

1. Use of Colour in Design

The AONB team has commissioned studies in the use of colour in design for developments within the nationally designated landscapes. Field research is currently being undertaken, which will be followed by the development of a colour palette for use in different landscape character types. The work is designed to inform development proposals on the use of colour to reflect the local character. Representatives of the Local Planning Authorities have been invited to contribute to the development of the work.

2. Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB Boundary Review

Natural England have informed the AONB team that it is aiming to start the consultation on the proposed extension to the SC&H AONB with the statutory local authorities in January 2018. This consultation will be opened up to anyone who has an interest in the proposed extensions.

3. Volunteer Action

Volunteers have been busy on a variety of work including the creation of community tree nurseries, the creation of pollinator patches and footpath clearance. Our two placement volunteers, Charlotte and Holly who are with us for six months, have already proved themselves invaluable undertaking conservation tasks and building their own experience.

4. Planning

There are currently several large planning issues across the two AONBs including:

- Konings in the Dedham Vale (which the AONB objected to)
- A consultation on Suffolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan for preferred options
- River Stour Mussel Fishery Order
- Environmental Impact Assessment scoping for East Anglia ONE North / East Anglia TWO offshore wind farms

Given the increase in development applications impacting upon the nationally designated landscapes the AONB's Advisory Committee have approved a re jiggling of resources to bring in an AONB Planning Officer. This post will be advertised in early January 2018.

5. 422 items of litter per 100m of beach

That is one of the awful statistics from Suffolk that formed part of the Great British Beach Clean. (The figure for 5 stretches in Essex was 2,552). The AONB team have been active in supporting teams to undertake this work, but it remains a constant problem to the visual amenity, public safety and a hazard to wildlife.

<http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/volunteering/volunteering-learn-more/beachwatch/>

6. Review of Housing in AONBs

The National Association for AONBs and the Campaign to Protect Rural England commissioned a report into housing in England's AONBs. Among other findings it reported:

- A growing number of planning applications for housing within AONB designated areas as well as in the setting of AONBs between 2012-2017
- A growing number of appeal cases for schemes more than 10 units in each year between 2012-2017 both within AONBs and within 500m

See <http://www.landscapesforlife.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Housing-in-AONBs-Report.pdf>

7. Welcome to the AONB?

The AONBs Combined Joint Advisory Committee have agreed to a project to consider the introduction of boundary or awareness signs at or near the AONB boundary. The intention is to increase awareness of the nationally designated landscapes, but is mindful of the need to avoid clutter of signs.

8. Shotley Walk Explorer

Shotley Walk Explorer Guide, a new revised edition of the Shotley Walk Explorer is now available. This edition has been expanded to include FOUR walks (the previous edition had two) so there is now even more to explore at Shotley! Free to download:

<http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/publications/walking-and-cycling-guides/explorer-walk-guides/>

Thanks to various Shotley organisations for supporting the production of this guide

9. Essex Police Rural Crime Strategy launched

See www.essexruralpartnership.org.uk/Rural_Crime/Essex_Police_Rural_Crime_Strategy.aspx

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