

### Development of the Programmes and Projects / Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy

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There is a great deal of evidence pointing to the need to develop a more sustainable approach to development in Wales - the adoption of sustainable development as the central organising principle of the Welsh Government demonstrates the importance placed on Wales becoming more sustainable. Committees under the current and previous National Assemblies have carried out inquiries into land use in Wales and Sustainable Land Management has been a key area identified for further development. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 demands that Public Bodies carry out sustainable development.

This will require working at a landscape scale and will need to look beyond the boundary of designated and protected sites. The Development Phase has allowed the Partnership to carry out a strategic audit of opportunities and lay the foundations of a strategic approach through the creation and adoption of a Regional Green Infrastructure Plan which has been developed with a Visitor Destination Management Plan across the three Local Authorities. This work provides an antidote to years of fragmentation and disconnection to the landscape character, offering strategic recommendations for where potential new access works and development would most benefit the landscape and least damage the historic environment as part of a coordinated strategy for the whole area. It provides a first and unique opportunity to preserve and enhance the historic environment and knit together a network of natural and semi-natural features and greenspaces for the benefit of the large urban population on the doorstep. These plans will also provide guidance for areas falling outside the remit of the LLLP for use in urban, planning and social policies.



The GI Strategy highlights opportunities for GI creation, enhancement and investment in the Gwent Levels, which in turn can benefit local communities, the economy and the environment. It provides a framework which identifies important elements of the GI network that require protection and management actions to improve their function or quality. The GI Strategy seeks to contribute to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the Gwent Levels in accordance with the principle of sustainable development, ways of working and goals enshrined by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The principle of sustainable development is to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**The GI Strategy promotes the following five “ways of working” advocated by the Act:**

- **Integration** – the Strategy reflects a joined up approach to communities and people, the economy, the environment and culture.
- **Long-term thinking** – the Strategy aims to balance current and long-term needs for GI.
- **Prevention** – the Strategy encourages taking action now to prevent problems in the future.
- **Collaboration** – the Strategy promotes working with a range of stakeholders to meet its GI objectives
- **Involvement** – the Strategy involves people affected by actions in delivery of GI projects.

### Green Infrastructure Vision for the Gwent Levels

The Gwent Levels' unique natural and historic environment is an irreplaceable legacy that is widely valued, cared for and celebrated.

A well-connected multifunctional network of green and blue spaces and corridors connects the Gwent Levels with people in the surrounding urban conurbations, provides opportunities for visitors to access the landscape and supports wildlife.

The integrity and connectivity of the green infrastructure network is maintained and enhanced by local stakeholders, communities and farmers working together.

The interdependency and multifunctionality of historic landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity elements within the agriculturally productive landscape is widely recognised, and are managed holistically.

Investment in green infrastructure underpins the provision of economic, social and environmental benefits for the Gwent Levels by supporting sustainable growth, improving quality of life and place, delivering ecosystem services and tackling climate change.

The Gwent Levels is a green and healthy place to live, with an increasingly coherent and resilient network of wildlife habitats, helping conserve biodiversity.

The vision is underpinned by the following three core aims:

- 1. Understand and appreciate the Gwent Levels' unique cultural and natural landscape, recognising its contribution to the vibrancy and distinctiveness of South East Wales.**
- 2. Conserve, protect and improve/enhance the Gwent Levels' GI assets, capitalising on opportunities for attracting investment, conservation-led land management and positive place shaping.**
- 3. Enjoy, celebrate and engage with the Gwent Levels' rich history, promoting the area as a distinctive and welcoming place to live, work and visit for current and future generations.**

### Green Infrastructure Priorities

#### The key priorities for investment in GI over the lifetime of the LLLP are:

- Enhancing existing GI assets to prepare them for greater visitor numbers and likely increased pressure linked to growth
- Maximising opportunities for GI assets to bring together both existing and new communities through linking settlements and accessible greenspace, wildlife reserves, urban greenspaces, heritage sites and waterways.
- Generally improving access, linkages and facilities relating to greenspace sites that connect visitors with the Gwent Levels.
- Reversing the erosion and fragmentation of natural and semi-natural habitats in the Gwent Levels, in order to reduce biodiversity loss and provide resilience in the face of climate change.

- Promoting high quality and sensitive design of new development to enhance the integrity and local distinctiveness of the landscape context.

These priorities are reflected in the Green Infrastructure Network for the Gwent Levels illustrated on Figure 9 which identifies strategic priority areas for improving connectivity of GI assets within the Gwent Levels. These have been embedded in to the design of the programme and the principles underpinning each of the three core programmes in the LLLP.

In addition, a number of LLLP projects are intended to contribute specifically to improving the knowledge, data and appreciation of the unique and special qualities of the historic Gwent Levels which it is hoped will have a positive influence on future planning decisions.

The Partnership is committed to creating a sustainable vision for the future of the Gwent Levels which can be delivered as a result of work started during the LLLP. The Living Levels Partnership Board will provide this project with a ready-made platform at the highest level across this Partnership. The strong and diverse Partnership coupled with our early involvement of local communities in our project development means we are very well placed to promote this project with the full collaboration and cooperation of local people, businesses, land-owners and organisations.





Image Credit:  
Gareth James



### Scheme Aims and Objectives

The previous sections have provided a narrative of the landscape, describing what gives this area its unique character, while assessing the risks, threats and opportunities that it faces.

This section lays down the aims and objectives to achieve the long-term vision. It goes on to provide a summary of the three delivery programmes and shows how they fit with the 9 HLF outcomes, creating a clear impression of how the Partnership will conserve and increase understanding about the area's landscape and heritage.

#### **Our programme aims to address two main threats to the landscape**

- 1. An increasing disconnection from the landscape by growing sections of the community, resulting in loss of heritage features due to reduction in traditional land management of the Levels, together with associated knowledge and skills with these methods;**
- 2. An under-developed “vision” and “sense of place” for the long-term future of this landscape. This is leading to inappropriate development; missed opportunities for tourism and inward investment; and increased negative impacts from local conurbations such as fly-tipping and litter.**

At the start of the Development Phase, the Partnership Development Group signed off a set of core general aims and objectives which are to underpin all proposals to help achieve the long-term vision for the area.

**The overall aim of the Living Levels Landscape Partnership scheme is to reconnect people and communities to their landscape to provide a sustainable future for this historic and unique area. We will do this via the following strategic aims:**



Image Credit:  
Ben Salter

- Forging a strong partnership, with the community at its heart
- Recapturing and enhancing the natural and historic heritage
- Celebrating its stories
- Providing new opportunities for learning, developing skills, participation and investment
- Encouraging and providing access for all
- Building capacity and resilience for the long term

As a result of this scheme:

- The Gwent Levels will be better understood by all those who live in, work on and choose to enjoy the area
- The Living Levels Landscape will be better managed; in better condition and better recorded
- People will have developed skills; learnt about the landscape and its heritage
- A greater diversity and number of people will be participating
- The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit







### Our Target Audiences

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HLF uses the term audiences to describe “all the people who might come into contact with your heritage through the project you are thinking about. This includes your current users and visitors and people attending events and taking part in activities. It also includes people who could become visitors, attendees and users in the future. All of the people in your local community and the wider community you serve form your potential audience ” (HLF, 2010).

Audience development is about being pro-active towards the Scheme’s audiences, based on understanding the current situation and using this knowledge to assess and plan for what could be improved for the future. It includes understanding what sorts of people are currently aware of the Gwent Levels, as well as who is not, and why not. It is about understanding needs and motivations of communities living in the landscape and those who may visit the area and identifying the most effective ways for the Scheme to increase these people’s awareness, understanding and engagement in heritage. Due to the Gwent Levels potentially serving a very large adjacent population, it is also an exercise in audience prioritisation to ensure the best value for the investment of HLF and the partners.

Based on findings and studies carried out during the Development Phase, the Partners have decided that the priority audiences for the LLLP should be organised under the following three groups:

- 1. Local residents, including those engaged and those ‘just living here’**
- 2. Interest communities using the Levels as a base for their activities**
- 3. Visitors for both day and overnight stays**

Underlying this choice is the decision to focus on connecting those who are currently not engaged at all and increasing the quality of the experience for the people who are already living on or near the Levels. From a visitor perspective, because the LLLP is starting from a low base, there is a desire to focus initially on those who would likely already be in the area visiting the wider City Region and who might be persuaded to manage an excursion on the doorstep, rather than, substantially trying to increase the quantity of other visitors which would be difficult given the landscape sensitivity, accommodation and amenities. Existing local visitor-focused businesses are seen as a conduit towards working with visitors. There is also a clear message from some residents that they fear their enjoyment of the natural environment and where they live could be spoilt if there are lots of new visitors who do not take appropriate care when visiting sensitive areas.

This translates in to the further sub-headings and objectives for each audience as follows



## Part One – The Scheme Plan / Our Target Audiences

### Target Audience

Local residents living in villages and communities located on the Levels

### Objective for this audience

—To increase active involvement and participation in discovering, sharing and promoting the Gwent Levels history and heritage  
—To provide opportunities for people to record and share their experience of the Levels at different times in their life

Residents located along the urban fringe in residential estates and new housing estates

—To increase awareness and understanding about the area and the 'workings' of the landscape, e.g. the sea wall, the drainage system and its maintenance, the history, the biodiversity, the area's unique character.  
—To promote the Gwent Levels as a Green Lung for East Cardiff, Newport and Severnside and promote opportunities that improve health and well-being which are available on the doorstep

Residents of deprived communities, BAME groups, or those with physical, intellectual or social impairments

—To undertake a marketing and promotional campaign targeted towards user groups that are currently underrepresented and provide these groups with opportunities and resources to enable them to increase access and their ability to explore and enjoy the Gwent Levels  
—To adopt a 'Least Restrictive Access' approach for access to the countryside and incorporate inclusive design into new information provision for all prospective visitors – whatever their age, gender, level of disability or ethnicity

Landowners and farmers who manage the land

—To ensure farmers and other land owners and managers act as custodians of Gwent Levels natural heritage and landscape and pass on their appreciation and knowledge  
—To ensure that future farm support is better targeted towards the Gwent Levels landscape, economy and environment.

Those in full-time education and lifelong learners

—To develop education resources and initiatives that will inspire teachers and local schools to use the Living Levels network of sites for curriculum-based study by schools and colleges  
—To contribute towards life-long learning opportunities relating to the historic and natural landscape.

## Part One – The Scheme Plan / Our Target Audiences

| Target Audience  | Objective for this audience   |
|--|---|
| Families, especially those with young children                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–To provide a range of family-oriented activities and targeted promotion of information to encourage increased family engagement and involvement with Gwent Levels heritage</li><li>–To increase the confidence of family audiences to explore the Levels in their own time</li></ul>   |
| Active nature enthusiasts and people engaged in outdoor leisure activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–To improve the information, signage and interpretation across a network of walking, cycling and horse riding routes of varying lengths and promote their use to existing and new users</li><li>–To raise awareness of the heritage and wildlife interests of the Gwent Levels through creative interpretation across the network and beyond the nature reserve network</li></ul> |
| Volunteers – current and potential   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–To provide a wide variety of volunteering opportunities and relevant training to engage and enthuse volunteers in Gwent Levels heritage conservation and destination management</li><li>–To develop a social prescribing pilot scheme to help volunteers gain from their experience in other useful ways</li></ul>   |
| Historians and archaeologists  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–To provide opportunities for historians and archaeologists to deepen and further their interest and participation with Gwent Levels historical heritage</li><li>–To ensure historical knowledge is recorded in relevant collections and made accessible for use after the scheme ends</li></ul>  |
| Visitors   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–To make visitors more aware and improve their understanding and enjoyment of the Gwent Levels</li><li>–To provide memorable experiences which can enrich the experience of visitors who are passing through.</li></ul>   |
| VFR (Visiting Friends and Relatives)                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–To encourage resident audiences, once engaged with the heritage and activities of Living Levels, to bring visiting friends and family to sites of interest for a visit.</li><li>–To give those who might normally go to the Wye Valley, Brecon Beacons or other better known destinations compelling reasons to stay and explore the Levels instead</li></ul>                    |

Appendix 14 shows notes relating to the development of priority LLP audiences.





### LLL Programmes

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The three core LLLP programmes and projects proposed are as follows.

#### PROGRAMME 1 CONSERVING AND RESTORING

##### Natural Heritage Restoration

###### Overall aim 1

To conserve, protect and enhance the Gwent Levels' natural heritage and GI assets

###### Overall aim 2

To raise awareness of the importance of the continuous management of this unique landscape for the benefit of the communities living and working in the surrounding area



### Principles

- **Strengthening landscape character and distinctiveness:** To reflect and strengthen the character of the Gwent Levels through the protection and restoration of distinctive historic and semi-natural landscape features and strengthening the condition of degraded landscapes where appropriate
- **Enhancing biodiversity:** To protect and enhance the rare and unique assemblage of species found in the Gwent Levels through a landscape-scale programme to re-establish management of important natural heritage features
- **Collaboration:** To create, adopt and demonstrate a vision for sustainable land management for the Gwent Levels created with the farming and landowning community
- **Sustainable natural resource management:** To reverse the erosion and fragmentation of semi natural habitats in the Gwent Levels and provide resilience in the face of climate change by working collaboratively and at scale
- **Improving knowledge and data:** To survey, collect and map data on important but undesignated Local Wildlife Sites, historic orchards, INNS and historical landscape features and make the data accessible to a wide range of public and professional users
- **Promoting involvement:** To increase appreciation and understanding of the special landscape, biodiversity, management regime and heritage of the Levels for a wide range of local audiences and through volunteering opportunities
- **Preventative action:** To prevent negative impacts on local environment quality and reduce downstream costs by tackling anti social behaviour such as fly-tipping and litter
- **Increasing access to nature:** To increase opportunities for people to access and engage with nature in the Gwent Levels to provide health, mental well-being and education benefits for local communities
- **Sustainable economic development:** To explore opportunities for new businesses/ income generation, skills development and job creation in the Gwent Levels from environmental land management and conservation, tourism and PES schemes
- **Advocacy:** To ensure that the economic cost of delivering sustainable natural resource management and ecosystem services for the Gwent Levels is understood and recognised by stakeholders and policy-makers of the future

Image Credit:  
Nigel Pugh



This programme provides an opportunity to address the key habitat needs identified in the LCA and GI strategies through working in collaboration with landowners to realise the potential for landscape-scale restoration schemes to restore the key biodiversity and landscape features of the area. The programme is timely, being developed under the influence of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015. This is new legislation which requires substantial obligations from most of those partners involved to better support the new ways of working suggested in the project plans. Moreover, the work will resonate with the expected integrated work programmes arising from the Public Services Boards, both contained in their local well-being plans and from their requirement to cooperate more closely to support the well-being of citizens. Based on the landscape needs and emerging priorities, the GI strategy recommended the following areas of investment:

- **Encouraging the reinstatement of historic drainage features** to maintain the drainage system as a distinctive landscape feature of the Gwent Levels by giving consideration to reinstating lost field ditches and grips; and managing riparian vegetation to reduce the dominance of double-hedged ditches and reens in order to restore their traditional mixed character.
- **Discouraging field enlargement and/or the infilling of field ditches** that would result in the loss of watercourses, leading to the erosion of the strong geometric pattern in the landscape and the abandonment of traditional channel management practices.
- **Working in collaboration with landowners to realise the potential for landscape-scale restoration schemes** in suitable areas where recutting of former ditches, removal of hedgerows and reseedling of grassland could be considered.
- **Promoting the restoration and/or continued management of pollard willows** along drains, ditches, reens, roadsides and tracks, to reinforce traditional landscape character and enhance habitat connectivity, and providing small-scale, localised sources of wood fuel.
- **Aiming to develop a more diverse range of habitats,** vegetation types and structures within holdings, enabling habitats and species to respond to the effects of climate change, while maintaining viable farming businesses, cultural associations and traditions and the overall character of the area





Image Credit:  
Nigel Pugh

### Principles: Strengthening landscape character and distinctiveness and enhancing biodiversity

**The LLNH-1 Targeted natural heritage restoration project** will provide a capital restoration budget for conservation work which targets the growing issue of abandonment of field ditch management along with the restoration of ancient orchards and other key heritage features in decline or in a degraded condition e.g. willow trees in need of pollarding, field grips in danger of disappearing, wet meadows in decline and the lack of adequate habitat for Shril Carder bee and other pollinating insects. This management will improve both the biodiversity value and SSSI condition of the Gwent Levels and will restore the landscape's traditional mixed mosaic character, particularly by opening up again the areas which have become shaded and dry. As a secondary benefit, it will also contribute to improving water quality, and reducing flood risk in some localised areas.

This Project will support 100% of costs towards management activities on land both within the SSSI and outside the SSSI boundary that lies within the Living Levels Scheme area. These management activities will include;

1. Field ditch re-casting (only including the c1200Km of private ditches and not main reens, and tree/scrub clearance southern side priority). Fencing will not be encouraged as wet fences are preferred but will be provided if absolutely necessary using electric fencing kits or permanent stock-proof fencing as a last resort. Culverts will be replaced where necessary.
2. Willow pollarding
3. Field re-gripping
4. Orchard pruning and maintenance
5. Orchard planting with local varieties (could be new and existing)
6. Meadow restoration linked with seed harvesting locally
7. Where landowners are happy the project could also involve improved access or interpretation at certain suitable points if opportunities arise.

At the end of the Scheme approximately 21km of ditch will have been restored, more than 60 willows pollarded, at least 10 new orchards replanted or restocked, 3 areas re-gripped and 6 areas of meadow will have received native wildflower seed to help restore wet meadows.

As well as working with farmers and landowners to restore key parts of the ditch and reen network - opportunities to improve access will be part of the scoring criteria for grants to be awarded to farmers wanting to cooperate in the LLNH-1 project. The issue of landowner access will continue to be pursued by the relevant Local Authorities.

### The GIS strategy also recommended:

- **Encouraging the diversification of habitats to include the creation, restoration and connectivity of flower-rich habitats** to support and sustain pollinating insects as part of the B-Lines initiative;
- **Encourage opportunities for diversification of farm businesses** include exploring the potential for restoring and/



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Alice Rees

or planting traditional/low intensively managed orchards using traditional varieties of apple and pear, with a view to developing commercially viable juice, perry and cider production with links to existing breweries (e.g. Tiny Rebel in Newport). Particularly where the underlying grassland sward is managed for floristic diversity, orchards would also significantly contribute to the aims and objectives of the B-Lines and other pollinator supporting initiatives.

### **Principles: Enhancing Biodiversity, improving knowledge and data and increasing access to nature**

**The LLNH-2 Pollinating the Levels** project will work with a range of target audiences and stakeholders (from landowners to retail park managers and local businesses with land holdings) to improve the connectivity and availability of suitable habitat for rare species of which the rare Shrill Carder bee is a key target species. A budget has been included for habitat improvements to increase forage resource,

shelter and nesting habitat for pollinating insects and other invertebrates, contributing towards a resilient ecological network at a landscape scale. Whilst the primary target is habitat creation and enhancement, the project will also engage a wide range of naturalist, student and 'uninitiated' audiences in identification, survey and habitat management techniques to improve the collective body of knowledge on bumblebee distribution on the Levels whilst contributing towards a national recording scheme. Work with volunteers will result in more community engagement with the landscape's natural heritage and improved awareness of the national importance for Shrill Carder bee. This project will also act as a means to promote biological recording on the Levels. Data collated as part of the Delivery Phase will be submitted to the Local Record Centre SEWBreC and used as a means to assess the success of habitat delivery long-term.

Orchards have been identified as such an important feature of the historic landscape in decline and for the ecosystem benefits they can derive.

**The LLNH-6 project 'Orchards and Community enterprise'** will support landowners and provide training for them, as well as give them opportunities through capital funding to promote and protect traditional orchards. The project will attempt to reverse the decline in traditional orchard features on the Levels by celebrating their cultural and potential economic value with local communities and businesses. A thorough survey of the different species present in those orchards will be carried out to show how management (or lack of it) can affect this. The project will also identify and map to a fine detail fruit tree varieties on the Gwent Levels – some of which are thought to be unique and 'last of a kind' by the Welsh Perry and Cider Society. Not only will this add to collective knowledge of heritage on the Gwent Levels it may also contribute to the development of a Gwent Levels brand and will provide some exciting media opportunities.





Landowners will be supported both financially and with skills training, in order to promote and protect traditional orchards. The project will also look to strengthen the long term sustainability of traditional orchards on the Gwent Levels by building relationships between producers and landowners and pushing to create new sources of income. Grafting samples taken from the ancient varieties will be identified, working in partnership with the Welsh Perry and Cider Society, so that more of these trees can be replanted into the landscape. The planting will increase the area of this important BAP Priority Habitat, and planning work to target strategic planting sites will increase future planting opportunities.

Orchards also have significant importance to people in terms of being beautiful places to visit. Calm and tranquil places, they offer huge therapeutic value and could contribute to health and well-being by reducing stress levels- particularly for those in more urban areas. Celebration events in

the orchards on the Gwent Levels will encourage people to visit and enjoy these spaces. Planting community orchards within Newport's schools and open green spaces will also bring orchards to those who cannot travel and would be less likely to visit the surrounding countryside.

A third project **LLS-1 Local Wildlife Sites** which sits under the Skills and Training Programme 3 will also support key principles in this programme. The Local Wildlife system allows land with no protection to have some recognition to show that the habitat is certified as being of importance at the local level - in some cases these sites are of a similar quality to a SSSI. The LLS-1 project will begin a pro-active survey search for new land of LWS quality and a designation process for new sites. Through this element of the Living Levels Scheme the partners hope to start the development of an overarching Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) or similar document that provides detailed guidance on the biodiversity and habitats of the Gwent Levels and tries to steer further development

in more suitable areas by raising awareness and understanding of the special qualities of the landscape for key local decision-makers and stakeholders.

**Principles: Collaboration, advocacy, sustainable natural resource management and sustainable economic development**

The Conserving and Restoring programme will also need to ensure a lasting legacy for the capital investments made in the restoration schemes. Designed to focus specifically on legacy, the LLNH-5 Ecosystems Services and LLNH-7 Sustainable Land Management projects will explore the economic gap between existing farm operations and more sustainable operations which can sustain the investments made in habitat management as part of the capital restoration programme. This will need the combined expertise of several partners, including core partners but also Farming Connect. These projects will also respond to the recommendations and issues in the following GI priorities:





Image Credit:  
Nigel Pugh

- **Mapping and quantifying ecosystem services** at a holding scale, particularly in the lowest-lying parts of the area, to identify and stimulate initiatives that release land from agriculture in exchange for other benefits, principally biodiversity through the expansion of wetland habitats such as fen, bog, swamp and reedbed, water regulation, protection of heritage assets and provision of access and recreation.

- **Encouraging more extensive and sustainable land management** (by means of appropriate stocking densities and the use of hardy traditional cattle breeds), reducing the risk of soil compaction and poaching increasing opportunities for floristic diversity, promoting the sensitive uses of pesticide and fertiliser, and implementing manure management plans, reducing nutrient enrichment of watercourses and improving overall water quality. This could potentially be achieved by, in the first instance, identifying farmers who may be prepared to act as 'exemplars' to demonstrate the possibility of

operating a commercially viable farm using sustainable land management techniques.

- **Identifying opportunities for farm business diversification** through mechanisms such as premium brand marketing, use of traditional premium value hardy breeds, payment for ecosystem services, and linking the management of the Gwent Levels to upstream watersheds where relevant

### The LLNH-7 project specifically will:

- establish examples of exemplar demonstration farms undertaking beneficial management for the (SSSI) ditch system, traditional orchards and pollinators;
- establish costs of management for nature and the economic impact on farm businesses;
- establish (from farmers) what it would take to ensure positive management for nature is maintained beyond project funding e.g. appropriate post CAP policy;

- raise awareness of the unique value of the Level's natural heritage and the importance of key management techniques and costs with decision-makers to ensure a suitable post-Glastir mechanism is considered.

The project will work with farmers to develop management systems that incorporate diversity and will seek to embed this in future management of the landscape. By developing a process of assessing farm operations and analysing existing drivers for management decisions, tools will be created which can be used to meet targets more sustainably to ensure a legacy for the continued management of natural heritage assets in the LLLP area. The tools could then be used to assess other farm businesses on other landscapes and could be useful for developing the next phase of Welsh agri-environment support. Demonstrating how public funding could be directed in the future to promote sustainable land management that delivers a range of public benefits will be a key legacy outcome of the project.

The **LLNH-5 Ecosystem Services** project will identify novel funding mechanisms for the funding of future land management that enhances ecosystem service delivery. Specifically, the project aims to establish the natural-capital value of sustainably managed land as achieved through actions in the capital targeted habitat restoration (LLNH-1). In particular, the extensive programme to remove scrub from double-hedged ditches and re-pollard willows on the ditch banks has the potential to produce volumes of biomass which may be suitable for these treatments. The LLNH-5 project will look at the viability of this option to assess the market potential for biomass associated with scrub removal. It will also develop business models for new markets for goods and services provided by farmers that manage land sustainably. This latter activity will be in partnership with business and marketing students from Coleg Gwent and will look to set up a pilot for the model which presents the strongest business case.

### **Principles: Preventative action and promoting involvement**

There is frequent mention in the LCA and Destination Management Plans of the abundance of fly-tipping spoiling the local environment quality and visitor experience, particularly at several hotspots in the Wentlooge Level. The LCA recommends enhancing and improving the quality of urban riverside environments through fly-tipping/litter management actions.

This was also a key issue raised repeatedly during our on-going community engagement programme. Several other attempts nationwide to deal with this problem have achieved only a temporary reduction in fly-tipping. A specific project to deal with this problem has therefore been included in the **–LLNH-4 Fly-tipping – from Black Spots to bright spots.**

The development of this project to date has sought to think innovatively about the challenges faced in combating fly-tipping on the Levels to ensure a sustainable legacy. The following are key

elements of project design which will be crucial in achieving a step change to how managing the issue of fly-tipping is approached:

During the Development Phase and continuing throughout the delivery of the project, partners will benefit by being able to use a new system called FlyMapper. This smart phone app. uploads incidents on to a web based map. FlyMapper is a practitioners tool for better addressing incidents of fly-tipping. The key improvement when compared with current national fly-tipping recording systems is the easy way it provides spatial information. Spatial data not only improves the identification of hotspots allowing better targeting of resources but will also be key to understanding and quantifying benefits arising within the project area both for adapting approaches as well as for reporting purposes.

Currently very few incidents of fly-tipping are investigated by enforcement authorities leading to a national prosecution rate of less than 0.2%. Once in delivery, the project will benefit from a



dedicated enforcement officer resource (0.5FTE) to investigate fly-tipping incidents on the Levels.

The effective collaboration to date has identified and enabled the utilisation of a number of shared platforms to communicate ideas on updates on the progress of the project including Yammer and the Gwent Now Community messaging system via Gwent Police (approx. 43,000 users).

Project activities fall into three groups – **Education, Awareness and Interventions.**

**Education:** Children and students must know about waste and how to deal with it responsibly – the project will enable teachers to deliver these messages in the classroom.

**Awareness:** Partners will raise awareness of the issues of fly-tipping and provide information to residents and businesses on how they should be disposing of their waste.

**Interventions:** Cameras will be deployed to catch offenders, locations will be target-hardened to prevent tipping and pollinator gardens constructed at hotspot locations to promote community pride in the landscape.

The Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science have carried out extensive research into fly-tipping causes, incentives and solutions. Fly-tipping Action Wales have worked on the recommendations in the report produced: Understanding and Preventing Fly-tipping – A Good Practice Guide. The activities that the project is planning can be found in the checklist of this report. The Fly-tipping Action Group has also fully endorsed the range of activities and methods chosen for roll-out during the LLNH-4 project.

### Principles: Preventative action and sustainable natural resource management

Finally, the **LLNH-3 Invasive Non-Native Species Defend the Levels from 'Alien Invasion' Project** is a proactive project designed to better enable the landscape to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change – also a key objective of the GI strategy and an issue with low public awareness currently.

Due to the interconnected nature of the Gwent Levels drainage system, it is particularly vulnerable to INNS. The key to protecting the Gwent Levels is preventing INNS from establishing: 'Defend the Catchment'. Once colonisation occurs control becomes costly, time consuming and is often unsuccessful. The INNS project will for the first time in this landscape, create a partnership approach to increase INNS awareness and build capacity to better monitor, record and manage to prevent or stop the spread of INNS. The INNS project focuses on awareness and prevention, enabling others to report and if appropriate, treat INNS correctly, and ensuring that



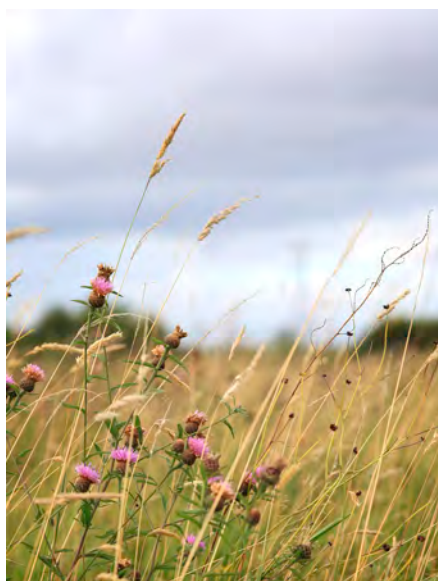


Image Credit:  
Nigel Pugh

those with a responsibility for INNS work together better and share best practice. As a result of this project, key partners and stakeholders will have a clear picture of where INNS are present; records will be linked to existing Local Record Centre GIS mapping and available to all. Treatment will be better coordinated between partners at INNS priority locations to stop further spread. The core focus will be on the sources of INNS (boundary) and on Nature Reserves. Public awareness of the threat and how to report threats will also be increased.

### Links to existing programmes and strategies

#### European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention (ELC), to which the UK is a signatory, provides the setting for general landscape policy in Europe and aims 'to promote landscape protection, management and planning' (Council of Europe, 2004). The ELC recognises that sustainable development can only be achieved if social and economic needs have a 'balanced and harmonious relationship' with the environment.

The European Union Biodiversity Strategy 2020 requires that 'by 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing Green Infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems'. The Commission recognises the benefits which nature provides, such as food, water, air, climate regulation, flood prevention, materials and recreation.

#### Delivering the Environment Act (Wales 2016)

The passing of this bill places an enhanced duty of public authorities (when compared to the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006) to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems. The Environment Act requires the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in a proactive, sustainable and joined-up way. This, and the nine principals of sustainable management defined by the Act, is at the heart of the LLLP:

1. **Adaptable.** As the programme progresses and a better understanding of the landscape and pressures faced (both environmental and socio-economic) are gained, we will refine our approach to deliver project outcomes. Lessons from improved evidence and experience will be used and shared.
2. **Scale.** The Gwent Levels is a distinct and unique landscape and of a desirable scale for a project of this nature.
3. **Working together.** The project will involve cross sector engagement, utilising and strengthening broad partnership working on a variety of projects which are to be co-delivered.
4. **Engaging with the public.** This programme will engage landowners, farmers, communities and local interest groups and businesses.
5. **Evidence.** Evidence from the wider Living Levels will be used and grown; a detailed Landscape Character Assessment and Green Infrastructure Study

have refined our understanding of the landscape and how it should be managed in the future. Several projects will collect data with the aim of filling important gaps in data that act as a hindrance to decisions affecting this unique landscape.

### 6. **Understanding the benefits we receive from natural Resources.**

Ecosystem services across the Levels will be better understood by looking in greater detail at the benefits this landscape provides, mapping the ecosystem services of the Gwent Levels and putting forward proposals for Payments for Ecosystem Service pilots.

7. **Long term.** The work undertaken as part of the project will gather and put in place the information, working relationships and community buy-in needed to establish long term change.

8. **Prevention.** The Gwent Levels landscape is under threat. Preventing further

decline through strategic green infrastructure-based planning, more sustainable land management, and reconnecting communities to their landscape is key to its future protection.

9. **Resilience.** This programme seeks to restore the key features of the working landscape and its natural heritage to improve its resilience at a landscape-scale.

### **Delivering the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales 2015)**

This project is all about working with those that live and work on this landscape to develop ways of working that are preventative and long-term. It delivers for all seven of the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act:

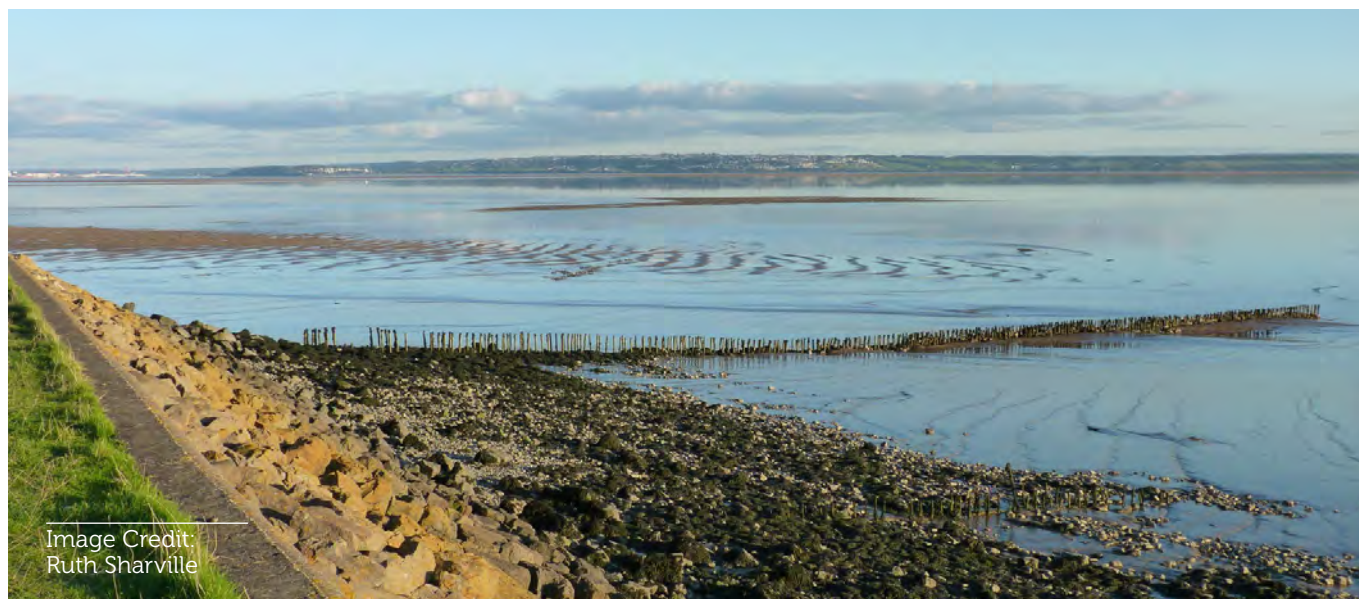
1. **A more prosperous Wales** – the programme seeks to bolster the identity and sense of place in the Gwent Levels, celebrating its history to attract more visitors and boost the local economy. It is also seeking to develop more efficient and proportionate farming practises.

2. **A resilient Wales** – Programmes focusing on natural heritage restoration and sustainable farming will allow Gwent Levels ecosystems to function healthily, supporting social, economic and ecological resilience.

3. **A healthier Wales** – The rich natural and cultural heritage of this landscape brings physical and mental benefits. These benefits are dependent on: positive land management; providing physical access into and around the landscape; removing the barriers preventing target users from accessing quality green space for health and well-being gains.

4. **A more equal Wales.** The programme will work with all communities in the Levels to bring about environmental and socio-economic benefit, regardless of background and circumstance.

5. **A Wales of cohesive communities** – A key aim of this programme is to restore pride in the natural environment and to develop a strong sense of place for all those living on the Gwent Levels.



### 6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

The cultural heritage of this landscape is unique in Wales – through interpretation, access and community-facing events, the programme will help it be further celebrated and enjoyed.

### 7. A globally responsible Wales.

This programme will make a positive contribution to climate change by improving landscape resilience, and raising awareness of the challenges imposed by climate change with key resident communities.

The work of these projects will also support implementation of the Welsh Governments' Natural Recovery Plan, launched in December 2015. The Nature Recovery Plan was designed to fulfill Welsh Governments Commitments under both the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the Global Convention on Biodiversity, which identified Strategic Aims and Targets in the Aichi Agreement.

### The Natural Recovery Plan Ministerial Forward states that:

**"In Wales, we recognise that our well being and the well being of future generations are dependent upon the health of our environment. The state of our natural environment and the nature it supports is a key test of whether we are learning to live sustainably. But our nature is under pressures: from over exploitation, habitat loss, pollution, climate change and invasive non native species. This Nature Recovery Plan is aimed at addressing these underlying causes of loss by putting nature at the heart of our decision-making, by increasing the resilience of our natural systems (ecosystems), and by taking specific action for habitats and species.....Conserving and restoring the nature that we have in Wales is an essential investment for everyone's quality of life in Wales. Taking action now, working in partnership, we can achieve real lasting benefits for this and future generations."**

The Nature Recovery Plan sets out six objectives, the first five of these are directly relevant to the Living Levels Programme and our outcomes will make a direct local contribution to progress under these objectives:

### Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels.

Placing nature at the centre of decision making is essential to address the underlying cause of biodiversity loss. A lack of awareness, and subsequent valuation of the critical contribution that our nature makes to our well-being and livelihoods, means we often do not account for that contribution in decision making, at all levels of society, from individuals, through local authorities, to businesses. This can lead to damage or overexploitation of our nature.

### Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management

Species and habitats are wonderful and awe-inspiring and we have a moral obligation to protect them and their genetic variety for future generations. They are the building blocks of our ecosystems and their functioning from which we derive many services and benefits, and we need to ensure we have resilient populations of species to support these. Sites designated



for nature conservation play an important role: they are a key mechanism for maintaining natural diversity required for resilience, and disproportionately contribute to a wide range of ecosystem services and benefits.

### **Objective 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation**

Degraded habitats are ones which no longer support the full potential of our native wildlife. In order to safeguard our protected species and to improve the resilience of more widespread species and habitats, we need to restore networks of habitats to a healthy condition across Wales, both on land and in the sea. Restoration of degraded habitats and habitat creation will build the resilience of our natural environment through taking action on the four attributes of resilience:

- Increasing diversity
- Increasing ecosystem extent through reducing fragmentation
- Increasing connectivity within and between ecosystems
- Improving habitat condition.

### **Objective 4: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats**

The UK Natural Ecosystems Assessment identified changing land management practices, through agriculture and urbanisation, pollution and invasive non-native species as key pressures leading to habitat and species loss and fragmentation. This, together with acidification and eutrophication, has changed the quantity and quality of habitats and the species they can support. It is vital to anticipate, prevent and mitigate the causes of biodiversity loss at source, using both our legislation, and innovative and holistic nature-based solutions.

**Objective 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring** To help nature to recover we need to inform the delivery of action by a better understanding of the ecology and science of our habitats and species, their status and trends, and the pressures and drivers leading to changes.

The programme will add value to the Natural Resources Wales Business Plan 17/18 which calls for actions that:

- Champion the Welsh environment and the sustainable management of Wales' natural resources
- Ensure land and water in Wales is managed sustainably and in an integrated way
- Improve resilience and quality of ecosystems
- Reduce the risks to people and communities from environmental hazards like flooding and pollution
- Help people live healthier and more fulfilled lives
- Promote successful and responsible business, using natural resources without damaging them
- Develop us into an excellent organisation, delivering first class customer service

In addition, the programme will contribute to the goals of the Welsh Government Pollinator Action Plan. (July 2013) which states that:

**“It is estimated that the value of pollinators to the UK is at least £430 million per annum which makes pollination a vitally important ecosystem service. However, despite their importance, pollinator numbers have been on the decline for the last 30 years and if we don’t take prompt action, this trend will continue.”** Welsh Government Action Plan for Pollinators (Ministerial Foreword, Alun Davies AM).

### **Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Pollinators in South East Wales (December 2015).**

The award-winning Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Pollinators in South East Wales is part of the wider Pollinators for Life project which is funded through the Welsh Governments’ Nature Fund. This fund was established to try to address the decline in Welsh biodiversity through landscape-scale projects, recognising the

interdependency of maintaining biodiversity with socio-economic factors. Local authorities and the Welsh Government have legal and moral responsibilities for biodiversity, health and well-being for the future.

The Action Plan forms an important component for delivering on these duties, providing specific actions for pollinators and is closely aligned with relevant Welsh Government and Local Authority policies. The methodology for the Living Levels Pollinator Action plan will be based on the integrated approach to pollinators and core actions recommended in the South East Wales Plan to ensure continuity in approach.

## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

### Summary of programme and costs / Programme 1 - Conserving and Restoring

| Code         | Project title                                  | Activities planned  | Key out-comes (HLF)        | Project lead                                   | Total budget      |
|--------------|--|---|----------------------------|--|-------------------|
| LLNH-1       | Targeted Natural Heritage Restoration          | Contracts for active land management to restore natural heritage of Gwent Levels landscape including:<br>1) The reinstatement of management on 7km of field-ditches per year for three years;<br>2) Targeted restoration of key landscape features (riparian habitats, pollinators, orchards);<br>3) Training land owners and volunteers to assist with future maintenance where possible.  | 1, 4,5,6, legacy           | Living Levels Natural Heritage Grants Manager  | £567,703          |
| LLNH-2       | Pollinating the Levels                         | Produce Pollinator Action Plan for the Gwent Levels based on South East Wales award-winning methodology;<br>Provide training/specialist advice to farmers, landowners and businesses;<br>Plant and restore pollinators at a network of key sites (farms, businesses and brownfield sites) across the Levels;<br>Promote and develop B-Lines;<br>Raise awareness of pollinators and pollinator-friendly planting through events;<br>Organise species monitoring + identification (volunteering). | All                        | Buglife Cymru and Bumblebee Conservation Trust | £85,238           |
| LLNH-3       | INNS Defend the Levels from 'Alien Invasion'   | Collection of data, uniform and consistent mapping of INNS across Gwent Levels;<br>Consistent sustainable reporting system developed;<br>Series of awareness and ID events held;<br>Creation of Gwent Levels Prevention and Control Strategy (legacy)   | 2,3,4,5,6,8,9              | NRW  | £13,165           |
| LLNH-4       | Fly-tipping - from Black Spots to Bright Spots | Roll out and use of fly-tipping app to map future incidences of fly-tipping;<br>Awareness-raising and education activities (link to schools project);<br>Installation of CCTV and covert cameras at mapped hotspots;<br>Collection of evidence to support prosecutions;<br>Creation of community "black spots to bright spots" pollinator gardens (link to pollinators project)<br>Cost-benefit analysis study (legacy)   | 2,4,5,6,7,8,9              | NRW  | £176,579          |
| LLNH-5       | Ecosystems Services                            | Ecosystem Services Assessment for the Gwent Levels;<br>Working with business and marketing students, development of business cases for PES pilots linked to key capital restoration projects;<br>Community engagement around ES with Gwent Levels communities to develop knowledge and understanding of ES.   | 1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 and legacy | Living Levels Sustainable Landscapes Officer   | £62,679           |
| LLNH-6       | Orchards and Community Enterprise              | Mapping remaining orchard areas and recording varieties found there;<br>Capital funding for orchard restoration; training for landowners and volunteers in maintenance, planting and fruit harvesting;<br>Invertebrate surveys in existing orchards;<br>Setting up an orchard forum, landowner days and orchard celebration events.   | 2,3,4,5,6,8,9              | Living Levels Natural Heritage Grants Manager  | £29,759           |
| LLNH-7       | Sustainable Land Management                    | Set up 5 demonstration farms for other landowners, WG and the public to demonstrate best practice landscape and habitat management;<br>Carry out farm economic analysis to quantify costs of achieving SLM at scale;<br>Provide policy recommendations for future public support adapted to Gwent Levels landscape - strong link to natural heritage project to provide incentives for continued management (legacy).   | All and legacy             | Living Levels Sustainable Landscapes Officer   | £82,281           |
| <b>Total</b> |  |   |                            |  | <b>£1,017,404</b> |



## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

### Programme Outputs

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Minimum of 7km/year of field ditch clearance across the Gwent Levels (21km target)   | 14. Creation of 30ha of wildflower rich habitat for pollinators   |
| 2. At least 60 willow trees pollarded   | 15. Publication of a Gwent Levels Pollinator Action Plan  |
| 3. Regripping of at least three areas   | 16. Delivery of at least 2 workshops with land managers and farmers on pollinator-friendly farming with at least 50 farmers and landowners engaged                          |
| 4. Creation of at least 4 new school orchards with at least 5 trees each  | 17. Delivery of at least 12 volunteer task-days and 6 business employee days for habitat restoration works  |
| 5. Creation of at least 1 new community orchard with at least 5 trees within Newport City   | 18. Delivery of 3 Bumblebee identification training days and one advanced course, 6 volunteer survey days, 15 Bee Walk transects with at least 50 volunteers participating  |
| 6. Drafting 5 management plans written for each created orchard and 5 for ancient orchards  | 19. Delivery of 2 pollinator lectures to the public and 2 public guided bee walks and talks   |
| 7. GIS mapping of ancient traditional orchards in the Gwent Levels showing Gwent Levels varieties for the first time  | 20. Development of a media campaign using Shril Carder bee as a flagship species delivering at least 3 press articles or media coverage pieces                              |
| 8. Providing training courses in orchard management with the organisation of 6 grafting events, 6 pruning maintenance events and 3 formative pruning events | 21. Production of 3000 copies of INNS awareness materials to improve identification skills for INNS   |
| 9. Carrying out at least 5 biodiversity surveys or existing ancient orchards to identify wild flowers, invertebrates and mistletoe                          | 22. Development of a reporting system for INNS and an INNS hotspot map  |
| 10. Designate 5 orchards as Local Wildlife Sites and create 1 opportunities map for future planting   | 23. Development of a bespoke INNS workshop for landowners and run an event during the existing Bioblitz INNS week bespoke to the Levels and threats from INNS on the Levels |
| 11. Funding 15 private orchards through the Capital Funding Grants scheme   | 24. Delivery of an in-house biosecurity training for operational staff in NRW   |
| 12. Creating 6 orchard celebration events reaching at least 100 people  |   |
| 13. Recruiting at least 30 volunteers to engage with orchard management, harvesting and potentially cider and juice making.                                 |   |

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 25. Work with Coleg Gwent students to develop and design an INNS awareness game for young people   | 36. Creation of an FTE Enforcement Officer/ Awareness raising position   |
| 26. Development of an INNS legacy strategy with rapid response monitoring protocols  | 37. Creation of an FTE Natural Heritage Grants Manager and an FTE Natural Heritage Project Support Officer           |
| 27. Delivery of a training course on spraying near watercourses to at least two existing herbicide sprayers  | 38. Deployment of covert surveillance cameras to record Fly-tipping evidence at least 2 sites                        |
| 28. Delivery of 2 CPD sessions on waste and fly-tipping issues and rolling out the 'catch a fly-tipper game' with attendance from at least 10 schools in the area  | 39. Installation of at least 2 CCTV locations on the Levels to deter Fly-tipping and capture evidence                |
| 29. Development of a bespoke Welsh Bac challenge in partnership with Coleg Gwent based around reducing incidences of fly-tipping in the Gwent Levels   | 40. A cost benefit report on Fly-tipping with recommendations on costs of preventative actions versus clearing costs |
| 30. Integration of Duty of Care responsibilities training in to relevant modules of at least 3 courses at Coleg Gwent including Responsible Trading targeting 100 students   | 41. An ecosystems services assessment and report on the potential of PES in the Gwent Levels                         |
| 31. Development of a primary school poster competition with at least four schools participating – one winner will have their design made in to a sign that will be used on designs for signage at key hotspots for fly-tipping | 42. At least two business cases for PES  |
| 32. Delivery of at least four Trade road shows at key outlets serving the Gwent Levels to deliver the duty of care message   | 43. Establishing 5 demonstration farms   |
| 33. Installation of at least 15 highly visible 'no fly-tipping' signs at key hotspots  | 44. Engaging 50 farmers in the process of defining SMNR in the Gwent Levels context                                  |
| 34. Design and install at least 2 'pollinator gardens' at former fly-tipping hotspots  | 45. A report on SMNR in the Gwent Levels targeting WG and stakeholders   |
| 35. Develop at least 5 target hardening assessments for Fly-tipping hotspots   | 46. Creation of a 0.6 FTE Sustainable Landscapes Officer   |
|  | 47. Working with at least 5 students to develop PES models   |

### Key programme Outcomes

#### HLF outcomes

Heritage will be better managed

#### Programme outcomes

- Landowners will better understand their responsibilities and will be more willing to manage their field ditches on rotation in future years
- The collaboration between landowners, ENGOs, statutory bodies and farmer representative groups will produce a step-change in the way field ditch management is planned and implemented at a landscape-scale
- Orchards will be better managed, local varieties grafted onto new rootstocks and saved, and fruit collected by groups of volunteers to create local produce
- Partnerships with local businesses supporting orchards will be made that will help ensure a long term survival for this important heritage
- Land owners and land managers will have an increased awareness of pollinators, will have received advice and training and will be managing their land more sensitively for the benefit of pollinators
- Project partners and stakeholders will be equipped with better tools to deal with future INNS outbreaks
- There will be increased awareness and effective reporting of INNS by residents and public
- Fly-tipping hot spots will be identified and managed through appropriate interventions
- The partners will have a shared vision for sustainable land management that is supported by local communities, farmers and ENGO's
- Local communities will have a greater understanding of the benefits derived from sustainable land management, and a greater understanding of the decisions and impacts affecting land management
- Ecosystem services will be better understood and valued by the community, local planners and decision makers
- The partners will have identified mechanisms which will ensure the long term legacy of investments undertaken

Heritage will be in better condition

- The overall pass/fail ratios of the Gwent Levels SSSI condition will be improved as a result of the interventions
- Field ditches will be improved and willow trees pollarded at a landscape-scale benefiting both biodiversity and flood alleviation
- Wet meadow restoration will have improved the quality and quantity of this habitat for the benefit of target species
- There will be increased forage resource, shelter and nesting habitat for pollinating insects and other invertebrates contributing towards a more resilient ecological network at a landscape scale
- Orchards will be brought back into traditional management and their condition improved, benefitting a wide range of invertebrates and pollinating insects
- Fly-tipping will be reduced, benefiting wildlife, the landscape and communities
- The risk of invasive species introduction, especially Japanese knotweed, will be reduced.



### HLF outcomes

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Heritage will be better identified/recorded

### Programme outcomes

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- Rare Gwent Levels fruit heritage varieties will be identified and managed to prolong their survival and use
  - INNS and fly-tipping hotspots will be mapped
  - The number of pollinator and invertebrate records registered with local recording centres will have increased
  - Wildlife abundances on the farm will have been recorded by landowners and more will have become engaged in the mink and water vole monitoring network
  - All data recorded from orchard surveys will have been sent to the Local Records Centre
  - All orchards and meadows of Local Wildlife Site/SINC quality will be designated to ensure their inclusion in the planning process

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People will have developed skills

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- People will have developed skills in wildlife survey techniques and will be able to contribute biological records on rare and threatened species in the Levels
  - People will have learnt habitat management skills including scrub clearance, habitat pile creation for invertebrates, grassland management for biodiversity, seed cutting, seed harvesting, sowing, planting and the safe use of hand tools
  - People will have developed awareness and skills in biosecurity issues - how to identify, report and manage threats safely and in a timely manner
  - People will have developed skills around promoting and potentially creating a market for the value of public goods such as nature, water quality and traditional landscape features
  - Integration of Duty of Care responsibilities into Further Education College training modules and at road shows will ensure that the traders and craftspeople of the future are more likely to operate legally and responsibly regarding waste disposal
  - Landowners will have developed skills and knowledge to bring their own orchards back into management
  - Volunteers will have been engaged with orchard management, harvesting and potentially cider/fruit juice making
-

## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

### Key programme Outcomes

#### HLF outcomes

People will have learnt about heritage

#### Programme outcomes

- Local people will have been provided with opportunities to learn about the local natural heritage and features of interest in the Gwent Levels
- Primary, secondary and higher education activities will have been used to teach students about the impact of fly-tipping on wildlife and landscape
- Volunteers will have learned about the importance of orchards and their heritage on the Gwent Levels

People will have volunteered time

- Volunteers will have helped with habitat restoration, pollinator task days and orchard planting contributing time and learning new skills
- A volunteer work force will have supported habitat restoration and its success will enable it to continue beyond the life of the LLLP
- Volunteers will have contributed to establishing a baseline for bumblebee abundances across the area, habitat management task days for bees, and public engagement through leading bee walks and events
- Volunteers from the community will have assisted with the construction and future maintenance of pollinator gardens

Environmental impacts will have been reduced

- A more resilient network of drainage ditches with increased water storage capacity will lead to increased resilience from climate change threats including higher rain fall
- The decline of traditional and rare tree varieties which provide important habitat to several key species will have been halted and reversed
- Pollinator habitat will be in better connected and less fragmented across the landscape
- Biosecurity protocols will be improved reducing the likelihood and improving control mechanisms for future INNS outbreaks
- Attitudes towards negative behaviours such as fly-tipping and littering will have been changed to reduce the incidence of these acts and deter potential fly-tippers
- CCTV cameras will have helped capture criminal activity been used to pursue enforcement activity
- Fly-tipping will have been reduced leading to an improved visual environment, less damage to wildlife and habitats, reduction in invasive species threats

### HLF outcomes

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More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage

### Programme outcomes

- 
- A wide range of groups will have engaged and been inspired by the natural heritage of the Gwent Levels and opportunities to participate in its care and maintenance including; school age children, teens, the less-able, retirees and those not currently in employment
  - Volunteers, landowners and people from the local community will have had the chance to celebrate Gwent Levels history and heritage
  - Students, local garden centres and communities will have come together to champion the pollinator gardens at former fly-tipping hotspots
  - Future traders, educators, students and households will have increased their knowledge and understanding of Duty of Care issues regarding waste disposal

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Your local area/ community will be a better place to live, work or visit

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- Appreciation of the natural heritage will help foster an improved sense of pride and sense of place and a greater likelihood of better care and maintenance in the future
  - Reducing fly-tipping will bring pride in place, lasting support for the Living Levels programme and is likely to improve visitor numbers and positive use of this landscape.
  - The pollinator gardens initiative will turn fly-tipping black spots into lasting community bright spots which will also provide health and well-being benefits to local communities
  - Being social, getting outside and being physically active will have health and well-being benefits for the individuals and their families
  - A wide range of people will have understood that small actions can make a difference, e.g. sensitive management of their land, not introducing plants or any other rubbish in to reens, making informed choices about plants in their gardens and reporting any threats to the relevant authorities
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Image Credit:  
Nigel Pugh

### LLLP Programmes

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#### PROGRAMME 2 – UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATING

##### Destination Management, Access and Interpretation

###### Overall Aim 1

To increase footfall, economic value and enjoyment of the Gwent Levels by improving access, awareness and the visitor experience

###### Overall Aim 2

To reconnect the local community with the Gwent Levels landscape and its heritage by engaging and involving people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities with their local green spaces, sites of heritage interest and the stories of its people.

### Principles

Underpinning this objective are a number of key principles against which the proposed physical, interpretative and marketing projects have been developed and tested:

- **Quality of experience:** To provide all visitors with a fulfilling, enjoyable and high quality experience of the Levels and its component parts
- **Promoting understanding:** To increase appreciation and understanding of the special landscape, biodiversity, management regime and heritage of the Levels for both local people and visitors
- **Strengthening communities:** To increase local awareness, understanding, care and enjoyment of the Levels and instil a 'sense of place' and ownership
- **Sustainable growth:** To prevent negative impacts of visitor activity through balancing the potential growth of tourism with needs of residents and the environment and investing in the enhancement of GI assets that contribute to the environmental quality of the Gwent Levels
- **Spreading benefits:** To share the economic and social benefits of tourism and distribute visitor flows throughout the Levels by encouraging exploration and understanding of lesser known areas
- **Visitor spend:** To increase the value of visitor spend to levels that contribute to the economic prosperity of local communities
- **Living Levels for all:** To ensure an inclusive experience where all visitors are able to enjoy a visit irrespective of their personal circumstances, encouraged by accessible and appropriate facilities, experiences, information and promotion. Emphasis will be given to engaging with hard-to-reach groups, community-led initiatives and delivering events and activities.
- **Collaboration:** To ensure all partners are 'singing from the same hymn sheet' in terms of the way the Levels are portrayed, talked about and promoted
- **Adding Value:** To optimise the local return on investment from pre-existing infrastructure e.g. Wales Coast Path, National Cycle Network, and combining and building upon resources to increase the reach and impact of marketing efforts
- **Authenticity:** To encourage an experience which is rooted in, and unique to, the locality and provides a genuine 'sense of place' shared by those who live in, work in and visit the levels
- **Health and well-being:** To promote opportunities for access and recreation that encourage healthy lifestyles and improve well-being for communities in the Gwent Levels
- **Increase access to biodiversity and nature:** To increase opportunities for people to access and engage with nature in the Gwent Levels to provide health, mental well-being and education benefits for local communities/visitors.



The development of the Visitor Destination Management Plan during the Development Phase is building on recommendations from the LCA and GI strategy which have identified that there is a need to improve access and recreation facilities for local communities and visitors to the Gwent Levels. There is growing evidence that access to, and enjoyment of natural and semi-natural greenspaces enhances people's health and well-being, particularly in areas of social deprivation. Engagement with the natural and cultural heritage of the Gwent Levels is key to the conservation of this remarkable landscape for future generations.

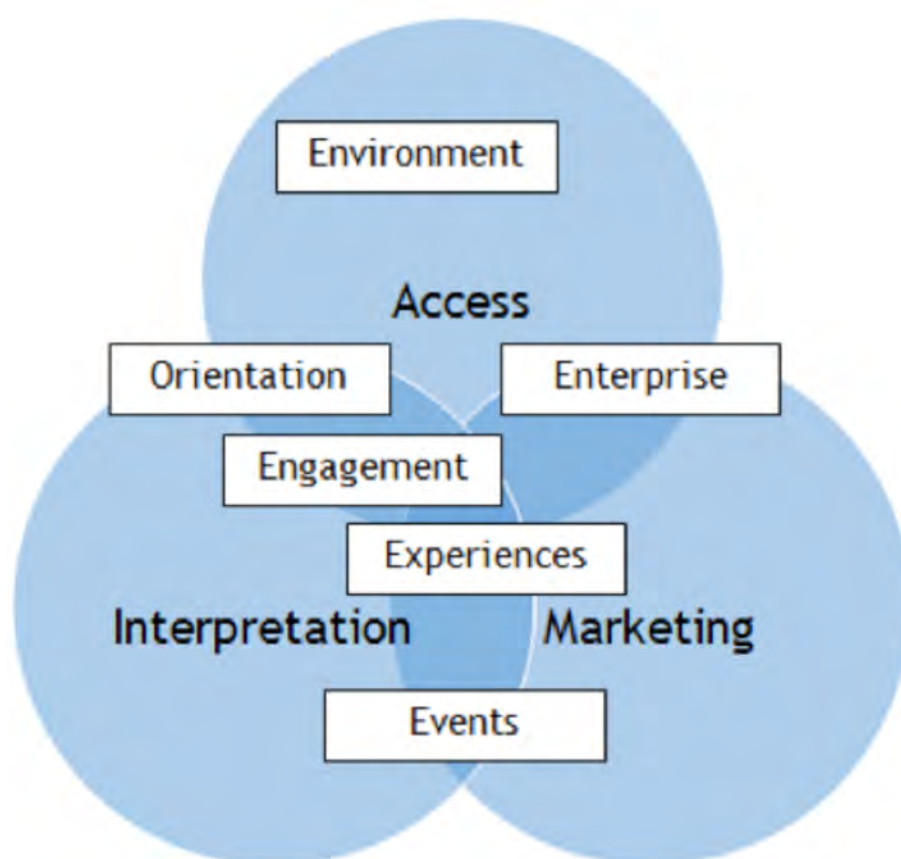
Opportunities for GI to help in addressing access and recreation through investment in the LLLP included the following key areas identified in the GI strategy:

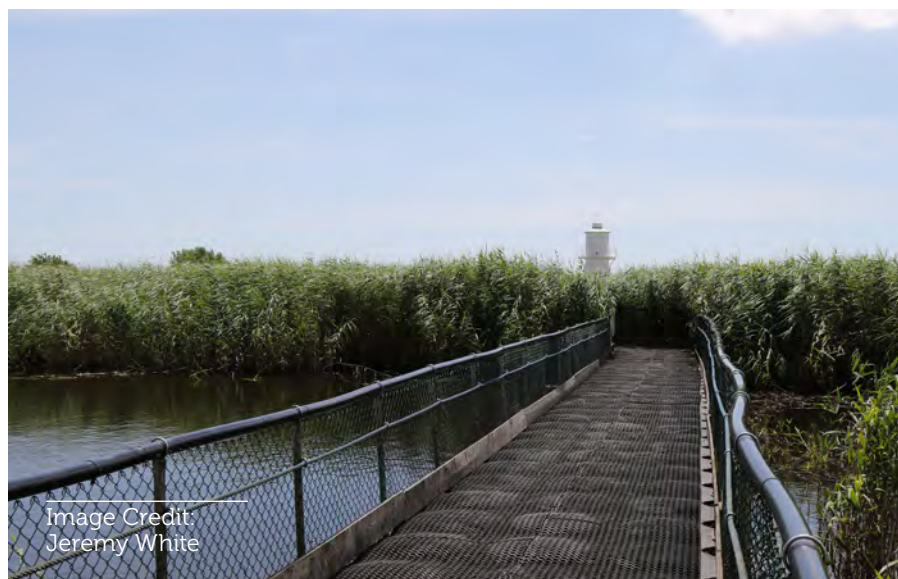
- **Focusing investment on improving/enhancing distinctive places, gateways and access routes within the study area that have a role to play in helping people to engage with, appreciate and enjoy the key landscape themes and attributes that make the Gwent Levels special** as identified the Gwent Levels Landscape Character Assessment
- **Maximising opportunities presented by a level landscape for cycling and encouraging healthier lifestyles by providing traffic free cycle routes that cater for all abilities** and provide a low impact form of access to ecologically sensitive sites for local people and visitors.
- **Considering opportunities to enhance intellectual access to and understanding of the Gwent Levels' unique landscape, history and wildlife**, such as through the promotion of 'citizens science' projects via outreach programmes for researching, identifying and recording the ecological and historical interest of the Gwent Levels. Other opportunities could include promoting the important role played by water, geology/soils and drainage in the development of the landscape through a network of interpretation sites, particularly on the coast, where existing roads and rights of way make them readily accessible, such as at St. Bride's Wentlooge, Goldcliff and Black Rock.
- **Raising awareness of the importance of the roosting and feeding areas for birds around the coast and estuaries** and the relationship to the inland wetlands of the Gwent Levels, ensuring that they are adequately protected, managed and enhanced in accordance with their internationally important status.

During the Development Phase tourism, community engagement and marketing consultants were commissioned to write a Destination Plan for the Gwent Levels to underpin the approach to Destination Management and identify the projects to be started during the LLLP. They were asked to:

- Discover and agree the vision or shared 'story' of the Living Levels through research and wide-ranging stakeholder consultation via a process that raises levels of awareness and engagement
- Identify, collate and list sources for a range of images, content and other resources to support the story and its sub-themes
- Develop a credible approach to brand and 'sense of place'
- Develop a comprehensive and practical Interpretation Plan, future-proofed in terms of sustainability and techniques recommended
- Develop a practical Access and Signage Plan which will encourage and allow sustainable enjoyment of the Levels by all visitors
- Create an Integrated Marketing Plan which identifies, engages and attracts the widest range of audiences in line with the project partners' social, cultural, environmental and economic aspirations

The following figure identifies the scope of this plan and the relationships between its component dimensions:





### Interpretation plan

The consultation process underpinning the development of the Destination Plan has given the project a lot more than just an understanding of the 'story' and its themes. The process has helped build awareness, pride and capacity and identify key thought and action-leaders among the stakeholders.

As shown earlier, the Levels is important historically and ecologically, which is recognised by a small group of local people who understand this landscape and want to 'champion' it. However, there is currently little or no real on-the-ground attempt to tell the stories of the Levels to either existing or potential users.

If people don't understand why the Levels area is 'special' they are unlikely to appreciate it. This deficit needs to be addressed, so that users are more understanding of the precious character of the Levels and their own role in its sustainability. There is also a need to bring these

stories alive in ways that:

- **Are creative/imaginative/inspiring and yet robust and practical**
- **Are inclusive and relevant to the many audiences**
- **Are bilingual Welsh and English**
- **Are firmly grounded in fact - celebrate the historic and 'natural' environment**
- **Complement other access and interpretation projects locally, regionally and nationally**
- **Increase local pride and support for the Levels**
- **Help create a positive and dynamic image of the Levels (as one person put it – 'create an idea of 'place' that people can fix in their minds' – e.g. Lake District – that automatically conjures up a vision in the mind's eye)**
- **Has a positive economic impact and inspires entrepreneurialism**

The role of the interpretation will be to engage the target audiences and to show them why the Levels are special, and how their actions have an impact upon its survival (both economically and physically).

### Interpretive themes

The LLLP Partners believe it is important to convey the message that the Levels is an environment shaped by human interventions that hold back the tide. Specifically they want to tell people about the Levels' many fascinating and often unique facets – from its Sea wall and built heritage to its ecology, its people (past and present), its plants and animals, and how it is being conserved and preserved for the future.

After visiting the Levels, it is important that visitors remember that this is no ordinary landscape, and that despite its laid-back rural feel, there is a constant tension between the sea and the people who live and work on the Levels.

This has resulted in the following headline interpretative theme:

**The Living Levels: dramatically stolen from the sea long ago, this is a fragile, fertile, man-made landscape teeming with history and ecology, whose tranquillity belies the constant tension between the human struggle to maintain it and the water's desire to reclaim it**



To complement the theme, the story of the Levels has been dissected in to bite-sized interpretative messages (storylines) as shown below:

### 1. The unique history of the Levels

- Land before the Levels - climate change after the last ice age transformed this landscape from a river valley – home to humans and animals - into an estuary with the second highest tidal range in the world.
- The history of the Levels is shaped by how the natural and man-made landscape has been used throughout history, and in particular by how the Levels area was created and how it has been maintained.

### 2. Living on the Levels/ the people of the Levels

- The challenges and opportunities provided by the Levels have led to distinct, industrious communities and strong characters.

### 3. Care, conservation and preservation

- The Levels is a landscape that cannot be left 'untouched'; it requires constant care and conservation to support the rich diversity of wildlife and plantlife which make the area so special

### 4. The Challenge: managing water on the Levels

- The Levels is a landscape in constant tension and now, as in the past, requires specialist and cooperative management, particularly in the light of accelerating climate change and rising sea levels.

In terms of the 'Story' the clear major thread is the interaction and tension between 'Water and People'. This can be explored dynamically to point up jeopardy and risk.

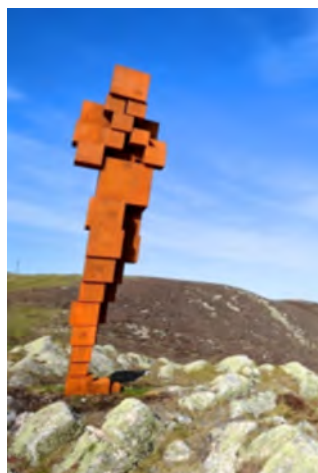
In addition, there are some clear and strong sub-themes to the 'Story':

- **Timeline** – prehistoric exploration/exploitation of the levels through to today (and tomorrow)

- **'Everybody plays their part'** – centuries of levels creation, families and communities, governance and cooperation
- **'Levels Lingo'** – a distinctive language for a special place
- **'An accidental oasis'** - a home for today's (and tomorrow's) bio-diversity and enjoyment
- **'A vital corridor'** – contribution to Wales' economy and development over centuries (prehistoric tracks, Roman roads, Brunel's railway, power, motorways, industry, housing)

Informed by local history and flavoured by the enthusiasm, passion and knowledge of local communities and organisations, these themes will lead people on a journey of discovery, deepening their understanding and appreciation of Gwent Levels significance and spurring them onto a greater sense of connection with the place.

There follows a short narrative to describe the key interpretive principles and actions identified in the Destination Management programme.



### Principles: Quality of experience, adding value and promoting understanding

#### People of the Levels – figures in the Landscape (LLDM-1)

A key aim of the LLLP is to reconnect people to the landscape of the Levels. Because the story of the Levels is so much about manmade influences, an effective way of doing this is by placing sculptural artwork figures in the landscape at places with historical or environmental significance. These figures will bring to life the heritage of the Levels and the stories of the people who have lived, worked, worshipped and played here. They can also draw attention to the natural heritage of area and act as visual signposts and markers.

An artist or sculptor will be employed to deliver the project working closely with the Community Engagement Officer in recruiting and engaging local participation. Community workshops will be used to help choose who the figures are and where they would be placed, complemented by historical

research to ensure the stories are grounded in fact. Ideally each community will 'adopt' their figure, so this involvement in delivery is crucial. As part of the proposed Levels Festival the figures could become the centre piece of events, from illumination to themed guided walks.

Included are some examples of figures used in the landscape elsewhere in the UK, to illustrate what could be done, although the Levels' figures may not look anything like these.

To give an example of the Levels concept, an interpretive artist (Rubin Eynon) has sketched an initial concept of 'The Monk' for the Levels by way of additional inspiration.

Related to the figures is the proposal to place a replica Roman marker stone to the west of Goldcliff, close to where it was found. This will be done with the help of the National Roman Legionary Museum at Caerleon, who plan to put the original stone on display in a new exhibition about the Living Levels area and its importance in supporting the Legionary Fortress (LLDM-2).

The approach to these interpretive interventions is pragmatic, targeted and joined up. All the figures and proposed locations are to be placed on the Wales Coast Path (WCP) or circular routes to or from it, or located at attractions along these routes where there is a target audience. The exception is the proposal to place a sculpture at the Spytty Retail Park in Newport, which has been built on the Levels. A sculpture in this location would raise awareness for an audience that is mostly blissfully unaware that they are on the Levels when they are doing their shopping.

#### Tidemarkers (LLDM-1)

In order to raise public awareness of the climate changes and unique drainage system, the **Tide Markers project (LLDM-1)** will be a collaborative research project with communities of the Levels whereby they will be researching tide heights at key landscape points of interest both above or below sea level. This will lead to the creation and installation of a series of tide markers at some of the promoted visitor destinations and along promoted routes as part of the Interpretation Plan. The markers will be wall-mounted



at places like Gwent Wildlife Trust's Centre at Magor Marsh and Newport Wetlands, and will be attached/incorporated into interpretation at other sites. They will contain information about height above sea level at key cycles in the tide, as well as showing the water level at that site during the Great Flood of 1607. People will be able to gauge whether their heads would be above or below sea level if the sea wall was not in place - a simple but effective mechanism for explaining the difference in ground levels within the Levels (e.g. why Magor Marsh is lower-lying than the land closer to the sea wall). It will also bring home the sense of jeopardy created by the tensions between the sea and the land and the future challenge presented by climate change and rising sea Levels. These messages will also be reinforced in the educational resources to be developed as part of the learning programme working with schools

Tides are measured against chart data so site surveys will be required to establish the correct heights/Ordnance Data on the tide markers at each of the proposed locations. Volunteers with an interest in geography and local history will be recruited to help with this task.

**Principles: strengthening communities, Living Levels for all, authenticity**

### **Living Levels Community place name signs (LLDM-8)**

Placed below village arrival signs these will include the wording 'A Living Levels Community' and may include the height above (or below) sea level, to create a more coherent sense of place on the Levels.

**Principles: Sustainable growth, spreading benefits, health and wellbeing and increasing access to biodiversity and nature**

### **Loops and Links (LLDM-7)**

Victorian and Edwardian clergy, walking their parishes on the Levels, were the first people to record the interesting plant

species and communities. This rare natural heritage is the reason why the Levels have been designated as SSSI and one of the best ways to appreciate it is by following in the footsteps of those earlier naturalists, and to walk on the Levels.

The Destination Management Plan reviewed existing access documents, consulted with a range of organisations and undertook a walkover of the existing routes in the LLLP area. The key conclusion was that the Wales Coast Path and Route 4 are the key walking and cycling routes through the Levels but these need better links and signage to and from local facilities and other existing routes. This project will use existing circular walks to link the Levels churches with the sea wall, WCP and attraction and facilities inland. Where needed access interventions and route upgrades will be carried out.

A mix of seven circular loops and linear routes are proposed, offering a range of distances to suit visitor needs, minimise disturbance to sensitive areas and offer the best visitor experiences.

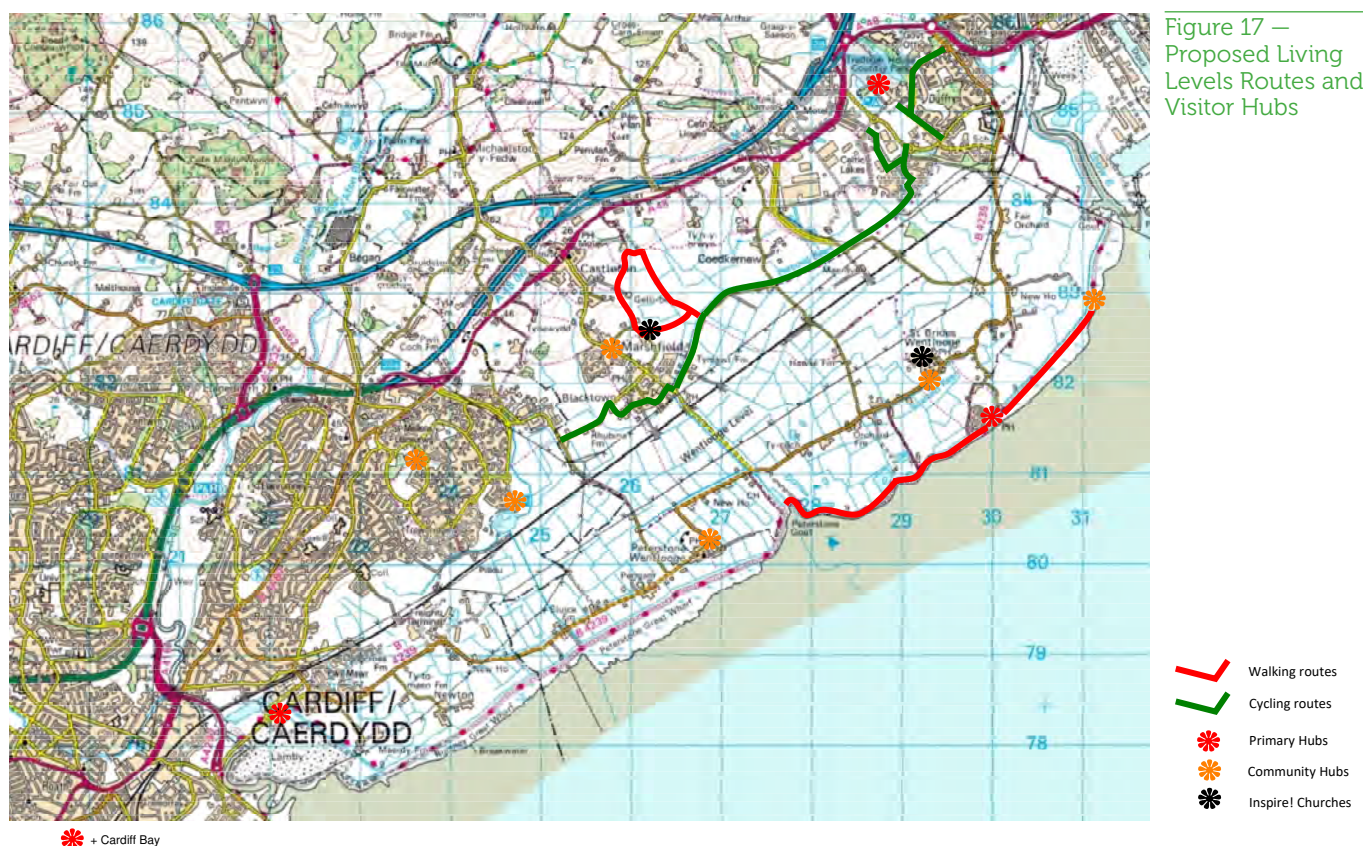


1. Circular Walk with loops: Black Rock to Sudbrook, Caldicot Castle and Portskewett (full loop 7km)
2. Circular Walk Magor to Magor Marsh 2.3km in summer months due to wet ground conditions
3. Linear Walk Magor to Magor Marsh year round 1.2km
4. Wetlands (short and long) to include Nash and Great Traston, Saltmarsh, Goldcliff and Wales Coast Path
5. Linear walk from Lighthouse Inn, to West Usk Lighthouse (travelling east) 1.7km or Peterstone Gout (travelling west) 3km

6. Bishton Circular Walk 5km  
7. Marshfield Circular Walk 2.8km

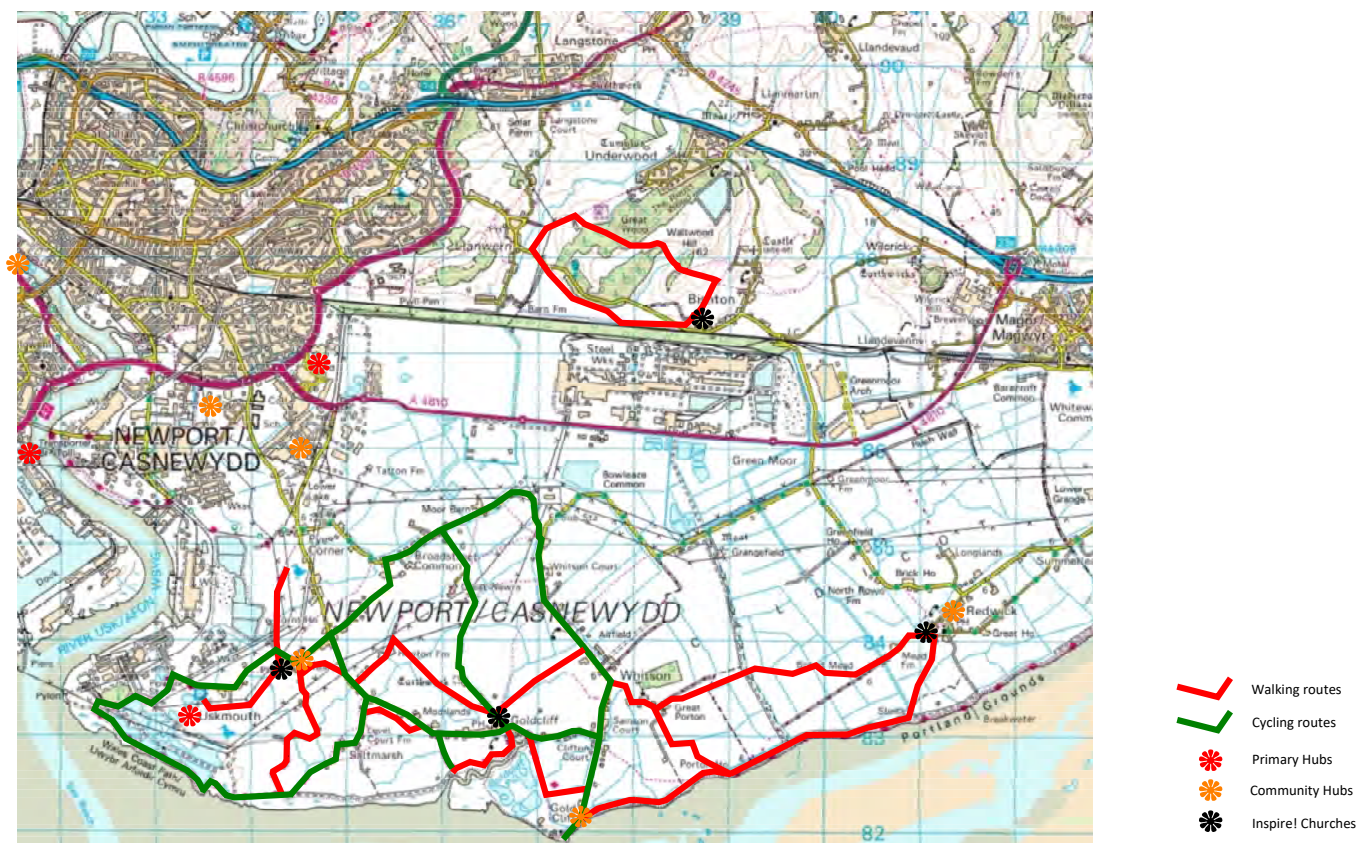
During the Development Phase all of the possible routes have been audited for current condition, accessibility, waymarking and existing interpretation. Detailed walkover notes and a selection of images showing the current state of the routes and setting out the proposals for new interpretation is given in Appendix 15.

The priority routes chosen are shown on the map:

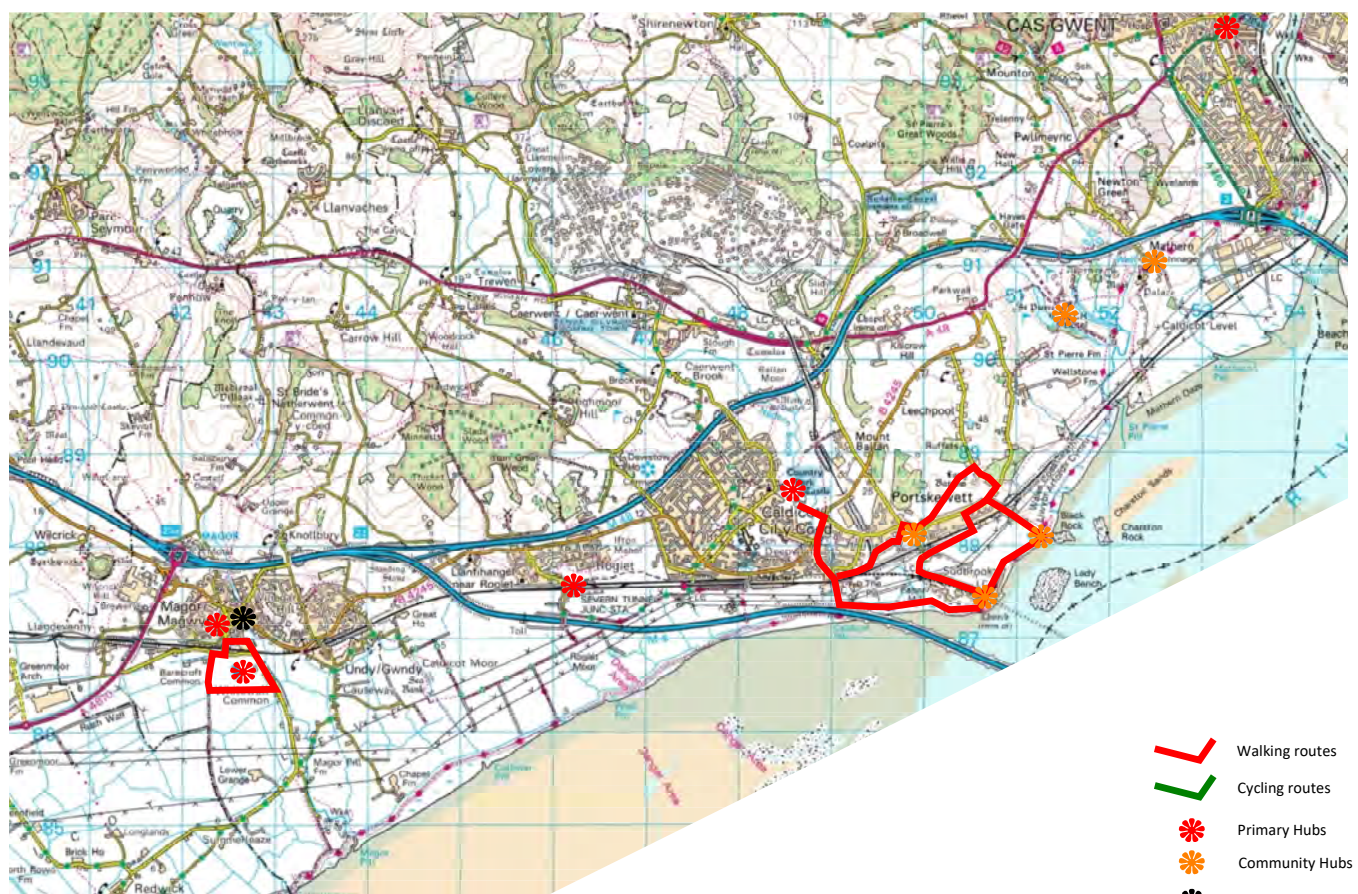


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Image Credit:  
Robert Drayton

### **For each route there will be a mix of interpretive interventions including:**

- Interpretive walk leaflet and web-based information
- Interpretation panels/hub information
- Figures in the landscape (sculptures)
- Tide markers
- Interpretation at churches, hides, attractions
- Interpretation on footbridges/ water features and interesting landscape/wildlife features along the route

### **How walks fit into interpretive plan**

The development of the walking opportunities in the Levels will make an excellent project for volunteers including the following activities:

- History Detectives and Ground Truthing: Volunteers can research historical interest and people on the routes to assist interpretation development and give real stories to the figures in

the landscape found along the routes (also a part of the LLS-2 project).

- Piloting and testing routes once developed.
- Testing routes for different users re accessibility.
- Using routes as Guided Walk Events and themes for the Levels Festival

In addition, a sum has been left flexible for better connections with existing routes such as Wales Coast path and the National Cycle Network 4 and the development of additional community links and loops which start in residential estates and which are currently poorly connected to the main PROW network.

### **Environmental Quality and impact on visitor experience**

As identified above, there are issues with dumping, poor waymarking and routes going through industrial areas, which other strands of the project need to address. At present, the Destination Plan concluded that it is not appropriate to spend money on other routes in the western Levels area due to the poor

environmental quality of these routes (and physical barriers due to railway engineering). Phasing of work is therefore a priority in terms of the delivery of the fly-tipping and community engagement elements of the overall Levels project. Further opportunities exist to link routes up on the western side of the Levels (i.e. when the Lamby Way Landfill site is capped with a planned diversion of the Wales Coast Path to go through the newly landscaped area). This will create a good opportunity to develop more routes for the Cardiff East population to access the Levels – a sum of £30k has been kept flexible for this as it is anticipated that this will happen by year three of the Delivery Phase.

### **Cycling routes**

The flat landscape makes the Levels a great place to cycle. Whilst the roads to the west are busy, the roads to the east are, in general, quiet and suitable for family cycling. Sustrans produced a review of the options across the Levels in 2014.





The following proposed Living Levels routes (shown on Figure 17) will link with National Cycle Network Route 4 (The Celtic Trail - connecting Severn Junction with Newport Railway Station to the west and Chepstow to the east).

### 1. Circular routes linking Sea Wall/Goldcliff; Goldcliff to Nash; Wetlands to Nash

These provide access to the Wales Coast Path. At the Wetlands Centre the cycling route also runs along the Wales Coast Path.

### 2. Tredegar House links

New signage from Tredegar House onto NCN Route 4 and (via Maesglas Underpass) onto the RSPB Cymru Wetlands Centre.

New Signage from Tredegar House to NCN Route 88 Percoed Lane via on-road section of Route 4 with an alternative off-road section along Pencarn Lane.

In the longer term, cyclists from Cardiff will be directed via Tredegar House to the RSPB Cymru Wetlands Centre as part of the East-West Primary Cycling Route from Cardiff to Newport. Newport

City Council has now completed its section of the route from Newport to Marshfield between the cities. The other section (Marshfield to Newport Road) is part of the Cardiff Enfyys network and is still under consultation and review by Cardiff Council. The current plan sets out links from the city centre to communities in Rumney and Trowbridge, the St Mellons Business Park and the missing link to the Newport route. As and when this is complete, the linkage signage can be added (predicted for year 3 of the LLLP).

### 3. Linear Route Percoed Reen

The newly surfaced Percoed Reen cycle/walking path between Duffryn and Hawse Lane offers potential to provide interpretation specifically targeted at a local community audience from the neighbouring Duffryn estate. This would include interpretation along the route interpreting how the water system works and a 'Figure in the Landscape' placed alongside the path.

For cyclists the route continues to the Cardiff Council boundary via Marshfield and is signed as Sustrans Route 88. For walkers, the route continues on-road and then

via footpath across the fields to Marshfield Church to link with the Marshfield Circular route. Where the off-road path ends there is potential to continue along the road and then follow a footpath across the fields to Marshfield Church to make a loop which will be explained in the route information. Marshfield churchyard is immaculately maintained and, although the church is not open, there are interesting graves (which may be researched as part of the LLS-2 project).

The leaflet for the route will be distributed locally to encourage use of this new resource, including targeting offices at Newport and St Mellons Business Park.

In the main, all of these routes (walking and cycling) require signage and some repairs to the surface. Like the walk routes, leaflets will be produced as downloads and as printed copies, as well as GPS downloadable routes for use on the Living Levels as well as partner's websites. The leaflets will contextualise the routes within The Living Levels, highlighting other aspects of the area to visit and explore. One



horse-riding route will also be identified and added in Redwick – this still needs further scoping work which is to be carried out in year one.

### Quality of experience, visitor spend, Living Levels for all, adding value

#### Levels Festival of Events (LLDM-5)

The LLLP area has a number of naturally occurring seasonal spectacles – startling murmurations, apple blossom and apple harvest, hay harvest, spring tides to name just a few. It also has its fair share of existing events – Caldicot's Cider and Perry Festival, the Newport Family Cycling Festival, GWT's Open Days, Open Doors events at local churches - all of which will be rebadged as the 'Living Levels Festival' and bought together in a themed calendar –which will also complement the Visit Wales theme years to bring added value and possibilities for investment.

A series of guided interpretive walks and cycles (based on the promoted routes) will support other events activities, starting

from key visitor hubs like the Wetlands, Transporter Bridge, Tunnel Exhibition, Redwick, Black Rock and local churches. There is plenty to sustain a year round programme of Living Levels community and larger scale events based on the seasons, given significant impetus by Visit Wales' promotional campaigns 'Year of the Sea' in 2018 and the 'Year of Discovery' in 2019.

#### Inspire! Churches on the Levels (LLDM-6)

The LCA revealed that churches are the key built heritage sites on the Levels and remain important places of community congregation for our older village residents. The medieval churches on the Levels are focal points in the landscape, not least because their spires and towers provide welcome vertical markers above the low-lying fields. They have been focal points for the communities around them, witnessing, and bearing the scars of life and death on the Levels - such as the catastrophic flood of 1607. A large part of the story of the Levels is wrapped up in the churches and the community living around them. Particularly strong links with churches

include the monastic links - e.g. Goldcliff Priory was responsible for managing land and churches and played a role in creating the drainage system as revealed by the names of some of the landscape features such as 'Monk's Ditch'.

The interpretive proposal focuses on ensuring the Levels story is told at key churches and that they are linked to the Wales Coast Path and other visitor attractions via circular walks. These footpaths exist because historically they linked local communities with their nearest church and pub. The churches listed below, primarily in the Magor Benefice, have been identified to the LLLP partners by the church authorities themselves as they are open to the public and able to offer shelter and refreshments.

**Nash Church** is a particular priority as it is so close to the Wetlands Centre and on the WCP. The focus there will be on making the church more accessible and reorganising the interior area to make space for interpretive displays. Walking routes led here from the local monastery will create a strong linking subject for the circular walks. There is a huge potential to tap into the Visit Wales





Year of the Sea 2018 to explore the influence of the Church and its role in shaping the landscape over the centuries.

**Principles: Authenticity, health and wellbeing, promoting understanding**

### **Different Levels (LLDM-4)**

Getting a physical view over the Levels is not always easy. Without that view many people struggle to understand its unique landscape character. The 'Different Levels' project seeks to give people the landscape overview via a few relatively straightforward means:

#### **Physical access:**

- Making more of available viewpoints e.g. Magor Railway Bridge, the Transporter Bridge through contextualising panels;
- Working with churches, pubs and lighthouses etc. with good vantage points to open their towers/views for special events or by appointment.

#### **Virtual Access:**

- Creating a series of time-lapse, drone, and still photography films and exhibitions reflecting

significant cycles in the tide/drainage and spectacular seasonal events. These films and images will be housed on monitors at key sites (Wetlands/ Transporter Bridge/Tredegear House etc.) as well as on project and partner web sites and will form of the basis of temporary exhibitions. It is intended for some of the photography and films to be produced working in partnership with Coleg Gwent Foundation Level Photography Students.

### **LLDM-9 Levels Interpretative Relief Model and interpretation upgrades at Newport Wetlands**

An interactive relief model of the Levels will help visitors understand the quotidian processes which maintain the unique Levels system of drainage. The favoured site and partner for this attraction is the RSPB Cymru Wetlands Centre due to high visitor numbers and current lack of historical and heritage interpretation onsite. Initially, the Partners were keen for this to be achieved through an interactive waterplay feature where people could get 'hands on' with water level management. However,

on investigation and after a site visit to the Wetlands by engineers from a similar project in London's Victoria Park, accommodating this kind of installation was deemed too environmentally challenging at the site and would have failed to attract SSSI assent due to the difficulty in handling waste water from the model. Instead, the proposal has now switched to a smaller cast relief model using LIDAR data. The key interpretation piece will be based on a relief model of a typical area of Gwent Levels landscape so that the operation of the drainage system and the subtle interplay between fresh and sea water are made understandable to visitors. The model will be accompanied by an explanatory timeline and will target a range of visitors of all types who use the centre currently and may come to use it in the future. This will be underpinned by a variety of digital equipment (e.g. webcams linked to live feed screens in the visitor centre) which will show how this unique landscape supports a variety of rare and nationally important wildlife. Many species are 'hidden' either in the waterways and the reedbeds, leading to the misconception





that there is 'nothing here'. This project will allow visitors to be surprised and inspired by the diversity of wildlife that the Gwent Levels harbours, contributing to understanding and appreciation outcomes.

One very relevant alternative location for the water play feature could be the redeveloped Lamby Way/ Parc Tredelerch site and partners will keep a dialogue open if this becomes a possibility. This could not be costed in to the current proposals due to the uncertainty over the future of Lamby Way at the time of application.

### Access and signage plan

Based on the identified issues with access and signage it has been agreed that the Access and Signage strand of the Living Levels Project will:

1. Build on the existing infrastructure rather than build new – in particular maximising the benefit of the Wales Coast Path, for long distance walkers and for local/casual walkers who have not used the path before.

2. Link together business and community facilities with the Wales Coast Path and other promoted walk and cycle routes.
3. Focus activity on a number of Primary access hubs, which will be augmented by Community hubs.
4. Achieve, wherever possible, physical, intellectual and information access for all potential visitor groups
5. Adopt a way of working that will involve and harness the community in the development, implementation and ongoing maintenance (monitoring) of information, access and interpretation. The proposed approach will build upon MCC's Community Engagement Toolkit, and it will be used during the implementation phase of the Living Levels project during which it will be refined and prepared for communities to use independently post project.

The lack of signage to and from the Wales Coast Path is an issue that requires a pan-Wales solution.

In Appendix 11 are the draft approaches which have been proposed by the LLLP Partners following a workshop to explore this issue during the Development Phase. Key aims are:

- Develop road signage protocols to key access points where people can park and access the WCP easily and have a "good experience".
- Develop pedestrian signage to the WCP from neighbouring communities and attractions, either as linear return routes or as part of circular walk routes.
- Signage on the WCP to indicate "how far" to points of interest – this may be integrated with interpretation structures

Importantly, NRW have agreed with the principles of the plans and have confirmed that they will work with the LLLP to refine the plans and to implement them as a pilot for review and possible wider rollout across WCP (with WG approval). The approach would be embedded within all route development within the Living Levels Programme.



**Principles: Spreading benefits, visitor spend, quality of experience, collaboration, strengthening communities**

### Hubs (LLDM-2)

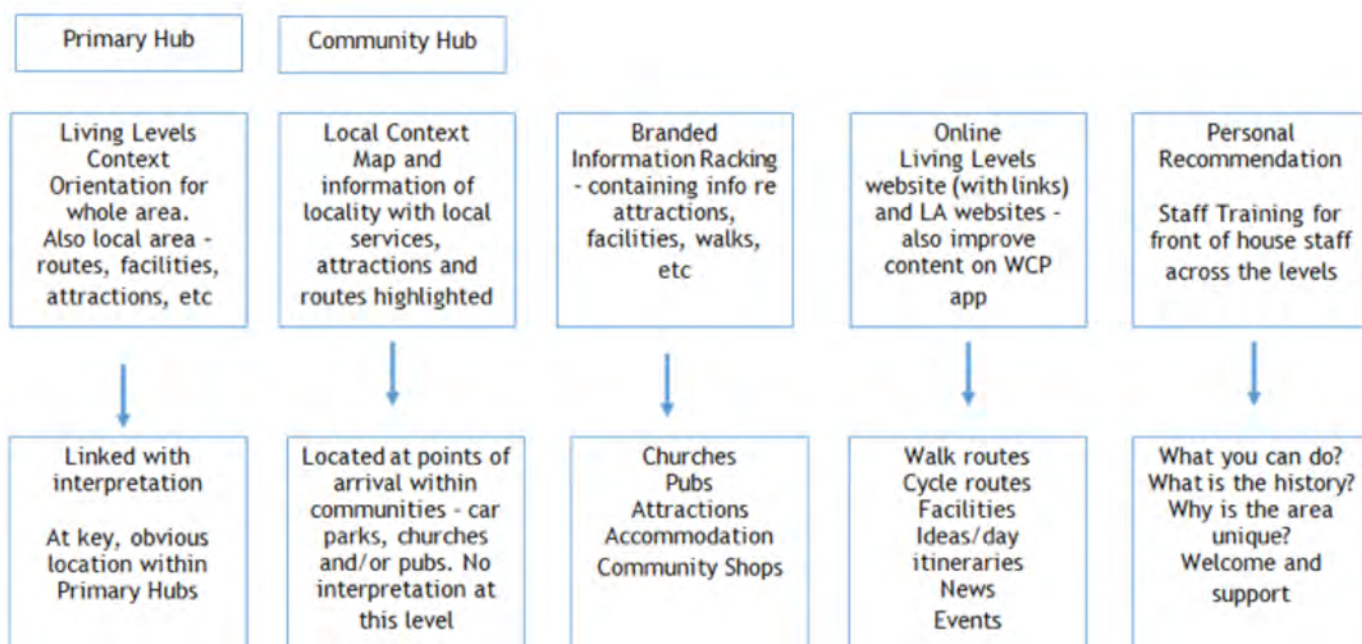
The Access and Signage Strategy proposes using the concept of visitor hubs to help direct people around the landscape and improve their experiences. Hub sites are described as defined physical localities whose cultural or natural heritage assets lend themselves well to conveying strategic themes/messages from the Gwent Levels story. They should have significant extant features of heritage interest, or provide strong heritage connections, contextual views and experiences. Hub sites should also be starting points, end destinations or otherwise be incorporated within connecting experiences.

A key principle is to create layers of information (and interpretation where appropriate) to help everybody have the best possible experience, and to encourage wider exploration, recommendations and repeat visits.

### The structure needs to ensure that:

- Visitors are able to find the appropriate information for their visit.
- At whatever point they interact with information, it should make sense and sit within the overall context of the Living Levels.
- Visitors should not be overwhelmed with too much irrelevant information.

Different levels of hub provide different key facilities directed at LLLP target audiences (including hard to reach, restricted mobility and those suffering from mental health conditions). Primary and Community Hubs, would, where appropriate also have key staff and volunteers trained to provide information to visitors. Links to the LLLP website will be included in all relevant attractions and community websites – increasing the connection with the Living Levels. The underlying concept is that local accommodation providers will benefit from the improved visitor facilities, and that will in turn help encourage longer dwell time.



### Primary Hubs

Primary hubs are to be located across the Living Levels area where there are 'full-time' facilities (parking, toilets, refreshments) for visitors, most of which are visitor attractions and heritage sites in their own right. The aim is to link these sites into the Levels to encourage exploration and recognition of what the Levels has to offer. At these sites the main actions will be:

- Interpretation – Information – Orientation.
- Improved Brown and White signage if necessary.
- Promoted walk and cycling routes – including routes to and from WCP.
- Living Levels Events Programme.
- Training for those working in and around Hub facility – re what the Living Levels area has to offer – and use of Ambassadors. Most of the chosen hubs are existing visitor destinations. Currently, there is a shortage of visitor facilities in the Western Levels. The **LLDM-**

### 3 Lighthouse Inn Eastern

**Gateway Project** will add a new primary visitor gateway hub to the Wentlooge Level. The Wales Coast Path, Wentlooge Gateway Feasibility Study (March 2014) identified this site as the best primary gateway option for the WCP on the Wentlooge Level. The development of this site is the next step in progressing the findings of the WCP study and provides added value and ROI for the LLLP. The creation of a gateway site at this location would create a starting point for walking, cycling and other modes of transport. It would also be a midpoint destination for people walking the Wales Coast Path from Newport to Cardiff or on circular walks where the start point would be Tredegar House or one of the local communities of Marshfield or Duffryn. The proposal will include information points, access to toilet and catering facilities, shelter, accessibility onto the Sea wall/WCP and footpath network, car parking and secure cycle racks.

### Community Hubs

These hubs will be developed with the aim that the community retains an involvement in the maintenance of the infrastructure post implementation. At these sites the main actions will be:

- Car park and public transport – at some sites, addition of cycle racks.
- The signage of businesses, churches and community facilities within reasonable proximity to walk/cycle routes that can provide refreshments and public conveniences at weekends.
- Information and orientation giving more information about local services and any events or volunteer opportunities on offer for local communities to get involved with. There may also be opportunities to use existing local information services.
- Encouraging businesses to promote their wifi hub as a means to gather information and install information/ leaflet racking in businesses/ community facilities.





- Ideally be a start for at least one walk/cycle/horse-riding route, using existing routes and establishing community links on to promoted routes – branding/ re signing to be added.
- Community or business involvement re the maintenance of routes, cleanliness of signage and leaflet racking.
- Local ambassadors trained to welcome visitors.

### Associated Hubs

It is recognised that there are potentially sites outside the LLLP boundary that are connected to the narrative of the area, and these will provide additional opportunities for associated activities linked to the Primary and Community Hubs, in particular the provision of information/ interpretation and the training of front of house staff to be able to talk about the opportunities for visitors across the area. Primary among these are Caerleon Legionary Museum and Newport Museum in respect of the Roman heritage but others can also contribute: Chepstow Castle for the Norman heritage, The Cardiff

Story Museum for the social history and the Newport Ship regarding the importance of the Levels area for transport and shipping. Museum displays to bring out the Levels connection are proposed at each of these locations.

**Principles: Collaboration, promoting understanding, sustainable growth**

### Cross Area Projects

**To support these targeted activities, there are a number of cross area projects:**

- **Brown and White highways signage (LLDM-8)** – increasing the accessibility of visitor facilities across the Levels, and directing visitors to the points on the WCP where they will have the best experience. This will be delivered as 3 sub regional schemes from key trunk roads. The detail of these schemes will be developed in conjunction with the relevant Highways Departments and will involve the engagement and agreement of attractions and tourism businesses in the scheme. It should be noted that this aspect of the overall

plan is not intended to replace existing signage, but to add relevant tourism signage to support the improved facilities and the tourism businesses in areas where there is no signage scheme in place.

- **Cycle racking (LLDM-7)** – providing appropriately positioned cycle racks at key visitor facilities across the Levels. These will be installed in partnership with the business and will be created in a way that adds to the general sense of place, i.e. they will be designed to incorporate interpretative strands or the Living Levels logo (to be agreed). This project has the potential of being a joint project with Coleg Gwent or another art/craft based educational establishment.
- **Web information (all projects)** – ensuring that all partners and Living Levels websites carry effective and up to date information to help residents and visitors to access as much of the levels as practical.



Image Credit:  
Newport CC

- **Pan Living Levels Map and Imagery (all projects)**– this action will create common resources for use in all activities, resulting in consistent messages, values and perceptions.
- **General Signage and links to residential areas (LLDM-7)** – a flexible budget has been reserved to allow further, as yet unidentified, small-scale improvements to adjoining routes and facilities to optimise the linkages between sites, routes and facilities as the projects and relationships with community hubs are developed. A core aim is to link with residential estates and lead people from them out in to the Levels and to link users of the Wales Coast Path and National Cycle Route 4 to local facilities. By giving people the tools and confidence to go easily to and from known routes including from within communities and estates it will become easier and more likely that the PROW network will be used by harder to reach groups.

**Principles: Adding value, sustainable growth, spreading benefits, visitor spend**

### Marketing plan (LLDM-10)

An Integrated Marketing Plan is provided within the Destination Management Plan.

The aim of the marketing plan is to build awareness, visits and loyalty to the LLLP area by identifying, engaging and attracting the widest range of audiences in line with the project partners aspirations leading to an increase in footfall and higher economic value for local businesses, but also greater awareness, understanding and support for tackling the issues facing the Levels. In order to optimise the awareness and use of the project routes and sites a range of ways to promote the Levels is needed including face to face exchange between visitors and front of house staff at attractions, hospitality businesses, churches, and primary and community hubs, particularly if they can provide added value using local knowledge.

**Key marketing principles in the approach:**

1. The effective use of “experiences” to attract visits to the Living Levels supported by a content marketing approach
2. Raising awareness of the Living Levels product within the local visitor economy and resident communities
3. Focus on targeting best-prospect market segments and making use of product resources enhanced via interpretation activity
4. Combining and building upon resources to increase the reach and impact of marketing efforts

**Six elements are costed and described in the Destination Management Plan as follows:**

1. **Digital Community Management Internship to develop digital channels for sustained, cost effective promotion of the Gwent Levels product and story**

### **2. Business/Community resource Toolkits to help businesses market themselves within the wider Levels product**

### **3. Brand development/Extension for the Gwent Levels as a Destination**

### **4. Destination Microsite 'web in a box' – consumer facing to help direct visitors to relevant information**

### **5. Social Media targeted Advertising**

### **6. Tactical marketing opportunities and PR linked to the events calendar**

The Integrated Marketing Plan links with all other LLLP projects and will promote the project within and beyond the area. As part of the plan, a series of interpretative resources (map, poster, leaflets) for use by partners and tourism businesses will be developed to help business give people the landscape overview and encourage more visits. There is no single user-friendly map of the Levels which shows the routes

and facilities in this unique area. The map will provide the overall context and allow attractions to drop a 'You are Here' pin on them for context and orientation. The map will also be applied to everything from 'Welcome' boards at attractions, orientation graphics, project leaflets, websites, and simple posters for use at B&B's and cafe's in the area, especially those adjacent to walking and cycling routes. The map will be commissioned directly from specialist mapping graphic agencies.

New photography showing iconic landscapes, activity, wildlife and heritage of the Gwent Levels will need to be commissioned for use on interpretive materials with the copyright retained by the Partnership.

Historical and archive images will also be needed for interpretation panels, leaflets and to enhance the partnership website. This resource will be available for marketing and promotional activity on - and off-line and will be used as part of the Destination Marketing approach to build up a bank of images and ways of describing the Levels and its offer by partners and tourism providers in the area.

In addition to the commissioned professional photography, several opportunities for student involvement have also been sought to provide practical work experience in areas linked to LLLP projects. For example, students at Coleg Gwent who are currently studying for a Foundation degree in Photography will be commissioned to provide images and content for website use and social media campaigns. This commission will be part of their course work needed to complete the degree and will produce content for a series of exhibitions and events as part of the LLDM-5 Levels Festival project. Initial ideas discussed with the college include developing a 'day in the life of' series designed to depict 'typical' days of people involved in the management of Gwent Levels landscapes and heritage assets.

### **Links to existing programmes and strategies**

The Understanding and Appreciating programme will contribute towards a number of relevant Welsh Government strategies, in particular those linked to tourism:



### Welsh Government's Pan-Wales Interpretation Plan

There is a great opportunity to signpost visitors between sites as the Levels have many great examples of different habitats, historical features and hospitality venues.

### Welsh Government's Partnership

**for Growth: Strategy for Tourism 2013–2020** identifies a product-led approach to developing and marketing tourism. It supports product development, people development, profitable performance, and place building especially on its flagship Wales Coast path. In 2018 it will be the Visit Wales' themed Year of the Sea for which this will be most apt.

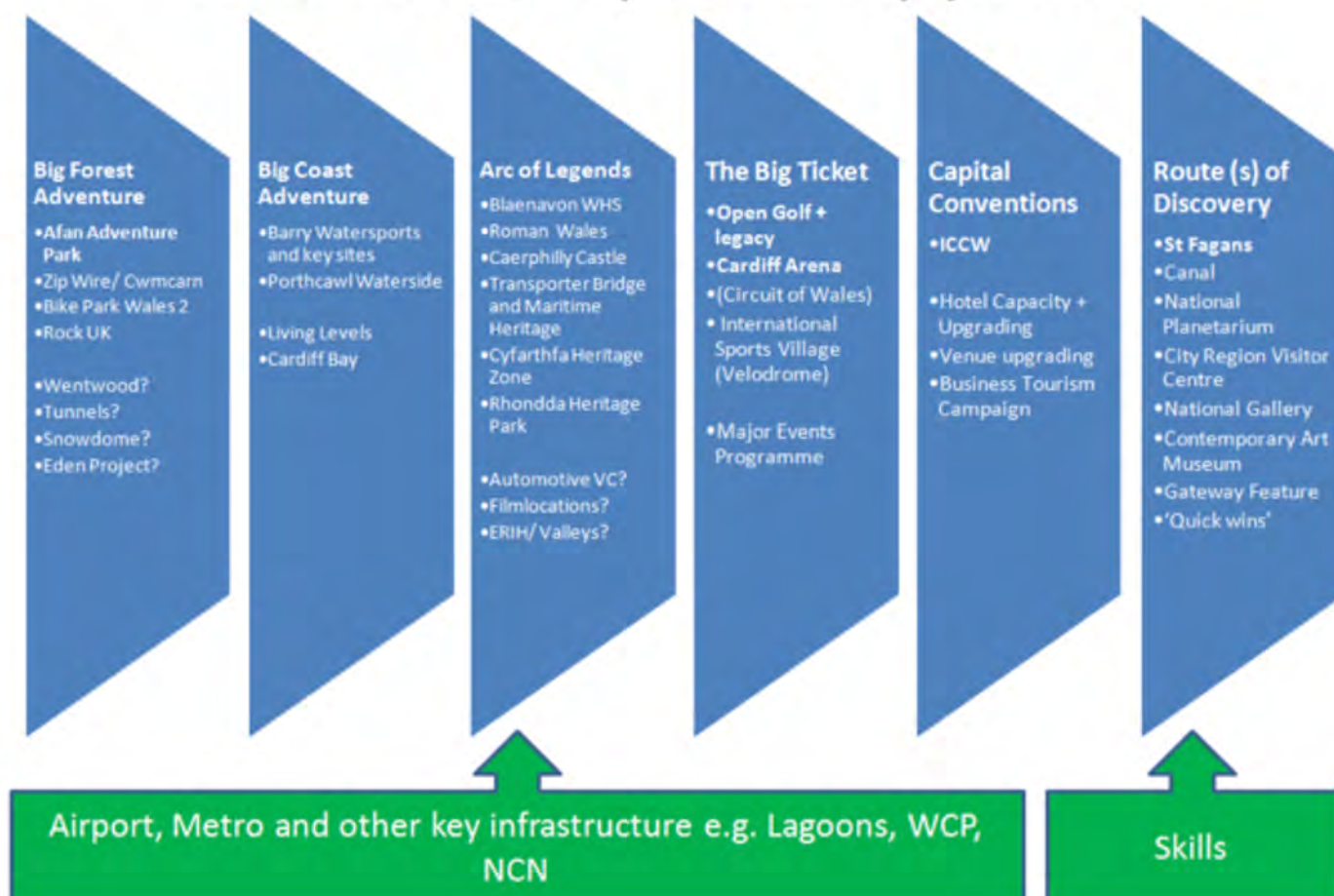
The project has the potential to meet in particular the following target markets for this campaign:  
- 'Active family explorers, targeting adults aged 35-55'.

The South East Wales Destination Management Group is re-evaluating the South East Wales City Region Tourism Action

Framework on behalf of ten Local Authorities to develop an overarching investment plan for South East Wales which will provide an agreed agenda for regional collaboration to support key 'transformational' visitor economy investments in the context of the City Deal, Visit Wales Partnership for Growth, and Local Authority Destination Management Plans. Living Levels is referenced in the draft plan as part of the thematic approach 'Big Coast Adventure' and as part of the development of visitor gateways. See diagram below.

Figure 18 – South East Wales Tourism Action Framework

## Thematic/ Spatial Approach



At a more local level, The Newport Destination Management plan identifies weaknesses with city legibility (signposting) and visitor information/ interpretation calling for more and better visitor research and monitoring and product development linked to the WCP. The Gwent Levels Destination Plan complements the strategic aims of the Newport Destination Management plan to:

- promote the links to surrounding superb scenery via cycle routes, footpaths and the canal network
- develop and market WCP
- grow weekend leisure break market (filling gaps in accommodation stock used during the week)

The Draft Monmouthshire Destination Management Plan for 2017-2020 identifies the potential of the Living Levels project area.

### The vision for Monmouthshire in 2020 includes:

**“Our visitors are also discovering new and surprising corners of the County –like the ‘big skies’ and intricate landscape of the Living Levels – given confidence to explore by targeted communications, well-informed hosts, timely and relevant information and enthusiastic Ambassadors”.**

The plan identifies the potential for Living Levels to contribute to specific programmes: the activities offer (walking and cycling); the cultural product, including potential to develop an iconic ‘gateway’ feature project (beyond the Living Levels proposals); for events to contribute

to the “Monmouthshire Season”; and to contribute to delivery of welcoming places.

**The Severnside Whole Place Plan**, Original (p17 to 25) and Nov 15 review (p19 for tourism & business), cites maximising the benefits of the areas heritage and environment, improving the visitor offer, stimulating tourism service and job creation. Monmouthshire’s Single Integrated Plan (SIP) focuses on promoting social equity and increasing citizen participation in planning and implementation which places a big emphasis on well-being.

Newport’s Single Integrated Plan contains the LSB’s vision for improving Newport, and has been developed around a set of priority themes, some of which contribute to this LLLP:

- **Economic Opportunity/ Physical Activity in the Environment** – potential initiatives to increase participation in the outside environment, and encourage greater use of alternatives transport i.e. walking, cycle routes.
- **Health and Well-being** - by developing new green space, the physical environment and the impact on health and well-being connected to addressing area based multiple deprivation

The LLLP will contribute to the following LEADER Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy 2014-2010 themes:

- **Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources** - by promoting the relevant unique rural Gwent Levels communities, the associated man-crafted landscape, the heritage underlining their fascinating

development, their future custody and the role these project sites play in bringing these elements together.

- **Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services** – through a variety of interpretation and signage, visitors to the Gwent Levels will be persuaded to try healthy activities such as walking and cycling on the flat and accessible landscape.

The LLLP will also contribute toward the Hierarchical Level Objective “To develop a connected territory that links rural hubs and places through digital technology, up-skilling communities for community and social benefit, whilst addressing poverty, exclusion and isolation” by providing improved community links and signposting between the public facilities and businesses. Good alternative transport links such as cycling/walking in areas of poor rural transport will bring people physically closer together therefore reducing Social Isolation. Through the shared Destination Marketing project, it also contributes to “Maximise the area’s visitor potential through integrating experiences, products and networks focusing on out of season opportunities and ensuring people enjoy the life-long learning benefits and live healthier lives as a result of their use and enjoyment of the surrounding environment..”

Finally, it will contribute to Cardiff and Newport Active Travel strategies and will complement the work of groups such as ‘Living Streets’ who promote “functional” walking as opposed to recreational walking (i.e. A to B routes to the shops, school or workplace).

## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

### Summary of programme and costs / Programme 2 - Understanding and Appreciating

| Code    | Project title                                  | Activities planned   | Key out-comes (HLF) | Project lead                                    | Total budget |
|---------|--|--|---------------------|---|--------------|
| LLDM -1 | Interpretative Sculptures and Tide Markers     | Design and install a series of human-scale sculptures based on putting 'people' in the landscape to bring the stories of the Levels to life to be placed on strategic routes and at visitor destinations (target at least 6 sculptures); Installation of tide markers (target 12) at key network of Gwent Levels sites to explain the challenge of managing water on the Levels/unique history of the Levels - launch during 2018 Year of the Sea.   | 4,5,6,8             | Living Levels Access and Interpretation Officer | £140,885     |
| LLDM -2 | Living Levels Hubs                             | Development of major visitor hubs (11), community hubs (16) and associated hubs (3) to help more people and a greater variety of people access and interpret the Gwent Levels;<br>Install orientation panels/ interpretation and waymarking at key hubs;<br>Developing resources for visitor hubs to promote health and well-being, including a mental health-focused activity programme and dementia-friendly resources;<br>Tide markers and sculptures to be integrated to design as appropriate;<br>Depending on site this will include signposting to promoted routes, the NCN and/or the WCP. | 5,6,8,9             | Living Levels Access and Interpretation Officer | £246,082     |
| LLDM -3 | Lighthouse Inn -Eastern Levels Gateway project | Development of new visitor access gateway and new ramped access to WCP including;<br>installing cycle racking;<br>installing shelter with interpretative content and seating, including information and orientation on what to see and do in the area;<br>Delivering improved car park surface;<br>Adding interpretation on footbridges on route to St. Bride's church; Peterstone Gout;<br>Integrating a Roman sculpture figure with a replica Roman marker stone on WCP.   | 1,2,4,5,6,7,8       | Newport City Council                            | £163,825     |
| LLDM -4 | Different Levels                               | Development of a series of 'Levels from Above' Films to be made available on-line and in visitor centres showing exciting happenings that reveal the character of the Gwent Levels (e.g. high tides, murmurations);<br>Promotion of films for use during Seasonal Events programme;<br>Working with Coleg Gwent students linked to a Foundation level Photography degree course. to produce a series of engaging films to promote the Levels to younger audiences.   | 3,4,5,6,8,9         | Living Levels Community Engagement Officer      | £23,218      |
| LLDM -5 | Festival of Events                             | Repackaging and adding value to existing events and natural occurrences into an annual "Living Levels Festival" programme.<br>This will include initially: heritage and traditional skills days; apple blossom days; Magor Marsh open days; Starling Murmuration celebration events; Church Tower openings; Family Cycling Festival; Maritime themed exhibition for 2018 Year of the Sea (and future "Year of..." events);<br>Incorporating events planned as part of the LLS-7 Big Skies Community Art Project.   | 3,4,5,6,8,9         | Living Levels Community Engagement Officer      | £73,192      |



## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

| Code         | Project title                                      | Activities planned  | Key out-comes (HLF) | Project lead  | Total budget       |
|--------------|--|---|---------------------|---|--------------------|
| LLDM -6      | Inspire! Churches on the Levels                    | Displays at 7 churches; Exterior orientation/ interpretation panels at main entrance to 7 churchyards (St Brides, Marshfield, Goldcliff, Nash, Redwick, Magor, Bishton) and Interior site specific interpretation panels at 5 (not St Brides and Marshfield as not open daily). This will include: Map of Levels saying 'You are Here', and where other churches are showing footpaths links and nearby attractions. Headline story of churches on the Levels developed - volunteer research and input.   | 5,6                 | Living Levels   | £48,403            |
| LLDM -7      | Levels Loops and links                             | Promotion of 5 key circular and 3 key linear walking and 3 cycling routes with waymarking and interpretation along the routes explaining key heritage and landscape features; Development of a pack of online and leaflet route guides highlighting the individual overall infrastructure to include the NCN routes and mapping of cycling facilities/info re using the Rail network; Waymarking along routes and signage to the wider PROW network; access improvements and measures along some routes to improve condition. Installation of 8 cycle racks at hubs and visitor facilities across Living Levels (see hubs project above). | 4,5,6,7,8,9         | Access and Interpretation Officer                     | £281,506           |
| LLDM -8      | Welcome and Highways signage                       | Signage scheme to key tourism facilities from A48 including signage to Lighthouse Inn/WCP; Installation of 18-20 Welcome to the Levels Community signs in situ to enhance the Levels community atmosphere and visitor welcome (suggested sites: St Mellons, Marshfield, Peterstone, Castleton, St Brides, Duffryn, Nash, Goldcliff, Redwick, Whitson, Bishton, Magor, Undy, Rogiet, Llanfihangel; Caldicot, Portskewett, Sudbrook, Mathern)   | 5,8                 | Access and Interpretation Officer                     | £31,084            |
| LLDM -9      | Improvements to Interpretation at Newport Wetlands | To be installed at the Newport Wetlands Environmental and Education Visitor Centre: Design and install a bronze relief model of the drainage system and a timeline explaining the governance of the system through time by the different bodies who have managed it since the land was first reclaimed; Develop a new exhibition room at the Visitor Centre exploring the heritage of the Estuary; Install web cameras to help visitors visualise the charismatic wildlife and birds that can be found in the Gwent Levels.   | 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9    | RSPB Cymru  | £81,566            |
| LLDM -10     | Destination Marketing                              | Development and roll-out of a marketing and Branding Toolkit for businesses; Development of resources for business including: Levels map, Living Levels leaflet for visitors; Living Levels general poster for use in tourist/accommodation sites; Brand extension of Living Levels branding for consumer facing use; Development of 'web in a box' Destination website for visitors; Digital Community Management Internship managed by LL Team (Social Media);  | 8                   | Monmouthshire County Council and Newport City Council | £110,132           |
| <b>Total</b> |  |   |                     |   | <b>£ 1,199,893</b> |

## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

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### Programme Outputs

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1. Creation of 11 Primary Visitor hubs spread across the Levels at sites where there are 'full-time' facilities (e.g. parking, toilets, refreshments) for visitors with information, orientation and interpretation designed to improve the initial visitor orientation and experience
  2. Creation of 16 Community hubs spread across the Levels with information targeted to local communities about life in the Levels, what's going on in the Levels and orientation/route information in the local area
  3. Creation of associated hubs at Museums with links to the Levels history displayed for visitors
  4. Engage at least 200 people from across the LLLP area to participate in community workshops to help choose and research stories of the characters to be included in the Sculpture trail
  5. Design and installation of at least 6 human-scale (or equivalent) sculptures at key points on promoted routes or hubs telling the stories of the Levels
  6. Design and installation of 12 individually scribed tide markers to interpret past and present sea levels
  7. Engage at least 10 volunteers in researching the tide heights for the tide markers
  8. Creation and installation of a replica Roman stone located near to the original field location at Goldcliff Point on the Wales Coast Path
  9. Development of a new Visitor Gateway at the Lighthouse Inn including: car park approach, entrance and surface improvements, installation of structural elements incorporated into fencing and stone walling along a 17m stretch, large bespoke timber seating shelters, cycle storage and interpretative panels; handrails to steps and access points to WCP and landscape planting around the area
  10. Delivery of surface improvements to the WCP at the new Lighthouse Inn Gateway along a 1600m stretch to improve all season usage and accessibility, including ramped Sea wall access for disabled and less able-bodied users
  11. Path improvements to a 2km St Brides walking link between the new Lighthouse Inn Gateway, Tredegar House, and the communities of St Brides, Peterstone, Marshfield and Duffryn. Improvements to include new surfacing, shrub clearance, new access furniture, remediation of potholes and waymarking.
  12. Development of a series of at least four 2-4 minute time-lapse videos capturing the unique and special landscape and wildlife of the Levels and one 20 minute feature film about the landscape and history to be screened at 8 events in the Living Levels Events calendar
  13. Creation of at least three student films for the Different Levels project and at least 200 images for use by the partnership
  14. Engage at least 10 students to participate in the Different Levels project
  15. Creation of a programme of at least 6 guided tours from 'Levels from Above' vantage points with a total of 100 people engaged and training provided for at least 10 volunteer guides
  16. Run 3 new Living Levels Seasonal events and add value to at least 30 existing community events over the life of the Programme to engage at least 5000 people in Gwent Levels heritage as part of the rebadged Levels Festival
  17. Installation of external interpretative panels at 7 churches across the Levels and internal informative story boards at 5 churches across the Levels with one creation of one 'Churches of the Levels' trail and interpretative leaflet
-

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>18. Installation of disabled access improvements to Bishton Church and an automatic locking door to enable daytime access</p> <hr/>  | <p>28. Installation of a new exhibit at Newport Wetlands with historic maps, a handling collection, poetry and local art</p> <hr/>  |
| <p>19. Promotion of at least 7 Living Levels waymarked linear and circular walking routes starting from primary or community hubs with informative leaflets and maps printed for each route (hard copy and downloads)</p> <hr/>                                 | <p>29. Installation of digital equipment at Newport Wetlands: 2x new screens, 2x nestboxes, 1x PTZ camera, 1x public console, 1x hand-held bat watching camera and 1x portable pond-dipping camera</p> <hr/>        |
| <p>20. Promotion of at least 3 cycling routes starting from primary or community hubs with informative leaflets and maps printed for each route (hard copy and downloads)</p> <hr/>   | <p>30. Involvement of at least 10 volunteers to research and install the relief model and new exhibition at Newport Wetlands</p> <hr/>  |
| <p>21. Signing and promotion of at least 1 new equestrian circular route in the Redwick area</p> <hr/>  | <p>31. Creation of 1FTE Access and Interpretation Officer</p> <hr/>   |
| <p>22. Creation and installation of waymarking and signage from the promoted routes to: Sustrans NCN Route 4 and the WCP and residential estates fringing the Levels – (locations and routes to be determined working with community groups directly)</p> <hr/> | <p>32. Creation of a 0.4 FTE Digital Community Manager internship</p> <hr/>   |
| <p>23. Two volunteer task days per month with at least 10 volunteers helping with the maintenance of PROW network and promoted routes</p> <hr/>   | <p>33. Create a base map, poster template and promotional leaflet about the Levels for use by local business and distribute 100 posters to business and 5000 promotional leaflets</p> <hr/>                         |
| <p>24. Installation of cycle racking at a minimum of 10 locations in partnership with local businesses and visitor facilities across the Levels</p> <hr/>   | <p>34. Create a Destination Management 'web in a box' site to promote the Levels as a Visitor Destination</p> <hr/>   |
| <p>25. Installation of highways signage from key roads to major visitor hubs and the Wales Coast Path (target to be determined)</p> <hr/>   | <p>35. Produce a library of at least 200 high quality photographs depicting Levels 'Sense of Place' for use by partners, businesses and stakeholders to promote the Gwent Levels as a Visitor Destination</p> <hr/> |
| <p>26. Installation of at least 18 'Living Levels Community' sense of place village signs including the height above or below sea level</p> <hr/>   |   |
| <p>27. Installation of a Gwent Levels landscape relief model and interpretative timeline at Newport Wetlands Environmental and Education Visitor Centre</p> <hr/>   |   |



## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

### Key programme Outcomes

#### HLF outcomes

Heritage will be better managed

Heritage will be in better condition

Heritage will be better identified/recorded

People will have developed skills

People will have learnt about heritage

People will have volunteered time

#### Programme outcomes

- Through the network of primary community and associated hubs, there will be a better information structure for visitors attempting to access Gwent Levels heritage
- Responsibility for long-term management of heritage assets will be shared between project partners and Local Authorities, communities and businesses leading to greater longevity of the investments made

- The PROW network and promoted routes will be made more accessible by adding furniture, bike racks, and surface improvements

- Stories of local iconic buildings such as Churches and points of interest along the promoted routes will be researched and included in future interpretation helping to tell the Story of the Levels
- The creation of films documenting natural phenomena in the Levels will provide a permanent digital record which will be added to online media archives in local collections

- Volunteers will have developed skills in researching local history and stories, historic and present day sea levels, running events, leading guided walks
- Students will have developed film and photography skills, boosting their CVS and chances of future employment
- The Digital Community Manager Intern will have gained relevant practical experience to help gain future employment
- Students will have designed sculpture and bike racks for use in the landscape

- Those living and working in the Levels will be more aware and more confident to explore and appreciate what is on their doorstep
- Local residents and visitors will be inspired by the beauty of naturally occurring seasonal phenomena in the Levels and be inspired to discover more by participating in other parts of the wider scheme
- There will be increased knowledge and appreciation for the “hidden” wildlife in the Levels and why they are an important sanctuary for many species
- Local groups will contribute to research tasks on the role of the churches in Levels society and the architectural interest

- Communities, businesses, church groups and special interest groups will have helped research and provide content for interpretation
- Volunteers will have contributed to environmental improvements to the PROW network
- Volunteers will have contributed to preparing content for, marketing and contributing to the Festival of Events
- Volunteers will act as local Ambassadors for visitors helping to provide a warm, informative welcome and leading walks and cycle rides

### HLF outcomes

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Environmental impacts will have been reduced

### Programme outcomes

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- By concentrating visits at key hubs and on a variety of promoted routes, impacts on sensitive areas of tidal foreshore and roosting and nesting sites associated with the Estuary and RAMSAR will be minimised
  - Increased awareness of issues such as fly-tipping and the decline in SSSI management will lead to pressure to resolve the issues driven by community action
  - Increased walking and cycling will encourage greater exploration of the Levels leaving the car behind

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More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage

- 
- More visitors will come to the managed destination hubs
  - The interpretation will provide visitors and local people with a deeper understanding of the special interest leading to greater appreciation for the area and increased likelihood of visiting other sites
  - Visitors and residents will be given the confidence and information needed to explore further away from the primary hubs, creating more opportunity to engage with the heritage of the levels
  - Engagement with harder to reach and deprived communities in Rumney, St Mellons, Pillgwenlly and Duffryn will have improved their confidence to explore what is on the doorstep
  - Greater accessibility of the WCP and the PROW network will encourage a higher number and a broader range of users to use the promoted routes
  - Improved highways signage and destination marketing will encourage new market segments to use the Levels as a visitor destination, raising awareness of the Levels as a geographical area
  - Digital and online media will have reached younger audiences and less physically mobile communities

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Your local area/ community will be a better place to live, work or visit

- 
- The Visitor experience will be greatly improved by the programme leading to wider exploration of the area, recommendations and repeat visits
  - New and improved visitor gateways will encourage visitors to explore the Levels from a variety of locations, encouraging return trips and increased spend benefiting the local economy
  - A greater number of users will help raise awareness and support for tackling some of the key issues facing the Levels
  - The improved visitor experiences and quality of welcome will add to the sense of local pride
  - Some of the new routes will provide a lunch-time recreation resource for office workers on the doorstep (e.g. in St Mellons Business Park)
  - More people will take up walking and cycling in the Levels as a result of the project leading to health and well-being benefits
  - Increased exposure of the Living Levels Destination product will enhance activity levels in support of local businesses and the economy
  - Volunteers will feel ownership for the installations and be more likely to intervene for their positive future management
-





# LEAVERS

Bodders  
Rose Calis  
Izzy Playle  
Emily Woods  
Rhino Gardiner  
Rizwan Ahmad  
Matt Ranscombe  
Annemarie Roelse  
Will Almond  
Tom Straker  
Freyja Pryce  
Kat Nicholls  
Sarah Gore  
Abi Hobbs  
Laura Hogg  
Lucy Shott  
Jen Wilson  
Laura Hogg  
Hrista Releva  
Freyja Pope  
James Berry  
Charlie Moore  
Jack Goodens  
James McCall  
Liz Kennard  
Tim MacDonald Watson  
Jemima Pettifer  
Becky Churchill  
Rory Williams-Burrell  
Jess Bamsley  
Rosie Johnson  
Georgia Geddes

Rory Williams-Burrell  
Matt Ranscombe  
James McCall  
Becky Churchill  
Jemima Pettifer  
Kirsty Caddy  
Celia Winning  
Kirsty Caddy  
Letty Steer  
Dan Gifford  
Sam Channon  
Simon Musset  
Jack Goodens  
Kirsten C  
Tom Str  
Laura  
Elsie B  
Doug Qu  
Tim MacDonald Watson  
Charlie Walster  
Abi Hobbs  
Richard Kevill  
Rhino Gardiner  
Cezary Namirski  
Hrista Releva  
James Berry  
Georgia Geddes  
Jess Bamsley  
LeAnne Norri  
Taran Johal  
Will Almond  
Kat Nicholls  
Laura Hogg  
Liz Kennard  
Freyja Pope  
Lucy Shott  
Charlotte Kemp  
Sarah G  
Annemarie Roelse  
Emma B  
Cezary Namirski  
Nick  
Rosie Johnson  
Richard  
James McCall  
Rose C  
Rory Williams-Burrell



### LLL Programmes

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#### PROGRAMME 3 LEARNING AND ENGAGING

##### Skills, training and learning programme

###### **Overall aim 1**

To raise awareness of the landscape and its wildlife, heritage and accessibility through creative learning and engagement

###### **Overall aim 2**

To provide skills and training in order to provide a lasting legacy for the programme by enabling ongoing management and care for Levels heritage assets

### Principles

Underpinning this objective are a number of key principles against which the proposed physical, interpretative and marketing projects have been developed and tested:

- **Improving collective understandings of the landscape:** To enable a wider range of audiences and stakeholders to be able to recognise, appreciate and value the landscape's special qualities to ensure future development is appropriate
- **Sustainable growth:** To support sustainable economic development in the Gwent Levels by helping to develop a knowledgeable, engaged and skilled workforce from primary school age upwards
- **Inspiring communities:** To provide opportunities to engage in learning about the heritage through inspiring and creative projects which tell the unique story of the Gwent Levels landscape
- **Strengthening institutions:** To improve the capacity, confidence and resources available for educators to provide learning opportunities linked to Gwent Levels heritage, history, geography and ecology
- **Recording and preserving:** To preserve the history and personal stories of the Levels for future generations and record oral histories before they are lost from within the ageing population
- **Inclusive action:** To engage communities particularly harder to reach groups and deprived groups through community art and events
- **Preventative action:** To tackle key anti-social behaviour having a detrimental impact on the landscape
- **Empowering communities:** To optimise community ownership of the LLLP by training communities to aid the development, implementation and ongoing maintenance of information, access and interpretation projects for their future enjoyment
- **Capacity building:** To develop a suite of skills learning events to provide people with the right skills to look after and manage the heritage of the Gwent Levels landscape and to enable them to better understand and care for it
- **Adding value:** To engage with local people, communities and schools, whilst at the same time, creating events and works that will add depth to visitor experiences

The sustainable future of the Gwent Levels requires an engaged, skilled and enthusiastic community of committed individuals. The Skills Programme will provide an avenue for people to build on their interest of the Gwent Levels, generate participation and the desire to learn more. Training provided will be linked to the skills which have traditionally developed within the Gwent Levels landscape, such

as traditional management of field ditches and willow pollard management, but also other skills that will enable local people to understand, use and manage the landscape better and add value to key investments in the area. These skills are crucial for providing people with a connection to the landscape and by doing so shaping and improving it for

future generations. The skills learning will also crossover with other work programmes and support the outputs from the Destination Management Plan and Green Infrastructure Strategy.

The below figure shows the key beneficiaries of the learning programme



Figure 19 – Beneficiaries of Learning



The programme is responding to needs in four key areas shown on the diagram below:

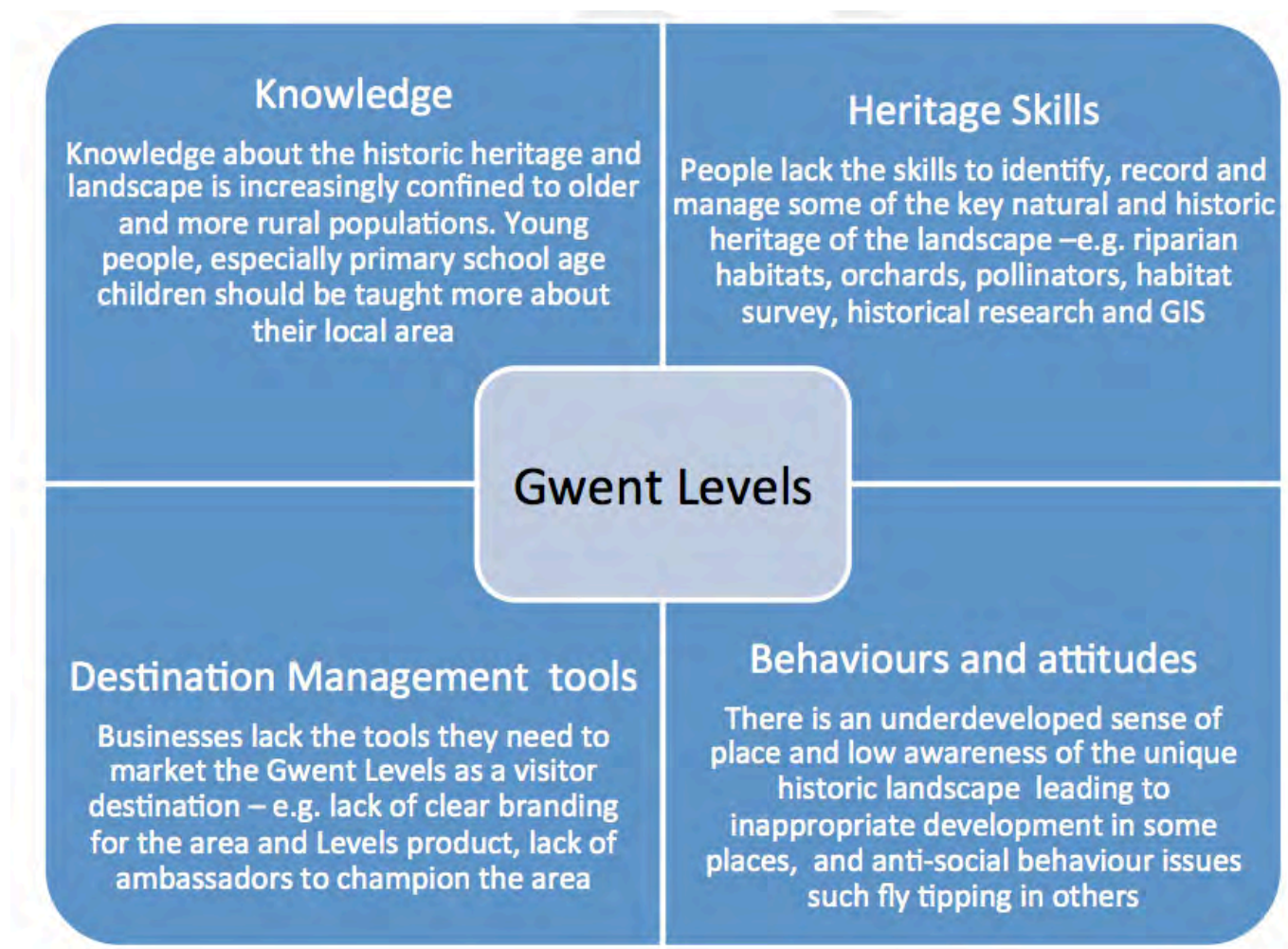




Image Credit:  
Nigel Pugh

### 1. Knowledge

#### Principles: Improving collective understanding of the landscape and sustainable growth

The Local Wildlife System allows land with no protection to have some recognition at local level to show that the habitat is certified as being of importance.

**The LLS-1 Local Wildlife Sites** project aims to instil a greater sense of place, pride, appreciation and understanding of the landscape's assets. By working with Local Authorities, the farming community and volunteers to survey, record and map high nature and historical value land, a strategic landscape-scale approach to GI will be adopted to minimise the pressure from development on the landscape and maximize opportunities for communities. The LLS-1 project will begin a pro-active survey for new land of LWS quality and a designation process to ensure that land of a certain quality (e.g. equivalent to SSSI) is surveyed, recorded and put forward as part of the wider non-statutory sites network (SINCs) which will then

be mapped across the LLLP area and added to a GIS showing the full network of protected sites and SINCs. The project will also look to develop a Gwent Levels SPG (or similar document) with Local Authorities to attempt to ensure the importance of the Gwent Levels is recognised by local planners. Through LWS designation landowners will also learn about their natural heritage and can work towards managing it positively and affording it some protection from inappropriate development. The landowners engaged will also become part of a network that are invited to annual Landowner Days held by GWT. In addition, there will opportunities for volunteers to accompany the Ecologists surveying the LWS areas which will up-skill them with knowledge of the natural heritage of the Gwent Levels.

#### Principles: Inspiring communities, strengthening institutions and capacity building

The **LLS-4 learning (schools) project** will inspire and teach the youngest members of the community to be passionate about caring for the Levels. Partners will work collaboratively to develop a central teaching resource on Gwent Levels heritage to support curriculum-based learning linked to a variety of subjects connected to the Levels history, geography, heritage and management. Through the development of a specific teaching resource for use by staff of the partners and teachers, the project will enable a sustainable way of delivering outdoor learning sessions specifically about the Gwent Levels history, heritage, wildlife and people and linked to the overall interpretation and learning objectives for Living Levels. Through developing and delivering resources and outdoor activities, training staff and educators and providing more opportunities for visiting the area that will excite learners about the history, ecology, and challenges of managing the landscape, this project will add



value to education work already undertaken and inspire a young generation to care for and respect the heritage of the Gwent Levels.

### Principles: Recording and preserving and improving the collective understandings of the landscape

**The LLS2- Recapturing the Historic Landscape project** will provide volunteering opportunities and professional supervision and training to be able to undertake a wide range of cultural and historical tasks including: archive research, GIS mapping, walkover surveys and ground truthing, archaeology and HER record entry. The project will use the 1830s Commissioners of Sewers maps as a starting point for exploring the history and development of the landscape of the Levels, particularly in relation to the protection and drainage of the land to allow farming and habitation. The 24 maps have been uploaded to a project GIS system during the Development Phase which is available to view online via the Living Levels website. A variety of activities will be carried out by volunteers to extend and enhance

knowledge of the Commissioners of Sewers and the impact they had on the landscape, and ways of life on the Levels from the 17th century onwards.

Archive-based activities will introduce volunteers to documentary and cartographic research, teaching them the skills of data analysis and transcription. The stories of the people and places of the post-medieval Levels will be collated through this research, to create a new and detailed narrative that will shed light on the everyday lives of those for whom land drainage was essential for survival. This information will be disseminated through different sources, primarily the project GIS and project Open Days, but will also be deposited with the Gwent Archives and the local Historic Environment Record (HER). Field-based activities will allow the volunteers to 'ground-truth' the information collected during the archival research. Walkover surveys will be carried out to identify what aspects of the historic landscape, recorded on the 1830s maps, survive in the modern Levels and sites with potential for excavation will be identified.

During the walkover surveys the volunteers will be taught to record features using hand-held GPS units, draw sketch plans and take photographs, to ensure that the historic detail is captured. Historic Building Recording activities will train the volunteers in the skills required to undertake a Level 1 building recording, creating a record of significant buildings across the Levels. The archaeological excavations will provide an opportunity for the volunteers to investigate specific historic sites, learning new skills and enhancing our understanding of the buried archaeological resource. The data collected during the fieldwork activities will subsequently be uploaded to the GIS by the volunteers. To ensure a sustainable legacy, the HER will be updated as a result of the 'Recapturing' project by volunteers trained in HER recording by GGAT.

The project will also include a number of community or public events designed to engage more local people, and visitors to the area, with the history of this nationally-important living landscape. The data gathered will inform the Interpretation Programme aimed at visitors to





Courtesy of:  
Carole Newton

the area and its attractions. Local community hubs will be used to meet and train volunteers, and the whole landscape will be explored over the three-year period.

### Principles: Recording and preserving, inspiring communities and capacity building

Stories are at the heart of this project. **The LLS-3 Stories from the Levels** project will preserve the history and personal stories of the Levels for future generations and record oral histories for preservation in local archives. Multiple voices from those who live and work on the Levels, in the past and present, will in turn, tell the wider community its unique heritage. Stories from the Levels will collect, document and interpret the history of the Gwent Levels working in a participatory partnership with the communities of Rumney, St Mellons, Wentlooge, Newport, Caldicot, and Monmouthshire. Over the past eight months of community engagement, the LLLP has already begun to build and gather a body of potential

participants for this project as well as materials (DVDs that people have sent in) and stories that people have shared– there is a huge amount of enthusiasm and demand for this project. It will inspire and engage people from these communities, enabling them to record and collect, then interpret and share their heritage. The communities and participants will decide how they will record, preserve and interpret their area's histories and they will gain the skills and confidence to do so.

There will also be an opportunity to capture stories from more disenfranchised and marginalised groups the LLLP area including the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma Communities. SEWREC and the Romani Cultural and Arts Company are keen to collaborate on this to ensure the full range of experiences are captured and explored by the diverse communities that make up the Levels.

As well as being inherently interesting stories to record and archive, the stories that will be told are also likely to convey more recent memories which will explore how different resident Levels communities

have experienced the significant changes to the Levels landscape as brought about by the building of major industrial infrastructure such as Uskmouth Power Station, the Steelworks and the Railway tunnel under the Severn. Transcribing these experiences will not only generate rich and interesting stories to help bring the history of the Levels to life for use by the Partnership during its events, it will also help build a picture of the emotional response to the cumulative impacts of major development in the landscape over time. Employees of Tata Steel in Llanwern are also keen to share their experiences of industry and working on the Levels, adding another perspective.



**Principles: Inclusive action, adding value, improving collective understandings of the landscape**

The **LLS-7 Big Skies Community Art project** will create, with the procured services of a proven Community Artist, a creative, authentic and contemporary live body of work that will develop and deliver a programme of community activity based firmly in the communities of the Gwent Levels. The aim is to inspire and create new traditions in the form of an annual series of distinctive 'celebrations', preceded by creative workshops exploring the landscape's rich history in different locations across the Living Levels landscape, helping the project to explore and develop its overall interpretative themes. These will be concentrated in three 'cluster' catchments, working with schools and community groups at the edges of the Gwent Levels and in the more urban areas with the least engagement currently. On a wider level, this programme has the potential to provide 'Health and Well-being' benefits to address both emotional and physical health by creating participatory arts activity.

This project will also link with the LLS-4 Learning project by targeting some of the same schools in order to increase the engagement of those children in harder to reach and more deprived communities.

### **Interpretive Artwork Maesglas Underpass**

This project is aimed at harder to reach audiences. Working with a particularly deprived community on the Levels around Duffryn in the 'West Cluster', this will be an important chance to engage a fringe urban community in an art project on a promoted cycle way – promoting a discovery of heritage, use of natural environment and cycling opportunities. Here the intention is to create an interpretive artwork at the Maesglas Underpass; a significant structure on the cycle route between Tredegar House, the heavily urbanised Duffryn Estate, and the Wetlands Centre. It has the potential to become a canvas for helping to tell the story of the Levels to local people and visitors. It would be particularly effective if it introduced walkers/cyclists to the bird and animal life they could encounter as

they approach the Wetlands. It is a great opportunity to bridge the gap between the residential hinterland and the environmental oasis of the Wetlands.

Another interesting story to embrace on the route would be the juxtaposition of nature with heavy industry – a visible feature in the landscape which can be seen clearly as one emerges from the underpass and moves on to the route to the Wetlands. Discussions with Tata Steel towards the end of the Development Phase suggest they are very keen to collaborate with the project team to integrate the landscape's industrial heritage with the natural and cultural elements. These themes will be explored using community workshops to decide on the content of the final mural at the beginning of the project as the idea is also to create full community ownership of the final piece.



This mural in the pictured example is from Waddon underpass, London Borough of Croydon. The Maesglas site might also lend itself well to sound-based artwork – a local (and international) sound-based artist has been sourced through links with Newport Live! Arts Development Team to help with this if chosen.

### 2. Attitudes and behavior

#### Principles: Preventative action, inclusive action and inspiring communities

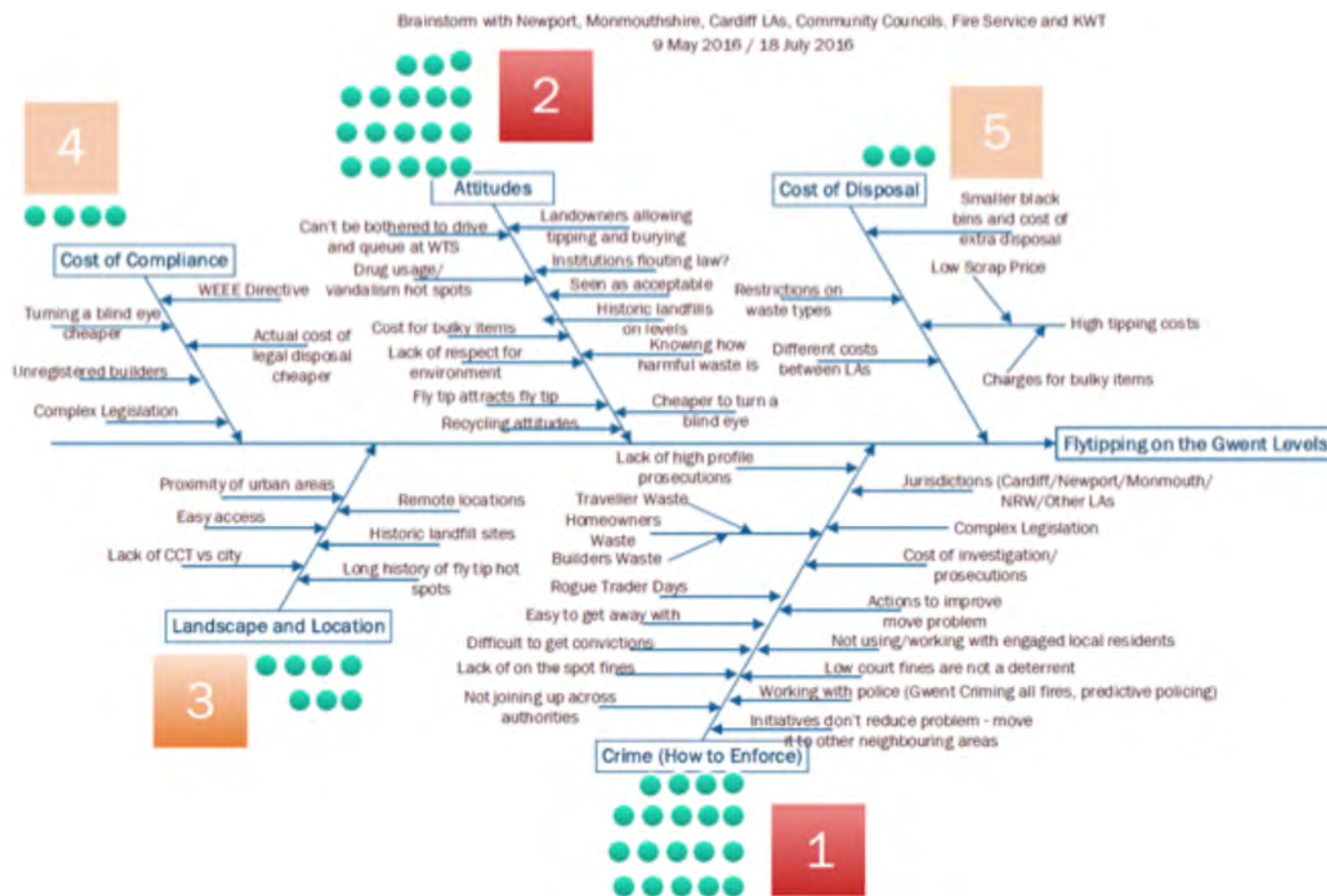
A shared activity between the **LLNH-4 Fly-tipping (Black spots to Bright spots) project** and the **LLS-4 Learning programme (schools)** will target the specific problem of attitudes towards fly-tipping and litter in the Levels. Primary, secondary and higher education activities will be used to teach young learners and students about the impact of fly-tipping on wildlife and landscape. For the youngest learners, a poster competition with schools to design 'No Fly-tipping' signage will be run. One winning poster will be turned into 'no fly-tipping' campaign signs to be placed at hotspots and other strategic locations across the Gwent Levels. The winning posters will then be used for awareness-raising at Living Levels events, community information hubs and for media engagement targeting family members and the wider community. For teens, Coleg Gwent will work with key partners to design a Welsh Baccalaureate Challenge on the impact of fly-tipping and possible responses. It will be designed

to help develop confidence and critical thinking resulting from students. In addition, integration of Duty of Care responsibilities into Further Education College training modules will ensure that the traders and craftspeople of the future operate legally and responsibly. To improve public awareness, information notices will be sent to all owners / occupiers of the Gwent Levels to ensure that they understand their waste disposal Duty of Care, including their responsibilities when using third parties to dispose of waste. This knowledge will provide people with the 'skill set' to choose responsible contractors.

The action plan which underpins the project has been collaboratively produced by the Fly-tipping Action group which was formed during the Development Phase and ensures that relevant partners and the local community are involved in the delivery. The group have identified the root causes of fly-tipping and then scoped solutions to produce an action plan. The linked fish-bone diagram overleaf was produced by the group and illustrates the effectiveness of the conversations which underpinned the development of the action plan.



Figure 20 – Causes of Fly-tipping Wishbone Diagram



In addition, the **LLNH-3 INNS project** which sits under programme one will also deliver some key training activities. Specifically, it will create and distribute Living Levels branded material to engage, raise awareness, and improve identification of INNS, and so prompt better reporting of INNS sightings. This has been designed to create a more vigilant and proactive attitude amongst the local community of people who are likely to be out and about exploring the Levels and in a 'best placed' position to record and report INNS threats. Particularly targeting walkers and local recorders, INNS ID and survey training should help

detect the presence of potential INNS threats. All data gathered as a result of the survey and monitoring elements will be shared with the appropriate data holding facility, including SINC database, SEWBRc, People's Collection Wales, and HER.

### 3. Heritage skills

**Principles: Capacity building, sustainable growth and improving collective understandings of the landscape**

**The LLS-5 Skills Enhancement project** will provide an avenue for people to build on their interest of the Gwent Levels, generate greater participation with heritage and inspire a desire to put learning into practice for the benefit of the landscape. This will be a truly multi-partner programme, combining the contacts and resources of combined sectors to enable the most added value for volunteers and target audiences.

Training will be provided by partners, volunteer experts and local Institutions and Colleges in key heritage, habitat management, and local economy skills gap areas to contribute to the overall objectives of the LLLP. The following key areas will be targeted:

- **Habitat management skills with a focus on:**

- Orchard planting, pruning grafting
- Grassland and wet meadow management
- Regripping fields
- Pollinator-friendly planting
- Scything for hay cutting

- **Technical skills with a focus on:**

- chainsaw operation
- brush cutting
- willow pollarding

- **Heritage skills to revive and maintain Gwent Levels heritage, culture and traditions:**

- traditional willow weaving skills and basket-making
- cider and apple juice making from local orchards
- oral history recording—particularly as a way to give a voice to more disenfranchised groups
- putcher fishing
- wildlife photography
- HER training
- GIS mapinfo skills

- **Maintenance of walking routes and access:**

- design and promotion of new routes
- maintenance of walking routes, furniture and access features

- **Survey and monitoring skills:**

- INNS monitoring
- Invertebrates, botany, water vole, otter, mink, bird survey (phase 1)
- Qualitative monitoring and survey techniques

These skills will be embedded in the local community by ensuring members of all generations have access to the learning opportunities. Courses will be offered at a range of locations and hardship travel grants offered to help harder to reach or isolated communities attend the training. It will also help people to build confidence and boost their CV, helping their employment opportunities after the scheme.



### 4. Destination management tools

**Principles: Empowering communities, improving collective understandings of the landscape and adding value**

**The LLS-6 Ambassadors and toolkits project** will create toolkits for businesses to help market themselves within the wider Gwent Levels Destination product and train front of house staff at primary hubs and associated hubs, and leads for community hubs and churches involved in the project on:

- **what the Levels have to offer**
- **how to best explore the area**
- **needs of different visitor groups**
- **customer care**

This will coordinate and improve the visitor welcome across the area, based on the Visit Wales Tourism Ambassadors approach.

To optimise the community ownership of the access and interpretation elements of the Living Levels project, it is proposed that a Community

Toolkit (adapted from the Monmouthshire Community Engagement Toolkit) will be developed mid-project, and then used with the community to implement the access and interpretation work programmes, before being refined and published at the end of the LLLP to allow ongoing management by communities. The Living Levels has a strong network of Community and Town Councils, who have been actively involved in the consultation for the Living Levels Programme (see letters of support in appendix 6). It is anticipated that these organisations will be the starting point for creating community ownership of the routes and the linkages with local businesses and services. The toolkit will provide guidance for communities in community hubs on how to plan, develop, maintain and promote walking and riding routes', extended to include cycling routes. Training and support will be delivered to encourage communities to get involved, providing them with the skills, tools and resources to assist with the ongoing management of the promoted routes, gateways,

and orientation/interpretation content. The geographical focus for training will be in and around the community hubs and promoted routes. The toolkit will be tested by communities throughout the project as part of implementing the access and interpretation work programmes. At the end of the project a final version will be published (online) as a tool for all communities across the Levels to continue to use for ongoing management and to implement further projects in line with the overarching plan. Each promoted route will have community toolkit feedback.

### Links to existing programmes and strategies

The National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014–2018 aims to ensure that:

**"Youth work provision interacts effectively with formal education providers to support positive outcomes for young people and support a sustained reduction in the numbers of young people not in education, training or employment."** This has been reflected in the feedback received from educators who were surveyed in the Development



Phase and has led to the development of the LLS-4 project which will ensure that curriculum needs are embedded in the design of school-based activities and resources.

Welsh Government's **Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship programme** works across all formal education sectors and is a requirement of education in Wales (as such it is inspected by Estyn). The programme has seven themes (below) and the LLLP will provide opportunities for educational establishments (schools and colleges) to engage in projects which help them deliver against these educational themes.

- **the natural environment**
- **consumption and waste**
- **climate change**
- **wealth and poverty**
- **identity and culture**
- **choices and decisions**
- **health**

On a local level, **the Newport City Council Economic Growth Strategy 2015-2025** has identified three key theme areas, 'people,

place and prosperity'. Under the 'people' theme, a core aim is to 'align physical, social and economic programmes more efficiently – aligning skills development to inward investment and physical growth'. By linking the skills programme to the local landscape needs and tourism destination growth it is hoped that the beneficiaries will be more likely to stay and find relevant employment in the LLLP area.

The project also contributes to the 'place theme' and the aim to "improve engagement with education and training providers", through the establishment of an education working group containing both project partners and local education providers from primary to tertiary levels to steer and guide the development of relevant resources.

The **LLS-5 skills enhancement** programme will complement Newport's Single Integrated Plan which contains the LSB's vision for improving Newport, and has been developed around a set of priority themes, of which the most relevant to the LLLP are:

**Skills and Work – by seeking to use and develop the local labour force**

**Economic Opportunity – by taking forward opportunities for funding to support the development of the rural economy in Newport with a focus on business development and digital technology.**

**Monmouthshire's Single Integrated Plan 2013** centres on creating and maintaining the County's economic and environmental health, promoting social equity, and increasing citizen participation in planning and implementation. The Skills programme will particularly support and contribute to theme 2 "People are Confident, Capable and Involved" which focuses on improving confidence to enable communities to contribute to their own development.

In addition, the three strategic priorities of the Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy are:

1. Supporting business growth
2. Encouraging inward investment
3. Growing entrepreneurs

Cross cutting themes with the Skills programme include the need to embrace and capitalise on digital technology opportunities and to raise skills levels to meet the needs and aspirations of individuals and employers.

For Cardiff East, the **Neighbourhood Partnership Action Plan 2016-2017** identifies four priority work areas and the skills programme will particularly complement priority 2, 'Learning and Training' by working collectively to address "educational experiences and opportunities", 'young people not in education employment or training, "opportunities for adult learning and employability", to ensure that people in Cardiff achieve their full potential. There are also links with Cardiff Council's wider work to involve communities in their local parks and open spaces including the linking of Hendre Lake through to Greenway and other Council owned sites.

## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

### Summary of programme and costs / Programme 3 - Learning and Engaging

| Code    | Project title                      | Activities planned   | Key out-comes (HLF) | Project lead   | Total budget    |
|---------|------------------------------------|--|---------------------|--|-----------------|
| LLS - 1 | Local Wildlife sites               | Survey land and apply for new LWS designations;<br>Train landowners in LWS management;<br>Organise landowner-focused events;<br>Develop Gwent Levels SPG or similar to help guide future development.  | 1,3,4,5,6           | GWT  | £16,402         |
| LLS-2   | Recapturing the Historic Landscape | Professionally-led volunteer research project to:<br>Research CoS records;<br>Building, place name and field name recording and data added to HER;<br>Develop and add to web-based GIS (skills training);<br>Write Parish Histories;<br>Conduct walkover surveys to identify historical landscape features;<br>Archaeological excavations;<br>Update HER, People's Collection Wales, Gwent Archives with relevant research at end of project.              | 1,3,4,5,6,8         | Historic Landscape Contractor (to be appointed in Delivery Phase by Programme Manager and team)              | £130,714        |
| LLS - 3 | Stories from the Levels            | Design and deliver community engagement events to capture oral histories;<br>Train a network of community engagement assistants and volunteers in oral history techniques;<br>Develop themed exhibitions based on stories for use at local venues/museums and as a source of content for interpretive content as part of wider Interpretation strategy;<br>Ensure archiving of material collected into local collections at end of project.                | 3,4,5,6,8           | Oral History contractor for Delivery Phase (to be appointed in Delivery Phase by Programme Manager and team) | £62,214         |
| LLS-4   | Learning programme (schools)       | Develop curriculum-based Gwent Levels heritage resources and deliver schools programmes from a network of key partner sites;<br>Organise and deliver training on the use of the resources for education providers and schools;<br>Write and help facilitate Welsh Bac Challenges with Gwent Levels themes;<br>Develop outdoor learning self-led resources about Gwent Levels at a network of key sites.  | 1,3,4,5,6,8,9       | GWT  | £96,893         |
| LLS - 5 | Skills enhancement                 | Deliver a series of skills workshops and courses for the public linked to the heritage of the Levels and its future maintenance, and the local visitor economy.  | 1,3,4,5,6,8,9       | GWT and RSPB Cymru   | £84,817         |
| LLS-6   | Ambassadors programme and toolkits | Train Newport, WCP and Monmouthshire Ambassadors and front of house staff re what is available across the Gwent Levels/visitor welcome;<br>Update and adapt the Monmouthshire community engagement toolkit and provide training for communities to provide them with skills, tools and resources needed to assist with the maintenance and upkeep of promoted walking and cycling routes, styles, gateways and interpretative content.                     | 4,6,7,8,9           | Monmouthshire County Council and Newport City Council  | £14,297         |
| LLS-7   | Community art project - Big Skies  | Commission a community-based artist to run a series of community and primary schools workshops to develop artistic content which interprets the heritage of the Gwent Levels building to the development of a 'celebration' piece which can be used as the centrepiece for a community event to celebrate the Gwent Levels;<br>Work with Duffryn community to develop a Maesglas underpass mural or sound-based artwork depicting wildlife and/or history. | 4,5,6,8,9           | Living Levels Community Engagement Officer   | £64,701.00      |
|         |                                    |  |                     | <b>Total</b>   | <b>£472,038</b> |



## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

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### Key programme Outputs

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1. Survey at least 30 sites against the LWS criteria
  2. Work with at least 10 landowners to survey land in detail for LWS designation and submit sites for formal designation
  3. At least 5 new LWS designated, newly discovered wildlife and habitats recorded and new areas outside of the SSSI identified and afforded some protection through the planning system
  4. Write an overarching SPG or similar that outlines the importance of the Gwent Levels and a coordinated approach to development across the LLLP area
  5. Recruit at least 15 volunteers to the Commissioners of Sewers Research and Transcription group (the "Sewers RATs"), 15 volunteers to update and maintain the historic GIS mapping database and 20 volunteers for Levels-based historical and archaeology-based activities
  6. Creation of a new and accessible data set of historic records on the Commissioners of Sewers to be made available for research purposes at Gwent Archives (cataloguing up to 2000 records relating to the historic drainage system)
  7. Creation of 1 publically accessible online GIS historic mapping resource (uploading an average of 10 records per week to the project GIS over the lifetime of the project and achieving 500 hits annually to the online GIS)
  8. Volunteer-created modern, validated histories of the parishes of the Gwent Levels, biographies of specific individuals and buildings, comprehensive place name record, record of visible archaeological sites and landscape historic features for transfer to the Welsh Placename society and regional HER
  9. Produce volunteer-led wikipedia entries for each parish in the LLLP
  10. Conduct at least 3 walkover field surveys for surviving elements of the historic landscape identified in the research phase – data added to GIS and submitted to HER
  11. Create drawn and photographic records of at least 5 historically significant buildings in the Gwent Levels and submit data to GIS and HER
  12. Lead and run 3 History Days to display research and findings of volunteer-led projects attracting at least 50 people per day
  13. Deliver 6 lectures by experts in the Gwent Levels aimed at general non-specialist audiences to engage at least 25 people per lecture
  14. Write at least one academic paper and one article in a popular publication on the results of the 'Recapturing' project (LLS-2)
  15. Recruitment and training provided for 4 Community Engagement Assistants and 15 volunteers for the Oral History project
  16. Capturing at least 25 oral histories from the Gwent Levels community
  17. Produce a touring exhibition based on findings from the LLS-1 and LLS-2 projects to tour a minimum of 4 venues in the Gwent Levels over the course of one year
  18. Organise 8 small-scale public events to showcase the history of the Gwent Levels and recruit candidates for oral history recordings
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19. Create a comprehensive and activity-based schools resource KS2/3 for Teachers and used by at least 10 educators including those in partner organisations.
20. 800 students from primary to sixth form engaged about heritage over the life of the programme
21. Develop and deliver a minimum of 3 CPD Living Levels staff training sessions on Gwent Levels heritage
22. Deliver a minimum of 6 CPD training sessions to 30 primary and secondary community educators to enable Gwent Levels heritage learning
23. Deliver 18 heritage activity sessions at Magor Marsh (target 360 students), 6 sessions at Rogiet Country Park (target 180 students), 9 sessions at Tredegar House or within Newport (180 students), 6 sessions at Parc Trederlerch and/or Hendre Lake (target 120 users) linking wildlife and land use through the ages using elements of storytelling, myths and legends to primary schools and community groups
24. Create 6 self-guided trails for Magor Marsh, Newport Wetlands, Rogiet Countryside Park, Black Rock, Tredegar Park, Parc Tredegar and Hendre Lake (all Living Levels major and community hubs) to act as focal points for learning about the Gwent Levels and its heritage
25. Create a Gwent Levels handling collection and artefacts box for loan to schools to be used in conjunction with the learning pack
26. Create a Baccalaureate project for use by schools and colleges in liaison with the fly-tipping action group
27. Up to 525 volunteer days achieved through volunteer attendance at skills courses or workshops
28. Deliver 15 Gwent Levels skills training sessions per year (45 total) with at least 150 participating annually
29. Design and run an ambassadors training programme for 40 volunteers per year for 2 years (80 total)
30. Design and development of a 'sense of place toolkit' to support businesses and organisations to build up a repository of images, content and experiences which add to the Levels destination brand and product
31. Write and promote a Community Engagement Toolkit focused on the maintenance of promoted routes and community hubs
32. Recruitment of a community artist in residence to deliver at least: 9 schools workshops and 9 community workshops in three different Gwent Levels cluster areas to develop pieces for 3 community events celebrating facets of the unique Gwent Levels landscape. The artist will produce a total of 3 unique centre pieces to accompany the materials produced with the community for use in the events
33. Design and installation of 1 arts mural and/or sound-based artwork in the Maesglas A48 underpass based on an aspect of Gwent Levels heritage chosen by the community

## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

### Key programme Outcomes

#### HLF outcomes

Heritage will be better managed

- LWS surveys will help ensure the land will be better managed and instil a sense of pride through designation
- Through the adoption of a Gwent Levels SPG, there will be added protection for the Gwent Levels from inappropriate development
- Data will be added to the regional HER used to assess future land-use change
- The GIS will prove a valuable research and management tool both for LLLP partners and for outside organisations, agencies and institutions

Heritage will be better identified/recorded

- LWS data will be submitted to SEWBRc
- Archaeologically and biologically important features will be better understood and recorded by local communities
- Knowledge of the management of the Levels in the post-medieval period will be improved, including adding place name evidence to the existing Welsh list
- New datasets will be created including surveys of previously unrecorded historic sites, a landscape-wide record of historic assets, the recording of oral history and local folklore, archaeological evidence relating to historic assets
- Personal stories and oral histories will have been archived with the local museum services, the Peoples Collection Wales and Cardiff Story Museum ensuring that they are protected for future generations
- Heritage professionals will have examined, sorted, and registered artefacts collected from people's collections and museum donations for the production of a handling collection explaining 10,000 years in the Gwent Levels for use in schools
- Project data relating to the historic environment and an enhanced historic mapping resource will be available for viewing by the general public in perpetuity

People will have developed skills

- Participants will have gained a wide variety of heritage management and maintenance skills
- Volunteers will have been trained in IT skills and GIS applications, historical research, archiving and analysis, walkover surveys, excavation, text writing, oral history, marketing and social media, art, drawing, photographing and recording historic buildings, recording data for the HER and data presentation
- Volunteers and participants will have gained soft skills such as increasing communication and people skills through team work
- Participants will have learnt how to bring neglected features of the landscape and of their own gardens and land into appropriate traditional management
- Communities will have been trained in the use of the Toolkit to help promote the routes and network of hubs
- Schools and Communities will have been equipped with the creative, organisational skills and confidence required to be able to take continue with activities and events in the years following the end of the LLLP

People will have learnt about heritage

- Through training and practical habitat survey, people will have learnt about the important features of Gwent Levels natural heritage
- Participants will have gained a new understanding and appreciation of the heritage of the Levels and how they contribute to the wider story of the area
- Students from primary to sixth form will have learnt about heritage over the life of the programme
- Staff and teachers will have a greater understanding of local heritage and how to communicate it to another generation



## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

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### HLF outcomes

People will have volunteered time

### Programme outcomes

- Volunteers will have carried out research, interpretation, oral history, events and marketing while learning about and celebrating the cultural heritage and landscape of the Levels
- Some of the volunteers recruited will have come from social prescribing schemes
- Volunteers will have taken part in events and activities as part of the learning and schools programme
- Volunteers will have been taking part in the celebratory arts events and will have assisted with the creative workshops in schools and with communities
- Volunteers will have used the Toolkit to promote and maintain promoted hubs

Environmental impacts will have been reduced

- The SPG will lead to a more coordinated approach to development which minimises impacts on the historic environment
- Toolkit use will lead to feedback on issues along routes which can be dealt with promptly, leading to better maintained paths and interpretation and potentially a reduction in fly-tipping, litter and vandalism

More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage

- By engaging all the schools in harder to reach catchments who have not engaged previously, the projects will have reached new audiences
- LWS owners will come from a wide range of backgrounds from farmers to small landowners to businesses
- Volunteers will be recruited from the immediate communities of the Levels, encouraging people to engage with the heritage on their doorstep
- Specific urban communities who may not have had the opportunity to visit the Levels or be aware of their history will have engaged with heritage
- Community involvement will be ensured across the Levels through roll-out and use of the toolkits in community hubs
- Ambassador training will lead to better awareness of what the Levels can offer visitors
- Touring exhibitions made accessible through local museums and online will attract an audience outside of the immediate area.
- Project staff and experts will have provided talks to the general public and local community organisations, engaged family audiences through the organisation of history days, open days and demonstrations, national audiences through articles in the media and academic audiences through academic publications

Your local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit

- Enhanced information about the history of the Levels will be available as a resource both by local people and visitors to the area
- The arts events will cast the Gwent Levels landscape and its communities in a positive light helping create a greater sense of pride and custodianship
- There will be resources and heritage trails available across a network of key sites to help engage a wide range of audiences
- Volunteers and educators will have a good knowledge and clear understanding about the heritage of the Gwent Levels to pass on to others
- Young people who have been engaged will be able to pass on information and stories about the levels to the next generation
- The learnt skills will stimulate an interest in local people in the landscape on their doorstep inspiring them to learn more about heritage and embark on further training courses
- The use of local venues for community events and exhibitions will raise awareness and appreciation of these venues, increasing usage and helping bring communities together

### Changes since round one application

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#### Projects that have been dropped:

- **Future Options for Magor Marsh Education Centre** – During the Development Phase, GWT have commissioned architects to develop plans for the future education centre at Magor Marsh. Because the costs would wipe out most of the capital budget in just one location, GWT will be pursuing the extension of the centre from other sources outside of the HLF scheme and are shortly to begin a fundraising plan to look at this. Any interpretation or additions to the site will be based on the architects plans produced during this Development Phase. Because of advice from HLF during the 2014 bid that expenditure should not be concentrated at just Magor Marsh and the Wetlands Centre, the Partnership has chosen to create a series of major and community hubs throughout the landscape to aid familiarisation and orientation from multiple access points.

- **Wetlands for the Future** – RSPB Cymru have decided to pursue this project outside the scope of Living Levels as it is difficult to justify the project in terms of HLF outcomes.

- **“Volunteering”**: In Round One ‘volunteering’ was listed as a project in its own right, however, opportunities for volunteering are now embedded in each project plan and an overarching Volunteer Plan covering recruitment strategies, communications, orientation for volunteers, accreditation and opportunities for social prescribing has been drafted and will be managed by the Community Engagement Officer (see appendix 16).

- **Legacy and GI plan**: Now that the partners have adopted the RGIS during the Development Phase and intend to create a Gwent Levels SPG under the LLS-1 project, it was felt that this would be a better use of the funding than creating the Legacy GI plan – all projects will need to include detailed legacy plans using the GI indicators from the adopted RGIS.

#### Changes to other projects proposed at Round One:

At Round One, there was only a capital and revenue budget for ‘Destination Management and improvements to access and interpretation ideas’ proposed but not any worked up projects – through both community engagement and the externally commissioned Landscape Character Assessment, the Partners have deepened their understanding of the landscape’s special qualities and community awareness of the landscape at present. This understanding was the basis for development of the key interpretative themes underpinning the Visitor Destination Management Study which has added the following projects not proposed at round one:

- LLDM-1 - Sculptures and Tide Markers
- LLDM-2 – Hubs
- LLDM-3 - Lighthouse Inn Gateway
- LLDM-6 - Inspire! Churches on the Levels
- LLDM-8 - Levels Welcome signage and Highways Signage
- LLDM-10 - Destination Marketing
- LLS-6 - Ambassadors and toolkits
- LLS-6 –Big Skies Community Art project



### Other changes to projects:

- **LLS4- Learning programme:**

The first round submission mentioned a minibus for this project but subsequent research has shown that a transport grant would be more effective in achieving the visitor numbers sought. Additional activities have been included following the schools survey which was undertaken in the Development Phase leading to the inclusion of the new resource for teachers and transport cover for teachers attending the training. The original project concept focused on outdoor learning, whereas this one is much more focused on heritage as partners are already running successful outdoor learning programmes. This is now multi-partner collaboration; originally this was just to be RSPB Cymru and GWT.

- **LLS-5- Skills enhancement:**

This Project now includes a wider ranging skills programme beyond skills falling under the Heritage Skills banner. These include new areas which can better equip target audiences with skills to look after the full range of heritage and help plug wider skills gaps. There is still a strong focus on skills to maintain and preserve the historic landscape but a better spread across the range of projects including areas under the banner of Destination Management.

- **LLDM-4 Different Levels:**

At round one, it was simply stated that partners intended to produce an interpretative film - this concept has developed to focus on time lapse and aerial photography. There is also the addition of the Coleg Gwent photography project and student commissions.

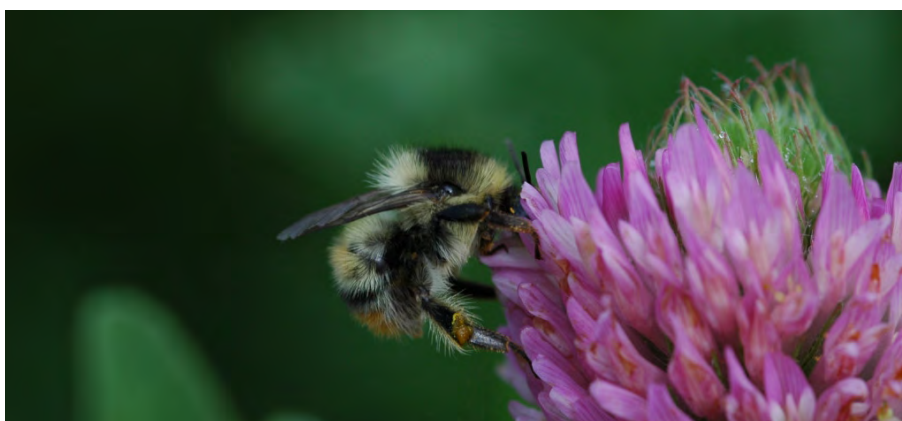
- **LLS-3 – Stories from the Levels:**

Within the stage one application it was stated that the Living Levels Community Engagement Officer would work on the project and manage three full-

time community engagement assistants and volunteers. Taking into consideration the number of projects moving forward into the Delivery Phase it is no longer feasible for this to happen, neither is it likely that the Community Engagement will have the necessary professional skills required to train the volunteers. Therefore the addition of a 'Stories of the Levels Professional Lead' with the required skills to lead the project is necessary. Based on discussions with other similar projects and experts in oral history, it is proposed to bring in a professional contractor to manage and train 4 Community Engagement Assistants and a wider network of volunteers to deliver the project.

- **LLNH-1- Targeted Natural Heritage Restoration:** This is no longer a third party grant scheme as the works have been mapped and planned according to a prioritisation criteria drawn up by the expert partners who are part of the Natural Heritage Restoration working group.





### • **LLNH-3- Pollinating the Levels:**

this project was originally focused solely on the farming and landowning community. It has been expanded to include businesses and brownfield sites to improve connectivity across the wider area. Instead of creating a brand new Pollinator Action Plan for the area, it will adapt and expand the award-winning the Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Pollinators developed in part by Monmouthshire County Council. A link has been made between this project, the Fly-tipping project and the Learning project to engage the audiences in the creation of community gardens at former 'hotspots' of fly-tipping.

### • **LLNH-5-Fly-tipping, Black Spots to Bright Spots:**

The stage one application listed three actions - target hardening, CCTV and signage but this plan allows for stronger enforcement capabilities (including the contribution of a dedicated officer to collect evidence and target prosecutions) and covers activities that come under education and awareness. The creation of a multi-stakeholder action group was also started during the Development Phase and will be continued in to Delivery.

### • **LLNH-7 Orchards and Community Enterprise:**

No major changes have been made. There is the addition of planting school and community orchards with Newport City Council specifically. There is also a budget allocated to fruit identification.

### • **LLS-1- LWS** – No substantial changes to the LWS part of the project, however, the desire to develop an SPG or similar document has been added.

### • **LLS-2 - Recapturing the Historic Landscape** – An annual archaeological excavation has been added to provide an extra practical activity for volunteers. During the Development Phase, the project has been thoroughly scoped, the Commissioners of Sewers maps cleaned, digitised and geo-referenced on to a modern OS map, the GIS database and web-based app set up and installed, and a scoping study of historical resources carried out in preparation for the Delivery Phase.

### **Changes to team structure proposed**

It is proposed to employ the following core members of staff to manage the programme:

1. Programme Manager (1FTE)

(no change)

2. Finance & Administration Officer (0.8 FTE) (no change)
3. Community Engagement Officer (1FTE) (no change)
4. Access and Interpretation Officer (1FTE) (increase from 0.8FTE – due to volume of projects under Destination Management Plan)
5. Natural Heritage Grants Manager (1FTE) (name changed from Conservation Officer to better reflect the nature of the role)
6. Sustainable Landscapes Officer (0.6FTE) – (name change from Policy Officer to better reflect the nature of the role)

In addition – two further support roles will be provided in-kind by Programme Partners as an contribution to help fulfil the aims and objectives of the scheme:

- Provided by NRW: Fly-tipping Enforcement and Awareness-Raising Officer (equivalent to 1FTE) – to help fulfil the LLNH-4 objectives
- Provided by GWT: Natural Heritage Project Support Officer (1FTE) – to coordinate and lead volunteer work parties to help fulfil the outputs and outcomes of the LLNH-1, LLNH-2 and LLNH-6 projects

## Part One – The Scheme Plan / LLLP Programmes

### Financial changes

There are a few changes to proposed costs compared to round one as round two has been used to gather the detailed costs and salary figures for the final selection of proposed projects.

The differences are presented below. We present a minimum scenario regarding volunteering time targets based on instruction

received during the HLF formal review. We fully expect to exceed this target but present our most conservative estimate here.

The three Community Engagement internships for the LLS-3 Stories from the Levels project have been dropped as these would have required full-time supervision from the Community Engagement Officer whereas the Partners preferred to support a broader

range and number of volunteers across all the programmes. An internship is offered in its place for the Digital Community Manager to be supervised by the Community Engagement Officer with support from the partner organisations Communications Officers.

In light of the above changes, the scheme costs have been revised and are set out below:

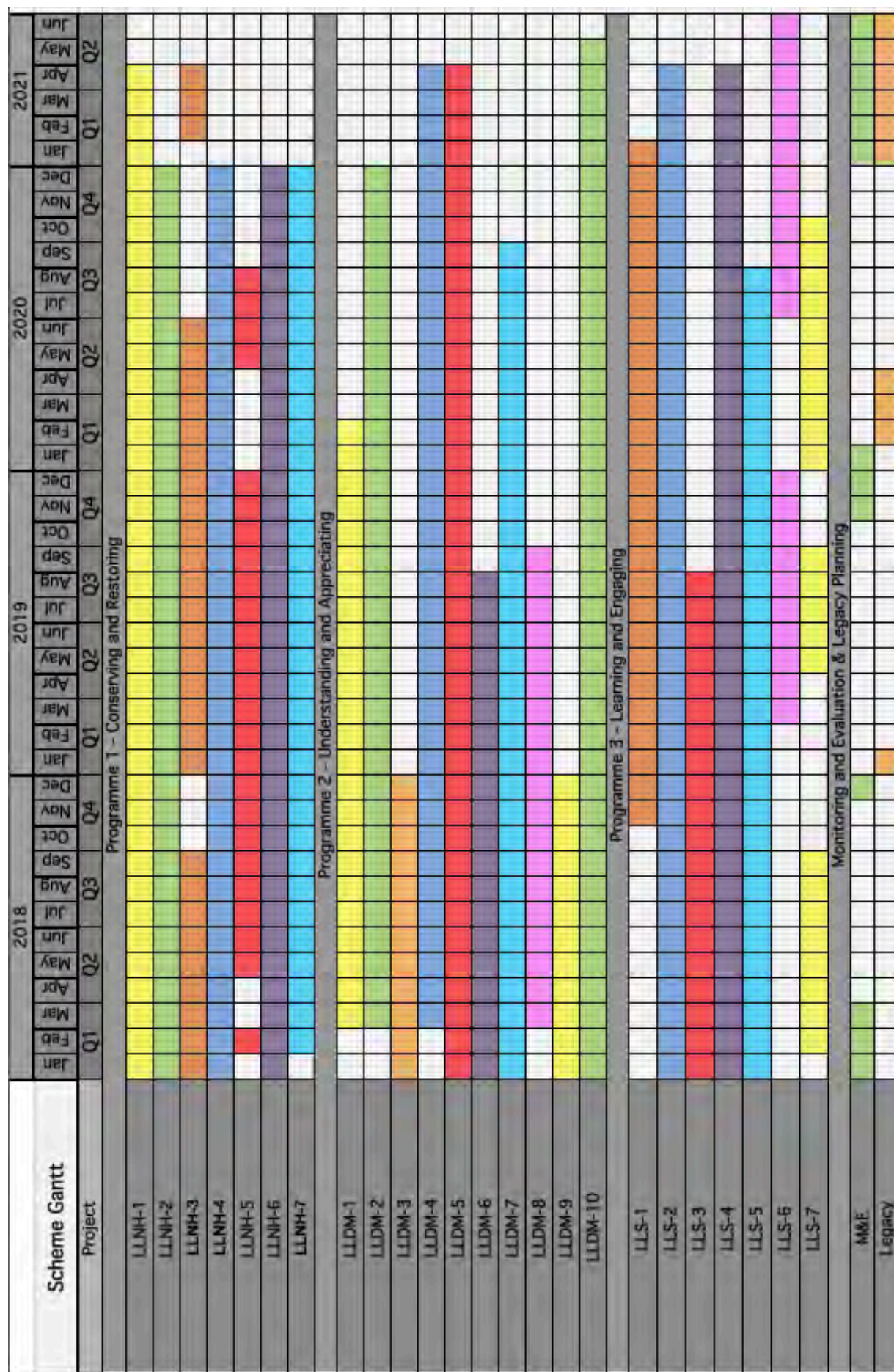
| Expenditure                                | Overall Total     | Ist Round Application |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Capital Costs</b>                       |                   |                       |
| Purchase price of items or Property        | £0                | £7,000                |
| Repair and Conservation Costs              | £469,800          | £502,500              |
| New Building Work                          | £238,352          | £350,000              |
| Other Capital Work                         | £443,573          | £360,000              |
| Equipment and Materials (capital)          | £54,165           | £27,162               |
| Other costs (capital)                      | £80               | £19,184 (inc VAT)     |
| Professional Fees                          | £121,050          | £25,500               |
| <b>Capital Costs Total</b>                 | <b>£1,327,020</b> | <b>£1,291,346</b>     |
| <b>Activity Costs</b>                      |                   |                       |
| Equipment and materials (activity)         | £161,970          | £3,325                |
| New Staff Costs                            | £520,171          | £606,075              |
| Other costs (activity)                     | £110,750          | £71,334 (inc VAT)     |
| Paid training placements                   | £30,200           | £150,000              |
| Professional fees                          | £262,803          | £162,550              |
| Training for Staff                         | £13,870           | £14,600               |
| Training for volunteers                    | £22,085           | £4,250                |
| Travel and Expenses for Volunteers         | £16,648           | £5,000                |
| Travel for staff                           | £37,983           | £40,000               |
| <b>Activity Costs Total</b>                | <b>£1,176,480</b> | <b>£1,057,134</b>     |
| <b>Other Costs</b>                         |                   |                       |
| Recruitment                                | £2,800            | £200                  |
| Publicity and promotion                    | £54,625           | £5,250                |
| Evaluation                                 | £25,000           | £20,000               |
| Other costs                                | £26,530           | £12,055 (inc VAT)     |
| Full Cost Recovery                         | £276,654          | £388,107              |
| Contingency                                | £175,000          | £156,209              |
| Increased Management and Maintenance Costs | £18,340           | £0                    |
| Irrecoverable VAT 9.63%                    | £42,066           | £0                    |
| Inflation                                  | £38,046           | £181,878              |
| <b>Other Costs Sub-Total</b>               | <b>£659,061</b>   | <b>£763,699</b>       |
| Non-cash contributions                     | £456,232          | £217,933              |
| Volunteer time                             | £117,877          | £132,900              |
| <b>Other Costs Total</b>                   | <b>£1,233,170</b> | <b>£1,114,532</b>     |
|  | <b>£3,736,670</b> | <b>£3,463,012</b>     |

**Schedule changes**

In light of the delayed submission from June to August, the proposed start date moved from September 2017 to January 2018 and the completion date moved from December 2020 to June 2021. The last four months are proposed as a wrap-up period, there is no project delivery after March 2021 when the focus of the scheme will be on evaluation, dissemination of evaluation outcomes and legacy planning.

SCHEME GANTT  
The Gantt Chart overleaf shows the proposed timeline for the scheme overall, broken down by programme area and projects. Detailed project workplans are provided in the full project plans.





## Part One – The Scheme Plan / Delivery of the LP

### Overview – Scheme Costs

|                                 | P1         | P2         | P3       |                   |   |                                   |                  |         |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|----------|-------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------|---------|------------------|
| Expenditure                     | Total      | Total      | Total    | Projects<br>Total | Pro-<br>gramme<br>Manage-<br>ment and<br>staffing | Monitor-<br>ing and<br>Evaluation | Contin-<br>gency | Legacy  | Overall<br>Total |
| Capital Costs Total             | £485,157   | £823,263   | £18,600  | £1,327,020        | £0  | £0                                | £0               | £0      | £1,327,020       |
| Activity Costs Total            | £46,960    | £252,335   | £308,874 | £608,169          | £568,311  | £0                                | £0               | £0      | £1,176,480       |
| Other Costs Total               | £148,387   | £69,146    | £22,845  | £240,378          | £160,156  | £25,482                           | £175,000         | £20,000 | £621,015         |
| Inflation Total                 | £9,891     | £13,041    | £4,272   | £27,204           | £10,842   | £0                                | £0               | £0      | £38,046          |
| In Kind and<br>Volunteer Total  | £327,009   | £42,108    | £117,447 | £486,564          | £87,546   | £0                                | £0               | £0      | £574,110         |
| <b>Income</b>                   |            |            |          |                   |   |                                   |                  |         |                  |
| Other Income<br>Secured Total   | £127,426   | £229,167   | £66,514  | £423,107          | £140,469  | £4,841                            | £0               | £0      | £568,417         |
| Other Income<br>UNSECURED Total | £14,000    | £25,000    | £0       | £39,000           | £0  | £0                                | £0               | £0      | £50,944          |
| HLF Contribution                | £548,970   | £892,543   | £287,219 | £1,728,731        | £598,840  | £20,640                           | £175,000         | £20,000 | £2,543,20        |
| In-kind and<br>Volunteer Total  | £327,009   | £42,108    | £117,447 | £486,564          | £87,546   | £0                                | £0               | £0      | £574,110         |
| <b>Total Project Value</b>      |            |            |          |                   |   |                                   |                  |         |                  |
| <b>Total Project<br/>Income</b> | £1,017,405 | £1,199,893 | £472,038 | £2,689,335        | £826,855  | £25,482                           | £175,000         | £20,000 | £3,736,600       |
|                                 | £1,017,405 | £1,188,818 | £471,180 | £2,677,402        | £826,855  | £25,481                           | £175,000         | £20,000 | £3,736,672       |



