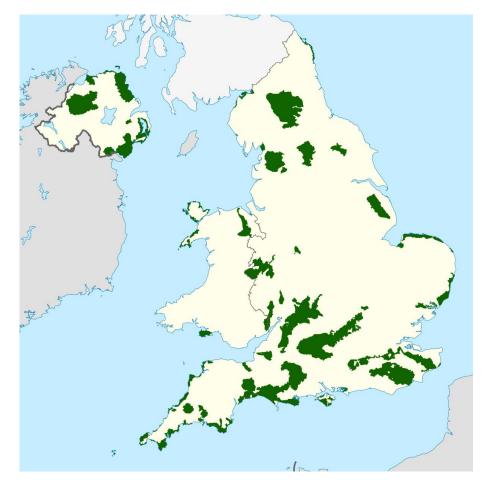
Surrey Hills AONB Boundary Review

Webinar Slide Pack



What is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

- An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000.
- The Act defines an AONB as "an area which appears to Natural England to be of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable that it should be protected for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty."
- There are currently 34 AONBs in England.





The Surrey Hills AONB

- The Surrey Hills AONB was first designated in 1958 under legislative provisions originally set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949
- The Surrey Hills AONB partnership has long considered that the AONB should be extended into adjacent areas that are locally designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).





Why now & who is leading?

George Eustice, Secretary of State (Defra), made a Written Ministerial Statement on the 24th June 2021 which included reference to Natural England taking forward the government's commitment to designate additional protected landscapes with specific reference considering the designation of the following four areas.

- Yorkshire Wolds AONB
- Cheshire Sandstone Ridge AONB
- An extension to the Surrey Hills AONB
- An extension to the Chilterns AONB

Natural England has a discretionary power under S.82 of the CRoW Act, to designate AONB's or to vary the boundary of an existing AONB's.

Natural England is the government's independent adviser on the natural environment, with special responsibilities for creating National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and reviewing their boundaries.



Deciding on a revised boundary

Deciding whether to vary an existing AONB boundary, requires Natural England to address three broad questions:

1. Does the landscape have sufficient natural beauty to be considered nationally outstanding?

2. Is it desirable for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty, to designate this landscape as AONB?

3. Where should the boundary be drawn?

It is an evidence driven process

Local people need to be involved in the review and decision-making process

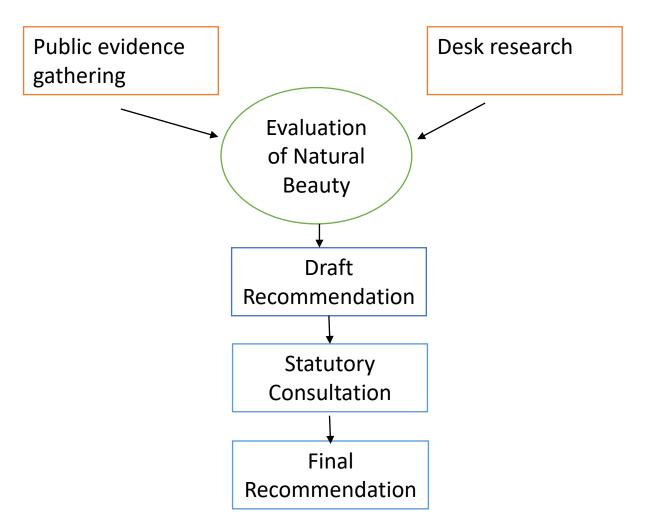
- Evidence gathering
- Being informed about how their input is being used
- Formal consultation

First time people have been involved at this early stage

The boundary review might increase the size of the AONB but will <u>not</u> decrease it



How is a boundary review undertaken (1)





How is a boundary review undertaken (2)

- Identify the Area of Search and agree evaluation areas
- Evidence Gathering, using natural beauty criteria
- Natural beauty evaluation evidence review, desk study data and site assessment
- Identify candidate areas
- Desirability assessment
- Identifying a suitable boundary
- Formal consultation on final recommendations
- Natural England makes recommendation to the Secretary of State (Defra)



Assessing natural beauty

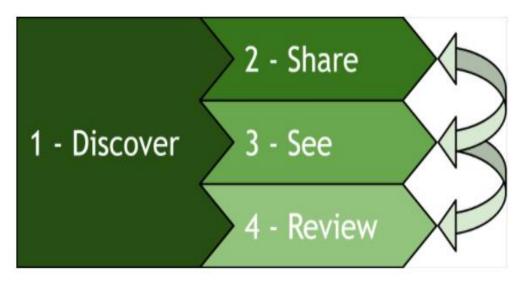
- Landscape Quality landscape condition, e.g. state of hedgerows, presence of litter
- Scenic Quality extent to which the landscape appeals to the senses
- Wildness degree to which the landscape feels wild
- **Tranquillity** how peaceful is the place?
- Natural Heritage influence of plants, wildlife and the shape of the land
- Cultural Heritage influence of traditions, people, artists, writers or historical events

https://www.surreyhills.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Guidance-on-Assessing-Landscapes-for-Designation-Updated-2021_final-30.6.21_2ndtestpdf.pdf



The Surrey Hills: your place, your voice

The Surrey Hills AONB boundary review process



STEP 1 - Discover

What is this boundary review? - Learn about the boundary review process.

STEP 2 - Share

How can I get involved? - Share your local knowledge.

STEP 3 - See

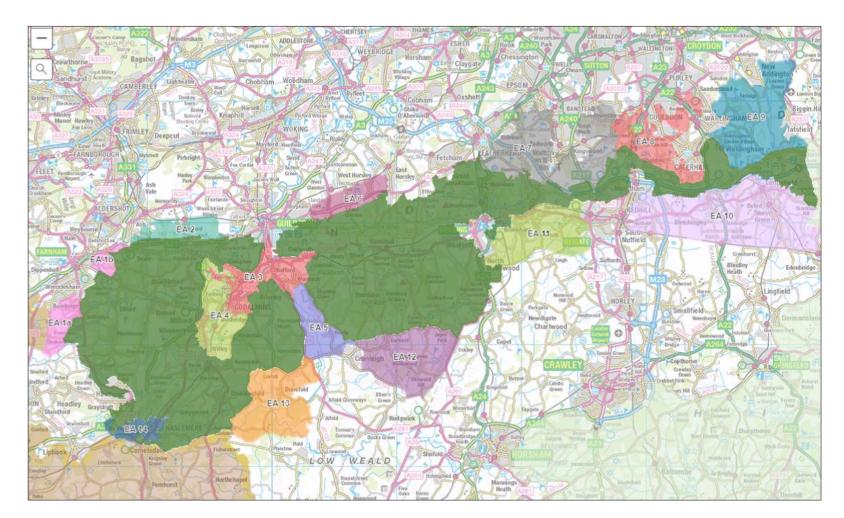
What's happening? - Keep up to date with the process via our Story Map.

STEP 4 - Review

How can I find out more? - <u>Attend events to review progress and to help</u> <u>contribute evidence.</u>



Evaluation areas





Ways to gather evidence

- On location
 - Using App or browser accessed from website
- From home
 - Using website
 - Requesting a hard copy form



Support

- Webinars
- Video's on website
- FAQ's & Glossary
- Helpline



Engagement tools

Surrey Hills AONB Boundary Review - Call for Evidence

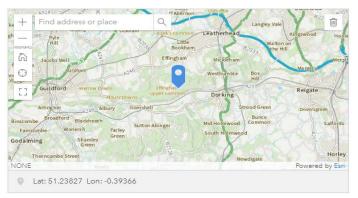
About Your Place of Interest

Tell us about this location and take a photo or share an image that demonstrates the Natural Beauty of the place.

Pick a point on the map

On the map below, use your pointer to drop a pin-point.

If you are 'in the field' and want to use your mobile location (via the cross-hairs icon), please ensure you have Location Services (GPS) enabled.



Take a photo or attach an image of this location

Select one of the options below to take a picture on your device or choose an image file to attach.

Please be aware that any images submitted may be used in our technical reports on the Boundary Review.

Select image file

6

Tell us why you think this landscape is special

Please try to describe the special qualities of the place in terms of one or more of the natural beauty factors as you experience them in this location:

- Landscape Quality landscape condition, e.g. state of hedgerows, presence of litter
- Scenic Quality extent to which the landscape appeals to the senses
- Wildness degree to which the landscape feels wild
- Tranquillity how peaceful is the place?
- Natural Heritage influence of plants, wildlife and the shape of the land
- Cultural Heritage influence of traditions, people, artists, writers or historical events

Not all these factors may be relevant to this location.

Surrey Hills AONB Boundary Review - Call for Evidence

Landscape Quality - Additional Information

A measure of the current physical state or condition of the landscape and its features.

For example:

- What is the condition of the landscape? For example, are the hedges well managed, do the trees appear healthy, are the lane verges intact or damaged by traffic?
- Are there any incongruous features or elements which affect Landscape Quality in this area? For example, are there pylons or overhead masts, is there fly tipping or verge erosion?

Please describe how Landscape Quality contributes to Natural Beauty in this location

		-
		5

Additional Photograph or Image

If you have a further image/photograph that demonstrates Landscape Quality, please add using the options below



Additional Document

If you have further material (e.g. document, presentation) that presents how Landscape Quality contributes to the natural beauty in this location, please add using the button below

Select file (support: pdf, doc, docx, xls, xlsx, pptx, ppt, txt)



www.r4c.org.uk

Would you like to provide more information on one or more of these natural beauty factors?

This gives the option to open more form pages, one for each of the Natural Beauty Factors.



Communication

- Issued the 'launch' press release
- Mailed 7000 people on the AONB newsletter database
- Issued 'reminder' press release this month
- Ran a social media campaign
- Invited, via email, 3800 individuals across 546 Communities of Place including 160 schools.
- Invited 149 Communities of Interest

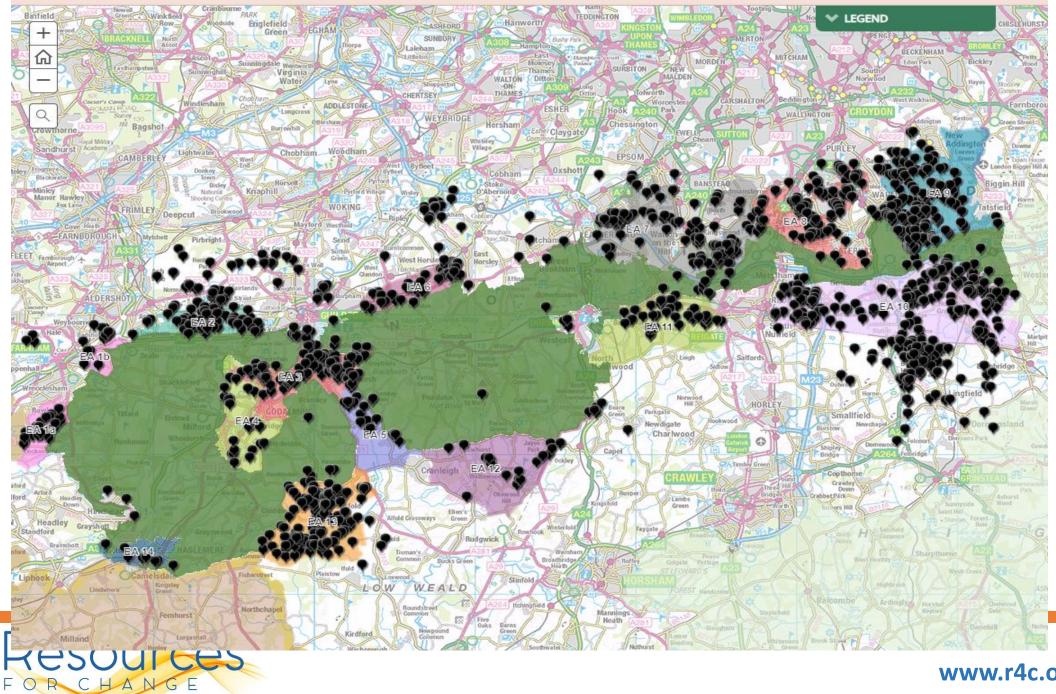


Level of participation

1st December to 31st January

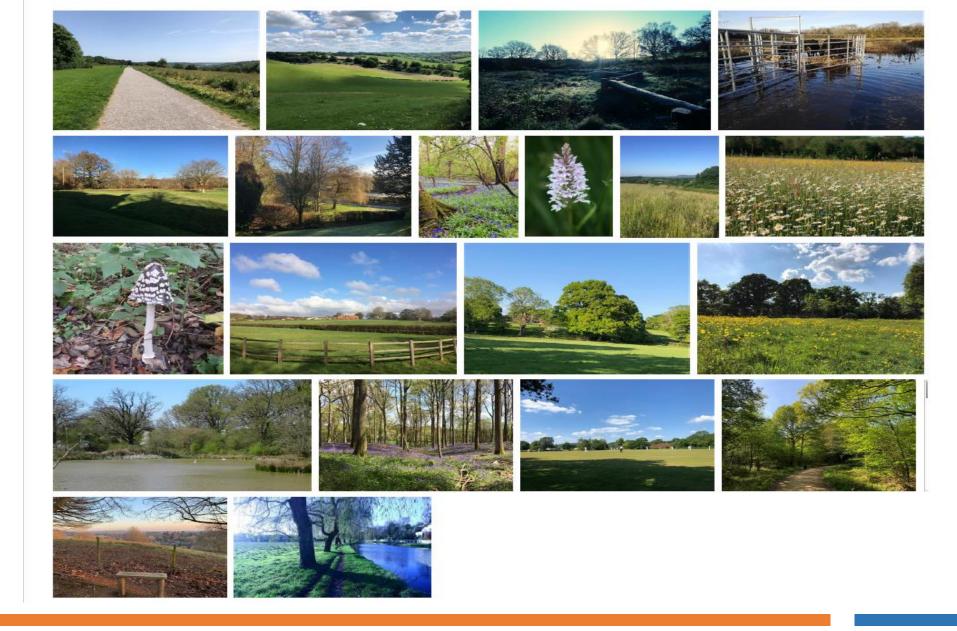
- 2,117 Evidence submissions in total
 - Online submissions 1929
 - Email submissions
 175
 - Postal submissions
 13





Evidence can be reviewed at <u>www.surrey-hills-aonb-boundary-review.org</u>

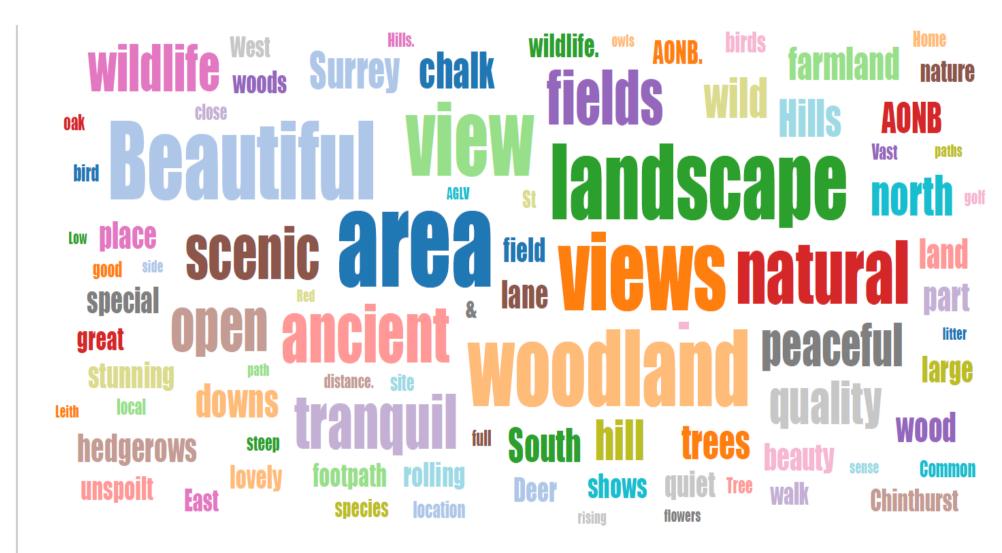




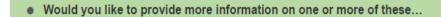
Selection of submitted photo's

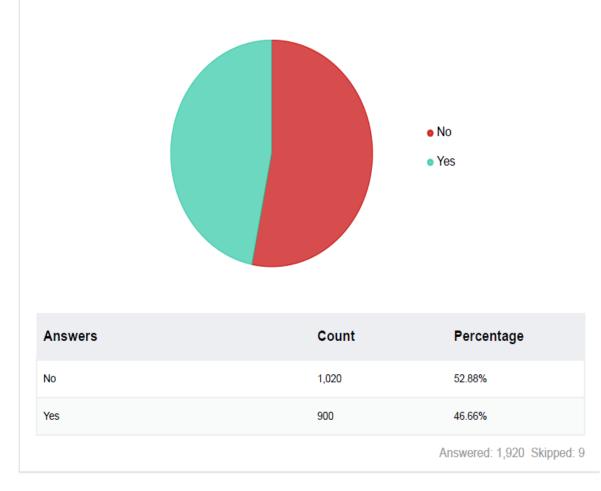


Tell us why you think this landscape is special









Level of engagement



Desk research – designation history

- Surrey Hills first identified as AGLV in emerging Surrey Structure Plan (1953)
- Surrey Hills AONB designated (1958) and included all of AGLV
- Extensions to the AGLV in the 1970's
- Further extensions to the AGLV in the 1980's
- Little known about the factors used to define the AGLV

AGLV not necessarily the same as 'Outstanding Natural Beauty'



Desk research – previous studies

- Chris Burnett Associates reviewed AGLV in 2007
- Alison Farmer Associates reviewed evidence in 2012 and recommended an evaluation based on NE guidance
- Hankinson Duckett Associates reviewed AONB boundary in 2013

Past studies provide information on natural beauty of area



Evidence Provided by Stakeholders

- Substantial <u>quantity</u> of evidence for Area of Search and land beyond
- Much of the evidence relates to individual sites or locations
- Clearly many <u>special qualities</u> associated with the landscape and <u>highly valued</u> by communities
- Natural beauty is assessed across areas of landscape using this evidence and applying NE guidance at a landscape scale



How Evidence is Used

- Each submission is reviewed and evidence translated across to survey forms
- Maps are marked up with evidence and an itinerary for site assessment prepared
- Natural beauty then assessed in the field evidence provided by stakeholders is verified and where relevant used to build a weight of argument supporting case for natural beauty



Themes Emerging from Evaluation

- Since AONB designation surrounding landscape has experienced change – infrastructure, development, land use
- Many areas have become fragmented they may contain pockets of high quality landscape which have become small or isolated
- Some areas are intact but **lack distinction** forming attractive countryside but not necessarily of national significance
- Some areas are transitional close to the AONB their natural beauty is lifted by proximity to distinctive topography but this reduces with distance



Themes Emerging from Evaluation

• Some areas are affected by pressure from significant population on the doorstep including fly tipping, traffic and lane erosion etc.

The assessment of natural beauty is utilising all evidence submitted. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are nationally outstanding landscapes.

Initial assessment indicates that only some of the areas considered by stakeholders as representing valued landscape, will qualify for national designation.



Engagement Programme

- Phase 1: Evidence gathering unlocking local knowledge through citizen science.
 - 1st December 2021 & 31st January 2022
- Phase 2: Evidence briefing informing stakeholders on how their evidence is being used.
 - March 2022
- Phase 3: Statutory & public consultation on proposed extensions
 - Beginning early 2023

