

PART TWO



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5 OUR VISION

Our Vision is to ensure that our Protected Landscapes improve the social and economic well being of communities and businesses in the South West, whilst safeguarding and enhancing our landscape resource for future generations.



All landscapes in the South West warrant support but the National Parks and AONBs require particular attention by virtue of their designation. The special qualities of these outstanding landscapes have been recognised for centuries. Now the challenge is to ensure that their special attributes of unspoilt beauty, peace and tranquillity and supporting distinctive economic, social and cultural activities are handed down to future generations unimpaired.

This is not to argue for sterility or the absence of change; indeed dynamic change and adjustment to new circumstances is essential. Development and renewal are critical to the sustainability of local communities.

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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

In delivering our vision for the Protected Landscapes of the South West we shall ensure that:

- The current condition and status of each Protected Landscape is fully monitored,
- The qualities of Protected Landscapes are further enhanced to retain the South West's position as the most attractive and popular of English regions,
- Landscape features, which give each area its distinctive local qualities, are identified and incorporated in individual vision statements or Management Plans,
- Protected Landscapes will become centres of excellence for landscape management and rural development and will act as test beds for such initiatives which will benefit other parts of the South West and beyond,
- Public awareness is raised about the value of both protected and local landscapes,
- Local organisations are given the resources necessary to support management plan objectives that benefit communities in Protected Landscapes,
- Support will be provided to new enterprises, and adding value to existing businesses, that are compatible with Protected Landscape purposes,
- Support will be provided to farmers, landowners and land managers who provide the backbone of landscape protection and learning and development opportunities will be shared amongst all who support the aims and objectives of Protected Landscapes,
- Effective partnerships will be established to coordinate management and funding and share common aims,
- Realistic targets will be set, linking national and regional strategies and resources with the aspirations of management plans for each special landscape,
- All relevant authorities and official bodies will agree on a joint programme of action to deliver the visions for individual Protected Landscapes.



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6 DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Successful planning and management of Protected Landscapes requires both an international perspective and local action on the ground. Strategic level policies need to reflect the status of Protected Landscapes while management plans for individual Protected Landscapes should encompass the broad objectives of higher tier strategies.



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The International Dimension

Decisions on land use and landscape management are increasingly influenced by international legislation and over 80% of English environmental law is governed by European Directives. Landscape does not always feature in the title but it forms a key part of Conventions, Directives and Strategies on biodiversity and nature conservation and also those relating to planning, environmental impact assessment and water management. The Maastricht Treaty requires that all EU Community legislation must comply with the Community's environmental statutes, including the Habitats and Birds Directives. In developing policies for the Protected Landscapes of the South West these international guidelines are increasingly important. For example, Management Plans will need to take account of the Water Framework Directive and proposed Agri-environment and wildlife, and Soil Quality Directives.

National Programmes

The Government has its own national programmes for conservation, economic

Case Study



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Sustainable Farms

The National Trust is working with its tenant farmers in supporting the delivery of sustainable land management programmes which are economically viable and environmentally sensitive. Three farms won public praise in 2003 for their sustainable practices and all of them sit within protected landscapes.

Bosigran Farm, near Pendeen, in the Cornwall AONB, was highlighted by DEFRA as an example of the sustainable policies the department is promoting nationally. It was one of the first farms to go organic in Cornwall but to supplement farm incomes they have set up a business that sells, and encourages the use of, biodegradable and washable nappies. The business is run from architecturally important

200-year-old barns which have just been converted by the National Trust using local materials. The whole project was funded by the National Trust, DEFRA and a Rural Diversification capital grant.

Southdown Farm in Kingsbridge, within the South Devon AONB, has won 3 awards for diversifying into the commercial planting and harvesting of natural birdseed, Soar Mill Seeds. The first award, from the Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group, was the Bronze Otter Award for the farms 'outstanding contributions to conservation'. They have also won the Devon County Show Prince of Wales Award for sustainable farming and the JS Neason Memorial Award for farm diversification.

“The South West must remain a region with a beautiful and diverse environment. By working together, applying the principles of sustainability we can achieve lasting economic prosperity and social justice, whilst protecting that environment. This approach will secure a higher quality of life now and for future generations.”

A Sustainable Future for the South West, 2001

“Conserve and enhance the landscape and historic environment as assets for everyone to value and enjoy”

Our Environment: Our Future, The Regional Strategy for the South West Environment, 2004-2014

DEFRA is the principal source of funding for rural land management under the **England Rural Development Programme**. Its priorities under ERDP support agricultural reform, promotion of forestry and woodland management, agri-environment schemes, agricultural diversification, environmental protection including landscape conservation, and encouragement of tourist and craft activities.

The environmental goals of the ERDP are closely aligned with those of Protected Landscapes with the emphasis lying on:

- Achieving sustainable land use,
- Integration of environmental, social and economic factors to achieve sustainable development,
- Protection and enhancement of the character and diversity of the region's environment and cultural heritage,
- Ensuring that the value of enhancing the environmental quality of the region is appreciated by all,
- Ensuring that support reflects and links with the achievements of international, national and regional priorities.

development and rural renaissance. These programmes coordinate European funding but also draw on the national exchequer. They are administered by bodies like Defra, the Countryside Agency, English Nature, English Heritage, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission. Most of these agencies now produce regional strategies and programmes which are highly relevant to landscape management.

Regional Strategies

The government has announced plans for a radical reform of strategic and local planning. Regional Spatial Strategies will effectively replace Structure Plans at county level, while Local Development Frameworks will supersede Local Plans. The aim is to provide strategic guidance through the work of the Regional Assemblies, and to make local planning more relevant to individual communities. Preparation of community strategies forms part of this overall picture.

Safeguarding and enhancing Protected Landscapes and promotion of integrated rural development within them is a fundamental objective of regional policy. Key regional policy documents include the:

- Regional Sustainable Development Framework – 2001,
- Regional Economic Strategy,
- Our Environment: Our Future, The Regional Strategy for the South West Environment 2004-2014,
- Sustainable Food and Farming Strategy Delivery Plan

In addition there are a number of important regional documents in preparation. These include the:

- Integrated Regional Strategy
- Strategy for the Historic Environment in the South West
- South West Biodiversity Implementation Plan
- A Woodland and Forestry Framework for the South West

Protected Landscape managers and partners will work to ensure that there is alignment between regional strategies and National Park and AONB Management Plans and that opportunities for joint working are identified and acted upon.

Local Frameworks

A principal goal of the new planning system is to provide communities with greater involvement in decisions that affect them. New community strategies and local development plans are being produced for this purpose. Local authorities can decide what areas to cover in their new plans and it is most significant that the Blackdown Hills Rural Partnership is spearheading a combined Community Strategy and AONB Management Plan for the Blackdown Hills AONB.

In other areas, community strategies and local development plans follow local authority boundaries so there may be a number of such plans affecting large areas like the Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs AONBs.

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Tourism on Dartmoor

The Dartmoor Partnership is a forum for tourism on Dartmoor; it provides a network and co-ordination function for a variety of organisations already working towards the development and promotion of tourism in the National Park and its surrounding area. The Partnership interprets tourism in its widest sense to include all visitors and all businesses in the area that have an interest, however big or small, in tourism.

Members of the Dartmoor Partnership include: Dartmoor National Park Authority, Chambers of Trade, South Devon Tourist Association, Duchy of Cornwall, Dartmoor and South Devon Farm Holiday Group, Dartmoor Towns Limited, Dartmoor Tourist Association Limited, Devon County Council, South Hams District Council, South West Tourism, Teignbridge District Council, West Devon Borough Council.

The Dartmoor Partnership's priorities are to:

Ensure networking and co-ordination amongst the key players involved in tourism in the Dartmoor area;

Promote economically viable and environmentally sustainable tourism in a co-ordinated and integrated way;

Promote a charter for sustainable tourism which local agencies and businesses can sign up to as an acceptable way forward;

Secure appropriate tourism signing for the Dartmoor area and support and develop schemes that improve the economic benefit accrued from visitors to the area, to support Dartmoor's communities and environment.

7 ADDING VALUE

In recent years, Protected Landscapes Managers and their partner organisations have become adept at establishing and running local delivery partnerships. They achieve this by working increasingly closely with a range of public, voluntary and private interests to achieve common goals for their designated areas. There are many success stories of mutual cooperation.



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Joint initiatives are also developed with statutory agencies like English Nature and the Environment Agency; public bodies like the Forestry Commission and Forest Enterprise and utilities like water companies. Experience shows that partnership working 'adds value' by:

- Breaking down traditional barriers,
- Seeing environment as an economic asset,
- Creating a sense of identity and ownership,
- Achieving a clear focus for sustainable development,
- Encouraging co-operation and
- Developing trust between bodies.

The National Parks have developed real skills and expertise in promoting community projects that pilot innovative approaches to rural development, through the use of special sustainable development funds.

Protected Landscapes are increasingly acting as trendsetters and as exemplars for sustainable development and environmentally sensitive land management. This

includes encouraging the tourism sector to put its full weight behind schemes aimed at maintaining the environmental qualities of the countryside and encouraging visitor spending and investment in initiatives that support tourism.

These are all valid reasons for continuing and increasing collaboration between the protected landscapes in the region, and between the protected landscapes collectively and their regional partners.

Some of our most important historic landscapes are those designated as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and we work closely with the teams responsible for landscape management in both

English Heritage 2004

Case Study



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Caring for the Cotswolds

Unimproved limestone grassland was identified as a priority in the Cotswolds AONB Management Strategy 1996, in particular Smooth Brome - Tor Grass grassland, of which 50% of the national resource lies within the Cotswolds AONB. The Cotswolds AONB Partnership adopted these grasslands as a priority in March 2000 and subsequently applied for Heritage Lottery funding for a project to improve their management.

The Caring for the Cotswolds target area contains 96 unimproved limestone grassland sites. The aim is to improve the management of a third of all unimproved limestone grassland in the Cotswolds AONB, around 1000 hectares, by reintroduction of grazing and improving existing grazing regimes; assisting with scrub management, provision of fencing and water supply; increasing awareness via publications, training events and demonstration sites; establishing a marketing campaign and brand to promote the sale of beef and lamb from unimproved grasslands; assisting and enabling applications for agri-environment schemes and co-ordinating a grazing 'dating agency' which puts graziers and site owners in touch parish by parish.

Partners: Cotswolds AONB Partnership, English Nature.

8 DEVELOPING A PLAN OF ACTION

Much useful progress has been made through informal meetings between staff of the South West Protected Landscapes over the last two years to improve coordination, but given the importance of these areas to the economy and quality of life in the region, it is clear that closer collaboration is needed on a regular basis to share experience and promote good ideas.



We propose 10 action points based on the overall objectives (in italics) which each Protected Landscape will consider in order to measure and improve on their performance. Emphasis will vary within the region since each of the Protected Landscapes has its own priorities based on its management plan. National Parks and some of the longer established AONBs are already tackling elements of the proposed actions but for others the tasks will be new.

Some proposals have resource implications that will need to be assessed by funding partners, but in many areas the benefits can be achieved by more effective joint working

A key priority will be to raise the profile of Protected Landscapes not only in the eyes of the public, but also amongst other national and regional government departments and agencies.

Objective 1
Establishing the Baseline
The current condition of each protected landscape is fully monitored;

'Condition' surveys should be undertaken to record the status of each protected landscape within the region. Surveys should be repeated once every five years. Surveys will combine both professional judgements and community views. Baseline data which already exists on population, economic activity and social conditions needs to be made more specific to land lying within the boundaries of the Protected Landscapes. The baseline indicators should provide a framework for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the contribution Protected Landscapes make to rural development.

Objective 2
Maintaining Quality and Local Distinctiveness
The qualities of all landscapes will be safeguarded and further enhanced to retain the South West's position as the most attractive and popular of English regions. Landscape features, which give each area its distinctive local qualities, will be identified and incorporated in individual statements or management plan; Safeguarding and enhancement

will be achieved through a wide array of activities that manage and guide change in keeping with the distinctive character of place. From application of planning policies, design standards and guidance, to the promotion of land management projects, individual actions, community enterprise and voluntary effort.

All Protected Landscapes have identified key features and some have carried out more detailed analysis through landscape characterisation studies. Comprehensive Landscape Character Assessments are valuable tools for Protected Landscape managers and should be a priority for action if not already completed. It is proposed that condition surveys should record the distribution and extent of the key landscape features so that these can be monitored in future, and appropriate action taken to preserve and enhance these features.

Objective 3
Leading by Example
Protected Landscapes will become centres of excellence for landscape management and will act as test beds for innovative landscape management which can be rolled out to all parts of the South West; Many of the Protected Landscapes in the South West are already leading the way in innovative approaches to managing landscapes; especially where European and other funds have been available. Examples

include the case studies highlighted in this prospectus. What is important is to ensure that learning is disseminated widely and that through peer to peer networking good practice is repeated not reinvented across the region.

Objective 4
Fostering Learning and Education
Public awareness will be raised about the value of both protected and local landscapes; Many people are only partially aware of the role of landscape designations or the resources provided for their enjoyment. This is particularly the case for urban dwellers and ethnic minorities. Formal and informal education, lifelong learning and volunteering will be encouraged within Protected Landscapes as a means to this end.

Objective 5
Enabling Community Action
Local organisations will be given the resources to support management plan initiatives that benefit communities within the Protected Landscapes; The delivery of many landscape objectives is heavily dependent on the ability of local organisations and individuals to help themselves and their communities. Local community partnerships and networks within the Protected Landscapes should be built up and strengthened and given appropriate financial backing. Examples include voluntary wardens, local cooperatives and marketing schemes.

Case Study



'Bracken Down'©
A forest products company has successfully developed a composted garden soil conditioner from bracken and other local products. Bracken is an invasive plant causing increasing damage to the ecology and biodiversity of grasslands in the Mendips AONB, and other upland areas in the South West. Bracken is harvested mechanically and converted into minerals rich compost, which is suitable as a soil conditioner, mulch and top dressing in fruit, vegetable and lower beds. The development of 'bracken down' offers a commercial solution to a growing environmental problem.

Partners: A Private/Public Initiative in the Mendip Hills AONB
©Fountain Bark Products, Brockley Combe, Backwell, Bristol.

Case Study



© National Trust

Green River Transport

The National Trust has been pioneering green transport solutions to encourage tourists to leave their cars behind. At Agatha Christie's former home, Greenway, on the River Dart in the South Devon AONB, 58 per cent of visitors arrived at the property by ferry, bus, bicycle, foot and even a canoe. The most popular route was on the ferry, which offered visitors a round trip going between Totnes, Greenway and Dartmouth. The scheme means tourists can leave their cars behind and enjoy a leisurely cruise up and down the Dart River without clogging up the small country lanes with noise and traffic. The scheme won the Environmental Award in Sustainable Tourism by the Devon Environmental Business Initiative (DEBI) Awards for Business in 2003.

Objective 6

Stimulating the Rural Economy

Support will be provided to new enterprises, and adding value to existing businesses, that are compatible with Protected Landscape purposes;

Maintaining a healthy local economy within the protected landscapes is dependent on giving support and encouragement to existing and new businesses to contribute to sustainable rural development whilst being compatible with the primary purpose of Protected Landscape designation.

Protected Landscape managers and their partner organisations are encouraged to focus joint working to maximising the following opportunities for rural development:

- Local products and services
- Working with tourism businesses to raise quality standards, expand green accreditation schemes and promote visitor payback initiatives
- Maximising the local economic benefits of delivering accessibility for all
- Developing and promoting the local economic benefits of active management of our native woodland resource
- Developing appropriate renewable energy schemes by fostering expertise and helping build a market lead in technologies for bio-energy, solar, hydro and tidal power generation

- Supporting and promoting sustainable approaches to food and farming

Objective 7

Supporting Land Managers

Support will be provided to farmers, landowners and land managers who deliver the aims and objectives of Protected Landscapes management plans;

Official organisations play a major role in directing policy and raising awareness about the importance of landscape, but most of the thousands of square miles which make up the protected landscapes of the South West owe their special character to generations of farmers and landowners who have crafted and moulded these landscapes. Given the undoubted benefits that stem from attractive countryside, only a small part of the economic reward filters back to the custodians. There is increasing recognition of the role of farming in managing fine landscapes and with reform of the common agricultural policies opportunities should arise to pay more directly for these activities.

Agri-environment schemes have already contributed greatly to safeguarding landscape character in our Protected Landscapes. It will be important to ensure that National Parks and AONB Partnerships continue to work closely with the Rural Development Service to ensure that the new Entry Level and Higher Tier schemes support integrated land use and the

objectives of Protected Landscape management plans.

Objective 8

Joined Up Working Practices

Effective partnerships will be established to coordinate management, funding and deliver common aims;

Protected Landscape managers and partners will need to ensure that there is alignment between the various regional strategies and that opportunities for joint working are identified and acted upon.

National Park and AONB teams are now handling Lottery schemes, European funding projects and other joint partnership schemes with Emillion budgets. The Haskins Report has highlighted the importance of allocating funds and responsibility for land management to those with local knowledge and involvement. There is tremendous scope for more joined up working practice between the Protected Landscapes management teams and national agencies. Greater coordination of partnership efforts will also be encouraged between national and regional funding agencies. The target will be to promote best practice in partnership working in delivering rural development across the region.

These developments will be stimulated and encouraged by the South West Protected Landscapes Forum, which will serve as the

Case Study



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Tamar Woodmeets

The Tamar Valley AONB, is developing initiatives round the local resource of woodland and timber. Like the Quantocks and other Protected Landscapes in the South West, Tamar Valley has substantially more tree cover than the national or regional average, which contributes to its special character. Here two economic 'clusters' of activity are being promoted: tourism and forestry. The programme has three key sectors – promoting woodlands for wood, woodlands for fuel, and

woodlands for people. The South West woodlands and forests generate over £500million a year to the regional economy, although timber production itself accounts for only £17 million. The remainder is created through non-timber products and multi-purpose use of woodland for tourism, recreation, leisure, arts, education cultural and health activities.

Partners: Tamar Valley AONB Service, Silvanus



'hub' to encourage dialogue and co-ordination with regional partners.

Objective 9

Achieving Targets

Realistic targets should be set, linking national and regional strategies and resources with the aspirations of management plans for each special landscape:

In 2004, for the first time, management plans and action programmes exist for all the Protected Landscapes in the South West. However, there is still much to do in prioritising work programmes and securing the resources and means to deliver these plans and in relating them to the equivalent strategies and plans produced at national and regional level by government departments and agencies.

The achievement of targets requires realistic objectives, adequate resources, appropriate expertise, and effective monitoring. Each of these criteria need to be carefully considered in developing management and business plans, not only within the Protected Landscapes but also by government agencies and local authorities, and in the private and voluntary sectors.

A formal review process needs to be established, to bring together the Protected Landscape management plans and budgets,

and to match these against the aspirations of the many regional players, including not only established participants like the Countryside Agency and English Nature but Health Authorities, Education Authorities and others with key interests in countryside and landscape.

Objective 10

Agreed Programmes for Action

All relevant authorities and official bodies will agree on a joint programme of action to deliver the visions for individual landscapes:

This prospectus has sought to address each of these recommendations and the following table sets out a programme and timetable for achieving tangible outputs. A full list of potential partners will be drawn up and efforts made to agree specific contributions to the individual management plans of Protected Landscapes.

Members of the South West Protected Landscape Forum and regional partners will take a lead in ensuring that all parties provide the necessary resources and commitment towards this end.



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TABLE 3 PLAN OF ACTION FOR SOUTH WEST PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

Abbreviations: SWPLF = South West Protected Landscapes Forum, CA = Countryside Agency, EN = English Nature, EA = Environment Agency, EH = English Heritage, RA = Regional Assembly, Defra = Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, SWRDA = South West of England Regional Development Agency, GO-SW = Government Office for the South West, RDS = Rural Development Service, LAs = Local Authorities, NGO = Non Governmental Organisations

No	Task	Output	Participants	Timescale
1 Establishing the Status Quo				
1.1	Produce economic and social data base for all Protected Landscapes.	Data base for all Protected Landscapes	Defra, Countryside Agency, Regional Observatory, SWPLF, National Parks, AONBs	Within 2 Years
1.2	Agree and publish set of indicators on Protected Landscape condition and their contribution to rural development.	Report	As above	Within 5 Years
2 Maintaining Quality and Local Distinctiveness				
2.1	Monitor planning decisions and collate regional trend data	Report	AONBs, SWPLF	Annually and 5 yearly
2.2	Record distribution, and condition of key features	Maps of Protected Landscapes with key features recorded on GIS	DEFRA, CA, EN, EH, EA, LAs, National Parks, AONBs	2-5 years
2.3	Completing Landscape Character Assessments for all Protected Landscapes	Landscape Character Assessments	CA, National Parks, AONBs	5 years
3 Leading by Example				
3.1	Set up, manage and publicise examples of best practice in land management and disseminate learning and good practice	News items, publications	SWPLF, National Parks, AONBs	Ongoing
4 Fostering Learning and Education				
4.1	Promote Protected Landscapes to non traditional audiences	Increased number and diversity of visitors recorded	National Parks, AONBs, CA, LAs	Annually
4.2	Raise awareness of the value of Protected Landscapes	Co-ordinated regional programme	SWPLF, CA, National Parks, AONBs	Annually

No	Task	Output	Participants	Timescale
5 Enabling Community Action				
5.1	Develop and strengthen volunteer and community groups involvement in Protected Landscape management.	Increased number and capacity of organisations reported	National Parks, AONBs, LAs, Community Groups, NGOs	Annually
6 Stimulating the Rural Economy				
6.1	Support new enterprises and add value to existing businesses that are compatible with Protected Landscape purposes.	Report on business start ups	SWRDA, All	Annually
7 Supporting Landscape Managers				
7.1	Develop programmes in partnership with land managers to increase local income returns from Protected Landscape management	Number of Higher Tier Schemes supported	All	Annually
7.2	Joint projects, data sharing and Staff exchange between RDS and Protected Landscapes	Increase number of collaborative projects recorded	National Parks, AONBs, RDS	Annually
8 Joined up Working Practices				
8.1	Establish links between management plans and programmes/budgets of national and regional agencies	Business plan	SWPLF, RA, All	3 Year rolling programme
8.2	Produce a regional database of AONB issues and actions and draw out a regional action plan for landscape	Database report	SWPLF	Within 6 months
9 Achieving Targets				
9.1	Undertake regional review of targets and resources for Protected Landscapes	Refined action plan and budgets	CA, SWPLF, RA, RDA, GO-SW	Annually
10 Action Programme				
10.1	Monitor progress of this plan of action and prepare updated programme	3 Year programme	SWPLF, CA, RDS, RA, SWRDA, GO-SW, National Parks, AONBs	Annually

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SOUTH WEST PROTECTED LANDSCAPES FORUM



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