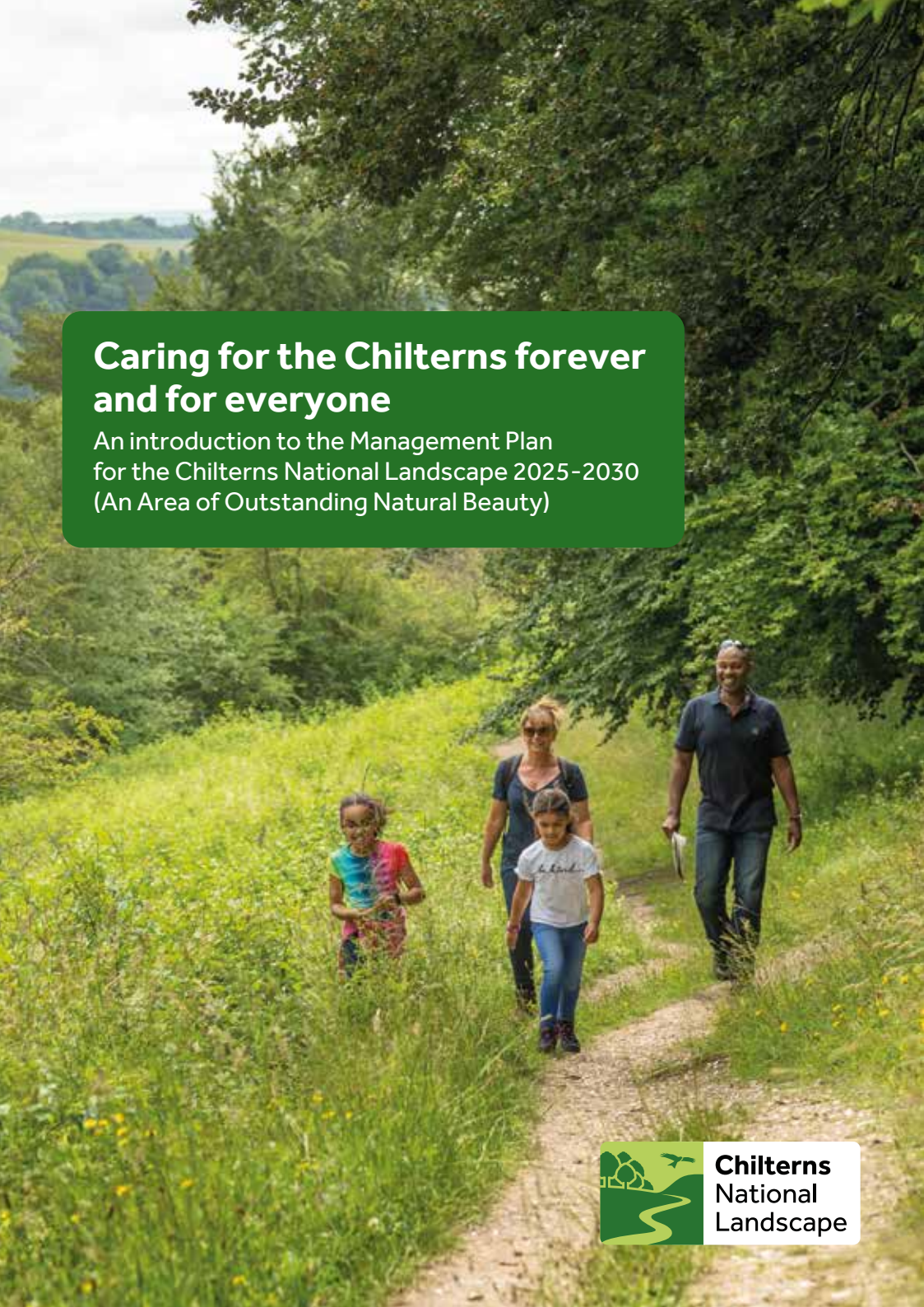




Caring for the Chilterns forever and for everyone

An introduction to the Management Plan
for the Chilterns National Landscape 2025-2030
(An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)



Chilterns
National
Landscape

About the Chilterns

The Chilterns is a landscape of remarkable beauty and distinctive character, shaped by its unique geology, ecology and cultural heritage.

Rolling chalk hills and escarpments give rise to flower-rich downlands, woodlands, commons and meadows criss-crossed by historic routes and pathways.

Picturesque villages nestle in valleys, while chalk streams such as the Chess and Misbourne emerge from the hills, sustaining wildlife and communities alike.

Introduction to the Management Plan

All National Landscapes are legally required, under section 89 of the CROW Act, to prepare a Management Plan, which sets out policies for the management of the landscape and for fulfilling statutory functions. This leaflet introduces the Plan, its vision for the Chilterns and some of the issues that its policies and actions are tackling.

Who is the Plan for?

The Management Plan is for everyone who has a role in shaping, managing, or enjoying the Chilterns National Landscape. It provides guidance to support the long-term care of the area for current and future generations. This includes partner organisations and local authorities, as well as landowners, farmers, and others who manage or influence land in the area. It also applies to those who live, work in, and visit the Chilterns.





What does the Management Plan address?

The Management Plan considers a range of key challenges and opportunities for the Chilterns, including:

- Ensuring that development does not damage wildlife and fragile habitats, such as chalk streams
- Maintaining a healthy landscape with a thriving rural economy
- Responding to environmental challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss
- Helping more people understand and value the Chilterns landscape
- Ensuring more people can access and benefit from the recreation and nature on their doorstep



How will the plan be delivered?

Delivering the Chilterns National Landscape Management Plan will depend on strong collaboration between partner organisations, landscape partnerships, charities, local authorities, landowners, farmers and local communities. Sustained and increased funding will also be essential to secure the long-term conservation and enhancement of this nationally important landscape.

About the Chilterns Conservation Board

The Chilterns Conservation Board was established by Parliamentary Order in 2004 to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns; and
- Increase the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities.

In fulfilling these purposes, the Board has a duty to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities.

A photograph of three children running away from the camera on a grassy hill. The child in the middle is wearing a blue shirt and dark shorts, the child on the left is wearing a dark shirt and shorts, and the child on the right is wearing a red shirt and blue shorts. The background shows rolling green hills under a clear sky.

A vision for the Chilterns National Landscape

The Management Plan is based on a vision that the Chilterns will be cared for, forever and for everyone. To achieve this vision, the CCB advocates that:

- 1 All special qualities and natural resources of the Chilterns will be protected forever for everyone, current and future generations.
- 2 The wildlife and natural beauty of the Chilterns have an intrinsic value that will be preserved and restored.
- 3 The landscape is designated for the nation and will be protected by the nation.
- 4 To ensure its future care, more people need to understand the value of the Chilterns as a unique and special landscape, of national and international significance.
- 5 The Chilterns provides a valuable resource for the enjoyment, health and well-being of a significant proportion of the country's population.
- 6 The landscape is a place where many people live and work, where community facilities must be retained to foster sustainable, vibrant communities.
- 7 Viable, sustainable and diverse farming, forestry and rural economy sectors are essential to conserve and enhance the wildlife and natural beauty of the Chilterns, and public benefits of land management are supported by public funding.
- 8 As one of the most accessible protected landscapes in Europe, more people should use the Chilterns for quiet recreation, especially the 2.25 million people who live within 8 km of the boundary and the adjacent urban populations, with carefully managed access to ensure the special qualities are protected.
- 9 Those who live in or near, make a living from, visit and love the Chilterns are encouraged to help care for it.
- 10 Given the Chilterns is already more developed than most protected landscapes and given the potential benefit of the landscape to millions, there should be no major development in the National Landscape; only the most essential development should take place and where it takes place, there should be no adverse impact on landscape, special qualities or access, and it should deliver an environmental net gain.

The special qualities of the Chilterns National Landscape

The Chilterns is shaped by many special qualities. Here are just some of the distinctive features the Management Plan aims to conserve and enhance.

One of the most wooded landscapes in England (24% woodland cover)

Home to extensive ancient woodland, a defining feature of the Chilterns.



Rare chalk grassland (just 1.5% remains)

Exceptionally rich in wildflowers and wildlife, now covering just 1.5% of the National Landscape.



Nine precious chalk streams

A globally scarce habitat supporting rare and threatened wildlife.



Historic landscapes and villages

Ancient routeways, flint buildings and archaeological sites reflect centuries of human history.



A dramatic chalk escarpment

A globally rare landscape that shapes the Chilterns' distinctive scenery, wildlife and heritage.



Panoramic views and tranquillity

Sweeping views, peaceful countryside and dark skies close to where millions of people live.





Securing the Chilterns for future generations

The Chilterns National Landscape faces unprecedented pressures that threaten its natural beauty and the enjoyment of its special qualities.

The Plan sets out shared ambitions to address these issues collaboratively, including a focus on climate action, nature recovery, and improving access and connection to the landscape for everyone.

- Ensure chalk habitat management is an exemplar of best practice.
- Enable people to understand and be inspired by the Chilterns, recognising its value to society, the economy and the environment.
- Secure greater protection for globally rare chalk streams.
- Encourage organisations, communities and land managers to work together to make more space for nature.

Nature



- Ensure spaces for wildlife are expanded, well connected, well managed and diverse.
- Increase the range and abundance of populations of key wildlife species.
- Reduce emissions, increase carbon storage and help the landscape and its communities adapt to climate change.

Historic environment



- Better protect the Chilterns' historic environment, including both designated sites and those without formal protection.
- Seek new discoveries of unknown heritage assets and deepen our understanding of those already identified.
- Increase knowledge, enjoyment and appreciation of the Chilterns' heritage and culture.

Land woodland and water



- Protect and restore the Chilterns' natural capital, including soils, water, clean air and wildlife.
- Maintain a working landscape with viable, sustainable farming, forestry and rural businesses.
- Safeguard the Chilterns by maintaining and enhancing landscape features (such as hedges and trees), wildlife habitats and cultural heritage.
- Increase resilience to pests, diseases, non-native invasive species and climate change.
- Achieve Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives for rivers, valleys, wetlands and other riparian habitats.
- Increase understanding of how sustainable farming, forestry and land management supports a healthy Chilterns landscape.

Enjoyment and understanding



- Secure national recognition and greater resources for recreational opportunities the Chilterns countryside offers to residents and visitors.
- Provide high-quality opportunities for recreation, volunteering and lifelong learning.
- Support healthier, happier lives through access to the Chilterns countryside.
- Increase awareness of what makes the Chilterns special and encourage people to care for it.

- Inspire young people to develop a lasting connection with the Chilterns.
- Reduce barriers to accessing the countryside and engage more diverse and underserved audiences.

Social and economic well-being



- Support the economic and social well-being of local communities and businesses through the visitor economy and improved community facilities.
- Promote the Chilterns' contribution to physical and mental health through access to nature and a wide variety of recreational opportunities.
- Increase recognition of the Chilterns' natural capital and ensure it informs decision-making and investment.
- Encourage businesses and communities to value its special qualities, support initiatives and help raise the profile of the area.

Planning and development



- Ensure planning decisions put the conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns National Landscape first.
- Ensure development delivers net environmental gain, leaving the Chilterns richer in wildlife, quieter, darker at night and more beautiful.
- Embrace opportunities to restore natural beauty on degraded or previously developed sites.

A shared plan for a shared landscape

- The Chilterns National Landscape Management Plan sets out a collective vision for the next five years – but it can only be delivered by working together.
- Whether you are a local authority, landowner, farmer, community group, charity or partner organisation, you have a role to play in caring for this special landscape.



**Scan to read the full Plan,
explore the priorities,
and see how to get involved**



Together, we can ensure the Chilterns continues to thrive for nature, people and future generations.

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