

Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan

2018 – 2023

Text Only Version

Produced on behalf of
Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey District Council,
West Lindsey District Council, North East Lincolnshire Council
and partners

by

The Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service and
Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee (AONB Partnership)

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Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan which sets out the proposed updated Strategy and Action Plan for the period 2018-2023. The Lincolnshire Wolds was designated as an AONB in 1973, recognising it as one of the country's finest landscapes, a designation on a par with our National Parks.

The Lincolnshire Wolds is a hidden jewel of the English countryside and one of only two nationally protected landscapes in the East Midlands region, the other being the Peak District National Park. During the 45 years since its designation as an AONB, the continued modernisation of farming, demands of modern living and development of new technologies have imposed continued pressures on the landscape. However these are both threats and opportunities. Our overarching goal is to ensure that the Wolds retains its unique landscape and undeniable special character, whilst maintaining and supporting its communities.

We are keen to thank the many organisations, local groups, farmers, landowners and individuals that have been involved in the development of this document. A public consultation questionnaire took place during the summer of 2016 with extensive coverage in the local press and social media. We received responses from a wide range of interested individuals, organisations, local businesses and parish councils. A detailed peer review was subsequently undertaken to update the Strategy (aims, objectives and policies) and make recommendations for the Action Plan (which proposes a range of specific actions for the five year period from April 2018). A formal six week consultation of the Revised Management Plan took place during the winter of 2017-18 with further coverage in the local media. Detailed responses and constructive suggestions were received from a wide range of parties including local landowners, community groups, parish councils, and representatives from many organisations including our local authorities.

The published Plan seeks to continue to build on our original shared vision for the future of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB with a continuing emphasis on balancing environmental, social and economic interests. Change is an intrinsic characteristic of the Wolds, but the type, scale and pace of change does need to be carefully managed. The challenge has never been greater, with pressures from the global economy, food production, energy use and climate change becoming increasingly evident. On account of Brexit, there is clearly considerable uncertainty for the UK's rural economy and more specifically the food, farming and environmental sectors. This Plan will remain flexible to respond to these ongoing challenges.

The Plan is not just a document for use by the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service (LWCS), or the Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), but rather a Plan for everyone. It is a place-based Plan derived through consensus and built on partnerships - local and national - and this is vital if we are to continue to move towards our shared vision for the AONB.

We will endeavour to ensure that the new Plan provides an ongoing catalyst for protecting and enhancing our unique asset – the Lincolnshire Wolds. The Partnership looks forward to working with you to this end.

Stuart Parker
Chairman,
Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee
(AONB Partnership; working collaboratively with the National Association for AONBs).

Ministerial Foreword or National Association for AONBs Foreword for AONB Management Plans 2018

Awaiting news from the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) in respect of securing an introduction/overview from Lord Gardiner, Parliamentary Undersecretary for the Environment with responsibility for protected landscapes. This would be a collective statement for all of England's AONBs.

Currently awaiting news from CEO, NAAONB

How to read and use the Management Plan

Section 1 (pages 9 - 12) sets the scene for the Plan, providing an overview of the statutory background to AONB designation and summary of the legal requirements to produce and review Management Plans through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) and more recent relevant legislation.

Section 2 (pages 13 - 34) describes the Lincolnshire Wolds and highlights the reasons for its designation as an AONB. Tables 1 - 2 and Appendix 3 complement this section, identifying the special qualities of the area, and the resulting threats/pressures and opportunities. The LWCS has completed a Draft State of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Report for 2017 (see Appendix 4) to establish a new baseline across a wide range of environmental, social and economic parameters. The report is not exhaustive, but commonly focuses on the more robust and readily available sources of data. It seeks to provide context, collate evidence and summarise findings across a number of proposed State of the AONB indicators.

Section 3 (pages 35 – 37) sets out the vision, aims and guiding influences for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and identifies five overarching themes: Protecting the Wolds; Living and Working in the Wolds; Discovering the Wolds; Developing the Wolds and Partnerships in the Wolds. These themes provide the overarching structure for the Plan.

Sections 4 – 8 (pages 38 - 79) provide the Strategy for the future management of the AONB detailing a series of objectives, policies and management statements across the five themes: Protecting the Wolds; Living and Working in the Wolds; Discovering the Wolds; Developing the Wolds; and Partnerships in the Wolds. These themes have been utilised to help group individual topics. Each topic is tackled succinctly with an introduction and overview of the current management issues. Each of these sections and individual topics are not mutually exclusive and in many cases there is both overlap and interdependence between them. This reflects the complex nature of AONB management in respect of the need to balance environmental, social and economic factors – the major drivers of landscape change in the AONB.

The objectives set out the overarching goals of the Plan, with policies providing clear specific and measurable areas of management for delivering the Strategy. Management statements have been endorsed for both the Wolds' landscape and partnerships as these are seen as integral to the overall delivery of the vision.

Section 9 (pages 80 - 110) contains the AONB Action Plan (Table 3) identifying and suggesting what needs to be done, by whom and when, to help implement the overarching objectives and policies. It is clearly an ambitious and challenging programme, even more so in the current financial climate and the many uncertainties emanating from Brexit.

The Plan's successful implementation will depend on everyone's continued hard work. Monitoring progress on the Action Plan and the condition of the AONB is included in Section 9, with Table 4 setting out a range of monitoring indicators.

Appendices and maps (pages 111 - 165) are included at the end of the document and provide a wide range of supporting information including additional baseline data, an index of key related plans and strategies, summaries of the questionnaire survey, peer review and public consultation, and a bibliography including useful website addresses. There is also a detailed glossary of technical terms and acronyms to aid the reader.

How was the Plan produced?

This revised statutory Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan (2018-23) has been produced by the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service (LWCS), in partnership and close consultation with the relevant local authorities, Natural England, other members of the Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) and many other organisations and interest groups.

The JAC, on behalf of the relevant local authorities, advised the LWCS of the need to conduct a light review to minimise public cost and avoid undermining the extensive work undertaken to help inform the previous 2013-18 Management Plan and its twenty-five year vision for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. This approach concurs with the recommendation in the recently published AONB Management Plans - Support for their revision in England (Steve Preston Associates with the NAAONB, June 2017) that recommends that the current round of Plan Reviews should be concentrating on both continuity and consistency of management objectives.

Key elements in the production of this Plan have included:

- An initial public questionnaire survey undertaken during the summer of 2016 (Appendix 5).
- A Management Plan Review Workshop for the Joint Advisory Committee (AONB Partnership) facilitated in October 2016.
- A subsequent detailed Peer Review from key partners and organisations with an active interest in the AONB (Appendix 6).
- Attendance from the LWCS staff and display at a range of local shows and events during the summer of 2017 - inviting informal discussions and comments on the current issues facing the area.
- Ongoing evidence gathering to aid compilation of the Lincolnshire Wolds State of the AONB Report - 2017 (Appendix 4).
- Production and circulation of the Draft Management Plan and formal six week public consultation (Dec 2017 – Jan 2018).
- An endorsement of the pre-publication of the Plan from the Lincolnshire Wolds JAC and key statutory consultees including Natural England and Historic England.
- Local authority adoption and publication of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan (2018-23) setting out the Strategy and Action Plan for the five year period from April 2018.

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1. Setting the Scene

1.1 What is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

The Lincolnshire Wolds is a nationally important and cherished landscape most of which was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1973 on account of its high scenic beauty. AONBs, together with National Parks, make up the finest landscapes in England and Wales. The AONBs are a national asset containing a wide variety of attractive landscapes including wolds, downlands, woodlands, moorlands and heaths, rivers and streams, estuaries and marshes, and coast (Map 1). Like National Parks, our AONBs are very much living and working landscapes that have been, and continue to be, shaped by nature and human activity.

1.2 Why have AONBs?

International context:

AONBs are one of a group of globally protected landscapes. They fall within a worldwide category of Protected Landscapes, established by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) where they are classed as 'Category V – Protected Landscapes'.

The European Landscape Convention, the ELC (2000), has been ratified by the United Kingdom and came into effect in March 2007. It sets out a comprehensive strategic agreement for the consideration of landscape matters within all relevant decision making across the European Community. The UK government's position on the Landscape Convention in the light of Brexit is currently unclear, although likely to be retained as saved legislation.

National context:

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (NPAC Act) established powers to create AONBs, with the overriding objective of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty. 'Natural beauty' is not just the visual element of the landscape, but includes landform and geology, plants and animals, landscape features and the rich history of human settlement over the centuries (Countryside Agency – now Natural England, CA24, 2001). Whilst the original reasons for protection still hold true today, with the landscape quality of overriding importance, there has been increasing recognition of the multiple benefits that these dynamic areas bring. Our national AONB resource provides vibrant places that help to underpin the economy and the health and wellbeing of UK society, offering a wealth of opportunities for everyone to enjoy and also to help in looking after them.

The Lincolnshire Wolds is one of a family of 46 designated AONBs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland that work closely through the shared aims, objectives and work programme of the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB). The NAAONB was formed in 1998 and now operates as a Charitable Company limited by guarantee with its membership comprising AONB partnerships, some local authorities and other voluntary bodies, businesses and individuals with an interest in the future of these nationally important and iconic landscapes. Through the guidance of its Trustees, Management Board and wider membership, the NAAONB aims to sustain and enhance the funding arrangements, management and public awareness for all AONBs. In addition to the clear links with other AONBs the Lincolnshire Wolds is part of a wider national protected landscape family that includes the UK's National Parks and Heritage Coasts.

The close working relationship with our family of AONBs and sister group of protected landscapes remains vital to help share expertise, good practice and encourage innovation. The NAAONB revised its Strategic Plan in 2016, reaffirming the shared objectives and aims for AONBs under the branding of Landscapes for Life seeking to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the UK's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, ensuring they can meet the challenges of the future.

- Support the economic and social wellbeing of local communities in ways which contribute to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.
- Promote public understanding and enjoyment of the nature and culture of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and encourage people to take action for their conservation.
- Value, sustain and promote the benefits that the UK's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty provide for society, including clean air and water, food, carbon storage and other services vital to the nation's health and wellbeing.

Over the past 20 years, the NAAONB has established itself as the collective voice of AONB partnerships in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in so doing, represents those involved in the planning and management of over 8,000 square miles of the UK's finest landscapes. Its "modus operandi" is "Leading, Sharing, Learning and Inspiring" to enable everyone who can help care for our AONBs to do so, now and for future generations (NAAONB Communication Strategy 2017-20).

(visit www.landscapesforlife.org.uk - for further details on the Strategy, Business Plan and wider work of the NAAONB – see also cross cutting themes).

1.3 What are the statutory obligations for managing AONBs?

In 1991 the Countryside Commission (now Natural England) published a policy statement about AONBs (CCP 356) which clarified the following obligations for their management:

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. In pursuing this aim account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be made to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves help to conserve and enhance the environment.

Unlike our National Parks, recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) introduced significant measures to improve the protection and management of AONBs. As summarised by the Countryside Agency (CA 23, 2001), the CRoW Act:

- Consolidates the provisions regarding the designation and purposes of AONBs previously contained in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (NPAC Act) as modified by subsequent legislation. (Section 82, CRoW Act)
- Confirms the powers of local authorities to take appropriate action to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of AONBs. (Section 84, CRoW Act)
- Places a duty on 'relevant authorities' when exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an AONB, to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB. (Section 85, CRoW Act)
- Provides for the creation of conservation boards for selected individual AONBs by means of an establishment order made by the Secretary of State. (Section 86, CRoW Act)
- Requires the preparation and publication of a Management Plan and its periodic review by the appropriate local authorities, or by an AONB conservation board where one is established. (Section 89, CRoW Act)

1.4 What is an AONB Management Plan and why is it needed?

The objective of AONB Management Plans is to ensure both consistency and continuity of management over time, conserving and enhancing these nationally important landscapes for their use and enjoyment over future generations. The production of five yearly management plans is a statutory duty for all local authorities that have AONBs, or part of an AONB, within their administrative boundaries and one plan must be produced in partnership with other local authorities and relevant statutory bodies.

The review of the previous Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan (2013-18) has provided a fresh opportunity for everyone with an interest in the area to help reassess the issues, revise objectives and set fresh priorities for protecting and enhancing the Wolds AONB. Additional to safeguarding our nationally protected scenic landscape the Plan can help to integrate strategic objectives and partnership actions to help secure a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits for those living, working and visiting the area.

1.5 The Management Plan in context

The total area of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is 558 km² (55,800 hectares): Map 2 shows the administrative areas which includes East Lindsey District Council (397 km²); West Lindsey District Council (119.5 km²); and North East Lincolnshire Council (41.5 km²) with 516.5 km² within Lincolnshire County Council.

The Management Plan cannot be viewed in isolation and its strategic objectives, policies and resulting actions represent the collaborative local authority, AONB Partnership and wider public aspirations for the area. This publication seeks to complement the planning and development management framework provided under the current National Planning Policy Framework NPPF (2012) and the accompanying suite of local plans. The NPPF recognises the importance of AONBs as national assets as detailed through paragraphs 115-116 and makes it clear that relevant planning decisions must give great weight to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in these areas.

The local plans of relevance to the Lincolnshire Wolds are: the East Lindsey Local Plan (Emerging Local Plan 2016-2031); the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (Adopted Local Plan, 2012-2036) which includes the joint policies for West Lindsey District Council (WLDC); Planning for Growth – North East Lincolnshire Local Plan (Pre-Submission Draft, 2016); together with the additional Lincolnshire County Council and North East Lincolnshire Council plans for highways, minerals and waste matters. There is currently one neighbourhood plan which extends into the AONB and was produced by the market town of Caistor and subsequently adopted by WLDC. The Greater Lincolnshire Local Economic Partnership and the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership, and their accompanying strategies, are further important drivers for change.

1.6 Status of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan

In accordance with Section 89 of the CROW Act and the various "how to write and review plans" AONB guidance (CA23, CA221, the 2012 Defra/Natural England/NAAONB advice note and the most recent AONB Management Plans – Support for their revision in England 2017 publication) the revised Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (2018-23) will be forwarded to Natural England for final observations prior to its formal adoption by Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey District Council, West Lindsey District Council and North East Lincolnshire Council.

1.7 Who looks after the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and how is the partnership funded?

The care of the AONB has been entrusted to the local authorities, organisations, community groups and those who live and work in the area. Much of the area is in private ownership, with few publicly owned and managed sites. Private landowners, particularly farmers and land managers, have a crucial role to play in continuing to safeguard this unique landscape.

The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB has an established Joint Advisory Committee (Appendix 1): a partnership of public, private and voluntary organisations and representatives who have a special interest or working knowledge of the area. The JAC acts as a forum to advise and guide activity on a wide range of issues across the Wolds and will be instrumental in developing, implementing and monitoring the revised AONB Management Plan.

The LWCS currently implements a varied work programme on behalf of the JAC and its core funders, who meet quarterly as part of the Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Management Group (Appendix 2). The LWCS works alongside a wide range of organisations, local landowners, community groups and volunteers advising on policy and undertaking activity that furthers the interests of the AONB and wider Wolds Character Area. The LWCS will help to coordinate both the delivery and future statutory review of the Plan and will play a key role in identifying and pursuing funding opportunities that can aid its implementation. The success of the Plan will ultimately depend on integrated stakeholder action involving all organisations, landowners and communities with an influence and/or interest in the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.

The LWCS provides the dedicated staff unit for the AONB and is hosted by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) on behalf of the JAC. The current national government has pledged its continuing financial commitment to AONBs; with a 75% core grant supplied direct from Defra and a local Memorandum of Agreement in place with all relevant local authorities including LCC, East Lindsey District Council, West Lindsey District Council and North East Lincolnshire Council – whom together help to cover the additional 25% core and selected project funding. The national funding arrangements for AONBs are likely to be under further review in 2020.

There is a wide range of available grant programmes for assisting landowners, local communities and businesses to protect and enhance the Lincolnshire Wolds. Natural England's Mid Tier Stewardship (MT) and High Tier Stewardship (HT) schemes, together with the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE), provide continuing support to the area's landowners and rural businesses. The RDPE also supports the Lindsey Action Zone (LEADER) programme which operates across and beyond the AONB boundaries and provides an added source of funding for local landowners, businesses and community groups and organisations.

Ongoing pressures on public finances and the need to reduce both central and local authority budgets will continue to have a direct impact upon future partnership work activity and grant programmes, creating challenging but fresh opportunities over the lifetime of the Plan. The JAC wishes to build on the many successes enjoyed by those living, working and visiting the Wolds: continuing to liaise with all to help towards the prudent management of resources and the exploration and implementation of innovative ideas for future sustainable development.

2. The Lincolnshire Wolds - A Special Landscape

2.1 The Lincolnshire Wolds - Introduction

The Lincolnshire Wolds lie in the north-eastern quarter of the county of Lincolnshire (Map 3), mid-way between Lincoln and the coast, surrounded by the relatively flat fens, coastal marsh and the Lincoln Clay Vale. As detailed, the AONB comprises an area of 558 km² (216 miles²), while the wider Lincolnshire Wolds Character/Natural Area incorporates the two neighbouring areas of the 'Spilsby Crescent' to the south and the remaining chalk uplands to the north (Map 4).

2.2 The Wolds' General Character

The Wolds has a strong unity of visual character, characterised by open plateau hilltops, sweeping views, strong escarpments, wide grass verges and ridge-top routeways, dramatic wooded slopes and valleys, beech clumps, attractive villages often nestled in hill folds and natural and historic features of great interest including visual remnants of ancient tumuli and deserted/shrunken medieval villages.

The Landscape Character Assessment for the Wolds undertaken by the Countryside Commission (CCP 414, 1993), recognises the landscape as strikingly different from most other chalk and limestone landscapes in the extent of arable cultivation, made possible by the area's fertile chalk and glacial tills. The 'typical' chalk downland features of calcareous grassland and sheep walk were probably never widespread in the Wolds due to the thinness of the chalk and the fact that much of the area is covered by glacial till. The area subsequently has a long association with cultivated farming practices. The surviving areas of semi-natural habitats, including grassland and ancient woodland, are very limited in extent, but are nonetheless of particular importance, and are supported by more recent introductions of hunting and shooting plantations and hedgerows indicative of an Enclosure Landscape.

In addition to the distinctive and widely nucleated villages and hamlets within the Wolds, the surrounding market towns of Alford, Caistor, Horncastle, Louth, Market Rasen and Spilsby have integral connections with the area. The Wolds remains relatively sparsely populated and the roles of the market towns are very important in providing a wide range of social and economic services for the wider community, whilst also operating as important gateways to the surrounding countryside. The AONB remains a relatively tranquil place for residents and visitors alike and the aim of the Management Plan is to promote and enhance the area's special qualities, whilst also supporting and managing future recreational and tourism demands across a living and working landscape.

2.3 Why is the Lincolnshire Wolds an AONB?

2.3.1 Outstanding Qualities

The Lincolnshire Wolds was designated an AONB in 1973 following a period of considerable local campaigning. This recognised the area's unique landscape and distinctive 'sense of place'. The Landscape Character Assessment (CCP414, 1993), acknowledged the following outstanding qualities as detailed in support of our current vision statement (see Section 3):

- A unique physiography (geology and topography) – The physical geography of the Lincolnshire Wolds is unusual and distinctive. The Wolds is the highest upland landscape in eastern England between Yorkshire and Kent and has a complex geology; nowhere else in Britain has a chalk landscape been so extensively modified by glaciations. These have given rise to some of its most striking features including numerous steep-sided and open-ended combs (valley systems).
- A scenic, working landscape – The high scenic quality of the Wolds depends almost entirely upon the area's use for agriculture. Much of its charm is derived from the seasonally

changing field and cropping patterns; the rural scenes of farming activity; and the traditional villages and farmsteads in brick and pantile. Overall approximately 76% of the AONB is in arable cultivation, with 14.5% as pasture or rough grazing and 5.4% woodland cover (Defra Agricultural Census 2013 & Forestry Commission stats, 2015). It is widely recognised that much of the attractiveness of the Wolds today is a result of the activities of generations of landowners and farmers.

- A major archaeological resource – The Wolds has a rich legacy of prehistoric sites and a wealth of historic landscape features. Most of Lincolnshire's long barrows are in the Wolds, with a high concentration of round barrows, together with many important ancient trackways including the ridge top routes of the Bluestone Heath Road and the Caistor High Street. The Wolds also has one of the largest densities of deserted and shrunken medieval villages (DMVs & SMVs) in the country.
- A valued cultural landscape – The Wolds' landscape has been a source of cultural inspiration. The Tennyson family has a strong association with the area. Alfred, Lord Tennyson - the Poet Laureate - spent much of his formative years in the Wolds and it is featured in many of his works including 'The Brook'. The landscape has offered inspiration to many artists and writers over the years including the mid-19th century landscape painter Peter de Wint and more recently the author A. S. Byatt in the Booker Prize-winning novel 'Possession'.

2.3.2 National Landscape Character Assessments

The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is part of the more extensive Lincolnshire Wolds National Character Area (NCA Number 43) as mapped originally by the Countryside Agency, now Natural England. The national Countryside Quality Counts project has helped to collate landscape trends for all of the NCAs and provides useful historic data for the wider Wolds area. This project has been updated by the Character and Quality of England's Landscapes initiative, also known as CQuEL. This programme aims to provide a series of integrated datasets focusing on place-based evidence for the character and function of landscapes, and the provision of relevant ecosystem services.

Natural England (NE) has led on a national programme to update, expand and strengthen the suite of England's 159 NCA profiles. This work has sought to encompass the recommendations of the Government's White Paper on the Natural Environment including the development of a Strategic set of Statements of Environmental Opportunities (SEOs) for each area.

2.3.3 District Landscape Character Assessments

Finer-grained landscape character studies have been undertaken via the West Lindsey Landscape Character Assessment (1999) and East Lindsey Landscape Character Assessment (2009). The West Lindsey study recognised two distinct sub-areas the 'North West Wolds Escarpment' and 'Lincolnshire Wolds' within the AONB. The East Lindsey study highlighted three sub-areas, two directly in the AONB: 'G1-Binbrook to Tetford Wolds Farmland' and 'G2-Little Cawthorpe to Skendleby' and a third 'G3 Hainton to Toynton All Saints Wolds Farmland' extending south-eastwards beyond the AONB boundary. A further landscape character assessment is considering the north-east corner of the Wolds as part of the wider North East Lincolnshire Council landscape character assessment. Alongside the Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) study for Greater Lincolnshire these studies help to illustrate the highly regarded and distinctive qualities of the Wolds' landscape and its relationship with neighbouring areas.

2.3.4 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment

The Lincolnshire Wolds Landscape Character Assessment (CCP414, 1993) identified and described the key features that make the area special and contribute to its overall 'sense of place'. These features are:

- A rolling upland landscape of strongly cohesive identity.
- A pronounced scarp edge to the west comprising rough pasture and scrub, affording fine panoramic views to the Central Lincolnshire Vale.
- A combination of elevated plateau and deep-sided valleys.
- Large rectilinear fields with wide hedgerows from the late enclosure.
- Archaeologically rich, with ancient trackways, deserted villages and burial mounds.
- Sparse settlements of small-nucleated villages, often in sheltered valleys and associated with modest country houses and small parklands. The diverse geology gives rise to a variety of building materials.
- Broad verges to some roads and tracks providing valuable flower-rich habitats.
- Occasional shelterbelts concentrated on steeper-sided valley and scarp slopes emphasising landform.
- Broader south-west valleys of the Rivers Lymn and Bain. Associated alder carr woodland and tree lined watercourses.

2.3.5 Local Landscape Character Areas

There are clear variations in scenic character across the Wolds with topography and geology appearing to be the most dominant factors. The Lincolnshire Wolds Landscape Character Assessment (CCP414, 1993) recognised four Landscape Character Areas within the AONB (Map 5) identified by their distinct group of special features (Appendix 3):

- The north-west scarp
- The chalk wolds
- The ridges and valleys of the south-west
- The south-eastern claylands.

The Management Plan uses the local landscape classification as the most practical tool within the AONB, with the other district and national classifications providing useful information at the relevant mapping layer.

2.4 The Lincolnshire Wolds State of the AONB Report: 2017

The Draft Lincolnshire Wolds State of the AONB Report: 2017 (Appendix 4) has been compiled by the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service (LWCS) and identifies and reviews a number of indices to help update and extend the baseline data for the protected landscape. There has been a notable increase in available data since the preparation of the previous AONB Plan in 2012-13, including provision of a wider range of national datasets made available via the Protected Landscapes Monitoring Framework (PLMF).

A number of indicators are proposed and these have been grouped in-line with the overarching themes of the Management Plan. The Report includes the context, findings and a concise analysis of the results, either for an individual indicator, or a cluster of closely linked indicators. As evidenced in the report, both quantitative and qualitative information has been utilised. Wherever possible AONB specific data has been gathered, however in some cases estimates from wider data coverage have been necessary to generate a proxy measure. This report is ongoing, with some limited data searches still being pursued, for example in respect of health measures, and broadband/mobile phone coverage specific to the AONB.

The report provides a snapshot of the Wolds to help assess the overall condition of the protected landscape, both its special qualities and also the area's important wider environmental, social and economic attributes. As mentioned, it establishes a detailed baseline of evidence to help evaluate both the current and the future success of the AONB Management Plan. The AONB Partnership (JAC) has always stressed that the objective of the Plan should be to provide a working document to help inspire and steer future positive partnership action.

2.5 Special Qualities of the AONB

Table 1 summarises the special landscape features that typify the Lincolnshire Wolds 'natural beauty' and 'sense of place'. These include features relating to landscape, farmland, geology, topography, biodiversity, archaeology, built heritage and culture. Appendix 3 provides an additional summary of the special qualities of each of the four Landscape Character Areas.

The table includes estimates of the extent or coverage of any feature and where possible an indication of its condition. This information is by no means comprehensive and has identified areas for further survey work (e.g. habitats in the wider countryside including woodland and grassland sites). The table provides a useful overview to accompany the more detailed State of the AONB report (Appendix 4). The source organisation is abbreviated in the left hand column. Table 2 complements Table 1 in highlighting specific threats and management options that relate to the individual qualities of the AONB.

Table 1: The Special Qualities of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Landscape Character	North- west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south- west	South- eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Scenic beauty & rural charm	General component (a rolling upland landscape of strongly cohesive identity with farming as an underlying component).				Most of AONB	Good, but needs quantitative survey (see monitoring section)	Changes in land management and the future use of farm buildings; decoupling from CAP; quarrying; telecommunication masts; wind farm developments including periphery of AONB; oil exploration; light pollution; solar, anaerobic and other alternative energy schemes.	Planning and development management; interpretation & education; liaison with community & visitors; national and local funding opportunities through agri-environment schemes, Lottery funding etc.
Expansive, sweeping views	General component (views from scarp edge, High Street and Bluestone Heath road are particularly dramatic).				Most of AONB	Good, as above	As above, but particularly potential for intrusion from hilltop or skyline developments including overhead powerlines.	Planning and development management; high quality design and build; landscaping. Undergrounding overhead wires initiative.
Peace & Tranquillity	General component (once away from the main roads there is a wide sense of remoteness and rural isolation accentuated by the combination of elevated plateau and sheltered coombes).				Most of AONB	Good, away from main roads such as A16, A18 and High Street.	Continued increase in road freight & possible increase in air traffic (via Humberside Airport and armed services); light pollution; unmanaged visitor pressure.	Integrated public transport initiatives.

<p>Farmed Land (scenic quality, biodiversity, socio-economic) (NE)</p>	<p>Primary land-use component of the AONB landscape.</p> <p>Almost 65% of the AONB is in regular cultivation, including over 45% for cereals.</p> <p>A further 14.5 % of the AONB is in grassland – a figure which has increased in recent years through agri-environment targeting of Countryside, Entry and Higher Level, and Mid and High Tier Stewardship Schemes.</p>	<p>Most of AONB</p>	<p>Varied, but essential element of the AONB character (see component features below).</p>	<p>New cropping regimes; changes to national/EU farm policy via Brexit reforms; demands for ever larger farm sheds, outside stores, grain silos; climate change.</p>	<p>Re-directing new funding streams for landscape, biodiversity, access and recreation. Opportunities via game conservation. High quality design for farmed buildings via land agents, design guides and LPAs good practice.</p>
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Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Earth Heritage	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south-west	South-eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Chalk upland – plateau & valley landscape (Geodiversity Group)	General component (series of sandstones, ironstones and clay underlie the chalk capping and form the essential character of the Wolds. The area has been shaped by at least two periods of glaciation).				Most of AONB	Varied	Modern development (visual intrusion e.g. telecom masts and wind turbines both within and adjacent to the AONB); farm infrastructure developments (as above); chalk quarrying.	Planning and development management; interpretation & education.
Glacial/periglacial features including remnant lakes/spillways (Geodiversity Group)		Key feature 1 SSSI 4 LGS 1 RIGS 1 LWT Reserve	1 SSSI 1 LGS	Key feature 1 LGS 1 RIGS	2 SSSI 6 LGS 2 RIGS	Varied 2 SSSIs all in favourable condition	Change in land use e.g. tree planting.	Improved access, interpretation & education; landowner liaison; restoration schemes.
Geological qualities (Geodiversity Group)	1 SSSI 1 LGS	4 LGS 2 RIGS	Key feature 3 SSSI 2 LGS 1 RIGS	1 RIGS	4 SSSI 7 LGS 4 RIGS	Varied, some small pits overgrown or infilled. 4 SSSIs all in favourable condition	Change in land use; lack of awareness; erosion; secondary activity including landfill; illegal activities.	Improved access, interpretation & education; landowner liaison; restoration schemes.

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Biodiversity	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south-west	South-eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Calcareous, meadow, pasture & wet grasslands (NE, LWT & LWCS)	Key feature Nettleton Valley and western scarp face.	Local feature within the chalk valleys. 1 SSSI (bats in disused railway tunnels)	Key feature 4 SSSI 2 LWT Reserves	Local feature 5 SSSI 3 LWT Reserves	Estimated 13% of AONB - Over 80 sites with grassland interest have been proposed as Local Wildlife Sites. 10 SSSI	54% decline in grasslands between 1975 and 1994 (EN stats. from MAFF agriculture annual census). Situation now improving with agri-environment support. 2 SSSIs in declining condition.	Threat to livestock farming; intensive agricultural practices including land drainage; potential conflict with woodland planting; loss via woodland/scrub encroachment.	Grazing support schemes; shifts in national/EU policy favouring environmental farming schemes; landowner liaison.
Beech clumps (BeC) (LWCS)		Key feature 28 BeC	Local feature 12 BeC	Local feature 8 BeC	Important landscape feature.	Many of similar age & structure. The LWCS Beech Clump project has helped to create/restore 38 clumps since 2004, with the planting of over 6,630 trees & shrubs.	Wide neglect & lack of management, climate change.	AONB specific grants & advice. Landowner liaison. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).
Woodlands (largely 18 th - 19 th century plantings) (FC)	Local feature	Key feature	Key feature	Key feature	2,454 ha, <4.4% of AONB Approx. 80% b'leaved 10% coniferous 10% mixed w'land/ young trees	At least 56% of woodland is now deemed to be in positive management from 27% in 2001/02. Remaining 44% unknown.	Further decline in management; lack of potential markets although improving with increasing demand for local wood fuels; conifer planting; fragility owing to small size; climate change; fly tipping.	Further surveys; targeted planting & woodland restoration schemes; development of woodland markets; TPOs.

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Biodiversity (continued)	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south-west	South-eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Ancient woodlands (NE, LWT, CA & LWCS)	Oak & ash	Hazel, ash & wych elm 1 SSSI	Alder carr 1 SSSI	Oak & ash 2 SSSI 1 LWT Reserve	604 ha, <1.08% of AONB Localised, but highly visible feature. 4 SSSI	2 SSSI in favourable condition.	As above; with isolation of the woodland of particular concern.	As above.
River, streams and ponds (EA & LWCS)	Key feature	Local feature	Key feature	Key feature 1 LWT Reserve	9 principal river systems many are SNCI and LWS. Total estimated length = 258 km. Ponds unknown	Poor – good 89 km classed as moderate to good condition. 7 km in poor condition (Laceby Beck catchment) Approximately 12 km of chalk stream restoration achieved since 2004.	Low flow issues; poor water quality including sedimentation; restricted or inappropriate riverside habitats; invasive alien spaces – signal crayfish, Himalayan Balsam etc.	Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project; Catchment Restoration Fund; Catchment Characterisation Studies; River Basin Management Plans under WFD. Anglian Water's Resources Management Plan. Future Facilitation Fund.

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Biodiversity (continued)	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south-west	South-eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Hedgerows (LCC; State of the Environment Report)	Local feature	Key feature	Key feature	Local feature	Unknown Mainly enclosure hedges, small areas of pre-enclosure (species rich) hedgerows survive in pockets.	Unknown. Between 1970s and 1990s over 1000m per km square believed to have been lost in the Wolds. Situation improving especially with grant support for new/restored hedges.	Decline in grant support for hedgerow restoration. Loss of traditional practices; poor management; spray drift.	Further surveys; landowner liaison, advice and specific grant aid; links to other habitats; development control (planning conditions) and Hedgerow Regulations.
Roadside verges and green lanes (LWCS & LWT) Roadside Nature Reserves (RNR)	Local feature	Local feature 7 RNRs	Key feature 3 RNRs	Key feature 7 RNRs	Overall key component of area. 17 RNRs within the AONB	Variable. 17 verges subsequently reclassified as Local Wildlife Sites	Loss of traditional management, e.g. grazing & hay making; inappropriate use; road run off & vehicle encroachment; fly tipping.	Increased volunteer engagement via Life on the Verge project; suitable future management; interconnected network of sites.

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Archaeology	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south-west	South-eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Ancient route-ways (LWCS)	Key feature Caistor High Street	Key feature Barton Street	Key feature Bluestone Heath Road	Key feature Barton Street	Roman roads and salter routes, many as byways etc.	Generally degraded, esp. on byways.	Loss of character through road widening; modern signage; increased traffic flows; lack of appropriate management (e.g. byways); increased traffic flows.	Sympathetic/traditional signage; education & awareness.
Scheduled Monuments (SMs) (LCC - MapInfo) (HE)	Local feature 13 barrow sites	Key feature 48 sites: 17 DMVs; 3 moated sites; 1 hillfort; 25 barrows 3 structures;	Key feature 26 sites: 2 DMVs; 2 moated sites; 16 barrows; 6 structures	Local feature 10 sites: 1 DMV; 9 barrows	98 SMs within AONB One new listing in 2016 – DMV.	30 SMs at high risk from cultivation (HE, 2017) - a downward trend from 37 in 2013 and 47 in 2004.	Change of land use or management; farming operations.	Development control; landowner liaison & advice; increased access interpretation & education; agri-environment schemes.

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Archaeology (continued)	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south-west	South-eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Burial mounds & monuments (LCC - MapInfo)	Local feature Long barrows and round barrows. 2 Anglo-Saxon cemeteries	Key feature Long barrows and round barrows. 3 Anglo-Saxon cemeteries	Key feature Long barrows and round barrows. 7 Anglo-Saxon cemeteries	Local feature Long barrows and round barrows. 1 Anglo-Saxon cemetery	Visible on chalk tops & adjoining routeways 56 long barrow & up to 350 round barrow sites recorded for the Wolds. 13 Anglo-Saxon cemeteries	Vulnerable feature. Many now only visible as crop & soil marks. Several important key sites remain e.g. Giants' Hill long barrow.	Farming operations; development pressures.	Planning and development management; landowner liaison; agri-environment schemes. HE & HL ongoing Long Barrow survey – results pending.
Deserted medieval villages (DMVs) & shrunken medieval villages (SMVs)	Local feature Nettleton Parish - Hardwick, West Wykeham & Draycot	Key feature Around North Ormsby, Calcethorp e, Withcall & Maltby	Key feature Around Wykeham, Biscathorpe and Calceby		High density of DMVs on plateau & spring line locations (Approx 80 DMVs /SMVs.)	Vulnerable feature.	Farming operations; development pressures.	Planning and development management; landowner liaison & advice; increased access interpretation & education.
Roman villas and settlements (LCC - MapInfo)	5 sites	Local feature 12 sites	3 sites	1 site	21 known	Variable condition, (but no data for all). Vulnerable features. Many are only visible as crop marks.	Change of land use; farming operations; development pressures.	Planning and development management; landowner liaison & advice; increased access, education & interpretation; agri-environment schemes.

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Cultural associations (community value)	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south-west	South-eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Literary/artistic (CCP414 pg 24-26)	General component, especially Chalk Wolds & Ridges and Valleys of the South-West. Local and AONB-wide cultural associations. Vernacular idiom/dialect.				Most of AONB	Strong. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate; Peter de Wint, landscape painter; A.S. Byatt, Booker Prize - winner novelist.	Change in ownership; loss of records or information; lack of interest or awareness.	Interpretation & education; improved access to cultural sites; landowner liaison; support specialist interest groups.

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Historic Landscapes & Buildings	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south- west	South- eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Village character, including churches (LWCS) Conservation areas (LCC - MapInfo)	Key feature Local ironstone & limestone buildings. Conservati on area in 2 villages (Tealby).	Key feature Villages hidden from view. Conservati on area in 1 village; conservatio n area of part of 1 town (Binbrook).	Key feature Local sandstone buildings, with rectangular plan villages. Conservation area of part of 1 village. (South Willingham).	Key feature Linear villages	72 villages with distinctive churches. 16 villages without a church. Many houses of brick and pantile.	Variable Total of 343 building & heritage features listed at grade I, II* & II. 3 Listed buildings deemed to be at risk in the AONB. 2 Conservation areas deemed to be at risk (South Willingham) and Binbrook).	Insensitive development including infill; change of use; visitor pressure.	Planning and development management, e.g. Design Guides as SPG; interpretation & education.
Traditional farm buildings (HE & LWCS)	Local feature Built of local stone, many still house livestock. Farmstead 43 Outfarms 3	Key feature Victorian planned farmsteads mainly built of brick. Farmstead s 196 Outfarms 11	Key feature Victorian planned farmsteads, mainly built of brick and housing livestock. Farmsteads 262 Outfarms 20	 Farmsteads 48 Outfarms 3	A feature, esp. the planned Victorian farmstead e.g. Turnor buildings at Kirmond le Mire. Farmstead 549 Outfarms 37	Variable Traditional Farmsteads Study completed in 2017 by Locus Consulting supported by LWCS and HE. Results included: Extant - 13% Partial loss - 36% Significant loss - 23% Farm house only – 6% Total loss – 22% Heritage potential 48%	Change of agricultural practices and legislation demand larger buildings for livestock and machinery; insensitive developments.	Planning and development management e.g. Design Guides as SPG; landowner liaison & advice; increased access, interpretation & education.

Special Quality (Importance to natural beauty)	Local Landscape Character Area – Quality & Extent					Condition	Pressures and trends	Management options
Historic Landscapes & Buildings (continued)	North-west scarp	Chalk Wolds	Ridges and valleys of the south-west	South-eastern claylands	Total extent within AONB			
Industrial heritage, airfields, railways mine workings	Local feature Ironstone mining.	Local feature. 3 former RAF airfields, old railway line and buildings.	Local feature Old railway line. Key feature - Stenigot Mast.		Small pockets of interest throughout inc. 9 historic military sites; 10 cuttings & embankment s.	Airfield heritage in declining condition, although memorials well maintained.	General neglect; previous lack of awareness has been improving e.g. Down Your Wold community heritage project.	Landowner liaison; improved access, interpretation & education. Growing interest in ironstone mining heritage.
Moated sites (LWCS)		1	Key feature 4		5 known	Vulnerable feature	Farming operations; development pressures.	Development control; landowner liaison; improved access, education & interpretation
Watermills & Windmills (LWCS)	Local feature Paper making industry at Tealby utilised watermills 7	Local feature Thoresway and Binbrook watermills remain 11	Local feature Stockwith Mill is best remaining in Wolds. Ketsby Mill has potential 6	Local feature Windmills at Hagworthing-ham and Grebby	A localised feature within the Wolds, many have no surviving remains (all records have been counted). 24 known	Only half (12) have bricks/evidence on the ground of the site.	Many now lost through changes into private residence with watercourses often diverted; neglected feature under threat.	Development control; landowner liaison & advice; improved access, interpretation & education.
Dry stone walls (LWCS)	Key feature				Limited to the north-west scarp.	Variable condition but improving in places e.g. Tealby church wall.	Neglected feature; lack of building material.	Further surveys; landowner liaison AONB specific grants/advice including agri-environ schemes.

2.5 Threats/Issues/Pressures on the Wolds' Natural Beauty

Table 2 complements Table 1 in providing an overview of the threats and pressures on the Wolds and future opportunities that may exist for minimising any potential impact on the natural beauty of the AONB. The opportunities also provide a basis for developing much needed positive action to improve the Wolds' landscape quality and biodiversity. Appendix 3 provides an additional summary of the threats/pressures for each of the four AONB specific Landscape Character Areas.

There is much action by landowners, local authorities and others to help influence and encourage positive landscape management. A wide range of partnership achievements are documented in the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB's Annual Reviews which have been published since 2004-05. These reports show the success of the Partnership in encouraging and supporting a wide range of projects, very often inspired by local communities, and delivering environmental and socio-economic benefits for the area.

Whilst there may be a number of continuing threats to the landscape, there are also many opportunities for conservation and enhancement of the AONB. The task for everyone is to ensure that efforts can be coordinated in the best interest of the Wolds' landscape whilst meeting the needs of those living, working or visiting the AONB. The Management Plan seeks to provide a framework and stimulus for such integrated action.

Table 2: Forces for Change on the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB (summary)

Land Management	Pressures/Threats:	Opportunities:
<p>Agriculture (see also economic section)</p>	<p>Uncertainties within agriculture linked to Brexit and de-coupling from CAP.</p> <p>Financial viability of future farming with increasing pressures from open market forces.</p> <p>Reducing and aging work force and possible restrictions on the mobility of seasonal labour from overseas.</p> <p>Extreme weather events, locally & globally, increasing volatility in market prices.</p> <p>Intensification in farm practices, coupled with emerging pests and diseases and future threats to biosecurity.</p> <p>Demand for ever larger working/storage facilities to maintain profitability & meet bio-control standards.</p> <p>Continued pressure on livestock farming & implications to the Wolds' landscape & biodiversity.</p> <p>Increasing financial costs of arable and livestock production and consistency in energy supply.</p> <p>Loss of cross compliance funding to help aid corridor management e.g. ditch and hedgerow boundary maintenance etc.</p>	<p>Ongoing Brexit and UK farming policy reform is a significant factor.</p> <p>Rationalisation of future government support mechanisms (Countryside Stewardship) providing a smart system of support with increasing emphasis on wider public goods and services – commonly expressed as "natural capital".</p> <p>Utilise links with the Campaign for the Farmed Environment, quality assurance schemes & other Lincolnshire branding initiatives including local rare breed groups.</p> <p>Catchment sensitive farming and integrated pest management systems.</p> <p>Increased collaborative working via Lincs Agri-Horticulture Forum, Natural England's forthcoming facilitation fund and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership & Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership.</p> <p>A greater role for research and innovation and sharing good practice within and between sectors to enhance the knowledge bank and ensure food security.</p> <p>A shift towards sustainable farming that can work in harmony with landscape/natural forces as well as offering resilience to market pressures.</p>
<p>Forestry (also economic section)</p>	<p>Continued decline in management & isolation of woodland.</p> <p>Inappropriate location/species mix.</p> <p>Traditionally a lack of markets for local timber, although trends reversing.</p> <p>Climate change impacts, including emergence of new pests & diseases including Ash Die-Back (<i>Chalara</i>) and Acute Oak Decline.</p> <p>Future impacts from an increasing deer population.</p> <p>Resilience tree felling by power companies.</p>	<p>Woodland surveys & audits. Farm woodland plans.</p> <p>Woodland support schemes.</p> <p>Woodland fuel products.</p> <p>Promoting/supporting appropriate management practices and raising awareness of licencing obligations.</p> <p>Tailored advice and guidance to landowners and managers including timber markets.</p>

Land Management (continued)	Pressures/Threats:	Opportunities:
Recreation (also economic section)	<p>Private ownership often restricts public access.</p> <p>Need to manage any potential increase in recreation pressures and visitor numbers, especially to avoid harm to the AONB, including tranquillity.</p> <p>Need to balance the various user group requirements to minimise conflict, including safeguarding farmer, landowner and local community interests.</p> <p>Declining access payments available through agri-environment schemes will continue to impact upon and restrict the future levels of permissive access.</p>	<p>Love Lincolnshire Wolds tourism network and the emerging Destination Management Plan for wider Lincolnshire Wolds and its market towns.</p> <p>Viking Way regional footpath and connections with the wider Walkers are Welcome market towns network.</p> <p>Increased number of promoted circular walks.</p> <p>Continued potential for cycling & promoted cycle routes.</p> <p>Access for all & multi-access opportunities e.g. the Lindsey Trail, all-terrain mobility scooters etc.</p> <p>Promotion of the wider benefits of recreation & countryside tourism; including to the local economy, environment, public health & well-being.</p>
Climate Change	<p>Increasing demands for rural products to be produced from sustainable sources & demonstrate 'green credentials'.</p> <p>Implications for species and habitats e.g. woodland species mix may change.</p> <p>Increased fluctuations in water flows & possible increase in flooding, drought & soil erosion.</p> <p>Temperature changes for ground & surface water & impact upon chalk stream species.</p> <p>More extreme weather events likely to place increased stresses on nature conservation, farming and heritage resources including archaeology.</p>	<p>Potential for new crops - new species & habitats may equally become viable.</p> <p>Increasing emphasis on multi-functional land management to help aid protection and enhancement of natural resources, including flood mitigation and the locking up of greenhouse gasses.</p> <p>Greater drive for energy efficiencies, including the opportunities to shift towards a more local "circular economy".</p>
Pollution	<p>Air quality – elevated levels of sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide pollutants from surrounding power stations along the Trent.</p> <p>Agro-chemical pollution exacerbated by low flows – water abstractions. Risk of diffuse runoff or point source discharges of pollutants, including potential risks from ammonia, pesticides (including neonicotinoids) and high sediment loads.</p> <p>Increasing light & noise pollution impacts upon dark night skies & tranquillity respectively.</p>	<p>Legislation, technical advances and alternative sustainable energies should improve air quality.</p> <p>Water quality protection via Water Framework Directive & Anglian Water's AMP6 targets.</p> <p>Technological improvements in farm spraying applications & LERAP regulations.</p> <p>Agri-environment & catchment sensitive farming schemes including buffering of water courses.</p> <p>Energy efficient lighting design.</p>

Economic (continued)	Pressures/Threats:	Opportunities:
Agriculture/Forestry Industries	<p>Wolds' economy historically heavily reliant upon farming.</p> <p>Pronounced period of uncertainty.</p> <p>Fewer people employed directly in farming than at any other period.</p> <p>Livestock farming particularly vulnerable along with infrastructure & skills to support a local livestock industry.</p> <p>Concerns that many of the younger generation are not attracted to a career in farming/forestry; additional impacts from the potential loss of the agricultural college.</p>	<p>Lincolnshire Forum for Agriculture & Horticulture.</p> <p>Local branding schemes – Tastes of Lincolnshire & Select Lincolnshire. Niche selling and promotions via farmers/rural markets.</p> <p>Farm diversification initiatives including links with tourism & conservation.</p> <p>Opportunities via the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership & Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership.</p> <p>Utilising the shooting/field sports sector and its links to the wider local economy.</p> <p>Cluster farming approaches to aid collaboration and promote and share good practice.</p>
Tourism Industry	<p>Developing tourism is currently restricted by a weak infrastructure (e.g. limited accommodation and attractions; restricted highways and public transport).</p> <p>Threat to peace & solitude of the Wolds caused by additional visitors to various attractions, especially to honey-pot villages and nature reserves.</p> <p>Limited resources for collaborative countywide tourism promotions.</p> <p>Greater investment required to support sympathetic innovative developments to help enhance the visitor experience.</p>	<p>Partnership promotion under the Love Lincolnshire Wolds banner and enhanced development of the Destination Management services to help grow and enhance the visitor economy.</p> <p>Need for improved and well managed range of accommodation & visitor attractions appropriate to the Wolds AONB.</p> <p>Scope to further develop the green tourism product.</p> <p>Ongoing innovation of the Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival and promotion of other local cultural events.</p> <p>Utilise countywide tourism initiatives, including links to visitors to Lincoln and the east coast.</p> <p>Explore further links to the Wolds unique sense of place and its range of local shops, pubs and tearooms.</p> <p>Segmentation of the market promotions to reflect varying demographics and interests – opportunities to expand the year-round and weekend offers.</p> <p>Utilise links to Cadwell Motor Park to secure fresh interest in the AONB from wider audience groups.</p>
Mineral Extraction	<p>A number of chalk quarries and sand/gravel pits are actively worked within or adjacent to the Wolds.</p> <p>Secondary uses e.g. land fill, recycling facilities, tarmacadam works.</p> <p>Hydrocarbon (oil and gas) exploration is ongoing. There is a perceived threat from "unconventional" drilling operations (i.e. fracking) but the UK</p>	<p>Reclamation schemes for landscape, wildlife, access, interpretation & education.</p> <p>Ongoing active management of key sites to maintain geodiversity features of interest.</p>

	Infrastructure Act (2015) does not permit hydraulic fracturing at a depth of less than 1,200 metres beneath nationally protected areas, including AONBs.	
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Economic (continued)	Pressures/Threats:	Opportunities:
Radio, Telecommunications Masts & Powerlines	<p>Incomplete broadband coverage.</p> <p>Proliferation of skyline masts including the latest generation masts for non-spots.</p> <p>Visual impact of medium and low voltage powerlines including potentially over-aggressive tree thinning operations.</p>	<p>Improved technology/design.</p> <p>Increased sharing of masts & sites by operators.</p> <p>Removal of redundant masts.</p> <p>Increased use of underground powerlines especially with OFGEM financial incentives.</p>
Alternative Energies	<p>Wind energy seen as both a threat and an opportunity.</p> <p>Several wind farm scheme applications have been permitted both within and adjacent to the AONB; other proposals have been rejected largely on landscape intrusion grounds.</p> <p>Potential solar farms and anaerobic digestion plants within and close to the AONB need careful planning & design.</p>	<p>Anaerobic digestion generation and bio-fuels, including miscanthus, maize & willow coppice, could aid farm diversification & woodland management.</p> <p>Potential for appropriate small scale wind turbines, appropriate on-farm composting schemes & increased use of photovoltaics & other emerging renewable energy technologies.</p>
New Business	<p>Expansion of IT resources is increasing business mobility – impacting upon social fabric of Wolds.</p> <p>Landscape threats due to new IT installations.</p>	<p>Secondary income to farm businesses through diversification & increased opportunities for local employment.</p> <p>Re-use of redundant/derelict buildings including farm buildings & former military installations.</p>
Transport	<p>Visual impact of road signage.</p> <p>Heavy goods vehicles impact on road verges and impacts from winter salting on verge habitats.</p> <p>Out of character road developments in village settlements following urban planning guidelines.</p> <p>Some village traffic calming measures potentially out of character with settlement entranceways.</p>	<p>Local Transport Plans and integrated initiatives.</p> <p>Every Street Matters initiative supporting public realm enhancements and aiding Village Design Statements.</p> <p>Promote opportunities for community and public transport provision such as Call Connect/Wheels to Work.</p>

Social	Pressures/Threats:	Opportunities:
Local Services	<p>Local services are under threat owing to the general rural isolation of many of the communities within the Wolds and the limited social infrastructure.</p> <p>Public transport service variable, often poor with weekend services particularly limited.</p> <p>Minimal services/facilities for the younger generation aiding outward migration of workforce.</p>	<p>Local Transport Plans.</p> <p>Community strategies including neighbourhood plans.</p> <p>Community-run facilities such as village shops and multi-use centres.</p> <p>Furthering connections with the market towns for wider service provision – a two-way pathway for wider links with parishes across the Wolds.</p>
Local Housing	<p>General lack of affordable housing, with the Wolds invariably enabling a premium market price for high quality larger homes.</p> <p>National building corporations using standard building designs with formulaic architecture.</p>	<p>Village Design Statements.</p> <p>Local Development Frameworks and accompanying Housing Strategies to help aid social housing.</p> <p>Sympathetic re-development opportunities for farmsteads.</p>
Social Fabric	<p>The rural communities have suffered from economic deprivation aggravated by an ongoing decline in agriculture and the defence industry.</p> <p>Continued rural isolation, loss of local services, small size of many settlements & influx of both commuters and retired people is impacting upon traditional communities.</p> <p>Some parts of the AONB currently have very limited mobile phone and/or broadband coverage.</p> <p>Concerns with the potential decline in police protection and increase in rural crime.</p>	<p>Community Strategies & resulting community development schemes, rural support networks etc.</p> <p>Enhance opportunities for public engagement and social cohesion via volunteering.</p> <p>Support sustainable communities through fostering environmental/place shaping activity.</p> <p>Market town initiatives & links with the AONB as physical and information gateways to the Wolds.</p> <p>New enterprise possibilities via recreation, tourism, educational & other specialist industry sectors.</p> <p>Broadband & other IT improvements, especially with opportunities via the OnLincolnshire Broadband Project, UK wide Rural Broadband Partnership and future development of Wi-Fi technologies.</p>

2.6 Public Survey – Have Your Say

During March to September 2016, residents and visitors to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB were invited to complete the Lincolnshire Wolds "Have Your Say" survey. The questionnaire was promoted via the LWCS and AONB Partnership's E-Newsletter Higher Ground, through direct mail and via social media. The survey provided a very useful snapshot of views in respect of the importance of the Lincolnshire Wolds and in particular perspectives on its recognition as a nationally protected Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The results are detailed in Appendix 5 and provide interesting comparisons with the public questionnaire survey coordinated by the Partnership in 2003. In terms of providing a barometer of local views and opinions the results complement the generally very positive findings from Google and Trip Advisor (500+ responses) as evidenced within the State of the AONB Report. The results were reported to the AONB Partnership and have helped to inform and shape the review of the Plan.

Going forward, the AONB Partnership will continue to place a high value on listening and seeking to understand and appreciate the views and aspirations of local residents, landowners, communities and visitors to the area. This helps us to identify the relevance of the AONB and the natural environment to peoples' day to day lives and the choices they make, and to help inspire imaginative and ambitious local engagement. We envisage conducting a similar Have Your Say survey during the summer of 2021 to inform the ongoing Action Plan and kick-start the next formal Management Plan review.

3. The Vision and Guiding Influences

3.1 The Vision

The Lincolnshire Wolds should not be preserved in aspic and is continually evolving in response to the many human and natural forces that are placed upon it and it is evident that the pressures on the AONB are set to continue to increase further. However, these pressures can be offset by new opportunities to manage the process, and the production of this Plan serves to highlight that there is a continuing pressing need for everyone to work in partnership - to positively influence the Wolds through appropriate future development and land management - recognising the vital contributions from local landowners, and the community living, working and visiting the area.

Subject to further public consultation, the area's proposed vision for the twenty-five year period from 2018 is as follows:-

The Lincolnshire Wolds will continue to be a vibrant living and working landscape through the primary influence of sustainable agriculture, forestry and land management. It will retain its unique and nationally important sense of place: an area of open rolling hills, dramatic views, farmed fields changing with the seasons, tranquil valleys, woodland, pasture, streams and attractive villages.

The Wolds natural and cultural heritage will be well known, enjoyed and widely respected by both residents and visitors. It will continue to provide a place of tranquillity and inspiration for those fortunate enough to visit the area, whilst meeting the economic, social and environmental needs of those who live and work there.

A sustainable approach to management activity will be normal practice with an emphasis on integrated farming and land management providing a wide range of innovative solutions to tackling the issues of climate change (through mitigation and adaptation), food production, water quality and supply, recreation provision, and energy demands. Enhanced connectivity between healthy, resilient landscapes and green infrastructure will help to provide and cater for an increasingly dynamic environment and help to contribute to a good quality of life for all.

The vision acknowledges the challenge of securing social, economic and environmental progress that can protect and enhance the special and intrinsic qualities that define the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB (as introduced in Section 2). The Plan sets out a framework of objectives, policies and actions that collectively strive towards achieving this vision through local partnership action.

3.2 The Aims

The five key aims of the Management Plan are to sustain and enhance:

- the Lincolnshire Wolds' natural beauty and its landscape character
- farming and land management in the Wolds as the primary activities in maintaining its character, landscape and biodiversity
- recreational, tourism and interpretive activities and opportunities appropriate to the area
- the economic and social base of the Wolds including the development and diversification of enterprises appropriate to the area
- partnerships between organisations, the local community, landowners and others with an interest in the Wolds.

3.3 Cross-cutting influences – national drivers

The recent publication, AONB Management Plans – Support for their revision in England (June 2017) has served to highlight the following national context to the fresh round of reviews:

Partnership working: *The AONB Management Plan is a place-based plan derived through local consensus. It seeks to define the approach to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB through the application of local solutions to local challenges that also respect the national and international importance of the AONB. It is a plan for the AONB, not just the Partnership or (where relevant) Conservation Board.*

Local participation: *AONB staff actively listens to their local communities. Using their skills, knowledge and empathy they are able to plan and support the delivery of practical solutions to local land management and planning issues that reflect local interests and concerns. These solutions often help support a sustainable rural economy and improve the health and well-being of those that live in, work in, and visit the AONB.*

Economic value of AONBs: *The AONB designation has helped to conserve and enhance some of England's finest landscapes. These landscapes are highly valued by business as economic assets in their own right and as settings which add value to business. Well managed landscapes offer a wealth of natural resources that serve as the foundations of rural business, including farming and forestry. Their beauty and international appeal also offers opportunities for tourism related businesses. AONBs are living, working landscapes that contribute some £16 billion GVA (Gross Value Added) to the national economy.*

Planning and the wider goods and services: *The natural environment underpins the economy through the provision of goods and services, more specifically its use in farming, forestry, housing, business, transport, energy, tourism and recreation. However, space and natural resources are limited and increasingly contested. The land use planning system is designed to help achieve optimal outcomes for society when decisions on land use priorities must be made.*

AONB teams can provide specialist advice to help public bodies and statutory undertakers make decisions on planning matters. In doing so, they can help these bodies meet their legal duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs, and ultimately help ensure that planning decisions result in sustainable outcomes.

Agri Environment Support: *Farming requires a profitable future to sustain farming families, safeguard the environment, mitigate climate change and maintain vitality and employment in rural communities. Land managers play a crucial role in helping to look after the environment including its soil and water quality and the provision for open air recreation.*

The AONB designation provides a platform for integrating the support provided to the sector with wider environmental, social and economic opportunities. In doing so, AONB teams are vital in helping develop a more sustainable approach to agriculture in the UK.

State of the Environment: *Monitoring and review is an essential part of management planning, with each review of the plan building on the results of the monitoring of the previous plan. In this way, successive plans can be modified to achieve better results, and the performance of those tasked with delivery can be measured. Robust state of the environment reporting is the foundation for all AONB management plans and is both qualitative and quantitative.*

Health and Well-being: *AONBs are vitally important for the health and well-being of the nation. 156 million people visit AONBs in England annually, many to make the most of the free opportunities on offer for outdoor recreation, exercise, rest and relaxation. Likewise, many of the 1 million people who live in AONBs express an appreciation for living in an area with a clear sense of place and local identity. As the link between greenspace and reduced depression, anxiety, anger and sadness becomes better understood, AONBs have become increasingly important for providing outdoor opportunities for improving the health of the nation.*

3.4 Delivery Themes

Considering both the aims and cross-cutting influences, five themes have been identified to help deliver the vision for the Wolds. These are:

- Theme 1. Protecting the Wolds**
- Theme 2. Living and Working in the Wolds**
- Theme 3. Discovering the Wolds**
- Theme 4. Developing the Wolds**
- Theme 5. Partnerships in the Wolds**

These themes provide the overall Strategy for the document. The sections are not mutually exclusive and in many cases there is both overlap and interdependence between themes. This reflects the complex nature of AONB management in respect of the need to harmonise environmental, social and economic forces, which are the major drivers for landscape change in the AONB. A set of objectives, policies and actions have been developed on a topic by topic basis within these themes, acknowledging both threats and opportunities.

Section 1.7 (p12) explains in more detail the resourcing of the wider AONB partnership. There is general recognition of the challenging financial climate which is continually likely to impact upon all sectors of the national and local economy, especially public and third sector organisations. This places an ever greater need for prudent and effective partnership working, increasingly utilising the services of willing landowners, volunteers, and local communities to help aid project delivery. The Strategy and Action Plan is ambitious, but the relevant local authorities and wider AONB partnership strongly believe that the document will serve as a catalyst for further innovative delivery.

4. Protecting the Wolds - Theme 1

4.1 Landscape Conservation and Enhancement

As detailed previously, the Wolds Landscape Character Assessment identified four landscape character areas within the AONB and highlighted the important landscape qualities of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Table 1 and Appendix 3 have been collated for this Plan, and together outline the special qualities of the AONB, where possible listing their current extent and condition. These are the principal elements of the natural beauty and landscape character of the Wolds.

The Wolds scenery is subtle and complex, but has a clear identity resulting from physical and human influences over many generations. It has a very open character with extensive outward views both eastwards to the coast and westwards across the Lincolnshire Clay Vale. The views within the AONB are equally dramatic and are shaped by the open rolling hills, hidden valleys and continually changing patterns of farming. The ridge-top locations provided by the Bluestone Heath Road, the Caistor High Street and the west-east drovers roads provide some of the area's best known and most frequented viewing points.

Threats/Pressures

There are many threats and pressures that have affected, and are likely to continue to impact upon the fine landscape character of the AONB. These are detailed in Tables 1 & 2, within the State of the AONB Report (Appendix 4) and are also summarised within the corresponding topic sections. The key landscape/character issues include:

- Impact of changing farming practices through any decline or switch in future agri-environment subsidies, especially as a result of Brexit and the current uncertainties in the future markets for UK agricultural and horticultural goods.
- Inappropriate or insensitive development both within and adjacent to the AONB including potential pressures from quarrying activity, wind farms, telecommunication infrastructure, new overhead electrical wires.
- Safeguarding the dramatic escarpment and ridge top views.
- Meeting the needs of the local community for new economic development and service provision whilst protecting the natural beauty and landscape character.
- Strongly linked to above, the need to maintain the area's special qualities and unique tranquillity whilst supporting/promoting development of appropriate type and scale to help secure access, recreation and tourism benefits.
- Impact upon views within, from and to the AONB, including cumulative impacts from neighbouring developments.
- Assessing future impacts from climate change including effects upon the area's ecosystem goods and services – including future agriculture, biodiversity, heritage and water assets.

The expansive views make the area particularly sensitive to landscape changes. Escarpment, ridge and plateau-top locations are especially vulnerable to inappropriate land-use or development. Similarly, the peaceful and highly attractive valleys that can be found throughout the Wolds are a key component of landscape character and are sensitive to change.

Sir John Lawton's report 'Making Space for Nature' (2010) remains relevant, and makes the case for 'more, bigger, better and joined' habitats to help ensure ecological recovery for our terrestrial wildlife sites, arguing that we must:

- improve the quality of current wildlife sites by better habitat management;
- increase the size of existing wildlife sites;
- enhance connections between sites, either through physical corridors or through 'stepping stones';
- create new sites;
- reduce the pressure on wildlife by improving the wider environment.

The report highlights that National Parks and AONBs should be exemplars of coherent and resilient ecological networks. The adoption of a landscape scale approach to land management provides an important mechanism for achieving such delivery, recognising the links between economic, social and natural forces.

The Lawton report recommendations, together with the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA, 2011) have helped to inform the Government's Natural Environment White Paper – 'The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature' launched in June 2011. The White Paper recognises the importance of landscapes and local nature partnerships for protecting and improving our natural environment and highlights the value of working together at a strategic level. The AONB Partnership is well placed to lead on such initiatives in the future to help deliver the multiple benefits (goods and services) received from exemplary land management. In taking forward such a collaborative approach there is clearly a need to understand landowners' interests and requirements and to work closely with the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP) and other key partners.

Landscape Management Statement:

The many partners supporting the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB will, through aiding and delivering the objectives, policies and resulting actions in this Management Plan, ensure that the natural beauty and special landscape character of the Wolds are protected and enhanced for the benefit of future generations.

As expressed within the vision; in addition, the Partnership will seek to explore innovative approaches to land management that can help to demonstrate the area's contributions to wider goods and services, including opportunities to explore and further links with natural capital (ecosystem services), health and well-being.

This landscape management statement is an overall statement of intent for all partners and is delivered by the objectives, policies and resulting actions across this Plan.

4.2 Natural Heritage – Biodiversity

4.2.1 Introduction – context setting for nature conservation

The value and importance of biodiversity has been recognised nationally through the Biodiversity 2020 Strategy (2011) which sets out ambitious targets for halting the overall loss of England's biodiversity by 2020. The most recent State of Nature Report 2016 highlighted that although there have been some success stories, the general trend in loss of nature continues largely unabated. Defra's 25 Year Plan for the Environment was launched in January 2018 and reaffirms the importance of embracing landscape scale protection and enhancement to support adaptation to climate change and the delivery of wider ecosystem benefits through the embodiment of a "natural capital" approach.

As documented in previous Management Plans wildlife is a key component of the natural beauty of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. The Nature Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire (2015) and the Lincolnshire Wolds National Character Area profile recognise farmland, grassland, roadside verges, woodland, beech clumps, rivers and streams and hedgerows as important habitat types within the AONB.

The Lincolnshire Wolds State of the AONB report provides a number of indicators that will help to monitor the nature conservation and biodiversity interests across the Wolds protected landscape – this includes GLNP collated data for a number of nationally and locally important species (UK BAP, Red List and Lincolnshire BAP Species) and a range of national datasets including those available from the PLMF programme (Section 2.4).

As evidenced, there are a limited number of nationally protected sites in the AONB, with 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) designated on account of their wildlife interest. Invariably these sites are located on the steeper valley sides or wetter valley bottoms and typically include important semi-natural grassland or marshland habitat and ancient woodland.

Historically there have been over 300 non-statutory wildlife sites recorded across the AONB. Many were originally listed as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs), but following more recent surveys some 208 of these sites have now been reclassified as Lincolnshire Wildlife Sites (LWSs). Of the remaining 95 original SNCIs, some still require resurveying, whilst some have failed to reach the more robust criteria for successful LWS listing. Additional to the above sites; the AONB has a further nine Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust Reserves and 17 Roadside Nature Reserves.

Clearly looking ahead, the pressures on the wildlife of the Wolds look set to continue, however there has been considerable work in recent years to help increase our knowledge and understanding of the flora and fauna resource. Additional to important agri-environment, forestry and riparian enhancement schemes, a wide range of collaborative projects have been undertaken with local landowners. The Partnership continues to seek to strive towards securing a diverse, abundant and accessible biodiversity resource – not just focusing on the rare and special - but also the wider network of habitats found across a heavily farmed, but nationally protected landscape.

Key issues for the future wildlife management of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB include:

- Continuing loss of biodiversity exacerbated by small size and isolation of priority wildlife habitats.
- Wide neglect and absence of traditional management especially of woodland, hedgerow, grassland and grass verge habitats.
- Lack of comprehensive up-to-date information, especially for remaining SNCIs that were not surveyed in 2005.
- Future trends in farming, including continued threat to livestock farming and subsequent loss in pasture, increasing pressure for intensification and new crops, and the ongoing uncertainties to future farming markets and subsidies through the Brexit negotiations.
- Need to develop 'good practice' land management in the wider countryside, including development of local case studies to assist landowners in protecting and enhancing wildlife.

- Conflicts between sites for new woodland planting and increasingly energy crops versus the retention of grassland/wetland habitats.
- Inappropriate or insensitive developments especially farmstead and barn conversions which may impact upon protected species such as bats, barn owls, swifts, swallows and house martins.
- Water resource issues including threat of diffuse pollution, sedimentation and low flow rates.
- Wider issues including global warming and the ongoing and future threats to biosecurity from invasive species. Common concerns include the spread of Himalayan balsam, signal crayfish, mink, ragwort and other exotics. Increasing pressures from badger and deer populations is an issue for some landowners.
- Increasing need for a new land management system post Brexit that can support an ecosystems services approach and encourage and support innovation through local ownership and governance. *(new issue)*

Objective:

BO To protect, enhance and where appropriate, restore the biodiversity of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, aiding the development and relevant delivery of the Lincolnshire Nature Strategy, Biodiversity 2020, Natural England's Conservation 21 Strategy, and emerging UK environmental plans (post Brexit) including A Green Future.

Policies:

BP1 To survey and monitor key habitats and species within the AONB in-line with Lincolnshire, national and international aspirations for biodiversity.

BP2 To develop and promote a landscape-scale approach to habitat conservation, restoration and creation, helping habitats and species to develop resilience to future climate change through increasing habitat linkages and providing for enhanced ecosystem service networks.

BP3 To support and encourage agricultural guidance and good practices that protect, enhance and restore wildlife habitats across the AONB, helping to minimise the need for regulatory enforcement.

BP4 Utilising the concept of natural capital to develop and promote general awareness and appreciation of the wildlife of the AONB and maximise the benefits of wider socio-economic gains including utilising wider links to the local nature tourism offer.

Actions: See BA1-6 in Table 3

Key Related Plans and Strategies (Landscape and Biodiversity)

Anglian River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan (2015)
Anglian Water Resources Management Plan (2015)
Anglian Water Asset Management Plan (2015-20)
Biodiversity Strategy (2011)
Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services
Conservation 21 – Natural England's Conservation Strategy for the 21st Century (2017)
Countryside Stewardship Statement of Priorities – Lincolnshire Wolds (NCA043)
Creating a Great Place for Living; Defra's Strategy to 2020 (2016)
Defra 25 Year Plan – A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to improve the Environment (2018)
Forestry and Woodland Policy Statement (2013)
Future Water (2008) Defra
Greater Lincolnshire Local Economic Partnership (GLLEP) Water for Growth - Water Management Plan 2015-2040
Greater Lincolnshire Nature Strategy 2015-20 (2015)
Humber River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan (2015)
Landscapes for Everyone; Creating a Better Future (Consortium Publication, 2016)
Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Strategic Action Plan (2014-19)
Lincolnshire County Council Natural Environment Strategy 2012-2018 (2012)
Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016)
Lincolnshire Wolds National Character Area 43
Local Development Frameworks and Core Strategies (see Developing in the Wolds)
Local Development Plans – Saved Policies
Local Wildlife Sites: Guidelines for the Identification and Selection in the Historic County of Lincolnshire 3rd Edition (2013)
Making Space for Nature: A Review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network (The Lawton Report, 2010)
Making Space for Water (2005): HA6 Catchment Scale Land-Use Management & HA7 Land Management Practices
Natural Environment White Paper (2011)
National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
National Pollinator Strategy (2014)
National Trust - Land, Outdoors and Nature Strategy (2017)
Planning for Ancient Woodland: Planners' Manual for Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree (2017)
State of Nature UK Report (Consortium Publication, 2016)
Steeping, Great Eau and Long Eau Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (2008)
The Anglian and The Humber River Basin Management Plan (2015)
The European Landscape Convention (ratified by the UK in 2006)
The European Water Framework Directive (2000)
The Geodiversity Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire (2017)
The Grimsby, Ancholme and Louth Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (2009)
The Grimsby and Ancholme Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009)
The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (2011)
The Nature Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire (revised 2015)
The Water Environment (England & Wales) Regulations (2003)
The Witham and Louth Coastal Catchment Flood Management Plans (2009)
The Witham Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (2004)
Think Big: Ecological Recovery – National Association for AONBs joint partnership statement
Vision for Nature; Young People's Vision for the Natural World in 2050 (2016)
Water Resources Strategy for the Anglian Region (2009)
Water Resources Management Plan (Anglian Water, 2010)
Water White Paper; Water for Life (2011)
Woodland for Water: woodland measures for meeting WFD objectives (2011)

4.2.2 Meadow, Pasture and Wet Grassland

Although much of the Wolds has long been under the plough, grassland habitats remain a very important landscape, wildlife and farming resource. The majority of the Wolds' grasslands and rough pastures are found on the steeper slopes (where soils are thin and the ground hard to cultivate), in the valley bottoms as lush pastures and wet flushes, and in disused quarries and chalk pits.

Unfortunately unimproved grassland has been very scarce in the AONB with less than 1.5% coverage. Much of this semi-natural grassland remains isolated and fragmented in habitat terms, although invariably protected through a range of designations, with added management support from agri-environment measures. The agricultural census figures for 2013 revealed total grassland coverage of just over 8,000 hectares (14.5% of the AONB); this includes permanent and temporary grassland and rough grazing. In more recent years some landowners have taken up the option of reversion to unfertilised and low inputs grassland, often for added benefits including heritage protection, reducing runoff and soil erosion.

Grassland is important in both landscape and biodiversity terms, with species rich swards often supporting a wide range of insects, pollinators and bird species. There has been a drive to improve management of the Wold's grassland for nature conservation, primarily by encouraging and supporting low-input fertiliser and balancing the grazing or hay and silage cutting regimes to aid self-pollination and maximise species diversity. The challenges look set to continue not least the uncertainties from Brexit that may impact (positively and negatively) upon the livestock industry. There is clearly a need for continued collaboration, supporting grazer networks at both local and strategic levels to help maintain and enhance the grassland resource.

Key issues for the future grassland management include:

- Loss of local livestock and the infrastructure and expertise to support a thriving local livestock industry.
- Resulting loss of traditional grazing management and threat to unimproved pastures, especially a decline in biodiversity from the encroachment of invasive species (e.g. ragwort, competitive grasses and scrub).
- Continued pressures of intensive farming practices, including a more recent shift to the take-up of poultry farming.
- Potential conflict with other habitat types, e.g. new woodland planting schemes.
- The need for identifying and encouraging appropriate grassland restoration.
- Increase in energy crop planting at the expense of wet grassland and grazing marsh.
- Potentially, more limited uptake of Mid and Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship scheme options in the future.
- Development and effective implementation of new land management policy post Brexit. (*new issue*)
- A need to maximise opportunities for wildlife and public services – multifunctional land for flood risk management, climate change resilience, and biodiversity gains within a productive food environment. (*new issue*)

Objective:

- GO** To increase the extent and quality of wildlife-friendly grasslands across the AONB, targeting areas close to Local Wildlife Sites, watercourses, important road verges, archaeological sites, historic parkland and settlements.

Policies:

- GP1** To help maintain, enhance and where appropriate, restore, extend or connect grasslands of high wildlife, historic and landscape value.
- GP2** To raise community awareness of the rich natural and cultural heritage of the Wolds' grassland. (See also Section 6.2 Interpretation)
- GP3** To support initiatives to encourage grazing of less productive grasslands, including calcareous grassland.
- GP4** To promote to land managers the additional benefits of good grassland management including carbon sink, climate change and flood alleviation impacts.

Actions: See GA1-6 in Table 3

4.2.3 Grass Verges and Green Lanes

A further important grassland resource is provided by the road verge and green lane network that characterises the Wolds, many of which are on historic routeways including Roman roads and the traditional salters tracks and drovers routes. On account of their history of development, a number of the verges are very distinctive in landscape terms, often with a straight roadway dividing broad verges and adjacent hedgerows.

A significant number of verges and green lanes are botanically rich, proving important refuges for grasses, sedges and flowering plants such as yarrow and devil's bit scabious. A large number serve as important links between otherwise fragmented habitats including grassland, churchyards, veteran trees, small copses and more substantial woodlands. Our green lanes and verges can also be very advantageous in terms of the two-way buffering from both field and road runoff, helping to minimise siltation and potentially the pollution of neighbouring water courses.

There are currently 17 Roadside Nature Reserves in the AONB, comprising over 16 kilometres of verge habitat. The Life on the Verge partnership project has done much to raise the profile of this resource; work included delivering training for volunteers who then went on to help in the extensive surveying of the verge network. Information subsequently compiled on-line contributed to the review and classification of 55 roadside verges/green lanes as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). *See case study.*

More recently partnership efforts have focused on working closely with Highways, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and other interest groups to secure good practice from a management perspective. This has comprised guidance on the appropriate levels of cutting, ideally lifting the arisings to avoid the ongoing build-up of nutrients. There is however often a balance to be struck, e.g. in terms of health and safety requirements to ensure both adequate visual splays and sight lines, and undertake salting during winter conditions, all of which can also impact detrimentally upon the neighbouring plant communities. A trial has been conducted (*LCC - Peakhill Associates*) from a study site buffering the Wolds to explore the potential for using verge cuttings to provide material for a local anaerobic digestion (AD) plant, generating both electricity and biogas. There is an opportunity to review further opportunities, especially in the context of Highway Authorities seeking financial savings from their future verge cutting programmes.

Threats/Pressures

Key issues for grass verge management include:

- Loss of traditional grazing and hay-cutting practises with a trend toward inappropriate mechanical cutting (over-cutting or poor timing), although often in response to road safety or amenity pressures.
- General neglect and/or poor management including inappropriate tree planting, scrub encroachment and introductions of other non-native plants, especially garden bulbs.
- Road run-off, particularly salt wash, resulting in long term damage to neighbouring plant communities.
- Illegal uses including litter and fly-tipping direct onto the verges and vehicle encroachments.
- Highway authorities' reductions in budgets for verge management – both an opportunity and a threat. (*new issue*)

Objective:

VLO To retain, restore and encourage, positive management of the distinctive grass verges along the AONB's roadsides and green lanes. (See also Section 5.1 Farming in the Wolds)

Policies:

VLP1 To help maintain, enhance and where appropriate restore, extend or connect, grass verges for their wildlife and landscape value.

VLP2 To raise awareness and local engagement in the natural and cultural heritage of grass verges and their contribution to green infrastructure and climate change adaptation.

Actions: See VLA1-8 in Table 3

4.2.4 Woodlands, Beech Clumps and Traditional Orchards

The woodland cover of the Wolds AONB is low, at just over 3,000 hectares (less than 5%), but remains an essential habitat and landscape component. Much of the original woodland cover was cleared by the 11th century to make way for the grazing and mixed arable landscapes of the early middle-ages. However significant replanting occurred during the parliamentary enclosures from the late 18th and early 19th centuries – often for game shoots, landscaping in the vicinity of country halls and manors and the provision of shelter belts.

The remaining native deciduous woods (just over 600 hectares) typically still provide the most diverse ecosystems, especially those with aged veteran trees, wet springs, and open glades and rides. Woodlands in particular are an important resource for wider goods and services and natural capital. They commonly provide a source of timber (soft and hard woods), shelter, and with careful management and planning, climate change resilience benefits (e.g. buffering from storm events and minimising rapid runoff problems such as soil erosion and subsequent stream sedimentation).

Defra's new 25 Year Environment Plan also recognises that ancient woodland and veteran trees are of significant heritage value and irreplaceable character and seeks to work with partners to help support their future sustainable management. As documented in previous Management Plans, our local woods can be a real asset to the local community in offering wider socio-economic benefits through forestry employment, field sports and game management, as well as many opportunities for wider public engagement through access, education, recreation and tourism.

The Forestry Commission has highlighted that future woodland and estate plans must recognise that small blocks of woodland are invariably less economic to manage and have less resilience in the face of climate change. They are advocating that the extension of woodlands, carried out sensitively and in the right places, should be promoted. They have proposed that in some locations it may be recommended that up to 20% of "honorary-natives" and 20% of "non-native" stock be incorporated within new woodland planting schemes.

There is a small but important orchard resource in the Wolds, many located within the grounds, or in close proximity to country manors and halls. Previous studies have highlighted a potential of 48 traditional orchards in the AONB (People's Trust for Endangered Species, 2009) and surveys have been initiated to further assess our orchard resource. Many are now relics, where active management and pruning has ceased, however those remaining often harbour local/rare varieties of fruit trees and provide further opportunities for biodiversity (often including lichen and specialist insects and pollinators) and wider cultural gains.

Threats/Pressures

Key issues for future woodland management include:

- Lack of current data on the woodlands/copses (especially those under 0.5 hectares).
- General neglect and lack of woodland management with many of the smaller plantations, typically the overly mature 'beech clumps', with few trees of an age to replace them - although the situation is now improving with more recent planting.
- Often general isolation of small and ancient/semi-natural woodland.
- Inappropriate planting schemes including species mix and locations.
- Illegal fly-tipping in some areas.
- Climate change and impacts upon the future viability of some native species potentially resulting from both more extreme/unpredictable weather patterns and new pests and diseases.
- A need to raise awareness of the need for felling licences and hedgerow removal notices, where appropriate.
- The need to review woodland management and planting in the light of Chalara and Acute Oak Decline.
- An increasing and expanding deer population.

Shared Priorities Statement - currently under review...

Through the Joint Accord, the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and the Forestry Commission (FC) East Midlands Region will continue to work together to enhance the contribution that trees and woodlands can make within this special landscape. The Government Forestry Policy Statement and the revised Management Plan for the AONB support the creation and sustainable management of woodland within the Lincolnshire Wolds. Most of the woodland within the area is in private ownership, and working closely with landowners will continue to be a key driver for success. As evidenced below, positive partnership activity has increased significantly since the signing of this accord.

Objective:

WBO To protect, enhance and where appropriate extend, the woodland and tree cover within the AONB, maximising their contribution to the AONB by integrating landscape, biodiversity and socio-economic benefits.

Policies:

WBP1 To reinforce the existing pattern of woodland, seeking to increase the area of native broadleaved woodland (including wet woodland), accepting some non-native planting for climate change adaptability.

WBP2 To re-establish complementary habitats adjacent to woodlands. (See also Sections 4.2.2 Meadow, Pasture and Wet Grassland and 4.2.5 Hedgerows and Landmark Trees)

WBP3 To record the extent and location of small ancient woodlands as part of an integrated digital resource database for the Lincolnshire Wolds woodlands.

WBP4 To encourage and support woodland business schemes, of an appropriate scale, within the AONB.

WBP5 To establish the extent and quality of traditional orchards and encourage suitable restoration, creation and management.

Actions: See WBA1-8 in Table 3

4.2.5 Hedgerows and Landmark Trees

The oldest hedgerows found in the Wolds are often markers of parish boundaries, or those located near to existing or deserted/shrunken settlements. As evidenced in previous Management Plans, a large proportion of the hedgerows found in the Lincolnshire Wolds today were actually planted in the 18th and 19th centuries in response to the national Enclosure Acts. Previously existing open fields, commons and rabbit warrens were subsequently parcelled into more regimented field systems. Many hedges were planted in uniform lines, adjacent to new roadways and wide verges with hawthorn the dominant species. Very often natural contours were ignored and the resulting patterns of hedgerows contrast markedly with the previous older, narrow and winding hedges that were species-rich, albeit with minimal verges.

Like much of lowland UK a significant number of hedgerows have been lost during the second half of the 20th century. It has for example been estimated that between the 1970's and 1990's an average of over 1,000 metres of hedgerow were lost for every square kilometre of farmland due to agricultural intensification and the government grants of the day. However there has been a realisation of the importance of hedgerows both in their own right for biodiversity (providing shelter, nesting and foraging opportunities for a wide range of wildlife), but also their wider role as landscape and ecosystem corridors often linking fragmented habitats and helping to provide livestock and soil protection.

The hedgerow resource found across the Lincolnshire Wolds provides an important refuge for many of the area's mature and veteran trees. The AONB Partnership's Trees of Our Time project enabled community groups to review and highlight individual trees, or groups of trees, that were prominent for wildlife and landscape reasons, or had a wider cultural significance. The pressure on our veteran trees look set to continue, not least with the new threats from climate change and spread of new pests and diseases. Post-Brexit changes to agri-environment schemes could also bring significant changes in terms of the future support for boundary and field edge enhancements.

Threats/Pressures

Key issues for future woodland management include:

- Lack of collated hedgerows surveys and limited information on landmark trees.
- Previously loss of traditional management techniques, for example hedge laying and rotational cutting, although situation has been improving via assistance from agri-environment schemes.
- Previously poor maintenance, particularly inappropriate timing and over frequency of cuts, however situation also improving via assistance from agri-environment schemes.
- The pressure on landowners to remove roadside trees on health and safety grounds.
- Balancing tree planting and maintenance needs with heritage and geodiversity protection.
- Resilience tree felling by powerline maintenance companies. (*new issue*)
- Tree health issues such as Chalara and Acute Oak Decline. (*new issue*)
- Potential loss of cross compliance options linked to CAP Pillar 1 payments which currently helps to protect hedgerow/ditch boundaries. (*new issue*)

Objective:

HTO To protect, manage, enhance and where appropriate increase, the hedgerows and landmark trees in the AONB.

Policies:

HTP1 To help record, maintain, and where appropriate restore all species rich and ancient hedgerows, encouraging planting and management of hedgerows and trees to benefit landscape and habitat connectivity. (See also Section 4.2.4 Woodlands, Beech Clumps and Traditional Orchards)

HTP2 To raise awareness of the importance of hedgerows and landmark trees for wildlife, landscape and cultural values and encourage future community engagement.

Actions: See HTA1-5 in Table 3

4.2.6 Rivers, Streams and Ponds

There are nine principal river systems within the AONB, which north to south comprise Nettleton Beck, Waithe Beck, River Rase, River Bain, River Lud (Louth Canal), Great Eau and Long Eau, River Waring and the River Lymn. These catchments are predominantly fed through the chalk aquifer and understandably chalk stream characteristics dominate; however due to the complex geology, which includes the Spilsby Sandstone aquifer in the southern Wolds, some of the streams are classed as 'mixed geology' chalk streams. Mapping records a total stream network of 258 kilometres within the AONB, both as main-river and smaller tributaries, often fed by fluctuating spring-heads and occasional swallow holes.

The Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project (LCSP) was established in 2004 and through committed partnership support continues to work closely with farmers, land managers, statutory bodies and residents of the Wolds to help support and enhance the quality of the chalk streams. Work has also focussed on raising awareness and interest in the special qualities of this unique resource, both through volunteering, surveying and an educational programme with local schools and colleges.

The LCSP has developed and kept under close review the partnership's Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Strategic Action Plan and has sought to develop innovative catchment-wide approaches to the challenges and opportunities facing both water quality and supply – including balancing nature conservation, farming, industry and domestic household requirements. The project is ongoing and has helped to deliver over 19 kilometres of riparian habitat enhancements, securing over 45 kilometres of adjacent habitat restoration. In addition to improving water quality and species conservation there have been wider benefits to the local communities, including reducing flood risk and enhancing the opportunities for leisure and tourism (e.g. improving the quality of the visitors experience, enhancing local fishing syndicates etc).

Currently over 76% of main river in the AONB is deemed to be in moderate to good ecological condition. Partners continue to be committed to working with landowners and managers to explore further opportunities for developing and maximising environmental enhancements alongside natural flood risk mitigation – helping for example to support and complement "hard-engineered" solutions such as the Louth Flood Alleviation Scheme on the River Lud. There may be further opportunities for integrated water management solutions with the potential increase in on-farm reservoir schemes as climate change takes hold (e.g. likelihood of restrictions of water supply during the summer months, but more plentiful water supplies during winter and via more extreme rainfall events) and also utilising the principals of SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage), as per the National Planning Policy Framework guidance for securing sustainable water resources - meeting the many water demands whilst safeguarding the environment throughout our river catchments.

Threats/Pressures

Current issues include:

- Low water table and flow rates primarily through abstraction, but also anticipated future variability in rainfall through climate change.
- Diffuse pollution - arable runoff of nitrate, phosphates, organic effluent and silts.
- Loss of riverside and other marginal habitats through intensive farming practices and development.
- Increasing water demands from agriculture, industrial/commercial and residential usage.
- Flooding and prevention measures including flood alleviation schemes, and active bank maintenance.
- Non-native and invasive species especially influx of signal crayfish, mink, farmed fish and Himalayan balsam.
- Loss of small and fragile wetland habitats (spring feeds and ponds) through insensitive development and/or undesirable management practices. (*new issue*)
- Rising water temperatures in the absence of some waterside tree cover. (*new issue*)
- Potential loss of cross compliance linked to CAP Pillar 1 payments. (*new issue*)
- Diffuse runoff or point source discharges of pesticides - especially neonicotinoids. (*new issue*)

Objective:

RSPO To improve, where appropriate, the function and natural environment of the river and stream catchments and their associated landscape character and wetland habitats.

Policies:

RSPP1 To maximise the extent of low-input land management adjacent to all rivers and streams and utilise floodplains to minimise impact of flooding in residential areas. (See also Section 4.2.7 Arable Farmland)

RSPP2 To rehabilitate streams and rivers to enhance their biodiversity and ecological status where appropriate and consistent with flood defence requirements and Water Framework Directive (WFD) targets.

RSPP3 To raise community awareness and where possible, community involvement of the rich diversity of water habitats within the Wolds and how their actions impact upon this resource. (See also Section 5.2 Thriving Communities)

RSPP4 To continue to further our understanding of the springs and pond resource found across the Wolds.

RSPP5 To encourage the enhancement of existing ponds and other wetland habitats for biodiversity, landscape and wider socio-economic gains.

RSPP6 Influence any future water storage schemes to encourage multiple benefits for biodiversity, landscape, flood prevention and wider ecosystem goods and services.

RSPP7 To seek to maintain groundwater levels and their seasonal fluctuations wherever possible to safeguard rivers, streams, springs and blow-wells sufficient to retain characteristic wildlife communities.

Actions: See RSPA1-18 in Table 3

4.2.7 Arable farmland

Unlike many of the chalk downland landscapes of southern England, much of the Lincolnshire Wolds sheep-walks, common land and warrens were extensively cultivated in the early 1800's, a pattern which continued apace with the Victorian High Farming Period which witnessed significant investment and the development of highly organised mixed rotational farming.

The generally high quality and permeable soils found across the Wolds, including for example loamy deposits from glacial tills, together with the area's generally drier climate (in comparison with western Britain) has favoured the ongoing intensification of arable cropping. The 1960's and 1970's saw some of the most dramatic changes to the tilling practices; and aided by mechanisation large fields took hold, the labour force shrank and many small farms and farmsteads were amalgamated.

Today, modern and commercial farming dominates much of the Wolds, invariably with a focus on a small handful of crops. Spray interventions, in the form of nutrient, pesticide and herbicide applications, together with the introduction of autumn sowing, has had a significant impact on the wildlife associated with the farmed landscape. There is increasing concern over the use of neonicotinoid pesticides and potential harmful impacts upon bees and other pollinators – the Plan seeks to support approaches to minimise pesticide and fertiliser applications. The once common cornfield weeds, including poppies, yellow charlock (ketlocks), thistles and docks were driven from the fields under the relentless drive for increased yields. A similar trend has been evidenced in the decline of many of our once common farmland birds including species such as lapwing, native partridge, tree sparrow, turtle dove and yellow hammer. However some opportunistic birds have favoured better and increased in number, including for example gold finch, stock dove, wood pigeon, and rook. It is also recognised that in more recent years a number of farmers and land managers across the Wolds have utilised a range of agri-environment schemes, local grants and voluntary measures to help protect and enhance the plant, bird and wider biodiversity across their holdings.

The future for domestic agriculture is uncertain, with current methods for farm support and cross compliance measures likely to change following de-coupling from the European payment support systems under Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 (Common Agriculture Policy – Rural Payments) and the move to more open market forces. Stakeholders are recommending that the Plan seeks to secure sustainable farming across the Wolds; in the context of arable cropping that means a type and level of cultivation that can secure a profit for the landowner/farmer, improving farm efficiencies to secure high quality food and produce, whilst also delivering on a wide range of public benefits (natural capital) including innovative projects to enhance arable wildlife, explore and develop integrated pest management and minimise inputs.

Threats/Pressures

- Increasing pressure for intensification to maintain economies of scale in production.
- Continuing applications of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers reducing opportunities for arable wildlife, however ongoing innovations and integrated pest management can aid good practice to help to minimise undesirable impacts and maximise economic returns.
- Changing influences (positive and negative) on biodiversity through emerging field crops e.g. flax, borage, sunflowers, and energy crops such as maize and miscanthus.
- Brexit and changes to domestic land management policies (including potentially no cross compliance) and increasing market pressures including the increasing influence of wider global forces. (*new issue*)

Objective:

AFO To improve the abundance and diversity of characteristic farmland wildlife within the commercially farmed landscape. (See also Section 5.1 Farming in the Wolds)

Policies:

AFP1 To encourage maximum take-up of agri-environment scheme options that provide enhanced conditions for arable farmland wildlife.

AFP2 To improve awareness of commercial farming's good practices that can bring additional wildlife and landscape benefits, including greater use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and low-input systems.

AFP3 To encourage surveys to improve information on distinctive arable wildlife (e.g. native herbs and grasses, pollinators and farmland birds), helping to provide a wider evidence base to inform future land management for the area.

Actions: See AFA1-5 in Table 3

4.3 Earth Heritage

4.3.1 Geodiversity

The Lincolnshire Wolds has a complex geology and geomorphology that has been extensively modified by a number of ice advances. Chalk from the Cretaceous period (140 million – 75 million years ago) forms the dominant bedrock for the area and is part of the strata that extends from the Chilterns north to the Yorkshire Wolds. However the chalk is typically less than 50 metres thick in places with glacial tills and gravels overlaying much of the area. The bedding planes of the Wolds dip gently eastwards, thus periodically exposing older rocks from the Lower Cretaceous (Carstone, Sutterby Marl, Roach, Upper Tealby Clay, Tealby Limestone, Lower Tealby Clay, Claxby Ironstones, Spilsby Sandstones). These deposits of sands, clays and ironstones are commonly revealed on the western facing scarp slopes and within the numerous river valley systems that cut through the Wolds. The picture is further complicated by the increasing dominance of the sandstone beds as you move southwards from the Bluestone Heath escarpment.

As indicated, the Wold's topography has been greatly modified by glacial and periglacial activity and this is one of the outstanding qualities of the area. No other upland chalk landscape in Britain has undergone such a dramatic modification on account of an extensive series of glaciations. Ancient coastal cliffs, glacial spillways, ponded-lake systems, dry valley combs cut by meltwaters, and complex glacial deposits (tills and gravels) are in abundance. One of the overriding legacies of the ice-age is the areas highly distinctive rolling plateau and incised steep valleys which are most evident in the Chalk Wolds character area.

The AONB currently has 15 registered Local Geological Sites (LGS's) with six sites still recognised as Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) and awaiting further review. There are a further six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) on account of providing nationally important striking and memorable geological/geomorphological features. Four of these sites are disused quarries and two of the sites are cuttings. Many of the LGS exposures occur within redundant pits and quarries, typically where stone or chalk was extracted for local building stone, road aggregates or as a local source of lime.

There is an ongoing role for the Lincolnshire Geodiversity Group, as part of the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP), to work closely with landowners to raise awareness and interest in the geological and geomorphological interest of the Wolds. No new sites have been put forward for future stone quarrying under the current Mineral Plan, so only land with historic or existing permissions will be potentially used for the purposes of future extraction. However there are alternative uses for quarry pits including recycling, road aggregate, and highway storage that clearly need careful consideration through the formal planning system. As well as retaining important bedrock exposures for the purposes of research and education there is also a balance to be struck in terms of wider reclamation interests - in some cases there may well be pressures to provide a re-supply of land for future farming, recreation or wider landscape or environmental gains. The most advantageous enhancement schemes are invariably those that have undergone careful collaborative planning and can offer multiple future benefits whilst safeguarding the intrinsic geological/geomorphological interests of the Wolds.

Threats/Pressures

Key issues for managing the Wolds' geodiversity include:

- Threats to geological sites from disuse, neglect or fly-tipping.
- Continued quarrying/mineral extraction and secondary development pressures (e.g. landfill, recycling of aggregates etc.).
- Possible threat to important localities from fossil collecting.
- Restricted or poor access to many of the RIGS/LGS sites.
- General lack of awareness and understanding.
- Unauthorised use for recreation (e.g. from quad bikes, motorcycles and other vehicles).
- Ongoing management of geodiversity sites to maintain their interest/condition. (*new issue*)

Objective:

GDO To protect and enhance the geological and geomorphological features of the AONB for enjoyment, education and research.

Policies:

GDP1 To work with partners and landowners to safeguard and improve the intrinsic interest of geological and geomorphological sites, including improved access. (See also Section 6.3 Access, Recreation and Tourism)

GDP2 To maintain and enhance awareness and understanding of the geological and geomorphological interest through general and site specific interpretation. (See also Section 6.2 Interpretation)

Actions: See GDA1-6 in Table 3

4.3.2 Soils

Soil can often be overlooked, however it is clearly a vital resource, not only providing the essential substrate for our farming industry (arable, livestock, dairy and horticulture) but also serving as the base medium for our many and varied ecosystems including woodland, grassland, hedgerows, verges, parkland and gardens. Soils play an essential role in terms of capturing and protecting our water resources and also in their ability to buffer and protect the wider environment from extreme climatic events and unfortunate pollution incidents. Soil properties are dynamic, responding to a wide array of chemical, physical and biological processes as well as local conditions such as land-use, the type and extent of vegetation cover, topography and the prevailing weather conditions.

In response to the complex geology and topography of the Lincolnshire Wolds it is no surprise that some 25 individual soil types have been identified across the AONB. (Cranfield University, Soil Report 2009). Light chalky soils of varying colour and texture extend over much of the central and northern plateau tops and often provide well drained high grade agricultural land. By contrast, many of the valley bottoms in the Wolds comprise pockets of heavier and often impermeable clay soils where wet pastures, marshland and woodland carrs dominate the landscape. Similar waterlogged soils are extensive in the south-east claylands where glacial tills and moraine deposits are widespread. In turn more extensive glacial till has been deposited west of Belchford in the Bain valley. Further variety of soils is provided by Spilsby Sandstone which give rise to the more sandy substrates commonly found in a narrow westerly band and within the wider Lymn valley.

The partnership recognises the essential contribution of the Wolds soil resource to the farming sector but also its importance in safe guarding wider environmental goods and services (natural capital). There is clearly scope to explore and develop our understanding of soil management. This should include identifying and supporting good practice that can help ensure soil protection, minimising erosion and sedimentation and retaining, where needed, nutrients and organic matter (there are some circumstances where thin soils or an absence of soil is beneficial, for example geological/geomorphological exposures and plant communities that favour shallow/low fertility substrates). Such actions will help to secure sustainable and efficient levels of farming whilst aiding the wider protection of ecosystems and heritage assets and assisting in the future availability of fresh clean water within our aquifers, streams and rivers.

Threats/Pressures:

Key issues for managing the Wolds' soils include:

- Erosion from wind and water run-off.
- Appropriate land management practices to prevent the risk of erosion and subsequent diffuse pollution.
- Maintaining good soil structure and nutrient content.
- The reinstatement of grassland or use of winter cover crops or stubble to conserve the resource.
- Potential impact from uncertainties and changes relating to Brexit, global market forces and climate change. (*new issue*)
- Potential increased risks to soil structure and water run-off (diffuse pollution) through new cropping patterns, for example, depending on location and topography, increasing maize production for anaerobic digestion. (*new issue*)

Objective:

SO To protect and enhance the soil resource for water protection, flood management, agricultural management, biodiversity, and carbon storage.

Policies:

SP1 To work with partners and landowners to safeguard and improve the soil resource, anticipating future pressures from climate change

SP2 To increase awareness and understanding amongst landowners, land managers and other practitioners, of the different soil types and their relationship to the wider landscape and other environmental and socio-economic services.

Actions: See SPA1-4 in Table 3

Key Related Plans & Strategies (Geodiversity & Soils)

Defra 25 Year Plan – A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to improve the Environment (2018)

Earth Heritage Conservation in England: A Natural Areas Perspective (1996)

Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016)

Geodiversity Charter for England 2014

Lincolnshire Wolds Natural Area Profile (1997)

Local Development Frameworks and Core Strategies (see Developing in the Wolds)

Local Development Plans – Saved Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Natural Foundations: Geodiversity for People, Places and Nature (2006)

RIGS Handbook - UK RIGS (1999 onwards)

UK Geodiversity Action Plan (UKGAP) - A Framework for Action (2009)

Local Geological Sites: Guidelines for their Identification & Selection in the Historic County of Lincolnshire (2009)

Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England (2011)

Soils Report for Lincolnshire Wolds AONB (2009)

The Geodiversity Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire (2017)

4.4 Cultural Heritage - Historic Landscapes

A key component of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is undoubtedly its rich and vibrant rural heritage, which itself is a further important contributor to our wider natural and cultural capital. We are continuing to discover and enhance our understanding of the areas heritage assets today, both through specialist surveys and in some cases excavation, and through community projects such as the award winning Down Your Wold and the subsequent Layers of History initiatives.

Some of the oldest human remains in Britain have been found here and every period of habitation has left its mark on the landscape. A great variety of cultural features can be traced throughout the area, from ancient tumuli, long departed monastic sites, distinctive stone churches and more recent industrial heritage (ironstone mining) and our abandoned (but not forgotten) wartime airfields. There is evidence of many small parklands and a number of smaller estates, which often include modest Tudor or Georgian country houses, together with a large number of Georgian and Victorian farmsteads and more isolated farm dwellings. The setting of heritage assets within the wider landscape is also significant and in the case of more prominent country houses there are often elements of designed garden and parkland landscapes which necessitate careful and sympathetic management.

The landscape has inspired many artists and writers, the most famous being Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892). Born in Somersby and educated in Louth, he left the Wolds in 1837, but its landscape provided a source for many of his poems including 'In Memorium A.H.H.', 'Maud' and 'The Brook'. At the time of the enclosures, the well-known painter Peter de Wint (1784 -1849) produced a number of popular canvases of the Wolds. In the late 20th century, the area again provided a setting for literature in A.S. Byatt's Booker Prize-winning novel 'Possession' and continues to provide inspiration for local artists and writers.

4.4.1 Archaeology

The Wolds has a wealth of archaeological and historic landscape features. There are over 2,000 archaeological sites, of which 98 are classed as Scheduled Monuments (SMs) on account of their national interest. There is longevity of settlement which makes the Wolds a premier archaeological landscape (CCP414, 1993) and during early Medieval times it was one of the most densely populated parts of England with a thriving wool industry which helped in the development of the surrounding market towns.

The oldest remains date from the Palaeolithic period, with an important and well researched stratified site at Welton le Wold. The southern Wolds has significant Mesolithic remains, particularly in the Lymn valley and by the Neolithic period the Wolds had become a cultural focal point. The Wolds has an exceptional ritual landscape including the densest distribution of long barrows in the country and an important grouping of round barrows. Significant settlement and burial landscapes can be traced through the Bronze and Iron Ages and analysis of prehistoric and Roman remains shows that many Iron Age centres were superseded as Roman settlements. The Caistor High Street, the Bluestone Heath Road and Barton Street provided an important network of ancient trackways. The line of a Roman road between Lincoln Eastgate and Burgh le Marsh can still be traced through Tetford and north of Skendleby.

A large number of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, such as the one at South Elkington, show the continued importance of the area for ritual purposes. The Wolds was important in the formative years of Christianity in the county with a very early monastery at Partney. Substantial numbers of remains date from the Medieval period, with numerous monasteries and nunneries and one of the highest concentrations of deserted and shrunken medieval villages in England.

The Wolds archaeology is an important resource in need of ongoing protection and enhancement. In 2004 English Heritage, now Historic England, identified 47 (51%) of the SMs at high risk and a further nine at medium risk. However by 2011 the number of sites at high risk was reduced to 33 (34%) with nine still remaining at medium risk. The most recent figures from 2017 highlighted that the number of SMs at high risk has once again been further reduced to 27 (28%).

A Joint Accord between HE and the NAAONB is in place and recognises the need for future integrated action to help safeguard, manage and raise awareness of the heritage assets widely evident in all of

England's AONBs. A partnership approach between local landowners and respective organisations is essential for the future protection and enhancement of the archaeological assets across the Wolds. The Plan seeks to encourage increased opportunities for voluntary input and community engagement, which very much aligns with the Government's more recent strategies for protecting the historic environment (Cultural White Paper, 2016) whilst supporting sustainable development. The local Partnership recognises that there is a continued need for further holistic research and study, especially in respect of the important archaeological features found across the Wolds. Such studies will undoubtedly further our understanding of the AONB's cultural capital and the links between people, place and landscapes and in so doing aid future protection, interpretation and management of both protected and unprotected heritage sites and features of interest.

Threats/Pressures

- Change of land use especially conversion of pasture to arable - although the increasing use of 'min-till' (minimum tillage) and 'no-till' techniques will help to minimise future disturbances from deep ploughing which has previously been a concern.
- Potential for damage through poorly executed woodland management and inappropriate planting – tree root and wind-throw damage.
- General lack of awareness and understanding.
- Future impacts from climate change.

Objective:

AO To protect, appropriately manage and enhance archaeological and historic features, and their wider landscape setting, within the AONB, preventing further loss or damage.

Policies:

- AP1 To work with a range of partners and community groups to encourage and support research projects to help increase our knowledge of the Wolds' heritage, identifying sites of key importance and promoting better understanding of the complexity of risk, particularly from climate change.**
- AP2 To raise awareness of archaeological heritage in the Wolds, working with local communities, farmers, landowners, land managers, utility companies and relevant contract workers to support positive management.** (See also Sections 5.1 Farming in the Wolds and 6.2 Interpretation)
- AP3 To increase and enhance appropriate public access to sites of archaeological and historic interest, in consultation with landowners.** (See also Sections 5.1 Farming in the Wolds, 5.2 Thriving Communities, 6.2 Interpretation and 6.3 Access, Recreation and Tourism)

Actions: See AA1-12 in Table 3

4.4.2 Built Heritage

Attractive farmsteads, country houses, hamlets and distinctive (often nucleated) villages all contribute to the special character of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. There is no one unified pattern of architecture in the area, but rather a wide range of rural buildings that often reflects the diversity of local buildings stones and local bricks.

Claxby Ironstone, with its rich ochre and the paler Tealby Limestone, are used extensively in the traditional church and cottage buildings in the north-west of the Wolds – for example at Nettleton, Walesby, Claxby and Tealby. In contrast, Spilsby Sandstone was the dominant building material in the southern Wolds, often providing a distinctive dark brown/greenish hue on account of the presence of the mineral glauconite (widely associated with greensand). Some churches, farm buildings and cottages have also made use of local chalk, usually blocks from the firmest Totternhoe Beds. When used, the chalk was usually incorporated in the main facades of the building, often on top and within more resistant foundation and cornering stones and hard wood timbers.

Brick became available from the 14th century and with the presence of local clays encouraged the development of local brick pits. Brick buildings, initially with thatch roofs, became much more dominant over the preceding centuries for domestic properties. From the 17th century clay pantiles were the preferred roofing material, although imported slates were also being used, increasingly for more prestigious buildings including country houses such as Harrington Hall, Hainton Hall and South Ormsby Hall. Other important buildings in the Wolds include the now rare 'mud and stud' cottages within the southern Wolds, water and windmills, and Georgian and Victorian farmstead buildings and cottages.

As highlighted in previous plans, many of current stock of rural buildings can provide important roost opportunities for protected species including barn owls and bats, and any future renovation plans need to be managed sensitively. There are currently some 325 Listed Buildings found across the Wolds with less than 1% deemed at risk. The recent farmstead study for the AONB has identified 586 traditional farmsteads, some 8% of which include either a farmhouse or work building that is listed. Nearly half of the farmsteads recorded still retain over 50% of their original features and clearly provide an important resource. Restoration and enhancement of redundant historic buildings, thoughtfully planned and carefully implemented, can support further development and diversification of the local economy, and can add real value to the local built fabric and distinctive sense of place evident across the AONB.

Threats/Pressures

- Abandonment/dereliction of farm, cottage and watermill buildings – although the situation is improving through more recent renovation opportunities.
- Previously poorly planned and constructed development/renovation/conversion, especially within some of the Wolds' villages, leading to loss of local distinctiveness – the situation is improving through local planning authorities increased attention to quality of design.
- Limited sources for local materials.
- Loss of traditional building expertise.

Objective:

BHO To protect and enhance the historic and locally distinctive character of rural settlements, buildings, and features within the AONB. (See also Section 7.1 Planning)

Policies:

BHP1 To work with property owners, residents, owner occupiers and developers to encourage sympathetic and innovative design and management of buildings in keeping with local distinctiveness and character.

BHP2 To work with a range of partners and community groups, to raise awareness of the built heritage in the Wolds and increase understanding of its contribution to the AONB.

BHP3 To encourage and support sympathetic repair and sustainable re-use of redundant buildings for uses directly supportive of the local economy, encouraging use of local materials. (see also Section 5.2 Thriving Communities)

BHP4 To embrace appropriate technologies that promotes sustainability and energy efficiency whilst complementing the AONB's special character.

Actions: See BHA1-8 in Table 3

Key Related Plans & Strategies (Archaeology and Built Heritage)

Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings; Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse (Historic England, 2017)
Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings; Historic England Advice Note 9 (2017)
Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for Sustainable Management of the Historic County Archaeology Manual - Lincolnshire County Council (2016)
Cultural Heritage - Government White Paper (2016)
Defra 25 Year Plan – A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to improve the Environment (2018)
English Heritage National Heritage Protection Plan (Version 1: May 2011)
Every Street Matters (2006)
Heritage Counts 2016: Heritage and the Economy (2016)
Heritage White Paper - Heritage Protection for the 21st Century (2007)
Joint Statement on the Historic Environment in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: English Heritage, CADW and National Association for AONBs (2004)
Lincolnshire Design Guide for Residential Areas (1996)
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Traditional Farmstead and Landscape Statement (2017)
Local Development Frameworks & Core Strategies (emerging)
Local Development Plans – Saved Policies
Looking After Our Landscapes Post Brexit (Heritage Alliance, 2017)
National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
Our Lincolnshire, Our Past - The Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Strategy 2017-22 (2017)
Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment (2010)
Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment (2000)
Streets for All (2005)
Streetscape Design Manual - Lincolnshire County Council (2016)
Structure and Local Plans – Saved Policies and Emerging Local Plans
The Greater Lincolnshire Farmstead Assessment Framework - Guidelines for Best Practice (2015)
The Greater Lincolnshire Farmsteads Character Statements (2015)
The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future (2010)
The Maintenance and Repair of Traditional Farm Buildings; A Guide to Good Practice (Historic England, 2017)

5. Living and Working in the Wolds - Theme 2

The Lincolnshire Wolds is sparsely populated, comprising small villages and hamlets and dispersed farm dwellings, surrounded by a number of small market towns. The area is deeply rural in character, and although characterised with some of the finest landscapes in the East Midlands, some communities still suffer from economic deprivation and rural isolation. Limited public transport connections beyond the primary main roads means many individuals are heavily dependent upon personal transport to access wider employment and service hubs.

It is important that there are sufficient local employment opportunities to enable people not only to continue living in the Wolds but also to have the opportunity of working close to home. As well as the important service and cultural links to the larger market towns, local residents are very aware of the need to utilise future benefits from new technologies (e.g. via the ongoing roll-out of mobile phone and broadband). There is also community awareness and understanding of the need to help maintain and support a wide range of local services including the village shop, post office, pub and tea room. Such facilities remain invaluable at a local level and often provide opportunities for important social connections, especially for the more isolated and vulnerable in our communities. As detailed within Natural England's Conservation 21 Strategy, a healthy local natural environment is a central part of health, wealth and prosperity - it is important that both residents and visitors to the Wolds are given every opportunity to become actively involved in both the enjoyment and management of the area's natural and cultural environments (natural beauty).

5.1 Farming and Field Sports in the Wolds

The character of the Lincolnshire Wolds remains heavily shaped by farming, with field sizes and cropping patterns reinforcing local landscapes and having an ever changing impact upon the visual character of the area. With over 75% of the AONB in cultivation any market changes through Brexit, and the potential decoupling from subsidies and move towards WTO (World Trade Organisation) rules, has the potential for wide reaching impact upon not only the farming community but also on the character and landscape of the Wolds.

Some 16% of employment in the AONB is in the farming sector, supporting a workforce of almost 800 individuals, including a significant number of full-time workers, farmers and farm managers. Almost half of the 231 farms registered in the area are primarily cereal producers (2013 Defra Agricultural Census). However approximately a quarter of the total number of Wolds farms continue to operate as mixed or lowland grazing units. These are commonly smaller holdings, but nevertheless also make an important contribution to the local economy and help to maintain the grassland pastures.

The current rural landscape of the Wolds, including its woodland copses, field headlands and winter cover crops owes much of its existence to both the previous and ongoing pursuit of various country field sports, including legal hunts and game shooting. The AONB Partnership continues to recognise that hunting, shooting and fishing interests can generate significant local income and employment to help support the local rural economy. There is a balance to be struck in terms of managing potential conflict with the wider public, for example potential noise and disturbance issues. Many landowners are equally aware of the need to sensitively stock and manage reared game birds, including the careful siting of release pens and game feeding stations to minimise impacts upon the local woodland and hedgerows and maximise the opportunities for wider environmental benefits. As indicated, many of the Wolds woodlands, copses, hedgerows and field margins continue to be actively managed to help support game rearing habitats and in

so doing also provide very important habitat diversity in support of wider wildlife interests, including small mammals, farmland birds and insects.

Returning to general farming matters, there has been a reported reluctance for landowners and tenants to commit to fresh Countryside Stewardship Schemes; common concerns include both the high levels of bureaucracy and the perceived difficulties from locking into fresh long-term agreements at this point in time. The current messages from Government suggest that any future agri-environment schemes beyond the current EU arrangements will more than likely have to demonstrate clear public benefit - above and beyond food production - to include for example an emphasis on natural capital and wider goods and services. Future collaboration across the farming, environmental and economic sectors are essential not only to help support individual farmers but also encourage increased catchment-scale approaches to land management.

Threats/Pressures

The majority of farmland in the Wolds is used for agricultural purposes and any market changes have the potential for wide reaching impact upon the landscape and character of the Wolds.

- Increasing uncertainty and continuing pressure for higher yields and increasing economies of scale through intensification to compete in the global market and resist declining incomes, although farm sizes predicted to stay fairly static.
- Potentially significant impacts and future uncertainties from both Brexit and the subsequent reform of domestic farming policy, including possible implications on farm subsidies for future agri-environment options.
- Continuing decline in livestock farming and associated infrastructure with its likely degradation of landscape character.
- Changing cropping patterns in response to climate change issues, weed/chemical control and market forces.

Objective:

FW0 To acknowledge and promote sustainable farming as a key activity in maintaining the Wolds' landscape character and other natural and heritage assets.

Policies:

FWP1 To develop and promote agricultural good practice to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and landscape character of the Wolds.

FWP2 To monitor and proactively influence changes in local, regional and national agriculture policy to maximise benefits to farmers in the Wolds.

FWP3 To encourage and support initiatives to sustain livestock farming in the AONB. (See also Section 4.2.2 Meadow, Pasture and Wet Grassland)

FWP4 To support farm diversification schemes appropriate to the AONB and which accord with planning policy. (See also Section 7.1 Planning)

FWP5 To seek to maintain traditional rural skills and activities that can protect, appropriately manage and enhance the landscape. (See also Section 5.2 Thriving Communities)

FWP6 To recognise and support the contribution of well managed field sport activities for the benefits of wildlife, rural character and the local economy.

FWP7 To raise awareness within the farming community of the growing issues of climate change, sustainable energy and carbon management.

Actions: See FWA1-15 in Table 3

Key Related Plans & Strategies (Farming in the Wolds)

Creating a Great Place for Living; Defra's Strategy to 2020 (2016)
Defra 25 Year Plan – A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to improve the Environment (2018)
Greater Lincolnshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2030 (refreshed 2016)
Local Development Frameworks and Core Strategies (see Developing in the Wolds)
Local Development Plans – Saved Policies
National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF (2012)
New Model Farming: resilience through diversity (2016)
Rural Business 2030: Unlocking Investment-Unlocking Potential (2016)
Rural Development Programme for England (2015-2020)
Uncertain Harvest: does the loss of farms matter (2017)

5.2 Thriving Communities

As indicated previously, the Lincolnshire Wolds is deeply rural, with a much dispersed infrastructure. Using 2011 census data, the LWCS estimates a population of 10,701 for the AONB, with a further 36,316 living in the surrounding market towns of Alford, Caistor, Horncastle, Louth, Market Rasen and Spilsby. There are 74 parishes within the protected landscape, only five of which have more than 450 residents. There are some 89 settlements, the larger ones being Brookenby, Tealby and Walesby within West Lindsey; Belchford, Binbrook, Ludford and Tetford within East Lindsey; and Hatcliffe within North East Lincolnshire.

The Wolds' communities are generally small, and often physically isolated, and their connections with the surrounding market towns remain essential to maintain the socio-economic vitality of the area. Equally important are the role of the many local facilities across the AONB. An LWCS audit in 2017 highlighted the following: 20 public houses; 6 post offices; 12 local stores; 9 tea rooms and 5 fishing lakes. The AONB Partnership is increasingly aware of the importance that such amenities provide, both within and between communities at the local level, providing a wide range of services for both residents and visitors to the area.

There is often a common perception that the Wolds is dominated by an elderly population with an influx of retirees and an outward movement of young adults. However closer examination of the population figures indicates that currently there is a fairly even distribution across all of the age categories, although the largest grouping is the 45-59 years old group. The LWCS estimates that in 2011 some 4,890 people were in employment, with 258 unemployed, the latter at 5% is slightly above the current UK unemployment average (4.3% - Oct 2017). As evidenced in the recent State of the AONB Report there are some 375 rateable businesses in the AONB including 70 workshops/factory premises, 54 warehouses/stores and 52 tourism accommodation providers including self-catering. Employment is varied across sectors with approximately 42% in professional, managerial or technical fields and 17% working in a skilled trade.

There is currently some concern at the local level in terms of recent housing applications both within and immediately adjacent to the AONB. Clearly a balance needs to be struck to maintain sustainable and viable communities by ensuring for example that any new housing proposed is in the right location, of the right size and of the right design and wherever possible can provide affordable homes. The respective Local Authorities and their formal Local Plans provide the mechanisms and legal policy frameworks for robustly assessing housing needs and supply and allocating accordingly future parcels of land for housing. Local engagement in all levels of the process should be actively sought, including the further support and encouragement of community Neighbourhood Plans.

There is recognition of the increasing importance of communication technologies and the ongoing need to upgrade and enhance the provision of IT and broadband services to many of our rural communities and businesses. The AONB Partnership respects this position and has sought to support and encourage the roll-out of both broadband and mobile phone coverage that is sympathetic and can ideally complement the landscape of the Wolds, through for example the careful siting, design, and landscaping of any critical infrastructure. Where ever possible, there should be an additional emphasis on encouraging mast sharing and the subsequent removal of any redundant infrastructure.

Returning to wider access to services, this also extends into green space provision, and although there is an extensive network of public rights of way many settlements have limited access to more formal areas of open space such as country parks, allotments and playing fields. With increasing awareness of the public health benefits from leading/experiencing active lifestyles there is considerable potential to enhance physical and mental wellbeing for all ages utilising the Wolds resource - supporting, promoting and enhancing the opportunities for local communities and the wider public to enjoy, experience and connect to the AONB's unique sense of place, tranquillity and rural charm.

Ongoing issues highlighted during the peer review:

- A sense of unease over the future of many rural services and facilities, typically the post office and village shop.
- Impact of unsightly development (buildings, wind turbines etc.)
- Loss of scenic beauty through changes to landscape.
- A generally poor public transport system because of the sparse settlement pattern.
- Concern over the decline in the rural economy and the need to sustain local employment
- The increasing housing difficulties for the young.
- The limited access to public open space.
- The ongoing EU review of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and development of a possible British Agricultural Policy
- Vulnerabilities to communities and the business sector through the continuing outward migration of young people. (*new issue*)

Objective

TCO To support and promote partnership activity to help safeguard and enhance the prosperity and well-being (quality of life) of communities within the Wolds AONB, ensuring the Wolds remain a place to live, work, invest in, and visit, whilst meeting the needs of this unique landscape. (See also Section 7 Developing the Wolds)

Policies:

TCP1 To foster safe, vibrant and inclusive communities, working with relevant agencies to support local businesses and communities, encouraging both innovation and wider good practice. (See also Sections 4.2.4 Woodlands, Beech Clumps and Traditional Orchards and 5.1 Farming in the Wolds)

TCP2 To encourage measures to reverse the declines in rural services and facilities and promote healthier lifestyles.

TCP3 To encourage existing and new businesses to have a high regard for environmental sustainability and an active engagement in enhancing natural capital, especially in the context of the AONB.

TCP4 To sensitively utilise the Wolds as a recreational resource, in particular promoting accessible 'green infrastructure' close to communities within and adjacent to the AONB. (See also Sections 4.2.2 Meadow, Pasture and Wet Grassland, 4.2.4 Woodlands, Beech Clumps and Traditional Orchards and 6 Discovering the Wolds)

Actions: See TCA1-13 in Table 3

Key Related Plans and Strategies (Thriving Communities)

Forestry and Woodland Policy Statement (2013)

Greater Lincolnshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2030 (refreshed 2016)

Health and Wellbeing in Lincolnshire; Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2017)

Local Development Frameworks and Core Strategies (see Developing in the Wolds)

Local Development Plans – Saved Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

6. Discovering the Wolds - Theme 3 (Interpretation, Access, Recreation and Tourism)

6.1 Overview for discovering the Wolds

The primary purpose of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB designation is the protection and enhancement of the area's natural beauty and unlike National Parks there is no statutory duty placed on the relevant authorities to actively promote the area for the purposes of recreation and tourism. However since the publication of the Lincolnshire Wolds Interpretation Strategy (2000) and subsequent AONB Management Plans there has been an increasing awareness and recognition of the value of supporting and encouraging "appropriate" recreation and tourism. The AONB Partnership's understanding of "appropriate" in this context, is a level of promotion and management of access, recreation and tourism that can help to support "quiet enjoyment" of the area and foster interest and respect in the natural beauty of the Wolds.

The superb views, attractive villages and hamlets, and unique natural and cultural heritage assets provide considerable opportunities for future recreation and tourism development. As evidenced in the State of the AONB Report, there is an increasing awareness of the tourism sector's contribution to the local economy, including wider visitor expenditure which can often assist local ancillary services important to the social fabric of the area. There is however a widespread view that promotion of the Wolds needs to be respectful of the protected landscapes special qualities, which include its deeply rural sense of place and tranquillity.

Key issues for the managing interpretation, access, recreation and tourism:

- Raising the profile of the Lincolnshire Wolds - its unique landscape and natural/heritage/cultural assets - as a place to visit, enjoy and appreciate.
- Balancing an increase in visitors with the Wolds sense of tranquillity and isolation.
- Developing an appropriate access, recreation and tourism infrastructure, including suitable facilities for specialist interests.
- Exploring opportunities to develop links with the surrounding market towns and neighbouring venues.
- Enhancing partnership working to aid the promotion and interpretation of the Wolds.
- Promoting walking, cycling, horse riding and carriage driving.
- Promoting access for all and the principle of least restrictive access.
- Promoting appropriate specialist leisure interests, exploring further opportunities for field sports activity, 'energetic/high adrenalin' pursuits and other emerging markets.
- Supporting and promoting established festivals and events programmes that can help to maintain and encourage the vitality and cultural interest of the Wolds area. *(new issue)*
- The need to be aware and sensitive to landowner and farmer interests, especially in respect of unwarranted trespass and the dangers of working farms and machinery, similarly the concerns with livestock disturbance and wider anti-social behaviour. *(new issue)*

6.2 Interpretation – Awareness Raising

There is an important role for the ongoing roll-out of high quality interpretation: as well as helping to direct and inform visitors, utilising a wide range of interpretive media has been shown to be a very important tool in engaging local residents and encouraging active interest and participation in the protection and enhancement of the Wolds AONB.

A people-focused approach to interpretation has always been fully supported and encouraged by the AONB Partnership, helping communities to discover and share in the understanding of local sites, places and the wider AONB – depending on levels of interest and expertise, outcomes will often be across a wide range of environmental and heritage topics. This approach recognises and builds on the wealth of local knowledge and local voices for exploring and promoting the area – including the area's local character, history, wildlife, folklore and cultural strengths. Local engagement links with wider national strategies, for example Defra's A Green Future and Natural England's Conservation 21 Strategy, will be encouraged, with

both documents advocating putting people at the heart of the environment to help encourage and support future "natural capital" place-shaping. Such endeavours can get more people connected, involved and inspired in their natural environment, local landscapes and cultural heritage (i.e. The Wolds natural beauty and its special qualities).

The future Management Plan will continue to recognise the important connections between the Wolds and the surrounding market towns, all of which, to varying degrees, act as both physical and intellectual "gateways" into the AONB. The future emphasis will be on the further development of a coordinated approach to interpretation, helping to promote the special attributes of the area through a diverse range of media. This should in turn help provide an enhanced sense of place and improve the visitor experience for not only those travelling into the Wolds but also for the benefit of our local residents.

Objective:

- IO To raise the profile of the AONB through increasing visitors' and residents' enjoyment and understanding of its special qualities, in turn helping to support the local economy. (See also Sections 5.2 Thriving Communities, 6.3 Access, Recreation and Tourism and 7.2 Transport in the Wolds)**

Policy:

- IP1 To provide visitors and residents with a greater understanding and appreciation of what makes the Lincolnshire Wolds a special place, encouraging interpretation facilities and services that can be utilised by all.**
- IP2 To strengthen the profile of the AONB as a visitor destination by highlighting the area's unique landscape character and sense of place to the general public.**
- IP3 To encourage residents and landowners to become actively involved in the interpretation and promotion of their area for visitors.**

Actions: See IPA1-9 in Table 3

6.3 Access, Recreation and Tourism

As highlighted earlier in the Plan, although there is a limited number of country parks and recreational open space immediate to many of the settlements in the Lincolnshire Wolds there is an extensive network of public rights of way. There are six well established long distance routes, including most notably the Viking Way, and also a wide range of walking, cycling and wider promotional literature that has been produced by the AONB Partnership.

The Partnership has more recently linked up with the relevant local authorities and local businesses to help support and promote the work of the new "Love Lincolnshire Wolds" tourism partnership; a group which seeks the careful promotion of both the Wolds and its surrounding network of market towns to aid the delivery of its Destination Management Plan (Lincolnshire Wolds and Market Towns). This Strategy has specific actions aimed at increasing visitors, identifying gaps in provision and further developing partnerships to help enhance facilities and bring additional economic benefits into the area.

The Love Lincolnshire Wolds group has highlighted the benefits of utilising wider countywide tourism initiatives, including the more recent success of the Lincoln Castle renovation programme and its national/international promotion of the Magna Carta. As highlighted in the State of the AONB report, the STEAM data analysis for the wider Lincolnshire Wolds National Character Area and the Wolds surrounding market towns estimates the total number of annual visitor days for 2016 as 4.05 million, bringing in an estimated £166.58 million in tourism income.

Clearly there is scope to further promote the area as an all-round destination and to continue to support the enhancement of the tourism and recreation offer to help attract new visitors and extend overnight stays. There is also an opportunity to make additional positive connections with the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership, in this context, working to secure and enhance engagement with "green tourism" initiatives to help build on the wider nature conservation /natural environment infrastructure.

A collaborative approach to recreation and tourism management involving public, private and third sector organisations is being actively encouraged for the area and is very much work in progress. An objective review of unsolicited comments from Trip Advisor and Google Maps (see Appendix 4 – State of the AONB Report), demonstrates the generally high regard held for the Wolds AONB as a recreation/tourism destination and its value to local residents and visitors for enjoyment, discovery, health and wellbeing - these widespread views echo the general findings from the Wolds Have Your Say Surveys (Section 2.6 and Appendix 5). The AONB Partnership recognises that the area is very much a living and working landscape and all visitors need to be mindful and respectful of both landowner and local resident interests.

Objective:

ARTO To develop, promote and seek implementation of a wide range of sustainable access, recreation and tourism initiatives appropriate to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.

Policies:

ARTP1 To maximise access opportunities for all visitors and residents of the AONB, improving provision for quiet recreation. (See also Sections 4.2.2 Meadow, Pasture and Wet Grassland, 4.2.4 Woodlands, Beech Clumps and Traditional Orchards, 5.1 Farming in the Wolds and 5.2 Thriving Communities)

ARTP2 To provide coordinated, accurate and up-to-date information on the access, recreation and tourism opportunities within the Wolds AONB. (See also Section 6.2 Interpretation)

ARTP3 To develop joint promotion and marketing initiatives to raise the profile of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, including utilising the surrounding market towns as gateways to the Lincolnshire Wolds. (See also Sections 5.1 Farming in the Wolds and 6.2 Interpretation)

ARTP4 To review current access, recreation and tourism provision and support new measures and good practice to improve the infrastructure where compatible with the AONB.

Actions: See ARTA1-18 in Table 3

Key Related Plans and Strategies (Interpretation, Access, Recreation and Tourism)

Creating a Great Place for Living – Defra's strategy to 2020
Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy - Dept. for Transport (2016)
Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan - Lincolnshire (2012)
Delivering a Golden Legacy; A growth strategy for inbound tourism to Britain from 2012 to 2020 (2012)
Forestry and Woodland Policy Statement (2013)
Lincolnshire Wolds Interpretation Strategy (2001)
Local Authorities Tourism / Economic Development Strategies (various)
Love Lincolnshire Wolds Destination Management Plan (2016)
Structure and Local Plans – Saved Policies and Emerging Local Plans

7. Developing the Wolds - Theme 4

As highlighted in the scene setting chapters, the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is a nationally recognised and protected landscape on account of its high scenic quality and its unusual combination of features. Originally designated in 1973, there have been continual efforts and action by the AONB Partnership - including local authorities, the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service, government agencies, and other third sector organisations - to work closely with landowners, local communities and businesses to help direct, influence and manage landscape change and future development in a positive way.

The Wolds scenery is subtle and complex, with many different facets combining to create the area's overall intrinsic character and distinctive sense of place. As is often said, the more one comes to know the area the greater its appeal. However there is a widespread view that the Wolds are very much a living and working landscape and should not be preserved in aspic. A key challenge remains in terms of fostering and supporting development that can work with, not against, the grain of the Wolds and its people. The Plan recognises that there may be some differences of opinions in terms of securing future sustainable development appropriate to the AONB. The strength of the JAC Partnership is in its power to convene, to listen and appreciate the varying viewpoints and work to secure a collaborative and positive outcome for the designation – this encompasses taking account of and respecting the various (and sometimes differing) needs of local residents, landowners, businesses and visitors.

7.1 Planning and Development Management

The Wolds AONB is particularly vulnerable to inappropriate development on account of its strong rural character and tranquillity, its extensive plateau tops and open views, and its dark night skies. Furthermore there is wide spread recognition that the topography of the Wolds is subtle and complex and its juxtaposition with the low lying coastal grazing marshes to the east and the equally flat clay vale to the west make the area especially sensitive to neighbouring development which can potentially impact upon both the setting and the expansive views to and from the AONB.

As highlighted previously, individual planning decisions are taken by the relevant local planning authorities based upon national guidance and legislation as expressed through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the corresponding suite of Local Plan, Highways, and Mineral and Waste policies. The Management Plan seeks to complement these strategies and not oppose them; it has been demonstrated through national planning appeals that AONB Management Plan policies are a material consideration in the decision making process for securing sustainable development. The NPPF makes it clear that there should be a general presumption in favour of granting development, however through Paragraphs 115 and 116 there is a duty on relevant decision making bodies to apply great weight to the protection and enhancement of our nationally protected landscapes (our National Parks and AONBs).

New development, of the right type, of the right scale, and in the right location should be actively supported. This should include thoughtfully designed and well-constructed development that seeks to complement and enrich local distinctiveness and the natural beauty of the AONB. The active use of relevant and up-to-date site surveys (including flora, fauna, heritage assets), relevant design guides and best practice should be the norm, accompanied by the comprehensive use of LVIA's (landscape and visual impact assessments) to help shape and assess both formal and informal proposals. The new 25 year Government plan for the environment has reaffirmed the importance of our nationally protected landscapes - AONBs and National Parks - and highlighted the need to explore and develop natural capital approaches to help secure positive outcomes for the universal benefit of people, places and wildlife.

Key issues highlighted included:

- Proliferation of often unsightly telecommunication masts and their associated infrastructure (similarly with overhead powerlines).
- Poor design and build of some developments, including village infilling and farm and cottage renovations.
- Growing impact of light pollution.
- Negative view of planning restrictions which are seen to be limiting socio-economic development.
- Lack of affordable housing for local people and key workers.
- Renovation/development of redundant farm buildings.
- Potential impact of development and land use change on sites adjacent to the AONB.
- Wind farms – pros and cons.
- House builders/developers utilising formulaic national designs.
- Potential for future increase in future hydrocarbon (oil and gas) exploration, together with increasing public concern with fracking. (*new issue*)

Objective:

PO To seek to ensure that development plans and planning guidance consistently recognise and uphold the primary purpose of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB designation – the protection and enhancement of its natural beauty and special character. (See also Sections 4.4.2 Built Heritage and 5 Living and Working in the Wolds)

Policies:

- PP1** To protect and enhance local character and distinctiveness through the highest quality design in new development and re-development, including making space for biodiversity, being sensitive to the considerations of heritage assets and tackling climate change.
- PP2** To encourage and support the sensitive conversion of traditional buildings to new viable uses to support the local economy and community, including making space for biodiversity and tackling climate change.
- PP3** To support the development of local needs/affordable housing provision which is appropriate to local character and consistent with AONB objectives and LA planning policies.
- PP4** To minimise damage to the AONB's landscape and natural beauty as a result of mineral working and associated activity and help implement the Lincolnshire Geodiversity Strategy.
- PP5** To promote awareness and encourage consideration of the impact of adjacent development on the views to and from the AONB.
- PP6** To recognise and protect the AONB night skies and general tranquillity through ensuring future development minimises impact upon light and noise levels.
- PP7** To ensure a general presumption against wind energy schemes in any location which could cause significant and demonstrably detrimental effects upon the natural beauty and intrinsic characteristics of the AONB.
- PP8** To support general waste reduction measures and recycling initiatives that are in accordance with the special requirements of the AONB and help the shift towards a circular economy.

- PP9 To ensure that where larger scale development must proceed within or adjacent to the AONB, because of other national interests, the highest regard is placed on minimising any impacts upon the primary purpose of the designation – the area’s natural beauty.**
- PP10 To develop a comprehensive assessment approach to securing opportunities for renewable energy provision across the AONB and its wider setting.**

Actions: See PA1-16 in Table 3

Key Related Plans and Strategies (Planning)

A New Vernacular for the Countryside (2004)
EC Rural Development Regulations (2007 onwards)
Fixing our Broken Housing Market - Dept. for Communities and Local Government (2017)
Greater Lincolnshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2030 (refreshed 2016)
Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Landscape Institute (3rd Ed, 2013)
Lincolnshire Design Guide for Residential Areas (1996)
Lincolnshire Charter for Agriculture and Horticulture Implementation Plan (2003)
Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2016)
Local Development Frameworks and Core Strategies
Local Development Plans – Saved Policies
National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
Planning Act 2008
Streetscape Design Manual - Lincolnshire County Council (2016)
The Lindsey Action Zone Local Development Strategy 2014-2020
The Localism Act (2011)
The Infrastructure Act (2015)
The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)

7.2 Transport and Signage in the Wolds

The Partnership recognises that a good transport network is essential to the future well-being and prosperity of those living in the Wolds, helping to ensure that local residents and visitors have good access to a wide range of amenities both within and adjacent to the AONB. These include links to the essentials for modern living – connections to commerce, retail, education, finance and health services - in addition to regular access to the wider countryside and its various rural attractions.

There is an expectation on developing and maintaining a good road infrastructure that can support the needs of local farming, forestry, tourism, recreation and the needs of other rural businesses. Whilst there is a network of arterial roads linking the surrounding market towns many of the Wolds interior routes are narrow and rural in nature. Currently over 90% of the highway network is managed directly by Lincolnshire County Council, the remainder by North East Lincolnshire Council. Comparing the average annual average daily traffic flow counts (AADT) for all vehicles using the principal A and B roads in the Wolds the average vehicle movements for A roads was 7,433 (2017 counts) with 2,078 vehicle movements for B roads (2016 counts). As evidenced in the State of the AONB report, the detailed picture is more complicated, but there has clearly been a net increase in road vehicle movements since 2010.

The AONB partnership has sought to encourage and develop local transport solutions to aid traffic management including the regular review of road signage, including the Lincolnshire Wolds gateway/entrance signs found on most of the principal routes. Whilst being mindful of the need to minimise roadside furniture and visual clutter the group has actively supported the ongoing renovation and maintenance of the AONBs locally distinctive, black and white, traditional road signs.

As noted in earlier chapters the settlement pattern across the Wolds is highly scattered and dispersed making the efficient running of a fully integrated transport network challenging. The InterConnect and CallConnect Services remain very important to the area, in particular providing vital links for those that are totally reliant upon public transport or private taxi services. Most of the arterial routes are covered by a scheduled bus route but the number of journeys can be fairly limited.

With an increasing partnership emphasis on encouraging sustainable recreation and tourism there will be ongoing pressures on the transport infrastructure and the need to review both services and the signage across the Wolds. There will also be fresh opportunities to explore the linkages with recreation and active lifestyles, helping for example to review and develop the InterConnect Bus Walks. Further provision for other user groups - cyclists, horse-riders and those with particular special needs - will also be important, including exploring and developing innovative good practice through public, private and community sector engagement.

Key issues highlighted included:

- Limited transport infrastructure.
- Sparse public transport links, especially in the northern half of the AONB.
- Lack of integrated public transport network.
- Increasing loss of rural character through proliferation of urban style road development.
- Road safety issues, particularly dangerous driving.
- Increase in commuting from the Wolds.
- In isolated cases, village signage that fail to capture adequately the links with the local character and distinctiveness of the Wolds. (*new issue*)

Objective:

TWO To encourage and support the development and promotion of a sustainable and fully integrated transport network which respects the AONB landscape and character and addresses local community and visitor needs.

Policies:

TWP1 To encourage integrated public and community-based transport schemes that can help to improve the links between communities within the AONB and the surrounding market towns. (See also Sections 5.2 Thriving Communities and 6.2 Interpretation)

TWP2 To support and encourage traffic management that will promote safe and attractive walking, cycling and riding in the AONB.

TWP3 To encourage transport infrastructure improvements to support appropriate tourism development, ensuring schemes are sympathetic to the landscape and character of the AONB.

TWP4 To encourage a consistent approach to the use of road signage, furniture and maintenance to promote and respect the character of the AONB.

TWP5 To support and encourage the development of an integrated and well maintained public rights of way network, maximising the opportunities for achieving access for all.

TWP6 To encourage the Highway Authorities to adopt traffic management measures and schemes commensurate with AONB designation and rural environments.

Actions: See TWA1-14 in Table 3

Key Related Plans and Strategies (Transport in the Wolds)

Community Strategies

Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan - Lincolnshire (2012)

Every Street Matters (2006)

Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan 4 - (2013)

Lincolnshire Streetscape Design Manual (2012)

Local Development Plans – Saved Policies

Local Transport Act (2008)

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

North East Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan (2011)

7.3 Climate Change and Energy

There remains a requirement to increase our understanding of the full suite of pressures from climate change, the anticipated type, scale and rate of change and the steps that can be taken to both mitigate and adapt to "climate-proof" our precious natural and developed landscapes. The worldwide understanding of climatic changes are continually improving, and although there are still sceptics to global warming, it is clearly evident that weather patterns are changing markedly, both home and abroad. Climate change, in addition to the spread of plastics, is now widely recognised as posing one of the most serious long-term threats to both global and UK ecosystems, with a host of direct and indirect impacts upon our landscapes, wildlife and habitats and the wider goods and services they provide – including provision of water, food and outdoor environments for recreation and tourism.

The Partnership continues to recognise that the problems associated with climate change have the potential to have a significant impact upon the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. Anticipated long term changes include a likely change to future cropping and farming patterns across the Wolds, as farmers increasingly review and adapt their growing regimes to help maximise their future commercial returns. There is likely to be increased pressure on wildlife and habitats, although some species may adapt well and expand their ranges, others will struggle and their coverage could become further restricted. Pressures on both farmed and indigenous plants and animals are likely to increase through the emergence and spread of new pests and diseases. Extreme and more unpredictable weather events are anticipated to become more frequent, including severe storms with high winds and intense rainfall. This has the potential to cause harm and disruption to crops, wildlife (including notably woodlands, parklands, landscape trees and our rivers and streams), historic buildings, infrastructure (transport, communications and utilities) and our communities, especially those residential and commercial properties within/adjacent to flood plains and historic spring-lines.

As well as working to reduce emissions (most notably fossil fuels), including the shift towards a circular economy and reduced 'carbon footprint', a landscape scale /catchment scale collaborative approach is highly advantageous to help build long term resilience and aid adaptations. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB can clearly provide a test-bed for more innovative multiple land management. An obvious example is the review and development of further green networks and habitat corridors to crucially connect isolated and fragmented habitats. Such an approach would be in-line with current Government thinking expressed within Natural England's Conservation 21 Strategy. For example, encouraging a mosaic of varying and connected habitats can aid the future migration of our native plant and animal species, whilst aiding natural pest control and crop pollination for adjoining cultivated land, and safeguarding our water resources through increasing infiltration rates in the upper catchments.

Key issues will be:

- Predicting and managing the increasing burdens on our natural and built resources, including impacts upon our water, food, biodiversity, housing and recreation interests.
- Securing energy conservation measures and reducing reliance upon fossil fuels.
- Ensuring that future sustainable energy technologies minimise their impact upon the Wolds' landscape and other environmental assets.
- Water availability and quality issues, including lower river flows, temperature changes, reduced water tables and expected increased demand for flood alleviation and water storage areas.
- Changes to future cropping patterns and impacts (positive and negative) upon local distinctiveness.
- Wildlife migration pressures and the mobility of habitats and species through adaptation.
- Likely emergence of new pests, diseases and invasive species.
- Increasingly integrating solutions to climate change through applying a landscape scale and ecosystems approach to land management including the provision of breathing spaces for nature.
- Encouraging sustainable forms of recreation and tourism to help enhance the local environment and economy.
- Increased pressure on woodlands to supply woodfuel to meet Renewable Heat Incentive requirements.

- Potential impacts from anaerobic digestion plants – including issues with design, infrastructure, transportation and future cropping patterns (increasing demand on monocultures).

Objective:

CCO To seek to develop and implement a long-term climate change strategy to help safeguard the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, recognising and responding to the key local pressures through effective adaptation and mitigation.

Policies:

CCP1 To establish, monitor and review key indices for monitoring the possible effects of climate change.

CCP2 To develop practices that promote a sustainable landscape approach to tackle and respond to climate change pressures through a range of mitigation and adaptation measures.

CCP3 To support and develop practices that promote healthy, well-connected and managed landscapes and ecosystems resilient and flexible to the effects of climate change.

CCP4 To encourage and promote innovative low carbon energy reduction/generation schemes that are conducive to the requirements of the AONB designation and complement local landscape character.

Actions: See CCA1-8 in Table 3

Key Related Plans and Strategies (Climate Change and Energy)

Community Strategies

Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act (HMSO, 2006)

Climate Change – The UK Programme (Defra, 2006)

Energy White Paper – Meeting the Energy Challenge (DBERR, 2007)

Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy (2003)

Local Development Frameworks and Core Strategies (see Developing in the Wolds)

Local Development Plans – Saved Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Natural England's Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan (2015)

The Economics of Climate Change – The Stern Review (2006)

The Kyoto Protocol – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992 & 1998)

The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy – Securing the Future (Defra, 2005)

8. Partnerships in the Wolds - Theme 5

Partnership Management Aspiration:

All agencies, organisations, communities, landowners/managers and local businesses will work in partnership to protect and enhance the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.

This partnership management aspiration is an overall statement of intent for all partners involved in the ongoing delivery of the objectives, policies and resulting actions of this Plan.

We wish to thank once again everyone who has contributed their thoughts and views to aid the formulation of the revised Management Plan for the period 2018-23. This has included - through the Have Your Say Survey, Peer Review and Public Consultations - comments and suggestions from local farmers and landowners, local residents and communities, visitors, and a wide range of organisations with an active interest in the Lincolnshire Wolds inclusive of those formally represented on the Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee (JAC, The AONB Partnership).

The Partnership, including all of our relevant local authorities, continues to welcome help and support in taking forward the new collaborative Strategy and Action Plan for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, one that can best protect and enhance the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, both now and for generations to come. Future success continues to remain dependent upon understanding, appreciating and collaborating both within and across sectors and interest groups. There are many pressures and issues that continue to face the area, against a backdrop of ever increasing demand on resources and budget pressures. The Management Plan aims to operate as both a strategic guide for the area (complementing the suite of relevant Local Plans and national AONB guidance) but also crucially operating as a stimulus for future positive action, identifying common points of synergy and encouraging innovation, at local, strategic, national and international levels.

Our links to the wider family of protected landscapes, including both AONBs and National Parks, remain important. The Partnership will continue with its active engagement with the National Association for AONB (NAAONB), helping for example to review and share good practice, and explore new ways of working within and beyond the protected landscapes family. Our collaborative goal is to continue to help conserve and enhance these nationally treasured landscapes, safeguarding their natural beauty for future generations through fostering sustainable social, economic and environmental enhancements.

9. Making it Happen – Implementation, Monitoring and Review

9.1 Implementation

It is intended that the objectives and policies set out in the revised Management Plan will be embraced and acted upon by all those organisations and individuals that have a role to play in the management of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB – in short, everyone. This includes landowners, voluntary organisations and interest groups, local authorities, parish councils, statutory agencies, regional bodies and government agencies.

The fundamental purpose of the Plan is to encourage integrated action by all who have an active interest in the management of the area. The subsequent Action Plan sets out a detailed five year proposed programme of work activity to help in the delivery of our policies and overriding objectives across the five themes:

- 1. Protecting the Wolds**
- 2. Living and Working in the Wolds**
- 3. Discovering the Wolds**
- 4. Developing the Wolds**
- 5. Partnerships in the Wolds**

The Lincolnshire Wolds JAC has a key role to play in conjunction with the LWCS and the relevant local authorities in overseeing the promotion and implementation of the Plan and the Action Plan (Table 3). The monitoring procedures will enable us to measure the success of the Plan where it matters most – on the ground. Lead partners will help support the JAC, LWCS and the local authorities with the co-ordination of the Action Plan. The Action Plan details a comprehensive suite of tasks relevant to the strategic policies and the wider objectives of the Plan. As far as possible these are intended to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound in order to deliver a set of clear outcomes. They will be the subject of a regular annual review to help prioritise and target actions as resources and wider partnerships allow.

Item 9.1.1: Table 3 - The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB 5 Year Action Plan 2018-2023

Theme 1: Protecting the Lincolnshire Wolds

Biodiversity Objectives – Overarching

Objective BO To protect, enhance and where appropriate restore the biodiversity of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, aiding the development and relevant delivery of the Lincolnshire Nature Strategy, Biodiversity 2020, Natural England's Conservation 21 Strategy and emerging UK environmental plans (post Brexit) including A Green Future.				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
BP1 To survey and monitor key habitats and species within the AONB in-line with Lincolnshire national and international aspirations for biodiversity.	BA1 Review and develop further baseline data to increase understanding and improve monitoring of the biodiversity of the AONB.	LWCS	Other relevant JAC partners GLNP	Ongoing
	BA2 Encourage community/voluntary biodiversity recording.	LNU LWCS LWT	Other relevant JAC partners	Ongoing
	BA3 Continue to research the spread and impact of invasive species on the biodiversity of the AONB.	EA	Other relevant JAC partners GLNP LWT NE	Ongoing
BP2 (see also Policy CCP3) To develop and promote a landscape-scale approach to habitat conservation, restoration and creation, helping habitats and species to develop resilience to future climate change through increased habitat linkages and providing for enhanced ecosystem service networks.	BA4 Build upon agri-environment scheme/s to promote uptake in Wild Pollinator and Farmland Wildlife Packages specifically designed to link and extend habitat corridors and protect watercourses.	LWCS LWT NE	Other relevant JAC partners	Ongoing
BP3 To support and encourage agricultural guidance and good practices that protect, enhance and restore wildlife habitats across the AONB, helping to minimise the need for regulatory enforcement.	BA5 Continued promotion through agri-environment scheme/s and Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) initiatives.	NE	CLA Defra LWCS	Ongoing
BP4 Utilising the concept of natural capital to develop and promote general awareness and appreciation of the wildlife of the AONB and maximise the benefits of wider socio-economic gains including utilising wider links to the local nature tourism offer.	BA6 Seek to influence and shape appropriate targeting via future agri-environment scheme/s.	NE	GLNP LWCS	Ongoing

Biodiversity – Meadow, Pasture and Wet Grassland (section 4.2.2)

Objective GO To increase the extent and quality of wildlife friendly grasslands across the AONB, targeting areas close to Local Wildlife Sites, watercourses, important road verges, archaeological sites, historic parkland and settlements. (See also Linc's Nature Strategy - LNS – for links with wider lowland grassland habitat targets)

Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
GP1 To help maintain, enhance and where appropriate restore, extend or connect grasslands of high wildlife, historic and landscape value.	GA1 Restore and maintain favourable conservation status to all grassland SSSI sites in the AONB supporting landowners with pro-active management.	NE	Landowners	50% (in area) by 2023
	GA2 Restore and maintain positive conservation management across all grassland Local Wildlife Sites.	GLNP LWCS	Landowners LWT NE	70% by 2023
	GA3 (see also FWA1 & FWA7) Promote, advise and encourage farmers and landowners uptake in agri-environment measures to increase the extent of biodiversity rich grasslands.	NE	Landowners LWCS	15 ha by 2023
GP2 To raise community awareness of the rich natural and cultural heritage of the Wolds' grassland.	GA4 (see also VLA6 & TCA13) Facilitate local events to increase awareness of the Wolds' grassland including via the Campaign for the Farmed Environment network.	LWCS	GLNP LWT NE	5 events by 2023
	GA5 Review and support further training opportunities to widen the voluntary skill base for ecological surveying, including utilising the LWT's Love Lincs Plants and exploring Plant Life campaigns.	LWT	GLNP LWCS Local specialist volunteers Plant Life	50+ volunteers by 2023
GP3 To support initiatives to encourage grazing of less productive grasslands, including calcareous grassland.	GA6 (as FWA6) Review and develop support networks for local graziers to aid future livestock management, including access to specialist advice on rare breeds.	NE	Defra LWCS LWT	Ongoing
GP4 To promote to land managers the additional benefits of good grassland management including carbon sink, climate change and flood alleviation impacts.	GA7 (see also GA4, VLA6-7 & SA3) Research and coordinate specialist training/awareness opportunities in tandem with GA4 including utilising the agri-environment scheme/s and the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund (CSFF) focusing on grassland management advice and support for land managers in the AONB.	LWCS NE	GLNP LCC LWT	3 events by 2023

Biodiversity – Grass Verges and Green Lanes (section 4.2.3)

Objective VL To retain, restore and encourage positive management of the distinctive grass verges along the AONB's roadsides and green lanes. <i>(See also LNS for links with wider lowland grassland habitat targets)</i>				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
VLP1 To help maintain, enhance and where appropriate restore, extend, or connect grass verges for their wildlife and landscape value.	VLA1 Continue to survey and monitor all Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs) in the AONB, utilising online recording systems.	LWT	Local specialist LCC LNU NE	Ongoing on a 3 year cycle
	VLA2 Restore all RNRs to favourable conservation status.	LWT	LCC NELC Landowners	100% by 2023
	VLA3 Review and encourage suitable verge cutting management to enhance biodiversity, avoiding compromising vehicle sight lines.	LCC NELC	LWT LWCS Landowners Specialist contractors	50 km by 2023
	VLA4 Minimise litter and fly-tipping on road verges and green lanes with an awareness campaign and deal with any incidents promptly.	ELDC NELC WLDC	LCC EA	Ongoing+ 1 x publicity campaign by 2023
	VLA5 Maintain liaison between highway authorities, landowners, interest groups and local communities to minimise illegal vehicle encroachments.	LCC NELC	Parish Councils Landowners Interest Groups	Ongoing
VLP2 To raise awareness and local engagement in the natural and cultural heritage of grass verges and their contribution to green infrastructure and climate change adaption.	VLA6 (see also GA4 & GA7) Research and coordinate specialist awareness raising opportunities linking with wider grassland management issues.	LWCS	GLNP LCC LWT NE	1 event by 2023
	VLA7 Promote and implement appropriate recommendations from the AD Biomass Trial to support verge management for nature conservation and wider gains.	LCC NELC	LWT LWCS Landowners Specialist contractors	Ongoing

Biodiversity - Woodlands, Beech Clumps and Traditional Orchards (section 4.2.4)

Objective WBO To protect, enhance, and where appropriate extend the woodland and tree cover within the AONB, maximising their contribution to the AONB by integrating landscape, biodiversity and socio-economic benefits. (See also LNS for wider links with Trees and woodland; Lowland mixed deciduous woodland; Traditional orchards; Wet woodland HAP; and Wood-pasture and parkland targets)				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
WBP1 To reinforce the existing pattern of woodland, seeking to increase the area of native broadleaved woodland (including wet woodland), accepting some non-native planting for climate change adaptability.	WBA1 Encourage uptake of grants and specialist advice to aid sustainable management of existing woodlands for biodiversity.	FC	CLA Landowners LCC LWCS NE NFU	10 ha by 2023
	WBA2 Promote uptake of grants to encourage appropriate new planting schemes, particularly adjacent to existing ancient semi-natural woodlands, and linking areas of existing habitats.	FC	CLA Landowners LWCS NE NFU	10 ha by 2023
WBP2 To re-establish complementary habitats adjacent to woodlands.	WBA3 Promote uptake of grants and specialist advice to encourage complementary neighbouring biodiversity habitats, including pasture and in-field crop options.	NE	CLA Landowners LWCS NFU	10 ha by 2023
WBP3 To record the extent and location of small ancient woodlands as part of an integrated digital database for the Lincolnshire Wolds woodlands.	WBA4 Encourage continued mapping of the small woodland resource across the AONB including beech clumps.	LWCS GLNP	FC NE	Ongoing
WBP4 To encourage and support woodland business schemes, of an appropriate scale, within the AONB.	WBA5 Encourage uptake of grants (FC, LAZ-LEADER, RDPE & SDF) and specialist advice to support local woodland/timber businesses.	FC	CLA Landowners LWCS NFU	Ongoing
	WBA6 (see also FWA11) Organise and promote an autumn festival event to help market locally produced timber, enhancing links between businesses and potential customers.	Business Operators	FC LWCS	1 event by 2023
WBP5 To establish the extent and quality of traditional orchards and encourage suitable restoration, creation and management.	WBA7 Review the results of the pilot voluntary orchard surveying project (ground-truthing the PTES inventory) with a view to aiding a wider roll-out of evidence gathering, including the type and frequency of local varieties.	LWCS GLNP	EoEAO Landowners LCC NE PTES	Ongoing
	WBA8 (see also FWA11) Promote annual Apple Day and other local events to encourage wider awareness of the orchards in the AONB and their management requirements.	LWCS NT GLNP	CG EoEAO LCC	3 events promoted by 2023

Biodiversity – Hedgerows and Landmark Trees (section 4.2.5)

Objective HTO To protect, manage, enhance and where appropriate increase the hedgerows and landmark trees in the AONB. <i>(See also LNS for wider links with Hedgerows and hedgerow trees targets)</i>				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
HTP1 To help record, maintain, and where appropriate restore all species-rich and ancient hedgerows, encouraging planting and management of hedgerows and trees to benefit landscape and habitat connectivity.	HTA1 Explore and develop funding applications to help support landscape scale enhancement projects; (to include potentially the Lincolnshire Wolds Greenway and Bluestone Heath Road initiatives).	LWT LWCS	EH GLNP Parish Councils	Review by 2019
	HTA2 Provide specialist advice and encourage uptake of agri-environment grants and the AONB Grant Scheme to support species-rich/ancient hedgerows and landmark trees.	LWCS NE	ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	5+ schemes supported per annum
HTP2 To raise awareness of the importance of hedgerows and landmark trees for wildlife, landscape and cultural values and encourage future community engagement.	HTA3 Continue to promote and encourage the tree warden scheme and training programme throughout the area.	ELDC LCC NELC TCV WLDC	Parish Councils	Ongoing
	HTA4 Continue to review and promote various tree advisory notes, including those pertaining to new and emerging pests and diseases (e.g. Chalara and Acute Oak Decline).	FC LWCS	ELDC LCC LWT NELC NFU WLDC	Ongoing
	HTA5 Encourage and support local cultural events to celebrate and inspire interest in the special values of our hedgerow and tree resource.	LWCS LWT	ELDC LCC NELC Parish Councils WLDC	3 events by 2023

Biodiversity – Rivers, Streams and Ponds (section 4.2.6)

Objective RSPO To improve, where appropriate, the function and natural environment of the river and stream catchments and their associated landscape character and wetland habitats. <i>(See also LNS for wider links with Rivers and wetlands; Chalk streams and blow wells; Ponds, lakes and reservoirs; Rivers, canals and drains; Springs and flushes targets)</i>				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
RSPP1 To maximise the extent of low-input land management adjacent to all rivers and streams and utilise floodplains to minimise impact of flooding in residential areas.	RSPA1 Promote and develop agri-environment schemes and woodland planting schemes to enhance the AONB's river valley landscapes where appropriate.	FC LCSP NE	EA Landowners LCC LWCS	Ongoing
	RSPA2 (see also AFA2 and SA4) Create low-input managed land adjacent to the area's streams and rivers.	LCSP	NE	50 km by 2023
RSPP2 To rehabilitate streams and rivers to enhance their biodiversity and ecological status where appropriate and consistent with flood defence requirements and Water Framework Directive (WFD) targets.	RSPA3 Facilitate, support and promote the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project (LCSP) under the guidance of its Steering Group.	AW EA NE LWCS	LWT WTT	Ongoing work programme review – 4 meetings per annum
	RSPA4 Influence and work with landowners to introduce a variety of in-stream and bankside enhancement measures.	LCSP	EA GLNP	5 km of river restoration by 2023
	RSPA5 (see also SA3) Coordinate delivery of the partnership Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund (CSFF) working with landowners in the Great Eau catchment.	LCSP	AW EA NE	3 events by 2021
RSPP3 To raise community awareness and where possible, community involvement, of the rich diversity of water habitats within the Wolds and how their actions impact upon this resource.	RSPA6 Facilitate a series of local events to increase public awareness of the Wolds' wetland heritage.	LCSP	LWT	5 events by 2023
	RSPA7 Provide a range of specialist talks, demonstration events and guided walks under the LWCS/LCSP banner.	LCSP	LWCS	12 activities by 2023
	RSPA8 Facilitate a range of practical volunteering activities, seeking engagement from the local communities.	LCSP	AW EA WTT	6 activities by 2023
	RSPA9 Develop and support a network of volunteer recorders under the riverfly monitoring project banner; utilising future opportunities via the Citizen Science initiative.	EA LCSP	AW LWT	2 further specialist training events + ongoing support.
RSPP4 To continue to further our understanding of the springs and pond resource found across the Wolds.	RSPA10 Encourage continued mapping of the small wetland resource across the AONB, utilising volunteer assistance where possible.	GLNP LWT	LCSP LWCS	Ongoing
RSPP5 To encourage the enhancement of ponds and other wetland habitats for biodiversity, landscape and wider socio-economic gains.	RSPA11 Provide advice and encourage practical enhancements for pond, lake and wetland management and where appropriate creation.	LCSP LWCS	EA LWT NE TCV	3 sites by 2023

RSPP6 Influence any future water storage schemes to encourage multiple benefits for biodiversity, landscape, flood prevention and wider ecosystem goods and services.	RSPA12 Provide relevant advice and support on any forthcoming storage or flood alleviation schemes.	EA LCC	LCSP LWCS LWT NE	Ongoing
RSPP7 To seek to maintain groundwater levels and their seasonal fluctuations wherever possible to safeguard rivers, streams, springs and blow-wells sufficient to retain characteristic wildlife communities.	RSPA13 Monitor, maintain and enhance the biological grading and flow rates of streams and rivers in the AONB.	EA	LCSP	95% to be in moderate/good condition by 2023
	RSPA14 Seek to influence the development and implementation of all relevant Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS) and Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) programmes to safeguard AONB interests.	EA LCSP NE	AW JAC LWCS	Ongoing
	RSPA15 Comment, monitor and respond to new implications from the Water Framework Directive.	EA	AW JAC LCSP	Ongoing
	RSPA16 Advise and support future chalk and Spilsby Sandstone groundwater modelling studies including impacts of siltation and diffuse pollution.	EA	LCSP NE	Abstraction models reviewed by 2023
	RSPA17 Review and where possible, minimise the presence of stream/river barriers to natural fish/aquatic migrations.	LCSP EA	AW	Ongoing
	RSPA18 Explore and encourage the practical applications of SUD (Sustainable Urban Drainage) systems to help support sustainable water management.	EA	LAs	Ongoing

Biodiversity – Arable Farmland – (section 4.2.7)

Objective AFO To improve the abundance and diversity of characteristic farmland wildlife within the commercially farmed landscape. <i>(See also LNS for wider links with Farmland birds targets)</i>				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
AFP1 To encourage maximum take-up of agri-environment scheme options that provide enhanced conditions for arable farmland wildlife.	AFA1 (see also FWA1) Promote, advise and assist farmers and landowners on relevant agri-environment stewardship measures including utilising the CS Wild Pollinator and Farmland Wildlife Package (WPFWP).	Defra NE	CLA Landowners LWCS NFU	Ongoing
AFP2 To improve awareness of commercial farming's 'good practices' that can bring additional wildlife and landscape benefits including greater use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and low input systems.	AFA2 (see also RSPA2 and SA4) Utilise farmers' networks to explore and promote environmental management systems for farms to share good practice.	CLA NFU	Defra Landowners LWCS NE	Ongoing
	AFA3 Continue to support and promote Open Farm Sunday events in the Wolds, encouraging engagement with harder to reach groups.	CLA NFU LEAF	Landowners LWCS	1 event per annum
AFP3 To encourage surveys to improve information on distinctive arable wildlife (e.g. native herbs and grasses, pollinators and farmland birds), helping to provide a wider evidence base to inform future land management for the area.	AFA4 Continue to identify selection of key sites for future monitoring of arable farmland – where possible linking with GLNP arable plants report on trends and distribution.	LWCS LNU	Landowners GLNP NE	5 new sites by 2023
	AFA5 Develop a subsequent monitoring programme utilising volunteers where possible.	LNU	GLNP LWCS	Review and amend baselines by 2023

Earth Heritage – Geodiversity (section 4.3.1)

Objective GDO To protect and enhance the geological and geomorphological features of the AONB for enjoyment, education and research				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
GDP1 To work with partners and landowners to safeguard and improve the intrinsic interest of geological and geomorphological sites, including improved access.	GDA1 Work with partners to deliver, monitor and review the Lincolnshire Geodiversity Strategy.	GLNP	LWCS	Ongoing
	GDA2 Encourage and support the review and reclassification of RIGS sites to Local Geological Sites.	GLNP ELDC NELC WLDC	LWCS NE	Review the four remaining RIGS by 2020
	GDA3 Maintain support and engagement with the Lincolnshire Geodiversity Group and GeoConservationUK.	LWCS	GLNP LWT NE	Ongoing
GDP2 To maintain and enhance awareness and understanding of the geological and geomorphological interest through general and site specific interpretation.	GDA4 Encourage and support appropriate on-site interpretation.	LGG	Landowners LWCS NE	3 further sites by 2023
	GDA5 Continue to review and promote the Wonder of the Wolds Geology leaflet and relevant partner publications.	LWCS	LGG	Ongoing
	GDA6 Organise and support public events and field trips to promote the geodiversity resource in the Wolds.	LWCS	LGG	3 events by 2023

Earth Heritage – Soils (section 4.3.2)

Objective SO To protect and enhance the soil resource for water protection, flood management, agricultural management, biodiversity and carbon storage				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
SP1 To work with partners and landowners to safeguard and improve the soil resource, anticipating future pressures from climate change.	SA1 Monitor the application of measures to safeguard and protect the soil resource.	CSF EA LCSP	IDB ELDC WLDC NELC	Annually
	SA2 Encourage and support voluntary measures to further improve and protect the resource via agri-environment schemes, CFE and planting schemes.	CFE CLA NFU	EA FC GLNP LWCS NE	A further 6 schemes by 2023
SP2 To increase awareness and understanding amongst landowners, land managers and other practitioners of the different soil types and their relationship to the wider landscape and other environmental and socio-economic issues and services.	SA3 (see also GA7, RSPA5 and FWP1) Organise and support events that raise awareness of different soil types and good practice for their management, utilising links with the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund (CSFF).	GLNP LWCS	LGG NFU CLA NE	3 by 2023
	SA4 (see also RSPA2 and AFA2) Explore land management techniques to aid soil protection and minimise water course sedimentation.	EA IDB	AW CSF FC LCSP LWCS NE NFU	Ongoing

Archaeology (section 4.4.1)

Objective AO To protect, appropriately manage and enhance archaeological and historic features, and their wider landscape setting within the AONB, preventing further loss or damage.				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
AP1 To encourage and support research projects, working with a range of partners and community groups to help increase our knowledge of the Wolds' heritage, identifying sites of key importance and promoting better understanding of the complexity of risk, particularly from climate change.	AA1 Continue to coordinate a specialist sub-group (the Heritage Working Group - HWG) to address the issues of archaeological sites and SMs at risk in the Wolds.	LWCS	HE HL LCC NELC	3 meetings per annum
	AA2 Review the findings and recommendations of the Long Barrows research project to help aid and inform future management practice.	HE NE HTL	HWG LCC LWCS NELC	Ongoing
	AA3 Continue to offer support to local history groups for survey, information gathering and interpretation material, including projects to aid what and how features are at risk.	LCC LWCS	HL HWG NELC	Support on request
	AA4 Seek to explore and understand direct and secondary climate change impacts upon the archaeological heritage of the AONB by engagement with current and future research.	HE	HL HWG LCC LWCS NELC	Ongoing
	AA5 Continue to support and guide the use of the countywide Historic Landscape Characterisation as a management tool.	LCC	HE HL HWG NELC	Ongoing
	AA6 Continue to utilise opportunities from the countywide Layers of History Project to develop and support further Wolds' community heritage projects.	HL LWCS	LCC HaR HWG NELC	By 2023
AP2 To raise awareness of archaeological heritage in the Wolds, working with local communities, farmers, landowners, land managers, utility companies and relevant contract workers to support positive management.	AA7 Promote opportunities for funding support for key sites including SMs identified as high risk by Historic England.	HE	HL LCC LWCS NELC	Ongoing
	AA8 Promote and encourage maximum take up of agri-environment scheme options that maintain & enhance archaeological sites, including those at risk.	LCC NELC	HE LWCS Landowners NE	Ongoing via CS agreements
	AA9 (see also BHA5) Utilise the Layers of History training programme to encourage voluntary stewards and local groups to undertake surveys across the Wolds.	HL	HWG LWCS	Ongoing
	AA10 (see also MA3) Support AONB focused data collection and review as part of the wider Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England (SHINE) and the Defra monitoring programmes.	NE Defra	HE HL LCC LWCS NELC	By 2020
AP3	AA11	LCC	HE	3 sites by

To increase and enhance appropriate public access and interpretation to sites of archaeological and historic interest, in consultation with landowners.	In consultation with landowners and tenants, provide new access opportunities to suitable archaeological sites in the Wolds.	NELC	HL Landowners LWCS	2023
	AA12 Provide regular data to aid monitoring of the heritage interests and features of the AONB.	HE LCC NELC	HL LWCS	Annually

Objective BHO To protect and enhance the historic and locally distinctive character of rural settlements, buildings and features within the AONB. <i>(See also Section 7.1 Planning)</i>				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
BHP1 To work with property owners, residents, owner occupiers and developers to encourage sympathetic and innovative design and management of buildings in keeping with local distinctiveness and character.	BHA1 Continue to coordinate the specialist Heritage Working Group (HWG) to advise and support built heritage interests in the AONB including a focus on Listed Buildings deemed to be "at risk".	LWCS	HE HL LCC NELC	3 meetings per annum
	BHA2 (see also TCA1 & PA2) Promote the development and use of Village Design Statements, Neighbourhood Plans, Parish Plans and Place Check surveys.	CL CPRE	ELDC LCC LWCS NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	BHA3 (see also BHA7) Seek funding and external support to develop a design guide to help aid and inform future sympathetic design and management of buildings.	HE HWG LWCS	ELDC HL LCC NELC WLDC	Reviewed by 2020
	BHA4 Explore and utilise future good practice for public realm design via promotion and implementation of the Lincolnshire Streetscape Design Manual (Every Street Matters).	LCC NELC	HL LWCS	Ongoing
BHP2 To work with a range of partners and community groups to raise awareness of the built heritage in the Wolds and increase understanding of its contribution to the AONB.	BHA5 (see also AA9) Actively promote the Layers of History project encouraging wide community uptake in the voluntary Heritage Stewards scheme.	HL	ELDC HE LCC LWCS	By 2021
	BHA6 In consultation with landowners and/or property owners encourage and support on-site access and interpretation.	HL	HE LCC LWCS NE NELC	3 sites by 2023
BHP3 To encourage and support sympathetic repair and sustainable re-use of redundant buildings for uses directly supportive of the local economy encouraging use of local materials.	BHA7 (see also BHA3) Identify buildings which are redundant and have potential for refurbishment/re-use, and develop linkages with appropriate funding mechanisms e.g. Higher Tier, Leader-LAZ, RDPE.	HWG LCC	ELDC HL LAZ LWCS NE NELC WLDC	Ongoing
BHP4 To embrace appropriate technologies that promote sustainability and energy efficiency whilst complementing the AONB's special character.	BHA8 To offer specialist advice and signposting to encourage wider use of relevant technologies and innovative design solutions.	ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	HL LWCS	Ongoing

Theme 2: Living and Working in the Wolds

Farming and Field Sports in the Wolds (section 5.1)

Objective FWO To acknowledge and promote sustainable farming as a key activity in maintaining the Wolds' landscape character and other natural and heritage assets.				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
FWP1 To develop and promote agricultural good practice to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and landscape character of the Wolds.	FWA1 (see also AFA1) Continue to promote, advise and assist farmers and landowners on relevant agri-environment stewardship measures.	NE	CLA Landowners LCSP LWCS NFU	Ongoing
	FWA2 (see also GA7, RSPA5 and SA3) Continue to encourage and support farmers' awareness raising and networking events to help share good practice utilising links with the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund (CSFF).	NFU CLA	Landowners LWCS NE	3 by 2023
	FWA3 Explore and develop a series of case studies to help demonstrate and promote examples of good practice.	NFU CLA	Landowners LWCS NE	Ongoing
FWP2 To monitor and proactively influence changes in local, regional and national agriculture policy to maximise benefits to farmers in the Wolds.	FWA4 In the light of Brexit, seek to influence national rural development policies to bring positive benefit to farmers in the Wolds.	JAC NAAONB	Defra CLA GLNP NFU	Ongoing
	FWA5 Explore and utilise current initiatives (such as the Facilitation Fund), to encourage continuing financial incentives for 'on-farm' environmental measures.	CLA CFE NE NFU	GLNP LWCS LWT	Ongoing
FWP3 To encourage and support initiatives to sustain livestock farming in the AONB.	FWA6 (as GA6) Review and develop support networks for local graziers to aid future livestock management, including access to specialist advice on rare breeds.	NE	CLA LWCS LWT NFU	Ongoing
	FWA7 (see also GA3) Support, promote and encourage arable reversion to pasture where appropriate and multiple benefits can result (e.g. species rich grasslands, heritage and soil protection, new habitat links).	NE	Defra CLA LWCS LWT	35 ha by 2023
	FWA8 Promote and encourage opportunities for niche branding and local co-operative ventures to help market a wide range of Wolds based livestock products.	CLA LCC	Landowners LWCS NELC NFU	Review by 2019
FWP4 To support farm diversification schemes appropriate to the AONB and which accord with planning policy.	FWA9 Work with landowners to promote and encourage high quality diversification projects utilising Lindsey Action Zone, RDPE and the Sustainable Development Fund for financial assistance.	Defra LAZ LWCS	CLA NFU	Ongoing
	FWA10 Recognise and support the role of local, small-scale and appropriate ventures to support the economy, seeking multiple	ELDC LWCS NELC WLDC	CLA NFU	Ongoing

	benefits to the special qualities of the Wolds.			
FWP5 To seek to maintain traditional rural skills and activities that can protect, appropriately manage and enhance the landscape.	FWA11 (see also WBA8, TCA3 & TCA11-12) Encourage promotional opportunities for a wide range of rural businesses, developing contacts to support local markets, cultural events and aid rural skills development.	CLA LCC NFU	ELDC LWCS NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	FWA12 (see also TCA 11-12 & ARTA14) Promote common links with the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and the range of local producers to support the local economy, including opportunities for aiding skills development.	LCC	CLA ELDC LWCS NELC NFU	Ongoing
FWP6 To recognise and support the contribution of well managed field sport activities for the benefits to wildlife, rural character and the local economy.	FWA13 (see also ARTA8) Support and promote existing initiatives that contribute towards sustainable field sports activities.	CLA	LWCS NFU	Ongoing
	FWA14 Quantify the benefits of sustainable field sports activities to the AONB and raise awareness of these benefits.	CLA	LWCS NFU	Ongoing
FWP7 To raise awareness within the farming community of the growing issues of climate change, sustainable energy and carbon management.	FWA15 Research and coordinate specialist training/awareness opportunities to explore whole farm approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation.	LWCS NE	CLA Defra EA GLNP NFU	1 event by 2023

Thriving Communities (section 5.2)

Objective TCO To support and promote partnership activity to help safeguard and enhance the prosperity and well-being (quality of life) of communities within the Wolds AONB, ensuring the Wolds remain a place to live, work, invest in, and visit, whilst meeting the needs of this unique landscape. (See also Section 7 Developing the Wolds)

Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
TCP1 To foster safe, vibrant and inclusive communities, working with relevant agencies to support local businesses and communities, encouraging both innovation and wider good practice.	TCA1 (see also BHA2 & PA2) Seek to encourage, influence and support Parish and Neighbourhood Plans, including opportunities for engagement with hard to reach groups.	CL CPRE LWCS	ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	TCA2 Develop innovative projects via the AONB Grant Schemes to support local businesses, communities and landowners.	LWCS	CL Defra ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	5 schemes supported per annum
	TCA3 (see also PA4) Continue to support, assist and promote a wide range of local community events, projects and voluntary activity.	CL LWCS TCV	ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	TCA4 Promote and encourage where appropriate affordable housing schemes within the Wolds.	CL	ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
TCP2 To encourage measures to reverse the declines in rural services and facilities and promote healthier lifestyles.	TCA5 Provide specialist advice and support to promote uptake of the various community grant schemes - Big Lottery Fund, local community grants etc.	CL ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	LWCS	Ongoing
	TCA6 Identify and promote fast broadband internet development appropriate to the AONB utilising various rural community broadband schemes.	LCC	ELDC NELC WLDC Internet service providers	Ongoing
	TCA7 (see also ARTA9) Support and promote local services via website links and 'Making the Most of' leaflet updates.	LWCS	Parish & Town Councils	Annual updates
	TCA8 Explore and develop links to the Lincolnshire Health and Well-being commissioning plans especially targets in respect of tackling obesity, physical activity and mental health.	ELDC LCC GLNP NELC WLDC	Lincolnshire Health & Wellbeing Board	Ongoing
TCP3 To encourage existing and new businesses to have a high regard for environmental sustainability and an active engagement in enhancing natural capital, especially in the context of the AONB.	TCA9 (see also FWA11-12 & ARTA14) All partners to help promote the positive benefits of the unique AONB landscape to the local business sector, including exploring opportunities for funding, sponsorship and active practical engagement, including volunteering.	JAC	Parish & Town Councils	Ongoing
	TCA10 (see also ARTA14) Seek to maximise opportunities for environmental gains via the AONB Grant Schemes, Lindsey Action Zone and the Rural Development Programme for England, including the post Brexit Shared Prosperity Fund.	LWCS	LAZ LCC	Ongoing
TCP4 To sensitively utilise the Wolds	TCA11 (see also ARTA6) Influence and link with Green	ELDC LCC	CLJPU LWT	Ongoing

as a recreational resource, in particular promoting accessible 'green infrastructure' close to communities within and adjacent to the AONB.	Infrastructure Strategic Plans to assist in the future development of multi-functional community green space.	NELC WLDC	LWCS NE	
	TCA12 (see also ARTA6 & TWA9) Help to identify and support new community facilities and access, especially those adjacent to settlements, utilising Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife and Geological Sites, woodland and community grant schemes.	LWCS Parish Councils	ELDC FC LCC LWT NELC WLDC	3 sites by 2023
	TCA13 (see also GA4) Continue to support and develop the God's Acre project to utilise the multiple benefits of the church and churchyard resource across the Wolds - including opportunities to link with the Citizen Science initiative.	CT LWCS	CCT GLNP LCC LWT PCCs Parish Councils	Ongoing

Theme 3: Discovering the Wolds

Interpretation – Awareness raising (section 6.2)

Objective IO To raise the profile of the AONB through increasing visitors' and residents' enjoyment and understanding of its special qualities, in turn helping to support the local economy. (See also Sections 5.2 Thriving Communities, 6.3 Access, Recreation and Tourism and 7.2 Transport in the Wolds)

Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
IP1 To provide visitors and residents with a greater understanding and appreciation of what makes the Lincolnshire Wolds a special place, encouraging interpretation facilities and services that can be utilised by all.	IPA1 Facilitate an interpretive walks and events programme across the Wolds linking with local partnership initiatives.	LCSP LWCS	ELDC LCC NELC RA WLDC	12 walks/ events per annum
	IPA2 Coordinate the production and distribution of the community focused AONB e-newsletter 'Higher Ground'.	LWCS	Community-groups CL JAC Parish Councils	4 e-news circulations per annum
	IPA3 Influence and utilise a wide range of partnership events, (e.g. Heritage Open Days, Wolds Words Festival and Church Festivals), to help celebrate the special qualities of the AONB.	ELDC LWCS HL WLDC	Parish Councils	Ongoing
IP2 To strengthen the profile of the AONB as a visitor destination by highlighting the area's unique landscape character and sense of place to the general public.	IPA4 Actively engage with businesses to help aid the review and mutual delivery of the Love Lincolnshire Wolds Destination Management Plan (Love Lincolnshire Wolds tourism group).	ELDC LLW LWCS WLDC	LCC Local businesses	Ongoing
	IPA5 (see also IPA7) Use range of local, regional and national press and publications to highlight the special qualities of Wolds.	LWCS	JAC NAAONB	4 postings per annum
	IPA6 Promote and develop further the Wonders of the Wolds series and the Enjoy the Lincolnshire Wolds leaflet.	LWCS	ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	IPA7 (see also IPA5) Work collaboratively with the National Association for AONBs and wider protected landscapes family (National Parks and Heritage Coasts) to promote the Lincolnshire Wolds - including utilising Outstanding Week.	LWCS	JAC NAAONB	Ongoing
	IPA8 (see also MA1) Highlight and celebrate the collective achievements of the AONB partnership through publication and distribution of an Annual Review to inspire further local action.	LWCS	JAC	1 per annum
IP3 To encourage residents and landowners to become actively involved in the interpretation and promotion of their area for visitors.	IPA9 (see also ARTA3) Encourage and support research and delivery of local community interpretation, supported by AONB Grant Schemes and other funding avenues.	CL HL LWCS	ELDC NELC LCC WLDC	3 by 2023

Access, Recreation and Tourism (section 6.3)

Objective ARTO To develop, promote and seek implementation of a wide range of sustainable access, recreation and tourism initiatives appropriate to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
ARTP1 To maximise access opportunities for all visitors and residents of the AONB, improving provision for quiet recreation.	ARTA1 (see also TWA12) To advise and assist the Mid-Lincolnshire Local Access Forum (LAF) and Rights of Way Improvement Plan in respect of AONB objectives.	LCC NELC	JAC LAF LWCS	Ongoing
	ARTA2 Seek to ensure no net loss to the existing Definitive Public Rights of Way network and maximise opportunities for access for all via permissive arrangements.	LCC NELC RL	CLA LAF Landowners LWCS NFU	Ongoing
	ARTA3 (see also IPA9) Work with landowners, residents and local businesses to review, develop and promote further Wolds self-guided trails for walking and cycling.	LWCS	Landowners LCC Parish Councils HL	A further 3 new publications by 2023
	ARTA4 Work with partners to review and promote the Lincolnshire Wolds Cycle Routes, North Wolds and South Wolds Cycling Maps and other Wolds public transport maps.	LCC NELC LWCS	Local businesses Parish Councils	Ongoing
	ARTA5 Continue to support and promote the annual Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival, including reviewing funding and governance beyond 2018.	HL RL	LAZ LWCS Steering Group Volunteers	1 Festival per annum
	ARTA6 (see also TCA11-12) Seek to establish new multifunctional green space (including grassland and woodland) where possible close to main settlements and existing wildlife habitats.	LCC LWCS Parish Councils	CL FC Landowners Local Businesses NE	3 sites by 2023
ARTP2 To provide coordinated, accurate and up-to-date information on the access, recreation and tourism opportunities within the Wolds AONB.	ARTA7 Regularly review and maintain visitor information via the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB website (www.lincswolds.org.uk), Love Lincolnshire Wolds (www.lovelincolnshirewolds.com), and Visit Lincolnshire websites (www.visitlincolnshire.com) including relevant signposting to tourist destination services.	LCC LWCS LLW	ELDC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	ARTA8 (see also FWA13) Link with landowners and other interest groups to provide information on more specialist recreational activity, including opportunities for legal hunting, shooting and fishing.	CLA NFU	ELDC LCC LWCS NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	ARTA9 (see also TCA7) Maintain and update the 'Making the Most of' leaflet and webpage and utilise links with partnership websites including the Love Lincolnshire Wolds interactive portal.	LWCS LLW	ELDC NELC Parish & Town Councils WLDC	Ongoing

	ARTA10 Work with the National Association for AONBs on promotional initiatives using combination of local and national branding, including relevant coordinated promotions through social media channels.	NAAONB LWCS	JAC	Ongoing
ARTP3 To develop joint promotion and marketing initiatives to raise the profile of the AONB, including utilising the surrounding market towns as gateways to the Lincolnshire Wolds.	ARTA11 Jointly promote the Wolds through collaborative visitor guides and marketing schemes including connections via the Love Lincolnshire Wolds network.	LCC LLW LWCS NELC	ELDC WLDC Town Councils	Ongoing
	ARTA12 Explore further opportunities to develop and promote the Wolds Gateway Walks series and cycle routes.	LWCS	ELDC LCC LNT NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	ARTA13 Support and assist market towns in working towards Walkers are Welcome status and maintaining the award once achieved.	LCC	ELDC LWCS NELC RL WLDC	Ongoing
	ARTA14 (see also FWA12 & TCA10) Explore common links with the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership to enhance the visitor experience and support the local economy through green tourism.	LCC	CLA ELDC LWCS NELC NFU WLDC	Ongoing
ARTP4 To review current access, recreation and tourism provision and support new measures and good practice to improve the infrastructure where compatible with the AONB.	ARTA15 Continue to enhance baseline information on visitor numbers, profiles and distribution across the AONB.	LCC	ELDC LWCS NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	ARTA16 Encourage and support more access, recreational and tourism studies especially to supply information on local visitor experiences and specialised interest groups.	LCC	ELDC GLNP LWCS NELC WLDC	By 2020
	ARTA17 (see also TWA8) Promote and support the Lindsey Trail horse carriage route for both specialist and general use.	LCC	BDS BHS LAF Landowners LWCS	Ongoing
	ARTA18 (see also TCA12 & TWA9) Resources permitting, explore provision for appropriate and sensitively planned car parking and viewing points in consultation with relevant landowners, highway authorities and community groups.	LCC NELC Parish Councils	ELDC LWCS WLDC	Ongoing
	ARTA19 Engage with the local Disability Access Forum and other relevant contacts to review and explore future countryside access provision for hard to reach groups – including those with potential mobility or other specialist health issues.	LCC	ELDC LWCS NELC WLDC	By 2020

Theme 4: Developing the Wolds

Planning and Development Management (section 7.1)

Objective PO To seek to ensure that development plans and planning guidance consistently recognise and uphold the primary purpose of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB designation – the protection and enhancement of its natural beauty and special character. <i>(See also Sections 4.4.2 Built Heritage and 5 Living and Working in the Wolds)</i>				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
PP1 To protect and enhance local character and distinctiveness in the highest quality of design for new development and re-development, including making space for biodiversity, being sensitive to the considerations of heritage assets and tackling climate change.	PA1 Comment on significant planning applications or those likely to set a precedent on sites within and adjacent to the AONB.	LWCS NE	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	PA2 (see also BHA2 & TCA1) Encourage and support the production and use of Parish and Neighbourhood Plans, recognising and reinforcing local character and distinctiveness in design.	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	CL EH LWCS NE Parish Councils	Ongoing
PP2 To encourage and support the sensitive conversion of traditional buildings to new viable uses to support the local economy and community, including making space for biodiversity and tackling climate change.	PA3 Develop wider partnership interest in the development of a tailored design guide to help aid future high quality development in the AONB.	CLJPU ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	EH LWCS NE Parish Councils	By 2020
PP3 To support the development of local need/affordable housing provision which is appropriate to local character and consistent with AONB objectives and LA planning policies.	PA4 (see also TCA3) Support the work of local authorities and housing associations in AONB communities.	CL	CLJPU ELDC LCC LWCS NELC WLDC	Ongoing
PP4 To minimise damage to the AONB's landscape and natural beauty as a result of mineral working and associated activity and help implement the Lincolnshire Geodiversity Strategy.	PA5 Comment on potentially significant mineral application proposals likely to impact upon the AONB.	LWCS NE	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	PA6 Provide specialist advice and support for landscape restoration and alternative uses following the cessation of mineral extraction.	LWCS NE	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
PP5 Promote awareness and encourage consideration of the impact of adjacent development on the views to and from the AONB.	PA7 Continue to liaise with planning authorities and relevant companies regarding those developments adjacent and visible from the Wolds that may impact upon the setting of the AONB.	LWCS NE	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
PP6 To recognise and protect the AONB night sky and general tranquillity through ensuring future development minimises impact upon light and noise levels.	PA8 Raise awareness and continue to review the baseline data for tranquillity and dark night skies across the Wolds.	CPRE LWCS NE	CLJPU Defra ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	PA9 Liaise with planning authorities and relevant developers regarding proposals that may impact upon general high levels of tranquillity and night skies.	CPRE LWCS NE	CLJPU ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing

PP7 To ensure a general presumption against wind energy schemes in any location which would cause significant and demonstrably detrimental effects upon the natural beauty and intrinsic characteristics of the AONB.	PA10 Seek to influence Local Development Frameworks (Local Plans) to recommend the general presumption against wind energy schemes likely to have a significant impact upon the AONB.	LWCS JAC NE	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	PA11 To provide specialist comments on any wind farm/turbine applications to the relevant planning authority on a case by case basis, reviewing accompanying reports as relevant, but especially Landscape and Visual Assessment Studies and wider Environmental Assessments.	LWCS NE	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
PP8 To support general waste reduction measures and recycling initiatives that are in accordance with the special requirements of the AONB and help the shift towards a circular economy.	PA12 To advise and assist the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership in respect of AONB objectives.	LCC LWCS NE NELC	CLJPU CPRE ELDC WLDC	Ongoing
	PA13 Seek to encourage innovative community-led waste reduction, management and recycling projects.	LCC NELC	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LWCS NE WLDC	Ongoing
PP9 To ensure that where larger scale development must proceed within or adjacent to the AONB, because of other national interests, the highest regard is placed on minimising any impacts upon the primary purpose of the designation – the area's natural beauty.	PA14 Provide specialist comments on any large scale development on a case by case basis, reviewing accompanying reports as relevant, but especially any accompanying Landscape and Visual Assessment Studies and wider Environmental Assessments.	LWCS NE	CLJPU CPRE ELDC LCC NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	PA15 In consultation with all statutory agencies, relevant local planning authorities and local communities investigate the options of a further Lincolnshire Wolds AONB boundary review.	Defra JAC NE	CLJPU ELDC LCC NAAONB NLC NELC WLDC	By 2020
PP10 (see also Policy CCP4) To develop a comprehensive assessment approach to securing opportunities for renewable energy provision across the AONB and its wider setting.	PA16 Explore and encourage innovative sustainable energy projects that are compatible with the special landscape qualities of the AONB.	CLJPU ELDC WLDC NELC LCC	LWCS	Ongoing

Transport in the Wolds (section 7.2)

Objective TWO To encourage and support the development and promotion of a sustainable and fully integrated transport network which respects the AONB landscape and character and addresses local community and visitor needs.				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
TWP1 To encourage integrated public and community-based transport schemes that can help to improve the links between communities within the AONB and the surrounding market towns.	TWA1 (as CCA8) Explore and support a programme of partnership activity to encourage public transport and community transport initiatives including shared bus schemes.	LCC Bus Operators NELC	ELDC LWCS NELC Parish - Councils RL WLDC	By 2020
	TWA2 Maximise public transport opportunities when organising and promoting events and walks.	HL LWCS RL	ELDC NELC Parish Councils WLDC	12 events by 2023
	TWA3 Review and influence future Local Transport Plans and Transport Strategies supporting sustainable transport solutions.	LCC NELC	ELDC LWCS Parish Councils WLDC	As required
TWP2 To support and encourage traffic management that will promote safe and attractive walking, cycling and riding in the AONB.	TWA4 Review and update the InterConnect Bus Walk Series using Lincoln - Skegness & Lincoln - Grimsby services.	Stage Coach LCC NELC	LWCS ELDC WLDC Parish Councils	10 refreshed routes in place by 2020
	TWA5 In consultation with local landowners and communities, promote and encourage safe walking, cycling and riding routes across the AONB, with an emphasis on community led/supported trails.	LWCS Parish Councils LCC NELC	CLA Landowners LCC NELC	5 new or updated routes by 2023
TWP3 To encourage transport infrastructure improvements to support appropriate tourism development, ensuring schemes are sympathetic to the landscape and character of the AONB.	TWA7 Work with local businesses and communities to explore and encourage development of cycle hire and bike loan schemes.	LAZ LCC NELC	ELDC LWCS WLDC	Ongoing
	TWA8 (see also ARTA17) Encourage appropriate equestrian tourism, including opportunities from the Lindsey Trail horse carriage route.	LCC LAZ	CLA ELDC LWCS NELC WLDC	Ongoing
	TWA9 (see also TCA12 & ARTA18) Work with landowners and local communities to identify and establish suitable and appropriate small scale car parking facilities for local and visitor use.	Parish Councils	ELDC Landowners LCC LWCS NELC WLDC	Ongoing
TWP4 To encourage a consistent approach to the use of road signage, furniture, and maintenance to promote and respect the character of the AONB.	TWA10 Seek to ensure that any road improvements are of a design and scale that will minimise their impact upon the landscape and character of the AONB.	LCC NELC	ELDC LWCS WLDC	When required
	TWA11 Continue to support, promote and develop the Traditional Roadsigns in Lincolnshire Project to enhance historic signage across the AONB.	LCC LWCS NELC	HL Local Volunteers Parish Councils	Ongoing

TWP5 To support and encourage the development of an integrated, well maintained public rights of way network, maximising the opportunities for achieving access for all.	TWA12 (see also ARTA1) Advise and assist Mid-Lincolnshire Access Forum and Rights of Way Improvement Plans in respect of AONB objectives.	LCC NELC	LAF LWCS JAC	Ongoing
	TWA13 Engage positively to help support and promote permissive and official public rights of way improvements to help enhance the network.	LCC NELC	LAF LWCS JAC	When required
TWP6 To encourage the Highway Authorities to adopt traffic management measures and schemes commensurate with AONB designation and rural environments.	TWA14 Liaise with highway authorities to minimise the urbanisation of country and village roads in the AONB – utilising Streets for All and similar guidance.	LCC NELC	LWCS Parish Councils	Ongoing

Climate Change and Energy (section 7.3)

Objective CCO To seek to develop and implement a long-term climate change strategy to help safeguard the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, recognising and responding to the key local pressures through effective adaptation and mitigation.				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
CCP1 To establish, monitor and review key indices for monitoring the possible effects of climate change.	CCA1 Review and utilise research and monitoring for environmental/landscape resources linking with proposed actions...	GLNP JAC	EA LWCS	Ongoing
CCP2 To develop practices that promote a sustainable landscape approach to tackle and respond to climate change pressures through a range of mitigation and adaptation measures.	CCA2 Research, encourage and support landscape scale enhancements linking with proposed actions...	GLNP JAC	EA LWCS	Ongoing
	CCA3 (see also CCA5) Research, support and encourage changes to land management practices to help aid the AONB's resilience to climate change impacts.	FC NE	EA LWCS GLNP	Ongoing
CCP3 To support and develop practices that promote healthy, well-connected and managed landscapes and ecosystems resilient and flexible to the effects of climate change.	CCA4 Explore opportunities for landscape scale habitat restoration via HLF and other strategic grant funded packages.	LWCS Defra	EA LCC JAC NELC NE	Ongoing
	CCA5 (see also CCA3) Encourage and support landscape scale habitat enhancements that can provide economic, social and environmental benefits.	GLNP JAC	EA LWCS NE	Ongoing
CCP4 (see also PP10) To encourage and promote innovative low carbon energy reduction/generation schemes that are conducive to the requirements of the AONB designation and complement local landscape character.	CCA6 (see also BHA8 & TWA1-3) To raise awareness of the benefits of carbon reduction plans for organisations, local communities and businesses active across the AONB.	LCC NELC	CL JAC Local Business Owners	Ongoing
	CCA7 Support low carbon micro-energy generation schemes and community energy reduction measures that are in-keeping with the special qualities of the nationally protected AONB.	JAC LCC NELC	CL ELDC Local Businesses WLDC	Ongoing
	CCA8 (as TWA1) Explore and support a programme of partnership activity to encourage public transport and community transport initiatives.	LCC Bus Operators NELC	ELDC LWCS NELC RL WLDC	Ongoing

Monitoring (section 9.2)

Objective MO To monitor the Management Plan activities and condition of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB				
Policies	Proposed Actions	Potential Lead Partners	Potential Others	Proposed Target
MP1 To monitor the performance of the Action Plan.	MA1 Collate, report and review information against annual work programmes for LWCS and JAC partners.	JAC LWCS	GLNP	Annually
	MA2 (see also IPA8) Utilise electronic reporting tools to support and encourage returns from all partners.	LWCS JAC	Parish Councils GLNP	Annually
MP2 To monitor the condition of the AONB.	MA3 (see also AA10) Continue to develop the Wolds AONB baseline evidence for key condition indicators – linking with key national protected landscapes monitoring datasets.	LWCS	Defra EA NE All LAs	Ongoing
	MA4 Actively engage with the NAAONB key performance reporting for the headline indicators: Landscapes for Nature, Landscapes for People, Landscapes for Culture and Landscapes for Business.	LWCS	NAAONB	Annually

9.2 Monitoring

The publication of the revised Plan is not the end of the process but marks a continuous commitment to manage the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. Monitoring both the condition of the AONB and the implementation of the Plan will be essential if we are to assess its success.

The previous evidence-bases for the area have been fairly limited, with datasets usually available at either the administrative boundaries (parish council, electoral wards, district/unitary and county levels) or the more extensive Lincolnshire Wolds Character Area. The volume of AONB specific data has been more abundant since 2005 with assistance from the Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre and nationally via the Framework for Monitoring Environmental Outcomes for Protected Landscapes project. However there is still a tendency for most information to be gathered at an administrative level; with further time and resources usually required to refine to the AONB boundary, with estimates and interpretation of information often necessary. A sound and robust evidence-base remains essential for making informed strategic decisions and ensuring the best use of limited resources to protect and enhance the area.

9.2.1 Condition Monitoring

A variety of 'condition indicators' have been identified in the accompanying State of the AONB Report 2017. These have been selected from a nationally recommended list of monitoring indicators recommended by Natural England and will enable comparisons with similar areas on a regional and national scale. The indicators will help to develop and refine baseline data over the following areas: countryside and landcover; cultural and vernacular; ecology and environment; and socio-economic and quality of life themes.

9.2.2 Performance Monitoring

Performance monitoring is necessary to monitor progress of the Plan. A more detailed annual work programme will be established from the five-year Action Plan for both the Lincolnshire Wolds JAC and LWCS. These will be reviewed annually, reporting progress on specific actions and identifying where additional resources may be required.

Objective:

MO To monitor the Management Plan activities and condition of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.

Policies:

MP1 To monitor the performance of the Action Plan.

MP2 To monitor the condition of the AONB.

Actions: See MA1-4 on Table 3

Table 4: Monitoring Indicators & Summary Findings (for ongoing review)

Indicator	Description	Summary findings
Protecting the Wolds (Theme 1) – Landscape, Natural Heritage & Biodiversity		
Landscape		
1	To review the fixed point photographs established across the AONB as a proxy measure for monitoring changes to key viewpoints and local character.	Under review
2	The investment and length of powerlines undergrounded since 2004 within the AONB.	Northern Power – 13kms undergrounded with an investment of £1.7 million. (2016) Western Power – 12 kms undergrounded with an investment of £1.2 million. (2016)
3	A visual tranquillity map of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	See relevant map p112 – State of the AONB Report
4	A dark night skies map of the Lincolnshire Wolds.	See relevant map p113 – State of the AONB Report
Nature Conservation		
5	UK BAP Species present within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	165 species from known records. (2017)
6	Red List Species present within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	244 species from known records. (2017)
7	Lincolnshire BAP Species present within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	41 species from known records. (2017)
8	Condition of SSSIs within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	50% (52 hectares) of SSSIs are in favourable condition. (2016)
Woodland Resource		
9	Area of ancient and semi-natural woodland the AONB.	604 hectares recorded as ancient woodland. (2017)
10	Area of the AONB's woodland in positive management	At least 56% of woodland in positive management. (2015)
11	Uptake of Woodland Managed and Created Under Environmental Stewardship (ES).	234.79 hectares of total woodland was managed and/or created via Environmental Stewardship - 18 agreements. (2017)
Grassland Resource		
12	Uptake of Low input Grassland, Managed, Restored or Created Under Environmental Stewardship (ES)	1883.22 hectares of low input grassland created, managed and/or restored. (2017)
13	Number, length and condition of Roadside Nature Reserves	17 Roadside Nature Reserves - condition info pending. (2017)
Rivers and streams resource		
14	The length of river in moderate or good ecological condition.	89.28 kms of main river was classified as being in moderate or good condition. (2017)
15	The length of Lincolnshire Chalk Streams and their adjacent habitat restored through active management.	Since 2006 over 19 kms of chalk stream resorted, with management enhancements to a further 45 kms of adjacent habitat. (2016)
Land Management		
16	Number and area of land in formal stewardship agreements.	31,990 hectares (57%) of the AONB in Environmental Stewardship with 136 live agreements with an investment of £2.17 million. (2017)
17	Environmental Stewardship (ES Options) number and area.	See relevant table in State of the AONB Report 2017.
Soils and Earth Heritage		
18	Area of the Lincolnshire Wolds retaining good soil structure and nutrient content for sustainable	25 soil types identified across the AONB - series of vulnerability maps produced in 2009 now in need of renewal.

	productive farming (or the area of the Lincolnshire Wolds providing high grade agricultural land).	
19	Condition of registered SSSI geological sites	Six SSSIs sites all in favourable condition. (2017)
20	% of Local Geological Sites and Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) that are in favourable condition.	15 LGS sites and a further 6 RIGS – condition to be confirmed (2017)
Cultural Heritage – Archaeology and Built Heritage		
21	Condition of heritage assets deemed to be 'At Risk'.	27.6 % of Scheduled Monuments and 5.9% of Grade II* buildings are deemed to be at risk. One place of worship (Grade II*) is also at risk. (2017)
22	The number of Traditional Roadsigns in Lincolnshire (TRiL) within the AONB in good condition.	89 TRiLs within the AONB, 95% estimated to be in good condition. (2017)
23	The number of AONB traditional farmsteads deemed to have "high heritage potential".	568 traditional farmsteads have been identified in the AONB; 48% are deemed to have heritage potential on account of 50%+ retention of historic buildings. (2017)
Living and Working in the Wolds (Theme 2)		
24	Population patterns in the AONB and adjacent market towns.	19% under 19 years, 21% 20-44, 26% 45-59, 25% 60-74 and 9% over 75 years. (2011)
25	Number of rateable businesses in the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	375 rateable businesses. (2017)
26	Employment levels in the Lincolnshire Wolds.	4,890 people currently employed in the Wolds (2017); unemployment currently approx. 5%
27	Business activity in the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	The rateable businesses (2017) include: 70 workshops, 54 warehouses, 52 guest houses etc, 27 comm's stations, 21 shops/showrooms, 20 pubs, 14 offices, 12 equestrian facilities.
28	Access to basic services.	See table p125 - LWCS audit (2017)
29	The annual average daily traffic flow (AADT) range for Lincolnshire Wolds A and B roads.	In 2016 the mean AADT from A road counts was 7,313 vehicles; 2,078 for B roads.
30	Public transport services	Under review
31	Broadband/Mobile Phone Coverage	Under review
32	Farm Types - Lincolnshire Wolds AONB	64% of farms are in cereals or general cropping, 18% livestock grazing. (2013)
33	Farm Sizes Classification	Over 53% of farms are over 100 hectares. (2013)
34	Land Use in hectares (% listings in respect of the total area of the AONB)	Over 76% of AONB was in cropping or bare fallow, 11% in permanent grassland and 3.2% as registered woodland. (2013)
35	Breakdown of Farm Labour (number of personnel)	798 people were in agricultural sector employment – 52% full-time. (2013)
36	Additional Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) and LEADER investment in landowner, business and community partnership projects across the Lincolnshire Wolds.	Between 2014–16, four farming/forestry projects completed utilising RDPE Countryside Productivity small grants programme. £451,273 of Leader grants was approved in support of seven projects in the AONB pre-2014. Schemes continue to come forward under the new programme.
Discovering the Wolds (Theme 3)		
37	The total number of visitors to the wider Lincolnshire Wolds Destination Plan Area.	In 2016 over 3.4 million visitors visited. (2017 STEAM data)
38	The total number of day and staying visitors to the Lincolnshire Wolds Destination Plan Area.	In 2016 there were 3.18 million day visitors and 250,000+ staying visitors. (2017 STEAM data)
39	The estimated economic contribution from tourism across the Lincolnshire Wolds Destination Plan Area.	In 2016 the economic contribution from tourism to the area is in excess of £166.5 million. (2017 STEAM data)

40	Number and condition of gateway roadsigns for the Lincolnshire Wolds	20 boundary signs originally installed in 2001 – one missing, one moved. JAC has deemed to renew any future damaged signs on a like-for-like basis. (2016 audit)
41	Number of Promoted Circular Walking Routes	Over 37 promoted walks available as "Wolds Walks" or "Gateway Walks". Further 11 Interconnect Bus Walks available. (2017)
42	Number of Long Distance Trails	Five long distance routes take in the AONB including The Viking Way. (2017)
43	Number of special feature maps and leaflets.	Five special feature leaflets (Wonders of...) available promoting AONB's points of interest + other specific leaflets inc. Making the Most of, Enjoy the... (2017)
44	Number of AONB specific interpretation panels	Seven panels were renewed in 2014-15. 11 panels were renewed in 2015-16. Four panels were renewed in 2017-18.
45	Number of people engaged in AONB activity through guided walks, events, shows and volunteering.	During 2016-17 over 11,250 people were actively engaged via AONB walks, events, shows and volunteering. (2017)
46	Number of visits to the Wolds AONB website.	During 2016-17 the LWCS's dedicated AONB website was visited 57,749 times, > 79% were first time visitors. (2017)
47	Google Maps Rating for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	449 independent postings - average score four and a half out of five. (2017)
48	Trip Advisor Rating for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.	63 independent postings - average score five out of five. (2017)
Developing the Wolds (Theme 4)		
49	Total investment and projects supported via the Wolds AONB Partnership's Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) and Small Grants Scheme (SGS) to aid delivery of wide range of goods and services.	Since April 2013 the SDF and SGS programmes have supported 78 projects across the Wolds with an investment of £106,987 securing match funding of £126,611.
50	Number of neighbourhood plans	None for any AONB settlements
51	Number of local design guides	Older guides exist e.g. Tealby
52	Number of new affordable homes	Under review
53	Number of new flood management schemes to aid water management and climate change adaptations.	New flood alleviation scheme constructed on the River Lud, helping to protect Louth.
54	Number of planning applications or appeals approved contrary to the advice of the LWCS and NE.	<i>New measure proposed for monitoring from May 2018. (Currently LWCS comments on a wide range of planning applications that may impact upon the AONB).</i>
Partnerships in the Wolds (Theme 5)		
55	The LWCS will compile and publish an annual review summarising activities undertaken.	13 th Wolds AONB Annual Review 2016-17 published and circulated. (2017)
56	All JAC partners will complete annual updates against key M. Plan policies and objectives as detailed within the five year indicative Action Plan.	Last recording request April 2017.
57	The key local authorities will review and sign a local Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) to help ensure continuing financial support.	Local MoA recently signed and in place until spring 2020.
58	The JAC will continue to support, influence and promote the wider family of AONBs – primarily via the work of the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB), under the Landscapes for Life banner.	Attendance at Chairman's Conference (autumn 2017); active participation in the NAAONB Strategic Business Plan review.

9.3 Management Plan Review

In addition to the annual review of the Action Plan, the CRow Act legislation requires that AONB Management Plans be reviewed at regular five year intervals. A formal review of the Plan will commence during 2022 to enable effective participation and consultation with partners and stakeholders.

Appendix 1: Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) Membership

Membership as of March 2018

Joint Management Group
Natural England (NE) - <i>statutory advisor</i>
Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) - <i>core funder</i>
East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) - <i>core funder</i>
West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) - <i>core funder</i>
North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC) - <i>core funder</i>
Other Members:
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)
Churches Together (CT)
Community Lincs (CL)
Country Land and Business Association (CLA)
Historic England (HE)
Environment Agency (EA)
Forestry Commission (FC)
Heritage Lincolnshire (HL)
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT)
National Farmers Union – East Midlands (NFU)
National Trust (NT)
Ramblers - Lincolnshire (RL)
The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
Advisory Members:
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) - core funder under the terms of the local Memorandum of Agreement.

Appendix 2: Role of the Joint Advisory Committee, Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service and sub-groups

Role of the Joint Advisory Committee - JAC

- To develop as an active partnership.
- To pool resources and expertise including National and Regional Agendas.
- To coordinate activities delivered across the Wolds including identifying adverse activities.
- Joined up delivery of members' services by advising their constituent authorities on proposals/policies for the Wolds.
- To oversee the production of the management plan, aiding its formal adoption and regular review.
- To identify opportunities and make recommendations for new initiatives.
- To agree and adopt the annual work programme.
- To receive, adopt and distribute the annual report.

Role of the Joint Management Group - JMG

- To identify and review the statutory duties placed on the local authorities in relation to the AONB, and where appropriate to ensure the LWCS delivers against these duties on behalf of the local authorities.
- To core fund the LWCS (in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement).
- To oversee the LWCS accounts.
- To identify the local Authority conditions attached to funding for incorporation into Management Plan and annual work programme.

Role of the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service - LWCS

- To give the AONB an identity, positive image and increased status.
- To obtain increased funding and resources for the AONB.
- To keep under review and refine the Management Plan.
- To coordinate the monitoring of change and development in the AONB.
- To establish a database for the AONB.
- To prepare technical and planning reports and act as secretariat to constituent local authorities and JAC for the Wolds.
- To liaise with local community and interested individuals in respect of 'AONB-related' issues, providing practical and specialist advice where appropriate.

Role of the specialist sub-groups

- To be set up as and when required with a clear remit and a set of outcomes to achieve.

A range of groups currently provide specialist advice, and assistance in reviewing and aiding the delivery of specific areas of the AONB Management Plan including the Heritage Working Group (HWG), Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project (LCSP), and the Traditional Roadsigns in Lincolnshire (TRiL) Project.

Appendix 3: Local Landscape Character Area Statements (AONB specific)

North-West Scarp

The prominent North West Scarp is a dramatic feature of the Lincolnshire Wolds affording distant views across the Lincolnshire Clay Vale. The slopes provide a steep and hummocky appearance with attractive spring-line villages at the foot of the scarp. The area is rich in wildlife with rough pasture, scrub and woodland dominant within the valleys.

Key local AONB features identified:

- ☐ Prominent scarp slope with extensive views west
- ☐ Rough pasture with some wet flushes
- ☐ Picturesque villages sited along the spring-line (e.g. Claxby, Nettleton, Tealby, Walesby)
- ☐ Industrial heritage (e.g. Ironstone mining in Claxby and Nettleton; paper making in Tealby)
- ☐ The Caistor High Street ancient trackway and associated tumuli
- ☐ Ridge-top clumps of beech
- ☐ Ornate late medieval churches and other distinctive buildings using Claxby Ironstone (e.g. Nettleton) and Tealby Limestone (e.g. Tealby, Walesby)
- ☐ Sparse farm settlements.

Key local issues identified:

- ☐ Proliferation of telecommunication masts on the highly visible ridgeline
- ☐ Impact of large agricultural structures
- ☐ Impact of chalk quarrying
- ☐ Threats to nature conservation, especially rough pasture and wet flushes
- ☐ Parking and visitor pressure in villages close to the Viking Way (e.g. Tealby, Walesby)
- ☐ Decline in woodland and beech clumps.

Chalk Wolds

The Chalk Wolds is a large open plateau of rolling hills and secluded valleys. The topography of this part of the Wolds is striking and is testimony to the last glaciation when ice sheets and meltwater dramatically altered the landscape. Large arable fields and characteristic changing crop patterns dominate the plateau top and contrasts markedly with the numerous valleys with their lush pastures and wooded slopes. The area has the highest concentration of deserted and shrunken medieval villages within the AONB.

Key local AONB features identified:

- ☐ Open rolling arable farmland on gently dipping plateau
- ☐ Wooded and lush inward-facing valleys and dry valleys
- ☐ Attractive nucleated villages, often of Saxon or medieval origin (e.g. Rothwell, Hatcliffe, Thoresway)
- ☐ Enclosure roads (drovers roads) with wide verges and characteristic hedgerows
- ☐ Small plantation woodlands and beech clumps of the 18th and 19th centuries
- ☐ Isolated chalk grassland
- ☐ Deserted medieval villages (e.g. Beesby, East Wykeham)
- ☐ Archaeological sites on the plateau (e.g. tumuli, barrows)
- ☐ Manors and parkland (e.g. East Ravendale)
- ☐ Geomorphological and geological sites (e.g. Hubbard's Hills, Welton le Wold)
- ☐ Localised old enclosed landscape (e.g. north-eastern corner of the AONB).

Key local issues identified:

- ☐ Impact of disused wartime airfields, transmission lines, radio masts and huge straw stacks
- ☐ Loss and decline of chalk grassland
- ☐ Loss and decline in quality of hedgerows
- ☐ Decline in quality of beech clumps and other woodland
- ☐ Impact of arable practices on archaeological features
- ☐ Abandonment of some of the more remote farms and cottages
- ☐ Lack of awareness of the unique geomorphology
- ☐ Threats to views out to the coastal marshes (e.g. wind farms, tourism developments).

Ridges and Valleys of the South-West

The ridges and valleys landscape is enormously complex with prominent chalk ridges bisected by deep combs and wide river valleys. The area is one of the most attractive within the Wolds with a patchwork of pastoral and arable fields, woodland, hedgerows, country estates and parkland, and attractive rivers and streams.

Key local AONB features identified:

- ☐ Dramatic views south from the Bluestone Heath Road and Nab Hill - Hoe Hill ridge
- ☐ Mixed pattern of arable and pastoral farming
- ☐ Herb rich roadside verges
- ☐ Rich marginal and aquatic habitats of the River Bain, Lymn, and Waring.
- ☐ Old mixed hedgerows
- ☐ Sole example of a semi-natural chalk woodland (e.g. Tetford Wood)
- ☐ Characteristic villages - often rectangular in form and houses widely built of brick (e.g. Tetford)
- ☐ Historic parkland and country houses (e.g. Harrington, Langton and Stenigot)
- ☐ Alfred, Lord Tennyson birthplace and childhood home at Somersby
- ☐ Archaeological interest on the ridges and slopes (e.g. barrows, tumuli, cultivation terraces)
- ☐ Early medieval churches and moated sites (e.g. Bag Enderby, Brinkhill, Langton and Somersby)
- ☐ Wet alder carr woodlands (e.g. New England Valley, Salmonby Carr).

Key local Issues identified:

- ☐ Lack of awareness about historic and cultural associations
- ☐ Development issues including telecommunications masts and oil exploration
- ☐ Threat to grassland habitats
- ☐ Inappropriate management of roadside verges
- ☐ Loss of local village services
- ☐ Heavy coastal traffic and potential road modernisation schemes (e.g. A158, Gunby Corner).

South-Eastern Claylands

The gentle ridge of the south-eastern claylands dips gently west before merging with the flat marshlands beyond the AONB. This is the most heavily wooded part of the Wolds where large blocks of woodland are interspersed with cultivated fields. The area has an isolated and remote feel. Ridge-top salters' roads, spring-line villages and archaeological features are evident here.

Key local AONB features identified:

- ☐ Views across the Middle Marsh to the coast
- ☐ Extensive oak-ash woodland (e.g. Maltby, Haugham, Burwell, Willoughby, Welton Woods)
- ☐ Attractive spring-line villages (e.g. Little Cawthorpe, Muckton, South Thoresby, Welton le Marsh)
- ☐ Rich mixed geology/chalk stream habitats typified by the Long Eau, Calceby Beck and Great Eau.
- ☐ Ancient sea cliff on eastern ridge, broken by glacial meltwater valleys (e.g. Skendelby Psalter, Well Vale)
- ☐ Ridge-top roads and their associated archaeology (e.g. long and round barrows)
- ☐ West-east salters' roads
- ☐ Wetland flushes and springs.

Key local Issues identified:

- ☐ Sand, gravel and chalk extraction
- ☐ Threats to views out to the coastal marshes (e.g. wind farms, tourism developments, grain silos)
- ☐ Impact of conifer planting
- ☐ Development issues on prominent ridgelines (e.g. telecommunication masts).

Appendix 4: State of the AONB Report - compiled Sept-Oct 2017

*Context, indicators and data summaries for the
Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.*

Further case studies pending.

produced by
Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service
(AONB Staffing Unit)



Table 1 within the AONB Management Plan (2018-23) summarises the special landscape features that typify the Lincolnshire Wolds natural beauty and sense of place – these include attributes that relate to the area's landscape, farmland, geology, topography, biodiversity, archaeology, built heritage and culture. Appendix 3 provides an additional summary of the special qualities of each of the four Local Landscape Character Areas.

This supplementary report identifies and reviews a number of indices to help aid future condition monitoring for the AONB and the development of subsequent Management Plans. These proposed indicators are grouped in-line with the overriding themes of the Lincolnshire Wolds Management Plan (2018-23):

- Protecting the Wolds (Theme 1)
- Living and Working in the Wolds (Theme 2)
- Discovering the Wolds (Theme 3)
- Developing the Wolds (Theme 4)
- Partnerships in the Wolds (Theme 5).

Protecting the Wolds (Theme 1) – Landscape, Natural Heritage & Biodiversity

Landscape character – conservation and enhancement:

INDICATOR 1: To review the fixed point photographs established across the AONB as a proxy measure for monitoring changes to key viewpoints and local character.

Context: Additional to detailed landscape character assessments undertaken at each of the local administrative areas (ELDC, NELC, and WLDC) the original Lincolnshire Wolds Landscape Character Assessment identified four distinctive landscape character areas: The North-West Scarp, the Chalk Wolds, the Ridges and Valleys of the South-West and the South-East Claylands.

Status: Resources dependent, a detailed study and reassessment of fixed point photographs is recommended over the next plan period.

Visual Amenity:

INDICATOR 2: The investment and length of powerlines undergrounded since 2004 within the AONB.

Context: OFGEM (the Government Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) has a target of supporting the undergrounding up to 5% of powerlines across nationally protected landscapes (AONBs and National Parks) to enhance scenic quality. Two district network operators; Northern Powergrid and Western Power Distribution have linked up with the LWCS, local communities and landowners to assist in undergrounding schemes across the Wolds.

Results:

- As of April 2016, Northern Powergrid has removed over 13 kilometres of overhead line and associated infrastructure with an investment of over £1.7 million.
- As of April 2016, Western Power has removed nearly 12 kilometres of overhead line with an investment of over £1.2 million.

Review of undergrounding data:

Most of the schemes have focused on low voltage schemes within or close to settlements – a total of 15 villages/hamlets have benefitted directly from the projects, improving not only visual amenity but often power outage and consistency in future supply.

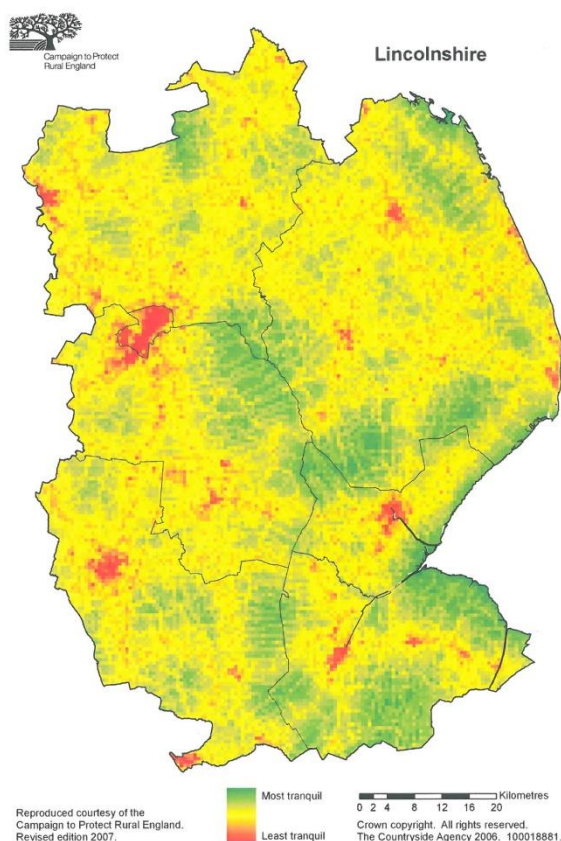
Tranquillity and Dark Night Skies:

Context: Tranquillity is stimulated by sight, sound and other senses either directly or as a trigger to memories. We aspire to it as it brings on or increases our feelings of peace and well-being with resulting positive effects on health and quality of life. It both benefits us as individuals and more widely society and the economy as a whole. In a densely populated country pressured by development and the pressures of modern living it is increasingly important to find the qualities of places which generate such tranquil feelings and to protect those locations and their attributes for the future (adapted from CPRE Tranquillity Mapping Report, 2008). The AONB family can make a major contribution in terms of safe guarding the tranquillity and sense of place that we find across some of our most special and often unique landscapes.

Revised national tranquillity maps were published by the CPRE in 2007 – the study did not seek to determine outright if an area is tranquil or non-tranquil by zoning but sought to provide continuous surface maps based on a combination of GIS mapping and Participatory Appraisal Consultation (PA). The integrated PA analysis reviewed peoples' perceptions, values and beliefs across a wide range of seeing and hearing attributes that would either contribute or detract from tranquillity (21 positive and 23 negative measures). The integration of the PA study applies modern thinking, recognising that as well as a resource, judgements on tranquillity are ultimately personal depending upon a complex set of factors.

INDICATOR 3: A visual tranquillity map of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB:

Lincolnshire County Tranquillity Map (2007):

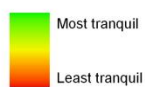


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Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Tranquillity Map (2007):

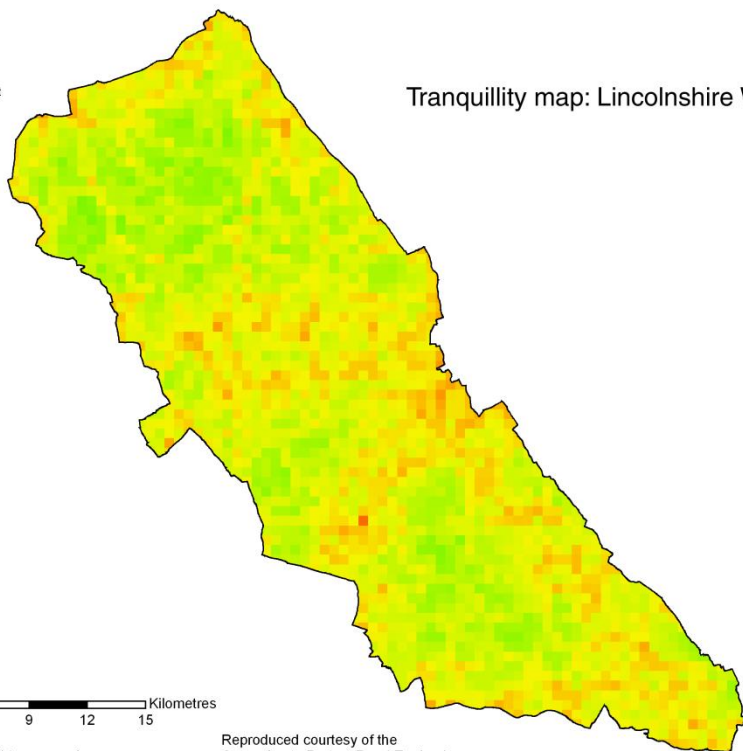


Tranquillity map: Lincolnshire Wolds



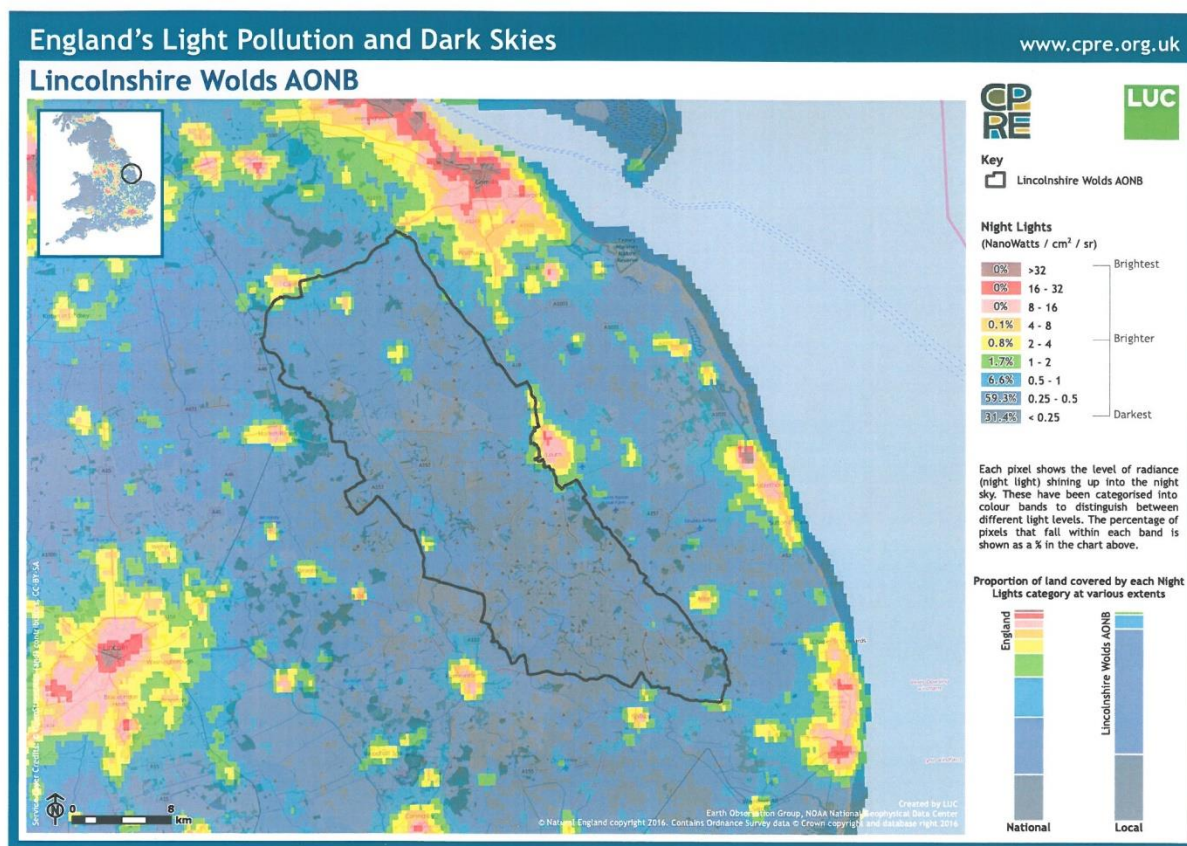
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The Countryside Agency 2006. 100018881.

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Campaign to Protect Rural England.
Revised edition 2007.



INDICATOR 4: A dark night skies map of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB

Visibility at night has been integrated into the national tranquillity mapping work. This has applied the measure of "skyglow" which is defined as the brightness of the night sky as a function of distance from varying sizes of urban areas – applying the assumption that settlement size correlates directly to light pollution (the ability to see the stars at night).



Copyright CPRE

Review of tranquillity and night skies maps:

As highlighted, both maps indicate the importance of the Lincolnshire Wolds for retaining a high degree of both tranquillity and night sky visibility, with fairly minimal negative receptors. The influence of adjacent market towns, Cadwell Motor Circuit and the major roadways are clearly evident on the tranquillity map. There is also a mapping cluster suggesting a loss of tranquillity/increase in light intrusion in the area of Binbrook and Brookenby, largely on account of the industrial business park.

Natural Heritage:

Context: The value and importance of biodiversity has been reaffirmed at a global and UK levels with the continuing aims to halt the loss of habitat degradation and species loss and help mitigate and adapt to climate change pressures. The wildlife of the Lincolnshire Wolds has been heavily shaped by living and working practices through the generations and is a key element of the natural beauty of the AONB. As detailed in the main Plan, habitats of particular relevance to the Wolds include: 1) grassland – meadow, pasture and wet grassland; 2) grass verges and green lanes; 3) woodlands, beech clumps and traditional orchards; 4) hedgerows and landmark trees; 5) rivers, streams and ponds; 6) arable farmland.

INDICATOR 5: UK BAP Species present within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB:

165 species listed from records, of which 51 were recorded post 2014.

INDICATOR 6. Red List Species present within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB:

244 species listed from records, of which 33 were recorded post 2014.

INDICATOR 7. Lincolnshire BAP Species present within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB:

41 species listed, of which 33 were recorded post 2014.

Source: Indicator 1 – 3: Lincolnshire Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership Records Centre

INDICATOR 8. Condition of SSSIs within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB:

Context: Sites of Special Scientific Interest are nationally protected areas which provide a representative sample of some of the best wildlife and geologically important sites in England. Most SSSIs are in private ownership and their management is a shared responsibility with Natural England, the body responsible for their designation and subsequent condition monitoring.

As directed through 'Biodiversity 2020', Natural England has a target to ensure that at least 50% of SSSIs are in favourable condition and at least 95% are in favourable or recovering condition by 2020.

The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB has a total of 14 SSSIs designated on account of their wildlife interest with many located on the steeper slopes of the Wolds, or within the valley bottoms. The sites include nine SSSIs of alkaline-acidic grassland/marshland, four SSSIs of ancient and semi-natural woodland and one nationally important bat colony, protected on account of both the number and the range of species present.

Results:

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB - SSSI Condition (figures = area in hectares)	2004	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
Favourable Condition	57	43	45	53	52	52
Unfavourable, Recovering	13	37	41	41	45	45
Unfavourable, No Change	30	13	10	10	5	5
Unfavourable, Declining	4	11	8	0	2	2
Total	104	104	104	104	104	104

Source: Natural England (April 2017)

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB SSSI Detailed Categories (figures = area in hectares)	Acid Grassland	Broadleaved woodland	Built up areas/ gardens	Calcareous Grassland (lowland)	Neutral Grassland (lowland)	Earth Heritage
2017						
Favourable Condition		29.5	3.8	4.4		14.1
Unfavourable, Recovering	2.4	14.1		13.3	14.9	
Unfavourable, No Change		5.4				
Unfavourable, Declining				2		
2014						
Favourable Condition	2.54	29.6	3.8	4.5	15	14.1
Unfavourable, Recovering		14.2				

Unfavourable, No Change		5.4				
Unfavourable, Declining				2		

Source: Natural England (April 2017)

Review of biodiversity data: The Lincolnshire Wolds SSSIs comprise a total of 104 hectares of land, with some 14.1 hectares designated on account of the earth heritage interests (see below). Including the latter, 92.8% of the total SSSI resource is currently deemed to be either in a favourable or recovering condition, with some 5% classed as unfavourable no change (within the woodland component), with just 2% unfavourable and declining (calcareous grassland). In terms of timeline changes there has been a slight reduction in the favourable condition of SSSIs over the past ten years, but a significant increase in the total hectares classed as unfavourable but recovering. Two SSSI sites, which include part of Swaby Valley and Skendleby Psalter Banks, have been declining largely on account of reduced grazing and the subsequent encroachment from dominant grasses and scrub.

Woodland Resource and Management

Context: The woodland cover of the Wolds is low (< 5.5% coverage) but remains a vital habitat and landscape component, and an important source of local timber. Additional to the wildlife benefits, especially of mixed and deciduous woods, these habitats aid water management and soil protection through reducing runoff, make a major contribution to green infrastructure connectivity and provide further opportunities for access and recreation. Many woodlands remain in active management on account of their use for supporting the rearing of game birds.

The mosaic of differing habitats within any given woodland can help to maximise plant and animal diversity, including for example woodland springs, streams, glades, rides and field edge layers. Agri-forestry grant enhancements and forestry/woodland plans commonly aim to enhance biodiversity and timber productivity, supporting species of local provenance and seeking to minimise the risks from future pests and diseases.

Extent and type of woodland cover:

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB	2014 (hectares)	2015 (hectares)
Total area of woodland	3,058	3,060
Broadleaved	2,478	2,478
Conifer	300	300
Mixed	80	80
Felled	4	4
Ground prepared for planting	46	27
Shrub land	1	1
Young trees	169	171

Source: National Forestry Inventory – Forestry Commission.

This measure is based upon Natural England's Ancient Woodland Data which seeks to establish the area of woodland recorded as ancient and semi-natural woodland (ASNW) and the area of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB – Ancient Woodland	2017 (hectares)
Ancient and semi-natural woodland (ASNW)	233
Plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).	1,392
Total area of ancient woodland	604

INDICATOR 10: Area of the AONB's woodland in positive management

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB	2014 (hectares)	2015 (hectares)
Actively managed woodland	1,723	1,741
Unmanaged woodland	1,392	1,394
% of woodland managed	55%	56%

INDICATOR 11: Uptake of Woodland Managed and Created Under Environmental Stewardship (ES).

As of March 2017, 18 woodland agreements were in place across the Lincolnshire Wolds through the ES programme, aiding management of some 235 hectares of woodland/woodland edge resource.

Woodland Managed and Created Under Environmental Stewardship (ES)	2017 (hectares)
Management of Woodland Edge – EC4 Option	1.98
Creation of Woodland Outside the SDA & ML – HC10 Option	5.23
Management of Woodland Edges – HC4 Option	0
Maintenance of Woodland Edges – HC7 Option	225.47
Restoration of Woodland – HC8 Option	2.11
Creation of Woodland in the SDA – HC9 Option	0
Management of Wood Edges – OC4 Option	0
Management of Woodland Edges – OHC4 Option	0
Total	234.79

Review of woodland data:

Many of the Wolds woodlands are small and fragmented and are often found on the steeper slopes of the escarpments or coombes, or in the wetter valley bottoms where cultivation is difficult. Some 80% of the woodland resource is broad-leaved, approximately 20% of which is ancient, semi-natural woodland. There are also a significant proportion of plantation woodlands, many are broad-leaved and also used for shelter belts and game cover. The results show that the current uptake for new woodland creation is low, but just over half of the woodlands are actively managed.

Grassland Resource and Management

Context: Although much of the Wolds is currently under cultivation, grassland habitats remain an important landscape and wildlife resource, comprising a wide range of semi-natural to permanent pastures. The composition of the grassland swards are variable, typically ranging from calcareous chalk grassland to neutral grassland depending on local soils and geology, with very small pockets of acidic grassland also present.

INDICATOR 12: Uptake of Low input Grassland, Managed, Restored or Created Under Environmental Stewardship (ES)

Low input Grassland, Managed, Restored or Created Under Environmental Stewardship (ES)	2017 (hectares)
Permanent Grassland with Low Inputs – EK2 Option	281.67
Permanent Grassland with Very Low Inputs outside SDA & ML – EK3 Option	438.47
Reversion to Unfertilised Grassland to Prevent Erosion/Runoff – HJ3 Option	186.68
Reversion to Low Input Grassland to Prevent Erosion/Runoff – HJ4 Option	4.93
Permanent Grassland with Low Inputs – Hk2 Option	5.41
Permanent Grassland with Very Low Inputs – HK3 Option	104.87
Maintenance of Species-Rich, Semi-Natural Grassland – HK6 Option	306.53
Restoration of Species-Rich, Semi-Natural Grassland – HK7 Option	501.39
Permanent grassland with low inputs; outside SDA & ML (organic) – OK2 Option	1.38
Permanent grassland with very low inputs; outside SDA & ML (organic) – OK3 Option	51.89

Review of grassland data: Many of the Wolds' grasslands and rough pastures are found on steep slopes (where the soils are thin and the ground hard to till), in the valley bottoms as wet flushes and pastures, and in abandoned quarries and pits. Maintenance and restoration of species rich grassland remains important and currently includes some 800 hectares; a further 700 hectares of permanent grassland is managed with low or very low inputs and is also a significant resource for wider wildlife and landscape benefits.

INDICATOR 13: Number, length and condition of Protected Roadside Nature Reserves and roadside Local Wildlife Sites.

Context: Grassed roadside verges and the wider network of green lanes are a distinctive landscape feature of the Lincolnshire Wolds, with many found alongside ancient drovers trackways.

Results: There are currently 17 Protected Roadside Nature Reserves in the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, totalling over 16 kilometres in length. Over 55 roadside verges and green lanes are currently classified as Local Wildlife Sites.

Review of grass verge data: The Life on the Verge partnership project with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust aided the wider mapping of the verge network through training and supporting voluntary recording across the Lincolnshire Wolds. This two year project acted as a drive for improved maintenance of verge ways and the opportunities for utilising cuttings for bio-energy ([Peakhill Associates](#)).

Water Quality in Rivers

Context: Under the European Water Framework Directive the ecological status of rivers and canals is classified as High, Good, Moderate, Poor and Bad. All main river (116.25 kilometres) within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB forms part of the areas internationally important chalk stream resource and is fed from nine principal catchment systems within the area, namely from north to south; Nettleton Beck, Waithe Beck, River Rase, River Lud, River Bain, Long Eau, Great Eau, River Waring and the River Lymn. The upper catchments comprise an important network of minor streams (a further 141 kilometres across the AONB), calcareous marshes and spring-line flushes and ponds providing further ecological and wider benefits.

INDICATOR 14: The length of river in moderate or good ecological condition.

In April 2015:

- 22.48 kilometres (19.3%) of main river was classified as being in good ecological condition.
- 86.36 kilometres (74.3%) of main river was classified as being in moderate ecological condition.
- 7.41 kilometres (6.4%) of main river was classified as being in bad ecological condition.

In April 2016:

- 14.89 kilometres (12.83%) of main river was classified as being in good ecological condition.
- 74.39 kilometres (64.13%) of main river was classified as being in moderate ecological condition.
- 26.97 kilometres (23.25%) of main river was classified as being in poor ecological condition.

Review of river quality data: Over 76% of the rivers in the AONB are deemed to be in moderate to good ecological condition. However there are still notable stretches in poor condition; it is believed that both sedimentation and agri-chemical runoff are major factors on local water quality, exacerbated by the relatively large areas of the Wolds that are actively cultivated (>75% of land area cropped).

INDICATOR 15: The length of Lincolnshire Chalk Streams and their adjacent habitat restored through active management.

Context: The Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project (LCSP) is a group of organisations that have actively worked together since 2003 to conserve and enhance this Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat. Since 2006 staff and volunteers have been employed to undertake work on behalf of the partnership, both monitoring riparian species and planning and organising a wide range of restoration.

Results:

Since 2004 over 12 kilometres of chalk stream has been restored through in-stream and or bankside restoration, with further management enhancements to over 45 kilometres of adjacent habitat.

CASE STUDY – RIVERFLY MONITORING PROJECT

The LCSP partnership has established and coordinated a programme of detailed riverfly monitoring, training up 46 volunteers in total to assist in surveying a number of sites across the project area. A total of 13 sites have been established across the AONB, with a further 16 locations downstream from the chalk stream headwaters.

See page 135.

Land in Environmental Management

Context: Natural England (NE) is a key partner in the AONB Partnership (Lincolnshire Wolds AONB) and a member of the Department for the Environment Farming and Rural Affairs family (Defra). NE administers agri-environment schemes which provide funding to farmers and land managers for undertaking a wide range of environmental enhancements. In 2005 the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) was replaced by the Environmental Stewardship Scheme providing both Entry Level and Higher Level agreements. Further modifications have been undertaken with the national roll-out of the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme in the period from 2014. The impacts of the new changes will take a number of years to evaluate as the current live schemes are at various phases of their five or ten year cycles - depending on the date of any individual agreements.

INDICATOR 16: Number and area of land in formal stewardship agreements.

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB	Area (hectares)	Number of agreements	Cost
AONB GIS area	55,898	-	-
Area of AONB under ES	31,990 (57%)	-	-
Total UAA (Utilisable Agricultural Area)	48,985	-	-
Proportion of UAA under stewardship	65%	-	-
Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship	20,149	78	£1,546,870
Entry Level Stewardship	7,950	52	£192,236
Higher Level Stewardship	3	2	£1,145
Organic Entry Level + Stewardship	3,486	3	£403,236
Organic Entry Level Stewardship	403	1	£24,131
Total Stewardship	31,990	136	£2,167,618*

Note: The total investment for Environmental Stewardship across the AONB = £1.96 million in 2011 (including £1.26 million for those Entry Level Stewardship schemes with additional HLS options).

Source: Natural England (March 2017)

INDICATOR 17: Environmental Stewardship (ES Options) number and area

There are six theme groups of ES options that contribute to conserving and enhancing landscape character – more specifically measures to help enhance the management and protection of archaeological features. These serve as a proxy measure for landscape quality and natural beauty.

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB ES Options Uptake	May 2017
Options measured in hectares	6,336.2
Number of parcels	2176
Options measured in metres	38,539
Number of parcels	96
Number of trees	234
Number of parcels	28

Source: Natural England (March 2017)

Review of Environmental Stewardship Data: As indicated, there is currently in excess of £2 million investment supporting over 135 stewardship schemes across the Lincolnshire Wolds, with over 57% of the AONB in a scheme. In more recent years a number of incentives have been especially important in protecting both wildlife and heritage interests through for example encouraging grassland restoration and minimising cropping in or immediately adjacent to Scheduled Monuments.

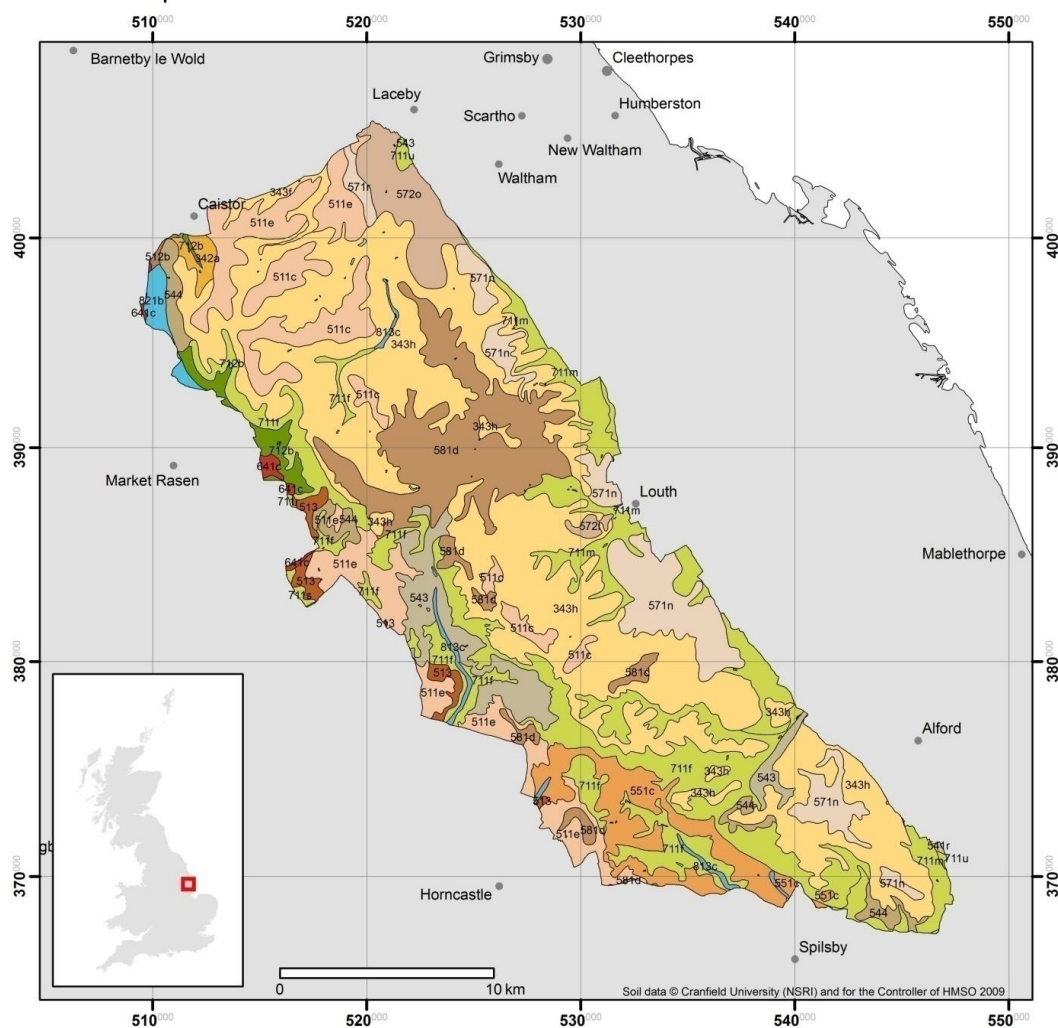
With the current uncertainties in the future agri-environment measures we are envisaging a likely downward trend as there is anecdotal evidence emerging that some landowners are currently holding off renewing their schemes due in-part to uncertainties stemming from Brexit.

INDICATOR 18: Area of the Lincolnshire Wolds retaining good soil structure and nutrient content for sustainable productive farming (or the area of the Lincolnshire Wolds providing high grade agricultural land).

Context: Over 20 soil types have been identified across the AONB, including light chalky soils on the plateau tops interspersed with heavy glacial drift deposits, impermeable clays in the valley bottoms and the lighter sandy and wind-blown loams often found to the south and west. Many of the more unworkable soils and nutrient poor ground has not been cropped and has been widely used for pasture and woodland – e.g. the valley bottoms, steeper valleys and the Wolds escarpments.

Review of Soil Data: The Lincolnshire Wolds Soil Report (Cranfield University, 2009) provides some more detailed soil maps for the AONB, including thematic mapping for leachate and soil erosion vulnerabilities. See below map for the spatial distribution of soils across the area. (*Further information available on request at www.lincswolds.org.uk*)

Soils - Spatial Distribution



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Earth Heritage

Context: The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB has a complex geology and topography. Chalk from the Cretaceous period (140 million - 65 million years old) forms the dominant bedrock, however the bedding dips gently eastwards, which often exposes the underlying Lower Cretaceous and Upper Jurassic beds in the western and southern areas of the Wolds (e.g. bands of Tealby Ironstones and Limestones, Spilsby Sandstone and Kimmeridge Clay). The geology and topography is further complicated by the extensive glaciation and periglacial modification which helped to create the areas distinctive pattern of rolling plateaus, deeply incised valley systems (coombes) and its glacial tills and gravel deposits.

INDICATOR 19: Condition of registered SSSI geological sites

Natural England has commenced recording and monitoring of important geological features, collating both the number and condition of geological SSSIs across the protected landscapes family. This information is commonly, but not always, indicative of prominent visible geological features or other earth heritage elements that may be striking or memorable. Exceptions can include hidden/underground features including in the Lincolnshire Wolds case glacial/periglacial deposits.

Recent data for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB SSSI Level 2 Geological Features records 6 sites all in favourable condition, and classed as: Disused quarries – 4 sites; Cuttings – 2 sites.

Source: Natural England (April 2017)

INDICATOR 20: % of Local Geological Sites (LGS) and Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) that are in favourable condition.

Context: In Lincolnshire RIGS are being re-assessed under new Local Geological Site criteria to evaluate their interest, condition and future management on a site by site basis. This work links with the Greater Lincolnshire Geodiversity Strategy 2017-21 and the GLNP's Geodiversity Group aspirations, which are striving to ensure that all of the county's geodiversity assets can be conserved, recorded, promoted, understood and enjoyed by all.

In the Lincolnshire Wolds there are 15 geodiversity sites which have been notified as LGS's and a further six sites which are currently still classed as RIGS.

Review of geodiversity data: A large number of these sites occur as redundant pits and quarries where there are typically exposures that have been created by mineral extraction, often as chalk pits or for local building stone. As indicated, the re-classification of RIGS as LGS's is a good proxy measure for the general condition of the sites as all of the notified LGS's will have undergone a recent survey and review process.

Protecting the Wolds (Theme 1) – Archaeology and Built Heritage

Context: The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is a rich archaeological resource with a wealth of historic landscape features including a high concentration of long and round barrows, ancient trackways and one of the highest densities of deserted and shrunken medieval villages (DMVs & SMVs) in the country. The area also has a number of distinctive farmsteads, county houses, and hamlets and nucleated villages, with a number of prominent churches. There is no one unified style of buildings across the Wolds – many reflect the local building materials of the day, including local stone, brick, and often wide spread use of slate and pantiles.

INDICATOR 21: Condition of heritage assets deemed to be 'At Risk'.

30 heritage sites within the AONB were deemed to be at risk in 2017, including over 27% of Scheduled Monuments (SMs).

Historic England Statutory Sites

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB	March 2017	At Risk	% of category at Risk
Scheduled Monuments	98	27	27.6
Listed buildings			
Grade I	14		
Grade II*	34	2	5.9
Grade II	277		
Total listed buildings	325		
Registered Parks and Gardens			
Grade II	3		
Registered Battlefields	1		
Places of Worship			
Grade II	-	1	-

Source: Historic England

Review of Scheduled Monument data: The proportion of Scheduled Monuments (SMs) classed at risk is high (over ¼), although an improvement on the situation in 2004 when over 49% of SMs in the AONB were deemed to be at risk. The situation for the stock of Listed Buildings found across the Wolds is considerably more positive with less than 1% considered to be at risk. In terms of heritage buildings Historic England has deemed to be at risk, due to their deteriorating condition, are the Church of St Andrew (Utterby) and

Church of St Helen, Biscathorpe, along with the Conservation Areas of Binbrook and South Thoresby (on the boundary of the AONB).

A large number of SMs comprise ancient Neolithic long barrows and bowl barrows, typically located on prominent ridges and plateau tops – they often occur within or juxtapose areas of cultivated ground where arable ploughing and clipping can cause significant problems. In some cases however localised disturbance of SM's has been the result of animal burrowing and tree/shrub growth. The current Long Barrows project, commissioned by Historic England, and being undertaken by Heritage Trust for Lincolnshire, is ongoing and seeks to review and inform our future understanding of these sites. The final results from this two year study will help inform and aid the further management of these nationally important sites.

INDICATOR 22: The number of Traditional Roadsigns in Lincolnshire (TRiL) within the AONB in good condition.

Context: Since 2003 the TRiL partnership group was established to survey, monitor and aid the repair of the very distinctive black and white road signs, which are a combination of concrete post, wooden finger signs and cast iron lettering. The LWCS has linked up with the County Council Highway's team and local volunteers.

As of September 2017, there are 89 TRiL signs in the AONB – the LWCS estimates that 95% of signs are currently in good condition.

Review of TRiL data: A minor maintenance programme is commissioned annually, clearly targeting those signs in most need of repair. There are also occasional requests from local parish councils or residents to install replacement signs – there is a protocol for assessing these requests, including the need for supporting evidence. Such requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

INDICATOR 23: The number of AONB traditional farmsteads deemed to have high heritage potential.

Context: Traditional farmsteads and their outlier farm buildings are an important heritage resource found across the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, and are integral to the landscape and cultural character of the area.

The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Partnership commissioned Locus Consulting to undertake a research project to provide guidance to support the future sustainable development and conservation of the historic farming landscapes of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The study builds on the Greater Lincolnshire Farmstead Guidance for Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North-East Lincolnshire published in 2015 which included:

- A Farmstead Assessment Framework
- Greater Lincolnshire Farmsteads Character Statements.

Data: The 2017 study recorded a total number of 586 traditional farmsteads within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. 45 (8%) of these include a statutory listed (protected) farmhouse or working building. Of the farm buildings listed 78% were classed 18th Century farmsteads, 22% were classed as 19th Century farmsteads.

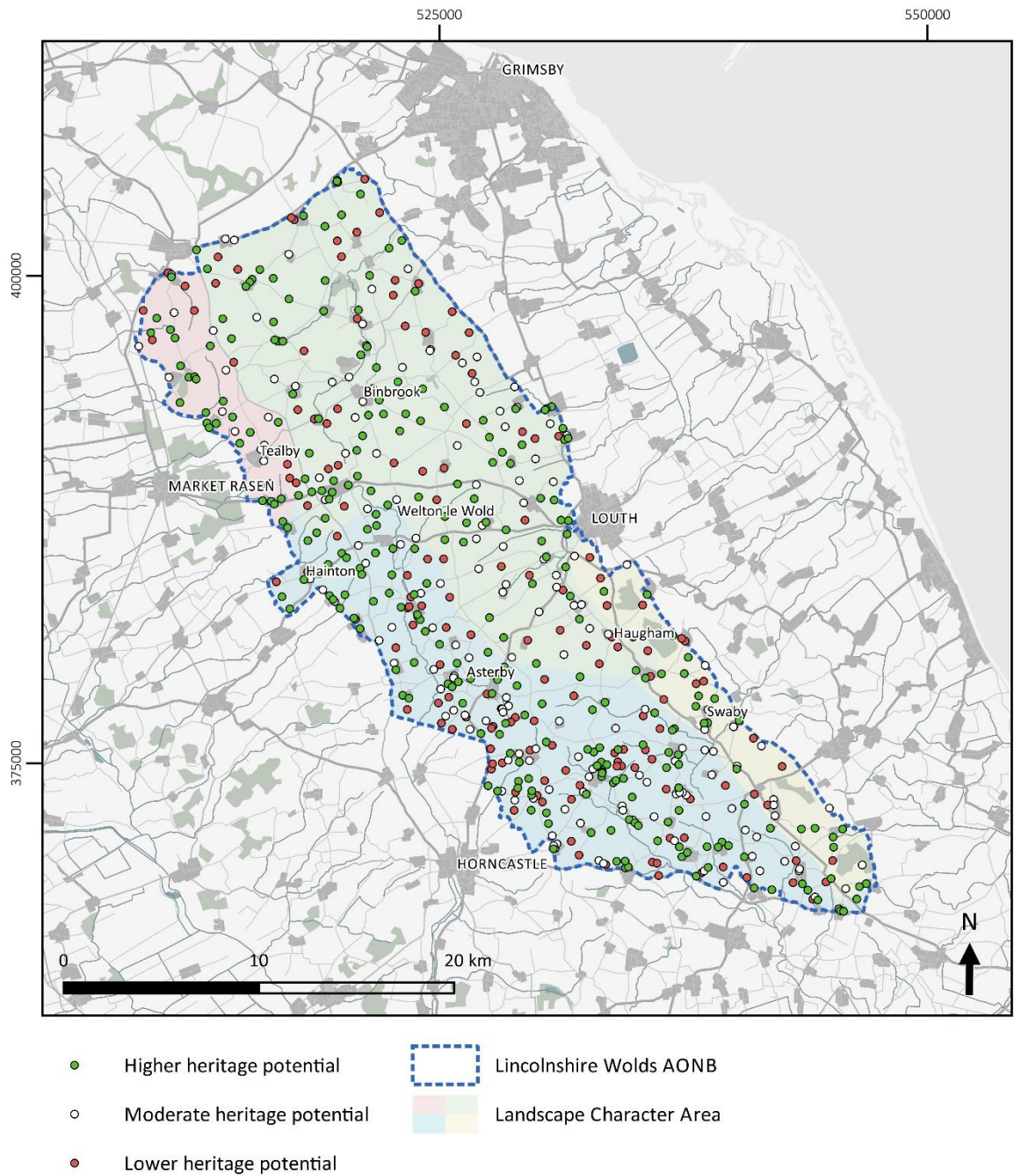
Locus Consulting's 2017 report classed nearly half (48%) of all of the identified farmsteads as having heritage potential on account of retaining close to 50% of their historic buildings within today's landscape. See below table:

Levels of Survival of Traditional Farmsteads:	Number in the AONB	% in the AONB	% in Greater Lincolnshire
Extant - no apparent alterations	63	11%	10%
Partial loss - less than 50%	203	37%	33%
Significant loss - more than 50% change	139	25%	19%
Farmhouse only survives	24	4%	9%
Total Loss or demolition of traditional buildings and plan	120	21%	29%

Source: Locus Consulting

Review of Traditional Farmstead Data: The more recent survey has indicated that the total number of known farmstead out outbuildings is larger than first envisaged (2013-18 AONB M. Plan recognises 300+). Current figures show that although many of the most important farmsteads and workshops are protected through listing, there is a small proportion of buildings which are currently not listed but have future heritage potential through sensitive restoration and enhancement.

Below map produced by Locus Consulting showing the "Heritage Potential" of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Farmstead Resource.



Living and Working in the Wolds (Theme 2)

Population patterns and distribution:

Context: The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is sparsely populated with a deeply rural fabric, traditionally heavily dependent upon the farming and defence sectors, although the latter's influence diminished with the closure of RAF Binbrook (Brookenby). The infrastructure across the AONB is dispersed and although there is a reasonable network of A and B roads public transport remains fairly limited. The AONB's links with its surrounding market towns remain important for the provision of retail, health, secondary school/college education, financial and other administrative services. Like many rural areas in the UK both mobile phone and IT service provision across the AONB is variable, with some notable areas of poor coverage.

Due to administrative and ward boundaries not always following the boundary of the AONB designation we must rely on census figures as an estimate for providing a range of socio-economic data for the area.

INDICATOR 24: Population patterns in the AONB and adjacent market towns.

Using the 2011 census the LWCS estimates that the population of the AONB at this time was 10,701, with a further 36,316 people living in the surrounding market towns of Alford, Caistor, Horncastle, Louth, Market Rasen and Spilsby. There are 89 settlements within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, and a further 49 settlements (including the market towns) within a wider five kilometre envelope.

INDICATOR 25: Age distribution in the Lincolnshire Wolds

In 2011 in the AONB:

- 19% of the population were <19 years old
- 21% were aged 20-44
- 26% were aged 45-59
- 25% were aged 60-74
- 9% were over 75 years old.

Review of population data: As indicated, the population within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is comparatively sparse, typically on average less than 20 inhabitants per km². There are 74 parishes but only five parishes have more than four hundred and fifty residents; Binbrook (892), Brookenby (665), Tealby-Walesby (551), Teford-Salmonby (464) and Ludford (460). There is also however a significant population (over 36,000) distributed across the six market towns that surround the Wolds, providing integral people and service links. The current age distribution for the AONB population is fairly even across the age categories; across Lincolnshire as a whole there has been a pattern of an aging population with an influx of those of middle-age or retirees, set against a trend of an outward movement of young adults, often pursuing further education and career opportunities in other areas of the UK.

Employment and economic performance:

INDICATOR 26: Number of rateable businesses located in the AONB

In 2017 there were 375 rateable businesses in the AONB. In terms of categories the ten highest listings were as follows:

- 70 workshops, factories and premises
- 54 warehouses/stores or land used for storage
- 52 guest houses, hotels, hostels or self-catering units
- 27 communication stations/premises
- 21 shops or showrooms
- 20 public houses
- 14 offices
- 12 equestrian or racing facilities
- 11 village or community halls
- 10 café, tea room or kitchens.

Review of rateable business data: The above groupings are an estimate from the LWCS based on local authority datasets and provides a useful proxy measure on the number and location of businesses that have a rateable value. Figures are not readily comparable with previous records as the criteria for the collection of business rates has recently changed. The actual number of enterprises based in the AONB will be higher as some micro-business activity will be exempt from business rates. The rankings indicate the importance of smaller workshop and warehouse facilities which are often located within rural farm buildings, or village settlements with a significant cluster at the Brookenby Industrial Park.

INDICATOR 27: Employment levels in the Lincolnshire Wolds – 4,890 people from the total census are in employment.

In 2011 the in-work distribution by occupation in the AONB estimated from census figures is as follows:

- 17% Professional
- 17% Skilled trades
- 15% Managers, Directors and Senior Officials
- 11% Elementary
- 10% Assoc. Professional and Technical
- 9% Caring, Leisure and other Services
- 9% Administration and Secretarial
- 7% Process Plant and machine Operatives
- 5% Sales and Customer Service.

In 2011 the not-in-work number in the AONB estimated from census figures is 5,811 people, distributed as follows:

- 70% Other - unpaid carers, students, parental etc (3,345 people)
- 23% Retired (1,886 people)
- 4% Long term sick or disabled (322 people)
- 3% Unemployed (258 people)

Review of general employment data: The current UK unemployment rate is 4.3% (UK Office for National Statistics, Sept '17) – this includes all persons aged 16 to 64 years of age. Census figures from 2011 suggested an unemployment rate slightly above the average at 5.01% for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. Employment is varied across the economic sectors; with over 42% working in professional, managerial or technical fields with a further 17% classed as skilled labour. Looking at more detailed figures for the farming labour market (INDICATOR 35 – Breakdown of Farm Labour (number of personnel) 16% of employment in the AONB is in this sector, including many full-time workers, and a significant number of farmers and farm managers.

INDICATOR 28: Access to basic services

Context: Traditionally the provision of services for both the local residents and visitors to the AONB has been variable and heavily dependent upon location and access to transport. Increasingly there has been a realisation of the value and importance of increased mobile phone and IT (broadband) coverage as a means of enhancing access to wider goods and services e.g. for finance, education and home-retail purchasing. Additional to the vital role played by the surrounding market towns and larger "service villages" of the Wolds (e.g. Binbrook and Tetford) there are a wide range of local facilities - both community and business focused – that are found across the AONB.

Lincolnshire Wolds Audit of services 2017	Facilities within/adjacent to the AONB	Facilities within the AONB + the wider offer (excluding market towns)
Local stores/shops	12	24
Tea /coffee rooms	9	15
Public houses	20	42
Post offices	6	13
Car service centres	6	11

Review of basic services data: Additional to the vital role played by the surrounding market towns and larger "service villages" of the Wolds (e.g. Binbrook and Tetford) there are a wide range of local facilities - both community and business focused – that are found across the AONB. The shops, pubs, tea rooms provide important facilities for local residents and help to provide further infra-structure to help support the visitor economy (both day time and staying). The facilities listed are especially important in the context of a generally sparse and dispersed population and several venues often provide a multiple range of services.

Road infrastructure and public transport services:

Context: The Lincolnshire Wolds JAC (Joint Advisory Committee) recognises that a good transport network is essential to the future well-being of those living in the AONB, to enable continued sustainable and sensitive development of the local economy. This should include a road infrastructure that can support the needs of local farming, forestry, tourism, recreation and other rural businesses. Currently 92.5% of the highway infrastructure is managed directly by Lincolnshire County Council, with 7.5% within the jurisdiction of North East Lincolnshire Council.

INDICATOR 29: The average annual average daily traffic flow (AADT) range for all vehicles and commercial vehicles on the Lincolnshire Wolds A and B roads.

Results:

A Roads	Lowest range	Highest range	Average % CV	Mean AADT	B Roads	Lowest range	Highest range	Average % CV	Mean AADT
2010	3,170	7,670	-	5,420	2010	1,340	4,320	-	2,830
2013	6,235	7,965	7%	7,100	2013	2,330	-	3%	2,330
2015	4,255	8,465	8%	6,360	2015	-	-	-	-
2016	3,510	11,115	9.5%	7,313	2016	1,355	2,800	9%	2,078
2017	3,435	11,430	9%	7,433	2017	-	-	-	-

(Note: Figures supplied from LCC; typically comprising data from between 3 to 7 counting stations within or immediately adjacent to the AONB).

Review of road traffic data: The above figures indicates that there has been a significant increase in road traffic through the AONB on the A Roads, with a >35% increase in annual average daily traffic flows since 2010. This reverse pattern would appear to be the case for B roads through the Wolds with the median figure showing a <30% drop in vehicle movements, although less surveys have been conducted on these roads. Taking the results as a whole the total number of vehicle journeys on the Wolds AONB roads has increased over the seven year period from 2010.

INDICATOR 30: The number and frequency of bus services through the AONB.

Further evidence required - there are currently four InterConnect routes (Nos. 3, 6, 9 and 51) which run within or very close to the Wolds. There are further additional bus routes radiating from Louth and a service linking Alford and Spilsby (part of a wider Skegness-Boston service). CallConnect services continue to remain very important for more bespoke journeys.

INDICATOR 31: Broadband/Mobile phone coverage:

Further evidence required – the AONB Partnership has sought to support and encourage the appropriate roll-out of both broadband and mobile phone coverage across the Lincolnshire Wolds. Digital and mobile phone services are clearly very important for both local residents and visitors to the area and a clear constraint for developing and enhancing our rural businesses. Government guidance highlights a presumption in favour of approving telecommunication applications – however in the context of the AONB impact upon the area's natural beauty must be reviewed on a case by case basis as planning applications come forward. The Partnership advocates the need to minimise potential harm to the designation through a range of measures, including maximising infrastructure (mast) sharing, careful site selection, robust justification statement, high quality design and landscaping for schemes. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) provide an important tool to aid and assist the decision making process and help inform subsequent recommendations and conditions.

Several schemes have come forward under the Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) to help tackle areas of particularly poor telecommunications coverage. Post 2014-15 eight new mast sites were proposed, five of which were within the AONB. Four sites were deemed to be broadly acceptable but one site was in a very exposed location, immediately adjacent to the Viking Way, and was subsequently withdrawn.

INDICATOR 32: Farm types – Lincolnshire Wolds AONB:

Context: The character of the Lincolnshire Wolds remains heavily shaped by farming, with field sizes and cropping patterns reinforcing local landscapes and having an intrinsic impact upon the visual landscape character. Farming practices in turn, be they cultivation or livestock management, can often have a dominating impact upon the wider health of the AONB environment - its soils, water, biodiversity, heritage assets, carbon storage and climate change resilience.

The annual census of farming, carried out each June provides a range of data for protected landscapes – the latest figures currently available are for 2013 which showed 231 registered farm holdings for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. Due to changes in various collection and grouping methodologies from 2010, applying comparisons with earlier census data can be misleading, although still useful as a proxy measure.

Farm Types - Lincolnshire Wolds AONB

Farm Types (number of farms) 2013				
Cereals	General cropping	Specialist Poultry	Grazing Livestock (lowland)	Mixed
113 (48.9%)	36 (15.6%)	10 (4.3%)	42 (18.2%)	20 (8.7%)
Farm Types (number of farms) 2010				
Cereals	General cropping	Specialist Poultry	Grazing Livestock (lowland)	Mixed
117 (50.6%)	39 (16.8%)	8 (3.5%)	39 (16.8%)	19 (8.2%)

Defra metadata - June Agricultural Census 2010 & 2013.

INDICATOR 33: Farm sizes – Lincolnshire Wolds AONB:

Farm Sizes Classification

Farm Sizes (number of farms) 2013				
<5 ha	5 - <20	20 - <50	50 - <100	>100
15 (6.5%)	36 (15.6%)	26 (6%)	31 (13.4%)	123 (53.3%)
Farm Sizes (number of farms) 2010				

<5 ha	5 - <20	20 - <100	50 - <100	>100
11 (4.8%)	43 (18.6%)	24 (10.4%)	32 (13.9%)	121 (52.4%)

Defra metadata - June Agricultural Census 2010 & 2013.

INDICATOR 34: Land Use in hectares (% listings in respect of the total area of the AONB)

Land Use	2007	2010	2013
Total cereals	24,950 (44.6%)	24,889 (44.5%)	26,428 (47.3%)
All other arable crops	11,998 (21.5%)	11,784 (21.1%)	13,150 (23.5%)
Horticultural crops	1,375 (2.5%)	811 (1.4%)	898 (1.6%)
Crops & bare fallow	38,900 (69.6%)	38,918 (69.6%)	42,973 (76.9%)
Permanent grass	6,195 (11.1%)	6,334 (11.3%)	6,358 (11.4%)
Temporary grass	1,190 (2.1%)	1,539 (2.8%)	1,507 (2.7%)
Rough grazing (sole right)	277 (0.5%)	278 (0.5%)	198 (0.4%)
Woodland	1,372 (2.5%)	1,529 (2.7%)	1,786 (3.2%)
Other land	1,330 (2.4%)	1,140 (2%)	1,151 (2.1%)
Set-aside	3,295 (5.9%)	-	-
Total Area (Defra registered)	52,558 (94%)	49,750 (89%)	53,962 (96.5%)
Total GIS area for AONB	55,898 (100%)	55,898 (100%)	55,898 (100%)

Defra metadata - June Agricultural Census 2010 & 2013.

INDICATOR 35: Breakdown of Farm Labour (number of personnel)

	2007	2010	2013
Farmers full-time	180	191	195
Farmers part-time	235	183	186
Salaried managers full-time	56	32	39
Salaried managers part-time	39	14	11
Employees full-time	192	203	226
Employees part-time	81	73	79
Casual workers	45	38	61
Total Labour	828	734	798

Defra metadata - June Agricultural Census 2010 & 2013.

Review of farmland data: Almost half of the 231 registered farms in the Wolds AONB are focused on cereal production, with over 75% of the area in cultivation. There remains an important proportion (>25%) of typically smaller farm units, that operate primarily as either mixed farming or lowland grazing units. These holdings are very important for their contribution to the local economy, environment and wider landscape, helping for example to maintain the lowland and rougher grazing pastures that characterise steep hillsides or the wetter valley bottoms. Some 16% of employment in the AONB is in the farming sector, which helps to support many full-time workers, and a significant number of farmers and farm managers.

INDICATOR 36: The total Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) and LEADER investment in landowner, business and community partnership projects across the Lincolnshire Wolds.

Context: The RDPE has provided a wide range of financial support to the agri-environment businesses in and around the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB – typically providing support to landowners to help raise productivity, support employment and help aid farm diversification projects. The Wolds are also within the wider Lindsey Action Zone (LAZ) which has operated as the Local Action Group for the LEADER programme since its inception in 2007. The LAZ is made up of local representatives from the public, private and civic sectors and has provided funding for local businesses, farmers, foresters, land managers and communities for projects that create jobs and benefit the rural economy.

Results – RDPE additional investment: Within/adjacent to the AONB the RDPE has supported four Countryside Productivity small grant projects to enable farmers to purchase equipment to improve on-farm nutrient management, animal health and welfare and forestry productivity. A further £75,000 has recently been awarded for a national 'best practice and innovation' project funded via the European Innovation Partnerships, also under the RDPE. This project aims to undertake trials and analysis to investigate the effects of cover crops in vining pea rotations to improve soil health, soil structure and soil organic matter content; ultimately to improve productivity and yields in a sustainable manner.

Leader investment: The Lindsey Action Zone funding mechanism is ongoing, and projects from businesses both within and adjacent to the Lincolnshire Wolds are continuing to come forward with eligible schemes. From the previous programme (closed in 2014) some £451,273 of grants were provided in support of seven projects that directly benefited the AONBs economy, communities and environment. Three of the projects were directly aiding farm diversification, three were concerned with tourism enhancements and one was an international collaboration project with a Normandy Leader scheme with a focus on water management. This investment figure excludes a number of projects which were supporting businesses in the adjacent market towns of the Wolds, and thus understates the full benefits of the LAZ support to the area.

Review of RDPE and Leader investment: As suggested above, both of these Defra funding mechanisms have been very important in providing an added grant incentive for farm and rural enterprises. It has often made the difference in terms of a local business or third party organisation deciding to take the risk in extending and or diversifying their business operations through for example renewing or enhancing various capital assets. The end result has been enhanced sustainable development appropriate to the special character of the Wolds.

Discovering the Wolds (Theme 3)

Context: The Lincolnshire Wolds plays an important role in providing opportunities for access, recreation and tourism. The special qualities of the AONB include its rich cultural heritage and inspiring scenic rural landscapes, and the pervading ambience of peace and solitude which in itself is widely appreciated by local communities and visitors. The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to protect and enhance the natural beauty of the area, so unlike our National Parks, there is no statutory duty to promote the area for the purposes of recreation. However in recent years there has been an increasing recognition from the Partnership of the benefits of supporting appropriate infrastructure to help inform and assist both residents and visitors who wish to experience, enjoy and further their understanding of the Lincolnshire Wolds.

The tourism profile for the area needs to be carefully balanced, but clearly enhancing the range and quality of the offer in a sustainable way (e.g. enhancing and not detracting from the area's special qualities) can bring added benefits to the local communities notably through helping to support local businesses and services and encouraging participation in outdoor recreation with resulting health benefits for the general public. The AONB Partnership has linked up with relevant local authorities and local businesses to help develop and promote the new Love Lincolnshire Wolds tourism partnership and its accompanying Destination Management Plan. A key aim of the group is to help promote the area as an all-year-round destination.

INDICATOR 37: The total number of visitors to the wider Lincolnshire Wolds Destination Plan Area*

	2014	2015	2016
Total number of visitors	3.26 million	3.46 m	3.44 m

INDICATOR 38: The total number of day and staying visitors to the Lincolnshire Wolds*

	2014	2015	2016
Total number of day visitors	3.02 million	3.21 m	3.19 m
Total number of overnight visitors	243,000	250,800	250,200

INDICATOR 39: The estimated economic contribution from tourism across the Lincolnshire Wolds*

	2014	2015	2016
Total number of visitor days	3,825,000	4,053,000	4,055,000
Estimated Economic impact on tourism to the Wolds	£153 million	£163.83 m	£166.58 m

Review of tourism data: Indicators 37 - 39 have been collected through the 2017 STEAM Trend Report undertaken by consultants Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd, commissioned by East Lindsey District Council.

The STEAM analysis data search area includes all of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and the wider hinterland areas recognised as the Lincolnshire Wolds Destination Plan Area*; significantly this includes all of the surrounding Wolds' market towns, the area known as the Spilsby Crescent which includes visitor sites such as Snipe Dales Country Park and Old Bolingbroke Castle, and the northern Wold extending to the M18-Humberside Airport zone.

The study reveals the important contribution that tourism makes to the Wolds economy with a modest upward trend in visitor days per annum to in excess of 4.05 million in 2016. There is an opportunity, with careful marketing and further sustainable infrastructure enhancements, to further develop the over-night stay offer – which currently represents just over 7% of the total visitor numbers.

The Love Lincolnshire Wolds partnership has highlighted the following key messages from the report:

- *Between 2014 and 2016 the visitor economy has grown by 8.87%*
- *More visitors are opting for non-serviced accommodation for their breaks*
- *There has been a 5% increase in visitor numbers between 2014 and 2016.*

INDICATOR 40: Number and condition of gateway roadsigns for the Lincolnshire Wolds

The LWCS undertook an audit in 2016 to review the conditions of the Lincolnshire Wolds boundary signs that had been installed as part of the Lincolnshire Wolds Interpretation Strategy Pilot Projects. Of the 20 signs installed over 15 years ago, 18 were found to still be in their original location, one had been moved and one had been lost. Most of the signs remain in a good physical condition (i.e. still sound), although some were not particularly prominent on account of overhanging vegetation and a small number were found to be in a general shabby condition.

Review of signage: The current stock of boundary signs are subject to renewal - with designs, funding and permissions pending. The design agreed and adopted at the time was of a basic style to ensure compliance with the Highway regulations. The style of the signs in their current form clearly does not include the revised LWCS logo, or the additional link to the wider National Association for AONBs.

INDICATOR 41: Number of Promoted Circular Walking Routes

Context: Since the Lincolnshire Wolds Interpretation Strategy in 2001, the AONB team has focused on the development of a wide range of circular walk and rides across the Wolds. Many have been subsequently produced with the direct involvement and support from a wide range of community and interest groups. These are available both in leaflet and electronic formats and are regularly reviewed and updated.

Results: As of September 2017 the LWCS has in print, or available electronically 15 Wolds Walk routes; 22 Gateway Walk routes from the Market Towns of Market Rasen, Louth and Alford. Lincolnshire County Council has produced a further series of walks for the town of Horncastle. There are a further 11 routes available that link directly with the Interconnect Bus Services (Lincoln < > Grimsby and Lincoln < > Skegness respectively).

INDICATOR 42: Number of Long Distance Trails

Results: There are seven long distance routes that pass through the AONB: The Viking Way, National Sustrans Cycle Way, SilverLincs Way, Lindsey Loop, Lindsey Trail, Lincs Wolds Way and the Greenwich Meridian Trail.

INDICATOR 43: Number of special feature maps and leaflets

- As of September 2017 the LWCS has in print five Wonders of the Wolds Leaflets – namely for Geology, Heritage, Water, Ritual & Religion, and the very latest on Wildlife.
- The LWCS has also produced two very popular general leaflets promoting the AONB and its attractions and facilities e.g. Enjoy the... and Making the Most of... the Lincolnshire Wolds.
- Louth Cycle Routes - a pack of six cycling routes (on and off-road)
- North and South Wolds Cycling Maps
- The Lindsey Trail - specialist horse-carriage route (on and off-road)

Review of recreational resource data: As evidenced, there is currently a wide range of walking and to a lesser extent cycling literature available across the Wolds that has been produced by the LWCS on behalf of the AONB Partnership. These are widely available in both leaflet and pdf forms and are in a clear and professional format. The Love Lincolnshire Wolds tourism group are currently developing an online resource, summarising key routes on an electronic map that will be accessible through Smart technology, and supplementing existing website access. With further local support and engagement there may be further opportunities to develop further routes, and there is a known demand for new off-road cycling and horse-riding trails.

INDICATOR 44: Number of AONB specific interpretation panels

Over 15 years ago Lincolnshire County Council coordinated the installation of a suite of interpretation panels on behalf of the AONB Partnership. Many were showing signs of general wear and tear so during 2014-15 seven were replaced in a new house style. A further 11 panels were updated in 2015-16. Three additional panels have been installed in collaboration with local community groups and relevant partners including sites at Nettleton, Utterby and Walesby. Four more site panels are being refurbished in 2017-18.

Review of interpretation data: As detailed, a modest investment has been undertaken to help refresh the interpretation panels across the AONB for the benefit of residents and visitors. The panels are located at some of the more popular vantage points across the Wolds – they are frequently used to highlight the area's national designation and raise awareness of the Wolds special qualities, its 'natural beauty' and sense of place.

INDICATOR 45: Number of people engaged in AONB activity through guided walks, events, shows and volunteering.

Throughout 2016-17 approximately 11,250 people were engaged in AONB walks, events, shows and volunteering including the annual Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival (3,000+ in attendance) and Lincolnshire Chalk Stream Festivals (250+ in attendance).

Review of practical engagement data: Year-on-year the LWCS and partners commonly makes direct contact with over 10,000 people through event and activity programmes and also through support and involvement in a number of locally organised community events. The challenge has always been to reach out to new audiences and to widen debate and interest in rural issues among the wider population.

INDICATOR 46: Number of visits to the Wolds AONB website.

During 2016-17 the LWCS website was visited 57,749 times of which 79% were new visitors to the site. 94% of visits were from the UK followed by the USA, Germany, Netherlands and Australia.

INDICATOR 47: Google Maps Rating for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.

As of September '17 the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB had received 453 independent review postings with an average score rating of four and a half out of five.

- 70.6% had scored as five
- 18.9% had scored as four
- 6.4% had scored as three
- 1.9% had scored as two
- 1.9% had scored as one.

INDICATOR 48: Trip Advisor Rating for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.

As of September 2017 the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB had received 59 independent review postings and had an average score rating of five out of five stars.

- 52 had scored as excellent
- 6 had scored as very good
- 1 had scored as average.

Review of website data: The LWCS operates a dedicated website and this has been a very useful tool for disseminating information, increasing interest and ultimately enabling participation in the wider work of the AONB Partnership. Further on-line activity via Google Maps and Trip Advisor is also providing a very useful tool for the recording of independent and unprompted feedback.

These outlets are commonly frequented by first time visitors to the area and as summarised, on the whole the responses have been very positive – many enjoy the views, tranquillity and special charm of the area. The more critical comments see the Wolds as a sleepy back-water with few attractions and facilities and a poor transport infrastructure.

Developing the Wolds (Theme 4)

Context: The AONB Partnership recognises that the Lincolnshire Wolds, whilst affording national protection on account of its high scenic natural beauty, should not be preserved in aspic – the visual character is clearly a combination of generations of interaction between people, communities and the natural environment – it is very much a living and working landscape. The challenge for strategic planners, developers, land managers, land owners and local communities is to continue to ensure that future development is sustainable.

In essence we must successfully balance the need for economic and social growth and cohesion with the highest quality of protection and enhancement for the natural beauty of the AONB. A constant should be to ensure that we secure the right type of development, of the right size and in the right location – whilst upholding the highest regard for the designation and also importantly its setting. The views both to and from the AONB are highly prized, but are especially vulnerable to development on account of the areas low profile and its juxtaposition with very flat and low lying ground, especially to the east (Lincolnshire Coastal Grazing Marshes) and to the west (Lincolnshire Clay Vale).

INDICATOR 49: Total investment and projects supported via the Wolds AONB Partnership's Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) and Small Grants Scheme (SGS):

Results: The Lincolnshire Wolds Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) administered by LWCS staff was launched initially in 2004-05 with support from East Midlands Development Agency. With Defra's continuing core grant support for the AONB, partnership funding has continued to support the programme. To date the SDF has successfully awarded over £600,000, supporting 113 local projects across the Wolds and helping to bring in over 1.1 million in match-funding.

Since April 2013 the SDF has supported 21 projects – with an investment of £68,624 securing match-funding of £73,022. Over the same period the SGS has supported 57 projects – with an investment of £38,363 securing match-funding of £53,589.

Review of SDF/SGS data: The SDF has sought to sustain and enhance the social wellbeing and economic viability of communities and local businesses within the Lincolnshire Wolds, along with seeking to conserve and enhance the local characteristics of farming, land management, culture, wildlife, and ultimately landscape. The programme remains important in providing a catalyst to enable innovative sustainable development at the grass-roots level.

The SGS has sought to encourage and support projects that protect, enhance and encourage interest in the Lincolnshire Wolds landscape and its special features and has helped to kick-start numerous local projects across the AONB, with many farmers, landowners and businesses utilising the scheme with guidance and support from the LWCS team.

Further details on individual SDF and SGS projects are detailed within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Annual Reviews. (available at www.lincswolds.org.uk)

INDICATOR 50: Number of neighbourhood plans

There are currently no known neighbourhood plans for settlements directly within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. Several have been produced for the neighbouring settlements of Caistor and Horncastle and also more recently the smaller settlement of Legbourne.

INDICATOR 51: Number of local design guides

Local village design guides and local histories have been produced on a regular basis by a number of Wolds communities, often under the auspices of local history groups.

There are currently very few local design guides – Tealby is one example.

INDICATOR 52: Number of new affordable homes

Further evidence required.

INDICATOR 53: Number of new flood management schemes to aid water management and /climate change

- Major new flood alleviation scheme installed within the River Lud catchment in 2017, to help protect the town of Louth from extreme rainfall events.

INDICATOR 54: Number of planning applications or appeals approved contrary to the advice of the LWCS (AONB Staffing Unit) and Natural England.

Indicator 54 is a new measure initially suggested by ELDC, and would be monitored from May 2018. Currently LWCS comments on a wide range of planning applications at the invitation of the respective planning authority. This has included AONB Partnership representation at the appeal stage. Natural England is more likely to get involved in applications for major developments within or adjacent to the Wolds. LWCS worked closely to support the relevant authorities in upholding WLDC's decision to refuse two large single wind turbine applications, both in close proximity to the western edge of the Wolds – the impact upon the views and setting of the AONB were significant reasons for the ongoing refusal of the applications on appeal.

Partnerships in the Wolds (Theme 5)

Context: The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is managed through the Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) body - a partnership of public, private and third sector (voluntary) bodies. The Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service (LWCS) operates as the AONB staffing unit and works on behalf of the JAC, helping to coordinate and facilitate the partnership's production, review and implementation of the AONB Management Plan. The Plan is a statutory document which sets out both the Strategy and Action Plan for protecting and enhancing the Lincolnshire Wolds through a programme of collaboration.

Additional guidance and scrutiny is provided via the Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Management Group, which comprises the key local authority funding partners and Natural England.

INDICATOR 55: The LWCS will compile and publish an annual review summarising AONB Partnership activity undertaken.

The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Annual Review (2016-17), the 13th annual report, has been completed and well received both locally and nationally.

INDICATOR 56: All JAC partners will complete annual updates against key Management Plan policies and objectives as detailed within the five year indicative Action Plan.

The last review was undertaken in April-May 2017. The next review will commence in March 2018 in advance of the adoption of the Revised Management Plan.

INDICATOR 57: The key local authorities will review and sign a local Memorandum of Agreement to help ensure continuing financial support.

- A three year MoA agreement is currently in place and due for renewal in March 2018.

INDICATOR 58: The JAC will continue to support, influence and promote the wider family of AONBs – primarily via the work of the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB), under the Landscapes for Life banner.

- National updates on relevant performance indicators are submitted annually.
- Submissions are provided to aid development of the NAAONB Strategic Plan.
- AONB staff continue to maintain active links with Basecamp as a e-sharing tool to aid learning.

Review of local and national partnership management data: The five-yearly Management Plan continues to provide a key focus for collaborative engagement across environmental, social and economic interests. As well as looking ahead, the LWCS Annual Review continues to be published to celebrate the many achievements and highlight the positive work being undertaken on the ground. A large number of projects are reliant upon ongoing partnership and community engagement. With continuing pressures on public resources the challenge remains on securing active involvement from all stakeholders, including key government agencies.

CASE STUDY 1 – RIVERFLY MONITORING PROJECT

The Riverfly surveying scheme is a national aquatic invertebrate surveying scheme involving standardised training and the use of standard equipment. Volunteers are trained to identify 8 key indicator species of aquatic invertebrates e.g. mayfly larvae and freshwater shrimp. Numbers are estimated and then totals are given a score of 1, 2, 3 or 4 for each species based on abundance. These totals are added up to give an overall score. A 'trigger' level is calculated by the relevant river authority (in this case the Environment Agency). If the overall score of a sample is below the trigger level the Environment Agency is told and relevant action taken. The surveys are carried out on a recommended monthly basis at allocated sites. Each volunteer surveys the same allocated site every time. The data is fed into a national database.

Environment Agency + Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project + Pilot Project

LCSP Partners at the Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire Environment Agency, Chris Extence and Richard Chadd, have developed a new scoring system based on an augmented list of aquatic invertebrates to extend the Riverfly Monitoring Initiative surveying model.

To implement the new system the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project with their partners at the Environment Agency have been working with their existing Riverfly volunteers to pilot the project on Lincolnshire's chalk streams in the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. Existing volunteers were given a day's training by Richard Chadd and Chris Extence hosted by the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project, first to emphasise the key problems with local rivers, then to demonstrate how the identification of particular invertebrates can highlight issues such as poor water quality, sedimentation and low flows.

The surveying method remains the same, a kick sample is taken at an allocated river section every month by volunteers and invertebrates are collected, numbers estimated and recorded. The list of invertebrates has been extended to 26 from 8 to give a more in depth evaluation of the issues within the river. The 8 key invertebrates on the standard Riverfly Partnership list are included on the new list.

Standard Riverfly sites: Nos 3, 5 -7, 10 & 11.

Pilot Project sites: Nos 1-2, 4, 8-9.

Survey Sites in the AONB:

1. Mid Bain - Mill Donington on Bain
2. Upper Bain - Biscathorpe 1 (Upper)
3. Upper Bain - Biscathorpe 2 (Lower)
4. Upper Waithe Beck - Kirmond le Mire
5. Upper Waithe Beck - Swinhope Church
6. Upper Waithe Beck - Moorhouse Farm
7. Upper River Lud - Welton Beck, Welton le wold
8. Nettleton Beck - Dunn Deal Tea Rooms
9. River Lymn - Salmonby bridge
10. Long Eau - Ketsby near Mill Farm
11. Burwell Beck - Burwell headwaters
12. Rain Beck/Double Dyke - Tetford
13. River Rase - Bully Hill. Tealby.

Case Study 2 – Traditional Farmstead and Landscape Assessment Report (Locus Consulting, 2017).

The Locus Consulting report provides guidance to support the sustainable development and conservation of the historic farming landscapes of the Lincolnshire Wolds. With direct links to the original Greater Lincolnshire Farmstead Guidance (for Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire) the study provided greater detail and clarity on the AONB farmstead resource. In addition to a review of the evidence base the report produced a Farmstead and Landscape Statement for the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB which seeks to enhance understanding of the local distinctiveness and significance of traditional rural building in the AONB. *(Further information available on request via www.lincswolds.org.uk)*

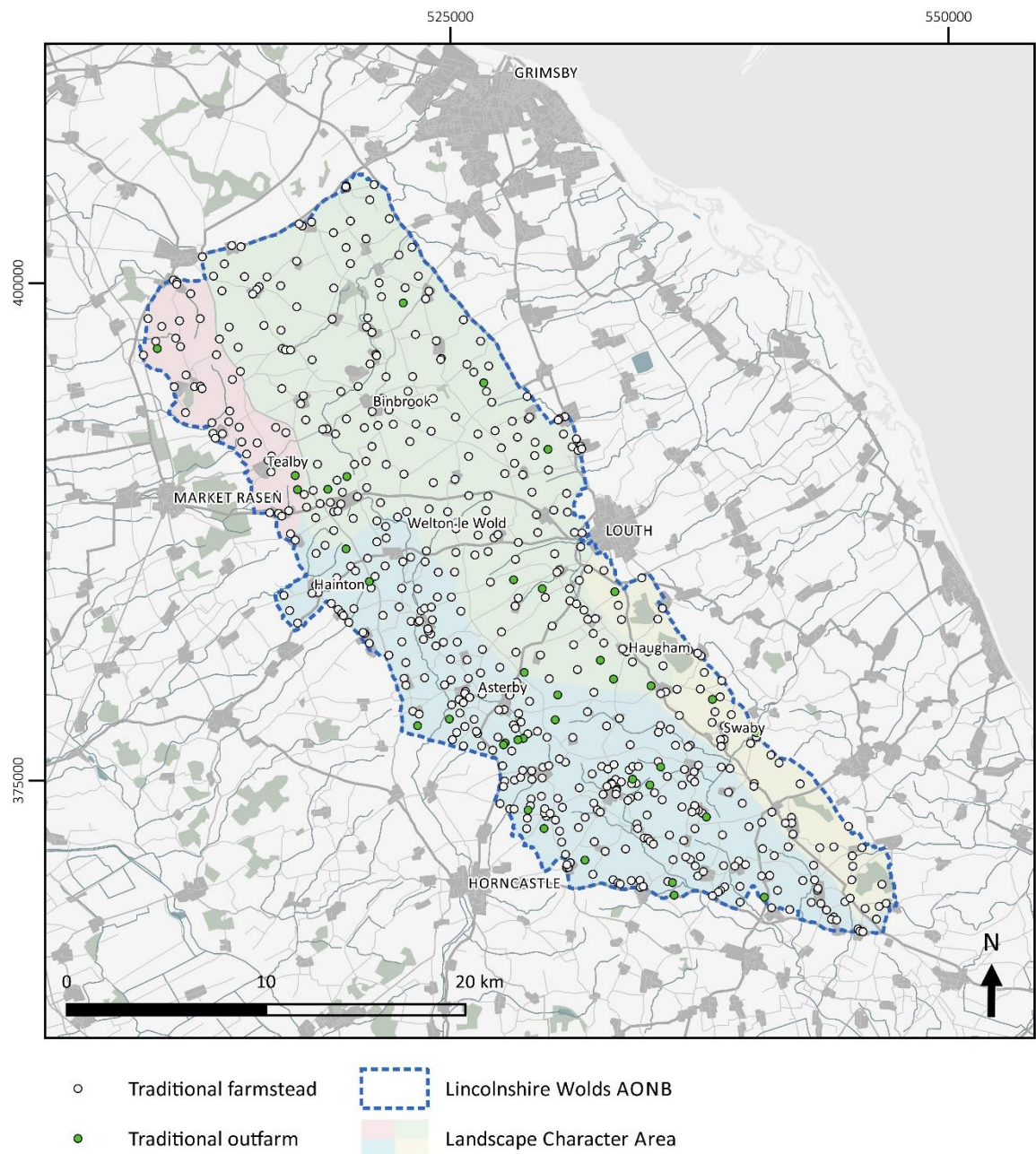
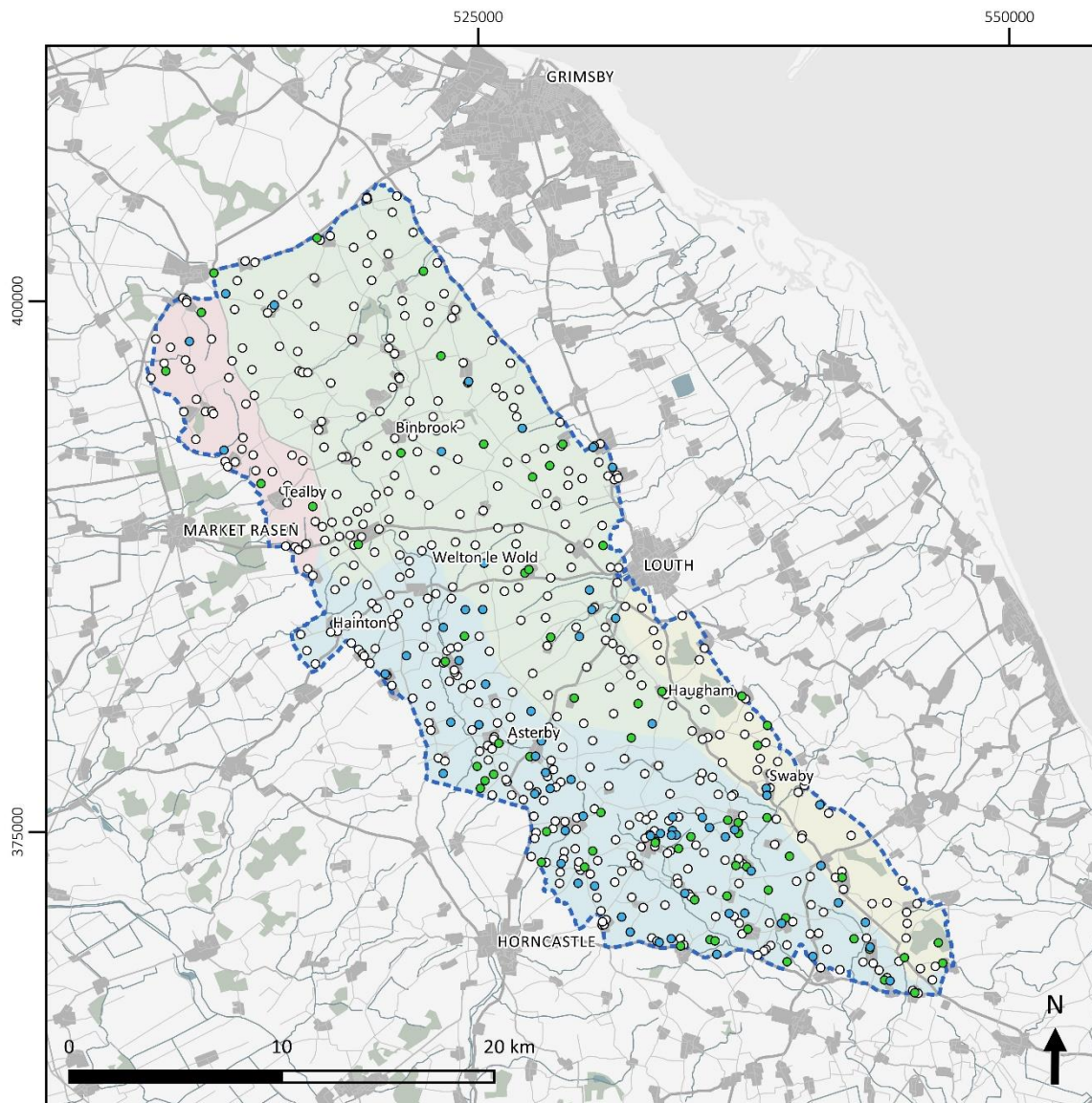


Figure 1: Farmstead classifications



- Regular courtyards
- Loose courtyards
- Other plan-types
- ▭ Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
- ▭ Landscape Character Area

Figure 2 - Farmstead Types

FARMSTEAD TYPES			
Layout	# in AONB	% in AONB	Greater Lincs' avg.
Regular courtyards	434	79%	76%
Loose courtyards	59	11%	14%
Others (including dispersed and linear arrangements)	56	10%	10%

LOCAL VARIATION IN FARMSTEAD CHARACTER ACROSS THE LINCOLNSHIRE WOLDS

Greater Lincolnshire	AONB	North West Scarp	Ridge and Valleys SW	South East Claylands	Chalk Wolds	
Numbers of traditional farmsteads and outfarms identified during the Greater Lincolnshire Traditional Farmstead project						
Traditional farmsteads	10497	549	43	262	48	196
Traditional outfarms	361	37	3	20	3	11
Farmstead types						
Regular courtyard	76%	79%	88%	73%	79%	85%
Loose courtyard	14%	11%	5%	13%	13%	9%
Others (including dispersed and linear arrangements)	10%	10%	7%	14%	8%	7%
Regular courtyard arrangements						
L-Plan	50%	37%	32%	43%	37%	30%
E-Plan	7%	16%	21%	6%	17%	29%
U-Plan	33%	40%	42%	40%	46%	38%
Others (including F, H, T and Z)	10%	7%	5%	11%	0%	1%
Farmstead location within the landscape						
In an isolated position	67%	71%	67%	74%	83%	75%
Within or associated to a high-status group, church or manor	3%	6%	0%	6%	8%	9%
Within or associated to a village or hamlet	21%	18%	33%	18%	15%	16%
Within a cluster of farmsteads	9%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%
Levels of survival of traditional farmsteads						
Extant – no apparent alterations	10%	11%	19%	10%	8%	13%
Partial loss – less than 50% change	33%	37%	40%	37%	35%	36%
Significant loss – more than 50%	19%	25%	26%	27%	23%	23%

change						
Farmhouse only survives	9%	4%	2%	3%	6%	6%
Total loss or demolition of traditional buildings and plans	29%	21%	14%	22%	27%	22%
Scale of traditional farmsteads						
<i>(measured in metres, diagonally across the farmstead plan)</i>						
Average	42.8	52	51.7	47.6	48.8	58.8
Median	39	47	50	41	43.5	57

Appendix 5: Questionnaire Results (summary) – 2016

During March - September 2016, residents and visitors to the Lincolnshire Wolds completed our 'Have Your Say' Questionnaire. There were a total of 146 respondents.

Which of the following special features of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB contribute most to its natural beauty? <i>(maximum of 3 selections per respondent)</i>	Ranking	Number of Selections
Open hill tops and sweeping views	1 st	123
Wooded slopes and valleys	2 nd	55
Attractive villages	3 rd	51
Farmed landscape	4 th	50
Ancient lanes and trackways	5 th	41
Downland and grassland meadows	6 th	31
Archaeological and historic features	7 th	26
Wide grass verges	8 th	23
River valleys	9 th	21
Geological features	10 th	14

What do you value most about the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB? <i>(maximum of 3 selections per respondent)</i>	Ranking	Number of Selections
Scenery and views	1 st	102
Peace and quiet	2 nd	81
Opportunities for Walking, Cycling, Horse-riding etc	3 rd	68
Wildlife	4 th	39
All of these	5 th	32
Farming life	6 th	26
Historic features	=7 th	16
Attractive villages	=7 th	16
Surrounding market towns	9 th	15
Locally sourced food and drink	10 th	10
Cultural connections	11 th	3
Visitor attractions	12 th	1

Which of the following current issues should be of most concern to the AONB Partnership? <i>(maximum of 3 selections per respondent)</i>	Ranking	Number of Selections
Impact of unsightly development (Buildings, Wind Turbines etc.)	1 st	86
Loss of scenic beauty through changes to landscape	2 nd	70
Decline in village services, including public transport	3 rd	53
Decline in wild plants and animals	4 th	45
Uncertainties in farming - poss. impact on landscape	5 th	36
Low regional/national profile as a tourist venue	6 th	30
Increased intrusion from noise and light pollution	7 th	29
Threats to rural way of life	8 th	28
Lack of information about places to visit and facilities	9 th	14
Loss of historic and archaeological features	10 th	10
Visitor pressure in popular locations	11 th	9

Which of the following activities do you undertake most frequently within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB? <i>(A maximum of three features per respondent)</i>	Ranking	Number of Selections
Walking	1 st	120
Eating out at pubs and tea rooms	2 nd	69
Visiting villages and churches	3 rd	53
Looking at wildlife	4 th	50
Cycling	5 th	36
Organised walks and rides	6 th	23
Car tours	7 th	21
Hunting/shooting	8 th	14
Horse riding	9 th	10
Visiting local attractions	10 th	5
Fishing	11 th	2

How often do you visit the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB?	Percentage	Number of Selections
Daily	47%	69
Weekly	29%	42
Monthly	17%	24
Six monthly	6%	8
Annually	1%	1
1st time		

Has the AONB designation and/or high quality of the landscape encouraged your visit?	Percentage	Number of Selections
Yes	76%	103
No	24%	32

What can be done to protect and enhance the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB? <i>(A maximum of three features per respondent)</i>	Ranking	Number of Selections
Prevent unsightly development	1 st	67
Support sustainable farming	2 nd	65
Develop environmental/landscape enhancement projects	3 rd	61
Support the rural communities	4 th	58
Raise awareness of the Lincolnshire Wolds	5 th	52
Promote appropriate tourism and recreation	6 th	44
Improve public transport and other rural services	7 th	39
Encourage farm diversification	8 th	34

What are the most important social and economic issues for the Wolds communities? <i>(A maximum of three features per respondent)</i>	Ranking	Number of Selections
Local services (schools, shops, public transport)	1 st	97
Local business and employment opportunities	2 nd	93
Threat to rural way of life	3 rd	63
Affordable housing	=4 th	60
General ageing population	=4 th	60
Loss of traditional rural crafts	6 th	18
Public health	7 th	9

What do you value most about the Wolds surrounding market towns? (A maximum of three features per respondent)	Ranking	Number of Selections
Locally distinctive shops	1 st	119
Regular markets	2 nd	90
Cultural events	3 rd	54
Health facilities	4 th	31
Schools/educational opportunities	5 th	29
Sports/leisure facilities	6 th	21
Entertainment	7 th	12

Do you think the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB boundary needs to be reviewed?	Percentage	Number of Selections
No	74%	99
Yes	26%	35

Would you like to be kept informed of progress on the Management Plan review?	Percentage	Number of Selections
No	43%	57
Yes	57%	77

Would you like the opportunity to provide further input into the management of the AONB?	Percentage	Number of Selections
No	57%	75
Yes	43%	56

Are you completing the questionnaire on behalf of a Parish Council or another group?	Percentage	Number of Selections
No	85%	120
Yes	15%	21

Do you?	Percentage	Number of Selections
Live in the AONB	41%	57
Live adjacent to the AONB	38%	53
Live within the wider Lincolnshire area	18%	26
Live out of County	3%	4
Work in the AONB	46%	44
Work adjacent to the AONB	26%	25
Work within the wider Lincolnshire area	23%	22
Work out of County	5%	5

Age Group	Percentage	Number of Selections
45 – 64	50%	68
65+	38%	52
26 – 44	11%	16
0 – 17	1%	1
18 - 25		

Response Form – please return comments by 31st January 2018

Please feel free to use this form to comment on the Lincolnshire Wolds Draft AONB Management Plan 2018-23 – save it to your computer, add your comments and return to aonb@lincswolds.org.uk or print it off and post to:

Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service
Freepost RTJA-KKJU-XXH
Navigation Warehouse, Riverhead Road,
Louth LN11 0BR

If you have any queries please contact aonb@lincswolds.org.uk or 01522 555780

Your details:

Name
Organisation/business (if applicable)
Address

Postcode
Email
Telephone

Do you have any comments on the general style of the revised AONB Management Plan? Please note the final AONB Management Plan will have a limited print run but will be widely available in CD and PDF formats.

Do you have any comments on 'Section 4: Protecting the Wolds'?

Do you have any comments on 'Section 5: Living and Working in the Wolds'?

Do you have any comments on 'Section 6: Discovering the Wolds'?

Do you have any comments on 'Section 7: Developing the Wolds'?

Do you have any comments on 'Section 8: Partnerships in the Wolds'?

Do you have any comments on 'Section 9: Making it Happen, which includes the proposed Actions'?

Are you able to suggest and/or provide any direct actions to assist the Plan?

Do you have any other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to let us know your comments and suggestions.

General observations

- LWT & NE both suggest a greater use of case studies to evidence progress since last Plan – examples could include LCSP, links with farming sector (Open Farm Sunday), work of the CFE's etc.

Landscape

- The National Trust supports the Plan and resulting advice/guidance within the Strategy but feels that as they are not in the AONB they have limited ways they can actively get involved in the work of the AONB Partnership.
- Opportunity to link with Gunby Hall via National Trust's Land, Outdoors and Nature Strategy. Gunby implementation planned for 2018.
- The NT highlights that they look forward to a time when the AONB could be extended to include their land holdings.

Biodiversity

- NE – ecosystems approach is essential. Through collaboration we must seek to achieve diverse, abundant and accessible nature & not just focus on the rare and special.
- Concerns from GLNP and LWT on habitat loss through reduction/influence lost through CAP Pillar 1 Cross Compliance e.g. options for riverside habitats, hedgerows and landmark trees.
- Wide concerns on changes post Brexit, climate change, bio-resilience to various pests and diseases – Chalara (Ash Die Back), Acute Oak Decline – emerald beetle etc.
- NE highlight the importance of future delivery tools, such as the replacement for Countryside Stewardship (CS), and the CS Facilitation Fund, being used in an integrated way to enable and advise effective local delivery.
- NE recognises that raising awareness and sharing good/best practice at "grassroots level" is critical – supports the promotion of various case studies.
- ELDC supports original issues as listed, but highlights post Brexit uncertainties, esp on account that much of our wildlife (environmental) legislation has European origins.
- LCC (Planning) do not feel that climate change and the threat from existing & invasive species is still a relevant issue.
- NT recognises all issues and policies still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Meadow, Pasture and Wet Grassland

- NE & LWT highlight need to recognise post Brexit changes & support for the development & implementation of wider multi-functional approaches.
- NE - Review & modify stewardship scheme info to reflect new terminology and/or Mid & Higher-tier Countryside Stewardship; review any emerging clarity post Brexit.
- LCC (Planning) has some differences of opinion with other partners in respect of grassland management conflicts with future land-use/habitat changes e.g. new woodland planting and miscanthus (energy crops).
- GLNP comment on GP3 Policy - whilst well intentioned who can take the lead on developing initiatives to support grazing of less productive grasslands? Are there any initiatives locally? Various 'matchmaking' services have been undertaken in other areas of the UK.
- Explore opportunities of rare breeds "Lincolnshire russets" and local products including dairy that rely on livestock.
- LWCS question - is there a bigger issue of intensive livestock rearing; with less reliance upon pasture fields and potential increasing trend towards poultry farming?
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Grass Verges and Green Lanes

- Biomass opportunities – link with LCC Study (LWT) any lessons learnt and consider Life on the Verge as a suitable case study.
- LCC (Planning) recommend revising objectives and policies although no suggestions to revised wording supplied; but pose the question "will the decision of the County Council to cut back its cutting of road-side verges have any impact and need to be taken into consideration?"
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Chalk Rivers, Streams and Ponds

- EA recognises the need for greater understanding and further research to help evidence the pond resource across the Wolds.
- Concerns from Forestry Commission regarding loss of riverside trees and subsequent increase in water temperatures.
(note - Chalk Streams Management Guide recommend seeking a balance of 60% light and 40% shade for the surface of the river/stream channels to maximise channel biodiversity for aquatic flora and fauna, including brown trout).
- LCSP - continuing focus on catchment partnership approaches to help implement river restoration, habitat buffering etc, - working to minimise sedimentation impacts and maximise biodiversity, water quality and flood mitigation gains.
- LCSP - Ongoing awareness of the need and benefits of helping to raise public and landowner awareness of the Lincolnshire chalk stream resource and the opportunities for getting involved.
- Contrary to other responses from the LCSP, LCC (Planning) do not view diffuse pollution and sedimentation as a current issue.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Woodlands, Beech Clumps and Traditional Orchards

- FC highlights the need for greater flexibility with planting mixes to safeguard from climate change and pests/diseases.
- Mapping of small woodland resource remains an issue but who/how is this to be resourced.
- Differing views on whether inappropriate planting (locations and species) is still an ongoing problem. For example - NE & FC both think this is no longer an issue; LWT & GLNP feel it is.
- LCC (Planning) do not feel that climate change and the future viability of some native issues, including new pests and diseases is still a relevant issue.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Hedgerows and Landmark Trees

- New issues highlighted include tree health and biosecurity especially from Chalara (Ash Die Back) and Acute Oak Decline.
- Impacts post Brexit especially with cross compliance (via Pillar 1 funding) currently supporting hedgerow/ditch boundary maintenance etc.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant, in particular stressing the pressures landowners are under to remove roadside trees on H & S grounds.

Earth Heritage – Geodiversity and Soils (see also comments on agriculture)

- LCC (Planning) – the recently adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan has not identified any need for additional quarries for chalk or the need for any additional landfill capacity so only expect that land with historical permissions or existing sites will be developed in the future.
- The GLNP highlights the issue of the need for ongoing management of geodiversity sites to maintain their interest/condition.

- NE highlights a case for strengthening partner efforts to raise awareness and understanding of soil related issues e.g. through river catchment initiatives, Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project work, CS Facilitation Fund & other future mechanisms.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Agriculture (see also comments on soils)

- NFU recognise the key issue of Brexit and its impacts upon the farming sector including;
 - 1) Future subsidy payments – any new schemes need to be advantageous for Wolds farmers with achievable and sensible conditions.
 - 2) General concern stressed on the poor uptake of Countryside Stewardship across Lincolnshire. Farmers have been put-off by much of the Defra/Rural Payment Agencies bureaucracy, including overly excessive inspection regimes and very onerous record keeping obligations.
 - 3) The implications from a shift to world market prices under WTO (World Trade Organisation) rules and the possibility of tariffs.
 - 4) Uncertainties in future legislation/regulations for food production, pesticide application, environment etc; a plea to minimise future red tape and Defra gold plating.
 - 5) Concerns with mobility of the work force in respect of the future use of foreign nationals – some scheme for agricultural workers is required.
- LWT, GLNP and NE all highlight uncertainties and future impacts from changes to domestic agricultural policy in light of Brexit – changes to cropping patterns, global markets etc.
- Roll of future voluntary/paid agri-environment schemes is unclear.
- Increase in interest for energy crops including miscanthus and more recently maize.
- NE highlights need to maximise Natural Capital approaches to help raise awareness with local businesses, schools and wider public.
- Future survey work for helping our understanding of distinctive arable wildlife – GLNP question what is meant by "distinctive"? NE asks how and what parameters? Future links with University of Lincoln?
- EA recommend that landowner engagement should also seek to raise awareness and understanding of increased sedimentation on our river systems and the potential impacts on water quality, ecology and flood risk.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.
(See also comments on Soils)

Farming and Field Sports

- LWT, NE and GLNP recommend refreshing issues in light of forthcoming Brexit scenarios and the uncertainties in the farming sector.
- LCC (Planning) agree with others on the need to support but revise Policy FWP2 (monitoring and influencing changes in regional, national and EU agricultural policy...). Stressed that with the uncertainty following Brexit there is an increased importance to influence agricultural policy to bring benefits to the Wolds.
- NE asks if the EA still have a budget/project to provide advice through workshops for farmers which could help aid delivery of Policy FWP7?
- LCC (Planning) still deemed important, but requested a revision to Policy FWP7 (to raise awareness within farming community of the growing issues of climate change, sustainable energy and carbon management). No further details or suggestions supplied.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Archaeology and Built Heritage

- NE supports all outstanding issues and highlights the opportunity to use examples from the Down Your Wold project.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.
- HL recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – some minor changes to wording of some policies suggested including the merging of Policies BHP1 and BHP4 due to their close similarities.
- In respect of Objective AO (to protect, appropriately manage and enhance archaeological and historic features within the AONB...) HL stresses the importance of the need for further research and a coordinated management approach from all agencies in consultation with landowners. Research is viewed as key, as the potential for archaeology needs to be fully assessed in addition to applying this objective to all known archaeological sites and features.
- HL – Policy AP1 (to encourage and support research projects to help increase understanding of the Wolds etc); further research is required to fully understand the significance of a wide range of heritage and to share this with people living and working in the area. Identifying what and how features are at risk will allow for priorities to be determined so that resources can be targeted. Baseline information is in place and needs to be updated.
- Policy AP3 (to increase and enhance appropriate public access to sites of archaeological interest etc.) HL highlights increased public access as valuable for local residents and could also be promoted to visitors to the area in order to increase the perception of the Wolds as a historic landscape.
- Policy BHP1 (to work with property owners, residents, owner occupiers and developers to encourage sympathetic design and management of buildings); HL stresses that working with planners in relevant authorities on a Design Framework/Guide for Wolds villages would be useful so that they can also offer the right level of advice and guidance at pre-application stage.
- Policy BHP2 (to raise awareness of the built heritage in the Wolds etc.); in terms of future delivery, HL recommends a project that can explore the morphology of Wolds villages – their common characteristics and their unique development attributes, such a project could encourage volunteer input.
- Policy BHP3 (encouraging and supporting sustainable re-use of buildings using local materials...); HL reports that funding for private owners is now incredibly rare but small scale grants can be an effective way to encourage conservation and re-use. Case studies about how redundant buildings have been reused in the past are very helpful to demonstrate how this can be achieved.
- Policy BHP3 (encouraging and supporting sustainable re-use of buildings using local materials...) LCC (Planning) feel that there is no evidence of lack of availability of local building materials that would constrain this approach.
- LCC (Planning) – support but revise Policy BHP4 (encouraging/supporting innovative new construction taking inspiration from local character etc); no further details supplied. HL also suggest a slight re-wording of this policy.

Thriving Communities

- ELDC, NE, LWT, GLNP - ongoing issues still valid to varying degrees but esp. concerns with local services/ facilities (inc. access to public open space) and future local employment opportunities.
- LCC (Planning) do not perceive an issue with limited public open space.
- LCC (Economic Regeneration) – the Thriving Communities section of the Plan looks to be too wide ranging. Consider splitting down into "Living in the Wolds", "Working in Wolds" and "Visiting the Wolds" or similar.
- Policy TCP2 (reversing the decline in rural services and promoting healthier lifestyles) – NE stresses that Defra wants to make clearer the links between a healthy natural environment and public health and prosperity. LCC (Planning) highlight the continued concern raised about the lifestyles of all ages and impact on health so important that contribution to the promotion of healthy lifestyles is recognised.
- Policy TCP2 - ELDC reports that the decline in rural services has not slowed down and that many of the smaller communities now have little in the way of services, with poor transport, isolation and deprivation more likely to occur.

- Policy TCP4 (community links with green infrastructure) - ELDC notes that this is arguably likely to become even more important as the appetite for more tourism and recreation increases via Love Lincolnshire Wolds initiative. LCC (Planning) reiterates the links to health benefits as detailed in response to TCP2.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.
- LAZ (LEADER) deemed all issues and policies as remaining important with the following additional comments:-
 1. Suggested new issue with the ongoing EU review of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) and the potential development of a new "British Agricultural Policy". There could be a role for the AONB Partnership to influence whether the future Rural Development Programme will include LEADER funding (or similar) i.e. rural development (socio-economic) funding to support economic growth and "quality of life" in rural areas.
 2. The LAZ flagged up that in terms of the overall Objective TCO (Support and promote partnership activity to safeguard/enhance the prosperity and well-being of communities within the Wolds etc...) the vulnerabilities for the communities still include outward migration of young people creating challenges for businesses in all sectors including the ability to attract and retain suitably qualified employees. (High growth is projected in the 65+ age group with the working age population set to reduce by 5% between 2017 and 2037 (Ref: LAZ LDS 2014).
 3. LAZ highlighted that in respect of Policy TCP2 (reversing the decline in rural services and promoting healthier lifestyles) issues still exist over broadband access and connectivity. Furthermore the average distance to key services is generally more than countywide or national average distances.
- LCC (Economic Regeneration) did not wish to comment on individual issues, objectives and policies as listed in the current M. Plan but wished to provide some wider observations and pose a number of questions for the Partnership. An overriding comment in respect of rural economies is the way that they are operating is changing, they are much more than simply economies providing employment and tourism - increasingly they are offering a wide range of additional services to the local community – e.g. schools, convenience stores, childcare to help families work and care services to the most vulnerable. There is also a shift in the affordability/viability of businesses so that there is an ever increasing need for communities to grow in order to help maintain their services (e.g. local pubs, shop, bakers, butchers, hair dressers etc, many of which can no longer survive in today's world/economy). Thinking about future pressures the following points were highlighted:
 1. The Plan might want to explore whether the AONB positively leads the way of life of its residents, or whether its residents' way of life has to adapt to be suitable to the AONB. Arguably, the AONB should be part of the psyche of its residents and lead their way of life.
 2. There is a debate to be had over the increase in population size versus tranquillity (sense of place) arguments. LCC (Economic Regen) ask if the Local Plans have the balance right in terms of enabling the sustainable growth of village settlements.
 3. In the light of news for 100% rural rate relief for businesses the AONB Partnership should consider specific actions that can help nurture and support small businesses in our deeply rural communities e.g. seeking to diversify the income streams of rural businesses but doing so in the context of the AONB's character.
 4. The Partnership should consider also nurturing and supporting links with further education colleges and academics to help aid research, (informing our evidence base, knowledge and understanding) and provide lasting legacies; as well as an opportunity to explore new income streams.
 5. There is an issue in respect of utilities (power, heat, water, digital), both costs and supply. Could and should more be made of the natural assets in the AONB to help ensure future supply and minimise the costs e.g. water power generation etc.
 6. The Plan needs to maintain and develop a greater focus on the inter-relationship between the market towns and the rest of the AONB. What can the AONB's communities do to stop them being simply a drive-through to the larger towns, in turn taking pressure off the market towns themselves. There will still be particular services that the AONB communities would need the

market towns to provide (e.g. vocational training, + *additional NHS services, larger retail units etc*).

Interpretation – Awareness Raising

- NE recognises that the broad interpretive-awareness raising Objective (IO) accords with NE's Conservation Strategy principles of "putting people at the heart of the environment" and "Natural Capital".
- LCC (Planning) stresses that in terms of overriding objective (IO) and Policy IP2" (strengthening the profile of the AONB); "with the success of Lincoln as a tourist attraction in recent times extra effort should be made to encourage these visitors to go beyond Lincoln". Consider revising Policy IP2 accordingly.
- WLDC (economic team) highlights the importance of the overarching objective IO (raising the profile of the AONB...) and the links with the emerging Love Lincolnshire Wolds (Wolds & Market Town Groups) and its Destination Management Plan. The Destination strategy includes specific actions aimed at increasing visitors, identifying gaps in provision and working with partners, all of which in turn will enhance resident facilities & bring economic benefits.
- WLDC notes the links to businesses that are engaged with the Wolds & Market Town Groups and connections with the Love Lincolnshire Wolds branding/website.
- ELDC, HL, LCC (Planning), NT and LAZ (LEADER) recognise all listed issues as still relevant.
- HL identifies an additional issue of promoting the importance of the value of established festivals and events, helping to demonstrate the vitality and cultural interest of the Wolds area.
- Objective IO (raising the profile of the AONB...); HL suggests re-wording to highlight the economic benefits. Also Policy IP2 wording is very similar to the overarching objective so is IP2 needed?
- Policy IP1 (to provide visitors and residents with a greater understanding and appreciation of what makes the Lincolnshire Wolds a special place...); HL highlights that there are several 'gateways' into the Wolds and a coordinated approach offering good quality information about all of the special attributes of the area is needed. A creative interpretation scheme would be very effective at creating an enhanced sense of place and improving visitor experience.
- Policy IP3 (to encourage residents to become actively involved in the interpretation and promotion of the area...); HL comments that local residents know the area best and have a wealth of knowledge about its character, history, best views, places to eat etc. Using promotional material which uses local voices to invite people to visit and to learn more about the place would provide a strong marketing/interpretative approach.

Access, Recreation and Tourism

- LCC (Planning) suggests revising of Policy ARTP3 (developing joint promotion and marketing initiatives to raise the profile of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB etc) to link with Lincoln tourism opportunities – see comments for Policy IP2 above.
- LCC (Planning) revise Policy ARTP4 (identify gaps in current access, recreation and tourism provision etc) but no further comment supplied.
- Policy ARTP1 (to maximise opp's for all visitors and residents of the AONB, improving provision for quiet recreation); HL suggests a definition/clarification of the term 'quiet recreation'.

Planning and Development Management

- WLDC (planning team) recognises the value of the AONB Partnership in reviewing planning and development management issues/themes but questions the use of presenting as "policies" as these will not have that status and there is no sense in duplicating what is already expressed in the Local Plans (inc Central Lincolnshire Local Plan) – so for e.g. the M. Plan cannot seek to deliver (more or less) affordable housing that will already be specified in local plans. Such policies should come out and be re-worded along the lines of "development should be supported that will.... protect and enhance the character of the area; development of affordable housing to support the ongoing sustainability should be promoted where it is appropriate in scale & design.
- LCC (Planning) recognise and support all previous planning issues and in addition highlighted a new issue of hydro-carbon exploration – planning permission has been granted for hydro-carbon exploration (*site in Biscathorpe*)- if drilled and successful this may result in pressure for further sites in the AONB.
- LCC (Economic Regeneration) Planning in rural areas needs to embrace businesses when they want to expand, however the time taken with the planning and decision making process may often put people off. Is there a role for the M. Plan in setting out some guidance for developers and planners when it comes to development in the AONB?
- Policy PP1 & PP2 (protecting and enhancing local character and distinctiveness through the highest quality in design; including for traditional buildings) - LWT & NE request stressing the importance of making space for biodiversity & tackling climate change in design.
- Policy PP3 (supporting development of local needs/affordable housing – ELDC stresses that current reductions in funding to Registered Social Landlords mean that their opportunity to provide affordable housing is seriously curtailed. Currently no formal housing allocations within East Lindsey portion of the AONB following objections to the Local Plan proposals; thus likelihood of limited affordable housing being provided via quota system on new market sites.
- Policy PP4 (minimising damage to the AONB landscape as a result of mineral working...) - LCC (Planning), as above comment, pressure for additional hydro-carbon extraction may be forthcoming.
- Policy PP6 (dark night skies)- ELDC notes the potential for this to become a more important issue if the amount of tourism in the area increases.
- Policy PP7 (wind energy schemes) - ELDC reports a drop in demand in wind farm applications largely on account of changes to subsidies; this could change if there are further modifications to the current national approach (incentive mechanisms).
- Policy PP8 (general waste reduction and recycling initiatives) – LCC (Planning) suggest policy revision highlighting that as we move towards a circular economy and a desire to 'make things last longer' this policy is an even more important requirement and should be given a high priority.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.
- The LAZ (LEADER) highlights the ongoing relevance of the Lindsey Action Zone Local Development Strategy 2014-2020.
- The LAZ also stresses the continuing importance of the England Rural Development Programme (RDP) initiatives and regulations. For the Lincs Wolds, as well as Countryside Stewardship, it also specifically includes the Lindsey Action Zone LEADER fund which makes funding available to business and community projects, up to c£40,000 at 40%. The funding is for projects that contribute to the rural economy and create jobs (for commercial businesses). The six national priority areas are farming, forestry, small business start-up and development, tourism, heritage and rural services. AONBs and National Parks are uniquely placed to engage in future planning for the ongoing Rural Development Funding – to aid and support local delivery and help ensure these priority areas continue to be relevant.
- HL highlights the ongoing issue of renovation/development of redundant farm buildings. Queries why there appears to be no clear policy for farm buildings in this section (LWCS note – possible duplication with Policy BHP1, BHP3 and BHP4).
- HL considers Policy PP1 (to promote and enhance local character and distinctiveness through the highest quality design...) to be a repeat of an earlier policy within Built Heritage section.
- HL considers Policy PP2 (to encourage and support the sensitive conversion of traditional buildings to new viable uses...) to also be a repeat of an earlier policy within Built Heritage section.

- CPRE has offered to assist the AONB Partnership in developing a document for a model "Wolds Landscape Character Proposal" that could help aid and inform future Neighbourhood Plans and Plan Policies – this would build on national CPRE work in this area to provide local context.

Transport in the Wolds

- ELDC recognises all current issues as valid and in terms of overall objective highlights the potential for transport related issues to become more important if there is a significant increase in the tourism offer in the Wolds. There may be a requirement to create better access links and certainly a likely increase in demand for signage associated with attractions and facilities.
- LCC (Planning) recognises all issues as still valid, and though still important recommends revisions to Policy TWP3 (encouraging transport infrastructure improvements to support appropriate tourism etc), Policy TWP5 (encouraging integrated and well maintained public right of way - network etc), and Policy TWP6 (maximising access for all on the PROW) to take account of earlier commentary on Policy IP2 e.g. securing the wider links to visitors from Lincoln + helping to promote healthy lifestyles.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Climate Change

- NE recognises all existing issues as still relevant + highlight the impact of future cropping patterns.
- LWT & GLNP stressed the issue of anaerobic digesters and increasing demands for energy crops such as miscanthus and more recently maize.
- FC highlighted a new issue of increasing pressure on woodlands to supply woodfuel to help meet Renewable Heat Incentive requirements.
- ELDC recognises all existing climate change issues.
- LCC (Planning) recognises all issues as still relevant except for the emergence of new pests, diseases and invasive species.
- NT recognises all issues and policies as still relevant – no additional comments supplied.

Monitoring

- NE – objective of "condition" monitoring demands robust (and regular) reviews of baseline/evidence.

Key to organisations/groups who formally responded during the initial peer review:

EA	Environment Agency	ELDC	East Lindsey District Council
FC	Forestry Commission	GLNP	Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership
HL	Heritage Lincolnshire	LAZ	Lindsey Action Zone
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council	LCSP	Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project
LWT	Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	NE	Natural England
NFU	National Farmers Union	NT	The National Trust
WLDC	West Lindsey District Council.		

Appendix 8a – Glossary for Acronyms

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AMP5	Asset Management Plan (2010-2015) for private water companies
AW	Anglian Water
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BDS	British Driving Society
BeC	Beech Clumps
BHS	British Horse Society
CAMS	Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CCT	Churches Conservation Trust
CFE	Campaign for the Farmed Environment
CG	Common Ground
CL	Community Lincs
CLA	Country Land and Business Association
CLJPU	Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit
COSMIC	Conservation of Scheduled Monuments in Cultivation
CPRE	Campaign to Protect Rural England
CRoW Act	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
CSF	Catchment Sensitive Farming
CSS	Countryside Stewardship Scheme
CT	Churches Together
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DMV	Deserted Medieval Village
EA	Environment Agency
EoEAO	East of England Apples and Orchard Project
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ELDC	East Lindsey District Council
ELS	Entry Level Stewardship
ENPAA	English National Park Authorities Association
EU	European Union
FC	Forestry Commission
GL	Groundwork Lincolnshire
GLLEP	Greater Lincolnshire Local Economic Partnership
GLNP	Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership
GM	Genetically Modified
GVA	Gross Value Added
HaR	Heritage at Risk
HE	Historic England
HHT	Hubbard's Hills Trust
HL	Heritage Lincolnshire
HLS	Higher Level Stewardship
HWG	Heritage Working Group (Lincolnshire Wolds)
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
JAC	Joint Advisory Committee (AONB Partnership)
JMG	Joint Management Group (of JAC)
LA	Local Authority
LAF	Mid-Lincolnshire Local Access Forum
LAZ	Lindsey Action Zone
LBP	Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership
LBAP	Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
LCSP	Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project
LDF	Local Development Frameworks
LE	Lincolnshire Enterprise
LEAF	Linking Environment and Farming Network
LERAP	Local Environment Risk Assessment for Pesticides
LERC	Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre
LGG	Lincolnshire Geodiversity Group
LGS	Local Geological Site
LLW	Love Lincolnshire Wolds
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LNS	Lincolnshire Nature Strategy
LNT	Louth Navigation Trust
LNU	Lincolnshire Naturalists Union
LRO	Lincolnshire Research Observatory
LTC	Louth Town Council
LTP	Local Transport Plan

LWCS	Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service (AONB staffing unit)
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
LWT	Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
LWWF	Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival
MapInfo	Map Information System (computerised)
NAAONB	National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
NE	Natural England
NELC	North East Lincolnshire Council
NFU	National Farmers Union
NO	Nitrogen Monoxide
NPAC Act	National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OFGEM	Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
OWG	Officers Working Group (of JAC)
PAWS	Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites
PCC	Parochial Church Council
PLMF	Protected Landscapes Monitoring Framework
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PTES	People's Trust for Endangered Species
RA	Ramblers
RDPE	Rural Development Programme for England
RDS	Rural Development Service
RES	Regional Economic Strategy
RFF	Regional Forestry Framework
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Site
RNR	Roadside Nature Reserve
RoWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
RTP	Rural Transport Plan
RTPO	Rural Transport Partnership Officer
SDF	Sustainable Development Fund
SE	Sport England
SM	Scheduled Monument
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance
SO	Sulphur Monoxide
SPD	Supplementary Planning Documents
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
SSP	Sub-regional Strategic Partnership
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TCV	The Conservation Volunteers
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
TRiL	Traditional Roadsigns in Lincolnshire
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WLDC	West Lindsey District Council
WTT	Wild Trout Trust

Appendix 8b: Technical Terms

Acute Oak Decline	Acute oak decline (AOD) is a condition usually affecting mature oak trees and is believed to be caused by a bacterium, although often exacerbated by beetle infestations.
Agri-environment Scheme	Land-based schemes that provide financial incentives for land managers to adopt environmentally beneficial land management practices.
Ancient woodland	A site that has had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600AD and which has not been cleared or replanted (except natural regeneration).
Barrows	An ancient mound associated with burials.
Biodiversity	The variety of life on Earth, coined from the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit of 1992.
Brownfield land	A planning term to indicate land that has been previously developed e.g. redundant airfield sites, industrial premises etc.
Calcareous	An area of ground that is rich in calcium carbonate (lime) and is therefore chalky. It supports specific vegetation types.
Carbon sequestration	The natural or artificial processes by which carbon dioxide is captured and removed from the atmosphere and stored in a carbon sink.
Carbon sink	A natural or artificial reservoir that absorbs and locks more carbon than it releases.
Climate change adaptation	A response that seeks to reduce the vulnerability of biological systems to climate change effects.
Chalara	A serious disease of ash trees caused by the fungus <i>Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus</i> .
Circular economy	Using restoration and recovery techniques to reuse products, components and materials; maximising their use and minimising harmful impacts upon the wider environment through reducing energy, waste and the need for raw materials.
Climate change mitigation	A response that seeks to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions and/or enhance the removal of these gases from the atmosphere.
Combes	Steep incised valleys formed by glaciation processes.
Coppice	To cut, at ground level, all stems of trees/shrubs to stimulate new, multi-stemmed growth. Also refers to an area that has been managed in this way.
Diversification (farm)	To vary and expand the type of operations within a farm business, e.g. supplement farm income by other enterprises.
DMV – deserted medieval village	An abandoned settlement that dates from the Middle Ages.
Drovers roads	Routes that were used to move flocks and herds between grazing pastures, markets and settlements.
Ecosystem services	A concept developed to aid our understanding of the human uses and management of natural resources including their supporting, provisioning, regulating and cultural functions.
Escarpment	A long steep slope at the edge of a plateau.
Geomorphology	The physical features of the surface of the earth, such as rivers, valleys etc.
Glacial and Periglacial activity	The landscape features created by the presence of, and by adjoining, ice sheets in the past glaciations.
GI – Green Infrastructure	A strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green space that provides multiple benefits for biodiversity, access, recreation and resource protection.
Hedge laying	To cut and lay stems of a hedge in such a way that it will regenerate and continue to grow.
Higher Tier Stewardship	Multi-year Countryside stewardship agreements for environmentally significant sites, commons and woodlands where more complex management requires support from NE and/or the FC, and include a range of year-round options and capital items.
Interpretation	The art of communicating the significance of places and features.
Landmark trees	Individual and small clumps of trees that are conspicuous within the landscape and add to its distinctive character – this can also be via local cultural significance.
Lincolnshire Nature Strategy	The document, previously known as the Biodiversity Action Plan that ensures everyone can help protect and enhance the biodiversity of Lincolnshire through a series of achievable actions.
Mid Tier Stewardship	Multi-year Countryside stewardship agreements for environmental improvements in the wider countryside that include a range of year round options and capital items.
Natural capital	Those elements of the natural environment that provide valuable goods and services to people, such as the stock of forests, water, land and sea.
Nucleated	A village or settlement with a strong central core.
Pollard	To cut, at 3-4 metres above ground level, branches of a tree to stimulate new, multi-stemmed growth out of the reach of browsing animals.
RNR - Roadside Nature Reserves	A verge that is deemed worthy of protection because of its botanical interest, and actively managed between the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Lincolnshire County Council, (previously classified as Protected Roadside Verges).
Socio-economic	The interaction of social and economic factors.
SMV – shrunken medieval village	A settlement much reduced in size from the Middle Ages.
Statutory undertaker	An organisation, required by law, to undertake certain duties, e.g. public utilities companies.
Sustainable	Ensuring social, economic and environmental needs can be met without depletion of natural resources.
Synergy	Interaction and co-operation of individuals and organisations to work more effectively.

Appendix 9: Key Related Plans, Strategies and Initiatives

Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings; Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse (Historic England, 2017)
Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings; Historic England Advice Note 9 (2017)
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Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies - Environment Agency
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Countryside Stewardship Targeting Statement, Defra (2003)
County Archaeology Manual - Lincolnshire County Council (2016)
Creating a Great Place for Living; Defra's Strategy to 2020 (2016)
Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy - Dept. for Transport (2016)
Defra 25 Year Plans – Environment; and Food and Farming (*pending*)
Delivering a Golden Legacy; A growth strategy for inbound tourism to Britain from 2012 to 2020 - Visit Britain (2012)
Earth Heritage Conservation in England: A Natural Areas Perspective - English Nature Research Report no 158 (1996)
England Rural Development Programme - Defra
Fixing our Broken Housing Market - Dept. for Communities and Local Government (2017)
Forestry and Woodland Policy Statement (2013)
Greater Lincolnshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2030 (refreshed 2016)
Greater Lincolnshire Local Economic Partnership (GLLEP) Water for Growth - Water Management Plan 2015-2040 (2015)
Greater Lincolnshire Nature Strategy 2015-20 - Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (2015)
Health and Wellbeing in Lincolnshire; Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board (2017)
Heritage Counts 2016: Heritage and the Economy - Historic England (2016)
Humber River Basin Management Plan (2015)
Humber River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan (2015)
Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Strategic Action Plan (2014-19)
Lincolnshire Charter for Agriculture and Horticulture Implementation Plan - Lincolnshire Forum for Agriculture and Horticulture (2003)
Landscapes for Everyone; Creating a Better Future (Consortium Publication, 2016)
Lincolnshire County Council Natural Environment Strategy 2012-2018 (2012)
Lincolnshire Enterprise Business Plan 2004-2007 - Lincolnshire Enterprise (2004)
Lincolnshire Rural Transport Partnership - Action Plan (2000)
Lincolnshire Tourism - A Sharper Focus (2003)
Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan 3 (2011)
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Local Wildlife Sites: Guidelines for the Identification and Selection in the Historic County of Lincolnshire (2013)
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Making Space for Nature - The Lawton Review (2010)
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National Association for AONBs - Strategic Plan 2016-2020 (2016)
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National Pollinator Strategy (2014)
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Natural Foundations: Geodiversity for People, Places and Nature (2006)
New Model Farming: resilience through diversity - CPRE (2016)
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 Rural Business 2030: Unlocking Investment-Unlocking Potential, CLA (2016)
 Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England (2011)
 Soils Report for Lincolnshire Wolds AONB (2009)
 State of Nature UK Report (Consortium Publication, 2016)
 Steeping, Great Eau and Long Eau Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (2008)
 Sustainable Community Strategy - North East Lincolnshire Council (2010)
 The Anglian and The Humber River Basin Management Plan (2015)
 The Anglian and The Humber River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan (2015)
 The European Landscape Convention, ratified by the UK in 2006
 The Geodiversity Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire (2017)
 The Greater Lincolnshire Farmstead Assessment Framework; Guidelines for Best Practice - Historic England and partners (2015)
 The Greater Lincolnshire Farmsteads Character Statements - Historic England and partners (2015)
 The Grimsby, Ancholme and Louth Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (2009)
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 The Infrastructure Act (2015)
 The Maintenance and Repair of Traditional Farm Buildings; A Guide to Good Practice (Historic England, 2017)
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 The Nature Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire (revised 2015)
 The Witham and Louth Coastal Catchment Flood Management Plans (2009)
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 The West Lindsey Community Strategy (2006)
 Think Big: Ecological Recovery - National Association for AONBs joint partnership statement
 'Think Farming and Food', Action Plan for Sustainable Farming and Food in the East Midlands (2003)
 Uncertain Harvest: does the loss of farms matter - CPRE (2017)
 UK Geodiversity Action Plan (UKGAP) - A Framework for Action (2009)
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 Vision for Nature; Young People's Vision for the Natural World in 2050 (2016)
 Walkers are Welcome Network (2006)
 Water Resources Strategy for the Anglian Region (2009)
 Water Resources Management Plan (Anglian Water, 2010)
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 Woodland for Water: woodland measures for meeting WFD objectives (2011)

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 East Lindsey Local Plan, Settlement Proposals - East Lindsey District Council (1995)
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East Lindsey District Council – Core Strategy & Local Plan documents (in development)
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(See also Appendix 7 - Key Related Plans, Strategies and Initiatives)

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www.english-heritage.org.uk	English Heritage
www.environment-agency.gov.uk	Environment Agency
www.forestry.gov.uk	Forestry Commission
www.glnp.org.uk	Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership
www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/countryside	Lincolnshire County Council - Access
www.lincswolds.org.uk	Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service
www.lovelincolnshirewolds.com	Love Lincolnshire Wolds - Tourism Partnership
www.landscapesforlife.org.uk	National Association for AONBs
www.nfuonline.com	National Farmers Union
www.naturalengland.org.uk	Natural England

Appendix 11: Acknowledgements

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Katy Anderson	Country Land and Business Association
Cllr Richard Avison (JAC Vice Chair)	East Lindsey District Council
Andy Bailey	Environment Agency
Liz Bates	Heritage Lincolnshire
Sara Blair-Manning	National Trust
Paul Chaplin	North East Lincolnshire Council
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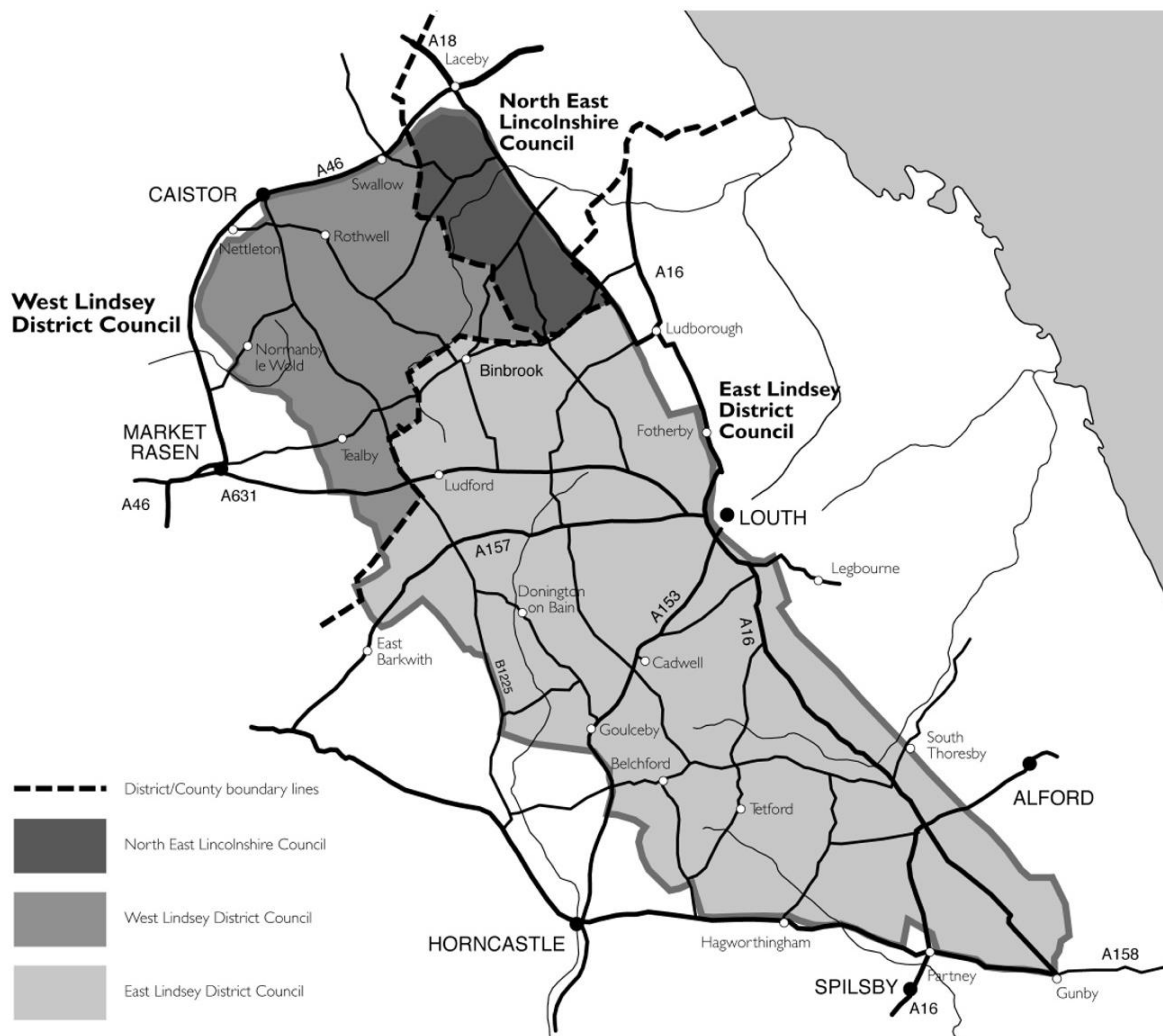
Map 1

National Map of AONBs



Map 2

Local Authority Boundary Map



MAP © Lincolnshire and South Humberside
Tourist Cartography by Lovell Johns Ltd. Oxford 1993

Map 3

County Map of the AONB



County of Lincolnshire
AONB Boundary

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Tourist Cartography by Lovell Johns Ltd. Oxford 1993

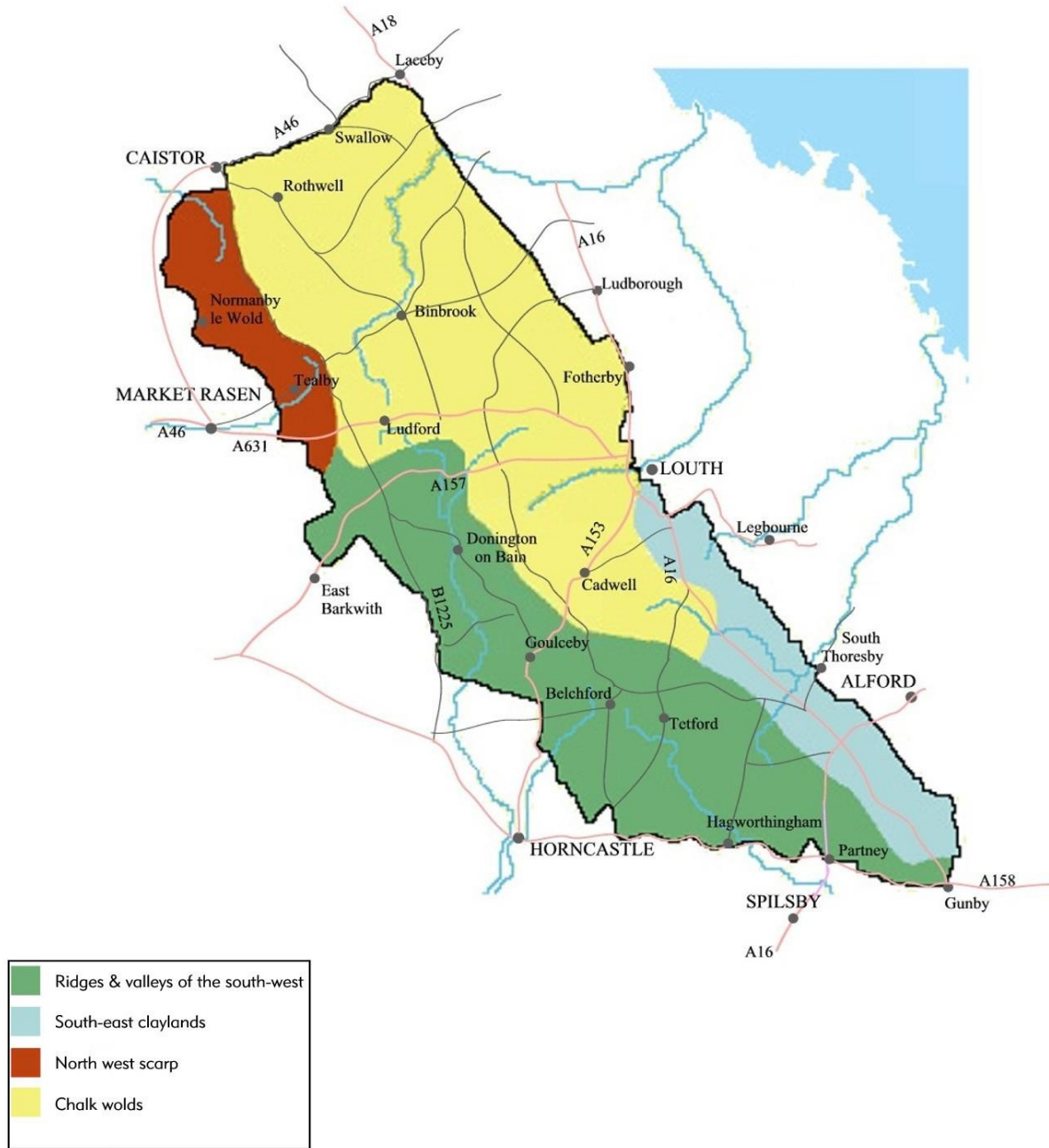
Map 4

AONB/Character Area Map



Map 5

Local Landscape Character Map



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