

Cotswolds Area of Outstanding
Natural Beauty

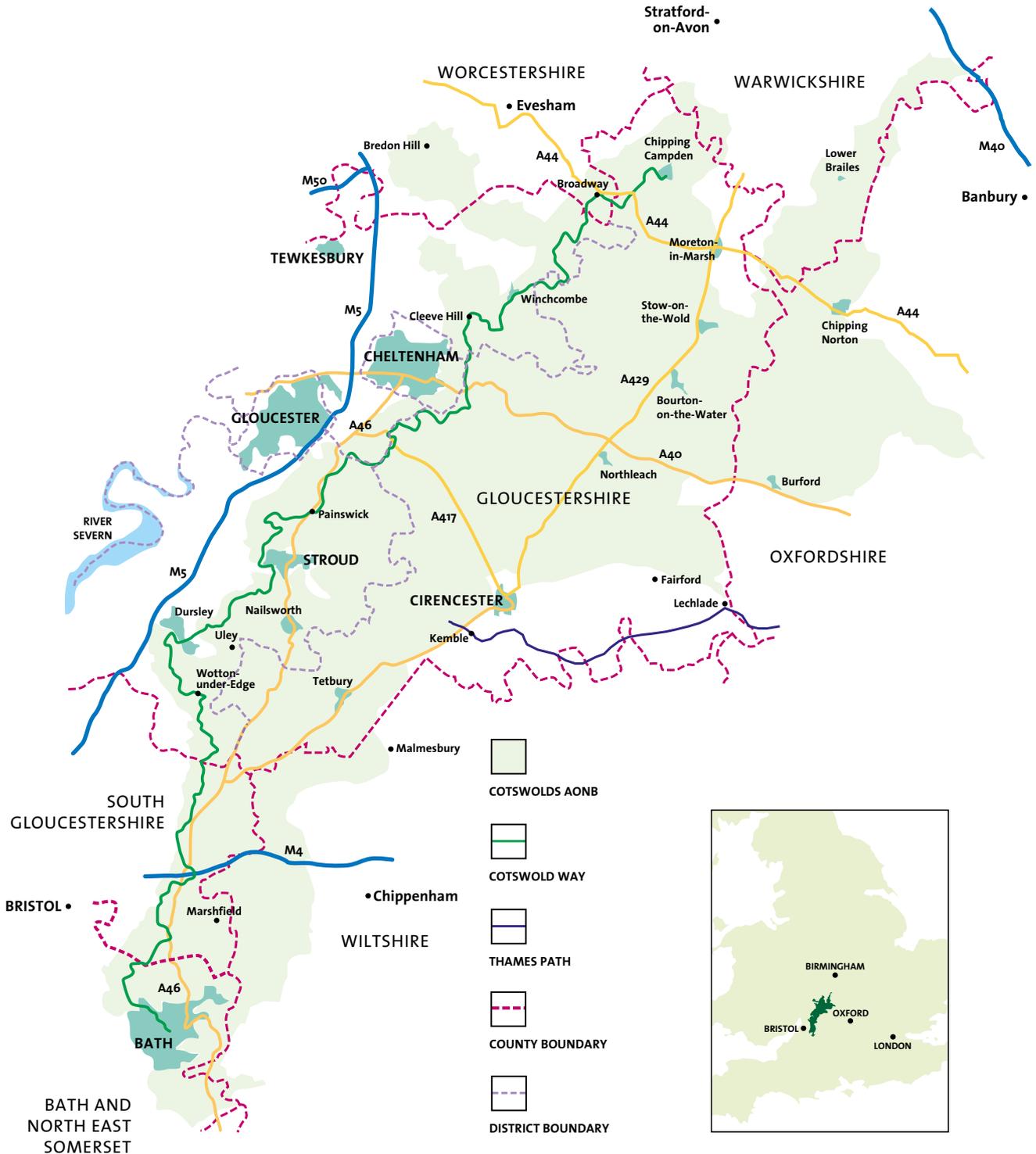
Management Plan 2018-2023

Executive Summary



www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

Map of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



The Management Plan – What/Who/How

Executive Summary

The Management Plan – What/Who/How

What is the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan?

The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan ('the Management Plan') is a statutory plan, which sets out the vision, outcomes and policies for the management of the Cotswolds AONB ('the AONB') for the period 2018-2023. The Management Plan has two primary purposes:

Purposes of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan

1. To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds AONB.
2. To increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB.

While having regard to these two purposes, the Management Plan also seeks to foster the social and economic wellbeing of local communities within the AONB.

The Management Plan is the only plan to guide the management of the AONB as a whole. As such, one of its main roles is to foster a consistent approach across this administratively complex AONB, which puts these two purposes at the heart of the plans, policies, work programmes and decisions of all relevant stakeholders.

Who is responsible for preparing and publishing the Management Plan?

The Cotswolds Conservation Board ('the Board') is the body responsible for preparing and publishing the Management Plan and for reviewing it at intervals of no more than five years.

Who will deliver the Management Plan?

As the body responsible for preparing and publishing the Management Plan, the Board will play an important role in its delivery. However, the Board doesn't actually own or directly manage any of the land in the AONB or its setting. As such, the successful delivery of the Management Plan's vision, outcomes, policies and ambitions is also dependent on a wide range of other stakeholders.

How will the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan be delivered?

The Board will deliver its contribution to the Management Plan through a separate three-year Business Plan. The detail of how other stakeholders will deliver their contributions is too complex to cover in this Management Plan. However, the Management Plan does outline the key actions that the Board invites specific stakeholders to undertake in order to help deliver the Management Plan.

How will the delivery of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan be monitored?

The Board will monitor its contribution to the delivery of the Management Plan through the quarterly and annual reviews of its Business Plan. The Board will also produce a 'State of the Cotswolds AONB Report' prior to each Management Plan review, which will help to gauge progress towards achieving the Management Plan vision. The Board will also endeavour to monitor the key actions that the Board has invited specific stakeholders to undertake. The Management Plan includes key indicators for each policy and ambition, against which progress will be monitored.

Vision: By 2043, the Cotswolds AONB will be:

- A distinctive, unique, accessible living landscape treasured for its diversity which is recognised by all for its wide open views, dry stone walls, intimate valleys, flower rich grasslands, ancient woodlands, dark skies, tranquillity, archaeology, historic and cultural heritage and distinctive Cotswold stone architecture.

Key Issues

1. Erosion of the natural beauty and special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB.
2. Lack of a consistent approach across the whole of the Cotswolds AONB.
3. Lack of understanding of the benefits of AONB designation.

Cross-cutting (Purposes 1 and 2)			Purpose 1: To Conserve and Enhance the Natural Beauty of the Cotswolds AONB ¹			
Outcome 1: Working Together	Outcome 2: Natural and Cultural Capital & Ecosystem Services	Outcome 3: Climate Change	Outcome 4: Landscape & Geology	Outcome 5: Local Distinctiveness	Outcome 6: Tranquillity	Outcome 7: Dark Skies
Policy CC1: Developing a Consistent, Coordinated and Landscape -led Approach across the Cotswolds AONB	Policy CC4: Natural and Cultural Capital & Ecosystem Services – Principles	Policy CC7: Climate Change – Mitigation	Policy CE1: Landscape	Policy CE3: Local Distinctiveness	Policy CE4: Tranquillity	Policy CE5: Dark Skies
Policy CC2: Compliance with Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (the ‘Duty of Regard’)	Policy CC5: Soils	Policy CC8: Climate Change – Adaptation	Policy CE2: Geology			
Policy CC3: Working in Partnership	Policy CC6: Water					

1. While having regard to purposes 1 and 2, the Board has a duty to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities within the AONB. This duty is addressed through relevant policies under the two purposes.

- A thriving collaborative, pioneering, proactive place, sustained by the passions of residents, visitors and businesses alike, where communities and businesses value its special qualities.

Ambitions

1. To promote the Cotswolds AONB as the Walking and Exploring Capital of England.
2. To secure the local design and delivery of a Cotswolds AONB package of agri-environment payments for public goods and services and rural development support.
3. To ensure that communities and businesses within and around the Cotswolds AONB identify and celebrate being part of a nationally recognised landscape.
4. To promote the case for the Cotswolds being designated as England's next National Park.

Purpose 1: To Conserve and Enhance the Natural Beauty of the Cotswolds AONB ¹				Purpose 2: To Increase the Understanding and Enjoyment of the Special Qualities of the Cotswolds AONB		
Outcome 8: Historic Environment & Cultural Heritage	Outcome 9: Biodiversity	Outcome 10: Rural Land Management	Outcome 11: Development & Transport	Outcome 12: Sustainable Tourism	Outcome 11: Access & Recreation	Outcome 14: Health & Well-being
Policy CE6: Historic Environment & Cultural Heritage	Policy CE7: Biodiversity	Policy CE8: Rural Land Management	Policy CE10: Development & Transport – Principles	Policy UE1: Sustainable Tourism	Policy UE2: Access & Recreation	Policy UE3: Health & Well-being
		Policy CE9: Problem Species, Pests and Diseases	Policy CE11: Major Development			
			Policy CE12: Development Priorities & Evidence of Need			
			Policy CE13: Waste Management			

The Management Plan – Topics

The Management Plan covers the following topics in this sequence:

Special Qualities of the Cotswolds AONB

The special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB are the key attributes for which the AONB is considered to be important. Perhaps the special quality that is most unique to the Cotswolds AONB is the unifying character of the limestone geology, including its visible presence in the landscape and its use as a building material. Other special qualities of the AONB include its: internationally important, flower-rich grasslands and ancient, broadleaved woodlands; escarpment; dry stone walls; river valleys; high wolds; tranquillity and dark skies; vernacular architecture and distinctive settlements; accessible landscape offering quiet recreation; and significant archaeological, prehistoric, historic and cultural associations.

Portrait of the Cotswolds AONB

The 'portrait' outlines the features of the Cotswolds AONB, the state of the AONB and the pressures upon it.

Key Issues

The Board has identified three key issues that it considers to be having an adverse effect on achieving the two purposes of the Management Plan. These key issues can be summarised as follows:

- **Key Issue 1.** Erosion of the natural beauty and special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB.
- **Key Issue 2.** Lack of a consistent approach across the whole of the Cotswolds AONB.
- **Key Issue 3.** Lack of understanding of the benefits of AONB designation.

Ambitions

The Board has also identified four 'ambitions' for addressing the three key issues. The Board will prioritise these ambitions in its own work programme and use them as headline indicators for the Board's performance in delivering the Management Plan. The Board encourages other stakeholders to support – and contribute to the delivery of – these four ambitions.

The four ambitions are:

- **Ambition 1.** To promote the Cotswolds AONB as the Walking and Exploring Capital of England.
- **Ambition 2.** To secure the local design and delivery of a Cotswolds AONB package of agri-environment payments for public goods and services and rural development support.
- **Ambition 3.** To ensure that communities and businesses within and around the Cotswolds AONB identify and celebrate being part of a nationally recognised landscape.
- **Ambition 4.** To promote the case for the Cotswolds being designated as England's next National Park.

The ambitions are explicitly reflected in specific policies in the Management Plan. These are Policy UE2 (paragraph 4) for Ambition 1, Policy CE8 (paragraph 3) for Ambition 2, Policy CC3 (paragraph 2) for Ambition 3 and Policy CC1 (paragraph 2) for Ambition 4. A number of additional policies also relate to the delivery of these ambitions.

Vision

The Management Plan provides an over-arching vision of what we want the Cotswolds AONB to be like in the long term (i.e. by the year 2043-25 years from the start of this Management Plan). The vision is shown in the table in the centre of the Executive Summary.

The Management Plan – Topics

Outcomes

The Management Plan breaks the vision down into 14 themed outcomes. These 14 themed outcomes have been grouped under three headings:

- **Cross-cutting outcomes:** these outcomes relate to both of the Management Plan's two purposes.
- **Outcomes relating to primary purpose 1**
(To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds AONB).
- **Outcomes relating to primary purpose 2**
(To increase understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB).

The title of each outcome is shown in the table in the centre of the Executive Summary. A full description of the outcomes is provided in the full Management Plan.

Policies

Perhaps the most important – and most utilised – part of the Management Plan is the policies. The policies serve five main purposes:

1. They are principles for how the Cotswolds AONB should be managed in order to:
 - a. conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB;
 - b. increase the understanding and enjoyment of the AONB's special qualities;
 - c. address issues that are having an adverse effect on the AONB;
 - d. achieve the vision and outcomes of the Management Plan.
2. They provide a framework for action by the Cotswolds Conservation Board and other stakeholders who have a role to play in the management of the AONB.

3. They represent the policies of the Board.
4. They are intended to guide, influence and be used by stakeholders in their own plans, policies, proposals, work programmes and decision making.
5. Together with other guidance produced by the Board, they are intended to facilitate a consistent approach across the whole of the Cotswolds AONB.

The Management Plan contains 24 policies, which are grouped under each of the 14 themed outcomes. The abbreviation 'CC' is used for policies linked to the *cross-cutting* outcomes, 'CE' for policies linked to the outcomes that relate to primary purpose 1 (i.e. *conserving and enhancing*) and 'UE' for policies linked to the outcomes that relate to primary purpose 2 (i.e. *understanding and enjoyment*).

The title of each policy is shown in the table in the centre of the Executive Summary. A full description of the policies is provided in the full Management Plan.

The Management Plan
is the only plan to guide
the management of the
Cotswolds AONB as a whole

The full version of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018–2023 can be downloaded at:

www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/planning/cotswolds-aonb-management-plan/



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