



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

Ardal o Barddech Naturol Eiddrefod
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Pontcysyllte
Safle Treftadaeth Y Byd
World Heritage Site

Our Picturesque Landscape Conservation Action Plan

Our Picturesque Landscape
Partnership Scheme
November 2017

Our Picturesque Landscape Conservation Action Plan

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Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme

1 Introduction

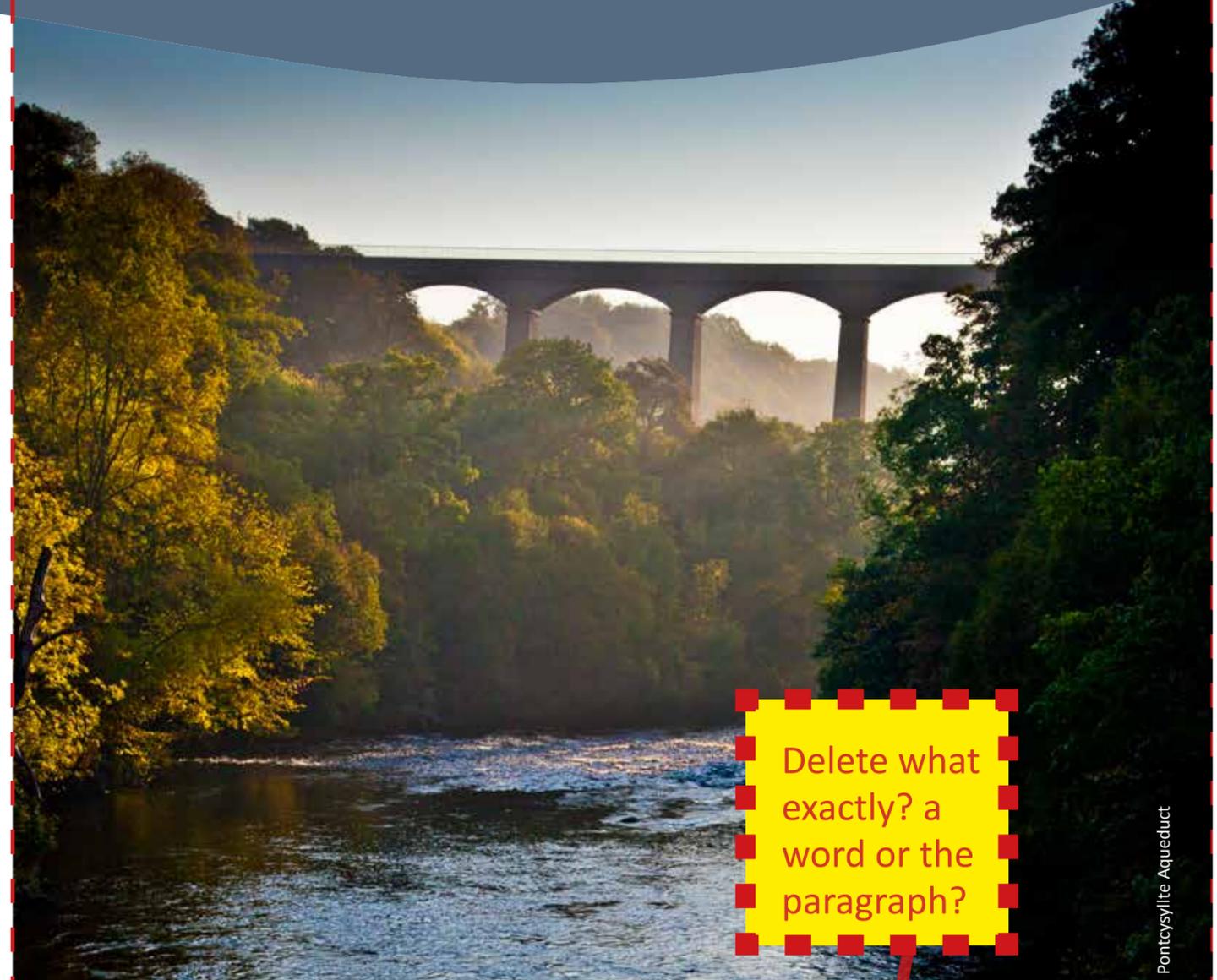
The Our Picturesque Landscape area is centred on the beautiful Dee Valley on the border of North East Wales. At its heart is the World Heritage Site of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal, spanning 11 miles of the valley, from Chirk Bank in Shropshire to the start of the canal in Llangollen.



The themes of the project are taken from the inspirational journeys that have been and still are, a key feature of this area. Many visitors have drawn inspiration from this beautiful place, reflected in art and poetry since the 18th century and it continues to draw visitors in search of the sublime.

The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership recognises that this is a landscape that is under extreme and growing pressure, with high and increasing numbers of visitors attracted to some of our most fragile sites. The communities that live and work here are failing to see the benefits afforded by the landscape and are becoming increasingly disconnected from the heritage of the area.

The Scheme aims to conserve and protect this unique area, investing in building the resilience of key sites, engaging communities in the appreciation of the many benefits of their heritage, involving them in its future management and reinterpreting the rich and varied landscape for a new generation.



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Pontcysyllte Aqueduct

1.1 The Partnership

The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership takes its membership from a broad range of agencies and community groups in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley area. It follows on from significant community conversations, both as part of extending the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 2011 and the inscription of the World Heritage Site in 2009, and a series of workshops held to explore the key issues around

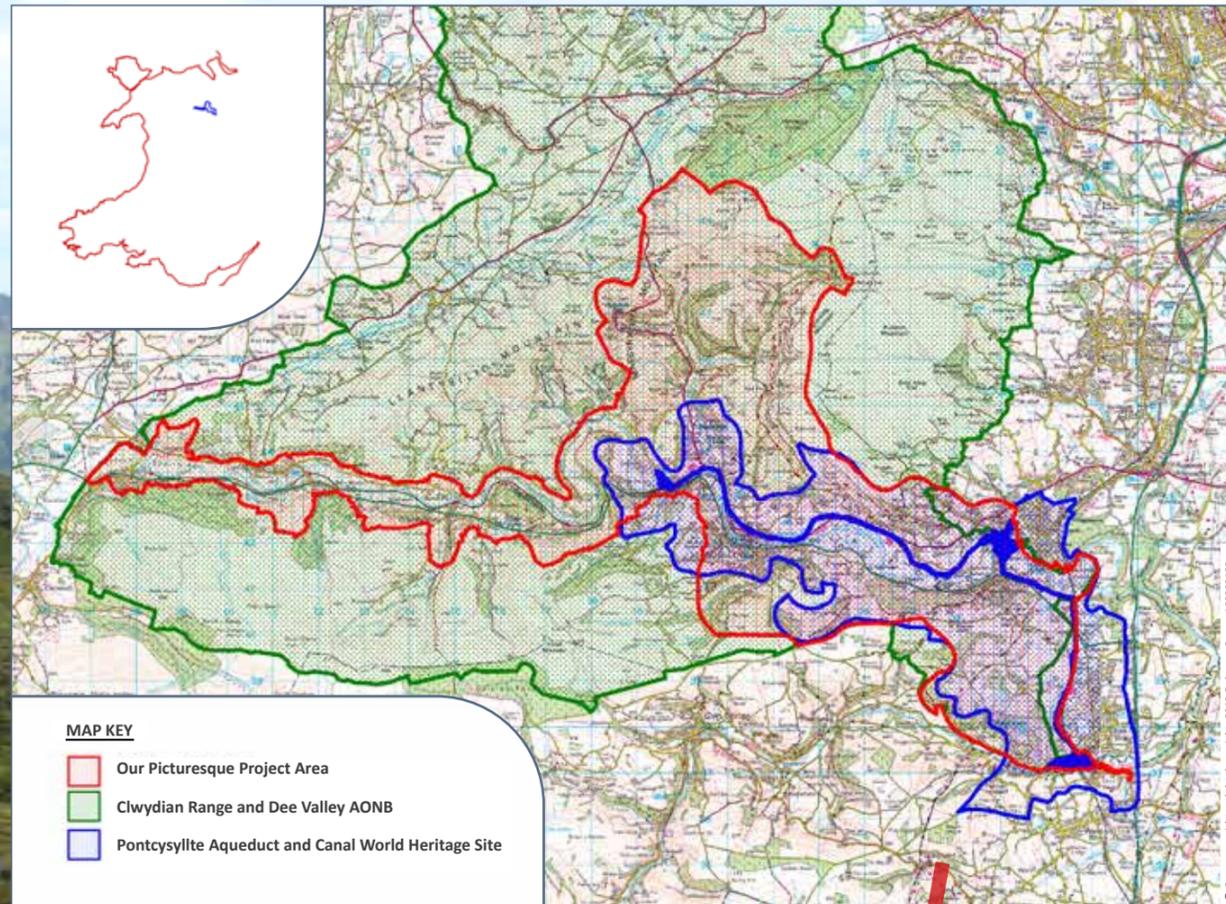
the communities and the heritage of the area which identified the need for a landscape scale project to address concerns relating to the area's future management and to increase awareness and understanding of its importance.

In 2013 a steering group was established to represent the many interests of the partners in the area. It included representation from a range of agencies and community groups

and identified that a Landscape Partnership bid as an ideal vehicle to deliver the aims and aspirations of the Partnership and local communities.

A phase 1 bid was submitted in early 2014 and was rejected and a new submission with a revised project boundary was submitted in early 2015. This was approved by HLF to be developed into a round 2 submission.

1.2 Map of the Project Area



Map of the Project Area in relation to the World Heritage Site and buffer zone and the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

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1.3 Membership of the current Partnership

The Partnership for the development phase has consisted of an officer led group with community representation from the following organisations:

Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
Denbighshire County Council	The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS)
Wrexham County Borough Council	Aqueducts - Friends of the World Heritage Site
Shropshire Council	Cadwyn Clwyd
Canal & River Trust (CRT)	Cadw
Friends of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley	

1.4 The preparation of the Landscape Conservation Action Plan

The preparation of this document has involved engagement with a broad range of project partners and stakeholders including:

- The Project Partnership
- Local Authority representatives
- Community and volunteer representatives
- Staff from the partner organisations, education establishments and other interest groups

As part of the development phase a number of community engagement events and conversations were undertaken to understand the different community aspirations for the area.

The approach taken included:

- Meetings
- Drop in sessions
- One to one meetings
- Talks
- Presentations
- Councillor meetings

This broad approach has resulted in a huge range of project ideas as well as providing significant insight into how people perceive the area, how they relate to the landscape and their aspirations for its future. This broad range of groups and contacts will be further developed and expanded during the project's delivery phase.

The scheme has benefitted from existing strong partnerships and links between the many organisations already working in the area. Both the AONB and the WHS have developed effective and committed partnerships and good working relationships with landowners and communities.

This has facilitated excellent links and will continue to be an asset throughout the life of the scheme, with these relationships underpinning the delivery of the Projects.

As part of the development phase a number of key documents and pieces of work have been undertaken and added to the previous studies and strategies completed for both the AONB and the WHS. These documents are intended to supplement the existing strategies and plans, being more project specific and filling the identified gaps in knowledge.

These have included:

- Community engagement and activity plan
- Heritage Asset study
- Habitat and connectivity survey
- Research and plans for the restoration and enhancement of The Dell, Plas Newydd, Llangollen
- Surveys and designs for Wenffrwd Pocket Park, Llangollen
- Interpretation action plan
- Monitoring and evaluation plan

2 Landscape Character and Significance



Our Picturesque Landscape Project Area.

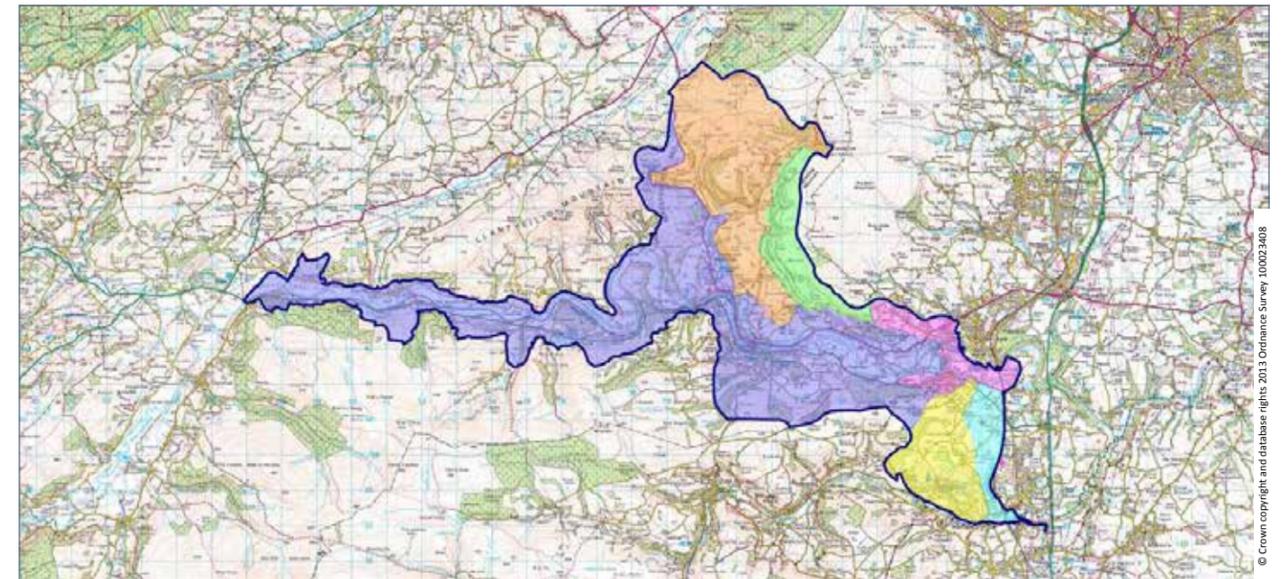
2.1 Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

INTRODUCTION

Landscape characterisation is defined as the process of identifying and defining the particular characteristics which make an area distinctive. Drawing upon a number of published landscape studies undertaken within North East Wales, a Landscape Character Assessment has been completed for the 'Our Picturesque Landscape' Project Area. Detailed landscape information has been referenced from LANDMAP data (2015); the National Landscape Character Map; Wrexham LANDMAP Supplementary Planning Guidance (2007); Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg Historic Landscape Characterisation (CPAT 2005); and Julie Martin Associates (JMA) Refinement of the Draft Boundary of a Proposed Extension to the Clwydian Range AONB (May 2010).

The information contained in the 2010 JMA Report and the up-dated LANDMAP information in particular, has been utilised to provide information at an appropriate local scale and forms a relevant and contemporary foundation for the LCA. The existing landscape assessments referenced above are considered by the OPL Partnership to sufficiently underpin the more detailed composite elements of the Landscape Conservation Action Plan.

The Our Picturesque Landscape Project Area has been defined by the Partnership through an iterative process based on landscape character information, detailed local knowledge and experience. The boundary definition process identified the landscape and cultural characteristics that provided the stimulus for the first journeys to the Dee Valley, particularly during the 18th Century Picturesque phase of poetry and art, and continue to do so today. These significant landscape and cultural features, when considered together, identify and define a coherent and unified Project Area based upon landscape character.



Our Picturesque Landscape Character Areas

 Horseshoe Pass	 Vale of Llangollen	 Chirk Estate to Froncysyllte
 Eglwyseg Rocks	 Dee Valley – Froncysyllte to Newbridge	 Chirk

The Project Area comprises a number of Landscape Character Areas (6), defined by recognised contemporary landscape characterisation assessment. These Character Areas extend beyond the identified project boundary and cover a much greater geographical area. However, the Project Area is unified by identifying and encompassing a set of distinctive, nationally significant, landscape and cultural features which are integral parts of the wider Landscape Character Areas – The Llangollen Canal; Castell Dinas Brân; Eglwyseg Rocks; Telford's A5; Caer Drewyn; and the River Dee. In addition to attracting visitors for centuries due to their outstanding qualities, each of these features has been identified through consultation and public engagement as being culturally and aesthetically important to the communities living and working in the Dee Valley.

The Our Picturesque Landscape Character Assessment starts with a landscape description of the Project Area, continuing into a characterisation exercise starting at the regional scale with the National Landscape Character Map. A finer, local scale, is then examined, identifying the six distinct Landscape Character Areas contained within the Project Area.

The results from the Landscape Character Assessment have been analysed and significant aspects of the landscape considered in more detail, tying them to the concept of the picturesque landscape that has drawn visitors to the area for centuries. This refinement identifies areas and features from within the Project Area where the characteristic 'picturesque' landscape can be experienced, enjoyed and appreciated.

2.1 a Project Area Landscape Description

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is an internationally recognised landscape, protected for its scenic, cultural and historic qualities. Set within the southern part of the AONB, the 'Our Picturesque Landscape' Project Area centres on the Dee Valley and comprises, from north to south, parts of Maesyrychen, the Vale of Llangollen, eastern sections of the Dee Valley, north-eastern parts of North Berwyn around the Chirk Castle Estate, and a small area of north east Shropshire centred on the Shropshire Union Canal.

Vale of Llangollen and Dee Valley

The Vale of Llangollen and Dee Valley dominate the central core of the Project Area, stretching from Corwen in the west to Newbridge in the east. The area is enclosed to the north by Maesyrychen, Llantysilio and Ruabon Mountains and to the south by the northern part of the Berwyn Mountains. The upland blocks and valleys were formed by faulting and mass movement, and were later sculpted by glaciers. The area provides a gateway to North Wales, with steep, dramatic valley sides, deeply incised meanders and fossil terraces. On the north side of the area, adjoining Maesyrychen, the deep side valley of the Eglwyseg River is overhung by the Carboniferous limestone crags of Eglwyseg Rocks (445m).

Elsewhere the underlying bedrock geology is Silurian sandstones and shales, but in places river gravel and alluviums give rise to a gently undulating valley floor.

This core part of the Project Area is a mainly pastoral landscape of lowland pasture and hillside sheep grazing, field sizes are generally small and boundaries tend to be irregular on the valley sides but more geometric within the valley bottoms. The valley floor is a more intimate landscape with relatively dense broadleaved woodland. Sections of the valley sides have been afforested, especially in the west, with mixed woodland and conifer plantations. The south side of the Dee Valley is characterised by a series of steep hanging valleys.



The Project Area extends from the intimate and enclosed valley floor to encompass an iconic landscape of truly outstanding scenic and visual quality. It has a huge diversity of scale, form, pattern, texture and colour. Perhaps its most striking features are the Carboniferous limestone crags of Eglwyseg Rocks north of Llangollen; the interlocking hillside spurs and meanders of the central valley section; and the fine waterside meadows that occur in the west. The intimate valley landscapes, notably those on the north side of the river, are characteristic in visual terms and contrast strongly with the sheer scale of the surrounding hillsides.

Man-made features also contribute greatly to the landscape. Castell Dinas Brân is sited in the central part of the Project Area on a prominent rock outlier north of Llangollen. Valle Crucis Abbey lies near the confluence of the Eglwyseg River and the Dee north of Llangollen. The ruined abbey buildings are typical of many Cistercian constructions lying in a secluded river valley surrounded by farmland. Further north the Offa's Dyke National Trail and the Panorama, which run along the foot of Eglwyseg Rocks, offer stunning high level views across the Vale. In the east, at the entrance to the valley, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct carries the Llangollen Canal across the Vale and is of course an iconic landmark.



Maesyrychen

Above the Dee Valley, the northern parts of the Project Area are formed by land rising from the Morwynion Valley up to the Maesyrychen Mountain (Moel y Gamelin) at 577m. The mountain is composed of Silurian shales and on its southern flanks extends down towards the Dee Valley at Rhowl (Llantysilio) in the form of a wide spur of land. The cover of semi-natural upland heath vegetation forms a distinctive feature on the upper valley slopes.

The unenclosed semi-natural upland in this part of the Project Area contrasts with the green farmlands below. From the south, the area is seen as a key part of the upland massif that encloses the Vale of Llangollen and forms the upland setting for Eglwyseg Rocks. From within this part of the Project Area there are wide open skies and long outward views over Wrexham and the Vale of Llangollen.

Chirk Estate and the Shropshire Union Canal

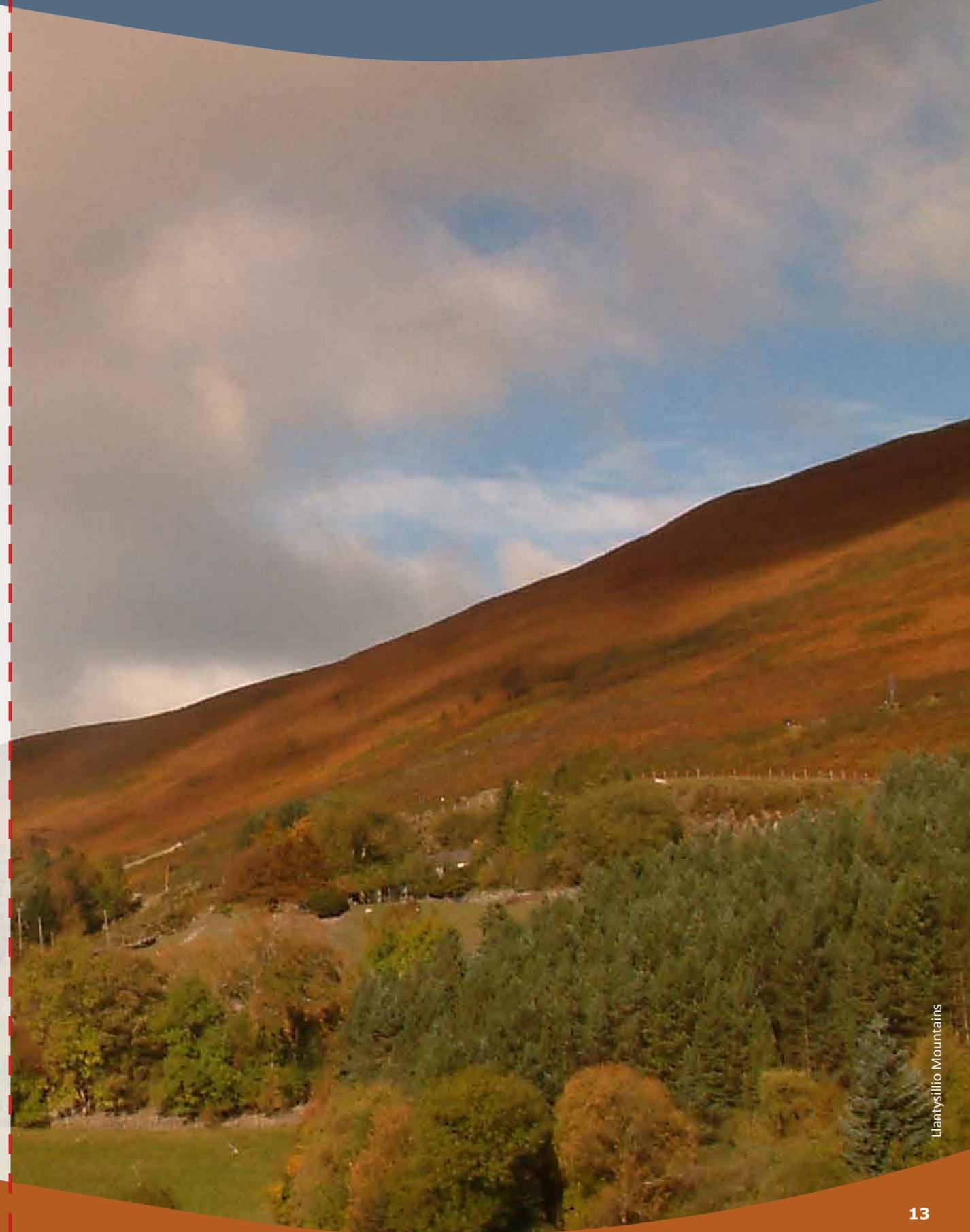
The landscapes around Chirk form the south-eastern part of the Project Area comprising the southern gateway to the Vale of Llangollen and also the entrance to the Ceiriog Valley to the south. An eastern continuation of the Berwyn uplands, the landform is broadly domed and lies at between 150 and 350m AOD. The solid geology is Silurian and Carboniferous rocks with an overlay of glacial deposits. The landscape is dominated by Chirk Castle and its estate parkland and woodland. Other areas of farmland and woodland create an enclosed landscape which is intimate and designed. The Shropshire Union Canal creates a sinuous route into the flatter agricultural landscapes of the Shropshire Plain. A small part of the Project Area crosses the English Welsh border south of Chirk and enters a landscape of riverside meadows, wooded valley slopes and settled farmlands.

The central part of Maesyrychen, within the Project Area, contains active slate quarries and historical tips near Horseshoe Pass. Locally these are intrusive landscape features, but set within the wider landscape, form a mosaic with the semi-natural moorland vegetation, grasslands and distinctive areas of human intervention.

Horseshoe Pass is a very popular tourist viewpoint and an important feature of the area in terms of its landform and cultural significance. Visitors accessing the Pass by motorised vehicles have an impact on the tranquillity of the area and its scenic qualities, but generally the area remains an expansive and unenclosed moorland landscape.

On the steep, dramatic north-facing slopes above Froncysyllte there are ancient, winding lanes set within a small scale mosaic of woodland and ancient irregular hedged enclosures; these slopes are especially important in framing the entrance to the Vale of Llangollen, and offer varied and stunning views across Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and the nearby railway viaduct at Newbridge.

The core of this eastern part of the Project Area focuses on an important designed landscape. To the south, Chirk Castle, built on an outcrop of Carboniferous sandstone and limestone, occupies a commanding position, surrounded by formal and informal gardens, parkland, associated farmland and belts of mixed woodland. There are panoramic views eastward from higher ground within the estate. Overall the Castle and estate create a prevalent designed and managed landscape.



Llantysilio Mountains

2.1 b Project Area Landscape Character

At a national scale, the Our Picturesque Landscape Project Area coincides with two National Landscape Character Areas (NLCAs) as defined by Natural Resources Wales. The Project Area is almost entirely contained within NLCA 15 Vale of Llangollen and Dee Valley, but runs into NLCA 16 Y Berwyn in the south-east of its extent around Froncysyllte and Chirk. A very small part of the Project Area extends into Shropshire to the south of Chirk. This area is very much a part of the transition landscape between the Welsh uplands and the more settled farmlands of the Shropshire Plain.

At a more local and detailed scale, the Project Area contains six Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) identified by the Denbighshire and Wrexham local authorities using LANDMAP – Wales’ national landscape assessment methodology. The six LCAs are:

- Horseshoe Pass
- Eglwyseg Rocks
- Vale of Llangollen
- Dee Valley, Froncysyllte to Newbridge
- Chirk Estate to Froncysyllte
- Chirk



Newbridge Viaduct

The National Scale

The National Landscape Character Area 15 Vale of Llangollen and Dee Valley provides a useful introduction to the Project Area at a broad scale, identifying the key characteristics that determine a sense of place and confirming this area as an outstanding landscape in terms of its natural beauty and character.

The dramatic Dee Valley provides a stunning gateway to North Wales with the characteristic topography of a steep sided Welsh Valley emerging from the flat Shropshire Plain. The Valley prompts a change in house styles, building materials, culture and landscape. A sense of timelessness is confirmed by the presence of the medieval Castell Dinas Brân and Valle Crucis Abbey founded in 1201 near Llangollen in the heart of the Vale.

Modern elements illustrating the emerging transport systems of the industrial revolution are internationally significant aspects of this Character Area – Thomas Telford’s London to Holyhead Post Road (A5) and the Llangollen Canal share the Valley with the Dee Valley railway line, now a major tourist attraction as a heritage railway running from Llangollen to Corwen.

To the north of the Vale, dramatic cliffs and screes result in outstanding limestone scenery, whilst adjacent hills to the north and south are of a gentler, smoother profile clad with heather, bracken and gorse.

The area is renowned for its cultural associations connected with the journeys taken by poets and painters in search of the sublime. Sarah Ponsonby and Eleanor Butler, the ‘Ladies of Llangollen’, moved to the area in 1780 and became recognised and sought after celebrities inviting numerous guests to their home at Plas Newydd in Llangollen. The Llangollen International Eisteddfod continues the tradition for attracting visitors to appreciate art and culture amongst the spectacular landscapes of the Vale and Dee Valley.



Pontcysyllte Aqueduct

Key Characteristics – NLCA Vale of Llangollen and Dee Valley

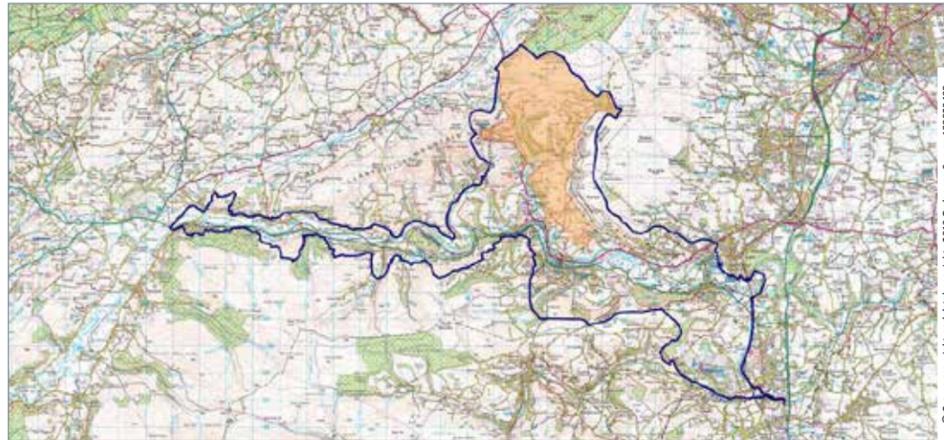
A major river valley – a distinctive, deeply cut, meandering valley containing the River Dee, fitting between upland areas: Llantysilio and Eglwyseg Mountains to the north and Y Berwyn to the south.	Field pattern -predominantly geometric and of small to medium scale, with boundaries defined by stone walls or hedgerows and many hedgerow trees, extending up hillsides.
A largely tranquil, rural landscape - with gentler, quieter valley character up-river from Corwen and very enclosed, steep-sided valley character below Corwen within the Project Area.	Valley and hillside woodlands and pastures – in places running down to the river and displaying a densely wooded character, with a mix of coniferous and deciduous woodland plantations. In other places, open valley floor grazing and steep hillside sheep grazing
Distinctive and spectacular limestone rock outcrops - north of Llangollen, Cregiau Eglwyseg, a series of sweeping convex curves comprising towering limestone cliffs and screes run up to a remote, tranquil and scenic valley known as World’s End.	An important transport corridor and ‘gateway’ - to reach upland Wales from England’s lowlands. An abrupt and dramatic landscape change for travellers by road, rail and canal, including Thomas Telford’s London-Holyhead road.
River morphology - alluvium, gravels and terraces give rise to a gently undulating valley floor and flood plain in places.	The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal is a World Heritage Site.
Soils - predominantly poorly drained / seasonally wet, silty soils overlaying the sandstones and shales, with areas of more freely draining loams and deep loams associated with the gravel deposits.	Settlement relates to this historic transport pattern , which in turn relates to the valley and topography. The historic and popular tourist towns of Corwen and Llangollen are located by the River Dee at historic crossing points.
Ecologically significant river habitats – along the River Dee and the numerous small streams that flow into it.	Iconic cultural landscape -centred on Llangollen, its International Eisteddfod, Valle Crucis Abbey, Castell Dinas Brân, the appeal of the picturesque landscape, the historic landscape, and the infrastructure of road, railway and canal.

2.2 The Local Scale

Local Landscape Character Areas

Horseshoe Pass

The Horseshoe Pass Character Area has a very diverse landform starting on the upland moorland ridge of Llantysilio Mountain and Cynr y Brain, continuing with a series of rounded hills largely grouped along the eastern edge of the Dee tributary valley of the River Eglwyseg, and finishing on the flat valley floor of the Vale of Llangollen. The vegetation is equally diverse consisting of a mosaic of upland vegetation and forest on the higher ground and mainly irregular fields and broadleaved woodland on the lower slopes.



Horseshoe Pass Landscape Character Area



Llangollen

The Character Area derives its name from the Horseshoe Pass (Bwlch Oernant) which dominates the northern part of the Project Area. The Horseshoe Pass road built in 1811 (and since improved) replaced a former turnpike road across the hills which ran along the lower Eglwyseg valley through Pentredwr. The modern Horseshoe Pass Road forms part of the A452 running from Ruthin to Llangollen but was originally part of the network that transported finished slate products from the quarries at its head. The A542 drops steeply into the valley after crossing the Horseshoe Pass and as it approaches Llangollen, although at times an intrusive feature in terms of its impact on tranquillity, provides extensive views of surrounding landscape and significant features such as Eliseg's Pillar and Valle Crucis Abbey. The high cliffs of Eglwyseg Rocks (Cregiau Eglwyseg) give a spectacular eastern boundary to the Area and can be observed from the A542 across the Eglwyseg Valley.

Slate quarrying is a significant aspect of the landscape in the northern part of the Character Area. Begun in the 1690s on land belonging to the Wynnstay Estate, quarrying produced slate for roofing, work surfaces, hearths, gravestones and billiard

tables. The associated waste products and the transportation systems for finished goods remain as characteristic and defining features in the landscape. The landscape is visually dominated by extensive heaps of quarry waste and deep and extensive excavations. Ancillary structures include traces of engine houses and other mill buildings, tramways and inclines at Clogau quarry and above Maesyrychen. Finely finished slate slabs were transported first by trackway, and then by means of the Horseshoe Pass (Bwlch Oernant) and from 1852 by a tramway system linking a number of quarries. The tramway carried material to the former slate mill and canal wharfs and subsequent railway sidings at Pentrefelin. The hillside is also traversed by numerous footpaths and tracks used by workers to access quarries and local settlements.

The eastern extent of the Character Area is dominated by the rounded hill and ridge of Dinas Brân. At 310m the hill is lower than the surrounding upland areas of Llantysilio, Cynr y Brain and Ruabon, the steep slopes of which are a significant feature on the western and northern edges of this Character Area. The hill top and upper

slopes of Dinas Brân are typically covered with neutral grassland and semi-improved pasture. Dinas Brân is nationally important for Silurian fossiliferous calcareous shales and visually dominates this Character Area.

The steep sided conical hill of Dinas Brân is characterised by the ruins of a Welsh medieval castle built within an earlier hillfort during the 1260s by Gruffudd ap Madog, lord of Powys Fadog. Its siting dominates the surrounding landscape from all directions and was probably selected for its symbolic significance. Occupation of the castle was relatively short lived as it was burnt by its Welsh defenders in 1277 against English attack. The castle was abandoned soon after the Edwardian conquest of 1282. Since the increase in visitors and sightseeing interests from the later 18th century, the hill has become an important picturesque icon within the landscape and dominates the southern parts of this Character Area. The hill, castle and landscape setting of Dinas Brân has also influenced the siting, orientation and aspect of a number of significant houses within the Dee Valley, including Plas Newydd, Dinbren Hall, and Ty'n Dwr Hall.

ASPECT	SUMMARY
Visual	Hill and scarp slopes with mosaic of woodland and pasture, upland moorland on hill tops.
Earth Science	Carboniferous limestone (mass movement). Mixed sedimentary Silurian shales (Horseshoe Pass shales)
Biodiversity	Mix of improved and semi-improved grassland, heathland, bracken, broadleaved woodland, conifer plantation.
Historic Environment	Dinas Brân hillfort and castle, a particularly important medieval landscape. Setting of ornamental park and garden and medieval abbey – Valle Crucis. Elements of semi-regular enclosure and organic irregular enclosure.
Cultural Landscape	Ornamental park and garden, part of wider picturesque movement. Medieval monastic development and estate garden development part of wider picturesque movement –Setting of Valle Crucis.

Eglwyseg Rocks / Cregiau Eglwyseg



Eglwyseg Rocks Landscape Character Area

A nationally significant geomorphological site, and possibly one of the UK's most dramatic landscape features, the open upland landscape of limestone cliffs and screes of Eglwyseg Rocks (Cregiau Eglwyseg) create a spectacular and dominant feature within this Character Area. The limestone escarpment contrasts markedly with the surrounding upland moorland scenery. At the foot of the slopes there are small enclosed fields edged with hedgerows and stone walls. The upper reaches of the valley known as World's End have recently been cleared of conifer plantations revealing the intimate valley form and associated limestone cliffs and terraces. The impressive timber framed manor house Plas Uchaf bearing the date 1563 lies at the northern end of the valley.

The limestone screes are the most impressive in the UK and the whole area provides exceptional opportunities for studying Carboniferous limestone geology. The steep slopes, outcrops, screes and cliffs

are covered in calcareous grassland communities and are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The cliff tops gradually gain in height from 300m above OD at their southern-most point overlooking the middle of the Vale, to 450m above OD at their northernmost point overlooking the upper reaches of the narrow tributary valley of the Eglwyseg River at World's End.

The limestone cliffs of Eglwyseg have been quarried for centuries both for building stone and as a source of lime. Several lead mines drove adits directly into the cliffs, and the remains of both industries are still to be seen. However, the over-riding character of this area is one of outstanding and spectacular natural limestone scenery.

The Offa's Dyke National Trail crosses the lower slopes of Eglwyseg Rocks providing excellent opportunities to access the outstanding features of this Character Area at close hand.

ASPECT	SUMMARY
Visual	Hill and scarp slopes with mosaic of woodland and pasture. Open hill and scarp with unenclosed grazing.
Earth Science	Carboniferous limestone (mass movement)
Biodiversity	Upland calcareous grassland and some broadleaved woodland.
Historic Environment	Upland subsistence, predominantly prehistoric. Semi-regular enclosure.
Cultural Landscape	Open moorland result of past land management practices, grouse shooting and sheep rearing. Quarrying and lead mining on Eglwyseg.



Eglwyseg Escarpment

Vale of Llangollen



Vale of Llangollen Landscape Character Area

The Vale of Llangollen Character Area comprises a prominent and deep valley with steep valley slopes and strongly meandering River Dee at its base. The Character Area can be divided into two main parts: The western section, characterised by the steep valley sides between Corwen and the side valley of the Eglwyseg River at Pentrefelin; and the eastern sections running from Llangollen, where the valley broadens into the Vale of Llangollen.

The western reaches of the Character Area feature a relatively narrow valley, with the river cutting through sedimentary rocks. To the north of the river, the land rises steeply to form impressive valley sides with characteristic semi-natural vegetation of heathers, bilberry and gorse. Other hillsides contain a mosaic of ffridd, pasture and woodland. South of the river, the North Berwyn uplands rise from the flat valley corridor which contains the settlements of Lliidiart y Parc and Glyndyfrdwy linked by the A5.

The western parts of the Character Area include the settlement of Corwen and the impressive early iron-age hillfort of Caer Drewyn. The hillfort is situated on the spur of a hill just above the confluence of the River Dee and the River Alwen. The earliest structure was a small enclosure built against a natural rock outcrop. Today this structure is only visible as the remains of a grass-covered bank. A later, larger fortress was surrounded by a dry-stone wall, and does not have the earth ramparts of other local hillforts. Caer Drewyn dominates the local landscape and is a significant feature at the western end of the Character Area.

Legend states that Owain Gwynedd occupied Caer Drewyn while Henry II of England was invading Gwynedd in 1165 via a southerly route, and Owain Glyndŵr is believed to have gathered his troops here in 1400 after he had proclaimed himself King of Wales.

Corwen, the site of a National Eisteddfod in 1919, presents itself on the banks of the River Dee and extends up the hillside sitting comfortably in the landscape. The town grew as a centre for cattle drovers. Landscape features in the Corwen area include the motte of a medieval castle, the thirteenth century Church of St Mael and St Suilien and the Capel Rug built in 1637 by William Salesbury.

Geomorphologically the Vale is a broad rift valley, but a combination of river and glacial erosion has been significant in shaping the valley and has created a number of small and rounded hills characteristic of the area. The river valley contains fluvial geomorphological interest providing evidence of the complex development of the River Dee. The flat valley floor is approximately 130m OD at Corwen, falling to approximately 70m OD as it leaves the Character Area at Froncysyllte in the east.

While the vegetation of the narrow valley floor is mainly improved pasture, the slopes are more diverse with a mosaic of heathland, acid grassland, bracken, scrub and woodland. The river is tree lined creating an intimate and confined character rich in biodiversity.

The Vale presents a remarkable visual combination of stark natural landforms and ancient and modern man-made features.

Sited at a focal point in the landscape close to the confluence of the Dee Valley and the side valley of the River Eglwyseg, Eliseg's Pillar is the lower portion of a stone cross set up on a mound (a bronze-age burial mound). The cross was erected by Cyngen, king of Powys, in the 9th century to honour his great-grandfather, Eliseg, who had reunited the kingdom by retaking land from the English.

The lower areas of the Eglwyseg valley are dominated visually by the ruins of the Cistercian monastery known in Welsh as Llanegwestl and in Latin as Valle Crucis (after the cross of Eliseg's Pillar). Founded by Madog ap Gruffydd in 1201 as a colony of Strata Marcella near Welshpool, Valle Crucis continued to operate as a monastic manor until its dissolution in 1537. Local folklore associates Valle Crucis with Owain Glyndŵr who disappeared in about 1410 after the failure of his rebellion against the English.

The landscape character of the area around Valle Crucis reflects the establishment of the monastic regime. The character is dominated by field-scapes with areas of scrub, broadleaved woodland and plantation. The upper part of the Valle Crucis area is predominantly composed of small irregular fields and the lower portion is predominantly large irregular fields. Field boundaries are mostly multi-species hedges of ancient origin. The contemporary setting of the Abbey is adversely affected by the presence of a static caravan park at Abbey Farm. The park is a discordant feature in an otherwise attractive rural valley landscape.

From the second half of the 18th century the

significant features and picturesque qualities of the Pillar of Eliseg and Valle Crucis began to ensure that they became important sites of interest to early tourists in north Wales.

Several historic houses with associated gardens, parks and woodlands occur in the Vale, the most famous being Plas Newydd, home to the 'Ladies of Llangollen' Sarah Ponsonby and Eleanor Butler. Trefor Hall, situated toward the eastern end of the Vale, is an impressive three storey brick mansion built in early Georgian style by the Lloyd family. The Hall has extensive gardens and parkland and is set on a wooded hillside overlooking the Vale. The Vivod Estate to the west of Llangollen is focussed around Plas-yn-Vivod, a Victorian house built in the 1850s with associated gardens, walks, lodge, estate cottages and contemporary stone built dairy complex. The estate influences the character of the local area but the Plas itself is hidden from view by modern day planting of coniferous forest and topography.

In addition to the larger historic estates and their characteristic managed influence on the landscape, a distinctive feature of the Vale is a group of country houses occupying significant locations that were built for industrialists in the later 19th century. Argoed Hall, a substantial two-storey stone house on the outskirts of Froncysyllte and over-looking the Dee, was built for the German industrialist R.F. Graesser associated with the Wrexham Larger Brewery and the chemical works at Acrefair. Tyn-dwr is a Tudor black and white style mansion built around the 1860s for John Dicken

an ironmaster. Sited to the east of Pen y Coed in Llangollen, the house has extensive grounds and features a tree-lined drive. Sitting adjacent to the Llangollen Canal, the brick-built Bryn Howell and its lodge were built in 1896 as a retirement home for the brickworks and tile manufacturer James Coster Edwards, in a mock Tudor style combining products from the factories and some half-timbering, the current use is as a hotel.

Central to the character of the Vale is the town of Llangollen which spans the full width of the valley floor, between a height of 90-140m OD to the north and south of the River Dee. This small market town is of early medieval origin and was probably first settled in the 6th or 7th century, developing into a trading centre by around 1260. The River Dee has been bridged at this point since at least the 1280s. The present bridge was built in about 1500 but has been repaired and extended many times between the 17th and 20th centuries. The bridge provides an attractive and significant man-made element to the landscape character of the Vale. The town itself is a mix of private houses, commercial, industrial and restored buildings reflecting Llangollen's long history.

In addition to the natural corridor characterised by the River Dee and adjacent floodplains and terraces, the Dee Valley has always been a major communications route and bears the evidence of successive innovations in the history of transport: the Llangollen Canal; The London to Holyhead Post Road; and the Vale of Llangollen Railway.



Dina Brán

Llangollen Canal

Perhaps the most notable of the communications routes is the Llangollen branch of the Shropshire Union Canal, constructed by Thomas Telford and William Jessop and opened in 1805. The canal, conceived as being 'for the mutual benefit of agriculture and trades' forms part of a system linking the River Mersey with the Rivers Dee and Severn. The Llangollen Branch starts at the water intake off the Dee at Horseshoe Falls, Llantysilio, and finishes at Welsh Frankton in Shropshire. The canal gave access to the Ruabon collieries, and stimulated the growth of the limekilns and pottery works at Froncysyllte and Tref-y-nant. Chemical works and the Plas Kynaston iron works also benefitted greatly from the canal.

Today, the key characteristic of the Canal is as a recreational waterway used for boating, walking and cycling on the towpath, and paddle sports. The canal is exceptionally popular with visitors as it provides an accessible route linking the significant features of the Horseshoe Falls, Llangollen and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct at Trefor. Over 15 000 boat movements per annum and over 200 000 visitors to its key sites makes the Llangollen Canal one of the busiest stretches of canal in the United Kingdom. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2009.



The Vale of Llangollen Railway

The railway was initially opened in 1861 from Ruabon to Llangollen as the Vale of Llangollen Railway, branching from the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway south of Ruabon, running via Acrefair and Trefor. The railway was subsequently extended westwards as the Llangollen and Corwen Railway. This reached Corwen in 1865 via the Berwyn Tunnel which took a year to complete.

For nearly 100 years the railway took traffic from the road and canal, becoming an important means of exporting slate, limestone and timber balanced by imports of foodstuffs, raw materials for the Llangollen breweries, and transporting tourists to and from the area. The railway offered visitors one of the country's most scenic routes from Ruabon to Barmouth via Llangollen and Bala.

The line was effectively closed in 1968 but has subsequently become a heritage service between Llangollen and Corwen operated by the Llangollen Railway Society. The service, a major tourist attraction, has preserved the line together with its characteristic features of embankments, cuttings, road crossings, bridge abutments and the evocative sounds of steam engines and whistles.



Llangollen Railway Line, Corwen

Telford's Holyhead Road

Running through the southern parts of the Character Area, Telford's Holyhead Road was part of major improvements to the physical links between London and Dublin following the 1800 Act of Union. It was an outstanding feat of civil engineering for its day, made possible by generous funding awarded by Parliament and arguably the first major state-funded road building programme of modern times. Use of the road declined with the development of railway links, but this decline contributed to the high degree of survival of much of the original work. Within the Character Area there are surviving stretches of original roadside walling, road revetments, and a number of characteristic milestones.



Sun Burst Gate, near Corwen

ASPECT	SUMMARY	
Visual	Low valley mosaic of woodland and pasture. Wooded hill and scarp slopes at western edge.	
Earth Science	Mixed sedimentary – Fluvial Mixed sedimentary (Berwyn)	Mixed sedimentary – Silurian shales (Horseshoe Pass shales) Carboniferous limestone (Mass movement)
Biodiversity	Ffridd mosaic of heathland, bracken, acid grassland, scrub and woodland on valley slopes, improved grassland on valley floor. Heathland on upper slopes.	
Historic Environment	Historic park and garden, Trevor Hall. Ornamental park and garden, Plas yn Pentre. Historic park and garden, Plas Newydd. Historic core of Llangollen. Historic park and garden at Vivod and Llantisilio. Communications corridors – A5 Telford's London to Holyhead.	Industrial slate workings in valley and on hillside south of Glyndyfrdwy. Upland subsistence, predominantly prehistoric. Upland fortification. Medieval settlement linked to Owain Glyndwr. Historic core of Carrog. Park and garden at Rhaggatt Hall. Regular and semi-regular enclosures, organic enclosure. Upland subsistence medieval
Cultural Landscape	Llangollen – centre for cultural activity and tourism, location of the annual International Eisteddfod. The first public Eisteddfod held in Corwen.	Communications and transport corridors – A5 and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site. Parks and gardens – wider picturesque movement.

Dee Valley – Froncysyllte to Newbridge



Dee Valley – Froncysyllte to Newbridge Landscape Character Area

To the east of the Vale of Llangollen, the Dee Valley narrows slightly to form an enclosed lowland valley with a level floodplain. The valley has a farmed and wooded character flanked by the closely built 'urban villages' of Cefn Mawr, Trefor and Froncysyllte.

The valley follows fault-lines separating the older Silurian rocks of the Berwyn uplands from the younger Carboniferous rocks of Ruabon Mountain and its eastern slopes. The River Dee is contained within a natural channel opening out onto an alluvial valley floor with terraces which narrow above the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

The fossil terraces and river cliffs at Trefor and Newbridge, together with the limestone outcrop at Froncysyllte provide outstanding views to and from the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Cefn railway viaduct, and nearby hills. The notable man-made embankment carrying the Shropshire Union Canal to the Aqueduct helps form a 'gateway' to the Valley, but in addition, this key section of the Dee Valley contains rail, road and Offa's Dyke crossings.

The western boundary of the Character Area is of course dominated by the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct which carries the Llangollen Canal across the Dee Valley.

Construction work on the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct began in 1795 and was completed in 1805 for the purpose of carrying the canal across the River Dee. This iconic piece of engineering was designed by Thomas Telford working under William Jessop. 18 tall, slender stone pillars and arches support an iron trough over 300m in length just under 40 metres above the valley floor. The trough contains the canal and was constructed of cast iron plates bolted together and supported beneath by cast iron ribs. Watching canal craft crossing the aqueduct from below is one of the outstanding features of the whole Project Area.

The embankment on the south side of the aqueduct is one of the largest canal earthworks ever constructed, built from material quarried to form the canal cutting and tunnel near Chirk, about 5 km to the south. Largely screened and hidden from view by mature trees today, the embankment remains an important feature in the Vale of Llangollen. Trefor Wharf, with extensive areas for coal, timber and lime, was served by railways from the surrounding collieries and Plas Kynaston iron works. The setting and original infrastructure has largely been compromised by modern day chemical works/ brownfield sites and industrial parks.

ASPECT	SUMMARY	
Visual	Enclosed lowland valley with level floodplain. Farmed and wooded landscape flanked by close built 'urban villages' of Cefn Mawr and Froncysyllte.	Outstanding views to and from Pontcysyllte aqueduct, Cefn railway viaduct, and nearby hills. Man-made embankment carrying canal.
Earth Science	Major river in natural channel. Alluvial valley floor with river terraces. River cliffs near Trefor and Newbridge cut into glacial drift and underlying sedimentary strata.	Carboniferous limestone outcrop at Froncysyllte. Valley follows fault-lines separating Silurian rocks of Berwyn from younger Carboniferous rocks of Ruabon Mountain.
Biodiversity	Lowland pasture. Upland mixed ash woodland.	Aquatic habitats of River Dee. Improved grassland and farmland.
Historic Environment	Historic crossing point – Offa's Dyke, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site. Part within Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg Landscape of Special Historic Interest.	19 th / 20 th century workers housing at Trefor and Froncysyllte connected with industrial expansion across Dee Valley. Limestone quarrying and burning at Froncysyllte, industrial ceramics.
Cultural Landscape	Historic parks and gardens – Trevor Hall and Argoed Hall. Artistic representations of aqueduct and literary references.	Historic and modern tourism and leisure activities on Canal and Ty Mawr Country Park.



Chirk Estate to Froncysyllte



Chirk Estate to Froncysyllte
Landscape Character Area

This Character Area is dominated by the designed landscape of the Chirk Estate with its castle, parkland, associated farmland and encircling belts of mixed woodland. The castle is built on an outcrop of Carboniferous limestone and sandstones and provides panoramic views eastward. The parkland containing veteran trees and wood pasture forms the core feature of the area, but smaller scale woodland and pasture mosaic is characteristic of the steeper slopes above Froncysyllte.

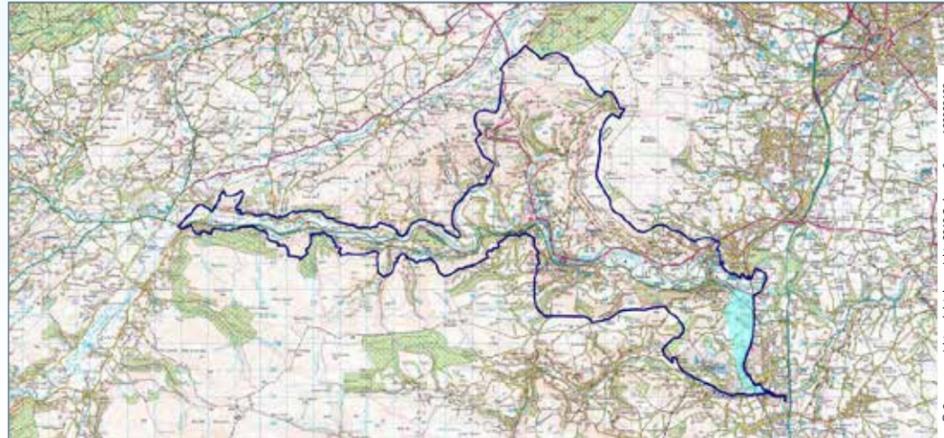
The Offa's Dyke, a medieval feature comprising a ditch and steep bank, crosses the area. The associated Offa's Dyke National Trail passes through the Chirk Castle Estate.

The lower edges of the Area are generally affected by views of extensive industrial development in Chirk and Cefn Mawr.

ASPECT	SUMMARY	
Visual	Dominated by the designed landscape of the Chirk Castle estate. Lower edges of area are affected by views of industry in Chirk and Cefn Mawr.	Smaller scale woodland and pasture mosaic found on the steeper slopes above Froncysyllte.
Earth Science	East facing slopes about 150m to 350m AOD. Higher areas underlain by older sedimentary rocks of Silurian age. Part of the Berwyn Dome and lower slopes by sedimentary rocks of Carboniferous age, overlain by glacial deposits.	Chirk Castle built on Carboniferous sandstone and limestone. Limestone out crop at Froncysyllte.
Biodiversity	Chirk wood-pasture with associated veteran trees supporting a range of saproxylic (dead wood) invertebrates. Broadleaved, conifer and mixed woodlands.	Semi-natural ancient woodlands found near Froncysyllte. Small vulnerable grassland habitats on moorland margins.
Historic Environment	Strategic defensive location – 13 th century Chirk Castle built for Edward 1 st , 8 th Century Offa's Dyke – built by King Offa of Mercia as political boundary.	
Cultural Landscape	Early 17 th century paintings of Chirk Castle and estate. Thomas Pennant described area in his 'Tour of Wales' in 1793.	



Chirk



Chirk Landscape Character Area

Only the western half of this Character Area lies within the Project Area. Chirk, set in a shallow valley is enclosed by hills to the west and a ridge to the east. The town is influenced strongly by large scale industrial development with associated steam plumes, noise and odours. The conurbation lies between the historic estates of Chirk Castle and Brynkinallt.

The landscape in the western part of the Area contains large regular fields in pastoral use, with hedgerows and sparse hedgerow trees. The transport and communication routes of the railway and canal are important elements of the landscape. The nationally important railway viaduct and the aqueduct and tunnel of the canal sit in the northern part of the area.

The railway viaduct at Chirk which was erected in 1846-8 and rebuilt in 1858 was the work of the Scottish engineer Henry Robertson. The 100 feet high stone structure was built for the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway. The viaduct stands some 30 feet above the adjoining aqueduct, but both provide significant features in the surrounding landscape.

The aqueduct designed by Thomas Telford was completed in 1801. It has a cast iron trough hidden by masonry walls. The aqueduct was a forerunner of the much larger structure of Pontcysyllte, but was briefly the tallest navigable one ever built.

ASPECT	SUMMARY	
Visual	Enclosed by hills to west and ridge to east but generally open views from shallow valley. Large regular field pattern with hedgerows and sparse hedgerow trees.	Visually diverse mix of land use including large scale industry. Important communications corridor with canal, rail and road links.
Earth Science	Coal measures on eastern ridge of character area.	Area covered by glacial till (Clays)
Biodiversity	Farmland comprises mainly improved grassland of low value.	Shropshire Union Canal aquatic habitats. Small areas of broadleaved and coniferous woodland.
Historic Environment	Shropshire Union Canal crosses the River Ceiriog on historic aqueduct. Chirk medieval non-planned settlement with earth motte and ancient church.	Chester-Shrewsbury railway line viaduct. Development connected with A5 border crossing. Whitehurst Garden 17 th century walled garden.
Cultural Landscape	Associations with Chirk Castle and Brynkinallt.	



Chirk Aqueduct and Viaduct

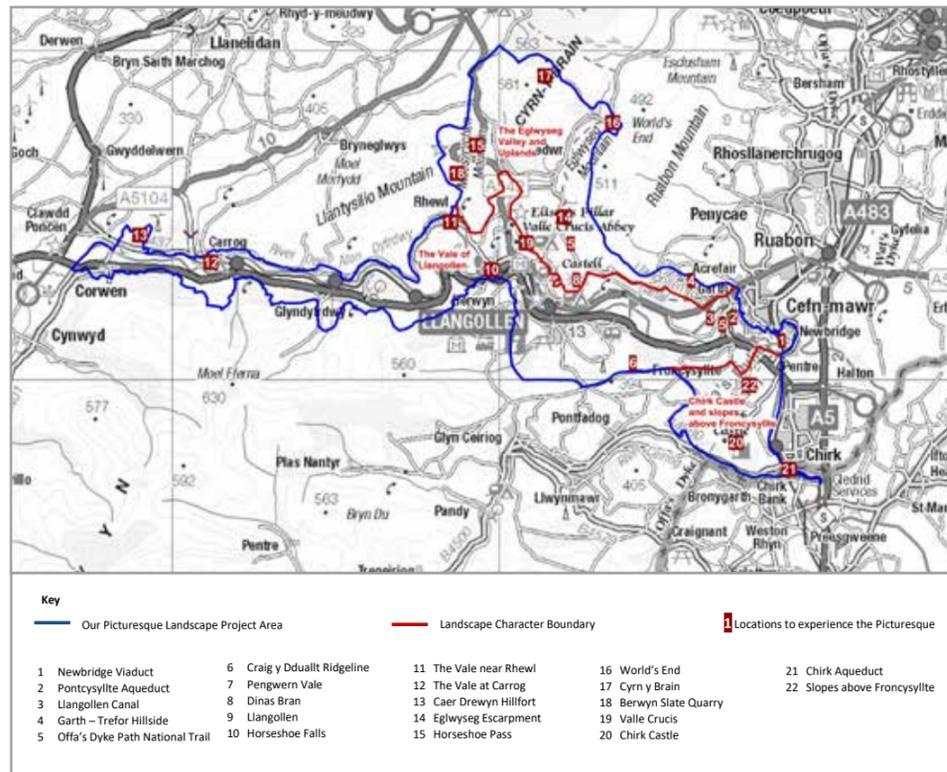
Experiencing the Picturesque

'Our Picturesque Landscape' focusses on a number of notable landscape features that capture the essence of the picturesque within the landscapes of the Project Area. These Picturesque qualities and features of the Project Area have been captured over the centuries by artistic representations based on local cultural expressions together with the results from journeys to the area from prominent artists and poets. Refinement of the Landscape Character Assessment detailed above helps identify a number of locations where the picturesque landscape features are particularly notable and can be experienced.

Vale of Llangollen

A narrow steep-sided valley with a mosaic of woodland and pasture cover on slopes and meandering river a dominant landscape feature. Within the valley views are confined by the presence of a series of mounds or low hills and intervening mixed woodland blocks and hedgerows with trees. This highly attractive landscape acts as an important entrance/gateway into North Wales. The only detractor being some of the less picturesque developments and settlements alongside the A5. Otherwise a spectacular entrance to Denbighshire and the north.

Experiencing the picturesque locations



Newbridge Viaduct

The railway viaduct is a dramatic feature of this part of the Dee valley, crossing the open floodplain between wooded valley sides. Accessibility to edges of the valley by road and the Ty Mawr Country Park provide several views of the viaduct, river and westwards to the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. The area feels tranquil and peaceful in contrast with the settlements above the valley edge.

Pontcysyllte Aqueduct

The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct majestically straddles the Dee Valley in a very wooded location. Hillside worker villages of Cefn Mawr and Ffroncsyllte perch on valley sides. There are limited opportunities to see the Aqueduct stretching across the valley, but the drama is best experienced through a sequence of experiences along the canal corridor - including glimpsed views of the aqueduct, an awareness of light and openness where the tree lined canal corridor meets the aqueduct, and the point of crossing where the valley is suddenly revealed and the height and exposure of the situation fully impacts the senses.

Llangollen Canal

The curving line of the Llangollen Canal makes visible the contours of the hillslopes and leads the eye along the valley. Canal bridges punctuate the journey and provide points of visual interest. Bank side vegetation limits outlooks in places but occasional views out across the valley and to Dinas Brân provide a sense of place and mark the journey.

Garth -Trefor Hillside

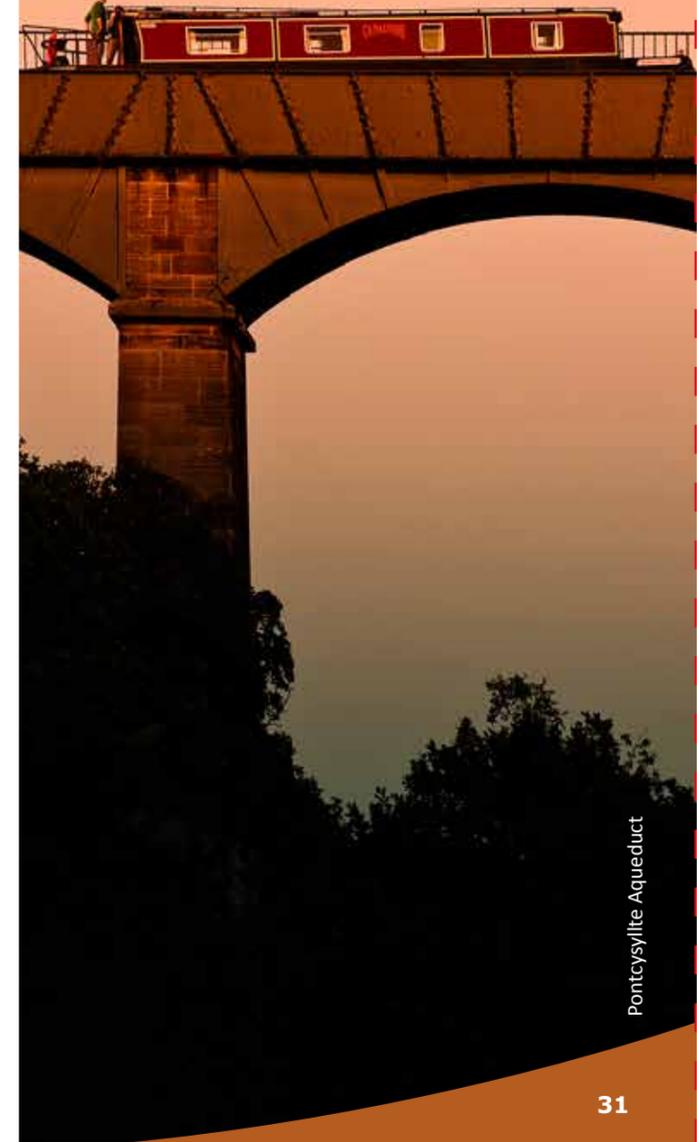
The landscape areas and edges to the villages here are made visible by the elevated valley sides. Woodland, irregular fields, small lanes, worker cottages and Trevor Hall are distinctive and contrast with the wilder moorland uplands above and the angled jagged skyline of the Eglwyseg escarpment just to the west.

Offa's Dyke National Trail

Offa's Dyke National Trail provides an evolving scenic journey as it passes through either side of the Dee Valley, with particularly memorable sections below the Eglwyseg escarpment, crossing the medieval bridge below Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and passing through the parkland and near the castle at Chirk.

Craig y dduallt ridgeline

The Cerriog Trail and a lane traverse the southern valleys sides and skyline of the Craig y dduallt ridgeline. The elevated and open prospect provide dramatic scenic aerial views of the Vale of Llangollen, the meanders of the River Dee, hill of Dinas Brân and backdrop of upland ridges.



Pontcysyllte Aqueduct



Caer Drewyn, Corwen

Pengwern Vale

This is a quiet, curving and secluded side valley tucked to the south of the Vale of Llangollen, overlooked from the Ceiriog Trail and the north Berwyn ridge.

Dinas Brân

The rounded hill outlier of Dinas Brân and its castle forms a landmark and distinctive skyline above Llangollen and provides 360 degree expansive views. The cultural importance of the derelict castle and its gothic appearance add to its presentation and perceptual qualities. This location in particular feels like the centre of the Our Picturesque Landscape with an amphitheatre of enclosing ridgelines to the north and layers of upland ridges of the Berwyn's stretching out to the south.

Llangollen

The narrow valley enclosed by wooded hilltops and spurs at Llangollen give particularly focus to the historic town, bridge, river crossing, International Eisteddfod pavilion, road viaduct and railway station near the chain bridge hotel, and scattered hill side properties. The wooded valley sides and grazed hills hug the town and are a constant visual backdrop.

The Llangollen steam railway line to Corwen, animates the landscape and adds a sense of heritage and nostalgia.

Horseshoe Falls

Horseshoe Falls (WHS) creates a distinctive tranquil place, with half-moon curving line of white water, natural sounds, contrasts between still and animated water, meandering river, parkland character, architecture and heritage of Llantysillio Church and Hall.

The Vale near Rhewl

Quiet lanes and changing scenic views occur along the wooded and secluded northern side of the valley to the west of Rhewl. Occasional views of the River Dee through native woodland and the sweeping meander bends in the river provide a scenic peaceful journey.

The Vale at Carrog

Carrog forms an attractive compact historical riverside village and bridge crossing along the northern edge of the River Dee and its meadows, nestling into the hillside where the valley twists slightly.

Caer Drewyn Hillfort

An impressive intact prehistoric hillfort formation of stone ramparts in an upland location and vantage point, with views of the Berwyns to the south and Llantysillio mountain curving eastwards to meet the Clwydian Range. Feels peaceful, a connection with the past and an escape from the more settled areas of the Vale.

The Eglwyseg Valley and Uplands

Overview

This area is an upland tributary valley of the River Dee with diverse topography of rounded hills and slopes with plentiful woods and trees. Vegetation cover is varied - ranging from mixed deciduous woodland on the valley sides and hillocks to an intimate small scale field pattern on the valley floor and lower slopes defined by mature hedgerows with numerous hedgerow trees. Dramatic views are available to the east of the limestone outcrops lying on the eastern flanks of Ruabon/Eslusham Mountain. Settlements are small scale - hamlets and isolated farmsteads and the area generally although well used by road traffic on the A542 feels remote and relatively unspoilt. Very attractive traditional agricultural scenes dominate the lower valley with dramatic views up towards the skyline to the east whilst memorable views of the entire valley complex are seen from the sinuous and steeply rising A542 as it passes over the Horseshoe Pass.

Eglwyseg Escarpment

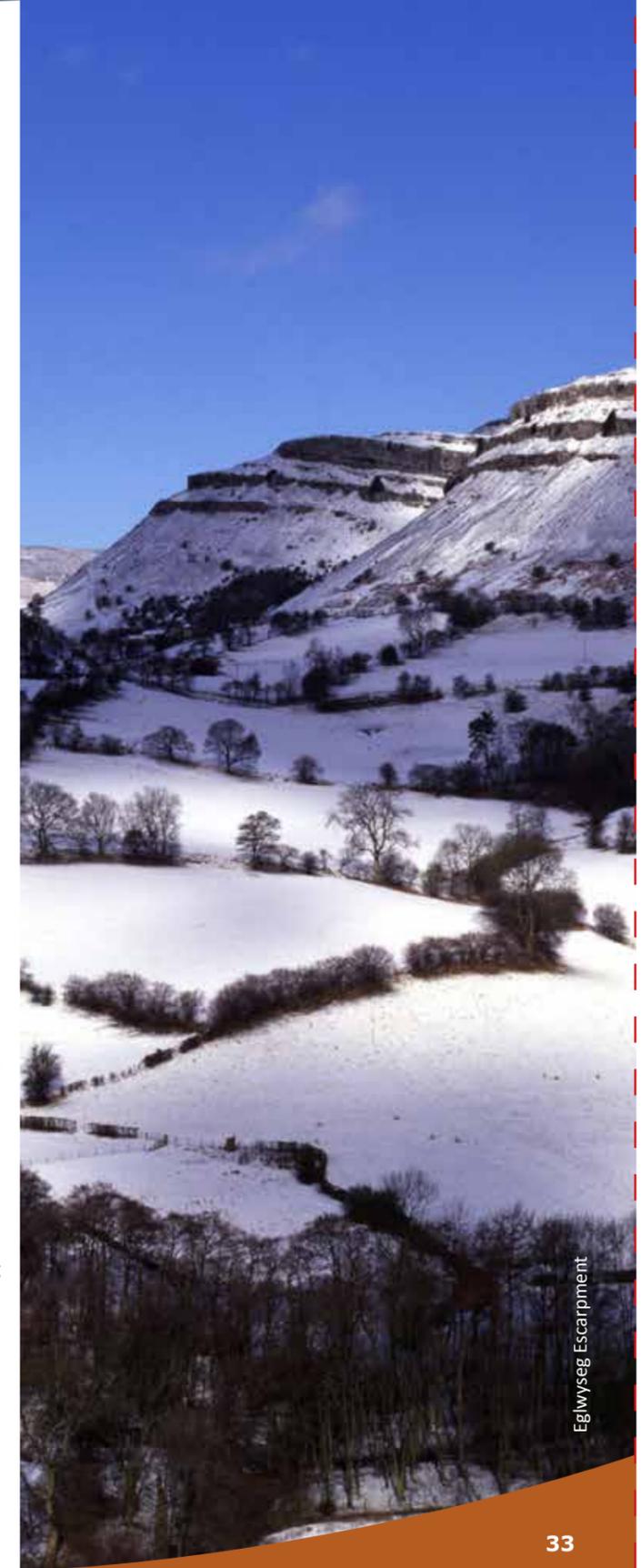
The spectacular Eglwyseg limestone escarpment and screes enclose the valley farmland and woodlands, with open moorland above. It extends for some 6km between Trefor Rocks to Worlds End in the north. Alpine in character, with a strong visual juxtaposition of angular bedding plains and precipitous slopes seen against rolling farmed and wooded valley below. Seen with dramatic effect from many locations to the south and west, the Offa's Dyke National Trail traverses the lower slopes and the permissive path along its upper precipitous edges provide spectacular access to this landscape. The craggy skyline at Trefor Rocks forms a distinctive profile to the wooded slopes and pastoral valley of the Vale of Llangollen.

Horseshoe Pass

The Horseshoe pass is a very popular destination providing rarely found vehicular access to such an exposed upland location with dramatic scenic views. The journey along the twisting and exposed mountain road provides evolving scenic views and drama. The destination experience however could be improved to moderate views of car parking and lessen the domestic influences of boundaries, signage and lighting.

Worlds End

The mountain lane from Minera crosses exposed featureless moorland before dropping off the end of the plateau improbably into the Eglwyseg Valley. The marked change in landscape and transition to a deep valley lined by the Eglwyseg escarpment is wild and very dramatic.



Eglwyseg Escarpment



Valle Crucis

Cryn Y Brain

This gentle broad hill forms part of an expansive inward tilting moorland plateau that stretches to Esclusham Mountain. The area is expansive, visually remote, tranquil and wild. The large plantation of Llandegla Forest in places has harsh edges and contrast with moorland, whilst elsewhere forest clearance has left a more disturbed landscape.

Berwyn Slate Quarry

The southern worked area forms an unusual 'sharks fin' notch in the skyline of views from the Vale of Llangollen. On closer inspection the exposed tilted slabs at the southern end of the quarry display ripple beds. The slate waste that visibly lines the northern edge of the site and hillslopes of the Eglwyseg Valley have yet to mellow and settle into the view. Whilst not easily seen within the same angle of view, the contrast in geology with the Eglwyseg escarpment within such close proximity is unusual.

Valle Crucis

Valle Crucis Abbey, Eliseg's Pillar and Tumulus and Pentrefelin Tramway Viaduct form historic focal points within the lower Eglwyseg Valley just north of the Vale of Llangollen. The area feels quiet and visually secluded in spite of the A542. The setting, atmosphere and status of the Abbey could however be improved and effect of the caravan park moderated.

Chirk Castle and slopes above Froncysyllte

Overview

The east-facing slopes dominated by the strategically sited Chirk Castle and Estate, the castle, and earth works of Offa's Dyke reflect the borderland location and historical tensions between upland and lowland Wales and England. To the north the slopes above Froncysyllte, reflected by the slopes above Trefor, form a gateway to the Vale of Llangollen.

Worker settlement and disused limestone quarries are absorbed within a mosaic of small fields, trees and woodlands. The area is largely tranquil and feels remote although is influenced by activity along the valley's road network, larger settlements and the industrial Kronospan complex.

Chirk Castle

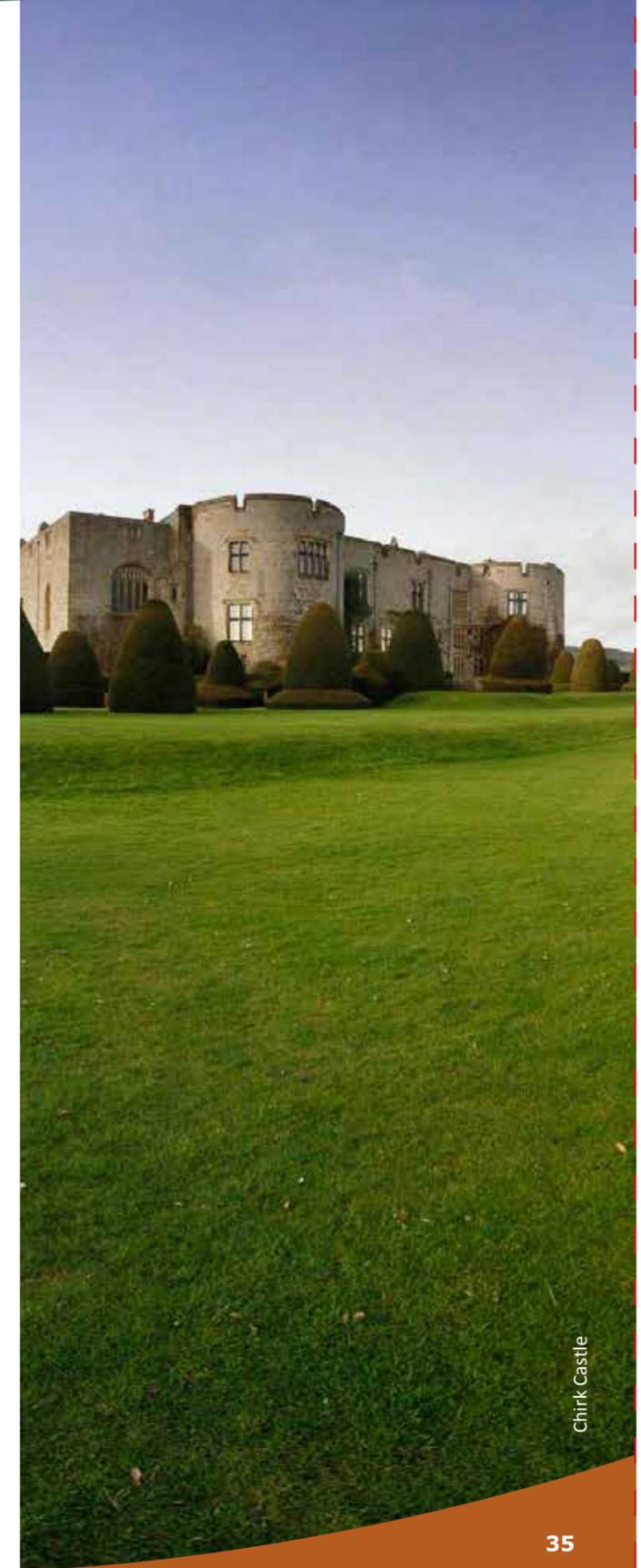
Chirk Castle forms an imposing building set within open parkland of mature oaks and grassland. The combination of mature woodland, pasture land dotted with mature specimen trees and parkland forms picturesque and aesthetically pleasing short distance views. Offa's Dyke earthworks (scheduled monument) are still intact in parts of the area.

Chirk Aqueduct

The Chirk Aqueduct (WHS) and railway viaduct are a strong visual focus, bisecting the small open floodplain of the River Ceiriog, enclosed by wooded valley slopes. The combination of structures here is telling about the engineering achievements required in response to landform. The visual and sensory experience is dramatic, heightened by the journey southwards along the canal through cutting and tunnel before crossing the aqueduct elevated above a scenic valley.

Slopes above Froncysyllte

Picturesque qualities are evident within the wooded undulating valley sides and spur which are prominent above adjacent lowlands. The curving woodland shapes and irregular edges reflect older field systems and their historical response to landform.



Chirk Castle

2.3 Discussion of Landscape Significance and Pressures

INTRODUCTION

The 'Our Picturesque Landscape' project is focussed on the beautiful Dee Valley in north east Wales. It includes the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS), inscribed in 2009 and also forms part of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) as extended in 2011. The valley from Corwen in the west to Llangollen and Froncysyllte in the east is narrow and steep sided with heather clad moorland to either side. East of Llangollen the valley begins to widen out until eventually reaching the fertile Shropshire and Cheshire plains. The river, canal, railway and A5 characterise the area as one of movement of people, goods and ideas.

As ideas about landscape developed in the eighteenth century, the previously despised mountainous areas of the country developed from being 'the fag end of creation' into the much admired landscapes of the Picturesque. Helped by the inability to travel to Europe due to the wars in France and the Iberian Peninsula, more people ventured into this part of Wales. Gilpin describes the Dee Valley as 'almost perfect' while Turner in his 1792 tour of the whole Dee Valley describes Llangollen as 'The Church and Bridge – river and descending road with the surrounding mountains all combine to give a complete romantic landscape', the same romantic landscape which Richard Wilson had painted for Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn in 1770-1. Already in 1755 Lord Lytton visited the Williams-Wynn's Wynnstay Estate at Ruabon and suggested that the owner should incorporate one particularly striking view to the west; 'If the Park was extended a little further, it would take in a hill, with the view of a valley most beautifully wooded; and the River Dee winding in so romantic and charming a manner, that I think it exceeds.....any confined prospect I ever beheld'. At the same time the Ladies of Llangollen,

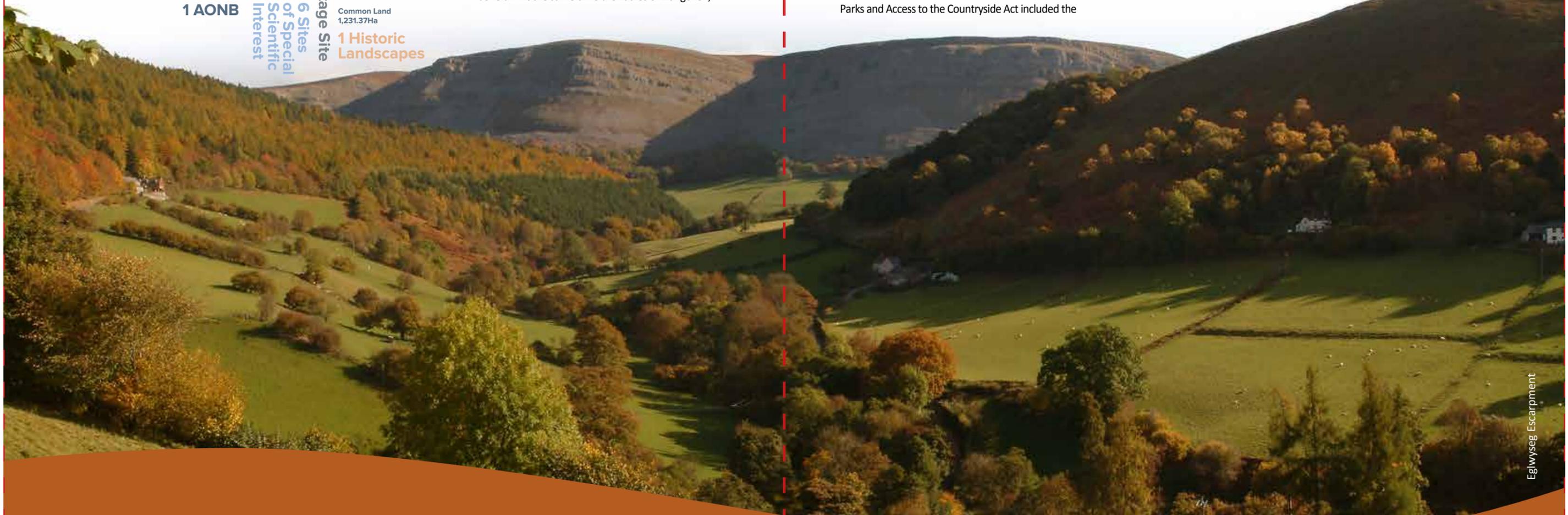
Lady Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, eloped together to Plas Newydd, Llangollen in 1780 to enjoy 'delightful retirement'. However they quickly became visited by the great and the good of the day including Lady Caroline Lamb, William Wordsworth, the Duke of Wellington, Josiah Wedgewood and the Duke of Gloucester, on some days receiving as many as 20 visitors! Even the young Charles Darwin visited at the very end of Sarah Ponsonby's life in 1831 when he was touring the area with renowned geologist Adam Sedgewick.

In his Tour of Wales of 1783 Thomas Pennant describes the Llangollen area 'The mountains soar to a great height above their wooded bases; and one, whose summit is crowned with the ancient castle, Brân, is uncommonly grand. . . . I know of no place in North Wales, where the refined lover of picturesque scenes, the sentimental, or the romantic, can give a fuller indulgence to his inclination. No place abounds more with various rides or solemn walks.'

The 1947 Hobhouse report reflects this. The subsequent legislation contained in the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act included the

area of the Dee Valley among those 'conservation areas' which were identified as worthy of protection for their landscape value. Many of these were later to be designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), with the Gower being the first in 1956. It was not until 62 years later in 2011, after extensive work to justify and demonstrate the benefits of the designation, that the Dee Valley was added to the previously existing Clwydian Range AONB to become the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. Thus recognising formally what had been known in the 1940s.

The AONB recognises the Valley as one of its special features, as does the management plan for the WHS which specifically looks at the Canal and its internationally important attributes. The development of the Canal and Railway enabled industries to grow and develop from the small scale enterprises in the medieval period into the heavy industries of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century; particularly iron working at the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct site and quarrying of both slate and limestone throughout the area.



Eglwysseg Escarpment

2.3 a. Geological Heritage

The geology influenced the industrial exploitation in the area and dictated the challenging landscape through which the canal, railway and road network were constructed. The Project Area is underlain by rocks from the Ordovician, Silurian and Carboniferous periods, spanning some 150 million years. Each period records a different episode in the geological evolution of Wales where the rock tells the story of deposition of muds in deep seas, volcanic activity, shallow tropical seas and thick beds of sand laid down by massive rivers which carried sediment eroded from land to the north and south of the area. Overprinted onto this is the record of glacial activity during the last Ice Age and thousands of years of the River Dee and its tributaries shaping the landscape.

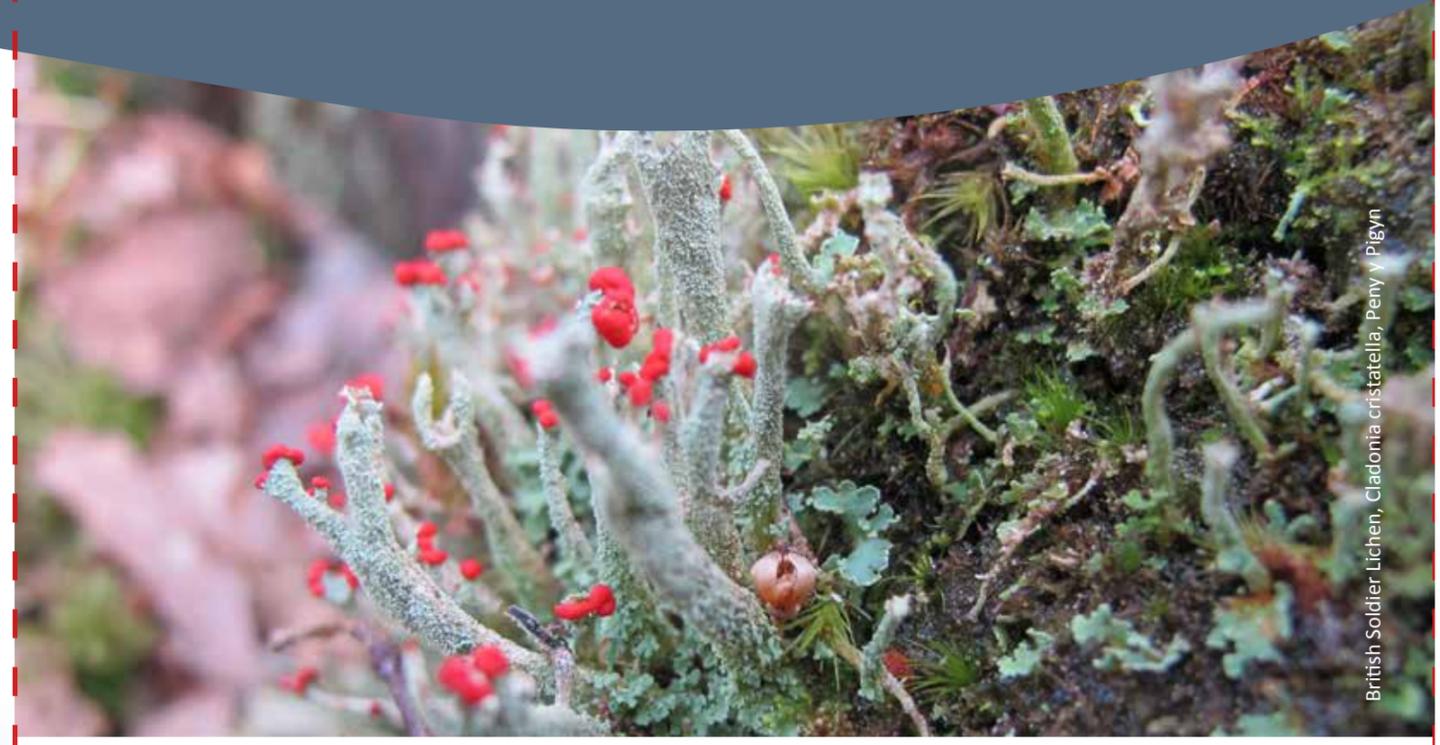
The geology of the Dee Valley is also rich in natural resources, which have been exploited particularly since the Industrial Revolution. This has left a lasting impression on the landscape. From Corwen to Llangollen extensive slate quarrying of the Silurian rocks, following the development of the canal and

later railways, left vast waste tips high on the valley slopes. Slate quarries at the Horseshoe Pass were extended once the Llangollen Canal was built and a tramway constructed to wharves at Pentrefelin; later the slate quarries at Moel Fferna and Penarth, near Corwen, were linked in the same way to the railway. The lower Carboniferous limestones exposed at Eglwyseg and Chirk was exploited for building stone and lime for agriculture and construction. The quarries at Eglwyseg were linked to the canal by a series of tramways. The Upper Carboniferous sandstones were quarried for building, with the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct the most impressive local example. At Chirk the Upper Carboniferous coals were mined in the southern part of the Denbighshire Coalfield.

Disused quarries at Penarth, near Corwen, Horseshoe Pass and Eglwyseg are now Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for their geological interest, as also is Castell Dinas Brân where the rock exposed by the Medieval builders is protected.



Eglwyseg Escarpment



British Soldier Lichen, Cladonia cristatella, Pen-y-Pigyn

2.3 b. Natural Heritage

The Dee Valley is rich in a wide variety of nature conservation designations which reflect the diverse natural heritage of the area. The whole of the River Dee is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a European designation. It is noted for the species within the river which include Otter, Atlantic Salmon and Freshwater Pearl Mussel which requires exceptionally clean water. The Eglwyseg limestone scarp and Llantysilio and Ruabon Mountains form part of the Berwyn and South Clwyd SAC and are protected for the European dry heath, semi-natural calcareous grasslands and calcareous screes and rocky slopes. These areas are also SSSI, a UK designation, as are Castell Dinas Brân and the quarries above the Horseshoe Pass and at Penarth, Corwen. Both the natural vegetation, predominantly calcareous grassland within the Project Area, and the geology is designated. Some sites are noted purely for their geology, these are the Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological sites (RIGs) which is a non-statutory designation. There are important areas which fall outside of the areas designated for their nature conservation value, such as Ffridd, but which nonetheless are extremely important. Ffridd, those areas

of a mosaic of habitat types which tend to lie on the slopes between the upland and the valley bottom, are a declining habitat in Wales as a whole and need to be focussed on to enhance and protect their diverse value.

The rare Llangollen Whitebeam *Sorbus cuneifolia*, of which only about 250 trees survive on the Eglwyseg slopes with a very few in Shropshire, is the subject of an exciting project led by Chester Zoo. Work is ongoing to cultivate cuttings of the tree and plant out more into the environment to ensure a successful future. Interestingly one of these limestone loving trees was recorded growing from the masonry of Castell Dinas Brân in the 1780s, growing in the mortar between the building stone. In the early 2000s when reconsolidation work took place at the Castle a Llangollen Whitebeam was removed and planted out. It is interesting to speculate whether this was the very same tree as noted 200 years previously.

There are also some plant and animal species that are problematic. Himalayan Balsam is an invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, which out competes other riverbank species thus leaving banks vulnerable to erosion in the



Skylark

winter when the soft stemmed plant dies. Japanese Knotweed is another Schedule 9 species which occurs in some place within the Project Area. There are also North American Mink on the river. This species preys on ground nesting birds and the rapidly declining water vole. Maintaining the river in a healthy condition is vital for the species within it but also for water quality. Water from the river is still a water source for many people in the Midlands.

2.3 c. Archaeological Heritage

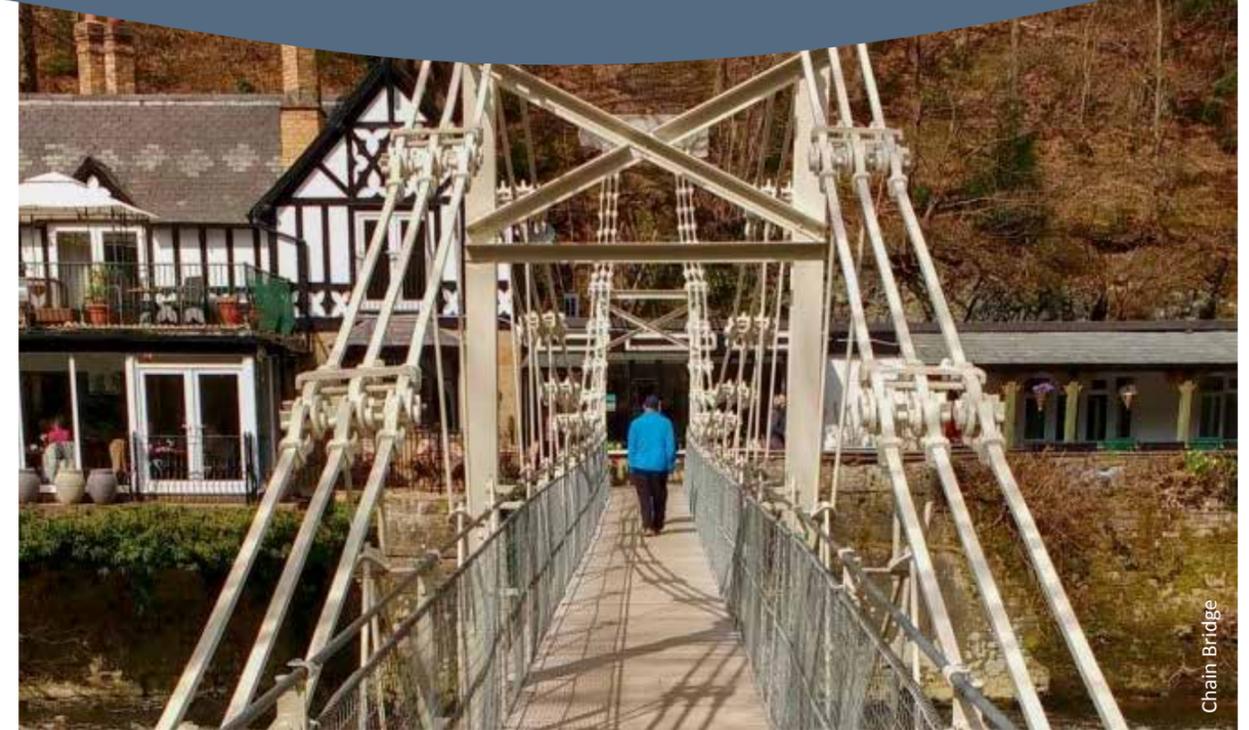


Eliseg Pillar

People have been living in and travelling through the Dee Valley for thousands of years. In 1840 an elaborate flint macehead dating to the Neolithic period (c 3000BC) was found at Maesmore, just outside the Project Area to the west. It has parallels with finds from Knowth in the Boyne Valley in Ireland. Ruabon Mountain also appears to have been a really important area with a stone circle and associated standing stones probably dating to the Bronze Age (c 2000BC). As farming developed and technological advances enabled people to smelt first bronze and then iron, hillforts and smaller farmsteads were built, the remains of these are still visible in the landscape and include the scheduled monuments of Castell Dinas Brân and Caer Drewyn, and to the south of the Project Area at Old Oswestry. During the Roman period the upland areas of the Berwyn appear to have been used to access the area, with evidence of Roman marching camps at upland locations like Pen Plenau.

Corwen, near the valley floor, appears to have been a military settlement. These may have been outliers of the large Roman fort complex at Rhyn Park, Shropshire, just to the south-east of the Project Area.

In the Medieval period the unique 9th century monument of Eliseg's Pillar was erected on top of a pre-existing prehistoric burial mound. This cross had an inscription on it, a genealogy of the Welsh Princes, legible until the late 17th century, and is the cross which gave its name to Valle Crucis, an early 13th century Cistercian monastery. Now a Cadw guardianship site, it is worth noting that the Cistercian monks deliberately chose peaceful and beautiful locations for their abbeys, as this was thought to help with their monastic contemplation, early seekers of the Picturesque! Castell Dinas Brân, the iconic site painted by both Richard Wilson and J M W Turner, also dates to the Medieval period and is both a scheduled ancient monument and a SSSI. Within Shropshire, the Project Area falls within the former Marcher Lordship of Oswestry, which was held by the FitzAlans, Earls of Arundel.



Chain Bridge

2.3 d. Built and Industrial Heritage

The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 2009. The canal formed part of the wider Ellesmere Canal network, which was conceived in 1791 as an ambitious attempt to link the Dee with the Severn and Mersey. The key feature of the site within the Project Area is the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. It was designed by William Jessop and Thomas Telford and is a masterpiece of civil engineering. From the beginning of the canal at the Horseshoe Falls, through the challenging landscape of the Welsh hills, to where it joins the softer landscape of the Shropshire Plain at Gledrid, it is the outstanding feat of design. The whole 11 mile corridor is remarkable, innovative in its use of iron, cut and cover tunnels, vast embankments and cuttings, it pioneered the use of civil engineering techniques. These were subsequently deployed on other major late 18th and early 19th century construction projects, for example on sections of Telford's Holyhead road where it passes through the study area, and which remain in use as modern highway and railway schemes today. The nomination

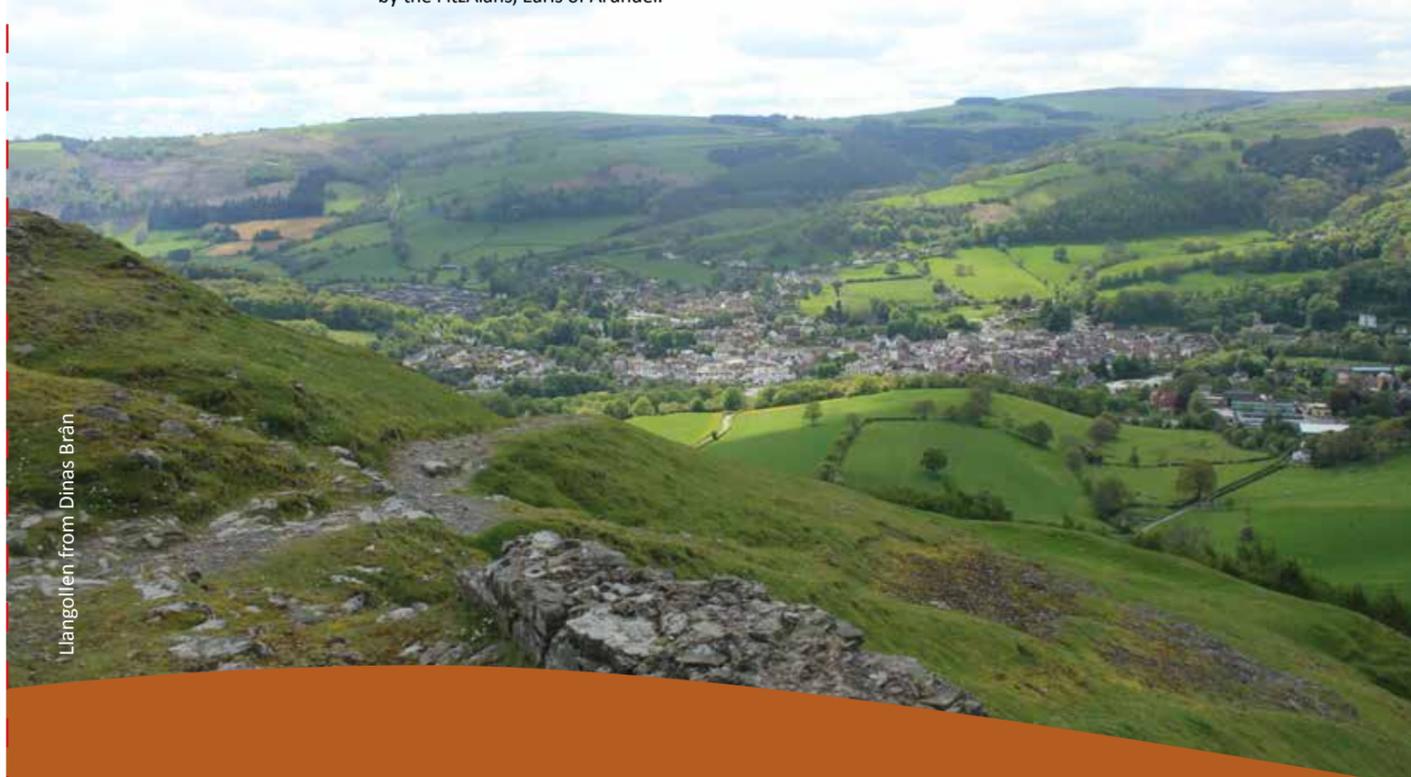
documents accepted by UNESCO made reference to Telford being aware of philosophies behind the Picturesque movement. He respected these in the design and made something practical and beautiful to fit into an already admired landscape.

Following the construction of the canal there was an explosion in industrial development in the area, with quarrying in the slate and limestone areas, coal and clay extraction and ironmaking. Manufacturing processes, such as clay working industries, developed within the Denbighshire coalfields area. This in turn led to gentry estates developing and extending, with the Wynnstay Estate leading the way. Sir Watkin Williams Wynn embarked on a two week tour of north Wales in 1771, taking the artist Paul Sandby with him. A forerunner of Thomas Pennant who travelled more extensively between 1773 and 1776. Sir Watkin's tour was influential in bringing the scenery of north Wales to a cultured audience. Lancelot 'Capability' Brown designed the Wynnstay Park and gardens in the 1770s. Later industrialists also chose to build or remodel their houses in the Valley. Places such as

Llantysilio Hall, built by the locomotive designer Charles Beyer, as well as Bryntysilio Hall which was enlarged by Sir Theodore Martin, biographer of Prince Albert. Estates were enlarged and improved at Vivod and Plas Berwyn. Plas Berwyn was altered by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Tottenham a major shareholder in the Llangollen and Corwen railway. He built the Berwyn Station to match the style of the Chain Bridge Hotel on the opposite bank of the River Dee.

Following on from the construction of the Canal, and later the Railway, slate and limestone quarries all grew and expanded. Their remains form an important part of the modern day landscape with the slate quarry waste tips at the Horseshoe Pass helping to define this landscape. The quarries, limekilns and mines are all important features in this landscape and reminders of its past industrial importance.

Early in its history the Llangollen canal was used as a tourist attraction. In 1881 Mr Newberry of the Royal Hotel in Llangollen organised a pleasure boat to run from Llangollen Wharf to the Chain Bridge and in



Llangollen from Dinas Brân



1884 Captain Samuel Jones set up a similar service with his boat the Maid of Llangollen. By the period just before World War One there were services operating several times a day, sometimes going as far as Chirk. The tradition of horse drawn pleasure barges continues today. Llangollen remains a busy tourist destination.

From the beginning of its life the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct was perceived as more than merely a component of an inland waterway system. It was regarded as a work of art and masterpiece of human ingenuity and although they objected to the development of quarries and mills within sight of Plas Newydd, the Ladies of Llangollen embraced the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and were among those at its opening in 1805. The American Washington Irving called it 'that stupendous work'.

The Chirk Aqueduct which was completed before Pontcysyllte, was seen by Sir Richard Colt Hoare whilst it was being constructed and he said 'From the length of this building, the straight lines and light piers which intersect the valley it has a pleasing effect even in its imperfect state. When finished it will have the most grand and picturesque appearance.' Engineers, Scientists and Artists were all equally impressed by the structures. Michael Faraday, visiting in 1819, stood on the road bridge below the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and described it as 'too grand a thing....seemed as light as a cloud'.

2.3 e. Cultural Heritage

The dramatic topography of the Dee Valley has inspired a long tradition of literary and artistic associations since early medieval times. These traditions have themselves influenced the ways in which the landscape has been perceived and developed – having influenced certain aspects of its architectural heritage, the creation of designed landscapes, and the conservation of natural features.

The Our Picturesque landscape area has important Welsh cultural associations with bards such as Iolo Goch, who wrote in praise of his 'protector' Owain Glyndŵr and Guto'r Glyn and Gutin Owain who wrote in praise of the Abbots of Valle Crucis. As early as the late 16th century Dinas Brân was praised in Romantic tones in an englyn written by the Denbighshire poet Roger Cyffin

*Gone, gone are thy gates, Dinas Brân on the height!
Thy warders are blood-crows and ravens, I trow;
Now no one will wend from the field of the fight
To the fortress on high, save the raven and crow.*

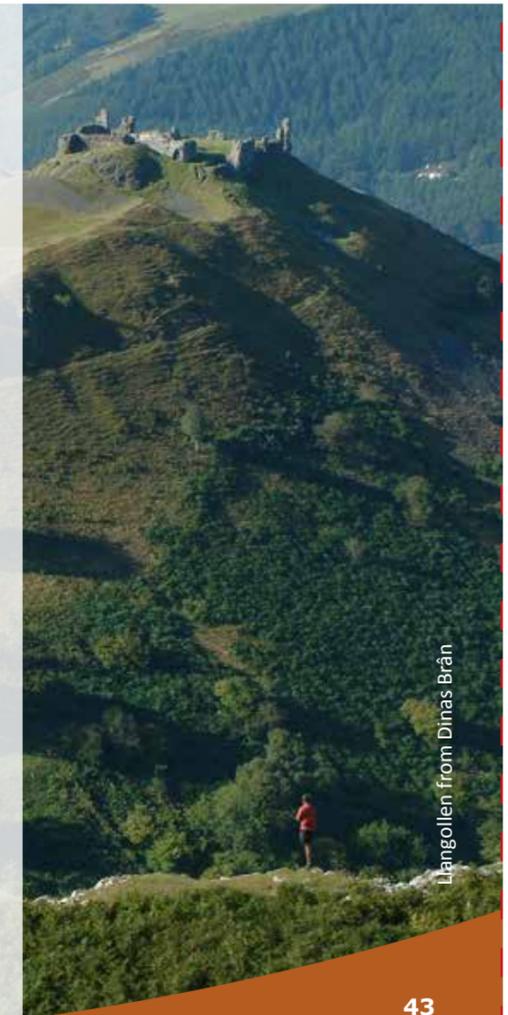
Translated in George Borrow's Wild Wales



This strong local bardic tradition continued in the area almost despite of the influx of visitors from further afield, notably Jonathan Hughes, 1721-1805 a contemporary of Twm o'r Nant. It was continued by the solicitor and poet ID Hoosen into the 20th century with Cerddi Baledi published during his lifetime in 1936 and the posthumously published Y Gwin a Cherddi Eraill, 1948. Hoosen is best known for his poems for children.

The place names of the area are extremely important and this is an area where the influx of visitors is having an impact. Climbers on the Eglwyseg scarp and canoeists on the Dee are inventing new names for places, like the serpent's tail for a particular rapid on the River Dee. Many of these places, particularly the crags on Eglwyseg have Welsh names which have been in use much longer and it is really important to ensure that these indigenous names are not lost. A project, Cynefin, has been ongoing in Wales which is all about digitising both the Tithe maps and the associated schedules. It is in the schedules that some of the Welsh field names are preserved and it is important for this project to build on this work and ensure that these important place names are carried through and preserved in the future.

Engravings of Valle Crucis were published by the Buck brothers in 1741-42 and by S. H. Grimm in 1770. The Welsh artist, Richard Wilson painted several views of Dinas Brân in about 1770. One commissioned by Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1771. Wilson had previously studied landscape painting in Italy, the Dee Valley with its fertile countryside and ruined castle and abbey forming ideal subject matter for landscapes in the Italian fashion. Indeed, X-ray analysis of one of his views of Dinas Brân suggests that it was painted over an abandoned landscape of Tivoli. John Ingleby undertook a watercolour of the landscape near Llangollen including both Valle Crucis and Dinas Brân and, in 1776, Paul Sandby published Views of North Wales which included one of the Vale of Llangollen from the east showing Dinas Brân. Ruthin born Edward Pugh also produced prints of the area which were posthumously published in Cambria Depicta in 1816.



2.3 e.1. Language and Lore

The earliest cultural associations in the Vale of Llangollen relate to folklore associated with a number of natural features and originate in the early medieval period. The most notable are focussed on Craig Arthur and Craig y Forwyn (Maiden's Crag), two of the prominent outcrops of the dramatic limestone escarpment of Eglwyseg Rocks. Eglwyseg was the setting for a popular legend of St. Collen, who was supposed to have killed a giantess called Cares y Bwlch, despite her call for aid from Arthur, another giant who had made his home in the Eglwyseg Rocks.



Subsequent associations in the early medieval and medieval periods are predominantly with reference to structures or buildings created within the natural landscape. The Pillar of Eliseg, the base of a stone cross prominently sited in the Eglwyseg Valley, was erected in the first half of the 9th century by Cyngen in honour of his great grandfather Eliseg. The inscription on this symbolically important monument traced the legendary descent of the royal house of Powys, laying down political and territorial claims dating back to the late Roman era.

Poetical associations with the Dee Valley were first recorded with Canu Llywarch Hen (Song of Llywarch the old) which alludes to the settlement of Llangollen and the pass known as Bwlch y Rhiw Velen northwards over the mountains to Ruthin (Horseshoe Pass).

Further poetical associations were to be made in the early 13th century by Einion Wan whose surviving works include an elegy for Madog ap Gruffudd Maelor, the first ruler of the subdivided kingdom of Powys Fadog. Madog founded Valle Crucis Abbey in 1201, and his son Gruffudd ap Madog built Castell Dinas Brân in the 1260s.

Castell Dinas Brân features in a number of literary works in the later 13th and 14th centuries despite its loss of political and strategic significance following the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the 1280s. It appears in the prose romance known as Fouke le Fitz Waryn, a manuscript written in old French in the first half of the 14th century but based on a much earlier text. Also dating from the 14th century is the only surviving work of Welsh poet Hywel ab Einion, a love-poem to Myfanwy Fychan of Dinas Brân. The poem

was first published in English by Thomas Pennant in his Tour of Wales. The poem also inspired the Victorian poem Myfanwy Fychan by John Ceiriog Hughes. Written for the Eisteddfod held in Llangollen in 1858, the poem formed a model for Welsh love poetry in the second half of the 19th century.

Valle Crucis Abbey, in addition to its economic and ecclesiastical significance, also became an important regional focus of cultural life due to the patronage role of successive abbots. Significant associations included the poet Iolo Goch in the 14th century and with Guto'r Glyn and Gutun Owain in the 15th century.



2.3 e.2. Landscape Traditions

As well as the world renowned International Eisteddfod, Llangollen hosts a Coracle festival. This reflects a long tradition of coracle use for fishing on the River Dee. Indeed the example housed in the Merseyside Maritime museum is from Llangollen, made in 1930 of calico stretched over an ash frame. Whether the calico came from one of the mills on the Dee is impossible to say, but Upper Dee Mill and Lower Dee Mill were operating from the late 19th century making cloth, and particularly flannel. Legend says that St Collen arrived in Llangollen in a coracle and established a church next to the River Dee.

The location has always been an agricultural area. In the Medieval period Valle Crucis Abbey, the second wealthiest abbey in Wales, had granges across the area where predominantly sheep were kept in large numbers. This tradition continues today, thus much of the area is pasture which links in to that picturesque feel of the landscape.

2.3 e.3. Wales and the World

The 16th and 17th centuries saw Dinas Brân and Valle Crucis continue to be a focus of poetry and art. The antiquarian John Leland mentioned Dinas Brân in a commentary after a visit around 1534 and early romantic images of the ruined castle were conjured up in an englyn by local poet Roger Cyffyn in the late 16th century.

Greater mobility and communications for social and leisure purposes resulted in a significant increase in visitors to the area from the middle of the 18th century. Published illustrations and engravings promoted an evocative and picturesque image of the landscape. As noted, the Welsh artist Richard Wilson painted several views of Dinas Brân in about 1770. John Ingleby undertook a water colour of the landscape near Llangollen including both Dinas Brân and Valle Crucis and in 1776 Paul Sandby published 'Views of North Wales' which included the Vale of Llangollen and Dinas Brân.

In parallel to the body of work produced by visitors to the area, a strong bardic tradition continued through native poets such as Jonathan Hughes (1721-1805). However, the principal cultural influences for the area during this period remained from visitors and their interpretations of the landscape and the buildings and natural formations within it.

In the later years of the 18th century, war and political instability in Europe dissuaded many travellers and tourists from attempting the 'Grand Tour' of continental Europe. Instead, sights were set on discovering the wilder landscapes of Great Britain. New publications and travelogues promoted this growing trend. Thomas Pennant's 'Tour of Wales' published in 1783 has references to Eglwyseg, the hills above Froncysyllte, and Valle Crucis. 'A map of the Six Counties of North Wales' was published in 1795 with engravings by Robert Baugh, which included a view of Valle Crucis. A drawing of the Pillar of Eliseg was made by Thomas Rowlandson in 1797.

The Dee Valley, and the Vale of Llangollen in particular, were to become a focus for the European-wide Romantic Movement during the last two decades of the 18th century. By the 1780s, Plas Newydd, which started life as the small stone cottage of Pen y Maes on the southern edge of Llangollen, became home to 'The Ladies of Llangollen' Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby. For 40 years The Ladies played host to an illustrious group of friends and acquaintances from the world of art, politics and literature who represented a significant generation of cultural tourists to the area. Josiah Wedgwood, Charles Darwin and Arthur Wellesley all visited Plas Newydd and William Wordsworth wrote of the imposing ruins of Castell Dinas Brân in 1824. Anna Seward was a further romantic poet to visit the Ladies during this period composing a series 'Llangollen Vale: with other poems'.



The Reverend Bingley noted Plas Newydd on his tour in 1798 and said of the Ladies:

“These two females, delighted with the scenery around Llangollen, when it was little known to the rest of the world, sought here a philosophical retirement from the frivolities of fashionable life, erected a dwelling that commands a fine mountain prospect, and have resided here ever since”.

Bingley also wrote about Castell Dinas Brân and gave early commentary on the construction of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

J.M.W. Turner, Britain’s finest landscape painter, sketched a view of the River Dee with Dinas Brân in the background in about 1798. In 1808 he made a preliminary sketch of Valle Crucis again with Dinas Brân in the background, which became a Romantic themed water-colour depicting a shepherdess and agricultural workers in the foreground against a back-drop of the natural landscape – a central theme of the romantic art of the period.

The concept of protecting and conserving the rural landscape of the Dee Valley began during this era. The Ladies of Llangollen organised a co-ordinated campaign against the industrialisation of the Valley and opposed quarries, mills and the construction of Telford’s Holyhead Road. Visitors to the area often commented on developments and the associated impacts on the landscape – Richard Fenton, visiting in 1808, stated the canal ‘disfigured’ the country from a picturesque point of view.

The early part of the 19th century saw a continuation in the growth in numbers of visitors to the Dee Valley and the Vale of Llangollen in particular. Well-off, predominantly English visitors, promoted a wider appreciation of the natural and manmade attractions of the area and its popularity increased accordingly.

The tourist industry was actively developed locally from the 1880s, this resulting in a rapid expansion in hotels, inns and boarding houses in Llangollen. This characteristic tourist led economy and culture remains to date with the town dominated by cafes, hotels and attractions.

The long standing attractions of Dinas Brân and Valle Crucis Abbey were supplemented in the 19th century by canal trips and the picturesque walk to the Horseshoe Falls. New places of interest were created for tourists in the early parts of the 20th century including the Victorian Promenade along the riverside in Llangollen, a

camera obscura and tea room within the castle ruins at Dinas Brân, and the Panorama Walk below the crags at Trefor. Nowadays it might seem strange to have a camera obscura on top of Dinas Brân. It was housed in a small building which visitors entered to see the fantastic views surrounding the castle projected onto a screen within. Why go inside a building when the view was so good in reality? Because the camera obscura was the modern technology of the day. It was the equivalent of the augmented reality views we look at today and was the modern and quirky way to appreciate the view. The coming of the train had diminished trade on the canal, a gap fully exploited by pleasure craft. Queen Victoria visited Llangollen at the height of the Victorian tourist trade, staying with her husband’s biographer Sir Theodore Martin at Bryntysilio Hall overlooking the Horseshoe Falls.

Literary associations with the Dee Valley continued into the early 20th century. John Cowper Powys, a resident of Corwen, published ‘Owen Glendower’ in 1940. Set in Dinas Brân and the surrounding landscapes, part of the book was written in the ruins of Valle Crucis.

In 1789 the very first public Eisteddfod in Wales was held in Corwen and during the revival of Eisteddfodau in Wales later in the nineteenth century, Corwen again was one of the first locations to be chosen. It was also the site of the ‘peace’ eisteddfod in 1919 following WW1 which took place in the Corwen Pavilion which had been erected in 1911. The Pavilion, a re-sited tram shed from Birkenhead, was the location for many cultural activities in the Dee Valley, concerts, recitals and competitions. As well as hosting the first National Eisteddfod after WW1 it was the location of the first Urdd Eisteddfod in Wales. Shell Oil used images of Plas Newydd in Llangollen to attract motorists to the area in the 1930s. This literary and cultural tradition was continued and perhaps formalised through the Llangollen International Eisteddfod which began immediately after the Second World War in 1947. As a way to heal worldwide wounds, it brought people from across the globe together. It still attracts people from across the world who come to the town to perform and compete. It was joined by the Llangollen Fringe festival in the early 2000s.

The International Eisteddfod, launched in 1947, has ensured the Dee Valley has continued to be culturally significant. The festival plays host to more than 6000 competitors from over 50 countries taking part in choral and dance competitions. The festival was first held on the Recreation Ground in Llangollen, but moved to its current position adjacent to the canal. The Eisteddfod building is an iconic modern structure, characterising the westerly approach to the town, visible from the hills around.



2.3 e.4. Landscape and Community



There remains a thriving creative community in the valley as evidenced by Llangollen's own art group and visits from the Borderlands Inside Out Art group. A recent photographic project in Llangollen recorded all of the different Community groups in the town, whilst in Corwen there have been a number of artist in residence projects working with the Town. Corwen also has an active Archaeology group.

Today there are plenty of opportunities for people to access this special landscape. The Offa's Dyke Path National Trail crosses through the eastern end of the area and regional routes, the Dee Valley Way and the North Berwyn Way allow people to access along the valley both north and south of the Dee. Linked to all of these are shorter, circular routes, like those at Nant y Pandy, Glyndyfrdwy and the Llangollen History trail which celebrate the heritage of the valley. The Panorama walk, along the Eglwysseg scar, conjures up the Picturesque with its romantic but descriptive name. Recently access has been improved and enhanced at the Horseshoe Falls. People are now able to get directly to the Falls from the nearby Llantysilio Green car park. Visitor numbers here have greatly increased, with over 100,000 people visiting during

2015/16, evidence of people's love of this picturesque landscape but also of the increasing pressure on the landscape. The Canal towpath and waterway provides great access, the horse drawn canal boats now come up as far as the Chain Bridge hotel since the reopening of the Chain Bridge which links the Canal to the Railway and the A5. Some of the best fly-fishing in Wales is found on the River Dee, attracting many keen anglers, but also some excellent paddling water for canoeists....a potential conflict of use today.

The A5 is identified as an historic route throughout its passage across Wales. Chirk, Llangollen and Corwen are three of the major locations on the route providing coaching inns and examples of Telford's original infrastructure, a good example of which is the sunburst gate, recently re-erected just outside the Project Area at Rhug. The A5 is vitally important for these towns and for the places between. Although it is now Llangollen that is associated with the Railway, at the end of the 19th and into the early 20th century Corwen was a more important location on the line as it was situated at the junction of two lines. At the end of the 19th century around 70 local people's employment depended on the railway, which brought in products and was closely associated with the town's Mart, a vital part of the rural economy. Corwen has long been associated with sheep shearing competitions, a tradition that is continued today. It was the landscape around Corwen that attracted Everest climber, Charles Evans a Welsh speaker from nearby Derwen, to utilise the area for training. His climb nearly to the top of Everest just days before Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing provided valuable information for the pair.

Visitors have been a feature of this area of the Dee Valley since the time of the Ladies of Llangollen at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries and early boat trips on the Canal in the late 19th century. In the past access was by horse drawn vehicles and then in the mid 19th century often by train. Today most tourists arrive in Llangollen by car and coach and the area is becoming a hub for outdoor activities like climbing, canoeing and cycling. All of this benefits the local economy but does put pressure on the landscape through haphazard parking of cars, erosion on the canal and river banks and robust discussion between different users such as canoeists and anglers. Communities like those in Cefn Mawr also discuss the loss of views of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct as a detriment to their wellbeing and enjoyment of their town.

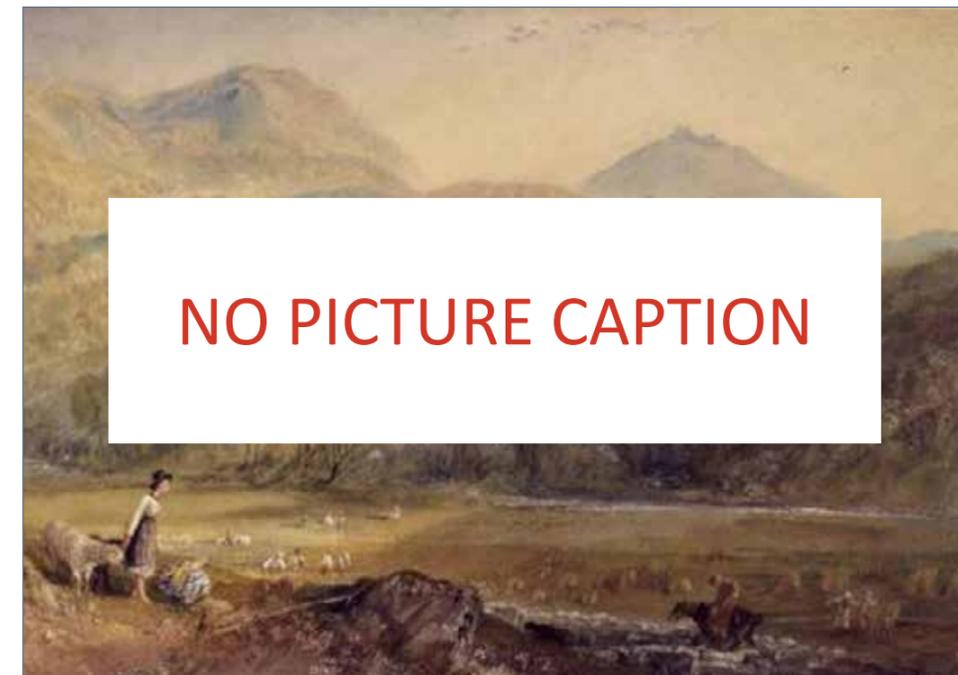
2.3 e.5. Landscape as Inspiration

The Picturesque is an aesthetic, visual and sensory experience of landscape, within which the interaction of nature and man has created striking visual compositions, scenic quality and places with a strong and distinctive sense of place. It is related to the concept of natural beauty, which underpins the approach to statutory landscape designations and cultural value placed on landscape in the UK.

The concept of the picturesque prompts thinking about the landscape in a number of ways. It is through the variety of experiences, interaction, and sometimes contrasts, between nature, beauty, tranquillity, wildness, drama, historic artefacts and cultural associations within the landscape, and our access to and understanding of these, that the Picturesque is experienced.

'Our Picturesque Landscape' focusses on a number of notable landscape features that capture the essence of the picturesque within the landscapes of the Project Area. These Picturesque qualities and features of the Project Area have been captured over the centuries by artistic representations based on local cultural expressions together with the results from journeys to the area from prominent artists and poets. The Landscape Character Assessment identifies a number of locations where the picturesque landscape features are particularly notable and can be experienced.

In summary, the 'Our Picturesque Landscape' Project Area is a landscape which has been valued for many years. This was set down in print by those early travellers like Sir Watkin Wynn and Thomas Pennant at the end of the 18th century and again in the mid twentieth century in the post war Hobhouse report. It has been an inspiration for artists since Richard Wilson painted Dinas Brân in 1770s, a tradition continued today. Specific aspects of the area are protected for their natural and built heritage now as SAC, SSSI and SAM while more generally the recent inscription as WHS and designation as AONB recognise the broader landscape value of the area. It is an area appreciated by visitors today who are attracted to the area by its internationally recognised and stunning landscape.



2.4 Potential Threats and Opportunities for Our Picturesque Landscape

Our Picturesque Landscape is a landscape of outstanding scenic quality, with internationally important natural, historic and cultural sites. It is a landscape that faces many future challenges, linked to changes in land management, demands from people, economic change and factors outside of the area's more direct influence, including political, policy and climate change. With these challenges come opportunities, which require a strong partnership to ensure that potential threats are managed proactively to deliver positive outcomes for the landscape and its people.

Historic and Cultural Heritage

The Dee Valley contains outstanding cultural heritage, which encompasses a rich historic built environment, farming traditions, rural skills such as weaving, ironwork and performing arts. Many of the area's cultural heritage sites are visited by thousands of people every year. Erosion damage caused by pressure of visitors, stock and other forms of access is an issue for many of the more popular sites such as Castell Dinas Brân and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Horseshoe Falls and the canal in Llangollen. Linked to this is the authenticity of repair work carried out. In the past inappropriate materials have sometimes been used to carry out repairs, including structures within the World Heritage Site. The WHS Management Plan identifies this as an issue which needs to be addressed.

Smaller heritage structures, often relating to the new opportunities provided through the opening of the canal, have been in the shadow of the area's significant industrial heritage features. Often overlooked as 'less important', these smaller structures have been historically neglected, resulting in their gradual deterioration within the landscape. Many of the traditional industries are no longer operating and their remains are found throughout this landscape, often crumbling away. It is accepted that not all of these can be conserved but that key examples should be.

Authenticity is an issue, not just in the materials that have been used for repairs in the past. Sites like Plas Newydd have changed a great deal since the Ladies of Llangollen lived there at the end of the 18th and early 19th century. Some of these changes are welcomed, the Victorian Topiary as well as the timber cladding on the exterior of the house, but in the Dell the atmosphere that the Ladies created has been eroded.

People have migrated through this landscape over time, with the industrial revolution and employment at quarries, ironworks and construction of the road and canal network and more recently the chemical industry. With these developments came changes to the character of associated settlements, and in particular the development of brick terraced houses, linked to the establishment of brickworks in the area. All these industries have left their mark on the landscape and a story to be told. The inward migration of people also brought with them their own heritage, creating a distinct diversity in cultures within these communities.

The movement of people within the landscape has also had an impact on the Welsh language, a unique and important part of Wales' cultural heritage. The Welsh language provides a layer of additional depth in reading and understanding our landscape. Place names in particular often derive from natural and cultural heritage features within the landscape and can demonstrate how the landscape has evolved through time. Past Welsh writings and poetry often celebrate the landscape and are important in shaping our views and how we look at the landscape today. The Our Picturesque Landscape area has a strong link with Welsh culture with the first public Eisteddfod being held in Corwen. Welsh place names relating to the landscape can be lost or changed with the gradual introduction and adoption of English names, for example Crow Castle rather than Castell Dinas Brân.

The valley has a rich culture in art, dating back to paintings such as Dinas Brân by Richard Wilson and the River Dee at Corwen by Turner. Early travel writers also document their travels and experiences which relate to people's modern day journeys through this landscape. There is a lack of awareness of the area's rich art heritage and a great opportunity to work with the art community who continue to be inspired by the Dee Valley.

There are abundant myths and legends that relate to the landscape ranging from Corwenna, the giantess of Corwen, to St Collen's arrival in a coracle giving his name to the town of Llangollen. The area has a strong story telling tradition which continues today with monthly gatherings and well known story tellers living in the valley. However, it is possible that there are many untold tales held by the local community, waiting to be shared.

Threats

- T1.1 Lack of maintenance of historic sites.
- T1.2 Erosion damage from visitors, stock and other access to historic sites.
- T1.3 Inappropriate materials used in the past repairs of heritage features.
- T1.4 The gradual decline of the smaller heritage features within the landscape.
- T1.5 The gradual change in character of historic garden areas.
- T1.6 Loss of Welsh place names within the landscape.
- T1.7 Loss of connection with Welsh poetry and writing about the landscape.
- T1.8 Structures on the buildings at risk register declining in condition.
- T1.9 Lack of awareness of local stories that relate to the landscape

Opportunities

- O1.1 To work together with the WHS Board, Cadw, CRT, landowners and other agencies to undertake targeted sympathetic erosion repair work to agreed heritage standards.
- O1.2 To work with landowners and organisations such as Cadw, CRT to achieve authentic repair and reconsolidation work on nationally important structures and those important but undesignated sites such as limekilns and other industrial features.
- O1.3 To engage with local communities to encourage volunteer activity and provide opportunities for training in techniques to address erosion repair and reconsolidation.
- O1.4 To engage with volunteers to positively manage the Dell area at Plas Newydd in the spirit of the Ladies of Llangollen.
- O1.5 To ensure Welsh is promoted, with all public communications provided bilingually.
- O1.6 To ensure Welsh place names are used in all signage.
- O1.7 To provide opportunities for people to engage in public events through the medium of Welsh, working in partnership with organisations such as Menter Iaith.
- O1.8 To provide opportunities for people to record local Welsh place names and field names before they are lost.
- O1.9 To work with the local schools to develop projects to collect and record local stories, for example connections to past industries, folklore, local names.
- O1.10 To celebrate the cultural heritage in the area through establishing art projects with the local community.
- O1.11 To encourage linkages between the community museums of Corwen, Llangollen, Cefn Mawr and Oswestry, through possible joint exhibitions and events, relating to the landscape.
- O1.12 To develop events and activities that will celebrate local stories and heritage to engage the local communities.
- O1.13 To continue monitoring of structures listed in the WHS gazetteer through State of Conservation surveys every 5 years.



Land Management

Land management is a critical factor in shaping the future of the Our Picturesque Landscape.

Lack of land management along the valley floor has resulted in the key views of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site being lost over time, obscured by the growth of trees. The loss of views has been identified as a priority issue within the WHS Management Plan. The gradual deterioration of hedgerows is also changing the character of the landscape, with fields becoming larger, or fences replacing the traditional boundaries. Remnant individual hawthorn and trees mark the old hedge lines. This fragmentation of hedgerows reduces habitat connectivity and resilience.

The watercourses within the Our Picturesque Landscape face potential threats that would have a detrimental impact on the river habitat including a change in water quality, absence of tree cover, erosion and the poaching of river banks by livestock.

In-between the valley floor and the uplands, ffridd areas can be found, consisting of a mosaic of upland and lowland habitats. Favourable areas of ffridd support a mix of upland and lowland species including semi-natural grassland, woodland, heathland, bracken and scrub. The ffridd areas face much the same land management risks as those pertinent to upland moorland areas. Grazing stock density has a direct impact on the condition of the habitat and in-particular sustaining the diversity of plants found within semi-natural grassland areas. Bracken can also become too dominant within ffridd areas, which again is something that needs to be monitored and managed.

Calcareous grassland is another key habitat which fringes on the upland moorland areas. Grazing is an important factor in determining the favourable condition of such grassland in allowing this special community of plants to flourish. Stocking levels have been higher than desired in the past, adversely affecting the diversity of calcareous plants found. Encroachment of conifer trees and bracken is again of concern in some areas.

The uplands surrounding the Dee Valley support important moorland habitats that require ongoing management to be sustained in a favourable condition. Heather areas need to be burnt or cut on a rotational basis to support the greatest diversity of plant species and heather age. Mature heather provides shelter to wildlife, with more recently managed areas supporting younger heather plants and a greater diversity of species, such as bilberry, providing food for both wildlife and stock. The practice of heather management has declined in the uplands and ensuring the correct management regime is a challenge.

Maintaining the correct stocking levels is another challenge and has a direct influence on the condition of the moorland. Too low levels of grazing allow trees to become more dominant on the heather moorland which is undesirable. Too high stocking levels results in overgrazing of the fragile heather moorland species, with upland grassland species becoming more prevalent. Over recent times there has been a tendency for graziers to reduce the number of their sheep on these moorland areas. It is important that stock is continued to be kept on the upland areas as they actively manage the moorland through nibbling the heather, encouraging growth from new shoots. It is also essential for the graziers to keep their interest in the management of the moorland, improving the grazing for their stock, which in return also benefits the wildlife.

Changes in farming practices means that bracken is no longer cut as bedding for animals with bracken gradually extending its distribution, smothering other heather moorland plants. Controlling the spread of bracken is a challenge for moorland areas.

The area has a number of large estates, such as Rhug, Vivod, Llantysilio and Plas Berwyn that traditionally managed the land for sporting interest. Management of the moorland for game continues in some areas today. The game tradition has also left interesting landscape features, such as old shooting lodges and huts, with Liberty Hall being a prime example, reflecting the past significance of these activities locally. It is interesting to note that the fishing rights to the river in this area have been held by the fishing clubs over a number of years.

Threats

- T2.1 Lack of management resulting in the unfavourable condition of habitats.
- T2.2 Inappropriate stocking levels resulting in the unfavourable condition of moorland, calcareous grassland, woodland and ffridd habitats.
- T2.3 Poor connectivity of moorland, calcareous grassland, ffridd, woodland, river and canal habitats.
- T2.4 Loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees as a landscape feature and wildlife resource.
- T2.5 Graziers withdrawing their stock from the uplands due to the challenges of farming in these areas.
- T2.6 Lack of diversity within key habitats such as ffridd areas.
- T2.7 Bracken becoming increasingly dominant within the landscape.
- T2.8 Poaching of river banks by livestock.
- T2.9 Land management that has an impact on water quality and river wildlife.
- T2.10 The loss of key views of significant heritage features due to the lack of management of trees and woodland.
- T2.11 The lack of tree cover along the river corridor.
- T2.12 Sporadic colonisation by trees from neighbouring plantations on key habitats, for example moorland and limestone grassland.
- O2.5 To undertake plant surveys of ffridd areas in partnership with other organisations and volunteers to inform future management.
- O2.6 To arrange volunteer events to plant trees on identified ffridd sites and river corridors to increase the diversity of the habitat.
- O2.7 To work with Natural Resources Wales to establish management agreements relating to the stocking levels on the most sensitive sites.
- O2.8 To investigate developing possible pilot areas for recreating calcareous grassland and heather moorland.
- O2.9 To improve the connectivity between moorland areas through the strategic cutting of conifer trees to create connecting rides between moorland areas.
- O2.10 To create new water bodies at strategic sites to improve the connectivity between the River Dee and the canal.
- O2.11 To utilise a small grant programme to improve river bank management through tree planting and stock management.
- O2.12 To raise awareness of the public of the diversity of habitats, their special qualities and threats that are within the Our Picturesque Landscape area through events and information.
- O2.13 To bring graziers together to investigate the potential of entering into agri-environment schemes.
- O2.14 To provide volunteering opportunities to undertake hedgerow surveys and planting.

Opportunities

- O2.1 To reinstate key views of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site through selective tree thinning and management of the woodland for the benefit of the habitat.
- O2.2 To work with landowners and volunteers to reinstate old hedgerows and plant trees within the landscape to improve connectivity between tree / woodland habitats.
- O2.3 To continue to work with graziers and landowners to manage the moorland of the area through burning and cutting, building on previous work.
- O2.4 To manage the spread of bracken using current best practice in partnership with landowners and NRW.



Horseshoe Falls



Horseshoe Falls

Decline in Skills

Change in agricultural and building practices has resulted in the gradual decline in rural and artisan skills such as drystone walling, hedgerow laying, coppicing, charcoal making, heather burning, weaving, blacksmith work and traditional building techniques. Sustaining these skills is vital to underpin the future management of our natural and historic heritage. These traditional skills have left their stamp on the landscape with features such as the sun burst gates, the patchwork of managed moorland and traditionally laid hedges.

Threats

- T3.1 Deterioration in the quality of natural habitats and historic monuments due to the lack of people with the skills to restore them.
- T3.2 Rural skills contractors approaching retirement age, with a lack of experienced young people coming through creating a skills gap.
- T3.3 Lack of young people taking up traditional skills
- T3.4 Loss of artisan skills such as blacksmiths and weavers.

Opportunities

- O3.1 To support new job opportunities for people in traditional skills in partnership with others, benefiting the rural economy.
- O3.2 To provide volunteering opportunities for people to develop rural and heritage skills at sites such as Wenffrwd, Plas Newydd and along the canal.
- O3.3 To increase the interest in young people in rural and heritage skills through the young ranger programme.
- 3.4 To work with local colleges, such as Llysfasi and centres such as the Bodfari Skills Centre to provide opportunities for people to develop rural and heritage skills.
- 3.5 To work in partnership with other protected landscapes and partners to secure funding to develop a countryside skills trainee programme.
- 3.6 To stimulate interest in rural skills by hosting annual hedge laying and drystone walling competitions.
- 3.7 To develop cross generation working and projects, providing opportunities to reduce isolation, which has been identified as an issue for older men in particular.

Invasive Species and Plant Diseases

The River Dee, designated as a Special Area of Conservation, suffers from the spread of non-native species such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed. These invasive species outcompete native species and grow vigorously. A river catchment approach is needed to tackle this issue, with partnerships already established to take positive steps to deal with non-invasive species along the River Dee. Cotoneaster, a garden escapee and non-native species that can be found on the calcareous grassland along the Panorama.

The area is also at risk from plant diseases. Ash dieback has been recorded in the Project Area and is of concern resulting in the loss of trees along the canal corridor and the valley floor. There are currently no control measures for ash die back disease, however it is hoped that resilient trees will be identified in the future. It is possible that a programme of replacement tree planting with alternative species will need to be developed to counter those lost due to disease.

Phytophthora is a parasitic fungi family with particular strains a potential threat to certain species found on heather moorland and riverside trees.

Threats

- T4.1 The loss of ash trees from ash die back.
- T4.2 The loss of bilberry from the moorland due to the spread of the parasitic fungi *P. ramorum*.
- T4.3 The loss of alder from the parasitic fungi *P. alni*.
- T4.4 The spread of invasive species such as Himalayan balsam, cotoneaster and Japanese knotweed

Opportunities

- O4.1 Work in partnership with other broader initiatives (e.g. the Dee Invasive Non-Native Species (DINNS) Project) to remove non-native species, and to undertake awareness campaigns aimed at limiting their spread in the future.
- O4.2 Engage with river users and contractors to manage non-native species along the river Dee, appointing contractors where necessary, focusing on areas that are difficult to manage or access.
- O4.3 Train volunteers to tackle invasive species where possible.
- O4.4 Provide training and equipment to river users to facilitate the management of non-native species in the future.
- O4.5 To undertake a programme of cotoneaster removal.
- O4.6 Adopt and promote biosecurity good practice measures to raise awareness and reduce the risk of spreading invasive diseases in the area.



Himalayan Balsam

Attitudes and Understanding

Increased visitor pressure in the area presents additional challenges in terms of people management and anti-social behaviour. Litter is a particular problem along the Panorama and detracts from the outstanding landscape of the area. The local Llangollen Tidy Town group arrange clean up events to manage the problem. Graffiti also defaces some of the rocks at the Panorama, creating a feel that the area is uncared for and neglected. Evidence of fires are also found during the summer months in laybys, with the risk of wildfires a particular concern. The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership would like communities and visitors to feel proud of the Dee Valley landscape to help minimise such anti-social behaviour.

The site surveys undertaken by the Our Picturesque Landscape Development Phase at key sites within the landscape found that 75% of respondents were local to the area, with some sites being as high as 100%. Respondents commented that the scenic beauty of the area was the key factor for their visit and perhaps surprisingly 61% said that they were aware that they were in an AONB, but only 10% had any knowledge about the Picturesque. The majority of the consultation work focused at key visitor sites, where a high level of awareness and understanding could perhaps have been expected. Other off-site consultations, for example with a community group of Plas Madoc, residents found that they didn't visit the countryside, seeing it as being inaccessible due to health problems.

In common with many other areas across the UK, the Our Picturesque Landscape Area has an aging population. Of these the number of 65+ that are under the care of social services is higher than the national average. Social isolation within the elderly has been identified as a concern within the Denbighshire well-being strategy. Another national trend that is also reflected within the Our Picturesque Landscape is the increasing levels of obesity, which has doubled in the UK over the past 25 years. In Denbighshire the number of obese adults in 2012/13 was recorded as 56%, lower than the national average but still a worryingly high figure. The increase in childhood obesity is also of concern, particularly in deprived areas. Related to the increases seen in obesity, the number of adults undertaking physical activity has also shown a decline.



Plas Newydd, Llangollen

The Our Picturesque Landscape is a very accessible landscape, particularly along the canal tow path and is an excellent resource available to help improve people's mental and physical wellbeing. Often it is people's perceptions that need to be overcome, with those in most need of exercise believing that outdoor recreation is not for them, together with the lack of knowledge about suitable places to visit. These barriers can be addressed by working in partnership across a broad cross-section of health, community and provider groups, with targeted initiatives and health walks. There is also the potential to incorporate other activities, such as community art projects, to extend people's knowledge and understanding of the landscape.

The Project Area is linear with a number of communities of diverse character located along its length. Three local authority areas are included and it is important that the project effectively works across these borders to deliver positive change for heritage and the local communities.

Threats

- T5.1 Lack of awareness and understanding about the AONB and WHS designations within some communities.
- T5.2 Lack of understanding of the fragility of heritage features within the landscape.
- T5.3 Anti-social behaviour within the landscape, such as littering, wild fires and graffiti.
- T5.4 Increasing levels of obesity and inactivity within the community and related health problems, for example diabetes.
- T5.5 Increased social isolation, particularly related to older people.
- T5.6 Disjointed approach across the three local authority areas resulting in an uncoordinated approach to management and community projects.

Opportunities

- O5.1 Increase understanding amongst local communities about the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS designations.
- O5.2 To educate people about littering, wildfires and other antisocial behaviour in the countryside, promoting a positive message on how to behave.
- O5.3 To work with groups such as the Tidy Town Team, Aqueducts, CRT volunteers and the Friends of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley to undertake clean up days throughout the area.
- O5.4 To remove current graffiti from the rocks at the Panorama.
- O5.5 To raise awareness of the significance of the historic and natural heritage features of the Dee Valley.
- O5.6 To create better understanding of the importance of farming within the local area through talks and site visits.

Really not sure... But I have never seen in Trefor. I have looked online for it. There is a quarry in Trefor on the Llyn peninsula?

There are lime kilns in Ffroncyllte but they don't look like this....

Are us sure they are correct?



Lime Kilns, Trefor Quarry

Development

Llangollen and the Dee Valley is considered a picturesque area, with a diversity of buildings relating to different periods of time creating its distinctive character. Some early buildings have been modified or changed, for example window openings or loft conversions introduced. Maintaining the character of the Dee Valley is important to sustain the local tourism economy, with the area first established as a destination during Georgian times.



Access from Llantysilio Green to Horseshoe Falls

In other areas such as Cefn Mawr, developments have been dominated by industrial structures. For example, the now vacant Flexys site was most recently the site of a chemical production factory and detracts from the local area as a brownfield site.

Planning policy will have a direct influence on guiding future developments within the Our Picturesque Landscape area and it is important for partners to engage with both the local and national policy documents. The Project Area is mainly within the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB and World Heritage Site and Buffer Zone areas which are material considerations in the determination of any planning applications relating to the area.

Threats

- T6.1 Inappropriate new developments that are not in character or of appropriate scale.
- T6.2 Pressure from economic regeneration.
- T6.3 Balancing the need for employment/new housing with that of protecting local landscape character.
- T6.4 Threat to integrity of the WHS through inappropriate development which could lead to withdrawal of status by UNESCO

Opportunities

- O6.1 To work with developers to create a balanced approach to new development looking at visual impact and community needs.
- O6.2 To contribute to planning policy reviews and consultations.
- O6.3 To work with the planning departments regarding planning applications to mitigate the impact on the Our Picturesque Landscape character area.
- O6.4 To develop supplementary planning guidance relating to the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB/ and review and update existing Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS and Buffer Zone Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- O6.5 To utilise the Cadw Understanding our Urban Character reports for both Llangollen and Cefn Mawr and District areas to inform future planning policy and decisions and maintain the special character of these areas.
- O6.6 To ensure archaeological watching briefs are a condition of relevant planning applications.
- O6.7 To consolidate archaeological features through section 106 agreements where the opportunities arise.

Visitor Pressure

The tourism sector is a significant part of the economy of the Dee Valley, with its greatest asset being the outstanding beauty of the landscape. Over recent years, honeypot sites within the Our Picturesque Landscape have seen a dramatic rise in visitor numbers. Horseshoe Falls visitor numbers have more than doubled from 2012 to 2016. The increased visitor numbers have caused congestion issues at certain sites. Cars being left along roadsides and on roadside verges create traffic management issues along narrow roads such as the Panorama, in addition to damage to the verges themselves. The cars also dominate their surroundings, detracting from the scenic qualities of the landscape that people have come to enjoy. At particular sites, for example Trefor Basin, the increase in visitor numbers and cars cause problems for access for local residents and their ability to park their car by their homes, creating friction between residents and visitors.

An increase has also been seen in recreational outdoor activities such as kayaking, rafting, canoeing and mountain biking. Access to the river and canal is a contentious issue for water users and can create erosion issues along sensitive routes, such as at the Horseshoe Falls.

The use of certain areas by mountain bikers using paths illegally is of concern, causing both damage and erosion. The erosion of the scree slopes along the Panorama, is a particularly sensitive matter.

More visitors also result in more day to day management issues, litter, path maintenance erosion, dogs off leads and potential conflict between users.

Threats

- T7.1 Congestion issues caused by cars parked along roadside verges and access roads.
- T7.2 Damage to sensitive road verges from cars parking, some of which support calcareous grassland habitats and are within a Special Areas of Conservation.
- T7.3 Conflict between residents and visitors due to the lack of car parking.
- T7.4 Access erosion at sensitive historic and natural heritage sites through increasing user numbers.
- T7.5 Erosion of the scree slopes at Eglwyseg from the use by mountain bikers.

- T7.6 Increase in issues such as littering, wild fires, graffiti from increased visitor numbers.
- T7.7 Deterioration and aging of infrastructure, e.g. signage, toilets, footpaths.
- T7.8 Loss of tranquillity.
- T7.9 Dragging of canoes, kayaks and rafts along grass areas causing erosion.
- T7.10 Conflict between anglers and other recreation users on the rivers.
- T7.11 The spread of invasive species and diseases unintentionally by users.

Opportunities

- O7.1 To undertake further visitor surveys to increase understanding of who is visiting and why to inform future management decisions.
- O7.2 To educate users to change behaviours, for example ensuring canoes are carried to the water rather than being dragged along the grass.
- O7.3 To assist in developing a more positive relationship between river users along the River Dee at Ty Mawr and around the Llangollen area.
- O7.4 To redistribute people along the 11 mile corridor of the World Heritage Site and surrounding areas alleviating pressure on areas suffering from congestion and visitor pressure.
- O7.5 To extend the tourism season for businesses.
- O7.6 To develop new access sites to the World Heritage Site, for example Wenffrwd Pocket Park.
- O7.7 To review current marketing and promotion of key sites in the light of visitor pressure issues.
- O7.8 To promote alternative means of access to honeypot sites, including public transport, walking and cycling.
- O7.9 To provide new public transport service to highly congested areas where no provision currently exists, such as the Horseshoe Falls and Panorama.
- O7.10 To invest in new more appropriate facilities and infrastructure.
- O7.11 To learn from good practice from other areas.

Policy Changes

On June 23 2016 Britain voted to leave the European Union. It is uncertain what the implications of this decision will mean in reality to the Our Picturesque Landscape. 19% of the area is currently designated as a Special Area of Conservation, European Natura 2000 sites and governed by the European Habitat Directive. Future legislation amendments relating to European designated areas in response to Brexit could potentially have a significant implication on their future conservation status, protection and management.

Agriculture support through the Single Farm Payment, Glastir and past schemes have largely led the management direction of agricultural land in the UK and has a direct impact on stocking densities, woodland management, diversification and environmental projects. How agricultural subsidy and support will be dealt with in the future by the Government will have a significant impact on the Our Picturesque Landscape.

A significant amount of European funding has supported projects which have benefited the heritage of the Our Picturesque Landscape, in particular conservation and interpretation projects. Funding for similar initiatives in the future is uncertain.

The Welsh Government recently coordinated a review of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks in Wales under the Future Landscapes Programme. In its position statement the Government sets a vision of people valuing our landscapes for what they provide for the people of Wales and elsewhere.

The review recognised that the bodies and partnerships with responsibility for the designated landscapes should together promote the social, cultural and economic value and sustainable use of all landscapes, working across boundaries with Natural Resources Wales and with local partnerships. The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme provides the opportunity to demonstrate good practice and delivery for the vision outlined within the Future Landscapes Programme. The project has developed a shared vision and action plan that will make a positive contribution for the landscape, community, heritage and economy.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 aims to create a more integrated approach to managing our natural resources, with sustainability being a core principle.

The Act recognises the need to manage our natural resources in a sustainable way and places a duty on Natural Resources Wales to produce a State of the Environment Report, in addition to Area Statements, which will identify priorities, risks and opportunities. The Act is a welcomed area of legislation, but may add additional pressure on staff to provide information and engage with these new policy areas.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act is a further piece of important legislation which introduces 7 wellbeing goals which all public bodies in Wales must work towards:

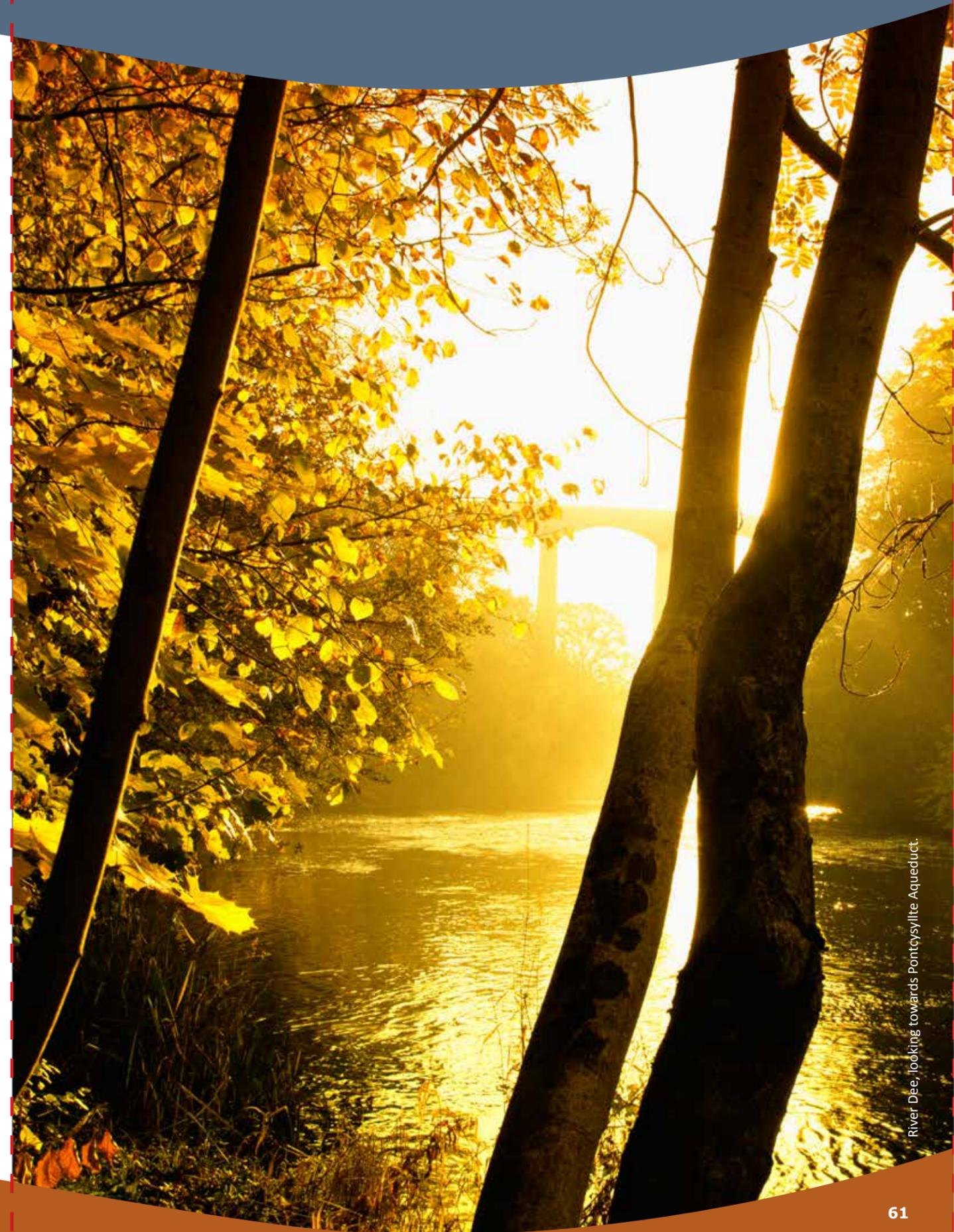
- A globally responsible Wales
- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Threats

- T8.1 Changes to the agriculture support system that could lead to negative changes in land management and stocking densities.
- T8.2 Changes to the conservation status of European designated sites.
- T8.3 Balancing the 7 wellbeing goals objectives.
- T8.4 Increased requirement for information linked to the development of Area Statements and other policy documents.

Opportunities.

- O8.1 To contribute to future consultations regarding changes to agriculture support and other policy changes, e.g. European designated sites.
- O8.2 To demonstrate good practice through the Our Picturesque Landscape Scheme in relation to the Future Landscapes Wales Programme, particularly in relation to working in partnership and innovation in resources.
- O8.3 To investigate alternative funding sources for the delivery of projects, for example crowd funding, plastic bag levy, charitable trusts and visitor payback schemes.
- O8.4 To feed in lessons learnt from relevant projects within the Our Picturesque Landscape Area into the Area Plans, Management Plans and Strategies.
- O8.5 To show best practice in the delivery of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act.



River Dee, looking towards Ponttysyllte Aqueduct.

The Our Picturesque Landscape presents opportunities to demonstrate good practice in terms of delivering the wellbeing goals.

Climate Change

It is difficult to predict the precise impact of Climate Change on the Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme area. Future general projections include hotter drier summers, wetter winters and an increase in more extreme weather conditions such as drought and flooding. Increased flooding episodes along the river valley would lead to increased erosion along the river bank, the loss of habitat and farmland and would result in a negative impact on the water quality. Extreme weather conditions would also cause greater pressure on historic monuments and footpaths through erosion.

Drier weather during the summer would dry out wet flush areas on the moorland and increase the risk of wild fires. Less water flow in rivers could have a potential impact on their special community of plants and animals. A warmer climate might also work against species on the extremities of their distribution such as the Black Grouse, which could result in their distribution

being pushed further north. Other species could be recorded in the area for the first time. Fragmentation of habitats resulting from the changing climate would have an impact on the distribution and numbers of species.

In addition to the impact on our heritage, climate change also has direct consequences for people. Agriculture and forestry could face changing crops, together with the increased risks from diseases, flooding storms and drought. An extreme drop in water levels resulting from drought would have an impact on water availability for abstraction from the River Dee for the canal system and as a water source. It is worth noting that the Dee is a highly regulated river and this would only occur in extreme circumstances. Damage to buildings along the river corridor from flooding could also be experienced. Dry weather during the summer months may lead to increased visitor pressure on outdoor activities and the increased erosion of paths.

Threats

- T9.1 Changing climate conditions leading to the loss of habitats and farmland.
- T9.2 Increased flooding episodes resulting in increased erosion along the river banks and a reduction in water quality.
- T9.3 Damage to historic features from flooding, wind and more extreme weather conditions in general.
- T9.4 Changes to the distribution of plants and animal species.
- T9.5 Changes in agricultural crops in response to change in growing conditions.
- T9.6 Increased threat from wildfires.
- T9.7 Increased risk of outbreaks of heather beetle on heather moorland.
- T9.8 A threat to pollination from changing bee and plant flowering life cycles in response to changes in the climate which may result in the lack of synchronisation.

Opportunities

- O9.1 Raise awareness and understanding about how everyone can make a positive contribution in reducing the threat of climate change.
- O9.2 Strategic tree planting schemes along the river corridor to minimise erosion and slow the flow of water within the river corridor, thus minimising the risk of flooding and making the banks more resilient to erosion. Tree cover would also provide shade, creating a comfortable microclimate for stock and river species during hot weather conditions.
- O9.3 Woodland and tree management to reduce the risk of dead wood entering the river and increasing flood risk.
- O9.4 Upgrade susceptible footpaths to withstand greater erosion damage.
- O9.5 Monitor the impact of water on footpaths to determine if localised drainage is required.
- O9.6 Create grass and wildflower field margins.
- O9.7 Work with landowners to create more wet flushes and pond areas.
- O9.8 Work with landowners to fence off sensitive river bank areas to prevent trampling from stock.

- O9.9 Work with landowners to plant more woodlands, shelter belts and restore hedgerows which will improve habitat connectivity in addition to providing shelter for stock and crops.
- O9.10 Work with landowners to restore stone walls to provide shelter for stock.
- O9.11 Work with the graziers to positively manage the moorland to ensure a diversity of age structure, creating wildfire breaks to minimise the potential loss from a wild fire event.
- O9.12 Work with the graziers, farmers, land managers and National Resources Wales to ensure that the habitat is in a good condition to support species such as black grouse.
- O9.13 Education of the public about the risk of wild fires.
- O9.14 Manage the moorland to increase the diversity of heather age and incorporate strategic fire breaks to reduce the risk from large wildfires extending over vast areas.



Climate change workshop



Pont Cysyllte

3 The vision

3.1 The vision for 2023

By 2023 we will be able to say that

The Dee Valley is a dynamic and picturesque landscape which supports a rich natural and cultural resource, accessible to all. The valley has a network of thriving communities that understand and value the area's cultural heritage and the contribution it makes to the health, wellbeing and economy of the area. They actively engage in its management, conservation and interpretation.

The valley has a strong identity as an area that has for generations attracted people in search of sublime beauty and it continues to welcome visitors today. The outstanding universal value of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site and landscape of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is appreciated by those visiting and a balance between visitor needs and the often fragile nature of sensitive areas is achieved through models of best practice in sustainable tourism.

3.2 Aims and objectives

The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership aims to:

AIMS	OBJECTIVES
Conserve and restore special features within the landscape	To protect and conserve at least 4 key sites within the area To reinstate and conserve 7 key views within the area Increase the capacity for managing the landscape by recruiting and training volunteers
Bring the importance of the landscape closer to people	To develop a range of learning opportunities for all To provide a variety of interpretation that inspires and informs people about the landscape To work with young people, to engage and inspire, by developing a range of activities.
Invest in the resilience of key sites.	To protect the areas within the scheme from further vehicle encroachment To encourage visitors to the area to visit the less well known parts of the WHS and AONB To encourage positive behavioural changes by highlighting the fragile nature of these sites
Make the area more accessible, both physical and intellectual	To open up sites that have previously had no public access To provide an additional gateway site with access and parking as a gateway to the WHS and AONB To Improve the information available electronically to better show the scope and range of attractions in the area
Improve a range of key habitats and their connectivity, engaging with landowners	To work with landowners to manage the environment for the benefit of biodiversity To bring key areas of woodland back into management



Pen y Pïgyn viewpoint

3.3 Meeting the outcomes for heritage

Heritage Lottery Fund Outcomes	Heritage			People			People		
	better managed	in better condition	identified/recorded	developed skills	learnt about heritage	volunteered time	negative environmental impacts will be reduced	more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage	local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit
OUR PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME PROJECTS									
A Conserving the Picturesque									
A.1 Improving the view	xx	xx	x	x	x	xx	x	x	xx
A2 Dinas Brân Gatehouse	xx	xx		x	x	xx	xx	x	xx
A3 Pentre Felin Wharf restoration	xx	xx			xx			xx	x
A4 Restoring our industrial heritage	xx	x	x	xx	xx	xx		xx	x
A5 Invasive Species	xx	xx	Xx	x	x	xx	xx	x	x
A6 Countryside Grant Scheme	xx	xx	xx	x	x	xx	xx		xx
A7 Connecting Habitats	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	xx	xx	x	x
A8 Panorama Management	xx	xx	x	x	x	x	xx		xx
A9 Wenffrwd Pocket Park	x	xx		xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx
A10 Picturesque Bus Service	x	x			x		xx	x	xx
A11 River / Canal Access Management	xx	xx			x	x	xx	x	xx
B Accessing the Picturesque									
B1 Picturesque inspired circular trails	x	x			xx			xx	xx
B2 Improving access	x	xx			x		x	xx	xx
B3 Horseshoe Falls access and viewpoint	xx	xx			xx			xx	xx
B4 Interpreting the landscape			X	x	xx	xx		xx	xx
B5 Portable Camera Obscura				X	xx	x		xx	x
B6 Celebrating the picturesque through art				xx	xx	xx		xx	xx
C People and the Picturesque									
C1 Restoring the Dell, Plas Newydd	xx	xx	x	xx	xx	xx	x	xx	x
C2 Engaging Young People				xx	xx	x	x	xx	x
C3 Art inspired by landscape				xx	xx	xx		xx	xx
C 4 Engaging communities	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx		xx	xx
C 5 Outreach				x	xx	x		xx	xx

KEY	X	Meets outcome partially	XX	Meets outcome well
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4 Governance and Delivery

4.1 Governance – the Partnership

The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme brings together a cross section of key stakeholders concerned with the heritage and communities of the Dee Valley, including local authorities, third sector organisations, Natural Resources Wales, Cadw and representatives from the local community. It is based on a long established working relationship between many of the organisations through a joint interest in the World Heritage Site and the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB is the lead partner for the scheme.

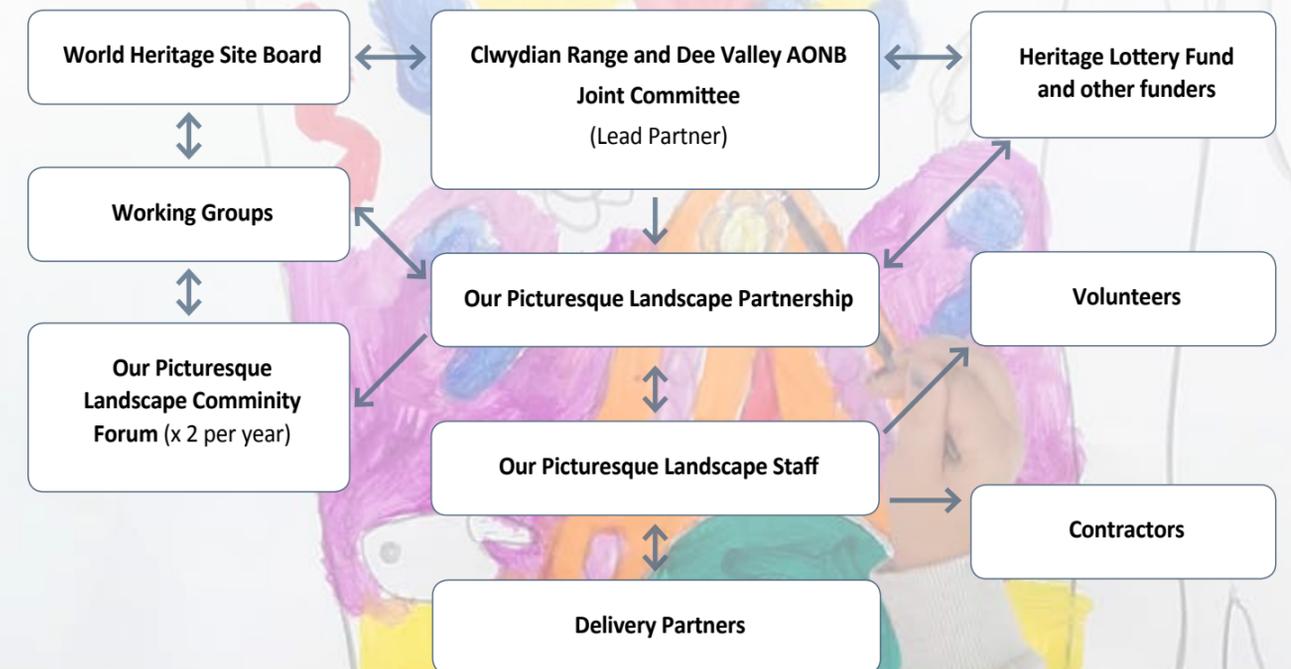
The local community is represented on the Partnership through the Friends of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley and the Aqueducts Groups. However, the Partnership recognises the need to broaden its community engagement, building on the work completed during the Development Phase so that more people can become more directly involved in the project delivery. A bi-annual community forum will be established during the Delivery Phase with the aim of providing project updates, consulting on proposals for future work and receiving suggestions for future activities. As the Project enters the Delivery Phase the Partnership membership will be reviewed and if necessary amended.

A small dedicated team of Project Manager, Project Officer and Administration/Communication Support Officer will be appointed to take forward the scheme on behalf of the Landscape Partnership Board. The Project Team will be appointed by Denbighshire County Council as the lead authority for the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Joint Committee, with the project staff being part of Denbighshire Countryside and Heritage Service's Team.

The delivery of the Our Picturesque Landscape Scheme will be guided by the Landscape Partnership and the Project Team will report to the group, in addition to providing updates to the AONB Joint Committee and Partnership Board and the World Heritage Site Management Board. The Project Manager will be responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of the scheme, reporting to the Heritage Lottery Fund, monitoring delivery partners, volunteers and contractors, in addition to managing the other members of staff relating to the Project. The majority of the scheme will be delivered by the project staff. However, certain elements will be delegated to the Landscape Partnership Members, and these elements are clearly identified within the Project Overview.

4.2. Our Picturesque Project Structure

Projects



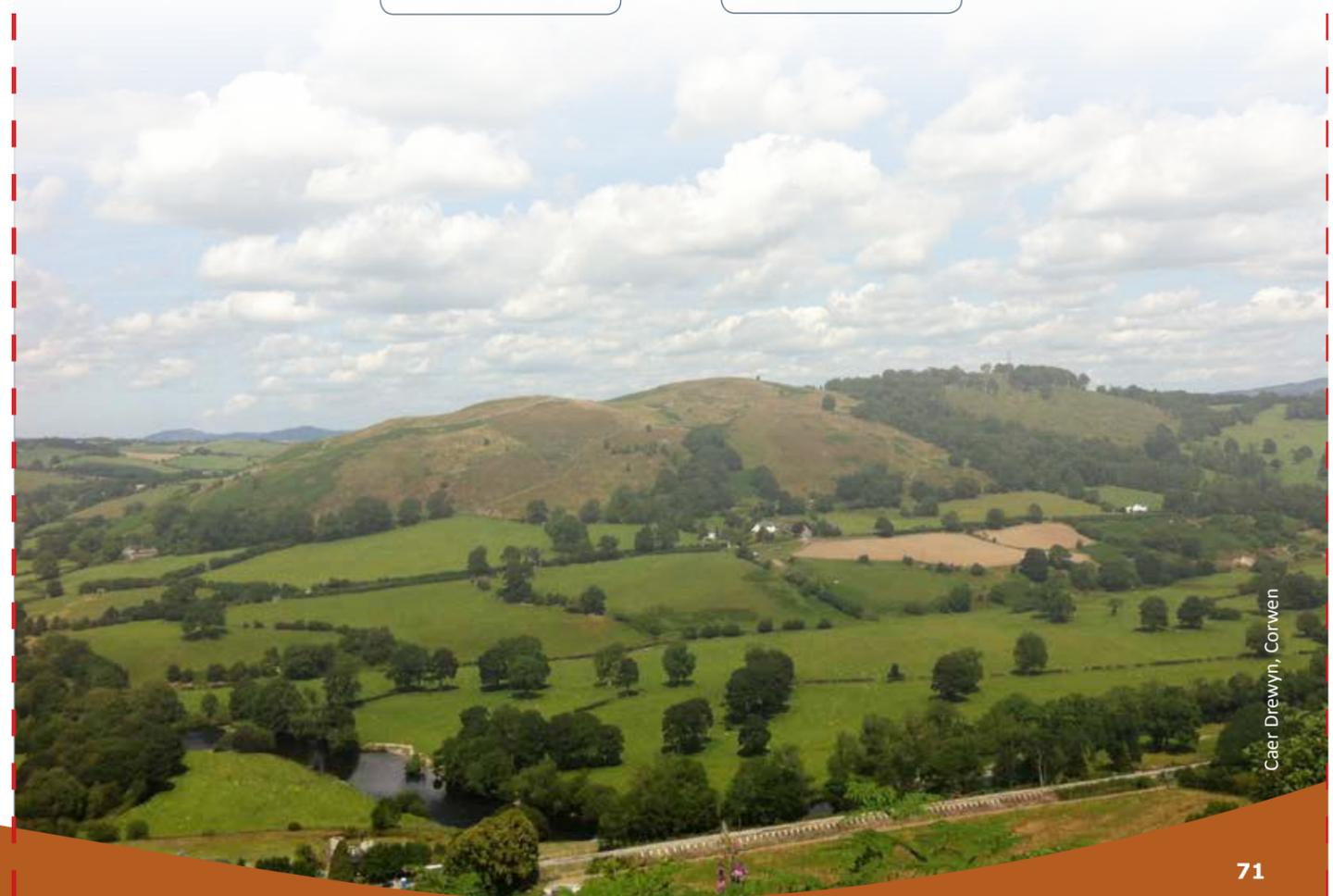
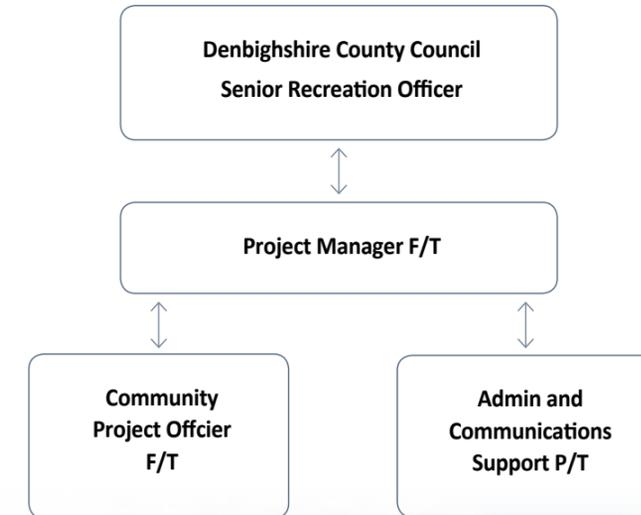
4.3. Our Picturesque Landscape Partners



Bryniau Clwyd a Dyffryn Dyfrdwy
Clwydian Range and Dee Valley
Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



4.3. Our Project Team



Caer Drewyn, Corwen

5.1 Overview and themes

As a result of the consultation undertaken and work done during the Project Development Phase a series of themes have arisen and these have shaped the development of the scheme.

They are:

Conserving the Picturesque

This theme focusses on the physical landscape and habitat projects across the area, enhancing and conserving what remains of key elements of the Picturesque. The projects will deliver a range of benefits to both the physical heritage assets and the communities that live, work and visit the valley. There will be opportunities for increased learning and appreciation of this unique landscape.

Accessing the Picturesque

This theme focuses both on physical access improvements and access and information around the Dee Valley. It is about sustainable transport options and encouraging visitors to the area to explore more widely. It will look at improving connections in the Dee Valley both physically and perceptually.

People and the Picturesque

This theme provides support training and engagement opportunities for local people and visitors to the area. It will use a range of activities including arts to celebrate the uniqueness of the Dee valley, to capture and retell the stories of the area and provide a range of events for people to attend and engage with as well as training opportunities for volunteers, businesses and the community.

The three themes have arisen from extensive consultation and stakeholder engagement and provide a clear direction for the projects the scheme aims to deliver. The projects proposed also link into existing and future projects in the scheme area and will complement and add value to these as well as to the HLF scheme.

The scheme will run over 5 years and provide a lasting legacy for the landscape and people of the Dee Valley as well as broad range of benefits and opportunities for people to engage on a number of levels. As part of the development work that has been undertaken a number of reserve projects have been identified. This is in order that the scheme can be ready to maximise new funding and partnership opportunities that may arise during the delivery phase. They will also be ready should any of the existing projects become undeliverable.

The activity plan will deliver a range of opportunities for people to engage with virtually all the projects at some level, including events, interpretation, volunteering and training workshops.

1 AONB
Listed Buildings 264

3 Regionally Important Geomorphological Sites
Common Land 1,231.37Ha

7 Historic Landscapes
Scheduled Ancient Monuments 24

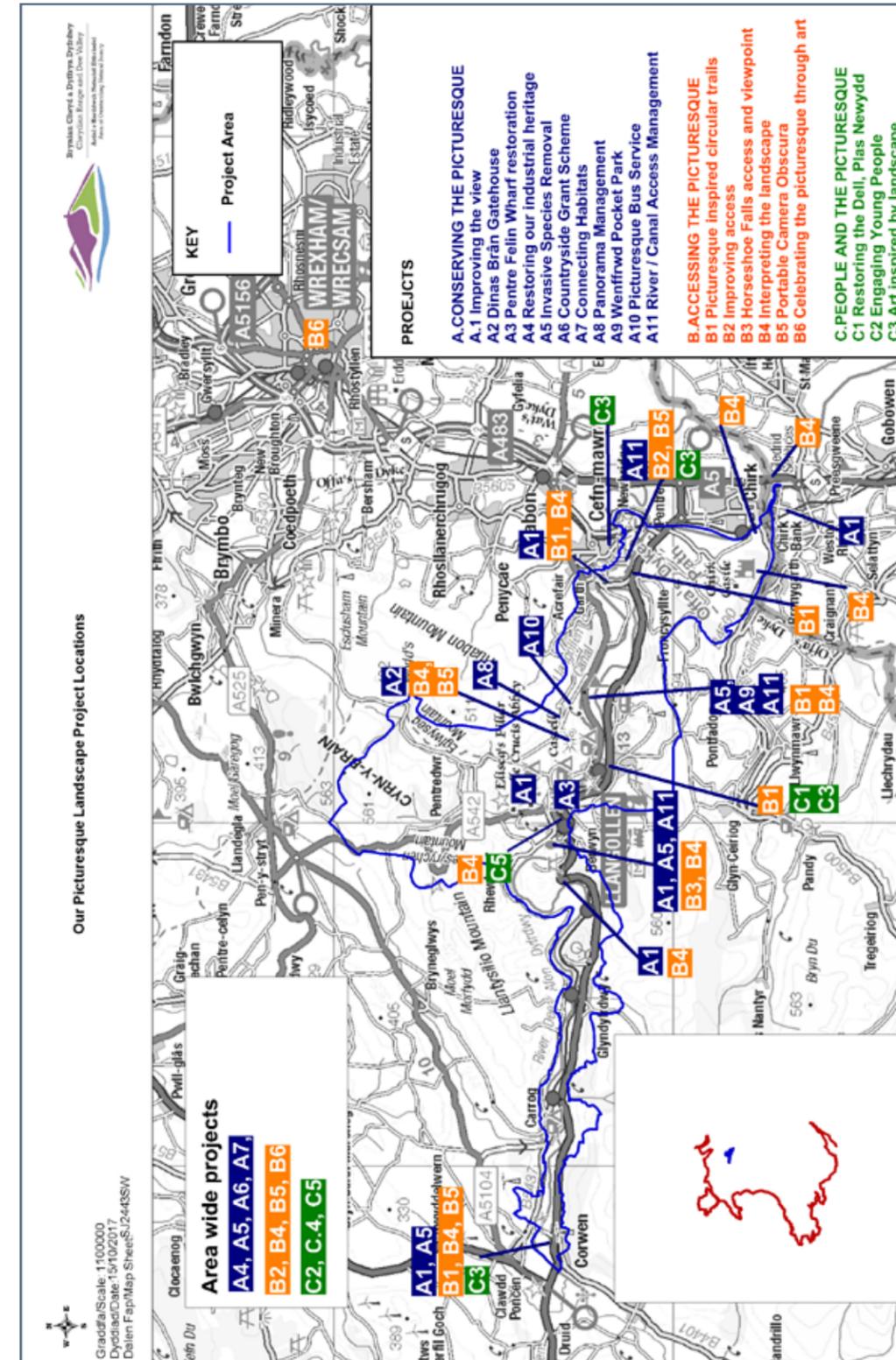
1 Historic Parks and Gardens
Rights of Way 127.7km

6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

3 Special Areas of Conservation

1 World Heritage Site
Open Access Land 1,516.91Ha

5.2 Project Map



5.3 Table of projects

Project	Ref No	Description	Outputs	Outcomes	Lead Partner	Threats and Opportunities Ref
A Conserving the Picturesque						
Improving the View	A1	To restore key views within the Dee Valley that have drawn visitors to the area for centuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 sites to be brought into better management. 1 planting scheme. 1 woodland management plan. 25 volunteer task days. 5 volunteer training days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The views will be opened up and enhanced for the enjoyment of all. The woodlands will be brought into better management. Volunteers enabled to carry out a range of conservation and woodland management tasks. 	CRDV AONB	T 1.1 T2.10 T 9.2 O2.1 O2.2 O2.6 O9.3
Dinas Brân Gatehouse	A2	The Castle gatehouse will be cleared and consolidated with hand forged interpretive gates installed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 metres of path improved. Gatehouse opened up for public access. Gatehouse structure conserved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access gained to a previously inaccessible area. Enhancements to the Scheduled Ancient Monument. Enhanced experience of the Castle remains. 	CRDV AONB	T1.2 T 1.3 O1.1 T5.2 T5.3 T7.4 O5.5 O5.7 O7.11
Pentre Felin Wharf Restoration	A3	Repairs to the canal liner which has failed in a number of locations due to a combination of groundwater and consequential canal water eroding under the canal and resulting in a loss of support to the canal liner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement to 225m of canal liner with reduced leakage. Improvement in bank stability and condition. Improved condition of adjoining ground. 225m of improved or safeguarded towpath. Maintain feed water to Hurleston Reservoir. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better maintained heritage. Improved access along the tow path. 	Canal & River Trust	T1.1 O1.2, O8.2
Restoring our Industrial Heritage	A4	Identify and enhance smaller and less well known heritage features in the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 structures enhanced/ restored. 20 people trained in heritage skills such as lime mortaring and site recording. 20 people will have volunteered time. 5 events linked to the conservation work delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancements to heritage features which will be recorded and conserved. Increased awareness of the heritage of the area among local communities and visitors. Local community has better understanding of the range of heritage features in the area. 	CRDV AONB	T 1.1 T 1.3 T 1.4 T 1.8 T 3.1 T3.3 T5.2 O 5.5 O 1.1 O 1.2 O 1.3 O3.7 O3.2
Invasive Species Removal	A5	Working in partnership with the DINNS Partnership (the Dee Invasive and Non-Native Species) the Project will focus on tackling the more difficult and inaccessible areas of invasive species, removing their presence from large stretches of the river network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 task days for volunteers. 120 Volunteer days contributed to the project. 5 sites managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved habitat condition. Reduced risk of soil erosion due to alternative plant species recolonising. Increased awareness and involvement in invasive species management. 	CRDV AONB	T4.4 O4.1, O4.2, O4.3, O4.4, O4.5, O4.6
Countryside Grant Scheme	A6	A Countryside Grant Scheme aimed at landowners will be established to deliver landscape and habitat improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 5 schemes per year. Enhanced biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat connectivity strengthened. Improved management of the area. Enhanced landscape amenity. Enhanced agricultural productivity. Improved relationship with landowners. 	CRDV AONB	T 2.1 T2.2 T 2.3 T2.4 T2.5 T2.6 T 2.7 T 2.8 T 2.9 T2.10 T2.11 T.12 O 2.2 O 2.3 O 2.4 O 2.5 O 2.6 O 2.7 O2.8 O 2.9 O 2.10 O 2.11 O2.14 O3.2 O3.7 O9.9 O9.10 O9.11 O9.12 O9.14
Connecting Habitats	A7	Targeted management across a range of habitats, including grassland, ffridd, woodland and water courses to strengthen habitat connectivity, working with landowners and farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 schemes delivered over 4 years 4 farmers engaged. 2 demonstration events. 10 volunteer events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An improvement in habitat connectivity. Better management of marginal areas of habitat. Better understanding of management requirements for key areas. 	CRDV AONB	T 2.1 T2.2 T 2.3 T2.4 T2.5 T2.6 T 2.7 T 2.8 T 2.9 T2.10 T2.11 T.12 T3.1 T 3.2 T 9.1 O 2.2 O 2.3 O 2.4 O 2.5 O 2.6 O 2.7 O2.8 O 2.9 O 2.10 O 2.11 O2.14 O3.2 O3.7 O9.2 O9.6 O9.7O9.8 O9.9 O9.11 O9.12
Panorama Management	A8	Landscaping and access management work to address the impacts of increasing traffic and numbers of visitors on the Panorama.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 parking bays formalised. 2 clean-up projects delivered. 10 volunteer events held. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area will be more resilient to visitor pressure. The landscape will be enhanced. There will be a greater awareness amongst visitors of the special and sensitive nature of the area. 	CRDV AONB	T2.1 T2.2 T2.5 T2.7 T9.1 O2.3 O2.4 O2.8 O2.12 T5.1 T5.3 O5.1 O5.2 O5.3 T7.1 T7.2 T7.4 T7.5 T7.6 O7.8 O 7.9

Wenffrwd Pocket Park	A9	Transform a former landfill site in to a pocket park creating a community outdoor recreation area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of 1 new park. Additional access to canal. 20 volunteer events and training opportunities. 50 people attending training courses. 730m2 of new accessible path. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of what the whole area has to offer. People visiting are staying longer. Habitat connectivity strengthened. Greater distribution of visitors across the World Heritage Site. Reduced pressure in other areas of the World Heritage Site. 	CRDV AONB	T3.2 T3.3 O3.2 O3.3 O3.7 T5.4 O5.8 O5.9 T7.1 T7.3 T7.4 O O7.4 7 O.5 O7.6 O7.8 7.10T9.1 O9.6
Picturesque Bus Service	A10	Establish a public transport service to key destination sites around the Dee Valley during the summer months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 bus service established. 800 people accessing the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced congestion pressure along the Panorama and at Horseshoe Falls. Increased access for those without their own transport to countryside areas around Llangollen. Greater distribution of visitors across the area. 	CRDV AONB	T7.1 T7.2 T7.3 O7.4 O7.8O7.9 O7.10O7.11
River / Canal Access Management	A11	The project will work with the outdoor sector in the Dee Valley to promote and manage responsible access to the River Dee and canal by all users, developing codes of conduct around river and canal access, improving infrastructure and raising awareness of the ecological and cultural importance of these areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1Ha of land improved. 20 people trained as ambassadors. 4 volunteer task days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of the area's fragile nature. Continuation of the partnership beyond the life of the project. More positive behaviours from people accessing the area. Promoting responsible access. 		T1.2 T5.1 T5.2 O5.1O5.2 O5.7 T7.8 T7.9 T7.10 O7.1 O7.2 O7.3 O7.4 O7.7 O7.10 O7.11
B Accessing the Picturesque						
Picturesque Inspired Circular Trails	B1	A series of short walks to encourage people to discover and explore the quieter, less known paths of the Dee Valley, whilst also celebrating and increasing awareness about the significant people and their past stories that make this landscape special.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A series of 3 short walks across different areas produced. Footpath signage improvement. 3 launch events held at Llangollen, Froncysyllte and Corwen. 15km of routes promoted. 45 people attending guided walks of the route. 2 walk leader training events held. 10 new walk leaders trained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in people discovering the less known parts of the Project Area, distributing users more broadly across the Dee Valley. An increase in people's awareness and understanding of the heritage and key historic characters that are part of the landscape's story and make the area special. Local people utilising more of the local footpath network on their doorstep. Local paths better signposted and waymarked. 	CRDV AONB	T1.6 T1.7 T5.4T7.4 O1.6 O1.12 O7.4
Improving Access	B2	Physical access improvements to provide new key footpath links within the Our Picturesque Landscape Scheme Project Area and to enhance the quality of existing paths to make them more accessible as identified by local community groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50m of path improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved quality of footpath connections between heritage sites and local communities. More people using their local footpath network. Help to lessen the impact of increasing visitor numbers on the most heavily visited sites by promoting alternatives. 	CRDV AONB	T1.1 T1.2 T5.2 T5.4 O1.1 O1.3 O5.2O5.5 O5.9 O5.10
Horseshoe Falls Access and Viewpoint	B3	To open up access to the 'stone noses' structures that are part of the Horseshoe Falls water intake system to feed the Canal. New fencing and signage will be installed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create 100m2 of new access. Open up 1 site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New access created. Increase awareness of the World Heritage Site. Enhanced visual aesthetics of a key gateway site within the World Heritage Site and the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. 	CRDV AONB	T1.9 T5.1 T5.2 T5.3 O1.12 O5.1 O5.2 O5.5 O5.7
Interpreting the Landscape	B4	To deliver of a range of interpretation projects to increase people's awareness and understanding of the varied and outstanding heritage of the Project Area, which will include signs/boards, leaflets, digital technology, art projects and live performances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretation at 8 key sites. Promotional material produced. 10 events across the area. 1 Action Plan delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People will have an increased awareness of the special character of the area. The visitor experience of the area will be enhanced. There will be a strong sense of identity for the Project Area that will help to promote the area as a visitor destination. 	CRDV AONB	T1.2 T 1.6 T1.7 T1.9 T5.1 T5.2 T5.3 T7.4 O1.5 O1.6 O1.9 O1.12 O5.1 O5.2 O5.7 O5.6 O7.4 O7.9 T 1.6 T1.7 T1.9 T5.1 T5.2 O1.5 O1.6 O1.9 O1.12 O5.1 O5.2 O5.7 O7.4
Portable Camera Obscura	B5	To work with the Creative Industries Department at Glyndwr University to design and create a portable camera obscura, which can then be used at sites and events throughout the Project Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x portable camera obscura designed and constructed. 1 launch event. 10 events using the camera obscura. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of skills for students at Glyndwr University. Greater appreciation of the beautiful Dee Valley for visitors and residents. 	CRDV AONB	T1.7 T1.9 T5.1 T5.2 O1.5 O1.6 O1.9 O1.12 O5.1 O5.2 O5.7 O7.4

Celebrating the Picturesque through Art	B6	To work with Art institutions, particularly Wrexham Museum and Gallery, to show some of the major original art works featuring the area as part of a celebratory exhibition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 major exhibition. 5 Events with which people can engage. 100 people engaging with the events. 2000 people visiting the exhibition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of the importance of the Dee Valley to the Picturesque Movement. Demonstrating the importance of the heritage of the Our Picturesque Landscape Project Area to new audiences. Encourage people to visit the Our Picturesque Landscape Project Area from the exhibitions. Sharing and celebrating the achievements of the Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme. 	CRDV AONB	T 1.6 T1.7 T1.9 T5.1 T5.2 O1.5 O1.6 O1.9 O1.11 O1.12 O5.1 O5.2 O5.7 O7.4
C People and the Picturesque						
Restoring the Dell, Plas Newydd	C1	To recreate and restore some of the key features of the Dell, as it would have been when The Ladies lived at the house. This includes opening up vistas, recreation of woodland meadow, enhancements to the river, removal of inappropriate growth such as Laurel, path improvement works and the installation of seats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced planting in the Dell. Improvements to the features of the Cyflymen. Access improvements to the Dell. 5 new seating projects installed minimum. 25 volunteer activities. 3 horticultural training sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picturesque 'feel' of the Dell recreated through enhancements which leads to an improved experience for visitors. Local community engagement with the site enhanced. Skills of volunteers involved increased. Biodiversity of the Dell increased through more variety of planting. Heritage features of the Dell better understood. Ladies of Llangollen's role and importance appreciated. 	CRDV AONB	T1.1 T1.2 T1.3 T1.4 T1.5 T1.9 O1.1 O1.2 O1.3 O1.4 O1.5 T3.1 T3.3 O3.2 O3.3 O3.4 O3.7 T5.2 T5.5 O5.5 O5.7 O5.8
Engaging Young People	C2	To develop a range of activities and resources to engage children and young people in heritage related projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 young ranger days held. 5 school projects delivered. 1 education pack for use with schools produced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge and understanding by children and young people of the special heritage of the Dee Valley, including its links to the Picturesque. Schools enthused about the heritage of the Our Picturesque Landscape. 	CRDV AONB	T1.6 T1.7 T1.9 O1.5 O1.7 O1.8 O1.9 O1.12 T5.1 T5.2 T5.3 O5.1 O5.2 O5.5
Art Inspired by Landscape	C3	Artist residencies will be developed through the life of the project to encourage and involve communities to produce art of all media inspired by the modern day landscape. The project will also provide support for workshops during the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Artist in residence projects completed. 9 workshops arranged. 100 people engaged. 3 exhibitions/events resulting from the residencies. 200 people attending exhibitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced appreciation of the landscape. Understanding of how artists perceived the landscape in the past and how it is now perceived. People will have learnt new skills and may be inspired to continue their artistic involvement. Local art groups will have been inspired. 	CRDV AONB	T 1.6 T1.7 T1.9 T5.1 T5.2 O1.5 O1.6 O1.9 O1.11 O1.12 O5.1 O5.2 O5.7 O7.4
Engaging Communities	C4	To work with project partners to deliver events around the project themes such as guided walks, festivals and heritage craft events, including a celebration event for the 10th Anniversary of the World Heritage Site Inscription.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Event programme produced (5) and distributed widely both in print and on line 200 events/activities organised through the lifetime of the project. Links to website and social media. 120 social media posts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People will have become involved in a range of events from practical tasks to visiting exhibitions via walks/talks and artistic activities. Increased understanding of the special nature of the Project Area, this will be evaluated throughout the project life and alterations made as necessary Visitors will appreciate the area more fully and will encourage others to visit and thus enhance the local economy Individuals' wellbeing and health will be improved whether by walking, socialising at a group event or becoming involved in something outside their comfort zone. 	CRDV AONB	T1.6 T1.7 T1.9 O1.5 O1.7 O1.8 O1.9 O1.12 T5.1 T5.2 T5.3 O5.1 O5.2 O5.5 O5.7 O5.8
Outreach	C5	To develop a series of initiatives and events to remove barriers that currently prevent people from underrepresented groups from accessing the Our Picturesque Landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 specific outreach events arranged. 100 people from target groups participating (65+ and those with a disability). 150 health walks arranged. 750 participants on health walks in the area. 2 walk leader training events held. 25 walk leaders trained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in the % of people over 65 visiting the Project Area An increase in the % of disabled people visiting the Project Area. Greater knowledge and understanding of the heritage of the Our Picturesque Landscape Area by currently underrepresented groups. Greater number of people participating in regular health walks in the Our Picturesque Landscape Project Area. Improved health benefits form people undertaking regular walks. 	CRDV AONB	T1.6 T1.7 T5.4T7.4 O1.6 O1.12 O5.5 O7.4

5.4 Changes between round 1 and 2

Changes have been made to the programme and the funding allocation for the individual projects as a result of the Development Phase. The revisions to the scheme have come about largely through the ongoing community and stakeholder engagement as well as more detailed costing being developed as detailed discussions have progressed. The overall value of the scheme has increased with the HLF contribution remaining the same. Additional match funding has been sought and mostly secured for the increase.

Round 1		Round 2	
Delivery Costs	£ 1,752,657	Delivery Costs	£ 2,024,520
HLF Grant	£ 1,504,700	HLF Grant	£ 1,504,700
Match Funding	£ 247,957	Match Funding	£ 519,820

The boundary for the Project Area has remained the same as at Round 1 as it properly reflects the projects aims and objectives, linking back to the stories around the Picturesque. It encompasses all of the key areas and elements that make it Picturesque. Consultation with local communities has also confirmed the appropriateness of the area designated.

6 Sustainability and evaluation

6.1 Sustainability

Overview

The Our Picturesque Landscape programme will deliver a range of high quality projects and events during the life of the scheme that will provide a long lasting and positive legacy relating to the landscape and the people that live, work and visit the Dee Valley.

A key component of the scheme's long term sustainability is the strength of the partnership membership and their ongoing commitment to the area and its people. It will provide a structure for the maintenance of the capital works delivered and also further development of the Project's community engagement work, building upon the foundation created by the Scheme.

The project's aims and objectives will be incorporated into the future Management Plans for the AONB and the WHS with work delivered through their relevant partnership /management boards.

	Project sustainability – key outcomes	Lead Partner
Programme A Conserving the Picturesque	The views will have been conserved and enhanced Key heritage features will have been restored Habitat improvements will have been carried out A new pocket park will have been created Engagement with landowners will result in better management of land for key habitats	AONB/ WHS
Programme B Accessing the Picturesque	Better access will have been created – both intellectual and physical New sites will have been opened up for access Key sites will have been interpreted and create a sense of place for the area A range of Illumination projects will have been delivered A portable camera obscura will have been created and toured key sites	AONB/ WHS
Programme C People and the Picturesque	The Dell at Plas Newydd will have engaged a range of volunteers The Dell will have had key features recreated and restored Schools will have engaged with the project A range of art inspired events will have been delivered A touring art exhibition will have linked the communities through the area Artist residencies will have encouraged people to engage with the scheme Volunteers will have access training opportunities	AONB/ WHS

Successful delivery of the Scheme aims and objectives will help to ensure the successful and sustainable management of the area in the long term, strengthening the existing partnerships and building new ones to help ensure the benefits of the Scheme are ongoing.

The Scheme will be delivered by a dedicated project team over 5 years with the final year focusing on ensuring that the projects are completed or handed over as appropriate. Each project plan has identified an exit strategy for that particular element of work following the completion of the Landscape Partnership Scheme.

Iv moved this to be inkeeping with the rest of the book

7 Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 Introduction

The appended plan will be the framework for monitoring and evaluating the achievement and impact of the Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The success of the planned approach will rely on externally appointed project evaluators, partners and staff. Monitoring and evaluation will be a continuous process and as such it is important that it is embedded into the day to day delivery of the projects.

External evaluators will be appointed at the start of the delivery phase who will support staff to collect the data and information required, act as a critical friend and provide the evaluation interventions as required by the project team.

7.2 Purpose of the project evaluation and monitoring

The project evaluation will assess the impact of the Our Picturesque Landscape Scheme on people and the landscape.

It will:

- Collect data against a range of outputs and outcomes
- Monitor that the Scheme is delivering to its aims and objectives
- Provide reports to the partnership and funders as required
- Feedback into the Projects to improve performance and future work
- Provide evidence of the scheme's impact
- Ensure that the partnership is working together effectively
- Inform the legacy planning for the Scheme

7.3 What the Scheme hopes the evaluation will achieve

The evaluation will look at the impact of the Scheme, assess if it is meeting the proposed outputs and outcomes, how successfully they have been delivered and how the Scheme is meeting its own aims and objectives. It will also evaluate the following:

- Lesson learned
- Unexpected outcomes
- Economic benefits

In addition the Scheme will be evaluated against its delivery against the core HLF strategic purposes for Landscape Partnership Schemes that:

- Heritage will be better managed, in better condition and identified and recorded
- People will have developed skills, learned about heritage and volunteered time
- Communities will have reduced negative environmental impacts, more and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage and the local community will be a better place to live, work or visit.

The Our Picturesque Landscape Partnership also has the following aspirations for the Scheme evaluation:

- That it will be meaningful and constructive
- It will effectively share lessons learned
- It will bring out the people stories
- It will be inclusive and engage with project partners and a broad range of stakeholders and participants including local communities.
- It will have good baseline data to effectively track the changes.
- It will be realistic in terms of what can be achieved within the parameters of the Landscape Partnership Scheme
- It will include self and external evaluation
- It will have a constructive and positive influence on the Projects and Partnership
- It will have a clearly defined monitoring and evaluation plan

7.4 Sharing the evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation data and feedback will be shared through a final report, presentation and events to the Partnership, other partners and organisations as well as the community and volunteer groups. It will be available on the organisations websites. A knowledge sharing event for other Landscape Partnership schemes will also be arranged.

Chirk
Carrog
Dyffryn
Glyndyfrdwy
Horseshoe Falls
Corwen
Cefn Mawr
Valle Pen y Pigin
Crucis Eglwseg
Plas Newydd
Ponycysyllte
Trefor
Dinas Brân
Llantysilio
Froncysyllte



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

Ardal o Barchwrch Naturiol Eiddoriedad
Awdurdod Cymunedol Pen-y-bont-y-dderwen



Pontcysyllte
Safle Treftadaeth Y Byd
World Heritage Site



Our Picturesque
Landscape Partnership
Scheme