

Tamar Valley

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Annual Review 2011/12



Introduction

Another twelve months in challenging times, but by working together look what we have achieved. All who have been involved in caring for our Valley and delivering on projects this year recognise what a special area we have.

Here's to another year of keeping it that way.

As ever,

Cllr Neil Burden
Chairman Tamar Valley AONB Partnership



Facts and Figures

What is an AONB?

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act (2000), and along with National Parks they represent the finest examples of countryside in England and Wales. Designation seeks to conserve and enhance natural beauty; whilst recognising the needs of the local community and economy.

When did the Tamar Valley become an AONB?

Cornwall and Devon County Councils first suggested that the Tamar Valley should be designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1963, but it was not until August 1995 that the designation was finally granted. This is the most recent area to be designated an AONB.

Why was the Tamar Valley designated?

It is a rare valley and water landscape based around an unspoilt estuary, a unique wildlife resource and a landscape of distinctive heritage.

Where exactly is the Tamar Valley AONB?

It is located on the border of Cornwall and Devon, and includes the valleys of

the Tamar, Tavy and Lynher. The larger section, around the rivers Tamar and Tavy, extends north from the broad estuary at Plymouth to the intricate, deeply incised river meanders just below Launceston and Tavistock. It borders Dartmoor National Park to the east and takes in Kit Hill to the west. The section around the river Lynher extends west from Saltash and Torpoint to St Germans in south east Cornwall.

How big is the Tamar Valley AONB?

The AONB covers around 75 square miles (190 square kilometres, 16155.74 hectares). It contains a population in the region of 27,000 people, most in the 30-50 age group.

What is the Vision for the Tamar Valley AONB?

To ensure that by working together the Tamar Valley AONB is managed in a way that conserves and enhances its unique cultural identity and outstanding natural beauty for the benefit of all the people who live, work and visit the area, now and in the future.

Highs & Lows

From sea level to 333m at Kit Hill.

Woodland

There are around 1700 hectares of woodland, of which 1500 hectares are

on ancient woodland sites.

Rivers

Includes the lower parts of the 3 river valleys - Tamar, Tavy and Lynher.

Farmland

75% of farmland is under grassland, predominantly used for sheep and cattle; there are around 600 holdings ranging from tiny smallholdings to large dairy farms of over 200 hectares.

Nature Conservation

The tidal waters are a designated European Marine Site consisting of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the EU Habitats Directive and/or a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EU Birds Directive. In addition there are 2247.76 hectares of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 41 County Wildlife Sites and 1 Local Nature Reserve.

World Heritage Site

The AONB has over 100 former mine sites and their associated physical and social infrastructure.

Local Authorities

The boundary crosses 5 local authority areas (2 counties, 2 districts and Plymouth City). The AONB also borders Dartmoor National Park. The AONB crosses 24 parishes.

The Year at a Glance



Learning Landscapes (Understanding & Awareness)

Events & activities

- Spring Tamar Trail Festival hosted 30 events held throughout the Tamar Valley over 4 days in April. In October, the Autumn Tamar Trail Festival attracted a further 200 people.
- Events held at Tamar Valley Centre over the year, included Children's Activity Days, two Local Art Exhibitions, Live Music, Christmas Gift workshop and Craft workshops.
- Volunteer Walk Leaders trained in October to lead Walk & Talk events that take place every week in the Tamar Valley and Saltash. 150 people regularly attended the walks throughout the year, 15 have been trained as walk leaders. Over 20 different routes have been walked.
- AONB stand at Plymouth Summer Festival Launch in the city centre, May. Our stand attracted visitors who learned more about our work in keeping the landscape special. In conjunction with Stepping Stones to Nature project and Plymouth City Centre.

Spreading our message

- 11,000 copies of The Valley newsletter printed and distributed throughout the Tamar Valley and beyond in May. 10,000 printed in

November. Also available to view and download from AONB website.

- Monthly eBulletins produced and emailed to around 900 recipients with an interest in looking after our Valley.
- Dedicated team approach to Tamar Valley AONB Facebook page and Twitter account created, to keep pace with social media and new channels for communication. Almost 100 'likes' on Facebook.
- Almost £9,000 worth of free press coverage was generated throughout the year, raising awareness of the Tamar Valley AONB and its projects. As always, this is a conservative estimate, and does not include radio or TV coverage, of which a number of radio interviews have been held.
- Tamar Trail Guide produced with updated routes.

Meetings & get-togethers

- Tamar Valley AONB Annual Conference held at Tamar Valley Centre. Over 60 people enjoyed an evening with guest speaker Dr Chris Smart, to find out what was discovered during the Community Dig in Calstock, autumn 2011, and listened to the highlights and achievements of the AONB team over the past 12 months.

Walking routes

- Extra link to Tamar Valley Discovery Trail opened in August, offering walkers the chance to walk to Kit

Hill from Lockett, Horsebridge and Gunnislake. Volunteers from Groundwork Plymouth and Duchy College worked to create the new links.

- Tamar Valley Discovery Trail walked by 'Walk & Talk' volunteers to inspect, clean and upkeep the 158 waymarkers along the route.

Mountain Bike Development Project

- Construction of new hut at Maddacleave began and Maddacleave played host to South West Down Hill Championships.
- The fourth track was created in September and introduction taster days were held specifically for female riders on the HSD track at Maddacleave.



The Year at a Glance cont.



A Living Landscape (Economy, Community & Planning)

Tamar Valley Food

- Tamar Grow Local obtained funding from Cornwall Community Foundation in April to set up a training apiary and run beekeeping courses.
- Cotehele's traditional Tamar sailing barge, the Shamrock, transported food & produce from the Tamar Valley to Plymouth in September, demonstrating low-carbon transportation and highlighting the proximity of quality vegetables to the Plymouth audience.
- Graft, Sow & Grow Extravaganza in March attracted between 800 and 1000 people, organised by Tamar Grow Local and National Trust's Cotehele.
- Visitors could graft their own Tamar Valley apple tree or learn more about bee keeping and poultry keeping, among other skills.
- Tamar Grow Local held initial meeting in August to discuss the idea of setting up a honey cooperative, to develop a recognised brand, provide access to expensive equipment.
- Cordiale project, Tamar Valley AONB and Tamar Grow Local worked with almost 400 school children, many parents and residents from Landulph, Harrowbarrow and Buckland

Monachorum, to press apples and discover more about market gardening in the Valley.

- Other activities included tree planting, community apple festival, apple crumble making, apple-related poetry and art and a song & dance performance.

Renewable Energy

- Two Energy Savers at Home events took place (February) and at the Tamar Valley Centre (March). 100 participants visited a total of 17 homeowners around the Valley to learn about ways to conserve energy or generate their own from a renewable source. Organised by Cordiale Project and Transition Tavistock.

Natural Assets (Understanding, Protecting & Conserving)

Safeguarding our Hedges

- Work began in January on the Hedge Survey Project, to recruit and train volunteers within the Cordiale Project area to record and protect valuable hedgerows. We have almost 40 active volunteers working on the project.

Orchards

- Orchard survey work took place throughout the AONB, to look at old orchards and the wildlife they support. The same methodology as the national orchard survey (undertaken by People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES)) was used. 155 orchards were visited (93 are still actively managed), 16 new orchards have been planted. Report available at www.tamarvalley.org.uk

A Sense of Place (Promoting Local Distinctiveness)

Tamar Valley Art

- Drawn to the Valley's annual Open Studios held at the end of August. the event attracted 2729 visitors generating £26,369. The Tamar Valley Centre hosted 4 artists where £1,325 was raised in art sales.

Cultural Heritage (Saving our Heritage)

Mining Heritage Project

- Renovation works took place to Wheal Emma bridge (between Devon Great Consols and Morwellham Quay) in February, part of the Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project
- Morwellham Chapel leased to West



Devon Borough Council as part of Mining Heritage Project. The Project aims to make the building weathertight, replace defective internal plastering and re-decorate. Simple interpretation panels will also be installed to tell the story of mid-Victorian mining and Methodism.

- 'Tramper' mobility scooter obtained in June to improve access along the Tamar Trails. Funded through Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project, Mobility South West and Tree Surfers.
- Old lock gate and counter balance bridge along Tavistock canal restored to former working condition as part of Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project.
- Close work with CoaST in organising free events for tourism businesses in the Tamar Valley, giving them the confidence to pass on information about our cherished landscape to their visitors.
- Collaborative work with CoaST began on an online Green Valley map, highlighting green transport options and green 'destinations' in the area.

Calstock Parish Heritage Project

- Geophysical survey events held and well-attended at Cotehele Estate in August. Part of Calstock Parish Heritage Project, in preparation for autumn's Community Dig.
- Community Dig took place in October to excavate Roman Fort in Calstock. 19 people took part

during the 2-day dig, with a further 100 people attending two open days to view the findings.

- Interactive Map went live on AONB website in November. Tithe map (1840s) and OS map for the parish of Calstock dates back to 1880s, and allows information to be added.

Working Together (International, national & regional co-ordination)

Cordiale Project

- 2-day Cordiale visit to Parc Naturel Regional d'Amorique in France took place in July, to develop programme of exchange visits between then and spring 2012.

Tamar Community Trust



- Tamar Community Trust took over management of Wacker Quay, near Antony. The site will be maintained as a public open space for quiet enjoyment and recreation, and a new walking route will be opened up.

National Association for AONBs

- Tamar Valley AONB, Cornwall AONB & Isles of Scilly AONB teams hosted this year's National Association for AONBs' Annual Conference. The 3-day meeting for staff from AONB Units and partners attracted over 140 delegates, to share best practice and develop new skills in caring for our special landscapes.

Wacker Quay Community Group

- Wacker Quay Community Group continues to run work days to help improve the site. Work has included litter picking, cutting back overgrown shrubs and initial work to create a new path beside the river that follows the route of an old military railway towards Antony.

South West Protected Landscapes

- The Tamar Valley AONB continued to collaborate with other protected landscapes in the south west through the SWPLF. Highlights included the Cordiale project, and the Adventure Cycling RDPE project.

Delivering the AONB Management Plan 2011/12

The Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan 2009 - 2014 is split into 6 policy themes; Landscape Management, Sustainable Management, Understanding and Awareness, World Heritage Site, AONB Management and Implementation & Review. This guides the work of the AONB team. The following chart illustrates our progress within each area of work, and in particular, the projects for each. For a copy of our Management Plan please visit www.tamarvalley.org.uk or call the AONB office on 01822 835030.

Management Plan Policy			Completed	Development / Implementation	Not Started
Landscape Management					
Landscape Heritage	(4 actions)	LM1	50%	25%	25%
Biodiversity	(6 actions)	LM2	50%		50%
Geodiversity	(5 actions)	LM3	20%	80%	
Natural Resources	(2 actions)	LM4	50%		50%
Working the Land	(6 actions)	LM5	50%	17%	33%
Local Distinctiveness	(2 actions)	LM6	50%		50%
River Management	(5 actions)	LM7	40%	20%	40%
Landscape for enjoyment	(10 actions)	LM8	60%	20%	20%

Sustainable Management					
Sustainable Communities	(4 actions)	SM1	50%	25%	25%
Transition Tamar	(1 action)	SM2	100%		
Climate Change	(2 actions)	SM3	50%	50%	
Local Supply Chains	(5 actions)	SM4	20%	60%	20%

Understanding and Awareness					
Interpreting, Educating, Communicating	(8 actions)	Ua1	75%		25%
Cultural Identity	(3 actions)	Ua2	67%		33%

World Heritage Site					
Tamar Valley WHS Management	(2 actions)	Ws1	100%		
Conserving the Mining Landscape	(3 actions)	Ws2	25%	50%	25%
Morwellham Quay	(1 action)	Ws3	100%		

AONB Management					
AONB Partnership	(1 action)	Am1	100%		
Tamar Community Trust	(1 action)	Am2	100%		
AONB Staff unit	(1 action)	Am3	100%		

Implementation and review					
AONB performance Indicators	(1 action)	Ir1	100%		
Implementation of the plan	(1 action)	Ir2	100%		
Environmental Impact	(1 action)	Ir3	100%		
State of the AONB monitoring	(1 action)	Ir4	100%		

There are 85 actions within our Action Plan, our overall progress as of March 31st 2012 was as follows:

Our overall performance	39%	33%	28%
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Financial Review

April 2011 - March 2012

2011/12 saw the AONB team involved in delivering a number of substantial projects funded by a number of sources. Finding project funding is becoming increasingly more difficult, with match funding being very hard to find. Nevertheless the Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project made substantial progress with extended access at the Tamar Trails and conservation works to the mining assets and the chapel at Morwellham. The European Co-operation project Cordiale was properly established within this year and activities and events were held on topics as diverse as saving energy, hedgerow surveys and apple pressing. The Calstock Parish Heritage Project organised a number of activities including a community dig and interpretation at the newly discovered site of the Roman Fort. The reception hut at Maddacleave for the Woodland Riders neared completion and a number of new downhill mountain bike tracks were constructed. Other projects supported included the popular health walks and volunteer days that have encouraged people to explore different parts of the AONB.

Tamar Valley AONB Core Budget Expenditure

Description	Tamar Valley AONB Expenditure
Salaries and associated costs	£154,997
Other employment costs	£24,309
Equipment	£8,204
Office costs	£6,818
Building costs	£9,674
Communication / Partnership	£13,972
Professional services	£29,735
Vehicle and transport costs (excluding Staff)	£24,700

Projects Supported by the Tamar Valley AONB

Projects	Description	Total Project Expenditure	AONB Match Funding
Cordiale	European cooperation project promoting sustainable landscape management	£151,324	£41,077
Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project	Partnership project conserving & providing access to the mining heritage	£605,244	£35,000
Calstock Parish	Project focusing on exploring Calstock's historic environment	£18,479	Staff time
Mountain Bike Development Project	Development of reception building and downhill mountain bike track for the Woodland Riders	£63,602	£16,500
Tamar Valley Centre	Development of the Tamar Valley Centre	-	£4,000
Tamar Community Trust	Development of Tamar Community Trust activities	-	£4,000
Health Walks	Continuation of the Health Walks scheme that was initially funded by SDF	-	£12,000
Stepping Stones to Nature	Access project run by Plymouth City Council	-	£1,000



Tamar Valley

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Tamar Valley AONB

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www.tamarvalley.org.uk
www.facebook.com/TVAONB
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Main Communication Messages from the AONB:

1. The Tamar Valley AONB team exists to conserve & enhance the natural beauty & cultural heritage of the AONB, ensuring it can meet the challenges of the future
2. We will promote public understanding & enjoyment of the nature & culture of the Tamar Valley AONB, and encourage people to take action for conservation
3. The Tamar Valley is a vibrant, dynamic, living landscape that helps communities work together to share responsibility of this unique resource
4. The AONB team makes best use of resources to add value to work that is already being achieved by other organisations within the Valley
5. The Tamar Valley's combination of wildlife, heritage & estuarine landscape is distinct & special in a national context. We need your help to keep it this way.



Our Vision for the Tamar Valley

To ensure that by working together the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be managed in a way that conserves and enhances its unique cultural identity and outstanding natural beauty for the benefit of all the people who live, work and visit the area, now and in the future.

The **CORDIALE Project** is a partnership between:



Cordiale was selected under the European Cross-border Cooperation Programme INTERREG IV A France (Channel) – England, co-funded by the ERDF

The **Mountain Bike Development Project** is a partnership between:



The **Tamar Valley Mining Heritage project** is a partnership between:

