

# September 2011

## Monthly update



1. **AONB Elections** were held at our Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) and AONB Partnership meetings on 28<sup>th</sup> September. Cllr David Wood (SCC) was re-elected as Chair of both JAC and Partnership. Cllr Andrew Nunn (SCDC) was elected as Vice-Chair of JAC and Cllr Sue Allen (WDC) was re-elected as Vice-Chair of Partnership.
2. For a second year we will have a Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB category in the *Suffolk: Creating the **Greenest County Awards** (aka **Suffolk's Green Oscars**)*. **Thorpeness & Aldeburgh Hotels** are kindly sponsoring the award for a second year. I will send out further information about the application process next month.
3. **Jemima Thompson** has now joined the AONB Unit as Communications Officer 2.5 days/wk. She joins us from the Eastern Enterprise Hub, where she is continuing on a part time basis. Jemima comes with a strong background in social media, so watch this space as we develop our communications work. **Helen Taylor** has rejoined us as part-time Business Support Officer after her maternity leave.
4. **Walberswick Visitor Centre** is now being formally transferred to the Walberswick Common Land Charity and will in future be run by the local community. This is an important step forward for the local community and the AONB Unit as we seek to work in different ways. We have donated the contents of the centre as part of the transfer, to ensure the village has a useable visitor centre that they can move into right away. We will remain involved in the centre in the future and will continue to support the local community as they take over this asset.
5. We have begun development of our **Touching the Tide Landscape Partnership scheme**, following our formal "permission to start" from HLF. Recruitment of the Development Manager is now well underway, with interviews in early October and the contract brief for the Landscape Character Assessment of the area has been prepared. We are also finalising the make up of the Board that will oversee delivery of the project, on which we will have c. 50% community representation.
6. We have appointed **URS/Scott Wilson to undertake the AONB tourism research** as part of our EU BALANCE project. The work will conclude in December 2012 and will have three key outcomes:
  - a. How tourism foot-fall and spend can be increased here, especially in the winter months and shoulder seasons
  - b. How tourism businesses can be effective stewards of the protected landscape
  - c. Mechanisms to ensure sustainable management of tourism by tourism businesses and the AONB Partnership.
7. We have had another very successful **Beachwatch Big Weekend** this year (17-18<sup>th</sup> Sept), with over 500 people helping to clean Suffolk's beaches. We are still finding a significant amount of **paraffin wax** on our beaches and are now in regular contact with the Marine and Coastguard Agency and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science to find the source of this pollution.
8. Visitors to Orford will notice that the **river wall crest trial work**, reported in last month's update, designed to strengthen the top of the wall and increase its resistance to overtopping, has now been completed. This work was led by the local community and landowner, and facilitated by our Suffolk Estuaries Officer.
9. Suffolk Wildlife Trust has led on the Stage 1 application for a **Suffolk Coast and Heaths Nature Improvement Area**, on behalf of AONB Partnership (see July update). There is a long way to go in this process, and if we get through the Stage 1 process we will have to develop the proposal up to stage 2 by Christmas.
10. In **October we look forward to**; hosting a visit from Defra AONB officers, appointing our HLF Development Manager, the National Association of AONBs' AGM and publishing and distributing our autumn/winter newspaper.

Nick Collinson  
September 29<sup>th</sup> 2011

[www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org](http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org)