

# ART IN THE LANDSCAPE

connecting people to nature through arts and culture

**A strategy commissioned by Landscapes for Life: The National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) - for the National Association and its Members**

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## **Art in the Landscape Statement of Intent**

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are cultural landscapes of local and national value. They are the product of people and place. They are an important element of our collective and individual identity and always represent much more than can be easily expressed.

We have a history of expressing the value of AONBs through the language of policy, by which the emotions of place are inadequately distilled into the tools of protection, but the reality is that we experience landscape; it triggers emotion. To describe landscape to others without invoking an experience is to fundamentally ignore our relationship with place and miss what it is to be human.

The beauty of these areas is often intangible and always vulnerable. Whether your spirits are lifted by a lone walk along a grassy hillside or refreshed by the intimacy of a woodland walk with a friend, their special qualities are experienced, felt, and ultimately understood. To recognise the experiential element of landscape and create opportunities for others to access the value this can bring to their lives is part of their effective curation.

The arts are a central mechanism for helping this happen. The creative exploration of place, through music, painting, poetry, and dance opens up the experience of landscape beyond the world of science and policy and helps us better understand our place in the world. With better understanding comes better stewardship; the basis of a more sustainable future.

The NAAONB therefore, commits to a deeper exploration into the relationship between arts and landscape. We will actively promote the relationship between landscape and art and optimise our engagement with artists and producers in order to ensure our most precious landscapes are more accessible and more widely understood and appreciated by the nation.

**Howard Davies CEO – National Association for AONBs**

**LANDSCAPES FOR LIFE**

## Fugitives

Then we woke and were hurtling headlong  
for wealds and wolds,  
blood coursing, the Dee and the Nidd in full spate  
through the spinning waterwheels in the wrists  
and over the heart's weir,  
the nightingale hip-hopping ten to the dozen  
under the morning's fringe.

It was no easy leap, to exit the engine house of the head  
and vault the electric fence  
of commonplace things,  
to open the door of the century's driverless hearse,  
roll from the long cortège  
then dust down and follow  
the twisting ribbon of polecats wriggling free from extinction  
or slipstream the red kite's triumphant flypast out of oblivion  
or trail the catnip of spraint and scat tingeing the morning breeze.

On we journeyed at full tilt  
through traffic-light orchards,  
the brain's compass dialling for fell, moor,  
escarpment and shore, the skull's sextant  
plotting for free states coloured green on the map,  
using hedgerows as handrails,  
barrows and crags as trig points and cats' eyes.

We stuck to the switchbacks and scenic routes,  
steered by the earth's contours and natural lines of desire,  
feet firm on solid footings of bedrock and soil  
fracked only by moles.

We skimmed across mudflat and saltmarsh,

clambered to stony pulpits on high hills  
inhaling gallons of pure sky  
into the moors of our lungs,  
bartered bitcoins of glittering shingle and shale.

Then arrived in safe havens, entered the zones,  
stood in the grandstands of bluffs and ghylls, spectators  
to flying ponies grazing wild grass to carpeted lawns,  
oaks flaunting turtle doves on their ring-fingers,  
ospreys fishing the lakes from invisible pulleys and hoists,  
the falcon back on its see-through pivot, lured from its gyre.

Here was nature as future,  
the satellite dishes of blue convolvulus  
tuned to the cosmos, tracking the chatter of stars,  
the micro-gadgets of complex insects  
working the fields, heaths tractored by beetles,  
rainbowed hay meadows tipsy with rain and light,  
golden gravel hoarded in eskers and streams.

And we vowed not to slumber again  
but claimed sanctuary  
under the kittiwake's siren  
and corncrake's alarm,  
in realms patrolled by sleepwalking becks and creeks  
where beauty employs its own border police.

And witnessed ancient trees  
affirming their citizenship of the land,  
and hunkered and swore oaths, made laws  
in hidden parliaments of bays and coves,  
then gathered on commons and capes  
waving passports of open palms, medalled by dog rose and teasel  
and raising the flag of air.

**COVID-19 CONTEXT**

This work has been drawn together through May 2020 at the height of the lockdown and other measures resulting from COVID-19. This has impacted upon the work and people we have been able to speak with. It is impossible to envisage the full impact of COVID-19, and thus we have not allowed our thinking to be perpetually clouded by this. But we recognise how huge the impact on the contexts will be. Fundamentally as we move towards the 'new normal' in this country and the wider world in whatever emerges there will continue to be landscape, artists and people and the connection between them will be vital within it.

We are also aware of the tension that the current easing of the lockdown has caused with the volume of new visitors to some of the AONBs. There will need to be careful consideration in executing a programme going forward which is mirrored in the cultural sector.

# ART IN THE LANDSCAPE

## connecting people to nature through arts and culture

### INTRODUCTION

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Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are some of the nation's most cherished landscapes. From the uplands and remote villages of the North Pennines, through the chalk grasslands and beech woodlands of the Chilterns, to the cliffs and fishing villages of Cornwall; all are different; all are special. In September 2019 AONBs along with National Parks celebrated the 70th Anniversary of the original Designation Act of Parliament<sup>1</sup> through a 'National Moment'<sup>2</sup> of arts inspired activities.

- AONBs cover 15% of England's land area and 5% of Wales' land area;
- just under 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the English coast is an AONB;
- AONBs are home to over 1 million people across England and Wales;
- Just under 160 million people visit AONBs in England and Wales, spending in excess of £2 billion;
- 66% of people in England live within half an hour travel from an AONB;
- The public can enjoy 1400km of the Wales Coast Path which passes through 4 AONBs.<sup>3</sup>

AONBs operate on a unique kind partnership model bringing together conservation organisations, parish, town and county councils, landowners, farmers, local businesses, local ramblers and bridleway users and voluntary groups. This partnership approach defines their ways of working in prioritising and sharing work to meet the needs of a wide range of stakeholders. The work of the AONB Partnerships incorporates all aspects of the area including natural beauty, culture heritage, wildlife, geology, habitats, tranquility and scenic quality. Each AONB has been designated so their natural beauty features can be safeguarded for future generations.

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<sup>1</sup> The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act was established by Government in 1949, paving the way for AONBs.

<sup>2</sup> The first national Art in the Landscape event was the National Moment which took place on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019.

<sup>3</sup> All data taken from the National Association of AONB publications and available as an infographic on <https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/publications/pubs>

There has been focus from Central Government recently on Designated Landscapes with the publication in 2019 of their 25 Year Environment Plan and The Landscapes Review (Glover Review).<sup>4</sup> It is clear from these that there is a continuing strong role for all that AONBs do with focus on how they can assist nature recovery and improve the health of the nation.

The National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB) is the umbrella charity for the AONBs in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland and works to develop this network of ambitious AONB partnerships with a strong collective voice, working collaboratively to deliver shared objectives. It has the principles of sustainable development at its core, and this is reflected in everything they do.

The 'National Moment' in September 2019 was a high-profile stage for the commitment, delivered by CEO Howard Davies and presented as the 'Art In the Landscape Statement of Intent'.

This commitment grows out of much of the context that has already been outlined above and with it, years of dedicated work by AONB officers, artists and arts organisations. As well as the delivery of projects over the past years there have been moments where there has been some space to step back and consider the strategic importance of arts and cultural actions. At NAAONB national conferences there have been an increasing number of sessions, focused on this. Ad-hoc discussions have taken place with Arts Council England on a regional and national basis. Some projects, such as the Wye Valley River Festival and the Lifecycles and Landscapes project have built in multi-day symposia and conferences. All of these have indicated a positive way forward and the need to bring an Arts Strategy into being that can be embedded at the heart of the strategic plans of both the NAAONB and the AONB network.

A successful bid made by NAAONB and supported (with finance) from many of the AONB partnerships/conservation boards to Arts Council England (ACE)<sup>5</sup> has enabled this work to progress: **Art In The Landscape: Connecting People to Nature.**

A new national steering group with terms of reference specifically for the project was established comprising representatives from the NAAONB and 7 of the AONBs<sup>6</sup>. This group guided and acted as a core consultative group for the consultants Kate Wood and Bill Gee of Activate Performing Arts who were appointed in December 2019. Activate Performing Arts, based in Dorset, have a history of working with Dorset AONB on projects across the landscape and they were the initiators and producers of the Life Cycles and Landscapes art project with three AONBs – see 'further reading'.

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<sup>4</sup> See further reading in the Appendices for a link to the report.

<sup>5</sup> Arts Council England was set up in 1946, by Royal Charter, to champion and develop art and culture across the country.  
<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/>

<sup>6</sup> See the Appendices for the list of the project Steering Group.

The project comprised:

1. An internal consultation process with the NAAONB – AONB ‘Family’ – to include different approaches: e-surveys, one to one telephone interviews, face to face meetings and focus groups. This work with both Lead Officers and wider teams scoped existing practice, reach, resourcing, governance structures, aspirations and ambitions. This has included AONB teams with different levels of experience in delivering arts and culture projects, importantly hearing from those who have not yet delivered major projects.
2. Desk research for background information from the NAAONB, Glover Review, Arts Council Strategies and the background to the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Arts Council for the three land guardians: National Trust, Forestry England and Canal & Rivers Trust.
3. Consultation with Graham Devlin, CBE who had worked as the lead consultant on developing all these MOU relationships.
4. Meetings with the arts leads with these three national land guardian organisations.
5. Consultation with senior officers from Arts Council England and other agencies.
6. Distribution and consultation on draft report within the AONB family.
7. Training for the AONB members to offer insight into working with the arts and develop confidence in the teams.

## **CONTEXT**

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### **1. Cultural Values**

It is recognised that AONBs have great environmental, social and cultural importance with values derived largely from the interaction of people and nature over time. They are an integral part of the UK’s diverse and dynamic cultural identity. They have inspired generations of writers, artists, poets, film-makers and composers and despite cultural heritage not being an explicit target of AONB management it is understood to be an essential aspect of the area for both those living in and those attracted into the Areas.

Anecdotally the past decade has seen an increase in both traditional and contemporary arts and culture activities being undertaken by and in partnership with AONB teams across the country. There has been more of a focus on the visual arts where AONB teams have long standing relationships with galleries and artist groups, such as in Kent Downs (Turner Contemporary Margate, Creative Folkestone, Stour



Valley Arts, Whitstable Biennale, Cement Fields, Applause Rural Touring<sup>7</sup>), Tamar Valley (Drawn to the Valley<sup>8</sup>), Chichester Harbour Conservancy (Pallant House Gallery<sup>9</sup>) and East Devon (Thelma Hulbert Gallery<sup>10</sup>). Recent work has covered a much wider range of art-forms, often outdoors. A few examples:

- Inspired by nature and culture the Wye Valley River Festival<sup>11</sup> has celebrated the landscape through a series of performances and spectacular installations;
- The Isle of Wight AONB provide the theme, contextual input and investment for annual large-scale carnival parades involving hundreds of young people participants and enjoyed by thousands;
- Forest of Bowland developing a long-term arts engagement programme, The Gatherings to deliver extended work in their landscape;
- Nidderdale AONB running festival type programme in their major local conurbation (Leeds) taking the essence of Upperdale into the City;
- Dorset, North Wessex Downs and Norfolk Coast AONBs all working together on the *Life Cycles and Landscapes*<sup>12</sup> project;
- Surrey Hills Arts (AONB) Harvest<sup>13</sup> – annual Harvest event combining singing, making, percussion, poetry and contemporary installation as part of their arts programme.

The drivers for these projects have often come from individuals' passions from both within the AONB staff teams and locally based artists and companies and there is the understanding that this now needs to be fully acknowledged and adopted across the AONB family.

Inherent in much of this work is a belief that landscapes themselves are works of art.

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<sup>7</sup> Turner Contemporary: <https://turnercontemporary.org/>, Creative Folkestone: <https://www.creativefolkestone.org.uk/>, Stour Valley Arts: <http://www.stourvalleyarts.org.uk/>, Whitstable Biennale: <https://whitstablebiennale.com/>, Cement Fields: <https://cementfields.org/>, Applause Rural Touring: <https://applause.org.uk/>

<sup>8</sup> Drawn to the Valley: <https://drawntothevalley.co.uk/>

<sup>9</sup> Pallant House Gallery: <https://pallant.org.uk/>

<sup>10</sup> Thelma Hulbert Gallery: <https://www.thelmahulbert.com/>

<sup>11</sup> Wye Valley River Festival: <https://www.wyevalleyaonb.org.uk/caring-for-wye-valley-aonb/river-festival/>

<sup>12</sup> Life Cycles and Landscapes: <https://activateperformingarts.org.uk/project/life-cycles-landscapes-0>

<sup>13</sup> Harvest: <https://www.surreyhillsarts.org/projects/harvest/>

## **2. Landscapes Review**

In 2018 The Environment Secretary commissioned journalist Julian Glover and five other independent experts to form the Designated Landscapes Review Panel and undertake research and report on the Designated Landscapes – National Parks and AONBs. The report was launched at the time of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Designation Act. The main recommendations focus on creating a National Landscape Service, defining AONBs as National Landscapes and proposing a greater role for them with increased funding, governance reform and having a greater voice on planning.

The wider findings are grouped around five summary proposals

- Landscapes alive for nature and beauty
- Landscapes for everyone
- Living in landscapes
- More special places
- New ways of working

With its far-reaching recommendations the impact of the Landscapes Review will be felt over the coming years with further consultations imminent in 2020 as the Government, through the Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA),<sup>14</sup> implements a working group.

In Wales, the Marsden Review<sup>15</sup>, commissioned in 2014 by the Minister for Natural Resources carried out a similarly detailed review of the purpose of AONBs and National Parks. Further work has since been carried out to explore the relationships between the function of designated landscapes in Wales, the wider statutory framework for sustainable development, and the potential role of a new National Landscapes Partnership.

## **3. The Climate Emergency and Nature Recovery**

Set against a backdrop of unprecedented concern for the future of the natural world, and intergovernmental reports that the current global response to the effects of human impact on nature is insufficient – the NAAONB with the network and

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<sup>14</sup> DEFRA: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>

<sup>15</sup> National Resources Wales: landscape: <https://naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/business-sectors/planning-and-development/advice-for-developers/landscape/?lang=en>

partnership model have made the Colchester Declaration<sup>16</sup> on Nature in AONBs, setting out a strategy for change and Nature Recovery.

As stated in the Colchester Declaration: 'With many AONB host authorities having taken the step of declaring a Climate Emergency we are demonstrating our readiness to act to redress declines in species and habitats within the context of a wider response to climate change.'

1. Natural Beauty has intrinsic value and means so much to people.
2. AONBs should be places of rich, diverse and abundant wildlife.
3. Nature recovery is central to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.
4. Climate change is the biggest threat to humanity and one of the greatest threats to biodiversity. Designated landscapes offer some of the most powerful solutions to the challenges of climate change.
5. The network of AONBs and National Parks, their teams, partnerships, authorities and stakeholders offer a unique solution to tackling environmental challenges.

These concerns are echoed and stand as a call to action for much of the arts and culture sector. There are movements such as 'Culture Declares Emergency'<sup>17</sup>, organisations like Julie's Bicycle<sup>18</sup> and directives from Arts Council England to its National Portfolio to produce annual Environmental Action Plans with equal importance put on sustainability at Arts Council Wales<sup>19</sup>.

Valuing how arts and culture projects can engage and deepen emotional connection in people can be vital for them to care and do something which will positively impact on our efforts to tackle Climate Emergency and biodiversity loss. This is stated as the first pledge of the Colchester Declaration and which will, in turn, result in better implementation of Nature Recovery Plans in AONB areas.

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<sup>16</sup> Colchester Declaration:

[https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/7815/6326/2583/The\\_Colchester\\_Declaration.pdf](https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/7815/6326/2583/The_Colchester_Declaration.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Culture Declares Emergency is a community of artists and cultural sector individuals and organisations who have declared a climate and ecological emergency <https://www.culturedeclares.org/>

<sup>18</sup> Julies Bicycle is a London based charity that supports the creative community to act on climate change and environmental sustainability. <https://juliesbicycle.com/>

<sup>19</sup> The Arts Council of Wales is an independent charity, established by Royal Charter in 1994. <https://arts.wales/>

#### **4. Public Awareness**

AONBs enjoy a lower profile than many of the other designated landscapes particularly the National Parks and National Trust properties, they have far smaller budgets than these other bodies and as they nearly always work through partnerships are not in the limelight. Work around marking the 70th anniversary of the designated landscapes, particularly with the commission of the *Fugitives* poem by Poet Laureate Simon Armitage which received extensive coverage in the broadsheet press and some local and regional media, has demonstrated the potential of arts and culture to raise awareness of the AONBs and their work.

#### **5. The Audience**

Audiences are from both within the areas and from without, whilst there are 1 million people living in AONBs it has been calculated there are c.156 million national, local and international visitors annually with 65% of the population living within a 30-minute drive of an AONB<sup>20</sup>.

There has been growing understanding that the work of the AONB teams is as much about people as about conservation of place, so if the AONB team is working on delivering a new agri-environment and environmental land management scheme then this is centrally about the involvement of people, both the farmers and also the wider 'audiences' who need to understand the changes. This is particularly pertinent given the extraordinary set of circumstances we are currently in and the events witnessed during the easing of the COVID-19 lockdown at the time of writing. We have seen an increase in the numbers of people wanting to access the natural landscape, in some cases having a detrimental impact, such as the huge numbers visiting many of the AONBs. It is not only the size of the visitor numbers but some of the behaviour that is detrimental to the landscape, to farming and to wildlife.

Art and culture programmes can be used as structured steps for people to engage with the landscape in a sensitive and meaningful way, leading to pro-environmental behaviour, an appreciation of the natural beauty and help with Nature Recovery.

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<sup>20</sup> Data taken from the National Association of AONB publications and available as an infographic on <https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/publications/pubs>

## **6. Diversity**

The Landscapes Review in England lays out how the countryside can seem exclusive and not open and free to all. AONB staff experience reveals low level of participation from the BAMER (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic & Refugee) community and, it is thought, other identifiable groups, such as communities from lower socio-economic areas and people who are disabled.

It is widely considered that economic, cultural and political barriers impede more engagement from underrepresented groups in AONBs. Underrepresentation of access in relation to age and gender (elders and women) has been recognized for longer but there are still many ongoing issues to address whether it be constraints around safety, perceptions of appropriate dress or access to toilets in the AONBs, all of which are pertinent to developing diversity of engagement.

Lack of engagement in AONBs can in part be put down to unintentional discrimination caused by lack of existing cultural variance in AONB Partnerships (0.7% of AONB Boards identify as BAMER and 0.4% with a disability compared with national averages of 19.5% and 19% respectively) and wider societal norms in relation to the countryside – perceptions of ‘is it for us?’ for example.

Moving forward these are key concerns for the sector and a priority area to address. The proximity of many AONBs to large conurbations means that they generally offer easier access for more people both in terms of distance and transport links than National Parks.

The interest in reaching new, diverse audiences/communities was a key driver behind the investment into this consultancy and creation of the strategy.

## **7. Convergence of Concern between Sectors**

The 2010 Equality Act<sup>21</sup> requires public sector authorities to exercise its Public Sector Equality Duty to consider and advance equality in policy making and decisions. The concern about lack of diversity within both the AONB organisations and their impact is shared with Arts Council England and Wales the cultural sector.

The Arts Council are asking organisations who receive regular investment from them to agree targets for how their governance, leadership, employees, participants, audiences and the work they make will reflect the communities in which they work.

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<sup>21</sup> The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

These targets will cover both protected characteristics (including disability, sex, and race) and socio-economic background.

So, the questions of how and what relevance the AONBs and cultural organisations have to those audiences and communities they are underserving is very much a current shared agenda and a high priority.

## **8. Connectedness to Nature**

Nature Connectedness is a measurable psychological construct that moves beyond contact with nature to an individual's sense of their relationship with the natural world, championed by Miles Richardson, Professor of Human Factors and The Nature Connectedness Research Group at the University of Derby<sup>22</sup>. The focus of the Nature Connectedness research work is all about understanding and improving peoples' connection to nature because of both the well-being and environmental benefits (see link in Further Reading).

"Rather than a focus on learning, there should be a focus on creating art, poetry and music – through noticing nature, its beauty and telling the story of the meaning and feelings it brings. Rather than a focus on learning the history, help nurture and enhance the present – caring for nature is a pathway to connection. Create a new culture of celebrating our place in nature." Miles Richardson Blog.

The work has created a new population measure – Nature Connection Index (NCI) - that has demonstrated that if people assess themselves as 76 % or greater connected to nature, they are far more likely to be active in their concern for landscape and resultant increase in well-being. This is essential for the AONB partnerships focus on nature recovery.

The evidence collected tells AONB partnerships and other landscape agencies such as Natural England and National Trust that they can build a new relationship with people by focusing on five types of activity: tuning our senses, responding with our emotions, appreciating beauty, celebrating meaning and activating our compassion for nature. All of which can be found within arts and culture projects and is important evidence for the value of this strategy approach and by which the AONBs can advocate for increasing their work with the arts and cultural sector.

There is plenty of evidence for the general impact and value of arts and culture and the value of green spaces on our health and wellbeing, education, and economic

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<sup>22</sup> The Nature Connectedness Research Group: <https://www.derby.ac.uk/research/about-our-research/centres-groups/nature-connectedness-research-group/>

impact. However, the evidence for the benefits of bringing the arts and the environment sectors together is clearly outlined in various studies undertaken, including:

- 'Merging science and arts to communicate nature conservation': undertaken by the University of Latvia in 2014 which evaluated the efficiency of the project 'Nature Concert Hall'<sup>23</sup> in communicating biodiversity to the general public following concerns about the overall negative response to nature conservation. The results of the survey were overwhelmingly positive:

*'The collaboration between artists and scientists clearly led to larger audiences: 53% of enquiry respondents would not have attended if there was only the 'scientific component' and another 34% were uncertain about their choice. Overall, 80.8% of respondents noted an increase in knowledge on biodiversity issues after attending Nature Concert Hall and 43.4% of respondents reported an increase in their pro-environmental activities.'*<sup>24</sup>

- 'Re-imagining the environment: using an environmental art festival to encourage pro-environmental behaviour and a sense of place': undertaken by the University of the Sunshine Coast in Australia, the study explored the audience response to *Floating Land* – a local government-initiated environmental art festival held in the Noosa Biosphere in Australia.

*'The study reveals that Floating Land contributed to reinforcing the essential role of local people in engendering positive change, thus manifesting the aims of the Biosphere Reserve and Agenda 21.'*<sup>25</sup>

- 'Towards ecological sustainability: observation on the roles of the arts', undertaken by the University of New England, Australia, describes how the arts shape environmental behaviour in individuals and society. They conclude that 'Art is a response to and embodiment of environmental conditions, contexts and crises.' And on the basis of their research, they developed a model to describe how the arts can shape environmental behaviour:

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<sup>23</sup> Nature Concert Hall: <http://www.natureconcerthall.com/>

<sup>24</sup> Taken from the Journal for Nature Conservation, Merging science and arts to communicate nature conservation Otars Opermanis, Silvija N. Kalnins, Ainars Aunins. Faculty of Biology, University of Latvia, Jelgavas iela 1, Riga LV-1586, Latvia, Institute of Environment and Heating Systems, Riga Technical University, Kronvalda bulvaris 1, Riga LV-1010, Latvia: <http://www.dabaskonzertzale.lv/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Opermanis-et-al.-2015.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Re-imagining the environment: using an environmental art festival to encourage pro-environmental behaviour and a sense of place, Marks, Megan, Chandler, L, Baldwin, C:

<http://research.usc.edu.au/vital/access/manager/Repository/usc:13461>

*'Three pathways are proposed: communicating information in an engaging form; creating empathy towards the natural environment; and embedding the arts in ecologically sustainable development'<sup>26</sup>.*

- From within the AONB membership example evidence includes the Kent Downs AONB Ash Project, which was designed to create a cultural response to the loss of ash caused by Ash dieback in the Kent Downs and across Kent more widely found that *'77% of people surveyed said they learnt more about the heritage we share with ash during the event'<sup>27</sup>*. The Forest of Bowland AONB, Pendle Hills Gatherings Project used creative practice to increase awareness and access to Pendle Hill. They found that: *'Knowledge and understanding of local landscape and heritage is increased'* and *'Improved understanding of artist's contribution to knowledge.'<sup>28</sup>*

And finally, a personal response from a member of the Art in the Landscape – Connecting People to Nature Steering Group that this work is about: *'Re-awakening and legitimising a sensory and emotional appreciation of all aspects of landscape through art.'*

## **9. Leaving the European Union**

The UK leaving the EU will have profound effects on much of the activity which takes place in AONBs, particularly agriculture. Current work, undertaken by the English AONBs and commissioned by DEFRA is focusing on what the future may be like post-BREXIT, as farmers move away from the rules dictated by the Common Agriculture Policy<sup>29</sup>. Arts and Culture could play a role in assisting a public awareness programme.

There has also been a social and community cost in the divisiveness that has resulted from the Brexit referendum and outcome. Arts and Culture, through both their internationalism and the ability to bring people together through gatherings can be a counter to this. The NAAONB, Dorset and Norfolk AONBs, through Activate, have been associated partners on a European funded programme called LAND (Land

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<sup>26</sup>Towards ecological sustainability: observations on the role of the arts, David J. Curtis, Nick Reid and Ian Reeve: <https://journals.openedition.org/sapiens/1655>

<sup>27</sup>The Ash Project, Kent Downs AONB: <https://www.kentdowns.org.uk/our-projects/the-ash-project/>

<sup>28</sup>The Gathering as part of The Pendle Hill Project <http://www.pendlehillproject.com/project/gatherings>

<sup>29</sup>The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the EU policy to provide financial support to farmers in member states: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en)



Stewards AND Artists)<sup>30</sup>, exploring new ways for environmental organisations and artists to work together. In the post-Brexit world these opportunities will need to be sought out more keenly in order to maintain our relationship, share good practice and collectively work on strategies for Nature Recovery and tackling the climate crisis.

## **10. The Impact of COVID-19 and an Uncertain Economic Period**

Every part of UK society is currently affected by the many impacts of the pandemic. The short-term impact of lockdown has kept most people isolated to their homes, with calls for people specifically not to travel to special landscapes such as the AONBs until the easing and the closure of arts and culture buildings such as theatres, galleries, museums and libraries. At the time of writing, these restrictions are beginning to be eased but it is likely that until a vaccine is created a level of social/physical distancing in how we engage with our everyday lives will continue. Assuming that greater access to the AONB landscapes is again allowed, then there is an opportunity to carefully create a programme to enable the arts to creatively provide an enhanced role in promoting a greater connectedness to nature and through this: promoting both physical and mental well-being. It has been recognized that, within reason, it may be safer to gather responsibly outdoors and this offers an opportunity that the AONBs can support both community and nature recovery.

The economic context suggests that all aspects of the UK will be hugely challenged by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular impact on rural and coastal areas most reliant on the tourism economy. This will be one of the last sectors to recover, along with the cultural sector – both uncertain of when visitors/audiences will return and in what numbers. The increase in public spending related to COVID-19, along with the downturn in the economy, will be a challenge shared by the landscape and cultural sectors. Central government and local authority budgets, which fund much of the work that the AONBs and the publicly funded cultural sector deliver, have been enormously stretched, although we suspect that a focus on health and wellbeing will become increasingly a focus of investment for public health and discretionary budgets. There are predictions that we are heading into one of the worst recessions in modern times. This would affect the ability for new visitors to fund transport to, or activity in the AONB.

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<sup>30</sup> LAND: <https://landartists.eu/>

## **11. Digital and Virtual Connectedness**

One result of the COVID–19 lockdown has been a speeding up of engagement with virtual and digital ways of working. It is now far more conceivable that distanced project planning, training and peer to peer support structures will be effective through digital platforms – one such example is through the AONB internal Communications Group.

Equally, artists have been upskilled in digital media and audiences have been increasingly accessing cultural and artistic programmes online.

## **12. Influencers not Landowners: Brokers**

As AONBs are generally partnerships which bring together a diversity of interests - from landowners to local authorities and from environmental organisations to heritage - they work very much through the influence that they can develop through this joined up working. They generally do not own their own assets, so when working with artists and cultural organisations they can often place themselves in a unique, semi-independent position as broker for projects that are all about access to the unique landscapes within that AONB. This type of brokered relationship can offer great benefit to arts and culture organisations in being able to work more effectively and reach out to these new audiences. For example, Surrey Hills AONB, through Surrey Hills Arts, have a full-time dedicated arts officer which has brought real breadth to the arts programme and has meant that a significant amount of work has been able to be brokered by this role, thus providing a richer programme through this strategic commitment.

## **13. Wales**

Five of the National Association member AONBs are located in Wales. It is clear there is complementary work being undertaken by the Welsh Government and Arts Council Wales with regard to the development of strategic alliances between the arts and cultural sector and Natural Resources Wales<sup>31</sup> that directly resources the

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<sup>31</sup> Natural Resources Wales is the largest Welsh Government Sponsored Body, formed in April 2013, largely taking over the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Forestry Commission Wales and the Environment Agency in Wales, as well as certain Welsh Government functions: <https://naturalresources.wales/>

AONBs. Arts Council Wales and other government agencies such as Visit Wales<sup>32</sup> already invests in programmes such as those in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley and Wye Valley River Festival. Work will need to be presented and promoted using both the Welsh and English language.

The summary proposals recommended by the Glover Review for England resonate with the work that the Welsh Government has been focussed on within the Future Generations Act<sup>33</sup>. Arts Council Wales has worked closely with the Future Generations Commissioner to create The Art of the Possible, with a strong focus on well-being.

There is clearly an opportunity to align the strategic development in Wales to England and build on some of the parallel and complementary work undertaken by Arts Council Wales and the outdoor arts development company, Articulture<sup>34</sup> that has been commissioned.

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.visitwales.com/>

<sup>33</sup> The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change: <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>

<sup>34</sup> Articulture: <https://articulture-wales.co.uk/>

# Proposed Arts and Cultural Strategy for the National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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## ART IN THE LANDSCAPE

### connecting people to nature through arts and culture

#### VISION

people experience a deeper connection to the natural beauty of the landscape through the arts.

#### STRATEGY AIMS

1. **To connect** people to nature and the natural beauty of the AONBs – increasing creativity, wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviour.
2. **To challenge** perceptions of access to the landscape in order to diversify engagement.
3. **To broker** new trusted relationships with the arts and cultural sector to co-create new programmes.
4. **To celebrate** the existing creativity in the AONB teams and the local community.
5. **To work** with arts and culture to understand and directly address the climate emergency and nature recovery.
6. **To welcome** provocations and questions in exploring ways that arts can change perceptions.
7. **To inspire** ambition by sharing exemplary projects of all scales.
8. **To capture** the public's imagination through engaging them in creative responses to the landscape.
9. **To raise** the profile of the landscape and the AONBs and the purpose of the AONB teams.
10. **To lever** in resources and relationships at all levels for an ambitious programme.

*..inhaling gallons of pure sky  
into the moors of our lungs,...*

The Fugitives, Simon Armitage

## **PRINCIPLES**

The strategy is underpinned with principles of collaboration, generosity and particularly at this time: kindness.

The artists and arts organisations working with the AONBs will be expected to be sensitive to the landscape and to the principles of the strategy.

The principles of quality in the arts and cultural sector will be guided by Arts Council England and Wales.

## **ACHIEVING THE AIMS**

The aims will be achieved by adopting the recommendations. Each recommendation directly addresses one or more of the above aims and/or supports a number of the aims. This is tabulated in the attached document/Appendix. The aims will be delivered through a plan referred to in the Appendix related to Recommendation 2.

## **WHO IS THE STRATEGY FOR?**

1. The strategy has been created for the National Association for AONBs to adopt. The National Association for AONBs serves its members: the network of 46 AONBs and this strategy has been created for all of them to adopt.
2. The strategy serves as an invitation to artists, producers, arts organisations and the cultural sector – professional and non-professional. It is also an invitation to existing and potential investors and other stakeholders or partners with an interest in arts and culture.
3. The strategy informs government departments and statutory bodies of this commitment to a way of working.

*steered by the earth's contours and natural lines of desire,  
feet firm on solid footings of bedrock and soil...*

The Fugitives, Simon Armitage

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### 1. Adopt the National Arts Strategy

Whilst recognising the independent nature and structure of the AONBs and the NAAONB, the responses that we have received from the vast majority of AONBs through this process has indicated that adopting an Arts Strategy at national level would be beneficial to the members when they subsequently propose to adopt it at local level.

*"The National Strategy is a good opportunity to focus thoughts on delivery of arts and cultural objectives and policies within the Management Plan and to broaden reach in terms of engagement and audience." Tamar Valley AONB.*

The process of developing the Strategy was grounded in the consultation across the network. A nationally and locally endorsed strategy will have strong currency in discussions with external agencies, both national agencies such as government and funders and locally with partners, arts and cultural organisations.

Thus, we recommend:

- the NAAONB adopt and endorse the Strategy and report at the Annual Chairs meeting;
- following on from this each AONB circulates the Strategy to all AONB's staff and members of AONB partnership boards;
- time is dedicated at full team meetings of each AONB and at partnership board for presentation and discussion of the Strategy;
- the Strategy is adopted by each AONB partnership board who agree an in principal commitment to invest in the proposed National resource;
- a five-year national action plan should then be drawn up (relating to Recommendation 8), endorsed by the National Steering Group and adopted by the NAAONB;
- recognising the unique sense of place each AONB has, each creates a local action plan of how the strategy can be implemented in their area within their Management plan and relating to the national plan.

*All 10 aims are addressed in the recommendation.*

## 2. Deliver a National Creative Projects Programme

In conversations we heard an overwhelmingly positive response to the commissioning of Simon Armitage's *'Fugitives'* poem inspired by landscape for the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Landscape Designations Act of Parliament. The poem and the different landscape-inspired heart manifestations imagined by the AONBs up and down the country created a national moment for bringing focus and profile. We recommend that national creative projects, of different forms, are adopted as a powerful activity in line with the aims for the AONBs.

Crucially the national creative projects need a simple artistic provocation at the centre. These ideas will be created by inviting experienced artists from diverse backgrounds into the AONBs and allowing their thinking, sometimes shared with scientists, ecologists, farmers or others to imagine new possibilities

They can offer the opportunity:

- for all AONBs to be involved;
- to be planned to share good practice and encourage peer to peer support;
- to be scalable so can be variation of delivery dependent upon local partners and resource – it is important to note that small budgets can be used resourcefully with artists;
- to create stories, images, film that can be used for gaining profile and inspiration for future projects;
- to take place over a specified period, such as Spring, or at the same time across the country such as building on the existing national Landscapes for Life week in late September each year;
- for collaboration with other national organisations, for example Culture Declares Emergency.

The projects could take a myriad of forms and utilise a wide range of art form practice: Poets in residence – such as the success of the work with Simon Armitage and the development of the relationship with the Laurel Prize and the residency programme; community dance; unexpected performers in the landscape, touring exhibitions; temporary projection installations; music in unexpected places; game type experiences; shared food moments – and many other creative potentials.

Research responses also strongly advocated for national creative projects to be clustered around specific themes, e.g., dark skies, coasts, ceremonial landscapes and hill forts. Where it may not be that every theme is relevant to each AONB we recommend careful analysis and planning to ensure that between the different themes all AONBs can participate in at least one of these projects.

A national project could build upon the focus and interest of an existing project that has been initiated by one AONB, such as a development of the Ash Project started by North Kent Downs AONB.

In the first instance there is a ready-made national project: the partnership with the Poetry School, Simon Armitage and the Laurel Prize which should be nurtured cemented and resourced.

*This recommendation relates directly to aim 6 and 9, and could relate to all the aims.*

### **3. Widen the welcome**

Many discussions throughout the research process have returned to who are the audience for the AONBs. There is recognition of an existing core audience that is older, predominately white and from higher socio-economic brackets and a real desire to see this diversified.

As reflected in the Landscapes Review introduction:

“... a lot more must be done to meet the needs of our many fellow citizens who do not know the countryside, or do not always feel welcome in it, but should be able to enjoy it. Our landscapes are open and free to all, but can seem exclusive.”

The NAAONB and many individual AONBs want to take positive action to set about broadening the reach of the work, which will result in far more people feeling connected to nature and wanting to be proactive in their tendency to nature conservation. Arts and culture are an excellent way to do this.

During the research process we were told of specific initiatives which purposefully set out to create strong links through programme initiatives with communities based in more urban areas outside of the AONB boundaries. These communities being targeted are where there are higher levels of people from BAMER and diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Some examples of this have been in Forest of Bowland through their Gatherings programme with In Situ arts, “Working alongside arts organisations in the delivery of our engagement work has widened the audiences who attend and participate in AONB projects and activities. We have been able to connect with people who would not normally be engaged in our work (in particular young people and BAMER communities)”; and a different example was with Nidderdale AONB taking a ‘taster’ programme of Upper Nidderdale in the City to the north of Leeds which attracted thousands of people.



Projects such as this and some of the learning from the Campaign for National Parks MOSAIC <sup>35</sup>programme in Wales and England which aimed to create sustained engagement between National Parks and new audiences, including BAMER communities, young people and others who have not visited National Parks before offer opportunities to build on. We understand this is currently being reviewed by DEFRA in light of the Landscapes Review.

We recommend that the AONBs work through arts and culture programmes to establish meaningful links, connections and visits with communities based in more urban areas outside of the AONB boundaries, particularly targeted where there are higher levels of people from BAMER and diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Projects could include photography and film; walking and drawing; lyric and song writing and cultural exchange.

Who people see leading projects is really important in their conscious and unconscious decision-making processes to become involved. We recommend a target for new arts and culture projects that at least 50% of the commissioned lead artists are from D/deaf and disabled, BAMER and lower socio-economic backgrounds. Equally, this should also be reflected in the teams brought in to work on the project and those participating in the work.

It may be that artists already have links and working practice with these communities that would be advantageous to build upon through new AONB projects and commissions, including co-creation models.

We recommend that the Steering Group and National lead will support the identifying of a cohort of interested artists that AONBs could then work with on creative projects. A sense of place should be valued and working with artists based locally is also important. Developing artists practice in areas with a lower population of resident artists will ensure the development of creative programmes across the AONBs is evenly spread. Recognising the lack of diversity in staff and partnership boards it may be necessary to bring in expertise to advise on appropriately experienced artists.

*This recommendation directly relates to aims 2 and could deliver on 1-9.*

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<sup>35</sup> MOSAIC: <https://www.cnp.org.uk/sector/mosaic>

#### **4. Develop the Governance**

As reported in the findings there is a relatively low level of membership by representatives from cultural organisations on AONB Management or Stakeholder groups. We see that it is important for these groups to gain a greater understanding and insight into the opportunities offered by the arts and recommend that the positive recruitment of at least one person from the culture sector to become a member of these Governance groups with a specific brief to help both the board and staff team to develop their engagement with the arts and to adopt the Strategy.

We recommend that focus is put into developing and making the most of the relationships with artists, arts and cultural organisations that either are located in or near the AONBs. The ongoing programmes; the Climate Emergency and artists' responses to this; the adoption of this Strategy and profile generated around this will make the potential for fostering these more possible than they have been. Finding contexts for these discussions may be around specific issues, such as nature renewal, development of new Landscape Partnership type programmes or they may be initiated by the Cultural sector, such as scoping for major projects such as bidding cities/regions for DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport)<sup>36</sup> sponsored UK City of Culture<sup>37</sup> programme. An example of this is how the development of a (not successful) bid for Great Places investment on the Isle of Wight led to closer working with the AONB and Culture organisations and subsequently led to a positive consortium bid to gain UNESCO Biosphere status for the island and reciprocally the AONB Lead Officer is a trustee of the Isle of White Collection (Culture Board).

*This recommendation supports the strategic vehicle through which all the aims can be achieved.*

#### **5. Advocate continually**

The best advocacy for this Strategy and the greater engagement with arts and culture will be from AONBs and staff members further commissioning and delivering and directly experiencing the engagement of new and existing audiences with the artworks and projects. The aim should be to ensure that arts and culture is integrated in delivering conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in the same way that

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<sup>36</sup> DCMS: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-digital-culture-media-sport>

<sup>37</sup> City of Culture article: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/insight-articles/city-culture-reflects>

'outreach' or 'education' currently are. As this journey develops, we recommend that the NAAONB, the Steering Group and individual AONBs continue to advocate for the work through an existing and ongoing programme of conferences, regular information briefings and presentations and through the dissemination of case studies, evaluation and research findings and any generated external coverage into the enhanced arts programme.

We recommend a dedicated area of the NAAONB's website to be created to showcase the arts programme and house the links to individual projects across the country.

*This recommendation supports the strategic vehicle through which all the aims can be achieved.*

## **6. Sustain and expand the National Arts and Culture Steering Group**

This current research programme has been guided by a steering group, comprised of representatives from the NAAONB and individual AONBs (from both Lead Officer and Officer level). This has been beneficial as it brings a range of viewpoints, regional perspectives and represents differing levels of existing engagement across the membership. We recommend that this is extended to become an ongoing steering group and that its membership is widened either by co-option or invitation to include places for representatives from artists, arts and culture organisations and that diversity is considered and reimbursement for time is offered.

*This recommendation represents the strategic vehicle through which all the aims can be achieved.*

## **7. Develop an understanding between NAAONB, AONBs and Arts Council England**

There is fortuitous timing in the planning cycle and a focus on future thinking, with ACE having published its ten-year strategy *Let's Create*<sup>38</sup>, DEFRA considering The Landscapes Review, and five yearly management plan reviews being drawn up by many of the AONB membership.

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<sup>38</sup> Let's Create Strategy: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate>

AONBs and crucially DEFRA are continuing to work through the implications of the National Landscapes review that advocates AONBs should be strengthened, with increased funding, governance reform, new shared purposes with National Parks, and a greater voice on development in order to serve the country better by improving their biodiversity, and the lives of people who work in them, live in them and enjoy them. There is a strong recognition by DEFRA and the AONBs of the need for far greater diversity of people, and through the Colchester Declaration there is the fundamental commitment to addressing the Climate Emergency.

There seem to be areas of clear convergence between these and the *Let's Create* core outcomes of;

- Creative People where everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life;
- Cultural Communities with villages, towns and cities thriving through a collaborative approach to culture with a creative and cultural country where England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international.

All being guided by the principles of ambition, quality, inclusivity, relevance, dynamism and environmental responsibility. [See the link to *Let's Create* in 'Further Reading']

This funded research process has seen a continuing and developing dialogue at strategic level between NAAONB, AONBs and ACE. We recommend that the NAAONB continue these discussions with ACE and develop an agreement based around these shared priorities. This agreement should look to the coming five years, as a trial period for joint working (and a mid-point in the Arts Council England strategy period) to increase arts and culture engagement within AONBs, with artists and organisations for people based both within and without them. The agreement should be monitored annually by senior ACE officers and the NAAONB and the Steering Group.

We recommend that as ACE refreshes its Rural Stakeholders group<sup>39</sup>, it invites a representative from the Steering group to the bi-annual meeting considering issues relating to arts and culture and rural communities. We recommend that ACE send officer/s to the NAAONB annual conference to understand the developing AONB context.

Depending upon the outcome of the work in Government related to resourcing recommendations made in the Landscapes Review, there could be a significant opportunity between DEFRA, DCMS, ACE and NAAONB around a partnership of joint

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<sup>39</sup> Arts Council England: Investing in Rural Communities: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/community-and-place/rural-positioning#section-1>

working on increasing engagement through arts and culture. The Agriculture Bill currently proposes public funding to support actions that deliver 'public goods' and the new Environmental Land Management schemes being developed include 'beauty, heritage and engagement' as one of the 'public goods.'

At the time of writing, COVID-19 is consuming almost all attention and we have been advised that Autumn 2020 would be the earliest time to make an approach. We recommend maintaining communication with Arts Council in the short term to try and secure a partnership that could resource a key national relationship between the NAAONB on behalf of its members and Arts Council England.

*This recommendation directly relates to aim 10 in order to achieve aims 1-9.*

## **8. Create a Core National Resource**

The NAAONB and AONBs are very lean organisations with extensive work plans and deliverables. Throughout the process, the need for increased staff capacity to develop arts and culture activity was identified. Many officers identified the benefit and catalyzing impact they could see of a resource that encouraged, inspired and advocated for arts and culture within the sector and beyond. The research with comparator organisations (National Trust, Canal & Rivers Trust, Forestry England and National Rural Touring Forum) shows that they have all successfully invested in a national resource which has included at least one dedicated officer who can lead nationally and support locally.

### **National Arts and Culture Development Manager**

To deliver on the vision and aims we recommend a new national role (with some administrative support), based within the NAAONB is fundraised for and recruited for a medium-term period of five years, with a delivery budget. (See Appendices for the suggested Job Purpose, Person Specification and Terms).

*This recommendation is the delivery vehicle through which all the aims are achieved.*

## **9. Create a Training and Professional Development Programme**

From the surveying work we undertook it is clear that AONBs and their staff have an identified need for specific training and capacity building and continuing professional development programmes in working with the arts. From discussion in the focus group and one to one conversations, it is clear that there is often a good

level of arts commissioning skills, creative people and existing experience base amongst officers, though sometimes this is not fully valued by the individual or their AONB. Equipping AONBs with the confidence and trust to invite the full agency of the artist and the arts is important.

To embed and deliver the vision and aims we recommend this potential is developed in a number of ways:

**Inspirational** – making detailed case studies of projects available (there are already a number of these – Wye Valley River Festival; Ash Project; Surrey Hills; Land of Bone and Stone; Lifecycles and Landscapes - which can be disseminated), commissioning online video interviews with AONB officers and artists on their work together and live presentations at future national conferences.

**Practical** – building on from the training delivered in this programme and the analysis of the usefulness of this, developing access to a set of bespoke resources e.g. project toolkit including planning guidance, suggested processes, timelines, budgeting advice, budget template, marketing and audience development; evaluation frameworks.

**Mutual Learning and Support** – cluster support and networking groups could emerge either from AONBs Taking The Lead programme<sup>40</sup>, the Communications Group or areas of interest such as Dark Skies. These groups would develop a term of reference for a specific period to offer mutual support, explore themes together, develop potential group collaboration and share artist information.

The training and professional development programme is to be managed by the national Arts and Culture Development Manager.

*This recommendation directly relates to aims 3, 4 and 7, and supports 6 and 8.*

*It was no easy leap, to exit the engine house of the head.....The Fugitives, Simon Armitage*

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<sup>40</sup> Landscapes for Life – Future Landscapes, Taking the lead project: <https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/about-us/future-landscapes>

## INVESTMENT

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In recognition that the National Association and its members' budgets are modest, being creative in allocating resources to arts and culture is paramount and there are numerous successful examples of this across the sector. However, to create a strategic and holistic investment approach, we recommend seizing an opportunity to collaborate with DEFRA and DCMS with the Arts Councils in England as referred to in Recommendation 7.

Initial investment from the AONBs is required to gear additional inward investment, as has been evidenced with success in this project (Art in the Landscape – Connecting People to Nature), the commissioning of *The Fugitives* and The Laurel Prize<sup>41</sup>. Further ongoing investment will be required from members for the proposed national programme.

It must be noted and clearly communicated to Arts Council that the NAAONB and its members do not have the large-scale arts budgets that other national organisations have managed to resource/repurpose from earned income. However, repurposing officer time and investing in-kind resources should be considered and valued and although there is a lower financial resource available there is the potential for high impact, given the partnership 'reach' of the AONB teams and thus the case for investment should be strong.

There will be two areas of investment required: strategic investment and delivery investment. There will be overlaps between the two of course, however, there are different avenues in securing these investment types as outlined below.

### Strategic Investment

Tier 1: aligning the adoption of this new strategy with the Glover recommendations could secure strategic investment through DCMS, DEFRA, Natural Resources Wales and Arts Council England and Wales into the core resource, ideally with a delivery budget attached. There could be an additional partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund programme<sup>42</sup>.

It is also worth considering that Arts Council England have a regular investment programme in which they invest in a 'National Portfolio' (NPO)<sup>43</sup> and put in place 4-

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<sup>41</sup> The Laurel Prize is an annual award for the best collection of nature or environmental poetry: <https://laurelprize.com/>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/>

<sup>43</sup> List of the national Portfolio of Arts Council England: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-investment/national-portfolio-2018-22>

year funding agreements and Arts Portfolio Wales<sup>44</sup> with the 5-year funding from Arts Council Wales. A parallel investment programme is for 'Sector Support Organisations' (SSO). None of the land guardian organisations are NPOs or SSOs. However, there may be an opportunity to create a new relationship where a regular investment could be explored with the Arts Council, using the Arts and Health South West model of a cross-sector organisational partnership that has secured regular funding for its invaluable work bringing together the arts and health sectors.

Tier 2: A second tier of strategic investment is the allocation of human resource from AONB Managers into incorporating arts and culture into their strategic plans, appointing a position at governance level and a lead in the staff team. Existing officers that deliver education and outreach could adapt their programmes to working in/with arts and cultural projects.

### **Delivery Investment**

Existing core resources could be used/repurposed as the arts can be a way of achieving the outcomes for example in education and outreach or communications. Personnel job functions could be redefined.

Partnership projects have been a vehicle for some AONBs to secure resources for arts projects. This could be through Landscape Partnership Schemes<sup>45</sup>, a partnership with another organization, or department in the council such as the example with Surrey Hills Arts and the AONB.

Fund-raising for the arts should be part of the role of the core national resource, however they will not be able to write all individual AONB applications for projects that are local to the AONB.

Lottery funds – AONBs are familiar with the National Lottery Heritage Funds, however Arts Council England manage Lottery funds and there are other lottery funds that could be used to support arts projects in communities with a social outcome focus such as The Community Fund.

There are other strategic Arts Council funding streams, which, depending on the location of an AONB could be an opportunity - for example Creative People and Places and the Great Place Scheme. Ensuring that the national resource keeps abreast of strategic funds as they are being developed and launched will be

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<sup>44</sup> List of the Arts Council Wales' Arts Portfolio Wales: <https://arts.wales/our-impact/how-we-help-make-art/arts-portfolio-wales>

<sup>45</sup> Landscape Partnership Schemes were schemes set up as part of the Heritage Lottery Funding Programme: <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/landscape-partnerships-evaluation>



important, especially Post-COVID-19, where there might be specific funds for rural areas to be developed.

Funding may be available from agencies such as Visit Wales, or Visit Britain<sup>46</sup> targeted at tourism development.

Other funding that could be explored is through research partnerships that can attract investment from bodies such as the Arts and Humanities Research Council<sup>47</sup> and The Wellcome Trust<sup>48</sup>. With the alignment to a number of strategic development areas including the health and wellbeing agenda, education, climate change, cultural tourism and associated economic regeneration, on top of the core purpose of the AONBs, there may be a number of other funding sources available to support arts and cultural projects.

Other Trusts and Foundations that have an interest in arts and the environment include Esmée Fairbairn Foundation<sup>49</sup>, Sainsbury Foundation/s<sup>50</sup> and Jerwood Arts Trust<sup>51</sup>. This list isn't exhaustive but these larger Foundations should be targeted for a joined-up approach to National Projects.

In light of the current situation with COVID-19, all funding is currently either on hold, focused on supporting existing organisations to deal with the crisis or offering funds to tackle the crisis. As we begin to move out of the current crisis, it is likely funding will focus on mental and physical well-being and tackling isolation and loneliness and the residual effects of the 'lock-down'. The transformational effect of both arts and the environment offers a way through these times that could support this valuable work.

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<sup>46</sup> Visit Britain: <https://www.visitbritain.com/gb/en>

<sup>47</sup> The Arts and Humanities Research Council is a British Research Council: <https://ahrc.ukri.org/>

<sup>48</sup> The Wellcome Trust exists to improve health by helping great ideas to thrive: <https://wellcome.ac.uk/>

<sup>49</sup> The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation aims to improve the quality of life for people and communities throughout the UK both now and in the future: <https://esmeefairbairn.org.uk/>

<sup>50</sup> The Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts is the operating office of 17 different independent grant-making trusts established by members of three generations of the Sainsbury family: <https://www.sfct.org.uk/>

<sup>51</sup> Jerwood Arts funds UK artists, curators and producers: <https://jerwoodarts.org/>

## **IMMEDIATE TIMEFRAME**

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- Autumn 2020: approval and adoption of the strategy
- Autumn 2020: meet Arts Council England
- Winter 2020/21: convene meeting with DCMS, DEFRA, ACE and NAAONB
- Early 2021: investment secured
- Spring 2021: National Appointment and programme start

## **APPENDICES**

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### **APPENDIX 1 NATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

#### **Purpose of role**

1. To co-ordinate the delivery of the arts strategy on behalf of NAAONB and all its members
2. To create and manage a five-year action plan based on this strategy and set of recommendations
3. To inspire and advocate for the arts within the sector
4. Create a set of resources / toolkits to assist all AONBs
5. Support existing structures in peer to peer networks and sharing best practice
6. Ensure that diversity, climate emergency, health and wellbeing are at the core of the delivery plan and practice
7. Create and deliver site-responsive national projects
8. Be a spokesperson for arts and culture within AONBs
9. Broker relationships with artists and cultural organisations
10. Support individual AONBs with feedback on local project ideas and funding bids
11. Build partnerships with existing and future funders e.g. manage ongoing relationship with Arts Council England and develop the relationship with Arts Council Wales
12. Sustain close relationship within the arts sector
13. Create a relationship with Forestry England, Canals & Rivers Trust and National Trust arts programmes through the National Agencies Group with Arts Council England
14. Manage national PR and profile gained through the programme
15. Develop evaluation framework and research partnerships with University sector

#### **Person Specification**

- Broad range of arts form understanding and arts development practice
- Understanding and/or appreciation of landscapes, specifically AONBs
- Management and brokering experience
- Strong partnership working experience
- Multi-partnership project development experience
- Experience at a national scale

- Understanding of public, private and voluntary sectors
- Understanding of producing work in sensitive landscapes
- Understand public sector
- Experience of securing investment for arts programmes
- Excellent communication and diplomacy skills

### **Terms of the role**

- Can be based anywhere geographically, could be based within an AONB, could be based with an existing culture organisation or sit independently
- Full-time for five years
- Reports to national arts and culture steering group, line managed by CEO NAAONB or Chair of steering group (there would need to be a financial recognition for this)

## **APPENDIX 2 COMPARATOR ORGANISATIONS**

Three major land steward organisations, National Trust (NT), Forestry England and Canals & River Trust have invested in contemporary art programmes over the past decade or so and have held Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with Arts Council England. Initiated in 2007 when ACE had adopted Great Art for Everyone as a mission and launched Turning Points, a 10-year strategy for the visual arts. Turning Points wanted more opportunities for people to experience and engage with the contemporary arts wherever they were in the country and to develop an understanding of contemporary art in its historical and cultural context. They all come together with ACE in the National Agencies Group.

We spoke with key representatives from the three organisations and how they offer models for this work, at the same time recognizing that they are very different types of organisations to the AONBs.

### **National Trust – Trust New Art**

The National Trust then and now holds a huge resource for the arts through its property, land and collections. Many shared objectives existed between NT and ACE, and an MOU was created to crystallise this partnership. This was always intended as a long-term relationship to encompass commissions, exhibitions, residencies, learning programmes, audience development and sales of contemporary arts and crafts. Core to the first MOU was; a joint project board; the adoption of a pilot programme with

resourcing from both NT and ACE; and the appointment of a new role, 'Contemporary Art and Craft Project Director'.

From the formation of the programme in 2008, scores of projects have been delivered across the country (including Wales when an MOU was established with Arts Council Wales). The journey has seen NT and ACE invest in central and devolved resources which have supported a core team based in Swindon and professional curators and project managers in the different areas/regions. The programme has worked with 150 sites, reached 10M people (including digital reach). The programme celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2019 with a series of projects and a publication.

Starting from the visual arts base the range of work has included performance, writing, film, dance, participative arts and more. The core staff team now also includes a specialism for outdoor arts projects in their landscape settings. NT have supported, not consistently, regional hubs, some of which have included curatorial and project management expertise and allowed regionally based peer to peer learning.

NT and ACE are now within the third term of their MOU running till 2022, the shared vision states, "The parties believe that high quality contemporary arts and cultural experiences can be a catalyst for change, enrich people's lives and contribute to health and the wellbeing of the nation. The parties know that contemporary arts and cultural programmes in heritage and natural settings can create greater relevance and connection between people and places, reach new audiences, inform new perspectives and stimulate valuable debate.'

The relationships Trust New Art has helped foster have acted as a catalyst to other projects, such as 14- 18 NOW (the national arts programme to commemorate WWI) choosing NT as a major delivery partner in their closing project, Danny Boyle's 'Pages of the Sea'.

### **Forestry England – Forest Arts Works**

The Forestry Commission (as it was then) had supported contemporary arts for many decades particularly through Grizedale Arts in the Lake District and other sited sculpture exhibitions. Within a similar context to the creation of Trust New Art, an MOU and programme was developed with ACE which saw the adoption of a first MOU in 2012 and a second one in 2016. The shared vision, "Forestry Commission England will work with ACE to support achieving Great Art and Culture for Everyone in England's public forests. We believe that great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better."

This is manifested in a national network of arts partnership programmes across England's Woods and Forests featuring site specific commissions, trails, events and festivals. It nurtures new and emerging artists as well as more established ones. Virtual reality experiences, composers and writers in residence, large scale photographic exhibitions, theatre shows for runners and walkers and long term sited sculptural works have all been commissioned. Major commissions have been co-funded and delivered with arts partners such as Abandon Normal Devices festival and with the Jerwood Foundation for two editions of Jerwood Open Forest programme.

Particular industry attention has focused on their innovative commissioning of digital art works and the impressive work based at Grizedale. Ongoing research showed that many of the audiences have been new to the forests.

### **Canals & Rivers Trust – Arts on the Waterways**

Developed first as British Waterways (working with The Waterways Trust) Arts on the Waterways has a core vision in, 'Transforming places and enriching lives. Providing artists with time and along the waterways to slow down, research and make ambitious new work responding to important social, environmental and heritage questions.'

The programme is now seen by C&RT in helping to deliver their mission to change public attitudes to its canals and rivers and engage with a wider diversity of people that live along them. Helping people reimagine their waterways for the future.

Amongst many major projects has been Super Slow Way – working with socially engaged arts projects inspired by Leeds and Liverpool Canal and part of the ACE Creative People and Places programme. The success has inspired the role out of this model in the Hinterlands project; a national programme taking place in three locations – Sheffield, East London and South Wales. These projects help demonstrate real wellbeing benefits for visitors in terms of engagement, mental health and creative skills.

Unlike the other two national organisations, C&RT are developing an Arts Strategy outside of the ACE MOU to be endorsed by the Board and senior management and be embedded by the whole organization.

## **Where we see there is learning from these land steward organisations for the NAAONB**

- The MOU agreements with ACE have ensured that at some point there has been the most senior level endorsement of the shared values of the programmes.
- All have employed a national lead officer, (in the case of the comparator organisations, the leads have all come from a predominately visual arts backgrounds).
- All have identified and invested their own resources into a national lead and programme.
- All have adopted an overview of themes for specific periods.
- All have noted an ability to secure higher profile artists and project partners for national projects.
- They recognize that it has been more strategic to have fewer conversations with ACE and other funders from individuals across the organisations; this avoids competing large bids going in at the same time and increases the chance of success.

## **Significant differences with AONBs**

- All three above 'comparators' are national organisations with one board, though they each do devolve operating responsibilities to areas or properties.
- All have specific estates that they own where they can invite artists to respond to. The estates in different ways can generate income, which can go towards paying the costs of art programmes.
- All have existing national and regional structures and teams such as communications who meet and share approaches to supporting arts programmes.
- They all have, to some degree, cultural and heritage collections, which at times they directly offer up to artists to respond to with contemporary projects.

These shared features highlight many of the differences with AONBs which operate in a smaller, non-hierarchical way where it is the quality of the partnership working that is important in delivering their mission and programmes and the level of financial resource is more modest. Other models of match funding for an investor such as Arts Council would therefore be advised – valuing the in-kind resources levered through the partnership approach. The value of the reach into rural isolated communities cannot be underestimated currently.

## **National Rural Touring Forum**

To find a comparator organisation that shared a more similar model to that favoured by the NAAONB and its members, we looked to the National Rural Touring Forum (NRTF). The NRTF is 'an organisation that networks, develops and supports the delivery of high-quality creative experiences across rural areas in the UK. The aim of the Forum is to strengthen and support rural communities to bring professional work to their venues.' As stated on their website:

'NRTF members are made up of a national network of Rural Touring Schemes who programme menus of professional artistic events that tour in their region. We also have artist, venue, promoter, producer and festival members all promoting and developing professional work for rural settings.

NRTF provides its members with opportunities for training, making connections, showcases, research, discussion and advocacy. It also develops strategic projects that enable national & international partnerships and commissions. We sit on Arts Council Rural Stakeholders panels to lobby for support in the rural sectors and highlight the importance of meeting the needs of rural audiences and communities. We also lobby at government level and throughout the creative and cultural sectors. Through research and advocacy, the NRTF aims to promote a better understanding of the value of rural arts and touring.'

NRTF was set up over twenty years ago and two years ago they appointed a Director who replaced their development lead who also ran one of the county-based rural touring schemes. In consulting the director, it was clear there was a synergy between their model and the NAAONB. They too have direct funding from ACE and a membership base of independent organisations delivering similar programmes that are funded by ACE. Many operate within AONBs and some are already working in partnership with their AONB, in Dorset for example. All have modest budgets and value the core resource offered by the National Forum. They consult their member base to create national projects that benefit the members and they raise additional resources in order to deliver these programmes.

The NRTF is an ACE NPO and also fulfils some of the functions of an SSO, although is not funded under this category by ACE. The Director of the NRTF is interested in the work of the AONBs and might also make a valuable partner.



## **APPENDIX 3 SURVEY FINDINGS**

There was a very good response to the Organisational level surveys from 18 AONBS and over 30 individual officer surveys completed. There was some very rich detail from the surveys which fed into a focus group meeting in Reading and the 121 meetings. They also gave us some materials for some potential case studies. The headline statistics:

### **Organisational Surveys**

24 responses

18 AONB

Key themes that emerged and were then discussed at 1-1 / Focus Groups:

- diversity of engagement in the landscape
- the well-being agenda
- partnership working
- the challenge of being 'time-poor'
- funding

Do you currently have arts & cultural activity embedded into your AONB Strategic Management and Delivery Plan?

41% Yes

50% No

Do you have any representation from cultural organisations in your partnerships, governance structure or funding?

61% Yes

39% No

### **Individual Surveys**

31 responses

11 AONB

84% Yes have experience of working with the arts.

100% believe arts & culture can help people engage with landscape

93% interested in working with arts & culture

With the provision of a national strategy for embedding arts into AONB management and delivery, are there any specific opportunities, challenges, considerations that relate to your role?

Top responses include:

- open up a whole new range of partners and audiences,
- understanding the value of arts (from teams & partners)
- capacity / time / resources constraints
- integration rather than simple bolt on
- difference in language used between sectors

In your opinion how might a national strategy for all AONB's make it easier for you to understand and integrate arts into your role?

Responses include:

- delivery and buy in by teams and partners
- improve understanding
- guide activity and integration into delivery and individual sites

Would you be interested in training?

50% Yes interested  
13% No  
36 % Maybe

## **Focus Groups**

We ran a focus group meeting in Reading on 3 March, which was attended by 8 different AONBs including 3 of the Steering Group. We explored the recurring themes that came out of the surveys and tested some of the thinking we had been doing post meetings with the other land guardians and some of the research we had undertaken. As we had very little interest in the Leeds Focus Group, we undertook 14 one to one calls. This also includes feedback from some respondents who couldn't make either date for a focus group and wanted to discuss the project further with us.

## **APPENDIX 4 AUTHORS**

### **Kate Wood, Executive and Artistic Director Activate**

Kate is a senior arts manager and has nearly twenty-five years of working in the arts and creative industries, from performing and tour management, through to her current Director roles, taking Activate from a county-based organization to one working with artists and producers from all over Europe and one that works on major projects such as Danny Boyles 14-18 Now project Pages of the Sea.

She is Co-Artistic Director of Inside Out Dorset helping to commission land-based performance and make the festival nationally distinctive. Kate has led the organisation into several National and European partnerships including Life Cycles and Landscapes, PASS Channel Circus, Coasters Strategic Touring Programme, LAND (land stewards and artists), Green Carpet in order to support, commission and present extraordinary artists and artistic work.

A regular speaker at events and consultant on the development of theatre, dance and outdoor arts, she has served on the Area Council for Arts Council England South West and on strategy boards locally and nationally for the past 15 years. Kate was also a social enterprise business advisor for the co-operative and creative industries in a former life and has sat on several boards ranging from regional outdoor arts development to creative industries development in Dorset.

### **Bill Gee, FRSA**

Bill works as artistic, creative and festival director working with a variety of art form practices for diverse audiences, particularly in site responsive and site-specific outdoor and public realm contexts. He also offers strategic thinking, scoping and support to organisations in the formulation of medium & long-term creative planning.

Currently working with The Stables for IF Milton Keynes International Festival as Creative Director that he has developed with Monica Ferguson since 2009; since 2006 Bill has been co-artistic director of the Inside Out Dorset festival; Executive Producer with Imagineer Productions for a Coventry 2021 major project; artistic associate for Bloomsbury festival and for the funded Seedbed R&D residencies at 101 Outdoor Arts Creation Space, Newbury.

In 2017 Bill undertook a consultancy for the Canal & River Trust conceptualising how the bicentenary of the Regent's Canal could be celebrated through the arts; this followed on from in 2016 a consultancy for the then new Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan visioning an Aerial Art Park for East London and the Thames Gateway.

Previously, Bill has run festivals and programmes for Mayor of London, De La Warr Pavilion; Canary Wharf Group Plc.; NOTT Dance and Nottinghamshire County Council. He has produced work by artists including Metis Arts; Jyll Bradley; Dries Verhoeven; Gob Squad; Kaffe Matthews and Nutkhut.

Bill was Chair 2009 – 2012, of ISAN – the UK’s national organisation for the development of outdoor arts, from 2007 to 2013 he was a regional council member for Arts Council England, East Midlands. He was a founding Trustee of Bristol based, maverick, live-art festival In Between Time. Bill is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

In developing this strategy, the authors received advice and support from **Graham Devlin CBE**.

Graham is a creative artist, senior arts manager and cultural strategist. He began his career as an opera and stage director and writer until 1999 when he became Deputy Secretary General and Acting Chief Executive of the Arts Council of England. He ran the successful new writing and music-theatre company, Major Road, for over 20 years whilst also working in dance and opera, directing and writing freelance for, amongst others, the National Theatre, Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne, Sydney Opera House, the Aldeburgh Festival and several regional theatres. Overall, he has directed more than 90 theatre shows. He was appointed CBE in the 2010 New Year’s honours list for services to the arts.

He has served on numerous Arts Council and Government committees and worked for many public agencies, including all four UK Arts Councils, a number of government departments in England, Scotland and Wales and local authorities such as London, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow. He has developed cultural strategies for, amongst others, the National Trust, the then British Waterways Board and the Forestry Commission as well as strategic reviews and planning for Birmingham, Coventry, Derby, Edinburgh, Hong Kong, Liverpool and the British Council. Recently, he led the London Borough of Lambeth’s bid to be London’s inaugural borough of culture which formed the basis for the borough’s five-year cultural strategy and developed the cultural strategy for the British Land development at Canada Water.

## **APPENDIX 5 ART IN THE LANDSCAPE STEERING GROUP MEMBERS**

Howard Davies, CEO – NAAONB

Clare Elbourne, Administrative Officer – NAAONB

Sue Dampney, Culture Community & Learning Officer – Dorset AONB

Jenny Carey-Wood, Manager – North Devon Coast AONB

Alison Clarke, Programme Manager – Surrey Hill Arts

Lucy Galvin, Communication Officer – Norfolk Coast Partnership

Sarah Hudspeth (formerly Chris Woodley-Stewart), Communications Lead – North Pennines AONB Partnership

David Shiel, Area Manager – Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB

Lucy Barron, Manager - Arnside and Silverdale AONB

Sarah Sawyer, Community Links Officer – Wye Valley AONB

Madelaine Hodge (until departure to Australia), Art and Inspiration Manager – Kent Downs AONB

## **APPENDIX 6 FURTHER READING**

The Landscape Review (Glover Review):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

Campaign for National Parks: Mosaic Programme:

<https://www.cnp.org.uk/sector/mosaic>

Nature Connectedness Research Blog by Prof. Miles Richardson:

<https://findingnature.org.uk/>

Nature Connectedness Research Group – University of Derby:

<https://www.derby.ac.uk/research/about-our-research/centres-groups/nature-connectedness-research-group/>

Arts Council England *Let's Create* Ten Year Strategy:

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate>

Arts Council England Rural Evidence and Data Review:

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/community-and-place/rural-evidence-and-data-review#section-1>

National Association of AONBs Statement of Intent:

<https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/about-aonbs/art-landscape/statement-intent>

The Colchester Declaration:

[https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/7815/6326/2583/The\\_Colchester\\_Declaration.pdf](https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/7815/6326/2583/The_Colchester_Declaration.pdf)

Forestry England - Forest Arts Works: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/forest-art-works>

National Trust - Trust New Art: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/trust-new-art-exhibitions-and-events>

Canals and Rivers Trust – Arts on the Waterways: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/waterway-arts>

National Rural Touring Consortium: <https://www.ruraltouring.org/about/>

Life Cycles and Landscapes and the Wayfaring project Activate, Norfolk Coast Partnership, North Wessex Downs AONB and Dorset AONB:

<https://activateperformingarts.org.uk/project/life-cycles-landscapes-0>

Ash Project Kent Downs AONB: <https://www.kentdowns.org.uk/our-projects/the-ash-project/>

Wye Valley River Festival Wye Valley AONB:

<https://www.wyevalleyaonb.org.uk/caring-for-wye-valley-aonb/river-festival/>

Drawn to the Valley – The Heralds of Spring Tamar Valley AONB:

<http://www.tamarvalley.org.uk/the-heralds-of-spring-drawn-to-the-valley-spring-exhibition/>

Bowlands Arts and Crafts Forest of Bowland AONB:

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/Arts-Crafts-Rural-Skills-0>

Carnival associated to Biosphere Reserve Isle of Wight AONB:

<https://onthewight.com/isle-of-wight-becomes-uks-latest-unesco-biosphere-reserve/>

South Dorset Ridgeway Landscape Partnership Dorset AONB:

<https://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/project/south-dorset-ridgeway/>

Shows and Festivals Nidderdale AONB: <https://nidderdaleaonb.org.uk/events/shows-and-festivals/>

Harvest Moon Surrey Hills AONB: <https://www.surreyhills.org/events/harvest-2019-one-moon/>

Pallant House Chichester Harbour Conservancy: <https://pallant.org.uk/learn-with-us/community-programme/>

Thelma Hulbert Gallery East Devon Coast AONB:  
<https://www.thelmahulbert.com/?q=exhibitions/experiencing-landscape-art-east-devon-way>

Super Slow Way Creative People and Places (C&RT):  
<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/waterway-arts/super-slow-way>

Laurel Prize: <https://laurelprize.com/>

Nature Concert Hall: <http://www.natureconcerthall.com/>

Journal for Nature Conservation, Merging science and arts to communicate nature conservation Otars Opermanis, Silvija N. Kalnins, Ainars Aunins. Faculty of Biology, University of Latvia, Jelgavas iela 1, Riga LV-1586, Latvia, Institute of Environment and Heating Systems, Riga Technical University, Kronvalda bulvaris 1, Riga LV-1010, Latvia: <http://www.dabaskonzertzale.lv/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Opermanis-et-al.-2015.pdf>

Re-imagining the environment: using an environmental art festival to encourage pro-environmental behaviour and a sense of place, Marks, Megan, Chandler, L, Baldwin, C:

<http://research.usc.edu.au/vital/access/manager/Repository/usc:13461>

Towards ecological sustainability: observations on the role of the arts, David J. Curtis, Nick Reid and Ian Reeve: <https://journals.openedition.org/sapiens/1655>