

LINCS WOLDS CONFERENCE – 27th NOVEMBER 2013

- Today has clearly demonstrated a great level of interest in protecting and enhancing the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and has brought together a very broad range of organisations and individuals, many already very actively engaged in the Lincolnshire Wolds and others that are keen to take a greater involvement in the future.
- We were all especially pleased that Howard Davies could join us - the Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee recognises and appreciates the excellent work that the National Association has undertaken, not least in helping to maintain a national profile for AONBs under the new "*Landscapes for Life*" banner and providing opportunities for learning and sharing good practice and innovation from our counterparts in England and Wales.
- Political engagement remains crucial at both local and national levels and the AONB family has an excellent track record in securing cross-party backing to help protect and enhance these very special areas.
- We will continue to do all we can at the local level to help support the wider family of AONBs, including maintaining positive engagement with DEFRA and Natural England to help protect the core funding from central government. This is vital for supporting our local funding and governance agreements with our hosting authority, Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey and West Lindsey Districts and North East Lincolnshire, although we will be continuing to explore new avenues of funding and support.
- What today has reaffirmed is also the importance of grass-root support - crucially with landowners and farmers, but also through a mix of organisations, community groups, local businesses and the wider public. We clearly have the benefit of a very active partnership and a specialist AONB unit - the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service - that comprises a well-respected and experienced team.
- The new Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan provides an important steer for the next 5 years and seeks to complement the emerging Local Planning Development Frameworks and other strategic and spatial plans emerging from the relevant local authorities and other key partners. The new Management Plan will undoubtedly build on the work of a number of successful partnership initiatives; including the nationally recognised Walking Festival and the highly acclaimed Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project. Novel partnership arrangements with 3rd sector organisations, such as Heritage Lincolnshire, and the business sector, such as Anglian Water, can clearly show the benefits of like minded organisations and individuals coming together to help deliver on shared goals and aspirations.

- As we all know the growth agenda and pressures on the public purse are continuing to dominate national and local discussions - it is important in these stringent times that the AONB designation can be seen as a force for the good and the JAC is keen to do all it can to encourage a multi-dimensional approach to future funding and partnership engagement.
- We all have our own perceptions of the special qualities of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and a central message is that the landscape continues to evolve. It is not something that can be preserved in aspic, but the partnership (and Management Plan) is striving to ensure that we all do what we can to ensure that we balance the various environmental, social and economic interests for the area. It is a nationally protected landscape and every effort needs to be taken to ensure that future growth is of a type, scale and design that can both complement and enhance the unique landscape features and qualities of the AONB. We hope that everyone in this room can continue to help us on that path to ensure that the AONB remains an outstanding living and working landscape that can be enjoyed by all...
- And finally a thank you to you the audience, all of our speakers, displays and organisers. To our sponsors, SYSTEMATIC PRINT MANAGEMENT, a successful & growing business with a national client base located in Caistor.