



Making strides across our landscape

2020/21 Annual Review



Chairman's welcome

Looking back at the review for last year, little did we know what we were to face during 2020/21. Our travails as a team may seem pretty minor given the sadness and calamity the world has gone through but, as an organisation, we have learnt a lot over the last 12 months and in particular, two points.



Brendan McCarthy.

Firstly, and in case we were ever in any doubt, we've seen just how much we all rely on being surrounded by beauty and nature, especially in times of stress. As I write, the Cotswolds landscape, while facing many challenges, is looking simply magnificent and its initial impact, as ever, is always positive, therapeutic and uplifting. We all delight in being able to get out to the far corners of our local countryside, so vital during months of lockdown, to see, smell and listen to our surroundings. How this has been reinforced over the last 12 months.

Sadly, for many who strive to visit the Cotswolds, plans have been thwarted for much of the last year. When rules have been relaxed, so we have seen huge pressures on some of our villages, and elsewhere, as people seek the right balance in their lives. All this reinforces the need for us to continue our work in protecting our landscape and nature while ensuring there is well planned promotion and access, and a greater understanding of the fragility of our environment – our core purposes in a nutshell.

Secondly, we have seen just how adaptable we can all be. Our people and Board have responded brilliantly to flexible, virtual working and, under the direction of Andy Parsons and his very capable team, we have raised alternative streams of income and cut costs, leading to an improved financial outcome for the year, despite the original budget being pretty much redundant from the outset. Our general fund position, which can be seen on page 18, has improved by £24,964 leaving us in a more financially secure position at year-end. A great outcome from which we can take a good deal of learning.

Through the year, our core work on planning issues, including some important national consultation responses, together with our input to the development of a new Environmental Land Management Scheme, have taken a good deal of employee time, along with the careful monitoring work of the A417 missing link proposals. Also, we've surpassed our targets on the number of hectares of enriched wildflower meadows created under our Glorious Grasslands Scheme and, at last, completed the long awaited Cotswold Gateways project, delivering some new access routes out into the Cotswolds landscape from a number of our busy towns and villages.

As ever, we offer many thanks to all our partners working with us on these important projects. I'm delighted to see how we are continuing to develop fundraising for specific projects under our Caring for the Cotswolds banner, including the establishment of the Kingfisher Trail, due to be a major draw in 2021. This, along with our many developing corporate partnerships, shows how the team is increasingly seen as an effective deliverer of high quality projects that meet the needs of many.

Quite naturally, the conservation work of our volunteer wardens has been sadly curtailed by the pandemic and our guided walks likewise. Our rural skills programme was also suspended for the year although this has provided us with the opportunity to review our offer, with the aim of broadening our audience, all of which bodes well for the future. ❖❖❖

Front cover image credit © Tea Smart, Squashed Robot Films

As I write, the Cotswolds landscape, while facing many challenges, is looking simply magnificent and its initial impact, as ever, is always positive, therapeutic and uplifting.



And looking to the future, we feel confident after this year like no other. There is much to play for, with soon to be announced proposals from Defra on developing future mechanisms for Farming in Protected Landscapes, in which we aim to play a full role. Equally, we see great opportunities to spread the word on important Cotswolds issues such as Ash Dieback, through our partnership with the BBC Radio Gloucestershire Ourboretum project, and as Government continues to develop its thinking on how our national landscapes across the country are best protected in the long term, we will continue to play a major role in helping this debate reach the best possible conclusions.

As always, my final word is for those who help us. Our long list of funders and partners enable a small employee team to punch considerably above its weight so, on behalf of the Board, I offer my sincere thanks. To the team and our volunteers, equal thanks for rising to the challenges of the past year so ably. We are a fitter, stronger organisation as a result with much to look forward to.

Image credit: © Tea Smart, Squashed Robot Films

Brendan McCarthy

Chairman

Cotswolds National Landscape

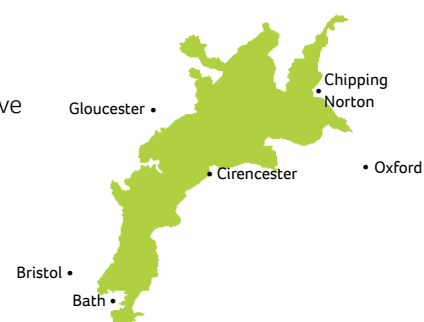
The Cotswolds National Landscape is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, in recognition of its rich, diverse and high quality landscape. Covering 2,038 sq km, it is the largest member of the family of the AONBs in England and Wales, and the third largest protected landscape in England after the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. The Cotswolds National Landscape is looked after by a small employee team, with support from 37 Board members and over 400 Voluntary Cotswold Wardens.

Our role

We are an independent statutory body, established by Parliament in 2004. We have two statutory purposes:

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

In fulfilling these roles we have a duty to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of people living in the AONB.



Glorious Cotswold Grasslands – “Flower Power” goes from strength to strength

The Glorious Cotswold Grasslands (GCG) team, Harvey Sherwood and Anna Field, have triumphed over the last year – in spite of the challenges laid down by the coronavirus pandemic. They continue to increase and expand their delivery of the project, and in the last year have smashed their original target of 100 hectares over three years by facilitating the restoration of over 90 hectares of meadow sites in the Cotswolds (and beyond) in 2020/21.



*Uplands Farm seed processing.
Image credit: Debs Roberts*

Botanical surveys

Increased field botanical surveys resulted in more than 50 sites being examined and assessed. Early summer drought conditions of 2020 necessitated additional seed donor sites being identified for survey, and possible seed donation, as previous selected sites became desiccated.

GCG volunteers

Covid guidelines prevented the winter volunteer work parties operating. As an alternative, flower seed broadcasting and pernicious weed control days were completed – which were more easy to arrange in a socially distanced way. The help from the volunteers who took part in this and the other activities possible within guidelines was invaluable, and for many individuals it offered a relief from their long term isolation and repeated lockdowns. Many thanks to our GCG volunteers. We could not have achieved what we did without their support for site surveys and assessments.

Seed harvesting, scarification and sowing

GCG services available for participant land managers also increased, with extra equipment enabling field scarification and seeding improvements.



*Anna surveying.
Image credit: Debs Roberts*

Wildflower seed yields were much-reduced in 2020 following erratic weather conditions. In order to meet seed volume requirements (1500kg) for the large number of recipient meadow/green-space sites already selected, 41 fields were seed harvested. An area of around 130 hectares was brush-harvested between June 22nd and August 7th. The low seed yields from flower meadows reflected the similar deflated Cotswold arable crop seed yields for 2020.

Mechanical spring-tine scarification and chain harrowing was completed on autumnal seeding sites, winter moss reduction from customer grassland, and spring seeding fields. ❖❖❖

Over
90 hectares
of meadow sites
restored in 2020/21

Increased field botanical surveys resulted in more than 50 sites being examined and assessed.

80% of the harvested seed was sown onto more than 90 restoration sites during the autumn weeks. A further 15 selected recipient sites were seeded during spring 2021. A small amount of seeds are safely stored for planned group and public events being offered in GCG packaging.

GCG project support

Donations continued from both generous private individuals and businesses. The diversity of commercial support has been illustrated by donations from three differing wildflower-linked products: Zoraida luxury bespoke jewellery, a large Cotswold farming estate trust, and Cotswolds Distillery.

A project in transition

As the initial three year funding period passed its halfway stage during 2020, a greater emphasis was placed on achieving a truly sustainable project. A consultancy produced feasibility and business planning ideas that are now being pursued, seeking out multiple future funding streams and the implementation of service charges for all our customers. Widespread support and positive customer response has demonstrated the viability of long term future working for GCG throughout the Cotswolds.

Our wildflower meadows and pollinator habitats are reassuringly in safe hands.



Clustered bellflower.
Image credit: Anna Field

Pyramidal orchids at a site working with the Glorious Cotswold Grasslands team.

Image credit: Anna Field

The Power of Collaborative Thinking

During the autumn and winter of 2020 we played a central role in taking a partnership approach to how we engaged with the A417 ‘Missing Link’ road scheme, ensuring it delivers more for the landscape. Regularly meeting with Highways England, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, National Trust, and Natural England we identified, and agreed on, some significant changes to the latest scheme design that should benefit the Cotswolds National Landscape, people’s enjoyment of the area, and biodiversity. The two key design changes that came out of these meetings are:

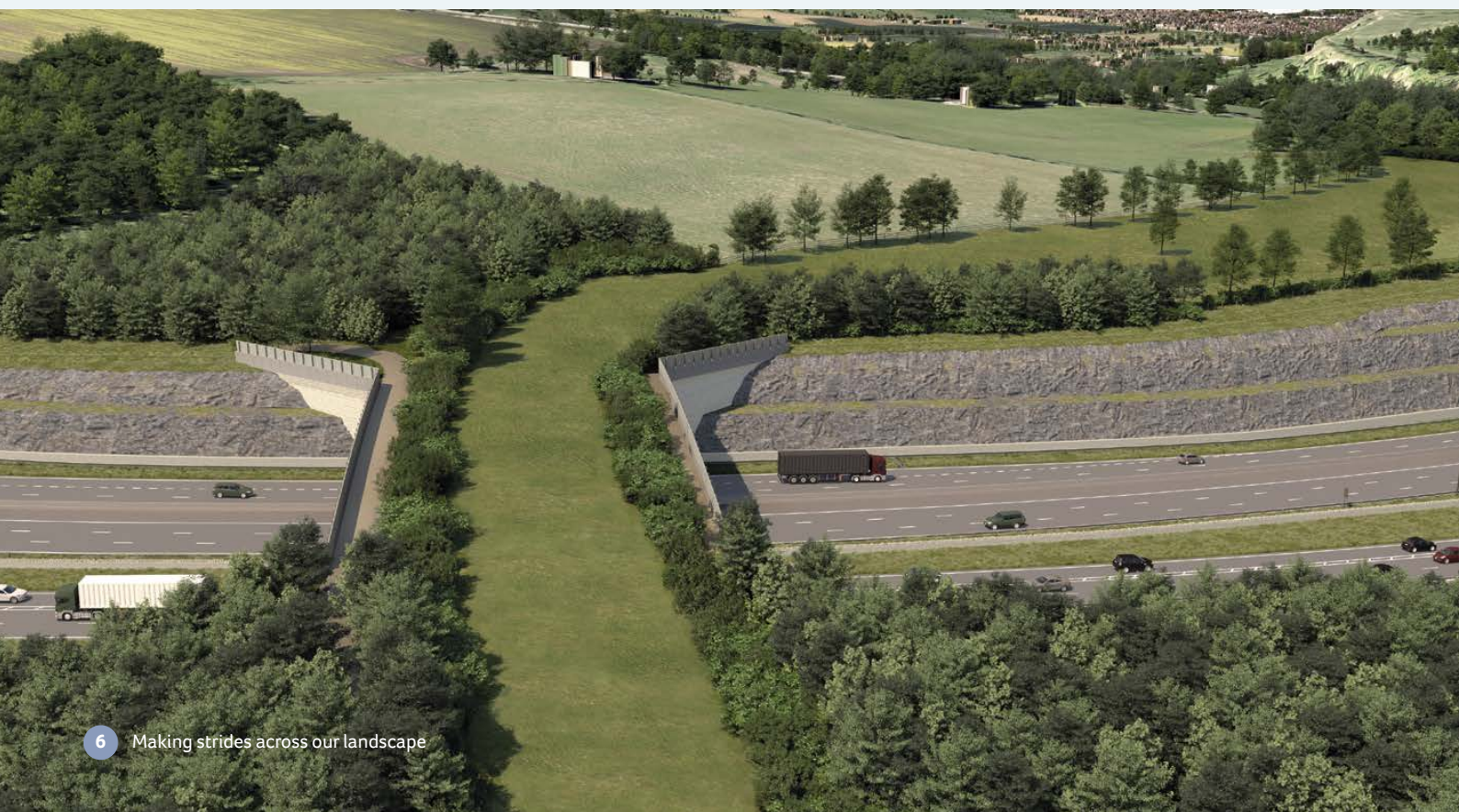
We are working with Highways England to identify ways for the scheme to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain – if successful, this would be a fantastic outcome.

- providing a ‘stepping stone’ calcareous grassland habitat to help address fragmentation of the Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake SSSI.
- providing a Gloucestershire Way crossing to incorporate a 25m width of calcareous grassland habitat to help address fragmentation of the SSSI, in addition to its required functions for species connectivity, landscape integration, and diversion of the popular Gloucestershire Way trail

We are also working with Highways England to identify innovative ways for the scheme to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain – this isn’t a statutory requirement of the road scheme but we all believe it would be a fantastic outcome, as it will go some way to demonstrating how the new road will meet its landscape-led ambition.

During 2021, we will continue to liaise with Highways England and the Planning Inspectorate as the road scheme enters the examination phase. We have a statutory duty to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape. We believe we can achieve this through positive partnerships, as well as detailed scrutiny.

A visualisation from Highways England to show how one of the new road crossings may look.



Ourboretum

Ourboretum, a project launched by BBC Radio Gloucestershire in partnership with Cotswolds National Landscape, aims to create a legacy of tree planting facilitated by the people and communities of Gloucestershire. Participants were encouraged to collect their own hazel nuts, beech mast, and acorns to grow saplings from seed which, when ready, will be planted across Gloucestershire.



Beech mast in the early stages of growth.

Chris Sandys, from BBC Radio Gloucestershire, with his home-grown saplings.

Green shoots have now started appearing in thousands of pots across Gloucestershire. Ourboretum is the brainchild of BBC Radio Gloucestershire Senior Producer, Chris Sandys, who himself planted 10 acorns and 10 hazelnuts, and now has five oak and six hazel saplings growing well. A 50% success rate is really positive.

As expected, Ourboretum participants have also reported stories of squirrels and wildlife pinching everything that was growing, as well as stories of nuts sadly rotting. Combined with some reports of no growth at all, this is confirmation if needed, that nature will often follow its own course.

Undeterred, the project now has around 4,169 nuts growing in pots, and we will start gearing up between now and winter 2021/22 to get ready to start our first tree planting season for the project. Mark Connelly, our Land Management Lead, is working on identifying land across the county where we can plant out, with the owner's permission, the saplings all the project participants are growing. The project has been supported by Ground Control, who provided pots, as well as compost and labels, to help people get started or continue planting. Many of the materials provided went to schools and community groups to help them take part.



Felix, one of the younger project participants, showing off the sapling he is growing.

Image courtesy of Rob Fountain

Cotswolds Champions

The Cotswolds Champions Programme is now into its second year and things are going well, with several supported projects underway and more in the pipeline.

The programme was devised to use £500k of Network Rail (NR) funding, secured by us to enhance the Cotswolds National Landscape in ways that would mitigate and compensate for the impacts of rail electrification works between Old Sodbury and Alderton. We chose to target this funding at a small selection of strategically significant projects that would showcase some of our key local partners – whilst also delivering the outcomes Network Rail agreed to fund.

Here's a summary of supported projects to date:



The **Rail Corridor Enhancement Project** focuses on the area directly affected by rail electrification works.

We're co-delivering this £200k scheme in partnership with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West, a registered charity representing the region's farmers and landowners in the delivery of wildlife conservation. The project aims to enhance the way trees and hedges screen and soften views of rail electrification works, as well as providing other benefits such as habitat for wildlife. In addition to this, we're working with local stakeholders to map natural capital and develop a broader programme of environmental enhancements in the area.



Bristol Avon Rivers Trust (BART) was allocated £48k for the **Headwaters of the Little Avon Project**.

This involves surveying watercourses in the Cotswolds National Landscape, and initiating a programme of works to conserve and enhance them, which we hope will grow to cover the entire Little Avon catchment. BART is a charity that delivers education, land and river management advice and practical river restoration work throughout the Bristol Avon catchment, which covers most of the central and southern Cotswolds.



Nature conservation charity Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT) is being supported with £20k towards their

Golden Valleys project, which they have developed in partnership with the Royal Entomological Society (RES). This landscape-scale project aims to enhance and connect existing wildlife-rich sites in the Chalford area, using GWT and RES owned sites as a springboard. ❖❖❖

£322k

of grant funding allocated to projects so far from the **Cotswolds Champions** programme



*One of the kingfisher sculptures from the Kingfisher Trail 2021 – a project supported by Cotswolds Champions.
Image credit: Lydia Booth*

Our existing small grants scheme for community groups and non-profits, **Caring for the Cotswolds**, was given a £29k boost to support even more great local projects – we really value this work.

Another internal project, the **Kingfisher Trail**, received £25k as a contribution towards start-up costs. As an exciting new public arts and engagement project – and a major fundraiser – the trail promises to benefit and enhance the Cotswolds in lots of ways.

We chose to target this funding at a small selection of strategically significant projects that would showcase some of our key local partners - whilst also delivering the outcomes Network Rail agreed to fund.

Local farmer and volunteers planting new hedge and trees to help screen rail electrification works near Acton Turville.

Responding to planning reform consultations

In August 2020, the Government undertook two consultations on its proposed planning reforms, both of which have significant implications for the Cotswolds National Landscape.

During 2020/21, we have provided comments on

130

development management applications, and eight local plan consultations

The first of these consultations was on 'changes to the current planning system'. The most significant proposal for the Cotswolds National Landscape was the proposed changes to the Government's 'standard method' for assessing local housing need. These changes would have potentially led to a two to three-fold increase in annual housing delivery across the Cotswolds National Landscape.

We were very concerned that an increase in housing delivery on this scale would fundamentally undermine the purpose of designation, which is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. Many of our local authorities, local MPs and other stakeholders had similar concerns. The level of opposition to the proposed changes to the 'standard method' was such that the Government ultimately decided not to take this proposal forward.

In its response to the consultation feedback, the Government made two very important points. Firstly, meeting housing need is never a reason to cause unacceptable harm to protected landscapes. Secondly, the 'standard method' does not present a target. So, for example, in local authority areas that overlap with protected landscapes, the number of homes planned for can potentially be less than the 'standard method' figure.

The second consultation was on the Government's planning white paper, 'Planning for the Future'. Planning for the Future proposes that all areas of land should be put into one of three categories: growth areas, renewal areas or protected areas.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), including the Cotswolds National Landscape, would be included in the protected areas category. However, ❖

Many of the Government's proposed planning reforms will come into force through a Planning Bill, which will be 'introduced' in autumn 2021.

Looking south-west towards Cheltenham from the Cotswold Way National Trail, on the Cotswold escarpment near Cleeve Hill.

Image credit: John Mills



we are very concerned that the proposed zoning could result in a significant increase in development in growth and renewal areas in the setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape. This has the potential to significantly harm the natural beauty of the National Landscape.

Many of the Government's proposed planning reforms will come into force through a Planning Bill, which will be 'introduced' in autumn 2021. Our Planning

& Landscape Lead, John Mills, has been invited to join a protected landscapes planning advisory group, which will advise Government on the potential implications of the planning reforms for protected landscapes.

We address the issue of housing in our new Housing Position Statement, which can be found on our website: www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/our-landscape/position-statements-2/.

Proposed zoning could result in a concerning increase in developments within the setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Cotswold Voluntary Wardens

In spite of a very challenging year for volunteers across the country, our voluntary wardens still managed to contribute an impressive number of hours of work all across the Cotswolds.

Even in a year with repeated lockdowns and many restrictions, the **voluntary wardens** still contributed an impressive

24,888

hours of their time to working across the Cotswolds National Landscape

The wardens continued to arrange small work parties (with numbers in line with pandemic guidelines); plan the guided walks for when restrictions lifted; promote the self-guided walks while the nation was locked down; continued their warden patrolling to help maintain footpaths (this was often done in combination with daily exercise within the coronavirus restrictions); worked on waymarking routes and general route maintenance; contributed to the implementation of the Cotswold Gateways project; and even helped to support the creation and installation of a large-scale wood carving, 'Drover and his Dog' at Langley Hill near Winchcombe. This final piece of work was funded in part through the Countryside Fund.



Voluntary wardens with the 'Drover and his Dog' sculpture.

2020 was an unusual year for all of us, and for some a very uncomfortable one, but our voluntary wardens never faltered. Their collective determination, resilience, and optimism continue to be an inspiration.

Cotswolds Farming Forum 2021

Our long-established annual live event was regrettably cancelled in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. In March 2021, with restrictions still in place, we decided to run it as a series of short, informative webinars instead. This was made possible with funding from Defra, released as part of the National Association of AONBs advocacy project for agri-environment schemes. Topics included ELM and Countryside Stewardship, Farming and Water, Woodland Creation and Management in the CNL, and Regenerative Agriculture.

The webinars proved popular, attended by well over 200 people with an interest in farming and land management in the Cotswolds. We also recorded the sessions and published them on our You Tube channel, where they continue to receive viewings. Many thanks to the numerous speakers who kindly gave up their time to share their expertise and experience with others. Many thanks also to all those who joined us for a webinar and helped make the Cotswolds Farming Forum 2021 a great success.

No doubt we'll run more online events in future, but we're also looking forward to the event going ahead as normal in 2022.



Image credit: © Tea Smart, Squashed Robot Films

Cotswold Gateways

Nine towns and villages across the Cotswolds National Landscape have welcomed new interpretation panels highlighting 37 walking and cycling routes which allow people to explore the countryside around each location. Led by the team at the Cotswolds National Landscape, the project, called Cotswold Gateways, has been developed from idea to implementation since 2017, and was funded by the Rural Payments Agency as part of their Rural Development Programme for England grants scheme.

The aims of the project is to highlight Cotswolds towns and villages that are overlooked due to the popularity of traditional and well-known honeypot locations, to attract visitors to lesser known corners of the Cotswolds all year round, and to encourage people to engage with local businesses in each location.

The new panels, created and implemented in partnership with local volunteers, communities, landowners, town and parish councils, local walking groups, Sustrans, and highways authorities, celebrate the local culture, businesses, heritage, and wildlife in each location. They invite people to explore local paths and get to know the towns and villages – and the treasures that make them each so special. The Cotswold Gateways panels are in Charlbury, Cirencester, Dursley,

Hawkesbury, Marshfield, Painswick, Tetbury, Winchcombe, and Wotton-under-Edge. Many locations are accessible by public transport, so that people are able to explore the routes in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly way. There are also cycling opportunities, with both on road and off road options. All walking routes are available to download as PDFs and GPX files online, with GPX files for cycle routes at www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/cotswold-gateways.

Many people have worked with the Cotswolds National Landscape team to bring this huge project to light. Those involved have contributed to all aspects of the project including the design of routes, securing permissions, installing kissing gates and route improvements, waymarking the routes, and installing the panels.



One of the many volunteers who helped to deliver this project.



One of the new interpretation boards located in Tetbury.

They invite people to explore local paths and get to know the towns and villages – and the treasures that make them each so special.

Caring for the Cotswolds

The Caring for the Cotswolds scheme is based around a visitor-giving model, where visitors voluntarily contribute to member businesses, who pass the funds along to be allocated as grants to projects that benefit the unique landscape and heritage of the Cotswolds.

In 2020/21, the **Caring for the Cotswolds** scheme awarded

£25,000

across 14 new projects

New steps being built to improve access at Beckford Nature Reserve.

In the north of the Cotswolds, a new project has been completed at Beckford Nature Reserve. A new set of new steps was installed to improve the safety and accessibility to the reserve, especially for the elderly, and people who find the terrain difficult. Another of the new projects, this time in the south of the Cotswolds, is being led by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. The project aims to eradicate Himalayan Balsam on the River By Brook from Castle Coombe to Box. Himalayan Balsam is an invasive species that easily outcompetes native plants and flowers, reducing important nectar sources for butterflies and bees. Furthermore, when Balsam dies off in the autumn, river banks are left exposed and vulnerable to erosion. This project is part of a long running programme by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to improve the river for nature and people.

Members of a newly formed Youth Panel were included in the project application review process, so that their views could be recognised. Youth Panel member Jessica Price commented, "Having the opportunity to escape our homes and look at something other than uniform buildings has been a lifeline during this pandemic, and it is why the Caring for the Cotswolds scheme is so important. By restoring and conserving areas of natural beauty, this positively affects both wildlife and people. The restoration of habitats allows wildlife to flourish, which in turn provides a landscape in which people can come to relax and escape."

James Webb, Partnerships and Fundraising Lead at Cotswolds National Landscape said, "The 14 new projects are really well spread across the four themes of the Caring for the Cotswolds scheme: conservation, heritage and landscape, improving access, and education and interpretation. It's especially pleasing to see so many local organisations developing projects that encourage and enable people to access and enjoy the countryside. Through the pandemic, we've seen that people value being out in the fresh air more than ever, and these new projects are a real celebration of that idea.

We'd like to give a big thank you to the participating businesses and their customers whose generous contributions help to keep the Cotswolds a special place to live, work, and visit."

The restoration of habitats allows wildlife to flourish, which in turn provides a landscape in which people can come to relax and escape.





Taking a break from clearing invasive Himalayan Balsam from the River By Brook.

Image credit: © Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

The 14 most recent projects/recipients funded by Caring for the Cotswolds are:

Conservation of habitats and species

- Box Parish Council – £2,350
- Bradford on Avon Town Council – £2,480
- National Trust – £1,750
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust – £1,326

Heritage and landscape

- Leafield Parish Council – £2,313
- Radway Parish Council – £1,384
- The Bath Stone Museum Quarry Trust – £1,900

Improving access

- Beckford Nature Reserve – £1,676
- Chalford Parish Council – £1,315
- Tetbury Rail Lands Regeneration Trust – £2,500
- Tysoe Parish Council – £1,262

Education and interpretation

- Chipping Campden School – £2,500
- Sladebank Woods CIC – £1,375
- Yatton Keynell Parish Council – £801



Work has begun on many of the new projects supported by Caring for the Cotswolds, including the new education shelter at Sladebank Woods CIC

Image credit © Martin Jakes

The 14 new projects are really well spread across the four themes of the Caring for the Cotswolds scheme: conservation, heritage and landscape, improving access, and education and interpretation.

From Nature Conservation to Nature Recovery

Approaches to thinking about nature has always changed and developed, and this year, ten years on from the publication of the Lawton Review “Making Space for Nature”, the pace of this change has increased noticeably.



Working on nature recovery will help species like fly orchid (pictured), which have been in decline, to thrive in the future.

Image credit: Simon Smith

We are talking less about protecting and conserving nature and more – a lot more – about nature recovery. Discussions with colleagues across all sectors reflect a greater ambition for nature, a vision of wildlife not just surviving but flourishing, and spreading across landscapes. This ambition is matched by an increased confidence about agricultural and planning policies, and our ability to restore habitats.

There are big changes coming that have the potential to do a lot to deliver nature recovery including: Environmental Land Management, Biodiversity Net Gain from planning applications, and Payment for Ecosystem Services – all guided by statutory nature recovery strategies. There will be six of these strategies overlapping with the Cotswolds

National Landscape – so how can we ensure that all these new initiatives achieve the best results for the Cotswolds?

A working group drawn from members of the Cotswolds Nature Recovery Forum has been working hard on producing a Nature Recovery Plan for the Cotswolds. It is a “deep dive” into the habitats and species of the Cotswolds, how they have fared, and what measures will best achieve nature recovery across the landscapes particular to this area. We will be consulting on it in late summer, with a view to the Cotswolds National Landscape Board adopting it as guidance in the autumn. This is in time to use it to help inform all these coming initiatives, which is when the real work will begin. An exciting time for our sector.



An area of restored wildflower meadow. Healthy grasslands and meadows are fantastic habitats for insects and other wildlife.

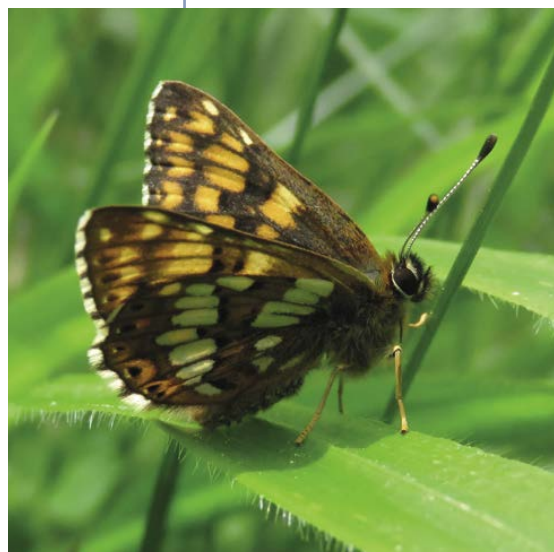
Image credit: Anna Field

Big Chalk – A Big Idea for Nature Recovery

The Big Chalk project aims to realise the best opportunity to help wildlife recover and adapt to climate change offered by the English landscape.

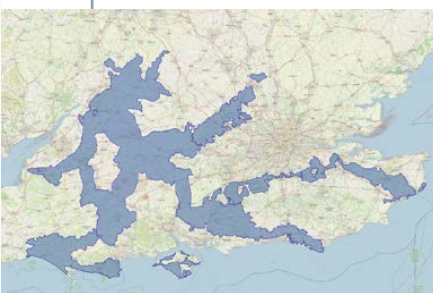
It is focused on the calcareous (chalk and limestone) landscapes running northwards from the south coast for 107 miles to the Midlands. Due to their history and underlying geology, these landscapes have the most species-rich habitats in the UK. This combines with their north-south reach to allow the most species to move northwards to a new “climate space” in response to climate change. Provided, of course, that a robust and connected nature recovery network is in place.

As well as the Cotswolds National Landscape, eight other AONBs and a National Park have joined to form the Big Chalk Partnership. This group includes every calcareous National Landscape across southern England. We have already agreed a common vision, identified bridging areas to link our landscapes, started sharing and collaborating on delivery, and developed project proposals to take the idea forward.



Duke of Burgundy – a priority species with a distribution strongly matching the Big Chalk area.

Image credit: Simon Smith



Most importantly, we are demonstrating that just as we are asking farmers and land managers to think about how wildlife moves and links up across their boundaries, as national landscapes we are doing exactly the same thing.

The highlighted blue area shows how working collaboratively between and across different national landscape boundaries will create a vast network of linked habitats for wildlife.

A new name and a new look

Following the publication of the Landscapes Review in 2019, and its recommendation that Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty should lose what has become a ‘cumbersome’ name, and adopt something easier-to-grasp, the Cotswolds embraced the opportunity.

In September 2020, we renamed to Cotswolds National Landscape and adopted a new logo and accompanying brand guidelines. The new logo retains the Cotswold Lion sheep, as a nod to our farming, landscape, and cultural heritage, but presents it in a confident new way. We are the first of the AONBs in England and Wales to respond to the name change suggestion from the Landscapes Review, and as a result, have attracted the attention of several of the

AONB family, as well as BBC Countryfile. The renaming and new logo have been popular with key stakeholders and both received positive feedback. As related projects, we also revamped the website, working hard to bring the look and feel in line with the new brand, and improving the navigation; and we have drafted a new vision for the organisation which sets out our future approach to working across the Cotswolds National Landscape.



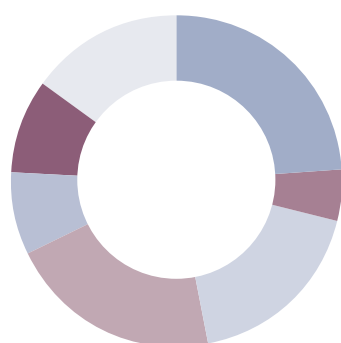
Financial Statement

Unaudited Summary Financial Statement

Income and Expenditure Account

For the year ending 31 March 2021

	2019/20 £	2020/21 £
Expenditure	989,479	940,827
Project Delivery	862,546	804,340
Corporate Management and Administration	126,933	136,487
Income	(1,459,727)	(911,705)
DEFRA Grant	(455,646)	(462,025)
Natural England	(63,929)	(68,929)
Local Authorities & Parish Councils	(130,574)	(130,574)
Rural Payments Agency	(95,040)	(21,197)
Network Rail	(500,103)	0
Other	(214,435)	(228,980)
Deficit (Surplus)	(470,248)	29,122
Balance Sheet		
<i>As at 31st March 2021</i>		
Net Assets:		
Fixed Assets & Investments	450,000	0
Current Assets	354,701	745,332
Current Liabilities	(69,197)	(38,949)
Net Current Assets	285,504	706,383
Total Net Assets	735,504	706,383
Financed by:		
Restricted Funds	664,536	624,586
Earmarked Reserves	24,135	10,000
General Fund	46,833	71,797
Total Reserves	735,504	706,383



Gross Expenditure 2020/21

Conservation of Natural Environment	24%
Conservation of Cultural Heritage	5%
Recreation Management & Transport	18%
Promoting Understanding	21%
Cotswold Voluntary Wardens	8%
Forward Planning	9%
Corporate Management	15%







Cotswolds Conservation Board

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The Cotswolds National Landscape is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), managed and looked after by the Cotswolds Conservation Board.

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