

Overview of Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB 2010-11 priorities

AONB objectives are:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty
- Manage the assets and resources of the AONB in a sustainable way
- Meet the demand for recreation where it is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the management of the land

Relationship with Suffolk Coast Futures - The unit is an important but relatively small player in developing the ICZM approach to the future of Suffolk's coast and estuaries. Our strength comes from championing the special landscape qualities of the area, as well as our leadership on grass-roots community engagement work on the southern estuaries - linked into the Estuary Planning Partnership.

Coastal Change & Climate Change are important themes of work and remain concentrated on community engagement around the estuaries. The Marine and Coastal Access bill will have an effect, especially on the maintenance and improvements of long-distance paths: the Suffolk Coast Path and Stour and Orwell Walk.

Climate Change theme includes removing barriers to landscape scale management of land between conservation partners - eg South Sandlings forest work on sustainable management and improvements for wildlife and recreation. Also agri-environment is seen as an important mechanism for landscape and wildlife enhancements on farms. New project **Future Landscapes** is a 2-year project to look at likely changes in agriculture in the context of climate change. Funding for this project is in place from Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership, the AONB and Natural England

Expansions and developments that we are 'keeping an eye on' include: major infrastructure planning such as the likely expansion to the **Sizewell** power station, and off-shore wind power. **Haven Gateway** growth point is a potential threat, and a possible opportunity, as is **Adastral Park**.

Responsible Access is an ongoing issue, and focuses many of our approaches. We are developing a 2-year responsible dog-ownership project with key local partners, and also begin to implement an Interpretation Strategy to invest in public interpretation and ways of influencing behaviour. Various projects will include elements of this theme, especially **BALANCE** Interreg access and interpretation project that will develop a visitor & recreation strategy, as well as look at access improvements of the long-distance routes.

The **Sustainable Development Fund**, administered by the AONB with funding from Natural England, for Sustainable Access, land management, community development type projects, is open for applications to the end of the month. Last years fund of £50k was granted to projects by: Nutmeg Theatre & Eastfeast, SCDC for C-Change Coastal, Aldeburgh Food & Drink Festival, and ICZM amongst others! The SCHs own fund for conservation projects, Connect, has agreed 20x £500 projects.

We are developing a **Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership** Stage 1 application for submission November this year. Over 30 people were at the first partnership development meeting a couple of weeks ago. Some good ideas for projects emerged from it around military heritage, visitor management and access, community involvement, volunteers, training, coastal and agricultural changes, interpretation.

Summary - the fit for the AONB with Alde & Ore Futures is around community engagement, access, tourism, habitat creation, landscape issues, and the rural economy for local businesses.