



Lynch Lane in the snow. © AONB Unit Photographer John Brownscombe

## Chairman's Welcome

This issue of the newsletter is about living and working in the AONB. Our landscapes have been shaped, over the many centuries, by local people who have lived by and worked on the land. Nowadays there are considerably less people working in land-based industries and so many of the people living in the rural settlements derive their living outside of the AONB. Because of this, it is important that those who live in the villages and settlements understand the AONB and the part that rural industries and tourism have on keeping the AONB a vibrant and living environment. What better place can there be than our village schools for putting this message across. In this newsletter we shall look at the new Sustainable Development Fund, and how it has helped the children at Brighstone School discover more about the landscape around them. We shall also look at 'Island Waste' and the importance of their work in the environment.

Whether you live in the AONB or enjoy what it has to offer, I am sure you will find something here to interest you.

**Tony Tutton** *Chairman,  
Isle of Wight AONB Partnership Steering  
Committee* ■

**T**HE end of the calendar year is once again upon us and thoughts turn to what has passed and what is yet to come, perhaps reminding us that change is always around us and has, through the years, fashioned the special character of the Island's finest landscapes.

Even the constancy of the Island's spectacular chalk downland has gone through many changes, from being wooded to being cleared for grazing and with the advent of mechanised farming techniques ploughed for arable cultivation.

Change can come in a variety of forms, environmental, social or economic. It can be planned and influenced through the political process by policy, plans and strategies, or be the result of natural processes such as coastal erosion (which in itself is influenced by the actions of people). In order to manage this change it is important for us to know the basis for the environmental value of the area, whilst also establishing the social and economic profile of its community.

In 2006 we expect to see a number of changes that will influence the future of the Island's finest landscapes. Locally there will be the formulation of the 'Island Plan', the Isle of Wight Council's Local Development Framework, which will in 2007 replace the current Unitary Development Plan as the document that guides the consideration of development on the Isle of Wight. At the same time the Isle of Wight Council's Local Transport Plan will be finalised, setting out how the Island will seek to manage its transport needs and highway infrastructure.

The Isle of Wight Council will also be continuing to implement its change management plan 'Aim High' reflecting its new priorities.

Nationally, there will be the creation of Natural England as the government body responsible for people, places and nature. This new organisation will replace the Land Access and Recreation division of the Countryside Agency (which includes the remit for National Parks and AONBs), English Nature and the Rural Development Service of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), and is expected to be established in October.

The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership continues to have a role working with organisations to influence these processes, as all will have an impact upon how we work to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the AONB for Islanders, our visitors and future generations. 2006 is set to be a year of many opportunities and challenges.

Following the theme of the economy and community of the AONB, in this edition of our newsletter the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership will be looking at 'Living and Working' in the AONB.

**John Brownscombe**  
*Isle of Wight AONB Lead Officer* ■



The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership is a member of the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

# Zummet vor Nippers!!!

## This Ghostly Isle – Hauntings in the AONB



**WE'VE all heard scary stories about ghosts, ghouls, and things that go bump in the night, but did you know that thousands of ghosts, spirits, poltergeists and apparitions haunt the Isle of Wight? It is recognised as the world's most haunted Island, thought to be due to powerful unseen energy or "ley lines" running under the Island.**

There are many different kinds of ghost from historical, usually associated with castles and ancient buildings to poltergeists, whose appearance is often centred round a household. They can also range from benign kindly apparitions to malevolent spirits spreading fear and terror. Almost anyone can see ghosts, although children and animals can be particularly psychic.

*"All houses in which men have lived and died Are haunted houses: through open doors The harmless phantoms on their errands glide With feet that make no sound upon the floors"*  
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

**Appuldurcombe** - There have been sightings of several ghosts within the ruins of the Manor, including monks in their brown habits, phantom carriages and

unseen hands leaping through the visitors book.

**Arreton** - The Manor was the site of a brutal family murder, with a young girl pushed to her death from a window. A small figure wearing a blue dress has often been seen crying out for her mother.

**Bouldnor** - During the 16th century, a Spanish ship called the Santa Lucia was wrecked in a storm along the coast. The ghostly form of a three masted ship can sometimes be seen with its lanterns lit, coming close in to the shore as if running aground.

**Brighstone** - Old Rock Cottage has been the scene of many ghostly appearances over the years, including a lady in old-fashioned clothes, and a Roman centurion. The latter may be connected to the fact that blocks from a nearby villa were used to build the cottage.

**Chale** - The Norman church of St Andrew appears to have been the scene of a slippage in time. Mourners have been seen in 18th century clothes, attending a phantom funeral in the graveyard.

**Dimbola** - It is said the spirit of Julia Margaret Cameron still lives on at the Lodge. She has often been seen in her high-necked dark taffeta gown, which rustles as she moves around the rooms of her old home.

**Downend** - The body of an evil woodcutter who killed his young grandson was returned after execution to hang on the local gibbet. His terrifying spirit still roams

the area carrying a large axe, staring through dark sockets that used to be eyes.

**Farringford** - Tales are told of a phantom horse and carriage driving to the house. In 1946 a local man heard horses hooves galloping in the distance, and although watching closely could see nothing. The ghostly sound went right past him, then gradually faded away.

**Freshwater** - Visitors to the Albion Hotel have heard heart-rending sounds of a woman in distress. It is possible this is the spirit of a young woman who drowned with her baby in the sea, and runs weeping along the beach calling for her lost child.

**Gatcombe** - There is an ancient tale of the church in Gatcombe, about the little dog, which rests at the feet of a crusader. He is believed to come to life on Midsummer Eve, dancing on his hind legs along the path to the church. His fairy friends then listen until dawn to tales of his adventures.

**Mottistone** - The Longstone is a place of power, long associated with the supernatural. It has seen use by Saxons, Celts and Romans, with the latter using the stones to sacrifice bulls in worshipping their god Mithras. Witchcraft and pagan practices are still associated with the site.

**Needles** - Soldiers wearing Great War uniforms have been seen running down the long tunnel to the searchlight post above the rocks. There have also been reports of an old camouflaged car driving with no lights down the narrow roadway.

**Newchurch** - People often gather on New Years Eve to see if the long vanished manor house of Knighton Gorges will re-appear at midnight. The house has a bloodthirsty history of madness, evil, murder and suicide, and even the stone creatures, which used to adorn the gateposts, re-appear from time to time.

**Undercliff** - A stable hand, who worked at the St Lawrence Inn in Victorian times, had an unhappy affair with a local woman. He threw himself down the well, and his despairing soul still haunts the inn.

**Ventnor** - The site of the old hospital has many ghostly visitors, especially near the old operating theatre. Shades of long dead patients, nurses in old-fashioned uniforms, even the old hospital itself has been known now and then to appear out of thin air.

**Yarmouth** - The old tide mill on the Yar was once used as a temporary jail for French prisoners of war, and a student sleeping there overnight suffered a chilling experience. Was it one of the ghostly prisoners who dragged his shackles through the mill and tried to throttle the young man?

*Our thanks go to Gay Baldwin, who kindly gave permission for us to use her fascinating series of ghost books for our research.*

*You can also find more ghostly goings-on via the website [www.ghost-island.co.uk](http://www.ghost-island.co.uk)* ■

## Wordsearch

Can you find the place names of these spooky tales in our Wordsearch

APPULDURCOMBE  
ARRETON  
BOULDNOR  
BRIGHSTONE

CHALE  
DIMBOLA  
DOWNEND  
FARRINGFORD

FRESHWATER  
GATCOMBE  
MOTTISTONE  
NEEDLES

NEWCHURCH  
UNDERCLIFF  
VENTNOR  
YARMOUTH

D	U	Y	E	B	C	E	B	M	O	C	R	U	D	L	U	P	P	A	D
O	Z	Q	P	N	S	U	T	V	C	F	M	H	K	L	T	X	S	T	Q
W	A	F	B	Z	O	X	Y	B	O	U	L	D	N	O	R	K	N	P	S
N	P	R	A	Q	C	T	A	Z	L	M	U	G	H	K	P	S	E	T	R
E	B	F	G	R	D	Y	S	C	M	N	E	L	A	H	C	P	W	D	O
N	F	G	H	T	R	M	R	H	K	W	Y	P	Q	F	H	G	C	T	N
D	Q	O	S	F	T	I	W	Y	G	X	D	F	L	M	T	S	H	V	T
F	G	M	L	R	N	K	N	U	T	I	S	I	O	E	A	K	U	Y	N
X	E	F	T	E	V	F	T	G	E	H	R	J	L	F	L	P	R	S	E
C	D	F	G	S	I	J	P	S	F	R	Z	B	V	J	O	B	C	Y	V
F	T	I	S	H	P	H	K	J	D	O	F	X	B	I	B	D	H	F	Z
D	E	L	X	W	B	T	L	N	O	E	R	P	N	T	M	S	U	C	Y
Y	B	C	K	A	O	U	R	T	G	N	H	D	J	O	I	Q	S	N	D
G	Z	R	X	T	P	O	S	J	L	R	P	Z	F	J	D	U	P	O	A
C	O	E	D	E	S	M	R	Q	X	B	Y	P	R	K	M	D	G	T	H
H	B	D	N	R	C	R	F	K	E	B	M	O	C	T	A	G	Q	E	X
A	C	N	U	V	T	A	O	B	C	A	D	M	N	X	Q	M	Y	R	L
L	A	U	B	S	V	Y	U	Z	X	N	E	E	D	L	E	S	F	R	C
E	D	G	H	E	I	J	K	M	N	P	R	T	S	B	D	F	G	A	U
Z	X	E	N	O	T	S	I	T	T	O	M	Y	J	K	Q	W	Y	U	B

# AONB Discovery

AS AN original approach to providing an educational resource for schools, the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership recently piloted a project entitled 'AONB Discovery' at Brighstone CE Primary School

Funded through grants from Leader Lite and the AONB Sustainable Development Fund, this ambitious scheme took a cross-curricular approach, looking at the various components that make up the special quality of the AONB landscape and ran for 4 weeks from Monday 26th September 2005 to Friday 21st October 2005.

Each week, each class followed activities relating to one of the four themes: Woodland; Downland & Farmland; Cliffs & the Sea; and Village Life, in turn. The activities were devised to best suit each individual year and subject range, and to be in harmony with the national curriculum. Through field studies and classroom visits by expert bodies such as the National Trust, IW County Geologist & Dinosaur Isle, the County Archaeology Service, County Records Office, Forestry Commission and AONB Unit, the children were introduced to the natural environment that surrounds them and looked at how people have lived, worked and influenced the area to make

up the distinct landscapes that we have today. Along with this, working with a number of professional artists, led by Union Arts, the children explored the more aesthetic aspects and ambience of the landscape using various arts media from beach sculptures, poetry and silk banners; to photography and ephemeral art; from music and movement to willow creatures; and the 're-birth' of the playground tree.

The project was highly successful and,



partners in the project, are running an exhibition of the photography taken by the children at Dimbola Lodge Museum, from 25th November 2005 until 15th January 2006.

As a memento of their participation in the project, each child completed a 'visual diary' and has been given a DVD record of the project, produced by Liz Cooke. And for the School, as an additional aspect of the project, we were able to bring back to life an old tree within the playground, through the hanging of individual copper leaves made by each child on a beautiful metal frame around the tree trunk. It is hoped that adding a leaf to the tree will form a part of each future student's education at Brighstone.

We would like to thank everyone at Brighstone Primary School staff, parents and children and all our project partners for their enthusiasm and commitment towards making 'AONB Discovery' such a success, and we hope to be able to build on this, through work with other Primary Schools within the AONB and to share our positive experience with colleagues in AONBs nationally. ■



although on reflection the project ideally could have run for longer, the children rose to the challenge and excelled producing some exceptional artworks. Much of their work including the willow sculptures, silk banners and copper way-markers can be seen around the school and the village and additionally, Julia Margaret Cameron Trust, as one of the



# Living and Working

**THE LANDSCAPE of the Isle of Wight AONB has been fashioned by the activities of people through history and gives us today a beautiful environment which adds to the quality of life of its community and attracts many visitors to the area.**

The primary purpose of AONB designation is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty. The natural beauty of the area is made up from many things including plants and animals, geology, the historic environment and cultural heritage.

However, we need to take into account the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and the social and economic needs of the local communities when pursuing the primary purpose of the designation. This reflects the fact that Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are living landscapes and are reliant upon the continuation of sensitive land management processes that provide an income for farmers and foresters and conserve and enhance the landscape, natural and historic environments of the area. Their future lies in the understanding of the relationship between people and place that has created their special character, and identifying how to manage change so that this character is retained for future generations, whilst providing for the social and economic needs of the community today. This is known as Sustainable Development and is at the heart of the management of the AONB.

To help us better understand the AONB today, the Countryside Agency commissioned research for all the Protected Landscapes (AONBs and National Parks) of the South East Region to create a social and economic profile for each of these nationally important landscapes. The successful consultants awarded the brief were Terra Consult and they set about collating



© Countryside Agency photographer Joe Low

information from major sources of data such as; Census 2001, Land Registry Average House Prices, Land Use Change Statistics, Defra's Agricultural Census, Rural Services Survey, Average Household Income, Index of Multi Deprivation, Annual Business Inquiry, Inter-Departmental Business Register. The gathering and recording of this type of statistical information is based upon standard administrative geographical areas such as counties, and electoral wards. However, the boundary of the Isle of Wight AONB (and indeed most protected landscape areas) does not conform to these specific administrative areas; often cutting across electoral wards, parish boundaries and in the case of larger protected landscapes across Counties and even Government Regions. By using Ordnance Survey postcode data to establish

the number of postal addresses within the AONB per electoral ward, Terra Consult were able to then interrogate data from the major statistical sources listed above and establish the figures just for the AONB designated area. This for the first time gives us a socio-economic profile for the Isle of Wight AONB.

## Results for the Isle of Wight AONB

### Communities

The Isle of Wight AONB is the second smallest nationally protected landscape within the South East Region, and has a relatively small resident population 10,835 and low population density some 57 people per square kilometre. The majority of the population within the AONB (91%) live in rural areas. The population has a higher proportion of older people and those of retirement age than other Protected Landscape Areas (PLA) within the South East (reflective of the overall Isle of Wight demographic).

A high proportion of householders own their homes outright, and there are fewer than average numbers of people in the AONB with mortgages. Social housing is provided by housing associations.

The housing tenure is mostly detached properties, higher than the regional average, and there is a notable lack of terraced housing. Household occupancy rates are lower than average and 11% of properties have no bath/shower, almost twice the SE



© Countryside Agency photographer Joe Low

PLA average. Some 0.36% of properties have neither a bath/shower nor central heating, a low figure, but still six times the SE PLA average.

Average house prices are the lowest of all the protected landscapes in the region and in fact lower than the overall SE regional average (excluding PLA), but have had an increase of 35% between 2001 & 2003 which is above both the regional and PLA average.

### Economy

Home working and self-employment rates are high in all PLAs, but the highest levels are found within the Isle of Wight AONB. However, we do not have details on the quality of these jobs.

The Isle of Wight AONB has the shortest travel to work distances of any of the SE PLAs, but this is still higher than the SE regional average, perhaps suggesting travel to the mainland for work by AONB residents. Car ownership levels are low when compared to other PLAs.

The rate of employment is 57%, slightly lower than the PLA average of 66% and regional average of 68%. There are a higher percentage of people in part-time employment than full-time employment.

Employment in agriculture and forestry generally makes up only a small percentage of total employment in the Region, and PLAs. However, the Isle of Wight AONB has the highest level of all PLAs, with 2.81% of the working residents employed in this sector, which is double the PLA average.

There are low levels of employment in managerial and professional occupations, higher than average levels of people in skilled trades, but fewer than average people in process, plant and machine operative employment. There are higher numbers of people employed in distribution, hotels and restaurants and more small businesses (micro-business) when compared to other PLAs.

### Land Use

The AONB has no high quality agricultural land (highly productive) and is predominately classed as grade 3 and 4 (46% and 39% respectively) according to the Agricultural Land Classification. Only 5% of the AONB is classified as non-agricultural and 0.2% urban.

Farming is largely composed of holdings growing cereals, or rearing cattle and/or sheep. Farm-gate income is at a similar level to other PLAs, estimated as £7,410,000 in 2003, with around 30% from the sale of combinable crops. A high proportion of the land within the AONB is under Countryside Stewardship schemes (26%), which is well above the regional average (15%).

Although, when compared to other PLAs development pressure within the AONB is lower overall, 77% of residential development that has taken place has been on formerly undeveloped (green field) sites.



© Countryside Agency photographer Joe Low

### Conclusions –

The analysis has shown us that the Isle of Wight AONB has a socio-economic profile that is significantly different to other protected landscapes in the South East Region, reflecting the overall status of the Isle of Wight as a county within the SE Region as a whole. There are issues of rural deprivation, which may be hidden within pockets of affluence, although the overall level of affluence of the Island is lower. Service provision is relatively high in the AONB in terms of access to GP Surgeries, Libraries, Post Offices and Schools, and the agricultural economy compares favourably with other protected landscapes, employing significantly more as a sector. Small businesses are important to the economy of the AONB, but we need to carry out more research to determine their profile and success.

### Challenges for the future of the Isle of Wight AONB –

By having a better understanding of the environmental, social and economic basis of the AONB today, we will be able to formulate policies and approaches that conserve and enhance the area for the future, whilst also providing for the needs of the rural economy and AONB community. Our challenge is to work with all the relevant bodies to ensure we achieve a sustainable solution that respects and enhances the special character of the AONB, continues to support the farming and forestry sector and regenerates its broader economy and community. We will do this by contributing to the formulation of the new Island Plan and by working in partnership with bodies like the Isle of Wight Council, the Isle of Wight Economic Partnership, and the Local Strategic Partnership, to deliver the future vision for the Island as a whole, and for the Island's finest landscapes, designated as AONB. ■

## Development

WE ALL like living on the Island, the beautiful landscape, quiet communities and distinctive buildings. Whilst we enjoy this, we also want to enhance and improve our own little bit of the Island by, for instance, building an extension, creating a driveway, or having somewhere for our horses to graze and exercise. This all leads to development pressure within the AONB. We are charged with the task of evaluating planning applications and working with all organisations and services that work within and affect the AONB.

The Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan and its forthcoming successor the Local Development Framework titled 'The Island Plan' are the Isle of Wight Council's spatial planning policies. All development

requiring planning permission is determined against these policies. All statutory bodies have a 'Duty of Regard' to the purposes of AONBs and therefore the AONB Partnership evaluates and makes comments to the Isle of Wight Council on those applications regarded as having an impact on the AONB. In order to protect and maintain these beautiful areas there is a need for sympathetic design that reflects local character and distinctiveness. This includes looking closely at the use of materials and the quality of development including innovative solutions.

The number of planning applications the Isle of Wight Council receives has increased in recent years and the proportion of planning applications received that are located within the AONB has also increased. The types of planning applications that are received vary from small householder and minor

developments, to changes of use for farm buildings or industrial units to major housing applications.

One of the downsides that the responsibility of conserving and enhancing our finest landscapes has is that at times we are perceived as being disapproving to any types of development. As the new AONB Planning Officer I am keen to try and dispel this perception and work with the Local Authority planners and applicants. By engaging in pre-application discussions we can establish what an applicant wants from their development and talk about the detail of the proposal, assess its impact on the AONB and if possible mitigate for this in order that when a planning application is received we can provide a positive comment to the Planning Authority.

Nicky Rogers  
AONB Planning Officer ■

# Island Waste Services

## Birds, Bats and Biodiversity

By Lynn Clarke, Island Waste Services



Attenuation pond at Standen Heath landfill site courtesy Island Waste Services

THE ISLAND has a strong commitment towards recycling this is reflected by the recent short-listing of the Isle of Wight Council as a beacon authority for its waste and recycling services.

In October 1997 the Isle of Wight Council awarded the contract for the collection, recycling and disposal of all the Island's household waste to Island Waste Services. This was the first integrated waste management contract to be awarded in the UK.

Island Waste Services are responsible for the collection of all the Island's household waste. The company also operate a kerbside recycling service, an organic waste collection and recycling service and have responsibility for the operation of the Island's three Civic Amenity sites and 48 public recycling sites. Underpinning these services is the operation of an In-Vessel composting plant, a Resource Recovery Facility and the Island's only landfill site at Standen Heath.

The overall objective for integrated waste management on the Island embraced by both the Isle of Wight Council and Island Waste Services is to conserve the Island's scarce landfill resources by attaining high recycling and recovery rates and by seeking more sustainable methods of waste management.

During the first 7 years of operation Island Waste Services have consistently over achieved on the set recycling targets and has obtained accreditation to:

**ISO 9001:2000**      **ISO 14001:2004**  
**Investors in People**      **EMAS**

The Environmental standard ISO 14001:2004 ensures that all potential environmental risks ensuing from operations are considered and objectives are set to minimise or eliminate these risks. These objectives are subject to a bi-annual audit.

However this very formal process has, until recently, failed to recognise numerous other activities that have been undertaken by the Company to protect and conserve flora and fauna on all its sites.

### The Landfill Site

Island Waste Services site at Standen Heath covers approximately 22 hectares. This site was the habitat for a diversity of species before human intervention deemed that it should become a landfill site. As current owners of the site Island Waste Services has a responsibility to ensure that these species continue to thrive whilst it is being used as a landfill.



Newt courtesy Island Waste Services

Since the site opened in 1997 the following initiatives have been undertaken:

#### *Wetland site translocation.*

Within the area designated for landfilling an area of flush vegetation was identified as a Site of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC), and as such was deemed too important to lose. Flush is an uncommon habitat type on the Island and this particular site contained several species of local conservation value including:

- Southern Marsh Orchid
- Bog Stitchwort
- Glaucous Sedge
- Common Spotted Orchid
- Marsh Pennywort
- Yellow Sedge
- Bog Pimpernell
- Bulbous Rush

The proposed landfill operation would have resulted in the loss of this area. It was decided that the whole flush should be moved (translocated) with the hope of conserving the species present.

The move took place in 1998 and monitoring of the species on the site commenced in 1999. The site was monitored annually from 1999 until 2004. Some of the key species were lost during this time. Whilst the new site was favourable for most of the conditions it lacked one key characteristic, rabbits! Without grazing by rabbits new species thrived and became dominant. Nevertheless this 5-year analysis of the effects

of translocation is an immensely important ecological study in its own right.

#### **Birds and Bats.**

The site contains an area of woodland called 'Vipers Bog Copse'. A bat survey was undertaken several years ago and two species of bat were detected. Bat boxes were subsequently erected in this area.

Bird boxes were installed in 1999 when a comprehensive bird survey was undertaken on the site.

#### **Red Squirrels**

Vipers Bog Copse contains numerous un-coppiced Hazel trees. Squirrels are often seen in the copse and the large number of discarded hazelnut shells is evidence of their presence. During the last two years extra hazel trees have been planted in the copse.

#### **Monthly monitoring**

A local environmental consultant has been working with Island Waste Services for the last 5 years monitoring the translocated wetland site. Having completed this study the consultant now undertakes a monthly survey of the entire site. This entails monitoring the progress of the numerous trees that have been planted all over the site and keeping a record of all noteworthy plant and animal species observed. During the last year this has included 41 species of birds, 16 species of butterfly and 8 species of dragonfly and damselfly. The monthly reports received are supplemented by observations made by the landfill site manager and supervisor.



Marsh Orchid courtesy Countryside Section, Isle of Wight Council

#### **Forest Road, Downend and Afton**

Bio-diversity action plans exist for all these sites and appropriate management plans are currently being discussed with the environmental consultant. Some very tame Red Squirrels are present at the Forest Road site and feeding boxes have been placed on some trees.

You can find out about the work of Island Waste Services from their website [www.islandwaste.co.uk](http://www.islandwaste.co.uk)

## Isle of Wight AONB Sustainable Development Fund

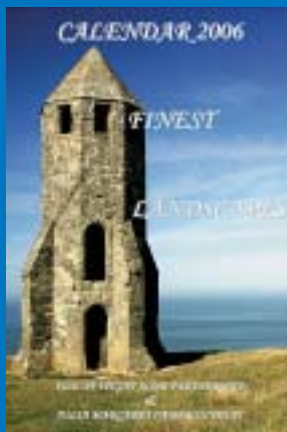
FOLLOWING a similar vein to the schemes currently operating in Britain's National Parks and Welsh AONB's, the Isle of Wight AONB Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) is looking for innovative projects that will bring social, environmental and economic benefits to the Island's Finest Landscapes.

With grants of between £2,000 and £20,000 available to organizations, businesses, community groups or individuals, this scheme aims to develop and test new methods of achieving a more sustainable way of life in this area of great beauty and diversity.

For further information contact Fiona Hanna  
on 01983 823855 or e-mail [Fiona.hanna@wightaonb.org.uk](mailto:Fiona.hanna@wightaonb.org.uk)

### Available Now

Using some of the stunning photographs submitted for our previous years competitions and introduced by Charlie Waite – the AONB Partnership and Julia Margaret Cameron Trust have produced a 2006 Calendar

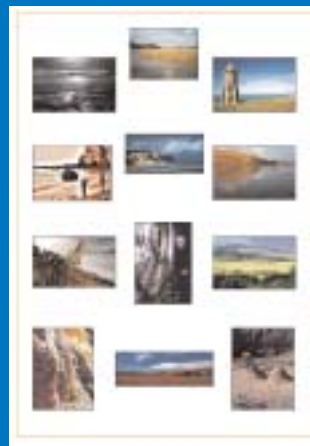


Buy this fantastic calendar for yourself – or how about one for family and friends this Christmas.

Available from the AONB Unit (01983 823855), Dimbola Lodge Museum, Tourist Information Centres, the County Press

Shop, IW Council Customer Services Reception at County Hall and other selected outlets.

**ONLY £4.95!**



## Shorwell Landscape Character Assessment

This fascinating and colourful brochure provides a detailed picture – through words, maps, charts and photographs – of the parish at the beginning of the 21st century. It has been produced in conjunction with a team of local volunteers, and is available from Shorwell Post Office, the County Press Shop or the AONB Unit at a cost of just **£5.00 each**.



*We asked Nicky Rogers, AONB Planning Officer if she had a favourite place on the Island...*

“ THAT’S A DIFFICULT ONE.

For someone who has grown up on the Island, gone away for a couple of years only to be drawn back two and a half years later, to pick just one place is near on impossible. My favourite thing about the Island is the Island, all of it. From growing up in a lovely village and its primary school, to being able to drive around its country lanes and still discover places I didn’t know existed.

Things that stick out most in my mind are two occasions where I felt so lucky to live, grow up and work where I did. There was one morning, on my bike doing my paper round for my Dad’s local paper shop. I came to a spot where the road stretched out ahead of me, it must have been spring or early summer as the array of greens I could see with the sun shining behind me was immense. There are houses along this stretch of road but there was so much green the road was almost illuminated and it was so picturesque, I did pause to take a breath at how wonderful it all looked. The second time was on my journey home from work. I used to work in Freshwater and my route to and from work was via the Military Road from Freshwater Bay to Grange Chine. The steep drive up from the bay led to the top of the chalk cliffs where on a clear day you could see virtually all the coastline all the way to Blackgang. It’s a distracting view that should be enjoyed whilst walking on the cliffs themselves. However, on the commute home from work it was enough just to view the many colours and textures of the cliffs, together with the various and ever changing forms the coast had come to take after wind, rain and waves cause the cliffs to fail. I always felt truly lucky to be able to see this every day.

Following my adventures on the ‘mainland’, (I still smile every time I say that



## My Favourite Place

© Countryside Agency photographer Joe Low

now) where I would spend at least an hour and a half of every day, often, sitting in queues of traffic on the M25 or the A12, or when getting to Chelmsford town centre on a weekend could make the most patient of people frustrated, I have returned and am now directly involved in protecting and

enhancing the very thing I have grown up to love. And whilst I enjoy going back to Essex, London, Suffolk or wherever it may be, I still (and I believe I’m not alone when I say) breathe a sigh of relief when I get on that ferry and arrive back to a very special place. ”



### AONB Unit Team

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