

Forgotten Landscapes Project Landscape Conservation Action Plan

5.5 Project: Guardians of the Landscape – BIO and STS

5.5.1 Introduction

This Project is concerned with the sustainable management of the vast areas of common land, the associated species and habitats and the conservation of areas of coal spoil. The three features are inextricably linked as this is open access common land. Commoners have rights to farm it, the public have rights to access and enjoy it in a responsible way and landowners are able to pursue their own interest such as hunting, hang gliding and mineral extraction where consents remain extant. Other legitimate users include: study groups from schools and universities, orienteering clubs, fell runners, horse riders and mountain bike enthusiasts. Such a broad range of uses means that there are many expectations of, and demands on, this landscape. Issues relating to public access and use are covered under Programmes B and C.

Delivery Plan Code	Name	Principal Aims
BIO 1	Conserving the Commons	Implement land management intended to bring about a sustained improvement in the condition of the area's common land and associated key habitats and species
BIO 2	Man and the Environment	Conserve and enhance the wildlife outside common land boundaries Improve ecological connectivity within and beyond the landscape area so allowing species migration
STS	Spoil to Spectacular	Develop a practical system for evaluating, conserving and using coal spoil sites for recreation and learning
Outcomes		
Bring inactive commoners back into the agricultural management of the commons		
Develop and disseminate best practice and innovation in commons management for sustainable agriculture		
Raise awareness of the role of the commons have played in the heritage landscape		
Enhance access and recreation and develop interpretive facilities		
Address illegal activity and alter negative perceptions		
Offset climate change impacts through sustainable land management and habitat creation		
Increase understanding of wildlife value and management needs		
Conserve coal spoil for industrial and natural heritage value, encourage access and understanding		

5.5.2 Links with other Implementation Programmes

The value of these uplands for their habitats and wildlife is unquestioned as is the importance of the role of the commoners in helping maintain it. While Projects under this heading will provide the means for delivering sustainable land management and habitat and species conservation, they will also provide opportunities for access into this dramatic landscape and its interpretation. Alongside this, education programmes will developed for learners of all ages in order that the true value of the landscape can be understood. Finally, to ensure Project sustainability, the volunteer workforce and the commoners will be provided with training necessary to allow them to manage this landscape for its habitats and species and for sustainable farming. These aspects are covered in Programmes B and C.

5.5.3. Purpose

The Guardians of the Landscape Project will ensure the conservation of key habitats and species and maintain the common land in a condition suitable for sustainable agriculture.

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Additional Projects for implementation during the period 2014 – 2020 will also be described. These will be delivered during the 10 year life of the LCAP subject to availability of funds and other resources