

1. AONB team submit £2.1M bid to Heritage Lottery Fund

After much development work with partners, communities and professional groups the AONB team have submitted a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership Scheme. The proposal is for an exciting and innovative project around the Stour and Orwell, including the Shotley Peninsula, that will seek to balance the needs of landscape, wildlife, recreation, tourism, heritage and commercial activity. If successful the project will deliver some outstanding projects for the benefit of people, place and wildlife.

2. AONB Grants: Funds available..... but be quick

The Galloper Wind Farm Fund (deadline Wed 21 June) and the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Sustainable Development Fund (deadline Weds 31 May) still have some funds for projects that benefit the social economic or environmental well-being of the area.

See <http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/grants-and-funding/>

3. Volunteering

Outstanding work in the construction of a wheelchair path to the newly restored pond at Flatford Field Studies Centre. It will mean more opportunities for wheelchair users.

4. Public Forums: Book your place

- The Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Forum on 16 June, including Prof Jules Pretty and the Chief Executive of the National Association for AONBs. Info at: <https://tinyurl.com/yakrhgmf>
- The Stour and Orwell Forum on 4 July, including presentations on England Coast Path, Archaeology and the Harwich Mayflower Project. Info at: <https://tinyurl.com/yakm7ed9>

5. LEADER Funding

Funding for projects that: Support for increasing farm productivity; *Support for micro and SME's and farm diversification; Support for rural tourism; Provision of rural services; Support for cultural and heritage activity; Support for increasing forestry productivity* is still available across both AONBs and their associated project areas. In Suffolk Coast & Heaths area see <https://tinyurl.com/hqp4q3g> In Dedham Vale/Stour Valley see <https://tinyurl.com/jrpuwmg>

6. The Ash project

The AONB team is teaming up with AONBs around the country (led by Kent Downs AONB) to provide a cultural response to Ash Dieback. See <http://www.theashproject.org.uk/> As part of the project a book on Ash Trees and Ash Landscapes, in partnership with the Woodland Trust will be published.

7. National Association for AONBs

The National Association for AONBs with the Campaign to Protect Rural England is commissioning a research project to create a comprehensive database of all housing submissions and approvals (over ten units) in English AONBs and Green Belt land since the NPPF.

8. Invasive Plant Species: Direct Action

The River Stour Enhancement Project has undertaken work to reduce the impacts of non-native invasive plant species at 36 sites this month including volunteer tasks on Himalayan Balsam and contractor works to control the dangerous Giant Hogweed.

9. Quick Bits:

- Terrific short Community Voices video (facilitated by the Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority) at <https://vimeo.com/150885111> or full film at <https://vimeo.com/191148781>
- The AONB has supported 3 walks during the Suffolk Walking Festival (including sneaking walkers into Essex part of the AONBs)
- 30 Wild Things. Do something wild every day in June see <http://www.essexwt.org.uk/30DaysWild>
- Our friends in the Brecks organising what looks like a fantastic heritage conference. See <https://tinyurl.com/y8698mwa>

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