



THE AIMS OF THE EAST HAMPSHIRE AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The aims, working through the AONB Project staff and partners are:

Primary Aim

- to protect, conserve and enhance the natural beauty and amenity of the East Hampshire AONB, including its physical, ecological, and cultural landscape

Secondary Aims

- to promote the quiet, informal enjoyment of the area by the general public, but only so far as is consistent with the first aim
- to improve the liaison with farmers, landowners and other parties, to raise awareness of the AONB and to encourage land management which supports the two aims above
- to foster the social and economic well-being of communities within the East Hampshire AONB

OBJECTIVES

The JAC works through a small project team whose remit is broad:

Strategic Management

- Preparation, promotion and implementation of a management strategy, along with partners, that achieves the aims of AONB designation
- Involvement in guiding the future management arrangements for the South Downs

Planning

- Commenting on policies in developing new Structure and Local Plans
- Commenting on planning applications likely to have a significant impact on the AONB
- Providing evidence at planning inquiries in support of the AONB
- Encouraging Parish Councils to carry out Village Design Statements and Parish Appraisals

Practical countryside management

- Advising landowners on projects relating to habitat management and landscape improvement
- Making grants available for landscape and wildlife enhancement work in the AONB
- Advising on the availability of national grants such as the Woodland Grant Scheme, Countryside Stewardship Scheme, South Downs Environmentally Sensitive Area
- Supporting local community projects
- Giving practical assistance to landowners on conservation & enhancement projects through the South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service

Enjoyment and raising awareness

Implementing sustainable recreation and transport policies such as the promotion of recreational walking and cycle routes

- Facilitating access to the area
- Interpretation and education
- Providing interpretation material
- Providing display material, giving talks
- Developing information about the East Hampshire AONB on the South Downs website www.vic.org.uk

In October 1999 the Government announced its desire to see a National Park in the South Downs. It is the Countryside Agency's duty under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act to designate National Parks and AONBs. In April 2000 the Countryside Agency began the process of designation, which is likely to take three or four years and will involve as wide a consultation as possible including local residents, landowners, farmers, local authorities and visitors. The starting point for the boundary has been the East Hampshire AONB and the adjacent Sussex Downs AONB. It is expected that the designation order will be submitted to the Secretary of State in 2002 for government approval. It will include a map of the proposed boundary, details of how the park will operate and the issues it will have to address, in particular how strategic planning and development control will be dealt with. The East Hampshire AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) will be working closely with the Countryside Agency and others to ensure the most appropriate arrangements for the South Downs. Meanwhile, the Countryside Agency continues to fund the East Hampshire AONB Project and Sussex Downs Conservation Board.

THE FUTURE OF THE EAST HAMPSHIRE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

The area comprises:
 ● 4 National Nature Reserves (NNR)
 ● 1 Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 ● 7 Special Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 ● Over 300 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) covering >3000 ha
 ● 47 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)
 ● 856 Archaeological Sites and Monuments Registered
 ● 245 ha of Common Land
 Land cover within the AONB consists of:
 ● 12% woodland cover
 ● 17% farmland
 ● 17% Other

The South Downs Way National Trail follows the downward ridge of the AONB, and other walking routes in the AONB include the Hangers Way, Wayfarers Walk and the Staunton Way.

The East Hampshire AONB is a living, working landscape, and has been shaped by people for over 6000 years. Today it is home to around 32,500 people.

Although the underlying geology provides a degree of unity for the East Hampshire AONB, the area embraces a variety of contrasting landscapes, from the dramatic open landscapes and panoramic views on the chalk downs, to the steep wooded scarp slopes of hanger woodlands, the gentle winding plains of the river valley and the enclosed intimate landscape of the Weald. The area has long been celebrated by artists and writers alike; notably Myles Birket Foster, Edward Thomas and Gilbert White. The AONB is not just important for its scenery: there are many ecological and archaeological treasures hidden in its extensive ancient woodlands and unimproved pastures.

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HOW DOES DESIGNATION HELP?

Designation as an AONB confers national recognition of the area's outstanding quality. It helps to provide protection from unsuitable development through planning laws and at the local level gives the rural community and its planners to keep any development in scale and sympathy with the area. It also identifies a priority area for directing national resources towards its management.



THREATS TO THE AREA

Threats to the area may come in many forms

- DEVELOPMENT**
 - Poor landscaping
 - New housing in the countryside and edge of towns
 - Obtrusive buildings
 - Unsympathetic conversions of redundant buildings
- AGRICULTURAL CHANGE**
 - Intensification of land use
 - Reduction in the numbers of farm workers
 - Diversification of farm businesses into inappropriate or damaging activities
 - Loss of traditional farming methods especially mixed farming

- HABITAT LOSS**
 - Pressures of new development
 - Invasion of non-native species
 - Lack of management of wildlife habitats
 - Isolation of wildlife habitats
- VISITOR PRESSURE**
 - Increased pollution and litter
 - Wildlife disturbance
 - Damage to public rights of way
 - Potential road congestion and parking problems
 - Inappropriate recreation
- EYESORES**
 - Telecommunication aerials and pylons
 - Fly tipping and litter
 - Inappropriate signing
 - Inappropriate tree planting



PUBLICATIONS FROM THE EAST HAMPSHIRE AONB

These publications are available or can be purchased from the Project Office, Local Tourist Information Offices, Public Libraries or where stated.

- Downscape – Annual Review of the East Hampshire AONB Project (East Hampshire AONB Project)** **FREE**
- Environmental Improvement Grants – Booklet** **FREE**
Helping you to help your environment in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Grants towards Countryside Management (East Hampshire AONB Project)
- Discover the East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty by Bike** **FREE**
A 22-mile on-road cycle route - Leaflet (Hampshire County Council and the East Hampshire AONB Project)
- Rother Valley Walks – Booklet** **£ 2.50**
14 Walks within the Rother Valley (East Hampshire AONB Project, Environment Agency, Sussex Downs Conservation Board)
- The East Hampshire Landscape – An assessment of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (CCP 358) (Countryside Agency)** **£ 7.00**
John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL50 3RA Telephone: 01242 521381 Fax: 01242 584270



EAST HAMPSHIRE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Funding for the project is provided jointly by:



- Hampshire County Council
- East Hampshire District Council
- Winchester City Council

THE EAST HAMPSHIRE AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (JAC)

The East Hampshire AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) is a partnership comprising representatives from local and national government agencies along with statutory bodies, landowner, farming, conservation, amenity and recreational groups. The full JAC meets annually. Project work is steered by three sub-groups or panels, which meet more frequently, made up of relevant representatives from the JAC and co-opted members from other organisations. These panels cover the following subject areas: Agriculture, Planning, Recreation & Access. The panels report to an Executive Committee, which has a strategic and financial remit.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact:



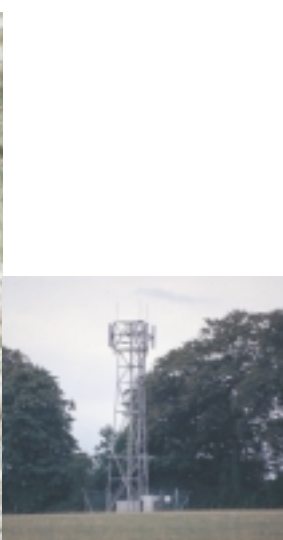
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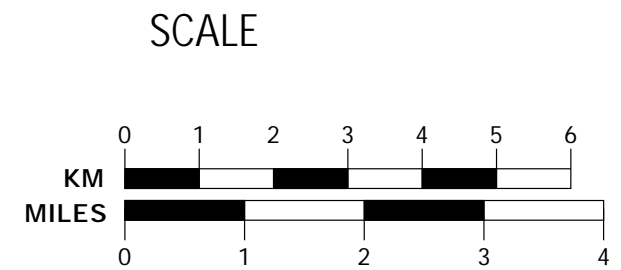
EAST HAMPSHIRE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY



The East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



The East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was designated in 1962. It covers an area of 386 square kilometres in a broad swathe from the West Sussex County boundary to Winchester. It is one of 41 nationally important areas which together with the National Parks provide some of the country's finest scenery. Created by the same legislation, the AONBs are no less beautiful but their primary aim is conservation rather than recreation.



The Chalk Downland

Within this chalk landscape there are three distinct character zones:

Open Chalk

Characterised by broad sweeping hills, the fields tend to be larger and predominantly arable, with fewer woods and hedges. Tree belts on the skyline are common. Much of this land would have been open grazing until the Enclosures Acts in 17th and 18th Century.

Examples:
Longwood Warren – Nr Winchester,
Chalton Down.



Enclosed Chalk and Clay Cap

Here, the chalk is overlain by clay with flints, which provide a better depth of soil for trees. A sense of enclosure is provided by the rolling fields of arable and pasture, neatly separated by hedgerows and small woods.

Examples: Bramdean, East Tisted.



Chalk Scarp

The scarp slopes at the western end of the South Downs are more convoluted. The steep slopes have largely escaped agricultural use and the thin soils are covered with herb rich chalk grassland and scrub. In a few places mixed woodland entirely clothes the slope. Panoramic views can be gained from hills along the top of the scarp ridge.

Examples: Beacon Hill, Butser Hill.



River Valley

The flat alluvial flood plain of the River Meon developed as an important transport corridor. The river itself was important to inhabitants throughout history, as a source of water and at various times through the ages for transport, power, industry - for wool washing and dyeing and agriculture - to flood water meadows and grow watercress.

Examples: Warnford, Droxford



The Weald

The north-east corner of the AONB has a distinct character lying on sandy clay soils and Gault clay. The area is typical mixed farmland with moderately sized fields divided by hedges and individual trees or oak, ash, hazel woodlands. As the land rises to the east, Sandgate and Hythe beds take over and the lowland farmland merges into heathland. Tributaries of the River Rother extend to most parts of the area although the river itself does not form a prominent feature in the landscape.

Examples: Greatham, Liss.



KEY

- Local Nature Reserves & Sites of Special Scientific Interest (access may be restricted)
- National Nature Reserves
- National Trust Land
- Site of Battle of Cheriton
- Iron Age hill-forts
- Queen Elizabeth Country Park
- View Point
- Houses of historic/architectural interest (not open all year)
- Gilbert White Museum
- Monument to poet Edward Thomas
- Home of famous Hambledon Cricket Club
- Butser Ancient Farm
- South Downs Way National Trail (Bridleway)
- Wayfarer's Walk (Footpath)
- Hangers Way (Footpath)
- Staunton Way (Footpath)
- Meon Valley cycle route (Bridleway)



The Hangers

The Hangers form a dramatic edge to the chalk downland and consist of the Chalk and Greensand Hangers, which form two steps down from the chalk plateau onto the floor of the Weald. They are nationally and internationally recognised for their wealth of flowers and insects.

Chalk Hangers

These are steep, dramatic slopes, in places greater than 15%. They are covered in predominantly beech, yew and ash woodlands, plus occasional meadows of unimproved chalk grassland.

Examples: Noar Hill, Ashford Hanger.

Greensand Hangers

These Hangers are less pronounced and more gradually sloped. The steeper slopes are clothed in oak, ash, hazel and Wych elm woodland. Leafy sunken lanes provide hidden ways through the area.

Example: Long Lythe – Selborne.

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