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Carbon Landscape Programme — **our achievements so far**

Mid-Term Review



Carbon Landscape Programme

The **‘Carbon Landscape’** tells the story of an ancient landscape characterised by peat, coal and canals. Nestled between the two city regions of Liverpool and Manchester, the Carbon Landscape is a significant ‘breathing space’ and a vital corridor for building resilience to climate change. It is the flagship programme of the Great Manchester Wetlands Partnership, covering 107sq. km.

The Carbon Landscape falls within three local authorities: Wigan, Salford and Warrington. It stretches from the **Flashes** in the west, **Mosslands** in the east and the **Mersey Corridor** in the south. These three distinct character areas are united by the presence of water and wetland habitats. Once devastated by industry, these special areas for nature recovery are shaping the landscape we see today. The Carbon Landscape is surrounded by dense urban areas, making it a valuable resource not only for wildlife but also for people.

Delivery towards our three main aims began in 2017:

- 1 To restore a derelict landscape,** ensuring connectivity and resilience in an area facing significant threats.
- 2 To reconnect people with their landscape** through improved access, increased learning and volunteering opportunities.
- 3 To instil pride and engender community ownership in the landscape,** providing skills for local people, groups and beneficiaries to become custodians for the future.

The Carbon Landscape Partnership Programme was awarded just under £2 million by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and has unlocked an additional £1.2 million in match funding. This has significantly resourced the restoration of this ancient landscape and enabled partners to reconnect the landscape with local people.

Our aspiration is to create a step change that is making space for nature that is bigger, better and more joined up. Historic efforts have been somewhat piecemeal, leading to fragmented biodiversity. However, when we think of the landscape on a much bigger and integrated scale, we will ensure that key ecological corridors and ‘stepping-stones’ are created in the right places. The Partnership also recognises that successful recovery cannot be achieved without involving local communities in the process, now and going forward.

carbonlandscape.org.uk



Bickershaw Country Park

To restore a derelict landscape,
ensuring connectivity and resilience
in an area facing significant threats...

Our achievements so far...



The Fenscape Project has achieved targets for bed lowering, scrub removal and installation of new ditches at Amberswood, Bickershaw and Wigan Flashes. Partners have secured further funding to create more fen habitat which has resulted in improving species diversity. The Environment Agency's Flood Management Scheme is effectively "slowing the flow" and mitigating flood problems further downstream.



The bog improvements on the mini-moss at Risley Moss are complete with a new boardwalk constructed enabling access for all, helping people to get up close to wildlife.



1.9 hectares of lowland raised bog has been restored at Pestfurlong Moss through a process of rewetting and the translocation of bog plants.



Success of working with landowners has seen **two significant new partners entering into the Partnership – Cheshire Wildlife Trust and Woodland Trust.**



At Holcroft Moss, parts of the outer moss have been restored through scraping off bracken and creating bunds. One of the drier scraped areas is planted with heather and the second wetter scraped area, has been left for the bog plant species to recolonise.



256 volunteers have been engaged in practical land improvements on the 'Key Sites' and corridors in between totalling 335 hectares.



The Citizen Science project, which aims to collect more data about our wildlife, has exceeded targets and **has trained 298 volunteers with 350 surveys submitted.**



Connections Kids © Paul Heyes



The River Guardians have spent 130 days sampling, surveying, slowing the flow and balsam bashing.



14 Landscape Champions are now mentoring others.



The partnership has supported the development and **success in securing funds for a Species Re-Introduction project.**



Risley Moss © Katherine Houghton



© Jenny Griggs

To reconnect people with their landscape through improved access, increased learning and volunteering opportunities...

Our achievements so far...



Our events have engaged 7682 participants at the mid-term review point.



Extensive consultation has enabled us to establish the Carbon Trail, for both walking and cycling, offering huge opportunities for accessing our landscape.



Our Gateway projects, as introductions for new audiences to the landscape, **have secured significant funds towards some innovative and ambitious improvements**. These include a Tower at Risley Moss, Warrington; a series of feature trails with full wheelchair access at Three Sisters, Wigan; and an adventure trail at New Moss Wood, Salford. Original ideas are still progressing and are viable for delivery.



Cobbled pathway between Scotsmans Flash and the Leeds-Liverpool canal © Martin Holden



RoundView sustainability resources have helped both influencers and communities to reflect on priorities for the future and what practical solutions are required to take action forward. These resources have been adapted to create tools aimed at schools and our **Carbon Clever activities have engaged 700 children**.



70 new website resources are in development to help inspire people to use and appreciate our landscape.



St Marks Primary visit Little Woollen Moss © Miranda Clarke



Environmental Education at Three Sisters © Ellen Sherlock

To instil pride and engender community ownership in our Carbon Landscape, providing skills for local people, groups and beneficiaries to become custodians for our future...

Our achievements so far...



Sense of Place has already supported 67 groups to take positive action within their landscape. The continuing focus is to support these groups and build their confidence to achieve great work within the spaces that they love. **20 projects have been completed with another 16 in the pipeline.**



The Carbon Landscape has reached out to new audiences, inspiring those who have never accessed their landscape before. Local people have been getting creative through workshops in photography, prose and poetry.



17 trained walk leaders are inspiring local communities to explore their landscape.



We have so far trained 1,118 people in a range of skills from use of brushcutters, how to be a volunteer group leader through to First Aid at Work qualifications. Two conferences have celebrated the work of the volunteers, as well as providing opportunity for networking and strengthening links between groups and volunteers.



All six trainees, who have completed their traineeship, have gone on to employment within the conservation sector. All of the trainees started out as volunteers within the landscape.



Connections Kids © Lydia Dayes



Boggarty Bog © Joe Roper



Trainees and placements on hedgelaying day © Steve Ormerod



Trainees © Anthony Da Silva



Launch at Lancashire Mining Museum the team © Alan Wright



Connections 6 Peat Bogs © Joanne Kennedy



Connections Key decision makers at Little Woolden Moss

Next steps...

The Carbon Landscape partnership's next year is likely to be our busiest year yet since many of our projects will be achieving major milestones.

We will continue to fundraise and deliver landscape restoration work demonstrating biodiversity net gain, natural capital benefits, carbon sinks, natural flood management, as well as strengthening our landscape through connectivity to ensure we are resilient to climate change. Over £0.5 million has been raised for the significant improvements at Woolston Eyes Nature Reserve, Warrington.

Our Citizen Science project has trained a significant number of volunteers who are keen to keep recording and mapping of significant species within the landscape. This work will prioritise where our next habitat improvements need to take place.

Our Gateway projects will be completed with open days to celebrate the work organised by April 2021. As we look to the future, we will hold a number of celebration events, influencer workshops and a conference to promote the huge achievements of the Carbon Landscape programme, particularly showcasing nationally important nature-based-solutions. Case studies will be created to highlight the learning from this work and provide evidence of value for money and added benefits as a result of our interventions.

A Youth Summit has been organised with young people from across our landscape coming together to look at their environmental concerns and what they would like to take forward to address this.



Pennington Flash Country Park © Pete Stuart

Our Creative work is currently being produced in postcards and brochures, culminating in an exhibition at Salford Museum.

We will be reaching out to new and more diverse audiences with mass participation events and promotion that will highlight the footpaths and cycle routes that are available across our landscape. We will work closely with Walking and Cycling Forums to ensure we work together to get more people active in our landscape.

Last, but not least, our growing number of community groups will continue to be supported to take action within their landscape. More people will be trained to ensure that our 'Landscape Champions' can continue to drive forward the ambitions of our partnership. Our work cannot be completed without the support of volunteers. We will continue to recognise and develop the range of opportunities and achievements that our wonderful volunteers deliver.

