

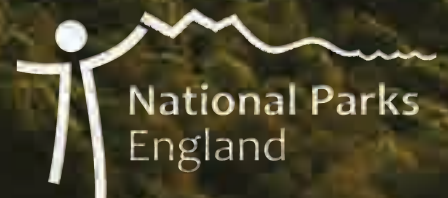
So much more than the view...

England's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks



Landscapes
for life
.org.uk

{ THE NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
Areas of Outstanding
Natural Beauty

National Parks
England

Introduction

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and National Parks are the most beautiful and cherished landscapes in England. They are rightly regarded as a treasured natural resource and are internationally recognised for their special qualities.

Covering a quarter of England, these are our finest landscapes, with iconic archaeological, geological and historical sites and valuable wildlife habitats. They are visited by millions of people every year and are home to thriving communities who live and work in these beautiful areas.

People are passionate about AONBs and National Parks and care deeply about their future. Those who visit, live or work within these special landscapes, enjoy the wide range of benefits that they provide for people and wildlife. They may not realise, however, that these dynamic, living landscapes underpin the economy and the health and wellbeing of society and that all these benefits come at a very low cost to the English taxpayer – at less than £1 per person a year.



Living, working landscapes

England's National Parks and AONBs are living, working landscapes, notable for their natural beauty and cultural heritage. Visited by millions of people every year, they are home to thriving communities who care passionately for these beautiful areas in which they live and work.

National Park Authorities and AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards aim to maintain thriving, living landscapes, where natural assets are conserved and enhanced and where people, businesses and communities can prosper, now and in the future.

There are more than 85,500 businesses, from all sectors of the economy, located in England's National Parks and AONBs. They are mainly small businesses and sole traders but some national and international companies operate in our finest landscapes.

The economies of our National Parks and AONBs are reliant on tourism, agriculture and other land-based activities. These activities depend on high quality natural environments that the landscapes provide; but can also help maintain and enhance those environments. Attracted by the qualities of our finest landscapes, technology and creative industries are also flourishing.

Diversity is the key to strong economies. We support innovation and diversification

in rural businesses by providing training, grants, advice, and provision of starter units, business networks, apprenticeships and other activities to help rural entrepreneurs start or grow their businesses.



Joe Coughlan of Yorkshire Organic Millers,
North York Moors National Park



North York Moors apprentices
construct a boardwalk



Hexham Hub business start-up units,
Northumberland

National Parks
and AONBs are
HOME TO OVER

**2.3m
people**

Overlooking Keswick in
the Lake District



Combined GVA of
National Parks and
AONBs is more than
£20BN
– similar to that of
Birmingham

Popular places

Mountains and moorland, lakes and coast, woodland and grassland, castles and cottages - there are so many varied and beautiful places to visit and enjoy in our AONBs and National Parks.



Crown Houses, Botallack, Cornwall AONB – used as Poldark filming location

As a nation, we love visiting beautiful places - whether for a short walk or ride, a holiday break, to climb, canoe or capture the scene in a photo or painting. AONBs and National Parks are truly popular places with 260 million visitors a year. This is more than 40 times the annual number of visitors to the British Museum.



Taking part in English Tourism Week and VisitBritain's GREAT campaign promotes our amazing landscapes to worldwide audiences

These visitors help support vibrant rural communities, thousands of rural businesses and over 120,000 jobs. Windermere Cruises alone attracts 1.4 million visitors a year to the Lake District National Park.

Leading the way in sustainable tourism and dark sky tourism, we work to gain international recognition for the special opportunities these areas offer. We also promote these opportunities by working with others including VisitEngland and VisitBritain.

Ensuring an excellent experience for all visitors is our goal. Investing in sustainable transport options or new infrastructure, such as visitor centres, are some of the ways we do this.

North Pennines Electric Bike Network

The quiet roads and stunning scenery of the North Pennines AONB are a huge draw for all cyclists – road, mountain and family. But the terrain is quite challenging for some. The Electric Bike Network aims to increase participation by all, providing an additional income stream for businesses and a sustainable form of transport for visitors to discover the North Pennines landscape. There are 24 bikes available from 11 Hire Points across the AONB, with plans for expansion.





The Electric Eel quietly carries passengers on a wildlife water trail along the hidden dykes behind the How Hill National Nature Reserve, Broads National Park.



AONBs and National Parks are part of a network of 131 protected areas in 16 countries developing and promoting sustainable tourism through the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.

The Forest of Bowland AONB was the first area in England to be awarded the European Charter in 2005. A programme of activity was developed in collaboration with businesses and communities to help businesses develop sustainable activities and communities to celebrate their special and distinctive qualities. The AONB Partnership supports a network of sustainable tourism businesses – Bowland Experience – to provide a framework for supporting and promoting tourism products and businesses in the area.

Similar partnerships and activities benefit businesses and communities in other Charter areas such as Exmoor (Exmoor Tourism Partnership) and the Broads (Love the Broads and the STEP partnership).



Enjoying the Brockhole Visitor Centre in the Lake District National Park



Children enjoying the dark skies



Exmoor star trails and Blagdon Cross signpost



Exploring the universe from our special landscapes

AONBs and National Parks are at the forefront of the boom in dark skies tourism as interest in astronomy is on the rise. Northumberland is Europe's first Dark Sky Park and Exmoor was Europe's first Dark Sky Reserve. Both have seen a boost in visitor numbers and benefits to tourism businesses of a year round attraction – the night sky. Other AONBs and National Parks are applying for this special status which attracts visitors of all ages. The North Pennines AONB has some of the darkest skies in the country with 16 official Dark Sky Discovery Sites.

Open to all

No ticket barriers, no entry fees – our National Parks and AONBs are open to everyone, 24/7, all year round.

National Park Authorities and AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards work with a wide range of organisations to reach out to communities who might not otherwise have the chance to visit the countryside and engage with new audiences who can enjoy and be inspired by these beautiful places.

We also provide opportunities and facilities such as Miles without Stiles routes which are useable by anyone including parents with buggies, wheelchair users or people with limited mobility who might find ordinary footpaths too difficult to negotiate.



Disabled Ramblers group on moorland trip with rangers



Young Rangers Scheme

The Mendip Hills AONB introduced a Young Rangers Scheme in 2005 linked to the EUROPARC Junior Ranger programme. The scheme offers a 2-year programme of varied activities, held once a month, for 15 Young Rangers aged 13-15 years selected from local schools. The young rangers work locally but also have the opportunity to attend the annual European Young Ranger conference and learn about other countries and cultures too.



Young Rangers in the Mendip Hills



Family walking through Dalby Forest in the North York Moors National Park

Walking in the North York Moors National Park



Cropton Forest in the Snow



Mosaic Young Champions get hands on with new born lambs in Grinton, Yorkshire Dales National Park



Top: Malham day out, Yorkshire Dales National Park

Below: Fishing under licence at Kilnsey Park Estate, Wharfedale



National Park and AONB
volunteers
put in over
half a million
work days
a year, worth
£40m
to conserve the
landscape and improve
access

We offer opportunities for all ages to get involved and experience what our finest landscapes have to offer. A ranger or volunteer guide can accompany a group to talk about the landscape, heritage and wildlife.

To help us keep our National Parks and AONBs special and accessible to all, our enthusiastic volunteers contribute over 500,000 work days worth over £40 million each year clearing scrub, repairing paths, leading walks, working in visitor centres, surveying habitats, mending walls, marshalling events and a myriad of other activities.

Inspiring Landscapes

Our beautiful landscapes have provided inspiration for some of our greatest works of art and literature from poets, novelists, painters, photographers, musicians, film makers and all forms of creative art and craft.

From the Picturesque movement in the Wye Valley of the 18th century to the landscape-inspired electronica of Grasscut in the 21st, great names of the past and present, working with all art forms throughout the country, draw inspiration from our beautiful landscapes.

Thriving creative communities exist throughout our inspiring landscapes and their work can be seen and heard both worldwide and more locally.

Our finest landscapes produce great voices and unique sounds and provide direct inspiration for many composers and musicians such as Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Britten, The Smiths, The Levellers, Kathryn Tickell, PJ Harvey and Richard Skelton as well as brass bands, folk, punk and pop groups, choirs and classical orchestras.

Durdle Door, Dorset AONB

"The Downs...too much for one pair of eyes, enough to float a whole population in happiness, if only they would look."

Virginia Woolf (Diaries, 1937)



"All this altering year you've called me from the hills above Nether Stowey, in the shifting of fossils and siltstones that clutter Kilve's wilderness shore"

An extract from 'Coleridge changes his library books' inspired by the Quantock Hills AONB. By kind permission of Deborah Harvey.



Inspired By Gallery at The Moors National Park Centre, Danby, North York Moors

The beauty of our special places has inspired many poets over the centuries including household names such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Sir John Betjeman, Simon Armitage and Deborah Harvey.

Great landscape artists such as Constable and Turner, David Hockney and Andy Goldsworthy have produced world renowned work with inspiration from, and celebrating, our landscapes.

Great novelists such as The Brontës and Hardy, Margaret Drabble and Graham Swift and writers about landscape, society and nature such as Alfred Wainwright, Gilbert White or Robert Macfarlane have all been similarly inspired.

Great photographers capture the beauty and moods of landscape and nature such as Fay Goodwin, Joe Cornish and Richard Billingham.



Visit Dedham Vale AONB at the heart of Constable Country to see the places that inspired some of Constable's greatest works.

Stars of the silver screen

Our beautiful landscapes and the buildings within them have provided inspiration for many TV and movie blockbusters.

© TAIT IMAGES

Bamburgh Castle,
Northumberland Coast AONB,
filming location for 'Macbeth'





© IDWPA



© CHRIS PARKER PHOTOGRAPHER 2013

Above Top: Lancaster bomber flying over the dams in the Upper Derwent Valley for a Dambusters memorial event in 2013

Above Bottom: Location of Brideshead Revisited, and other TV series and films, Castle Howard, in the Howardian Hills AONB

Screen tourism is a growing phenomenon, with more and more locations across the country benefiting from a booming screen industry. For many years, popular television series have brought our wonderful landscapes and communities to huge audiences and inspired people to visit the locations.

Our AONBs and National Parks are favourite locations for many directors. Increasingly, people want to visit and explore the places they see on television and at the cinema. In 2014, these visitors brought between £100-£140



Merrivale stone row at sunset, Dartmoor

© ANNA CURNOW

"I have never before, in my long and eclectic career, been gifted with such an abundance of natural beauty as I experienced filming War Horse on Dartmoor.."

And, with two-and-a-half-weeks of extensive coverage of landscapes and skies, I hardly scratched the surface of the visual opportunities that were offered to me".

Film Director, Steven Spielberg

million to England's economy (outside London), with the most popular locations generating up to another £1.6 million every year in international visitor spend.

Dartmoor National Park provided many of the stunning locations for the 2012 award winning film War Horse. Specialist staff from the National Park Authority provided advice and assistance to the

production team before and during the filming process.

Cornwall AONB's rugged coast and mining heritage was the setting for the 2015 BBC adaptation of Poldark. The Peak District has seen Keira Knightley in various roles including Elizabeth Bennet in the 2005 film Pride & Prejudice and the title role in 2008's The Duchess



© LESLEY TRELOAR



© CORNWALL AONB

Above Top: Chapel Porth St Agnes, Cornwall AONB, location for Poldark TV series

Above Bottom: Filming on Bodmin Moor, Cornwall

which also filmed in the Norfolk Coast AONB.

Location filming in our lovely landscapes is not just a modern phenomenon. The Dambusters (1954) gave the Derwent and Howden Dams in the Peak District a starring part, recreating the role they played in World War II as practice grounds for the famous Barnes Wallis bouncing bombs. Today many people come to the dams to both remember wartime achievements and visit the site of a movie classic.

© VISIT ENGLAND IMAGES

Foodie heavens

You can't eat the view but you can 'drink it in' while enjoying top quality local produce in friendly surroundings.

Our National Parks and AONBs are the homes of distinctive internationally known products such as Grasmere Gingerbread, Wensleydale, Cheddar and Dorset Blue cheeses, Bakewell Puddings and Cornish Clotted Cream. They can provide an experience to suit every palate and pocket from cosy traditional cream teas to Michelin-starred restaurants serving the finest dishes.

With agriculture and tourism forming the mainstays of our local economies, it is no surprise that we have found many ways to combine the production of distinctive, high quality produce with a warm welcome. Centres of excellence, such as the Suffolk Food Hall or Chatsworth Farm Shop, showcase local produce and cuisine.



A traditional Cornish cream tea by the harbour

The Crown Inn pub and restaurant in Churchill, Mendip Hills AONB





Display of local produce at the Setley Ridge Vineyard Farm Shop, New Forest National Park



Supporting local food businesses

Partnerships such as Dorset Food and Drink and the New Forest Marque promote local growers, processors and retailers to help them reach wider markets and provide assurance of quality and provenance to customers. Such partnerships exist in many National Parks and AONBs.

The new South Downs Food Enterprise Zone, where the South Downs National Park Authority is working with the Local Enterprise Partnership, will help develop and promote local food producers and distinctive products. Food and drink businesses in the South Downs National Park can also get a free publicity boost through an online directory and a networking service to help promote their produce to local people and visitors.



Below: The Michelin starred Yorke Arms in Ramsgill, Nidderdale AONB

Our market towns and specialist shops are proud and keen to stock local food and drink. You can find quality produce such as West Country Beef and Lamb or Yeo Valley dairy products in shops across the country, or order on-line.



A variety of drinks are produced in our most beautiful landscapes: apple juice from the Wye Valley, Kent or Devon, a fine selection of beers, ciders or perry from across the country, wine from Sussex or Surrey or even whisky from the Lake District.



Above: English Sparkling wine at the Court Garden vineyard, Ditchling, South Downs National Park

Left: A warm welcome is certain at the Wensleydale Creamery shop, Yorkshire Dales National Park

Healthy landscapes, healthy people

Our beautiful landscapes provide inspiration for getting fit and remaining healthy and help to inspire sporting success.



Kayaking near New Bridge, Dartmoor

We have long known that moderate activity is good for us physically. More recently, evidence has shown that being active outdoors can bring substantial mental health benefits by reducing stress levels and enhancing mood. Sharing the experience with others also improves social networking and connectedness.

AONBs and National Parks offer a wide range of environments and methods of bringing benefits to our health and well-being. Walking is one of the easiest,

cheapest and most ubiquitous ways of keeping fit, but you can do anything from abseiling to zorbing in our beautiful landscapes.

Projects with health benefits, such as Wye Valley Mindscape and Moor to Enjoy, are set up and run by the bodies which care for our most treasured landscapes.

Moor to Enjoy is a ground breaking partnership between Exmoor National Park Authority and the Health and Wellbeing Boards of Devon and Somerset. The first of its kind in England, it aims to demonstrate how access to green space can reduce the need for drug based interventions or the development of long term conditions.



© PAUL GLENDELL CORNWALL AONB UNIT



The MindSCAPE Project has been developed to enable people living with dementia and their carers, both family and professional, to reconnect with the landscape in a sociable and creative way. The project is a partnership set up by the Wye Valley AONB Unit with the Forestry Commission, Forest of Dean District Council, Dementia Adventure, the Alzheimer's Society, the Forest of Dean Dementia Alliance and supported by funding from the Big Lottery.



Hannah and Graham examine natural artwork



Le Grand Depart 2014 - Tour de France comes through Cray, Wharfedale, Yorkshire Dales National Park

Spectator or sporting superstar

AONBs and National Parks provide training grounds for some of our elite athletes and a backdrop for national and international sporting events.

If something more than a gentle stroll is your thing, you can watch or participate in a huge array of events: half-marathons, triathlons, IronMan challenges, the Ten Tors event, the Great North Swim, fell

running, kayaking, horse racing, sailing or rowing events and many more. Jessica Ennis-Hill, Jonathan and Alistair Brownlee, Ben Ainsley, Lizzie Armitstead and Mark Cavendish are just some of the many sporting greats who train in and are inspired by our magnificent landscapes.

In 2012, Box Hill in the Surrey Hills AONB provided a spectacular scene and challenge for both the men's and women's Olympic road cycle races and in

2014 Nidderdale AONB, the Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District National Parks welcomed millions of visitors as the Grand Depart of the Tour de France came to Yorkshire. The Grand Depart 2014 was such a success that a new annual event, the Tour de Yorkshire, saw its first race in 2015. It generated great excitement, attracted competitors and spectators from all over the world and international TV coverage.



Olympic Road Cycle Race 2012, Box Hill, Surrey Hills AONB



Walkers near Jack and Jill windmills, South Downs National Park



Surfing at Saltburn, North York Moors National Park



Sailing yachts in The Broads National Park



Pilot Gig World Championships 2012 - the ladies' race

Gig racing

Now in its 26th year, the World Pilot Gig Championships in the Isles of Scilly attract international spectators and competitors. The "gigs", are traditional wooden boats, typically 32 feet long by 5 feet wide, some dating back to 1830 but new ones are still being built. Gig racing evolved from the desire to get a pilot out to a ship – with the first pilot getting to the ship winning the lucrative pilotage contract.

Where everyone can get closer to nature

Hear the boom of the bittern or see the nimble dash of the red squirrel. National Parks and AONBs are places where wildlife can truly flourish and are home to some of England's rarest plants and creatures.

The variety of our landscapes supports a breadth of habitats, from lowland fens to upland heathlands, and deep lakes to clear chalk streams. More than half of the sites identified nationally as priorities for conservation are found in our National Parks and AONBs.

We support landowners and land managers to help ensure that these habitats are maintained in good condition, and look for opportunities to expand and join up habitats to provide more space for nature.

Our network of habitats provides homes for many of England's rare and threatened species, which often need a special conservation focus to halt their decline and help to increase their numbers and distribution. We work with

50%
of SSSIs
are in National
Parks or
AONBs -
protecting
some of our
**most important
wildlife habitats**



A swallowtail butterfly



Wild orchid



Lapwing, Danby Beacon

specialists to put in place projects that survey and monitor species, and take action to provide the conditions they need to thrive. One example is the All the Moor Butterflies Project taking place across designated landscapes in the south west.

© HOWARDIAN HILLS AONB UNIT



Pond dipping in the Howardian Hills AONB



Fawn, Cranbourne Chase AONB



© VISITENGLAND IMAGES



Wild mushrooms

National Parks and AONBs are places where people can connect with nature. They offer fantastic opportunities for people to learn more about the natural world, and the place of humans within it. Every year thousands of people are involved in volunteering activities to survey wildlife and improve

habitats in our

designated landscapes, and outreach and education activities help people of all ages to enjoy unforgettable experiences that bring them closer to England's wildlife.

The size of the network of designated landscapes means that they provide unparalleled opportunities for coordinated activity that benefits nature and people at scales that make the best ecological sense, such as across whole catchments or habitat areas. The Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership involves 2 National Park Authorities and 3 AONB Partnerships working together to learn from one another, and to build a strong and coordinated network that underpins a thriving environment-based economy.



Dipper

© MIKE NICHOLAS



Melting snow on Blackthorn

© DAVE BLAKE WESSEX WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY



© DAVE BLAKE WESSEX WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

Top: Dragonfly on The Broads

Below: Barn Owl

Where history comes alive

National Parks and AONBs are treasure troves of significant historic sites spanning the ages from pre-history to World War II. Whatever our age or interest there is a story, building, site or artefact to connect us to the past and help us better understand our beautiful landscapes.

History is all around us in National Parks and AONBs, as part of modern day life. Our historic landscapes show the traces of the full span of our island history; from prehistoric stone circles and Neolithic camps, via Roman roads, forts and villas, to the remains of training sites and airfields for WWI and WWII.

The many lives lived in these landscapes leave their traces in medieval abbeys, workers' cottages, mills, market towns, stately homes and castles. Remains of our changing industrial landscape, from the tin and copper mines of Cornwall to the alum works of the North Yorkshire coast, remind us that these are working landscapes.



© AMANDA BRACE

Enjoying Rievaulx Abbey, North York Moors National Park



© NORTH YORK MOORS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY / MIKE KIPLING

Try your hand at archery

Castlerigg Stone Circle, near Keswick in the Lake District National Park. It is one of Britain's earliest stone circles, dating back to the Neolithic period.

Jurassic Coast - first for fossils

The Dorset and East Devon Coast is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, designated because of the continuous exposure of 185 million years of the earth's history in the spectacular cliffs and fossils. This area is world famous for the discovery of fossils by Mary Anning and the part it plays in our understanding of the history of life on earth.

© JURASSIC COAST TEAM



Ammonite parkinsoni



© SAM ROSE - JURASSIC COAST TEAM

Charmouth Beach



Far Left: Getting hands on with the World War II exhibition, New Forest National Park

Left: The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre, Northumberland National Park



Stunning geology on show at Man O'War Cove, Dorset AONB



Drizzlecombe Stonerow. Dartmoor is rich in Bronze Age standing stone rings and rows

More than
8,800

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

are in AONBs and National Parks, **almost half** of all the SAMs in England

The evidence of farming lives and methods across the ages lives in the landscape and also in present-day communities through deep-rooted festivals and traditions.

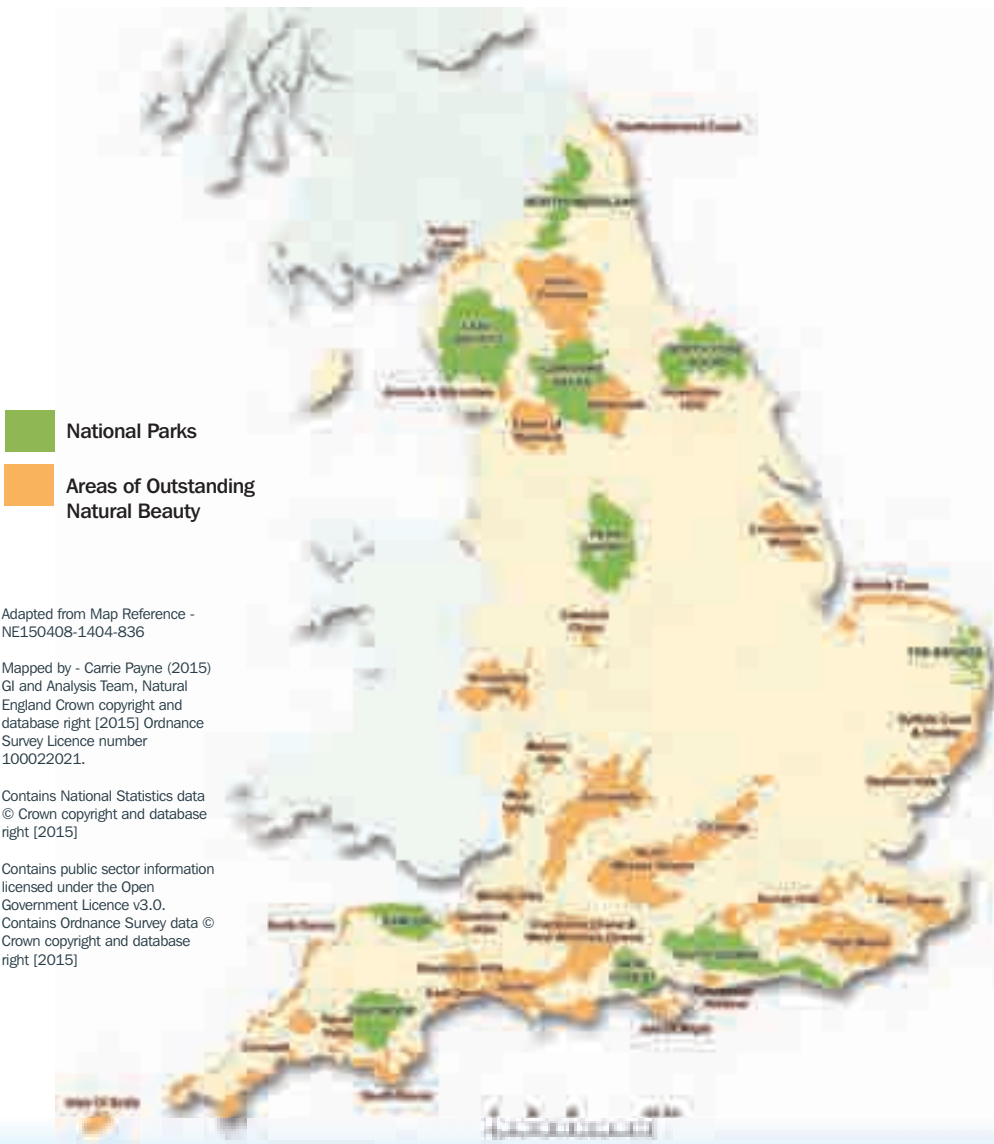
We work with bodies such as the National Trust and English Heritage and with private owners to enable access to our most important historic sites and buildings. Providing information and inspiration we bring history alive through events and activities.

Projects which engage local people in gathering stories, surveying the landscape or taking part in digs are increasingly popular and capture people's interest and imagination,

making new personal connections to the landscape and history.

Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is internationally famous. It will soon be home to The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre. This bold, ambitious project will transform how people of all ages understand and explore the landscapes, history, culture and heritage of Northumberland and the wider North East.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks in England



National Park Authorities and AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards, with their dedicated small teams, deliver significant benefits for their communities and the whole nation.

We work with local communities, businesses and others, valuing their skills, knowledge and energy to add value and growth to the local economy. Collaborative working and providing value for money are core principles of our work. By taking innovative approaches and forging new partnerships we achieve beneficial results for people and wildlife.

We are supporting skills development, investing in infrastructure and attracting visitors to promote sustainable rural economies that conserve and enhance the natural environment for the benefit of everyone.

With sufficient resources, National Park Authorities and AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards will be able to continue to promote sustainable growth, provide the wide range of benefits described in this booklet and contribute to the nation's prosperity and wellbeing.



National Association for AONBs
11 High Street
Fairford
Gloucestershire
GL7 4AD
Tel: **07964 535166**

www.landscapesforlife.org.uk



@naaonb

The NAAONB is a Registered Charity No. 1158871 and company limited by guarantee No. 4729800



National Parks England
5th Floor
Local Government House
Smith Square
London SW1P 3HZ
Tel: **020 7072 7421**

www.nationalparksengland.org.uk



@natparksengland

National Parks England is a not for profit company limited by guarantee, No. 6521048, registered in England.