

## Response ID ANON-WMVF-CXWT-6

Submitted to Government response to the Landscapes Review  
Submitted on 2022-04-06 11:41:27

### About you

1 Do you want your responses to be confidential?

No

If yes, please give your reason::

2 What is your name?

Name:  
Chantal Brooks for Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council

3 What is your email address?

Email:  
clerk@brenchleyandmatfield.co.uk

4 Where are you located?

South East

5 Which of the following do you identify yourself as?

Local authority

If other, please identify below:  
Parish Council

### A stronger mission for nature recovery

6 Should a strengthened first purpose of protected landscapes follow the proposals set out in Chapter 2?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

7 Which other priorities should be reflected in a strengthened first purpose e.g. climate, cultural heritage?

Please give us your views:

Cultural heritage: this is a vital element of protected landscapes  
Protected landscapes' contribution to combating climate change is also very important.  
However, bodies like our Parish Council that wish to incorporate measures and optional technical standards to combat climate change in our Neighbourhood Development Plan are hamstrung by the Written Ministerial Statement of 25 March 2015, which forbids them from doing so. The Statement is outdated and fails to take account of the special circumstances of protected landscapes. It needs to be replaced as soon as possible.

### Agricultural transition

8 Do you support any of the following options as we develop the role of protected landscapes in the new environmental land management schemes? Tick all that apply.

Designing the environmental land management schemes in a way that works for all farmers and land managers, including the specific circumstances for those in protected landscapes, recognising that farmers in these areas are well-placed to deliver on our environmental priorities., Using Local Nature Recovery Strategies to identify projects or habitats within protected landscapes. , Monitoring the effectiveness and uptake of the new environmental land management schemes in protected landscapes. Using this to inform whether further interventions are needed to ensure we are on track for wider nature recovery ambitions., Creating a clear role for protected landscape organisations in the preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Our recent LNRS consultation specifically asks for views on the role of different organisations in the preparation of LNRSs, including protected landscapes., Building on FiPL, empowering protected landscapes to support decision-making and delivery against agreed priorities, including through dedicated project coordinators and advisers.

9 Do you have any views or supporting evidence you would like to input as we develop the role of protected landscapes in the new environmental land management schemes?

Please give us your views:

Environmental land management schemes may help, but the real problem is that the AONB countryside in our parish is under constant and growing threat from development. "Exceptional circumstances" seem to be interpreted to mean just about any development that promises to provide 40 % affordable housing. Unless greater legal protection is given to AONB countryside and farmland, the landscape will continue to be degraded and fragmented.

Access for the public should be given a high priority in the new environmental land management schemes.

## A stronger mission for connecting people and places

10 Should AONBs have a second purpose relating to connecting people and places, equivalent to that of National Parks?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

this is very important

11 Should a strengthened second purpose of protected landscapes follow the proposals set out in Chapter 3 to improve connections to all parts of society with our protected landscapes?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

12 Are there any other priorities that should be reflected in a strengthened second purpose?

Please give us your views:

Providing open air recreation

## Managing visitor pressures

13 Do you support any of the following options to grant National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority greater enforcement powers to manage visitor pressures? Tick all that apply.

Please give reasons for your answer: :

As our parish is not in a National Park or the Broads, these measures would not apply in this parish.

14 Should we give National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority and local highway authorities additional powers to restrict recreational motor vehicle use on unsealed routes?

Unsure

Please give reasons for your answer: :

Unsure: our parish is not in a National Park, nor does it have any BOATs or Unsealed Unclassified roads, so this proposal is of no interest to us. Our impression is that the existing legislation is probably adequate. The difficulty is in enforcing it without erecting barriers that also unfairly prevent access by some non-motorised users. We question whether further legislation would really help with this.

15 For which reasons should National Park Authorities, the Broads Authority and local authorities exercise this power? (select all that apply)

Environmental protection, Prevention of damage

Other (please state):

Environmental protection, prevention of damage and public safety could be reasons for exercising such a power, but it must be done in a way that is proportionate and that does not disadvantage legitimate non-motorised users, even if they are a minority.

16 Should we legislate to restrict the use of motor vehicles on unsealed unclassified roads for recreational use, subject to appropriate exemptions?

Unsure

Please give reasons for your answer::

There are no unsealed unclassified roads in our parish. We note that on footpaths and bridleways, where there are already no rights for public motor vehicle use, substantial damage can often be caused by farm and forestry vehicles and by vehicular access permitted by landowners. There is a danger that restricting public vehicular use may disadvantage the public without preventing damage, unless there is also a requirement on landowners, occupiers and those with private rights of access to repair damage caused by private use within a specified period, as there is for ploughing under the Rights of Way Act 1990.

17 What exemptions do you think would be required to protect the rights and enjoyment of other users e.g., residents, businesses etc?

Please give us your views:

The exemptions developed for restricted byways in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 are a good model.

### The role of AONB teams in planning

18 What roles should AONBs teams play in the plan-making process to achieve better outcomes?

Please give us your views:

AONBs teams should have statutory consultee status and an effective veto on local plans that would conflict with the AONB's statutory purposes.

19 Should AONB teams be made statutory consultees for development management?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer::

this is essential

20 If yes, what type of planning applications should AONB teams be consulted on?

AONB teams should formally agree with local planning authorities which planning applications should be consulted on.

Other (please state):

This is the best option. Sometimes even a small development can have a seriously damaging effect on the AONB, and the cumulative effect of multiple small applications needs also to be recognised. Different AONBs will need to have different criteria. For example in the case of the High Weald AONB, one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in Europe, a small development that would destroy a medieval field boundary or damage a historic routeway would have a serious effect on the landscape and the reasons for which the landscape is designated.

### Local governance

21 Which of the following measures would you support to improve local governance? Tick all that apply.

Improved training and materials, Streamlined process for removing underperforming members, Greater flexibility over the proportion of national, parish and local appointments, Merit-based criteria for local authority appointments, Reduced board size, Secretary of State appointed chair

Other (please state):

Please give reasons for your answer: :

Greater use of advisory panels

Unsure. This should only be where an advisory panel will really add value.

### A clearer role for public bodies

22 Should statutory duties be strengthened so that they are given greater weight when exercising public functions?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

Yes, this is essential: the duty to "have regard to" is too weak.

23 Should statutory duties be made clearer with regards to the role of public bodies in preparing and implementing management plans?

Yes

Please give reasons for your answer: :

Yes, local planning authorities need to be given a clear statutory duty to assist in preparing and implementing AONB management plans.

### General power of competence

24 Should National Parks Authorities and the Broads Authority have a general power of competence?

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer: :

As our parish is not in a National Park or the Broads this question does not apply.

## Overall

25 If you have any further comments on any of the proposals in this document, please include them here.

Please give us your views:

While these proposals are for the most part very welcome, they fail to address two major problems in our parish:

- the volume and speed of motor vehicles on minor roads, which is substantially degrading the environment and reducing public enjoyment of our special landscape. The default speed limit on all roads in AONBs except A and B roads should be set at 40mph, with no need for repeater signage, just notices on entry to the AONB;
- the permitted development rights for erection and then conversion of agricultural buildings. These are leading to a rash of new agricultural buildings, often on very small holdings, which damage the AONB landscape and are then converted to residential use in unsustainable locations where new dwellings would not normally be located.