

Evaluation of the Sheffield Living Landscape Partnership

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1. Introduction: Independent Evaluation of Living Landscape Partnership (SLLP)

Monitoring & Evaluation Report, January 2024. Prepared by Waymark.

a. Overview

This evaluation report offers a comprehensive account of the execution and effectiveness of the Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership, a multi-agency, landscape-scale scheme. It delves deeply into the tangible impacts and influences the scheme had on a diverse group of stakeholders, including partners, participants, and the members of local communities. The report not only presents evidence of these wide-ranging effects but also highlights key insights and valuable lessons learned from the scheme's development, structure, and delivery. Through our analysis, we aim to shed light on the strengths, challenges, and overall effectiveness of the scheme, providing a clear understanding of its outcomes, to conclude with its value for money for the funders.

b. Scheme Description

Sheffield Living Landscape Partnership (SLLP) Scheme was funded by the Heritage Lottery and ran from 2018-2024. It consisted of landscape and heritage-based projects and activities that sought to journey towards a more natural and resilient Sheffield Lakeland landscape for everyone to value. The scheme centred on wildlife and landscape conservation, access and recreation, plus learning and skills development. The scheme was led by Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust with other partner organizations involved, including the major landowners of the area.

c. Vision Statement

The vision statement that was created for LCAP:

“A more natural and resilient Lakeland landscape for everyone to value, enjoy, understand and feel part of.”

d. Executive Summary

SLLP has achieved outcomes of local, regional and national significance. The partnership has proved to be an effective collaboration, and, very importantly, looks set to continue to deliver positive outcomes for nature and the community in 2024 and beyond. The funding has been effectively utilised in terms of outputs and outcomes. SLLP should be regarded as a benchmark project of landscape-scale thinking at its best. This report will explain why these conclusions have been reached and provides further detail.

OUTCOME EVALUATION

Landscape-scale thinking at its best



A JOINED UP APPROACH

"It has brought cohesive activity to management of landscape units under different land owners."

ENGAGED COMMUNITY

"It is surprising how small group projects can help to develop your skills, or make use of skills that you can offer."



SUSTAINABLE

"Because these groups were already established, work we enabled will continue beyond the life of the project."

ADDED KNOWLEDGE

"New initiatives in NFM, ELMS tests and high level research opportunities are leading to a Landscape Laboratory."



GOING FORWARDS

"Joining in the latter stages it's clear to me that positive relationships and good communication are key."

"It's been great to make connections with other key stakeholders and work collaboratively."

FINDINGS EXPLAINED USING QUOTES FROM EVALUATION SURVEY RESPONSES

2. M&E Approach

The specific objectives of this evaluation are to:

- ✓ Develop a narrative that outlines the journey of the SLLP.

Examine the value of the landscape partnership approach by evaluating project impacts from stakeholders' perspectives, partnership working in terms of partners' experiences and engagement, and governance structure and processes.

- ✓ Identify the successes and learnings resulting from the SLLP.

The M&E project identified at the outset that monitoring and evaluation would take place on three levels: Individual Project, Scheme, and Strategic Partnership. In addition to this, Waymark has undertaken an evaluation of the wider influence of the project at regional and national levels.

a. Data Collection and Evidence

Data and evidence were collected throughout the project via the bespoke online portal built to support the project. Additionally, Waymark conducted interviews and visited the Sheffield Lakeland project area. Several surveys were undertaken as part of the preparation of this report.

b. Acknowledgements

Waymark would like to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed evidence to the monitoring and evaluation process, particularly those who kindly agreed to be interviewed, videoed, or participated in group discussions and completed questionnaires. In our analysis and presentation of the qualitative data we received, we have strived to accurately reflect the perspectives, opinions, and meanings of the contributions made, and to provide suitable context for the statements made.

3. Monitoring Outputs and Achievements

a. Introduction

SLLP has exemplified how concerted, collaborative efforts can positively impact nature conservation, landscape enhancement, and community engagement. SLLP not only met but exceeded its objectives, showcasing the power of collective action towards environmental stewardship.

b. Achievements: Action for Nature

SLLP exceeded its targets when it comes to people taking action for nature. Over the years the scheme has shown just how much this type of partnership can deliver for nature, the landscape, and for local communities.

Outputs

- **Output:** Heritage will be better managed. A new 10 year partnership LCAP 2023-33
Indicator: This will now take the form of Nature Recovery Network Strategy and Nature Recovery Plan. New projects within that Strategy are already being explored.
- **Output:** Heritage will be better recorded. A supplementary planning document (funded by gateways project)
Indicator: We will not be creating a supplementary planning document, instead we are aligning our outputs with Nature Recovery Strategies which better allow us to directly address opportunities and threats.

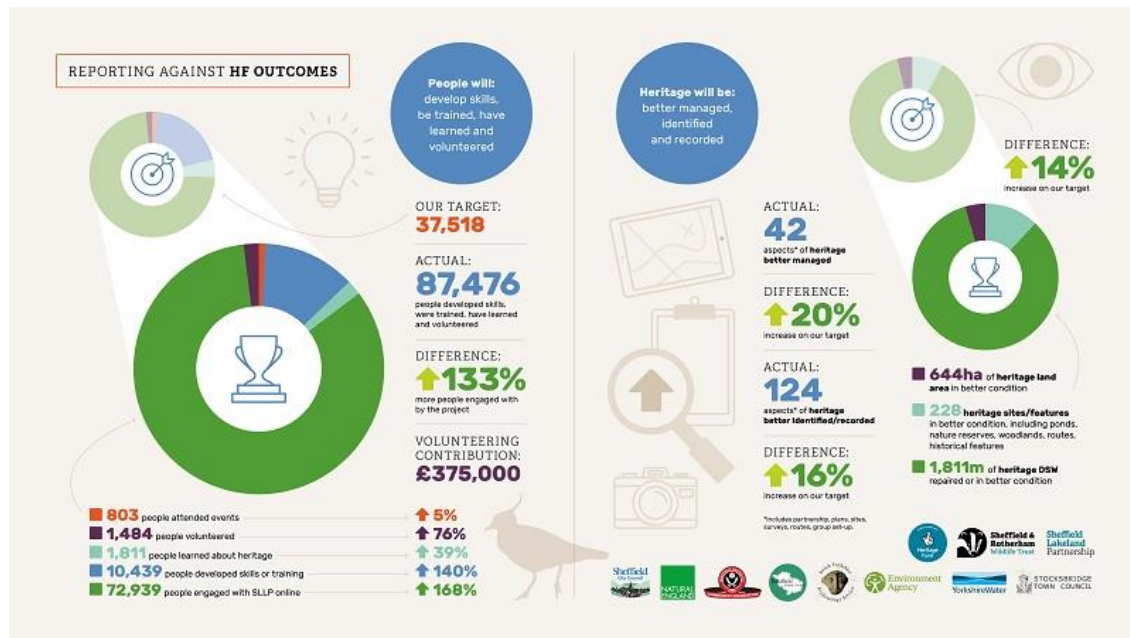
i. Outputs Reported

Outputs: Action that was taken for nature:

A [photo gallery](#) providing photographic evidence was uploaded regularly during the program for Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) purposes. This gallery clearly illustrates the extensive amount of work accomplished.

Spreadsheet of outputs - A downloadable spreadsheet details the deliverables achieved through the scheme. [[click to download spreadsheet](#)]

Summary infographic by Anna Pethran, highlighting how the SLLP outputs have contributed to the HF Outcomes, visually represents the tangible results of the scheme's efforts.



c. Support for Action Takers

SLLP supported those taking action. The following feedback was received from Heritage Highways about the support given by SLLP:

'Jo does an amazing job of making sense of everything that's thrown at her! She deserves credit. She was a great help to me at the beginning of the project and has consistently supported us.'

d. Community Funding and Engagement

Tom from Steel Valley Project explains in this [short video](#) how his project benefited from pointing smaller organisations towards the SLLP Community Funding.

e. Sustained Group Action

Groups are stronger and more pro-active as a result of working with SLLP. The following responses were received from the groups we contacted. See [Appendix 1- Feedback from Local Groups](#)

4. Evaluating the outcomes of each project in the scheme

Waymark has conducted assessments of the impacts of the individual projects in the scheme:



Connections between projects

The diagram above was prepared during the development phase of the scheme to identify the projects and connections, golden threads, that join them. The projects were planned to be greater than the sum of their parts, however it is useful to provide an evaluation summary of each. Presented below are concise summaries of the key outcomes from each project undertaken as part of the SLLP scheme, supported by the evidence that substantiates these assessments.

A resilient landscape

Through the establishment and effective management of a partnership that benefits all involved parties, the Wildlife Trust has expanded its capacity and visibility across the partnership.

Evidence:

- New and vigorous partnership highlighted in the meeting on June 28th 2023, when partners committed to the next phase of working together.
- The involvement of Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) and the creation of a Landscape Laboratory, encompassing EU Horizon and research bids, as well as curriculum changes in Geography and Environment to incorporate Sheffield Lakeland.
- The development of a Nature Recovery Plan that aligns with and complements the South Yorkshire Nature Recovery Strategy.

LWS (morphed to Water Vole)

While SCC delivered a relatively small project, it was deemed satisfactory. Other projects converged to support a larger initiative, leading to Water Voles becoming part of the SRWT's new project goals.

Evidence:

- Two successful small research bids from SHU and the University of Sheffield (legacy work).
- Two grant applications for Species Recovery by SRWT, involving partners.

SRWT Nature Reserves

At Hammond's Field (near Redmires) the project has contributed to work relating to the water vole.

Midhope, a new nature reserve

The Midhope project underwent significant changes as it could not be converted into a nature reserve due to its reinstatement as a drinking water reservoir. However, the inclusion of Brooks Bank Farm contributed to increased outputs, ultimately benefiting the Gateway and Landscape Connections projects, which will be discussed later.

Supporting Local Groups

While all output targets were successfully met, outcomes varied among groups:

South Yorkshire Bat Group: A strong relationship developed with Yorkshire Water, resulting in long-term, high-quality scientific monitoring related to habitat creation and connectivity, including Brooks Bank Farm.

Evidence: Note / response by Gregg Slack.

St. Nicholas Church: SLLP support in the early stages of a partnership between the Church of England, Gods Acre, and Atlantic Geomatics contributed to the creation of a nationwide, multi-million-pound digitization project.

Evidence: Email from Atlantic Geomatics.

Rivelin Valley Conservation Group –outputs were good.

WALC –There was a significant broadening of understanding and interest within this group. Originally focused on addressing issues with SCC regarding heathland area maintenance, the group diversified into wider environmental concerns, ecological recording, and archaeology.

Evidence: Presentation on June 28th 2023.

Woodland Heart

This project generated positive outcomes and made a substantial contribution to transforming the landscape. Notably, SRWT now hosts the South Yorkshire Woodland Partnership, funded by the Mayoral Authority and comprised of various partners. It is reasonable to suggest that the heightened profile of the SLLP partnership influenced the decision to appoint SRWT as the host organisation.

Evidence:

Yorkshire Water comment: Felling of coniferous plantations was uneconomical in some locations without investment in infrastructure. The SLLP funding has allowed this coniferous plantation to be removed which is poor for water quality and wildlife. The Native Broadleaf trees will change the landscape in the coming decades into a much more resilient ecosystem and the infrastructure allows us to respond to wildfires and antisocial behaviour more readily.

Working with Water

This project resulted in a relatively straightforward outcome: a robust partnership that continues to carry out headwater work across Sheffield.

Evidence:

- Limb Brook Demonstration project (complete)
- ELMS Test and Trials (Complete)
- Loxley Demonstration project (underway)
- Sheaf & Porter (in development)
- Video of partnership comments

Supporting Species

A successful project in respect of outputs, some thought needs to be given to outcomes for people. There is now an appetite for surveying and monitoring which should be supported, so SRWT has asked Trust Volunteer Coordinator to consider how to approach this. A lot of the last year's work has contributed to species support for the water vole.

Evidence:

- Self-supporting Barn Owl Group.
- All things water vole, including Redmires continuation.

Hidden History

This project yielded outstanding outputs, demonstrating a strong appetite for community archaeology in the area. Outcomes are less clear, although evidently Wadsley & Loxley Commoners (WALC) have benefitted. Any new programme around community archaeology would potentially do really well, particularly if Lodgemoor were included, but to-date no organisation has come forward to carry on the good work.

Heritage Highways

This project excelled in enhancing understanding and access to heritage sites. One of the most notable outcomes is the development of a more dynamic, ambitious, and capable group of volunteers.

Evidence:

Speaking at the June 28th 2023 event

Restoring the Lattice

As a result of this project, the Wildlife Trust has established an independent walling and scything team, representing a valuable additional outcome for the Trust. Independent practical volunteering had not been previously achieved before SLLP.

Evidence:

A video by the walling team.

Telling Stories

Telling stories provided an effective means of capturing video content about SLLP's activities. While it may have contributed in a modest way to strengthening people's attachment to the area, there is no concrete evidence to confirm this.

Access to Heritage

The physical access component of this project did not aim to achieve significant outcomes, as HF is not an access funder. However, the information element achieved more, particularly in helping Walkers are Welcome update their websites and organize events. If this effort strengthened the group, fostered attachments to the area, or supported the mental health of participants, it would be considered a positive outcome, though evidence for such outcomes is lacking.

Gateways

This project encountered initial challenges, with an early working group comprising SCC, SRWT, and YW focusing on creating a unified management agreement for the Redmires, Wyming Brook, Rivelin gateway. However, disagreements over access provision led to a decision to postpone until after a PDNPA planning decision. Before progress could resume, the Covid pandemic disrupted activities. Nevertheless, post-Covid, this project has advanced significantly, with the Landscape Connections team leading a partnership approach to gateway management.

Evidence

- Map based agreement on 'zoning' of Redmires, Wyming Brook, Rivelin.
- Landscape Connections are working on YW site, YW have offered additional funding.
- Meetings held with additional funding secured from the Local Area Committee.

This is one of the projects expected to still be running well post SLLP.

Practical Projects and Volunteering

This project stands out as a remarkable success, where outputs not only met but surpassed set targets. The most noteworthy achievement is the successful introduction of trainees, all of whom have now secured employment.

Evidence

All trainees are now gainfully employed.

Landscape Connections

While this project faced challenges in meeting its original outputs (such as school visits) and outcomes (including the creation of a financially sustainable project), partly due to the impact of Covid and geographical constraints, it nonetheless forged a valuable new connection with visitors to the gateway sites (project 14). Post-Covid restructuring has led to the establishment of a lasting legacy project.

Evidence

Ongoing YW / SRWT partnership work on these sites beyond SLLP.

Connecting Steps

The Connecting Steps initiative yielded valuable lessons and fostered productive partnerships with various groups, resulting in highly positive outcomes. With the endorsement of the Heritage Fund, SLLP is actively exploring the expansion of this project through legacy efforts, integrating it with other Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust (SRWT) initiatives, and engaging groups in diverse locations. The ultimate goal is to advance this project through an HF resilience bid.

See case study – section 5e

Art in the Landscape

The HydroSpheres project played a pivotal role in strengthening the collaboration with SHU, extending beyond the Geography Department:

Evidence

SHU is now a partner, which is in large part due to the close collaboration on the HydroSpheres project.

Digital Landscape

This project, though unsupported by a partner, was deemed essential as a communication-focused initiative (as elaborated in our commentary in the Learnings section). Despite its challenges, the project proved its worth:

Evidence:

- St. Nicholas Church (refer to Supporting Local Groups) contributed significantly to a nationwide project.
- The Digital Landscape has evolved into the public-facing output-reporting mechanism concerning legacy.

Community Grant Scheme

This project operated satisfactorily but encountered difficulties due to staff turnover and the impacts of Covid. Nevertheless, it successfully met its output targets. Valuable lessons have been learned, providing insights for those considering similar schemes.

See Appendix 2- With more time and money - Hypothetical question: What more could projects have achieved if they had more time and money?

5. Scheme-Level Evaluation: Assessing Comprehensive Impact

a. Introduction

As we move to evaluate SLLP at the scheme level, our focus broadens to assess the overarching effectiveness and impact of the initiative as a whole. This evaluation aims to scrutinise not only whether SLLP met its stated objectives but also to explore the depth and breadth of its impact across various domains.

In undertaking this evaluation, several critical questions guided our analysis:

Ambition and Management: Were the scheme's objectives ambitious enough to drive significant change? How effectively was the scheme managed, and did it achieve its stated aims?

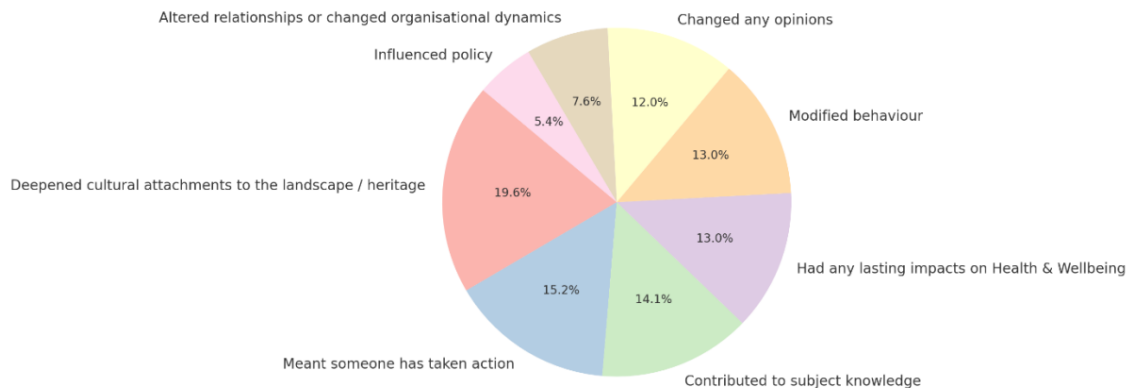
Behavioural Modification: To what extent did the SLLP projects modify behaviour towards more environmentally responsible actions?

Health and Wellbeing: How significantly did the SLLP benefit the health and wellbeing of the communities it engaged?

Cultural Attachments: Were cultural attachments to the area strengthened as a result of the scheme, fostering a deeper sense of place and identity among participants?

Knowledge Contribution: Did the scheme contribute to expanding subject knowledge, both for participants and within the broader field of landscape and heritage conservation?

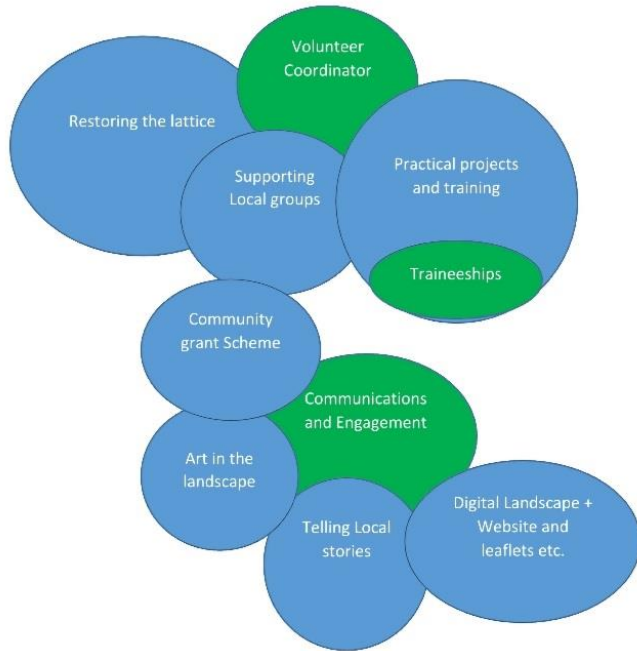
The following pie chart visually represents the impact of SLLP perceived by the respondents to our questionnaire to stakeholders. Each slice of the pie chart corresponds to a different impact, with its size indicating the percentage of respondents who mentioned that specific impact.



These questions are integral to understanding the scheme's effectiveness and legacy. Before examining those questions in more detail, it is worth examining if the scheme was well managed, and if so, was this a contributing factor

b. Was SLLP Well Managed?

i. Project Management



SLLP Project Management Structure: An overview of the project management structure established for SLLP.

ii. Efficiency in Project Administration and Management

Portal infrastructure: A notable achievement of the SLLP was the implementation of a central Portal framework for reporting and claiming. This setup enhanced the efficiency of project administration and management by clearly delineating roles between project officers and administrators.

Portal Usage Metrics: The portal served as a vital tool for storing and sharing project-specific information, demonstrated by:

- 825 [images uploaded](#) for M&E, publicity, and HF reporting
- 439 Progress Reports
- 256 Equal opportunities forms submitted
- 205 shared documents
- 329 financial claims
- 292 volunteer declarations
- 30 in-kind contributions recorded

iii. Leadership:

From questionnaire responses and interviews, we have concluded the following about the leadership and management:

Vision and Strategic Planning: SRWT was pivotal in establishing the initial vision for the project, with the Chief Executive's "drive and determination" receiving particular credit. This vision provided clear direction and motivation for partners and participants to keep working towards common goals.

Programme Management: the programme management is praised. SLLP benefitted from appointing, and keeping throughout, a Programme Manager who brought experience of the role from a previous Heritage Funded Landscape Scale project.

"I was always impressed by the way Keith [the programme manager] had his finger on the pulse." Steering Group member:

An emerging theme of this report is how good inter-personal dynamics were an enabling factor in the success of this project, and we believe that experienced management set the tone. We are advised that potential differences in priorities between partners were addressed on a one-to-one basis to mitigate any issues arising, meaning that steering group meetings were positive and productive. Similarly issues arising at project level, sometimes out of anyone's control, were addressed so that creative solutions or alternatives were identified in a timely way.

Recognition and Celebrating Success: Achievements and milestones were recognised and celebrated via reports, newsletters and social media, and also at public events. Highlighting the project's positive impact on the community and natural heritage boosts team morale.

Sharing best practice: Sharing ideas, and feedback of successes and failures builds knowledge within a project and this was achieved at events and via the online portal infrastructure. Similarly training and providing opportunities for professional development enhances the skills and knowledge base available to the partnership. There are many instances (already covered in this report) of events and examples of professional development in SLLP, particularly within SRWT.

iv. Analysis of Changes and Adaptations During the Project Period

The adaptability and responsiveness to change were key factors in the management of SLLP, as evidenced by the analysis of questionnaire responses related to project changes since 2018 and adaptations, including to the Covid-19 pandemic.

v. Conclusion on Project Management

The blend of leadership, stability and adaptability in the management of SLLP projects suggests a balanced approach, combining adherence to original goals with the flexibility to adapt to new circumstances. This balance is indicative of effective project management, ensuring that SLLP could achieve its objectives while remaining responsive to evolving needs and challenges.

c. Behaviour Modification

Our evaluation of the scheme attempts to delve into the success or otherwise that SLLP achieved in subtler realms of behavioural change. Did SLLP foster a shift towards more environmentally responsible actions among individuals and communities? This section assesses the extent to which the scheme succeeded in modifying behaviour, an outcome that signifies a deeper, more lasting impact.

i. Addressing Landscape Literacy

The following are examples of outcomes that look to improve the landscape literacy of people who use the area:



ii. Spreading the word

Connecting steps report, 2020:

"Looking at how the SLLP area is being used and the problems that have arisen over lock down due to people being irresponsible mis-using bbqs, destroying walls, littering etc. We are researching what is already out there in terms of initiatives to publicise the Country Code etc and how we can help bring that message to the people we work with and reach others. - Creating the webpage for connecting steps. Uploading the videos and PDFs etc - We have a new leaflet that has been designed to show the positive ways to wild wellbeing. Featuring 5 ways to Wild Wellbeing, Noticing 3 Good things in Nature and the 5 Pathways to nature connection. It will be a great leaflet to give to participants to show other ways to be involved with Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife trust. This should be printed by the next quarter report."

iii. Dogs on leads

SLLP ran a social media campaign about ground nesting birds and the dogs on leads. The number of likes and shares show that a few more people understand the consequences of their actions as a result of SLLP's education via social media. This is a notoriously difficult subject so making a start should be regarded as a positive.



SheffieldLakeland LP @SheffieldLakes · May 30, 2022

...

It is vital that dogs remain on a lead whilst out walking at this time of year as many birds are still raising their young. In a good year, many birds will also raise a second brood.

[#wildlife](#) [#protectwildlife](#) [#biodiversity](#)



Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust

3 17 31 Tip



SheffieldLakeland LP @SheffieldLakes · Mar 1, 2022

...

Did you know that from today, 1st March, dogs must be kept under control on public rights of way and on a short lead on open access land? This is to protect our vulnerable ground nesting birds [#BiodiversityCrisis](#) [#wildlife](#) [#protectourwildlife](#) [#birds](#) [#nestingbirds](#)



Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust and Sorby Breck RG

4 114 152 Tip



SheffieldLakeland LP @SheffieldLakes · Mar 4, 2022

...

Many birds are now returning to their breeding grounds, and we've had several sightings of endangered and critically endangered species within the Lakeland area. Please spread the message that dogs in the countryside must be kept on a lead, so birds can raise their chicks safely.



Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust and 4 others

4 31 47 Tip



Corrie, the Landscape Connections Project Officer, and her dog running a stall at Redmires handing out free dog treats to dogs on a lead to raise awareness of ground nesting bird season. Credit- Sean Soe

Landscape Connections delivered a school assembly at a primary school located near the Redmires Gateway. The assembly was an interactive exploration of what the children can do to help protect wildlife on their doorstep, in particular, explaining water voles can be protected. Landscape Connections reported:

"after the assembly, one of the children approached the team and said: 'I go walking at Redmires and I'm going to tell my dad all about the water voles at Redmires and how we can put our dog on a lead to help keep them safe'. This child was becoming an advocate for wildlife in the area that he lives in."

iv. On site rangers

Funding has been committed by Yorkshire Water for the next 5 years. The rangers are taking more of a policing role rather than an educative one, to ensure people behave appropriately in the area. Yorkshire Water may have taken this step unitarily, but being part of the Partnership probably influenced this action.

v. This is not a Park project.

This is being run by SHU - an Horizon (EU) partnership project looking at how people manage infrastructure sites that were not designed for nature or leisure but are increasingly being recognised as supplying these services

vi. Rural Review

City Council Land Agents have completed a Rural Review and SLLP work has been referenced as a success many times throughout the document. (See Appendix 3 – Surveys)

d. Contributed to Improved Health & Wellbeing

Though not initially designed as a Health & Wellbeing project, the SLLP has yielded notable positive outcomes in this area, especially highlighted during the challenges posed by Covid-19. As a caring organisation, SLLP played a significant role in supporting community groups and individuals through uncertain times, particularly during the pandemic hiatus. (See Appendix 1 – Groups' Feedback)

i. Support Through Difficult Times

The pandemic led to a noticeable decline in volunteer engagement, with many community groups facing reduced capacity. However, the continued projects and funding assurance from SLLP during this period were crucial for the survival of these groups, albeit with one exception where a group did not re-emerge post-lockdown. This support highlights SLLP's pivotal role in trying to maintain community cohesion and volunteer involvement during challenging periods.

ii. Health and Wellbeing Benefits

Feedback from volunteers consistently emphasized the health and wellbeing benefits of participating in SLLP activities. Unsolicited comments in questionnaires revealed the significant impact of outdoor engagement and nature connection on improving mental health, resilience, and overall wellbeing. Respondents advocated in favour of involvement in SLLP's initiatives as a means for personal development, making new friends, and expanding networks, illustrating the project's broad-reaching benefits on individual and community wellbeing.

Responses included:

Get involved, you will learn how getting outdoors, connecting with nature, improves health & wellbeing, mental health and resilience. It broadens

opportunities to do more work with clients we are supporting whilst helping with your own wellbeing.

*Get involved... it's good for your own personal development and wellbeing.
You can make good friends and expand your network*

iii. Creative Responses to Covid-19

In an innovative approach to maintaining engagement during lockdown, the SLLP team encouraged the creation of art expressing reactions to the pandemic. This initiative not only kept participants connected with the project and each other but also facilitated a unique expression of the lockdown experience through various art forms. The exhibition of these artworks, presented by Sheffield Hallam University at the Royal Society, showcased the diverse and poignant reflections of participants, highlighting the therapeutic value of creative expression in coping with the pandemic's challenges.



Covid19 Responses

iv. Professional Development and Career Progression

The scheme also supported individuals' professional development and career progression, as evidenced by Martin's journey with SLLP. From needing work to managing a project, SLLP supported Martin's wellbeing and career development. We interviewed Martin about his experience with SLLP since he joined in 2018. He explains he built his practical skills on the Working with Water project. In his engagement with local farmers he learned about land management techniques. Martin also learned the importance of relationships: "spending time and understanding people is when opportunities arise". Martin is now working on a Working with Water succession project with EA, which he describes as being a direct result of the SLLP's proven track record of delivering works in the area.

In total, the scheme supported five trainees, all of whom now work in the environmental sector.



Martin's experience with SLLP: watch the short [interview](#)

v. Conclusion

The SLLP, through its compassionate and adaptive approach, contributed to the health and wellbeing of its participants and the broader community, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. The scheme's support for community groups, the therapeutic benefits of volunteer activities, and the innovative engagement strategies through art have underscored the essential role of nature and community involvement in enhancing wellbeing. These outcomes, while perhaps unintended, highlight the multifaceted value of landscape and environmental schemes in supporting public health and personal development, making a compelling case for the integration of health and wellbeing objectives in future initiatives.

- e. Improved access and increased knowledge of landscape and heritage.

Evaluation of SLLP requires assessment of whether people value, enjoy, understand and feel more connected to the area. Please see Appendix 4 – A collection of Personal Stories.

- i. Case Study: connecting less-served communities with their local landscape

The Impact of Connecting Steps

Connecting Steps was aimed at reaching individuals not currently accessing the countryside, particularly focusing on vulnerable or isolated people. The project worked with existing community groups to incorporate countryside-based activities into their programs, enhancing participants' health and wellbeing and fostering a deeper connection with the natural environment.

Project Highlights include:

- ✓ Formed successful partnerships and selected visits that showcased the SLLP area's offerings.
- ✓ Engaged with diverse community groups, including South Asian Women's Group, Sheffield refugee group, and others, planning visits tailored to their needs.
- ✓ Developed "standard" sessions showcasing the SLLP area, using simple walking routes and public transport where possible.
- ✓ Exceeded the target with more than 8 groups involved, exploring the SLLP area through various activities and creating a toolkit for participants.
- ✓ The project used public transport to enhance accessibility to the Lakeland area, empowering groups with travel information and suggested routes.
- ✓ Engaged participants in nature walks, mindfulness activities, and nature connection activities, including creating ephemeral land art.
- ✓ Celebrated the project's impact through a film showcasing group activities and shared experiences.

Analysing the Progress Report submissions from the Connecting Steps project, it's clear that while the initiative achieved significant success in engaging diverse community groups and fostering connections with the natural environment, there were also challenges and deviations from the plan that offer valuable learning opportunities:

Challenges Encountered in the Connecting Steps Project:
Delayed Start and Scheduling Conflicts: Activities commenced later than anticipated due to various factors, leading to scheduling challenges amidst high demand.
Volunteer Recruitment Difficulties: The project faced hurdles in recruiting sufficient volunteers to support its planning and development activities.
Weather-Related Postponements: Adverse weather conditions led to the postponement of sessions, affecting the project's timeline and participant engagement.
Impact of Covid-19 on Delivery: The pandemic severely restricted face-to-face interactions and delayed planned community visits and activities.
Access and Inclusivity Barriers: Groups encountered difficulties accessing the Sheffield Lakeland Landscape area due to logistical and mobility challenges.
Limited Engagement with Wildlife Activities: Preference for visiting Sheffield Lakeland Landscape area over local reserves and wildlife activities indicated a challenge in diversifying engagement.

Resource Constraints: Rising costs and financial limitations impacted the project's ability to facilitate trips, particularly affecting less physically able groups.

Staffing Changes and Continuity: Transitions within the project team posed challenges to maintaining continuity and capacity for project delivery.

Covid-19 Restrictions on Group Meetings: Pandemic-related access restrictions and safety measures limited the project's ability to conduct group meetings and engage new participants as initially planned.

Key Insights from Connecting Steps

Connecting Steps significantly contributed to community engagement within the SLLP, reaching beyond its initial aims to foster inclusive access to the countryside, enhance wellbeing, and support sustainable engagement with nature. The project's adaptability, particularly in response to Covid-19, and its lasting legacy underscore the importance of connecting communities with their local environments.



An amazing first trip out with Nature Connector Terezia and a group from Page Hall Roma community; learning to feed the ducks calmly, meeting the cows with Corrie, mud art and a picnic by Damflask Reservoir.

The Connecting Steps project, while encountering various challenges, demonstrated the importance of ambitious goal-setting in driving meaningful community engagement with natural landscapes. Among these challenges, the aim to enable self-sufficiency among vulnerable and isolated groups in accessing the countryside without support was notably ambitious. It highlights a learning of the critical role of ongoing support and facilitation to empower community groups effectively.

It could be said that there is a learning about the necessity of realistic expectations; however, it can also be regarded as commendable that the project aimed high with its goals, reflecting a commitment to making a significant impact on community access to the countryside. The experiences and learnings from these challenges have been constructively taken on board as the project transitions into its legacy phase as the Natural Neighbours project. This forward-looking approach ensures that the insights gained will inform future strategies, enhancing the project's

capacity to achieve its objectives and support community groups in a sustainable and impactful manner. The legacy phase represents an opportunity to build on the project's achievements, applying lessons learned to further refine and adapt community engagement efforts. This iterative process underscores the project's commitment to continuous improvement and its vision for inclusive, accessible natural landscapes for all.

ii. Landscape connections - Life on a Farm

A project aimed at schools and families to learn more about farming. The business is now sustainable in as much as schools can book visits and families can visit Our Cow Molly.

Image: Child learning about milking at Our Cow Molly

iii. Bailey Hill

Steel Valley Project worked with Historic England (not a partner) to achieve Scheduled Ancient Monument consent for access work with volunteers.

iv. Community Engagement: Quotes from questionnaire respondents



"Taking part in the Our Cow Molly event proved beneficial."

"My involvement with this project [Heritage Highways] has underlined for me the importance of proper and consistent support for volunteers. Individual volunteers have found their niches; doing the things that they like to do and feel confident about doing. Along with regular updates on the various aspects of the project, it's important to ensure, as far as possible, that volunteers are happy and confident in their role within the project - something that I think that we've managed to achieve." G Hartley, Heritage Highways Project

"It has been fantastic to establish a regular working relationship with the community."

"The AAP/HARP workdays with Danny, continue to be a highlight."

"Using the farmer at Church Farm to deliver the sessions was a brilliant example of community engagement."

"The Digital Landscape touches all of the 20 projects and how they engage with the community."

"It appears that some art related works are emerging as a means of engaging with the community."

"The Telling Stories project and individual stories have been a great way to engage."

"The classroom at Our Cow Molly will allow for greater community engagement."

"Its worked well so far to link with other projects for community engagement."

"It has been important to set expectations on the level of community engagement."

v. Reports, Surveys, Research projects

The comprehensive surveys and mapping activities undertaken during the SLLP project have been pivotal in enhancing the understanding of the natural heritage within the area. These efforts, led by dedicated volunteers and professionals alike, have yielded invaluable baseline data and insights, critical for informed conservation planning and action. As an example of this work, the South Yorkshire Bat Group's meticulous Myotis trapping surveys exemplify the project's scientific rigour. By mapping new records for Brandt's and Whiskered bats across key locations and refining habitat models, the group has laid a solid foundation for targeted conservation strategies in the coming years. This and other survey projects (detailed in Appendix 3) demonstrates how much was achieved in preserving and enhancing biodiversity through precise, data-driven management planning. Collectively, these surveys significantly increase knowledge of the local landscape and heritage, that will vitally inform ongoing stewardship.

vi. Learning resources for the Community

Films

Working with Water - This film is designed for the general public, to raise awareness and add to knowledge of the subjects.

[Working With Water](#) in the Sheffield Lakeland' 10 min film about natural flood management which had a 'digital release' in April 2020 and a screening in 2022.

[Working with Water Pt 2](#). The team talk about what they are doing and why.

[Working with water pt. 3](#) Stakeholders from across the sector talk about water, flooding and wildlife. The video highlights the work that has been going on with Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust, Yorkshire Water, Sheffield City Council, landowners, and many other partners to protect and enhance the region.

[Torrent](#) - The Floods and Sheffield

[Water Voles](#) - A look at Water Voles in Sheffield - a species that is under threat from habitat loss and predation

[Woodland indicator species](#) - a video created by Julie Riley, SLLP Community Ecologist, in April 2020 during one of her daily lockdown walks. Julie shows us some key ancient woodland indicator species. A brilliant example of how a subject like ecology can go digital in a very simple and engaging way.

An [educational video](#) (part funded by EPIP) was an output from the Landscape Connections project, made to complement our 'Life on the Farm' sessions at Our Cow Molly. It is sent out to schools, along with instructions to enable it to be used interactively (attached in media uploads) when they book a session on the farm.

“As well as being really interesting and informative, it is also designed to provide the children with information to think about before their visit to the farm, and allows them to process a lot of information before they arrive. This in turn allows for a more valuable and productive experience whilst on the visit itself, and often leads to more thoughtful and informed questions to be asked by the children on the day.”



f. Resilience: is there a stronger volunteer force?

It was an intention of SLLP to help groups become stronger and more active. The actuality is that there are some new groups, some that are more proactive, but others that are still left battered by Covid.



WALC group undertaking bracken bashing

[Archaeological service](#)

The Archaeological Service has no more funding, which is a loss as the Prisoner of War project was a successful project in terms of community engagement.



Volunteers being taught archaeological field techniques at Lodge Moor

g. [Golden threads: increasing the whole beyond the sum of the parts](#)

Through employing key roles and achieving good working relationships, SLLP has succeeded in interconnecting its projects in a manner that has amplified the environmental and community impacts.

Example: Restoring the Lattice Project

This project is an example of a 'golden thread' that connected various initiatives, underscoring the combined impacts.

Dry stone walls were identified early on as a key landscape feature, with the Peak District National Park's involvement, and were included in the area's Landscape Character Assessment. Restoring the Lattice quickly became a cornerstone project. Under the stewardship of the Practical Projects Officer, Danny, and with expertise from instructor Steve, the project facilitated professional development and volunteering opportunities. It created a pathway to employment for participants, including City Council and Yorkshire Water apprentices.



Narelle Willis, Assistant Ranger for SLLP, starting to learn the basic techniques of Dry Stone Walling before beginning the formal LANTRA Level 1 Dry Stone Training.

In this way Restoring the Lattice was more than a stand-alone conservation effort. From engaging and training people to safeguarding key natural reserves like Wyming Brook, enhancing forestry sites and supporting the Working with Water project, the walling project served as a golden thread, weaving through the SLLP to connect and extend many disparate projects.

For more examples, please see Appendix 5 – Narratives about heritage connections

6. Strategic Level Assessment: Relationships and organisational dynamics between those that manage the area

Strategic Leadership

The Landscape Partnership was set up with the following partner organisations:

Organisation	Project Interest
Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust (SRWT) (Lead Partner)	Lead partner, landscape-scale heritage conservation, community engagement and improved physical and informational access for all.
Yorkshire Water (YW)	Water company responsible for managing the collection, treatment and distribution of water in Yorkshire with significant land owning interests, improving woodland management, biodiversity and public benefits.
Sheffield City Council (SCC)	Local Authority with significant land owning interests, improving management of woodlands, biodiversity and public recreation.
Bradfield Parish Council (BPC)	Local community involvement and improvements and promotion of the area as appropriate.
Sheffield United Community Foundation (SUCF)	Engaging a diverse community in becoming more active and exploring the outdoors – particularly young people aged 15-17 years.
Private land owner representative (LO/M)	Working with moorland owners to support engagement with a range of projects.
Natural England (NE)	Landscape-scale conservation plan and advice / provision of data. Countryside Stewardship scheme.
Environment Agency (EA)	Taking forward Water Framework Directive opportunities to improve the catchment for people and biodiversity.
South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS)	The archaeological advisors to the councils of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield, also offering advice to a wide range of other land managers and developers
Stoke Newington Town Council (STC)	Local community involvement and improvements and promotion of the area as appropriate.

- Some members were lost during the project.
- Engagement with certain members was limited.
- Certain potential candidates were unable to participate.
- One stakeholder, Sheffield Hallam University (SHU), has recently joined as a Steering Group Partner.

Yorkshire Water: I believe the right organisations were involved and those that could have been either weren't involved because they had different views on the landscape (moorland owners) or didn't put in enough resources to support the SLLP to achieve its aims. Whilst it is a shame these organisations couldn't be involved, ultimately, the right people were in the room to move the projects forward.

Questionnaire: How has your organisation developed in respect of partnership working as a result of this project?

Yorkshire Water: We have been working extensively in partnership with Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust throughout and co-designed a Visitor Behaviour Change plan. Also, we have been working with Sheffield Hallam Uni on a number of academic projects that they have found funding for. The approach of working with a Uni like this has been interesting and something we would like to explore further.

The most compelling evidence of Steering Group members sharing a vision and working together more effectively is the commitment demonstrated on June 28th, 2023, when organisations signed up for the next phase of partnership working with another partner on board.

Dr Jon Bridge, Sheffield Hallam University: SLP brings together a wide range of disciplines across the participants, including those with a focus on natural sciences, economics and policy-making. Additionally, having good relationships with people who can provide access into wider networks and stakeholders is really important to our research agenda.



[Watch the interview :](#)

a. SRWT is now stronger and fully committed to leading the next phase. Leading SLLP had a positive impact on the relationship between SRWT and the area's large land managers. SLLP has contributed to the enhanced status of SRWT. Through SLLP, SRWT

successfully brokered relationships between these land-managing stakeholders so that now working relationships are extremely positive. SRWT will continue to take the lead on the next phase of strategic collaboration, Sheffield Landscape Partnership.

b. [Key landowners are more partnership-oriented and share a vision](#)

Stakeholder questionnaire: please describe how connections and/or relationships made as part of SLLP have been beneficial to you, your organisation and/or the local area:

Yorkshire Water: Better relationships with individuals from the Sheffield City Council and Sheffield Hallam Uni. This has led to better land management for people and nature, along with innovative approaches championed by the Uni.

The closer collaboration among key members resulting from SLLP is evident and has led to a collaborative approach to land management, encompassing woodlands, gateways, and ecosystem services, as demonstrated in the new [10 Year Plan](#).

7. Assessing the Broad Impact: Beyond the Project Area

SLLP embarked on a journey with focused objectives aimed at enhancing the local environment, community engagement, and heritage conservation. It is a testament to the scheme's success and the dedication of its participants that we find ourselves evaluating its impact on a scale beyond those initial local aims. This section is dedicated to exploring an important consideration: Were the outcomes of the SLLP scheme of regional or national significance?

Any extension of influence beyond the original local focus would be a significant measure of SLLP's achievements. Any indirect impacts at regional or national levels—whether through inspiring similar conservation efforts, contributing to environmental policy discussions, or enhancing public awareness and engagement —underscore this scheme's importance and effectiveness.

This analysis seeks not only to celebrate these somewhat unexpected successes but also to draw out valuable insights and lessons that can guide future initiatives in achieving similar far-reaching impacts.

In detailing the scheme's extended reach, we will consider evidence and narratives that highlight how its influence has succeeded in permeating through to a wider stage. This exploration illustrates how local initiatives can resonate more widely.

a. [Scheme Influence](#)

The following are a direct result of, or have been influenced by, involvement in the SLLP scheme.

Source to Sea programme (EA). A full catchment area project in which SLLP is the organisation selected to deliver the Sheffield element. Keith Tomkins (SLLP Project Manager) explains in this [vox pop](#) how as a result of the Working with Water project there is 4-5 years of baseline data to take forward.

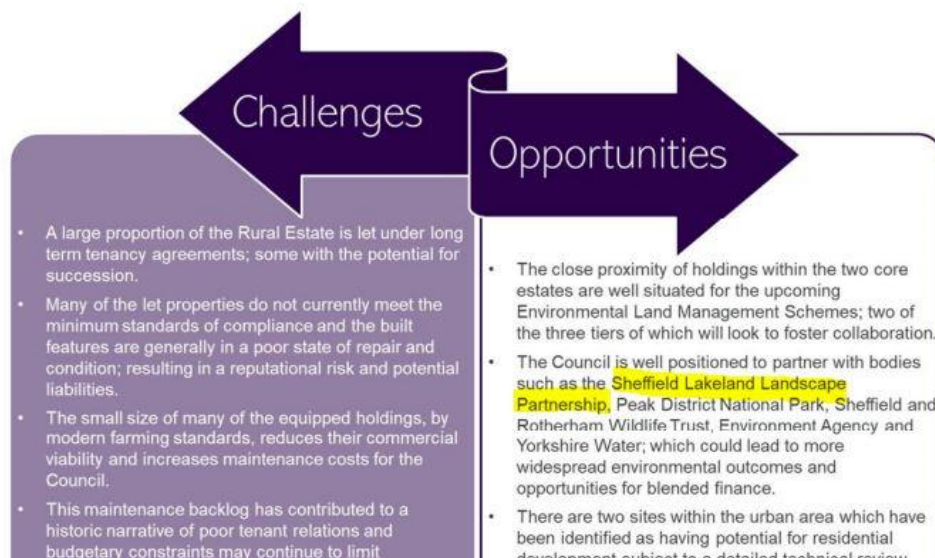
Yorkshire Water has expanded its partnership working to include many local organisations, including the Wildlife Trust, and is developing a relationship with SHU and the Bat Group.

SYMCA – The South Yorkshire Mayoral Authority highlight the work SLLP are doing as an example of how their work on Ecosystem services and Nature Recovery Strategy can be used to direct action.

SCC – Sheffield City Council Rural Review Report (draft not yet adopted by SCC) highlights importance of working in partnership and retaining SLLP approach.

RURAL ESTATE STRATEGIC AMBITIONS

Challenges and Opportunities



DEFRA – SLLP team were able to carry out a DEFRA Test & Trial in respect of blended financing and stacking benefits, including biodiversity net gains (BNG), contributing to the emerging Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) that replaces CAP.

SHU – Have adopted the Sheffield Lakeland Partnership as their ‘Landscape Laboratory’ which, in turn, is a significant element of their Centre for Climate and Sustainability.

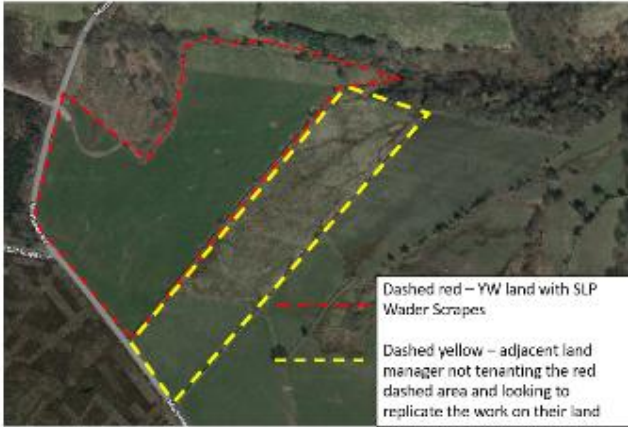
b. Related Organisations and Strategies

(Appendix 4 of Sheffield Lakeland - the next 10 years. [Download the full report](#))

- Environment Agency: Connected by Water, Don, Dearne and Rother Network Catchment Plan-
- Government: 25 Year Environment Plan with Tree Action Plan, Peat Action Plan, Nature Recovery Plans, Environment Improvement Plan
- Peak District National Park Authority: Management Plan, Local Plan and Local Nature Recovery Plan, Landscape Strategy, Wooded Landscapes Plan

c. Influencing neighbours

A relatively small, but perfect, example of SLLP’s influence extending beyond the original remit, albeit locally;



Change of farming practice



A scrape created for wildlife foraging



Creating the scrape at Brooks Bank Farm

The land adjacent the SLLP project area at Brooksbank Farm had been used for grazing but the current tenant learned about the creation of Scrapes at the moorland edge and watched them develop to support nature. As a result, the tenant adapted land management practices to create scrapes. A small SLLP project became effectively 3 or 4 times larger.

8. Learnings: What worked, what didn't and advice to pass on

Waymark has conducted an in-depth analysis of the project to assess what worked well, and what did not. We posed some challenging questions and have endeavoured to answer them by consulting with everyone involved in the project. Additionally, we have provided insights into certain aspects that may serve as valuable lessons for those planning similar projects.

a. Was the initial vision realistic?

“A more natural and resilient Lakeland landscape for everyone to value, enjoy, understand and feel part of.”

The initial vision was somewhat aspirational, given the size of the area and the population it encompassed. Therefore, it is more critical to gauge how far the project progressed on its journey and whether that journey continues. For example, Connecting Steps aimed high by striving to empower individuals unfamiliar with accessing nature, especially those reliant on public transport, to become self-sufficient and motivated to regularly visit Sheffield Lakeland. While the project faced challenges, it tapped into a willingness to explore this approach and achieved significant success with various underserved groups. Moving forward, the approach is being adapted to involve more hands-on efforts in connecting inner city residents with the surrounding countryside. The fact that the entire SLLP program was effectively managed and now possesses valuable experience and a dedicated team, both strategically and at the project level, suggests that the initial vision was sound.

A sample comment we received:

We over-aimed in respect of actually getting gateway sites into joined up management, this may have been due to changes in key personnel within the Steering Group from the earliest days of development, but it was certainly made a lot worse by Covid. Having one significant joined up programme running at one gateway, including two of the Steering Group partners is a great success in reality at this point. Hopefully by the end of the HF funded part of SLLP we will achieve a lot more.

b. Steering Group Assessed

Not every organisation that might have been closely involved was in a position to engage with SLLP at the time. An organisation that would have achieved superb levels of engagement was not able to take part as initially hoped. Organisations that fundamentally could not align with the project's ethos promptly disengaged. Importantly, invitations were broadly extended, resulting in the meaningful engagement of key stakeholders in the area throughout the project's duration. At an organisational level, SLLP ended in a stronger position than it began, with smaller players like the Steel Valley Project proving instrumental in their respective areas, and Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) joining as a key contributor.

Determining if all the correct individuals were involved is a challenge. Not all organisations could send representatives who held decision-making authority and some organisation did not have the financial capacity to commit staff for extended periods.

Occasionally, job or organisational priorities did not align, and Waymark sought to explore this further but did not receive the responses from partners as anticipated. What became abundantly clear, however, was that greater achievements were made when individuals had strong working relationships. It is concerning to think that the fate of a species might hinge on the interactions between a couple of individuals whose job priorities do not align or who do not have a strong enough personal rapport to resolve a situation. This scenario was certainly not the case at SLLP, but it is a potential outcome that other projects may find valuable to contemplate.

c. Can the success of SLLP be replicated elsewhere?

Response from a volunteer:

There is far more to the SLLP and its aims than I first realised. The impact of achieving its goals will have a dramatic effect on the area and this success must be replicated wherever possible.

Anecdotal evidence would indicate that few Landscape Partnerships continue for long, or meaningfully, beyond the conclusion of the initial scheme. SLLP however, with its legacy plan in place and being well supported by Partners and the local community would appear to be in a very strong position. The question is, what is different about SLLP? From our findings we consider that SLLP demonstrated the following:

- A well-presented vision and widely perceived need for the actions planned
- Ability to align priorities amongst a diverse set of stakeholders
- Good governance, project management and administration
- Professional and passionate project delivery team engaging well with volunteers.
- All culminating in a proven track record of delivering.

d. What is the best way to manage communications?

Waymark has worked with several landscape-scale programmes, and each has managed communications in a different way. For external communications, SLLP chose to run comms-based projects, which were ambitious, possibly at the expense of a regular, routine approach to disseminating information.

SLLP benefited from having a robust Portal infrastructure that supported both internal and external communications. The online system enabled photos (with appropriate permission confirmed) and stories from all the projects to be regularly uploaded to the Portal ready for external dissemination. There was also a section of the Portal for sharing feedback internally, and this was routinely used.

Comments received relating to communication and personal interaction:

"In my time as Community Ecologist I have found that working with others is the key to success."

"Continued chat between land team, reserve managers, and community engagement officers is vital."

"SRWT team cross-over working continues to be a key to engagement."

"It has been easy to feel isolated from other projects, but community engagement activities help."

"We need to hear about what other opportunities are available for engagement."

"We need to have information about what other projects are doing in terms of community engagement."

"Cross-fertilisation of ideas through human contact is crucial."

"Communication with land managers sometimes results in new opportunities for engagement."

e. Learnings shared

Advice that project leaders offered to others planning to work within a partnership scheme falls into four themes:

- Interpersonal dynamics
- Preparation
- Record-keeping
- Flexibility

For more data please see Appendix 6 – Shared Learnings.

Comments we received:

Joining in the latter stages it's clear to me that positive relationships and good communication is key.

The work has made me realise that environment is completely a people thing, rather than a black or white environmental thing, and as a people thing, needs to be recorded and continue as people move, change and develop. (Working with Water project)

9. Evaluation Conclusion

In reflecting upon the journey and achievements of the Sheffield Living Landscape Partnership (SLLP) scheme, several key factors emerge as instrumental to its success. At the heart of SLLP's triumph is the power of collaboration. Visionary and effective leadership, a clear need for the project and strong inter-personal dynamics all played their part in the success of this project.

The project stands as a testament to the effectiveness of multi-agency schemes, demonstrating that with a collective approach, even the most ambitious goals can be within reach. It is a lesson in the importance of unity and dialogue that should resonate with anyone considering a similar collaborative endeavour.

The stakeholders involved in SLLP, encompassing charities, local councils, corporate (utility) partners and volunteer groups, were not only passionate about their work but also deeply committed to the scheme's vision. Achieving alignment among the diverse priorities of these stakeholders was no small feat and represents a significant achievement of the project. This alignment was crucial in navigating the ambitious aspects of the scheme, some of which were arguably stretched to the limits of feasibility.

Throughout its course, SLLP demonstrated remarkable adaptability, responding to challenges and seizing opportunities with agility. This responsiveness is a clear indicator of effective management across the varied landscape of organizations involved. By balancing the aspirations and capabilities of charities, local government bodies, and private sector entities, SLLP showcased a model of governance that other multi-agency projects would do well to emulate.

The outputs of the SLLP scheme were not just numerous but also of a high calibre, underscoring the collective's capability to deliver tangible results. These achievements have bolstered confidence in the partnership, attracting even more organizations to join and contribute to its vision. The success of SLLP has proven that when entities come together with a shared commitment, the impact of the scheme as a whole is so much more than the sum of its parts.

As we look to the future, the SLLP scheme embodies a beacon of inspiration for collaborative environmental and community projects to increase the resilience of local landscapes. Its legacy is one of ambition met with action, challenges overcome with creativity, and opportunities embraced with enthusiasm. The landscape will be better managed and more people value, enjoy, understand and feel part of it. The SLLP journey offers valuable lessons in partnership, management, and the pursuit of collective goals, setting a benchmark for what can be accomplished when organisations work together towards a common purpose.

The fact that the legacy is so clearly envisioned and well supported is the best possible evidence of this scheme's success and demonstrates value to the funders.



Wayne Cranton (SHU), Kate Josephs (SCC), Tom Cavanagh (NE), Liz Ballard (SRWT), Chris Offer (YW) and Helen Batt (EA) sign the MoU for Sheffield Lakeland [10 year plan](#)

Appendix 1 – Groups Feedback

Group	How did your group benefit from involvement with SLLP?
Wadsley and Loxley Commoners	<p>Access to expertise and training (specifically Ecology and Archaeology).</p> <p>Volunteers for conservation (support from SRWT and growing our own volunteer numbers)</p> <p>Monitoring wildlife species (Bioblitz event and our own surveys)</p> <p>Funding (contractors, equipment - including tools, interpretation boards and barn owl box)</p>
South Yorkshire Bat Group	It's been great to make connections with other key stakeholders and work collaboratively.
Rivelin Valley Conservation Group	SLLP brought additional funding that has been used effectively to complete numerous project throughout Rivelin Valley to the benefit of the visiting public.
Bradfield walkers are welcome	<p>Networking</p> <p>Financial support towards projects</p>
Bradfield Parish Council	BPC have been able to connect with groups who have potential projects to enhance the landscape and/or the lives of residents and visitors to the area
Stocksbridge Town Council	It has allowed STC connect with groups who have potential projects to enhance the landscape and/or involve residents and visitors with events
freinds of Stoneface	SLLP has allowed us to fund projects that have had a visible impact on the local area. These projects have been art based, event based & public engagement based. Without the support of the SLLP it is our belief that the Sheffield lakeland area would be worse off for it especially during COVID-19
Pennine Artists	We have been able to publicise our group and take part in a couple of SLLP events.

Appendix 2 – If the scheme had more time and money...

...what more could you have achieved?

If the scheme had more time and/or money, what would you do more of to make a greater impact?	Describe the greater impact that more time/money would enable?
<p>We would have concentrated more upon training as an engagement tool. Students really enjoyed getting out and we could have built more around them. Our trainees all benefited from learning and some of our volunteers really picked up on it, we even got to the stage where asylum seekers and probationers were getting involved, the impact this activity had upon their well being and understanding of rural heritage has not yet been considered.</p>	<p>We could run a permanent Walling project designed specifically to people who do not normally come into the countryside, often they don't come because they don't 'see' a purpose. We would have to run this with partners and in line with the model created by our project; Connecting Steps, but it could be really great. I'm not sure though that we would find a financially sustainable model.</p>
<p>With more money and time I would concentrate on two main areas, the Wadsley and Loxley Common and the Lodge Moor POW camp. Both of these projects were extremely successful in engaging and enthusing local people to get involved with and understand the archaeology at both sites.</p> <p>I think a larger project at the POW camp would be very beneficial for the local community and should include a programme of archaeological work, archival work and audio/visual/written capture of people's memories and recollections of the camp and prisoners during the time the camp was open.</p> <p>At the W&L Common there is an enthusiastic and engaged group (WALC) who would be a great advert for the outputs of community archaeology and I would like to see a bigger and more in-depth archaeological survey across the common to identify and catalogue the features therein, along with some targeted excavations to help us understand the historic environment and lead into management plans for the common in the future.</p>	<p>A greater understanding of the POW camp within its social setting of the city of Sheffield and the wider area. Also, it would create a better understanding of the underlying archaeological remains and the impact the trees in the plantation are having, so could inform management plans going forward.</p> <p>The W&L common would be better understood from an archaeological perspective, which would feed into the Historic Environment Record and the future management plans for the site.</p>

<p>If the scheme had more time/ money, I would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Spend more time community mapping so that the sessions we run at Our Cow Molly and Stoneface Creative could be made more accessible to people who can't/ don't currently attend the sessions. -Collect more demographics data from those attending family sessions so that we can work out who we are and are not reaching. -Develop family sessions at Our Cow Molly to include more follow up contact with people who attend. Often those attending the session are not engaged in other opportunities offered by SRWT. I would like to provide more support and opportunities for those who attend the sessions to take part in other nature connection activities in the area so that the session has more of a lasting impact. -Offer more free assemblies to schools and enable us to make a stronger business case for assemblies to become part of our business as usual offer in the Outdoor Learning Team. Assemblies have provided a great conversation starter with schools because they are free and have a small amount of time commitment for schools. However, we have found that when we have delivered an assembly, it has often started a relationship with a school. Even though they are free, these contribute to us crating a financially sustainable model. -Explore installing better facilities at Stoneface Creative so that we could take school groups/ families there. This would mean a much more diverse offer for children young people and their families in the Lakeland area. -Create and implement a longer term behaviour intervention plan for the Gateways area to encourage people to connect with the landscape, understand it's cultural and natural heritage and feel empowered to act to protect it. 	<p>The impact of more time and money:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More children, young people and their families would create more lasting connections with the natural and cultural heritage of the Lakeland area. -Visitors to the Redmires Gateway will feel more connected with the area and be compelled to act to protect it through their actions (more dogs off leads/ more people sticking to the path/ more people taking action for nature)
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<p>This project was created by the Wildlife Trust in order to maintain the involvement of existing local groups in the landscape, not to isolate them. If we had more time and money we would work with the same groups over the next few years in order to align / integrate the progress made in SLLP with the new initiatives being developed under Outcome 2 "Taking Action for Nature".</p>	<p>I'm not sure that more money invested in the same model would have a greater impact, the investment made by HF over the previous few years succeeded in building capacity and relationships between the groups and the wider environmental sector (this is the same for Hidden History, Heritage Highways and Art in the Landscape).</p>
<p>I would just want to have a dedicated project officer working full time to offer practical conservation skills and resources to a wide range of projects and groups whose main skillset and outputs are not directly Conservation. With a small budget and a trainee an officer with a roving remit could offer so much to those who want to do environmental projects as part of but not wholly as their remit. This would include projects like Connecting Steps, where at present Steph (previously a trainee) is supplying the practical support to others in that project and Landscape Connections. But it could equally contribute to community groups and others who want to take action for nature.</p>	<p>Time would allow this project to have become a permanent feature of the work of the Wildlife Trust.</p>
<p>Access - The element of Project 13 I led was a combination of the existing North America path and the adaptation of it and loss of Langsett Path project to undertake upland path restoration across Ratton Gutter, North America and Cutgate. This was a really well managed access project led by Moors for the Future, if I had additional funds and time I would continue to work with them.</p>	<p>Restoration - The upland path situation around the Sheffield Lakeland area has deteriorated considerable since the boom in access around the Covid restrictions, routes such as the linking footpath between Back Toor and Dukes Road which had been well maintained for the previous level of use are now in dire need of upgrading, the damage to the wildlife and hydrology is unacceptable, we could carry out a major upland path project if resources allowed.</p>

Note - this project is not over, we hope to carry it under SLLP HF funding through to March 2024, however, delivery is morphing from SLLP to the Landscape Connections team at SRWT.

I am very positive about the future of this project. Yorkshire Water and Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust are working well together around Redmires and Wyming Brook. There is an increasing amount of visitor engagement, consultation, information sharing and practical habit work underway. If we can keep this going and expand to the other gateways that will be a major win, all we need is more time and resource.

What we are aiming for is:

Efficiency, rather than three organisations turning up on site to carry out the same task we can share those tasks, this is starting to work with YW and SRWT, hopefully when YW get their new Rangers this cross-over will become even more effective.

Messaging, presence on site is absolutely essential if we are to **effect behavior change**, SRWT is now "The Vole Patrol" , people know the site is cared for.

Engagement and improvement, we have a **growing number of volunteers** actively working to improve this site, we can continue to grow this.

<p>Probably the restoration/access improvement aspect of the project, such as more of the stone mounting blocks to assist the less able rider to remount their horse after dealing with a tricky gate. Replace hard to use gates with proper bridlegates, with bridlegate handles and latches. Better gates (or removal of them altogether) would also help walkers and cyclists using the old highways and bridleways and make them more easily accessible to all. (Some of the old packhorse ways that we've researched during the project are part of the public bridleway and footpath network so work on them would benefit the most people.)</p> <p>We would probably also hold further events to promote the old highways and packhorse routes, such as organised rides (for horse riders and cyclists) walks and talks, in order to pass on what we've learnt about them: our original project statement was that we would tell the story of the old highways 'in various ways', in order to make people more aware of the 'history beneath their feet'. We'd do more archive research too, to increase our knowledge of packhorse use in the Sheffield Lakeland area, as this was severely curtailed during Covid.</p> <p>We would use our research as the basis for more DMMO applications in order that more of the old routes are recorded at their correct historical status (some are recorded as footpaths when they were historically used as bridle styles, horse drifts or packhorse ways.)</p>	<p>Walkers, cyclists and riders would be enabled to more easily access those old highways and sections of packhorse routes that are part of the existing public rights of way network. This would be accomplished via the improvements referred to in the previous answer. In particular, horse riders are put off using some routes because of difficult gates and/or poor surfaces so improvements and/or restoration work would facilitate more use of the routes by riders.</p> <p>Holding further events, as described above, would enable us to reach more local people (and those from outside the area) in order to promote knowledge of the 'history beneath their feet, hooves & wheels' more people would be aware of the heritage of the old highways and packhorse routes in the Sheffield Lakeland area.</p> <p>Successful DMMO applications would mean that riders and cyclists would have access to more of the network of old highways and packhorse routes, currently unavailable to them. (Bridleways are more inclusive access for all users, in particular for disabled walkers, as there are no stiles to negotiate.)</p>
<p>If our project had more time and money - with no further pandemic restrictions or outbreaks, I would have liked to set up a project working with people who could benefit from engaging with the local environment through art to reduce stress, isolation and depression as a result of the pandemic.</p>	<p>I'm not sure that such a project would have a big impact overall, but I think it would have a significant impact on the health & wellbeing individuals who took part.</p>

<p>Working with groups with vulnerable and isolated people takes time to introduce ourselves and the offer but especially to generate a trust for the group to venture out into an unknown outdoor space. The initial 4 trips per group seems now too few to establish a deeper and richer connection between these communities and the SRWT.</p> <p>* A more regular staff presence over a longer period for each group would have a more sustainable impact.</p> <p>* Transport is a key barrier to many of the groups so finding a way to help fund access into the SLLA would have a huge impact.</p>	<p>More staff hours allocated to each group over a longer period: with an established relationship and regular meets to enthuse, encourage and educate, the groups' confidence and independence would increase to a potential tipping point to a level of sustainability where a member of SRWT would no longer be needed to facilitate trips out (and into the SLLA). In addition, more time could be spent appreciating the groups' local green spaces and unique connection to nature, sharing with others in the community.</p> <p>Public transport (accessible, affordable, reliable): If transport was not an issue, more of the groups would visit the SLLA independently, and more often. Apart from the actual expense of tickets that could be reduced/removed, more sharing of strategies could be offered to cope for bus/tram no-shows, alternative travel options, most efficient routes, etc.</p>
<p>More time allowing ourselves to increase coordination between contracts and contractor availability.</p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> More time and money would allow further work in greater areas.</p> <p>The SLLP area is huge and there could be infinite more work. If more time I was tranverse the entire area and survey/discover further opportunities such as the recent bogs that have just been discovered in this last phase. It is likely there are many more of these significantly large bogs that could be protected for little cost.</p> <p>I would like to expand the area, and work with more farmers if had more time and money, as resources have been focused around a few key farmers.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Discovery and protection of important wetland habitats, which have large NFM capacity. For instance, a site has just been "discovered" which is a 7.5 ha bog and would take little work to protect. It takes further time to design a scheme, then time to implement.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Working with moorland, as to date we have kept to farmlands only.</p>

<p>Although much has been achieved during the lifetime of this project, there is a need for further access, interpretation and habitat management works to take place in these broadleaf woodlands to maximise their positive outcomes for people and wildlife and build on what has already been achieved .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further access work would improve the network of paths in the woodland, enabling more people to access and enjoy the sites, more safely. - More interpretation would better explain the history of these interesting woodlands, helping the communities around them to
<p>More access improvements at key gateway sites in SLLP area.</p>	<p>Improve accessibility for a wide range of users, enabling more people to access and experience the natural and built heritage in the SLLP area.</p>
<p>More days on some of the more simple but labour intensive management tasks such as balsam pulling. There have been a lot of management days but they have to be balanced between tasks and the more repetitive ones fall out of favour with volunteers. Also the covid pandemic impacted some of the regular management routines which made them larger undertakings the following year.</p>	<p>Reduce invasive species and allow more native flora to establish.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. investigate willow tit populations further and progress research into simple tool to identify potential habitat 2. research potential for larger, regional project for osprey 3. commission water vole surveys above reservoirs and mink surveys across SLL area with appropriate interventions made 4. encourage greater citizen science involvement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a simple tool would enable easy and quicker assessment of woodland/scrub suitability for management for willow tit 2. in partnership with organisations such as Derbyshire WT & YW it may be possible to reinstate osprey in the region. 3. Avoid threatened extinction of this species 4. wider public involvement would mean higher level of public knowledge of and personal investment in the area

<p>For the time I have been involved in the project it seems to me that broadening the impact/importance on the gateways could have been given longer to tie up continuing conversations between large organisations who are planning their activities in those areas. I think there is the potential to complete further works in these woodlands and others like them.</p> <p>The Broadleaf thinning works look to be a really valuable piece of work and help us tackle aspects of woodland management that sometimes get neglected. It's been great to have the opportunity to do this work and see the benefits on the ground. So, more of this in the future!</p>	<p>An even wider range of benefits, although I appreciate that these deliverables could have been covered off in other projects.</p>
<p>It wasn't necessarily time and money that held this project back, so much as the pandemic and all the restrictions for years that followed. However, with more time and money it would have been great to work in a more joined up way with our Community Archaeologist as many of the themes and stories crossed into the Hidden Histories project, particularly Dam Builders. In addition, with more time we could have engaged our documentary film maker to make a short film about the Dambuilders, which could have grown on the success of our film 'Torrent', as there seems to be an incredible thirst for local history in the SLLP area.</p>	<p>We would have been able to interact with more people and involve them in connecting with their local heritage.</p>
<p>If we'd had more time and money I would have increased the amount of original content that we produced, and increased it's quality.</p>	<p>It would have enabled us to reach wider audiences, and to be more agile in the face of declining print media quality and presence.</p>
<p>If we had had more time and money after lockdown restrictions had been lifted and people had regained their confidence then we could have run more in-person events, especially with disadvantaged or disabled groups.</p>	<p>This would have helped disadvantaged and under-represented groups to access the Lakeland area more confidently, increasing their wellbeing and knowledge of their local natural and cultural heritage.</p>
<p>I would run sessions with local community groups to coach them through the grant application process to give them more confidence.</p>	<p>Hopefully, a greater number and variety of groups and projects applying to the fund.</p>

Appendix 3- Surveys

Project 1

- A summary of the species and importance of West Nabb Farm (SCC Rural Estate) by Wendy Birks (Volunteer)
- Carter Jonas Rural Estate Review

Project 2

- The Canyard's Hill Interpretation PDF (that SCC had planned to undertake): this has been created by Jon Bridge (Inverse) and accompanies a digital tour of the site which can be accessed through a link on the Wildlife Trust website or via the PDF itself.
- Local Wildlife Site Haggstones survey report
- Local Wildlife Site Yew Tree Wood survey report
- Bowcroft Cemetery survey report

Project 4

- Connectivity mapping showing the impact of Woodland planting across Brook Bank Farm

Project 5

- A report on the bees of Wadsley and Loxley Common by local volunteer Alan Smith
- Over the Autumn of 2020 WALC carried out a survey of the Grassland Fungi present on the common. The findings are intended to inform the future management of the grassland areas.
- Report on a habitat survey carried out at St Nicholas Church, High Bradfield, with a map and list of management suggestions to improve the biodiversity of the churchyard.

Project 7

- Combined Student projects
- Sheffield Hallam Working with Water, stream monitoring report.

Project 8

- Water Vole survey project.
- Sheffield Small Myotis Project: 2018 Summary Report
- First Nightjar survey report June 2021
- Results and analysis of 2022 SLLP nightjar survey.

Project 9

- CFA article for the Hunter Archaeological Society Transactions
- Volunteer survey report of pre-history on Foulstone Moor
- Bitholmes Wood combined survey research reports which were submitted to the Sheffield Archive

Project 10

- Cairns, Crosses, Guide Stoops. Chapter four of the Packhorse Book; how routes across the Sheffield Lakeland were marked.
- Racker way. Article by Melanie FitzGerald published in Hunter Archaeological transaction, exploring and describing Racker Way which ran between Walkley and Stannington in the Sheffield Lakeland.
- Packhorse routes book.

Project 14

A fixed interpretation audit was carried out, culminating in a short report explaining the methodology and use of the GIS software tool that is now available to the project.

Hydrospheres

[Hydrospheres](#) is a research project with Sheffield Hallam University and the SLLP that explores art-based co-design.

ARHC HydroSpheres has designed a presentation to accompany the final academic report.

A contributory report on 'Art and the decision making process' was commissioned by Jon Bridge at Sheffield Hallam University, the full paper to be published soon.

Here are the closing notes from the first Hydrospheres workshop held on Zoom by Dr Jon Bridge in September 2020.

Landscape Laboratory

[23May23_SLP_LandscapeLab_outline.pdf](#)



Core research themes (Phase 1 from Sept 2023)

Data infrastructure: developing and applying **state of the art digital architecture and tools** for the synthesis, **organisation**, storage and analysis of all forms of data and knowledge relating to the Sheffield Lakeland landscape, including the legacy knowledge base of the SLLP.
Lead academic Dr Carlos Da Silva, Department of Computing

This Is Not A Park: **integrating the Sheffield Lakeland into an international network** of researcher-practitioners whose objective is to understand and develop ways of living well in the Anthropocene. Leading with social design and praxis research into human and more-than-human connections.
Lead academic Dr Julia Udall, Department of the Natural and Built Environment

Blue-Green research: the Landscape Lab can provide a base (data infrastructure, partner engagement, case studies, network) and present research challenges to **a range of SHU-based researchers interested in water, blue-green infrastructure and human-water interactions**. *Lead academics Dr Mel Lacey, Dr Rachel Schwartz-Narbonne, Department of Biology*

Nature Connection and Humanities research: the Landscape Lab can **focus SHU expertise in environmental humanities / radical eco-literature / ecological arts expertise** on eco-cultural relationships and environmental imagination in and about the Sheffield Lakeland under social and environmental change. *Lead academic Prof Harriet Tarlo, Department of Humanities*

Nature Recovery research: the Landscape Lab can **coordinate monitoring and modelling of ecological parameters** to inform and assess Nature Recovery within the Sheffield Lakeland and related environments, in the context of the wider human-environment system. *Lead academic Dr Joe Glentworth, Department of the Natural and Built Environment*

Appendix 4– People’s stories

Narratives from the Project Evaluation Questionnaire

Each story illustrates the diverse impact of the SLLP activities on individuals, illustrating how the scheme affected personal growth, community involvement, and environmental stewardship

Sue and Dave, Volunteers: "Both of these guys are Wildlife Trust volunteers who got involved with Danny and the Restoring the Lattice project. As part of this project, they trained up and gained their level one walling certificates, but this was not enough for them. Instead of just sitting back and continuing to volunteer under supervision they worked with Danny and gained the information they needed to become independent of the supervision which was restricting their wish to be carrying out walling work for the Trust. They are now both out with a small team of volunteers repairing walls on Wildlife Trust and partners sites across the west of Sheffield."

Nettie tried something new : "Joined the Wadsley and Loxley Common excavation of the military trenches and had never been involved in archaeological work before, but had always had wanted to. For her, this was a bucket list tick! From the start of this initial work she was enthusiastic and involved herself at all levels, including researching the military remains in her own time to find newspaper articles and other information online to add to the final report. Her work here discovered that there had been military manoeuvres prior to the First World War and gave us a huge amount of information about the people that left the archaeological remains behind. After this, she also joined us at the Lodge Moor POW camp, bringing the experience she had gained during the previous excavations to be a great help on site. Not only this, but her enthusiasm and terrific sense of humour was a really positive addition to the wider team. It was an absolute pleasure to enable Nettie to do something she had long wanted to be involved with and see that she took to it like a duck to water. Nettie was one of the stars of the show as far as I am concerned!"

Children from Woodhouse West Primary enjoyed a new experience: "The project enabled a teacher to organise a trip that they wouldn't have been able to otherwise. This meant that children who don't usually get the chance to experience the area were able to connect with nature and their environment. A teacher fed back that 'The children from our school don't often get the chance to leave the area even though this is just 20 mins up the road. The travel bursary really helped us be able to organise the trip and the children had a fantastic time that they won't forget.'"

Danny's Story: "Danny really wanted to work on environmental heritage projects, his interest was practical tasks, heritage skills and particularly traditional skills. He had worked for a number of organisations where his enthusiasm and physical skills were put to good use but his interest in the heritage element of our work was not. By working with other groups, who did not possess access to power tools and contractors, he was able to build upon his interest traditional techniques (including walling, scything and woodworking), the groups and volunteers he worked with also benefited by learning from him and sharing his enthusiasm. In addition to building these traditional skills Danny gained experience and competence in respect of communications and the ability to plan and instruct others, this was an area he had not worked in before. It's fair to say that Danny did not enjoy the restrictions of project work, particularly the administration, but he now runs his own traditional craft business."

A Trainee's journey: Narelle left university and was hoping to follow a career in the conservation sector, as a volunteer with the Wildlife Trust she applied for this post before it existed as she heard about it on the grapevine in the Land Management Team and volunteers. Regardless of the embarrassment of premature application she reapplied when it became a real job, she must have

worked hard on her application because it was head and shoulders above others, it's worth noting over 100 people applied for this one post. We were delighted to appoint Narelle and she threw herself into the role 125%. It was quite a difficult start as the rest of the team had barely settled in and projects were just kicking off really. At the end of Narelle's traineeship she did not want to leave, but we'd made it really clear throughout that this post was to be enjoyed but was a stepping stone only and that we wanted to offer the same opportunity to others. Narelle moved on to the River Stewardship Company and then Natural England. She keeps in touch with us and now lives in Nidderdale with Nabil, our first SLLP Working with Water Officer."

Irene's Initiative: "Project volunteer Irene came up with the idea of writing a booklet of short walks during Covid lockdown. This was when everyone had an hour a day in which to take some outdoor exercise. Irene had done some research and surveys of old tracks near to where she lived and thought it good idea to put together some short walks, coupled with a bit of history, as a 'lockdown' project. This gave her something to focus on during this time. We hadn't planned to do a book of walks, but the unique format that Irene produced and the information that she found out about the routes that she put together was so interesting that we decided to have the booklet printed. The booklet has been a huge success, so much so that we've had a reprint done. Irene found that her computer skills were challenged by producing the booklet, but she still enjoyed the experience immensely."

Keith explores Creative Expression: "I think the connections that Keith has appeared to make through the Hydrospheres project have been quite an exciting surprise to him. I would guess that expressing himself creatively may have been a little outside his comfort zone initially, but he really embraced this project and the partners that it put him in touch with; he was especially thrilled when 'Spillway', a collection of poems, was published by one of the partners at Sheffield Hallam University. Keith also took part in the C-19 Reflections project which asked staff at SRWT to consider how lockdown restrictions had been affecting them and their relationship with the Lakeland environment."

Naheed's Empowerment: "When I first met Naheed in July 2021 it was walking around her local park with the Sheffield SOAR community group, who meet for physical activity and social time. She seemed very quiet and sad. Originally from Pakistan she is a mother and a grandmother but had become isolated and depressed with ailments associated with inactivity. English is not her first language. Regularly walking round her local park was helping her form new friendships but it was when she came on the trips into the Sheffield Lakeland area that she started to smile and become more confident. This was to such an extent that following the group leader's departure in May 2022, Naheed took on a temporary role to organise a small group on a trip into the Rivelin valley using public transport. As per usual, they all carried heavy bags each containing freshly prepared dishes for a picnic feast at lunch time. This was a really special day where the trust that had formed over the year became enough to overcome many of the barriers, real and perceived, resulting in a giant leap in adventure for these ladies."

Appendix 5 – Heritage-related stories

The following reported narratives highlight how SLLP activities made a difference to natural heritage. These stories highlight various aspects of how SLLP activities contributed to natural heritage, from habitat improvement and species protection to educational initiatives and ecological engagement.

Walling and Wildlife Habitat Improvement:

"Our walling has been integrated into a number of other SLLP Projects, including Working with Water. Our walls at Church Farm are stock proof and are excluding sheep and cattle from Sick Brook, as a result we are helping rehabilitate a badly poached stream resulting in an improved habitat for wildlife, recently dark green fritillary have been seen using the enclosed area."

Archaeology and Natural World Consideration:

"Although the archaeology strand of the SLLP was primarily concerned with archaeological outputs and outcomes, the impact on the natural world was also considered in several ways. At Lodge Moor POW camp, prior to the works, the Sheffield City Council foresters were consulted at every opportunity to mitigate the impact of the archaeological works on the nature in the area. This included scrub removal and placement, ensuring that badgers were not disturbed during the works and working closely to decide which trees should be removed before the excavations began. Also, the final report should make clear the impact that the natural environment is having on the underlying archaeological remains and help to plan management of the site for the future."

Habitat Creation and Species Connectivity:

"The South Yorkshire Bat Group (mostly reported on via Supporting Species) have undertaken some really interesting research work around habitat creation and species connectivity. This project links to the Midhope and Brooks Bank project where Yorkshire Water have planted trees to create additional woodland at Brooks Bank Farm, this planting connects three existing woodlands which, when more mature, will result in a contiguous woodland block in excess of 230 hectares. This work of monitoring bat movement and roosting at Brooks Bank is ongoing and will help influence work such as the South Yorkshire Nature Recovery Strategy, it is also a location that the SLLP team use to take out interested parties in order to show them what the overall programme aims to achieve, how the different projects can interlink and how the partnership (and partnerships within it) have developed."

Trainee-led Deadwood Assessment for Willow Tit:

"The Practical Projects project was not designed to deliver natural heritage outputs in its own right, outputs were about people (trainees and volunteers) and supporting other projects. However, as part of our trainees 'learning on the job' Becky, our student placement trainees undertook a project to research and design a 'deadwood' assessment based survey technique for willow tit, we will be using this technique as one of three ways of understanding suitable woodland in the SLLP area for woodland management and woodland creation. It will factor in our Species Recovery Plan and hopefully the creation of our Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which makes up part of our SLLP legacy."

Bog of Doom Erosion Control:

"Right at the top of Cutgate, where the Sheffield Lakeland ends and the Ladybower Valley starts (watershed) is the Bog of Doom, a plateau of deep peat (in excess of 3m) overlying massive broken millstone grit devoid of vegetation and consisting of a range of eroding peat hags and deep peat and water-filled holes. This important habitat in the core of South Pennines SSSI had suffered increasingly from erosion as the Cutgate bridleway changed from a quiet route only used by long-

distance walkers and the very occasional horse rider into an extremely popular route for walkers, runners, and mountain bikers all using and enjoying the landscape, some would say it was virtually impossible to cross without detouring off-route and onto the surrounding pristine moor, this detouring of course was simply widening the Bog of Doom, the work carried out here halted and has started to reverse the erosion and protects this sensitive habitat."

Ecologists' Engagement at Coffee Mornings:

"Ecologists came to two of our coffee mornings to talk to participants about how they could help local wildlife, by creating suitable habitat. Jo Ashby, at Sheffield Equestrian Centre, hosted one of our coffee mornings and Jon Goodrick, S&RWT Ecologist, had a walk around the fields and stable yard and gave advice on how she could provide habitat for wildlife. Jo had swallows in her barns and was keen to encourage other wildlife to share the paddocks and barns with the horses. Jo has implemented some of the changes suggested by Jon and has seen an increase in the wildlife around the paddocks and barn."

Water Vole Sculpture Engagement Tool:

"This project isn't a particularly good fit for picking out something that made a difference to our natural heritage, but I would say that the water vole sculpture commissioned for the entrance to Redmires SSSI will help to remind people of their presence so that they can behave more considerately. Redmires is a Gateway site that has suffered negatively during the project because travel restrictions greatly increased the number of visitors and their impact on the wildlife has been significant and detrimental. The sculpture is just one of the engagement tools being used to change visitor behaviours on site."

Appendix 6 – Shared learnings

What advice would you pass on?

The advice that project leaders would pass on to others planning to work within a partnership scheme falls into four themes:

- Interpersonal dynamics
- Preparation
- Record-keeping
- Flexibility

Question: What pieces of advice or learning would you pass on to someone starting an activity like yours as part of a partnership like SLLP?

Responses:

Make more of the opportunities that a partnership brings, as mentioned previously, we had to dedicate staff time to support the walling instructor, but other team members were out there supporting groups, if we'd involved them earlier it would have been more efficient. We got there in the last 18 months, without covid we would have got there earlier. What happened was that the teams appointed to each project got their ducks in a row first before looking around for inter-team synergies, then covid struck just as they started looking around at their partners. I feel it should have been a requirement to engage with other teams from the outset.
Ensure that you identify and engage with land owners at the earliest opportunity. Identify and engage local community archaeologists within the area. Ensure that when dealing with a formed group that they have a lead on the work you want to do, as they will be more enthused and engaged with the project in that case.
-If an element of the project isn't working after exploring several routes, reflect why and, adapt! Landscape Connections grew and changed in response to the needs of people and the landscape during/ post pandemic. Because we reviewed the project and adapt
This is a very worthwhile element of an area based partnership project. When creating a risk assessment for large projects include staff turnover as a risk and consider how you can minimise the affect of such changes.
Practical support for all projects is a great idea, but if you want it to be a 'Golden Thread' then consider reducing the output and outcome targets specifically assigned to that project, it's hard to prioritise other people's targets if you have your own. ;Our traineeship worked really well, I think all large projects should include this.
Do not include any projects where the sponsor has still to gain planning permission from the Peak District National Park. ;Where the individuals representing partners are strong advocates of your partnership and it's aims be careful to factor in 'loss of individual champion' for larger organisations, the resultant loss of momentum can be crippling.
Reduce your aspirations in the short-term and look to make a significant step toward actual joined up delivery on the ground.
Do plenty of research and planning beforehand and don't try to do too much as most things tend to take longer to achieve than you think that they will - especially if you have to deal with local bureaucracy. Be very specific about what you will do and how you propose to do it, but remain adaptable as you never know what you might have to deal with during the delivery period.
I would invest more time in the initial stages giving media and communications training to staff and partners so that they were able to supply print-ready materials for their projects as my capacity to co-manage 5 projects and manage the communications and engagement for the entire project was too much for one part-time member of staff. I believe that it also resulted in some

missed opportunities and confused messaging being sent out because it was difficult to posthumously embed this culture within the team.
CREATE A TEAM DELEGATE SMILE MAKE BISCUITS
Don't underestimate the lead-in time when planning projects and factor in contractor availability from the outset.;Speak with contractors in the planning stages so they can be prepped and ready when you need them.
Record and document. Document and record. Keep logs of all data, where there are opportunities, where there are no opportunities and everything in between. Assess for cost. Significant funds have been spend to protect small areas of bog. For the exact same spend, areas of bog orders of magnitude bigger could be protected. ;Assess for requirement. If removing phosphorus input from stream, does that stream suffer from problems associated with phosphorus?
Be organised - to be able to share maps, information quickly with many new and different people interested in the trips and project. Keep the initial offer clear to groups - it is easy for the facilitation to take on a "guide" role with the focus becoming "free" trips without group/leader input or the nature for well being aspect being appreciated. Keep it simple - often less is more; letting the groups focus on their surroundings rather than a planned activity has been more than enough. Keep records - for each trip it is really useful for all staff to share their experience and feedback from the group. Try not to guess or pre-empt - listen and meet the groups, gauge ability and enthusiasm as soon as possible to be able to plan bespoke outing offers. Be aware of the bigger picture - each group will have their own local settings, behaviours and hopes. Think beyond the immediate outputs as to how the offer can be sustainable for each community.
Work closely with as many partners as you can, as this can bring unexpected opportunities for the future and added value for the project. ;Have a detailed plan and try to stick to it where possible but be flexible and focus on achieving the most important elements of the project.
Work with partners that want to work with you and buy in to what you are trying to achieve. Particularly if you are short on time and need to carry out work efficiently. ;Have the flexibility to try something different to what you had planned if circumstances change during the delivery phase of your programme.
To have a long list of tasks ready in advance and try and have plans a/b/c for these as contingencies to counter weather and other factors
Try and attend every meeting/event that partners may be attending and get yourself known I found this difficult, particularly at the beginning of taking over the project when I felt unsure of what my role actually was. Make sure you understand what you are meant to be contributing to the budget as soon as possible.
Joining in the latter stages it's clear to me that positive relationships and good communication is key.
For some of the outputs it would have been better to work with a local history group for delivery, as this is outside the normal operating parameters for a Wildlife Trust and their staff knowledge-base.
I would try to embed the generation of digital content throughout the project team from the very beginning. I would also increase the skill level of key individuals so that they were able to document their most valuable and engaging work so that it could be digitally shared and disseminated.
Community grants are a great way to support local groups and grow community cohesion, but they are very poor when set against achieving your own objectives as you have little or no control over the projects that apply to the fund. A more effective strategy would be to support small groups to deliver your project outputs. And if you want to build the skills and experience within groups to manage their own projects and apply to external funds, then this should be done separately.

a. Learnings from SLLP to pass on to others preparing Projects bids

i. Understanding M&E

Project plan authors all claimed they did know the difference between outputs and outcomes – so we are wondering why there was so much confusion between the two in their project plans and predictions. It's probably not an issue, but more clarity in predicted outcomes would have been tidier. We'll be looking for any other impacts of this confusion.

ii. Background and context

Respondents are satisfied that the background and context outlined in their project plans was largely correct.

iii. Predicting outcomes.

If you were to write your project plan now, would you predict the same outcomes? 7/17 said no they would not predict the same outcomes, Interestingly, only one of those was because of the effect of the pandemic as most projects successfully adapted.

iv. Deviation from the plan

How much has your project changed? 8/17 selected 'changed a lot'.