

**National Landscape (AONB) Report
Environmental
January 2025**

Cllr Roger Dollins

It is an auspicious week for looking to the New Year; we are pleased to share Monday's [announcement](#) of the Government's intent to legislate to strengthen the National Landscapes and National Parks, to increase our role in nature recovery, climate and access amongst other things. This comes on the 75th Anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act which created the National Landscapes, National Parks and National Trails.

Looking back on 2024, I am grateful for the dedication of the Team and partners and the invaluable support from our funders, whose collaboration has been instrumental in conserving and enhancing the Mendip Hills National Landscape. Together, we've made significant strides towards our vision of a beautiful, thriving landscape that everyone feels part of.

- **Our rangers and volunteers** have done 40 nature recovery tasks and 50 days of drystone walling.
- **The Darker Side of Mendip** book was launched to raise awareness of this special landscape with new audiences.
- We've focussed work on engaging communities in Weston through the national **Nature Calling** work, our own **Mendip Nature Connections**, and the drop-in day we did near the sea-front.
- We know so much more about our Champion Species thanks to all the **community surveyors** helping us.
- **Hundreds of people** have started to think about the future of the Mendip Hills through the management plan consultation.
- We've rolled out the new **National Landscape brand** to build on the pride we all have for the area.
- We're putting the building blocks in place for future generations of **countryside decision makers** through the new cohort of Young Rangers.
- The **Farming in Protected Landscape** grant programme is already completely allocated for this financial year covering 40+ projects.

And finally, more gruesome evidence from the darker side of Mendip, and how important this National Landscape is for human history [Somerset Bronze Age massacre victims likely cannibalised - BBC News](#)

Roger:

Draft Management plan meeting 9th January plan agreed to take forward for more consultation etc looking good.

I have a copy of the Management Plan if anyone would like to view it, it is 67 pages long so a huge amount of information to take in. I will try to pull out the main points if possible, for the Parish March meeting.