

It is with great sadness to report the separate deaths of two people that have done so much for the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley.

Rachel Hoskin worked with the team in 2004, on volunteer tasks, visitor management work and wildlife projects before moving on to Natural England and then Footprint Ecology. At the later she developed much of the work relating to the mitigation of harmful impacts on designated sites in Suffolk and Essex. Her skills, knowledge and character will be sorely missed by all those that knew her.

Roger Drury, who among many other interests, was a long term member of the AONB Partnership. He was instrumental in encouraging Parish Councils and local societies to support the work of the AONB team. His great knowledge of the planning system, talent to act as a champion for the things he believed in and ability to encourage others to do what he saw as the right thing to do will be a loss to not just the Dedham Vale but all those he came into contact with him.

Our thoughts are with their family and friends.

### 1. **2,000 trees and counting**

The River Stour Enhancement Project, a joint initiative between the AONB team and the Environment Agency have planted 2,000 native trees as part of work to improve the environmental conditions of the Stour and its tributaries. The project has just received a permit to deliver 45 features over more than 1 mile of the Brett. It is a tribute to the landowners, team and funders that there is so much energy to deliver what we consider will become the best stretch of the Brett for landscape and wildlife.

### 2. **Marine Pioneer: The legacy starts here.**

For nearly three years the marine pioneer, funded by DEFRA and the AONB, has been seeking to influence how decision makers consider the environment. The project will shortly report its findings to DEFRA, but in a UK first, it has been demonstrating a tool that identifies how businesses and public sector organisations interact with and depend upon the natural world. A summary of this work will be made available on the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB website shortly.

### 3. **Colchester Declaration for Nature: An Update**

The declaration relates to the AONB networks response to the challenges of climate change and wildlife decline. At a national level the AONB network is developing a grant application for a pilot project to deliver the aspirations of the declaration while at a local level the team is developing a Nature Recovery Plan for each of the AONBs. The designated landscapes are keen to demonstrate their commitment to playing its part in nature recovery.

### 4. **A swift project**

The AONB team is working closely with the Stour Valley Farmer Cluster group on a substantial bid to National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative. Prior to that the two groups are working to deliver a project to support the swifts by installing swift boxes and 'micro callers' to attract the birds to potential new homes. Landowners are due to attend some free training before installing the boxes and callers, funded by the AONB, in around 9 locations. This work will build on the work already being undertaken by some highly impressive groups in and around the AONBs.

### 5. **More energy projects?**

National Grid's published Network Opportunity Assessment has identified two further projects that have the potential to significantly impact on the AONBs. Both the Bramford to Twinstead and Suffolk to Kent projects have 'proceed' status in the document and we wait to hear more of the detail of these energy transmission projects and how they may impact the nationally designated landscapes.

### 6. **Quick Bits:**

- Dedham Parish Council have installed a water fountain. Less reason for single use plastic bottles
- **Dedham Vale Stour Valley Forum 2020 will be held on 20 May. Details to follow.**
- Suffolk Coast Against Retreat AGM to be held on Saturday 7 March. Always informative
- Munnings Museum putting on an exhibition of paintings to mark anniversary of AONB (from April)
- Hurry up for CPRE's star count: 21-28 Feb
- Jules Pretty Lecture on the East Country: See SPS website. Unmissable

Simon Amstutz, AONB Manager, 25 February 2020

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