



## Annual Review 2020-21



Celebrating our first 25 years

# Welcome to the Tamar Valley AONB Annual Review

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# Celebrating Our Silver Anniversary - 25 Years of the Tamar Valley AONB



The 35-mile **Tamar Valley Discovery Trail** was created in 1998.



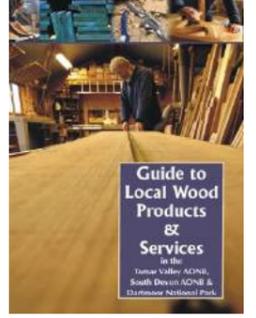
In summer 1999, the **Tamar Passenger Ferry** was launched. It operated between Calstock, Cotehele and Ferry Farm.



**Tamar Valley Regeneration Project** ran from 1999-2001. A £2.9million project, led by Cornwall County Council - a programme of environmental enhancements in and around Calstock, Callington and Gunnislake.



**TAVATA & Woodmeet** - established 2001 from a grant from the Phoenix Fund, designed to help rural businesses affected by Foot & Mouth Disease.



**Working the Woods** was a 3-year project in the mid-2000s, that highlighted the links between protected landscapes and woodland.



**Sovereigns, Madams & Double Whites**, a book and recordings capturing the memories and life during the heyday of Tamar Valley's market gardening industry, was produced in 2004.



Photo © Peter Eeles

The **Heath Fritillary Project**, initiated by Butterfly Conservation in 2005 and is still ongoing in the Tamar Valley.



In 2006, the AONB team helped the Tamar Protection Society secure funding to restore the **Elizabethan Garden at Mary Newman's Cottage**, Saltash.



Work began on the £6million **Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project** in 2006, to bring alive the rich mining heritage of the Tamar Valley.



The **East Cornwall Regeneration Project** was a £1.8million project that focused on conservation and access improvements at 7 mining sites, plus the creation of 19.9km of multi-use trails and 11km of walking trails.



As part of the East Cornwall Regeneration Project, the **Tamar Valley Centre** was built. Home to the AONB team and Calstock Parish Council, it was opened by HRH The Princess Royal in July 2009.



**Drawn to the Valley** art group have 150 members from right across the Tamar Valley, all of whom draw their inspiration from our special landscape.



The community dig in October 2011, as part of the **Calstock Parish Heritage Project**, resulted in the discovery of Calstock Roman Fort.



**Diarykeepers** was inspired by the diaries that St Dominic market gardener, Joseph Snell kept. 90 people recorded their lives each day for a month in June 2012.



In June 2012, the **Wacker Quay to Antony Trail** opened. This was the result of a great deal of work over 18 months by a small team of volunteers (Wacker Quay Community Group), the Tamar Community Trust and the Tamar Valley AONB.



As part of the Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project, the **Tavistock Canal Poetry Trail** was created in 2012, with poetry written by local schoolchildren.



**'What's In Your Back Garden?'** took place in July 2012. Over 40 residents and 36 children from the school in Bere Alston dug test pits to look for history in their back gardens.



**Tamar Valley Food Hubs**- established in 2013 as part of the Cordiale project's Tamar Valley field trials. This was aimed at promoting and encouraging increased availability of sustainable and affordable local produce in the Tamar Valley and surrounding areas.



**Woodfuel** was one of the key focus areas for the Cordiale project which concluded in 2013. A range of woodfuel resources were produced, including toolkits and case studies.



**Helping Hands for Heritage** was a 2-year project (2014-2016) that provided expert training for volunteers over a range of heritage topics.



Around 300 visitors joined the Tamar Valley AONB's **20<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the Tamar Valley AONB in the grounds of the Tamar Valley Centre in 2015. It also marked the culmination of the five-day Tamar Trail Festival.



The **Low carbon farming project** took place in 2015 - The Tamar Valley AONB, Environment Agency and FWAG ran a series of events looking at how farmers and growers can manage soil sustainably.



**Heralds of Spring** began in 2017. In the first season of surveying, over 104 heritage varieties of daffodils in the landscape were recorded, resulting from 352 surveys.



The **10 Events for 10 Years Wildlife Weekend** featured a wealth of activities focusing on the wildlife of the Tamar Valley. This was a culmination of a series of events celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tamar Valley Centre in 2019.



A local beer, **Ale of Outstanding Natural Beauty**, was created to mark 25 years of the Tamar Valley AONB in 2020. Bere Brewery used 100% Tamar Valley hops in their brew. Monarch Liqueurs paired fruits from Tamar Valley hedgerows to create a blackberry and elderflower gin liqueur, named **Tamara**, to mark the occasion, too.

# Our nationally important landscape

## A Foreword from Our Chairs

Rising on the borders of Cornwall and Devon, the rivers Tamar, Tavy and Lynher form one of the last, unspoilt drowned valley river systems in England.

On their passage to the broad estuary between Plymouth and Saltash, the rivers flow through a series of deep meanders, steep gorges and wooded valleys. A ribbon of Atlantic woodland extends along the estuary margin. Between the valleys, the high land has a farmland plateau character and there is a feeling of remoteness and solitude. The landscape contains a wide variety of wildlife habitats, including many ancient woodlands and intertidal wetlands that provide important wintering grounds for wildfowl and wading birds.

Opportunities for exercise and exploring abound, including along the renowned Tamar Trails, the Gawton Gravity Hub and our Tamar Valley Discovery Trail. Fabulous historic buildings and beautiful public gardens are dotted throughout.

The diverse scenery reflects the impact and activities of the people that have lived and worked for many centuries in an area rich in natural resources. Field patterns disclose ancient farming practices, disused mine workings reveal intensive mining activity (much of the AONB is covered by Area 10 of the Cornwall & West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site), and old orchards scattered on the warm, south-facing valley slopes are the remnants of market gardens that were widespread in the area at the beginning of the 20th century.

Many of these factors were captured in the original Landscape Character Assessment that formed the basis for the Tamar Valley's designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1995. Still the latest addition to the AONB 'family' (though we noted with pleasure the Government's recently announced intention for two new AONBs, and extensions to two more elsewhere in England), we celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> year as a protected landscape in 2020.

As an AONB, our performance is measured against our five-year Management Plan and its Key Performance Indicators. This report sets out our activities over the past extraordinary 12 months, much of which was under lockdown, showing the remarkable resourcefulness and resilience of our team, our Partners and of course, our landscape.

We would like to thank our small team, supported by our Executive and wider Partnership, for their work during these extremely challenging times. The same can of course be said about most organisations that have kept things moving through all the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, but nonetheless, in the AONB's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the clear and strong progress made is a real demonstration of the dedication and expertise of the team, and the strength of our partnerships.

Lastly, but certainly not least, it is a pleasure for us both to have been elected as the new joint Chairs of the Tamar Valley AONB Partnership, there are exciting opportunities ahead. We thank and pay tribute to our previous Chair, Neil Burden, for his commitment and the AONB's achievements over his long and successful tenure.

Martin Howlett and Cllr Philip Sanders  
Joint Chairs, Tamar Valley AONB Partnership



# Executive Summary

Operationally, and despite the substantial challenge of lockdowns, the Tamar Valley AONB team has delivered in the key aspects against its Management Plan objectives in 2020-21. It certainly delivers value for money and, in line with other AONBs, can demonstrate a match funding ratio against core funding of around 3:1, with a good example this year being the successful securing of funding for the exciting Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme.

Projects delivered, developed or actively supported by the AONB this year, under our broad Management Plan themes of Place, People & Prosperity, and Partnership, include:

Farming-focused projects including the Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs) Tests & Trials project assessing the viability of new technology in measuring soil carbon and soil health indicators, and the ELMS advocacy work identifying farms and farm clusters keen to work on environmental and landscape improvements.

The announcement of the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme after year-end, with its substantial resourcing for work on nature recovery, climate change, access and heritage and sustainable business practice, was particularly welcome.

The ongoing successful delivery of the project to control the invasive species Giant Hogweed continued, with surveying showing good progress towards virtual elimination across the Tamar Valley.

The AONB continues as an active partner on the important flood-bank realignment and intertidal habitat creation projects at South Hooe and at Calstock, both of which will deliver significant nature recovery benefits and access improvements.

Maintenance of links with our community partners has to enabled continuation or early resumption of Walking for Health programmes, and volunteering opportunities, including the maintenance of the Tamar Trails, fly-tipping and litter clearance and tree planting. We were pleased to be able to welcome back Drawn to the Valley to the Tamar Valley Centre for their first exhibition in 2021.

The announcement of the successful funding bid and the official launch of the Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme at our well-attended online Annual Forum in early 2021 was a particularly important milestone. The resourcing and project mechanisms are now being established to ensure delivery of this exciting five-year programme.



An express objective under the third theme of our Management Plan is to review our governance mechanisms and representation on the Partnership, so the Governance Review that has been recently conducted and the approved recommendations now being implemented (including the adoption of new Terms of Reference and review and revitalisation of our Partnership), are helpful for the long-term success and vitality of our AONB.

We have also responded, contributed to, or noted key drivers and forces for change including:

The Government's on-going response to its Landscapes Review 2019 (or Glover Review): Of particular interest is a proposed National Landscapes Service (with local accountability and delivery), and recommendations in areas of nature recovery, greater access and inclusiveness, expanded volunteering, potential ranger services and more resources for AONBs.

The 25 Year Environment Plan and the linked environmental targets and other measures contained within the current Environment Bill remain an important focus. As does the Agriculture Act 2020, the proposed ELMs and the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme. These are part of the UK Government's agricultural transition, intended to deliver mutual benefits to the local farming economy and to the environment and wider communities.



There are also many regional and local authorities' initiatives that we contribute to, including Cornwall's Environmental Growth Strategy, Devon & Cornwall's Climate Change Strategies, the work of Local Enterprise and Local Nature Partnerships, the latter importantly including the current Cornwall Local Nature Recovery Strategy, one of five UK pilots that we've actively supported, and will continue to do so as it moves into its vital implementation phase.



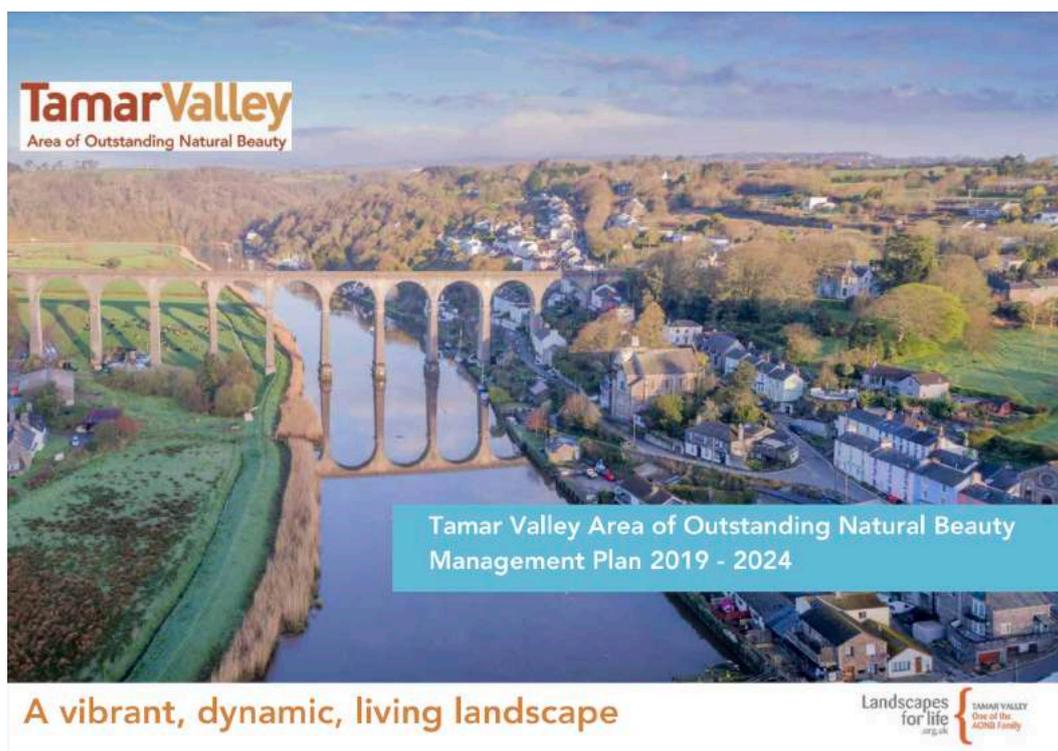
# A Strong & Vibrant Partnership

There are effectively three levels of operation for the Tamar Valley AONB Partnership, enabling all of its partners and stakeholders to contribute and influence its policy and practice:

The **Partnership** – comprising those on the Executive alongside a wider range of stakeholder and community organisations responsible for guiding the vision and strategic direction of the AONB, particularly through the production, monitoring and review of the AONB Management Plan on behalf of the constituent Local Authorities for the AONB.

The **Executive Group** – comprising elected local authority representatives, advising officers, plus nominated non-Council representatives from the AONB Partnership, and responsible for the oversight and scrutiny of AONB budgets and delivery plans, operational decision-making on the deployment of staff and financial resources and the provision of advice and direction to Cornwall Council, in its role as ‘host authority’.

The **AONB Team** – comprising core staff and additional non-core staff responsible for administration of the AONB Partnership and delivery of its programmes of activity.



# Tamar Valley AONB Team\*

**Dan Cooke**  
AONB Manager



**Donna Watterson**  
Office and Finance Manager (P/T)



**Lesley Strong**  
Project Officer (P/T)



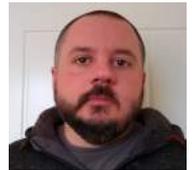
**Jo Pridham**  
Monitoring and  
Reporting Officer (P/T)



**Valerie Darwall**  
Project Officer



**Ben Dancer**  
Planning Advice Officer (P/T)



**Charlotte Dancer**  
Information and  
Communications Officer (P/T)



# Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme\*

**James Luxton**  
Programme Manager



**Gary Lewis**  
Senior Heritage Officer



**Chris Harris**  
Finance and Monitoring Officer



\*as at 31 March 2021

# Associated Bodies

## Tamar Community Trust

A key delivery partner working with the AONB, over the past year inevitably all the planned work was seriously affected by the COVID-19 restrictions. Despite these challenges, Tamar Community Trust has continued with work at Wacker Quay and Tamar Trails, much of the work being completed by the Task Leader on his own. Tamar Community Trust has been involved in various other projects including scrub and sapling clearance at Gunnislake Clitters, hedgerow and woodland creation, together with some tree planting at South Hooe, and vegetation management at Okel Tor mine. Tamar Community Trust volunteers also assisted with the clean-up of fly-tipped waste at Wacker Quay in early 2021.

The River Tamar Walkway and Wetlands Project at Calstock is also being managed by Tamar Community Trust and, thanks to additional funding from the Environment Agency, Cornwall Council and the Cornwall Community Foundation, work is now progressing to bridge the gap that will be created by the breach of the floodbank as part of the Project.

## Tamar Valley TLC

As with many organisations Tamar Valley TLC has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past 12 months which has meant that there has been virtually no activity. With retail and holiday outlets closed for the majority of last year there has been a small amount of income from donation boxes together with some direct donations.

The Tamar Valley AONB is working with Tamar Valley TLC to coordinate the Bere Peninsula Discovering Dormice Project. Tamar Valley TLC was successful in securing a grant of £1,500 from DPD's Postcode Local Trust towards the educational elements of this project, but delivery has been delayed. Tamar TLC continues to work with Tamar Grow Local to complete the 'Heralds of Spring' project.

## Friends of the Tamar Valley

Activities of the group were restricted by COVID-19 restrictions, but the group had one outdoor summer event in August 2020. The monthly lecture series moved online and a full programme of talks was delivered between September and March.





## Development Phase

In 2019, the Tamara team were recruited to complete a full and comprehensive 2nd round submission to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Despite the challenge of COVID-19 restrictions, this fully costed submission was submitted at the end of August 2020 for consideration at a NLHF board meeting in December 2020.

The submission was successful and NLHF awarded a grant of £2.3 million which, when added to the match funding and in-kind support from partners, gave a total funding of £3.2 million.

After completing the necessary permission to start requirements, the Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme formally started on 23 February 2021 and was launched at the Tamar Valley AONB Annual Forum in May.

**The Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme is a five-year project, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other partners and aims to:**

- Bring local communities together, historically connected but physically divided by the rivers of the valley
- Strengthen and conserve the landscape character and natural beauty, from heritage orchards to broadleaf, woodland-lined, steep-sided river banks, of this unique part of South West England
- Prepare the area for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

The Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme covers an area of 295km<sup>2</sup>.

# Outline of the 10 Tamara Projects

The 10 projects cover 3 areas – built heritage, land management and community

<b>Small Detail, Big Difference</b>	Supporting local communities to identify, research and protect the unique heritage of the Tamar Valley that matters to them. Activities may include physical work restoring heritage buildings, recording our unique oral history projects and identifying and protecting the little things that make the Tamar Valley so special.
<b>Heritage of Innovation</b>	Exploring the pioneering innovation of this unique area which includes ground-breaking mining technology, the market gardening industry and inventive forestry techniques. This will include the development of a variety of creative media and activities to raise awareness and strengthen understanding of the evolution of the Tamar Valley and look at how the challenges of tomorrow will be met to ensure a more sustainable future.
<b>New Approaches/ Making Connections</b>	Working with farmers, landowners and communities, the project will mitigate for climate change and improve water quality and the surrounding water environment. Targets include increasing tree canopy cover and orchard planting, along with the restoration of hedgerows and provision of farmer/landowner support through the transition to new agri-environment schemes.
<b>Accessible Tamar</b>	Improving sustainable and integrated transport and access into and through the Scheme area, including establishing a coast-to-coast, long-distance walking route. The project will explore the feasibility of reinstating the Calstock Ferry Crossing for walkers and also develop options for a combined rail/ferry ticket for day trippers.
<b>Come Visit and Stay Awhile</b>	The Tamar Valley has a huge amount to offer visitors and tourists. The project will work with Visit Tamar Valley CIC to create and stimulate an increase in visitor numbers and opportunities for local businesses.
<b>Celebrating Tamara</b>	Creating fun and fascinating events for both individuals and families designed to connect communities, engage new audiences and provide great experiences for people enlightening them about their local heritage.
<b>Tamara Trainees</b>	Focusing on increasing the opportunities for employment and meeting the heritage skills need in the Scheme area. Foundation, internship and apprenticeship training opportunities will offer access to training for communities in and around the Tamar Valley.
<b>River Explorers</b>	Looking to address the disconnection between people and their local waterways by re-engaging individuals, communities and schools. Trained volunteers will adopt their local waterway and protect it by monitoring its biodiversity, pollution and sediment levels. Schools will take part in fun workshops and learn how to care for their local rivers, ponds and streams.
<b>Natural Connections</b>	Aiming to improve people's physical health and mental wellbeing by helping them to reconnect with nature and heritage and to overcome social isolation. By partnering with link workers, the social prescribing network and other specialist organisations the project will provide a range of fully inclusive opportunities for people to engage with the landscape creatively and therapeutically.
<b>Promoting Our Produce</b>	Supporting market gardening enterprises, community allotments and providing training programmes for new plot holders. This project will also look at the feasibility of establishing new markets through promoting heritage varieties and local producers using new branding to give added value.

# Landscape Character

## Working to conserve and enhance the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the AONB

We continue to review and support projects that align with our landscape character objectives and priorities. During the last 12 months there has been a comprehensive review of the Landscape Character Assessment for the area carried out as part of the Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme development phase. This has updated and applied the same methodology across the whole Valley and covers both the AONB and Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme areas.

### Case Study

**The South Hooe Restoring & Enhancing Watery Landscapes** project has continued to develop and deliver as part of the National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative. The Tamar Valley AONB is continuing to work with partners and the landowners to carry out the phase one programme. Over 2000 trees and shrubs, provided by the Woodland Trust, were planted in the first year and a further similar number planted in November 2020 following COVID-19 guidelines. The trees have been planted by the Tamar Community Trust volunteer working party and landowner and will create over 700m of new hedgerows and 1.2 ha of wooded areas. Tree planting has been combined with the sensitive maintenance of existing hedgerows to develop the hedge structure and encourage the growth of hedgerow trees compensating for the loss of trees in the landscape due to Ash dieback disease. New fencing has been installed to allow the development of rough grassland for Barn Owls and other wildlife.

Phase two will focus on the land adjoining the Tamar Estuary and a project led by the Environment Agency to create up to 14 ha of new intertidal habitat. Work is planned to commence in autumn 2021, subject to planning and other permissions.



## Working to discover, conserve and enhance heritage within the AONB

In a landscape with a rich time depth of story to tell we continue to deliver projects that safeguard and promote the heritage in the Tamar Valley. Partnership working is also a key to our work and the Understanding Landscapes project continues to increase our understanding of heritage in the AONB. The National Lottery Heritage funded project is being delivered by University of Exeter and has attracted a great deal of interest from volunteers. Unfortunately, COVID-19 restrictions impacted heavily on the project in the last 12 months, but desktop discoveries continue to add to our knowledge about local heritage.

## Case Study

The **Rediscovering Gunnislake Clitters** project continued to make progress despite the pandemic, but with lower volunteer involvement than originally planned.

A funding boost from Cornwall Heritage Trust and Historic England has helped to conserve, and improve access to, the Skinner's Shaft section of this important historic site. This initial phase of the project enabled vegetation clearance to take place in winter 2020/21 in order to improve access to the site for visitors and for a detailed condition survey as part of the Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The Tamar Valley AONB is working in partnership with Historic England, the Cornwall Heritage Trust, Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site, and the Tamar Community Trust on this project and we are grateful to the Duchy of Cornwall, which owns the site, for its support and giving permission for this work to take place.



## Working to support the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity in the AONB

The Tamar Valley AONB are partners in a number of key projects which focus on biodiversity and species that have stronghold populations within the AONB. We continue to work with Butterfly Conservation on the 'Saving Tamar Valley's Heath Fritillaries' project and the good news is that, following habitat management at Greenscombe Woods, Heath Fritillary numbers have remained stable.

We are also partners in Plantlife's 'Building Resilience in South West Woodlands' National Lottery Heritage funded project. Unfortunately, this project was badly impacted by COVID-19 restrictions but online training sessions allowed volunteers to carry out Rapid Woodland Assessments as part of their daily exercise which will provide a valuable resource going forward. The AONB have started to scope priority species and nature recovery networks and will continue to build on this in 2021/22, with the development of the AONB Nature Recovery Plan, as part of its commitment to the Colchester Declaration. The AONB has partially met this commitment via actively inputting to the Cornwall Local Nature Recovery Strategy, one of five UK pilots for Defra. It also continues to work close with the Devon and Cornwall Local Nature Partnerships.

## Case Study

The **Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat (DGHB) project** has been hugely successful over the last five years and, despite COVID-19 restrictions during the final year, volunteers were still able to take part in surveys. The Tamar Valley AONB continued to host the bat detector and volunteers who took part in the 2020 survey provided valuable data to help inform management for both greater horseshoes and other species of bat across the AONB and beyond. The DGHB project team also provided a number of online talks about the project and there was a very well attended end of project 'virtual conference'. The DGHB project website remains a legacy and has a wealth of information and resources about these amazing bats.



## Working to maintain high quality river systems and habitats and identifying opportunities for sustainable development, recreation and tourism

Rivers and estuaries are at the heart of the Tamar Valley AONB and any work carried out on a catchment scale ultimately impacts on these systems. By focusing on landscape-scale projects, we can have an influence on the provision of high quality river systems. The Tamar Valley AONB is represented on the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum and the Tamar Catchment Partnership. The team has also been working on options appraisals for three catchments within the Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme, focusing on opportunities to improve water quality and a range of other ecosystem services in these areas. Other ongoing projects such as South Hooe Restoring & Enhancing Watery Landscapes, The River Tamar Walkway & Wetland Project and the Tamar Invasive Plants project add to the strong focus on rivers and estuaries.

### Case Study

The **Tamar Invasive Plants project** is a long-established and widely-recognised body of work, with a focus on the eradication of Giant Hogweed in the project area. The Tamar Valley AONB delivers 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).

The project continues treatment to control Giant Hogweed on an annual basis. Numbers of plants have shown a progressive decrease in the survey area in recent years. However, the 2021 season showed a slight increase which demonstrates the need for constant vigilance to prevent the spread of this invasive species. The Tamar Valley AONB and our partners in the Tamar Invasives Group, are grateful to have been awarded additional funding through the Water Environment Grant (WEG) earlier this year, covering the cost of the 2021 survey and control work. In addition, South West Water generously provided additional funding in 2021, ring-fenced for future invasives work in the Tamar Valley.



# Environmental Quality & Climate Change

## Working to ensure effective conservation and management of the AONB's natural resources and responding to the challenges of climate change

Environmental Quality and Climate Change is a theme at the heart of our work and links across all of our Management Plan themes. A member of the Tamar Valley AONB works one day per week for the Forest for Cornwall project focusing on opportunities for engagement locally and is working with Calstock Parish Council to develop the vision and delivery of the 'Forest for Calstock Parish'. The AONB team has also been providing input to both Devon and Cornwall Climate Change policies.

Intertidal habitat creation is one of the main areas of work ongoing in the Tamar Valley with multiple benefits for the environment and a more resilient future in the face of climate change.

### Case study

The **River Tamar Walkway & Wetland** project has progressed well over the last 12 months despite COVID-19 restrictions. The Tamar Community Trust has entered into an agreement with the Environment Agency to act as a key delivery partner for a £2.2 million flood defence scheme on the River Tamar at Calstock, south east Cornwall. As a result of rising sea levels, more extreme weather and deterioration in the historic embankment, Calstock has become more at risk from flooding. In response to this, the Environment Agency has obtained funding to construct new embankments and create intertidal wetland habitat in part of the flood plain. Once completed, these wetlands will help to protect against river flooding and surge tides whilst providing important biodiversity habitat.

Phase 1 of the wetland creation work is now complete with the area on the landward side of the embankment re-profiled to provide a range of scrapes and lagoons. The next phase will see the breach of the current flood bank to create a 14 ha intertidal habitat and this work is anticipated to take place in autumn 2021. Once the breach has been made, the wetland will change progressively from a freshwater to an intertidal regime.



## Working to support systems of landscape management that conserve and enhance the AONB

The Tamar Valley AONB continues to support farming, forestry and land management activities which contribute to a healthy, well-functioning landscape and sustainable business practices today and in the future. Our activity ranges from providing input to strategies that will help to shape future land management to promoting and supporting the local delivery of programmes such as Forest for Cornwall and Saving Devon's Treescapes. Working in partnership with other organisations is a key to delivery of new land management opportunities within the Tamar Valley AONB, and the Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme's New Approaches/Making Connections project will provide opportunities to take this further over the next five years.

The Tamar Valley is one of 12 AONBs who have joined together to undertake a collaborative national tests and trials programme for Defra's Environmental Land Management (ELM) agricultural transition scheme, hosted by the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) under the Farming for the Nation banner, and was involved in the ELM Advocacy programme which finished in March 2021.

### Case study

The Tamar Valley AONB **Environmental Land Management (ELM) Tests & Trials** researched new soil scanning technologies as part of the Farming for the Nation - (ELM) Tests and Trials programme. Scanners could help to measure soil organic levels and wider soil health, information which can be useful in good land management and the fight against climate change. This information could then form the basis of future payments to farmers and landowners.

The results will help to inform the UK Government in setting its own agricultural transition schemes over the next five years. Once the scanning trials were complete, the AONB worked with Duchy College, participating farmers and South West Farm Consultants to assess the results. The trial started in the autumn of 2020 and concluded in June 2021.



## Working to promote the development of integrated access, recreation and tourism that are compatible with the AONB designation

In normal times, we would be providing updates from our weekly walking groups that take place throughout the Tamar Valley. These walks offer much-needed social interaction as well as the more obvious health benefits from exercise and fresh air. Unfortunately, as with many events and activities this year, these groups were forced to press pause.

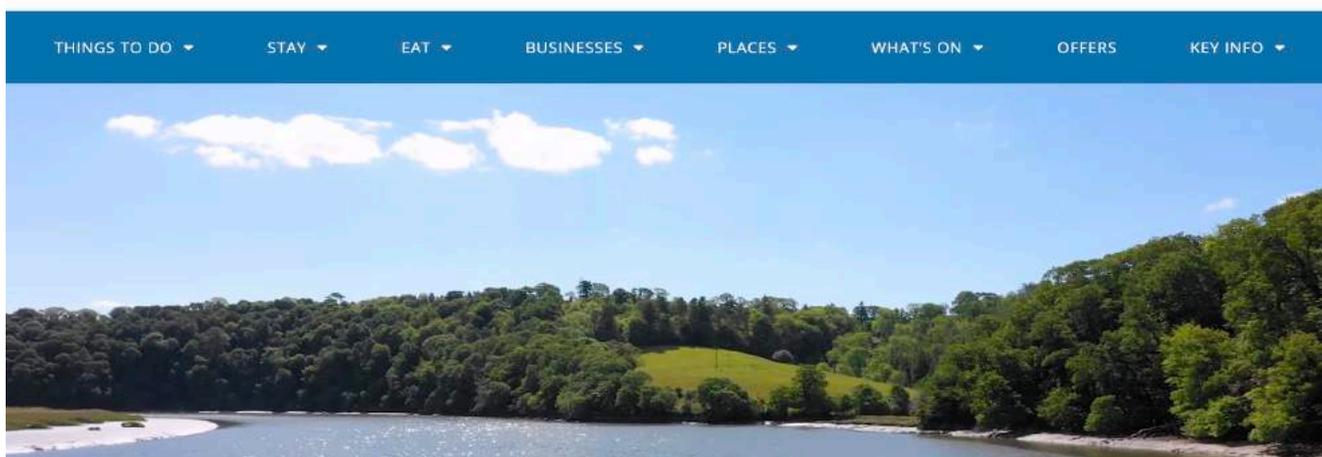
Overnight, the Tamar Valley AONB team switched from promoting walks and talks to raising awareness of local businesses who could offer food and drink, that was in short supply for a while, to the local community. Tamar Valley grown and sourced had never been so important for our generation!

Not everything stopped. Much behind-the-scenes work was carried out both within our AONB team and for our partner organisations. The Tamar Valley Tourism Association (TAVATA), for example, not only rebranded, but re-launched themselves under a completely new name.

### Case Study

**Visit Tamar Valley** - Known for many years as 'We Love the Tamar Valley', in 2020 the Tamar TAVATA rebranded to become 'Visit Tamar Valley'. Established some twenty years ago, this important AONB partner has always sought to promote the Tamar Valley and support the many small businesses that make up the tourism and hospitality sector. With a new identity in place, increased resources and a clear focus on promoting the Tamar Valley as a 'not to be missed' destination to the domestic tourism market, Visit Tamar Valley is ready to face a future full of opportunity.

The team also set about building collaborative relationships with key stakeholders in the Tamar Valley, and aligned itself closely with the Tamar Valley AONB and Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme. Towards the end of 2020, a brand-new destination website was commissioned and built. [www.visittamarvalley.co.uk](http://www.visittamarvalley.co.uk) was launched in 2021.

## Working to ensure that the AONB's purpose and objectives are fully recognised in local planning policy

Ensuring appropriate scrutiny and input into often sensitive planning applications and policies is an important role for the AONB. 178 formal planning applications were reviewed in 2020/21, ranging from proposals to create extensions, develop housing, leisure and community facilities, as well as the creation of an area of intertidal habitat.

### Case Study

The Tamar Valley AONB would also note the recent appeal at Rosehill Nurseries, Landulph (APP/D0840/W/20/3260932) where the Inspector dismissed the appeal.

The appeal is notable for the following reasons;

1. It related to previously developed land (plant nurseries)
2. It was agreed that it represented major development within the AONB

The Inspector handling the case agreed with the Tamar Valley AONB objections confirming that the horticultural cultural significance of the glasshouses was important in people's perceptions of the AONB as a working landscape and also that the impacts of the development were such that it should be regarded as "major development" as per the National Planning Policy Framework and Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan definitions.



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

The Tamar Valley AONB is a living, working landscape and the people of the Valley, past and present, are vital in keeping it special. This year has been a year like no other. Locally-sourced food became essential at the start of the pandemic, when throughout the country demand outstripped supply and families struggled to get hold of the basics. The AONB team signposted social media followers and e-bulletin subscribers to the growing list of local food providers at this time, and encouraged people to continue to buy local as normal service within the supermarkets gradually resumed.

The AONB team joined forces with Tamar Valley TLC to bring a weekly quiz to Tamar Valley residents, who were perhaps missing their regular pub quiz or just wanted to keep their minds active.

### Case Study

**Drawn to the Valley.** It has been a challenging year for local artists, as for everyone else. In particular, it has been almost impossible to hold exhibitions safely and in 2020 some of the most popular annual events for Drawn to the Valley, such as the annual Open Studios and Spring Exhibition had to be cancelled.

Perhaps the biggest unanticipated benefit of the COVID-19 crisis was the availability of grant funding for the arts. Drawn to the Valley was able to successfully apply for funding from the Arts Council to help build a new website with a gallery and shop feature. This feature not only helps local artists to share and profit from their artwork but also allows the group to host online exhibitions. The website has raised the profile of the group enormously and has also helped to attract new members, with the group membership increasing by 20% since it was launched.

Things are slowly returning to normal and the opportunity to provide exhibitions in local venues is returning. The 'Resurgam' Exhibition at the Tamar Valley Centre was extremely popular and it was great to renew the good working relationship with Tamar Valley AONB. The members have also been enjoying regular outings to local beauty spots for artist working days, a feature of Drawn to the Valley activities which is ever popular and which allows members to fully appreciate the beauty of the Valley and express this in their work.



## Working to promote a great understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the AONB landscape and wider recognition of the designation and its purpose

With the Tamar Valley AONB celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary since designation in August 2020, this provided the perfect opportunity to raise awareness of our protected landscape and spread our key messages far and wide.

Although restrictions prevented hard copies of *The Valley* newsletter being produced and distributed, online versions were created. Monthly ebulletins continued to be sent to over 450 subscribers and 11 press releases were issued to local and regional media throughout the year.

Regular social media postings continued across three platforms; a great way to engage with our audience.

Our most successful campaign of the year was the 25-day countdown to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, increasing our Facebook reach by 23,275 and number of engagements by 1,661. Twitter had a reach of 18,973 and Instagram attracted 447 interactions with the content.

## Case Study

**New branding for the Tamar Valley AONB** was launched to coincide with the Tamar Valley AONB's silver anniversary. Cornwall-based Paul Eustice Design created a new look for the AONB, Tamara Landscape Partnership Scheme and Visit Tamar Valley. The 'bee' logo represents a sense of living and working together, with a shared understanding and need to pull together to conserve everything we hold dear within our Valley. We are an industrious and fearless community – a hive of activity and energy. The AONB's new website was also launched during this year – [tamarvalley.org.uk](http://tamarvalley.org.uk)



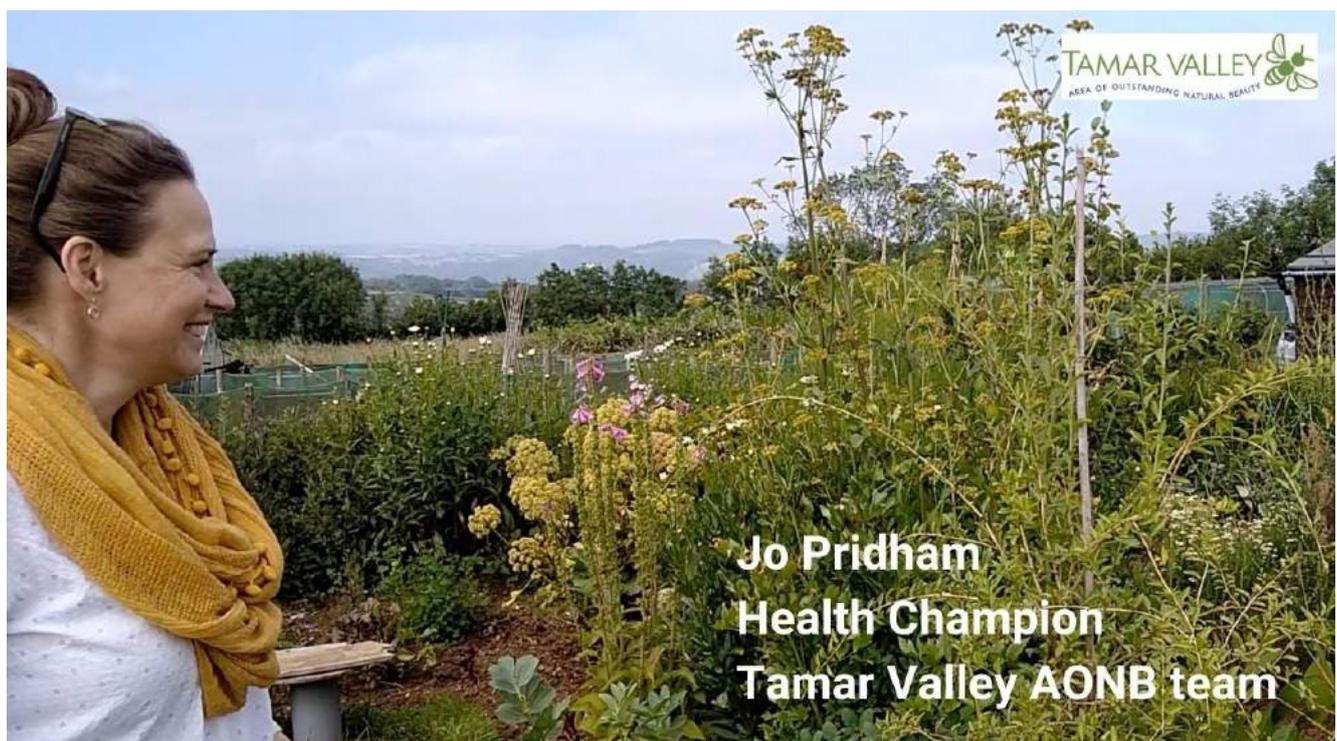
## Working to connect people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing

The Tamar Valley AONB team works to connect more people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing. Spending time in the natural environment, whether it be in green or blue spaces, improves mental health and feelings of wellbeing. It can reduce stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression and it can help to combat loneliness and bind communities together.

Over the last 12 months, people have been enjoying the AONB for all sorts of exercise during COVID-19, even though our larger walking groups were suspended during that time. The Tamar Valley AONB has also continued to be involved in the Active Devon campaign and provided input to other health and wellbeing initiatives locally. This has given the team a firm grounding to develop and deliver health and wellbeing activities in the future.

## Case Study

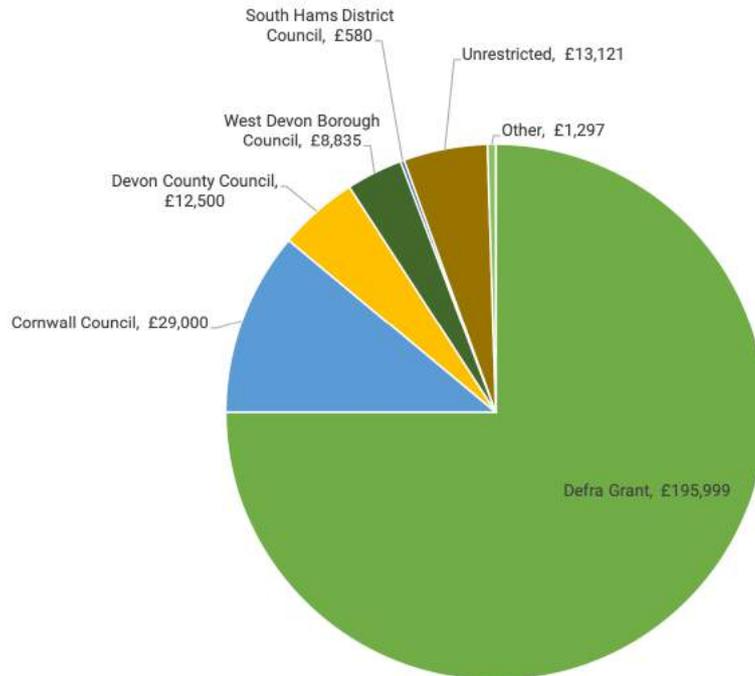
Cornwall Council, Tamar Valley AONB's host authority, runs a staff **Health Champion** programme, and Jo Pridham represents the AONB team. Jo has promoted health campaigns and the '5 Ways to Wellbeing' and when COVID-19 restrictions eased, staff took part in socially-distanced walking meetings.



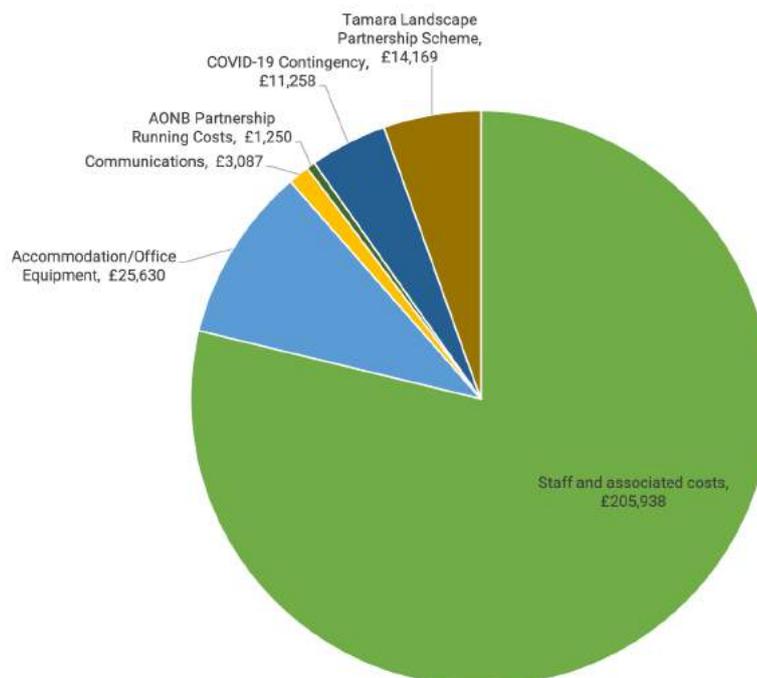
**Jo Pridham**  
**Health Champion**  
**Tamar Valley AONB team**

# Financial Summary 2020/21

## Income



## Expenditure



# Discover...

# TAMAR VALLEY

AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY



### Ordnance Survey References

Please note that this map is for general guidance only. For detailed information on public rights of way in the area, please refer to the following Ordnance Survey maps:

- Explorer Map No.108
- Lower Tamar Valley & Plymouth (1:25000)
- Explorer Map No.112
- Launceston & Holsworthy (1:25000)

### Walking Routes

- Tamar Valley Discovery Trail
- Linking Routes
- Town Trail
- Tamar Valley Rail Line
- Tavistock Canal
- Lifton Link

For St. Dominica Heritage Trail please visit: [www.stdominic.org.uk/stdominicaheritage/trail.php](http://www.stdominic.org.uk/stdominicaheritage/trail.php)

### Cycle Routes

- NCN Route 27
- Bere Cycle Route
- Dartmoor Way Cycle Route
- Drake's Trail Cycle Routes

\*see [www.tamartrails.co.uk/maps](http://www.tamartrails.co.uk/maps) to view the Tamar Trails

### Wildlife Interest Point

**Tamar Valley Centre**  
& Drakewalls Mine

### Sites of Heritage Interest

- Morwellham Quay
- Cotehele House
- Buckland Abbey
- Antony House
- Mount Edgcombe
- Endsleigh House & Nursery
- Kit Hill Country Park
- Saltram House
- Clitters Mine
- Port Eliot
- Pentillic Castle
- Hingston Down
- Dupath Well
- Devon Great Consols
- Garden House

- Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Cornwall & West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site Boundary
- Dartmoor National Park & Neighbouring AONBs
- Woodland Area

### Further Information:

For information about places to stay and things to do, please visit: <https://visitamarvalley.co.uk/> or call 0845 058 0621 or visit one of the **Tourist/Visitor Information Centres** in the Tamar Valley. For information about the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, visit [tamarvalley.org.uk](http://tamarvalley.org.uk). For all Public Transport information, please call **Traveline: 0871 200 22 33**

TAMAR VALLEY  
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY



## Tamar Valley Centre

Cemetery Road, Drakewalls, Gunnislake, Cornwall PL18 9FE

Tel: 01822 835030

[tamarvalley.org.uk](http://tamarvalley.org.uk)

[enquiries@tamarvalley.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@tamarvalley.org.uk)

