



I.0 INTRODUCTION



- 1.2.3** Bardsey or Ynys Enlli is a very special island. Its links with Christianity date back to a very early period and pilgrims from near and far have flocked there over the ages. It occupies a prominent place in Welsh folklore and, according to legend, 20,000 saints are said to be buried here. The Island has an abundance of historic remains and buildings and is home to a rich variety of wildlife.
- 1.2.4** The peninsula itself also boasts a rich heritage, with ancient monument sites dating from the Mesolithic and Iron Age era, such as the hill fort at Tre'r Ceiri. Most of the peninsula and Bardsey are included on the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales.
- 1.2.5** In general, agriculture in Llŷn comprises small traditional units and this has helped to protect the landscape and the environment. However, in common with other places, the agriculture industry has witnessed many changes over the years which has resulted in a sharp fall in the number of people who make a living out of farming. There has also been a sharp decline in the fishing industry: full-time fishermen are few and far between, although there are a number of part-time fishermen. Mineral extraction workings and quarrying industries were extremely important in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- 1.2.6** Due to the lack of job opportunities many local young people and people of working age have moved away and have been replaced by people who have moved in from other parts of Wales and the UK. This has had an impact on the cultural character of the area and the use of the Welsh language; however the percentage of Welsh speakers is still among the highest in Wales.
- 1.2.7** Tourism is vital to the local economy; the southern coastline has one of the prime yachting centres in the UK. Many of the coastal villages such as Abersoch and Nefyn are now popular tourist destinations. The area is also very popular for camping and caravanning. These popular tourist resorts are subjected to intense pressures on a seasonal basis as well as during other times of the year, although to a lesser degree. This means that the area as a whole is under pressure, but more so along the southern coastline due to the level of activity on the beaches, roads, car parks, boat launching areas and on the sea itself.
- 1.2.8** The table in Appendix 4 includes key data about the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

1.3 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

- 1.3.1** The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 granted new access rights to the public on open and common land, placed a greater emphasis on protecting biodiversity and created new responsibilities for the management of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Specifically, Section 4 of the Act:
- strengthens previous legislation relating to the designation of new AONB;
 - places a duty on all public bodies to have regard to the purposes of AONBs;
 - sets out the procedures for establishing Conservation Boards and outlines their powers;
 - places a statutory duty on Boards and local authorities to produce Management Plans.
- 1.3.2** The Act requires local authorities to publish a Management Plan which must be reviewed within five years of it being adopted. The content and process for preparing Management Plans for AONB are outlined below.

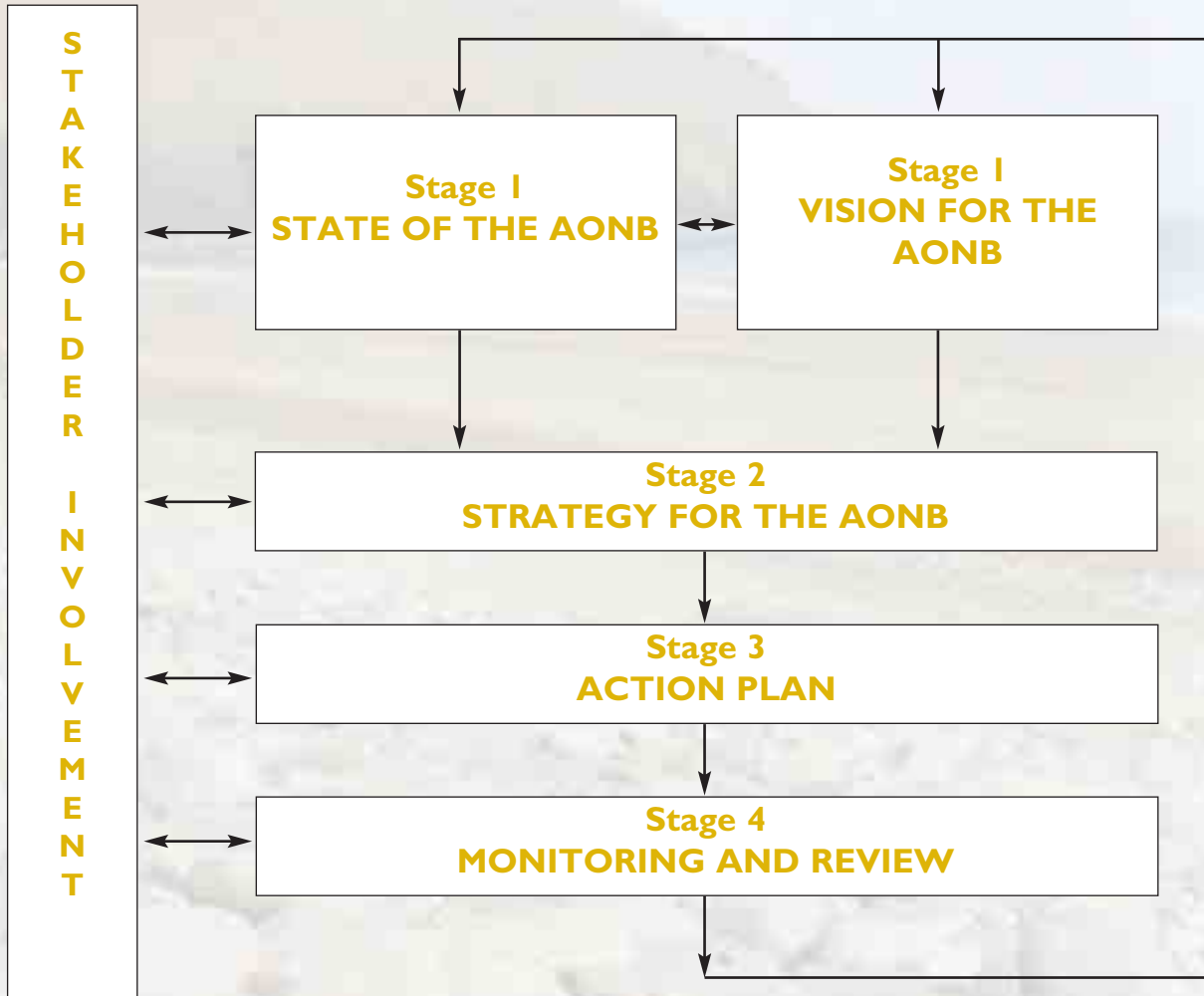
1.4 AONB Management Plans

- 1.4.1.** Section 89 (2) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 places a statutory obligation on relevant local authorities to: 'prepare and publish a plan which formulates their policy for the management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it'.
- 1.4.2** The purpose of the Management Plan is to recognise the area's special qualities, assess their condition and to try and manage development and future changes for the well-being of those qualities. Recognition and consideration should also be given to social and economic needs in the area as part of their long term well-being. Guidance was given on preparing Management Plans in the document – 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans – guidance for Local Authorities in Wales'. The process of preparing the Management Plan comprises specific stages:
- definition of special qualities and the importance of various resources;
 - assess the condition of the qualities and resources;
 - consider activities and pressures;
 - formulating a vision for the future of the area;

- identifying agreed aims and policies to achieve the vision;
- identifying what needs to be done by whom and when;
- monitoring and review.

1.4.3 The diagram below shows how the various sections of the Plan relate to one another:

AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN PROCESS



1.5 Llŷn AONB Management

1.5.1 The Llŷn Joint Advisory Committee was established in 1997. Its members include Gwynedd Council, Community Councils, Representatives of the Farming Unions, the National Trust and other public and voluntary bodies. Its role is to advise local authorities and other bodies on general countryside and environmental management issues and act as a forum for discussion. The Joint Committee has been responsible for co-ordinating work on this Management Plan.

1.5.2 The AONB Service is provided for the Joint Committee and Gwynedd Council by the AONB Unit. The Unit is located at the Council's Dwyfor Area Office, Embankment Road, Pwllheli. The main responsibilities of the service are:

- prepare, monitor and review the Management Plan;
- co-ordinate the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC);
- promote policies and actions to safeguard, improve and manage the AONB;
- lead the Council's work on AONB's nationally;
- raise and sustain awareness and understanding of the area;
- search for funding opportunities and prepare grant applications;

- develop and lead projects which benefit the AONB;
- provide the Council and its partners with professional advice on responsibilities and undertakings;
- administer the Sustainable Development Fund.

I.6 The Llŷn AONB Management Plan

I.6.1 Work on preparing the first Management Plan for the AONB began in January 2003 following the appointment of the AONB Officer. In August 2004 the AONB Assistant was appointed to help strengthen the service.

I.6.2 The Joint AONB Committee (JAC) has led and co-ordinated the work of preparing the Plan and regular meetings were held to discuss various sections of the Plan:

February 2003	Work programme and research needs discussed;
November 2003	Research Studies and Llŷn's Special Qualities considered;
January 2004	Considered the assessment of the area and activities and pressures;
March 2004	Considered report on the Vision and Strategy.
December 2004	Draft Management Plan adopted;
March 2005	Considered comments and changes to be made following consultation.

I.6.3 Due to the lack of information on a number of specific areas the AONB service commissioned research reports to assist in the process of preparing the Management Plan:

- Economic Potential of the Llŷn Peninsula AONB, Cynefin Cyf 2003
- Llŷn AONB Settlements Character and Conservation Area Appraisal Study, BDP, 2003
- Visitor Study in Llŷn AONB, Pinwin Market Research, 2003
- Pen Llŷn Interpretation Strategy , S. Sheakspear 2004

I.6.4 The Plan itself concludes that further research is needed regarding some areas. These could be part of the County's wider research needs and could be co-ordinated by the Council's Policy and Performance Group.

I.6.5 **Consultation** – As well as consulting with the JAC, the AONB Service have also consulted consistently through preparation of the plan with the organisations and individuals below:

- key Gwynedd Council staff;
- section 85 of the Countryside Act agencies as 'relevant agencies' such as Community Councils; Statutory Contractors etc;
- local Members;
- relevant local organisations such as Agricultural Unions, Cyfeillion Llŷn and the National Trust;
- local individuals – through raising awareness and holding mobile exhibitions.

I.6.6 Following the formal consultation on the draft Management Plan during January 2005 fair and detailed consideration was given to all comments received by the JAC and relevant Gwynedd Council committees.

