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979) (came into force on 1 June 1982) www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/nature/bern/default_en.asp
Paris Agreement United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (2015) http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php
EUROPEAN
The Birds Directive (Directive on Conservation of Wild Birds) (79/409/EEC) (Adopted 1979) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/birdsdirective/index_en.htm
The Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention) Council of Europe (121) 1985 http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=121&CM=1&CL=ENG
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised 1985) http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/143.htm

Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) (1991)

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1991:375:0001:0008:EN:PDF

The Habitats Directive (Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora) (Directive 92/43/EC) (1992)

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm

The Landfill Directive (99/31/EC) (1999)

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/landfill_index.htm

The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) (2000)

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/index_en.html

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) (2001)

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:197:0030:0037:EN:PDF

The Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC) (2002)

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/noise/directive.htm

The Landscape Convention 20 October 2000 (ratified by UK in November 2006)

www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/landscape/default_en.asp

Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy (June 2006)

http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st10/st10917.en06.pdf

Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020, European Commission (2011)

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7%5B1%5D.pdf

NATIONAL

Legislation

Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/1-2/49/contents

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/46/pdfs/ukpga_19790046_en.pdf

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/pdfs/ukpga_19900009_en.pdf

The Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1994 SI 1381

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1994/1381/contents/made

Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents

Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents

Planning Act 2008

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/contents

Climate Change Act 2008

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents

Localism Act 2011

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents

The Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 (Habitats Regulation) as amended in 1997, 2000 (in England only) and 2017 (SI 1012)

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made

European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Act 2017

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/9/pdfs/ukpga_20170009_en.pdf

National Planning Policy Framework (DLUHC 2023)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a11af7e8f5ec000f1f8c46/NPPF_December_2023.pdf

Environment Act 2021

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/pdfs/ukpga_20210030_en.pdf

Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 c. 55

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/section/245

Policies, Strategies and Plans

Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (Defra 2005)

www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2011/03/25/securing-the-future-pb10589/

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (English Heritage 2008)

www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/publicationsNew/guidelines-standards/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesandguidanceapril08web.pdf

Water for people and the environment - Water Resources Strategy for England and Wales, Environment Agency 2009

http://a0768b4a8a31e106d8b0-50dc802554eb38a24458b98ff72d550b.r19.cf3.rackcdn.com/geho0309bpkx-e-e.pdf

Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network, (Chaired by Professor Sir John Lawton CBE FRS) Defra 2010

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130402170324/http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/documents/201009space-for-nature.pdf

Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (Defra 2011)

www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2011/08/19/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020/

Strategic Framework for Tourism in England 2010 – 2020 (Visit England 2011)

www.visitengland.org/strategicframework/

'The Natural Choice', the Natural Environment White Paper (Defra 2012)

www.defra.gov.uk/environment/natural/whitepaper/

Healthy lives, healthy people: Improving outcomes and supporting transparency (DH 2012)
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_132358

GPA2 Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment Historic England (2015)

https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/gpa2/

GPA3 The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic England (2017)

https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets/

GP4: Enabling Development and the Conservation of Significant Places Historic England (2020)

https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa4-enabling-development-heritage-assets/heag294-gpa4-enabling-development-and-heritage-assets/

Several National Character Area Profiles apply to Cranborne Chase (Natural England 2013):

- Avon Vales National Character Area 117
- Blackmore Vale & Vale of Wardour 133
- Dorset Downs & Cranborne Chase 134
- Dorset Heaths 135
- Salisbury Plain & West Wiltshire Downs 132

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles

Heritage 2020: strategic priorities for England's historic environment 2015-2020 Historic Environment Forum, March 2015

http://www.heritage2020.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Heritage2020-framework-text-2016-06-20_final.pdf

Tourism Action Plan, DCMS (August 2016)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tourism-action-plan

Conservation 21: Natural England's conservation strategy for the 21st century – Natural England 2016

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LOCAL

The NL lies within the areas of 5 local authorities. Each produces strategies and plans that cover a similar range of topics that affect the NL. Many of the policies are similar. All will need to be considered during the SEA process.

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http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/waste-core-strategy-2009-july.pdf

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 3 - April 2011 to March 2026.

https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/localtransportplan

The current plan (LTP3) ends in 2026 and the Council is drafting the fourth edition, which will be known as Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), covering the period to 2038.

Wiltshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2015 – 2025 (Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2)

https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/recreation-rights-of-way

Wiltshire Council Business Plan 2022-2032

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Wiltshire's Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 to 2032 (2023)

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Wiltshire Climate Strategy 2022-2027 (Feb 2022)

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Wiltshire Council is preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. A draft version of the LNRS is in production. The National Landscape Management Plan should seek to embed appropriate policies.

https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/local-nature-recovery-strategy

Dorset Council

North Dorset Local Plan (January 2016)

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Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan (2019)

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Dorset Council Plan 2024 to 2029

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Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 (LTP3) 2011

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A new joint Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) is in preparation.

Dorset Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) 2011-2021

https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/rights-of-way-improvement-plan?p_l_back_url=%2Fsearch%3Fq%3DRights%2Bof%2BWay

Dorset Council Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020 to 2023 (2020)

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Dorset Cultural Strategy 2021 to 2026

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Dorset's Economic Growth Strategy 2020 to 2024

https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/dorset-s-economic-growth-strategy-2020-to-2024

Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Strategy 2023 to 25 Refresh

https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/natural-environment-climate-ecology-strategy-2023-25-refresh?p_l_back_url=%2Fsearch%3Fp_l_back_url%3D%252Fsearch%253Fq%253DRights%252Bof%252BWay%26q%3Dclimate%2Bstrategy

Dorset's local nature recovery strategy

https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/about-the-local-nature-recovery-strategy

Hampshire County Council

Serving Hampshire - Strategic Plan 2021 to 2025 updated in 2023

https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/strategiesplansandpolicies/corporatestrategy

Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton, New Forest National Park and South Downs National Park Minerals and Waste Plan (the 'Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan') 2013

https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/strategic-planning/hampshire-minerals-waste-plan

Local Transport Plan 4 (2024)

https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/localtransportplan

Hampshire countryside access plan 2015-2025

https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/countryside/accessplan

Hampshire County Council Climate Change Strategy 2020-2025

https://documents.hants.gov.uk/environment/Hampshire-Climate-Change-strategy-2020-2025.pdf

Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire

https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/nature-recovery-hampshire/hampshire-strategy

New Forest District

Local Plan 2016-2036- New Forest District outside the New Forest National Park (July 2020)

https://www.newforest.gov.uk/developmentplan

New Forest District Council Corporate plan 2024 to 2028 - For people, place, prosperity

https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/3645/Corporate-plan-2024-to-2028

Somerset Council

(Note: only a very small part of the National Landscape lies within this administrative area)

Somerset- Mendip Local Plan 2006-2029 (December 2014)

https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/adopted-local-plans/?district=Mendip

Somerset South Somerset local plan 2006-2028 (March 2015)

https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/adopted-local-plans/?district=South+Somerset

Appendix 7: The eight landscape types in the Cranborne Chase National Landscape

The landscape characteristics and qualities of the eight landscape types of this National Landscape are set out focusing on the additional issues and challenges that are particularly pertinent to each of them. Management Objectives are identified and the Management Plan policies and actions seek to address these issues and to reinforce and enhance landscape character.

Landscape type 1: Chalk Escarpments

This Landscape Type comprises the following Landscape Areas:

- Character Area 1A - Melbury to Blandford Chalk Escarpment
- Character Area 1B - West Wiltshire Downs Chalk Escarpment
- Character Area 1C - Fovant and Chalke Chalk Escarpment

Key Characteristics:

- Dramatic chalk escarpments eroded into rounded spurs and deep combes.
- Underlying geology of Lower, Middle and Upper Chalk giving rise to the predominantly calcareous soils.
- Areas of unimproved chalk grassland of international importance on steeper slopes.
- Field systems on the lower slopes, including strip lynchets close to medieval villages sited along the springline.
- Improved pasture and arable fields occupy the shallower, more accessible, slopes where straight-sided fields represent late 18th/early 19th century Parliamentary enclosure.
- Hanging woodland and sunken lanes are features of the steep, enclosing chalk coombes.
- Panoramic views over adjacent landscapes.

Issues and challenges

- Decreases in livestock grazing leading to loss of grassland habitat to scrub.
- Visibility of changes within the landscape and areas round it.
- A350 corridor, intensification of use and highway paraphernalia, and potential visibility of any development.
- Maintenance of heritage assets.
- Visibility of changes within the A30 corridor and associated Greensand Terrace fields.
- Management and renovation of Fovant Badges (and similar features).
- Conservation of historic features.

Strength of Character: Strong

Current Condition: Good - Moderate

Possible Future Trends:

- Decreases in livestock grazing leading to loss of grassland habitat to scrub.
- Heavy use of areas of CRoW Act access land can result in erosion by walkers and pressure for visitor facilities in the open landscape. Visitor management, particularly in the aftermath of increased local usage and 'staycations' that resulted from the coronavirus pandemic, will continue to be a priority.
- The prominent elevated character of the scarp may bring demand for construction of tall structures, including communication masts and possibly wind turbines.
- Increased efficiency of production may divert less productive arable land, such as the steepest slopes and areas with thinnest soils, to environmental management, such as reversion to chalk grassland.
- The evolving, post Brexit, Environmental Land Management schemes accessible to farmers will support continued environmental management of the landscape.
- Future trends in landscape condition look set to be stable in this area.

Management Objectives:

- Area 1A The overall management objective should be to conserve the uninterrupted landform, strong open skyline and the distinct mosaic patterning of woodland, scrub and chalk grassland and to seek opportunities to restore and enhance habitats and historic features.
- Area 1B The overall objective is to conserve the overriding sense of openness, the smooth undeveloped ridge, and the simplicity of the scarp landform. Within this open, pasture dominated landscape there are significant opportunities to restore and link areas of chalk grassland.
- Area 1C The overall management objective is to conserve the large scale, open character of the escarpments including their smooth flowing, rounded landform, distinctive pattern of woodland, peaceful perceptual qualities and ecological value. Restoration of lost and/or declining features such as the woodland rivers which occur in places along or near to the break of slope will improve condition, quality and visual integrity of the landscape as well as its ecological value.

Landscape type 2: Open Chalk Downland

This Landscape Type comprises the following Landscape Areas:

- Character Area 2A - West Wiltshire Downs
- Character Area 2B - Southern Downland Belt

Key Characteristics:

- Large-scale landform of broad rolling hills intercepted by a dry river valley.
- Dominated by an Upper Chalk surface geology with drift clay with flints capping on higher ground.
- A predominantly arable landscape divided into large, regular field units with straight-sided fields representing late 18th/early 19th century Parliamentary enclosure.
- Remnant chalk grassland, ancient broadleaved woodland and Yew woodland are important habitats.
- Main roads cut across the undulating landscape linking major settlements on either side of the National Landscape.
- Large open skies and distant panoramic views.

- Low density scattered settlement of farmsteads and the occasional downland village.
- Numerous Neolithic burial and ritual monuments and Bronze Age Barrows.
- Later prehistoric and Romano-British ditches and defensive earthworks
- Beech trees line lanes and comprise formal avenues.
- Large blocks of woodland and coppice contrast with the open arable fields.
- Ancient route ways follow east-west ridges.

Issues and challenges

- Arable crop changes influenced by globalisation, commodity prices, farm inputs and costs impacting on both the aesthetics and the landscape functions.
- Exposed transport corridors - A303 / A350 / A354 - intensification of use and highway paraphernalia, and potential visibility of any development.
- Erosion and truncation of Ancient Monuments.
- Hedge planting blocking views and modifying the open, expansive, character.
- Fertilizer use and impacts on aquifers.
- Visual and soil impacts of extensive pig keeping.
- Rectangular, unsympathetic, 20th century game coverts.

Strength of Character: Strong

Current Condition: Moderate

Possible Future Trends:

- Potential diversification into other crops such as biomass crops and diversification of farm businesses into secondary enterprises such as farmhouse accommodation or commercial shoots.
- These new land uses may result in increased sense of enclosure.
- The evolving, post Brexit, Environmental Land Management schemes accessible to farmers will support continued environmental management of the landscape.
- Heavy use of areas of Open Access Land can result in erosion by walkers and pressure for visitor facilities in the open landscape. Visitor management, particularly in the aftermath of increased local usage and 'staycations' that resulted from the coronavirus pandemic, will continue to be a priority.
- There may be pressure for development of tall structures, such as communication masts and wind energy developments, in this elevated, open and windswept landscape.
- Future trends imply that, although landscape character may change, landscape condition is likely to be stable in this area.

Management Objectives:

- Area 2A Overall, management of this landscape should conserve the simple, open character of the landscape, long views, sense of scale and remoteness. Management should also seek to restore key features that have been lost or are declining, such as areas of chalk grassland.

- Area 2B Overall, management of this landscape should endeavour to conserve the distinct downland landscape of broad rolling hills and gentle slopes whilst improving the condition of many of its characteristic features to increase visual unity and sense of integrity and make the combination and pattern of elements more distinct

Landscape type 3: Wooded Chalk Downland

This Landscape Type comprises the following Landscape Areas:

- Character Area 3A - Cranborne Chase Wooded Chalk Downland
- Character Area 3B – West Wiltshire Downs Wooded Chalk Downland

Key Characteristics:

- An elevated downland landscape with dramatic intersecting coombe valleys and rounded upstanding ridges.
- Dominated by an Upper Chalk surface geology with drift clay with flints capping higher ground.
- A well wooded landscape with large woods, shelter belts, copses, and clumps creating a series of enclosed spaces or 'rooms' surrounded by trees.
- Mosaic of unenclosed downland, improved grassland and arable fields, dating from 19th century enclosure, between the woodland.
- Chalk grassland and ancient woodland provide important nature conservation habitats.
- Typically low density, scattered settlement of individual farmsteads with the occasional downland village or Medieval hunting lodge.
- Visible archaeological features including Neolithic long barrows, Bronze Age round barrows, prehistoric to Romano-British earthworks and field systems.
- Panoramic views from upstanding chalk ridges to adjacent ridges and into valleys/coombes.
- Beech lined lanes and tracks criss-cross the downland.
- Mosaic of unenclosed downland, improved grassland and arable fields, often dating from 19th century enclosure, between the woodland.

Issues and challenges

- Conservation of heritage/archaeological interests.
- Impacts of climate change on mixed farming and forestry/ancient woodlands.
- Connectivity between woodlands and maintenance of enclosures.
- Hedge and screen planting, coupled with reduced management, blocking views and modifying character.
- Declining coppice management.

Strength of Character: Strong

Current Condition: Good - Moderate

Possible Future Trends:

- The evolving, post Brexit, Environmental Land Management schemes accessible to farmers will support continued environmental management of the landscape.
- Heavy use of areas of Open Access Land can result in erosion by walkers and pressure for visitor facilities in the open landscape. Visitor management, particularly in the aftermath of increased local usage and 'staycations' that resulted from the coronavirus pandemic, will continue to be a priority.
- Impacts of climate change on mixed farming and forestry/ancient woodlands.
- There may be pressure for development of tall structures, such as communication masts and wind energy developments, in this elevated, open and windswept landscape.
- Future trends imply that landscape condition is likely to be stable in this area.

Management Objectives:

- Area 3A The overall management objective should be to conserve the distinctive classical English landscape created by the dramatic chalk valleys, ridges and plateaux, diverse woodland, copses, shelterbelts, avenues and parkland trees. In particular, there is a need to re-invigorate woodland management within this area.
- Area 3B Overall, management of this landscape should conserve the simple, open character of the landscape, occasional long views, sense of scale and remoteness. Management should also seek to restore key features that have been lost or are declining, such as areas of chalk grassland.

Landscape type 4: Downland Hills

This Landscape Type comprises the following Landscape Area:

- Character Area 4A Martin - Whitsbury Downland Hills

Key Characteristics:

- A series of small scale but prominent knolls and hills.
- Dominated by an Upper Chalk surface geology giving rise to argyllic brown earths.
- Land cover is predominantly arable, with improved pasture on lower ground towards the River Valleys.
- Dominated by a pattern of medium to large Parliamentary enclosure type fields.
- Deciduous and coniferous woodland silhouette against the skyline, clothing the crests of the slopes.
- Low density, dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads.
- The absence of major roads contributes to the feeling of remoteness and tranquillity.
- A number of ancient woodlands including Burwood, Lower Breach Copse and Boulsbury Wood (SSSI).
- Neolithic and Bronze Age burial monuments, prehistoric and Romano-British enclosures, settlements, field systems and linear boundaries and hillforts contribute to the plethora of visible historic features of the landscape.
- Panoramic views with open skies from hill tops

Issues and challenges

- Conservation of archaeology and ancient woodlands.
- Development pressures on the villages.
- 'Horsiculture' and changes in sense of place.
- Decrease in agricultural stock grazing.
- There has been some encroachment of arable cultivation onto chalk grassland and open downland in the past - this is particularly noticeable on the visible chalk bluffs and hillsides.
- The presence of coniferous forestry plantations jars with the soft outlines of the deciduous woodlands and hill-top copses.
- Some scrub encroachment is visible on downland turf

Strength of Character: Strong

Current Condition: Good

Possible Future Trends:

- The evolving, post Brexit, Environmental Land Management schemes accessible to farmers will support continued environmental management of the landscape.
- Heavy use of areas of Open Access Land can result in erosion by walkers and pressure for visitor facilities in the open landscape. Visitor management, particularly in the aftermath of increased local usage and 'staycations' that resulted from the coronavirus pandemic, will continue to be a priority.
- There may be pressure for development of tall structures, such as communication masts and wind energy developments, in this elevated, open and windswept landscape.
- Development pressure in and around villages.
- Future trends imply that landscape condition will probably be stable in this area.

Management Objective:

Area 4 The overall management objective should be to conserve the pattern and contrast of the landscape created by the open areas of arable downland and distinct pattern of woodland, including copses on the summits of the hills and the tracts of ancient woodland that form a dramatic backdrop to the open downland.

Landscape type 5: Chalk River Valleys

This Landscape Type comprises the following Landscape Areas:

- Character Area 5A - Wylye Chalk River Valley Sides
- Character Area 5B - Ebble Chalk River Valley Sides
- Character Area 5C - Stour and Avon Tributary Valleys
- Character Area 5D - Ebble Chalk River Valley Floor
- Character Area 5E - Wylye Chalk River Valley Floor

Key Characteristics:

- Strongly enclosing valley sides, frequently eroded to form dry valleys, but in some places quite wide (e.g. Ebble).
- The steepest valley slopes have retained their semi-natural chalk grassland or are clothed in 'hanging' woodland while the shallow valley sides have been exploited for arable cultivation.
- The clear, fast flowing chalk rivers and streams are a key habitat.
- The floodplains support water meadows, cress beds and damp pasture.
- The valleys typically provide convenient transport corridors, with the Wylye Valley containing a trunk road and railway.
- Straight-sided fields represent late 18th/early 19th century Parliamentary enclosure, with large scale fields resulting from 20th century boundary loss.
- Field boundaries and footpaths often reflect the tracks, droves and hollow ways that took the livestock to and from the downs in the Medieval period.
- A series of linear springline villages typically lie at the foot of the valley slopes.
- Isolated Neolithic long barrow burial monuments, Bronze Age round barrows and water meadow channels on the valley floor contribute to the visible archaeology.
- The rural landscapes are sometimes interrupted by the large volumes of traffic that use the valleys as transport corridors to access organised events.

Issues and challenges

- Water flows and water resource management.
- 'Horsiculture' and loss of sense of place.
- Development pressures (expensive properties, high demand, gentrification, replacement dwellings).
- Highways , transport corridors, and road 'improvements'.
- Shoot and Event management
- Chalk grassland conversion
- Infrastructure clutter (e.g., telephone and electricity poles, signs).

Strength of Character: Strong - Moderate

Current Condition: Good - Moderate

Possible Future Trends

- The evolving, post Brexit, Environmental Land Management schemes accessible to farmers will support continued environmental management of the landscape.
- Heavy use of areas of `Open Country' under the CRoW Act, and of public rights of way can result in erosion by walkers and pressure for visitor facilities in the open landscape. Visitor management, particularly in the aftermath of increased local usage and 'staycations' that resulted from the coronavirus pandemic, will continue to be a priority.
- Future trends imply that landscape condition will probably be stable in the future.

Management Objectives:

- Area 5A The overall management objective should be to conserve the strong visual unity of the valley, the diversity of semi-natural habitats and the pattern of springline villages and to restore boundary features.
- Area 5B The overall management strategy should be to conserve the dramatic character of the landform, the distinctive settlement pattern on the valley floor and to restore declining features such as wet woodlands, meadows, chalk grassland and boundary features.
- Area 5C The overall management objective should be to conserve the strong visual unity of these valleys, the pattern of linear villages and semi-natural habitats, and to restore declining features such as wet woodlands, meadows, chalk grassland, valley side woodlands and boundary features.
- Area 5D The overall management strategy should be to conserve the distinctive settlement pattern on the valley floor and to restore declining features such as wet woodlands, meadows, chalk grassland and boundary features.
- Area 5E The overall management objective should be to conserve the strong visual unity of the valley, the diversity of semi-natural habitats and the pattern of springline villages and to restore features such as wet woodlands, meadows and boundary features.

Landscape type 6: Greensand Terrace

This Landscape Type comprises the following Landscape Areas:

- Character Area 6A - Fovant Greensand Terrace
- Character Area 6B - Kilmington Greensand Terrace

Key Characteristics:

- Flat aprons of land from which the dramatic chalk escarpments and greensand hills rise.
- Dominated by arable fields of Parliamentary enclosure.
- Large geometric fields and open skies contrast with the smaller scale, enclosed landscape of the adjacent Greensand Hills.
- Upper Greensand geology giving rise to rich brown earth soils that have a high agricultural value.
- Land use is predominantly agricultural, including cereal cropping, grass rotations, dairy farming and stock rearing.
- Mixed woodland runs in discontinuous belts along the base of the chalk escarpment, frequently along either side of the boundary between the Greensand Terrace and Chalk Escarpment landscape types.
- Tree belts provide shelter around dispersed and isolated farmsteads.
- Settlements tend to be at the interface with, or within, the Greensand Hills.
- General absence of prehistoric earthworks.
- Long views across adjacent landscapes
- The landscape provides the setting of views from the escarpments and hills.

Issues and challenges

- A30 corridor.
- Highway paraphernalia, traffic volumes, and loss of tranquillity.
- Field sizes, hedge management, intensification of farming, and reduced ecological value.
- Inconsistent management of the linear woodland rivers at the base of the adjoining scarp.
- Sustaining best and most versatile land in agriculture whilst enhancing ecological values.
- Development pressures.
- Visual intrusion of farm buildings.

Strength of Character: Strong - Moderate

Current Condition: Moderate

Possible Future Trends:

- The evolving, post Brexit, Environmental Land Management schemes accessible to farmers will support continued environmental management of the landscape.
- There may be further pressure for new built development within the attractive villages as well as redevelopment of agricultural buildings to residential, amenity or industrial use.
- Future trends imply that landscape condition is likely to be stable in the future.

Management Objectives:

- Area 6A Overall, management of this landscape should conserve the simple, flat, open character of the landscape and the important (undeveloped) physical and visual relationship between terrace and escarpment. Restoration of lost and/or declining features such as field boundaries and woodland rivers will improve condition, quality and visual integrity of the landscape as well as its ecological value.
- Areas 6B The overall management strategy should conserve the open farmed character of the terrace with its distinct pattern of settlement and the contrast with the adjacent escarpment. Restoration of lost and/or declining features such as field boundaries and woodland rivers which encroach in places along the southern edge of the area will improve condition, quality and visual integrity of the landscape as well as its ecological value.

Landscape type 7: Greensand Hills

This Landscape Type comprises the following Landscape Areas:

- Character Area 7A Donhead - Fovant Hills
- Character Area 7B Penselwood - Longleat Hills

Key Characteristics:

- Upper Greensand is exposed as a band between the older clays and younger chalk between Mere and Wilton; elsewhere the hills overlook the Greensand Terraces.
- The Greensand typically forms upstanding ridges and hills that have been eroded by tributaries of the major rivers into a series of rounded knolls and deep valleys.

- Hills and ridges support a large proportion of woodland, both deciduous and coniferous.
- Extensive woodlands 'hide' recreational development, e.g. Centre Parcs, and create a sense of enclosure.
- Country houses and estates, some very large and spreading across the Greensand Terraces, are set within landscaped parkland, and contribute to the scenic beauty of the area.
- Distinctive patterns of settlement include villages hidden in the shelter of the deep valleys.
- Fortifications are strategically located on the hill tops.
- Ancient and narrow sunken lanes wind their way through the hills.
- Small and irregular fields characterise areas of agricultural land use.
- Meadows and wet woodland are typical of the valley floors.

Issues and challenges

- Heritage conservation especially in parklands with visitor pressures.
- Infrastructure clutter (e.g., telephone and electricity poles, signs).
- Viability and impacts of commercial forestry.
- Reduced livestock grazing.
- Limited access due to narrow lanes.
- Traffic and development leading to loss of character and tranquillity.
- Enlarged replacement dwellings.

Strength of Character: Moderate - Strong

Current Condition: Good

Possible Future Trends:

- There may be further pressure for new built development within the attractive villages as well as redevelopment of agricultural buildings to residential, amenity or industrial use.
- The presence of coniferous planting and coupes means rate of change in the landscape is potentially rapid - felling of large coupes results in instant change and sharp lines on the hills.
- There may be an improvement in woodland structure and management.
- Overall, future trends imply that landscape condition may decline in the future.

Management Objectives:

- Area 7A The overall management objective should be to conserve the rich mosaic of land uses and the contrast between the shaded, enclosed coombes and exposed hills. Woodland conservation and management is key in this wooded landscape.
- Area 7B The overall management objective should be to conserve the woodland, parkland and the mosaic of pastures and meadows that characterise the landscape. Woodland conservation and management is key in this wooded landscape.

Landscape type 8: Rolling Clay Vales

14.14. This Landscape Type comprises the following Landscape Area:

- Character Area 8A - The Vale of Wardour

Key Characteristics:

- Predominantly clay vale occupying a series of eroded anti-clinal axes between the chalk downlands.
- Varied underlying geology with different geological exposures leading to outcrops of hard rock.
- A mixed agricultural landscape with small scale fields of lush, improved, pasture and arable production with water meadows on the valley floor.
- Wooded character, with broadleaf and mixed woodland and copses (some of ancient origin) scattered across the vale, reinforced by bushy hedgerows bounding most fields.
- Layout of fields, farms and villages illustrate the pattern of Medieval settlement, clearance, and farming.
- A predominantly enclosed landscape, with close views limited by hedges, and frequent ups and downs resulting from the varied geology.
- Narrow, twisty, lanes.
- Rivers and their tributaries meander through the vale.
- A further sense of enclosure is provided by the surrounding upland landscapes.
- Villages dispersed over the floor of the vale.

Issues and challenges

- Viability of family farms and dairying.
- Field enlargement, loss of hedges, overmature trees
- Water regimes (Nadder and Sem rivers).
- Road network limitations, transportation engineering, and vehicle accessibility.
- Infrastructure clutter (e.g., telephone and electricity poles, signs).
- Greater benefits from the railway, and associated parking needs.
- Development pressures, particularly around Tisbury, reuse of traditional and old buildings, and potential loss of character.

Strength of Character: Strong

Current Condition: Moderate

Possible Future Trends:

- There may be a further decline in tree population as trees reach maturity, and loss of the distinctive black and white signposts that are falling into disrepair.
- There is also likely to be further pressure for new built development within the attractive villages as well as redevelopment of agricultural buildings to residential, amenity or industrial use.

- This landscape could see a great change in the future and the trends stated here imply that landscape condition may decline in the future.

Management Objective:

- Area 8A The overall management objective for the Vale of Wardour should conserve the pastoral character of the vale and the diversity of habitats. The key features that unify the landscape must be conserved such as the consistent use of building materials and the presence of scattered trees. Restoration of many key features, such as the hedgerows and characteristic rural signage is also required to enhance the sense of intactness and continuity across the landscape.

Appendix 8: Why biodiversity is an important consideration in the Cranborne Chase National Landscape

Introduction

This appendix sets out why biodiversity is an important consideration in the Cranborne National Landscape (including why a higher biodiversity net gain requirement would be appropriate in the National Landscape, compared to neighbouring, non-designated areas).

Statutory purposes, duties and powers The Cranborne Chase National Landscape is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The statutory purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.[48] Local authorities and other 'relevant authorities' have a statutory duty to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs.[49] Local Planning Authorities also have the statutory power enabling them to take action to accomplish this purpose.[50]

Public authorities also have a statutory biodiversity duty[51] that the Environment Act 2021 introduced. Under this duty they "*must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England*."

Link between natural beauty and biodiversity

Natural heritage (including biodiversity) is one of the factors that contributes to the natural beauty of AONBs.[52] As such, the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity is an important consideration when seeking to further the purpose of AONB designation.

Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that *'the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in [AONBs]'*.[53]

Biodiversity Net Gain and the Seek to Further Duty

Research by the Kent Nature Partnership (KNP) has identified that increasing biodiversity net gain (BNG) delivery from 10% to 20% does not significantly affect viability. [54]

A recent Wildlife and Countryside Link report on BNG refers to that KNP research.[55] It also states that Defra's own research[56] has shown that 10% BNG is the minimum that is required to ensure no net loss. So, it could be argued that to deliver a genuine gain in biodiversity, you need to have a BNG figure higher than 10%.

The University of Kent's research into BNG outcomes for early adopter councils shows that certain loss of biodiversity is being traded for the promise of unverifiable gains at some point in the future.[57]

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[48] Section 82 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.
[49] Section 85 of the CROW ACT 2000.
[50] Section 84 of the CROW Act 2000.
[51] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty
[52] Natural England (2011) *Guidance for assessing landscapes for designations as National Park or AONB in England*. Table 3, page 13, and Appendix 1, page 25.
[53] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024) *National Planning Policy Framework*. Paragraph 189, page 54.
[54] https://cieem.net/kent-assesses-20-biodiversity-net-gain-requirement/
[55] Wildlife and Countryside Link (2024) *Biodiversity Net Gain: more than a fancy offset?* (link).
[56] https://consult.defra.gov.uk/land-use/net-gain/supporting_documents/181121%20%20Biodiversity%20Net%20Gain%20Consultation%20IA%20FINAL%20for%20publication.pdf. The relevant section is 5.1.1, page 18.
[57] zu Ermgassen, S.O.S.E., Marsh, S., Ryland, K., Church, E., Marsh, R., Bull, J. W. (2021). *Exploring the ecological outcomes of mandatory biodiversity net gain using evidence from early-adopter jurisdictions in England*. Conservation Letters. 14: e12820. https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12820

This is relevant to the new statutory duty to seek to further the purpose of protected landscapes designation (i.e. for national landscapes, to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the protected landscape). As outlined above, natural heritage / biodiversity is one of the factors that contributes to the natural beauty of a national landscape. If 10% BNG is the minimum that is required to ensure no net loss, then 10% BNG isn't necessarily enhancing the natural beauty of the area, in this regard, it is just ensuring no net loss. For actual enhancement of natural beauty (in relation to biodiversity), it could be argued that a BNG figure of more than 10% is necessary.

Landscapes Review, Government response and '30 by 30'

The Government-commissioned Landscapes Review Final Report[58] proposes that:

- national landscapes[59] should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks – joining things up within and beyond their boundaries;[60]
- national landscapes should have a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature;[61]
- there should be stronger purposes in law for our national landscapes, including 'recover, conserve and enhance... biodiversity';
- strengthened [AONB] Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery.[62]

The Government's response to the Landscapes Review Final Report states that:

- Working with... AONBs in the coming years, we will ensure our protected landscapes boost biodiversity.[63]
- Our vision for protected landscapes is a coherent national network of... nature-rich spaces... Protected landscapes will drive forward nature recovery.[64]
  - The Prime Minister has committed to protect 30% of UK land for nature by 2030 (30 by 30)[65]...Achieving 30 by 30 will rely on improvements in how these areas are protected and managed for nature recovery.[66]
  - We will put our protected landscapes at the heart of delivering our nature recovery... policies.[67]
  - Given their spatial scale, and track records in planning and delivering landscape-scale restoration projects, protected landscapes could play a particularly important role in the delivery of the Nature Recovery Network.[68]

[58] Defra (2019) *Landscapes Review Final Report*.
[59] The phrase 'national landscapes' relates to AONBs and national parks.
[60] Proposal 4, page 52.
[61] Proposal 1, page 36.
[62] Proposal 3, page 43.
[63] Landscapes review: government response. Foreword.
[64] Landscapes review: government response. Introduction.
[65] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-commits-to- protect-30-of-uk-land-in-boost-for-biodiversity. This press release implies that the 30% figure includes the entirety of AONBs: *'Existing National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other protected areas already comprise approximately 26% of land in England. An additional 4%... will be protected to support the recovery of nature'. However, the Government's response to the Landscapes Review states that 'at present, under their current statutory purposes, level of protection and management, protected landscapes cannot be said to contribute towards 30 by 30 in their entirety'.*
[66] Landscapes review: government response. Since the publication of the review - nature and climate.
[67] Landscapes review: government response. Chapter 2: Nature and climate.
[68] Landscapes review: government response. The Nature Recovery Network and 30 by 30.

- We will explore ways for protected landscapes to support responsible authorities in preparing [Local Nature Recovery Strategies].[69]
- By strengthening the first purpose [of protected landscape designation] for nature... we will ensure these areas can contribute to this ambitious commitment for biodiversity and our wider nature recovery ambitions.[70]
- We will strengthen this purpose [to 'conserve and enhance'], making it clear that we need to actively recover nature in these areas, rather than simply conserve what remains.[71]
- A core function of protected landscapes should be to drive nature recovery.[72]

The Government report 'Delivering 30by30 on land in England'[73] states that '30by30' will be delivered across three themes:

1. Strengthening.
2. Extending and creating.
3. Investing.

Measures identified under the 'strengthening' theme that relate specifically to protected landscapes include:

- Action through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act to enhance Protected Landscape management plans and place a stronger requirement on partners such as local authorities and public bodies to contribute to their delivery.
- The creation of a new partnership between the National Landscapes Association (formerly the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), National Parks England, National Trails UK and Natural England to deliver a range of exciting projects and programmes on nature recovery and widening access to nature. The partnership will also boost opportunities for private sector investment in our Protected Landscapes.
- A new outcomes framework for Protected Landscapes, which will set targets for their contributions to national environment and climate commitments, to be embedded in their management plans. We are also updating Protected Landscape management plan guidance to ensure consistency.
- Our response to the consultation on implementing the Landscapes Review, which sets out our action plan for Protected Landscapes.

Measures identified under the 'investing' theme that relate specifically to protected landscapes include:

- Committing to invest £100 million in thriving farming businesses through our successful Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme. More than 5,000 farmers and land 8 of 15 managers have engaged with the programme, delivering projects that achieve outcomes for climate, nature, people and place.
- Investing in National Parks Partnerships and the National Landscapes Association to build the capacity to create a pipeline of projects to generate more private finance in Protected Landscapes.

[69] Landscapes review: government response. The Nature Recovery Network and 30 by 30.
[70] Landscapes review: government response. The Nature Recovery Network and 30 by 30.
[71] Landscapes review: government response. A stronger mission for nature recovery.
[72] Landscapes review: government response. A stronger mission for nature recovery.
[73] Department of Farming, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) (2024) *Delivering 30by30 on land in England* (link).

- Pledging a further £15 million to support our existing National Parks and National Landscapes, helping to support our most iconic landscapes.

The report also states that protected landscapes will be at the heart of 30by30.

As such, protected landscapes (including National Landscapes) are clearly a vital component of delivering the 30by30 commitment (i.e., ensuring that 30% of land in England is managed for nature).

Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework

The Government's Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework identifies several biodiversity-related targets, specifically for protected landscapes, that are relevant to the National Landscape[74] (see Appendix 5).

Target 1 is to restore or create more than 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats within Protected Landscapes, outside protected sites, by 2042 (from a 2022 baseline).[75] It is important to note that the Target 1 figure of 250,000 hectares is half of the Government's target of creating or restoring 500,000 hectares in England by 2042[76]. So, protected landscapes are expected to deliver 50% of the national (England) target for habitat restoration / creation even though they only cover 25% of England. In other words, protected landscapes will be expected to restore / create three times as much wildlife-rich habitat, per unit area, as land outside protected landscapes.

Colchester Declaration

The 'Colchester Declaration', launched in 2019, is a formal commitment by the family of National landscapes, under the umbrella of the National Landscape Association, to redress declines in species and habitats within the context of a wider response to climate change.

The commitments include that, by 2030:

- At least 200,000ha of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in National landscapes will be in favourable condition.
- At least 100,000ha of wildlife-rich habitat outside of protected sites will have been created/restored in National landscapes.
- At least 36,000ha of new woodland will have been planted or allowed to regenerate in National landscapes following the principle of the right tree in the right place.

[74] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protected-landscapes-targets-and-outcomes-framework/protected-landscapes-targets-and-outcomes-framework

[75] This is half of the national target (including areas outside protected landscapes) of restoring or creating 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat, outside protected sites, by 2042 (link), even though protected landscapes only cover 25% of England.

[76] The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan, in 2018, introduced a target to create or restore 500,000ha of wildlife-rich habitat outside the protected landscapes network (link – page 26). This target was reiterated in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan, in 2023, which specified that this target would be met by 2042 (link – page 31). This target became legally binding in the Environmental Targets (Biodiversity) (England) Regulations 2023 (link). This target is also reiterated in the Government's '30by30' policy paper (link – page 7).

Appendix X: Summary of the timetable and key outputs from consultation

A workshop on Management Plan priorities at the Annual Forum, April 2024 plus priorities for Nature Recovery.

Repeated during the seven days of the Chalke History Festival in June 2024 and at 2023 and 2024 Planning Seminars