

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Summary: To (1) provide a high level summary of activity since the last Board meeting in March 2021 and (2) outline the key decisions/ discussions required from this meeting.

Recommendation: That the Board notes the report

Report by: Andy Parsons - Chief Executive

PRIORITY ACTIVITY SINCE THE LAST MEETING (not recorded in other papers)

1. Team

- Nicole Daw joined the team on 1 June, as our Trails and Access Officer. Nicole will be supporting Becky and leading on the access project within the wider Bathscape programme.
- Scott Brown took on the new role of Farming Engagement Lead on 7 June, as part of the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme. Three additional roles are being recruited externally.
- John Mills has joined the Planning Advisory Group, a national group made up of representatives from Defra, Natural England, National Parks and AONBs. Their remit includes advising on the planning related proposals from the Landscapes Review and reviewing how national planning policies will impact national landscapes in England.
- The Kingfisher Trail launched at the end of May. Media attention and public engagement has been excellent. Visit Gloucestershire is the trail's headline sponsor and the trail app is now live as well.
- The Rural Skills programme has restarted with participation numbers and feedback looking positive. Courses are now bookable via our main website.
- The Voluntary Wardens are now restarting guided walks, the first time since the start of the pandemic began.
- The team will have a phased return to some office-based working over the next couple of months.

2. Engagements (Chief Executive)

- 30 Mar, 12 Apr and 27 Apr – attended Highways England's 'Designated Funds' meetings.
- 31 Mar and 12 May – with Graham Hopkins, John Mills and Mark Connelly, attended Highways England's 'Statement of Common Ground' meetings.
- 16 Apr – the 'Vision' group met to review the consultation feedback and to draft the new vision.
- 20 Apr – with Cate Le Grice-Mack, met with the Rare Breeds Survival Trust to discuss opportunities to work together and promote the Cotswolds Lion.
- 28 Apr and 30 Apr – attended two Defra meetings for all Lead Officers to review (1) how the government intend to respond to the Glover Review and (2) Farming in Protected Landscapes.
- 4 May – with Becky Jones, attended an A417 meeting to discuss the impacts (both during construction and after) on the Cotswold Way National Trail.

- 5 May – with Graham Hopkins, attended Highways England’s ‘Strategic Stakeholder Panel’ meeting.
- 10 May – attended a meeting with Highways England to review the timelines and detail of the Development Consent Order for the A417 road scheme.
- 12 May – with John Mills, Mark Connelly and Graham Hopkins, attended a Statement of Common Ground meeting with Highways England.
- 13 May – joined the new members of the Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Working Group for a walk around Northleach, followed by a short meeting.
- 17 May – with Rebecca Charley, met John Swanton for a long overdue face-to-face introduction.
- 20 May – met Deborah Lawrence of Highways England to discuss the potential of Biodiversity Net Gain designated funds.
- 21 May – met the Chairman at the Old Prison to discuss operational matters.
- 27 May – attended the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership Board meeting.

OVERVIEW OF THIS BOARD MEETING – 22 JUNE

3. The key items of focus at this meeting are:
- Item 6 – the review, and if in agreement adopt, the new Vision.
 - Item 8 – to review, and if in agreement adopt, the National Association of AONBs ‘Art in the Landscape’ strategy.
 - Item 10 – to review and discuss the results of the recent Skills Audit questionnaire completed by Board Members.
 - Item 12 – to provide a verbal update on the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, including recruitment, assessment panel and grant funding criteria.

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- None

JUNE 2021