

Bowland Award 2016 - Nominees

Stour Valley Volunteers

In which AONB(s) is the activity being carried out? **Dedham Vale**

Overview

The Stour Valley Volunteers have worked across the Dedham Vale for over 25 years. The primary focus has always been improving the landscape, habitat and access facilities to the area but a secondary achievement has been to improve the health and wellbeing of participants and residents and visitors.

The team has evolved over the years and diversified into different areas of work including: work as footpath wardens, information rangers, a youth ranger scheme and running events.

Many of the volunteers take newer members or those with particular needs under their wing. The team have promoted the AONB communities and visitors' physical health and well-being by encouraging people to get out and enjoy the area or help enhance the outstanding landscape. In addition many support those that come to volunteer that have mental health problems or are recovering from a difficult personal moment in their lives.

The National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

11 High Street, Fairford
Gloucestershire, GL7 4AD
07969 888823

Jill.Smith@landscapesforlife.org.uk
Twitter @NAAONB

A company limited by guarantee no: 4729800
Charity Number: 1158871
Registered office as above

<p>What was done</p>	<p>The Stour Valley Volunteers have been working for over 25 years and contributed an estimated 7,500 work days during that time. If a member of staff works around 225 days a year (taking out weekends, annual leave and bank holidays) the work is equivalent to one staff member working for 33 years, some achievement.</p> <p>Some of the highlights the team have done over the years includes biodiversity projects for bats (converting pill boxes into hibernaculum); otters (building artificial holts or dens); barn owls (installing and monitoring over 100 boxes) and growing on and planting over 500 Native Black Poplars.</p> <p>In addition to biodiversity projects the team have undertaken significant landscape enhancement projects, including planting many miles of hedgerows, planting many thousands of trees to create new woodlands and copses, managed several acres of traditional grassland by cutting and raking these areas on an annual basis and undertaken river restoration projects to bring back many natural features to the River Stour and its tributaries.</p> <p>The team has been involved in improving access into the AONB for many years. In addition to acting as ‘footpath wardens’ undertaking minor repairs, reporting more serious issues and chatting to users. Practical volunteers undertake enhancements of the network including surfacing, replacing stiles with gates, and clearing overhanging vegetation. This practical work has undoubtedly made the participants physically fitter, and volunteers often remark on the fact that they feel better after a few sessions but much of the work supports both residents and visitors to get out and enjoy the AONB with all the physical and mental health benefits that that brings.</p> <p>It is, as previously mentioned, the culture of the group that make it so special. Like many conservation groups the Stour Valley Volunteers attract a number of people with mental health problems and those that are taking their first tentative steps back into a more normal way of life following some personal crisis. While the group does not go in for group therapy many of the volunteers maintain a watchful eye over each other and offer a sympathetic ear for if and when others need to speak. While no data is recorded, staff that have facilitated the work of the Stour Valley Volunteers, have noted the benefits to individuals that have come out with the group.</p> <p>As the group has matured it has diversified with new areas of work starting. Initially supporting the AONB team’s programme of guided walks and support at events new opportunities have arisen for people to work as Constable Country Rangers to provide information and advice to the 220,000 visitors a year to Flatford or develop a new Youth Rangers group to inspire a new generation on the importance of protected landscapes, wildlife and ‘getting out there’.</p> <p>Emma Black, who has run the group for many years, has been an outstanding leader and inspiration to the group and facilitated work to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB and Stour Valley and contributed so much to the health and well-being of volunteers, residents and visitors.</p>
<p>Outputs/Outcomes</p>	<p>The Stour Valley Volunteers have been running for over 25 years In that time they have:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contributed an estimated 7,500 work days, in 2015/16 over 500 days were contributed ○ Planted over 500 Native Black Poplars from cuttings grown on at own nursery ○ Built 10 artificial otter holts ○ Managed 5 areas (c3 acres) of grassland manually and annually for orchids, Sulphur clover and other wildflowers ○ Undertaken river enhancement projects in over 10 locations ○ Installed 10s of new gates to replace stiles and footpath clearance projects ○ Supported AONB staff at events such annual public forum, country shows and parish events ○ Worked on several school grounds projects
Learning	<p>The key to success has been the superb nature of the volunteers involved and the inspiration of AONB staff in providing support to the team.</p> <p>The culture engrained in the Stour Valley Volunteers is very much a ‘can do’ attitude and for ensuring that everyone has a useful part to play in getting the work done.</p> <p>Technical skills such as those required for planting or construction projects are willingly shared by those with the knowledge to those newer members of the group or those seeking to learn new skills.</p> <p>Some members of the Stour Valley Volunteers have become interested in the wider work of the AONB team and have become actively involved in the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Partnership. The Partnership invited the Stour Valley Volunteers to have a representative onto the group so that they can take a more active role in wider AONB objectives but also to report back to the Partnership the activities of the Stour Valley Volunteers.</p> <p>In addition the Stour Valley Volunteers hold an annual celebration event where a speaker on a topic of interest to the group presents information about their area of expertise to the group, recent speakers have included presentations on Rights of Way, Wildlife and River Restoration.</p>
Downloads, videos, images	See images attached
Quote from nominee	<p>The Stour Valley Volunteers are such a fantastic group of people who do such outstanding work in the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley. We couldn’t achieve anything without you.</p> <p>Emma Black, Countryside Officer, Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project</p>
Quote from participant or someone who has benefitted	<p>Quote from card sent to AONB Countryside Officer: <i>I just want to thank you for 16 years (with a break last year) of wonderful Wednesdays, I loved it.</i> Margaret</p> <p>Quote from beneficiary: <i>Thank you all on behalf of everyone in Nayland for the excellent fencing job you did today.</i> Andora</p>

Stepping into Nature

In which AONB(s) is the activity being carried out? Dorset AONB

<p>Overview</p>	<p>Stepping into Nature is helping to deliver health and wellbeing benefits for Dorset’s older people, including those living with dementia and their carers. The project uses Dorset’s outstanding natural and cultural landscape to create and provide dementia friendly activities and sensory rich visits to places of interest in Dorset.</p> <p>Julie Hammon, project leader, works with a range of environment, cultural and health & wellbeing partners to deliver a range of landscape based activities that encourage older people to be physically and mentally active. Using the landscape for inspiration, we provide safe, enjoyable and sociable opportunities that adopt a philosophy of positive risk taking.</p> <p>By supporting our key beneficiaries and service providers, we’ve increased awareness and understanding of the needs and requirements of people living with dementia and their carers, creating safer natural spaces to visit.</p>
<p>What was done</p>	<p>Stepping into Nature secured funding from Dorset County Council Special Projects Fund, Inspired By 2012 “Health and Wellbeing Legacy”, People’s Partnership for Older People (POPPS) and Dorset AONB for a pilot project.</p> <p>This pilot investigated current opportunities/barriers existing in Dorset for older people living in their own homes, including people living with dementia and their carers that encourage the interaction with or connection to the natural & cultural environment to experience its restorative effects. The project drew on good practice described in “Greening Dementia 2013” (Natural England) and similar projects across the country.</p> <p>One key finding was the need for support for people living with dementia, their carers and delivery organisations when engaging with the natural environment or taking part in an outdoor activity. This evidence and feedback shaped the project and its partnership; an evaluation report is available through our website.</p> <p>Barriers/enablers identified to accessing the natural environment included accessibility, seasonality and weather, information, cost, health, issues related to dementia, and perception of others. Taster sessions delivered as part of the pilot included village walks, poetry sessions, green woodwork and gardening. The feedback received highlighted how the language used to promote inclusive activities is important and can greatly influence the number of people taking part, for example, a walk titled “Dementia Friendly” had just one participant who said, “my friends thought it was only for people with dementia”.</p> <p>We found people living with dementia and their carers are a hard to reach group, the perception of dementia meant that people were less likely to take part in new groups or specific activities. Carers indicated that participating in nature with their charges alone can be harder and more stressful than staying at home/going to a café for fear of them</p>

	<p>walking off, or not knowing the route themselves presenting a huge barrier to exploring new or less familiar places in nature.</p> <p>Time and other commitments or just sheer lack of information and support meant that people found it difficult to take part in different activities. Carers indicated they felt isolated from others due to the lack of day-to-day support leading to physical and mental exhaustion, affecting their health & wellbeing, reducing confidence, autonomy, competence and relatedness.</p> <p>Work carried out through this pilot was used to develop a wider reaching longer-term project outline with the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a range of meaningful and social activities inspired by nature & landscape tailored for our target audience, delivered by a consortium of partners. • Create and promote ‘Dementia Friendly’ community-led green spaces, using the Alzheimer’s Society guidelines. • Develop and deliver a suite of training where needed, for people with dementia, carers, community groups, providers, and volunteers to increase knowledge and understanding of how to deliver activities that promote inclusive engagement with the natural environment. • Work with local transport providers, organisations and volunteers to explore sustainable options for our audience to access local green spaces • Run events to increase awareness and understanding of the dementia journey and what a dementia friendly countryside is and to promote opportunities that facilitate engagement in this countryside both locally and countywide. <p>Stepping into Nature is designed to achieve post-funding sustainability by stimulating and satisfying a latent demand from the target audience, and embedding this green health offer into everyone’s lives.</p>
<p>Outputs/Outcomes</p>	<p>Over that period, the following consultations took place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online surveys; 31 participants • 3 Focus groups run by Bournemouth University Dementia Institute (BUDI) targeting PLWD and carers; supported by the Alzheimer’s Society; 20 participants • 4 Walking surveys in conjunction with taster activities; 8 participants • 8 Weekly Green Wood Club sessions for Dorset Young Alzheimer’s Group; 15 participants • 1 gardening project delivered by Alzheimer’s Society Memory Café; 10 participants • Presentations to Bridport’s Older Persons Forum to 20 people; 6 questionnaires • Dorset Dementia Alliance Conference - 100 attending; 6 questionnaires • 1 Training session delivered by Dementia Adventure; 11 people <p>In total around 200 people were engaged in the project over the pilot, of these 97 people commented. This comprised of 15% people living with dementia, 19% caring for someone with dementia, 25% volunteers or knew someone with dementia and the remaining 41% comprised of older people and representatives of organisations.</p>

<p>Learning</p>	<p>Our project consultation shows there is a wide variety of interest for a number of different activities using the natural environment, and the need for a flexible approach with activity programmes. We found that a combination of a social interaction and active participation was where people saw the most positive differences for people with dementia and their carers. The language we use to engage our audience is important and can greatly influence the level of people getting involved. Not being able to access these green spaces because of limited transport or mobility highlighted the importance for locally accessible dementia friendly outdoor activities, bringing the natural space to people's doorsteps.</p> <p>Our taster sessions allowed participants to feel at ease, bond together and produced visible changes in mood and engagement from participants with dementia. Research shows people with dementia who engaged with the outdoors indicated they felt improvements to sleeping and eating patterns, increased independence and self - esteem and improvement of social interaction and belonging.</p> <p>Information and opportunities for engaging in the natural environment for our target audience are fragmented and limited, service providers have shown a great interest in developing learning around dementia and the natural environment but greater awareness and support are needed to deliver activities that are more inclusive in a more unified manner. There is a need for a connected partnership between environment and health organisations and this could be addressed by working with a consortium of partners that represent older people including people living with dementia, their carers, the natural environment and health & wellbeing representatives.</p>
<p>Downloads, videos, images</p>	<p>http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/our-work/health-and-wellbeing and see images attached</p>
<p>Quote from nominee</p>	<p>"The idea behind Stepping into Nature is to give people with dementia a chance to get out into nature and enjoy the sensory experience that being in the great outdoors brings. Providing the opportunity to get outdoors in a safe and supportive way, whilst also retain a sense of adventure and meet new friends."</p>
<p>Quote from participant or someone who has benefitted</p>	<p>One gentleman with dementia taking part in an activity commented, "I felt useful today and I don't often feel like that now".</p>

Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival

In which AONB(s) is the activity being carried out? Lincolnshire Wolds AONB

<p>Overview</p>	<p>This nomination is on behalf of the Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival Partnership. Currently hosted via Heritage Lincolnshire (HL) its success has been heavily dependent upon a wide partnership of organisations – including East Lindsey District Council, West Lindsey District Council, Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service, Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey Heart Support Group and the Lincolnshire Ramblers.</p> <p>The Steering Group has had an excellent track record in securing external funding to ensure the continuation of the Festival, including welcomed contributions from LEADER, the local Healthy Walking programmes and the AONB Partnership (Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee).</p> <p>The Group has developed its own robust Business Plan to help explore new avenues of funding, including reviewing charging for some activities and developing on-line giving and corporate sponsorship.</p>
<p>What was done</p>	<p>The annual Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival comprises a programme of events run over two weeks during May-June and has just completed its 12th consecutive year. Typically the Festival offers upwards of 100 walks each year and attracts between 4,000-5,000 participants. It begins with a Festival Launch event and concludes with a Finale with a suite of walks offered from a particular venue, and additional attractions provided during the day.</p> <p>The Festival is one of the largest and well attended events of its kind in the UK – delivering 16 days of inspirational walking activity across the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It offers a great way for everyone to discover and enjoy a beautiful landscape with its rich wildlife, culture and heritage. The LWWF Partnership has been keen to reach out to new audiences and questionnaire feedback is invited from all of the participants, walk leaders and event organisers to help regularly review the programme. In any given year 1000+ forms are returned so evaluation is time-consuming but very important in terms of assessing performance and generating fresh ideas.</p> <p>The Partnership is keen that EVERYONE should be able to take part so a number of the walks start and finish using public transport, others try and make full use of ‘access for all’ opportunities, including trialing an all-terrain hopper in 2016. Volunteers and landowners play a key role in both organising and promoting the Festival. A wide range of walks and activities are offered to cover for as many different ages and abilities as possible. A number of events are marketed as ‘talking walks’, to help promote and inspire interest in the wide range of special qualities of the area – for example the many deserted medieval villages found across the Wolds or the area’s strong links to the Poet Laureate Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Other walks may include activities such as stream dipping from one of the many Lincolnshire Chalk Streams; mini-beast and plant spotting along one of the Wolds many green lanes or peaceful churchyards; or geocaching trails for the more technically-minded.</p>

	<p>The Steering Group includes volunteer healthy-living representatives and this has been invaluable in tailoring specific events to help publicise and promote specific healthy life style choices – these have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The setting up of blood pressure testing and the provision of free fresh fruit at key events • Promoting the benefits of walking as a means of increasing daily exercise, including access to more strenuous walking through for example tasters for Nordic style walking • The mental and social benefits that come from a support network – leading to increase activity through regular walking either informally or via local Healthy Walking networks and programmes • Promoting the benefits of healthy eating – including access to locally produced good food via Tastes for Lincolnshire/Select Lincolnshire branding. This has included regular farmer-led walks to help promote the importance of sustainable farming in the context of the Lincolnshire Wolds.
<p>Outputs/Outcomes</p>	<p>The Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival was one of the first such initiatives to be developed and has grown into a valued part of the AONB's calendar - for businesses, residents and visitors alike. Since its inception in 2005, there have been over 37,000 participants.</p> <p>A large proportion of walks are delivered by volunteers, with additional input from local authorities and a large number of partner organisations such as the National Trust, the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and the Louth Navigation Trust. The Festival programme is largely devised from the proposals of walk leaders, with additional elements (such as ‘access for all’) developed by the Steering Group. Annual Spring Social and September Meetings ensure that volunteer leaders meet and exchange ideas and experiences, contributing directly to the year on year development of the Festival.</p> <p>Festival feedback is high, with typically around 25% of participants responding per walk. Invited to rate their walk experience, in the last three years around 85% stated that it was Very Enjoyable, with a further 12% stating that it was Fairly Enjoyable. Only 1% state that their experience was Not Very Enjoyable. About three quarters of respondents state that they have attended previous Festivals, demonstrating that the event attracts return visits; but in turn also indicating that our marketing continues to be effective in attracting 25% new attendees each year.</p> <p>The event successfully engages older people, with around 45% aged 61-70 and a further 15% aged 71 and over. Around 50% of participants are ‘leisure walkers’ comfortable walking 3-8 miles, with a further 40% who regard themselves as ‘experienced walkers.’ Only 10% are less able or confident to walk up to 3 miles, but anecdotal evidence shows that participants use the Festival to build their confidence and stretch themselves from short to longer walks. Other walkers are proud of their achievement in walking, typically, 130 – 150 miles during the Festival.</p> <p>Most of the walks are free, although a number of them invite donations for local charities and projects. The Festival annually generates around £42,000 secondary spend on local businesses, not including fuel or overnight stays.</p>

<p>Learning</p>	<p>The Festival benefits from a very stable infrastructure, with long-term support from Steering Group partners and similar investment from volunteer walk leaders. The commitment of volunteers is crucial to the success of the Festival, providing administrative and practical support for the event in addition to developing, planning, promoting and leading the walks.</p> <p>Without the volunteers' support, enthusiasm and fresh ideas we wouldn't have a Festival that can continue to go from strength to strength or one that is willing to take new risks – for example experimenting with offering cycle rides and continuously seeking new ways to engage younger people, families and people with special needs. The project aims to be as democratic as possible, and the annual September Meeting provides a forum for reviewing annual feedback, identifying challenges and discussing future plans. Walk leaders also have a direct line of communication with the Festival Co-ordinator, who sends out regular updates, advice and reminders.</p> <p>The opportunity for participants to discover and share in some of the hidden delights of the Lincolnshire Wolds, in the company of experienced and knowledgeable walk leaders, is enhanced by the social aspect of the Festival. Time and again people return to take part, meet old friends and discover new ones. A sense of camaraderie always pervades, particularly when it's raining!</p>
<p>Downloads, videos, images</p>	<p>See images attached</p>
<p>Quote from nominee</p>	<p><i>"The Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival attracts tremendous support and appreciation from participants and effectively contributes to the health agenda by promoting the benefits of walking, whilst also providing lifelong learning experiences in the realms of landscape and heritage".</i></p> <p>Nicki Jarvis, Festival Co-ordinator</p>
<p>Quote from participant or someone who has benefitted</p>	<p>LWCS Annual Review 2014-15: <i>"As always the Festival was brilliant and well organised – met nice people, I'll be back".</i></p>

'Written in the Land' – Sharing Historic Character of the North Wessex Downs

In which AONB(s) is the activity being carried out? North Wessex Downs

<p>Overview</p>	<p>The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of the most attractive and fascinating landscapes of England and Wales and the result of a partnership between people and the land in which they have lived and laboured for more than 5000 years. The approach known as Historic Landscape Characterisation encourages us to explore the history and origins of our local area with new eyes, prompting us to ask what stories they have to tell and why they matter for us and future generations.</p> <p>Following several years of collating and refining information relating to the historic landscape character, in 2015 we successfully bid for Heritage Lottery funding to help turn this rich resource into something accessible and useable by all those living and working in the AONB.</p> <p>The aims of this project are to better understand the historic landscape of the North Wessex Downs; to raise awareness of the unique cultural heritage of the area amongst local people and visitors; and to inform decisions about development, conservation, and land management.</p>
<p>What was done</p>	<p>The North Wessex Downs have a rich heritage and over the last 10 years work has progressed steadily to describe and document the historic character of the AONB. In 2015, a small grant was secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to develop this work further and to share it with a wider audience.</p> <p>Four workshops run in October 2015. Themes: farming and land management, development and planning, community and parish, and heritage enthusiasts. Results were collated and used to direct and inform the development of a web site and online mapping.</p> <p>In addition to an update on the work of the North Wessex Downs AONB Partnership there were presentations on how to consider historic character and a review of the historic landscape character work already completed.</p> <p>New web site www.HistoricNorthWessexDowns.org.uk designed, constructed, populated, tested, demonstrated, consulted on and launched. New leaflet Written in the Land: archaeology and history in the North Wessex Downs designed and printed. Project promoted through press release, digital marketing and web pages.</p> <p>Inaugural North Wessex Downs Heritage Forum organised and held in Lambourn in March 2016. Presentations covered the importance and relevance of historic landscape characterisation in everyone's back yard, how to use HLC to read different landscapes, and a demonstration of the content of, and how to use, the HistoricNorthWessexDowns web site.</p> <p>There was extensive discussion and exchange of opinions and insights, and then participants tried their hand at reading the historic character of Lambourn and its setting, using a prepared worksheet, before returning to report back and compare notes. They also contributed to an A to Z of the Heritage of the North Wessex Downs, being invited to identify a favourite site, landscape, characteristic or feature of the area.</p>

Outputs/Outcomes	<p>The project successfully delivered community four workshops, site visits, a Heritage Forum, HLC fieldwork training, a new interactive HLC web site with zoomable, OS-based, mapping and aerial photography, and an accompanying leaflet.</p> <p>The project involved 100 experts and local volunteers contributing time valued at over £15.9k (HLF calculation). The HLF grant of £5,300 also secured an additional £8,427 in cash contributions.</p>
Learning	<p>The project succeeded in bringing together a diverse range of people from across the North Wessex Downs to learn about and understand the fascination and importance of the historic landscape character of this nationally protected landscape, and to begin to read it themselves. Input came from a range of expertise including heritage professionals, local farmers and landowners, parish councils and community groups. The new web site has been designed specifically to address the needs and preferences expressed by participants in the HLC workshops</p>
Downloads, videos, images	<p>Press release can be found at: http://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/news/121/39/Archaeology-and-History-in-the-North-Wessex-Downs.html</p> <p>For all materials please see; http://www.historicnorthwessexdowns.org.uk/</p>
Quote from nominee	<p>Henry Oliver, North Wessex Downs AONB: <i>“The beauty of the landscapes and townscapes we see today are the result of a partnership between people and the land in which they have lived and laboured for more than 5000 years. Every part of the AONB has been shaped by history and the endless interaction of people and nature that makes the area so special.”</i></p>
Quote from participant or someone who has benefitted	<p>Workshop participant; <i>“clear, informative & enjoyable. I developed new awareness of features in familiar surroundings - will try to apply skills in new places”</i></p> <p>Project leader Oliver Cripps of the North Wessex Downs AONB; <i>“The new website contains fascinating information on the cultural heritage of this area and we hope it will help create a sense of identity in the community.”</i></p>

Robin Toogood

In which AONB(s) is the activity being carried out?	South Devon AONB / AONB Family
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<p>Overview</p>	<p>Robin had an outstanding 22-year career devoted to the South Devon AONB with sharing, learning and inspiring at the very core of his approach to AONB life.</p> <p>Robin was involved with the original South Devon AONB Joint Advisory Committee (established 1992) and appointed as AONB Officer in 1997. He led the establishment of the AONB Partnership in 2002 and as AONB Manager, the recruitment of the staff Unit in 2003. He continued in the role of AONB Manager until Chronic Fatigue, sadly led to his retirement at the end of May 2016.</p> <p>Robin's achievements over his 22 years amount to much more than simply long service. It was clear from the heartfelt messages sent on news of his ill-health retirement that Robin has had an enormous impact on colleagues across the AONB family and beyond.</p> <p>Robin's insight and involvement will be greatly missed by all that know him. The Bowland Award would be a fitting recognition of Robin's unwavering commitment and outstanding achievements for society's health and wellbeing and more, all derived from natural beauty.</p>
<p>What was done</p>	<p>Over the years Robin has become the 'face' that all in the South Devon local area, Devon's AONBs, the South West Protected Landscapes Forum and wider AONB community all recognise and respect for his understanding, but thorough professional approach to challenging issues affecting AONBs. These have ranged from the impact of Foot and Mouth on the economy and access to the coast, through to major coastal erosion impacts causing the coastal road closure within Slapton NNR. He was able to implement successful recovery programmes providing the vital link between local people and national organisations, as partners in the process and taking opportunities to reconnect communities with our coast, countryside, estuaries and marine natural beauty.</p> <p>Between 2003 – 2006 Robin was involved in the £2.1 million European Objective 2 and Lottery supported programme called 'Life into Landscape' with organisations on the AONB Partnership. It involved the whole community in environmental heritage activities and made a long lasting effect upon the recreation trails and green lanes in the area. The work was recognised in 2005, being Highly Commended in the 'Best Protected Area Initiative' category of the International Responsible Tourism Award, coming runner up to the Basecamp Masai Mara project in Kenya.</p> <p>Robin has been at the forefront of Protected Landscape policy and management in the South-West Region acting as the Regional Coordinator of the SW Protected Landscape Forum in 2004 and serving on the National Steering Group of the early AONB Staff Forum.</p>
<p>Outputs/Outcomes</p>	<p>Robin's enthusiasm and energy was evident when delivering actions from the first AONB Management plan (97-2002), coordinating considerable support from partner organisations and helping to secure</p>

	<p>£770K European Objective 5b funds for landscape and nature conservation projects. Much of this work tested new pioneering Green Tourism approaches that involved local businesses, visitors and residents in environment protection, access and management.</p> <p>The voices, recollections and personal anecdotes of a selection of AONB colleagues Robin has influenced over his years of service will articulate the outputs and outcomes Robin will be remembered for.</p>
Learning	<p>Robin's commitment and dedication has seen him been quietly and unerringly delivering consistently high standards of projects and initiatives across the spectrum of themes synonymous with South Devon's spectacularly varied landscape. Making connections between resident and visiting communities to the AONB and the health and wellbeing benefits derived from actively managing, interacting with and monitoring the area's natural beauty had a special place in Robin's AONB management ethos.</p> <p>Not one to shout loudly, Robin's work has gone on quietly and consistently over many years. He is in our view a true unsung hero of national, regional and local AONB work.</p>
Downloads, videos, images	<p>3 Photographs are attached to this nomination depicting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robin Toogood • Introducing Prince Charles to the South Devon AONB • Robin and other Devon AONB colleagues celebrating AONB work with Richard Benyon (the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Natural Environment and Fisheries) in April 2011.
Quote from nominee	<p>We have chosen to keep this nomination a surprise for Robin. His health and recent retirement mean that he will not be present at this year's NAAONB Conference.</p>
Quote from participant or someone who has benefitted	<p><i>"Having worked with Robin over the last decade in South Devon, I have seen the huge contribution Robin has made to the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB. With great kindness and care Robin very gently influences and guides people and partners, sharing his wisdom to maximum effect and with the greatest of impact and benefit to the natural beauty and wellbeing of the area's residents and visitors. Robin has been able to position conservation projects in the perfect place to maximise support from partners and stakeholders. This is undoubtedly the result of his dedicated efforts to the AONB for over 20 years. Robin has been a great inspiration to me personally and I have learnt a huge amount from working with Robin, and I am delighted to hear that these thoughts are shared by many partners and colleagues with whom he works."</i></p> <p>Andy Pratt, South Devon AONB Partnership Chairman and Senior Head of Centre, Slapton Ley FSC.</p> <p><i>"Robin: you have done a great job in testing circumstances and our AONB owes you a great debt for all that you achieved and fought for. There will be many who are not involved directly in the work of the AONB who have benefitted from your commitment and will do so in the future. Many thanks on their behalf."</i></p> <p>Jonathan Dimpleby, Presenter Commentator and writer.</p> <p><i>"For virtually all my working life [Robin has] been part of my wider</i></p>

grouping of colleagues; quietly and calmly doing great things in South Devon, his absence will be felt and his ability to identify the key points in any discussion will be missed"

Cathy Fitzroy, Natural England

"[Robin has] been a constant calm and inspirational influence"

Corinna Woodall, Tamar Valley AONB Manager

"[Robin's] time, dedication and tenacity has achieved real legacy"

Brian Irving, Solway Coast AONB Manager

"[Robin's] thoughtful contributions, quiet wisdom and sense of humour have been a pleasure and an inspiration"

Henry Oliver, North Wessex Downs AONB Director

"I have always valued [Robin's] insightful and carefully considered contributions to the various projects on which the Aune Conservation Association has collaborated with the AONB Unit over the past decade or so"

Stuart Watts, Chairman, Aune Conservation Association.