



**Quantock
Hills**
National
Landscape

QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 23 January 2024

2pm, Crowcombe Village Hall, Crowcombe, TA4 4AQ

To: The members of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Quantock Hills Communication and Support Officer Amanda Sampson on email quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk

Guidance about procedures at the meeting is given on page 2.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda:	
1.	Apologies for absence
2.	Declarations of interest - Members of the JAC to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter being considered at this meeting (see Sc 5 page 2).
3.	Accuracy of the previous minutes (copy appended) and to consider any matters arising.
4.	Public question time - The Chair will allow members of the public to ask questions or make statements about any matter on the agenda for this meeting or present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit.
5.	Presentation – Somerset Nature Connections (Joanna Hicks)
6.	Paper A – Partnership Update (Iain Porter)
7.	Paper B – Management Plan Review (Iain Porter)
8.	Paper C – Quantock Hills Nature Recovery Plan (Mark Baker)
9.	Paper D – Quantock Hills Business Plan 2024/25 (Iain Porter)
12.	AOB
	<p>Future JAC meeting dates: (all start at 2.00pm, venue TBC)</p> <p>Tuesday 16th April 2024 Tuesday 16th July 2024</p>
	<p>Note: Further information about any of the reports for this meeting may be obtained from the report authors based at the Quantock Hills AONB Service, The Quantock Office, Fyne Court, Broomfield, Bridgwater, TA5 2EQ. Tel: 01823 451884 or Email: quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk</p>

Meeting Guidance Notes:	
1.	<p>Inspection of Papers</p> <p>Any person wishing to inspect Minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact the Quantock Hills Communication and Support Officer Amanda Sampson at quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk</p>
2.	<p>Notes of the Meeting</p> <p>Details of the issues discussed, and decisions taken at the meeting will be set out in the Minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting. In the meantime, details of the decisions taken can be obtained from the Quantock Hills AONB Communication and Support Officer Amanda Sampson at quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk</p>
3.	<p>Public Question Time</p> <p>At the Chairperson’s invitation you may ask questions and/or make statements or comments about any matter on the Committee’s agenda. You may also present a petition on any matter within the Committee’s remit. The length of public question time will be no more than 20 minutes in total.</p> <p>A slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been signed. If you wish to speak, please tell Amanda Sampson, the committee administrator, before the meeting.</p> <p>You must direct your questions and comments through the Chairperson. You may not take direct part in the debate.</p> <p>The Chairperson will decide when public participation is to finish. If there are many people present at the meeting for one particular item, the Chairperson may adjourn the meeting to allow views to be expressed more freely. If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.</p> <p>An issue will not be deferred just because you cannot be present for the meeting. Remember that the amount of time you speak will be restricted, normally to two minutes only.</p>
4.	<p>Substitutions</p> <p>Committee members can appoint substitutes if they are unable to attend the meeting.</p>
5.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>It is a member of the JACs responsibility to declare a personal or prejudicial interest at all meetings where matters being discussed or to be discussed affect their interests. Full guidance can be found in appendix 3 of the JAC Constitution.</p>

QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (JAC)

Minutes of a meeting of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee held on:
Wednesday 25th October 2023 at 2pm
Holford Village Hall, Holford

Present:

Members:

Dixie Darch (DD) JAC Vice Chair	Somerset Council
Mike Caswell (MC)	Somerset Council
Tom Deakin (TD)	Somerset Council
Alan Bradford (AB)	Somerset Council
Tim Whittingham (TW)	Friends of the Quantocks
Alicia Aras (AA)	Somerset Local Access Forum
John Ebsary (JE)	Forestry England
Rob White (RW)	Quantock Commoners Association
Tommy Muncie (TM)	National Trust
Mark Phillips (MP)	Parish Representative – West Quantoxhead
Sarah Nason (SN)	Parish Representative – Holford
Martin Jones (MJ)	Parish Representative – West Bagborough

Officers:

Iain Porter (IP)	Quantock Hills AONB Service
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Also present:

Amanda Sampson (Quantock Hills AONB Service), Owen Jones (Quantock Hills AONB & Forestry England Ranger), Mark Baker (Quantock Hills AONB Project Manager), Alex Meletiou (Quantock Hills AONB Planning Officer), Bill Jenman (Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme Manager), Jon Doyle (Somerset Council), Julie Cooper (Somerset Council), Deborah Prestwich (Quantock Pony Association).

1. Apologies

Hugh Warmington (JAC Chair), Bill Revans (Somerset Council), and Laura Daniells (Natural England), Julian Taylor (North Petherton Town Council) and Fran Smith (Somerset Council).

DD chaired the meeting in HW absence and started by thanking MC for his work and support as Vice Chair for approximately 8 years. DD asked the group to briefly introduce themselves as some new faces were in attendance. DD thanked TD for attending the meeting as a new member replacing Sarah Dyke from Somerset Council.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were given.

Accuracy and matters arising from the previous minutes (July 2023)

The minutes of the July meeting were signed off as a true representation of the meeting.

3. Public Question Time

No public questions.

4. Paper A – Partnership Update (Iain Porter)

IP gave a brief update on the Partnership Paper A, including a presentation of the new Quantock Hills National Landscapes brand which will come into effect in late November 2023 as part of the national rebrand from Area's of Outstanding Natural Beauty to National Landscapes.

All in attendance were happier with the new logo design.

There were no further comments or questions.

Paper A Recommendation(s):

1) **The JAC noted the report.**

5. Paper B – Management Plan Review (Iain Porter)

The current Management Plan has been extended to March 2025. The team has started on the review of the plan presenting the timeline to ensure adoption by April 2025. IP is currently assessing if there is a requirement for a working group as for previous reviews.

A group discussion was had about LCN's.

MC – LCN groups would welcome some representation from the Quantock Hills AONB. IP looking to attend, however as Quantock Hills is covered by four LCN's all having their meetings within similar timescales it is difficult to regularly attend. JD - there are monthly meetings of the clerks of the LCN's so may be worth the AONB's attending these meetings, JD will pass on contact details to IP. AB – not all clerks attend all LCN meetings. JC – is encouraging that most LCN's have an interest in Climate and the Environment.

There were no further comments or questions.

Paper B Recommendation(s):

1) **The JAC approved the Management Plan Review timeline.**

2) **The JAC approved the setting up of a Management Plan Review Working Group to run from January 2024.**

6. Paper C – Planning Update (Alex Meletiou)

AM gave a brief update on the planning update paper C and asked for any further planning questions.

MJ – Any news on the Solar Farm at Washford. AM – not at the moment.

TW – Hedges in Spaxton. For a long time there have been questions over the hedges being removed which is a serious issue that needs to be addressed. DD – Planning Officers are looking at it, and the Friends of the Quantocks actions have not gone unnoticed. TW – We are hoping for some form of resolution after approximately 700meters of hedgerows have disappeared over a number of years. DD – Landowners can legally take out 20 meters of hedging without having to apply for planning permission.

AM – has contacted Planning North reminding them of a retrospective application that was turned down and requirements that illegal track be restored to agricultural land, which has not occurred within the required time period. AM has asked for the planning officer's name dealing with it but is still awaiting a reply. DD – enforcement officers are in short supply and there is a resource problem. AB – Planning North have had a number of officers leave over the past 6 months which has caused a lot of disturbance and a lack of experience and local knowledge.

MC – not a personal opinion but in 2002/2003 it became a non-statutory obligation which does not have to be done, enforcement officers do not have to be employed.

ACTION – the Quantock Hills team to attempt to make further contact with the Planning North team to request more robust approach to the purposes of the AONB designation. IP – contact has been made but nothing more heard back so needs following up.

There were no further comments or questions.

Paper C Recommendation(s):

- 1) **The JAC noted the report.**

7. Paper D – Dark Skies Position Statement (Alex Meletiou)

IP gave a brief update on the dark skies position statement paper D. More detailed information is available on the CPRE (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England) website <https://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/nature-and-landscapes/dark-skies/>

AM - we have a policy in our Management Plan to support actions that retain or create Dark Skies. The purpose of the statement is to raise awareness, mainly amongst Planners, to highlight what issues are and potential solutions. Currently 37% of the Quantock Hills is pristine dark skies.

MP – St Audries wedding venue seems to have some impact on the light pollution of the area. IP – this is one we can follow up as a case study.

TW – there is no mechanism of controlling the light pollution as no planning permission is needed for putting up lights etc. When planning applications are completed, they should include lighting schemes. AM – this is the point of more education on the matter.

RW – has there been any research regarding solar farms and whether they would have an impact on light pollution at night when they reflect the moon. AM- none that we know of.

MC – the light pollution effect from the development at HPC has had a massive effect on the Steart Marshes and the local area, the nocturnal wildlife has virtually disappeared, and some residents have actually placed boards in windows and rearranged their house layouts due to the unnatural light. DD – happy to feed this back to the Council and follow this up. IP – the partnership did challenge the light spill from HPC, and the light levels are monitored from within the site with limited monitoring of spill outward and at the time, the site was compliant, but worth following up again. MC – in experience HPC have a very limited response to it and maintain they are just trying to build a power station.

MP – There has never been planning applications for the lighting at St Audries wedding venue. DD – has the Parish Council tried to contact the owners about it. MP – has personally tried numerous times to raise questions about this but to no avail.

JC – has used nature conservation and wildlife as an issue when raising questions regarding light pollution. Is very important to get the point about light pollution across to people, more community groups need to get behind this.

There were no further comments or questions.

Paper D Recommendation(s):

1) The JAC adopted the statement.

8. Paper E – Nature, Heritage & Engagement Update (Owen Jones)

OJ gave an update on the nature, heritage and engagement work of the Team, including a presentation on the work being done to improve dormice monitoring and numbers, coppicing and the volunteering activities.

SN – is it right for the environment to still be swaling. OJ – other methods have been tried and tested however swaling is one type of management of heathland. We also use mob grazing and cut & collect where appropriate. TM – the National Trust have chosen to stop swaling on deep peat based soil – NOTE There are no deep peat sites on the Quantock Hills - it is about trying to maintain a heathland mosaic and swaling is one part of a complex management regime to achieve that.

There were no further comments or questions.

Paper E Recommendation(s):

1) The JAC noted the report.

9. Paper F – Nature Recovery Plan (State of Nature Report) (Mark Baker)

MB gave an update on the nature recovery plan state of nature report.

TD – how does this fit in with the management plan. IP – The NRP will form the main part of the 'nature' theme of the management plan. DD – this feeds in to the Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy. IP – been in contact with Steve Dury at Somerset Council to ensure synergies between the various consultations going on between the NRP and the LNRS.

AB – Is there anything really suffering in terms of wildlife due to dog walking ect and the wildlife being disturbed in general by the public. MB – agrees there is a problem, however if we get the habitat right then we can address the need for education regarding disturbing wildlife.

SN – thought dogs on leads would be included more in the nature recovery process. Do the Rangers enforce people keeping dogs on leads. OJ – certain times of the year there is a legal requirement for dogs to be on leads and this is enforced where possible. At other times there is a requirement for dogs to be under close control. SN – people don't seem to fully understand the general disturbance issues to both livestock and wildlife. OJ – it is about greater education on the matter. JC – what needs consideration is the need to provide positive alternatives for dog walkers as dogs do need somewhere to be able to run. BJ – people tend to react to what they can see, so people will put dogs on leads if they see sheep but won't consider the wildlife that they cannot see.

There were no further comments or questions.

Paper F Recommendation(s):

- 1) The JAC approved the State of Nature element of the Nature Recovery Plan.**
- 2) The JAC noted the revised timeline for the drafting of the Nature Recovery Plan.**

10. Paper G – Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme Update (Bill Jenman)

BJ gave a brief update on the status of the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme paper G. Alison Ricketts has joined the QLPS team as the new Project Support Officer and started on the 16th October.

AA – what is happening at Fyne Court. BJ - restoration project work including access improvements for wheelchair users and ongoing restoration and presentation of the walled garden.

DD – the team has managed to access communities who would not normally have been involved before and we need to share this good practice a bit wider. This is a model of excellence practice. TD – more than happy to help where possible with linking the community together. BJ – will be producing a 'how to' guide about what we have done and what we have learned. The communities are here, and you can find ways in you have to just keep trying. AA – Broomfield Parish have a WhatsApp group and are happy to share news and get more information out.

There were no further comments or questions.

Paper G Recommendation(s):

- 1. The JAC Noted the report.**

11. AOB

AB – Anthony Trollope-Bellew the longstanding JAC Chair who sadly passed last year, is there anything being done to remember him and his contribution to the Quantock Hills. IP - have been in touch with the family to offer a more permanent memorial whether something physical or something such as a memorial fund and will update when we know more.

IP – there has been a significant increase in correspondence from members of the public regarding hunting. The AONB Service position is that if a person sees activity they believe to not be covered within exempt hunting under the Hunting Act they must report it to the police. Where the issues relate to inappropriate vehicle use (off-road) it can be reported to the team to be followed up.

IP - Defra have announced £5 million funding nationally to restore and repair historic farm buildings through the FiPL programme. All works to be completed by March 2025 and projects will need to be quite well developed. Contact Katie Read, Landscape Projects Officer for more information.

Date of next meeting:

Tuesday 23rd January 2024 at 2pm, Crowcombe Village Hall.

Meeting was closed at 16.05pm

To	Quantock Hills JAC	PAPER A
Subject	Team and Partnership Update	
Author	Iain Porter, National Landscape Manager	
Date	23/01/2024	

1. Staffing

- a. Community Engagement & Volunteering Officer recruitment. After further discussion, this post has been moved to sit under the QLPS Team. It is going forward for recruitment now with the aim of being offered full-time for a fixed term of 12-months. This post will be jointly funded by the core NL Team and the QLPS Team (40% NL Team / 60% QLPS).
- b. Community Engagement Ranger. As the group will be aware we have had a partnership post that delivered our volunteering and people engagement workstreams. This post started in 2010 and since 2019 has been a partnership post with the Blackdown Hills National Landscape Team. Unfortunately in December the Blackdown Hills team informed me that they would not be able to continue funding the post.
- c. Farming Engagement Support Officer. Ann Guilding has handed in her resignation (03/01/24). Ann started with us on 25th September and did not settle into the role. I have started the recruitment process as February / March are busy times for this post and we are keen to fill the post.
- d. QLPS Project Support Officer. Alison Ricketts was recruited to this post 16th October. Unfortunately, Alison decided the role was not right for her and left on 14/12/23. The QLPS team are starting the recruitment process with the aim of having the post filled in the next 4-6 weeks.
- e. With the loss of 2 support roles within the team I have made enquiries as to how we can get some temporary support to handle the finance and general admin functions for both the Landscape Projects and the QLPS teams.
- f. Community Engagement Development Officer. As reported at the last meeting I have updated and enhanced the QLPS Community Engagement & Volunteering role description to increase the development element of the role. Unfortunately, the JE process has graded the post at grade 12. This is the same as the existing Community Engagement & Volunteering Officer post. This poses a number of issues:
 - i. The CEDO role line manages the CEVO role. We have been informed by HR that a post cannot line manage one of the same grade. Apparently there is supposed to be 2 grades difference between posts, though this is not the case within our existing team.
 - ii. The CEDO role includes more strategic development work, line management, budget management but is at the same grade as one with none of this responsibility. This lack of regard for the increase responsibility has impacted negatively on the current post holder.

- g. We have raised this issue with HR who are aware of a number of similar issues and looking to amend the JE process to resolve these issues.

2. Defra Grant

- a. Somerset Council are now correctly set up on the Defra tendering portal, allowing the submission of interim claims for the Core and FiPL grants. We have also secured £4,500 of Capital Access Grant funding this financial year to replace a number of interpretation panels throughout the Quantock Hills and continue track improvements across Quantock Common.

3. Landscape Review response.

- a. In November Government issued its response to the Landscape Review. The full response can be seen here - [Implementing the Landscapes Review: summary of responses - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/landscapes-review-summaries) . Responses / actions of relevance to the Quantock Hills National Landscape include:
 - i. Strengthened legislation. Including guidance on consideration of Protected Landscapes are part of the biodiversity duty in the Environment Act 2021 and more recently through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 the requirement of National Landscape Management Plans to contribute to national environmental targets and relevant authorities to help in delivery of Management Plans – moving from the requirement to produce and review plans. Guidance on how to deliver this is expected soon in the new year.
 - ii. Updated guidance on the key role of protected landscapes in the development and delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). Late in 2023 Government produced statutory guidance on LNRSs highlighting protected landscapes as being particularly suitable areas for nature recovery.
 - iii. Establishment of the Protected Landscape Partnership – see below
 - iv. Boosting financial support for protected landscapes. This includes Farming in Protected Landscapes programme (FiPL) which has had a significant budget uplift and extension, Access for All, Water in Protected Landscapes and Landscape Recovery – though this last funding stream is not specific to protected landscapes. With regard to the long-term funding of protected landscapes, a key proposal of the landscape review which recommended a 50% increase in core funding for National Landscapes, Government has increased funding for the National Landscape Association with the aim that it will develop the green finance product of National Landscapes. There is a commitment to review the core funding model of protected landscapes to develop a formula that is fair and transparent though no timescale have been given as to when this will occur.

4. Protected Landscapes Partnership (formerly called the Landscapes Parks and Trails Partnership)

- a. As part of the PLL the National Landscape Association has recently recruited a team to explore nature based solutions with National Landscapes. The team will be looking at national and local opportunities for National Landscapes and we will be hosting a visit for the team later in January.

5. National Landscape Rebranding

- a. On 22nd November Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty became National Landscapes. A national launch event was held in London which was more of an

internal affair, however significant media coverage occurred both nationally and locally. Feedback has generally been positive though some have questioned the need for a change in name. Further support for the new name came from the new Natural Environment Minister, Rebecca Pow, one of our local MPs, who attended the Chairs conference on 23rd November. Since the launch further reinforcement of the name change has occurred through increased media content including a number of press releases and social media content. The Team have also rebranded the teams van and are in the process of changing the branding on uniform and forward facing visuals. These changes will be funded through additional grant from Defra.

6. Partnership

- a. Cllr Sarah Dyke (Somerset Council) stood down from the Partnership following her successful election to MP of Somerton & Frome. Cllr Tom Deakin has replaced Sarah and attended the last Partnership meeting.

7. 2023/24 Budget Qu2

In December we finally managed to get detailed budget reports. Unfortunately, there are a number of issues including:

- a. Miscoding of significant numbers of Pos / TJs, including incorrect cost codes. Some of this is due to errors when raising the Pos and some due to errors when assigning spend.
- b. Internal transfer journals not being allocated to cost codes. Items such as insurances rates, which are charged centrally and usually changed each quarter. None of these regular charges are shown on the budgets yet making
- c. Missing income / grant from 2022/23. This includes the final FiPL grant (£78k) and Prevent Demand to improve Lives fund (£13k). Thankfully, the Reserves budget has been found and allocated to the correct cost code.
- d. However the reports have allowed a good assessment of the current budgetary position which is generally positive. More detail on the different cost codes is below.

8. Partnership Visit Days

- a. Following feedback from the Partnership the Team are looking to put on a number of site visits during 2024 to look at issues, projects and works being undertaken by the Team and / or Partners. Current dates and themes are:
 - i. 16 April, 10am-12noon. Beech Hedge Banks. A site visit to the Drove and nearby farms to explore the past, present and potential future management of the iconic beech hedgebanks.
 - ii. 6 June 10am – 12noon. Quantock Common. At 1,789Ha Quantock Common is one of the largest areas of contiguous heathland in the southwest with much of it designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a large proportion a Special Area of Conservation. This site visit will show the management that is undertaken by the commoners and some of the opportunities and challenges the common faces into the future.
 - iii. 24 September. Farming in Protected Landscapes. Join our Landscape Projects team to look at delivery of nature recovery, climate, people and place based actions undertaken by farmers through funding provided through FiPL. The site visit will also explore the role of agri-environment schemes into the futures and the opportunities for the Quantock Hills.
- b. To allow planning for the first site visits to look at beech hedgebanks please inform the Team by emailing quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk if you are interested in attending. Bookings for the future site visits will be emailed out later in the year.

Recommendation(s)

- 1) The JAC notes the report
- 2) JAC Members interested in attending any of the site visit to contact the team.

Appendix A1: Quantock Hills National Landscape. Finance position mth 8 (November 2023)

Summary

Cost Code	Heading	Budgeted Expenditure	Budgeted Income	Budgeted overrun	Actual Spend	Committed spend	Actual Income	Forecast overrun	
G002359	Core	296,652	-287,281	9,371	332,685	112,696	-410,005	35,376	
G003034	Landscape Projects Quantock	450,202	-450,183	19	56,010	201,970	-257,980	0	
G002358	Projects Quantock	80,400	-80,400	0	30,219	-18,859	-17,800	-6,440	
G002362	Heritage Lottery Funding (QLPS)	639,300	-639,400	-100	328,598	188,629	-516,028	1,199	
G002361	Amenity Land Quantocks	23,900	0	23,900	1,170	590	-3,946	-2,186	
G002360	RIA	0	-9,000	-9,000	0	0	-110,091	-110,091	
	Total	1,490,454	-1,466,264	24,190	748,682	485,026	-1,315,850	-82,142	
								Allocated Reserves (redundancy)	16,000
								Carry forward (LMSS)	15,000
								Carry forward (land management)	2,300
								Surplus 31/03/2024	-48,842

Core / Revenue

Cost Code: G002359 (Core Costs Quantocks)	Budget	Actual Spend	%	Committed spend	Forecast overrun	Comments
Salaries - Basic Pay	174,731	157,282.43	90%	68,072	225,354	Overspend as Project Manager salary cost miscoded to this code.
Salaries - Overtime	0	75.24	-	0	75	
Salaries - Add Hrs	8,486	5,844.72	69%	2,760	8,605	Increase due to pay award
NI	16,800	15,390.39	92%	6,500	21,890	Increase due to pay award
Pension - Local Gov	33,162	32,803.37	99%	13,650	46,453	Increase due to higher pension rate (not communicated by HR) and pay award
Training - Course Fees	2,800	20.00	1%	0	20	Spend miscoded on Supplies & Services
Training - Seminars & Conference Costs	0	160.00	-	0	160	Miscoded
Employees Other - Apprenticeship Levy	1,000	471.18	47%	300	771	On track
Repairs & Maint - Servicing - PAT Testing	0	65.00	-	0	65	Correct
Energy - Electricity	600	239.01	40%	160	399	Correct
Rents - Rents	10,200		0%	0	0	Spend miscoded on Supplies & Service
Rates - Business Rates NNDR	1,600		0%	1,500	1,500	Estimated spend
Water - Water Charges / Sewer	150	66.61	44%	140	207	Correct
Direct Transport - Fuel	5,386	3,030.02	56%	1,500	4,530	Correct

Direct Transport - MOT/Service	0	11,249.48	-	0	11,249	Spend miscoded from vehicle contract hire
Direct Transport - Unscheduled Repair and Maintenance	1,600	72.37	5%	0	72	Spend miscoded
Direct Transport - Tyres & Tubes	400	146.79	37%	0	147	Correct
Vehicle Contract Hire/Op Leases - Vehicle Contract Hire	12,500		0%	0	0	Spend miscoded on MOT / Service
Public Transport - Travel Fares	200	117.61	59%	150	268	correct
Car Allowances - Vehicle Mileage Allowance	500	343.57	69%	350	694	correct
Transport Insurance - Insurance Costs	2,000		0%	1,700	1,700	Unsure when and how much charges will be
Equip Furn Mat - Equipment	1,500	1,368.75	91%	200	1,569	Correct
Equip Furn Mat - Equipment - Maintenance	500	344.42	69%	100	444	Correct
Catering - Hospitality	1,200	1,221.47	102%	200	1,421	Check
Clothing Uniform Laundry - Purchases (Non Stock)	500	232.91	47%	1,300	1,533	New uniform items
Books and Publications	0	4.99	-	0	5	Correct
Courses Fees	0	75.00	-	0	75	Miscoded – should be on training
Postage	200	18.42	9%	50	68	Correct
Stationery	800	433.22	54%	150	583	Correct
Printing	300	41.31	14%	50	91	Correct
Publicity & Promotions	1,500	132.00	9%	200	332	Correct
Communications - Telephones - Calls	1,142	0	0%	1,142	1,142	Estimated expenditure
Communications - Telephones - Mobiles	900	0	0%	900	900	Estimated expenditure
Computing Costs - ICT - Hardware	0	170.22	-	0	170	New monitor – Correct
Subscriptions - Subscriptions	2,915		0%	2,915	2,915	Estimated expenditure
Fees & Hired - Fees & Hired	2,000	3,528.00	176%	0	3,528	Check
Fees & Hired - Public Convenience Services	0	66.61	-	0	67	Query
General Insurance - General Insurance	730	11.00	2%	730	741	Estimated unsure when charges will be applied
Sup & Serv Oth - Other Supplies & Services	2,000	17,858.23	893%	0	17,858	Checking through expenditure items. Significant number miscoded.
Sup & Serv Oth - Conference & Meeting Expenses	0	13.79	-	0	14	Miscoded
Sup & Serv Oth - Subsistence	100	24.51	25%	0	25	Correct
Internal - Cross Directorate Recharges	0	857.56	-	0	858	Miscoded
Internal - Cross Service Recharges	8,250	6.50	0%	8,250	8,257	Correct
Supplies & Services - Suspense - Purchase Card	0	179.49	-	0	179	Miscoded
Govt Grant - Inside AEF - DEFRA - Other	-190,604	78,719.00	-41%	-78,719	0	Missing FiPL grant. Assumed it will be found and correctly coded
Contributions - Other Local Authorities	-12,762		0%	-12,762	-12,762	Correct
Contributions - Other	-24,409	-21,613.00	89%	-9,000	-30,613	Correct

Fees & Charges - Other Fees & Charges Income	-300	142,953.35	47651%	-47,651	-190,604	Miscoded Defra interim grant.
Internal - Cross Directorate Recharges	-12,106		0%	-50,207	-50,207	HPC recharge to cover Project Manager costs & MSS (Heritage) recharge
Sub Total	56,471	168,118.84	298%	-85,370	82,749	
Somerset Council Contribution	-46,200				-46,200	
Recharges (apprentice levy)	-900				-900	
<i>Balance</i>	<i>9,371</i>				<i>35,649</i>	

Landscape Projects

Cost Code: G003034 (Landscape Projects Quantock)	Budget	Actual Spend	%	Committed spend	Forecast overrun	Comments
Salaries - Basic Pay	82,150	30,280		8,990	39,270	Project Manager miscode to core.
NI	6,833	2,685		810	3,495	
Pension - Local Gov	14,869	6,086		1,807	7,893	
Training - Course Fees	1,000	1,050		0	1,050	
Employees Other - Apprenticeship Levy	219	0		200	200	
Public Transport - Travel Fares	700	0		100	100	
Car Allowances - Vehicle Mileage Allowance	0	0		200	200	
Equip Furn Mat - Equipment	410	0		200	200	
Fees & Hired - Fees & Hired	0	2,159		0	2,159	FiPL – soils training
Sup & Serv Oth - Other Supplies & Services	131,520	0		4,980.00	4,980	
Grants - Grants Project Work	212,501	13,750		184,683.00	198,433	Grants (FiPL & GQLDF)
Govt Grant - Inside AEF - DEFRA - Other	-250,980	0		-250,980.00	-250,980	FiPL grant
Internal - Cross Directorate Recharges	-199,203	0	-	-7,000	-7,000	Recharge HPC (GQLDF)
Sub Total	19	56,010	-	-56,010	0	

Projects

Cost Code: G002358 (Projects Quantocks)	Budget	Actual Spend	%	Committed spend	Forecast overrun	Comments
Salaries - Basic Pay - Instructors		3,900	-	0	3,900	Project spend from last year
NI - Instructors		433	-	0	434	Project spend from last year
Grants - Grants Project Work		23,358	-	-23,359	0	Miscoded FiPL spend. Need to be moved G003034
Fees & Hired - Fees & Hired	30,000		0%	4,500	4,500	Expected spend CAG
Fees & Hired - Prof/Tech Serv Curric	2,400		0%	0	0	
Sup & Serv Oth - Other Supplies & Services		2,527	-	0	2,527	Correct
Contributions - Other	-30,000		0%	-4,500	-4,500	CAG grant (Defra)
Internal - Cross Directorate Recharges				-13,300	-13,300	ILPD Funding from last year
Fees & Charges - Other Fees & Charges Income	-50,400		0%	0	0	
Sub Total	0	30,219.38	-	-36,659	-6,440	

Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme

Cost Code: G002362 (Heritage Lottery Funding)	Budget	Actual Spend	%	Committed Spend	Forecast outrun	Comments
Salaries - Basic Pay	117,100	92,418	79%		152,418	
NI	10,500	8,839	84%		8,839	
Pension - Local Gov	21,200	18,576	88%		18,576	
Training - Course Fees	2,000	6,882	344%		22,862	
Employees Other - Apprenticeship Levy		272	-		272	
Public Transport - Travel Fares	1,000	586	59%		586	
Car Allowances - Vehicle Mileage Allowance	2,000	762	38%		762	
Equip Furn Mat - Equipment	10,000	107,078	1071%		199,745	
Equip Furn Mat - Equipment - Cleaning & Materials		10	-		10	
Equip Furn Mat - Materials - Horticultural Supplies		350	-		350	
Catering - Hospitality	3,000	1,498	50%		1,498	
Books and Publications		92	-		92	
Postage	100	0	0%		0	
Stationery	200	29	14%		29	
Printing		58	-		58	
Reprographics		59	-		59	
Publicity & Promotions	1,000	10	1%		10	
Communications - Telephones - Calls	400	0	0%		0	
Communications - Telephones - Mobiles	600	0	0%		0	
Computing Costs - ICT - Mobile Phones		25	-		25	
Grants - Grants Project Work		21,357	-		21,357	
Fees & Hired - Fees & Hired	275,000	137	0%		137	
Fees & Hired - Prof/Tech Serv Curric	50,000	0	0%		0	
Fees & Hired - Research & Development	100	6,037	6037%		10,895	
General Insurance - General Insurance	100	0	0%		0	
Sup & Serv Oth - Business Support		4,500	-		4,500	
Sup & Serv Oth - Other Supplies & Services		40,433	-		69,551	
Sup & Serv Oth - Conference & Meeting Expenses		27	-		28	
Sup & Serv Oth - Contractors Costs - Not 3rd Party	145,000	0	0%		0	
Internal - Cross Service Recharges		3,873	-		3,873	
Fees & Charges - Other Fees & Charges Income	-509,400	-151,028	30%	-360,000	-511,028	While full NLHF grant is shown likely that will need to do an accrual for the final quarters grant.
Other Income - Other Income		-5,000	-		-5,000	
Internal - Cross Service Recharges	-130,000	0	0%		0	
Sub Total	-100	157,880		-300,000	503	

Land Management

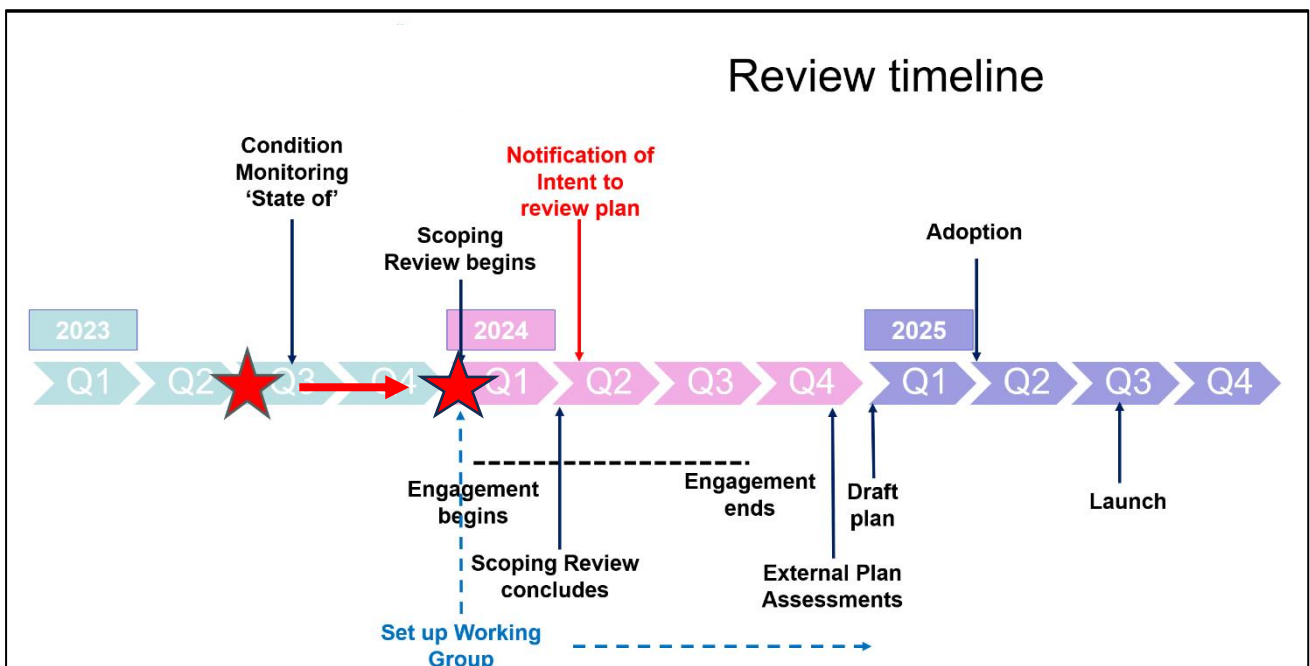
Cost Code: G002361 (Amenity Land Quantocks)	Budget	Actual Spend	%	Committed Spend	Forecast overrun	Comments
Salaries - Basic Pay	18,900	0	0%	0	0	Miscoded budget
NI	4,100	0	0%	0	0	Miscoded budget
Pension - Local Gov	900	0	0%	0	0	Miscoded budget
Equip Furn Mat - Equipment	0	243.42	-	590	1,559	
Sup & Serv Oth - Other Supplies & Services	0	926.49	-	1,000	3,325	Contractor costs
Govt Grant - Inside AEF - DEFRA - Other	0	0		-3,946	-3,946	HLS income
Sub Total	23,900	1,169.91	5%	1,590	-2,356	

Receipts in Advance

Cost Code: G002360 (Quantocks RIA)	Budget	Actual Spend	%	Committed Spend	Forecast overrun	Comments
Govt Grant - Inside AEF - DEFRA - Other	-9,000	-109,994	1222%	0	-109,994	RIA brought forward.
Contributions - Donations	0	-97.50	-	0	-98	donations
Sub Total	-9,000	-110,091	1223%	0	-110,091	

To	Quantock Hills JAC	PAPER B
Subject	Management Plan Review	
Author	Iain Porter, National Landscape Manager	
Date	23/01/2024	

1. Progress. During this quarter, the main workstreams have been the production of the Condition of the Quantock Hills National Landscape, scoping requirements of the updated draft guidance and sourcing data on the likely climate change adaptation plan elements for the reviewed plan. Notification of intent to review has been brought forward and issued in January to avoid the busy period at the end of the financial year. It also allows us to start discussions with Somerset Council on the most appropriate vehicle to have the Management Plan adopted.



2. Management Plan Guidance. Natural England have undertaken consultation on the draft Management Plan guidance issued last September. They expect to produce the final version of the guidance in summer. While not ideal we are able to develop significant parts of the Management Plan and may have to adjust some elements of the plan when the guidance is released.
3. Working Group. For the last three management plan reviews the partnership has used a working group to support the manager. These groups have been 'sounding board' ensuring all elements that should be considered have been and to be able to guide the manager with practical issues such as the correct committee or delegated authority required for plans to be adopted. After consideration and discussion with senior managers at Somerset Council I believe a working group will not add value to the review process this time. The Steering Group has good representation from Somerset Council, and we are linking to other officers within the authority to ensure there is resource available at the right time to input.
4. Condition of the Quantock Hills National Landscape
 - a. The Condition of the National Landscape databook has been completed (attached). This largely contains datasets from the previous versions with a few additions where we have been able to source additional data. There are also some datasets that are no

longer being update as they were in previous management plan review cycles. Where this is the case we have looked to source similar data that allows us to see similar trends e.g. number of units developed.

- b. The databook identifies trends across all four themes of nature, climate, people and place. This along with other strategies / plans, such as the Nature Recovery Plan, will be used to inform the scoping report and priorities for the plan.

Recommendation(s)

- 1) The JAC notes the report.**
- 2) The JAC are recommended to accept the Condition of the Quantock Hills databook to be used to inform the Management Plan review.**

To	Quantock Hills JAC	PAPER C
Subject	Quantock Hills Nature Recovery Plan	
Author	Mark Baker, National Landscape Projects Manager	
Date	23/01/2024	

1. At the October 2023 JAC meeting the members were presented with the State of Nature Report. This report was the first stage of the Nature Recovery Plan. We are very grateful for the feedback from members of the JAC, which we have received through this process of developing our plans for nature recovery and are sure that this contribution will continue.
2. The State of Nature report summarised our work on assessing the most valuable habitats and species within and bordering the Quantock Hills National Landscape. The report also highlighted some of the historical and recent changes that have occurred on the Quantock Hills and the reasons for them.
3. The draft Nature Recovery Plan responds to that information and those trends that were set out in the State of Nature Plan and provide actions against those current pressures. Most of the actions in the plan are for the Partnership to take forward, however they will involve the continuing cooperation and collaboration with the many farmers, land managers and organisations already involved with the Quantock Hills.
4. The wide-ranging proposed actions are set against each of the main categories of priority habitats i.e. Woodland & Woody Habitats, Heathland Habitats and Grassland Habitats. These broad categories cover virtually all the priority habitats. The proposed actions include ways to conserve and enhance the populations of the many iconic species that our habitats support.
5. The draft Nature Recovery Plan sets out the how with the help of farmers and land managers we will reconnect some of the more fragmented habitats with wildlife corridors and other 'buffers' between isolated habitats. In early January, this year the Government announced the enhanced Environmental Land Management Scheme which provides farmers and other land managers with funding (through the Sustainable Farming Incentive and Countryside Stewardship schemes) for activities that improve habitats, wildlife, soil health, flood prevention and many other public benefits. The existing rates paid to farmers have been significantly increased and extended in range. This funding for farmers, along with our bid for Landscape Recovery funding and other funding pots will enable us to collaborate with farmers, land managers and many other partners to create a more connected landscape that is more diverse and also more resilient to the effects of climate change.
6. The draft Nature Recovery Plan will be presented to the JAC at the meeting. Members will be invited to provide comments, queries, suggestions, or feedback by 6 February. All feedback received will be considered and amendments made to the report which will be brought to the April meeting for adoption.

Recommendation(s)

- 1) The JAC notes the report.**
- 2) The JAC provide feedback, comments or suggestions to the Team by 6 February for consideration and inclusion in the final Nature Recovery Plan.**

To	Quantock Hills JAC	PAPER D
Subject	2024/25 Business Plan	
Author	Iain Porter, National Landscape Manager	
Date	23/01/2024	

1. Attached with the papers is the draft business plan for the Quantock Hills National Landscape Partnership for 2024/25. Unlike previous years the Business Plan is outside the Management Plan cycle due to the extension of 12 months. However actions continue to deliver the Management Policies of the plan and priorities of both local and national partners.
2. The JAC will note that reserves are being used to cover overspend in the core / revenue budget. The level of reserves is sufficient to allow this and presents a worst case as a number of cost-recovery elements have not been built in as they are not confirmed.
3. A significant area of work will be the Management Plan review and I expect that as part of this a wider review will need to be undertaken looking at the most appropriate structure of the Partnership and Team to deliver the new Management Plan from April 2025.
4. There are a number of actions which relate to legacy planning of the current projects and programmes due to end in March 2024 – Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme and Farming in Protected Landscape Partnership. This is to ensure learning of these programmes informs the work of the Team and others into the future. With the loss of a significant delivery resource, both in terms of funding and staff, there are a number of external funded pots / programmes being developed. It is hoped that some of these will come online in 2025.
5. Some elements are not finalised yet as we are waiting on external partners, such as whether the partnership project with Somerset Council at New Stowey Farm is going ahead. This will be confirmed as soon as we are able to.

Recommendation(s)

- 1) **The JAC notes the report.**
- 2) **The JAC are invited to provide comment on the Business Plan to the Manager by 9th February prior to final submission to Defra.**