

Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

ANNUAL REVIEW

2019 - 2020

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A nationally important landscape – taking the wider view

The Tamar Valley AONB team continues to actively engage with the National Association for AONBs (NAAONBs). A member of the team completed the Taking the Lead programme focusing on developing staffing skills and networks. Through the NAAONB all AONBs made a collective pledge for nature through the Colchester Declaration and we are now working to shape this for the Tamar Valley AONB. Work has also focused on opportunities from the Defra 25-year plan, the Landscapes Review, by Julian Glover and the potential benefits from post-Brexit land management options. This has included taking part in the Defra Environmental Land Management tests and trials (Farming for the Nation) pilot scheme. On a national scale, work has been focused at positioning AONBs and National Parks as playing a key role in nature recovery and climate change mitigation and adaptation.



The Landscapes Review was published, itemising 27 proposals, including the setting up of a single National Landscape Service, a ranger service operating in all national landscape areas, greater focus on nature recovery and the promotion of wildlife and that National Landscapes become a statutory consultee for planning purposes.

On a regional scale, much work took place, together with other Devon AONBs, in preparation for the NAAONB Conference that was due to be held in Exeter in July 2020, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regional representation throughout the year included staff members attending meetings of the Devon AONB Managers, Heritage Kernow Board, Cornish Mining World Heritage Site Technical Panel, Devon Landscape Policy and Dartmoor Environment Policy. The AONB also co-hosted the Cornwall Ancient Tree Forum AGM at Pentillie and supported Devon Local Nature Partnership/Natural Devon's 'Naturally Healthy May' initiative.

The Tamara Landscape Partnership scheme has continued to take shape during its development phase providing a range of ground breaking and exciting opportunities for the Tamar Valley AONB to take forward to submission to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in August 2020.

It's a busy and exciting time for the Tamar Valley AONB as we look forward to celebrating the 25th anniversary since our designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in August 1995.

The 2019 – 2020 Highlights

National hearts in the landscape celebrate Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Hearts were formed across the country in our most loved landscapes on Saturday 21st September 2019. For the first time ever, people in all the AONBs formed hearts to show how much their landscape means to them.

The heart shape was chosen as it represents not only the love for these areas, but also that AONBs and National Parks were originally thought of as the 'Natural Health Service'. The legislation that allowed the creation of these protected landscapes, the National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act was agreed in 1949, the same year as the National Health Service.

The Tamar Valley AONB team used two trailer loads of local apples from National Trust Cotehele to form a huge heart, that was later pressed into juice. Charlotte Dancer, Information & Communications Officer says, "Nothing says autumn in the Tamar Valley like apples! We used many different local varieties from Cotehele's old orchard, kindly gathered by Cotehele staff; the smell of the apples as we created our heart was delicious! "

Key Milestones

- 5-year review of the Tamar Valley AONB Partnership Management Plan.
- Commissioned the State of the Tamar Valley AONB report.
- Securing first round funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the Development Phase of the Tamar Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme.
- 10-year anniversary of the Tamar Valley Centre.
- Celebrating the National Association for AONBs' National Moment.



Celebrating 10 years of the Tamar Valley Centre

In July 2019, the Tamar Valley Centre, near Gunnislake, celebrated its 10th anniversary. A programme of ten events was organised to mark the occasion.

The gateway for visitors to the Tamar Valley AONB was opened by HRH The Princess Royal in 2009, and for the past decade it's been home to the Tamar Valley AONB team, Calstock Parish Council and the Calstock Parish Archive Trust. Many exhibitions, workshops, classes, events, celebrations and meetings have been held at the Centre during this time.

Ten events took place under the **10 Events for 10 Years** banner. They included a Recycling Workshop, Apple Pressing & Bulb Market and a Photographic Exhibition.

A word from the Chairman

During these times of great uncertainty and unknowns, it's heartening that in nature life seems to carry on regardless. We are so fortunate to have the Tamar Valley, with its palette of lush green fields and vibrant swathes of colour from flower-filled hedgerows, that give us all such a boost. I've been encouraged recently as many people have stopped to comment on how wonderful the hedgerows look this year. With more time to stop and look, it's given them an enthusiasm and renewed appreciation for the variety and abundance of species growing. This is so reassuring for all our staff, volunteers and loyal supporters, as their efforts are now being acknowledged by a much wider community. I'm so thrilled by people's positivity, as they realise what an outstanding place they live in. Working to conserve and enhance all that our beautiful Valley provides us with seems all the more important at this time.



It's been wonderful to be involved in another busy and productive year for the Tamar Valley AONB team, and I am delighted to see the progress with the Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme. By the time you read this, the bid will have been submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, so we keep everything crossed for a positive outcome in December. James Luxton, Gary Lewis and Chris Harris from the Tamara team are hugely thankful for all the support, hours of work and wealth of knowledge provided by the many organisations, groups and individuals involved in the development phase.

Until we can safely meet again, enjoy reading all that's been achieved over the past year, and join us in new and different ways as we continue to look after our ever-important landscape, its communities and wildlife.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Burden'.

Cllr Neil Burden
Chairman, Tamar Valley AONB Partnership

Working in Partnership

The Tamar Valley AONB Partnership has an overall governance structure that enables all of its stakeholders to influence and contribute to the development of policy within the Management Plan, and to contribute to action on the ground through the Delivery Plan. An Executive Committee focuses on the detailed financial, staffing matters and meeting Defra obligations. The day-to-day embodiment of the Plan is fulfilled through the Tamar Valley AONB team.

The AONB Team

The Team comprises a core staff team and additional project staff that are funded from other sources, following the development of external funding bids. The AONB Team is responsible for advising the Partnership, for administering the secretariat for the Partnership, and for ensuring the delivery of the Management Plan.

The Executive

The Executive is made up of the constituent Local Authorities for the AONB, one of which is the 'Host' authority. This is currently Cornwall Council, which provides financial administration on behalf of the Partnership, line management and employment responsibility for the core staff and other project staff as appropriate. In addition, there is a representative from Natural England as landscape advisor to Defra and also up to three non-Local Authority members elected from the Partnership. This group has overall and executive financial responsibility for the AONB Partnership and the Team.

The Partnership

The Tamar Valley AONB Partnership is responsible for guiding, advising and supporting the AONB Team and Executive Group through the production and delivery of the AONB Management Plan.

The Tamar Valley AONB Team

(as at 31 March 2020)

Tim Dart

AONB Manager

Donna Watterson

Office and Finance Manager (p/t)

Coralie Barrow

Development Officer

Lesley Strong

Project Officer (p/t)

Valerie Darwall

Project Officer

Charlotte Dancer

Information and Communications Officer (p/t)

Ben Dancer

Planning Advice Officer (p/t)

Jo Pridham

Monitoring and Reporting Officer (p/t)

The Tamara Landscape Partnership

Team (as at 31 March 2020)

James Luxton

Development Manager

Gary Lewis

Development Officer

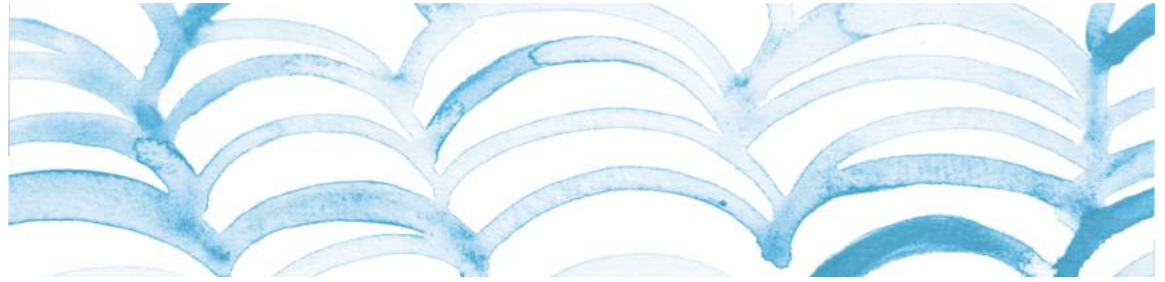
Chris Harris

Finance and Monitoring Officer (p/t)

The Tamar Valley AONB partnership received initial National Lottery Heritage Fund support for the Tamara Landscape Partnership scheme in October 2018. Development funding of £180,000 was awarded to help the Tamar Valley AONB and its 34 partners progress their plans to apply for a full National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £2.3 million in August 2020.

The scheme aims to provide a brighter future for the Tamar Valley and its communities through a programme of 10 individual, interconnected and substantial projects.





Tamar TLC

Everybody needs a little Tender Loving Care once in a while, and special places like the Tamar Valley are no exception. To conserve its natural and cultural heritage for all to enjoy costs money and takes time. Tamar TLC was set up in 2016 to raise, manage and distribute funds to enhance, conserve and protect the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Heralds of Spring

The Trust has continued to work with Tamar Grow Local in furthering their 'Heralds of Spring' Project, which is scheduled to progress over the next two years. The project is aimed at raising awareness of the heritage varieties of daffodils and their location. An app was developed early in 2019 for smartphone surveying for which training sessions have taken place. In addition, there have been a number of visits to local schools which have been well received.

Small Grants Scheme

A number of small grants of £250 each were awarded to various organisations, subject to certain conditions. These included,

- Gunnislake Community Matters – erection of an information board in the centre of Gunnislake
- Bere Local History Group – creation of a website
- Tamar Valley Tourism Association – production of a new map to promote exploration of the Tamar Valley.
- Hedgehog Health Service – 'hedgucation' and training programme
- Tamar Valley AONB – production of an online-only winter issue of *The Valley* newsletter.

Unfortunately, all with the exception of the newsletter, have been delayed due the 'pandemic lockdown'.

Donation boxes

Income raised from donation boxes brought in nearly £1,200, the majority of which is set aside to support individual initiatives in the Valley.

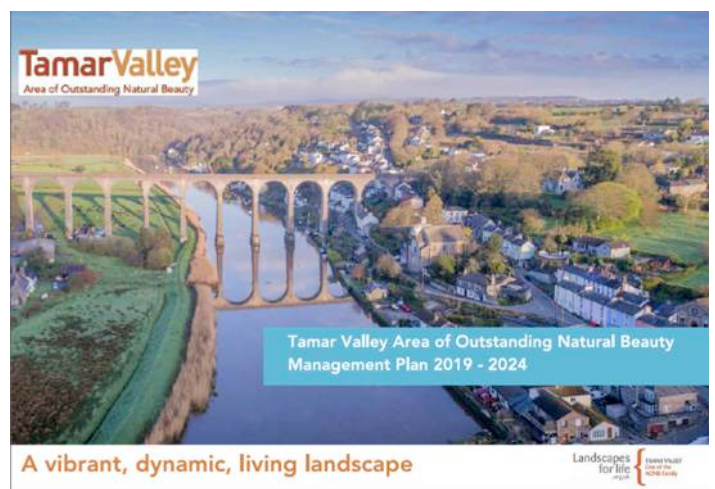


Our 20-year Vision....

“The people of the Tamar Valley are stewards of this rare valley and water landscape of high visual quality, a unique wildlife resource with a remarkable heritage, which is a legacy of thousands of years of human occupation. By supporting a thriving community with a sense of belonging and identity, we will ensure the sustainability of the area as a peaceful, tranquil breathing space; at a time of unprecedented change.”

Management Plan Review & Annual Forum

The latest Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan was launched in June 2019. This Plan forms a revised strategy for the Tamar Valley AONB from 2019–2024. It has been developed through an extensive consultation and review process with a wide range of agencies, organisations and individuals who live and work in the area.



The launch of the Management Plan 2019-2024 was held to coincide with the annual AONB Forum which celebrated some of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Sport England supported projects taking place in the Tamar Valley and to introduce the Tamara Landscape Partnership. The day concluded with a visit to the excavations at Calstock cemetery as part of the University of Exeter’s Understanding Landscapes project.



State of the AONB Report

[The State of the Tamar Valley 2018/19](#) report has been compiled to support the five-year review of the Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan for 2019-2024.

The report brings together the findings of the Monitoring Report 2018/2019, which tracks indicators for change for the Tamar Valley AONB and provides some additional detail to support the background sections throughout the Management Plan.

Tamara Landscape Partnership



The Tamar Valley is a hidden gem that connects Devon and Cornwall, but it is a landscape at risk. Changing land management approaches have reduced hedgerows, traditional orchards and wetlands, in turn decreasing the landscape's resilience to climate change. Heritage of international importance is declining, and communities living on the doorstep of this beautiful place are not accessing it and benefitting physically and mentally from this remarkable resource.

With the uncertainty of a post-Brexit economy and the introduction of the Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs - the new agri-environment funding package for landowners and farmers) due in 2024, land management and landscape protection and enhancement is crucial. This has been exacerbated by the 'new normal' that a post COVID-19 world will deliver in the short and medium term. Climate change is all-encompassing, and is already impacting the natural world. The Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme was created to address these challenges, and it will continue to reflect and adapt to best serve the communities it supports. A strategic but adaptive approach will enable the Tamara Landscape Partnership to manage the unwelcome impacts and make the most of the opportunities that lie ahead.

The Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme consists of ten projects in three themed programmes; built heritage, land management and communities. Together, these projects will empower communities to protect and restore their heritage in the Tamara landscape and develop the Tamar Valley as a green tourism destination. They will offer upskilling and routes to employment through traineeships and apprenticeships, empower schools to care for their local streams and rivers, and support farmers in the uncertain post-Brexit marketplace to improve their businesses by achieving better environmental outcomes. The projects will also remove barriers to improve the physical and mental health for disadvantaged communities both in the Scheme area and in the surrounding market towns and the city of Plymouth.

We have created a powerful partnership, which is the key to our success. The Landscape Partnership Scheme will increase the resilience of organisations, communities and individuals, building the capacity and skills of the volunteer base working in the area, and provide opportunities for a diverse range of people to be involved in improving their communities and providing a positive future for this outstanding landscape.

Landscape Character

Conserve and enhance the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the AONB



South Hooe Landscape Enhancement Initiative

We are continuing to work with partners and the landowners to develop and deliver the South Hooe Landscape Enhancement project on the Bere peninsula in Devon, as part of the National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative.

The Tamar Community Trust and AONB staff planted 2,100 trees to establish a new hedgerow and woodland. The next stage will be to install a new permitted access route around the perimeter of the site.

Western Power – programme of undergrounding cables

Expressions of interest were submitted for two sites within the Tamar Valley AONB, to underground visually impactful powerlines. We are still awaiting the outcome of these proposals but hope to develop them further in due course.

Historic Environment & Local Distinctiveness

Discover, raise awareness of, protect, conserve and enhance heritage within the AONB

Heralds of Spring

The Tamar Valley AONB team continued to support Tamar Tender Loving Care (TLC) in the ongoing delivery of Heralds of Spring, surveying historic daffodil varieties across the Tamar Valley. Volunteers travelled on the Tamar Valley Line in March, promoting the project and local daffodil events to passengers on the train, while the AONB team and Drawn to the Valley spent the day at Plymouth Railway Station, engaging with a wider audience. This joint initiative with Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership, National Trust Cotehele and Drawn to the Valley generated great interest, and one we'll be seeking to repeat. Unfortunately, COVID-19 resulted in most of the events being cancelled. The Tamar Grow Local team continued to deliver the daffodil survey.

17

People attended training

13

Active volunteers

355

Pre-verification records

Understanding Landscapes

The Tamar Valley AONB is a partner in the University of Exeter's *Understanding Landscapes* project. The project provides opportunities for volunteers to be involved in archaeological investigations, with practical sessions and by learning desk-based skills to make new archaeological discoveries in the Tamar Valley AONB and beyond.

Calstock Community Archaeological Excavation took place in June. Over 35 volunteers made a number of new and exciting discoveries. The open day attracted around 200 visitors.

Five archaeological workshops took place at the Tamar Valley Centre in early 2020, attracting around 30 people who spent time cataloguing the finds. The Calstock post-excavation volunteers were so efficient in the first two of five planned workshops that there were no finds left to process. So, the workshops took a new direction, initially focussing on undertaking desk-based landscape research using historic maps and then making exciting new discoveries from studying LIDAR data.



Cornwall Local Distinctiveness

The Tamar Valley AONB provided input into the Cornwall Local Distinctiveness project, which has looked to define and understand the unique cultural distinctiveness of Cornwall. This has ensured that many of the characteristics that make the Tamar Valley AONB special have been captured in the final report. Several of the case studies accompanying the work are from the Tamar Valley.

Cornish Mining World Heritage Site

The Tamar Valley AONB continues to have a representative on the Cornwall & West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (WHS) Technical Panel, which exists to provide professional support to the WHS from partnership organisations. This group meets three times each year.



Heritage at Risk

Tamar Valley AONB worked alongside Historic England, various organisations and the landowners at Okel Tor, to investigate a schedule of works for the site that benefits both the heritage features and wildlife.

Work began with Historic England on assessing clearance work required at Gunnislake Clitters. A report of recommendations was produced, including path clearance and making the site accessible to visitors. Fundraising opportunities were also explored.

Both sites are on the Heritage at Risk register and this work will help to stabilize or improve their condition, with a view to further ongoing management to safeguard the future of these sites.

Biodiversity & Geodiversity

Support the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity & geodiversity in the AONB

Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project

The Tamar Valley AONB is a partner in the Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project. The Tamar Valley Centre continues to be a hub for the community to borrow a bat detector. This year, it was fully booked all season and 39 surveys were undertaken within the local area with 11 species recorded.

Species	Total surveys when detected	Maximum passes on a survey
Common pipistrelle	39	4189
Soprano pipistrelle	32	538
Long-eared	13	9
Noctule	28	100
Serotine	10	26
Greater horseshoe	14	28
Lesser horseshoe	11	69
Barbastelle	1	6
Myotis bat species (at least 3: Daubenton's, Natterer's and Whiskered/Brandt's)	33	1066

A member of the Tamar Valley AONB team attended a bat, lighting & planning workshop in October and a community engagement task & finish group in March. A training workshop on bat sound analysis was held at the Tamar Valley Centre, attracting nine people. A further data analysis session was also held, with eight attendees. A member of the AONB team presented a Bat Talk to St Dominic Women's Institute in July, to an audience of over 25 people.

Building Resilience in South West Woodlands

The Tamar Valley AONB is a partner in Plantlife's *Building Resilience in South West Woodlands* project. A member of the Tamar Valley AONB completed the Forest Bathing Practitioner training as part of this project and four Woodland Strolls for Wellbeing & Relaxation were planned for the 2020 season. Five volunteers completed training in Rapid Woodland Assessments at Grenofen Woods and another volunteer carried out the assessments in the Tamar Valley area as work experience for a Masters Degree. A number of Valley Volunteers have gone on to complete moss and lichen ID training and advanced training through other opportunities offered by the project.

B-Lines

The Tamar Valley AONB is one of the areas mapped for Buglife's B-Lines project. B-Lines are 'insect pathways' that need to be restored or created to help our native insect pollinators to move freely throughout our landscape.

Saving the Heath Fritillary in the Tamar Valley

We continue to provide ongoing support for Butterfly Conservation's *Saving the Heath Fritillary in the Tamar Valley* project. Butterfly Conservation reported that the weather in South West England in 2019 was poor for Heath Fritillaries and numbers were lower than recent years. Despite this setback, habitat management carried out in 2017/18 is starting to offer suitable breeding sites for this butterfly.



Rivers & Estuaries

Maintain high quality river systems and habitats and identify opportunities for sustainable development, recreation and tourism



Tamar Invasive Plants project

The Tamar Valley AONB continues to deliver the Tamar Invasive Plants project, on behalf of a partnership of four organisations (Tamar Valley AONB, Environment Agency, Natural England and Cornwall Council – known collectively as the Tamar Invasives Group).

Field survey and control treatment of Giant Hogweed was completed in June. Numbers of plants continue to decrease in the survey area, down from 359 in 2018 to 160 in 2019. Activities are planned for 2020, including an independent project review and collaborative public event with the South West Lakes Trust, with support from South West Water.

Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum

A member of the Tamar Valley AONB represents the partnership on the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum.

Marine events

A member of the AONB team attended a workshop, hosted by the Marine Management Organisation, based on the implementation of Marine Plans for the South West, and also attended Plymouth Sound National Marine Park public event in September.

The Tamar Valley AONB Manager attended the Tamar Catchment Partnership meeting hosted by Westcountry Rivers Trust in Lifton. The aim of the meeting was to refresh and reinvigorate the 2012 Tamar Catchment Partnership Plan by gathering together interested parties at an open meeting to review and celebrate the achievements of the first nine years and begin the process of planning for the future.

Environmental Quality & Climate Change

Ensure effective conservation and management of the AONB's natural resources and respond to the challenges of climate change



River Tamar Walkway & Wetland project

We are a partner in the River Tamar Walkway & Wetland project, a flood resilience and habitat creation scheme at Calstock's floodbank. Site work began at the end of September 2019.

Tamar Valley Centre – community hub to reduce, re-use & recycle

Recycling for charity

The Tamar Valley Centre has become a hub for community recycling, collecting plastics that can't currently be recycled through fortnightly kerbside collections. South Hill Association for Renewable Energy (SHARE) and Terracycle recycle the plastics, raising funds for KicksCount charity to help reduce stillbirths. In January alone, across the entire collection area that SHARE covers, members of the community have recycled the following:

400 Pringles tubes	1,000 Baby food pouches	2,500 Bread loaf bags
1,425 Toothbrushes and toothpaste tubes weighing 18kg	12,240 Sweet wrappers (8kg) and biscuit wrappers (20kg)	70kg Crisp Packets 20kg KP nuts and snacks
740 Triggers, hand pumps and wipes packaging	170kg Pet food bags and pouches	300 Soft tubes, hand creams, lipsticks, mascaras, etc

Visitors to the Centre are also encouraged to spend a couple of minutes picking litter from around the site, as part of the #2minutelitterpick campaign.

Ecover Refill Station

30% of monthly sales at the Tamar Valley Centre (as at March 2020) are made up of honey and Ecover products. The local community can refill their bottles with Ecover washing-up liquid, hand wash or non-bio laundry liquid.

The Centre also continues to offer free drinking water refills, as an official Water Refill Station.

Repair Café

A Repair Café launched at the Tamar Valley Centre on 15th February, saving 11 items from going to landfill. Fixers were members of the local community, volunteering their time to help, with support from the Saltash Repair Café. The Repair Café will be held monthly, with money raised for Tamar Tender Loving Care (TLC).

Coffee & Conversations

The weekly café continues to be held on Thursday mornings at the Tamar Valley Centre, with donations made to Tamar TLC. So far, £792 has been collected in donations. This year also saw the 1st anniversary of the Coffee & Conversations project.

Tevi workshop

Tevi, the project that focuses on environmental growth for businesses in Cornwall, held a workshop at the Tamar Valley Centre. 33 local businesses attended. Tevi is a partnership between the University of Exeter, Cornwall Council, Cornwall Wildlife Trust and Cornwall Development Company.

Climate Change Theme Lead

Tamar Valley AONB Manager, Tim Dart, acted as Climate Change Theme Lead on behalf of Cornwall Council for the Agricultural sector.

Green Champion

The Tamar Valley AONB has a 'green champion', an initiative through Cornwall Council, to promote sustainable approaches to the work of the AONB team.



Farming, Forestry & Land Management

Support systems of landscape management that conserve and enhance the AONB

Environmental Land Management scheme Test & Trial

The Tamar Valley AONB was successful in gaining an offer letter to conduct an Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs) Tests & Trials. £80,000 has been granted to look at the practicality of assessing soil organic carbon using soil scanning technology. Soil carbon assessments are typically carried out using labour intensive hand sampling methods. By trialling mechanised soil scanners there is an opportunity to assess if this technology can provide the same quality of data as the hand sampling methods but on a larger scale. If the trials are successful it will be possible to build a wider picture of soil carbon data across the Tamar Valley and beyond and to assess the impact of changes in land management on soil health.

Forest for Cornwall

Work began on promotion of, and identifying opportunities for, the Forest for Cornwall in the Tamar Valley. Opportunities for community tree nurseries, as well as increasing canopy cover for Calstock Parish Council's assets, have been worked on. A number of events are being planned, including a Forest for Cornwall/Environmental Growth strategy event for parishes across the AONB and beyond, a Tree Warden recruitment event and a number of talks to local groups. Opportunities are also being identified for replication in Devon.

Devon's Trees

Tamar Valley AONB has had representation at a combined meeting of the Devon Ash dieback resilience Forum and the Landscape & Ecological Resilience Group in which the status of ash dieback in Devon and current management strategies were discussed and an overview of the Saving Devon's Treescapes project was presented.

The team has also been involved with the Devon Hedge Forum, and attended both the Devon Landscape Policy group and Dartmoor Environment Policy group meetings.



Access, Recreation & Tourism

Promote the development of integrated access, recreation and tourism that are compatible with the AONB designation



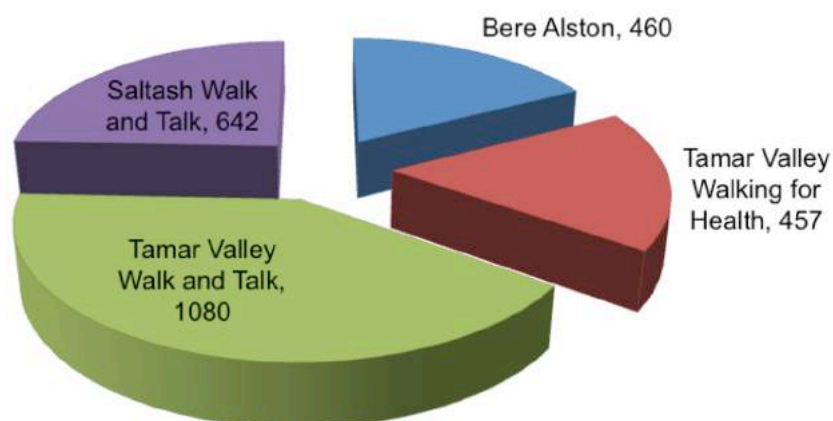
Bere Alston Healthy Walks

The Tamar Valley AONB continued to deliver a programme of weekly Bere Alston Healthy Walks as part of a wider Active Devon scheme. We also organised walk leader training in April, delivered by Active Devon, which was attended by 14 people.

Walking Groups

The team continued to support other local walking groups through the Walking for Health and Walk & Talk programmes. The very successful Tamar Valley Walk & Talk group celebrated its 10th anniversary during the summer of 2019.

Total Number of Walkers - 2639



Walking Group	Number of walkers	Average walkers per walk	Number of volunteer walk leaders
Bere Alston Healthy Walks	460	12	6
Tamar Valley Walking for Health	457	9	8
Tamar Valley Walk and Talk	1080	21	3
Saltash Walk and Talk	642	12	2
Total	2639	54	19

Tamar Valley Tourism Association

The Tamar Valley AONB team continues to support the Tamar Valley Tourism Association (TAVATA), and have been working closely with them during their rebranding work, which will mean that they are more aligned with other Destination Management Organisations.

Dartmoor Tourist Information Centre (TIC) Group

A member of the Tamar Valley AONB team attends meetings throughout the year to discuss how the Tamar Valley Centre is performing as a visitor centre. It is an opportunity to share best practice and consider new initiatives, for example with regards visitor feedback, volunteer recruitment, best sellers and exhibitions. The group is coordinated by the Visitor Services Manager from Dartmoor National Park Authority and comprises representatives from TICs across Devon.

Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership

We continue to work closely with the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership to promote the Tamar Valley Line. We are represented on the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership/Tamar Valley Line Forum. The AONB helped to organise and host an exhibition in June for the 25th anniversary of the new Gunnislake Station, which was well attended.

Sustainable Transport

Work began to explore sustainable transport opportunities. Meetings were held to discuss the feasibility of a number of schemes.

Discovery Trail Challenge

Seventeen adults, six children and five dogs took part in the Discovery Trail Challenge in July. They walked the 12-mile Cornish section of the Tamar Valley Discovery Trail, raising in excess of £350 for Tamar TLC. The Discovery Trail Quest was run in conjunction with the challenge, to engage families with younger children.

Planning & Development

Ensure that the AONB's purpose and objectives are fully recognised in local planning policy

Our Planning Advice Officer (one day a week) reviews and comments on planning applications within the Tamar Valley area.

164 applications were reviewed. This included applications to replace windows, create extensions or carry out conversions to properties, as well as larger, more complex, plans including housing developments and a hotel with leisure facilities.

The Tamar Valley AONB offers a payable pre-application service. One fee accruing formal pre-app was carried out during this year, although this figure does not reflect the many informal pre-application advice provided direct via phone, in person or via email for which no charge is made.



Communities & Culture

Support communities to understand and appreciate their cultural identity and contribute to a sustainable future for communities in the AONB

Neighbourhood Plans

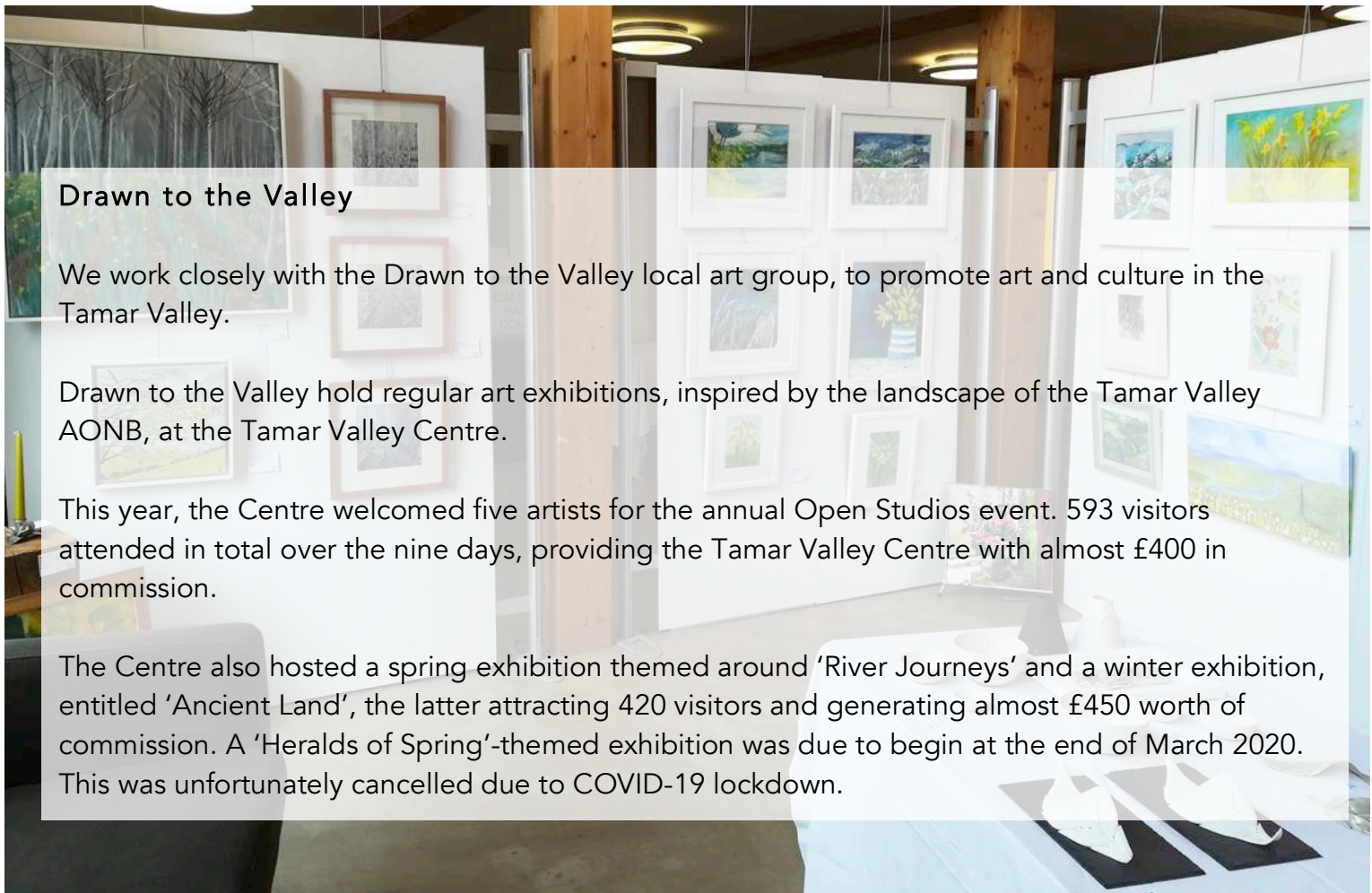
The AONB continues to provide input into Parish Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) and provided comments to Calstock NDP consultation.

Grants for Small Businesses

The Tamar Valley AONB hosted a workshop aimed at small businesses within the AONB looking to access sources of funding. This included presentations from the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) and the Cornwall Development Fund and attracted 64 delegates.

Sustainable Development Fund

The AONB coordinated the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) to support projects that conserve and enhance the Tamar Valley AONB. Working in partnership with Tamar TLC this year, £4,930 in total was allocated to eight applicants. Successful projects included the restoration of a rare survival of a Victorian school toilet block and refurbishment of steps providing access to a local mine site.



Drawn to the Valley

We work closely with the Drawn to the Valley local art group, to promote art and culture in the Tamar Valley.

Drawn to the Valley hold regular art exhibitions, inspired by the landscape of the Tamar Valley AONB, at the Tamar Valley Centre.

This year, the Centre welcomed five artists for the annual Open Studios event. 593 visitors attended in total over the nine days, providing the Tamar Valley Centre with almost £400 in commission.

The Centre also hosted a spring exhibition themed around 'River Journeys' and a winter exhibition, entitled 'Ancient Land', the latter attracting 420 visitors and generating almost £450 worth of commission. A 'Heralds of Spring'-themed exhibition was due to begin at the end of March 2020. This was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19 lockdown.

Wildlife Weekend

The Wildlife Weekend, held at the Tamar Valley Centre in Drakewalls in September 2019, saw over one hundred visitors getting up close to wildlife and nature, joining in with the many activities, talks and walks on offer. On Saturday 7th September families made bird boxes, seed bombs and plant prints and explored the site in search of wildlife and plants.

Inspiring talks on Hedgehogs, Moths and Bats, advice on keeping bees, and suggestions on adding pollinator plants and bug hotels to gardens, informed the many visitors from the Tamar Valley area. Plants, local honey, jewellery inspired by nature, handmade soaps and local glass decorations were on sale, together with local cakes, tea and coffee. A Bat Walk, Birdwatching Walk, Forest Bathing taster session and Botany Walk completed the weekend.



Community Volunteering

As part of Cornwall Council's Employee Volunteering Scheme, some members of the AONB team painted the railings outside Gunnislake Village Hall. This is something we would like to do more of. If your community group would like our help, please do get in touch – enquiries@tamarvalley.org.uk

Communications, Education & Awareness

Promote a greater understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the AONB landscape and wider recognition of the designation and its purpose

Press releases

22 press releases were issued to mainly local and regional media throughout the year to generate interest and raise awareness of the work of the AONB partnership.

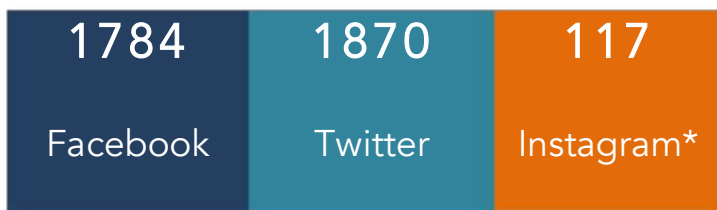
Whilst we are unable to record the amount of press coverage generated at present, our highest profile coverage this year was the six-page article in the March 2020 issue of *Country Living* magazine, entitled 'The Daffodil Detectives'. The article focused on the daffodil surveyors and artists, and featured Andrew Spry's orchard at Weir Quay.

The Valley newsletter

6,000 copies of *The Valley* newsletter (summer issue) were produced and distributed to local outlets through the Tamar Valley and surrounding area. Due to budget constraints, the winter issue was online only. Monthly e-bulletins continue to be sent to 400 subscribers.

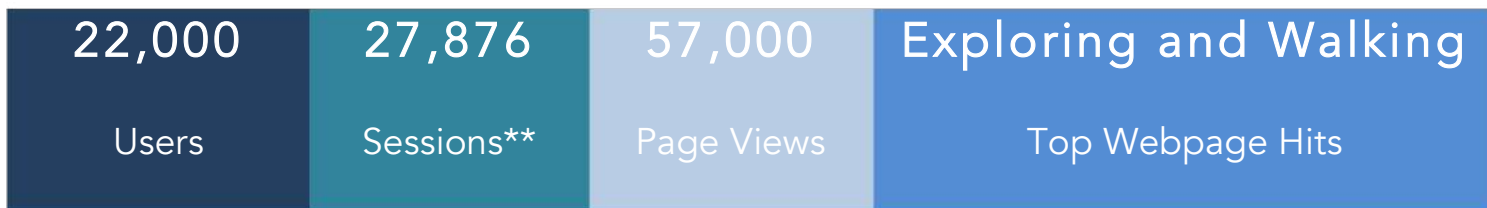
Social media

Regular social media postings continue across three platforms, to increase awareness of, and engagement with, the Tamar Valley AONB. The number of followers, as of March 2020, were

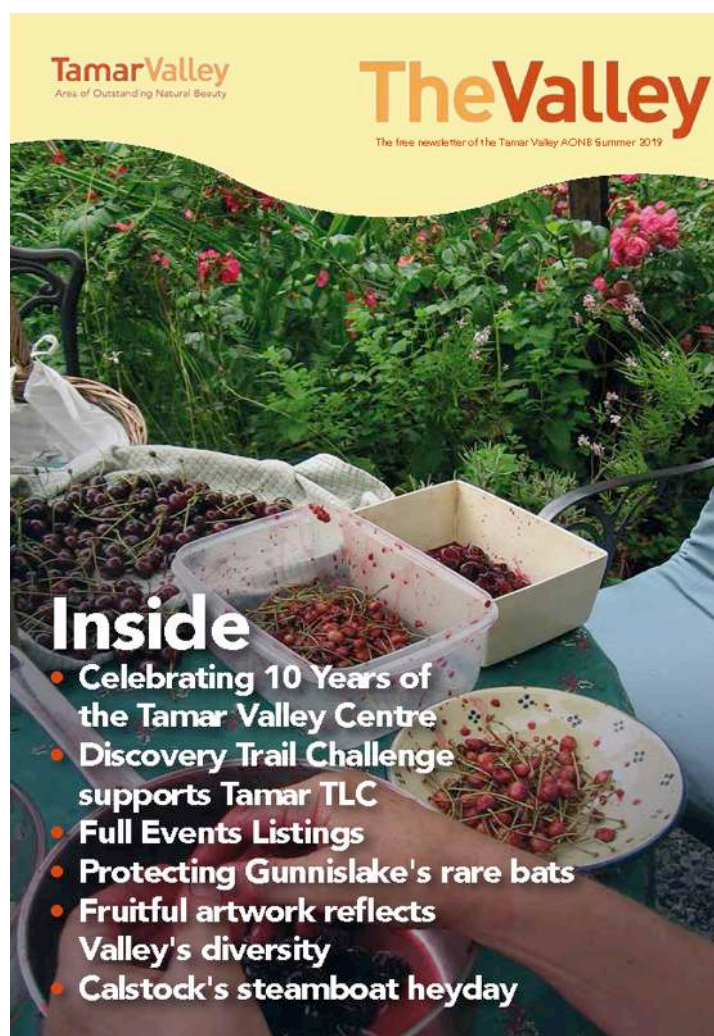


*Instagram set up in mid January 2020

Website



**period of time a user is actively engaged with the website



Talks

Our Heritage Guides continue to provide talks on behalf of the Tamar Valley AONB to local groups, whilst raising funds for Tamar TLC. This year, they were invited to speak at Saltash Heritage Group, St Germans Community Group, Blunts Community Group and Bickleigh, Roborough & District Gardening Society.

School visit

The Tamar Valley AONB team hosted Delaware Primary School for an educational visit to the Tamar Valley Centre and displayed an exhibition of artwork inspired by their visit. 30 local children took part in hapa zome (a natural way to create leaf and flower prints on cloth. It literally means 'leaf dye') and a big bug hunt around the Drakewalls site. Members of the Tamar Valley AONB team also visited Callington Community College to discuss opportunities to develop a wildflower meadow as a teaching resource.

Local events

The AONB team continues to attend and support local events and initiatives, including Latchley, Chilsworthy & Cox Park Show, Callington's Honey Fair, anti-litter event at Gunnislake Village Hall, Tamar Energy Festival in Tavistock's Butchers' Hall and the Calstock Parish Christmas Tree Festival.

Christmas Tree Festival

Tamar Valley AONB decorated a tree for this year's Calstock Parish Christmas Tree Festival. Held at All Saints' Church, Harrowbarrow, we choose the theme of *Tackling Climate Change & Promoting Sustainability in the Tamar Valley AONB*. The tree highlighted just some of the work and many projects the AONB had been involved with over the past 25 years that addressed climate change and promoted sustainability. Each project was written onto a 'leaf', made from recycled Christmas cards, and attached to a silver birch branch (as we approach our silver anniversary year).

Spreading the message

Information on the Tamar Valley AONB was sent to Plymouth Boat Cruises to improve their commentary on boat cruises to Calstock, after identifying that limited information was given to passengers once passing under the Tamar Bridge.

Image database

The AONB commissioned local drone operator, TON Drone Services, to increase the geographical range of images to our photographic library. This was vital for our Management Plan and will be very helpful for ongoing publicity to maintain a fresh, current look for the Tamar Valley. We are delighted to feature a number of the images in this Annual Review.

Health & Wellbeing

With a greater emphasis on the value of the natural world in health and wellbeing this is the beginning of a new chapter for the AONB

An AONB team member is a Health and Wellbeing Champion for Cornwall Council.

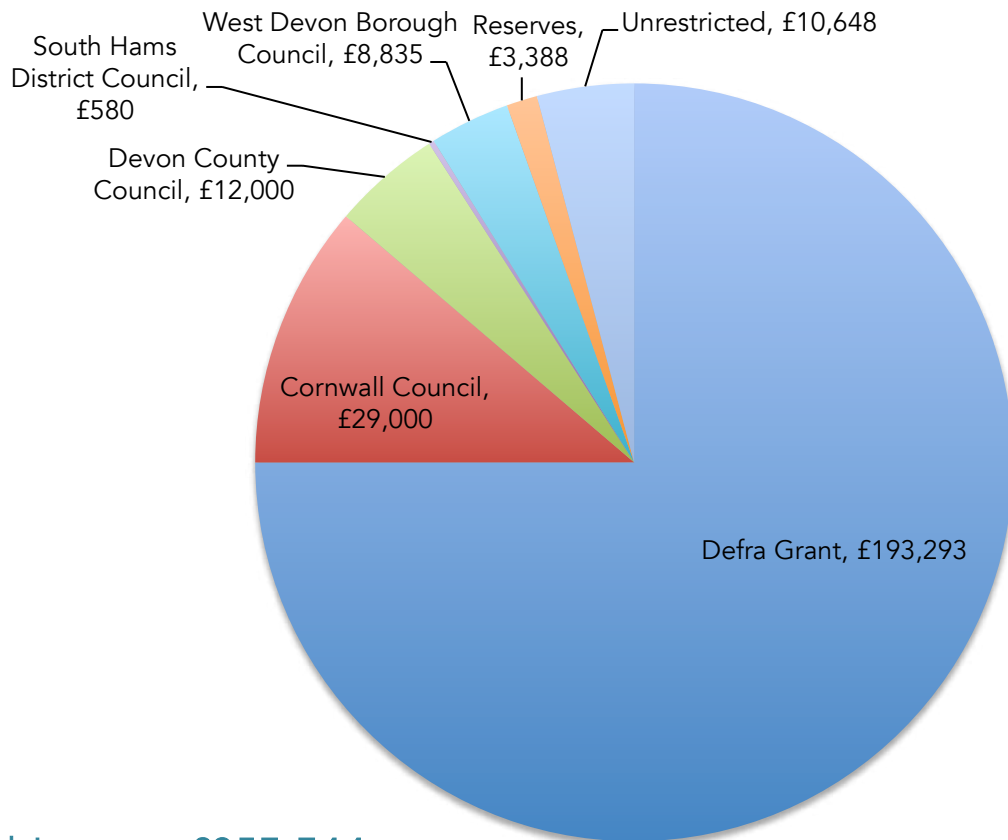
The AONB has been represented at a number of health and wellbeing meetings, including Tavistock (and surrounding area) Health & Wellbeing Alliance, Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Interagency, Devon Local Nature Partnership's Naturally Healthy Forum, Active Devon and Arts Well network. A team member also attended the Voluntary and Community sector 'Delivering Better Health and Care Outcomes Together' Conference and hosted a Staff Wellbeing Checks day for the team.

The AONB was also represented at a workshop in Liskeard to discuss Social Prescribing that is to be introduced to the Launceston, Callington and Gunnislake areas, and the AONB Health and Wellbeing Champion subsequently met with the new Social Prescriber/Link Worker for Gunnislake and Callington.

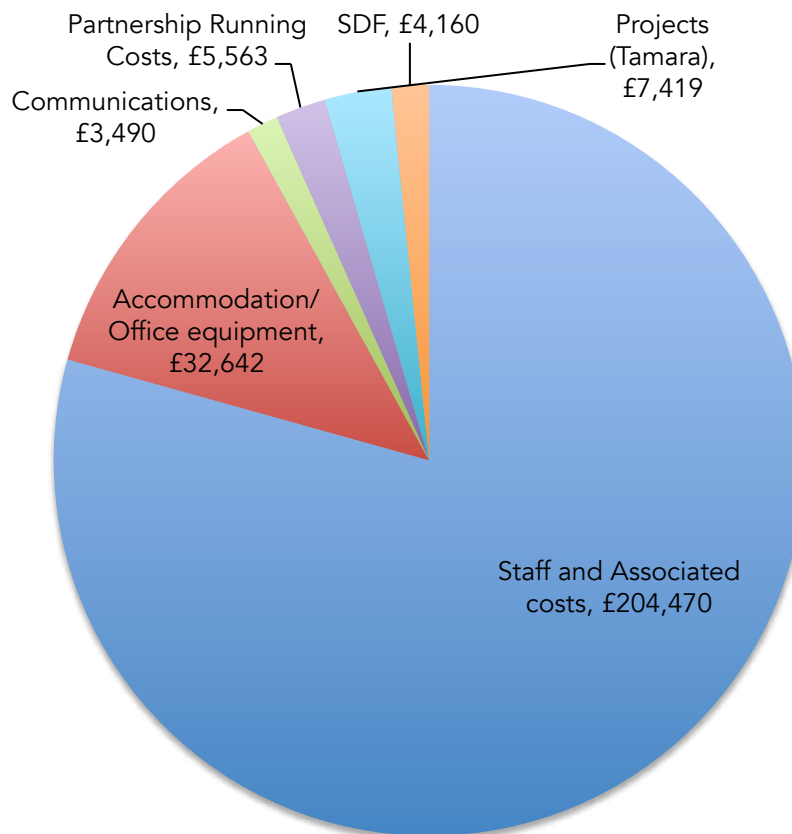
Thanks to a training opportunity through Plantlife's *Building Resilience in South West Woodlands* project an AONB team member is now a qualified Forest Bathing practitioner, which provides additional opportunities to connect with the environment.

With the ongoing success of the walk programmes, the AONB is developing an exciting health and wellbeing offer with potential to expand in the future, subject to available funding.

Financial Summary 2019-20

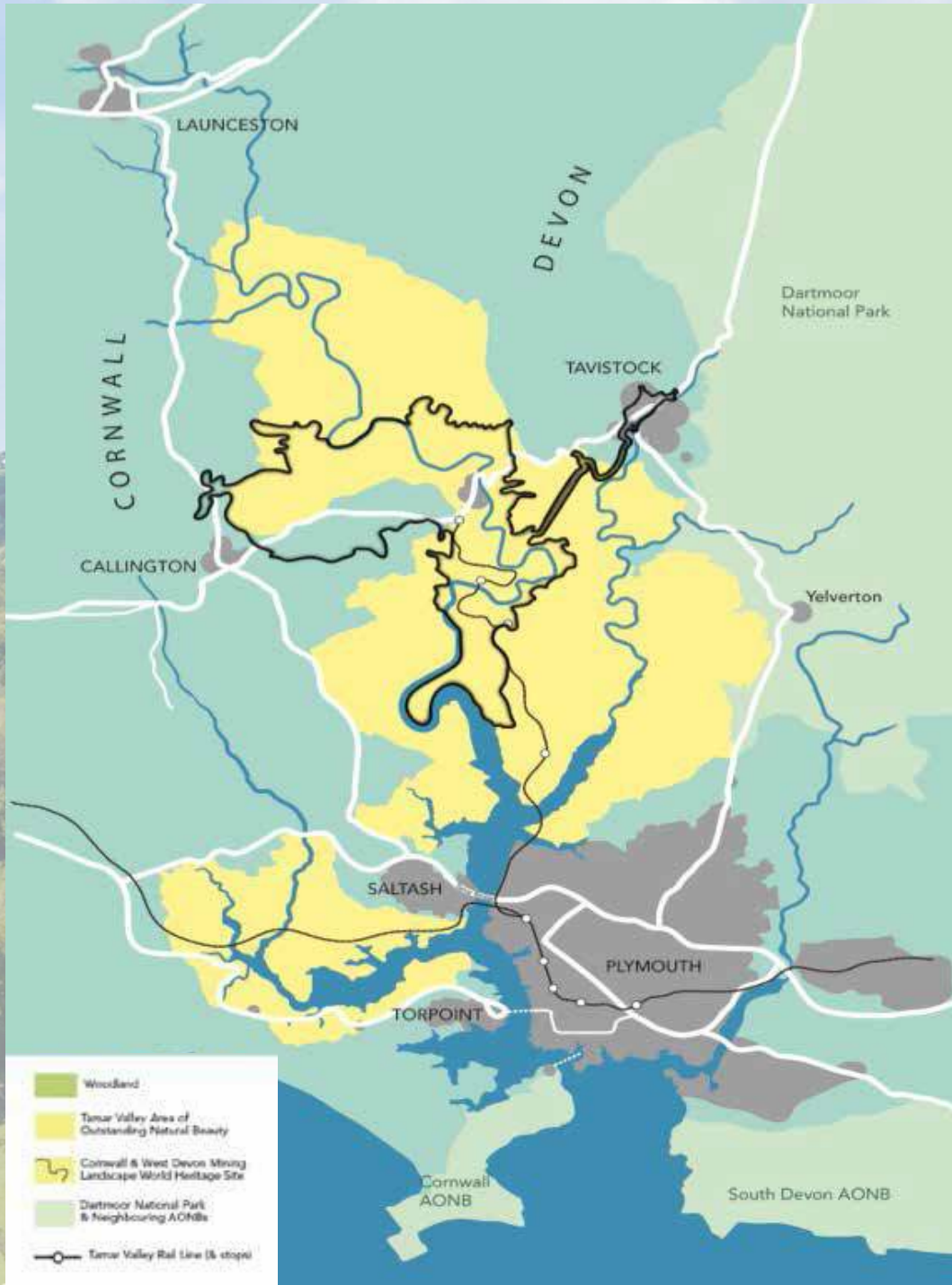


Total Income £257,744



Total Expenditure £257,744

Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Tamar Valley Centre

Cemetery Road, Drakewalls, Gunnislake, Cornwall PL18 9FE

Tel: 01822 835030 website: www.tamarvalley.org.uk email: enquiries@tamarvalley.org.uk



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