



# Blackdown Hills

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

ANNUAL REVIEW  
2021-2022

# CHAIR'S FOREWORD

So, a year of challenges and opportunities. As chair, I always enjoy working closely with the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) team and I continue to be astounded by their knowledge and professionalism. This is particularly noticeable on the occasions when they have been required to implement major initiatives at incredibly short notice, as experienced for the Farming in Protected Landscapes initiative. I know, from conversations with and feedback from many volunteers and partners, that this is a widely shared view. It is the reason that we are able to continue to attract such incredible support for our work.

2021-2022 was both a time of reflection and an opportunity to make some ambitious plans for the future. At the beginning of the year, the UK's transition from the European Union was complete. We were also still feeling the impact of the Covid pandemic, with a gradual opening up taking place as the year progressed. In June, we celebrated 30 years since the Blackdown Hills was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Landscapes (Glover) Review of 2019 had highlighted several issues of concern and, to address these, we seized the moment to develop a Nature Recovery Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

While the ongoing pandemic meant that some aspects of our work remained constrained, we were able to redirect some of the funds not used (for things like travel and public events) to support another round of our Challenge Fund, this time focussing on climate and nature.

The spring of 2021 saw a return to in-person volunteering activities as Covid restrictions began to be lifted. It was good to see people back outdoors in the company of others getting stuck in with practical tasks.

Somerset Nature Connections' practical six-week courses also got underway, enabling participants to make improvements to their mental and physical wellbeing through connecting with nature. It was clear that these sessions were having an incredibly positive effect on individuals who took part. One new participant remarked that they were not aware that a certain species of insect was found in the UK. By the following week they had bought an identification chart, joined the species conservation society, and were enthusing about seeing the nature around them for the first time.

While we were delighted people were able to get out more, some aspects of our work remained online, allowing us to continue to capitalise on some of the benefits of collaborating remotely.

July 2021 saw the launch of Defra's new Farming in Protected Landscapes scheme providing one-off funding for projects focussing on climate, nature, people, and place. New staff members joined the Blackdown Hills AONB team to help administer the scheme and support local farmers and landowners to access these grants.

This year it was the turn of the Devon's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to host the National Association of AONB's annual conference and with the inevitable challenges of running a conference during a pandemic it was agreed that this should be held online.



One of our contributions was a virtual tour of the River Culm in the form of a series of videos. These enabled us to highlight various aspects of the Connecting the Culm project and provided a valuable online resource.

If you have not experienced the work of the Blackdown Hills AONB team directly, I encourage you to step beyond this review to visit our website where you will find a wealth of material, including films of the projects and the activities we deliver. You will also find details of opportunities for you to get involved

with the AONB's many activities and enjoy at first hand the wonderful landscape of the Blackdown Hills.

[www.blackdownhills.org.uk](http://www.blackdownhills.org.uk)



**BRUCE PAYNE**  
Chair, Blackdown Hills  
AONB Partnership

# NATURE RECOVERY PLAN



James Maben

This year saw us developing a Nature Recovery Delivery Plan for the Blackdown Hills AONB. The plan identified 14 Nature Recovery Areas, each containing land where priority actions can and should be pursued to enable the recovery of habitats, species, and ecosystem functions across the landscape.

We based all but one of the Nature Recovery Areas on river catchment and sub-catchment boundaries, excluding the flat plateau lands. These represent ancient countryside on the valley sides and floodplains, with thick hedges and relatively small field sizes.

The remaining Nature Recovery Area consists of the high plateau land, together with some of the lower peripheral land around the boundaries of the Blackdown Hills AONB. This area, is on the main, agriculturally improved with larger, late-enclosure field patterns.

The nature recovery actions identified for these Nature Recovery Areas vary in their emphasis, from a focus on conserving and expanding existing habitat for biodiversity, to a consideration of opportunities for regenerative farming practices for soil conservation and hydrological management.

We deliberately designed the Nature Recovery Areas to ensure no ‘white space’ within the AONB, following the principle that any land manager can take action to help recover nature and build climate resilience.

Working collaboratively with other AONBs in the South West, we ensured that our Nature Recovery Delivery Plan aligned strategically with other plans and strategies, underpinning it with visualisations, a state of nature report, and a monitoring and evaluation plan.

We identified six champion species on which to focus our action and integrated these into our nature recovery approach, through delivery at scale and applying the Lawton principle: better, bigger, more and joined up (habitats).

- Greater and lesser horseshoe bat; Bechstein’s bat
- Hazel dormouse
- White-clawed crayfish
- Brown hairstreak butterfly
- Springline mire mosaic invertebrates, including marsh fritillary, small pearl-bordered fritillary, double line moth and narrow bordered bee hawkmoth
- Beaver



Neil Hulme

# CLIMATE ACTION PLAN



James Maben

To create a framework for our ongoing work to address the climate emergency, we developed a Climate Action Plan. This took the form of a multi-layered sandwich, with the top-down vision coming from national, county and district plans, the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan at its centre, then the local parish plans providing input from the bottom up.

We began with a review of climate and carbon plans at national, county, and district level, cross referencing these with the Blackdown Hills Management Plan (2019-2024) and looking ahead to the requirements for our next Management Plan. We also incorporated some of the climate related actions from a piece of work conducted by Blackdown Hills Parish Network, working across the 40 component parishes in the AONB.

It was evident from this review that we will need to operate across the different elements of the climate agenda, including land management, transport, and renewables. However, we are likely to have a greater influence over certain areas more than others. So, it is important that we prioritise actions where we can make the most significant impact and those actions that best align with the AONB's purposes and special qualities.

From this Climate Action Plan we created a delivery plan which specified actions that anyone could take, and identifying where people could obtain support to take these actions. The delivery plan also aligns with the business plan produced by the Blackdown Hills Parish Network and has crossovers with the Nature Recovery Delivery Plan for Blackdown Hills AONB.

# TRIPLE AXE (FARMING, NATURE & PEOPLE)



In early 2021, we began work to develop Triple Axe, a partnership programme aimed at tackling some of the significant challenges posed by the River Axe and its catchment.

The River Axe catchment straddles East Devon, West Dorset and South Somerset. The Axe was once one of England's richest and most diverse rivers, hosting salmon and sea trout spawning grounds and many rare species of wildlife. As a result, much of the river was a Special Area of Conservation – the country's highest nature conservation designation. However, in recent years the condition of the river has rapidly declined, and it is now losing the features that made it so special. This is down to increasing levels of phosphate in the river, increasing soil sediments and more extreme flood events eroding the riverbed and banks.

Through the East Devon Catchment Partnership, a group of organisations came together in 2021 representing farming, industry and conservation groups to develop a coordinated plan to reverse this decline. The result is the Triple Axe Action Plan which has these core aims, to:

- Reduce phosphate and suspended sediment levels by 50%
- Use nature-based solutions and restore more natural river function at key sites by raising the riverbed
- Involve local people and communities in developing solutions, for example by reducing pressures on the sewage system.

# DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Landscapes (Glover) Review, published in 2019, included proposals to increase the diversity and inclusion work of all protected landscapes, from governance through to engagement and delivery.

With the support of external contractors, we undertook a piece of work to review these proposals in the context of the Blackdown Hills AONB and its adjoining settlements. Desk research as well as conversations with staff and management group members, partner organisations and other stakeholders enabled us to review the current picture and identify the actions we need to take.

As an organisation centred on the landscape and environment and not primarily focused on diversity, equality, and inclusion, what emerged is a mixed picture, with some key elements missing (for example a strategic framework and sufficient recording of data), but also some positive examples of project work that does reach those who are normally under served.

The recommendations from this piece of work, that we took forward into 2022-2023, were that we need to:

- Have a clear definition and understanding of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion relevant to Blackdown Hills AONB
- Collect data to better understand the current situation
- Start to increase diversity within the management group and the voices reflected in decision making
- Build relationships with other local community organisations and agencies to collaborate on inclusion.



Rob Jones

# PLANNING

We provided responses to three neighbourhood plan consultations; Dalwood, Kilmington and Luppitt, with the Dalwood plan going on to be formally made (adopted) at the start of April 2022. We responded to the Mid Devon Local Plan Issues Paper. We also submitted comments during statutory consultation on the A358 Ilminster to M5 National Infrastructure Project.

Over the course of the year, we considered over 200 planning applications – a significantly higher number than in previous years. After assessment, we provided detailed advice and comments in response to 82 of them.

We also dealt with consultations and enquiries for pre-application planning advice, felling licences and tree planting, road safety schemes, rights of way and access.

# NATIONAL GRID LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE

## **November 2019 – April 2026**

The Landscape Enhancement Initiative provides grant funding for local visual improvement and landscape enhancement schemes in 30 of the English and Welsh AONBs and National Parks crossed by National Grid electricity transmission lines.

We have two projects funded by the Landscape Enhancement Initiative; Enhancing the Hills (running to November 2024) and Hillforts of the Hills, approved in April 2021.

This year, the focus of the Enhancing the Hills project was on grassland enhancement on three holdings in the vicinity of the electricity lines to create five hectares of species-rich hay meadow.

In partnership with Historic England, Hillforts of the Hills is intended to protect the archaeological interest and improve management at Membury Castle and Stockland Great Camp Scheduled Monuments through the removal of invasive scrub and selective felling. Preparatory work took place this year, including ecological surveys and community engagement.

[www.blackdownhills.org.uk/nationalgrid](http://www.blackdownhills.org.uk/nationalgrid)

# CELEBRATING BLACKDOWN HILLS AONB'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY

To mark the 30th anniversary of the designation of the Blackdown Hills as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty we published a series of activity sheets suggesting 30 ways to experience the Blackdown Hills. Their purpose was to provide visitors with mindful and creative ways to explore the Blackdown Hills, under the themes of zooming in, expansive views, hillforts, woods, and rivers. We promoted these via our social media channels, newsletter and via partner activities, and we also published blogs focussing on the Blackdown Hills past and present.

[www.blackdownhills.org.uk/30ways](http://www.blackdownhills.org.uk/30ways)



# FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

In July 2021, Farming in Protected Landscapes was launched – a national programme administered by National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in England. Through the programme, Defra has been providing funding for one-off projects that support nature recovery, tackle climate change, provide opportunities for people to discover nature, or support sustainable farm businesses.

In the Blackdown Hills, Farming in Protected Landscapes is proving to be a valuable tool in addressing a range of environmental opportunities and issues which other grant support schemes cannot reach. It is a locally administered scheme, flexible, and responsive to the needs of the local area.

During the first year of Farming in Protected Landscapes in the Blackdown Hills, we supported 24 projects across the AONB, to the tune of £138,000, covering such varied activities as looking after important springline mires, researching soil carbon, planting new hedges and laying existing ones, creating new orchards, acquiring a wildflower seed harvester, and supporting farm-based education projects.

Our local assessment panel includes representatives from three local farm businesses, members of the Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership Management Group, Natural England, NFU (National Farmers Union), Somerset Wildlife Trust, Devon Wildlife Trust, Historic England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, and the Rural Payments Agency.

# 24

Projects supported

# 24

Projects completed

# 20

Hectares of land supported

## 23 projects delivering for nature

*Including:*

- 250 metres of hedgerows planted
- 630 metres of hedgerow laid
- 1.7 hectares of positive management on SSSIs
- 16.6 hectares of habitat improvement for biodiversity
- 802 metres of improved habitat connectivity

Other nature outcomes:

Wildflower seed harvester, mini flail and timber trailer acquired, wildflower seed cleaning equipment acquired, winter housing for conservation grazing cattle herd built, cattle handling facility built, and 5 wildlife pond construction plans drawn up.

## 18 projects delivering for place

### *Including:*

- 1 historic feature explored and conserved
- 5 projects increasing the resilience of nature-friendly sustainable farm businesses, contributing to a more prosperous local economy

### Other place outcomes:

Two farm transformation plans drawn up based on holistic assessments of environmental and economic aspects of farm businesses, one fruit tree nursery supported to raise more orchard trees for planting with the AONB.

## 17 projects delivering for climate

### *Including:*

- 12.2 hectares of woodland, orchard or parkland creation
- 3 projects to improve the soil quality
- 3 projects helping to reduce flood risk

### Other climate outcomes:

Research study into the soil carbon storage capacity of Blackdown Hills soil and vegetation types.

## 5 projects delivering for people

### *Including:*

- 3 projects delivering educational visits
- 3 projects to support greater public engagement in land management

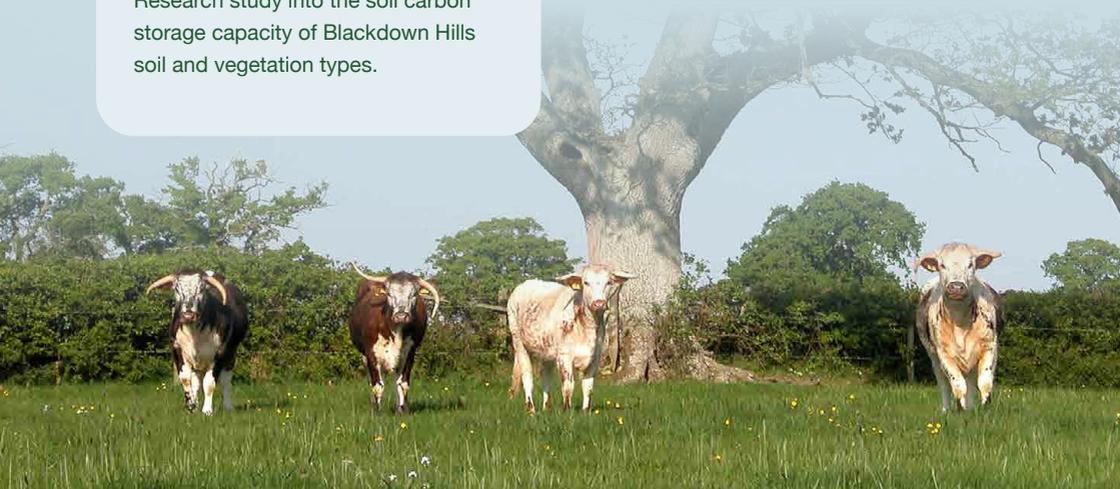
### Other people outcomes:

Acquisition of equipment to enable visits to schools to demonstrate aspects of farming, and to the farm to enable more school visits.

## We have been able to do this by working with a range of partners

### *Including:*

- 24 farmers
- 8 farmers who have not engaged with agri-environment schemes before
- 15 farmers with whom the Blackdown Hills AONB has not previously engaged
- 2 farm clusters supported

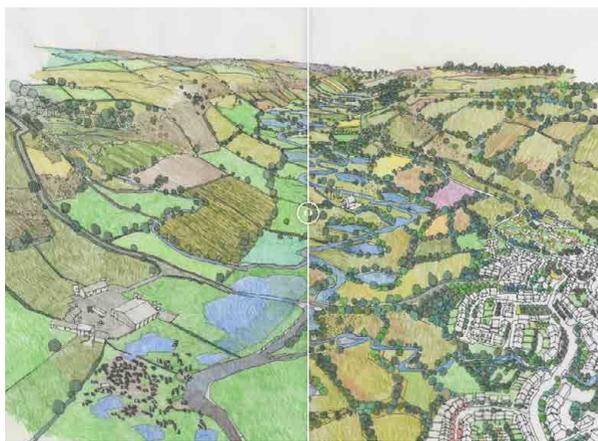


# CONNECTING THE CULM

Exciting, complex, challenging and inspiring were just some of the words used to describe the Connecting the Culm project in a year that saw significant progress both on the ground, and towards future planning through creation of a Blueprint for the River Culm action plan.

We ran a series of well-attended online events provided audiences with stimulating talks on climate resilience, understanding soils, and some of the nature-based solutions used at Killerton. Through online working groups with professional stakeholders, catchment visioning workshops, community surveys and two open forums, we brought people together to co-create a vision for the River Culm in 2050:

*“The River Culm will be celebrated as a lifeline that connects people with each other and with nature. Land across the catchment will be managed to protect and enhance the River, whilst sustaining people’s livelihoods. Through the seasons and as the climate changes, the River Culm will have space to flow naturally and safely. The water will run clear, wildlife will flourish, and people will easily access and enjoy all these benefits.”*



Local artist Richard Carman created a series of visualisations that imagined positive and negative versions of the catchment in 2050. An interactive slider on the website allowed viewers to compare the present catchment with the ideal, climate-resilient version of the future.

A group of volunteers set up the Culm Himalayan Balsam Action Group (HBAG) and quickly set to work pulling up this invasive plant and making surveys of the

riverbanks and tributaries. Meanwhile more volunteers contributed to the Connecting the Culm project’s evidence base through Westcountry Rivers Trust’s Citizen Science Investigations, Riverfly and Devon Biodiversity Records Centre vegetation monitoring training.

We introduced additional river monitoring with the deployment of the Culm sonde – a complex piece of equipment providing real time data on water quality. Although the Co-Adapt project, under which Connecting the Culm sits, is primarily focused on climate change and resilience to flooding and drought, water quality is an issue of great concern to the local community. It generated significant interest and further work which was incorporated into the Blueprint for the River Culm.



With the relaxation of Covid restrictions the Connecting the Culm team were delighted to get out over the summer to engage with hundreds of people through the Festival of the Culm, which included displays and activities at Honiton, Cullompton and Uffculme shows. We also delivered a storytelling series via the Connecting the Culm website and an education programme involving more than 300 primary school pupils and teachers who participated in river focused sessions in outdoor classrooms and on field trips.

Finally, farmers and landowners met to explore opportunities for nature-based solutions and more than 20 landowners participated in co-designing plans for nature-based solutions on their land. These interventions include scrapes and ponds, leaky woody dams, and tree planting, all intended to slow the flow of water and improve the ability of the land and soils to function as a useful sponge. Priority habitats were surveyed in advance and practical work got underway when weather conditions and labour availability permitted. It was exciting to see the changes after rainfall events and watch new habitats become established.

The Connecting the Culm project is part of Co-Adapt, an international programme collaborating with partners in France, Belgium and the Netherlands to assess ways of making river catchments more resilient to the impacts of climate change (primarily flooding and drought). Co-Adapt is funded in part by the European Union's Interreg 2 Seas programme.

[www.connectingtheculm.com](http://www.connectingtheculm.com)



# SOMERSET NATURE CONNECTIONS



Somerset Nature Connections is a three-year partnership project between Somerset Wildlife Trust (the lead partner) and the three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Somerset – Blackdown Hills AONB, Quantock Hills AONB and Mendip Hills AONB. The project aims to help individuals and groups to connect with nature to benefit their physical and mental health, to reduce some of the barriers which prevent people from accessing natural spaces, and to develop a network of skilled volunteers who can support communities for the longer term.

In the spring of 2021, Somerset Nature Connections project officers delivered a six-week online course with the Somerset Recovery College and, in June, embarked on delivering the first face-to-face outdoor sessions in the AONBs.

The practical outdoor sessions took place once a week in blocks of six weeks. They were based around the 'five pathways to nature connectedness' developed by the University of Derby: contact (senses), beauty, emotion, compassion and meaning. Sessions included wellbeing interventions such as nature-based mindfulness, as well as practical conservation, nature exploration, wildlife identification, outdoor art and bushcraft.

The Blackdown Hills sessions took place at Park Farm near Wellington and Newhaven Coppice, Whitestaunton. Activities included making bird boxes and feeders, identifying birds and trees, learning ancient building techniques, and even wassailing! There were practical tasks, including repairing a bridge, spreading woodchips on paths and orchard pruning. Somerset Film led a photography workshop exploring nature, natural craft and mindfulness.

Somerset Nature Connections is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, Hinkley Point C Community Impact Mitigation Fund, Somerset County Council Public Health and Improving Lives to Prevent Demand Fund, Discovery Community Fund, South Somerset District Council and St James Foundation. The funders agreed to extend the project to October 2023, reflecting delays at the start due to the pandemic.

[www.blackdownhills.org.uk/snc](http://www.blackdownhills.org.uk/snc)

# VOLUNTEERING

From March to May, 20 volunteers surveyed ten Forestry England sites looking for basking adders over three visits, their findings reported to the Somerset Reptile and Amphibian Group and the Forestry England ecologist.

Volunteers took part in our work with Wild Planet Trust, Bristol Zoological Society, Nicky Green Associates, and the Environment Agency to release a dozen endangered white-clawed crayfish into an 'ark site' in the Blackdown Hills, providing a place of safety where the crustaceans could breed. A group of volunteers participated in regular sessions to remove pond weed from a site near Hemyock, in preparation for the release of the captive-bred crayfish.

We facilitated monthly health walks around Chard Reservoir for members of Chard WATCH group, and guided walks with Somerset Recovery College at various sites in the Blackdown Hills.

Thanks to Devon Wildlife Trust, we were able to run some public training sessions at Otterhead Lakes on how to spot signs of beavers. These sessions were very well attended with 40 people over two days learning a huge amount. Through such training Devon Wildlife Trust hope to gain feedback from members of the public to help them better understand how beavers are spreading through the landscape.

In partnership with Forestry England, British Trust for Ornithology and Somerset Ornithological Society we organised nightjar surveys at locations across the northern Blackdown Hills. 30 volunteers took part in online training sessions then undertook surveys at dawn and dusk over June and July.

Volunteers worked with Devon County Council's historic environment team on their monument management scheme at Hembury Hillfort and Dunkeswell Abbey to undertake scrub and sapling clearance on these protected sites.

In August, we held a training session introducing participants to butterflies on the Blackdown Hills at Mount Fancy Butterfly Conservation reserve. The session was led by the Mount Fancy wardens and funded by the Levels Up project.

To thank our volunteers and give the groups a chance to meet with each other, we held a celebration picnic at Wellington Monument at the end of September.

[www.blackdownhills.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.blackdownhills.org.uk/volunteering)



# CHALLENGE FUND AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Following the success of the Challenge Fund in the previous year, we launched a new Challenge Fund for 2021-2022, this time with a focus on climate and nature. Due to the Covid pandemic there were funds – for example for events and travel – that we no longer needed. The Challenge Fund allowed us to redirect these funds to local communities. Combined with the annual Sustainable Development Fund, this provided £27,930 towards community projects, with match funding of £36,134 levered in cash and in kind.

[www.blackdownhills.org.uk/sdf](http://www.blackdownhills.org.uk/sdf)

## **Building a sustainable future for Dunkeswell Abbey Church**

Sustainable Development Fund grant: £1,813 | Total project cost: £7,309.

Dunkeswell Abbey Church is grade II listed and on Historic England's heritage at risk register. This unique building is a valuable community asset and has the potential to engage new audiences alongside the nationally important medieval ruins of Dunkeswell Abbey. The grant provided the trustees of Dunkeswell Abbey Church with specialist expertise and equipment to obtain crucial visitor data to help them seek significant additional funding towards the restoration of the building.



## **Facilities for visitors at Little Bishops Organics**

Sustainable Development Fund grant: £2,000 | Total project cost: £4,103.

Little Bishops Organics is a small-scale organic market garden that grows a wide range of vegetables. Based on a family farm it has a short supply chain and sells everything locally. This grant enabled the construction of a compost toilet, which will mean that Little Bishops Organics are now able to host school visits and local people, including the farm's box scheme members, can visit to see where their food is grown, learn how it is produced, and develop a connection to the land.

## **Neroche Woodlanders climate, leadership and skills training**

Challenge Fund grant: £5,000 | Total project cost: £9,875.

Neroche Woodlanders spent the autumn and winter of 2021-2022 developing a new approach to nature-based volunteering with a focus on climate. This was achieved through work parties on key wildlife sites, along with informal training and some certificated courses. They also increased their efforts to engage further volunteers through a programme of recruitment. There were two training sessions for volunteers on the environmental context of volunteering, and three sessions on how volunteers can collaborate with one another to meet the consequences of the climate crisis.

### **Chardstock biodiversity audit**

Challenge Fund grant: £2,054 | Total project cost: £3,675.



Chardstock Eco Group, a local community group which consists of over 25 active volunteers, undertook this project. Part of the project was to provide baseline biodiversity information, against which to measure future actions to improve and regenerate nature and land use in the parish of Chardstock and the Kit Brook catchment. The group sought to engage and involve local people in citizen science

to collect, interpret and understand the biodiversity data. The information collected will contribute to a long-term nature regeneration programme for the parish and the Kit Brook catchment.

### **River water quality monitoring and invertebrate sampling**

Challenge Fund grant: £4,709 | Total project cost: £14,341.

This project put in place comprehensive water quality monitoring and invertebrate sampling of the Umborne Brook, Corry Brook, River Yarty, All Saints Stream, and Kit Brook. A group of volunteers received training and equipment so that they could continue monitoring the rivers over the longer term, providing a continually updated database of the state of the water and river environment.

### **Task force on the upper River Tale**

Challenge Fund grant: £4,390 | Total project cost: £5,790.

This project, led by Broadhembury Parish Council, increased awareness of the biodiversity on and around the upper River Tale. Local volunteers, particularly people of school age, took part in recording the species along the river to create a baseline to measure habitat changes in future. In doing so they also improved their skills in flora and fauna identification. The local school started a tree nursery with the children raising tree species from seed to offer landowners for planting near the river.

### **Otterhead Lakes micro hydro turbine**

Challenge Fund grant £3,000 | Total project cost £6,000.

Otterhead Lakes is a nature reserve run by local volunteers. The one remaining building, the coach house, is occupied by a forest school, which provides support to children with emotional and educational needs. The work funded by the grant formed part of a larger (£41K) project to provide electricity to the coach house by means of a micro hydro turbine. The funding contributed to the repair and reuse an ancient watercourse fed from a spring.

### **Trimplants Eco Hub biochar production**

Challenge Fund grant £4,964 | Total project cost £12,971.

This project involved volunteers in making charcoal and biochar from wood extracted from a nearby managed woodland using a device called a retort. Biochar is an organic material which has been carbonised under high temperatures in the presence of little or no oxygen. It can be used as a rich soil improver and is a method of carbon sequestration (removing carbon from the atmosphere). The group is also working on research into Biochar in partnership with Exeter and Plymouth universities.

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

AONB Income	Cost (£)
Income brought forward from 2020/21	45,640
Defra	198,667
Devon County Council	10,500
Somerset County Council	5,122
Mid Devon District Council	8,500
East Devon District Council	9,323
South Somerset District Council	6,000
Somerset West and Taunton Council	10,000
Other income	28,587
Income carried forward to 2022/23*	-37,820
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>284,519</b>

\* Monies received for Blackdown Hills AONB ongoing projects.

AONB Expenditure	Cost (£)
Staffing	151,605
Office costs	6,677
Partnership costs	17,049
Partnership projects	81,258
Sustainable Development & Challenge Fund	27,930
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>284,519</b>

Projects (Sustainable Development Fund and Challenge Fund grants)	Cost (£)
Dunkeswell Abbey Church Trust - Building a sustainable future for Dunkeswell Abbey	1,813
Little Bishops Organics - Everybody needs to go sometime	2,000
Trimplants - Eco hub	4,964
Neroche Woodlanders - Nature based volunteering, climate, leadership & skills training	5,000
Otterhead Trust - Micro hydro	3,000
Chardstock Eco Group - Chardstock biodiversity audit	2,054
Axe Vale Rivers Association - Water quality monitoring & invertebrate sampling	4,709
Broadhembury Parish Council - Task force on the Upper Tale	4,390
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,930</b>

External Project Income	Cost (£)
Enhancing the Hills – National Grid	2,664
Hillforts of the Hills - National Grid	94,025
Triple Axe Farming Advice Feasibility Study - WEIF	24,400
Farming in Protected Landscapes	201,733
Connecting the Culm – Interreg 2 Seas	257,927
<b>Total external project income</b>	<b>580,749</b>
<b>Carried forward from 2020/21</b>	
Enhancing the Hills – National Grid	7,657
Hillforts of the Hills - National Grid	8,000
<b>Total (income and carried forward)</b>	<b>596,406</b>

External Project Expenditure	Cost (£)
Enhancing the Hills – National Grid	4,130
Hillforts of the Hills - National Grid	1,925
Triple Axe Farming Advice Study - WEIF	24,400
Farming in Protected Landscapes	194,579
Connecting the Culm – Interreg 2 Seas	242,927
<b>Total External Project Expenditure</b>	<b>467,961</b>
<b>Carried forward to 2022/23</b>	
Enhancing the Hills – National Grid	6,191
Hillforts of the Hills - National Grid	100,100
Farming in Protected Landscapes	7,154
Connecting the Culm – Interreg 2 Seas	15,000
<b>Total (expenditure and carried forward)</b>	<b>596,406</b>

# HOW TO CONTACT US

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Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is funded by Defra, Devon and Somerset County Councils, as well as East Devon, Mid Devon, Somerset West and Taunton, and South Somerset District Councils.

We would also like to thank the many other organisations that have supported the projects that we lead or are a key partner in. In 2021/22 we received additional project funding from EU Interreg 2 Seas, Water Environment Grant (Rural Development Programme for England), Environment Agency, Natural England, Landscape Enhancement Initiative (National Grid), Public Health Somerset, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Local Levy (South West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee), National Association for AONBs, Devon Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Historic England, local parish councils and others.

Front cover image: Tim Youngs



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HILLS**  
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