

**UNIVERSITY OF
LEADING
THE WAY
WESTMINSTER** 

WestminsterResearch

<http://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/westminsterresearch>

Evaluation of the Landscape Partnerships Programme: Report to the Heritage Lottery Fund

Richard Clarke^{1*}

Marija Anteric¹

David Mount¹

¹ Centre for European Protected Area Research at London University Birkbeck

* Richard Clarke now works within the Westminster Business School, University of Westminster

This is an exact copy of a report produced for the Heritage Lottery Fund. It was originally published online at:

http://www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/howwework/Documents/Evaluating%20LP_CEP_ARMay2010FINAL.pdf

The WestminsterResearch online digital archive at the University of Westminster aims to make the research output of the University available to a wider audience. Copyright and Moral Rights remain with the authors and/or copyright owners.

Users are permitted to download and/or print one copy for non-commercial private study or research. Further distribution and any use of material from within this archive for profit-making enterprises or for commercial gain is strictly forbidden.

Whilst further distribution of specific materials from within this archive is forbidden, you may freely distribute the URL of WestminsterResearch: (<http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/>).

In case of abuse or copyright appearing without permission e-mail repository@westminster.ac.uk

Report to the Heritage Lottery Fund

**Evaluation of the Landscape Partnerships
programme**

May 2010

**Centre for European Protected Area Research
University of London *Birkbeck***

Contract GEC00/GEW04

Report to the Heritage Lottery Fund Evaluation of the Landscape Partnerships Programme

Report prepared by Richard Clarke (Lead) with Marija Anteric, David Mount of CEPAR with input from colleagues at the Rural Evidence Research Centre (RERC) and the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR).

Centre for European Protected Area Research
University of London *Birkbeck*
Room 715 Malet Street, London WC1E 7HY
cepar@cepar.bbk.ac.uk
+44 (0)20 3073 8220

Contract GEC00/GEW04

Main Report; Evaluation of the HLF Landscape Partnership Programme

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	5
1.1.	Working methods.....	6
1.2.	Structure of this report	8
2.	The HLF Landscape Partnership context.....	10
2.1.	The European Landscape Convention.....	10
2.2.	Landscape & partnership working.....	11
2.3.	Protected landscapes and LPs	12
2.4.	Risk, impact, signal and noise	14
3.	HLF LP monitoring and evaluation.....	18
3.1.	Options for evaluation of the LP programme.....	18
3.2.	External commissioned evaluations.....	21
3.3.	Internal evaluation and reporting.....	21
3.4.	The role of advisers and HLF guidance	23
4.	Output data, outcomes and legacy	25
4.1.	Output data categories	25
4.2.	Output data methodology and conclusions	26
4.3.	Modification of output data guidance	28
5.	Evaluating Intangibles	31
5.1.	Access, participation, perception, understanding, engagement and access.....	31
5.2.	Integration of social, economic and environmental objectives.....	33
5.3.	Partnership working and cross-sector learning	34
5.4.	Social and economic benefits	35
5.5.	Existing data collection with 'baseline' evaluation potential.....	36
6.	Links with external data and monitoring initiatives	42
6.1.	Spatial data and GIS.....	42
6.2.	Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and LANDMAP	49
6.3.	CQC and CQuEL.....	50
7.	Discussion: Options and proposals for LP evaluation and monitoring.....	54
7.1.	New schemes.....	54
7.2.	Existing Stage 2 schemes.....	55
7.3.	Completed schemes and post scheme monitoring.....	55
7.4.	A more engaged role for HLF?.....	55

8.	Conclusions and recommendations	59
9.	Appendices.....	64
	Appendix 1. LP and AS schemes.....	64
	Appendix 2. Schedule of Key Informant Interviews	66
10.	Sources and references.....	68

List of examples and boxes

Box a.	The Mineral Valleys Project	9
Box b.	Valley of Visions Landscape Partnership Scheme, Kent Downs	16
Box c.	The Neroche Project, Blackdown Hills	16
Box d.	A summary of HLF guidance on evaluation	19
Box e.	Rhythms of the Tide Area Partnership Scheme	21
Box f.	The Blaenavon ‘Forgotten Landscape’ Partnership Scheme.....	23
Box g.	The Applecross LPS Evaluation Plan.....	23
Box h.	Life into Landscape Area Partnership Scheme, South Devon.....	28
Box i.	Discover Bute Landscape Partnership Scheme	29
Box j.	The UK Government’s five ‘pillars’ of sustainability.	34
Box k.	The Stour Valley Landscape Partnership.....	34
Box l.	‘Laganscape’- the Lagan Valley Partnership.....	39
Box m.	Grow With Wyre Landscape Partnership	40
Box n.	Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership.....	43
Box o.	Regional landscape datasets in the South-West.....	44
Box p.	Landscape Character Assessment	50
Box q.	CQC and CQuEL.....	51
Box r.	Trent Vale Landscape Partnership.....	52
Box s.	Possible further roles for HLF	56

List of tables

Table i.	Benefits of landscape and partnership working.....	11
Table ii.	Dangers and potential disbenefits of the Landscape Partnership approach	12
Table iv.	Output data categories (2009)	25
Table v.	Information (beyond Output Data) already being collected by LPs.....	37
Table vi.	Data types and sources used in connection with the Weald forest Ridge LP.	42
Table vii.	Spatial data sources potentially relevant to Landscape Partnerships.....	46

Acknowledgements

This report was produced by Richard Clarke, David Mount and Marija Anteric of the Centre for European Protected Area Research at London University *Birkbeck* with additional input from Birkbeck's Rural Evidence Research Centre and the Institute of Voluntary Action Research.

The project team would like to thank the HLF Steering Group in particular Corinna Woodall (Policy Officerⁱ), Gail Fawcett (Research Manager) and Gareth Maeer (Head of Research and Evaluation) for their input and support throughout the project, as well as the Senior Grants Officers in HLF Regional Offices for their valuable assistance.

We are particularly grateful also to the Landscape Partnership managers interviewed during the project and for information provided in response to (sometimes repeated) requests for information. We also wish to thank staff from country agencies and from several protected landscapes, who provided valuable input. Special thanks are due to those HLF advisers/mentors/monitors who gave their time to be interviewed and who provided additional information during our consultation.

A list of the individuals interviewed during this research is provided in Appendix 2. Schedule of Key Informant Interviews (page 66).

Codes used in this report for key informant interview respondents

LPM	HLF Landscape Partnership Manager
AMM	HLF Adviser/Mentor/Monitor
HLFO	HLF (Grants or other) Officer
PLO	Protected Landscape (e.g. AONB or National Park) Officer
LPL	Landscape Partnership Lead Body representative

ⁱ until February 2010.

Acronyms

This table identifies some of the acronyms used in this Report and commonly in discussions regarding Landscape Partnerships.

(D)CLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
ANGSt	Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AP / AS	(HLF) Area Partnership / Area Scheme
BARS	Biodiversity Action Reporting System
CADW	'to keep' (historic environment service of the Welsh Assembly)
CCW	Cyngor Cefn Glwad Cymru; Countryside Council for Wales
CICES	Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services
CIS	Countryside Information System
CQuEL	Character and Quality of the English Landscape (Natural England)
CRoW	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
DCMS	Department of Culture, Media and Sport
Defra	Department of Food, Environment and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
EH	English Heritage
ELC	European Landscape Convention
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GIS	Geographic Information System(s)
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
HS	Historic Scotland
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LCAP	Landscape Conservation Action Plan
LDU	Landscape Description Unit
LHEG	Landscape, Historic Environment and Geodiversity (NE programme)
LiDAR	Light detection and ranging (survey for archaeological survey)
LIANE	Landscape – an Integrated Approach for Natural England
LP/ LPS	(HLF) Landscape Partnership(s)/ Landscape Partnership Scheme(s) ⁱ
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MAGIC	Multi Agency Geographic Information System
NAO	National Audit Office
NCA	National Character Area
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NHMF	National Heritage Memorial Fund
ONS	Office of National Statistics
OS	Ordnance Survey
PAC	(House of Commons) Public Accounts Committee
PAWS	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
PfP	(HLF) Parks for People grants programme
RDP	Rural Development Programme
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SP1, 2, 3	(HLF) Strategic Plan (first, second, third)
THI	(HLF) Townscape Heritage Initiative
UKBAP	UK Biodiversity Action Plan

ⁱ In this Report 'LP Scheme' is used to refer to the set of LP activities within or related to a particular LP area; 'LP Programme' indicates the HLF funded body of work across the UK as a whole. The term 'landscape partnership' (l/c) is used to indicate the different partnership(s) which may last beyond (and may sometimes predate) the funded LP Scheme.

Main Report; Evaluation of the HLF LP Programme

1. Introduction

The Heritage Lottery Fund distributes money raised by the National Lottery to support projects involving the national, regional and local heritage of the United Kingdom. HLF was established in 1994 under the National Lottery Act and operates under the auspices of the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF). Its activities are presently conducted to its third strategic plan. 'Valuing our heritage: Investing in our future'.⁽¹⁾

HLF grants can range from £3,000 to £5 million and are allocated through seven different award programmes. Two of these – Your Heritage and Heritage Grants – fund projects involving any kind of heritage. Five of its programmes are targeted – on landscapes, townscape regeneration, public parks, places of worship and on young people's engagement with heritage ('Young Roots'). The Landscape Partnerships (LP) programmeⁱ is (together with Parks for People, and the Townscape Heritage Initiative) one of three larger programmes, offering grants which start at £250,000.

LP is the only HLF grant programme specifically focused on the countryside. Like Parks for People (PfP) and the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) LPs must actively engage local communities, and must also meet local social, environmental and economic needs. However LPs are more complex than other grant programmes. They need to address conservation of the 'built' and 'natural' heritage. They are generally comprised of a number of discrete projects which include heritage conservation and restoration, access, education and training. They are delivered through a partnership of bodies, normally including statutory agencies, local authorities, NGOs and community organisations.

LPs also contribute significantly to the UK's commitment to implementation of the European Landscape Conventionⁱⁱ. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) sees 'landscape' as multifaceted, multipurpose and multifunctional, the product of the action and interaction of humans and nature over time. 'Landscape' is the place where people live and work and which people visit. Landscape provides vital benefits such as food, water and other 'ecosystem services'. Landscape is valued by people for many different reasons and is 'used' in many different ways.

At the commencement of this research, HLF had funded 35 Landscape Partnerships, each of which have received between £500k and £2 million (amounting to around 60% of total costs) with a combined value of £55 million. Sixteen schemes have been operating for at least 12 months⁽²⁾. In addition to LPs a further 14 earlier Area Schemesⁱⁱⁱ (the predecessors of LPs, introduced in 1999) are now complete. According to Output Data returns collected to date, LPs and Area Schemes (AS) together cover approximately 9% of the UK countryside.

The principal aim of the research is to assist HLF *'to understand the difference made by using 'landscape' as a defining and dynamic concept for awarding grant funding'* and to advise HLF on the assembly of evidence including baseline data to enable it to test the 'landscape hypothesis' *'that funding at the landscape scale, utilising 'landscape' as a concept and encouraging partnership working has benefits above and beyond the benefits that would occur by funding the different elements of a landscape through a series of separate, discrete projects.'*⁽²⁾ The HLF research brief (which is referred to in appropriate sections of the Report) specified particular dimensions of these benefits as of particular interest. The brief together with further advice from the Steering Group has provided direction to our work.

ⁱ www.hlf.org.uk/landscapepartnerships

ⁱⁱ More information is given on the European Landscape Convention in section 2.1.

ⁱⁱⁱ All AS involved partnership working and many of the schemes chose to call themselves 'Area Partnerships'.

All HLF grant aided activities are monitored in a variety of ways. The quality of applications is scrutinised by external expertsⁱ and their advice is incorporated by HLF Grants Officers into assessments which inform decisions on funding by HLF Trustees and Country/Regional Committees. Following awards to LPs, expenditure is monitored directly by HLF Regional Officers. Grantees are required to make regular reports on activities and work undertaken. For the larger grant programmes independent HLF mentors and monitors also make regular reports. In addition 'output data' is collected across all schemes at regular intervals.

For each of its programmes, HLF also now tries to evaluate their longer-term 'outcomes' and 'impacts'ⁱⁱ. Typically this has been through commissioned external research. This has usually been conducted on a sample of projects and has generally focused on a particular topic (such as economic impact, or the social benefits of volunteering). Two of the larger grant programmes have been the subject of special arrangements. Early THIs have been the focus of a major externally contracted research programme since their inception. By contrast, and as an experiment, PfP grantees are being asked to do their own evaluations, avoiding the need for HLF to commission further work. The LP programme has not yet been the subject of any systematic evaluation. Part of the brief for the present research is to help HLF decide how this should be done in the future.

One of the early conclusions of our work was that it is not yet possible to conduct a robust external evaluation of the longer term impacts of the LP programme within the constraints of time and money available. The schemes themselves and their objectives are too diverse for benefits to be captured by any simple set of measures. Many of their intended benefits are not reducible to numerical indicators and where the benefits might be captured in quantitative terms, baseline data does not yet exist. It was agreed with the Steering Group that the best way forward was to try to capture the expertise that has built up on the part of LP managers, external advisers and within HLF itself, during the delivery of LP work.

This Report draws on the expertise and insight developed through the Landscape Partnership programme on the part of HLF monitors, LPS partners and others in determining robust and enduring approaches to assessment of 'value added' and wider benefits of landscape partnership working, with the objective of producing proposals which will assist the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to:

1. Evaluate the long-term outcomes and impact of Landscape Partnerships (LP) and their work;
2. Assess the degree to which funding at a landscape scale, using 'landscape' as a concept and encouraging partnership working, yields benefits 'above and beyond' those that would result from individually funding a series of discrete projects (the 'landscape hypothesis') and
3. Establish baselines for future monitoring of the impacts of LP schemes.

1.1. Working methods

The research included several elements:

1. **A desk study of existing LP applications, reports and assessments including documents held by HLF centrally and in regional offices.** The purpose was to identify what information exists (not necessarily presented in numerical form in the documents themselves and going beyond the Output Data and other information already collected) which might be used to address the research objectives.

ⁱ HLF support staff include individuals (here referred to collectively as advisers) contracted externally to play a variety of roles in respect of specific LPs, from supplying expert advice on LP applications, to mentoring schemes in their early phases, to monitoring delivery.

ⁱⁱ HLF monitoring and evaluation procedures and the distinction between 'outputs', 'outcomes' and 'impacts' are discussed further in section 3.

In addition to the above, existing output data was examined with regard to its relevance to these objectives, its completeness and to what additional measures (for example in the form of standardised reporting data) HLF might ask of its funded LPS in the future.

- 2. Consultation with LP managers, HLF advisers and others.** This took the form of semi-structured 'key informant interviews' conducted face-to-face and by telephone based on a questionnaire proforma that was sent to all respondents in advance. The object of consultation was to capture the significant wider understanding that now exists regarding the purposes of LP working and the need for and best approach to evaluation. To the extent that our recommendations are taken forward we believe that this approach will also help to secure 'ownership' of the outcomes by all who may need to be involved.

The original Research Brief invited us to focus on the 20 LP schemes currently delivering under Stage 2. However during consultation we were several times referred to schemes 'completed' under the old AS provisions as examples of 'good practice' which had either delivered (and were continuing to deliver) lasting benefits or which had failed to do so because of failure to secure follow-on funding. We have therefore not refrained from referring to such schemes where it appeared appropriate to do so. In addition, the arrangements for LP applications and delivery were changed in late 2009 and it is important that whatever approaches to evaluation are adopted, they should apply to developing LPs so we have also had regard to new schemes 'in the pipeline'.

A list of past and present LP and Area Schemes is presented in Appendix 1 (page 64).

In addition to advisers, LP managers and HLF staff, we have consulted widely with other persons and organisations already working at a landscape scale and/or involved in monitoring or evaluation of 'landscape' and 'partnership' working. These have included key individuals working for national agencies (Natural England, CCW and SNH) as well as others based in AONB units or in national park offices. The objective was to supplement the information gathered as described above and in particular to examine the methods that are being used to monitor landscape management and partnership working, and the degree to which these could be applied to LP schemes.

A list of those consulted is presented in Appendix 2 (page 66).

- 3. External datasets and the potential of GIS.** Together with colleagues at the Rural Evidence Research Centre (RERC), we have also examined the use of national and local datasets and also the use of geographical information systems (GIS) in LP and landscape scale working. We have considered the degree to which existing LP datasets as well as additional datasets might be of use in LP evaluation as well as the potential application of GIS.
- 4. Working paper and workshop.** The results of the above work were assembled in a working paper. This was submitted in draft to the Steering Group and after modification was distributed for comment (in the second week of February), to all those who had been involved in the consultation to that date.

The working paper was also used as the basis for a workshop, held on 25th February at HLF offices in London, and attended by 30 invited LP managers, advisers and HLF staff. The workshop focused on a number of issues, including the purposes of evaluation, on how this should best be carried out, and on the measures and methods that should be used, and it provided the opportunity for critical scrutiny and peer review of the Working Paper.

- 5. Follow-up consultation.** Following the workshop, further informal consultation was conducted including interviews with those whom we had been unable to contact previously, and further desk research conducted in particular to follow up issues and leads revealed at the workshop.

A Draft Report was submitted to the Steering Group at the end of March. This Final Report embodies comments received subsequently.

In all the above the most pressing constraint was time. The research was commissioned at the end of November 2009 and the Draft report required at the end of March 2010; most interviews and visits had to be conducted in January and the first half of February 2010. Constraints of time and season have meant that some areas merit further investigation. Other areas are outside the remit for or resources allocated to this work. In both cases we have identified these in text.

1.2. Structure of this report

The remainder of this Report presents the results of our research under several heads:

The HLF LP context. Here we summarise the objectives and nature of the LP programme in relation to the purposes of HLF and also to the wider social and policy context including the European Landscape Convention. We identify in particular the distinctive features of 'landscape' and 'partnership' working and their (potential) benefits and (possible) disadvantages particularly in relation to the aims of HLF and the nature of other HLF funded grant programmes.

HLF LP monitoring and evaluation. This section discusses current arrangements for LP monitoring and evaluation in relation to existing and earlier HLF guidance. It discusses how this could be applied to or adjusted in order to capture the longer term benefits of LP schemes.

Output data, outcomes and legacy. Data is currently captured by HLF from all LP schemes as a way of monitoring delivery. Here we consider how output data collection might proceed in the future and how it could be modified in order better to capture longer term benefits.

Evaluating intangibles. Here we consider some of the issues involved in identifying and demonstrating benefits beyond the physical landscape works and other quantifiable measures captured in output data collection.

Links with external data and monitoring initiatives. This section examines the potential for using external datasets in LP evaluation, and links with other monitoring initiatives such as Landscape Character Assessment (LCA).

Discussion, conclusions and recommendations. Each of the above sections includes a summary of the outcomes of our consultation in the form of conclusions and recommendations. The penultimate section considers some options and proposals for future LP evaluation and monitoring, including possible roles for HLF or its consultants. The final section then summarises our broad recommendations for the future.

Appendices. At the end of this document a series of appendices are presented as follows.

- 1) A list of AS and LP schemes (approved, in progress and completed).
- 2) A schedule of Key Informant Interviews with dates.

Sources and references. A concluding list of the main published sources (with web links where these are appropriate) are presented, indexed to citations in text.

Box a. The Mineral Valleys Project

Mineral Valleys was an HLF-funded Area Partnership in County Durham. Between 2003 and 2008, HLF contributed £2.8 million to the total investment of £5.1 million. This funded 14 linked projects to sustain key wildlife habitats, secure new and improved public access, deliver environmental education with schools, develop local skills and contribute to sustainable tourism in the area.

The Scheme celebrated its completion by publishing a 36-page colour pamphlet (produced at the same time that it submitted its final report to HLF) illustrated with photographs, maps and case studies; this is also available on the project's website.ⁱ This not only documents outputs and achievements, but also says what is planned for the future and gives contact details for organisations and individuals who will make sure this happens. Here are some of the 'outputs' of three of the projects and (in italics) their enduring legacy:

- 'History in the Making' included setting up a 'friends' group at Longovicium Roman Fort who produced an education pack, walk leaflets, and led a series of guided walks. Another project restored the Bantling Lime Kilns using original stones and traditional building materials and providing seats and interpretation panels about their links with the Stanhope and Tyne Railway. *The Friends of the Fort group continues to meet, is developing new projects on the Roman heritage of Lanchester and members have been trained in geophysical surveying and are presently studying the area around the Fort. Groundwork West Durham and Darlington are applying for funding to restore more of the Bantling kilns.*
- The Sustainable Tourism project was led by the BTCV; outputs included 3,709 conservation workdays by 762 visitors over 50 residential 'green tourism' holidays, plus 346 local conservation volunteers and 765 people attending training courses. *BTCV continues to run similar projects in the area although conservation 'hosts' and participants usually have to pay for themselves.*
- 'Woodlands and Wildlife', led by Durham County Council, has created woodland and other habitats on 197 ha of former colliery land (involving 234 volunteer days and 50 schools in tree planting) and including 21 km of new or improved access routes and 12 information panels. *The County Council has accepted responsibility for future management of the woodlands and has secured Woodland Grant Scheme funding to do this; more tree planting is planned in collaboration with the Woodland Trust.*

The publication concludes by setting out what has been achieved over the whole AS programme. The achievements are summarised in a set of 45 indicators, which were used to monitor progress on the scheme during its delivery. These available on an MS Excel spreadsheet and some of them could be used as a baseline against which to compare later data in order to assess long – term impacts.

The Mineral Valleys Project has also produced videos and DVDs recording community involvement and partnership working in the project. These also provide a partisan, but nevertheless valuable record of what was achieved by the scheme and could be used as the basis for follow-up studies.

ⁱ www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/north_east/ourwork/mineral_valleys_project

2. The HLF Landscape Partnership context

'Landscape' is conceived by different people in different ways, but is much more than merely 'scenery'. Ecologists have developed the concept as an indicator of scale of analysis and action, including habitat connectivity and ecosystem dynamics. In archaeology, landscape has provided a framework for understanding and managing assemblages of monuments in space and time and for Historic Landscape Characterisationⁱ (HLC). In the context of LPs 'landscape' is the totality of an area – its landform and topography, its habitats and biota, its past and present land use, the 'built' and archaeological remains and, most importantly, its people, those who live and work in the area and those who visit it. HLF LPs seek to conserve the landscape heritage, natural and cultural, and also to deliver 'people' benefits within and beyond the areas they cover, which are more than those that would derive from funding a series of separate discrete projects.

The aims of LPs and their predecessor Area Schemes (AS) have changed over time. The early AS focused primarily on the integrated management of the natural and cultural landscape, including public access. All 14 Area Schemes are now complete and funding has ended. Area Schemes were replaced in January 2004 with Landscape Partnerships. Compared to AS, LPs are required to have a balance over the 'natural' and the 'built' heritage. They place much greater emphasis on community participation, on access and learning, and on training opportunities in heritage skills⁽³⁾.

2.1. The European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) was adopted by the Council of Europe in 2000 and came into force in the UK in March 2007. The ELC's definition of 'Landscape' as '*an area as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and /or human factors*'⁽⁴⁾ is a rich concept that encompasses but goes beyond sectoral (geomorphological, ecological, archaeological, historical or aesthetic) approaches. ELC makes it clear that people are at the heart of all landscapes (the commonplace and 'degraded' as well as the eminent) each of which has its distinctive character and meaning to those who inhabit or visit it⁽⁵⁾. The ELC approach recognises landscape as:

- the result of the complex interaction of natural (e.g. geology, soils, biodiversity), cultural (settlement, land use) and the perceptual and aesthetic (experience, associations, tranquillity, colour);
- linking past, present and future as the dynamic manifestation of physical processes and human intervention (has always changed and will continue to do so)
- important to people, multiple and sometimes contested values, including tangible and intangible dimensions;
- existing at any scaleⁱⁱ from large tracts of land such as mountain ranges, to small locally important spaces such as parks and streetscapes.

ELC places obligations on the UK to recognise landscape '*as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity*'. Signatories are required to identify the diversity and range of their landscapes, the important features of each, and to engage with local communities, private bodies and public authorities in their protection. This includes raising awareness and understanding of the character, value and functions of landscape and the way these are changing. There is also an obligation to provide training in landscape-related skills. Defra is the UK lead body for ELC implementation. Several country agencies, for example Natural England⁽⁶⁾ and English Heritage⁽⁷⁾ as well as other bodies such as the National Forest Company⁽⁸⁾ have produced ELC action plans. Landscape has become a principal (though variable) focus of public policy throughout Europe⁽⁹⁾.

ⁱ See, e.g. www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.1292 and /nav.1293

ⁱⁱ HLF expects LPs to cover an area between 20 km² and 200 km² in size (2).

There is a considerable overlap between the provisions of ELC and the objectives of HLF's LP programme which is the only national grant programme whose objectives largely coincide with ELC.

2.2. Landscape & partnership working

Consultations revealed a concern to secure greater understanding of and support for the evolving concept of 'landscape' (for example as promulgated in ELC) but also some divergence of views as to what that concept involves. Whilst some consultees expressed reluctance to 'reduce' the concept of landscape and partnership working to a set of specific 'benefits' there was also general acceptance that these benefits needed to be identified if they were to be demonstrated. Table i below presents a list of the putative benefits of LP working as they have been identified by us and argued during our consultation so far, presented roughly in the order of priority in which they were presented to us.

Table i. Benefits of landscape and partnership working.
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The landscape approach – strengths and opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus: Multiple activities within an area of coherent landscape character; affirms and integrates its distinctive qualities. • Scale: Enables a larger-scale approach to (natural and cultural) conservation and (physical and intellectual) access (e.g. habitat connectivity, ancient monuments in their historic setting, 'joined up' visitor trails and interpretive material). • Integration: Encourages the different landscape features (natural, historic heritage) and services (visitor access, educational) to be linked. • Coherence: Enables landscape features (e.g. floodplain water levels, habitat restoration, archaeological) to be dealt with as a whole. • Facilitation: Stimulates approaches and initiatives that might not have been conceived/promoted except as part of a larger scheme. • Perception: Encourages the landscape to be understood, valued and engaged with as a whole, including its disparate elements. • Engagement: Inspires local and stakeholder participation and commitment. • Risk: Permits the inclusion of innovative or speculative projects (some of which might 'fail') within the umbrella of a larger scheme.
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The 'partnership approach' – strengths and opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a single point of contact and representation. • Supplies a reservoir of broad expertise and resources across partner organisations. • Co-ordinates project planning and delivery, increasing efficiency and reducing risk. • In cases of difficulty other partners are able to step in and help, or funding can be vired to other projects in the LP. • Links different administrative areas at county, district or parish level. • Creates dialogue between landowners, local communities, visitors and interest and user groups. • Unites diverse stakeholders and conflicting interests; resolves common problems through joint working. • Engages whole communities as well as individuals and whole commercial sectors as well as individual businesses.

- Improves opportunities for all people to access, enjoy and understand the whole area and its heritage.
- Permits dissemination of results to a wider audience.
- Leverage; LP areas become a priority for funding, in turn benefiting other applicants.

These benefits in aggregate represent a consensus about the elements of what makes LP schemes different from other HLF funded grant schemes, including large multi-project schemes such as THI which are focused on heritage restoration and socio-economic regeneration. Some of these benefits may be reflected in longer term outcomes of LP working and some are in principle at least capable of being 'captured' in evaluation.

In addition to these benefits our consultation revealed awareness of risks and potential disbenefits of the LP approach. These are listed in Table ii below.

Table ii. Dangers and potential disbenefits of the Landscape Partnership approach

- Scale of funding may encourage 'playing safe' and avoidance of risk.
- Assembly of disparate projects under one umbrella may reduce funding to and activity in other areas.
- Concentrates funding on well administered/ well resourced areas, on existing partnerships judged likely to deliver and where experience of working at a landscape scale is likely to be strongest.
- Concentrates funding in 'high value' landscapes, and in consequence reduces support to 'ordinary' or 'degraded' landscapes where the benefits (as well as the risk) could be higher.
- Focus on LCAⁱ areas may reinforce sectoral or subjective judgements about landscape quality and character.
- 'Flaky' projects (which might be difficult to justify on their own, or involve significant risk) may be included to 'make volume' or to balance the overall portfolio.
- Awards to local authorities or other public bodies increases the danger that monies may be used to subsidise statutory obligations, reducing value added.
- Lack of ongoing support – 3 year funding leads to the inevitable flurry of activity that is beginning to deliver good outputs when those involved start to see the finish line approaching and have to start winding up the programme.

2.3. Protected landscapes and LPs

'Landscape' and 'partnership' working are not restricted to LP schemes and HLF is not the only player in the field. In the UK in particular, protected landscapes – mainly national parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) have been developing approaches to landscape and partnership working for a number of years. Protected landscapes are a category of protected area defined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)ⁱⁱ as areas *'where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value'*⁽¹¹⁾

ⁱ See section 6.2.

ⁱⁱ The IUCN protected area category descriptors were revised in late 2008; replacing the earlier definition which described them as areas characterised by 'the harmonious interaction of man and land while providing opportunities for public enjoyment through recreation and tourism within the normal lifestyle and economic activity of these areas'⁽¹⁰⁾.

value'.⁽¹¹⁾ Ps are particularly characteristic of Europe although they constitute a minority of designated areas worldwide. UK protected landscapes are recognised as having pioneered approaches to 'people-centred' approaches to landscape protection and are increasingly seen as places where new approaches to rural governance and to sustainable landscape management can be pioneered and later extended to the wider countryside.

National Parks (NP) cover just over 9% of the land area of England, nearly 20% of Wales and just over 7% of Scotland. AONBs cover 15% of the land in England and 5% in Wales. Both NPs and AONBs are distinguished from the wider countryside not just by landscape quality or by the development controls that seek to protect this but by the existence of an agreed management plan. This is implemented through an additional layer of governance – in NPs the national park authority, and in AONBs a joint committee of the responsible local authorities, usually working through an AONB Unit. 'Landscape' and 'partnership' working is integral to their work'. LPs (and their predecessor AS) are presently over-represented in protected landscapes.

Eleven of the seventeen presently active LPs with a Stage 2 greater than 1 year are located in protected landscapes 9 (Table iii below). Nine of these are in AONBs, twice the number that would be expected were they to be no association. The preponderance of LPs in protected landscapes seems likely to be not just because protected landscapes by definition encompass our more 'eminent' landscapes, but because the existence of an administrative infrastructure and traditions and experience of partnership working have made it easier for strong LP applications to be put together. This may reduce risk and also increase the chances of the benefits of LP being continued beyond the end of HLF funding.

Table iii. LP and AS schemes in protected landscapes

Protected Landscape*	LPS	AS
Arnside-Silverdale AONB		Arnside-Silverdale Limestone Heritage Project
Blackdown Hills AONB	Neroche Project	
Chichester Harbour AONB		Rhythms of the Tide
Clwydian Range AONB	Heather & Hillforts	
Cornwall AONB	Caradon Hill Area Heritage Project	
Cotswold AONB		Caring for the Cotswolds
Dorset AONB	Isle of Purbeck	
High Weald AONB	Weald Forest Ridge	
Isle of Wight AONB	Through the Eyes of the Needles	
Kent Downs AONB	Medway Gap 'Valley of Vision'	
Lake District National Park	Bassenthwaite Reflections	
Malvern Hills AONB		Malvern Heritage Project
North Pennines AONB	Unique North Pennines- A Landscape Moulded by People	
Peak District National Park		Moors for the Future
Lagan Valley AONB	Lagan Valley Regional Park	
Shropshire Hills AONB		Blue Remembered Hills
South Devon AONB		Life into Landscape
Wye Valley AONB	Overlooking the Wye	
Yorkshire Dales		Dales Living Landscape

* excluding LP and AS in Scottish NSAs

i There are no AONBs in Scotland where their nearest equivalent in Scotland are the National Scenic Areas (NSA) which cover some 13% of the land surface. Scots NSAs are excluded from this analysis because they are essentially designations within which stricter development control is applied than within the 'wider' countryside; there is no significant difference in governance

One issue has to do with the degree to which LPs in protected landscapes should be integrated with the protected landscape delivery mechanisms. Some have argued that the LP scheme should be administered – and delivered - at ‘arms length’ from the PL, to ensure that the LP partnership (and its funding) should be genuinely additional to the governance structure of the LP. Others have argued that this would involve an unnecessary duplication of resources and that delivery will be achieved more effectively by co-locating with protected landscapes, where infrastructure, administrative support and a degree of long term legacy can be assured.

It has also been suggested that despite the potentially higher risks to success the benefits of LPs might be even greater in areas outside protected landscapes, particularly in degraded or neglected landscapes and in areas of significant social deprivation where ‘landscape’ and ‘partnership’ working are often a novelty. In fact several protected landscapes have targeted their LP applications in less favoured areas – for example, the Kent Downs AONB has hosted a scheme (‘Valley of Visions’ Box b) which extends outside its borders to include a degraded landscape of industrial decline. The Stour Valley Landscape Partnership (Box k) is also interesting because it included the Dedham Vale AONB whose responsible local authorities decided some years ago to extent the coverage of the management plan to the whole of the Stour Valley, not just that part of it for which a management plan was a legal obligation.

More recent LP schemes have been targeted on areas outside protected landscapes, including some areas of social deprivation. This is not only reducing the distributional imbalance of protected landscapes, but could also be seen as manifesting in practice one of the claimed or intended functions of protected landscapes – that is, to act as test beds for innovation in rural management and governance which can be subsequently extended to the wider countryside.

Irrespective of the above, the experience of protected landscapes where landscape-scale partnership working is now embedded in policy and practice was seen as relevant to our research and – particularly where protected landscapes are the lead body for LPs studied we have included relevant protected landscape staff in our consultation.

2.4. Risk, impact, signal and noise

Evaluation of impacts of the LP programme should be recognised as offering particular challenges which are not found to the same extent in other HLF programmes. It is arguable that in most cases it will be more difficult than in the case of other more focused HLF grant programmes (and in some cases it will be impossible) to evaluate long-term impacts.

In the first place, LP schemes exist within a rapidly changing environmental, social and policy context, including changes to EU agricultural and rural support mechanisms. The broad interlinked objectives of LP schemes and the variety of projects within them means that it will often be difficult, if not impossible to separate the impact of HLF funding from wider changes taking place within or affecting an LP area. For example in the Isle of Bute, the recent acquisition of the Attenborough Estate in the northern part of the island by the Bute Community has significantly altered the context of the area particularly for visitors.

Secondly, LP schemes often exist alongside other initiatives with overlapping or parallel objectives. For example where LPs are within an area covered by LEADER funding, the latter is likely to have the greater socioeconomic impact. Within protected landscapes the smaller scale initiatives of the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) will also often be complementary to the objectives of LPs.

Other funding by HLF may also confuse the picture. Of the twenty LPs currently at Stage 2, all but one (The Isle of Purbeck) had already benefited from HLF funding, either to the LP lead body, or through other spend in the LP area (Figure i below). The pattern is likely to change in the future as HLF increasingly directs its efforts beyond protected landscapes. A particular emphasis now is on the landscapes of degraded or deprived areas. Here the potential benefits of funding may be greater than in protected landscapes, but the difficulties of both securing and demonstrating legacy may also be greater. In all cases however, a major problem for evaluation is that of isolating the impact of LP activities from other influences.

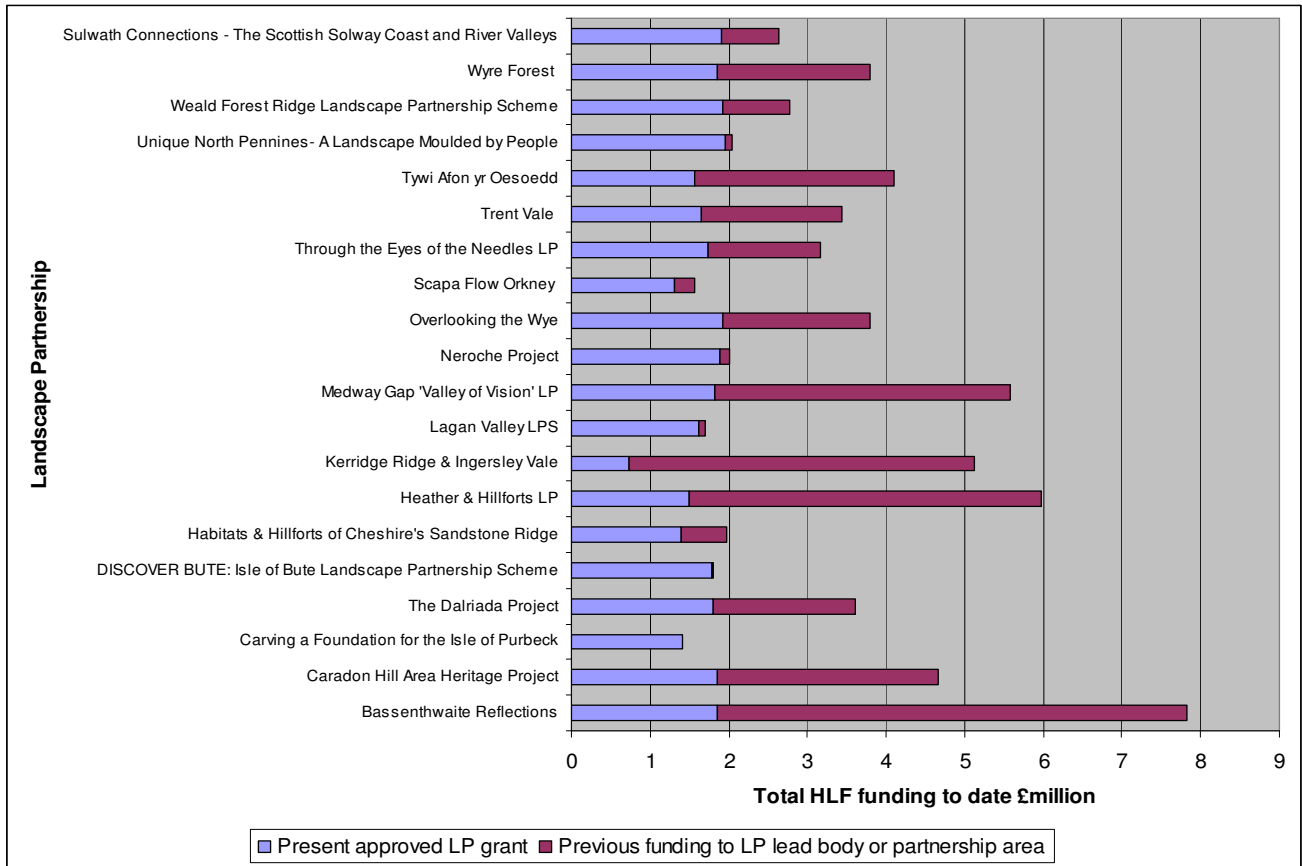


Figure i. HLF grant for the 20 LPs currently at Stage 2 and previous HLF funding to the lead body or area. Subsequent to assembly of data (extracted from Stage 2 decision papers) a major THI grant has been awarded to Rothesay (Bute).

In none of these instances should the difficulties of isolating the benefits of HLF funding from other initiatives be seen as reducing the need for LPs; indeed the very complexity of the LP programme and its synergy with wider rural dynamics should be seen as a positive and valued feature of the LP programme. For example, in the case of the Stour Valley, where most individual projects could not have occurred without HLF funding, the LP has contributed significantly to realising the benefits of landscape and partnership working over a wider area than the AONB, however although, their longer term impacts cannot be distinguished from those of other initiatives in the area.

Box b. Valley of Visions Landscape Partnership Scheme, Kent Downs

The 'Valley of Visions' is an area of industrial decline and deprivation in the Medway Gap sandwiched between two disconnected areas of the Kent Downs AONB, which hosts the scheme. The LP scheme is a complex programme designed to conserve and enhance the Medway Gap's heritage landscapes and biodiversity; to improve physical and intellectual access to them; and to engage local landowners, communities and visitors sustainably in their exploration, interpretation and long-term care.

One of the key elements is the 'Landscape and Habitat Programme'. This is steered by a Tactical Review led by Kent Police working with the Fire and Rescue Services, landowners and local authorities and aims at addressing the presently high level of anti-social behaviour including nuisance vehicles, environmental damage, theft and fly-tipping. The prevention of illegal access project represents an innovative approach working on a landscape scale using intelligence gathering and publicity, community involvement and installation of physical barriers to target places of particular concern. This work entails fencing, ditching, barriers, education, enforcement and information gathering using the National Intelligence Model. The co-ordinated approach is claimed as the first of its kind in the country and is the focus of a national conference, 'Securing the Landscape' which has already attracted widespread attention.

Kent Police have undertaken to continue the project beyond the end of HLF funding. They routinely collect data anyhow on anti-social activities and part of their role will be to monitor these in the future; the results will provide a direct measure of the outcome of this project beyond the end of HL funding within the 'Valley of Visions; LPS.

Box c. The Neroche Project, Blackdown Hills

In the run-up to its final evaluation report to HLF the Neroche Project in the Blackdown Hills AONB produced an attractive folder including a film on DVD entitled 'Liberating the Landscape'. This documents what the AS had achieved with the aid of HLF funding between 2006 – 2010 - including 300 hectares of conifer plantation restored to pasture, heath and broadleaved woodland and 245 ha of new open-ground habitat restored, a community excavation of the lost Medieval village of Playstreet, habitats restored by volunteers, 23 km of new off-road multi-user circular trails and many community events, local history project and schools visits.

The Neroche Stakeholders Group is also establishing itself as an independent trust and the folder and film also set down a 'Vision for 2015' elaborating three programmes through which they hope to deliver sustainable benefits in the future:

- **'A landscape prepared for a shifting climate'** programme hopes to extend the Neroche 'Forest Beef' model across the Blackdown Hills, through a collaborative approach to low-intensity grazing, alongside woodfuel and timber production. The aim is to form a network of sustainably managed woodland and pasture, providing a 'climate-proofed, diverse landscape, rich in biodiversity, supported by local, traditional skills'.
- **'A common space for learning and sharing'** programme aims to develop natural spaces for community activity and education, backed by a Forest Schools support service to local schools, a community history toolkit, and a Neroche Roundhouse' – constructed of earth and timber to provide a covered space for events and for public use of the forest.
- **'Bringing the forest to town'** aims to create a 'green wedge' from central Taunton out into the Neroche forest, through a programme of landscaping and recreational facilities, 'an extension of the town's greenspace, creating a continuum from urban parkland through to wild forest'.

Only time will tell how far these initiatives will succeed. But the ongoing partnership working between the eleven members of the Stakeholders' Group – including the Forestry Commission, Devon and Somerset County Councils, two District and the Taunton Deane Borough Council, the Natural England, the Environment Agency and the National Trust is itself one measure of the success of the Neroche Landscape Partnership beyond the 'outputs'

Selected quotations from our consultation:

'Bits & bobs that don't get done any other way which would be so complicated otherwise. And, individual projects may not be that great – but when combined they can have a massive impact. Individually quite small but when put together form a big whole.' (AMM2)

'...when they work, they work really well.' (HLFO9)

'Vision probably degrades into projects in practice. Individual projects don't get deep scrutiny.' (HLFO2)

*'80% of [our] projects wouldn't have been even proposed without the scheme – the scheme was the reason for their existence. The capacity was probably there to deliver, but they needed the drive and the *reassurance* of the team to get beyond conception.'* (LPM15)

'ELC and the landscape concept are much too hard for people – though now they've done this sort of work it would be much easier to move them in this direction.' (LPM20)

'The landscape approach is valued by people but receives meagre funding.' (PLO10)

'We knew they had to manage public forests as multifunctional space. But nobody had time to sit down and to work out how to do it – how to address all the functions to best effect. Our LP has made us do this.' (LPM11)

'LPs create a new awareness of an area... people don't want to say 'I live in the [xxx] NCA' – they identify with a place.' (AMM2)

'Creates a team of new advocates.' (AMM5)

'The scale of funding brings its own benefits. There are economies of scale (e.g. our website, communications, administration). The initial legwork for our [LCA, Audience Development Plan] was already done. Everyone was confident, ready to start.' (LPM15)

However there are drawbacks – an enormous amount of preparatory work – we reckon some £400-£500k just to get to the start-up stage – time, opportunity cost. Each partnership meeting involved 15-18 senior staff for a half-day. But without HLF we couldn't do it. If someone said at the start 'would you invest £1/2m' we wouldn't do it.' (LPM15)

'To achieve a landscape approach the only large scale funding is through HLF LPS. There are risks. The areas may be too large; there may be too little money, the time scale too short. After the grant the area may need further involvement and more funding to keep things going. The scheme may prevent/preclude involvement in other schemes i.e. not being included as considered sorted through the HLF LPS.' (LPM10)

'Most stakeholders don't understand the full wider picture – they are aware of the individual elements but when put together would agree on the wider benefits.' (LPM1)

'The ELC definition - it's a 'a raft in the sea': stick to it. ELC cries out for examples of what the initiative means – we need to talk up HLF LPs as an example of ELC in action.' (AMM15)

3. HLF LP monitoring and evaluation

Since the introduction of Area Schemes, HLF has progressively increased its emphasis on monitoring and evaluation (M&E). For AS schemes, the predecessors of LP, this was largely limited to financial management and compliance monitoring by HLF although several schemes independently produced their own more reflective evaluations.

HLF's second Strategic Plan (SP2) in 2004 saw the replacement of AS by LP and (in December 2005) the introduction of a new evaluation framework for all its grant programmes. This made a distinction between project monitoring during implementation and evaluation of outcomes prior to and after completion. Internal monitoring procedures and reporting systems were adjusted for each HLF grants programme. In addition, a number of external evaluations have been commissioned for different programmes from consultants, generally based on a sample of schemes where complete coverage is impracticable.

No specific evaluation guidance was issued for LPs. In consequence there is little consistency between LPs in their approach to the collection of output data, let alone information on longer term outcomes. The 2009 output data round reported that *'In many cases, therefore, project managers have had to extract the relevant data manually and/or estimate outputs, leading to some uncertainty in the accuracy of the data collected via the survey forms. There are also gaps in the data collected where schemes have not recorded and/or have been unable to estimate certain types of output (e.g. visitor information).'*⁽¹²⁾ Any systematic collection of information which could be used for longer-term evaluation of outcomes – beyond those categories of output data which endure beyond the end of funding - is absent. Our consultations have revealed that LPs and LP managers would appreciate greater scrutiny and guidance from HLF with regard to objective-led evaluation particularly with regard to individual projects; equally HLF advisers were sometimes uncertain as to how much direction they should provide and guidance would be welcomed on this aspect.

Recommendation 1. HLF should consider whether it is able to provide a clearer 'steer' either directly to LPs or via advisers on evaluation particularly linked to the objectives of individual projects.

HLF's evaluation framework was reviewed by the National Audit Office (NAO) in March 2007⁽¹³⁾. NAO declared that *'HLF should continue to develop its framework for capturing the benefits arising out of its funding so that it can measure and report on the impact it is having'*⁽¹³⁾. The NAO report fed into a Public Accounts Committee hearing in July 2007⁽¹⁴⁾. PAC in particular expressed concern about the equitable distribution of funding, of access to its benefits, declaring that *'Increased access to and understanding of heritage is one of the main benefits the Fund is trying to promote through its funding, but it has little concrete information with which to judge its success'*; the evidence that it did have of broadening access was mostly *'partial and largely anecdotal'*⁽¹⁴⁾. At the same time, PAC declared that HLF would need to *'find ways to make its money go further'*⁽¹⁴⁾.

3.1. Options for evaluation of the LP programme

In response to the NAO and PAC reports HLF revised its guidance on evaluation. From the start of its third strategic plan in April 2008 HLF made it a requirement that projects should provide a self-evaluation report at the completion of their project. The last 10% of the grant payment is dependent on the receipt of this evaluation report. HLF has stated that *'in time, we expect that our programme evaluations will be able to increasingly draw on the evidence provided back to us by grantees. We have issued guidance to applicants and grantees on how to produce an evaluation report.'*⁽¹⁵⁾ Guidance presently provided is not tailored to the needs of different HLF programmes. *However we have left the content, format and length up to grantees. Given that there is likely to be variability in the grantees own evaluation work, we still expect to carry out our own research into completed projects within each of the programmes we fund.'*⁽¹⁵⁾

HLF's advice on evaluation is contained in detailed guidance issued in April 2008⁽¹⁶⁾. This was after the start of most current LPs (more than half of the 20 LPs which were the initial focus of our consultation started before this date) and not all LP managers – or advisers – were aware of its existence. The new guidance is intended to apply especially to the larger grant programmes, including LPs. For each of its programmes, HLF tries now to capture longer-term information about 'outcomes', 'impacts' and 'benefits'. This depends on research beyond the simple counts of activities undertaken/ work carried out that predominates in the 'output data' questionnaires. For most schemes this has involved HLF commissioning external research on a sample of projects. In the case of the THI a major research programme was commissioned soon after the start of the programme and has just reported⁽¹⁷⁾. By contrast to this approach, and as an experiment, grantees on the more recent Parks for People programme are asked to do their own evaluation work and report back to HLF – avoiding the need for HLF to commission further top down work⁽¹⁸⁾.

A decision now needs to be made on which approach (i.e. external evaluation by consultants or internal evaluation by schemes themselves) should be adopted for LP, what methods are most appropriate, what advice should be given (beyond that offered in the generic HLF guidance), whether and how this can be applied to schemes currently in delivery and whether evaluation is possible for those that have ended.

The complexities of the LP programme, the diversity of schemes, their local specificity, and their significance in the rural context (including UK obligations under ELC) would justify an approach analogous to that adopted for THI – that is, a longitudinal study of the programme or of a sample of schemes from inception. However the LP programme is now well established, several schemes are well into their delivery phase and all of their AS predecessors are now completed. In practice therefore a different approach is required, and this is likely to involve a combination of methods.

Box d. A summary of HLF guidance on evaluation

'Evaluating your HLF project'ⁱ, issued in April 2008, provides relatively detailed guidance, reflecting HLF's increased emphasis on evaluation and monitoringⁱⁱ. Most of it is intended to apply to all larger (>£50,000) grant schemes including Landscape Partnerships. The exception is Appendix B (6 of its 69 pages), which presents a standard HLF Evaluation Questionnaire. Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) has its own data collection questionnaires and in the case of LP, output data spreadsheets.

The guidance emphasises a conceptual project sequence of Inputs, Activities, Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts. Each of these is distinct. Each can be evaluated and monitored using both quantitative and qualitative measures. '*Inputs*', for example, may include time, money, staff and facilities but also less tangible human assets such as commitment, enthusiasm and a shared vision. '*Activities*' and '*outputs*' are usually directly linked and involve easily countable things such as the number of hours of training delivered, of metres of wall rebuilt or of individuals involved.

'*Outcomes*' by contrast, are longer-term benefits measured in terms of their consequences or effects on an area or for people and can often only be captured qualitatively. '*Impacts*' relate to the project '*vision for change*' defined as '*the outcomes less what would have happened anyway*'. The guidance describes evaluation as '*telling your project story*' – '*looking back on what you did, and finding out how well it worked*'. The 'story' is an account of the project '*in the form of a narrative or a theory of how change happens*' it '*avoids getting bogged down in process and jargon*' and '*avoids falling into the familiar trap of... counting things just because they are easy to count, even though those things may be less useful for telling the whole story*'. The guidance emphasises that evaluation is a learning as well as an

ⁱ Available on-line at www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources

ⁱⁱ Key elements of this guidance were distilled in an introduction to evaluation⁽¹⁹⁾ mainly aimed at applicants to grant programmes up to £50,000 issued in Spring 2009.

accounting process – it *'has two purposes – one is about proving, the other is about improving'*⁽¹⁶⁾. It should be an integral part of every scheme, built in from the start, and it should be fun.

The in-project monitoring reports required by HLF *'only deal with the financial details of project spend and whether the planned implementation of capital works and activities is on track'* At the end of the project however, HLF will require an evaluation report that *'compiles quantitative and qualitative evidence to tell the story of your project and which makes a comparison with the aspirations first laid out in your application'*; 10% of grant monies is withheld until this is received. Appendix A provides a specimen structure for an end-of-project evaluation report, together with indicative contents and suggestions as to where the information required could come from. In addition an evaluation questionnaire will be sent within a year of project completion, requesting quantitative information that matches the data requested at the second round of the application. For larger projects involving capital works the same information will be requested at intervals of five and ten years after project completion. The guidance suggests that the costs of evaluation should be included in the budget and might amount to up to 5% of total project costs. However HLF's contribution is limited to 1% of project costs for grants of £1m or more (and up to 3% for grants below this figure). It suggests that external help might be commissioned for evaluation, although the final evaluation report should be written by the grantee.

The guidance provides useful hints for 'telling your project story', starting with the assertion that *'All good evaluations will incorporate data collected before and after a project has been delivered, to see whether and to what extent a change has taken place'*. *'Indeed it is likely that the collection of baseline information will be part of the process that leads you to identify the need that your project is addressing, and therefore to decide on the details of the project plan'*⁽¹⁶⁾. Useful evaluations also need *'to be shaped by four key principles.*

- *Look beyond outputs – though they are a good foundation the numbers alone do not tell the whole story...*
- *Tell the story... be clear about the link between activities and actions and the change that they are designed to bring about...*
- *Involve people in your evaluation and make it a conversation... rather than a mere extraction of data from people.*
- *Choose indicators that matter... indicators... can be a combination of numbers and descriptions of people's experience, and must be chosen based on what people associated or benefiting from the project have identified as important to measure, and not just what is easiest to count'*⁽¹⁶⁾

A number of tools for evaluation are suggested including postal, telephone and on-site surveys, interviews and focus groups, together with advice on sampling, statistics, and avoiding bias. A list of example questions relating to outcomes in learning/understanding heritage, perceptions and attitudes, developing skills & is provided for use in semi-structured questionnaires, focus groups and interviews with visitors, volunteers and trainees. Activity based research is particularly recommended as a tool for engaging people most closely involved with projects, including project managers, staff, partners, funders and volunteers. Detailed instructions are provided for the New Economics Foundation's *'Prove It!'* handbookⁱ including a 'Storyboard Exercise' and a 'Poster Evaluation Exercise' (Appendices C and D). Finally a long list of links is provided to a bewildering variety of organisations providing guidance on evaluation, from Association of Inland Navigation Authorities through several New Economics Foundation sites, to the Wildlife Trusts' guidance on evaluation and monitoring for people and wildlife work.

ⁱ www.proveandimprove.org

3.2. External commissioned evaluations

Evaluation of HLF funded programmes has in general been based primarily on external commissioned reports, mostly involving the collection of new data. To date there have been no such targeted evaluations of the LP programme. LP (and their earlier AS) have in general been excluded from evaluation studies commissioned to date by HLF. The Ipsos MORI aggregated completions for 2004-7⁽²⁰⁾ and the BOP Consulting study of the social impact of participation⁽²¹⁾ were restricted to the 'Your Heritage' and 'Heritage Grants' programme. Recent studies on the economic impact of HLF projects⁽²²⁾ did not include LP schemes and no LP schemes or projects featured in the visitor surveys or household surveys conducted for the 2005-8 BDRG 'Impact of HLF funding' study⁽²³⁾ or in the 2007 ECOTEC 'Impacts of Funding Heritage' study⁽²⁴⁾.

It is our view that robust retrospective evaluation of LP outcomes as a whole would be methodologically problematic, costly, and is unlikely to be productive, at least within the confines of HLF normal annual spend. However where external studies are commissioned across a range of HLF grant programmes (for example on specific aspects such as socioeconomic benefits, or volunteering) these studies might usefully include selected LP schemes or sample projects within them (see section 7). To date only one Area Scheme, has been included in such a study; the Chichester Harbour 'Rhythms of the Tide' project (Box e) - was included (and praised as a model) in the 2008 evaluation of conservation outcomes of HLF funded projects⁽²⁵⁾.

Recommendation 2. Sample LP schemes or sample projects across LP schemes should be included in any future external research commissioned by HLF across a range of HLF grant programmes.

Box e. Rhythms of the Tide Area Partnership Scheme

Half of Chichester Harbour's AONB is tidal water known primarily for sailing, but it is surrounded by dunes, mud flats and saltmarsh, and is an important habitat for overwintering birds. The area is likely to be significantly affected by climate change. The AONB unit's work includes a managed realignment programme to create 22 hectares of new intertidal habitats, based on a computer model capable of predicting water levels over the course of the next century. The Rhythms of the Tide project has facilitated this work but also incorporated cultural heritage and provided new access for those of all abilities to enjoy the area. This has included an additional three kilometres of wheelchair paths, with two all terrain wheelchairs, established a 16 kilometre long cycle and wheelchair path, linking Chichester and the coast at West Wittering, built a new pontoon, and purchased a solar powered boat, the Solar Heritage, to provide educational trips around the Harbour, with easy access arrangements for less able passengers.

'Rhythms of the Tide' was cited as a model of a successful HLF funded scheme in a 2008 HLF study of conservation outcomes of HLF funded projects⁽²⁵⁾. The AONB maintains detailed visitor data and some socioeconomic information on local residents and businesses which could be used as a basis for monitoring the long-term benefits of HLF funding; however for the AONB the importance of the 'Rhythms of the Tide' project is the way that it complemented their other management activities, greatly enhancing the outcomes for wildlife and people alike across the whole area.

3.3. Internal evaluation and reporting

HLF's main emphasis in evaluation should be on new and developing schemes. In our view, the most effective evaluation is likely to be that carried out scheme by scheme by LPs themselves in collaboration with HLF advisers. Output data will reveal some long-term benefits, however additional information will need to be collected to allow evaluation of the less tangible benefits. The diversity of schemes and their projects means that some guidance from HLF will be required if data is to be comparable between schemes or useful for assessment of

the benefits of the LP programme as a whole. The results could then be validated by independent consultants (across the LP programme as a whole); this could involve 'ground truthing' but not the collection of fresh data.

Recommendation 3. HLF's main emphasis in evaluation should be on new and developing schemes. The most effective evaluation is likely to be that carried out scheme by scheme by LPs themselves in collaboration with HLF advisers.

New procedures and revised criteria for LP grant applications were introduced in December 2009. The major change has been in the application and approval procedure, particularly in the requirement for a Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP). The LCAP is intended as a stand-alone document, 'owned' by the LP which is intended to guide the delivery phase. In place of the previous (competitive) Stage 2 Application, progress (via 'Round 2') to the implementation phase is assured provided a satisfactory LCAP is submitted. Evaluation is clearly specified as an integral element of the LCAP as a criterion for confirmation of grant ⁽²⁶⁾. However, although second round application notes require the LCAP to include a section on evaluation, guidance on its content is restricted to a few sentences which direct the applicant to the generic guidance ⁽²⁷⁾. Beyond the generic HLF guidance it is left to the applicants to say what their evaluation measures should comprise ^(15, 27).

Recommendation 4. Guidance is required from HLF regarding the way in which evaluation should be incorporated in the LCAP including the collection of baseline data during Phase 1 in order to allow evaluation of intangible benefits.

The emphasis in HLF's generic guidance on the importance of qualitative as well as quantitative data, on the need to distinguish between activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts ⁽¹⁶⁾, on collecting baseline information at the start of all projects, on integrating evaluation and monitoring into delivery, and the suggestions for helping to collect information on intangibles are valuable. Those of our consultees that had used the new guidance (mainly advisers involved with new Schemes) have found its contents helpful. But the new guidance now needs to be appropriately implemented in the specific context of LP schemes. Little guidance - other than informal advice from HLF advisers and Grants Officers - has yet been offered to LPs on how they should plan their own evaluations.

The new guidance also states that all funded schemes must submit on completion an **evaluation report** *'that compiles quantitative (e.g. numbers of activities, visits etc.) and qualitative evidence (e.g. personal accounts of participants) to tell the story of the project, and which makes a comparison with the aspirations first laid out in your application...'* ⁽¹⁹⁾ The final 10% of HLF grant is retained until LPs have submitted this report. Grantees are also (within one year of project completion) required to complete a follow-up **evaluation questionnaire** to capture quantitative outputs. For LPS this is likely to be based on the output data proforma, summarized in Table iv.

Third party recipients of grant for major works are required to commit to a 10-year management agreement and current arrangements for monitoring state that for larger projects involving capital works the same information (as required in the completion report) will be requested (presumably from LP lead bodies) at intervals of five and ten years after project completion, however it is not clear whether this applies only to major works or to data on the LP scheme as a whole. Either way it is likely in our view that meaningful evaluation (beyond compliance) five or ten years after the partnership will rarely be realised. It is likely that too much else will have happened subsequently and too many externalities come into play.

Box f. The Blaenavon ‘Forgotten Landscape’ Partnership Scheme

‘Forgotten Landscapes’ is a partnership led by the Gwent Wildlife Trust and Torfaen County Borough Council, covering some 40 square kilometres around the Blaenavon World Heritage Site, an area which never really recovered from the depression of the 1920s and 1930s and is seen by many as a derelict and neglected wasteland.

The Partnership aims to engage local people to restore of buildings and habitats conserve the distinct heritage of the landscape, provide training in countryside skills, boost the local economy and tourism, and highlight the connection between industry, society and the natural environment.

For their Stage 2 submission to HLF in December 2009, the LP decided to produce a Landscape Conservation Action Plan. This required a section on evaluation and in addition to output measures. The Partnership has had to consider what indicators might be used to capture longer term benefits. Few details are given in the LCAP, however and the LP will need to consider carefully what the long term benefits might be and how these can be captured.

The new guidance only applies to schemes approved after December 2009. Grantees already in the development phase, (most of whom will be submitting their Stage 2 Applications in the first half of 2010) have been given the option of sticking with the old guidance or following the new guidance, i.e. producing an LCAP. At least one Stage 2 applicant has chosen not to do an LCAP because they were too far down the road of preparing documents to start again but has produced a separate ‘evaluation plan’ to accompany their Stage 2 application (Box g).

Box g. The Applecross LPS Evaluation Plan

The Applecross LPS Evaluation Plan is in many respects exemplary. For each project, outputs and outcomes are distinguished and for each of these, monitoring methods and the responsibility for gathering data are identified.

However the majority of the outcomes identified are project specific. No outcomes are identified which are generic to the LP Scheme as a whole. Few of the outcomes would lend themselves to follow-up (post Scheme) monitoring except though relatively expensive longitudinal studies of the individuals involved.

3.4. The role of advisers and HLF guidance

In all of the above, we believe the role of HLF mentors and monitors is important. HLF monitors are already seen as the ‘eyes and ears’ of HLF on the ground; mentors could perform a more proactive role (as many already do) beyond ensuring that HLF procedures are followed. In particular they could act – in parallel with clearer guidance documents from HLF – as a means of communicating best practice, including ensuring that baseline information is collected which will feed in to evaluation of longer term impacts.

Recommendation 5. Good instances of evaluation should be promulgated either direct to LPs or via Regional Officers and HLF advisers; Debate over these examples should be encouraged so that their limitations as well as their strengths are acknowledged.

The revised generic HLF guidance on evaluation provides a sound basis, but needs to be developed and implemented in the context of LP schemes. As with the present Output Data collection, there is a case for using a standard structure for longer-term evaluation, linked to the LCAP.

Recommendation 6. Use existing structures for monitoring and evaluation, e.g. data collection through advisers/ monitors/ mentors. As with the present Output Data collection, there is a case for using a standard structure for longer-term evaluation, linked to the LCAP

Selected quotations from our consultation:

'There are lots of project management models, very few evaluation models.' (HLFO9)

'Evaluation is very hard to get funding for afterwards. It needs to be built into the scheme from the start.' (HLFO9)

'When a scheme ends HLF tends to close the file and that's the end of that.' (AMM7)

'HLF never allow sufficient resources to get people thinking about outcomes and legacy.' (AMM5)

'Evaluation needs baseline studies otherwise it's anecdotal. We need more time in the 1st year to set up monitoring, carry out surveys so there's a record at the start, during and later. This is difficult as it needs money although community involvement is important.' (LPM19)

'The best way of monitoring would be where outcomes beyond the life of the LPS are clearly specified. At the moment HLF does not require them – merely a 10-year maintenance agreement on capital works, nothing else. How can you monitor 'impact' if you have not been clear what you wanted to achieve, what those intended impacts were?' (LPM15)

'HLF should take more steps to help sharing of this sort, including 3rd party agreements – we need to have a library of useful documents.' (LPM20)

'although HLF shadowed us very closely throughout the project to keep an eye on budgets and outputs, their requirements for evaluation and mature reflection - or even a decent end-of-project report - were surprisingly absent... they drove us so hard during the project that they didn't feel able to make any more demands on us at the end!' (ASM1)

[LP schemes are] *'a massive undertaking over a rather long period. 'Like a supertanker; once got going, difficult to change direction. Expert advice is needed earlier in the development of the schemes... It takes unbelievable guts to take one on.'* (AMM2)

'A very important feature of LPS working is lobbying, persuading, influencing, has a great impact which could be a great target to aim for if thought of in terms of policy for e.g. local councillors.' (AMM2)

'Visitor surveys are costly – they need to be part of the project design, not put in half-way through.' (AMM14)

*'A better way often would be to sit down themselves with a facilitator to go through this themselves... really think about who are the stakeholders, who are the beneficiaries, who should we be talking to now, who should we go back to in 10 years time to ask **'what difference did this make'?**'* (AMM5)

'The understanding in the development phase that they refine the landscape assessment needs to be emphasised.' (AMM5)

'HLF should be top slicing funding to put together data in a usable form.' (AMM12)

'A menu of examples could be useful.' (PLM5)

'The application process needs to go beyond box ticking and button pushing. Asking applicants to think about monitoring is one way to do it.' (PLM5)

'...what does HLF do with the data it collects?' (AMM12)

4. Output data, outcomes and legacy

HLF presently collects output data from LPs through a self-completed Excel proforma distributed to all LP managers which inputs into an output data spreadsheet. In the future the post-completion follow-up **evaluation questionnaire** is likely to be similar to the output data form spreadsheet presently in use. Consultation is presently under way which will lead to modifications to this form in the next round of data collection although it is yet to be decided whether the task will continue to be contracted out or undertaken in house.

4.1. Output data categories

Table iv summarises the data categories which were collected in the last (early 2009) round of output data collection ⁽¹²⁾.

Table iv. Output data categories (2009)	
Output data category	Examples of data collected. Data collected against i) Predicted, ii) Achieved in each instance.
1) Basic data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land area covered by each LP, and LP distribution by country and region &c.
2) Advice & Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 categories of data collected including: Landowners/farmers engaged, Wildlife surveys undertaken, Management plans written (no/ha), Successful agro-environment grant applications made/facilitated (no/ha/£)
3) Biodiversity & Landscape Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 39 habitat categories including: Lowland calcareous grassland, Restoration of PAWS (ha), Ponds (no), Rivers, Hedgerows (km), data collected from each against 'Maintain extent/ Achieve condition/ Restore/ Expand'. 3 'Other Priority Habitats' - Dry stone walls, Fencing (Km) and Individual trees (no); data collected against 'Repair/Restore' and 'New'.
4) Built Heritage Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designations: 10 categories including: Conservation Area, Listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monument; data collected against Recorded/ Repaired/ Restored/ Conserved/ Interpreted/ Re-Used Features: 11 categories including: Village Hall, Commercial, Domestic/residential, Church/chapel data collected against Recorded/ Repaired/ Restored/ Conserved/ Interpreted/ Re-Used
5) Industrial Maritime & Transport Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 categories including: Communications, Food processing, Mining and extractive, Bridge/viaduct, Ship/boat. Water supply/drainage. Data collected against Recorded/ Repaired/ Restored/ Conserved/ Interpreted/ Re-Used
6) Museums Libraries & Archives Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 categories e.g. Archive, Gallery, Library, Painting; Sound and film. Data collected against Catalogued/ Repaired/ Restored/ Exhibited/ Interpreted/ Stored.
7) Participation & Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation: 7 categories e.g. Primary schools worked with, Colleges/universities worked with, Youth groups worked with, Community consultation events held. Data collected against Number / Beneficiaries Learning: 19 categories e.g. Learning resources/packs, Outreach visits to schools, Vocational learning sessions for pupils/students, Family learning activities, Teacher training, Oral history projects, Open days, Exhibitions/displays Tours/walks for disabled people. Data collected against Number / Beneficiaries.

<p>8) Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area & linear access e.g. Footpaths, Cycle tracks, Pathway accessible for disabled people (km); <i>7 categories</i>. Data collected against New/ Improved. • Trails, projects and equipment e.g. Nature Trails, Heritage Trails, Erosion control projects: <i>7 categories</i>. Data collected against New/ Improved. • Trails, projects and equipment: <i>2 categories</i> - Guided walk projects and Health projects. Data collected against Number / Beneficiaries. • Intellectual access: <i>10 categories</i> including: Interpretation boards, Leaflets, Websites, Blogs Community archives. Data collected against New/ Improved.
<p>9) Visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not reported: only 7 / 27 schemes provided visitor data;
<p>10) Volunteers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2 categories</i>; Number of volunteers involved in the project and Number of volunteer hours delivered. Data collected as total numbers only.
<p>11) Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTE jobs i) created, ii) safeguarded <i>each 4 categories</i> (Conservation & heritage; Learning, interpretation and outreach, Project management and administration, Other). Data collected against Internal/ External.
<p>12) Training & Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • i) Land Managers & Rural Businesses, ii) Volunteers, <i>each 8 categories</i> including: Land and habitat management, Rural skills & heritage conservation, Tourism and business development, Apprenticeships, Work placements. Data collected against Courses / People Trained.

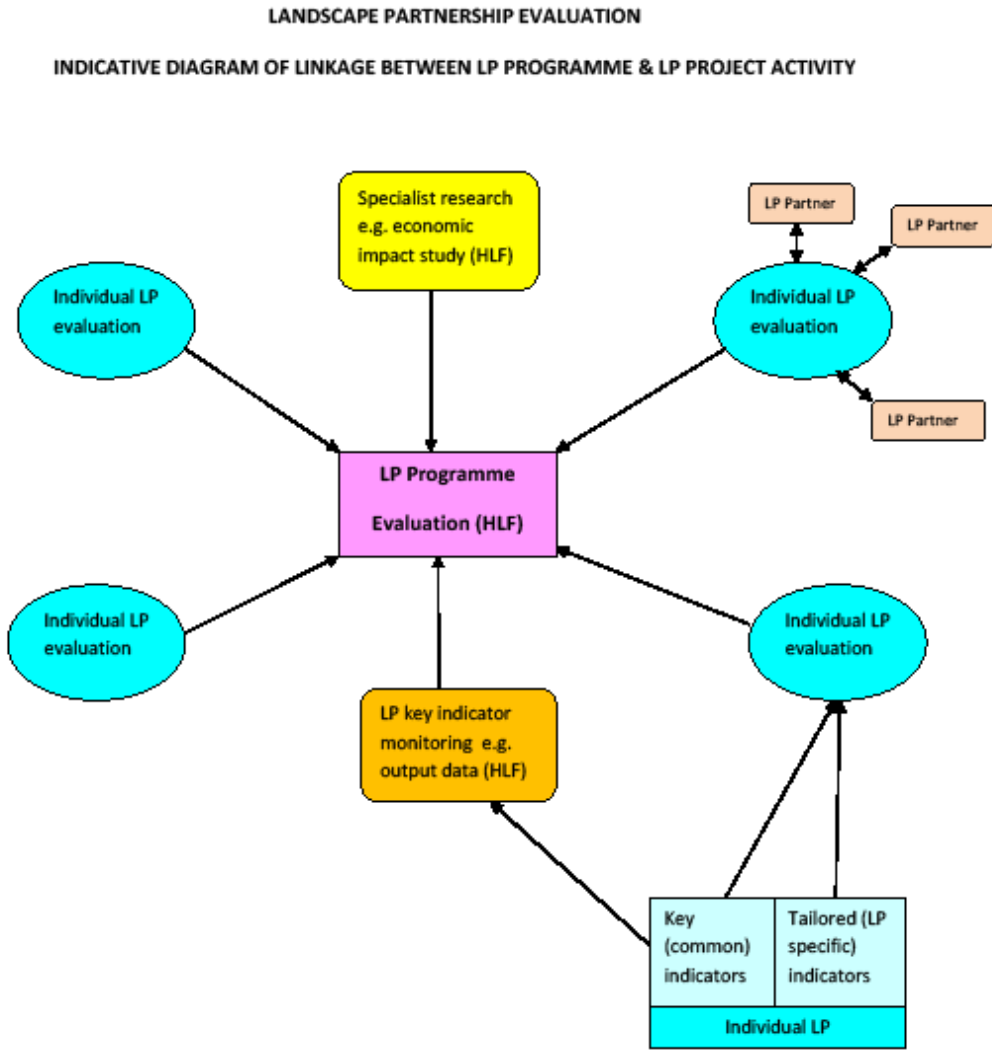
4.2. Output data methodology and conclusions

Collection of the output data has entailed significant difficulties for HLF or its contractors. The 2006 round identified *'considerable variability in the availability and quality of output data from schemes. It is apparent that while some schemes have invested time and effort in good recording and management systems, a number have not. The result is that the aggregated outputs should be treated with caution'*⁽²⁸⁾. It is clear that some of these problems remain. In the 2009 data collection round despite considerable effort, returns were received from only 20 of the then 'live' 27 AS and LP schemes. Data for the remaining 7 had to be estimated or extracted from other documents and data. Consultants concluded that the lack of standardised monitoring and reporting systems meant that the data collected should be *'regarded as best estimates rather than being in any way definitive'*⁽¹²⁾.

Output data is intended primarily a measure of activity rather than outcome, but some of it captures benefits that would be expected to endure beyond the end of funding. Most of this is to do with works to landscape features (built and habitats). Little if any data is relevant to the 'landscape hypothesis' particularly as regards participation, perception, interaction of landscape features, integrated management, cross-sector learning or enduring socio-economic benefit.

Output data is important to measure 'delivery' across the spectrum of LP programme spend and should continue to be collected, probably at the same frequency as at present (i.e. not every year) and at the conclusion of each LP scheme. However if there is additional data relating to the 'landscape hypothesis' or useful for baseline monitoring data of long-term outcomes it would be sensible to collect this at the same time.

In the case of LP, this 'output data' set is currently much more extensive than for Heritage Grants, and has been collected more frequently. The first round of output data collection reported that *'schemes have tended to provide relatively few, quantifiable output targets for their schemes, contrasting with the wider, more comprehensive reporting of output achievements. Without wishing to play down the success of these schemes, this can give the impression of excellent performance against targets when, in fact, in many cases, it is a reflection of achievements being recorded without there being corresponding, pre-set targets'*⁽²⁸⁾



Paul Silcock, Cumulus
12.3.10

Figure ii. Landscape Partnership programme evaluation: indicative diagram of linkage between LP programme and project activityⁱ

ⁱ By kind permission of Paul Silcock, Cumulus Consultants.

4.3. **Modification of output data guidance**

Figure ii above indicates in schematic form the present arrangements for LP monitoring and evaluation. Output data collection against key indicators provides a measure of LP activity and achievements. Specialist research provides in principle the possibility of evaluating longer-term outcomes though as noted in Section 3.2 above this has yet to be commissioned for the LP programme; moreover the complexity of most LP schemes and the intangible nature of many intended LP outcomes mean that retrospective evaluation is methodologically problematic, particularly in the absence of baseline data.

It is now generally accepted that monitoring of LP schemes should be built in from the start. All LP schemes are now familiar with the output data proforma and new schemes coming on stream will doubtless be made aware of its existence. This should hopefully avoid the problem encountered with the two rounds of data collection to date where LP schemes had not previously collected the necessary data or had done so in a way which was not compatible with the requirements of the form and spreadsheet.

Consultation on modifications to the output data form are now complete and although we have not had sight of the revised form, we understand that this will in the future include provision for LP schemes to add additional categories of data of their own where they think this might be useful for monitoring purposes.

At the same time Output targets are now beginning to be specified in advance and the requirement for an LCAP should encourage this; but the requirement needs to be made specific. It would be very helpful for evaluation if outcomes could also be specified more clearly, and targets given where appropriate (against baseline data, where possible).

Recommendation 7. Output data collection should be maintained at approximately the same intervals as at present. Modifications to the data collection proforma should include the possibility of LPs entering scheme-specific additional data. This should be defined in advance in discussion with HLF, monitors, or consultants. The requirement for identification of clear output targets in the LCAP should be made specific.

Box h. Life into Landscape Area Partnership Scheme, South Devon

'Life into Landscapes' was a programme of activities to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and rich heritage of South Devon. Between 2003 and 2007, 50 green lanes were restored to encourage walkers and riders to explore the countryside, 23 new recreational paths were created, safely linking places of natural and historic interest. Communities and experts were brought together through 12 parish appraisals, researching and celebrating their local cultural heritage; 217 farmers and landowners were provided with conservation advice and 116 capital grants to conserve and enhance landscape heritage were secured. Several hundred people from rural South Hams and adjoining urban centres of Plymouth and Torbay have been involved in programmes of environmental activities. It won a major award in the *2005 First Choice Responsible Tourism Awards* (organised in association with [The Times](#)).

The legacy of partnership working is evident in the continued collaboration of the partners. Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and South Devon AONB are presently commissioning a landscape study of area around Brixham mapping development pressures. Working with a disadvantaged community in Plymouth Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and BTCV set up a training pilot which has led to further work later. 'Stepping Stones to Nature' is an example of a project which had to change when funding stopped. It used minibuses to take excluded urban groups to the countryside. This was costly and the emphasis now is on work on local green areas and corridors and countryside access using public transport. However in addition to its direct benefits to participants during the life of the scheme, the 'Stepping Stones' programme created an awareness of the potential benefits of access to nature and a demand for provision that has contributed significantly to these new initiatives.

Box i. Discover Bute Landscape Partnership Scheme

Bute is a small island 15 miles long by 5 miles wide, with approximately 7,000 inhabitants. The dynastic succession of Stuarts since the 13th Century has resulted in extensive estate influence in all aspects of island life, but particularly in land use patterns and architecture. Bute's accessibility and proximity to Glasgow encouraged its development as a Victorian holiday island which has resulted in a remarkable assemblage of architecture in Rothesay, Ascog and Port Bannatyne, now Scotland's largest Outstanding Conservation Area. Other designations include National Scenic Area, SSSIs, an outstanding designed landscape (Inventory Site), all overlapping the LP area.

Bute has close and ongoing links with the rest of the world through emigration over many years celebrated in 2009; as the 'Year of Homecoming'. The Sons & Daughters of Bute project has been involved in filming Rothesay residents to collect their memories through an oral history project; this is linked with a social inclusion project called 'Step-Up' which involves young people and other excluded individuals in the filming, editing, creating of DVDs and in placing the work on the website .

The LP scheme links with an HLF Townscape Heritage Initiative in Rothesay, an economically depressed town. One of the LP projects has been restoration of Thom's Cuts – a major feat of hydraulic engineering which once supplied water to Bute's textile industry. Another project is the restoration of the old Tramway, disused since the late 1930s, so that people can walk safely from Port Bannatyne on the east coast to Ettrick Bay on the west. Working with the RCAHMS Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland over 600 known and new archaeological sites have been recorded in seven weeks of survey work. As part of the Archaeological Research Programme (ARP) the Marquis of Bute will fund four individual bursaries for archaeology students to develop research projects which focus on the archaeology of the Bute. Long term legacy is dependent on the Mount Stuart Trust, the land owner for 90% of the LP area which has committed £100k as an 'In-Kind' contribution for the maintenance of the projects.

Since the launch of the LP scheme, a major development on the island has been the formation of the Bute Community Land Company to purchase the Rhubodach Forest in the northern part of the area which has been put up for sale. This will protect an important area of natural and cultural heritage and provide an additional community and visitor resource, complementing the impacts of the 'Discover Bute' LPS. However this will also make it difficult to evaluate the achievement of the LP in isolation as the achievements and outcomes of the two initiatives will be linked, as they are to the THI scheme in Rothesay.

Selected quotations from our consultation:

'Outputs might be few but the outcomes may be many e.g. volunteering. Targeting new volunteers in inner city areas with a partner organisation means people learn lots of soft skills (confidence, team work) or apprenticeships finish with pieces of paper. Ideally it is hoped they work in the area, e.g. in conservation work as contractors and employ others. If people are still working a few years after the scheme ends, that's a good outcome.' (LPM19)

'Where monitoring works well, why change it? Monitoring reports are narrative. OK?' (HLFO9)

'Most of the team are retired gentlemen! This does not appear on your Socio Economic Profile. On average 15 people turn up every Friday to work on countryside tasks. It is a major success... that we have such a strong volunteer group who are now very skilled in what they do.' (LPM08)

'We found the output data sheet difficult to fill in – trying to be all things to all people, to squeeze the world into a ball.' (LPM17)

'We need to be careful not to drown people in paperwork. Monitoring forms should be flexible to be adapted specifically for each scheme.' (HLFO9)

'Most of the topics you need to investigate are by nature subjective, philosophical and without hard boundaries. They do not lend themselves to any meaningful analysis by metrics. None of the LPs I am monitoring seem to be collecting data which would relate directly to the kind of questions you have been set.' (AMM10)

'If you do not have an objective understanding of the baseline condition, then of course you cannot measure change.' (AMM10)

'Community participation is a good thing to do in itself not necessary to justify and push people into producing meaningless data.' (AMM2)

'Difficult to disaggregate impact of single projects from the overall scheme impact.' (AMM14)

'First round applications should ask not just 'to what extent could this project contribute to the 4 outcomes' but also how those outcomes could be measured. Outcomes need to be specified in the 1st round applications.' (AMM4)

'Is not just the money, it's the energy.' (AMM5)

5. Evaluating Intangibles

To be considered for funding applicants to the Landscape Partnerships programme must be able to show that their scheme will deliver benefits balanced across four programme areas:

1. *Conserve or restore the built and natural features that create the historic landscape character.*
2. *Increase community participation in local heritage.*
3. *Increase access to and learning about the landscape area and its heritage.*
4. *Increase training opportunities in local heritage skills.*⁽²⁹⁾

The outcomes of conservation and restoration activity to the natural and built heritage features can in general be regarded as 'tangible'; they remain as landscape features and their condition may be monitored subsequent to the ending of funding – often routinely in schemes that are unconnected with HLF. The long-term outcomes of the remaining criteria (2, 3, and 4) however – community participation, access and learning, and training opportunity – are more complex, include 'intangibles', and are less easily evaluated. In the research brief for the present contract, HLF identified some of the elements as follows:

- *'The extent of community participation in projects within the Landscape Partnership and whether the 'landscape' has influenced participation and whether the LPs influence the 'perception' of landscape by individuals;*
- *The degree to which the Landscape Partnerships are able to integrate social, economic and environmental objectives;*
- *The extent to which the various components and functions of landscape are interacting and being tackled holistically (as intended by the ELC) within an LP area;*
- *The extent of partnership working and cross-sector learning between different organisations operating within an LP area, for example, organisations working in the built heritage and natural heritage; and*
- *The extent of additional funding and other benefits generated through delivering through Landscape Partnerships.'*⁽²⁾

Several of these areas are complex. A recent paper from the Institute for Voluntary Action Research contrasts the growing emphasis on impact in government policy with the conceptual obstacles to measurement in specific contexts⁽³⁰⁾. Community benefits in particular are difficult to define and to measure. Quantification of many of the dimensions of interest, particularly those of human and social capital (such as community engagement, partnership working, organisational learning, shared understanding of and commitment to landscape meanings and values &c) raises significant methodological issues. Some of these are addressed below.

5.1. Access, participation, perception, understanding, engagement and access

Access (physical and intellectual) is a required and core element of all LP schemes. Output data effectively captures many of the benefits to physical access, for example the degree that new or improved footpaths, cycle routes &c are likely to last beyond the end of LP funding. Intellectual access is more difficult to estimate because the 'benefits' of interpretive boards, leaflets and CD-ROMs are varied and rarely subject to assessment (in part because of the methodological difficulties of doing this); output data here relates almost entirely to inputs rather than outcomes.

In respect of both physical and intellectual access the absence of basic visitor statistics from all but two of the schemes surveyed would seem to be a matter of concern. The existence of such information makes follow-up studies potentially feasible and small sample follow-up studies would make it possible to draw conclusions about the impact of schemes by extrapolation.

Recommendation 8. HLF (directly and through its advisors) should require the collection and submission of visitor data before and after implementation wherever this is appropriate.

All of the 20 current LP schemes examined had produced (usually through commissions to external consultants) audience development plans. These were judged (both by our consultees and ourselves) to be of variable quality. The best of them succeeded well in linking an analysis of the heritage to proposals for ways in which different constituencies might be engaged; the worst appeared to do little more than rehearse standard lists of potential audiences and to offer a range of standard options for interpretive or educational activities. In very few cases were there clear recommendations for evaluation and monitoring. The new requirement for an LCAP should provide an incentive for such plans to identify potential audiences more clearly and where possible to suggest targets. However such plans are commissioned early in the life of LP schemes, often before the appointment of scheme managers and clear guidance from HLF would help to make clear what such plans might contain. For example it is important that LP schemes avoid targets for their own sake and that those targets that are adopted are chosen carefully. A PAC hearing in January 2009 censured the DCMS for saddling English Heritage with an arbitrary target of increasing visits to historic sites from underrepresented groups, on the grounds that a high proportion of the population already visited such sites and that most of those who didn't said that they were not interested in heritage; a more important priority would be to reverse the decline in educational visits to such sites⁽³¹⁾. In the context of LP, blanket objectives (beyond the four programme areas specified in LP application guidance) have been properly avoided by HLF, but clearer outcomes related to individual schemes and projects, incorporated in the LCAP, would assist monitoring and evaluation.

Recommendation 9. HLF (directly and through its advisors) should provide additional tailored advice on the structure and content of Audience Development plans and other commissioned studies which feed in to the LCAP.

Perception and participation constitute rather different elements in LPs although they are often conflated. 'Participation' manifests itself primarily as an activity whereas 'perception' has to do both with understanding and with the values attached to that which is understood and can be captured primarily only by qualitative measures that are likely to be specific to the context. A 2008 BOP study of HLF volunteering⁽²¹⁾ was based on a sample of just over 200 volunteers from 23 Your Heritage and Heritage Grants projects. It provided useful data on the demographics and motivations of volunteers and although the study could usefully be replicated on LP schemes, equivalent data could be collected by LP schemes themselves relatively easily, however this would require coordination and guidance. The BOP study was carried out whilst the schemes were in operation so provided no longer term information about 'outcomes' for volunteers lasting beyond HLF funding; if respondents' contact details were available a more valuable study in this respect would be to repeat such surveys following the ending of the HLF project. If 'baseline data' of this sort were to be collected (on volunteers, on local residents or on visitors) by LPs themselves it would be important for HLF to provide survey guidelines so that results were comparable between LPs and could be aggregated over the programme as a whole.

Recommendation 10. HLF could usefully encourage simple 'in house' surveys of volunteering and community participation and provide guidelines as to how these might be conducted.

One change in the objectives of LP between 2004 and 2009 is the replacement of the third LP aim '*To conserve and celebrate the cultural associations and activities of the landscape area*'⁽³⁾ with that of '*Increase community participation in local heritage*'.⁽²⁹⁾ 'Celebration' is an activity rather than an outcome although the act of celebrating might well influence perception. Our consultation revealed that the requirement to 'celebrate' was felt to have on occasion encouraged the inclusion of somewhat contrived 'events' which might amount to little more than a confected pastiche of heritage. This was particularly a potential criticism of 'public' events (rather than, for example, activities for school children, where it was felt that school teachers

were the appropriate arbiters of content and technique) especially where professional groups had been paid to stage or facilitate a pageant which had only a tenuous connection with the 'heritage' to which they were supposedly linked.

One respondent pointed out that 'perception' and 'understanding' can sometimes be influenced in unforeseen and perhaps unintended ways and (as recognised by HLF in the case of slavery), 'heritage' may not always be something to be 'celebrated'. In one LP location dominated by a single landowner, one project to 'celebrate' the family's historic connections with the area was dropped, not because of opposition in principle (though it is likely that this existed) but because the family trust itself decided that the proposed exhibition was inappropriate.

Recommendation 11. Baseline studies of perception of landscape by local residents and/or visitors need to be conducted at an early stage in delivery; as with participation these could most usefully be carried out 'in house' by LPs themselves but simple guidelines are needed as to how these might be conducted.

The maxim 'history is found, heritage forged'ⁱ informed some but not all of the approaches to public engagement in the schemes examined. Some of the best projects were those where participation and learning were linked to a real change in understanding of local environmental history. Examples include archaeological or habitat surveys of the LP area involving local residents. Here there are likely to be multiple outcomes, from the generation of knowledge *per se* (measurable through research or other publications) to changes in participant's own understanding (best captured through narrative reports) to long-term voluntary engagement with survey or conservation work (which could be 'measured' given baseline data but which is probably far more effectively captured through individual narrative accounts).

Recommendation 12. HLF should encourage the collection of qualitative data by LPs themselves and its submission to HLF in an appropriate form with the final evaluation report.

5.2. Integration of social, economic and environmental objectives

LP applications are required to show a 'balance between the four objectives identified above and to that extent the integration of 'social, economic and environmental' is built in to the objectives of all LP schemes. Individual projects, however, are likely to focus more on one than another aspect. Judgements about the degree to which social, economic and environmental objectives are realised in an integrated manner across the LP scheme as a whole therefore relate at least in part to the degree to which the various projects themselves are linked or integrated. In respect of project objectives this exists *de facto*, because they are all framed (for the purposes of an LP application) within the objectives of the scheme as a whole. In delivery, and (as with all judgements in this section, within the limits of our consultation) we have found that the degree to which this is the case depends very much on the skills and commitment of the LP manager and the focus of the LP Board.

Recommendation 13. Integration of social, economic and environmental objectives is an inherent feature of scheme delivery and is unlikely to be 'measurable' through indicators; a more robust approach is to assess scheme delivery across the four HLF LP programme objectives, and such an assessment is a feature of the best LP and monitor's reports. HLF could usefully specify this more clearly in its advice.

The trilogy of 'social, environmental and economic' is usually invoked as a characteristic of sustainability. It should perhaps be recorded here that the government's current sustainability policy has abandoned this framework because although earlier guidance '*stressed that these*

ⁱ 'Heritage is not the same as history. Heritage is history processed through mythology ideology, nationalism, local pride, romantic ideas or just plain marketing, into a commodity... Heritage is a product...' (32)

objectives had to be pursued at the same time, in practice, different agencies focused on those one or two most relevant to them. So a new purpose is needed...⁽³³⁾. The revised five (rather than three) legged characterisation of sustainability is more specific about environmental, economic and social objectives and adds 'good governance' and 'sound science' as key criteria (Box j). The objectives of LPs would appear in principle to address all of these criteria, in that 'science' (in terms of an analysis of the heritage resources) and governance (in respect of partnership working, which parallels the participatory management 'tier' in AONBs) are key elements.

Box j. The UK Government's five 'pillars' of sustainability.

- **Living Within Environmental Limits:** *'Respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity – to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.'*
- **Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society:** *'Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity for all.'*
- **Achieving a Sustainable Economy:** *'Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity and opportunities for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (Polluter Pays), and efficient resource use is incentivised.'*
- **Promoting Good Governance:** *'Actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people's creativity, energy, and diversity.'*
- **Using Sound Science Responsibly:** *'Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the Precautionary Principle) as well as public attitudes and values.'*⁽³³⁾

Recommendation 14. The current 'five elements' of the government's approach to sustainability (environmental limits, social justice, economic prosperity and opportunity, and sound science) could be used in parallel with HLF's own four LP programme priorities to assess schemes on the basis of their contribution across each of these areas.

5.3. Partnership working and cross-sector learning

Partnership working is an inherent feature of LP schemes. Lasting outcomes and cross-sector learning are likely to be reflected in the degree to which such working, initiated and developed by partnerships during their delivery phase, continues beyond the end of HLF funding. Our research has revealed contradictory evidence in this regard. Several respondents (including those who had been involved in some of the earlier AS) perceived that partnerships had disintegrated following scheme completion and that – whatever the change to individuals – institutionally things reverted to what they were before.

Box k. The Stour Valley Landscape Partnership

The Stour Valley is characterised by rolling farmland, riverside meadows, ancient woodlands and picturesque villages: the quintessential lowland English landscape and an inspiration to many writers and artists, immortalised by John Constable's paintings of Dedham Vale over 200 years ago. However the area's special qualities have been vulnerable to development and agricultural pressures. To address these the lower part of the valley was designated an AONB in 1970. At the same time the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Countryside Management Project was established and has now operated in the area for more than 20 years,



creating a culture of partnership working between local authorities, government agencies, community groups and local landowners.

When the CRoW Act 2000 set out a formal requirement for local authorities to prepare management plans for AONBs, the five local authorities that together cover the Dedham Vale AONB agreed that the AONB's Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) should produce the strategy on their behalf. The JAC took the decision to produce the Management Strategy for the whole of the Stour Valley area, not just for the AONB for which it is a legal requirement. This has brought together a wide range of key partners, including government agencies, national organisations, local landowners and community groups, who share a common commitment to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the area, and to deliver on the policies of the plan through an action plan which is reviewed annually. The advantages of the AONB management plan and process have been spread to the whole of the catchment - an area some three times larger than the AONB itself.

Projects within the Stour Valley Landscape Partnership have been deliberately located throughout the area in order to complement other Partnership management activities. They include habitat restoration, archaeological survey and visitor access. One novel project involves rotating photograph images from church towers which integrate community involvement, landscape and heritage. According to one assessment *'the Scheme almost undermines the AONB as a separate entity but immensely strengthens the whole area.'* Evaluation is planned for individual projects but it will be virtually impossible to assess the impact of the scheme as a whole in isolation from other initiatives. What is clear is that HLF funding is a major element in realising the role of protected landscapes in pioneering new initiatives in countryside management and rural governance that could be extended to the wider landscape.

5.4. Social and economic benefits

In contrast to the 'soft' benefits to human and social capital many dimensions of the social and economic benefits of LP working are in principle at least, susceptible to measurement. The economic impacts of project expenditure are very variable. For example projects dominated by the construction or restoration of physical structures tend to rely on purchased goods and services, whereas those involving habitat management or restoration, museum collections and gardens are more likely to involve direct staff and volunteer inputs. The

2009 GHK analysis of the economic impact of HLF projects ⁽²²⁾ covered a sample of 10 major schemes from most HLF funding streams but not LP (or THI). The study involved analysis of applications, business plans, financial reports and monitor reports held at HLF offices and estimates of impact were based on standard multipliers. Similar studies could be carried out on LP schemes, however they might be subject to the similar challenges to those made by a member of the Commons Public Accounts Committee at the 2007 HLF hearing of the 'trickle-down theory that *'any spending anywhere improves the lot of everyone'* ⁽¹⁴⁾. Measures based on spend do not capture the nature of economic benefits delivered or their distribution.

Moreover although the GHK analysis of invoices provided detailed information about project expenditures *'much less information was available about employment, training or visitor effects, and none about ongoing impacts'* ⁽²²⁾. It found it difficult to assess the extent to which additional economic activity following the end of a scheme could be attributed to HLF funding because it *'is always dependent on ongoing funding from other sources... HLF funding is often a necessary but not sufficient condition for these ongoing economic impacts'* ⁽²²⁾. Similar difficulties of estimating economic benefits would arise in the context of LP schemes and it is arguable that the costs of any robust study of the economic impacts of LP grant spend across the LP programme might outweigh the benefits. Although a focused economic analysis across the LP programme might not be justified it might be worth including an LP scheme (or selected projects across several schemes) in any future such evaluations.

Evaluation of social benefits of LP schemes is characterised by a similar lack of studies. The 2007 'Assessment of the Social Impact of Participation in HLF funded projects ⁽²¹⁾ (which was restricted to Your Heritage and Heritage Grants) focused on volunteering. There has been little, if any, assessment of the social benefits of HLF spend on any programme beyond this and no follow-up studies following the end of funding.

Recommendation 15. Sample LP schemes or sample projects across LP schemes should be included in any subsequent cross-programme social and economic research commissioned by HLF.

Some at least of the benefits of landscape and partnership working 'above and beyond' those that would arise from funding individual projects are likely not to be susceptible to quantification. One view holds that pinning down these 'intangibles' is key to any robust analysis of the 'landscape hypothesis'. A strongly expressed contrary view in our consultations to date is that the search for proxy quantitative measures of some of the key benefits of landscape and partnership working is likely to be fruitless and counterproductive. It has been argued that HLF should, rather, assert the equal importance of narrative evaluations and peer assessment of the impacts of LP working.

Recommendation 16. HLF should champion the status of qualitative evaluation – already recognised in its internal guidance - in its external promotional material.

5.5. Existing data collection with 'baseline' evaluation potential

Most LPs are in practice already collecting various kinds of data (beyond basic output data required by HLF) which might in principle be useful for outcome evaluation. However most of this is being collected without specific regard to its potential utility for evaluation (and would be difficult to replicate), is specific to individual projects (and therefore cannot be compared or aggregated, either within LP schemes or between them); much is collected in an unplanned and ad-hoc manner. Better planning and coordination would in principle at least allow this information to be used for post-scheme evaluation (and could improve its utility for LPs themselves during delivery. Examples of the range of information presently being collected are provided in Table v below; it seems likely that with guidance from HLF (to LPs and also to monitors and to HLF's own regional staff) such data collection could be put on a more systematic footing and would be of greater value for post-scheme evaluation.

Recommendation 17. HLF should produce and disseminate guidance and facilitate the sharing of best practice in the gathering of LP scheme and project specific data in such a form that it can be used for post-scheme evaluation.

Table v. Information (beyond Output Data) already being collected by LPs

LP Scheme	Example of information currently collected which could be used for evaluation of outcomes
	Landscape Partnerships with a Stage 2 greater than 1 yr
Kerridge Ridge & Ingersley Vale Project	Photographic records (before and after) have been collected for Volunteer Restoration Projects. An Ecological Appraisal Survey has used photography to record flora and fauna but the work had to be curtailed due to the outbreak of the foot and mouth epidemic.
Carving a Foundation for the Isle of Purbeck now the Purbeck Keystone Project	Frome Valley Winter Wetland Bird Surveys have been conducted since 2006 as part of the Frome Valley Water Level management project. Botanical Monitoring of the Purbeck Ridge in 2007 carried out by volunteer recorders has included setting up a baseline and recording from (14) rigid quadrats of rare, scarce and threatened plant species and mapping of selected butterfly food plants. Butterfly recording in 2007 and 2008 in collaboration with the Dorset Branch of Butterfly Conservation carried out by volunteers. This has greatly enhanced data already collected for the forthcoming Butterfly Atlas.
Neroche Project within the Blackdown Hills AONB	Data collected at events includes numbers of children and volunteers but no records of individuals which would allow longitudinal evaluation. However the LPS also collects individual records of trainees engaged in craft or skill learning as well as Forest School teacher training. This in principle could allow re-survey of the individuals concerned to assess lasting benefits.
Bassenthwaite Reflections	Details of volunteers and their activities in the two new recreation areas created through the LPS - Dubwath nature reserve and Masmill oakwoods - are being collected. This will enable subsequent collection of longitudinal data on benefits to participants.
Sulwath Connections - The Scottish Solway Coast and River Valleys *	The Conservation of Historic Churchyards project involves collaboration between Dumfries and Galloway Council, Historic Scotland and Solway Heritage to repair and consolidate the graveyards using a baseline survey of Council churches carried out in 1997/8 with up to date photographic and drawings surveys undertaken under the LPS. The LPS has also conducted 102 wildlife surveys.
The Dalriada Project	The Archaeology and Landscape project included a number of 'walk over' surveys of the key features of pre-forestry land use change and collation of the archival material. LPS has trained volunteers for the Black Grouse Habitat project to monitor population changes and habitat management success and also for the Biodiversity project.
Medway Gap 'Valley of Vision' Landscape Partnership	Kent Police as the lead partner of Securing the Landscape project collects data both routinely and specifically in relation to the project. They will continue with the project and data collection beyond the life of the LPS. The LPS also collects other data such as visitor numbers at events, and there is a potential use of future data collection relating to training. The River Warden scheme run by Medway Valley Countryside Partnership on behalf of the LPS involves volunteers to record and monitor local wildlife for the Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre using recording sheets. The scheme also runs informal workshops which have the potential for data collection.

LP Scheme	Example of information currently collected which could be used for evaluation of outcomes
Lagan Valley LPS	People counters installed at entrances to the Valley will provide information on changes in visitor numbers. A more detailed user survey is conducted every three years. As the LP is the major initiative in the Valley changes may well be related to the impact of the LPS.
Heather & Hillforts Landscape Partnership	No 'baseline' data appears to have been collected.
Unique North Pennines- A Landscape Moulded by People	No 'baseline' data appears to have been collected.
Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd *	No 'baseline' data appears to have been collected.
Overlooking the Wye	Visitor data is collected for events using feedback forms and interviews. A systematic gathering of visitor perception data was completed in May 2009 data at Symonds Yat Rock and will continue to be collected for different phases of works in the future. There are recordings of archaeological data collected by volunteers at New Weir Forge. Photographic data of the before and after type collected across the programmes, for instance for hillforts and Brockweir and Monmouth Quays. Records on training courses include data from feedback forms by attendees.
Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme	The AONB uses GIS intensively for planning, administration and monitoring and already collects spatial data on landowner understanding and attitudes. A three months contract to Sheffield University produced baseline data for historic farmstead survey using a LiDAR archaeological survey and attitudinal questionnaires to woodland owners, linking heritage quality to landowner attitudes.
Discover Bute: Isle of Bute LPS	The LPS, in collaboration with the HCAHMS is undertaking a three year survey of the archaeology of the island through engagement of Bute local history society and local volunteers. In addition records are being updated to include data from historic OS and other mapping. The LPS propose to use passenger figures on the Caledonian MacBrayne ferries as one indicator of success, however to the extent that such data indicates greater visitor interest in the area it will not differentiate between outcomes of the LPS or of the THI initiative in Rothesay, or indeed of other tourism-related initiatives in the area.
Habitats & Hillforts of Cheshire's Sandstone Ridge	The LPS provides volunteer training in survey techniques. The Hillforts of the Ridge project includes archaeological surveys of the area. The Habitats of the Ridge project includes habitat surveys undertaken by volunteers.
Through the Eyes of the Needles - Landscape Partnership *	No 'baseline' data appears to have been collected.
Wyre Forest LPS "Grow with Wyre"	The LPS conducts butterfly surveys in collaboration with Butterfly Conservation using trained volunteers to identify and record butterfly species. The Forest is one of the best recorded sites in the UK. The LPS in collaboration with the Worcestershire Historic Environment & Archaeology Service are surveying archeological heritage using LiDAR.
Landscape Partnerships with Stage 2 less than 1 yr	
Caradon Hill Area Heritage Project	A survey of commoners prior to the start of Stage 2 has gathered attitudinal data on problems and aspirations; this could be repeated subsequent to the end of LP funding to ascertain whether long term benefits are perceived. Photographs and detailed drawings of engine houses in private ownership made at the start of 10-year management agreements will provide baseline information against which condition can be assessed subsequent to the end of the scheme.

LP Scheme	Example of information currently collected which could be used for evaluation of outcomes
Scapa Flow Orkney	Baseline information is being collected for each of the programmes with outputs and outcomes listed. This includes visitor data collection using people counters on the paths, questionnaires and observation. An archaeological survey for Ness Battery as part of Landscapes of War had been completed. Baseline surveys of local sites for a potential new nature reserve, of woodlands and habitats were undertaken to be repeated after 5 years.
Trent Vale	The LPS is conducting perceptual surveys of the area using questionnaires working with Nottingham Trent University (Arts and Media Department). This is a pilot mapping project using GIS, postcode data of the interviewees and the grid reference of the areas used to anchor the perceptions of visitors and residents with the focus on the latter. The study could subsequently provide a baseline for evaluating the impact of the LPS. The LPS has run eleven community events/meetings on perceptions of the LPS; the outcomes of these have been captured. . In addition the LPS are also monitoring media coverage of the Scheme. The believe that changes in media coverage will be a good indicator of how the status and perceptions of this hitherto 'marginal' area has changed as a consequence of HLF funding.

Box I. 'Laganscape'- the Lagan Valley Partnership

Lagan Valley Regional Park lies along the River Lagan stretching for 17.6 km from Stranmillis, Belfast to Union Locks, Lisburn. In 2007 it became the first Landscape Partnership Scheme in Northern Ireland. The aims of the scheme are to maintain and enhance the landscape quality and environment, to conserve the native flora and fauna, the richness and diversity of semi natural habitats and species, along with the area's cultural heritage, to provide opportunities for research, study, education and interpretation of the Regional Park. The programmes include a combination of restoration and conservation projects, survey and recording work, activity projects, awareness raising and training initiatives.

One of the milestone projects of Laganscape is the restoration of the Lock Keepers' Cottage, which is owned by Castlereagh Borough Council. The cottage is now fully restored and open to the public. Other work undertaken has included the planting of 2,500 oak trees, the enhancement of two wetland sites, a programme of community based events and activities and the restoration of the locks themselves in partnership with the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL). The Partnership also developed the OS Activity Map for the area which is now on sale. Laganscape won the Environmental Project of the Year Award 2009 promoted by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency / Sustainable Ireland Awards.

The Lagan Valley staff have installed automatic visitor counters at five locations and undertake a user survey every 3 years. This involves face to face survey along the stretch of the towpath which runs through the entire Regional Park. It includes questions on the purpose and frequency of visits and also employment status and other information relevant to management. The Park management believe that this will be the principal means of measuring impact.

Box m. Grow With Wyre Landscape Partnership

'Grow With Wyre' lies in a large area of the West Midlands, which encompasses North Worcestershire and South Shropshire. The lead partner is the Forestry Commission with Wyre Forest Study Group and other partners. Its 18 projects include the restoration of ancient

forest landscapes and woodland habitats (many of which have been lost over the last century). Archaeological surveys have identified 20 new areas for the Historic Environment Record. A major focus is to encourage more people to engage with the landscape, by improving the quality of information and developing better understanding of the area's historic and environmental importance.

One of the projects was the restoration of 15 orchards around the county using local varieties of cherry, apple, pear, plum and damsons. In another project led by the Land Community Trust, three Gloucester Old Spots pigs have been used to aid woodland management which hopes to counter the specific challenge of bracken preventing acorns from growth. The Gateway to Wyre Community Discovery Centre at Callow Hill, near Bewdley, due to open in April 2010 will feature a sensory garden, bird observatory and classrooms for children and adults to expand their knowledge of the region's natural history. The Centre is a result of complex negotiations between the Forestry Commission and other partners.

One of the major consequences of 'Grow with Wyre' has been to change the attitude of the Forestry Commission locally so that community participation is seen as central to its work. This includes the establishment of a community trust. One major test of legacy will be the degree to which the trust continues to function beyond the end of HLF funding.

Selected quotations from our consultation:

'Measure it in five year's time by seeing if the scheme is discussed down the pub.' (LPM13)

'Half our projects are ephemeral. The principal legacy will be just memories. But the other half will deliver improved facilities; museums with a greater footfall &c.' (LPM13)

'You'd need to go back and ask people 'what was it that helped you to consider a future in the [depressed] area?' (AMM5)

'The benefit to the individuals is the most important – and usually ignored. Just what do skills in dry stone walls contribute to employability?' (AMM6)

'its difficult to measure capacity building, often it's something you can feel.' (PLM15)

'You can see the penny dropping with the farmer who has been inspired by [our LP scheme] vision – that there is something beyond the immediate benefits for him in getting involved.' (PLM15)

'the completed schemes should have been studied. A guidance with common questions would be good.' (AMM7)

'Some outcomes are only susceptible to longitudinal studies.' (AMM7)

'...all agree the [xx Area Scheme] scheme has been successful. The question is, how did they do it?' (AMM12)

'Area Schemes may be in the past for HLF but they are very much in the present for many of those who were involved in them.' (AMM5)

'EA is really the wrong shaped organisation for HLF, they are motivated by water quality and have bolted community participation and learning onto this.' (LPM1)

'Because of [the LP Scheme] our [forestry plan] was strongly influenced by LCA, and HLC historic landscape characterisation, it had a strong landscape element.' (LPM11)

'The broader the partnership the greater the understanding.' (AMM6)

'There's a big difference between national agencies [in their approach to ELC] - CCW are doing relatively little, SNH very little and Northern Ireland haven't yet heard of it.' (AMM15)

'Development phase for our project was 7-8 years. We started in 2000/1. Now we have to deliver in 3 years. But maybe good schemes benefit from the years of matchmaking.'

(LPM13)

'The benefits of an enforced (bribed) partnership are that it emphasises geographical identity and stops people operating in silos.' (LPM1)

'key players start off with their own visions – but need to be outward looking in the development to make it right.' (LPM13)

'Other things would be more difficult to gauge. As the LPS profile gets more prominent more people get involved. Our Stakeholders Group is an informal focus group established after Stage1 involving individuals from the community acting as two way monitors - community and the Scheme. They will establish themselves as a community trust.' (LPM11)

'How then to try and come to a view on the key questions that you have asked? In my view, bearing in mind the above issues, it cannot be based on the collection of pre-existing data or on the current output based data collected during implementation. Probably the best alternative approach is through a series of structured interviews with the key players in the agencies and organisations involved in the scheme, plus the supporters, user and target groups of sub-projects. Such interviews would need to be conducted by skilled and experienced workers who understand the contexts in which the projects are working. Those giving evidence should be asked for evidence to support their views and this might include documents and other data. The workers would also need to undertake ancillary research to corroborate the evidence provided by interviews. The collective evidence would need to be analysed using research experience and professional judgement to provide an overall view... It would therefore be a rather old fashioned, unglamorous and time-intensive approach which would be very dependent on the skill and experience of the researcher and would also be dependent on a textual and qualitative analysis.' (AMM10)

6. Links with external data and monitoring initiatives

It has been argued that LP monitoring and evaluation should, if possible and where appropriate, link in with external programmes and initiatives, particularly those of the country environmental, natural and built heritage agencies. If national datasets or monitoring schemes could be used this could save costs, provide a degree of external validation of the achievements of LP schemes and also provide some consistency between them, facilitating evaluation of the LP programme as a whole. New HLF guidance specifies that successful LP applicants must submit digitised boundary files using MapInfo or ESRI formats with their LCAP before they may proceed to the second round ⁽²⁷⁾.

This section first addresses the availability of spatial datasets at national and local level and then examines two initiatives potentially relative to LP monitoring, Landscape Character Assessment (LCA, developed by the English and Scots agencies but in use across the whole of the UK) and CQuEL, Natural England's 'Character and Quality of England's Landscapes' project.

6.1. Spatial data and GIS

Some effort has been spent in examining the prospect of utilising spatial datasets in LP evaluation.

As far as we have been able to ascertain, all LP schemes currently at Stage 2 have benefited at least to some extent from applications of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). However in the majority of cases GIS use has been limited to simple mapping, generally provided by the lead body or by a third party and often primarily undertaken for the purposes of preparing the LP application. Exceptions are principally those LP (and older) schemes where the lead body (in whose offices and facilities the LP team are 'hosted') uses GIS routinely. These all involve the collection of locally specific spatial data in addition to the use of datasets but in both cases this is possible because that data is collected anyhow as part of the activities of the lead/ host body,

Table vi below summarises the principal data types and data sources used by the Weald Forest Ridge LP as a tool in planning or delivery through the good offices of a dedicated GIS officer in the lead body AONB team.

Table vi. Data types and sources used in connection with the Weald forest Ridge LP.	
Data type	Data Source (examples)
Landscape character	Landscape Character Assessments
Geological features and Earth Heritage resources	Natural Area Profiles, Geodiversity Action Plans, Geological Conservation review, Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)
Habitat types – forest, grassland, moorland, wetlands &c	Natural Area Profiles,
Woodland and forest cover	Regional Woodland and Forestry Frameworks, National Woodland Inventory
Species information	Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)
Environmental resources – air, soil and water - condition and trends	Environment Agency, Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, Nitrate Sensitive Areas, Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies, River Basin Management Plans

Archaeological features and historic landscapes - type and location	Scheduled Monuments Register, Historic Landscape Characterisation, Battlefield sites
Built heritage features and settlement patterns - type and location	Conservation Area Statements, Listed Buildings Registers
Public access opportunities and informal recreation facilities – type and location	ROW maps and records, ROW strategies, recreational route strategies, access land maps, physical and intellectual access studies
Visual and sensory perceptions	Tranquillity Areas Maps. CPRE Dark Sky maps

One LP, Trent Vale, expects to use GIS extensively once the scheme is delivering and sees it as a potentially useful tool for monitoring and evaluation. Trent Vale has already commissioned a study of resident perceptions of landscape from the local college and in which respondent postcodes will be recorded and the landscape values will be georeferenced. Other GIS monitoring is planned, but this is facilitated by fact that all management activities (including, for example the removal of graffiti from bridges and other structures) are routinely georeferenced by the lead body.

Any possibility of utilising existing national or local datasets in evaluation either directly or as proxy indicators would be attractive. Some of the government’s recent initiatives are highly relevant to the objectives of LP partnerships, and are reflected in policies for data collection, in National Indicators of the DCLG’s Place Survey. An example is NI 6: *Participation in regular volunteering* and NI 197: *Improved Local Biodiversity – proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented*⁽³⁴⁾. However individual GIS (or other) datasets appear highly unlikely to pick up the impacts of LP schemes, and although indices based upon combinations of data might potentially do so this appears unlikely to be the case in practice.

There are two major problems. The first is that most of the potentially useful indicators in respect of LP monitoring suffer from a poor response rate, varying from 30%-70% of UK local authorities and are (like NI 6), optional so coverage is patchy. They are intended more as targets to which individual local authorities can work towards, rather than indices of change. Even were this not the case, there is a further problem. LP schemes by intention relate to landscape units which are not necessarily contiguous with local authority boundaries. Small scale geospatial data which can be ‘cut’ using GIS to LP boundaries is not presently available for most of what appear to be potentially the most relevant national indicators.

In addition to the above a good deal of data is also being collected at Regional level and a number of organisations working on a landscape scale (including protected landscape lead bodies) collect their own locally generated data for management planning and monitoring. All national park authorities and several AONB units have their own systems for local data collection (including local GIS datasets). In several cases these feed in to Regional Observatory and national spatial datasets. The Protected Landscapes Forum and the Regional Observatory in the SW are examples. It is probable that this will enable the identification of data categories that might be in recommendations for monitoring to be contained in future LP schemes LCAPs. However at present most of this information deals only with physical features or variables and offers little prospect for internal or external monitoring or evaluation.

Box n. Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership

The Weald Forest Ridge runs west to east, in an almost unbroken line, from Horsham to Tunbridge Wells. It is the highest ridge of the High Weald AONB (which hosts the LP scheme) and within it are the remnants of the Weald’s four great medieval forests, as well as numerous rock outcrops. The Ridge lies in close proximity to a number of large urban settlements, making it an important recreational resource.

The AONB uses GIS intensively for planning, administration and monitoring, perhaps more so than any other AONB, but is also keen to emphasise the limitations and difficulties.

These include the costs of copyright data, the time to analyse it, the incompatibility of spatial boundaries and the lack consistency in data collection.

The AONB already collects spatial data on landowner understanding and attitudes. But the work is specialised, intensive and data is not easy to assemble. A three month contract to Sheffield University produced baseline data for a historic farmstead survey including a LiDAR archaeological survey and attitudinal questionnaires to woodland owners. The results were a valuable input to management. The survey could be repeated but the costs would need to be justified by more than simply compliance with HLF monitoring.

Box o. Regional landscape datasets in the South-West

The South-West Protected Landscapes Forum (SWPLF) seeks to coordinate activities in the 13 AONBs and two national parks which together cover 48% of the region's land area. The SWPLF GIS groupⁱ has developed a comprehensive directory of available data including a list of 138 relevant data types with notes on their availability and their appropriateness for monitoring change over a 5 and 10 year period; this is intended to feed in to a proposed SWPLF Electronic Data Atlas.

SWPLF also coordinates the supply of landscape- related data to the South West Observatoryⁱⁱ. Regional observatories exist in each of the English regions, and provide access to a wide range of data and intelligence in economic, social and environmental issues; the SWO provides a one-stop source of information on the state of the environment in the South West. SWPLF is one of the organizations that inputs and accesses data from SWO.

The use of spatial data in landscape and socioeconomic analysis and monitoring is rapidly changing. The datasets we have examined to date have major limitations in their applicability to LP evaluation and monitoring. Those that are national in coverage are collected at an insufficiently fine scale and/or are unavailable at boundaries which relate to LP areas and/or have patchy coverage. In addition there are significant costs associated with the acquisition of appropriate datasets.

This may change with the forthcoming relaxation of copyright on OS mapping data which is likely to provide free public access to certain categories of map data. In addition EU Directive 2007/2/EC INSPIRE (Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community) places a duty (on LAs in the first instance) to share their spatial data (and to generate it in a consistent way). The Defra consultation on INSPIRE is now complete but it will be some time before the outcome is known. However both developments are likely to encourage the local and tailored use of GIS in protected landscapes and LPs.

In the meantime the new requirement for LPs progressing to Stage 2 to submit boundary shape files is to be welcomed. We have been able to collect only a few boundary LP files; the new requirement for these to be submitted with the LCAP is to be welcomed and should be applied firmly. In connection with this research, for a variety of reasons; those LP lead bodies which have supplied them have correctly required evidence of our OS license before releasing them and an assurance that data produced using their files would not be published or distributed in contravention of OS copyright. The recent relaxation of OS copyright restrictions seems likely to overcome this difficulty and to make it possible to manipulate and distribute information based on OS maps without infringing OS copyright.

ⁱ www.southwestlandscapes.org.uk/GISGroup.asp

ⁱⁱ www.regionalobservatories.org.uk and www.swenvo.org.uk/login/

Recommendation 18. The request for LPs to submit boundary shape files with their LCAP should be reinforced. It would be useful to secure boundary files for all existing LPs and completed AS. HLF may need to check on its present position with regard to OS copyright and reassurance on this matter may be needed to overcome the reluctance of lead partners to release this material.

GIS will potentially facilitate analysis and operation of LP schemes as a whole. However a common analytical framework is important to make this possible on a routine basis; otherwise analysis will only be possible through contract to external consultants who will need to possess the appropriate licenses and will need to buy in proprietary datasets at additional cost. One possibility would be for HLF to link up with the GIS arm of an agency such as Defra or ONS. It would be valuable if LP boundaries could be entered as a layer on a publicly accessible mapping system such as Defra's Multi-Agency Geographic Information System (MAGIC). A boundary file set would appear to meet the criteria for inclusionⁱ and would allow anyone accessing MAGIC to locate areas on large scale maps, to compare the locations of LP schemes with, e.g. protected landscapes, ancient woodland, scheduled monuments &c.

Recommendation 19. HLF might consider using its good offices with Defra to secure the addition of LP boundaries as a publicly available layer on MAGIC.

ⁱ See www.magic.gov.uk/ProjectLibrary/InfoNotes/magi0057.pdf and www.magic.gov.uk/ProjectLibrary/InfoNotes/magi0062v2.pdf

Table vii. Spatial data sources potentially relevant to Landscape Partnerships

This table lists the major sources of spatial datasets used by those LP schemes that use GIS and some additional sources that have been suggested as potentially relevant to LPS.

Site name and url	Notes
MAGIC = Multi Agency Geographic Information System www.magic.gov.uk/	Conceived as a one-stop shop for rural and countryside information from the partner organisations. Provides access to definitive rural designation boundaries – e.g.; administrative boundaries, statutory rural designations (e.g. protected landscape, SSSI), land-cover information, including National Character Areas (NCA) and habitat inventories data on rural land-based schemes. Simple GIS manipulations can be carried out interactively on-line and watermarked maps downloaded and printed. In addition there are metadata files on all datasets. Includes hotlinks to web pages containing supporting information to more complex searches between different websites or applications. Bias towards England, Sponsors/ Partners: Defra, EH, NE, EA, FC, (D)CLG
CIS = Countryside Information System www.cis-web.org.uk/	MS-Windows to access spatial information about the British countryside. Data comes from a variety of sources including the Countryside Survey and MAGIC. Provides a menu-access to a data catalogue including administrative boundaries (e.g. local authorities, Parliamentary constituencies), agriculture (e.g. crop and farm type) &c.
LCN = Landscape Character Network GIS/ Data Resources http://landscapecharacter.org.uk/node/28 http://landscapecharacter.org.uk/database	Links to MAGIC (and to the MAGIC NCA dataset), Gigateway, and Nature on the Map. Also holds on-line access database of Landscape Character Assessments in England
Gigateway http://www.gigateway.org.uk/	Free access to a relatively comprehensive index of suppliers of geospatial information (archaeological to land cover and lifestyle to weather) in the UK. The site also contains guidelines for collecting and submitting metadata to the UK GEMINI (qa standard) profile.
NERC Data Discovery Service http://ndg.nerc.ac.uk/discovery	The Natural Environment Research Council
British Geological Survey www.bgs.ac.uk/data/databases.html	Access to UK metadata and datasets from solid and drift geology to groundwater levels, river flows and water chemistry.
Natural England Digital Boundary Datasets www.gis.naturalengland.org.uk/pubs/gis/gis_register.asp	All GIS Digital Boundary Datasets held by Natural England are available for free downloading for use in a GIS, they range from agricultural land classification through all principle habitat types to statutory and informal designations (SSSI, AONB &c) to access and volunteering initiatives.
Nature on the Map	Provides access to interactive maps and information about National Nature Reserves, other

<p>www.natureonthemap.org.uk</p>	<p>designated sites and areas of semi-natural habitat, based on digital boundary datasets above.</p>
<p>Natural Spaces http://gateway.snh.gov.uk/ see www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-pa00a.asp</p>	<p>SNH's Geographically referenced digital data which are available to download. Feeds into GIGateway.</p>
<p>NDAD = The National Digital Archive of Datasets www.ndad.nationalarchives.gov.uk/</p>	<p>A directory of datasets, documents and metadata from UK government departments and other public bodies, and is managed by the University of London Computer Centre. Topics range from the Agricultural and Horticultural Census through education, environment, health and transport to the Vital Villages Project Database.</p>
<p>GVAC UK Higher Education Edina + Digimap http://edina.ac.uk/ http://edina.ac.uk/digimap/</p>	<p>Strictly for teaching and research purposes within UK academia. Legal users of this dataset must be with UK Higher and Further Education and registered with the Census Registration Service (http://census.data-archive.ac.uk/) EDINA is the JISC national academic data centre based at the University of Edinburgh. Services are available free at the point of use for students and academic staff in the UK working on and off campus. Access to most services involves licence or subscription by universities and colleges, and requires some form of authentication by end users. Some services to researchers outside the HE sector are provided to contract.</p>
<p>NI = National Indicators www.communities.gov.uk</p>	<p>NIs are indicators associated with local authority performance against government targets. Of around 200 indicators, some are mandatory. Others are optional in that they can be included in returns to governments in LA's Local Area Agreements (LAA). Only a few NIs in the National List ⁽³⁴⁾ (such as National Indicator 6 – 'Participation in regular volunteering', NI 110: 'Young people's participation in positive activities' and NI197 'Improved local biodiversity') appear to be particularly relevant to LP objectives. In 2008-09, 43 local authorities and their partners chose NI 6 to be part of their LAA.</p>
<p>DCLG Place Survey www.communities.gov.uk</p>	<p>The DCLG Place Survey collects information from local authorities on people's perceptions of their local area and the local services they receive. The survey is based on a core questionnaire to which LAs can add optional questions from a 'question bank' and is conducted by LAs to protocols in a technical manual. Very few questions in either the recommended questionnaire or the optional question bank are specifically relevant to the objectives of LP. First results from the 2008 survey appeared in June 2009. The previous release focussed on results relating to the 18 National Indicators for local government and questions relating to satisfaction with local services, perceived value for money and overall satisfaction with local services.</p>
<p>DCLG Data Interchange Hub www.communities.gov.uk/hub and https://www.hub.info4local.gov.uk/</p>	<p>The Data Interchange Hub is a password protected online data repository restricted to government organisations, local authorities and inspectorates. It allows them to deposit and/or access data for national indicators in a single location. There are currently a small number of indicators which local authorities are required to input directly to the Hub. The vast majority of indicators are collected from local authorities by government departments through other data returns and reporting</p>

	mechanisms
<p>LDEx = Local Data Interchange www.communities.gov.uk</p>	<p>Data resources currently held in the Data Interchange Hub, the Places Database and Geography Publishing Service. LDEx is intended to provide <i>'open access to data to support digital innovation and public accountability and drive improvements in public services. Making public data available enables people to reuse it in different and more imaginative ways than may have originally been intended by linking data from multiple sources around common concepts.'</i> The pilot, to be launched in Feb 2010 <i>'will focus on a small number of open platform demonstrators which collectively test and show the benefits and practicalities of combining and presenting public data alongside other related information held in third-party systems'</i></p>

6.2. Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and LANDMAP

A Landscape Character Assessment (LCA, developed initially for use in England and Scotland, but also used in Walesⁱ) is an essential requirement under present HLF arrangements as an input to the first round of an LP scheme. LCAs have already been produced for most of the UKⁱⁱ. In England LCA provides the framework for National (previously 'joint') Character Areas (NCA/JCA) and inform several areas of rural policy. HLF now require an LCA to be submitted as part of LP Scheme.

A number of LP schemes have commissioned or conducted their own LCA and it has been suggested that, particularly where these local LCAs involve a substantial degree of local involvement, they could be a basis for evaluating and monitoring the impacts of LPs both on the physical landscape and on people's perceptions of it.

The last national LCA Guidance for England and Scotland was produced in 2002 and is currently being revised by NE and SNH to reflect current use, good practice, and the ELC. New LCA guidance is presently in draft and is expected to be issued by the end of 2010. Methodological criticisms of LCA include the degree to which it may impose a formal 'solution' to what are sometimes contested or individual perceptions of landscape, or to which different LCAs covering the same area may be manipulated for sectoral interests.

It is expected that the new guidance will place much greater emphasis on GIS as a tool for mapping and analysis and that it will emphasise the need for every LCA to be accompanied by a landscape strategy. ELC requires the production of Landscape Action Plans and it is likely that these will be based on LCAs. It has been argued that ELC requires initiatives such as LCA to engage with communities, however it is likely that that LCA nationally will remain expert-led, so those LPs that have attempted a participatory local LCA will remain at the forefront of 'best practice'.

Recommendation 20. Supplementary guidance may need to be prepared following the release of new LCA guidance for example on the role of LCA in the application procedure, the way that local LCAs may 'nest' within the LCAs for NCAs, links with GIS data layers, and the capturing of perceptual information for monitoring and evaluation.

ⁱ www.landscapecharacter.org.uk/lca and www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/

ⁱⁱ A database of LCAs is on www.landscapecharacter.org.uk/db/index.html.

Box p. Landscape Character Assessment

LCA is an initiative led by the English and Scottish country agencies Natural England (NE) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) but used also by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and in Ireland. Landscape character is defined as '*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse*'.

LCA applies to both a process and its product. The process involves classifying and describing different types of landscape, using a mixture of desk study and field survey. All elements of a landscape are in principle relevant – geology and topography, climate and soil, land use, agriculture, habitats and species, archaeology and 'built', as well as the perceptual and aesthetic consequences of these. LCA is a way of 'unpacking' the landscape and understanding how its distinctive elements contribute to sense of place and it involves subjective as well as objective judgements and (in principle at least) the perceptions of local residents and visitors as well as 'experts'.

LCA can take place at a variety of scales and LCAs often overlap as well as 'nest'. The 'highest' levels in England are those of the National Character Areas (NCAs, previously called Joint Character Areas or JCAs, just Landscape Character Areas in Wales). All protected landscapes (such as AONBs and national parks) and many local authorities also have their own LCA. LCA as a 'product' is a document intended to provide an evidence base for decision-making (particularly on matters of spatial planning and development control) that respects local distinctiveness.

LCAs can also be carried out at a local level, for example at a parish level and guidance has been produced for parish landscape character assessmentsⁱ. 'Participatory LCA' involving community engagement and 'ownership' is increasingly recognised as 'good practice' in the light of ELC.

Recommendation 21. HLF should consider emphasising the value of locally produced participatory LCAs. Information including perceptual data collected in their production is potentially valuable as baseline data for future evaluation and monitoring.

In Wales, LANDMAP is a systematic GIS based approach to landscape assessment developed by the Countryside Council for Wales which is intended to include cultural and perceptual aspects. Community perceptions and engagement have yet to be incorporated as an analytical 'layer' although this is planned for the future.

6.3. CQC and CQuEL

Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) is a national programme for monitoring change in condition in the English countryside. It is being replaced by CQuEL 'the 'Character and Quality of England's Landscapes' project'ⁱⁱ. CQuEL should be in implementation in England in late 2011. Like LCA, CQuEL is in part driven by ELC but incorporates a new emphasis on 'Ecosystem Services'. This derives from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) which promotes an approach to landscape and ecosystems based on recognition of their (cultural as well as ecological) significance to human well-being, emphasising their 'utilitarian' as well as their 'intrinsic' value. Natural England has declared that '*CQuEL will act as a transforming process for*

ⁱ www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/COAgregreport_tcm6-8188.pdf

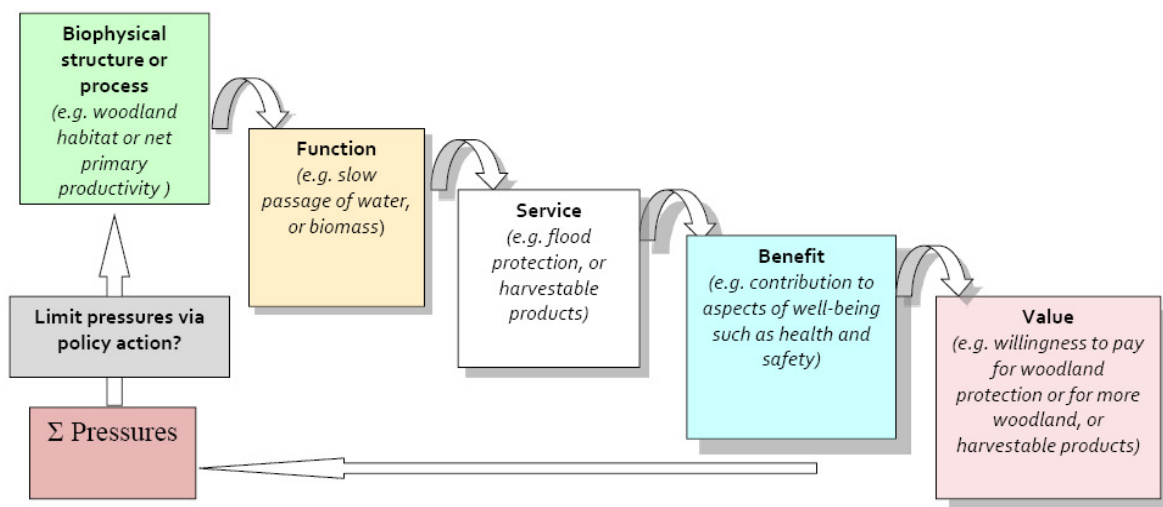
ⁱⁱ <http://countryside-quality-counts.org.uk>

Natural England and its partners, developing more holistic approaches to strategic monitoring of the natural environment.⁽⁶⁾

CQuELⁱ is likely to focus initially on a selected range of 'ecosystem services'. Cultural and perceptual aspects are not likely to be prominent and it is unlikely that it will yield data relevant to LP monitoring, at least in the initial stages. Most LP managers and HLF advisers who have engaged with the process have not found CQC of use for monitoring and have few expectations of CQuEL as a source of information for planning, let alone for monitoring LP impacts. It is likely that the same limitation would apply to other country-agency responses to the monitoring requirements of ELC and MA.

Box q. CQC and CQuEL

Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) was launched by Defra in collaboration with NE and EH following the 2000 Rural White Paper to provide systematic monitoring of countryside change and condition, to feed in to rural policy and decision-making (e.g. in protected areas and agri-environmental targeting) and fulfil the ELC requirement for monitoring. Data sources are mainly biophysical (agriculture land cover, NE habitat inventory data, SSSI condition, species distribution and abundance and historic features &c). The third round of CQC, to cover the period 2003-2009 will draw on a wider range of data sets than before and the nationally run information gathering will be supplemented by local expert consultation to arrive at some negotiated understanding as to what the data means in different places. Data gathering for CQC III will take place 2010/11 with data publication by April 2012. Other country agencies have analogous programmes.



Ecosystem service 'cascade' (Haines-Young & Potschin, 2009)

In parallel, CQC is being replaced by the Character and Quality of England's Landscapes (CQuEL). CQuEL is NE's principal integrated monitoring project and is currently in the detailed planning stage, due to report in March 2010. The aim is to deliver spatial data which will provide an enhanced and current understanding of the complexities of the English landscape (analysis) and the quality of the natural environment more generally (evaluation). There are as yet no comparable initiatives within the other UK country agencies.

ⁱ <http://cquell.org.uk>

CQuEL is based on the concept of 'ecosystem services' ⁽³⁵⁾, one element in a 'cascade' of elements starting with landscape 'features', progressing through their 'functions', the 'services' they provide, the human benefits that flow from these and, ultimately, the (monetary) 'value' that can be placed on these. Analysis and monitoring will be place-based on the National Character Area (NCA) framework.

CQuEL recognises that landscape is the product of the past and present interaction of humans and nature. For example moorland may itself result from past human clearance of forest, and its 'services' depend critically on how it is presently managed. 'Well managed' blanket bog is an important sequester of carbon (and has potential monetary value in contributing to Britain's obligations to net emission reduction) but poorly managed bog will degrade and will contribute to those emissions.

Box r. Trent Vale Landscape Partnership

The Trent Vale is a unique landscape of 388 km² across 55 parishes shaped by its natural, cultural and industrial heritage. It is a 'border' area between the counties of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire and is characterised by industrial decline and neglect and is outside most recognised administrative and landscape 'boundaries'. However it is also rich in archaeological and historical features such as old ferry crossings, towpath bridges and distinctive 'clapper gates'. The Trent Vale Landscape Partnership involves a wide range of public, voluntary and commercial organisations led by British Waterways. Projects include archaeological research, renovation of a key heritage building, conservation of important wetland habitat, creation of a Trent Vale grazing herd, a small grants scheme for landowners, environmental and heritage education work, improved moorings, heritage festivals, visitor guides and promotion of the area as a recreational resource. The aim of the TVLP is to celebrate the special features of the landscape and to the River Trent to re-establish community links which have gradually been lost, leaving villages isolated and disconnected from each other.

The LP scheme is working with Nottingham Trent University on a proposal to anchor the perceptions of visitors and residents using GIS: Postcode data of interviewees will be recorded as will the grid references of the areas they use. The study will be useful for management and could also subsequently provide a baseline for studying the impact of the LP scheme.

Selected quotations from our consultation:

'Be careful about linking with other monitoring schemes – there is a danger in being dragged along to where you don't want to be.' (AMM2)

LP schemes 'need help in locating and securing datasets (on the appropriate topics and scales) especially where these cannot be done through the local authority. Could HLF help for example in securing cut-rate licenses for particular categories of data? Or since the LCA is so central why can't the datasets used for the LCA be reused for LP purposes rather than having to scope and buy in data separately for every LPS?' (LPM2)

'GIS has been used 'almost as much as it should be'... 2-3 members of our team are GIS literate – we will soon be in a position whereby GIS will be able to generate instant reports for the project.' (LPM17)

'GIS is not used much by our LP – just for basic maps, footpaths, signposts etc.' (LPM20)

'Our [NPA] has a sophisticated GIS team but we're not working with the sort of data HLF is really interested in - a typical example would be accessibility profile, relating e.g. bus stops to

services, where people live etc.' (PLM6)

'We are piloting a GIS-based project on Perception Mapping [with the Arts and Media department at the University]. This will involve plotting perceptions of residents (our focus is on the community rather than visitors) of discrete elements or places in the LP area.' (LPM15)

'Our people/ activity data is not on GIS but it's often local data using postcode datasets. e.g. where audiences are coming from.' (LPM11)

'Data sharing is a major problem.' (AMM5)

'we are working towards developing a data atlas. Use of proxy indicators lacks ground truthing e.g. if no grants/outside of funding mechanism it is assumed that the heritage is not properly managed.' (PLM15)

'It's a good thing that LP schemes are so diverse – each is different, there can be no common large scale monitoring using national data.' (AMM4)

'GIS work needs dedicated staff to record features and their condition.' (PLM15)

7. Discussion: Options and proposals for LP evaluation and monitoring

All monitoring and evaluation carries a cost – to HLF in terms of staff time or consultants' fees and to LP scheme managers in terms of the opportunity costs of the additional burden of data assembly and desk work. The collection of output data is relatively low cost - c. £30,000 direct costs (in consultant' fees) per round and is important (despite the gaps in data identified above) to demonstrate compliance as well as yielding (largely as an incidental) useful information about long term benefits in respect of physical landscape works.

Output data collection is (and is intended as) primarily a measure of activity, not outcome. However elements of output data – particularly those which record physical works to the landscape - do relate to enduring outcomes and are capable of follow-up.

Monitoring intangibles is conceptually more challenging (because the indicators are not straightforward) and it is more difficult to attribute benefits to the operation of LP schemes alone. Many of the indicators of the wider benefits of landscape working are qualitative in nature and assessment of some of the key benefits, for example of community engagement or partnership working, is likely to be subjective. There are also major practical difficulties in selecting and collecting information, particularly where baseline data is not available and/or the LPs themselves have dissolved. It is also considerably more costly. In many cases the boundary between 'monitoring', 'evaluation' and 'research' are unclear.

It is important that a balance is struck between the benefits and costs of such work and that where possible monitoring and evaluation should deliver benefits beyond merely demonstrating that LP spend and outcomes are compliant with the approved LP grant. We believe that, with the changes (including the requirement for an LCAP) introduced from 2009, present arrangements for output data collection and monitoring are broadly sound. However we would offer the following recommendations with regard to their application to new, existing, and 'completed' schemes, which will assist in the evaluation of longer-term outcomes.

7.1. New schemes

For new schemes including those that have secured Stage 1 approval but have yet to progress to their delivery phase, it is likely that the most effective evaluation will be that undertaken in collaboration with LPs themselves, drawing on data that LPs have collected and analyses they have conducted on their own projects.

The new guidance for LP applicants emphasises the importance of incorporating evaluation (including the collection of baseline data) from the start. LCAP would appear to be the vehicle for doing this. HLF's generic guidance on evaluation outlines some techniques for evaluating individual projects but these are not tailored to the needs of LPs. The comments and suggestions recorded in this research could usefully be incorporated into clearer advice to LPs and to HLF advisers regarding the way in which long-term benefits might be more clearly identified and means of measuring these elaborated (including where appropriate, the collection of baseline data) during the LP development phase and incorporated into the LCAP.

It is likely that some of these longer-term measures would focus on key indicators. Baseline data would not necessarily be collected by the LP itself. In assessing Stage 2 submissions, HLF will need to be aware of the costs of collecting data and the need to balance rigour and objectivity against measures which enhance delivery and outcomes of the scheme itself. We are of the view that robust evaluation of future schemes may require a more engaged role of HLF itself and our consultation has indicated that this would be welcomed by grantees; we return to this in the final paragraph.

A number of proposals for the delivery and administration of LP schemes were made during our consultation, some of which relate to evaluation. One proposal that was put strongly

to us was that HLF might recommend (in its application guidance) that where appropriate LPs are led by an independent chair and/or include an audit committee not involved in delivery. This would be unlikely to be suitable in every case but where it was, scrutiny by 'an external competent' would add significantly to the perceived transparency and claimed benefits of LPs.

7.2. Existing Stage 2 schemes

For existing schemes (i.e. those currently in their delivery phase) we have found it difficult to identify significant data (beyond that already collected as output data) which could be used for any robust evaluation of long-term impact or of the 'wider benefits' of partnership working. Where information which could be used in this way has been identified it is specific to individual LPs (or projects) and does not lend itself to cross-scheme comparisons or evaluation of the wider benefits of LP working as a whole. This again is a reflection of the nature of LPs and in no way reduces the value that should be placed on their work.

In general, the absence of baseline information means that reliable 'before and after' comparisons (other than regarding physical works to landscape features) is not possible. It has already been agreed in principle that LP's will be invited to add additional information (qualitative and quantitative) to their returns in the next round of output data collection and this may yield additional information useful information. The absence of visitor data in most returns do date is a significant omission and schemes should be encouraged to ensure that where possible this data is collected. However with this exception we do not believe that any useful purpose would be served by adding a further burden to LPs (which would entail significant opportunity costs) by requiring them to collect significant additional information in mid-delivery.

Any new guidance issued to new schemes as per 7.1 above should also be brought to the attention of LP managers and HLF advisers, who should be asked to consider longer-term impacts and 'wider benefits' in their reports. With this proviso, we believe that the combination of output data already collected and periodic independent reports by HLF advisers provides a reliable and adequate assessment of their individual achievements.

7.3. Completed schemes and post scheme monitoring

Post- scheme evaluation, particularly in areas outside protected landscapes, where formal partnerships no longer exist or have been transformed, is always likely to be problematic. In most cases and particularly if directed at the LP programme as a whole, it will need to be focused on particular outcome topic areas. In a limited number of instances – such as habitat quality or the condition of landscape features – it may be possible to base evaluation on existing national or local spatial datasets. However even here it will often be impossible to attribute changes identified to the operation of the LP alone. This needs to be accepted as a necessary corollary of the nature LPs and in no way detracts from their importance. In other areas (such as public perception or economic impact) evaluation will require specialist input and will need to be conducted by external contractors. The costs of such studies should not be underestimated. In some instances a better approach may be to include selected LP projects into studies undertaken of other HLF grant programmes.

7.4. A more engaged role for HLF?

Our research has revealed that a major problem in evaluating the enduring impacts of individual LP schemes and the impact of the LP programme as a whole is the 'intangible' nature of many of the presumed benefits of landscape and partnership working, and the absence of adequate baseline data for those outcomes which are in principle susceptible to quantification. The new requirement for a LCAP provides a basis for remedying the latter and for at least partial solution to the former.

However this will not apply to old schemes. HLF has been done well given its limited resources to put in place effective systems for monitoring grantees' activity and expenditure and commissioning external evaluation on the achievements of its grant programmes. We believe it

has also been exemplary in communicating the results of its evaluation to a wider public, both in the 'popular' content of its website (which also provides on-line access to most evaluation and research reports) and in more targeted papers in for policy constituencies including published reports of evaluations (see, e.g. 36, 37, 38). In the case of the LP programme, which has not yet been the focus of systematic evaluation, our view is that the complexity of LP schemes means that effective evaluation is unlikely to be secured through a single external contract. Multiple methods, including a more engaged approach by HLF may be required.

An assessment based on LP output data concluded in 2006 that *'Grantees and applicants would appreciate a wider role being fulfilled by HLF over and above a funding provider including: developing and promoting best practice; acting as a source of intelligence on LPS; acting as a facilitator to access funds from other sources, over and above match funding; helping in relation to generic issues; and advising on sustainability. While some additional expenditure would be required, the investment would avoid 're-inventing the wheel' and improve cost-effectiveness.'*⁽²⁸⁾ We believe this is likely still to be the case. Some of the roles that HLF might play (or is already playing) identified during our consultation are given in Box s.

Box s. Possible further roles for HLF

Some of the things that HLF might do to assist LP schemes and LP scheme evaluation were identified during our consultation as follows:

- Development and promotion of best practice for example through seminars for LP managers and others. In particular, these seminars have been useful in disseminating the experience derived from more advanced schemes to those at development stage.
- Acting as a source of intelligence on LPs an informal network of practitioners involved in LPs already exists, and HLF has already put a summary of several successful schemes on its LP webpage as a example to potential applicants; some of the suggestions included:
 - A register of 'best practice' exemplar projects with case studies and contact details.
 - A library of useful documents, including advice on monitoring.
 - A 'Partnership Start Pack'. This could include technical information on HLF reporting but also example questionnaires perhaps with 'standard questions' which would enable comparisons of responses between LPs.
- Web-based support this could best be hosted by a body such as LCN with support from HLF.
- Acting as a facilitator to access funds from other sources, over and above match funding. 'Gearing up' the HLF contribution by securing (additional) match funding or separate support from external sources is already a recognised function of LP teams; HLF could usefully help to establish an advice and facilitation process (perhaps through LCN as above) to help applicants to access additional funding in this way.
- Helping in relation to generic issues. Many issues are generic to many LPs, such as agreements committing landowners to maintenance or management for a period of 10 years in return for capital funding. HLF could assist greatly in developing standard documents and/or advice, as it has already done in relation to State Aid rules, which LPs partners can then adapt to their specific circumstances.
- Advice on sustainability. Within the guidance to grantees, the HLF could strengthen its advice to LPs on how to ensure that schemes are sustainable beyond the period of the HLF funding, thus creating a longer-term legacy from the funding provided.

Recommendation 22. HLF could usefully explore ways of providing a more active facilitating role in encouraging landscape and partnership working, perhaps in collaboration with other agencies. Even if the resources do not exist for this at present, the need should be acknowledged in HLF's own policy material.

Such a 'facilitating' role may be beyond the remit or resources of HLF at present (and we are conscious that advocacy of it is perhaps beyond the remit of the present research).

However in respect of evaluation, we are of the view that HLF may need to find ways of being, if not more prescriptive, then of providing a clearer 'steer' through its Regional Officers and its advisers. This is particularly important in regard to ensuring sustainability of scheme outcomes, and of ways of demonstrating that this has been achieved through appropriate evaluation.

We understand that the purposes and functions of HLF LP web pages are being explored and believe that better communication – with LP managers and advisers as well as with a broader audience - might in the interim be secured through an on-line forum which could act as a vehicle for dialogue but also as a medium for promulgation of best practice in evaluation (as well as in planning and delivery). However this will carry a cost and this may be reduced through collaboration with LCN.

It is important, particularly if a model of participative evaluation is adopted, that the multiple audiences for evaluation are recognised and that collaboration is seen to be of mutual benefit. At a minimum, this requires effective feedback to be provided to LPs, Regional teams and advisers

Recommendation 23. Participative evaluation has multiple benefits (and multiple audiences). Feedback on the results of evaluation, to Regional teams, advisers and to LPs themselves is important.

We think it is important that any quantitative 'test' of the benefits of landscape-scale working should be seen as robust and that claims regarding the benefits of landscape-scale working should withstand external scrutiny. Baseline data categories should endure and data collected should be comparable over time within individual LP areas, and where possible, should allow comparison between LP schemes and, where quantitative, be capable of aggregation to enable assessment of the LP programme as a whole. At the same time many of the aims and achievements of LP are not susceptible to quantitative assessment, and both qualitative and quantitative evaluation is in many cases unlikely to be able to isolate the impact of LP schemes as a whole from the impact of other changes and forces. A better approach may be to focus on the overall purposes of LP working and to promulgate more widely the achievements of schemes and projects which have contributed towards these ends.

Recommendation 24. HLF workshops and training events, which are currently structured principally as a means of sharing experience and promulgating 'best practice' in delivery, could also usefully be the focus for deliberation about improvement in reporting and evaluation.

Selected quotations from our consultation:

'...an intelligent central approach is needed for perception and area character changes innovation that recognises that PLs and LPS are not the only players - there are others and other factors.' (PLL10)

'The Police are in charge of our community project and this will continue beyond the LPS – it has also been included in the AONB management plan. This wouldn't have been easy with Interreg funding but HLF flexibility is a great plus.' (PLL10)

'We recognise that what we're doing is all quite fragile – everyone is on short term contracts.' (LPM17)

'Don't let the people who did the development leave before the scheme is launched.' (LPM19)

'The LP is just moving into its last year – so all the staff are looking around for other jobs etc.' (LPM20)

'...we have run 11 community meetings/ events including community chosen photographs of what they think is significant about the area; views, places they think are

representative or embody the essence of it. The outcomes of these have been captured – in effect they are focus groups, and they could be replicated.’ (LPM15)

‘When [our Area Scheme] ended, another up escalator appeared – and we were better equipped to get on it. ...as a catalyst it was very valuable.’ (PLM5)

‘There is generally a lack of a set of agreed outcomes. Use of proxy data sets are crude. What is needed is original survey work which is expensive and takes time. Our [Area Scheme] work on hedgerow restoration was a drop in the ocean - there are approx 4,000 km of hedgerows in the area.’ (PLM5)

‘LPs might change the way that whole communities perceive, value and engage with the landscape, but the absence of follow-up means it is more likely that beyond the physical works - field barns restored, hectares of fen or heath reclaimed, km of hedge laid or dry stone wall rebuilt - the only ‘people’ legacy we know about may just be a few small remnant community groups which wouldn’t otherwise have existed.’ (LPM2)

‘Self-evaluations tend to be rather thin and usually put a positive gloss on things. By the final stages the project managers have mentally moved on from the project and give it scant attention - often, they have moved on to other jobs altogether. The ideal is external and independent evaluation with input from the project managers.’ (AMM10)

‘...good examples should be on the web (not on the shelf).’ (AMM5)

8. Conclusions and recommendations

Specific recommendations, and the reasoning behind them, are presented in each of the sections above. This section summarises our broad conclusions.

Some of the essential principles of LP evaluation include:

- evidence based
- appropriate scale
- independent scrutiny or validation
- meeting multiple purposes
- value for money.

Our first conclusion concerns the more tangible benefits that are delivered by Landscape Partnership schemes. These include physical works, such as habitat conservation, the preservation of archaeological features, the repair of buildings and the restoration of other landscape features, the construction and improvement of footpaths, trails and other access routes and the provision of fixed interpretation and signage and of visitor facilities. These works are 'captured' in output data collection and summarised in end-of-scheme evaluation reports provided by Landscape Partnerships themselves and by HLF monitors. 'Legacy' for these types of project is (in principle) relatively easily measured by post-scheme surveys. Third party recipients of grant for major works are required to commit to a 10-year management agreement and larger projects involving capital works are required to provide this information at intervals of five and ten years after project completion. At present it is not clear whether this applies only to major works or to data on the Landscape Partnership scheme as a whole.

Our examination of output data submissions shows that these are probably as comprehensive as is possible given a data structure that needs to be relevant to a diversity of schemes. It is disappointing however that no returns were received from a quarter of the 'live' Landscape Partnership and Area Schemes in the last data round. The only methodological reservation here is that follow-up studies might in practice be difficult where the location of works is unclear. One example of this is where HLF funded access improvements were part of a wider programme of such works and it would be difficult to ascertain (in the absence of detailed maps submitted with the final report) where the former started and stopped.

Physical works are only part of the benefit intended by the Landscape Partnership programme and even in aggregate do not contribute to the 'above and beyond' of the 'landscape hypothesis'. The potential benefits of 'landscape' and 'partnership' working derive as much from other elements of Landscape Partnership schemes (such as community participation, public access and learning, and training opportunity) and from the combination of all these elements together. Moreover many of the benefits themselves – including those (such as landscape 'quality') deriving from physical works are of their essence intangible or at least not reducible to quantitative measures. Even where this might be the case, or where quantitative measures (such as visitor numbers) might act as a proxy for less tangible benefits (such as public engagement) there are deficiencies in the output data, either because data has not been requested or because returns are incomplete (as in the case of visitor statistics, which were returned by only a quarter of 'live' schemes).

There is plenty of anecdotal and other evidence (some of which is presented in this Report) to demonstrate that the Landscape Partnership schemes have delivered significant and lasting benefits. We conclude however that the Landscape Partnership programme as a whole is not presently susceptible to robust retrospective external evaluation through quantitative measures because:

- The necessary baseline data does not exist. In the majority of instances the information – in particular qualitative data – which could have been collected at the outset of schemes, has not been assembled. Neither are there adequate external datasets which could allow this to be done.

- Even where such data might be available the nature of these benefits (for example in community engagement, partnership working and cross-sector learning) will be influenced by many factors unconnected to the work of a landscape partnership.
- Any aggregation of outcomes would be problematic as the context and approach of the Partnerships are so different

The same reservations apply in part to the retrospective evaluation of individual schemes although a number of individual projects within schemes have involved the collection of data which might be useful in a later evaluation.

Landscape Conservation Action Plans

The new requirement for Landscape Partnership applicants to submit an acceptable Landscape Conservation Action Plan before they proceed to Stage 2 (delivery) presents an opportunity for partnerships to specify more clearly the long term benefits intended of their schemes and the means whereby these may be assessed following the end of funding. The two LCAPs that we have looked at to date (both from Landscape Partnership schemes progressing to Stage 2 who have opted to do this) do not specify in sufficient detail the kind of information that needs to be collected to allow post-scheme monitoring of impact.

Principal recommendations

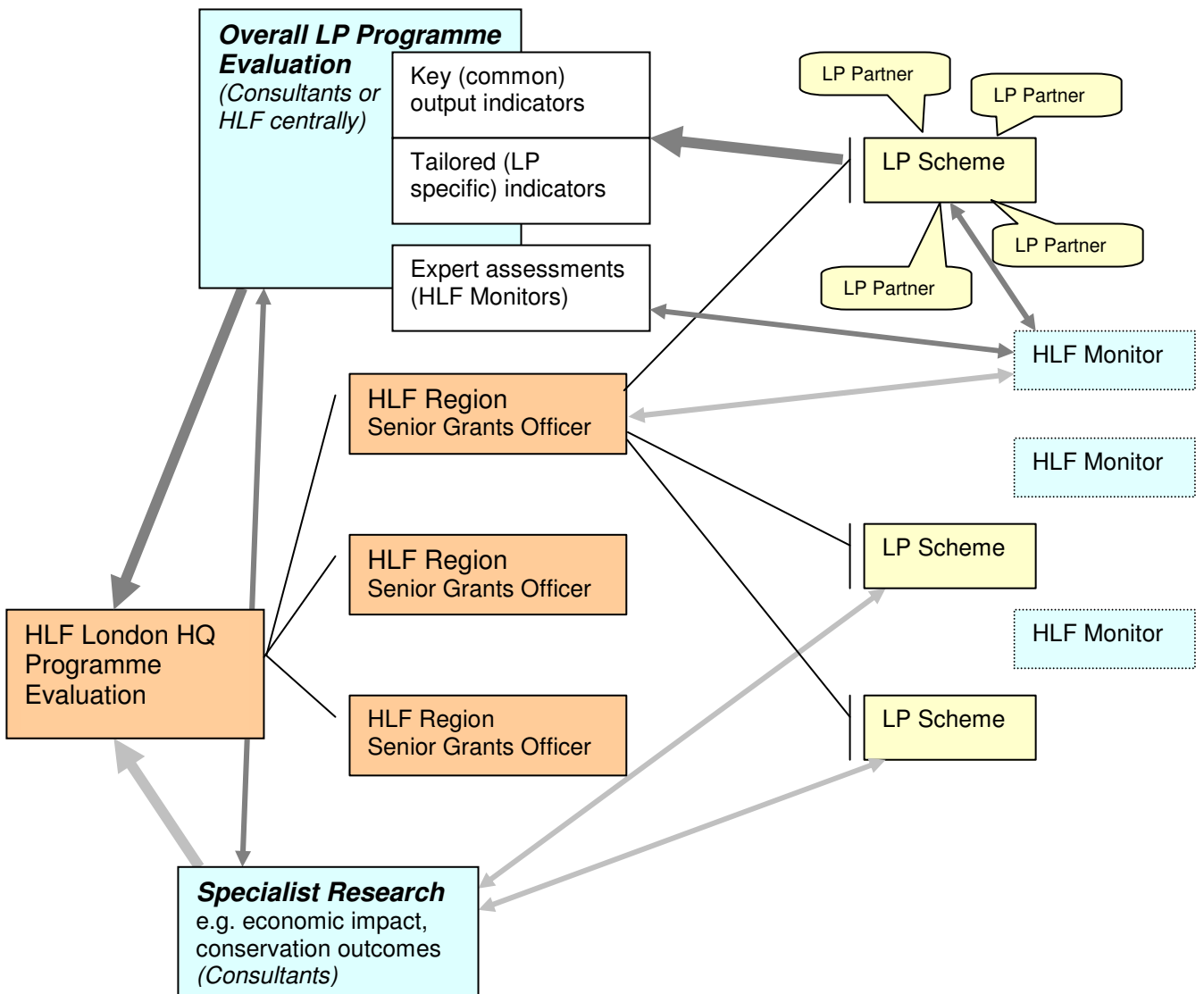


Figure iii. Landscape Partnership programme evaluation; indicative diagram

Figure iii above indicates in schematic form a model for LP programme evaluation involving LP schemes, HLF, monitors, and external consultants. This includes the collection of key (common) output data together with other indicators specific to individual LP schemes and projects (including qualitative as well as quantitative data) as well as assessments of HLF monitors. The model would include the following elements:

Landscape Partnerships to take the lead role in programme evaluation

The most effective evaluation is likely to be that commissioned or conducted scheme by scheme by Landscape Partnerships themselves in collaboration with HLF advisers rather than contracted out to external consultants across the Landscape Partnership programme as a whole. Evaluation is unsatisfactory if conducted wholly internally, so a degree of external scrutiny will be required. HLF Monitors have an important role to play here. In addition, partnerships might consider the benefits of an independent Chair, or the establishment of an independent Audit Committee.

If a local approach was adopted the results could then be validated by independent consultants. This would involve an element of 'ground truthing' but not the collection of fresh data.

Developing a common approach to data collection and evaluation reports

The main emphasis in adopting a new approach to evaluation should now be on new and developing schemes. The output data which is already being collected will reveal some long-term benefits, but additional information will also need to be collected to allow evaluation of the less tangible benefits.

HLF should require the collection and submission of visitor data before and after implementation wherever this is appropriate.

Evaluation should be an important focus of an LCAP, and should contain proposals based on data collected during Phase 1 as well as data collection which will enable evaluation of intangible benefits. There is a case for the use of a standard structure for longer-term evaluation, linked to the LCAP.

HLF could usefully encourage simple 'in house' surveys of volunteering and community participation and provide guidelines as to how these might be conducted.

Baseline studies of community participation and of perception of landscape by local residents and/or visitors need to be conducted at an early stage in delivery. These could most effectively be carried out 'in house' by Landscape Partnerships as part of project activities.

HLF should encourage the collection of qualitative data by Landscape Partnerships themselves and its submission to HLF in an appropriate form with the final evaluation report.

Integration of social, economic and environmental objectives is an inherent feature of scheme delivery and is unlikely to be 'measurable' through indicators. A more robust approach is to assess scheme delivery across the four HLF Landscape Partnership programme objectives; such assessments are already a feature of the best Landscape Partnership and monitor's reports. HLF could usefully specify this more clearly in its advice. An alternative approach would be to use the five elements of the UK government's current approach to sustainability (environmental limits, social justice, economic prosperity and opportunity, and sound science) and to assess schemes on the basis of their contribution across each of these areas.

HLF guidance

The diversity of schemes and their projects means that further guidance from HLF - to LP applicants and schemes, to monitors and to its own Regional staff - will be required if evaluation is to be comparable between partnerships and so useful for assessment of the benefits of the Landscape Partnership programme as a whole. Our own consultations to date have begun to establish a consensus around the need for such guidance and about the form that this might take. Such guidance needs to address the issues identified above, in particular:

- Tailored advice on the structure and content of Audience Development plans and other commissioned studies which feed in to the LCAP.
- Advice about the evaluation section of the LCAP tailored to the specific needs of the Landscape Partnership programme and going beyond the generic guidance issued as part of HLF's current Strategic Plan.
- How best to capture intangibles by gathering cognitive or other data.

Guidance and co-ordination is needed to avoid baseline data collection proceeding in an ad-hoc way. We are aware that in the present climate a more engaged role for HLF will not be easy, but without this evaluation results are likely to be variable across different partnerships and external evaluation, as with our own consultation, is likely to reveal a variety of practice and achievement.

Sharing good practice

HLF workshops and training events, which are currently structured principally as a means of exchanging experience and promulgating 'best practice' in delivery, could also usefully be the focus for deliberation about improvement in reporting and evaluation. These have been a feature of the Landscape Partnership programme in recent years and our consultations suggest that they more than justify the resources used.

Good instances of evaluation should be promulgated either direct to Landscape Partnerships or via Regional Officers and HLF advisers; debate over these examples should be encouraged so that their limitations as well as their strengths are acknowledged.

Participative evaluation has multiple benefits (and multiple audiences). Feedback on the results of evaluation, to Regional teams, advisers and to Landscape Partnerships themselves is important.

Output data and monitor reports

Existing structures for monitoring and evaluation, e.g. output data collection and systematic monitoring by advisers/ monitors/ mentors, should continue.

Output data collection should be maintained at approximately the same intervals as at present. Modifications to the data collection proforma should include the possibility of Landscape Partnerships entering scheme-specific additional data which could usefully be defined in discussion with HLF or its advisers.

GIS issues

It is important to ensure that all new Landscape Partnerships submit boundary shape files with their LCAP. It would be useful to secure boundary files for all existing Landscape Partnerships and completed Area Schemes. HLF should clarify its present position with regard to OS copyright as reassurance on this matter may be needed to overcome the reluctance of lead partners to release this material.

HLF might consider using its good offices with Defra to secure the addition of Landscape Partnership boundaries as a publicly available layer on MAGIC.

Landscape Character Assessment

Supplementary guidance may be needed following the release of new LCA guidance later this year. This might address the role of LCA in the application procedure, the way that LCAs for the partnership area may 'nest' within the broader scale assessments, links with GIS data layers, and how perceptual information can be captured for monitoring and evaluation.

The value of locally produced participatory LCAs should be emphasised. Information (including perceptual data) required for LCA production can be potentially valuable as baseline data for future evaluation and monitoring.

Inclusion of LPs in HLF wide research and evaluation

Sample Landscape Partnership schemes or sample projects across Landscape Partnership schemes should be included in any future external research commissioned by HLF across the entire HLF grant programme.

Other

HLF should champion the status of qualitative evaluation – already recognised in its internal guidance - in its external promotional material.

HLF could usefully explore ways of providing a more active facilitating role in encouraging landscape and partnership working, perhaps in collaboration with other agencies. Even if the resources do not exist for this at present, the need should be acknowledged in HLF's own policy material.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1. LP and AS schemes

* = Documents examined as a part of this research

Project reference	Project title	Region	Decision date St 2
a) Landscape Partnerships with a Stage 2 greater than 1 yr			
LP-04-50670	Kerridge Ridge & Ingersley Vale Project *	North West	14-Jun-06
LP-03-51377	Carving a Foundation for the Isle of Purbeck *	South West	20-Jun-06
LP-04-50752	Neroche Project within the Blackdown Hills AONB *	South West	14-Sep-06
LP-05-00015	Bassenthwaite Reflections *	North West	11-Nov-06
LP-04-50790	Sulwath Connections - The Scottish Solway Coast and River Valleys *	Scotland	21-Nov-06
LP-05-00091	The Dalriada Project *	Scotland	27-Feb-07
LP-04-50736	Medway Gap 'Valley of Vision' Landscape Partnership *	South East	01-Mar-07
LP-03-51375	Lagan Valley LPS *	Northern Ireland	30-May-07
LP-05-00009	Heather & Hillforts Landscape Partnership *	Wales	07-Jun-07
LP-05-00239	Unique North Pennines- A Landscape Moulded by People	North East	15-Jun-07
LP-05-00920	Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd *	Wales	06-Mar-08
LP-05-00865	Overlooking the Wye	West Midlands	12-Mar-08
LP-06-00954	Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme *	South East	06-May-08
LP-06-00071	Discover Bute: Isle of Bute LPS*	Scotland	03-Jun-08
LP-06-00953	Habitats & Hillforts of Cheshire's Sandstone Ridge	North West	05-Jun-08
LP-05-00872	Through the Eyes of the Needles - Landscape Partnership *	South East	18-Jun-08
LP-06-01035	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	11-Sep-08
b. Landscape Partnerships with Stage 2 less than 1 yr			
LP-06-00054	Caradon Hill Area Heritage Project	South West	23-Mar-09
LP-07-00022	Scapa Flow Orkney	Scotland	13-Mar-09
LP-07-00057	Trent Vale	East Midlands	18-Sep-09
c. Landscape Partnerships Developing Stage 2			
	Project title	Region	Trustee decision St 1
LP-07-00948/1	Stour Valley	East of England	Apr-08

LP-07-00022/1	Sefton Coast	North West	Oct-08
LP-07-01737/1	Sperrin Gateway (Five Parishes Upper Moyola Valley & Slieve Gallion)	Northern Ireland	Oct-08
LP-07-00051/1	Isle of Harris	Scotland	Oct-08
LP-05-01626	Applecross	Scotland	Oct-08
LP-08-00106/1	Ochil Hills & Hillfoots	Scotland	Oct-08
LP-07-00936/1	Exmoor Moorland LP	South West	Apr-08
LP-08-00111/1	(Blaenavon) Forgotten Landscapes	Wales	Oct-08
LP-08-00179/1	South Pennines	Yorkshire & Humber	Oct-08
c. Landscape Partnerships with a Stage 1 pass			
LP-08-00723/1	Partneriaeth Tirlun Llyn	Wales	
LP-08-00722/1	Faughan Valley	Northern Ireland	
LP-08-00728/1	Limestone Landscapes	North East	
LP-08-00720/1	Windermere Reflections	North West	
LP-08-00726/1	Lincolnshire Grazing Marsh	East Midlands	
LP-08-00727/1	Derbyshire Magnesian Limestone	East Midlands	
c. Area Partnership schemes			
HF-99-00661	Arnside-Silverdale Limestone Heritage Project	North West	
HF-99-00583	Blue Remembered Hills	West Midlands	
HF-00-00450	Caring for the Cotswolds	South West	
HF-00-00184	Dales Living Landscape	Yorkshire & Humber	
HF-00-00917	Life into Landscape	South West	
HF-99-00601	Malvern Heritage Project	West Midlands	
HF-01-00071/2	Mineral Valleys	North East	
HF-99-01016	Moors for the Future	East Midlands	
HF-98-01100	Nàdair 1	Scotland	
HG-03-00101	Nàdair 2	Scotland	
HF-01-00595	Rhythms of the Tide	South East	
HF-00-00660	The Sherwood Initiative	East Midlands	
HF-98-00242	Tweed Rivers Heritage Project 1	Scotland	
HF-01-00032	Tweed Rivers Heritage Project 2	Scotland	

Appendix 2. Schedule of Key Informant Interviews

Respondent	Job title/ capacity	Interview date and place (T = by telephone)
Adrian Phillips	Mentor/ Monitor	13 Jan RC (T)
Alison Fowler	AONB Officer Chichester Harbour AONB	13 Jan RC (T)
Andy Robinson	Project Manager, Caradon Hill Area Heritage Project	21 Dec RC (T)
Bob Cartwright & Steve Ratcliffe	Director of Park Services & Director of Planning and Partnerships, Lake District National Park	27 Jan DM at Kendal
Bob Griffith	Programme Manager, Wyre Forest LP	1 Feb, RC (T)
Brendan O'Connor	Project Manager, Lagan Valley LPS	29 Jan DM at Belfast
Chris Wood-Gee	Project Manager, Sulwath Connections - The Scottish Solway Coast and River Valleys	27 Jan DM at Dumfries
Chris Woodley-Stewart & Peter Samsom	North Pennine AONB	28 Jan, DM at Alston
Claire Thirlwall	Mentor/ Monitor	26 Jan RC (T)
Dave Dixon	South – West Protected Landscape Forum	18 Jan RC at Exeter
David Hughes Hallett	Mentor/ Monitor	14 Jan RC (T)
Dr. Andy Bridge, manager	Lagan Valley Regional Park	3 Feb, DM at Belfast
Elinor Gwynn	Mentor/ Monitor	15 Jan RC (T)
Fiona Southern	Mentor/ Monitor	20 Jan RC (T)
Gavin Saunders	Project Manager, Neroche Project	18 Jan RC at Exeter
Helen Mrowiec	Project Officer, Heather & Hillforts LP	5 Feb, DM at Denbeigh
Howard Sutcliffe	AONB Officer, Clwydian Range AONB	5 Feb, DM at Denbeigh
James Dennis	Mentor/ Monitor	1 Feb RC (T)
Jo Bowry	Project Manager, Carving a Foundation for the Isle of Purbeck	19 Jan RC, MA at Totnes
Jon Charlton	Project Manager, Unique North Pennines LP	29 Jan DM at Alston
Julian Branscombe	Manager, Scapa Flow Orkney LPS	3 Feb, RC (T)

Respondent	Job title/ capacity	Interview date and place (T = by telephone)
Kevin Heaton	Mentor/ Monitor	29 Jan RC (T)
Linda Bennet	Manager, Blackdown Hills AONB	18 Jan RC at Exeter
Martin Varley	Landscape Partnership Officer, Bassenthwaite Reflections	28 Jan DM at Kendal
Mike Harding	Mentor/ Monitor	07 Jan RC (T)
Nick Johannsen	Director, Kent Downs AONB	13 Jan RC at Snodland
Angela Lavin	HLF Officer, Northern Ireland	03 Feb DM at Belfast
Paul Walshe	Mentor/ Monitor	14 Jan RC (T)
Rick Bayne	Project Manager, Medway Gap 'Valley of Vision' LP	13 Jan RC at Snodland
Rob Fitzsimons	External Funding Officer, Trent Vale Scheme Coordinator	25 Jan RC at Nottingham
Robin Toogood	South Devon AONB	19 Jan, RC, MA, at Totnes
Sally Marsh, Gerry Sherwin, Ruth Child	Director, Planning Officer and GIS Officer, High Weald AONB	05 Jan RC at Flimwell
Sarah Bronsdon & Lucy Casot	HLF Officer, Scotland	27 Jan RC, MA at Edinburgh
Simon Aguss	Project Development Officer, Weald Forest Ridge LP	05 Jan RC at Flimwell
Simon Lees	Mentor/ Monitor	20 Dec RC (T)
Kirsty Wallace & Thomas Brewer	HLF Officers, South-West	18 Jan RC, MA at Exeter (KW only, TB ill)
Sue Middleton	Scheme Manager, Overlooking the Wye LP	15 Dec RC (T)
Tony Devos	Mentor/ Monitor	21 Jan RC (T)

10. Sources and references

1. HLF. *Valuing our heritage, Investing in our future. Our Strategy 2008 -- 2013*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2008.
2. HLF. *Evaluation of the Landscape Partnerships programme. Research Brief*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2009 October. Report No.: RES-09107.
3. HLF. *Landscape Partnerships. Guidance and Application Pack*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2004.
4. Council of Europe. *The European Landscape Convention*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe; 2000.
5. Council of Europe, Landscape Character Network. *The European Landscape Convention and its Explanatory Report: Side-by-side*: Landscape Character Network; 2008.
6. Natural England. *Natural England's European Landscape Convention 2008/2009 Action Plan*. Peterborough: Natural England,; 2008 November.
7. English Heritage. *The European Landscape Convention. The English Heritage Action Plan for Implementation*. London: English Heritage,; 2009.
8. National Forest Company. *European Landscape Convention. Action Plan 2008-13*. London: National Forest Company,; 2009 November.
9. Roberts G, Hughes E, Scott A, et al. *Identifying Good Practice from Countries Implementing the European Landscape Convention*. Aberystwyth: International Centre for Protected Landscapes; 2007. Report No.: ICP/001/07.
10. IUCN, Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas. *Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories*. Gland, Sw and Cambridge, UK: International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; 1994.
11. Dudley N, editor. *Guidelines for applying protected area management categories*. Gland, Sw: International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; 2008.
12. Cumulus. *Area Schemes and LP Partnerships. Assembly of Output Data. Report to the Heritage Lottery Fund*. Broadway, Worcestershire: Cumulus Consultants Ltd; 2009 August.
13. National Audit Office. *Heritage Lottery Fund. Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General*. London: HMSO; 2007.
14. House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts. *Heritage Lottery Fund*. London: The Stationery Office; 2007.
15. HLF. *Programme evaluation within HLF. Meeting of NHMF Board on 20 May 2008*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2008 May. Report No.: HLF 2008 (5) 9.
16. HLF. *Evaluating your HLF project*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2008.
17. THIRU. *Townscape Heritage Initiative Schemes Evaluation. Five Year Review. Final Report*. Oxford: Townscape & Heritage Research Unit, Department of Planning, Oxford Brookes University; 2008.
18. Hall Aitken. *Parks for People Programme Evaluation. Baseline Report for BIG Lottery Fund and Heritage Lottery Fund*. In. London: Hall Aitken; 2009.
19. HLF. *First steps in... evaluation*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2009.
20. IPSOS MORI. *Heritage Grants and Your Heritage Programme. 2004-2007 Aggregated Completions Report*. London: IPSOS MORI; 2009 June.
21. BOP Consulting. *Assessment of the Social Impact of Participation in HLF-funded projects. Final report*. London: Burns Owen Partnership; 2009 June.
22. GHK Consulting. *Economic Impact of HLF Projects*. London: GHK Consulting; 2009 March.

23. Mills S. *Impact of HLF Funding. Visitor and Neighbourhood Surveys 2005-8*. London: BDRG; 2009.
24. ECOTEC. *The Impacts of Funding Heritage Case Studies for 2007*. London: ECOTEC; 2008.
25. Bond S. 'Evaluation of Conservation Outcomes from HLF Funded Projects Final report'. 2009.
26. HLF. *LP First-round help notes*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2009.
27. HLF. *LP Second-round help notes*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2009.
28. Cumulus. *A Review of HLF Area Schemes and Landscape Partnership Schemes, Baseline Data Collection and Preliminary Evaluation. Report to the Heritage Lottery Fund*. Broadway, Worcestershire: Cumulus Consultants Ltd; 2006 July.
29. HLF. *Landscape Partnerships. Guidance*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2009.
30. Aiken M. *Impact of community anchors: towards a conceptual framework for research*. In: London: Institute for Voluntary Action Research; 2009.
31. House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts. *Promoting Participation with the Historic Environment*. London: The Stationery Office; 2009.
32. Schouten F F J. 'Heritage as Historical Reality'. In: Herbert DT, editor. *Heritage, Tourism and Society*. London & New York: Mansell; 1995. p. 21-31.
33. H M Government. *One future - different paths. The UK's shared framework for sustainable development*. London: Defra; 2005.
34. DCLG. *National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Updated National Indicator Definitions*. London: Department for Communities and Local Government; 2009 August.
35. Haines-Young R, Potschin M. *England's Ecosystem Services and the Rationale for an Ecosystem Approach. Full Technical Report to Defra*. Nottingham: CEM School of Geography, University of Nottingham; 2009.
36. Maer G. *Values and benefits of heritage. A research review*. London: Heritage Lottery Fund; 2008.
37. Clark K, Maer G. 'The cultural value of heritage: evidence from the Heritage Lottery Fund: Evidence from the Heritage Lottery Fund'. *Cultural Trends* 2008; 17 (1): 23-56.
38. Maer G, Campbell I. 'Evaluation of the Townscape Heritage Initiative: Evidence from the Heritage Lottery Fund'. *Journal of Urban Regeneration and Renewal* 2009; 3 (2): 185-201.