



**Bryniau Clwyd a  
Dyffryn Dyfrdwy**  
Clwydian Range  
and Dee Valley

Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

<b>Held on:</b>	<b>17 November 2017</b>
<b>Lead Member / Officer:</b>	<b>Howard Sutcliffe</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Helen Sophia Mrowiec</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Item 7 Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership</b>

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**1. What is the report about?**

1.1 The Our Picturesque Landscape Scheme is a 5 year £2 million partnership project, led by the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB that aims to:

- Conserve and restore special features within the landscape
- Bring the importance of the landscape closer to people.
- Invest in the resilience of key sites.
- Make the area more accessible, both physical and intellectual
- Improve a range of key habitats and their connectivity, engaging with landowners.

1.2 Stage 1 approval has been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund, with the Stage 2 application due to be submitted in November.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

2.1 To seek approval from the Joint Committee to submit the Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme Application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

3.1 That the Committee approve the submission of the Stage 2 Application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. (For further information about the Scheme please refer to: Item 7 Appendix 1 Landscape Conservation Action Plan  
Item 7 Appendix 2 Landscape Conservation Action Plan – Project Overviews)

3.2 That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Item 7 Appendix 3) as part of its consideration.

**4. Report details.**

4.1 Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme centres on the landscape of the Dee Valley and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site. It takes as its themes the inspirational journeys that have and continue to be a

feature of the area which is crossed by the Canal, Telford's A5 and the River Dee. Visitors have drawn inspiration from this beautiful valley in art and poetry since the 18th century and it continues to draw tourists in search of the sublime.

4.2 But this is a landscape under extreme pressure with high numbers of visitors drawn to what are often our most fragile sites. The communities on its doorstep, born from the industrial endeavours that shaped it, are now less connected to the benefits the landscape offers. The project will invest in the resilience of key visitor sites and engage communities in its appreciation and management whilst reinterpreting this rich landscape for a new generation.

4.3 Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme is a partnership project developed by the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, Wrexham County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, the Canal & River Trust, Shropshire Council, Natural Resources Wales, Cadw, Cadwyn Clwyd, Aqueducts (Friends of the World Heritage Site) and the Friends of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley.

4.4 Projects have been developed under 3 themes:

#### **Conserving the Picturesque Landscape**

Key views, heritage features and habitats will be restored, assistance will be provided to landowners for positive management through a countryside grant scheme and innovative solutions will be adopted to reduce congestion, access and erosion issues.

#### **Accessing the Picturesque Landscape**

Physical access improvements and interpretation will be delivered to increase the accessibility, awareness and understanding of the varied and outstanding heritage of the Our Picturesque Landscape Scheme Project Area.

#### **People and the Picturesque**

A broad range of events and activities will be arranged to engage individuals and groups from targeted communities. Artist in residence projects and new educational resources will also be developed.

### **5. How does it contribute to the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB Management Plans Priorities?**

5.1 The Our Picturesque Landscape will deliver against Landscape Quality and Character, Historic Environment, Habitats and Wildlife, Culture and Tourism and Access, Recreation and Tourism Policies of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Management Plan. Please refer to Appendix 5 for further details.

### **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

6.1 The total cost of the Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme is £2,027,362 and includes the employment of 2.5 members of staff to deliver the scheme and associated costs.

6.2 The Funding for the scheme includes:

- £1,314,450 grant support from the Heritage Lottery Fund
- £380,000 from Partnership Members
- £30,000 In kind match funding
- £25,000 match funding from landowners through a countryside management grant scheme
- £120,000 from the Rural Community Development Fund (stage 1 approval received and awaiting determination of the stage 2 application, expected January 2018).
- £157,912 is currently unsecured. Applications will be submitted to the Sustainable Development Fund, Cadwyn Clwyd, Natural Resources Wales Competitive Grant and Welsh Government during the 5 year delivery phase. The unsecured element is less than the 10% contingency that is a requirement of the Heritage Lottery Fund Application and therefore it is felt that this risk can be managed by careful project management. In addition it is likely that the scheme will secure more in-kind match funding than that included in the application which could reduce the current short fall, however, this would lead to a reduction in the actual budget that can be spent in reality as it is not a cash contribution. The scheme has already secured the first year match funding as required by the Heritage Lottery Fund to proceed to the delivery phase.

6.3 The scheme outputs and targets have been carefully considered to minimise the risk and ensure the targets are deliverable.

6.4 There will be no additional ICT support required other than the general equipment for project set-up, which has been budgeted within the scheme.

6.5 The project will make a positive contribution to improving biodiversity through positive conservation works that will strengthen habitat connectivity, working with landowners across a range of habitats including grassland, ffridd, woodland and water courses.

6.6 The project has secured a partnership agreement with project partners.

6.7 Support will be required from Denbighshire's finance team during the submission of quarterly claims which will be prepared by the Project Manager.

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?**

7.1 The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme has scored well under the Well-being Impact Assessment tool as a cross cutting project that delivers against all 7 well-being goals. The scheme was rated 3 out of 4 stars and probably did not score higher as it is a time limited initiative with a 10 year exit strategy that has not considered its impact in 2050 and beyond.

7.2 The Impact Assessment was completed by Helen Mrowiec and Howard Sutcliffe of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on behalf of the Landscape Partnership Board.

## **8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1 The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme has undertaken the following consultation as part of the Project Development Phase:

- a user survey at key visitor sites within the project area
- a programme of public consultation events
- an online survey for those unable to attend the events
- meetings with key project partners
- a quiz/consultation designed for young people
- meetings with individuals and organisations of hard to reach groups

The user survey provides baseline data on users of the landscape in Our Picturesque Landscape project area.

Community consultation events were held at Ty Mawr Country Park Wrexham, Plas Newydd Llangollen and Rhug Estate Corwen. These resulted in suggestions from individuals and community groups as to the nature of projects they would like to see implemented. An online survey was available for people unable to attend these events.

Regular updates have been given to both the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Joint Committee and the Visitor Management Group of the World Heritage Site.

## **9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

The Our Picturesque Landscape Scheme will help deliver key priorities through the use of match funding and grant funding. Importantly the scheme has already secured the first year match funding as required by the Heritage Lottery Fund to proceed to the delivery phase. Although there are some unsecured elements to the match funding (across the 5 year life of the project) the project can be altered to match available resources should that be required. On that basis this report is supported.

## **10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

Please refer to Item 7 Appendix 4 Risk Assessment for the Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme.

## **11. Power to make the Decision**

The Legal basis lies in Section 101 (5) of the Local Government Act of 1972 and the Local Government Act 2000, where Local Authorities can enter arrangements to 'discharge functions jointly with one or more Local Authorities by means of a Joint Committee.'