

## **GOWER AONB PARTNERSHIP**

### **GOWER AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL OF FINAL PLAN**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Gower AONB Management Plan (2016) has been produced by the AONB Team on behalf of the Gower AONB Partnership. Once adopted by the Council under the Local Development Plan (LDP), it will form Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within and affecting the AONB. A copy of the Management Plan is appended to this report.
- 1.2 The Gower AONB Partnership is the advisory body to the Council, convened by them, to facilitate the management of the Gower AONB. The Partnership works to support the activity of everyone – local landowners, farmer, businesses, visitors, community groups and individuals - in their conservation and enhancement of natural beauty. The Partnership includes the key stakeholders in the AONB representing a wide range of interests. Terms of Reference are incorporated into the Council's Constitution, and the Partnership includes CCS Councillors, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) representatives plus 10 others elected at the Annual Forum.
- 1.3 The Steering Group of the Partnership is responsible for overseeing the management of the AONB, and is responsible for the development of policy and strategy for the AONB area, particularly through the AONB Management Plan. Specific responsibilities of the Steering Group include the preparation of the AONB Management Plan on behalf of the City and County of Swansea, as well as the coordination of its implementation.
- 1.4 The current adopted Management Plan was first published in 2006 and has been overdue for a review. This report provides an overview of the Management Plan review and consultation. Formal approval of the finalised Management Plan is now required from the Steering Group to take it to Planning Committee to approve its adoption as SPG.

#### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The first statutory Gower AONB Management Plan was adopted by the Council and published in 2006. The plan was the result of wide-ranging consultation, with involvement from stakeholders over more than two years in meetings, focus groups, site visits, presentations and consultations.

2.3 This first review of the management plan was initiated in 2010, but has been protracted for a number of reasons. Production of the final Gower AONB Management Plan (2016) has been preceded by review activities, including:

- Statutory notifications letters (to Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and Welsh Government) of an intention to review the management plan
- Stakeholder Workshops (in May 2010) to identify key issues for the Management Plan review
- SEA scoping report and consultation (in autumn 2010) with Cadw, CCW and the Environment Agency (the latter two now combined in NRW); and more recently
- Consultation with the AONB Partnership Steering Group and NRW (in summer 2013) on a draft State of the AONB report
- Public consultation on the draft Management Plan and supporting documentation in 2014/15.

2.4 The final Management Plan retains much of the structure and format of the 2006 Plan and comprises the following chapters

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>1: Introduction</b>	An overview of: the Gower AONB; AONB management and management planning; links with other plans and strategies
<b>2: Resources</b>	Updates the characteristic of the special qualities of the Gower AONB - including their extent and condition - under four themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural</li> <li>• Cultural</li> <li>• Environmental</li> <li>• Recreation</li> </ul>
<b>3: Activities and Pressures</b>	An assessment of the activities and pressures acting on the special qualities of the AONB and how they may change in the future.
<b>4: The Vision</b>	The overall 20-year vision for the AONB, expressing the desirable condition, with specific vision statements for 14 key themes.
<b>5: The Strategy</b>	5-year objectives and policies for each of the 14 key themes
<b>6: Action Plan</b>	A 5-year action plan (2014-18) to achieve the objectives and implement policy.
<b>7: Implementation Monitoring and Review</b>	Monitoring and review requirements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the implementation of the management plan</li> <li>• reporting on the condition of the AONB special qualities</li> </ul>

### **3.0 Consultation on Draft Management Plan**

3.1 Formal consultation responses on the draft Management Plan were received from the following organisations:

Natural Resources Wales

The National Trust

The Gower Society

The Countryside Management System Consortium

Swansea Bay Sustainable Travel and Transport Partnership (Baytrans)

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)

Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales

South Wales Police

Friends of Swansea Horses

Responses were also received from ten private individuals/businesses.

3.2 The attached Consultation Report details the responses received and the consequent amendments incorporated into the final Management Plan.

### **4.0 Resources and Legal Implications**

4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from the adoption of the reviewed Management Plan. Implementation of the Action Plan in Chapter 6 will need to be accommodated within existing CCS budgets and staff resources, but also through working collaboratively with AONB partners and stakeholders to secure additional external resources.

5.2 The Gower AONB Management Plan (2016) will be a material planning consideration when determining planning applications in and affecting the AONB once adopted as SPG to the future adopted LDP. To be clear, the LDP is a critical aspect in the maintenance of the AONB's special qualities – in that it is through the LDP policy that development is controlled. The AONB Management Plan does not override the LDP, but is expected to give a clear indication of how LDP policies should address development issues in the AONB.

#### **Appendices:**

Gower AONB Management Plan (2016)  
Consultation Report

**CHRIS LINDLEY**  
**GOWER AONB TEAM LEADER**  
**5 December 2016**