

Quarterly Newsletter

Winter 2010

**Suffolk Coast
& Heaths**
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



New AONB Pub Walk Guides available now!



A new collection of 14 Pub Walk Guides, produced in partnership with Adnams to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB are now available. The guides feature a selection of 25 specially chosen walks, linked to 29 Adnams pubs in, or close to, the AONB. Each, full colour, fully illustrated guide includes a map of the walk(s), together with a description of the route and information about things of interest along the way. They also provide information about the Adnams pubs on the route, including full details of the facilities they offer.

The leaflets are available individually from the participating pubs, can be downloaded from the AONB and Adnams websites, or bought as a full set from the AONB Unit or local outlets*, priced at £4.99. To find out more and download guides, visit our website:

<http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/downloads.asp?PageId=205>

Pictured: Emma Hibbert (Adnams), Nick Collinson (AONB Manager) & Councillor David Wood (AONB Chairman) with the new guides

*if you would like to sell packs for us, please call for details

Cuts to AONB budgets

Following the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review the AONB is anticipating cuts to its budget for the period 2011-2015. The cuts will affect the contributions from central Government (currently via Natural England) and are also likely to impact on contributions from local authorities. This will mean the AONB's core income will decrease. In preparation for this reduction in public sector funding we have employed a Funding & Development Officer (Cathy Smith), whose role it is to generate income from non-public sector sources.

New Voluntary Code of Conduct for the Stour and Orwell estuaries

Anglers and bait diggers are working with conservationists to help reduce the disturbance pressure on estuary birds, and protect the food they eat, by supporting a new Voluntary Code of Conduct for the Stour and Orwell Estuaries.

The new Voluntary Code of Conduct has been developed by a working group of estuary users which has been seen as a huge step forward in helping to manage the estuaries. A key part of the code is the voluntary closure of selected areas of mudflat between 1st November and 30th April to help to reduce the disturbance to birds and allow worms to breed during the winter months. These areas will be monitored by volunteers during this period to assess the success of the code.

For more information contact Trazar Astley-Reid, Suffolk Estuaries Officer.

Download the leaflet here:

www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/uploads/Code%20of%20conduct%20Stour%20and%20Orwell.pdf



Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB power line removal scheme approved

A regional steering group of environmental experts that allocates funding for the removal of low voltage power lines has voted to support a project to remove power lines along the Butley River in the Parishes of Chillesford and Butley.

The decision will lead to £260,000 being invested to remove over 2.4km of overhead network and 25 poles that run from Chillesford village across the valley of the Butley River in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The steering group approved the scheme because the lines have a significant visual impact and because the river valley is an important wildlife corridor. The removal of the power lines would, for example, eliminate the risk of birds colliding with the overhead lines and poles.

The funding comes from UK Power Networks. The energy firm has a special allowance of £2.9 million, granted to them by the electricity industry regulator Ofgem, to invest in projects to remove power lines in AONBs and National Parks in the East of England before 2011.

A new underground network will be installed in place of the existing power lines in agreement with local landowners, residents and other consultees, once all permissions have been granted.

For more information contact Neil Lister, AONB Projects Officer.

Climate Change and agriculture project warms to the task

National Farmers Union (NFU) Suffolk has been contracted to deliver our exciting new *Future Landscapes* project. As well as investigating likely scenarios for agriculture and the countryside in the AONB over the next few decades, *Future Landscapes* will also provide clear and practical advice to land managers on how to adapt to the challenges presented by climate change.

Otley College has been engaged to deliver part of the initial *Future Landscapes* activity. Students and staff will shortly be undertaking 1:1 interviews with farmers and landowners in the AONB to log the current impact of climate change on their activities. The students and College are extremely excited to be involved in such a practical exercise.



We are delighted that NFU (Suffolk) are running the *Future Landscapes* project as it will enable us to build on our relationships with both the NFU and the farming community in the AONB. *Future Landscapes* is funded by the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership, the AONB and Natural England.

The NFU has also just published a new booklet, on Why Farming Matters in Coastal Suffolk. To download this publication follow the link below

<http://www.nfuonline.com/searchResults.aspx?query=why%20farming%20matters%20in%20coastal%20suffolk>

For more information on *Future Landscapes* contact Neil Lister, AONB Projects Officer.



Photographers conjure up a vision of natural beauty

An exhibition of photographs was held at the Suffolk Food Hall, entitled 'A Vision of Natural Beauty', featuring the best images from the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB 40th anniversary photography competition.

The exhibition, which ran through October and the first half of November contained a selection of images drawn from over 170 entries received for the competition.

Pictured: Cllr David Wood, Chairman of the AONB Partnership (left), with competition winners Peter Etheridge, Graham Moss and David Cross, at the opening of the exhibition.

Restoring saltmarsh on the Deben estuary



Work has commenced on a project that aims to restore saltmarsh on the Deben estuary. The Deben Estuary Partnership, facilitated by the Suffolk Estuaries Officer Trazar Astley-Reid, are exploring the possibilities of slowing down and eventually reversing the loss of saltmarsh. Working with Natural England, the Environment Agency and the National Trust, the Partnership has been successful in attracting funds from local fund raising, Suffolk County Council, the

Environment Agency and the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB's Sustainable Development Fund.

The site where the scheme is taking place is owned by The National Trust and is in front of Sutton Hoo at Melton, just downstream from Wilford Bridge. The trial hopes to slow the flow of water so sediments can accumulate allowing the saltmarsh to regenerate itself. As well as being an important natural feature in its own right, saltmarsh absorbs wave action, reducing the maintenance costs of river walls. It also provides a vital home for birds and other wildlife, a nursery for fish, and has the hidden benefit of taking pollutants out of the river system and locking them into the plants' roots. The Deben Estuary Partnership is currently exploring the possibilities of developing other saltmarsh restoration and creation projects on the Deben.

For more information contact Trazar Astley-Reid, Suffolk Estuaries Officer.

Greenest Community Awards for AONB

This year, for the first time, there is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty category in the Suffolk - Creating the Greenest County awards. The AONB award, sponsored by Thorpeness & Aldeburgh Hotels, is in the community category and will be awarded to the individual or community group that has done most to "conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB". The closing date for entries is the 30th January 2011.

The Creating the Greenest County awards are an annual celebration of environmental excellence in Suffolk, highlighting how Suffolk's communities, businesses and schools are leading the way on a wide range of environmental areas. As well as celebrating achievement, they enable lessons from their work to be publicised more widely. Award winners will be a key part of Creating the Greenest County and will have their



achievements celebrated across the county. To find out more, visit the Creating the Greenest County website:

http://www.greensuffolk.org/ctgc_awards/greenest_community_awards/community_area_of_outstanding_natural_beauty

Long distance routes to get an international make-over

A new guidebook covering the AONB's three long distance routes will be published in 2011. The Sandlings Walk, Stour and Orwell Walk & Suffolk Coast Path will all feature in a new guidebook by Cicerone Press, publishers of over 250 award-winning guidebooks. Over the last 40 years Cicerone has established a reputation as the very best publisher of guides to exploring the hills, mountains and countryside of Britain, Europe and the world. We have teamed up with Cicerone Press to support production of this new book with our expertise and knowledge of these routes and will be the sole distributor locally. As well as route directions, the guidebook will feature lots of information about the area and will start with a foreword from the AONB.

To see existing Cicerone guidebooks visit:

<http://www.cicerone.co.uk/product/index.cfm/menu/2/cid/14/catalogue/southern-england>

The art of coastal change

In partnership with Suffolk Coast Futures and with support from Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council, the AONB has successfully applied for a grant of £12,000 from The Crown Estate to undertake the local promotion of a report, written by Professor Robin McInnes. The report uses paintings from 1770-1940 to highlight how the coast has changed. The project will run three lecture/debates, the dates for which will shortly be confirmed, with coast and art experts debating the current viewpoint, and in Spring 2011 there will be some educational art workshops looking at how art can help our understanding of coastal change. Look out for further information about this project in the local media soon.

For more information contact Cathy Smith, Funding & Development Officer.

Volunteer Update

Beachwatch – 18th & 19th September 2010



This year, 36 teams took part in Suffolk's Beachwatch, of which four were new teams. Considering that 350 teams were registered nationwide, this means Suffolk's contribution was approximately 10% - an incredible achievement!

The Crown Estate supported this year's event, enabling some new promotional boards to be produced. Peter Riches, The Crown Estate's local agent, handed over a cheque for £2,300 at the AONB's Bawdsey Beachwatch event.

Not so pleasing was the amount of litter we found. Most groups collected about 20kg of litter, with 2 groups collecting an extraordinary 100kg and 1000kg. It's reassuring to know that so much litter has been removed from our coast and the wider marine environment, but shocking that there is still so much litter to collect. One very positive aspect of this year's Beachwatch was that over 300 young people took part, including numerous Scout groups, all helping to ensure we made a huge impact! In response to this, Michael Hansen, the Scouts' District Commissioner said, "We are very keen to support local community projects and to help care for and improve the environment. The Scouts are keen to add this event to their calendar each year and we are already looking forward to the 2011 Beachwatch".

Participating in Beachwatch encourages volunteers to look after their local beach or foreshore, but also contributes to a global effort. Beachwatch is the UK's contribution to the International Coastal Clean-Up, a world-wide event organised by the Ocean Conservancy Council in the USA. Between 80-100 countries regularly take part each September, making it the largest anti-pollution event in the world.

The 2009 results leaflet is now available on the website at the link below:

[http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/uploads/Suffolk-Beachwatch-AdoptABeach-Results-2009\(1\).pdf](http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/uploads/Suffolk-Beachwatch-AdoptABeach-Results-2009(1).pdf)

The winter Adopt-A-Beach surveys will be taking place through December to February, including the Suffolk Coast and Heaths event at Bawdsey in December.

For more information contact Lynn Allen, Countryside Officer.

Coast and Estuary Wardens

The first Annual Review was held at the end of June with 10 wardens. The day was a great success, and included presentations summarising the results gathered during the first 12-months of the scheme. A workshop session followed where the wardens were asked their opinions on various aspects of the scheme. This proved enormously helpful, enabling us to establish where the scheme is working, and where improvements can be made. The results and discussion sessions in the morning were followed by a walk along the River Deben from Melton, looking at the natural history and issues affecting that section of the river.

The seventh Coast and Estuary Wardens induction day will take place later in November.

For more information contact Lynn Allen, Countryside Officer.

Open Access Monitoring

The objectives of this work were to continue recording the use of Open Access land on Sutton and Hollesley heaths, and also to educate and encourage the correct use of Open Access land, especially the need to keep dogs on a short lead for the period of 1st March to 31st July,

inclusive. The primary purpose of this is to raise awareness and help protect vulnerable wildlife especially ground nesting birds. Leaflet dispensers and posters were located in prominent positions on all four sites.

An Open Access training day was held earlier in the year for the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB volunteers and a nightjar evening was held on June 28th. Nine volunteers attended the event, which enabled them to learn about, and see this enigmatic - and vulnerable - nocturnal bird.

A total of thirty five hours monitoring was carried out, and the data collected by the volunteers was used to produce a report which was circulated to the relevant organisations.

For more information contact Nick Marsh, Countryside Officer.

Winter work programme

A volunteer outdoor winter work programme has been put together, with work including cutting back vegetation on the Suffolk Coast Path and the Stour and Orwell Walk, heath land management and planting trees and shrubs on the north side of the River Orwell.

For more information on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Volunteer Scheme, please contact Nick Marsh, Countryside Officer.

Contacting us...

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If you have not received this Newsletter directly and would like to, please contact one of us.