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Improving landscape or recreating the picturesque?

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Improving landscape or recreating the picturesque?

Three historic rural landscapes in the English Midlands

Améliorer le paysage ou recréer le pittoresque? L'exemple de trois paysages historiques dans la région des Midlands

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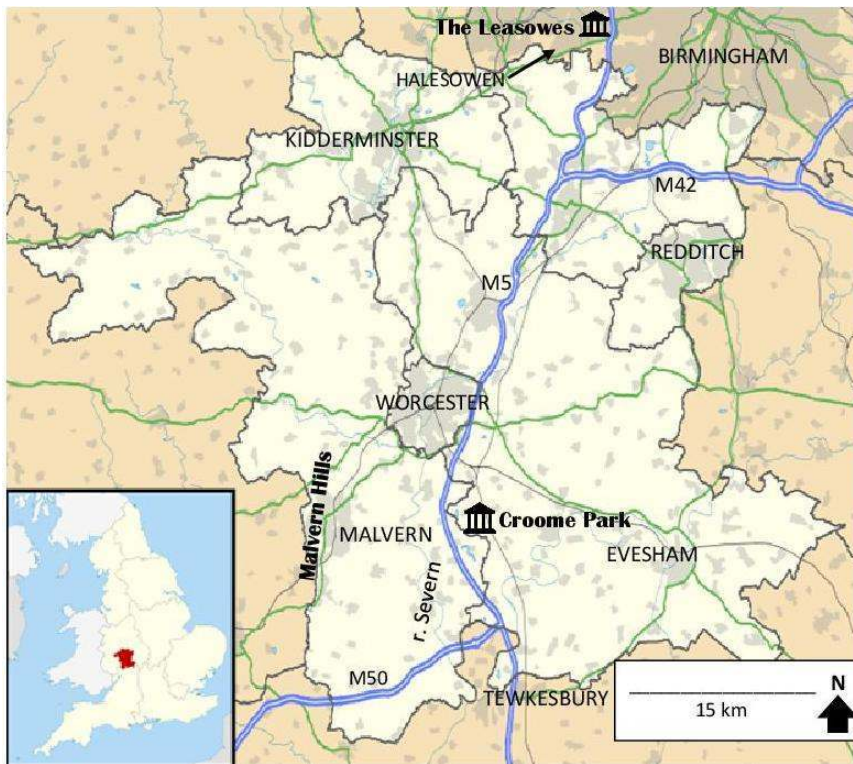
Introduction: The Creation of Heritage Landscape

- 1 Throughout human history, people have deliberately modified the physical environment to create landscapes providing food, shelter and aesthetic delight. In the United Kingdom (UK) this aesthetic dimension came to the fore in grand landscape gardening schemes across many great country estates of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, expressing aristocratic visions of human society and nature “profoundly distant from the actuality of working and living in [the] landscape” (Wylie, 2007, p. 62). From 1660 onwards, wealthy ‘Grand Tourists’ exposed to the cultural legacy of classical antiquity and the Renaissance (Trease, 1991), superimposed their acquired visions upon the existing English countryside. Large ornamental gardens and parks were laid out in highly geometrical forms, as at Westbury Court in Gloucestershire. By the mid-eighteenth century landowners’ tastes were favouring ‘naturalistic’ gardens designed by innovators such as Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown, William Kent and Humphry Repton, with “trees, lakes, cascades, grottoes and ornamental buildings” disposed according to the taste and

preference of the owner (Coones & Patten, 1986, p. 224). The impact of these designers significantly influenced both the great estates of the realm and lesser landholdings of the minor gentry (Hoskins, 1954). Thus, a map showing ‘parks circa 1820’ is notable for its depiction of thousands of hectares landscaped or ‘emparked’ in a wholesale transformation of the countryside, especially in the south and midlands (Prince 1976, p. 129). Large areas of woodland were cleared to create open ‘parkland’, often including substantial new plantings of exotic species (Prince, 1976).

- 2 Many English landscapes widely admired today, as measured by visitor numbers to particular locales, owe less to the aesthetics of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century estates than to more recent land-use innovations including: the widespread enclosure movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, forest clearance, wholesale colonisation of heaths, moors and mountains, draining of wetlands, and rural industrialisation. Nonetheless, mass tourism and conservation movements have generated a heritage ‘industry’ invoking complex notions of nostalgia, tradition, conservation, preservation and the symbolic (Cosgrove & Daniels, 1988; Daniels, 1993; Seymour, 2000), alongside a desire to re-create past landscapes.
- 3 Many restoration projects in England purport to re-create or maintain eighteenth-century parkland landscapes. These projects exist alongside a myriad of other heritage management projects aimed at maintaining the appearance of rural landscapes that have gradually evolved across centuries (Darby, 2000; Johnson, 2006) or through particular events, such as enclosure, mining activity and industrial development (Watkins & Wright, 2007). Arguably, the National Parks themselves reflect long-term processes of landscape evolution, with strong planning constraints on development as the mechanism for retaining landscape character, heritage and amenity (Robinson, 2005). Some funding for landscape heritage projects has been provided via the European Union’s Common Agricultural Policy (Gray, 2000), but other sources have included central and local government, various heritage organisations, conservation agencies and the National Lottery (Selwood, 2001).
- 4 This article illustrates heritage landscape management using three examples of landscape re-creation in the English Midlands (Figure 1). One uniting feature of the three is the notion of the ‘picturesque’ as articulated by William Gilpin in the late eighteenth century (Andrews, 1989; Gilpin, 1792; 1800), where the term ‘picturesque’ is taken from *pittoresco*, the Italian for “in the manner of a painting” (Linden, 2007). They represent the picturesque being enacted at different scales: the miniature, the meso- and the macro-scale, the latter including a ‘wild’ or mountainous backdrop. A second commonality is that they have each received support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to re-create historic landscapes. The HLF receives money from the state-franchised National Lottery, established in 1994. By 2024 £7.1 billion had been awarded to the HLF for over 40,000 projects to transform and sustain the UK’s heritage, including museums, parks, historic places, archaeology, the natural environment and cultural traditions (HLF, 2016). Despite difficulties in directly linking individual categories to landscape, data available for the first 15 years of the Fund show ‘public parks’, ‘nature conservation’ and ‘world heritage sites’ together accounted for 18% of all projects and 22% of funding (Clark & Maer, 2008, p.34; Stark *et al.*, 2013).

Figure 1. Worcestershire in the English Midlands, showing the locations of Croome Park, the Leasowes and the Malvern Hills.



SOURCE OF BASE MAP: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/d4/Worcestershire_UK_location_map.svg/700px-Worcestershire_UK_location_map.svg.png

- 5 The article begins with a brief outline of the notion of the ‘picturesque’ as developed under eighteenth-century aesthetic theory. This notion is applied to the first case study: a small landscape in a peri-urban fringe. A key feature of one of the earliest examples of the Picturesque English Landscape Movement, the Leasowes, has been re-established following the loss, across two centuries of neglect, of many of the original 1740s and 1750s landscape innovations. Comparisons and contrasts are made with landscapes on a broader scale. The second case study describes Croome Park, a Palladian mansion with substantial eighteenth-century emparkment. The third case explores a dominant physical feature, the Malvern Hills, designated in 1959 as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), one of 41 such areas in England and Wales (Holdaway and Smart, 2013), where long-term grazing has created distinctive ‘bald’ hills devoid of trees or scrub, but also with a legacy from the eighteenth century when the town of Malvern became a spa town and tourist centre. The article raises issues regarding what landscapes are valued in contemporary society and why. It draws on scoping surveys of the three case studies, which involved short interviews with a small random sample of ninety users of the landscapes conducted at each of the three locations, and secondary sources such as local newspapers. Interviewees were asked about their usage of the parks/hills and their views regarding the landscape restoration projects.

The Picturesque in Eighteenth-Century Garden Design

- 6 In the neo-classical aesthetic theory of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the artist was required to 'imitate nature' by imitating certain ideal forms latent in natural objects. However, before it could be imitated, the artist first 'improved' nature. Even as he imitated them, the artist subtly altered the features and relative disposition of natural objects to help reveal those ideal forms. In this regard, the shaping (design) and maintenance (pruning) work of the gardener closely resembles the role of the neoclassical artist in tidying natural objects and scenes to reveal their latent iconography. It is therefore no surprise that the landscape garden became the quintessential art-form of the mid-eighteenth-century turn to the picturesque.
- 7 According to Dixon-Hunt (1981) and Townsend (1997), the eighteenth-century appropriation of nature and the environment has a complex past. For Dixon-Hunt (1981, p. 262), the rise of the picturesque movement reflected growing dissatisfaction with the traditional allegorical language of painting. At the same time, the psychology underlying key eighteenth-century empiricist theories of taste, as developed by Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) and David Hume (1711-1776), shifted aesthetic value from the intrinsic features inherent in the art object, to the emotional response of the viewer (Ackerman, 2003, p.79). Dixon-Hunt (1981, p. 257) suggests that the picturesque was an attempt to rediscover the meaning of visual art in the felt response of the perceiver. The circular walk created by William Shenstone at the Leasowes (see section immediately below) illustrates this attempt to connect the emotions of the viewer as part of the aesthetic response. As John Archer (2002) suggests, "... by laying out his estate architecturally and horticulturally as a series of objects and stations ... in a linear sequence along a circuit path, each designed to cue certain ideas, memories, or feelings, Shenstone ... orchestrated opportunities for intellectual, emotional, and physical engagement" (p. 145). The importance of the felt response is exemplified in the picturesque's fascination with rough and irregular surfaces, and decayed or ruined structures (Ackerman, 2003, p.88; Dixon-Hunt, 1981). As a feature of picturesque landscape, ruins served to engage the emotional imagination of garden visitors with their "impressionistic suggestions of decay and loss" (Dixon-Hunt, 1981, p. 260).
- 8 Dixon-Hunt (1981, pp. 256, 267) describes the picturesque movement as both a 'moment' and a 'cult'. In so doing, he implies that the picturesque was an influential but short-lived movement in art history, and one reflecting an eccentric rather than mainstream taste.
- 9 Although the picturesque movement in its purest expression was short-lived, it had a lasting influence upon tourist conceptions of landscape. The picturesque turn allowed the British middle-classes to 'consume' English landscapes as spectacle, just as aristocratic Grand Tourists tended to consume continental landscapes (Bermingham, cited in Townsend, 1997, p. 365). For both middle-class tourists and the pioneer photographers in the nineteenth century, notions of what a landscape should look like were set out in guidebooks employing picturesque ideals (Ackerman, 2003, p.75; Dixon-Hunt, 1981).

Case Studies

The Leasowes

- 10 The English poet William Shenstone (1714 – 1763) was one of the earliest practitioners of landscape gardening through the development of his estate, the Leasowes (meaning ‘pasture-land’ or ‘meadows’), just north-east of Halesowen, then in the county of Shropshire, about 11.3 km southwest from what has become the city centre of Birmingham, England’s second largest city (Figure 2). Upon inheriting the 57 ha property in 1741 (Humphreys, 1937), Shenstone quickly became interested in ‘beautifying’ the estate and is credited with inventing the term ‘landscape gardener’ (Darby, 1976, p. 45). Within three years he boasted to a friend, “My wood grows excessively pleasant ... I have an alcove, six elegies, a seat, two epitaphs (one upon myself), three ballads, four songs, and a serpentine river” (Williams, 1939, p. 93).

Figure 2. The Nature Reserve, The Leasowes, looking north to Shenstone’s Circular Walk.



- 11 The picturesque treated landscape as a form of pictorial composition, as found in the landscape paintings of contemporary European artists, especially Claude Lorrain, Gaspard Poussin and Salvator Rosa (Manwaring, 1925). Thus, ‘picturesque’ landscapes were ones ‘suitable for painting’ (Townsend, 1997, p. 365). According to Shenstone, “the landscip [sic.] painter is the gardiner’s [sic.] best designer” (Shenstone, 1764, p. 129). His garden at the Leasowes estate exemplified the picturesque movement’s tendency to view any landscape as a ‘drama-scape’: the scene or setting for a potential human action. The Leasowes estate contained one of the tributaries of the river Stour in a steep, amphitheatre-like valley immediately west of the manor house (Kinvig, 1962, p. 275). Manicured hills dotted with allegorical temples were sculpted into the estate (Reily, 1979; Johnson, 1783, p. 359), forming a diverse landscape of wooded valleys, open grassland, lakes and streams, a creation he called his *‘ferme ornée’*, literally meaning an ‘ornamental farm’ (Dodsley, 1765).
- 12 As landscape artist, Shenstone attempted both to reinforce natural characteristics and to enhance Nature, echoing sentiments expressed in his poetry (Symes & Haynes, 2010, pp.

- 137-189). His own particularised interpretation of landscape and the rural can be placed alongside both earlier and contemporary creations in the UK, e.g. Alexander Pope's garden at Twickenham (1719 onwards) near London (Mack, 1969).
- 13 One centrepiece was the 'circuit walk', winding alongside cascading water plunging to still pools, with views of a folly, and a ruined priory, perhaps a direct invocation of the ruins of Halesowen Abbey, less than a mile from the estate (Gallagher, 1996, pp. 202-211). This walk is comparable with other eighteenth-century circular walks created in England at Stourhead, Hawkstone and Painshill (Schulz, 1981). Shenstone also planted large numbers of trees and shrubs, including Lombardy poplars, beech, oak, alder, willow, yew, hazel, hawthorn, crabtree and elder (Williams, 1939, pp. 207-208).
 - 14 Within 37 years of Shenstone's death, the Leasowes had passed through eight different owners. By the early nineteenth century little remained of the famous *ferme ornée*. Shenstone's house was rebuilt in 1768, and used as a girls' school around 1900. In 1906, an 18-hole golf course was laid out by Halesowen Golf Club. Halesowen Council purchased the Leasowes in 1934. In the 1960s the ruined priory folly and gothic stables were pulled down (Pevsner, 1968, p. 182). Today the park is owned by Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, who established the Leasowes as a public park, acting as a green barrier between the abrupt southerly ending of the densely settled Midland plateau and the industrial Black Country (DMBC, 2017). It is used for various recreational purposes, including fishing, golfing, bird watching, jogging and walking. The Golf Club still leases the course.
 - 15 In 1991, local community concern about the degraded state of Leasowes park encouraged the Council to formally endorse a proposal to restore some of Shenstone's original design. A programme of woodland management and restoration was commenced, with thinning and replanting of woodland in the valley immediately west of the house (between two of Shenstone's creations Virgil's Grove and Beech Water) (Gallagher, 1996, p. 219). In 1997, the HLF awarded £1.3 million for additional restoration work. Further funding from the Council itself, and in 2003 from the Liveability Fund of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of renewed government commitment to urban parks (Wilson and Hughes, 2011) created a total budget of £1.75 million for the Leasowes Restoration Project. This has focused on restoring a section of the North Valley, which Shenstone had named Virgil's Grove, involving re-creation of two large pools, a dam and cascades, archaeological investigations, footpaths laid out as per Shenstone's original design, removal of some paths and bridges of later construction, and new tree and shrub plantings to reflect the historic lay-out. Work on the project was completed in 2009.
 - 16 Shenstone's original circuit walk has been substantially re-established, with certain features, notably the cascades, dams and pools once more prominent within a confined wooded valley. Numerous walkers now use the circuit and there have also been some positive environmental outcomes. For example, the re-creation of pools has attracted kingfishers, herons, goosanders, cormorants, little grebes and great-crested grebes (BBC News, 2011). Moreover, the Leasowes is now listed as Grade 1 on the English Heritage 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England'. Yet the cost of the project has attracted criticism locally. Informal interviews conducted by the authors with a cross-section of park users reveal ambivalence towards the restorations. Critics tended to focus on the cost of restoration, which many (around one-third) felt was not justified because they identified more urgent priorities for spending, e.g. schools and hospitals ("We need better services not a restored cascade" – local golfer, male, aged 75; "it's a ridiculous amount of money to restore something from a bygone age" – local dog walker,

female, aged 30). Indeed, even regular users of the park were inclined to think that substantial landscape restoration was unnecessary because the park's environment was already attractive and, with a significant area covered by a golf course, it was not a 'natural' environment anyway ("I have walked in the Leasowes for twenty years; it's beautiful and doesn't need changing" – local resident, female, aged 45). Many (over half) were unaware that the project re-created an eighteenth-century landscape. Nor were the majority able to name Shenstone as the originator of the features being re-created, though users living within one mile of the park were more knowledgeable.

Croome Park Estate

- 17 Croome Park and its neo-Palladian mansion, Croome Court, near Pershore in south Worcestershire, were designed in the mid-eighteenth century by Capability Brown for the Sixth Earl of Coventry (Figure 3). It rivalled Kew Gardens for its variety of plants, cultivated in a walled garden, with the parkland landscape distinguished by a man-made lake and numerous follies, many designed by Robert Adam and James Wyatt (Beresford, 1996; Symes, 2012), including statues, temples, a grotto, rotunda, and mock castles as well as a church serving the family. This landscape has some echoes of the Leasowes, in terms of objects as spectacle being dispersed in a specially created environment designed to stimulate the viewer. However, Croome Park was on a broader scale, initially covering over 300 ha. The estate remained in the hands of the Coventry family until 1981 before part (270 ha) was acquired by the National Trust (NT) in 1996 using HLF money and a donation from Royal Sun Alliance, the previous owners. From 1979, the house survived a succession of owners and uses before being purchased by the Croome Heritage Trust in 2007 and being managed by the NT. Part of the walled gardens remains in private hands, but these have been restored and from 2014 opened to the public.

Figure 3. Croome Court, adjacent buildings (under restoration) and the parkland of Croome Park.



- 18 The parkland landscape remained largely intact until 1940 after which it was gradually denuded of its original planting schemes and converted from pasture to arable cultivation. Large parts of its eastern area became a Second World War airfield, used until 1957, a part of which is now preserved as a museum by the NT. Some of the shelterbelts and shrubberies also suffered limited commercial forestry planting. In 1962, the western edge of the park was separated by the construction of the M5 motorway. The NT is currently in the process of restoring the site to a condition similar to that described in the 1824 Guide Book (Dean, 1824). This programme has involved the writing of conservation and management plans in the late 1990s and subsequently (Alker & Smith, 2012; NT, 1999; Oliver, 1998; Rutherford, 2011).
- 19 HLF has contributed both to restoration of the landscape, with grants in the mid-1990s, and more recently to restoration of the Court, and an oral history project to record recollections about Croome. The overall project has cost nearly £5 million, including recreation of Brown's vision of a sweeping landscape that sits against the wider backdrop of the Worcestershire countryside, notably the Malvern Hills. Staying faithful to Brown's plans, but using modern technology where appropriate, the 20-year scheme has been the largest of its kind undertaken by the NT (Lambert & Lovie, 2006). Since 1996, the NT has replanted more than 45,000 trees and shrubs using global satellite positioning technology to ensure historical accuracy; dredged the man-made ornamental lake and river, removing 50,000 cubic metres of silt; returned 162 ha of arable farmland to English wildflower meadow; reinstated 4 km of historic pathways; and restored 18 ornamental statues and buildings.
- 20 This extensive restoration of park, gardens and mansion has seen substantial increases in tourist numbers (170,000 in 2014). Croome Court was named Midlands Historical Family Attraction of the Year 2014/15 by regional tourism magazine, *Going Places*. The Director of

Going Places said, “Visitors particularly appreciate the vast restoration work that has been undertaken and how the informative volunteers and staff made their visits so special” (*Worcester Observer*, 2.3.2015). Interviews with visitors to the parklands overwhelmingly expressed satisfaction with the re-created landscape, especially emphasising the restoration of follies and buildings in the landscape (“It’s great to see the house and grounds being restored to former glory” – overseas visitor, female, aged 50; “After years of neglect, the place is starting to look wonderful again” – local resident, male, aged 40). Less comment was elicited about the wildflower meadows and restored pastures, but typical opinions referred to “an idyllic English rural/pastoral scene” (visitor from Worcester, male, aged 55) and “the beautiful English landscape” (visitor from London, female, aged 60). There was relatively little appreciation of the fact that this restored landscape was originally ‘created’ in the eighteenth century, though the age of the mansion was clearly recognised by most visitors.

The Malvern Heritage Project

- 21 Located on the borders of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the Malvern Hills are a popular tourist attraction receiving 1.7 million visitors per annum and an annual spend of £81.5 million (MHDC, 2012) (Figure 4). The place-name Malvern may be derived from the Welsh *moel bryn*, meaning ‘bare hill’. Indeed, the Hills have long been bare of woodland, and dominated by acid grassland, reflecting a land management system of widespread animal grazing traceable at least to medieval times (Bowden 2005). Today that grassland supports rare plants and a threatened butterfly, the high brown fritillary (*Argynnis adippe*). In recent decades, changes to livestock management by local farmers, withdrawing widespread grazing from the Hills, has led to the grassland becoming increasingly colonised by bracken, gorse and birch scrub, especially the southern part (Hurle, 1984). Indeed, research monitoring landscape appearance in 2006/7 recognised 30 separate ‘landscape description units’ within the AONB and 11 distinctive landscape character types (CRR, 2007; Evans & Connolly, 2006). The ‘bald hills’ were acknowledged as characteristic principally only of the southern part of the AONB, and the encroachment by scrub and trees there was duly noted (CRR, 2007, pp. 8-9), including areas lying within Sites of Special Scientific Interest (p. 14). Two-thirds of the area of the AONB were recorded as permanent grassland, but there was also intensively cropped arable land and dense woodland (both semi-natural and introduced species). One-third of the area was under agri-environment schemes, mainly involving regulation of grazing practices.

Figure 4. The bare high hills of the Malverns.



- 22 The Malvern Hills also possess spring waters, some of which were regarded as holy wells in Medieval times. Medicinal waters discovered at Malvern Wells in the seventeenth century, were popularised in the nineteenth century when several hotels, a pump room, baths and drinking fountains were built (Garrard, 2006), giving rise to the development of the nineteenth century spa town of Great Malvern (Osborne & Weaver, 2001). This became a fashionable place to ‘take the waters’, with Princess Victoria visiting in 1830 (Pevsner, 1968, p. 158).
- 23 Since 1959 the Hills have been protected as an AONB (covering 104 square km), managed by the Malvern Hills Partnership including representatives from five local authorities and the Malvern Hills Conservators (MHC). The latter was constituted under the 1884 Malvern Hills Act as a separate management organisation for the Hills, primarily as a response to urban encroachment and piecemeal erosion of common land by enclosure (Evans & Connolly, 2006, p. 5; MHC, 2016). The Partnership has recognised the need for urgent repair and restoration of both habitat and historic buildings, especially to prevent encroachment by scrub, i.e. to control natural revegetation which occurs when livestock grazing is prevented.
- 24 In October 2000, the HLF awarded £770,000 to Worcestershire County Council (WCC) for its Malvern Heritage Project (MHP). This was launched as a £0.9 million scheme with three aims: to reintroduce grazing animals to the Malvern Hills, as a means of scrub management, and to restore several water features associated with the Spa, including an historic network of water spouts. The Malvern Hills AONB Service led the project, in partnership with 22 agencies. The MHP encourages landowners to graze sheep and cattle widely across their land, so that they will eat into overgrown scrubland and thus recreate the longstanding ‘bare hills’ that have long characterised the Malverns (Malvern Hills AONB Partnership, 2011). According to a project officer for the AONB, “... this work maintains the landscape people come here to see” (National Lottery, 2013). Of course, this

is in direct contrast to 'natural' re-vegetation and re-colonisation of native trees and shrubs, which would occur without the grazing farm animals.

- 25 The MHP employs a shepherd, both to manage sheep and cattle and to provide information to visitors on grazing and other conservation topics. Anne Jenkins (HLF Regional Manager for the West Midlands) says, "We want to make sure that the Hills' stunning features are preserved long into the future for everyone to enjoy" (National Lottery, 2013). This approach extends to other landscape features, including renovation of nine distinctive water features, 17 water spouts, installation of new cattle grids to assist livestock management, and collaboration between the AONB, local conservation and voluntary groups.
- 26 Overall, the aim is to keep 350 grazing sheep and 140 cattle within the boundary of the commons while encouraging nesting of birds, rare wild flowers and re-growth of the acid grassland. The intention is to allow no more than one cow or eight ewes with lambs per hectare. Funding also supports maintenance of trees and hedgerows, including tree surveys, pollarding and the erection of fences to separate woodland and grassland (Evans, 2014).
- 27 Initial public reaction to the MHP was quite hostile, with concerns voiced that by erecting temporary fences on the Hills for restoration purposes, the Conservators would be straying from the core duty of keeping the Hills as unenclosed open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public. Letters to the local paper complained that leisure activities were being affected, with "the feeling of freedom associated with 'just being' on the Malvern Hills" disappearing (Malvern Gazette, 2002). However, an apparently concerted opposition group organised via Facebook appears to have been largely the work of one disgruntled dog owner concerned about losing the 'right to roam' across the Hills following fencing-off of some areas for conservation purposes (Self-Willed-Land, 2013). A local public meeting in October 2010 voiced concerns about Project costs, use of fencing to control livestock and impacts of temporary stock control measures upon public access and use of footpaths. However, concerns about cost were placed in context by the Conservators' director: "the cost of the cattle grids, over their 50-year life span, is a lot less than the cost of cutting scrub every year" (Malvern Gazette, 2000). Moreover, use of goats to eat bushes and scrub was described positively by the Conservators: "you are actually improving public access" (Malvern Gazette, 2000).

Discussion

- 28 Viewed purely from the perspective of historical re-enactment, the Leasowes remains the least successful of the three HLF projects described here. A number of structural features there have conspired to prevent the total re-instatement of Shenstone's original picturesque landscape. For example, the construction of the Dudley No 2 Canal as part of the Birmingham and Worcestershire Canal (in 1797) reduced the extent of Shenstone's Priory Pool (Miller, 1847, pp. 152-169). Under the reconstruction, although the lakes attract wildlife, the streams barely cascade because higher levels of regular maintenance are needed to remove weeds and silt from the watercourses. A walk of the reinstated pathways confirms some open higher ground commanding splendid views of the Clent Hills to the south - but only as these appear above discordant modern high-rise flats near the centre of Halesowen.

- 29 It is perhaps unrealistic to suppose that any such re-instatement could realise the spirit of Shenstone's original scheme, for reasons having as much to do with the nature of the picturesque movement as with the practicalities of turning the clock back within a living landscape. In treating a landscape garden as a form of pictorial composition, the scene of a potential human action, the picturesque sought to impose the timeless, unchanging qualities of a painting upon something that is dynamic and ever-changing: a chunk of the natural environment (Townsend, 1997, p. 368). The picturesque remains a metaphor for the act of landscape recreation, but also a pointer to the futility of any such enterprise to reinstate the past within a working or evolving landscape.
- 30 The vocal resistance to some aspects of the MHP and the Leasowes restorations demonstrates how landscape provokes intense feelings and emotions in people. Any landscape restoration scheme must commit to potentially controversial decisions as it seeks to freeze a working landscape at one historical point rather than another. Thus, any discussion of such schemes must pose the question 'whose landscape is being reproduced, and why?'
- 31 As an impressive and influential garden in the picturesque landscape movement (Ackerman 2003, p. 91), the Leasowes offered middle-class connoisseurs of landscape painting a new domain wherein to exercise their taste. The public, for which these picturesque landscapes are being recreated today, remain well removed from the aesthetically well-informed, middle-class tourists following in the wake of Gilpin and Price, who elected to display their connoisseurship by perceiving landscapes using a pictorial method of framing. The picturesque movement encouraged cultivated tourists with existing skills in looking at paintings to adopt a perceptual, rather than practical, attitude towards the natural world reconceived as 'landscape'. By comparison, modern consumers of Lottery-funded heritage landscapes typically engage in more practically-oriented recreational activities (walking, picnicking, etc.).
- 32 Contemporary consumers of the Leasowes and Croome Park are Western industrial urbanites who have been dispossessed of some traditional relationships with the land. Arguably, these two historical landscapes capture nostalgia for a past where one individual or a family could do much to tame and shape their environment as a vision of humans living in harmonious control of nature. In contrast, the 'bald hills' of the Malvern Hills are derived from the centuries old application of common rights in which the commoners grazed sheep and cattle thereby keeping the hillsides clear of shrubs and trees. Yet this too has produced an attractive visual appearance drawing tourists to appreciate the open landscape as well as the urban features associated with the nearby spa town. A recent report on the impacts of the Malvern Heritage Project notes, "the open character high Hills and slopes are generally improving due to the active intervention of the Malvern Hills Conservators in providing grazing initiatives and in mechanically cutting invading scrub" (Evans, 2017, p. 5). Hence the significant investment to maintain the bare hills appears to be having a generally positive effect, especially through reduction in the extent of bracken by active grazing management (p. 30), though the impacts are uneven (pp. 38-39).

Conclusion

- 33 There is no doubt that the three HLF-funded heritage schemes have created enhanced environmental amenity within their respective local landscapes – edge of the Midlands plateau (Leasowes), the river Severn lowlands (Croome Park), and Malvern Hills. Thus, at the level of creating useful public recreational space (in the form of dog-walking facilities or picnic facilities), each landscape can be judged a success, with the Lottery funds reflecting some value for money. However, as also described across the case studies, with the possible exception of Croome Park, locals remain uncertain or unaware of the historical credentials of the schemes. This fact naturally raises the question whether the same amenity might have been achieved through other means and without appealing to the pretext of historical re-enactment of prior landscape.
- 34 For future research, there is a need for more comprehensive study of the impacts of the HLF on heritage re-creation and management (see Bewley & Maer, 2014). The discussion above highlights impacts on landscapes at different scales, whilst emphasising potential differences between opinions voiced by local residents and users of a particular landscape, and those of officialdom. ‘Gatekeepers’ within society may have one set of views about what constitutes heritage, and hence what constitutes landscapes, buildings and artefacts to be preserved or restored. Others in the community may have different views, and this potential mismatch requires further investigation, focusing on how decisions about heritage are taken, what input there is from the local community, and the users of the landscape.
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ABSTRACTS

Maintaining and restoring historic landscapes requires attention to native vegetation, cultural artefacts, historic buildings, hedges, stone walls and riparian woodland. One United Kingdom

National Lottery scheme, which was launched in 1994, funds preservation of 'heritage landscapes'. This paper examines the Lottery's contribution to landscape restoration and rural development. It considers different scales at which restoration is occurring, focusing on three examples. The Leasowes estate is a small yet important example of a landscape garden in the eighteenth-century 'picturesque' taste. Croome Park, a National Trust property, boasts 270 hectares of parkland and a neo-Palladian mansion. The 105 sq km of the Malvern Hills is a human-created landscape traceable to prehistory, with landscape features dependent on longstanding grazing practices now threatened by changing farm economics. The article highlights different management approaches as it debates issues affecting landscape restoration and heritage management. Resolving tensions between official policy and cultural values within the community offer directions for further research.

Au Royaume-Uni, le système de loterie du patrimoine finance la maintenance et la restauration des paysages patrimoniaux, en particulier la végétation indigène, les biens culturels, les bâtiments historiques, les haies, les murs de pierre et les forêts riveraines. Cet article étudie la contribution de ce type de financement à la restauration du paysage et au développement rural. Il examine les différentes échelles de restauration à partir de trois exemples du centre de l'Angleterre : le domaine de 'Leasowes', un petit jardin paysager dans le goût pittoresque du XVIII^e siècle, 'Croome Park', une propriété du 'National Trust' composée d'un parc de 270 ha et d'un manoir néo-palladien, et enfin 'Malvern Hills', une étendue de 105 km² datant de la préhistoire et dont les caractéristiques paysagères dépendent de pratiques de pâturage ancestrales menacées par l'évolution de l'économie agricole. L'article met en avant les différentes approches liées à la gestion du patrimoine ainsi que les problèmes associés à la restauration des paysages et à la gestion du patrimoine. La résolution des tensions entre les stratégies officielles et les valeurs culturelles au sein de la communauté offre diverses orientations pour la poursuite de la recherche.

INDEX

Keywords: historic landscapes, the picturesque, heritage lottery, landscape restoration, English Midlands

Mots-clés: paysages historiques, style pittoresque, loterie du patrimoine, restauration du paysage, région des Midlands, Angleterre

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