

FROM: The South West AONB Family: Blackdown Hills, Cornwall, Cotswolds, Cranborne Chase, Dorset, East Devon, Mendip Hills, North Devon, North Wessex Downs, Quantock Hills, South Devon, Tamar Valley

Dear Colleague

The Colchester Declaration : A commitment to nature's recovery by the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)

Launched in 2019, the [Colchester Declaration](#) is an ambitious plan, led by the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), to recover nature in and beyond protected landscapes, build climate resilience and enhance engagement with people.

The Colchester Declaration frames our urgent initial response to the climate and ecological emergency recognised by authorities throughout the UK. While clearly requiring some planning, it is focussed on delivering action for habitats and biodiversity at a significant scale in the shortest possible time. Realising this ambition will require additional resources, forging new partnerships and cementing strong alliances with partners: a task we have been focussing on over the past few months.

This builds on successful nature recovery solutions delivered through AONB partnerships [70@70](#) and will help deliver the goals in the *Landscapes Review* and the 25 Year Environment Plan (YEP).

In the south west, we are plugging into county Nature Recovery Network processes and engaging through Local Nature Partnerships to both embed the approaches outlined in the Colchester Declaration and secure buy-in, but also to ensure alignment and added value.

There are two key areas of progress we would like to share with you. Firstly, we have produced a framework for **Nature Recovery Plans (NRPs)**, a key commitment in the Colchester Declaration and each of the 38 AONBs in England and Wales will be co-creating an iterative plan. The plans aim to engage partners and inspire and inform positive action, to conserve what remains and reinstate what's been lost.

AONB NRPs will relate to land outside the protected landscape boundaries. Where AONBs share a boundary, they will link across it (see map below). Elsewhere they will relate to the ecology beyond our boundaries. AONB NRPs will be co-created with a wide range of stakeholders across the landowning and conservation sectors and the wider community.

Secondly, we are establishing a series of **national pilots** to trial and demonstrate approaches, several of which partly or wholly occur in the south west: namely Big Chalk, Axe catchment and a coastal pilot.

If we haven't already, we would welcome a conversation with you about how to work together to deliver the Colchester Declaration and specifically Nature Recovery Plans, to ensure that they take into account your area of interest and crucially that they dovetail with other plans, strategies and initiatives planned or already active, so we can add value and avoid duplication.

Best wishes and thank you

Blackdown Hills tim.youngs@devon.gov.uk
Cornwall emma.Browning@cornwall.gov.uk
Cotswolds andy.Parsons@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk
Cranborne lindaNunn@cranbornechase.org.uk
Dorset tom.munro@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
East Devon chris.woodruff@eastdevonaonb.org.uk

Mendip Hills jim@mendiphillsaonb.org.uk
North Devon jenny.carey-wood@devon.gov.uk
North Wessex Downs henryoliver@northwessexdowns.org.uk
Quantock Hills cedwards@somerset.gov.uk
South Devon roger.english@southdevonaonb.org.uk
Tamar Valley tdart@tamarvalley.org.uk

