



Bluebells, Alverstone © Countryside Agency/IW AONB Photographer Joe Low

## Draft IW AONB Management Plan – Still time to have your say

**T**he consultation period for the draft IW Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan ends on the 31st of July. The plan, which has been formulated by the IW AONB Partnership on behalf of the IW Council, explores the relationship between people and place that has led to the landscape character of the AONB we treasure today; attempts to set out a vision for the future of the AONB and its conservation and enhancement; highlights current threats and challenges; and gives aspirational policies which aim to influence other statutory and non statutory plans and strategies giving details of how aspirations will be put into action through partnership working. Although the plan is primarily aimed at key stakeholders and organisations with a direct impact on the future of the AONB, the IW AONB Partnership welcomes representations from all who may wish to comment.

Copies of the draft plan can be seen at all Libraries, at Isle of Wight Council Receptions (County Hall and Seaclose Offices), or can be downloaded from our website – [www.wightaonb.org.uk](http://www.wightaonb.org.uk).

For further information please contact the AONB Unit. ■

## Chairman's Welcome

Welcome to issue three of the 'Finest landscapes' newsletter. In this extended edition we explore the importance of the geology of the Isle of Wight to the natural beauty of the Isle of Wight AONB. There are also some ideas on how to enjoy the Island's finest landscapes this summer.

I hope that you enjoy reading the features in this edition.

**Tony Tutton**  
*Chairman*  
IW AONB Partnership  
Steering Committee ■

## Zummet vor Nippers!!!

# EXPLORE THE SHORE!

With Sue Hawley, IW Estuaries Project Officer

Horray!! It's summer which means it's nearly the holidays and time to go to the beach!!

Being on the IoW in the summer is great, there are always plenty of things to see and do, particularly out and about in the AONB and on the beautiful Heritage Coast. Most of us love being near, on or in the sea during the summer and it is also a really good time to explore the seashore. Wherever you are on the coast there are always things to see and because it constantly changes with the tide, it is never a dull place to be!



© Collins and Mallison

Our coastal waters are alive with a rich variety of plants and animals many of which live in the intertidal area between land and sea. This is a very difficult place to live because the conditions are constantly changing. Plants and animals have to be well-adapted to survive there. When the tide goes out, many of the animals that live on the shore need to keep wet to stay alive. Limpets do this by clamping themselves firmly to a place on a rock in which they fit perfectly. The limpet and its shell gradually grow into that particular spot so you should never move them because they will not survive. The beadlet anemone usually stays in one place and pulls its tentacles in at low tide so looks a bit like a little lump of jelly. This lets it live higher up the shore than other anemones that leave their tentacles out. You might see some anemones catching food in rockpools but be careful, some of them can sting!

Crabs are usually scuttling around on the seashore or keeping cool under rocks and seaweed. The most common ones are shore crabs which often have interesting patterns on their shells. You might also see hermit crabs which come in all shapes and sizes because they live in the old shells of other creatures. As the hermit crabs grow they have to look for a new shell and move house very quickly to avoid being eaten.....it's a good job they don't have any furniture! Keep your eyes peeled for moving shells at low tide and you might spot one.

Rockpools are really interesting but don't forget that the plants and animals can only survive in certain places so please don't move them from their homes and be very careful to put rocks or seaweed gently back into place.

## Wordsearch

Try and find some of the other things you might see at the seashore...

<b>Limpet</b>	<b>Anemone</b>	<b>Sea</b>
<b>Sand</b>	<b>Barnacle</b>	<b>Shore Crab</b>
<b>Blenny</b>	<b>Periwinkle</b>	<b>Hermit crab</b>
<b>Rockpool</b>	<b>Lugworm</b>	<b>Butterfish</b>
<b>Seaweed</b>	<b>Shell</b>	<b>Tide</b>

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

Next time you are on the beach you could make a sand sculpture of your favourite sea creature or why not design your own – you never know there may be a creature just like it living in the murky depths of the ocean not yet seen by a human! ■

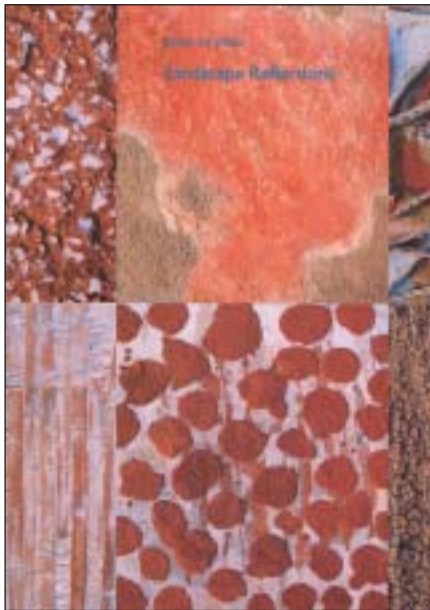


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## Annual Open Forum

We apologize for any inconvenience caused by the cancellation of our annual Open Forum scheduled for May. The Open Forum will now be held on Thursday 30th September 2003 at Northwood House and will run in conjunction with our 40th Anniversary celebrations. Spaces are limited; however, if you would like to attend, please contact us at the AONB Unit.

# Sense of Place – Landscape Reflections



Since January of this year a flurry of activity has been going on in three communities on the Island as part of the 'Landscape Reflections' project. Brading, Totland and Chale have all been involved in this project designed to engage with Islanders responses to their local landscapes through the arts.

A whole range of activities have taken place including; 5 different arts workshops in each of the three community Primary Schools, ceramics workshops in Totland and an open pit firing, clay workshops with staff, pupils and parents at Chale Primary School, Photography workshops, an exhibition of work in Totland Parish Office and a Soundscape in a Brading Chalkpit! All the arts activity resulted in an exhibition held at Quay Arts featuring work made by school children, community members and artists alike. The exhibition has been very favourably received with lots of positive comments from participants and visitors; "A wonderful challenge, very rewarding" Workshop participant



"The children and adults at Chale had a great time being involved in this project. The artists inspired everyone to think about the beautiful landscapes we are lucky enough to live in and hopefully it may move the younger generation to look after it somewhat better than we have" Dave Badman  
"We don't appreciate our Island as much

as we should but this exhibition makes you think"

A publication has been produced to accompany the exhibition and project which features art work produced including specially commissioned pieces from Island artists. Please contact the AONB Unit, if you are interested in obtaining a copy.

And it doesn't stop there!! Dancer Liz Bolwell is going back into Chale, Brading and Totland Primary Schools to lead dance and movement workshops with pupils inspired by the work so far. Parents, teachers and pupils at Chale Primary School are also transforming their school library into a permanent Landscape

Reflections exhibition inspired by the local landscape.

Project manager Hannah Birks said "The landscape, and more specifically, the AONB designation on the Island, has proved to be a rich and exciting inspiration for everyone involved in the project. The variety of work made and the innovative approaches taken are proof of this. The input of Island artists, who have worked school pupils and community members, has been a particular strength of the project and something we are keen to continue". ■



# AONB PLACE – Earth Heritage

**O**n a clear day if you stand on Headon Warren you can take in a panorama stretching from Dorset in the west, through Hampshire to the Southdowns in the east, part of southern England bounded by the rolling hills of the Chalk Downlands.

At Headon Warren, that same Chalk is rising up below your feet to form the wall of Chalk cliffs behind you in Alum Bay and stretching away east, to form the “backbone” of the Isle of Wight, till where it again falls away under the sea at Culver Cliff. It can almost seem that the rest of the Island is merely draped off the sides of that backbone, formed and defined by the rocks which lay below our feet, and that our patchwork landscape of trees and fields and homes, a blanket smoothing over the ancient rocks below.



© Countryside Agency/IW AONB – Photographer Joe Low



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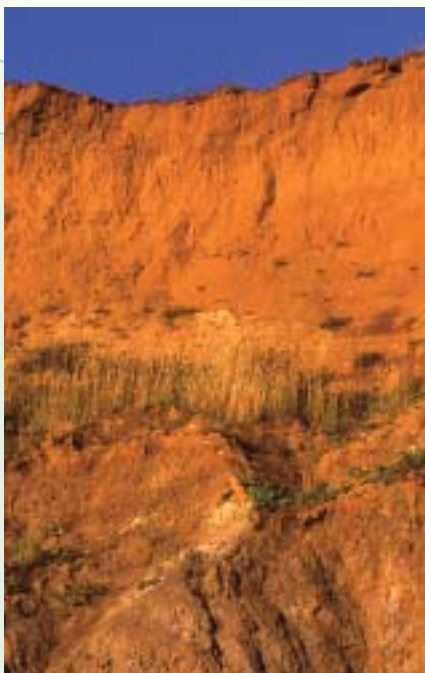
Contained within the AONB is almost every aspect of our Island’s 125 million years of Earth history, from when herds of plant eating Iguanodon dinosaurs dominated the land till after the passage of almost all those years when the bitter chill of the Ice Age ended and melt waters carved the landscape upon which we live. During that time geologists place many important markers, such as the mysterious disappearance of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago, and the long cycle of cooling (beginning about 38 million years ago) which took southern England from a Florida-like paradise to the seasons we experience today.

The Island’s geology is recognised in the AONB as it helps us form our ‘Sense of Place’ through the character of the landscape we live in. On the Island the main way in which geology helps to define “place” is through its very rapid changes in the surface as generated by the changes in rocks below the ground. Think of looking east from Tennyson Down, or walking from Culver Down to the seafront at Yaverland. However, it is not just through the shape of the land surface but also through the use of local rocks such as Bembridge Limestone and Upper Greensand in vernacular architecture in our churches and houses that also define place.

The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership is working towards conserving the Island’s geological heritage by promoting its appreciation and understanding so that future generations can also form the sense of being part of this special landscape. ■

*Martin Munt*

*Curator of Geology, The Isle of Wight Council*



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# Fossil Hunting

In our first edition we ran a Childrens Competition, part of the 1st prize in this competition was a Dinosaur Isle Fossil Hunting Trip. On a very wet April afternoon we joined winner, Lucee White along with her mother and several other eager enthusiasts. The trip leader was Steve Hutt, who took us on a walk along the beach at Yaverland 'going forward in time' (working from approx 120 million years ago to approx 65 million years!!). As we ventured along the beach, we were given a brief account as to the time period and the processes and events that created the various rock forms. Steve, additionally, astounded us with his expert eye and his ability to tell us so easily whether the items we picked up were dinosaur bones, other types of fossil or something else. His knowledge, gleaned from many years experience, meant that nothing was just a bit of stone – it was brought alive, and we were informed as to whether it was fallen wood, a freshwater creature or some other snapshot of the past.

We would like to thank Steve, for providing such an interesting and enjoyable fossil hunting trip. ■



A poem from the Landscape Reflections Project



Photographs © IW AONB Unit – Photographer Fiona Hanna



## Useful Tips for Fossil Hunting

- Check for permission to collect fossils
- Check Tide Times
- Avoid unstable cliffs
- Collect loose fossils only
- Only collect what you need
- Seek identifications (the staff at Dinosaur Isle can help with this)
- Avoid leaving litter



# Sustainable Tourism –

## is it a pipe dream?

Becky Collier, Island 2000 Trust



'Compton'  
© Countryside Agency/IW AONB – Photographer Joe Low

How many times have you heard the words “sustainable tourism” used as the answer to all our problems? Imagine the utopia that the Isle of Wight could be if it really was a completely sustainable tourism destination...

- visitors leaving their cars on their mainland travelling around on foot, bikes or public transport;
- taking their rubbish home with them or recycling everything they use;
- staying in environmentally-friendly accommodation;
- using minimal energy and water;
- buying only locally made souvenirs
- eating local produce
- spending money in local shops and pubs;
- coming all year round, not just in the busy summer months;
- appreciating and understanding the Island's unique environment.

Sounds great doesn't it – but how realistic is it? Of course, we are a long way from achieving this across the board here on the Island – or anywhere else in the world for that matter. Even destinations that are generally acknowledged as leading lights for ecotourism and “natural” holidays, such as New Zealand and Belize, have a long way to go before they can be said to be truly sustainable.

Sustainable tourism is often confused with “green tourism” but it is about so much more than just the environment. A handy, but slightly surprising way of defining it is to think of VICE! That is, sustainable tourism must balance the needs of the Visitor, the Industry, the Community and the Environment. It is a bit of an unfortunate acronym and it seems a shame that visitors are not called “nisitors” so we could have a “nice” acronym, but life is not like that!!!

To put it simply, sustainable tourism should:

- satisfy the visitor
- be profitable for the tourism industry
- be acceptable to the host community
- not adversely affect the environment

Many organisations, businesses and individuals on the Isle of Wight are doing their bit to help towards achieving this dream of sustainable tourism. Well known events such as the annual Walking Festival are helping to encourage people to understand and explore the Island's beautiful countryside without using their cars while projects like the Green Island Awards reward tourism businesses for adopting sustainable tourism measures. Gift To Nature, the scheme that encourages tourists to give a donation towards Island conservation projects, is going from strength to strength with the support of over one hundred tourism businesses and thousands of holidaymakers.

The AONB Unit has an active involvement in all of these projects as well as developing new ways to encourage sustainable tourism. One current project is the Finest Landscapes Packs – a new bedroom information pack for visitors covering the Isle of Wight AONB, its heritage and way of life. The packs are free to accommodation providers who then “do their bit” by filling in template sheets which encourage their guests to explore the AONB without using the car, to try local produce where they can, to support local events and to understand the heritage and environment of the nationally important landscapes right on their doorstep. The project, developed in partnership with Island 2000 Trust and the South East AONBs Sustainable Tourism Project, is funded by the Countryside Agency, and an equivalent pack was also launched simultaneously in the New Forest. This is one example where the Isle of Wight really is leading the way nationally and, if the packs prove to be a success, then the idea will be rolled out to other AONBs in the South East and across the country. So far, over 50 Island businesses have taken up the challenge of developing the packs and we plan to involve more in the autumn.

Of course, this project alone, is not going to make the Island's tourism industry completely sustainable overnight. However, every little helps and, when combined with all the other efforts currently taking place, the result will be a more sustainable future for this very special island in the sun. ■

IW Estuaries Project, IW Council Curator of Geology, Island 2000 Trust and Freshwater Lifeboat are members of the IW AONB Partnership and we would like to thank them for their contribution to our work.

# AONB People

© IW AONB Unit – Photographer Fiona Hanna



Wanting to run his own business, **Don Wright** and his family moved to Freshwater in 1978 from the 'Black Country' and for nine years ran a grocery store in the town. They chose the Island following visits to friends who already lived here, and admired not just the beauty of the landscape, but also the pace of life that the community of Freshwater offered. He remembers at that time, when he was doing deliveries people

would leave their doors open and the money on the table. He would also have a chair in his shop for people (particularly the elderly), to use to rest or to sit and have a chat. He feels that today's modern lifestyles and the appeal of large retailers and supermarkets, has changed not only the economy of the village, through the loss of local shops, giving the village a bit of a disheveled air, but also the feeling of closeness within the community. To Don, this and the loss of the 'local bobbies on the beat', mark the largest changes to his part of the AONB since he has been there.

Don who has a saying that 'you have to advance to stand still', enthusiastically devotes his time between: the Scouts, to whom he has been committed for most of his life, and is currently Vice-Chair for the County Scouts; the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee and Freshwater Lifeboat (whom he joined as a follow-on from his work at the Needles Maritime Rescue Sub Centre with the auxillary coastguard).

Freshwater Lifeboat, on average gets called out about 25–30 times a year and its

operation relies heavily on the work of the volunteers that operate it: from the boat and launching crew, many who will take time from work to answer an emergency call; to the fund-raising crew, whose work in the small gift shop adds valuable money to the funds. Don, who professes that all his involvement with the Lifeboat is very much land-based, assists in the fund raising through giving talks to various interested organizations about the work they do, and over-seeing visits from children's groups from schools and clubs, such as Brownies, cubs, etc. He also has been working to increase awareness nationally, and has been influential in recent features on Freshwater Lifeboat by Jeremy Clarkson and in the Money Mail.

When you talk to Don, he has an obvious and infectious appreciation not only for those organizations he supports, but also for the community and area in which he lives. When asked what part of the AONB was particularly special to him, he answered that 'all of it west of Newport is especially beautiful and makes me feel that I'm home'.

**If anyone would like to help or know more about the work of Freshwater Lifeboat, please contact:  
Mr Roy Wild, Chairman, The Warren, Victoria Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight PO40 9PU  
Telephone: (01983) 754008**

## Sense of Place – Small Grant Fund

Have you a project or idea – you want to turn into reality – but need extra funds?

Is it in the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

Will it enhance or conserve the landscape?

Will it add to a 'Sense of Place'?

The Sense of Place Small Grant Fund is an exciting way to take a new approach to projects, by working to conserve, enhance and celebrate the diversity of the local distinctiveness and character of the Island's finest landscapes, adding to the quality of landscape and quality of life within the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Fund offers up to 50% funding for projects with an estimated total value of between £200–£4,000 and is available to community & voluntary groups, town or parish councils, farmers or landowners,

schools and colleges, however, the project must be for public benefit and not for personal gain.

There are eight categories, split into two themes:

### A Place of Distinction –

- Boundary Features such as walls, hedges, ditches and planting schemes;
- Restoration/Clearance Projects such as scrub clearance, clearance of ditches and streams and pond restoration;

- Feasibility/Research studies relating to landscape management good practice/new delivery;
- Traditional Crafts and Countryside Skills e.g. hedgelaying

### A Place for People –

- Information/Interpretation panels/boards/leaflets;
- Celebratory/Promotional event or workshop (music, artworks, stories, etc);
- Event/Project to enhance quiet enjoyment of the AONB;
- Research study into historic, natural or cultural significance.

For more information contact us at AONB Unit on (01983) 823855 or e-mail [unit@wightaonb.org.uk](mailto:unit@wightaonb.org.uk)



# Enjoying the AONB

'Sunset'

© Countryside Agency/IW AONB – Photographer Joe Low

## Starry Starry Night

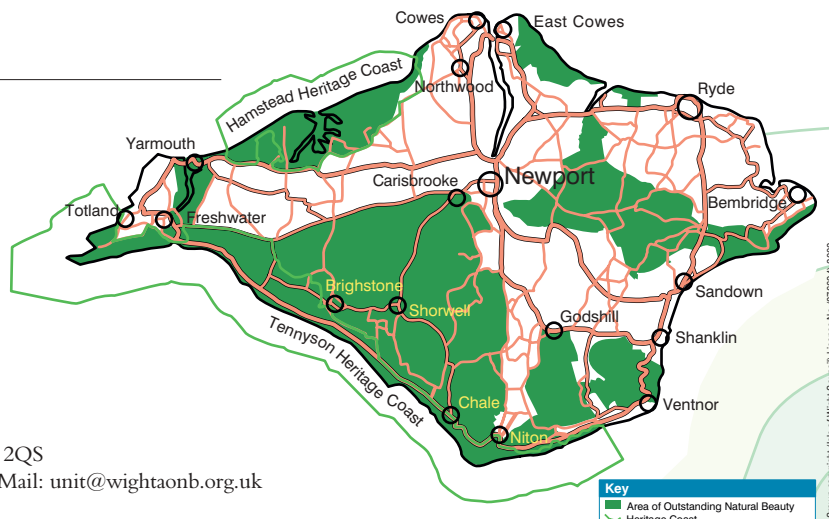
The Isle of Wight AONB is one of the best places in the South East to experience the wonder of the night sky. A recent survey by the Council for the Protection of Rural England has shown that 9% of the land area of the Island is classified as 'dark'. In particular the southwest coastal area of the AONB, (around Compton and Atherfield) is shown as one of the few parts of the South East where you can still view the night sky with very little light pollution. There is a new moon on July 19th and August 27th making these dates ideal (subject to weather conditions) to Star Gaze.

## Moon Walking

Why not take a walk in the landscape by moonlight. There is a full moon on July 13th and August 12th, choose a familiar downland route and take a walk guided by the light of the moon (don't forget a torch in case you need to look at a map). At night the quiet landscape may allow you to hear the Nightjar or distant village church bells peeling to herald the new day. Walk quietly and you may see other timid nocturnal wildlife, and maybe even Glowworms.

**Don't forget National Astronomy Week 23rd–30th August. The Observatory of the Vectis Astronomical Society at Watery Lane, Newchurch (Grid Ref – 554842) will be open for displays, projector shows, lectures and demonstrations.**

**For more information take a look at their website [www.wightskies.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.wightskies.fsnet.co.uk).**



## AONB Unit Team

John Brownscombe – AONB Officer  
 Marijke Ransom – AONB Planning & Information Officer  
 Fiona Hanna – AONB Assistant

AONB Unit, Seaclose Offices, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 2QS  
 Telephone: (01983) 823855 Fax: (01983) 823851 E-Mail: [unit@wightaonb.org.uk](mailto:unit@wightaonb.org.uk)  
 Website: [www.wightaonb.org.uk](http://www.wightaonb.org.uk)

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