

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Summary: To report on progress following the adoption of the 2023 – 2025 Management Plan and early work on the production of the 2025 – 20230 Management Plan.

Recommendations: That the report is noted.

Report by: Simon Smith – Nature Recovery Lead

PROGRESS TO DATE

1. Natural England wrote on the 16th March confirming that they have no further comments to make on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Both the SEA and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) reports are now complete with no further revisions to the Management Plan being required.
2. Capacity issues within Natural England with respect to engaging with the SEA & HRA processes in accordance with the statutory scheduled have been raised with the National association of AONBs (NAAONB) and Natural England. A particular concern is that if these processes are still in place in 2025, they will represent a spike in workload when the majority of plans will be revised at the same time.
3. The content of the Management Plan webpage has been rewritten and the new Management Plan along with the SEA & HRA reports added as downloads. This was completed on 23rd March. On the same date Board and team members were informed that the 2023 – 2025 Management Plan was available on our website and that they should use that version.
4. The consultant engaged by Natural England to develop the new management plan guidance has expressed interest in including this plan as a case study. She commented that the focus on climate and nature was really strong and may highlight it under that topic in the guidance.
5. A design brief covering both the full core document and an exciting public facing summary has been developed and sent to the designer. Questions of clarification have been addressed and a quotation is expected by May 12th.
6. The text of the letters seeking endorsement from the local authorities has been agreed and they are scheduled to be sent out by Andy Parsons during the week commencing 22nd May. They will be addressed to local authority leaders with the relevant Chief Executives, local authority Board Members & the lead local authority contacts copied in.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2025 - 2030 MANAGEMENT PLAN

7. The primary focus of 2023 – 2024 is to develop, analyse and present the evidence base with a State of the Cotswolds report being published by the end of the year. One new aspect of this is that the Environment Agency have assisted us by producing a costed Natural Capital Evaluation of the Cotswolds National Landscape. This will shortly be made available on our website.
8. A priority for this year is to collaborate with the engagement work around the development of our pathway to net zero. This outreach work and workshops are an essential element of developing new evidence for the Management Plan.
9. Work continues with supporting Defra on the development of targets for protected landscapes. Along with the national outcomes monitoring framework for protected landscapes and the management plan guidance these should be rolled out in early summer.
10. As the timescales of all the above become clearer it will be possible to develop a detailed production schedule for the 2025 – 2030 plan over the summer.

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- None

May 2023