



Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

B1

Background



Area



Theme



Supplementary



Method

# Historic Environment Action Plans

Background 1 : Introducing the  
Cranborne Chase and West  
Wiltshire Downs AONB  
Historic Environment Action Plans







This document forms part of a suite of documents which together comprise the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Environment Action Plans.

The HEAPs provide a summary of the key characteristics of the historic environment of the AONB at a landscape scale, they then set out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of this special landscape and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance these special characteristics. These summaries are divided into two groups:

1. Summaries of the historic environment of the AONB by area
2. Summaries of the historic environment of the AONB by theme

These core documents are accompanied by documents which provide background information, supplementary information and detail on the methodologies used to create these documents.

A series of icons help you navigate this suite of documents:

**B** **Background** - Provides an introduction to the AONB Historic Environment Action Plans and provides background information on the history and archaeology of the landscape **(B1 to B10)**

**A** **Area** - Summarises key characteristics of discrete geographical areas within the AONB, they then set out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of each area and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance its characteristics **(A1 to A12)**

**T** **Theme** - Summarises key characteristics of historic environment themes, each document then sets out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of each theme and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance its characteristics **(T1 to T14)**

**S** **Supplementary** - A series of documents which explore supplementary issues of relevance to the Historic Environment Action Plans **(S1 to S2)**

**M** **Method** - Introduces the methodology behind the production of the Historic Environment Action Plans **(M1 to M3)**

## Introducing the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Environment Action Plans

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### What is an Historic Environment Action Plan?

The Historic Environment in this context means all aspects of the landscape resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

At the core of Historic Environment Action Plans are a series of specific, attainable time based actions which address key threats to the historic environment of a landscape, area, place, site or theme.

These actions flow from assessments which describe the key historic and archaeological characteristics of the landscape, area, place, site or theme in question, and set out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting these historic characteristics.

The documents also form an important evidence base in their own right which can be used to inform planning policy and strategy, management policy and practice, research and outreach.

Historic Environment Action Plans are different from a traditional archaeological research strategy, which doesn't cover landscape matters, as their primary purpose is not to enhance understanding of past human activity but to conserve and enhance the key historic and archaeological characteristics of the present day landscape, and also the way time depth is articulated in that present day landscape. They also differ from a traditional site management plans as they are landscape scale in approach and they focus on the commonplace as well as the special.

## Introducing the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB has been established under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act to conserve and enhance the outstanding natural beauty of this area which straddles three Counties<sup>1</sup>, one Unitary<sup>2</sup> and five District councils<sup>3</sup>. It is clear from the Act, subsequent government sponsored reports, and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 that natural beauty includes wildlife, scientific, and cultural heritage. It is also recognised that in relation to their landscape characteristics and quality, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are equally important aspects of the nation's heritage and environmental capital. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks are therefore designated to conserve both our most significant natural, and historic (including cultural) landscapes. This position is supported by the European Landscape Convention which defines landscape as *'an area perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'*.

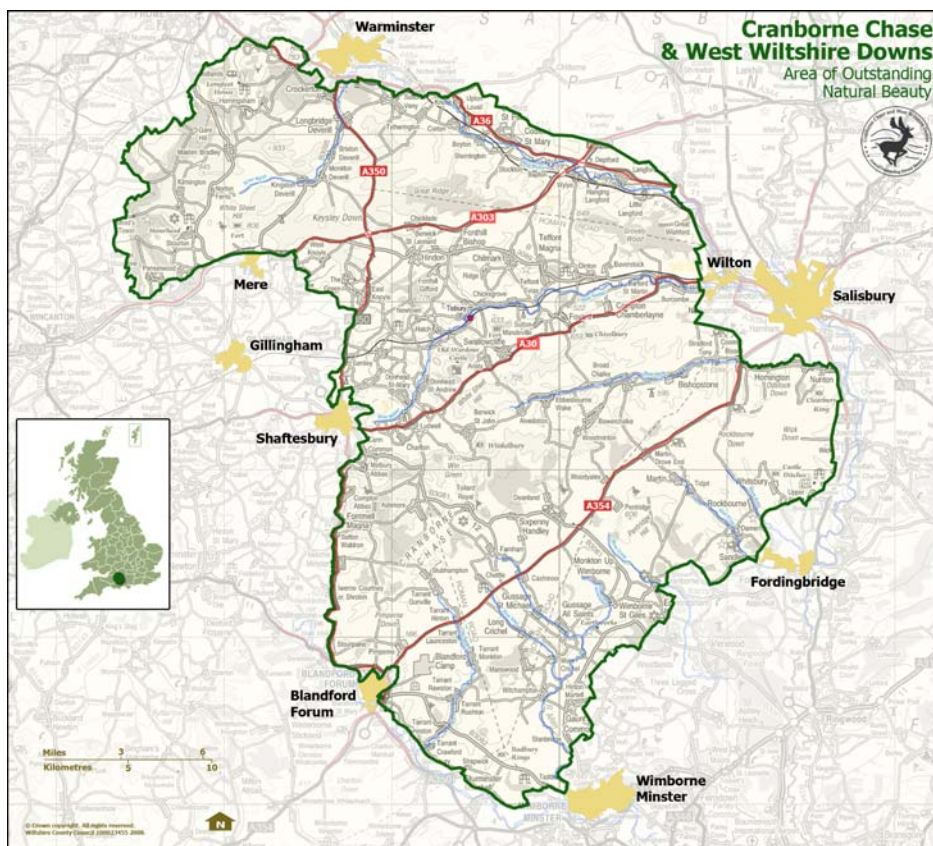


Figure One: Map of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB

The landscape of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Beauty can only be fully conserved and enhanced through recognition and

<sup>1</sup> Dorset County Council, Hampshire County Council, Somerset County Council

<sup>2</sup> Wiltshire Council

<sup>3</sup> East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, Mendip District Council, New Forest District Council, South Somerset District Council



management of the attributes of the historic environment within its borders. The landscape of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is the result of the various influences that have, over vastly different time-scales, acted upon it. The character of the landscape has evolved in response to the basic underlying geological characteristics of the land upon which natural processes and human activities have operated, in turn influencing the patterns of land use as well as ecological and cultural character.

It is an area comprising 981 square kilometres (379 square miles) forming part of the extensive belt of chalkland that stretches across southern England

The AONB is a deeply rural area with scattered villages and narrow roads. There are no large settlements in the AONB but nearby country market towns such as Salisbury, Blandford Forum, Wimborne Minister, Shaftesbury and Warminster are growth areas. The AONB comprises all or part of 104 parishes and has a resident population of approximately 30,000.

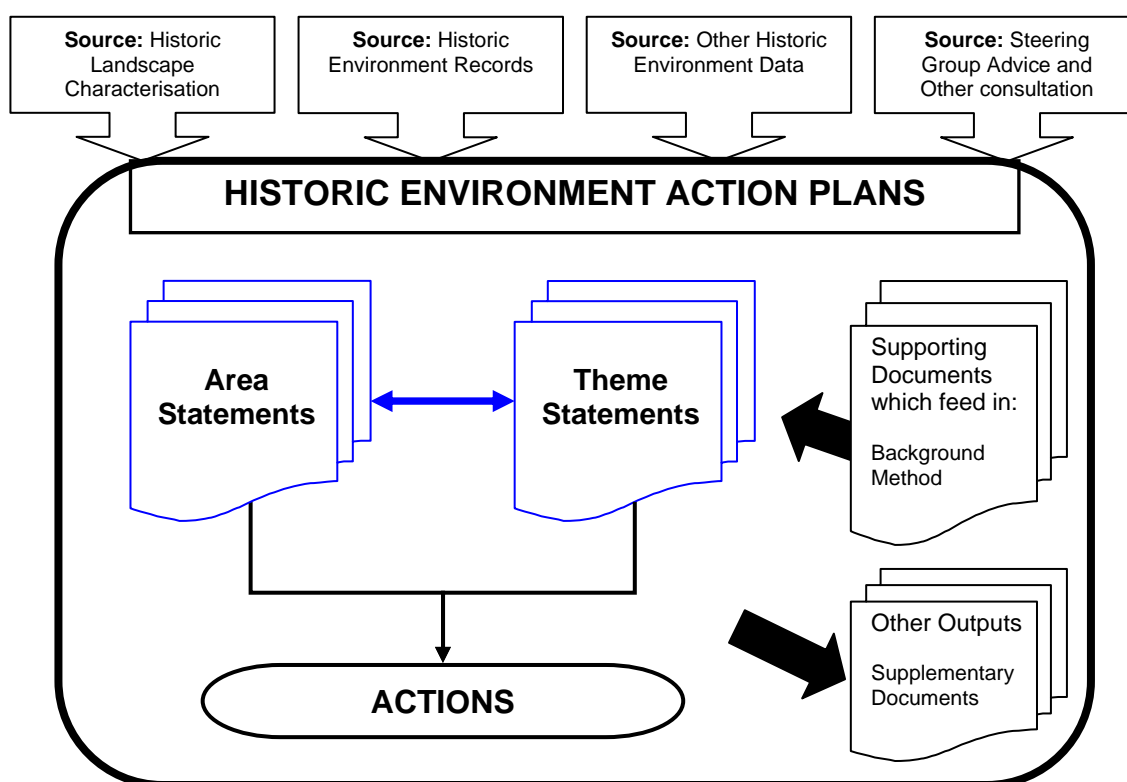


*Wooded Chalk Downland of the Cranborne Chase*

### Introducing the AONB Historic Environment Action Plans

Between February 2009 and February 2011 the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty created a series of comprehensive Historic Environment Action Plans (HEAPs) for the whole AONB landscape. This work was funded by English Heritage as a best practice exemplar for protected landscapes (National Parks and AONBs) and undertaken by a project officer supported by a steering group.

The HEAPs build on an AONB wide Historic Landscape Characterisation which was completed between January 2007 and September 2009. Historic Landscape Characterisation provides a detailed evidence base which captures, maps, and analyses the present day historic landscape character of the AONB. While the county based Historic Environment Record provide point based information on archaeological sites, buildings, finds and events. The complexity of these complementary datasets means that it is often time consuming and difficult for non specialists to understand the information held within these datasets and its significance. The point based data held within Historic Environment Records also has limitations in terms of landscape scale evaluation and assessment. Historic Environment Action Plans can be used to provide a more accessible overview of the information held within these records. They also can be used to identify the significance of the key attributes of these data sets.



The Historic Environment Action Plan approach provides a mechanism through which the AONB and its partners can systematically and transparently assess the significance of its historic and cultural assets.

The HEAPs provide a summary of the key characteristics of the historic environment of the AONB at a landscape scale, they then set out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of this special landscape and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance these special characteristics. These summaries are divided into two groups:

1. Summaries of the historic environment of the AONB by area
2. Summaries of the historic environment of the AONB by theme

These core documents are accompanied by other documents which provide supporting background information, supplementary information and detail on the methodologies used to create these documents.

### How can the AONB Historic Environment Action Plans be used?

**The Historic Environment Action Plan can be used as a means of increasing understanding of the archaeological, historical and cultural aspects of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB.** The documents forming the HEAP:

- synthesise a wealth of historic environment information and present it in one easy to use of source.
- provide a clearer vision of how different aspects of the historic environment contribute to the special qualities of the APNB landscape.
- present the key historic environment characteristics of the AONB landscape in a way which is accessible to non-specialists.

**The documents comprising the Historic Environment Action Plan can be used as an evidence base.** This evidence base can be used to:

- add value to both spatial policy and development application decisions effecting the AONB landscape. In particular they inform:
  - the strategic evidence base for Local Development Frameworks and other strategies.
  - forward planning documents including regeneration strategies and masterplans.
  - development management decisions.

The AONB has documented its work in this area using its own Historic Environment Action Plans in a document entitled “A guide to the role of historic landscape characterisations in planning in and around the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty”. This document includes case studies of where and how it has promoted the evidence base provided by the Historic Environment Action Plans as a tool to:



- allow the creation of specific planning policies which address the historic aspects of landscape.
- develop a strategic overview of historic landscape character.
- develop an understanding of the landscape context from which to appreciate site-specific information.

- assess potential and actual development sites and produce statements of significance.
- inform wider planning and management strategies including the AONB Management Plan, Conservation Area Assessments, and Environmental Stewardship Schemes.
- enhance existing landscape characterisations.
- inform land management practices including agri-environment agreements.
- facilitate the better targeting of historic environment resources and advice.

**The Historic Environment Action Plan can be used as a tool for engagement within a protected landscape.** The documents forming the HEAP can be used:

- in outreach to present the key historic environment characteristics of the AONB landscape in a way which is accessible to the non-specialist.
- to facilitate a debate with a wide range of individuals, groups and organisations surrounding the key features of the historic environment in a given area, their significance and the forces for change enacting upon them.
- to raise the profile of the historic environment and historic landscape of the AONB.

**The Historic Environment Action Plan can be used as a tool for research.** The Historic Environment Action Plan approach provides an opportunity to assess gaps in current knowledge and understanding, and identify actions through which research can be undertaken to fill those gaps.

**The Historic Environment Action Plan can be used as a means of creating real action.** The action plan at the centre of the HEAP provides the opportunity to implement a series of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-based actions. The action plan will provide targeted opportunities through which the historic aspects of the AONB can be both conserved and enhanced. This will include improved management of features, sites and landscapes.

**As an exemplar for other protected landscapes (AONBs and Protected Landscapes) and other rural areas.** The Historic Environment Action Plan project has thoroughly documented the methodologies used to create area and theme statements, has produced a guidance document aimed specifically at Protected Landscapes.

### Who are the Historic Environment Action Plans for?

The Historic Environment Action Plans have a wide range of end users beyond the AONB team and partnership including the wider historic environment sector; partners to the historic environment sector; local authorities; and local planning authorities and land managers, owners, advisors and local people.

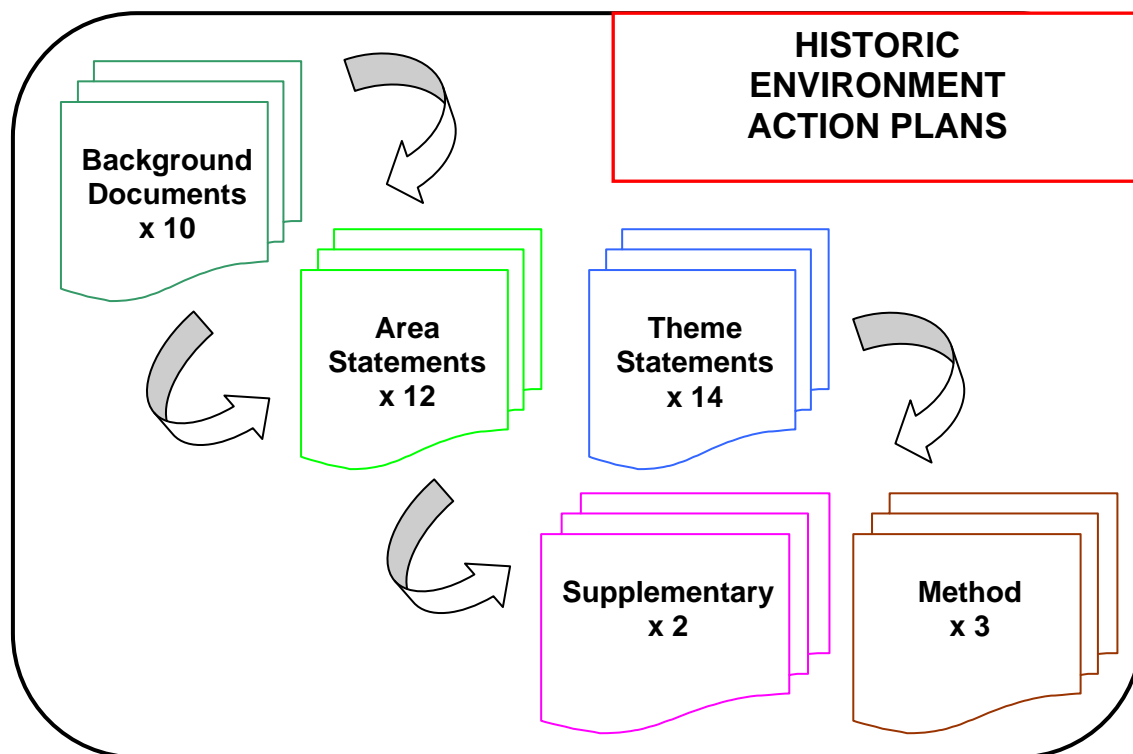


## How were the AONB Historic Environment Action Plans created?

The Historic Environment Action Plans have been created by a dedicated project officer supported by a dedicated steering group. The steering group was comprised of local residents, landowners, land managers, local historians and archaeologists, heritage interest groups, AONB representatives, local authority members and officers, heritage professionals and representatives from key organisations including Natural England, English Heritage, and the Forestry Commission. This wide base of expertise has ensured that the action plans fully address the key threats to the archaeology and history of the AONB and fully cover the range of historic environment assets present in the landscape.

## How are the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Environment Action Plans organised?

The Historic Environment Action Plans (HEAPs) are split into a series of 41 cross referenced documents. These can be explored via hard copies, using linked .pdfs on computer or downloaded from the website [www.historiclandscape.co.uk](http://www.historiclandscape.co.uk).



These 41 documents are divided into 5 sections:

- **Background** documents which provide an introduction to the HEAPs and provide information on the history and archaeology of the landscape.
- **Area** statements which summarise key characteristics of the historic environment within discrete geographical areas within the AONB.

- **Theme** statements which summarise key characteristics of the historic environment of topics of particular relevance to the AONB landscape.
- **Supplementary** documents which explore issues of relevance to the HEAPs.
- **Method** documents which provide guidance on the methodology behind the production of the HEAPs.

In the majority of cases the first documents of interest will be either the statement relating to the geographic area of interest or a theme statement relating to a particular subject or topic of interest.

### Background Documents

These provide an introduction to the AONB Historic Environment Action Plans and provide background information on the history and archaeology of the landscape.

|           |                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                      |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>B1</b> | <b>Introducing the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Environment Action Plans</b> | Introduces the concept of Historic Environment Action Plans and describes the AONB HEAPs                             |
| <b>B2</b> | <b>Description of the Archaeology of the AONB by time period</b>                                       | Describes the main historic and archaeological features present in the AONB by time period.                          |
| <b>B3</b> | <b>History of Archaeological Discovery</b>                                                             | Describes the history of research into the archaeology of the AONB.                                                  |
| <b>B4</b> | <b>Land Use</b>                                                                                        | Describes past and present patterns of land use in the AONB.                                                         |
| <b>B5</b> | <b>Local Distinctiveness</b>                                                                           | Discusses the relationship between the archaeology and history of the AONB and the concept of local distinctiveness. |
| <b>B6</b> | <b>People in the Landscape</b>                                                                         | Outlines the main historical people and families associated with the AONB landscape.                                 |
| <b>B7</b> | <b>Major Historical Events, Trends and Fashions</b>                                                    | Overview of the historical events and fashions which have had a landscape scale impact on the AONB.                  |
| <b>B8</b> | <b>Designated Heritage Assets</b>                                                                      | Describes the nature, and extent of designated heritage assets in the AONB.                                          |
| <b>B9</b> | <b>Full list of Historic Environment Actions</b>                                                       | Provide an overview of Actions identified for the AONB landscape.                                                    |

## References and Glossary

Full list of bibliographic references and glossary

## Area Statements

These summarise the key characteristics of twelve discrete geographical areas within the AONB based on Historic Landscape Characterisation information. They then set out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of each area and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance its characteristics.

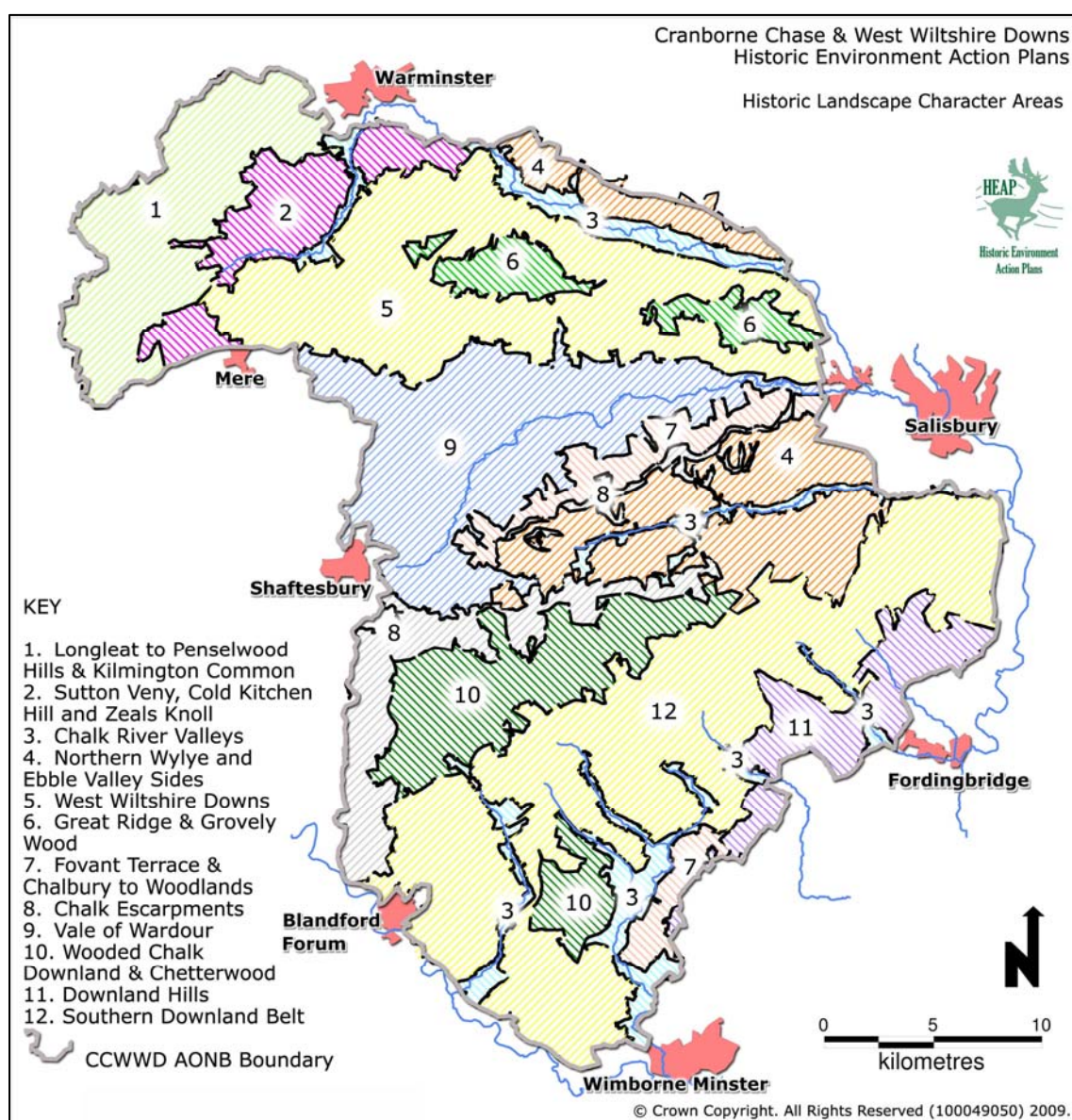


Figure Two: Map of the Historic Landscape Character Areas



- A1** Area One: Longleat to Penselwood Hills and Kilmington Common
- A2** Area Two: Sutton Veny, Cold Kitchen Hill and Zeals Knoll
- A3** Area Three: Chalk River Valleys
- A4** Area Four: Northern Wylde and Ebble Valley Sides
- A5** Area Five: West Wiltshire Downs
- A6** Area Six: Great Ridge and Grovely Woods
- A7** Area Seven: Fovant Terrace and the area between Chalbury and Woodlands
- A8** Area Eight: Chalk Escarpments
- A9** Area Nine: Vale of Wardour
- A10** Area Ten: Wooded Chalk Downland of the Cranborne Chase and Chatterwood
- A11** Area Eleven: Downland Hills
- A12** Area Twelve: Southern Downland Belt

### Theme Statements

These documents summarise the key characteristics of historic environment themes of particular relevance to the AONB landscape, and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance its characteristics

- T1** Theme One: Ancient Boundaries and Land Ownership
- T2** Theme Two: Farms and Farming

- T3** Theme Three: Fields in the Landscape
- T4** Theme Four: Historic Parks and Gardens in the Landscape
- T5** Theme Five: Hunting Landscapes
- T6** Theme Six: Industry in the Landscape
- T7** Theme Seven: Landscapes of Militarism, Commemoration & Defence
- T8** Theme Eight: Landscapes of Prehistory
- T9** Theme Nine: Open Land
- T10** Theme Ten: Routeways in the Landscape
- T11** Theme Eleven: Settlement in the Landscape
- T12** Theme Twelve: Water in the Landscape
- T13** Theme Thirteen: Woodland and Trees in the Landscape
- T14** Theme Fourteen: Historic Features of Local Value

### Supplementary Documents

A series of documents which explore supplementary issues of relevance to the Historic Environment Action Plans

- S1** **Planning and Historic Landscape Character: A guide for the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB** This document uses a series of case studies to demonstrate how Historic Environment Action Plans can add value to spatial policy and application decisions within the constituent Local Planning Authorities



**Forces for change operating on the historic environment of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB at a landscape scale and their past, current and future impacts**

Details the forces for change impacting upon the key historic and archaeological characteristics of the AONB.

## Method

Introduces the methodology behind the production of the Historic Environment Action Plans and provides guidance for other Protected Landscapes (AONBs and National Parks).



**Creating Historic Environment Action Plans for Protected Landscapes**

This document sets out the relevance and appropriateness of Historic Environment Action Plans to Protected Landscapes



**Creating and Describing Historic Environment Areas**

Documents the methodology used for identifying, creating, and describing Historic Environment Character Areas for the AONB Landscape



**Creating and Describing Historic Environment Theme**

Documents the methodology used for identifying, and describing Historic Environment Themes for the AONB Landscape

## Further Information

For further information on this project you can:

- Explore the suite of documents forming the CCWWD AONB Historic Environment Action Plan
- Visit the project website [www.historiclandscape.co.uk](http://www.historiclandscape.co.uk)
- Contact the office of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB by:
  - emailing [info@cranbornechase.org.uk](mailto:info@cranbornechase.org.uk)
  - phoning 01725 517417
  - writing to AONB Office, 4 Castle Street, Cranborne, Dorset, BH21 5PZ

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|               |     |                                                                                                                                                                              |  |
|---------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Background    | B1  | Introducing the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Environment Action Plans                                                                              |  |
|               | B2  | Description of the Archaeology of the AONB by Time Period                                                                                                                    |  |
|               | B3  | History of Archaeological Discovery                                                                                                                                          |  |
|               | B4  | Land Use                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
|               | B5  | Local Distinctiveness                                                                                                                                                        |  |
|               | B6  | People in the Landscape                                                                                                                                                      |  |
|               | B7  | Major Historical Events, Trends and Fashions                                                                                                                                 |  |
|               | B8  | Designated Heritage Assets                                                                                                                                                   |  |
|               | B9  | Full List of Historic Environment Actions                                                                                                                                    |  |
|               | B10 | References and Glossary                                                                                                                                                      |  |
| Area          | A1  | Longleat to Penselwood Hills and Kilmington Common                                                                                                                           |  |
|               | A2  | Sutton Veny, Cold Kitchen Hill and Zeals Knoll                                                                                                                               |  |
|               | A3  | Chalk River Valleys                                                                                                                                                          |  |
|               | A4  | Northern Wylde and Ebble Valley Sides                                                                                                                                        |  |
|               | A5  | West Wiltshire Downs                                                                                                                                                         |  |
|               | A6  | Great Ridge and Grovely Woods                                                                                                                                                |  |
|               | A7  | Fovant Terrace and the Area Between Chalbury and Woodlands                                                                                                                   |  |
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|               | A11 | Downland Hills                                                                                                                                                               |  |
|               | A12 | Southern Downland Belt                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| Theme         | T1  | Ancient Boundaries and Land Ownership                                                                                                                                        |  |
|               | T2  | Farms and Farming                                                                                                                                                            |  |
|               | T3  | Fields in the Landscape                                                                                                                                                      |  |
|               | T4  | Historic Parks and Gardens in the Landscape                                                                                                                                  |  |
|               | T5  | Hunting Landscapes                                                                                                                                                           |  |
|               | T6  | Industry in the Landscape                                                                                                                                                    |  |
|               | T7  | Landscapes of Militarism, Commemoration & Defence                                                                                                                            |  |
|               | T8  | Landscapes of Prehistory                                                                                                                                                     |  |
|               | T9  | Open Land                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
|               | T10 | Routeways in the Landscape                                                                                                                                                   |  |
|               | T11 | Settlement in the Landscape                                                                                                                                                  |  |
|               | T12 | Water in the Landscape                                                                                                                                                       |  |
|               | T13 | Woodland and Trees in the Landscape                                                                                                                                          |  |
|               | T14 | Historic Features of Local Value                                                                                                                                             |  |
| Supplementary | S1  | Planning and Historic Landscape Character: A Guide for the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB                                                                     |  |
|               | S2  | Forces for Change Operating on the Historic Environment of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB at a Landscape Scale and their Past, Current and Future Impacts |  |
| Method        | M1  | Creating Historic Environment Action Plans for Protected Landscapes                                                                                                          |  |
|               | M2  | Creating and Describing Historic Environment Areas                                                                                                                           |  |
|               | M3  | Creating and Describing Historic Environment Theme                                                                                                                           |  |

Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



## Historic Environment Action Plans

**[www.historiclandscape.co.uk](http://www.historiclandscape.co.uk)**

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