

- 1. AONB Chairs sign off on Colchester Declaration, a collective approach to nature recovery**

The Colchester Declaration, a commitment from the national network of AONBs to address the twin issues of wildlife decline and climate change, was signed off by AONB Chairman at its recent conference. The declaration that was developed at the L4L20 conference held at the University of Essex, Colchester, and will commit AONBs to playing their part in nature recovery. See a one page summary at: https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/7815/6326/2583/The_Colchester_Declaration.pdf
- 2. National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) Position Statement on Housing**

The NAAONB has agreed a position statement on housing in AONBs. This will shortly be available on the Landscapes for Life website but copies are available from simon.amstutz@suffolk.gov.uk It is recommended that local planning authorities carry out a transparent assessment demonstrating how they have had regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB in deciding the level of housing provision proposed, the type of homes and the distribution of those homes. This should demonstrate how:

 - great weight has been given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB,
 - the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and heritage has been taken into account, and
 - the scale and extent of development within the AONB has been limited.
- 3. Last Sustainable Development grant for 2019/20 awarded in Dedham Vale AONB**

A grant of over £4,500 has been awarded to a group in Nayland for a permissive access path and tree planting in the Nayland Conservation Fields. The AONB will be looking to open its grants programme in the new year for projects that contribute to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the two AONBs. Start thinking about potential projects now.
- 4. LEADER Project: Enhancing the visitor experience**

The European funded project, hosted at the AONB, continues to support the River Stour Festival and The Wool Towns Association whilst facilitating a Stour Valley Business Network, all working together to promote the Stour valley as a visitor destination. A film, *Stour Surroundings*, will be launched at an event on Thursday 30th Jan 2020 at Firstsite in Colchester, with subsequent viewings at venues in East Anglia throughout February. The project is working with a local sound artist to produce a series of podcasts about visitor activity in the Stour Valley, as well as a series of new publications to provide information to visitors.
- 5. Offshore windfarm applications accepted by the Planning Inspectorate**

The Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects proposed by ScottishPower Renewables for two wind arrays off the Suffolk coast, known as East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two have been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate for examination. More information and proposed timetables will be posted on the Inspectorate's website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>
- 6. AONB staff changes**

Emma Black has increased her hours to cover the vacancy left by the departure of Lynn Allen in the role of Countryside Projects Officer. Emma has a fantastic track record in volunteer development, environmental education and community engagement in the Dedham Vale and she will bring these skills to the work on the Suffolk coast through Beachwatch, Education and Community engagement.
- 7. England Coast Update: Delay on Publication of England Coast Path stretches**

Natural England have informed the AONB team of a delay to the publication of the Suffolk coast sections of the England Coast Path due to the forthcoming general election and the need to abide by election rules. Up to date information at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-in-the-east-of-england>
- 8. Quick Bits:**
 - The Government has updated its advice on how to consider light in the planning system: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/light-pollution>
 - Landscapes for Life Week 2020 will be held between 19 and 27 Sept.
 - The National Lottery Community Fund launches a climate action fund of £100m over 10 years see: <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/climate-action-fund%23section-2>

Simon Amstutz, AONB Manager, 28 Nov 2019 simon.amstutz@suffolk.gov.uk

www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org

www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org