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The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - a very special place

The Cotswolds is one of the most beautiful areas of England, known and loved by people across the world. Its distinctive golden buildings and stone walls, rolling grasslands, beech woods and captivating villages make it an outstanding English landscape.

The area's special qualities were recognised when it was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1966. This gives the area national and international status as worthy of special protection.

The Cotswolds AONB Partnership

The Cotswolds AONB Partnership works with others to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB and is the only organisation to care for the AONB as a whole.

Bringing together 34 local, regional and national organisations representing farmers, local people, local authorities, tourist bodies and wildlife and heritage groups the Partnership's aims are to:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB
- develop and test new ideas and initiatives for caring for the AONB and for managing landscape and local heritage features
- promote enjoyment of the AONB - ensuring that this complements the conservation of the area and the needs of farming and forestry
- raise awareness of and support for the AONB among residents and visitors.

'Caring for the Cotswolds'

A key area of the AONB Partnership's work is a five-year project called 'Caring for the Cotswolds'. Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, this £2.8 million project is concerned with four areas of work that reflect the key characteristics of the AONB. The project areas are: dry stone walls, unimproved grassland, local distinctiveness and interpretation.