



North Pennines National Landscape



Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme

End of Scheme Evaluation



Selected project delivery images from Fellfoot Forward celebration event ~ March 2024

Final version ~ June 2024

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Summary ~ Fellfoot Forward at a glance

Fellfoot Forward is a Landscape Partnership Scheme funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) that has delivered a range of heritage activity over 4 years between April 2020 and March 2024. From information collected during the project period and presented in the final evaluation, the Fellfoot Forward scheme has delivered and can celebrate the following key achievements:

18 projects delivering a **£3.4 million investment** within the Fellfoot Forward landscape area

For natural heritage and species recovery

- **1,125ha of landscape and natural habitat** enhanced and maintained through partnership work with local landowners and managers
- **44km of new or resorted hedgerow** enhancing ecological connectivity with **23,505 hedgerow and in field trees** planted
- **1.9km of electricity cable** undergrounded
- **2,000 survey records** generated for **local Biological Records Centres**
- **£461K additional investment** accessed through **environmental grants and Farming in Protected Landscapes**
- **68 land managers and farmers engaged** to increase **understanding of habitat restoration and species recovery.**

For built heritage

- **2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments** recorded and cared for with improved visitor access
- **Kirkoswald Castle** removed from the Heritage at Risk Register

For participation and engagement

- **5,542 people** engaged through **245 activities, talks, walks and events**
- **1,766 school children** involved in **education and learning activity**
- **1,530 days or 7 full time working years** from **610 volunteers**
- **Engaging with 66 local community groups and schools**
- **1,311 people** benefitting from **82 training and skills workshops**
- Creation of **85 new interpretation features** and digital products created to **increase understanding and awareness**
- **30 community groups** benefiting from grants totalling **£90,000** to **enhance and raise awareness of the heritage of the Fellfoot area**

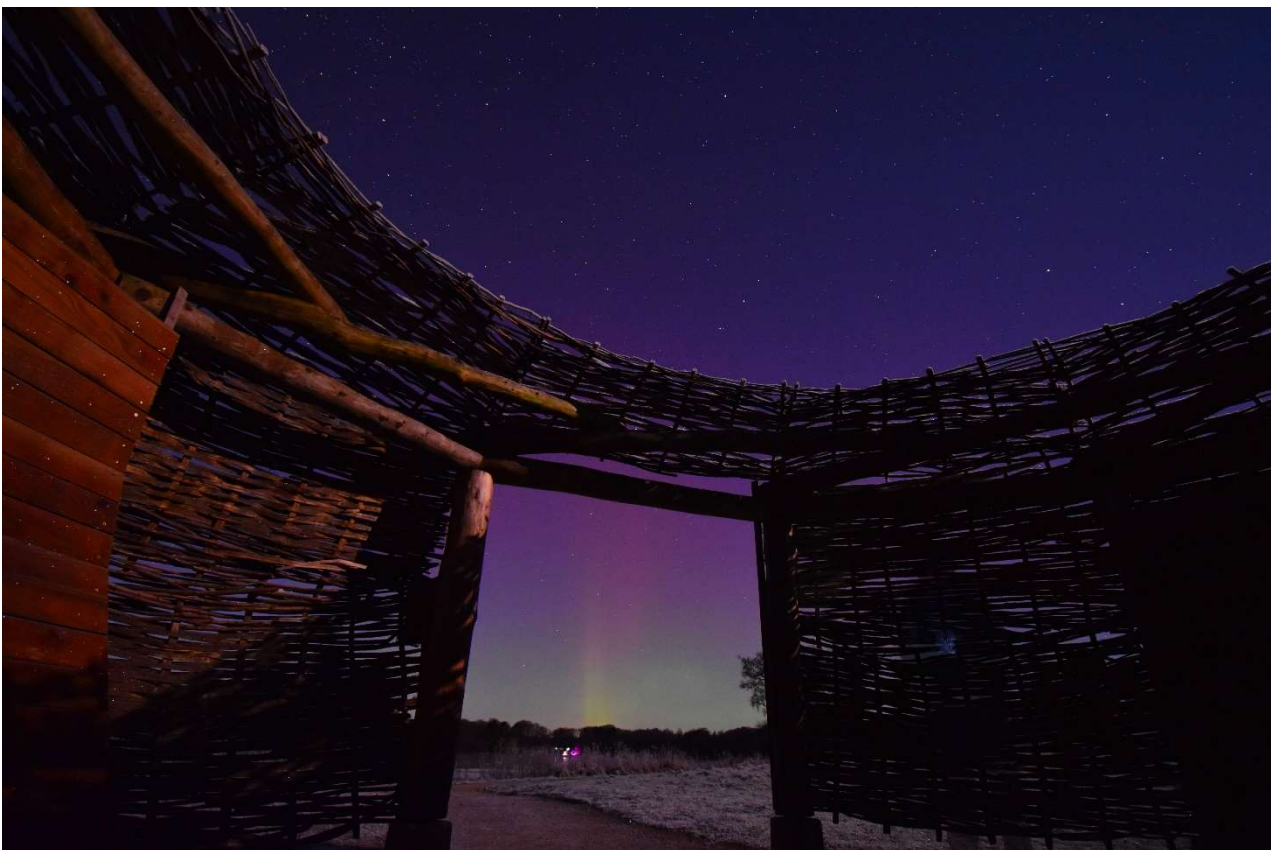
- Opportunities for **4 trainees to gain experience** and move on to further employment within the natural heritage sector

For increasing access to heritage

- **148km of access improvements** created and promoted with **6 new trails**, 5 high level walks and 1 cycle trail offering increased accessibility

For increasing sustainability

- **21 farms benefitting** from sustainable land management best practice advice
- **9 community buildings** receiving energy audit, funding advice and signposting
- **4 community buildings** receiving capital grants to improve energy conservation measures



Stars in the Tarn ~ The Nest ©David Ambridge

1. What is a Landscape Partnership?

Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership programme

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), renamed in January 2019 as The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), distributes money raised by the National Lottery to support projects involving the national, regional and local heritage of the United Kingdom. Landscape partnerships grew out of 14 Area Schemes that were introduced in 1999.

In 2004 HLF's second Strategic Plan (SP2) saw the replacement of Area Schemes by Landscape Partnerships. From 2008 to 2012, Landscape partnerships were part of HLF's third Strategic Plan (SP3) while HLF's Strategic Framework (SP4), covering the period 2013-2018, was launched in October 2012. Landscape partnerships were the only HLF programme to focus primarily on rural areas, and offer grants of between £250,000 and £2 million. Schemes aim to conserve the heritage within areas of distinctive landscape character.

Landscape Partnership Schemes are complex grant programmes. They are delivered through a partnership of bodies, normally including statutory agencies, local authorities, voluntary and community organisations. One of the goals of the programme is that schemes should actively engage local communities, while also meeting local social, environmental and economic needs.

Landscape Partnership Schemes need to address the conservation of the natural, built and cultural heritage. They are comprised of a number of discrete projects that include heritage conservation and restoration, access, education and training delivering evenly across all of the following of the nine programme outcomes:

Heritage will be:	People will have:	For communities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better managed• In better condition• Identified and recorded	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed skills• Volunteered time• Learnt about heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The local area will be better to work, live or visit• Negative environmental impacts will be reduced• More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage

Landscape Partnership working in the Fellfoot Forward scheme area

The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)¹ Partnership produces a statutory Management Plan every five years, which guides work for that period. Consultation on the 2014 to 2019 Management Plan revealed a strong local impetus for heritage conservation in the fellside area of the North Pennines AONB, east of Carlisle. The AONB Partnership identified a *Landscape Partnership Scheme* (LPS) as the best vehicle for a project of this scale and ambition, and prioritised development of a landscape partnership submission.

The *Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme* came together from a series of meetings with Local Authorities, partner organisations and community groups in 2015. This was followed by a period of consultation, which included community drop-ins and events, questionnaires and

¹ Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were renamed as National Landscapes in November 2023. Given the timeline of development and delivery, for this document reference to the North Pennines AONB and Partnership is continued...

engagement with specialist groups such as the North Pennines AONB Access and Recreation, Tourism, Historic Environment and Geopark Advisory Groups.

This consultation revealed the special qualities of the Fellfoot Forward area: ancient connections between Fellfoot settlements and the high escarpment; little-known footpaths and prehistoric archaeology; endangered species and rare habitats. It revealed a community desire to come together across historic boundaries to protect a shared heritage.

The first iteration of the Fellfoot Forward LPS was submitted as a Stage 1 Landscape Partnership Scheme bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF, then Heritage Lottery Fund) in May 2016. Following NLHF advice, further consultation and project development was carried out, and the North Pennines AONB Partnership completed a Functional Analysis of the Fellfoot landscape, and a Theory of Change model. These two documents informed key priorities for the LPS by identifying the heritage assets of most importance in sustaining landscape functions, and the processes and stakeholders best placed to conserve them.

This work provided clarity and more detail to the original Stage 1 submission. Following resubmission in May 2017 the partnership was awarded a 'Stage 2 pass' in November 2017. This provided £161,300 funding from NLHF, matched by various sources, to develop the *Fellfoot Forward* proposals into a full Landscape Partnership Scheme, that was submitted to the Heritage Fund in August 2019. The date of the initial application meant that the scheme was subject to HLF's application and implementation process during SP4.

Landscape

Landscape partnerships contribute significantly to the UK's commitment to implementation of the European Landscape Convention. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) sees 'landscape' as multifaceted, multi-purpose and multifunctional, the product of the action and interaction of humans and nature over time. Landscape is the place where people live and work, and which people visit. Landscape provides vital benefits such as food, water and other 'ecosystem services'. Landscape is valued by people for many different reasons and is 'used' in many different ways.

The ELC's definition of 'Landscape' as '*an area as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and /or human factors*' is a rich concept that encompasses but goes beyond the traditional (geomorphological, ecological, archaeological, or aesthetic) approaches. The ELC makes it clear that people are at the heart of all landscapes (the commonplace and 'degraded' as well as the well-known) each of which has its distinctive character and meaning to those who inhabit or visit it. The ELC approach defines landscape as:

- The result of the complex interaction of natural (e.g. geology, soils, biodiversity), cultural (settlement, land use), the perceptual and aesthetic (experience, associations, tranquillity, colour);
- Linking past, present and future as the dynamic manifestation of physical processes and human intervention (has always changed and will continue to do so)
- Important to people, multiple and sometimes contested values, including tangible and intangible dimensions;
- Existing at any scale from large tracts of land such as mountain ranges, to small locally important spaces such as parks and streetscapes.

There is a considerable overlap between the provisions of the ELC and the objectives of the Heritage Fund's landscape partnership programme, which is the only national grant programme whose objectives largely coincide with the ELC philosophy.



Map showing the location of landscape partnerships that were awarded funds by HLF from 2004 to 2018

2. What did Fellfoot Forward set out to achieve?

“We will restore and connect habitats, protect and celebrate our heritage, and create access that encourages a deep and lasting engagement with this special place. Our legacy will be a more resilient landscape, left in the hands of communities better-equipped to protect and celebrate their own particular Eden.”

Fellfoot Forward Landscape Conservation Action Plan extract

Background and strategic context

The Fellfoot Forward LPS covers an area of 267 km² in Cumbria, with part of the area lying in Carlisle City Council and part in Eden District Council². This is a sparsely populated region, with approximately 5,400 people, or 20 people per km². Its inhabitants live in the distinctive fellfoot villages which give the landscape partnership its name, or in outlying farms. From the centre of the scheme area the nearest city, Carlisle, is 20 miles away and outside the scheme boundary.

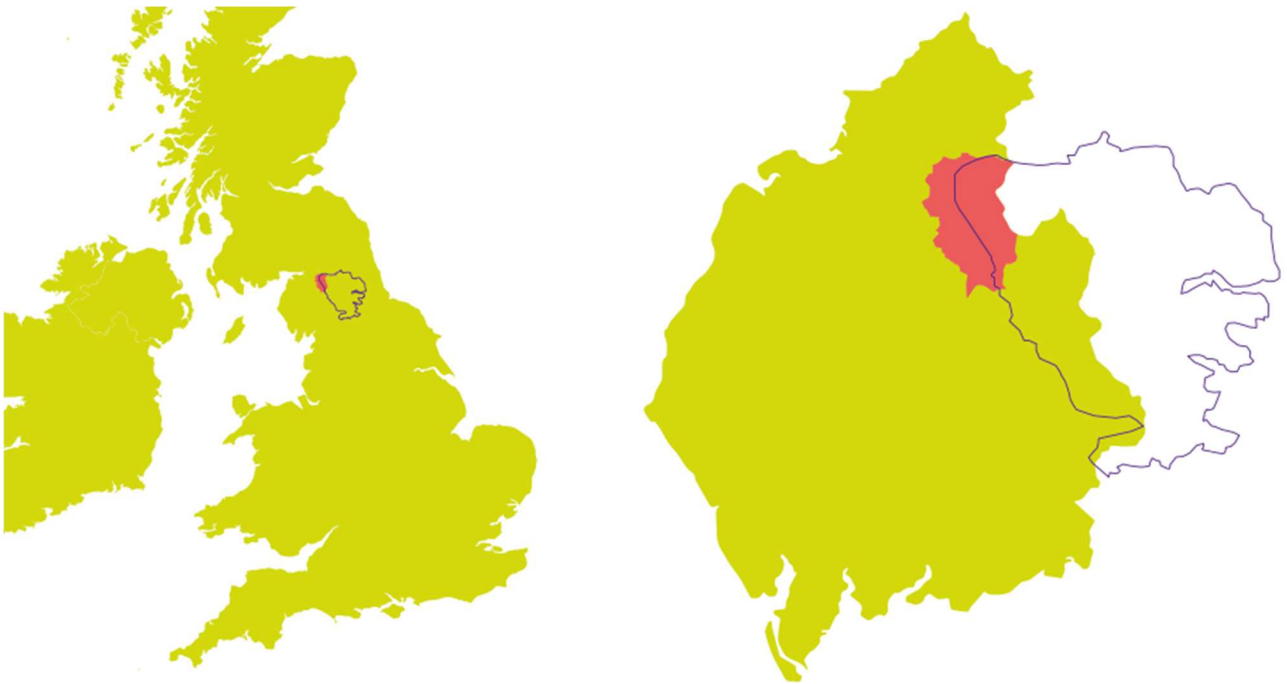
To the west, the river Eden flows through a landscape of gently rolling hills, pasture and wood pasture, arable fields and woodland. To the east, a dramatic escarpment rises steeply to moorland with three plateau summits, the highest of which is Cold Fell with an altitude of 621m. The project area is divided centrally by the North Pennines AONB boundary, which runs north-south.

The key component of the development phase was the production of a Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) that formed the basis of the second round application and subsequent project delivery. Key extracts taken from the LCAP describing key heritage features of the area includes:

- 8,000 years of human stories can be read here: from the Neolithic stone circle of Long Meg and her Daughters to today’s Fellfoot Forward communities. The field patterns and ‘lonnings’ travelling up the fellsides tell of ancient farming cycles
- The project area is home to 25 Scheduled Monuments and 48 listed buildings, along with countless unmarked or undiscovered heritage features.
- A landscape of high fells with peatlands and acid grasslands; a limestone dominated escarpment with woodland and ‘becks’ running through steep-sided valleys, and a post-glacial landscape of rolling farmland giving way to the broad Eden Valley.
- The complex geological past is celebrated in several designations: it is part of the North Pennines UNESCO Global Geopark and includes seven Local Geological Sites and one National Geological Review site.
- Natural heritage sites are under the protection of ten Sites of Special Scientific Interest, three Special Areas of Conservation and the North Pennines Special Protection Area.
- Red List and Annex 1 bird species can be found in the rivers, moorlands, farmland, woods and hedgerows across the area, along with other endangered wildlife such as white clawed crayfish, water vole, red squirrel, pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly and brown-banded carder bee.
- The traditional way of farming is generations-old and lies behind many of the processes and heritage assets in the landscape.
- There is a strong connection between people and landscape with five local history groups and Kirkoswald Environment Group active in the area.
- Eden valley visitors seek landscape, scenery and a quieter, more relaxed, off the beaten track destination. They explore along paths, tracks and quiet roads or strike off along one of the ‘lonnings’ up onto the higher fellsides, which connect the Fellfoot Forward villages with the high, remote fell tops.

² On 1 April 2023 local government in Cumbria changed. The six district councils and Cumbria County Council were replaced by two new unitary authorities, Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council.

It was recognised in the LCAP that it is the combination of these many natural, built and cultural heritage assets, coupled with strong local connections, that make the Fellfoot Forward landscape partnership area a significant and unique place.



The Fellfoot Forward area (red) and North Pennines National Landscape (black line) in the UK and Cumbria context



The Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Area

The scheme vision and aims

We will connect our fellfoot communities, strengthen their ties to the landscape, and work together to realise our shared vision for a ‘slow’ landscape; one that is naturally resilient, rich in wildlife, accessible, and that encourages deep engagement with our natural and cultural heritage.

Communities will be better connected, more resilient and ‘Future Fair’.

Taken from the Landscape Conservation Action Plan:

Curiosity, exploration and immersion in a ‘slow’ landscape rich in nature and culture will lead to reflection and care for our heritage. Ours is a landscape of prehistory, of gentle walks and majestic views, of rolling byways and traditional village greens, of veteran trees and ancient woodlands, and of rich wildlife and hidden histories. It is a slow landscape, its quiet drama uniquely suited to an immersive and reflective experience of a rich biodiversity and a deep past.

Over an 18-month development period, the partnership worked closely to better improve its understanding of the natural, cultural and built heritage of the landscape, the physical and perceived barriers to access, and the opportunities for visitors and local people. The partnership engaged with communities that live and work in the landscape, spoke to people and encouraged ideas and opinions, to better understand local need. Through this process, a series of audits and development documents were produced that identified 17 different yet interrelated projects around three strategic themes that would help to work towards the vision for the Fellfoot area. One additional project ‘Future Fair’ worked across the themes and sought to embed sustainability across all activity and promote the ‘Future Fair’ approach to all communities and visitors.

The relationship between the programme themes, 5 aims, 15 objectives, and the National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes, are shown effectively in the table (overpage) as taken from the LCAP Part 1.

The outcomes that the Heritage Fund require from Landscape Partnership Schemes are:

1. Heritage will be better managed.
2. Heritage will be in better condition.
3. Heritage will be identified/recorded.
4. People will have developed skills .
5. People will have learnt about heritage.
6. People will have volunteered time.
7. Environmental impacts to communities will have been reduced.
8. More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage.
9. The landscape will be a better place to live, work and visit.

As part of the development phase, a Landscape Character Assessment divided the Fellfoot Forward area into 11 landscape types, with a further division into 22 local character areas. The summary map highlighting the main landscape character types, with a brief description can be seen in **Appendix 1**.

It is noted that the total project area of 267 km² for the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership is 30% greater than the maximum guideline area for Landscape Partnership Schemes that was set at 200 km². The justification for this is that by concentrating on the landscape at this scale, programme delivery becomes focussed on an area of geographic and ecological coherence.

Fellfoot Forward ~ the relationship between the Vision, Programme themes, Aims, Objectives, and the National Lottery Heritage Fund Outcomes

LPS Programme	Vision	Aims	Objectives	NLHF Outcomes									
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
A: Conserving and Restoring	The Fellfoot Forward landscape and its communities will be better connected, more resilient and 'Future Fair'	To create a landscape that is more resilient and richer in wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase quality, quantity and connectivity of habitats To protect and conserve key endangered species To reduce risk of flooding through natural flood management techniques 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		To conserve distinctive heritage features of the Fellfoot Forward landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To conserve key historic sites To conserve and enhance key heritage community buildings 										
To increase understanding of the landscape and its unique heritage		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To engage communities with researching, recording and sharing histories To inspire schools and young people with the landscape's outstanding heritage To train land managers in protecting and conserving natural heritage To train communities in wildlife identification, recording and local conservation To empower our visitor businesses to champion our heritage assets 			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
			To create meaningful connections between a wide range of people and their heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To creatively and collectively interpret the stories around our heritage features To offer differently accessible, immersive walks through the area's 'slow landscape' To empower local communities to protect and enhance their heritage assets 				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
All programmes	To ensure all our actions are Future Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To underpin all our activities with a 'Future Fair' approach To promote a 'Future Fair' approach to all our communities and visitors 			✓	✓		✓			✓		✓

Programme themes and project delivery

From the work undertaken in identifying the programme objectives during the development phase, three strategic themes emerged, to bring together all of the identified project delivery. These were:

<p>Conserving and restoring</p> <p>The Conserving and Restoring programme primarily contributes to achieving the two aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a landscape that is more resilient and richer in wildlife• Conserve distinctive heritage features of the Fellfoot Forward landscape <p>The conserving and restoring programme will deliver these aims by increasing the quality, quantity and connectivity of habitats; by protecting and conserving key endangered species, and by reducing risk of flooding through natural flood management techniques. It will conserve key historic sites, and conserve and enhance key heritage community buildings</p>
<p>Engaging and Training</p> <p>The Engaging and Training Programme primarily contributes to achieving the aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase understanding of the landscape and its unique heritage <p>The engaging and training programme will deliver this aim by engaging communities with researching, recording and sharing histories; inspiring schools and young people with the landscape's outstanding heritage; training land managers in protecting and conserving natural heritage; training communities in wildlife identification, recording and local conservation, and empowering visitor businesses to champion our heritage assets.</p>
<p>Revealing and Connecting</p> <p>The Revealing and Connecting Programme helps contribute to achieving the aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create meaningful connections between a wide range of people and their heritage <p>The Revealing and Connecting Programme will deliver this aim by creatively and collectively interpreting the stories around Fellfoot Forward's heritage features; offering differently accessible, immersive walks through the area's 'slow landscape', and empowering local communities to protect and enhance their heritage assets.</p>
<p>For all programmes</p> <p>In addition to the programme themes, Future Fair capitalised on opportunities across the landscape and sought to embed sustainability across all project activity and help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure all our actions are Future Fair

Fellfoot Forward's Programme themes, from the Landscape Conservation Action Plan

The programme themes were aligned to the HLF/NLHF objectives for landscape partnerships that were awarded funding from 2014 onwards. As well as conservation or restoration of the natural and cultural heritage there was a need for successful schemes to have an emphasis on community participation, and on providing opportunities for individual participation and training in heritage skills. At the outset, the Partnership intended to deliver a programme of 18 discrete yet inter-related projects taking place within the Fellfoot Forward area, as demonstrated in the following mix of project activity.

THEME A ~ CONSERVING AND RESTORING ~ 6 projects contributed to this theme made up of:

Project	Lead partner
A1 Better Becks	Eden Rivers Trust
A2 Species Recovery	RSPB
A3 Wild Connections	North Pennines AONB Partnership
A4 Monuments at Risk	North Pennines AONB Partnership
A5 Going Underground	Electricity North West
A6 Community Buildings	Cumbria Action for Sustainability



Better Becks ~ Natural flood management and river restoration

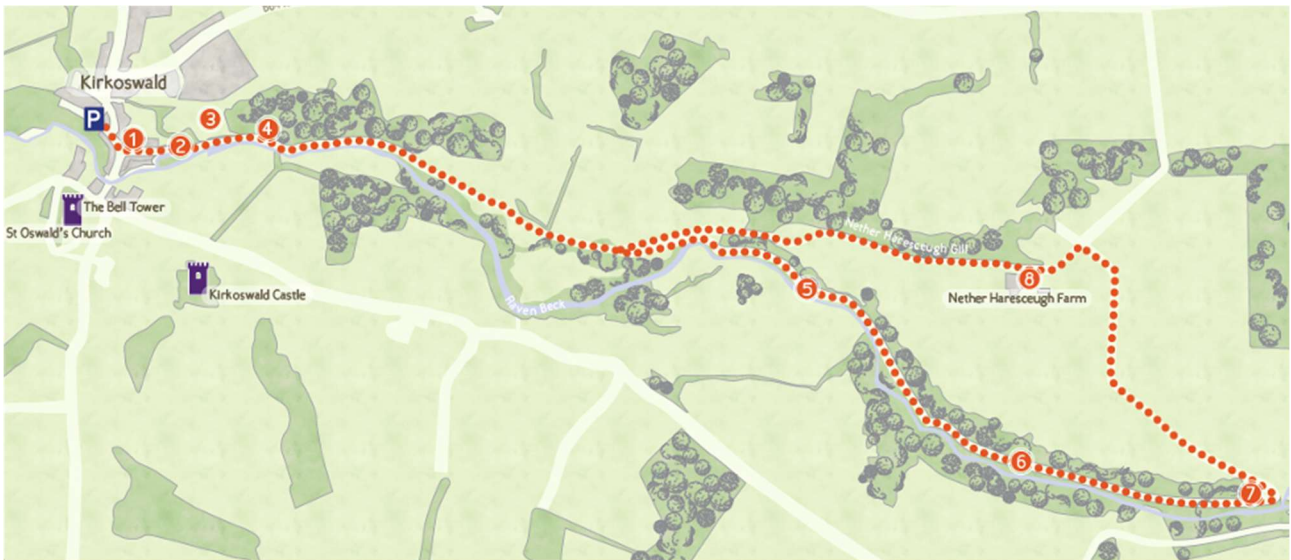
THEME B ~ ENGAGING AND TRAINING ~ 6 projects contributed to this theme made up of:

Project	Lead partner
B1 Uncovering the Past	North Pennines AONB Partnership
B2 Farm Futures	The Farmer Network
B3 Citizen Science	Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre and Cumbria Wildlife Trust
B4 Next Generation	North Pennines AONB Partnership
B5 Fellfoot Welcome	North Pennines AONB Partnership plus Eden District Council and Carlisle City Council
B6 Trainees	North Pennines AONB Partnership



THEME C ~ REVEALING AND CONNECTING ~ 5 projects contributed to this theme made up of:

Project	Lead Partner
C1 Bringing the Past Alive	North Pennines AONB Partnership
C2 Stars in the Tarn	North Pennines AONB Partnership
C3 Slow Trails	North Pennines AONB Partnership
C4 Arts Connections	North Pennines AONB Partnership
C5 Community Grants	North Pennines AONB Partnership



Kirkoswald slow trail walking route



Seen and Unseen community arts ~ supported by the Community Grant

THEME D ~ ACROSS THE WHOLE PROGRAMME

Project	Lead Partner
D1 Future Fair	Cumbria Action for Sustainability

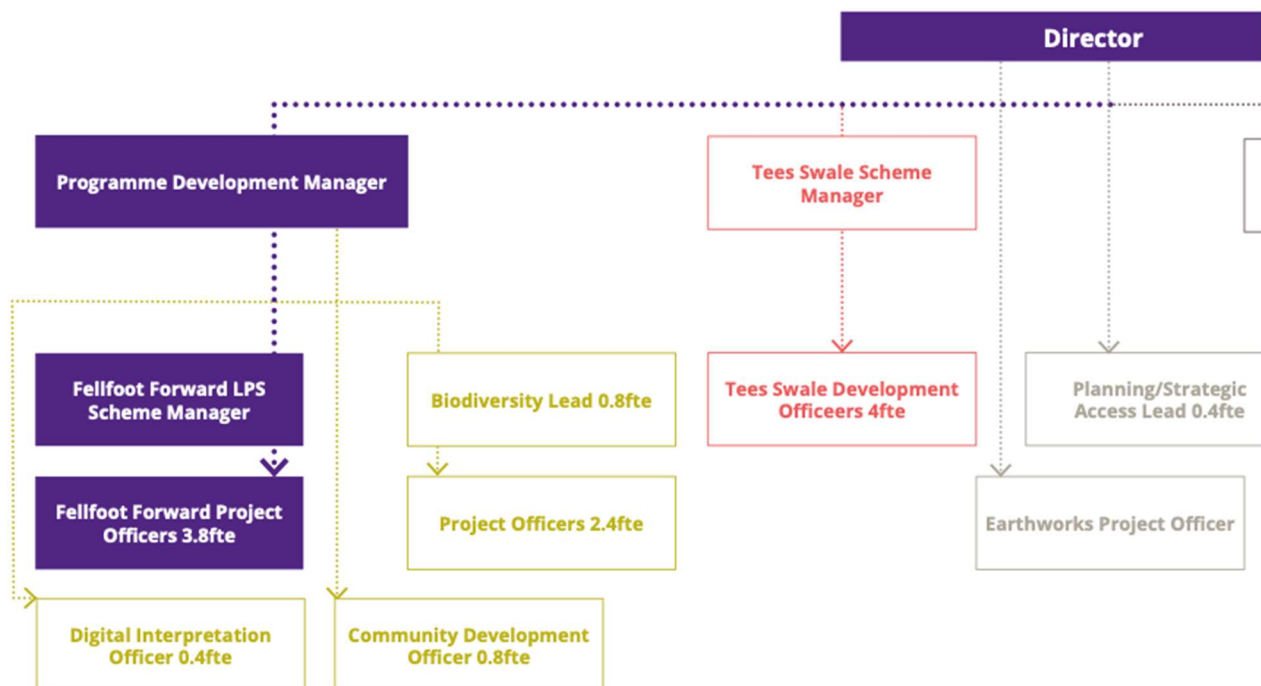
Who has been involved?

The Fellfoot Forward Advisory Board was established as the partnership to oversee the delivery of all activity as identified in the Landscape Conservation Action Plan and Stage 2 submission to the Heritage Fund. The partnership met four times a year and its membership included:

- The Programme Development Manager of the North Pennines AONB (Lead Partner)

Plus representatives of:

- Fellfoot Communities ~ including the Advisory Board chair, Tom Speight
- Historic England
- Natural England
- RSPB
- Environment Agency
- Eden Rivers Trust
- Eden Tourism
- Eden District Council
- Cumbria County Council³
- Carlisle City Council
- Farmer Network
- Cumbria Action for Sustainability



Fellfoot Forward team organisational structure for scheme delivery from the LCAP⁴

³ On 1 April 2023 local government in Cumbria changed. The six district councils and Cumbria County Council were replaced by two new unitary authorities, Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council.

⁴ Within the delivery period the Communications Assistant working with Fellfoot Forward was managed by the Communications lead for North Pennines AONB.

The **lead partner** for the project was the North Pennines AONB Partnership, hosted by Durham County Council as the **accountable body**. It is through the accountable body and AONB that the **Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Team** were appointed to co-ordinate and deliver the scheme. The North Pennines AONB Partnership managed the grant and financial contributions from partner organisations and other sources, and ensured procurement processes were in line with those advised by the accountable body and Heritage Fund. They had responsibility for ensuring the activities and projects were delivered in accordance with the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant conditions.

The **Fellfoot Advisory Board** had responsibility to:

- Ensure the implementation of the Scheme's programmes by co-ordinating and focusing effort and resources to create real change on the ground;
- Develop and promote the Scheme's objectives as widely as possible;
- Encourage and secure the active participation of communities, landowners, farmers and other businesses;
- Identify gaps and secure new funding for projects;
- Support the delivery of the Scheme and act in its best interests at all times;
- Review and assess the performance and direction of the Scheme, and recommend changes if required;
- Receive, and comment on, reports on the Scheme's work programmes including existing, proposed and completed projects;
- Exchange information, ideas and advice to support the implementation of the Scheme;
- Keep under review the membership of the Board, introducing change as required;

The North Pennines AONB Partnership employed the staff to manage the scheme and recruited a **core delivery team of 4.6 FTE** members that included:

Fellfoot Forward Scheme Manager ~ with overall responsibility for the landscape partnership scheme. Responsible for liaison with Advisory Board and partners; for the delivery of the Scheme as a whole, and for sharing and reporting the work to funders, including the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Community Engagement Officer ~ leading on community development and involvement, education and awareness, arts, and festivals.

Environment Officer ~ leading on the natural heritage aspects of the scheme.

Communications Officer ~ (three day/week) providing external communications support for Fellfoot Forward.

Admin. and Finance Officer ~ assisting with financial management and reporting, and with landscape partnership administration.

Each project had a nominated **Project Lead** (an organisation or individual), responsible for the delivery of their project according to the terms and conditions specified in the Project Partner Agreement. The agreement included agreed project outputs, budget, procurement rules and reporting requirements. Each Project Lead had a designated contact point in the Fellfoot Forward team, who provided general support, and escalated issues to the Scheme Manager as necessary.

Project Leads operated independently to deliver their projects, whilst working in partnership with other elements of Fellfoot Forward to enable mutual support, promote a landscape-scale approach and ensure the programme was greater than the sum of its parts.

3. The purpose and approach taken to programme evaluation

It is a condition of grant funding that recipients carry out an end-of-scheme evaluation. National Lottery Heritage Fund have published specific guidance on evaluation for landscape partnerships which advises on how best to approach the evaluation of a complex, multi-project scheme, with an emphasis on the need to look across the whole range of activity, to identify how these have complemented one another, hopefully demonstrating that the scheme as a whole has delivered more than the sum of the individual projects.

While there is inevitably an element of judgement and criticism in any evaluation process, for those involved in a scheme it can provide a lot of positive feedback. The guidance states the aims of an evaluation as being able to “prove” (that resources have been well spent, ambitions achieved) and “improve” (capturing lessons learnt through experience of programme delivery).

With this recommended approach in mind, Fellfoot Forward sought to make the most of the process by implementing a longitudinal approach to monitoring and evaluation, with an ethos of constructive reflection, aiming to draw out the learning from this project for the core team and partners to share with the Heritage Fund and other similar grant schemes. In order to achieve this, the following methodology was adopted.

- **Inception and development** ~ working with the project team and partners to develop the monitoring and evaluation framework building on work completed in the development phase, to help guide the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data and specifically help with bringing together all the known outputs, outcomes and indicators into one place.
- **Mid-term review** ~ key elements of this review included a project update meeting with the Scheme Manager, a facilitated discussion at meetings with the Fellfoot team, project delivery lead staff and Advisory Board, a review of the scheme documentation, plus reporting and presentation of findings.
- **Ongoing coaching and project completion templates** ~ online meetings with the project team members to give an overview of the evaluation approach and information needed to populate a final report. Producing individual project completion templates to help guide collection of evaluation data, information and learning.
- **Evaluation films** ~ producing two short films to complement the mid-term review and end of scheme evaluation findings.
- **End of scheme evaluation** ~ the information collected from the project completion reports by the project team and partners throughout the duration of the project has helped to feed into and shape this end-of-scheme evaluation.



Extracts from Fellfoot mid-term review evaluation film ~ July 2022

4. How the resources were spent

18 projects delivering a £3.4 million investment to improve the natural, cultural and built heritage of the Fellfoot Landscape Area

Financial summary

By December 2023, Fellfoot Forward had evidenced a cash spend totalling £3,083,336 or 90% of the anticipated total cash value of £3,438,605 from 14 quarterly financial claims commencing in September 2020. Information from the project team in May 2024 shows the final grant claim to be totalling up to £350K to be claimed by Scheme completion, making up the total cash investment of £3.4 million.

Overall expenditure profile

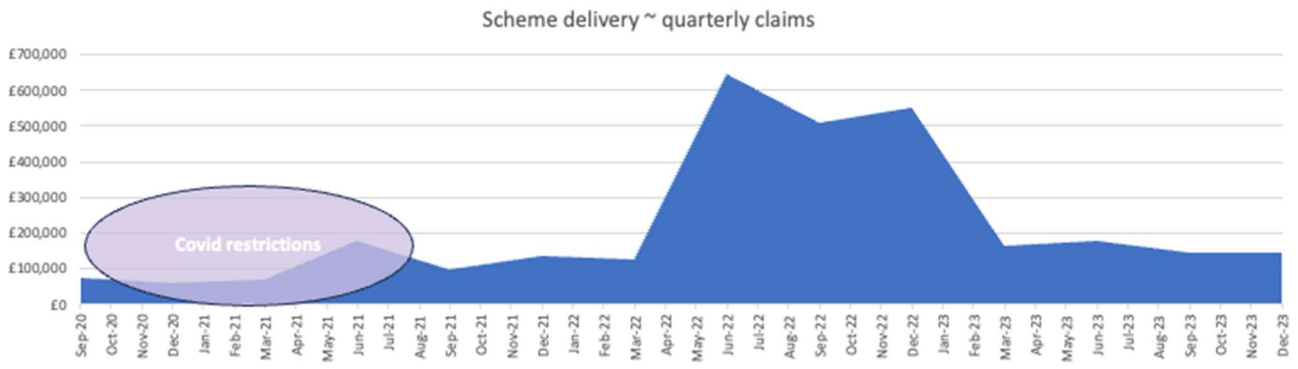
The following table summarises the figures presented in the quarterly financial claims to NLHF. Yearly totals have been included to help give a sense of how project delivery has unfolded over the duration of Scheme delivery.

Intended Claim	Date	LCAP	Actual	Yearly	Percentage of total
1	Mar-20	£10,390			
2	Jun-20	£127,038		£205,484	6%
3	Sep-20	£240,986	£73,226		
4	Dec-20	£393,584	£133,959		
5	Mar-21	£913,069	£205,484		
6	Jun-21	£1,058,091	£386,219	£539,663	16%
7	Sep-21	£1,287,463	£483,704		
8	Dec-21	£1,553,845	£619,208		
9	Mar-22	£1,784,137	£745,147		
10	Jun-22	£1,928,727	£1,389,896	£1,867,712	54%
11	Sep-22	£2,094,167	£1,898,164		
12	Dec-22	£2,300,357	£2,449,217		
13	Mar-23	£2,653,638	£2,612,859		
14	Jun-23	£2,787,309	£2,790,319	£470,477	14%
15	Sep-23	£2,922,160	£2,937,989		
16	Dec-23	£3,093,235	£3,083,336		
17	Mar-24	£3,438,605			

Key points to note are:

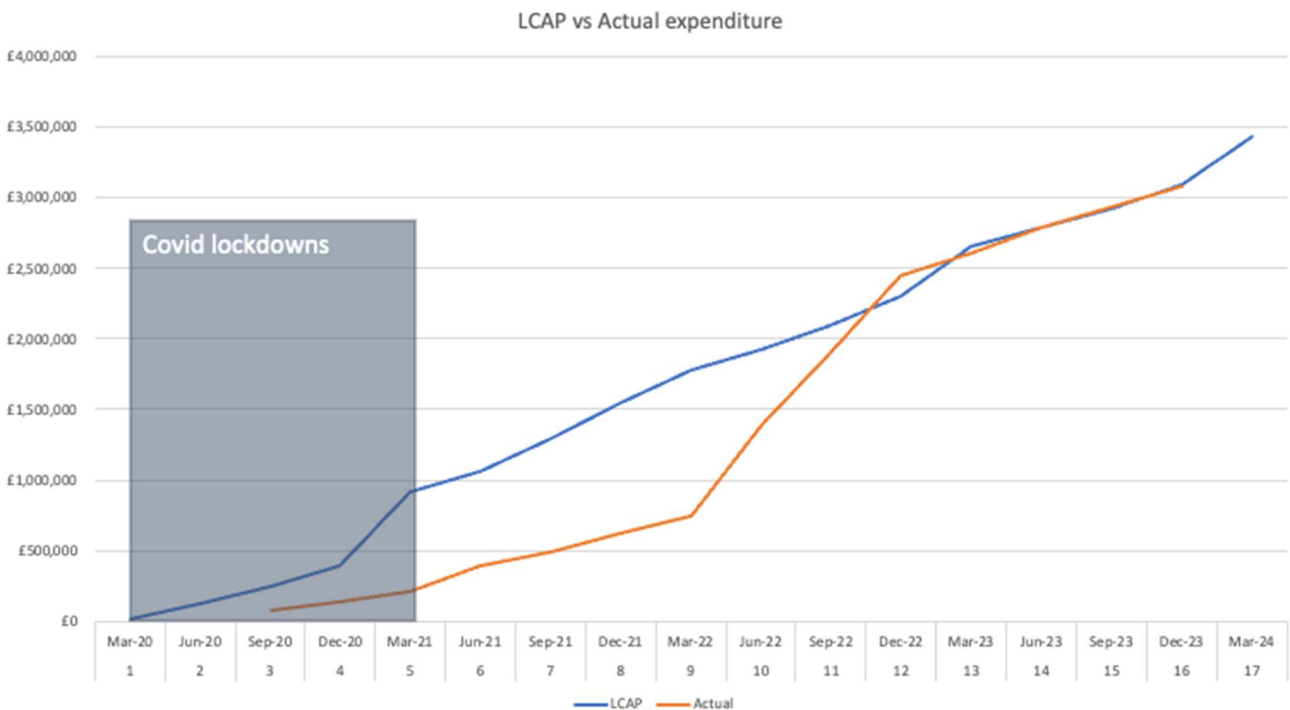
- The slow start for Year One with £205,484 or just 6% of total expenditure by March 2021, wholly attributable to project commencement coinciding with the start of the coronavirus pandemic and the level of disruption caused for 12 to 18 months through following the necessary national government guidelines.

- The large level of programme activity with a figure of £1.87 million being claimed in year three, showing the amount of background preparatory work undertaken in years one and two.
- The final remaining claim of up to £355,269 to draw down all the grant award from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



Fellfoot Forward quarterly financial claims

Information taken from the quarterly claims shows a Scheme that has been well managed from a financial perspective with good liaison with the Heritage Fund through programme delivery. The considerable activity in year three brought scheme expenditure in line with the cashflow forecasts from the Landscape Conservation Action Plan, that gives a degree of confidence in the work undertaken in the development phase that should be highlighted.



Expenditure profile to March 2024

5. Principal achievements: what was delivered on the ground

In order to develop the headline achievements for the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership “as a whole”, the outputs from each individual project have been sorted, aggregated and presented according to headline output categories developed by the Heritage Lottery Fund to support early monitoring of their landscape partnership programme.

Following the transition to NLHF it is no longer a requirement for Landscape Partnerships Schemes to report against these headings, yet from an evaluation perspective they are a very useful starting point and an opportunity to look at collective achievements and a mechanism to present data “in the round” rather than on a project by project basis. To get a picture of the overall achievements for Fellfoot Forward, the anticipated outputs from the LCAP have been presented along with actual outputs achieved against the following key indicators:

- Advice, Access, Biodiversity & Landscape, Built Heritage, Employment, Participation & Learning, Training & Skills and Volunteers

The collated outputs for Fellfoot Forward as a whole are presented below with observations giving the main headlines of actual outputs achieved. To give this picture the output information has been derived from three sources; the individual project completion reports, plus two spreadsheets compiled by the Fellfoot team that captured the total of volunteer hours and public engagement at walks, talks and events across all project activities.

Advice

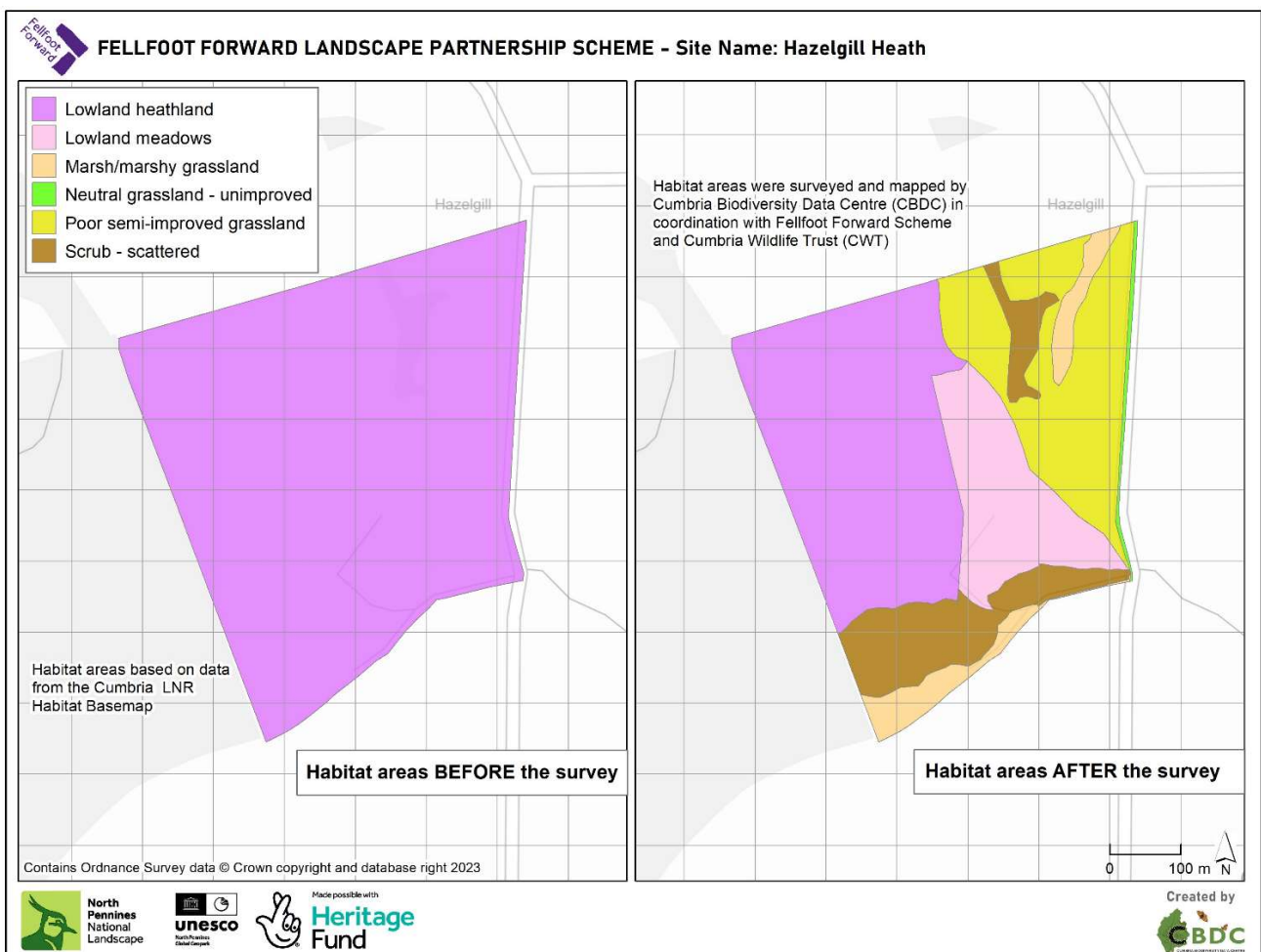
What we said to NLHF in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to March 2024
<p>1,000 biological survey records completed and submitted to Biological Records Office.</p> <p>25+ technical reports, Management Plans and strategies produced to support the development of the Fell Foot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme.</p> <p>31 land managers and farmers engaged to increase individual understanding of habitat restoration and species recovery.</p> <p>15 farms receiving advice and training on habitat improvements.</p> <p>4 community buildings with improved energy conservation measures.</p>	<p>2,000 biological survey records completed and submitted to Biological Records Office.</p> <p>21 technical reports, Management Plans and strategies produced to support the development of the Fell Foot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme.</p> <p>68 land managers and farmers engaged to increase individual understanding of habitat restoration and species recovery.</p> <p>13 farms receiving advice and training on habitat improvements.</p> <p>4 community buildings receiving capital grants to improve energy conservation measures.</p> <p>Additional outputs delivered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Soil Organic Carbon Surveys • 9 other community buildings receiving energy audit, funding advice and signposting • 6 Farms with Agrivoltaics • 5 Farm carbon audits

Final evaluation ~ March 2024: Advice outputs have been exceeded

Building on external opportunities with 25 grants awarded through Farming in Protected Landscapes totalling £340,000 to improve nature recovery

Of note is the:

- **Biological survey recording doubling intended activity with an additional 1,000 records** submitted to the Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre
- **The additional 37 land managers and farmers engaged**, that was achieved through taking advantage of changes in Agri environment schemes introduced during the delivery phase of the landscape partnership. In particular taking advantage of opportunities presented through the Farming in Protected in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme that allowed for 25 grants totalling £339,893 being awarded
- Additional outputs delivered through the Farm Futures and Community Buildings programme with 21 farms benefitting from sustainable land management best practice advice and 9 other community buildings receiving energy audit, funding advice and signposting



Improving knowledge of local habitat areas

Access

Access improvements totalling 148km have been delivered with 6 new trails, 5 high level walks and 1 cycle trail offering increased accessibility

What we said to NLHF in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to March 2024
<p>7 new Heritage Trails and easy access routes totalling 20+ kilometres.</p> <p>1 new promoted cycle trail, the <i>Fellfoot 40</i>, totalling 64 kilometres.</p> <p>16 + pieces of infrastructure to improve access within the landscape.</p> <p>New way marker discs and signs to improve access within the fell foot landscape.</p>	<p>6 new Heritage Trails and easy access routes totalling 31 kilometres.</p> <p>1 new promoted cycle trail, the <i>Fellfoot 40</i>, totalling 64 kilometres.</p> <p>7 pieces of infrastructure to improve access within the landscape.</p> <p>12 new way marker discs and signs to improve access within the fell foot landscape.</p> <p>5 high level walks across the fellside refreshed and republished promoting 53 kilometres of access</p>

Final evaluation ~ March 2024: Access outputs have been exceeded

Access work was subject to change and variation through programme delivery such as:

- Removing the proposed heritage trail from Long Meg to Lacy's Caves and Little Salkeld after consultation due to the caves not being safe to access
- The loss of the 'donate a gate' scheme and intended infrastructure improvements due to the Friends of North Pennines being disbanded

Despite these challenges and changes, the refresh and promotion of 5 high level walks across the fellside has helped deliver and exceed the overall intended level of access improvements.



Digital promotion of three Slow Trails

Biodiversity and Landscape

A landscape impact over 1,125ha to enhance natural heritage and biodiversity with improvements over 45km of landscape to enhance connectivity

What we said to NLHF in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to March 2024
<p>Work in partnership with landowners and managers to improve over 1,300ha of high quality natural habitats.</p> <p>20+ management interventions over 12km of important habitat to enhance landscape value and connectivity, to include 7. km of new or restored hedgerow, 2.5km of peat grips blocked, and 1.9km of electricity cable underground.</p> <p>500 new hedgerow and in field trees planted.</p> <p>4 seasons of nest protection for the Hen Harrier.</p> <p>3 community led projects to enhance habitats for local wildlife</p>	<p>Work in partnership with landowners and managers to improve over 1,125ha of high quality natural habitats.</p> <p>Management interventions over 45km of important habitat to enhance landscape value and connectivity, including 44km of new or restored hedgerow and 1.9km of electricity cable put underground.</p> <p>1,665 new hedgerow and in field trees planted.</p> <p>4 seasons of nest protection for the Hen Harrier.</p> <p>9 community led projects to enhance habitats for local wildlife</p> <p>Additional outputs delivered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,835 hedgerow plants • 7,005 new trees planted

Final evaluation ~ March 2024: Biodiversity and Landscape outputs have been achieved and exceeded with enhanced habitat connectivity delivered

As with access work, Biodiversity and Landscape activity has been subject to change and variation throughout the delivery phase such as:

- Changes to the intended work on blanket bog restoration totalling 220ha that had to be halted due to a change in Estate ownership.
- Wild Connections has been particularly successful at delivering environmental improvements with a total of 146 hectares of new native woodland and scrub planting (an increase of 106ha above the intended 40ha)

The headline achievements for enhanced habitat connectivity have been delivered through:

- 44km of new or restored hedgerow
- 16,500 hedgerow and infield trees planted
- 7,005 new trees planted
- One hectare of re-naturalised river and new wetland created

The uptake of hedgerow restoration and new hedges has been fantastic. The recognition of the value of hedges within the farming system and especially the regenerative practices emerging across the scheme area is a big boost for nature recovery. It is also supporting peoples interaction and perspective of the landscape as it will become greener and more structurally diverse around the lower slopes and fell bottom.

Wild Connections end of project report

Built and Cultural Heritage

What we said to NLHF in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to March 2024
2 sites removed from the Heritage at Risk (HAR) Register, with safe visitor access and enhanced visitor experience.	2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments cared for with improved access and enhanced visitor experience. 1 Scheduled Ancient Monument removed from the Heritage at Risk register.

Final evaluation ~ March 2024: Built and Cultural Heritage outputs have been achieved

Conservation and Consolidation activity at Long Meg and Kirkoswald Castle has improved access and enhanced the visitor experience.

The programme of works agreed with Historic England to address the risk as stated on the Heritage at Risk register have been delivered. Friends of Long Meg will be pursuing with Historic England the possibility of future excavations based around restoration work. Kirkoswald Castle tower is now off the Heritage at Risk register.



New interpretation at Long Meg

Employment

What we said to NLHF in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to March 2024
5 staff, the equivalent of 4.6 FTE, making up the Fellfoot Forward core project team.	5 staff, the equivalent of 4.6 FTE, making up the Fellfoot Forward core project team.
3 trainees employed to support the core team and partner activities.	4 trainees employed to support the core team and partner activities.

Final evaluation ~ March 2024: Employment outputs have been achieved with one additional trainee employed

An additional trainee was appointed through utilising underspend in project budgets that helped maintain project capacity towards the end of the Fellfoot Scheme.

The core team worked closely with all other staff employed by project partners to help with the integration of overall project delivery. As with any time limited project there has been a change in personnel throughout the programme. The nature of fixed term contracts has meant that some staff have found other employment, particularly towards the end of programme delivery that has presented challenges in getting all projects completed.

Participation and Learning

What we said to NLHF in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to March 2024
<p>2,900+ people participating and engaged through 90+ activities, talks, walks, and events.</p> <p>1,370 school children engaged through education activity.</p> <p>70 local community groups and businesses supported and engaged.</p> <p>75+ new interpretation features and digital products created and promoted to improve awareness and understanding of the fell foot forward area.</p> <p>25 oral history stories captured, transcribed, and shared, to increase understanding of the cultural and natural heritage of the Fellfoot area.</p> <p>40 transport grants enabling pupils to discover local heritage.</p> <p>Community grant scheme with 40 grants awarded</p>	<p>5,542 people participating and engaged through 245 activities, talks, walks, and events.</p> <p>1,766 school children engaged through education activity.</p> <p>52 local community groups and businesses supported and engaged.</p> <p>85 new interpretation features and digital products created and promoted to improve awareness and understanding of the fell foot forward area.</p> <p>15 oral history stories captured, transcribed, and shared, to increase understanding of the cultural and natural heritage of the Fellfoot area.</p> <p>30 transport grants enabling pupils to discover local heritage.</p> <p>Community grant scheme with 30 grants awarded</p>

Final evaluation ~ March 2024: Participation and learning outputs have been exceeded. Total direct participation figures over 5,500 people represents a 90% increase compared to the LCAP.

Activities, walks, talks and events have been held with great success despite the restrictions faced by the COVID 19 pandemic, with a move to online digital activity helping to increase and reach different audiences.

Direct school engagement of 1,766 children was a 29% increase in activity, with 14 local schools and youth groups engaged through the scheme.

The community grant scheme has seen £90,000 awarded to 30 local groups to support community led heritage projects create a positive and lasting change at a local level.

Interpretation has improved awareness and promotion of different parts of the Fellfoot area and is helping to spread impact and activity across the whole landscape.



Kirkoswald Primary School children trialling education resources at Talkin Tarn

Volunteers

1,530 volunteer days contributed equivalent to a value added of £231,930

What we said to NLHF in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to March 2024
472+ volunteers anticipated to be involved, some projects to identify numbers.	610 volunteers engaged and involved in Fellfoot Forward project activity.
588 volunteer days to be delivered	1,530 volunteer days contributed

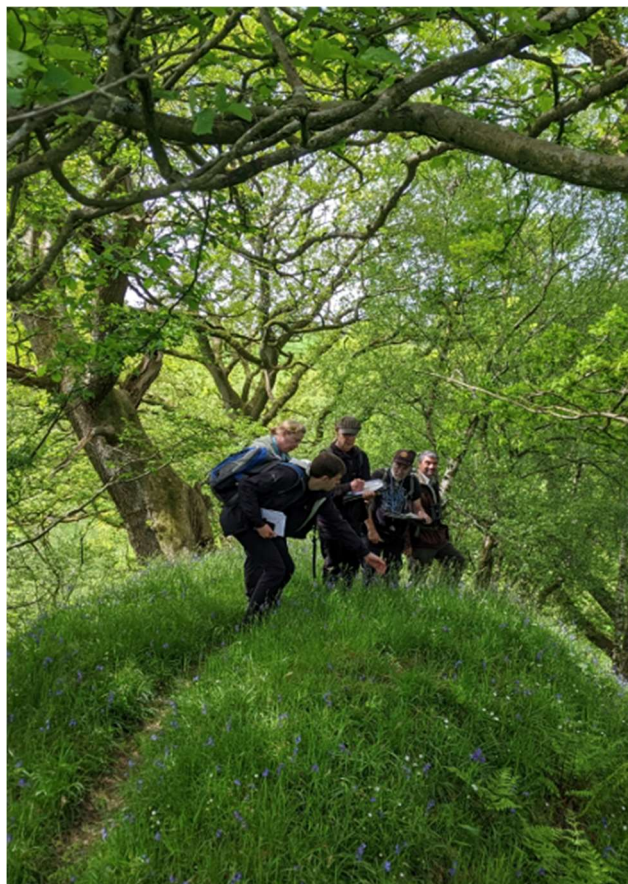
Final evaluation ~ March 2024: Volunteer outputs have been exceeded although not fully quantified in the development phase

Individual projects did not fully estimate volunteer activity as part of the project planning process, hence the low numbers identified within the LCAP. To help track overall volunteer involvement, the core team submitted volunteer claims on a quarterly basis to the Heritage Fund as part of the project reporting process. Figures taken from this reporting sheet show a total volunteer contribution of 1,310 days totalling a value of £198,930.

Activity delivered through Arts Connection was not accounted for as part of this process with this project reporting 220 days delivered at a value of £33,000. Aggregating the total reported and additional outputs together, overall volunteer activity totals are:

610 volunteers contributing 1,530 days or the equivalent cash value of £231,930

The 1,530 days contributed is just under 7 full time working years (allowing for 220 work days per year) and works out as an additional resource of nearly **two extra full time staff members contributing to the work of the Fellfoot team.**



Volunteers hedge planting and surveying

Training and Skills

What we said to NLHF in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to March 2024
<p>68 training and skills workshops facilitated and delivered.</p> <p>800+ people involved in training and skills workshops.</p> <p>4 farmers achieving CEVAS accreditation to run on-farm education.</p>	<p>82 training and skills workshops facilitated and delivered.</p> <p>1,311 people involved in training and skills workshops.</p> <p>6 farmers achieving CEVAS accreditation to run on-farm education.</p>

Final evaluation ~ March 2024: Training and Skills outputs have been exceeded

The training programme has exceed anticipated outputs with examples of the outputs delivered through individual project include:

- **Citizen Science** ~ 326 people trained in wildlife identification
- **Farm Futures** ~ 306 farmers attending a mixture of webinar and in person events
- **Wild Connections** ~ 229 volunteer engaged and trained in traditional land management skills

Overall picture

From the information presented in the final project completion reports and other project management documentation, **the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme can demonstrate that it has achieved and surpassed many of the original ambitions** as anticipated within the LCAP and stage 2 submission with inevitable variations and changes to individual projects as problems arose at a local level during the delivery period, along with the restrictions faced with the implementation of activity due to the coronavirus pandemic coinciding with the commencement of project delivery from March 2020 onwards. The overall story and picture presented is about the success of engagement activity and delivery at both a landscape scale and local community level.

The biggest achievements to note and celebrate for nature recovery are:

- The landscape impact over 1,125 hectares to enhance natural heritage and improve biodiversity.
- 44 kilometres of new or restored hedgerow to enhance ecological connectivity
- Planting a total of 23,505 hedgerow and in field trees
- Securing £461,000 total additional funding through environmental grants and the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme
- The success of the wildlife recording activity with 2,000 biological records reported.

For local engagement and participation:

The delivery of an awareness and engagement programme at a community level has been an effective part of Fellfoot Forward as demonstrated by:

- 5,542 people participating in the 245 different events and learning activities throughout the scheme,
- The delivery of 22 skills workshops and training opportunities benefitting 1,311 participants
- Recruiting and engaging 610 volunteers contributing 1,530 days or the equivalent of an additional 7 full time working years
- Creating 148 km+ of access improvements with 6 new trails, 5 high level walks and 1 cycle trail offering increased accessibility

For innovation and sustainability

Fellfoot Forward has sought to innovate and integrate sustainability across programme activity and can demonstrate:

- 21 farms benefitting from sustainable land management best practice advice
- 13 community buildings receiving improvements or relevant advice to improve energy conservation measures



Hallbankgate Farm ~ increasing diversity of flora and fauna by managing the soil health on the farm

6. Programme achievements and outcomes

What has been collectively achieved

Collecting qualitative evidence relates to the change and outcomes that have been delivered by a project or scheme. This is important in relation to 'people' goals such as engagement, learning and skills training, where numbers often miss the main story about how people's perceptions of their heritage, and their aspirations, have been changed.

Measuring outcomes are often more difficult to measure than quantitative outputs due to a number of complex factors such as:

- landscape change taking place over a longer period of time than delivery of the scheme and/or
- attributing individual change within people to one particular moment or activity...

The source material for the programme achievements and outcomes came from information collected by the project team and the individual project reports that were produced on conclusion of programme delivery that provided many of the rich examples of project achievements, outputs, outcomes and legacy plans.

Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme Outcomes

As part of developing the approach to monitoring and evaluation at the beginning of the delivery phase, six strategic "Scheme Outcomes" were identified and agreed with project partners. These six programme outcomes were linked to the four programme themes and 18 identified projects, with evidence collected accordingly, recognising that some projects would deliver against more than one outcome and across a number of theme areas.

Fellfoot Forward Scheme Outcomes
<p>A. Heritage will be in better condition</p> <p>The key natural and built heritage features of the Fellfoot Landscape will be improved and better understood with a system to ensure the benefits are sustained. Where appropriate the connectivity and diversity of selected habitats will be improved and visual landscape impacts reduced.</p> <p>Communities are at a reduced risk of flooding and agri environment schemes deliver better outcomes for nature recovery.</p>
<p>B. Awareness and engagement of heritage will be increased</p> <p>Awareness, understanding and threats to the Fellfoot Forward area will be increased amongst the individuals, groups and local communities engaged.</p> <p>More and different types of people and local groups will understand, appreciate, and take positive care of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the Fellfoot Forward area with improved access for all.</p>
<p>C. Fellfoot Forward will be Future Fair</p> <p>Local communities and people involved with Fellfoot Forward will be more engaged and have developed skills to deepen their understanding of sustainability in the area.</p>
<p>D. People will have volunteered time and developed skills</p> <p>Local communities, land managers and people will be more engaged with the landscape and heritage, some will have volunteered time and developed skills to increase their understanding of the area.</p>

Fellfoot Forward Scheme Outcomes

E. Access to heritage will be improved

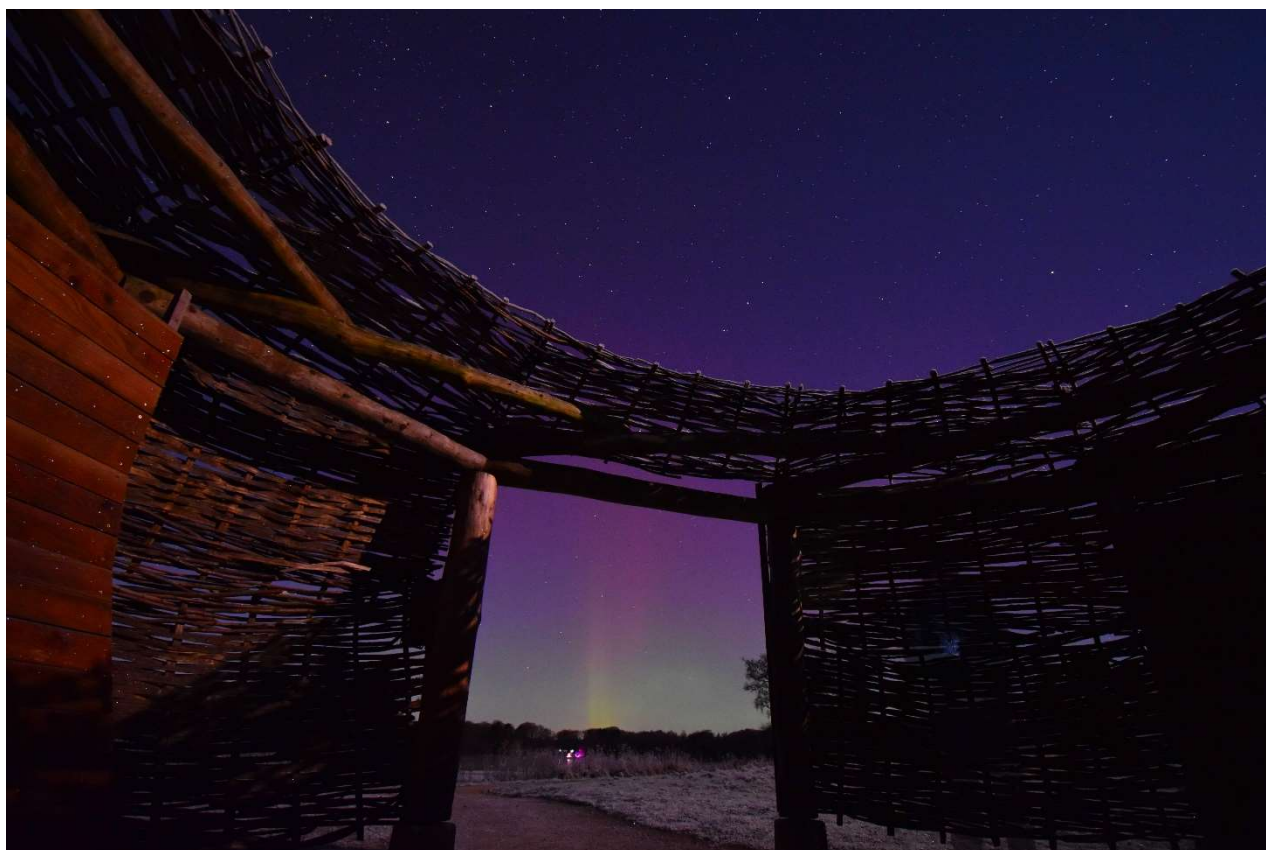
Increased access and improved infrastructure at key locations enabling people to become more aware of and enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the Fellfoot area. There will be increased opportunities for informal recreation that promotes health and well-being benefits.

F. Developing the heritage economy and employment

A responsible heritage-led tourism economy begins to thrive. Rural skills are increased and trainees will use the experience and confidence gained to progress to employment or other learning opportunities. There is an increase in the number of people gaining employment in the environmental sector.

Using the six scheme outcomes as the framework and the final project completion reports as evidence, the Fellfoot Forward team and partners were able to supply many examples of programme achievements and outcomes.

The following pages illustrate some of the project activity (but not all) providing evidence of qualitative information that delivered against the scheme outcomes.



Stars in the Tarn ~ The Nest ©David Ambridge

Outcome A ~ Heritage will be in better condition

“The large renaturalisation of Cairn Beck at Townfoot brought 3 funding streams together to deliver 5km of connected projects with river restoration at each end. The Cairn beck has been a focus for work and is directly supporting the relief of flooding downstream in communities such as Warwick Bridge.”

Better Becks project completion report

Scheme Outcome ~ Heritage will be in better condition

The key natural and built heritage features of the Fellfoot Landscape will be improved and better understood with a system to ensure the benefits are sustained. Where appropriate the connectivity and diversity of selected habitats will be improved and visual landscape impacts reduced.

Communities are at a reduced risk of flooding and agri environment schemes deliver better outcomes for nature recovery.

The following evidence can demonstrate working towards or achieving this outcome.

Better Becks

Looking back ~ what is the one thing that you’re most proud of that has come from your project being part of Fellfoot Forward?

“Better Becks worked across 14 different landholdings. This large number and local engagement has raised awareness in the farming community and others, and built trusted relationships for future work between landowners and Eden Rivers Trust.”



River restoration of the Cairn beck at Townfoot farm

Some of the impacts on the natural heritage include:

- The re-naturalisation of two sections of the Cairn Beck has created a more diverse habitat with pools, riffles and shallow areas and exposed gravels. The increase in habitat will support a greater diversity of aquatic and marginal plants which will support a greater variety of freshwater invertebrates, with grey wagtail, dipper and sandpipers returning to the previously canalised sections. The development may also be beneficial for our native, White-clawed crayfish.
- At Carindale ponds (dug in 2021 and re-visited in 2024) the landowner has seen species arrive such as nesting oystercatchers, and then, as the vegetation matured, dragon flies and damselflies, moorhen, coot, reed bunting, and willow warbler.



Cairndale ponds - under construction (left) and after 3 years (right)

- The number of trees that have gone into the ground will be there for a long time, improving soil conditions under hedges, creating space for flowering plants for pollinators, stabilising banksides and reducing sediment load in the becks.
- The kested hedges running cross slope slow and hold water as it percolates down slope. The hedges themselves create wildlife corridors, habitats and food for more and more diverse wildlife.



Kested hedge at Carlatton

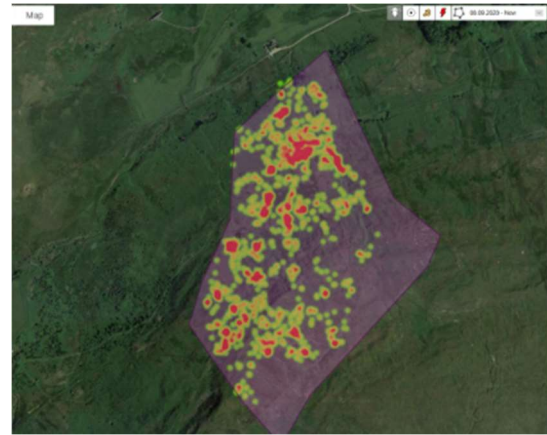
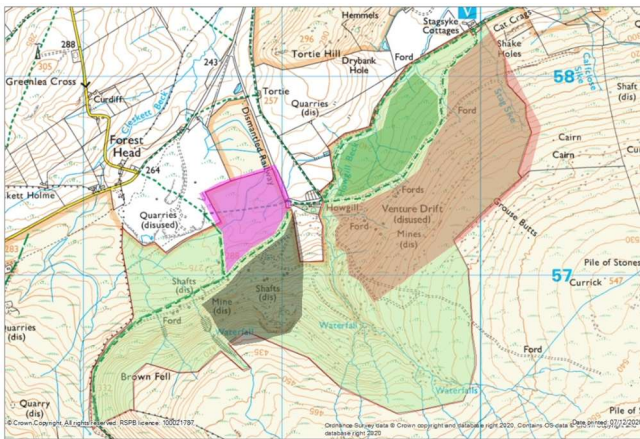
Species Recovery

“Being able to lever extra funding for Curlew LIFE by using Fellfoot as match has meant a larger, more far-reaching project for curlew has been achieved.”

Project officer reflections

A successful project that has delivered significant natural heritage benefits that has:

- Enhanced 60 hectares of curlew habitat across the Geltsdale reserve through rush and heather cutting, adapting grazing management and creation of scrapes and wetlands.
- Enhanced 900 hectares of black grouse habitat across the reserve through woodland planting and maintenance and use of cattle collars to manage grazing with cattle.



Maps showing the Nofence enclosures and Heatmap showing where livestock have grazed



Cattle fitted with Nofence collars

The success of Nofence collars

The accuracy of the collars has allowed individual curlew nests to be circled to protect eggs and young chicks from trampling. The collars used with cattle are now being trialled on a small flock of Herdwick sheep to proactively manage rush re growth in areas of rush management for lapwing, curlew and other ground nesting birds. Their dung attracts invertebrates for the birds to eat so managing sheep grazing in selected sections of the reserve helps create a different grazing sward.

Project officer reflections

Other significant benefits delivered for species recovery include the:

- Increased the number of volunteers for Hen Harrier nest watch to a minimum of 50. In summer 2022 the Hen Harriers had a successful nest with 5 fledglings. In 2023 4 territories were secured by breeding pairs and from that 2 nests successfully fledged.
- Sharing and dissemination of project findings. Some of the papers and media that have been produced and published include:

British Wildlife 'RSPB Geltsdale ~ A case study of Upland Management, Aug 2019

The Journal for Nature Conservation ~ Varying response of breeding waders to experimental manipulation of their habitat and predators, April 2023

A case study on the use of the Nofence invisible fencing system. Trees and cattle combine to boost upland wildlife ~ Farm Wildlife", April 2022

A short film produced and distributed to colleagues and land managers across the UK

Renaturalising Howgill Beck

"The re naturalisation of Howgill Beck has seen common sandpipers and oystercatchers nesting in this area for the first time due to the improved favourable conditions."

Howgill Beck renaturalising project demonstrates the benefits of restoring a natural watercourse and managing land for increased biodiversity on a sustainable working farm. The beck was canalised pre 1791 (for 430m) and lacked many of the natural on-line features associated with this watercourse type.

A flowing wetland system has been created, working alongside a permanent watercourse which can now connect to its floodplain during flood events. New sinuous channels have been cut, creating a braided river with a longer stream bed. Variety within the new sinuous channels has been created by adding pools and riffles, reducing the energy; the slower flow has already allowed some fine gravels to accumulate, creating fish spawning habitat.



Howgill Beck ~ pre and post renaturalising work

Wild Connections

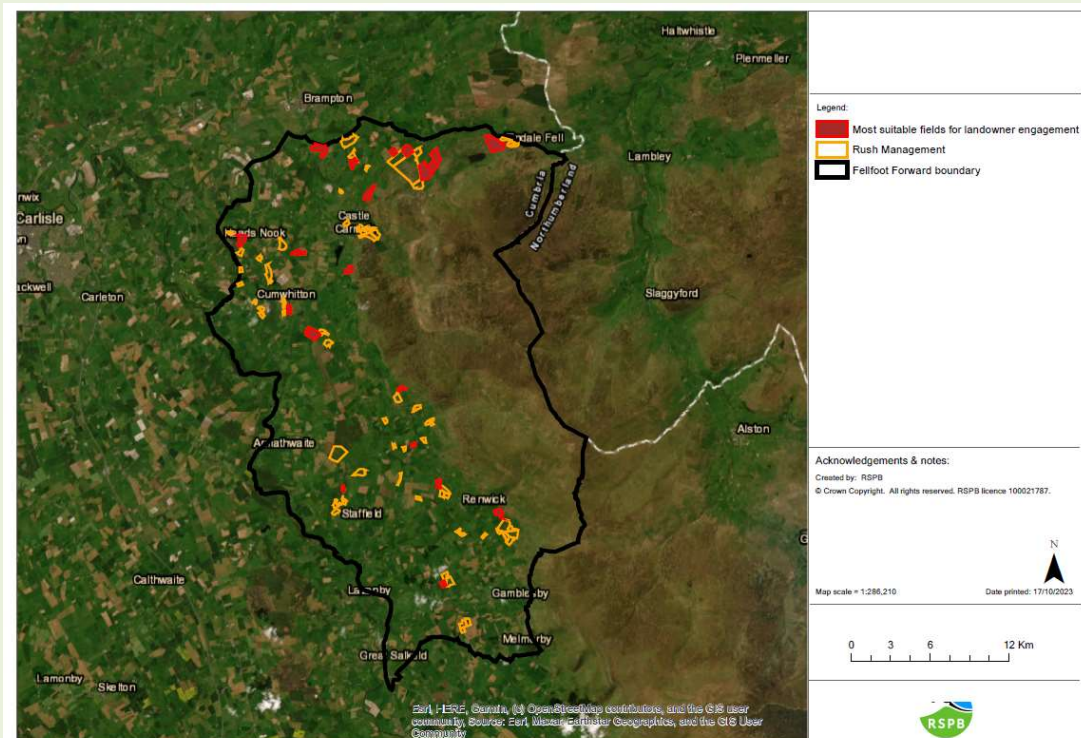
25 grants awarded through Farming in Protected Landscapes totalling £340,000 to improve nature recovery

Looking back ~ what is the one thing that you're most proud of that has come from your project being part of Fellfoot Forward?

"From the start, there was considerable appetite to get involved in this project from farmers, landowners and communities to help nature across this landscape, by restoring, creating and connecting habitats... This meant Fellfoot Forward was able to take forward lots of opportunities that delivered good quality outcomes, considerably more than the original targets, and for a wider range of habitats and features than was originally envisaged.

One of the landscape partnerships' real strengths was that it was able to work with farmers and landowners that typically wouldn't be able to get financial and advisory support from other potential sources such as Countryside Stewardship. This is typically because they don't have enough land, or they can't get a high enough score for their applications or because the application process being disproportionate for their modest projects. **Essentially, Fellfoot Forward was able to 'fill some of the cracks' between other opportunities.** For example, Fellfoot supported several small holders and an older farmer who has never been in any Agri-environment schemes or received any grants during the 40yrs+ that he's been farming.

A few months after starting, the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grant programme became available, offering considerably more funding to build on the momentum that had already been created by Wild Connections. This meant that a lot more could be delivered than was originally envisaged, with an additional £340,000 being awarded through this programme."



Rush map showing areas of potential landowner engagement in the Fellfoot area and those fields where rush management would have the greatest benefit. This map has been used to help focus effort and resources during project delivery.

Monuments at Risk

Improvements to 2 significant built and cultural heritage features

Kirkoswald ~ the tower had been on the Heritage at Risk since at least 2014, and was at the point of losing its top 8-10 courses of stone if left for another winter. The landowner was in no position to carry out this work. The landscape partnership has allowed key consolidation work to be carried out, and should enable the tower to stand for another 100 years.

New fencing has secured the site for the landowner and allows managed grazing within the castle site to benefit the ground flora. A new 6 metre wide and 175 metre long hedge along the western field boundary will improve habitat connectivity.



Repair of Kirkoswald Tower

Improved visitor management and access at Long Meg

“The site is healing, we can see the eradication of large areas of bare mud.”

The car park has dramatically reduced the pressure on the site from visitor cars parking and churning up the scheduled monument. We don't have car counts in place, but Stephen and Julia Morton at Long Meg farm have anecdotally fed back the reduction in the number of cars. The disabled car park still allows access to those who can't make the short walk or wheel from the car park.

The car park removed 10m of old thin hedge but 80m of mixed hedge was planted on the newly created southern boundary which will be of benefit for nature recovery.

“Really appreciated the new car park at Long Meg giving better access to the site, and meaning the site was first seen from foot as it should be rather than car and trying to find somewhere to park it”

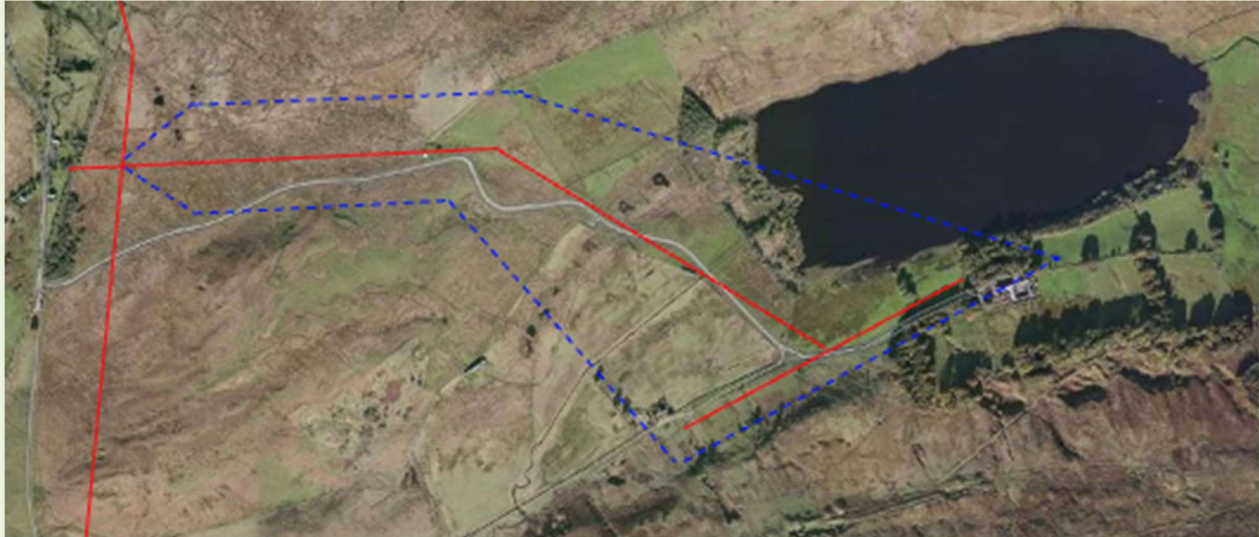
Social media feedback

Monuments at Risk ~ end of project report

Other examples of improving the condition of the natural and built heritage include:

Community Buildings ~ Improvements have been made to 13 buildings across the project area. Examples include energy efficiency improvements at Ainstable Church Institute Carlisle; lime mortar replacement at Kirkoswald Church Institute; insulation of the Old School Hall, at Armathwaite; advisory visits, audits, design work and reports on potential for building improvements and renovations, at many other sites.

Undergrounding ~ removing and undergrounding 1.9km of high voltage overhead powerlines (in red within the blue hatched lines below) for visual amenity at RSPB Tindale Tarn.



Electricity North West ~ Engineering report

Trainees ~ the trainees have made a demonstrable difference in delivering trees in the ground with the farms and partners receiving the Environment Grant and FiPL funding and furthering the amount of new and restored hedging, in-field trees, and hay meadow plug-planting.

Stars in the Tarn ~ A *Dark Sky Lighting Improvement* initiative led to the installation of appropriate lighting (downward, fully shielded lamps that only light what is needed and when needed) on Council buildings around Talkin Tarn Country Park. This work has ensured that the awareness of the dark skies and the opportunities to access these skies has been encouraged by the removal of light pollution, providing opportunities for people to engage with their local natural heritage through astronomy and stargazing.

Outcome B ~ Awareness and engagement of heritage will be increased

“We believe that high quality, face to face advice from a trusted advisor yields the best results for improved land management changes on the ground. We have been pleased to help deliver that.”

Wild Connections project feedback

Scheme Outcome ~ Awareness and engagement of heritage will be increased

Awareness, understanding and threats to the Fellfoot Forward area will be increased amongst the individuals, groups and local communities engaged.

More and different types of people and local groups will understand, appreciate, and take positive care of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the Fellfoot Forward area with improved access for all.

The following evidence can demonstrate working towards or achieving this outcome.

Uncovering the Past

“This project is a brilliant initiative to engage with the local community and rediscover the past of such a beautiful area.”

Neil Hudson ~ Local MP Neil Hudson ~ writing about the project launch

Looking back ~ what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

“Uncovering the Past has given a huge boost to local awareness of the rich archaeology and history in this part of North East Cumbria, and ‘Dig Ventures’ wider network has elevated this to an international platform. The resident population and archaeology community have been offered valuable training and insight to key neolithic and bronze age monuments in the Fellfoot area with foundations to build toward greater understanding and preservation, with developing local groups, keen to continue research and well positioned to do so.

Both adults and young people have learned about the meaning of these monuments in the context of the wider landscape and their significance to people 1000s of years in the past. This understanding gives the landscape a much more nuanced and powerful connection for those who have engaged with the project and, for many, a new way of interacting with it.”



Screenshots from a short film from a visit by William Howard School

“Our young archaeologists learnt the fine art of the trowel and were soon busy cleaning back a section of the cairn. Their eagle eyes were employed in the classic game ‘Rock Or Not?’ as they scrutinised every inch of dirt and stone for the elusive flakes of worked prehistoric flint.”

What difference has this project made to the natural, cultural or built heritage of the Fellfoot Forward programme area?

“We have collected documentary evidence of a period now gone from Hallbankgate, a village steeped in industrial history which also reflects individuals’ lives and an insight into social history. We have been able to arrange interviews and the recording of memories with some key people who have lived in the Fellfoot area for many years, and in one case, a lasting memory of a now deceased member of the community. *Uncovering the Past* has shared stories of people in the Fellfoot, highlighted monuments that beckon to its ancient people and their rituals, whilst collating histories of three charismatic villages through accessible resources.”



Carlatton Cairn ~ archaeological survey

Citizen Science

What difference has this project made to people?

“It can be difficult to know how to acquire wildlife identification skills so involvement in the Sight Seeing project has signposted identification resources to individuals and groups. The project has provided basic identification skills, boosted confidence when exploring the wider countryside, developed skills from beginners sessions to more advanced, and built appreciation for the natural world, particularly in the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme area.”



Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme's Site Seeing Project 2023

Email invitation ~ promoting Citizen Science activity

“I’ve really enjoyed getting out [as part of the project]. With work and other things I’ve not felt as connected to nature as I’d have liked so it’s been a good opportunity to get out with others and to sit and bake in the sunshine! The project has helped me to put the use of keys into context in the environment, narrow down knowledge... and use critical thinking. It’s been a good way of sharing community knowledge and learning off others. It has helped connect people who are interested in wildlife.”

Ian ~ Sight Seeing Participant

“Involvement in Fellfoot Forward has helped to establish new networks with landowners and church communities with conservation organisations where knowledge and survey reports have been shared, helping to expand people’s understanding on how to best manage their land, widening knowledge and participation.

Site-Seeing has strengthened partnerships between Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre and North Pennines AONB. Cumbria Wildlife Trust staff have shared learning and adopted new initiatives, such as involvement in the *Festival of Nature*.”



Discover your Woodlands training day at Kirkoswald ~ April 2023

- ***“Events like this serve so well to help us open our eyes to the wonder and diversity around us. Thank you.”***
- ***“Great day – always thought grass was just green and never really thought of them as flowering plants. A good starter day for grasses!”***
- ***“It was really interesting, I learnt loads on the project and it was brilliant seeing the variety of all of the different species out on site.”***

Site Seeing participants feedback

Next Generation

“I think the children got to ‘see’ the Tarn’s natural beauty from a perspective they wouldn’t with their families.”

Volunteer feedback

A project that aimed to excite young people about the heritage on their doorstep, help them reflect on their impact on their heritage, and think how they might help conserve, celebrate and champion heritage now and in the future.

Looking back ~ what is the one thing that you’re most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

“Almost 1,000 children and young people have engaged with nature in a variety of ways, either showcasing the Fellfoot area to them for the first time, or helping to engage with their local area in new ways. The scheme has enabled children to be free and enjoy the outdoors against the backdrop of pressure and mental stress over lockdowns, and the aftermath of COVID 19.

Children and young people have demonstrated their interest in the natural world, creativity inspired by it, and a commitment to preserve it. Time and again we have seen and heard how project activity has supported young people’s health and well-being, as well as educationally.”



Education resources now available on the North Pennines National Landscape website

What difference has this project made to people?

Some of the many different examples of the positive benefits of participation and engagement delivered through project activity can be demonstrated in the following case studies and feedback.

Education resource trials at Talkin Tarn ~ engaging local people with learning disabilities and autism spectrum conditions

Child A ~ “Child A has high levels of anxiety. When in a group indoors she does not have the confidence to speak up and offer her opinions and really get involved when she really would like to. In the small group we were in, outdoors, with people around her that she felt comfortable with **she absolutely came out of her shell and felt she could ask questions, get involved and do what she wanted without feeling any pressure or embarrassment to be herself. It was lovely to see this side of her!**”

Child B ~ “Due to Child B’s communication difficulties, she often is overpowered by others and withdraws when she cannot be heard, which at times excludes her from certain activities. In the group session she was listened to and heard and was able to get involved and have fun. She could ask questions and say what she thought and everyone responded to her so she felt included. **It was great to see her empowered to have a voice.**”

Child C ~ “Child C is very active and his behaviour can be erratic at times, he finds it very difficult to concentrate and focus, but joining this session, he focused on each task and being outdoors brought calmness. Child C asked questions and was comfortable to try things himself rather than asking his sister for help. **Seeing him in the group and around nature, engaging, listening and being calm was fantastic.**”

Feedback from 4Eden (formerly Eden Mencap)

RSPB Geltsdale ~ Showcasing professional art alongside young people’s work

In March 2023, art created by artist Mark Gibbs and pupils from the Carlisle Youth Zone was exhibited at the Geltsdale visitor centre.

“The exhibition centred on moorland birds and celebrated the young people’s work as part of a project called Green PLACE , in which members from 12 to 18 years old explored the region by walking, canoeing and camping, earning themselves a John Muir Award and making the beautiful landscape of the North Pennines more accessible to them. Their work featured bird sculptures and street art-style paintings inspired by bird identification boards.”



Mark Gibbs and Carlisle Youth Zone joint exhibition

Gilford Centre Pupil Referral Unit Sessions ~ improving self esteem

Being in the woods allowed the children to discover new strengths and ways of being in nature which increased their self-esteem. Their self-esteem had been damaged by a system that couldn't meet their needs. **Finding and believing in their strengths will have a lasting positive impact.**

Some of the children that we worked with had been on few school trips throughout their whole school experience, being told they were not trusted to take part. Thanks to the Fellfoot Landscape Partnership Scheme, they got to form a connection with the woods, have a positive educational experience and discover a place where they weren't restricted by their struggles in mainstream education.

The time in the woods acted as Continuing Professional Development for the centre staff. They found confidence in taking the students out into nature more and adopted therapeutic practices that they could take back and employ in the classroom.

Feedback from Stomping Ground facilitator



Screen-shots from a short video about Carlisle Youth Zone's expedition in the Fellfoot Forward area

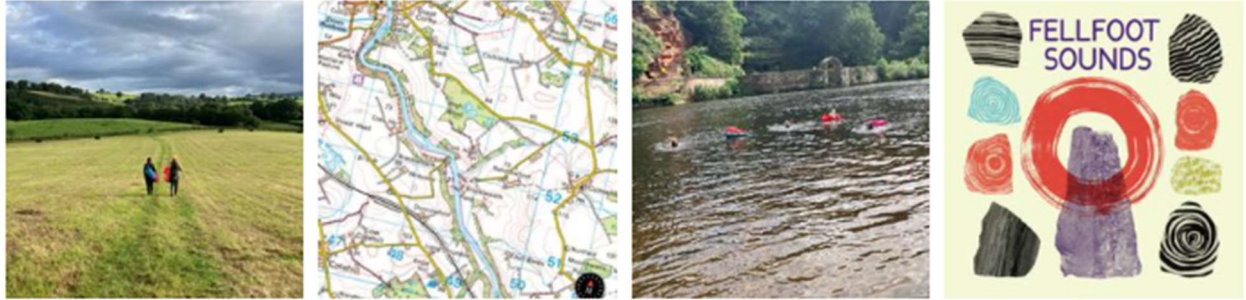
The importance of grants to support school trips and increase engagement

"Many of the schools and youth groups involved had never been to Talkin Tarn before and would not have considered or have been financially able to visit without it. 27 organisations received a grant, of which 14 were schools. The difference the field visits can make in reaching wider audiences and young people are significant, best summed up by a teacher from Brook Street Primary in Carlisle who wrote:"

'We would like to do the Art at the Tarn activities; this will benefit the year 5 class from Brook Street school who rarely get an opportunity to spend time in natural outdoor places as they mostly live in rented terraced housing with no outside space. The children are mainly from deprived backgrounds, some parents unemployed, some in low-cost work and lots of them are migrant workers on zero rated contracts who find it difficult to access the outdoors. This school year we have not had much chance to get creative with the Art curriculum so this trip will be of great benefit to them'.

Fellfoot Welcome

A project to develop a deeper understanding and knowledge of the heritage of the Fellfoot Forward LPS area amongst visitor businesses. To equip local business with the skills, tools and structures to maximise their engagement with visitors around heritage in our 'slow landscape'. To support people of all ability and interest to be inspired by an immersed in the Fellfoot Forward landscape.



Promoting community activity through the Fellfoot Forward project group on Facebook

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

"The *Sense of Place* workshops were well structured and delivered, and had good buy in from the community that attended. The contractors took a lead and the outputs from the workshop, creative writing, postcard images from across the scheme area and a radio programme on Fellfoot radio have been great. The creative writing has been used across projects.



here, facing cloud, sun
and the bold Helm Wind
here, on the edge of things
among old ways, something new begins



time braids itself through place
sets its pace in shifting mountains,
in human years, or a flower's sunward turn
in stories, stones and lives, old and new entwine

Sense of Place postcards, developed in Fellfoot Welcome workshops

Bringing the Past Alive

“The bronze raised plan diagram of Long Meg on the low plinth is great for children to explore as a tactile object and to support those with limited mobility or sight to get a feel for the site through their fingers and imagination.”

Project officer reflections

What difference has this project made to people?

“Kirkoswald castle had no site interpretation as previously there was no safe formal access. The site has been developed, and the information and interpretation will support visitors and groups on visits. The panel carrying the main interpretation has been positioned on the verge side at a key viewing point. As the site is not easily accessed this allows everyone if they wish to view and learn more about the site without the need to go into the site.

This thinking has applied to the site interpretation for Long Meg, where information is positioned so people with limited mobility can benefit from the new interpretation.”



Kirkoswald castle new interpretation

Stars in the Tarn

A project to raise awareness of dark night skies in the Fellfoot Forward area. To create the chance for people to engage and immerse themselves in stargazing as part of a ‘slow landscape’.

What difference has this project made to people?

“The project has undoubtedly raised an awareness that the Fellfoot area is host to *Dark Skies*, and that the importance of protecting and celebrating this relates to both the conservation of nocturnal wildlife, and the health and wellbeing of individuals living in, visiting, and playing hosting to others in the area i.e. local tourism businesses.”

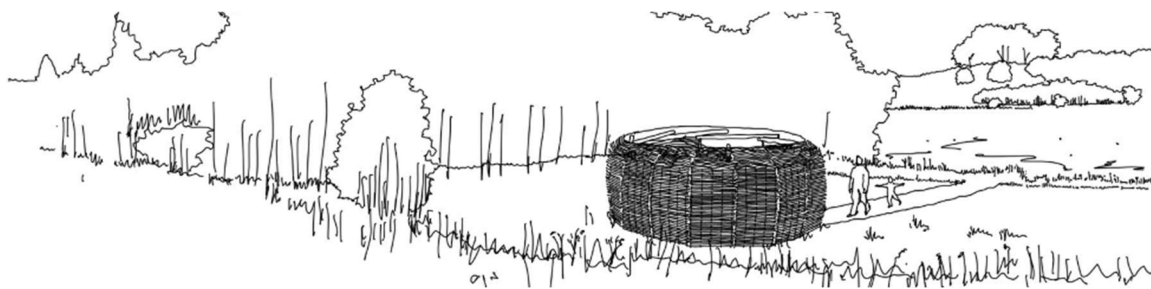
“Further engagement has taken place through site visits with two local Primary schools, a drop-in Arts sessions with local artists for local users of the Country Park, land art activities at the Festival of Nature, photography sessions with Carlisle Youth Zone, and sessions at The 2023

North Pennines Stargazing Festival. The Pavilion is also being used for weekly mindfulness sessions by a local health and wellbeing business.”

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

“The project succeeded enormously in strengthening ties between partners, stakeholders and Fellfoot residents, who all worked closely to ensure that community engagement was a fundamental aspect of both the installation of *The Nest* (a functional artistic Skygazing Pavilion) at Talkin Tarn, and the Dark Skies heritage and surrounding ‘slow landscape’ that it was designed to help celebrate and interpret.

Workshops and events created *The Nest*, using sustainably sourced materials, and constructed through hands-on, practical engagement by volunteers. The practical courses, including stargazing and green wood working, attracted both novices and very talented and inspiring individuals, and in the case of the hazel hurdle workshops, mainly young adults who grafted hard to contribute towards the creation of 25 hazel panels that formed the cladding for *The Nest*’s larch timber construction frame.”



The Nest ~ from concept to reality

“So much knowledge imparted from local experts. Excellent. Especially the laser pen to point out stars and constellations. I wish to pass what I have learned onto my Brownie unit.”

Feedback from the North Pennines Stargazing Festival and launch of The Nest, November 2023

Arts Connections

Inspired by the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape, and the many stories within the communities, the community arts programme brought Fellfoot Forward people together, across village and parish boundaries. Some of the activities delivered through Arts Connections included:

- **Everything changes, everything stays the same**, a year-long arts project for 2023, funded by Arts Council England and Westmorland and Furness Council, bringing together local communities and landowners to collaborate with artists and creative practitioners, using sound and music to explore the area's landscape. The work was performed across the Fellfoot Forward area and broadcast through Fellfoot Radio, an online radio channel created by the project team.

"I had always been interested in the radio and was happy to be asked to be on fell foot radio. I felt nervous to begin with and then it got gradually easier as my confidence increased. It went alright, I thought. After the radio was completed, we had a cup of tea at the end."

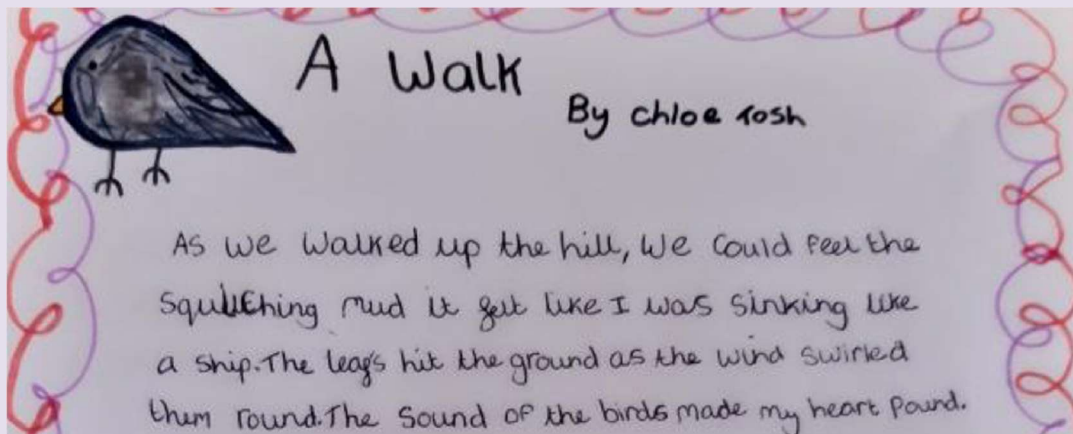
4Eden participant and Fellfoot Radio contributor

- **Nine artist commissions were awarded in 2022 and 2023** to artists living and/or working in the Fellfoot Forward area. The commissions responded artistically to one, or more, of three Fellfoot Forward LPS priorities.
- **Community arts pilot projects** were commissioned for 2021, with six artists working with local community audiences to deliver their activity.

The positive impact and learning from these six pilot projects included:

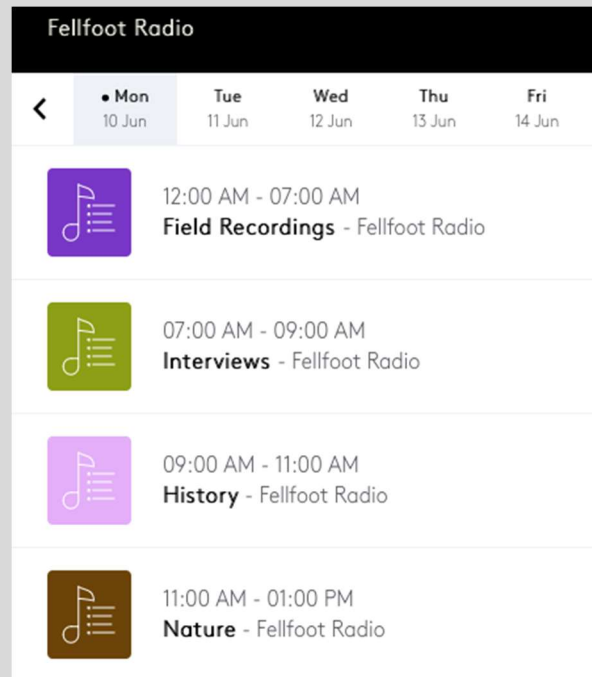
- 47% of community participants stated their participation in an arts project is something they "rarely do" or "have never done before."
- 89% of participants stated the project "inspired them to explore and think about the local natural environment."
- 68% of participants stated they were "inspired to think more about the places in which they live."

- **Fellfoot fables** was the first community arts project delivered in 2020. A virtual creative writing series recording young people's connection to the landscape during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and restrictions, through poetry and prose.



Fellfoot Radio

“Fellfoot Radio has offered a creative platform for the project, showcasing so much of *Everything Changes, Everything Stays the Same* ...it has told the story of the Fellfoot Forward scheme. It has been a valuable evaluation record.”



Fellfoot Radio ~ broadcast and schedule

The development of Fellfoot Radio is a unique way of disseminating local experiences of the natural and cultural heritage. Some of the stories available as part of the schedule includes:

- **Living in Longtown** ~ an audio snapshot of life in rural Cumbria in the twenty-first century from the perspective of the children of Longtown.
- **Nature Recovery and RSPB Geltsdale** ~ a window into the hidden lives of waders and moorland birds, features an interview by broadcaster Helen Millican with the naturalist Guy Broome
- **Dawn chorus at Talkin Tarn** ~ the recording formed part of a 24 hour environmental listening workshop with 26 local artists, creatives and researchers.
- **Voices from the Fellfoot: John Barron & Hugh Beesley** ~ long-time residents of Hallbankgate talk about coal mining and the former industrial history of the area, along with a few anecdotes about haymaking, the importance of pigs, local wildlife, and colourful characters of yesteryear.
- **Fellfoot Sounds with Jorge Boehringer, Jayne Dent and Ore** ~ live performances recorded at Fellfoot Sounds in summer 2023 that celebrated the landscape through sound and listening.
- **Live from a cattle shed** ~ live broadcast from a cattle shed on Hallbankgate Farm.
- **Live from a rural churchyard** ~ the sounds of bells mix with crows, owls, choir practice and the murmurs and stillness of village life.
- **Sounds from Fellfoot Forward** ~ a collection of sounds from the industrial and natural heritage including hydrophone recordings of the River Eden and its underwater insects.
- **Tuning into Culgaith** ~ recordings of music and poetry in response to their local by young people from Culgaith Church of England Primary School.
- **Voices from Fellfoot Forward** ~ five conversations with residents from the Fellfoot Forward area.

What difference has Arts Connection made to people?

Arts connection was able to engage with a diverse community, including youth and seniors, in projects that enhanced social cohesion and promoted learning and collaboration. Some of the different impacts on participants through the many different activities includes the following reflections and comments:

“A lot of the service-users wouldn't feel confident straying off a footpath or even walking on a public footpath in a green space, because they don't know if they're allowed. So, confidence in navigating the natural world, confidence in being outside and with that there's confidence to be creative ...hopefully inspiring them to be more creative.”

John Coburn (creative producer, *Everything Changes, Everything Stays the Same*) describing impacts for 4Eden.

“I find the project helps towards my wellbeing ...I learn to appreciate the landscape using all my senses.”

“Having not undertaken any formal art since school, it was fantastic to be given the opportunity and time to be creative whilst discovering the landscape around me.”

Participants reflections from the Pilot Community Arts projects

“I was inspired to think about the place where I live; I was inspired to explore and think about the local natural environment; I learnt about the night skies, the planets and the universe.”

“I always loved walking my collie in the dark, but now I switch off my torch and love walking with just the moonlight.”

Feedback from the arts bursary projects

“The micro bursaries proved to have significant impact on the artists and their work, providing new skills, inspiration and relationships, showing a small financial investment in artistic development can go a long way.”

Project officer reflections

Living with mental health conditions ... adds another layer of challenges in creating a supportive community, especially in a space lacking in representation. We got exposed to a highly stimulating atmosphere and gained self-confidence to discuss and brainstorm. We now believe more in ourselves and tend to express interest to join other initiatives in the broad field of arts and society.

Comments from a Micro-bursary recipient



Fellfoot Sounds performance at Long Meg and Culgaith Primary School listening and recording workshop

Sight Support case study

In the Autumn of 2023, artists Amy Boud and Dominic Smith introduced a visually impaired group from Carlisle Sight Support to the Fellfoot Forward landscape as part of the ***Everything Changes Everything Stays*** the same arts programme.



Some of the positive benefits and responses to **What have you got out of this?** included:

“Meeting people with the same problem as I have knowing what they do and how they cope and seeing if I can cope any better at home because I just live at home”

Raymond

“As a child I never walked through all the leaves, hugged trees, ‘cos I lived in the city. It was a great experience and it’s taken me all these years to do something like this which I enjoyed very much.”

Maureen

“You take things for granted but it’s brought it right to the front. You don’t realise how nice them sounds are until you listen to everybody’s different sounds”

Carol

Community Grants

“I think the community grant has been one of the most positive projects for reaching an audience that would not otherwise have had contact with the scheme. The ripple effect of the community grants has been great.”

Project manager reflections

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

“Funding allowed us to support community led projects that create a positive and lasting change at a grassroots level and included support for a diverse range of activities such as:

- Brampton 2 Zero
- Repair Café
- Farming on the Fellside
- Festival of Nature
- Eden Big Swim

As grants were delivered by the community in the community and their networks have been greater than anything we could have created ourselves. The acknowledgement of the funding has been good and this has supported Fellfoot Forward’s awareness raising and I hope will build new relationships with the North Pennines National Landscape and other scheme partners.”



Eden Big Swim

The community grant supported filming, equipment purchase, digital storage and editing for a film highlighting the condition of the river, by a team who swam the length of the River Eden.

“The community grant has been an invaluable support for the project, giving us the confidence and materials to publicise the swim and our findings on the health of the River Eden...It also gave a young local filmmaker the chance to get involved in local environmental filmmaking”

Eden Big Swim Team

Festival for Nature

The community grant supported a public event for local people and environmental and community partners. The event featured talks, workshops, drop-in activities, and demonstrations to share and communicate the wonder and value of local wildlife to people’s wellbeing.

“Many thanks for the generous support it certainly created some great opportunities for local residents to engage with nature and learn”

Simon Whalley, Cumbria Wildlife Trust



Community grant examples

Outcome C ~ Fellfoot Forward will be Future Fair

Scheme Outcome ~ Increased awareness and engagement

Local communities and people involved with Fellfoot Forward will be more engaged and have developed skills to deepen their understanding of sustainability in the area.

The following evidence can demonstrate working towards or achieving this outcome.

Farm Futures

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

“The work to have actual upland whole farm carbon analysis with the Farm Carbon toolkit is ground breaking. A good deal of data on farm carbon is on arable and lowlands farms. Taking a whole farm approach and establishing soil carbon base line for the North Pennines National Landscape are important first steps. The work is feeding into the East of Eden project, Farmer Network initiatives and, through word-of-mouth, to other farm businesses.”



Feedback event with Farm Carbon Toolkit from the 10 participating farms

Future Fair

“The farmhouse retrofit is a good example of an unexpected outcome. Through Fellfoot Forward we were able to offer a fully funded retrofit audit and planner to eight working farms in the landscape partnership area. This work was funded through the Carbon Emissions Reduction Fund and promoted in partnership with the Farmer Network.”

Future Fair project reflections

What is meant by Future Fair?

Climate change and how we respond locally and globally will affect the security and impact of everything invested through the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme. Working with Cumbria Action for Sustainability, the scheme ensured that the opportunities for action on climate change deliver positive outcomes to underpin activity on heritage. Future Fair is the

‘golden thread’ of sustainability, to ensure that the Fellfoot Forward scheme was delivered with maximum positive impact and with greater security.

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

Taking a whole farm carbon approach

Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS) worked with The Farmer Network to deliver a farm carbon footprint pilot using the [Farm Carbon Toolkit](#). This work highlighted the significant potential carbon reductions that could be delivered through actions farmers planned to take, such as increasing hedgerows and reducing fertiliser inputs.

“The LPS scheme has been reactive to the major transition in farming practice and the need to find ways to farm sustainably with reduced emissions. This flexibility has allowed us to run multiple pilot projects, developing a really useful ‘*on the ground*’ evidence-base for the challenges and barriers facing the decarbonisation of agriculture. We’ve been able to extend this learning across other projects and platforms.

Future Fair has focussed on baseline emission reduction across the scheme area and engaging communities and farmers in the climate change and carbon debate. We’ve approached this directly with the agricultural community and this has been challenging but the urgency of the situation requires this. It has been well received by farmers who want to do the right thing and transition to regenerative practices while retaining a viable business.”

Fellfoot Forward Results



Whole Farm Basis

Carbon Footprint Balance	Baseline (tonnes CO ₂ e)	Adjusted (tonnes CO ₂ e)*
Average	184	-84
High	629	-5
Low	-121	-130

*Average change between baseline and adjusted carbon footprint was a reduction of 268 tonnes of CO₂e.

Fellfoot Forward carbon emission reductions, detected using the *Farm Carbon Toolkit*

What difference has taking this approach made to the natural heritage of the Fellfoot Forward programme area?

“Future Fair has focussed on baseline emission reduction across the scheme area and engaging communities and farmers in the climate change and carbon debate. We’ve approached this directly with the agricultural community and this has been challenging but the urgency of the situation requires this. It has been well received by farmers who want to do the right thing and transition to regenerative practices while retaining a viable business.”

Fellfoot Forward Results



Example Action Plan

Emissions:

- 15% reduction in Blended Feed usage
- 10% reduction in Road Diesel
- 10% reduction in Red Diesel

Sequestration:

- Increase in soil organic matter by 0.05% across the previously sampled 33.96 ha
- Establishment of New Woodland Planting to become 10-15 year old trees
- 10 ha of new Wood Pasture from Rough Grassland
- Conversion of 200m of established hedgerows to large growth with an increased width
- 992m of new Hedgerow planting

Fellfoot Forward carbon reduction action plan, from the *Farm Carbon Toolkit*

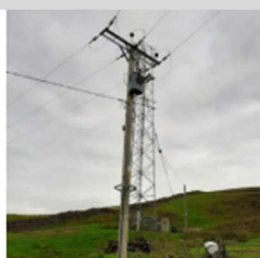
On farm renewables ~ Agrivoltaics

CAfS received £10,000 from Electricity North West to deliver a pilot on farm renewables pilot in the Fellfoot Area, this was matched with £5,000 from the Fellfoot Forward Community Grant Scheme. Five farms participated in the pilot which investigated the option for solar PV, wind and Electric Vehicles, with these case studies being drawn together and promoted though the [Farming for a future webpage](#).

A further four Fellfoot farms received free advice and one to one surgery from Electricity North West at a Farming on the Fellside Legacy event, these are farm renewable projects being planned but not completed as part of Fellfoot Forward.



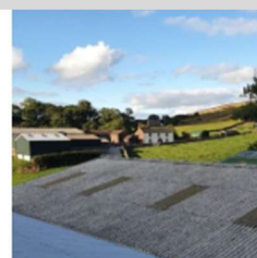
CASE STUDY:
MIXED LIVESTOCK



CASE STUDY: BEEF
& SHEEP FARM
WITH NEW BUILD



CASE STUDY:
DAIRY FARM WITH
CARAVAN SITE



CASE STUDY: BEEF
AND SHEEP HILL
FARM

Example case studies from CafS website

What difference has this project made to people?

“We’ve been able to hand-hold farmers through the complexities of carbon and soil carbon baselines, support them to engage face to face with Electricity North West, and to establish a new way of working with farmers as a community looking at the barriers to installing renewables on farms.”

“We talked through what we were wanting to do re 3 EV fast chargers on the caravan site and 1 in the farmyard. Meeting was excellent and very helpful to have the conversation with people on-site and be able to ask them many questions (because we don’t know the ‘electric process, systems and jargon) was excellent.”

Better Becks

Helping to protect communities at risk of flooding and increase sustainability through finding new ways to manage the flow of water especially during floods and drought. The process involves research of the areas where interventions are required then working with the landowner to identify and agree the most appropriate measures and techniques from the natural flood management (NFM) toolbox that will work with nature to produce flood protection and create or enhance habitats.

What difference has this project made to people?

“For those downstream of the variety of slow-the-flow initiatives across several of the tributaries of the Eden, it is supporting a reduction of flood incidents within villages within the scheme area, such as Croglin and Cumrew, and those on the edge of the scheme area such as Warwick Bridge. With more unpredictable weather this work needs to be highlighted and scaled to support at-risk communities.”



Woody dam collecting water and Sumburgh after construction

Outcome D ~ People will have volunteered time and developed new skills

Scheme Outcome ~ People will have volunteered time and developed new skills

Local communities, land managers and people will be more engaged with the landscape and heritage, some will have volunteered time and developed skills to increase their understanding of the area.

The following evidence can demonstrate working towards or achieving this outcome.

“The volunteering events are a great support for people living rurally isolated. Friendships are built, loneliness reduced, and people’s mental and physical well-being boosted.”

Better Becks end of project report

Uncovering the Past

“I have often looked at those bumps in the field, and am pleased that I now know more about them, and how they fit into the history of our village...”

Long Meg volunteer and village resident

What difference has this project made to people?

“As we’ve taught volunteers how to do archaeology in the field, we’ve also been showing them techniques, such as 3D photogrammetry. 3D models of the excavation trenches have been produced - including Carlatton Cairn, Long Meg, and the remaining standing stone at Grey Yauds. This is a valuable public resource for anyone to interact with online; it exists only because of the Fellfoot Scheme.

Volunteers who have never been involved in archaeology have seen and now appreciate the landscape through a completely different lens. Those who kept returning on field events and workshops, built up skills, confidence and expertise to enable them to do and contribute more on surveys.”



Long Meg fieldwork group and flint find

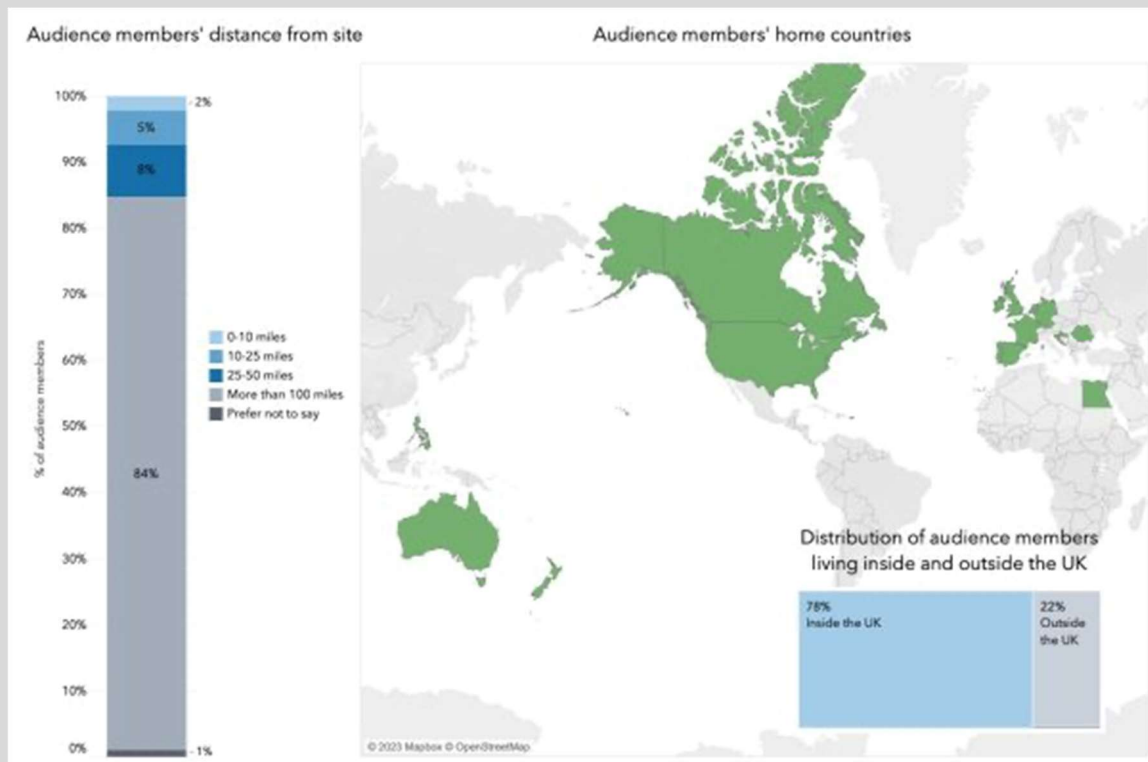
Long Meg virtual site tour

“Over 400 people signed up for the virtual tour, from sixteen different countries, demonstrating that the appetite for Cumbria’s Neolithic archaeology transcends regional and even national boundaries.”

Fellfoot voices blog

The move to virtual talks was a response to the Covid lockdowns, as a way to help engaging people with the scheme. As part of the community excavation at Long Meg a virtual site tour was held so that people were still able to see the dig in progress. These type of online events would not have been planned at the development stage but a creative response due to the restrictions from the Covid pandemic shows how projects can increase access, reach and audience diversity through this type of activity with:

- 2% attending from 0 to 10 miles away
- 5% from 10 to 25 miles
- 8% from 25 to 50 miles
- 84% from more that 100 miles, with 22% of the audience from outside the UK



Map showing the online audience for the Long Meg virtual tour

‘Uncovering the Past’, has opened a fascinating new avenue in which to employ my professional skills as a geologist, as well as enabling me to fulfil a life-long ambition to “do” archaeology... into a wonderful world of cross-fertilisation between geology and archaeology, involving the ongoing study of Long Meg and her Daughters, as well as other neolithic stone circles in the area.’

Geologist and volunteer, Paul Logan.

Citizen Science

“Through Site Seeing, 2,024 new records have been made for the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme project area. This is a substantial contribution of records; it includes sites which haven’t been surveyed for decades, and new sites within communities.”

Citizen Science project reflections

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

“Because of *Site Seeing’s* engagement and training opportunities, we’ve been able to bring on-board and develop skills with a new cohort of volunteer recorders from in and around the project area, this included young people and strengthened relationships with longer-standing volunteers. The project has allowed development of relationships and new networks with landowners and communities and has established links with the University of Cumbria Wildlife and Media Society. Relationships have also been strengthened by engaging with further opportunities across Fellfoot Forward, such as the Festival of Nature.”

What difference has this project made to the natural, cultural or built heritage of the Fellfoot Forward programme area?

“The Fellfoot Forward area now has up-to-date records, mapped by Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre (CBDC) and volunteers. Most records have been made on sites which hadn’t been visited for decades or surveyed at all, contributing to better understanding of the local natural heritage.

Identification skills have been passed on to individuals and groups in the Fellfoot area, providing them with very useful skills to share more widely. A number of participants in these events have joined other CBDC events to further their knowledge and experience.

The project has allowed participation from a wider audience and encouraged a framework for cross-generational learning through the progression of opportunities delivered with experienced volunteers joining alongside new volunteers.”



Discover your Grasslands volunteer training day and survey days.

“We now have more volunteers who are more skilled and aware of County Wildlife Sites, surveying methods used, and identification skills to promote future conservation of these spaces.”

Citizen Science ~ end of project report

Some of the other examples of the impact achieved through volunteering and developing skills includes:

Species Recovery ~ employed fieldworkers and worked with many local volunteers on all of their projects. People have gained skills and knowledge that be applied to future conservation and heritage activity with the following examples reported:

- The re naturalisation of Howgill Beck was undertaken by a local Penrith based contractor which is supporting a new growing business.
- Last summer the seasonal Curlew volunteer working at the reserve has gone on to full time employment with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in the South working on curlew conservation.

Farm Futures ~ the success of the cattle collars attracted a lot of interest because the use of the collars at Geltsdale was one of the first sites to deploy them in an upland landscape.

“We have shared our experiences of using the technology and helped several landowners gain confidence on using the collars with their own stock. Having the time to invest in learning how to get the best out of the technology has meant we are in a good position to advocate.”



Delivering advice on Nofence collars to farmers and land owners.

Monuments at Risk ~ nine people gained one to one training on heritage building conservation and hands-on lime mortar. This included local farmers and landowners, who will be able to apply the knowledge and skills gained to their own farm buildings.

Bringing the Past Alive ~ The interpretation at Long Meg and Kirkoswald engaged key volunteers in the development of both sites. At Kirkoswald this has led to one volunteer becoming a community link for the landowner to manage individual group requests for access outside of the holiday opening periods.

Stars in the Tarn ~ The practical courses, including stargazing and green wood working, attracted both novices and skilled individuals. The hazel hurdle workshops were attended by mainly young adults who developed skills to contribute towards the creation of 25 hazel panels that formed the cladding for *The Nest's* larch timber construction frame.

Outcome E ~ Access to heritage will be improved

Scheme Outcome ~ Access to heritage will be improved

Increased access and improved infrastructure at key locations enabling people to become more aware of and enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the Fellfoot area. There will be increased opportunities for informal recreation that promotes health and well-being benefits.

The following evidence can demonstrate working towards or achieving this outcome.

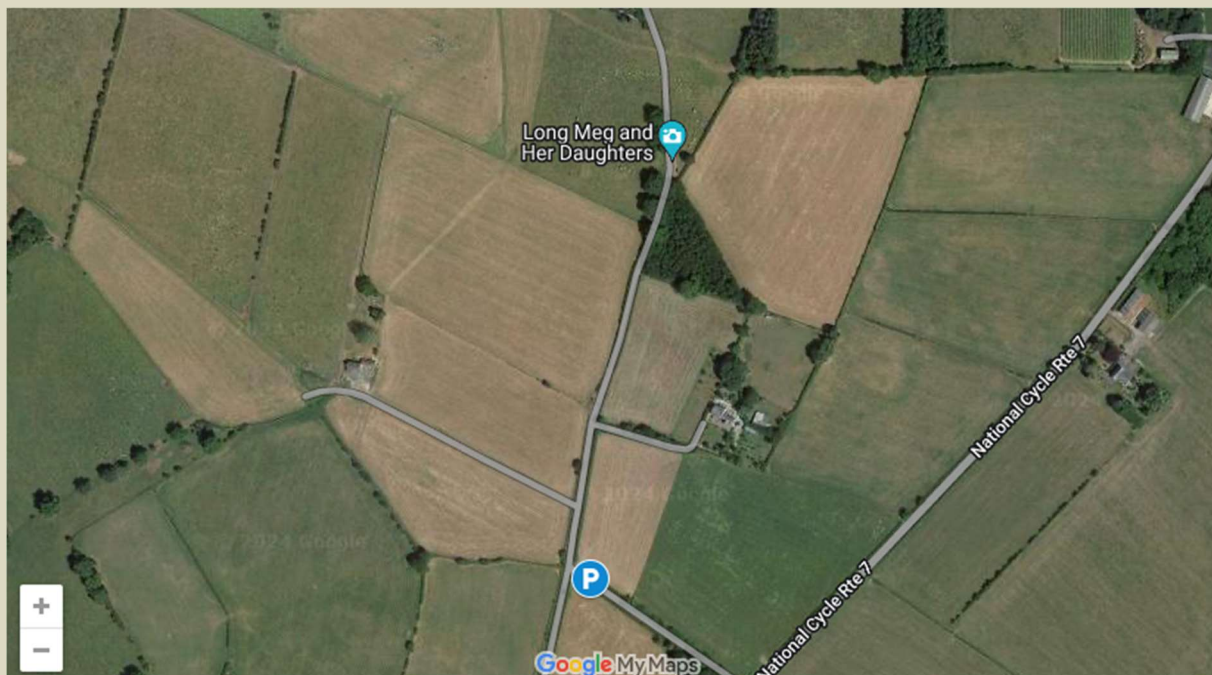
Monuments at Risk

“Really appreciated the new car park at Long Meg giving better access to the site, and meaning the site was first seen from foot as it should be rather than car and trying to find somewhere to park it”

Social media post

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

Improving access at Long Meg ~ “Completing the car park at Long Meg after the extensive community consultation, planning and purchase of the land. The feedback through Facebook and other personal comments on the way the car park has enhanced visitor experience visiting the site. The site scars caused by parking have healed.”



Friend of Long Meg promoting new access

“Previously, undertaking fieldwork, or guided tours at Long Meg would have involved parking on site or bussing folk in from afar, or getting permission to park somewhere and walking a long way. The car park has changed all this... removing the negative visual impact of the many cars that on sunny summer days were often parked on the grass either side of the road, risking serious damage to buried and very sensitive archaeological deposits. The farmers no longer have their access road blocked!”

Friends of Long Meg management team member

Improving access at Kirkoswald Tower ~ “The site has better public access. The cows will not be in the castle area when public are allowed in. The moat crossing has been improved with laying of causeway flags. The stiles at either end of the footpath running past the site have been replaced. There is interpretation and information for the visitor. The castle owners are in a much more secure position with regards to possible litigation from the public injuring themselves. The tower has been consolidated, the site secured, and new stiles, fencing and hedges put in to support the wider site and biodiversity on the farm.”

Stars in the Tarn

“*The Nest* provides a novel opportunity at a new location for the many visitors to Talkin Tarn to sit, park their mobility scooters, meet with one another informally, shelter and relax and reflect, adding an important resting point along on of the new accessible walking routes created through the *Slow Trails* project.

Interpretation boards at *The Nest* demonstrate that the design and structure of this low impact Skygazing Pavilion draws upon the history and materials used in traditional roundhouse construction, and in representing a nest shaped composition in form and name, takes inspiration from the Tarns’ rich natural heritage.”



Stars in the Tarn ~ end of project report

Slow Trails

The landscape partnership has developed ‘slow’ walking and cycling routes to encourage exploration and immersion in the landscape. 12 different accessible routes offer people the opportunity to take time travelling in the landscape, learning about the heritage along the way.

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

“The Slow Trails project provided a focal point for the Fellfoot team to engage with local walking and cycling groups, creating new routes, promoting the area as a ‘slow landscape’, boosting local tourism, and improving conditions for existing walkers and cyclists.

Leaflets are designed to engage the walker more deeply with a sense of place through a *Roam, Relax and Reflect* element.”

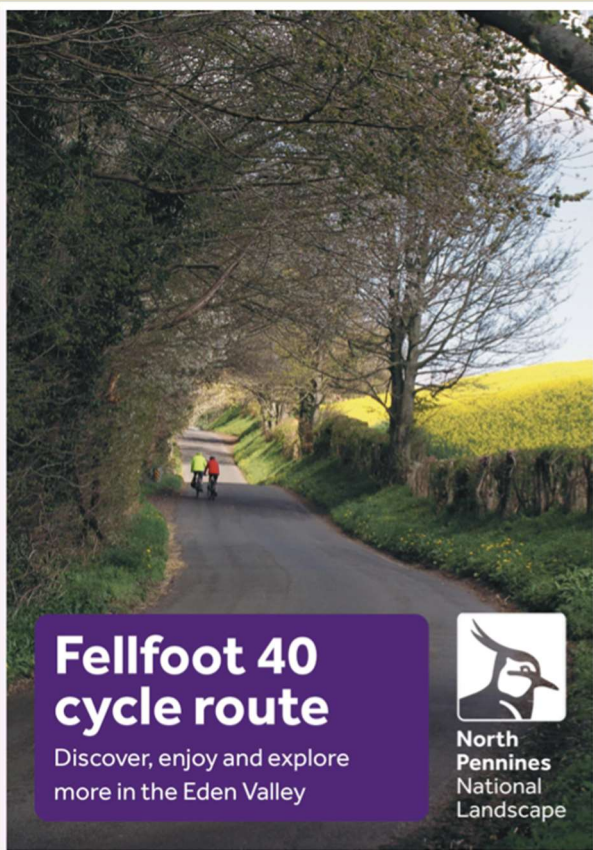


Consultation and route checking with *Brampton Walkers are Welcome*



Experience Community provided expertise on access

The Fellfoot 40 cycle route ~ is an invitation to spend time gently exploring the landscape partnership area on a figure of eight, 40 mile route. The route follows a network of local lanes, travelling through traditional villages with a diverse natural, cultural and built heritage to enjoy.



Fellfoot 40 cycle route ~ downloadable leaflet

Outcome F ~ Developing the heritage economy and employment

Scheme Outcome ~ Developing the heritage economy and employment

A responsible heritage-led tourism economy begins to thrive. Rural skills are increased and trainees will use the experience and confidence gained to progress to employment or other learning opportunities. There is an increase in the number of people gaining employment in the environmental sector.

The following evidence can demonstrate working towards or achieving this outcome.

Trainees

“All the trainees to date have maximised their opportunities. Developed their own project work and have gone on to employment.”

Project manager reflections

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Fellfoot Forward LP Scheme?

“The landscape partnership been informed and influenced by all the trainees sharing their recent study and experience: Emma Pope has influenced the slow trails outputs; Jack Ravenscroft developed and delivered the blueprint for winter volunteering activity on farms; Lizzy Benn shaped the second year of the engagement activity and delivered the first festival of nature, and Dylan Hardy is paving the way for younger, non-graduate traineeships for those on large projects.

Jack Ravenscroft (BSc Environmental Sciences) was keen to gain practical experience, project management skills and develop a professional network in the area. Of note, Jack developed and delivered a series of tree planting volunteer events across farms that had received environment grant funding.

Jack went on to secure a role with Natural England. At the moment, he balances part time Rights of Way work with the North Pennines, undertakes survey work for Natural England plus his own private practical Right of Way work.



Jack demonstrating tree planting at Hallbankgate Farm



Emma consulting on Slow Trail work

Emma Pope had recently finished her doctorate, and was keen to apply it to a defined project. Emma focused the community consultation element of the 6 slow trails and the Fellfoot 40 cycle ride.

Emma worked with the Carlisle Youth Zone residential activity, led a workshop at the 2022 tourism forum and influenced the slow trail interpretation. Emma left to take up the role of research assistant at University of Cumbria and has since moved to Natural England.

Lizzy Benn (MSc Wildlife Biology and Conservation) was living in the area, and was keen to develop her engagement skills and build a professional network. Lizzy worked across projects but led on the CEVAS (educational) training for farmers and schools and youth engagement.

Lizzy took on Samantha Tranter’s 12-month maternity cover. A role that gave her time to develop her skills, networks and confidence. She left to take up a volunteer coordinator role for Lake District National Park and then became Engagement Officer for Cumbria Wildlife Trust in the north.



Lizzy supporting volunteers tree planting



Dylan working with volunteers at a traditional skills workshop.

Dylan Hardy came to Fellfoot Forward after volunteering on the creation of the skygazing pavilion The Nest at Talkin Tarn. Dylan left school to take up work in small-scale farming and forestry. He gave up his forestry work to support the four week programme of hurdle making workshops.

Dylan has progressed with the organisation and delivery of practical volunteer tasks. He undertook GIS training and has applied that to mapping Environment grant scheme activity for the scheme.

“It has been good to work with trainees that had a commitment to staying in the area. This will benefit the North Pennines with respect to continuity with staff if they stay with the host organisation and wider partnership working if they are employed by regional partners.”

Project manager reflections

“Things started off with a mixed bag of helping everyone with everything to get a flavour of the scope of Fellfoot Forward, from farm visits and Farming in Protected Landscapes, to hosting Carlisle Youth Zone and other events; Pennine Way footpath maintenance, and retail work at Bowlees. Then I got to refine it to my interests, and focused on Festival of Nature. The experience was directly related to what I wanted to do in future jobs.”

Lizzy ~ Fellfoot trainee

Fellfoot Welcome

“Covid disrupted the first two years of the scheme and businesses were unavailable. There was a lack of drive on our part to engage and push partners to deliver activity. Both Cumberland and Westmorland offered training events in the development period but then were hard to engage. When a new member of staff arrived, they worked to programme events in 2023 but there was poor uptake, and we directed our energies elsewhere.”

Project manager reflections

It is acknowledged by the Fellfoot team that progress to develop a deeper understanding and knowledge of the heritage of the local area amongst visitor businesses was less successful than for other aspects of the scheme. Delivery of the workshops to equip business with the skills and tools to maximise engagement with the local heritage and landscape was hampered by the pandemic and priorities of the target audiences that lay elsewhere.

Over the duration of the scheme, three annual tourism showcase events were held. One online event in 2021, with two other events in Melmerby and Kirkoswald in 2022 and 2023. Nine businesses and communities have been actively supported to help develop the heritage economy with the following examples demonstrated:

- Howscales cottages with access.
- Carindale Caravan Park with a new wetland site.
- Croglin High Hall with planting and wetland creation
- Cannerhaugh with planting
- Into The Woods with walks leaflet
- Ainstable Parish Council with replica and restoration of the cast iron black and white village directional signs.
- Hallbankgate Hub with signage
- Castle Carrock Parish Council with new benches for visitors and locals.
- Eden Valley Glamping with star gazing equipment



WED, 29 NOV 2023
North Pennines Tourism Forum
Kirkoswald
12 people interested

☆ Interested



Tourism Forum ~ November 2023

“The village boards will be a positive addition to the villages to support visitors and benefit the understanding of a small part of cultural and natural heritage.

I hope the Eden Glamping dark skies initiative will support the visitor and community with a greater appreciation and understanding of the value of the dark skies across the area. “

Project manager reflections

7. Programme learning: some key ingredients for future activity

As part of the final evaluation of the Landscape Partnership Scheme, all the projects supported through Fellfoot Forward produced individual project completion reports. In addition to capturing the output and outcome information, the report format provided an opportunity for individual reflection, the chance to capture some lessons learnt and **think about how to improve** on the wide range of activities delivered.

Many of the lessons learnt reflect the different complex elements of successful project management, communication and delivery and have been grouped into eight key areas. By far the biggest learning relates to the breadth of experience gained from project delivery or “learning from doing”.

All eight areas identified should be considered “in the round” and serve as reference points and **list of key ingredients**, or form a checklist, for all project partners to integrate into project planning and evidence thinking for future programmes of activity.

1. Project management ~ being realistic with resources and timetable

Monuments at Risk ~ We would have benefitted from putting more funding and time into finishing off the restoration at Long Meg with more formal edging where needed but not detracting from the untouched feel of the site.

Fellfoot Welcome ~ The targets drawn up in the development period were too ambitious. Some were borrowed from previous schemes. The two councils and the North Pennines team had ambitions which in the end were not seen as a priority and fell by the way. Covid did impact greatly on the visitor businesses with lockdown either sparking people to quit, refurbish or switch-off and disengage at that time. The village information boards were also not progressed until a staff change in May 2023. On reflection I would have reduced the scale of the project and focused more on the tangible outputs to support businesses.

Community Grants ~ Covid did stall engagement with the community and activity. However this should have given us time to get a forward plan together to engage once people became comfortable with virtual sessions and restrictions lifted. Unfortunately we were not proactive with this. The project staff member was disengaged and went on sick for a period of time and then left the organisation. Better line management from myself and re-direction of their work across other staff members or external partner support would have helped. A new member of staff came in for the last 12 months and turned the project around. They delivered targeted work with the community that meant we met our original targets and delivered quality support to some great community initiated projects.

Slow Trails ~ It would have been good to start earlier but Covid halted progress and staff leads on the trails work changed twice.

Arts Connections ~ 4Eden Project ~ Some of the challenges that we faced were:

- Due to timing, it was hard to get Risk Assessments sorted in time.
- Our Kids club wanted to be involved with the project but due to Fellfoot not being available in the evenings, they could only take part in the school holidays.
- The Assess ability wasn't great for our wheelchair users, although they made it to some of the venues once there they could only take part in certain activities which made us feel left out in a way.
- Some of the timings were very last minute so we didn't get time to process what we were doing that day. Normally we like to plan ahead to we can be ready.



Carlisle Youth Zone at Cardunneth Pike

2. Project management ~ managing risk and uncertainty, adopting a flexible approach

Species Recovery ~ The project was planned far in advance, and changes to priorities and staffing occurred. We have been grateful for flexibility on the delivery of these objectives, such as the reallocation of resource to help the Howgill Beck Project.

Wild Connections ~ Our projects were impacted by an internal whole-organisation restructure as well as the Covid pandemic. Staff allocated to the project were not working at RSPB as the point the project began and there were internal challenges to fill gaps. Several of the team were furloughed during the 2020 lockdown and then again in 2021, which again, caused challenges in covering work expectations.

Future Fair ~ The landscape partnership scheme has allowed flexibility to identify priority projects that reflect these challenging times. If this hadn't happened the outcomes would have been a lot less relevant and impactful.

Citizen Science ~ The Site-Seeing project developed at a slightly later stage and altered from original plans from the development phase. A number of changes in staff throughout the projects lifespan from different partner organisations did occur too. A more detailed project plan for Site Seeing specifically, linking back to the over-arching citizen science scheme and schemes already in progress, may have been useful for new project staff to continue to develop to build on the project for greater impact from the start.

Next Generation ~ When we committed to the Fellfoot Forward project we had, as part of our team, people engagement officers. A major society restructure in 2019-2020 meant those roles were lost from the team. This has made this project harder to fulfil.

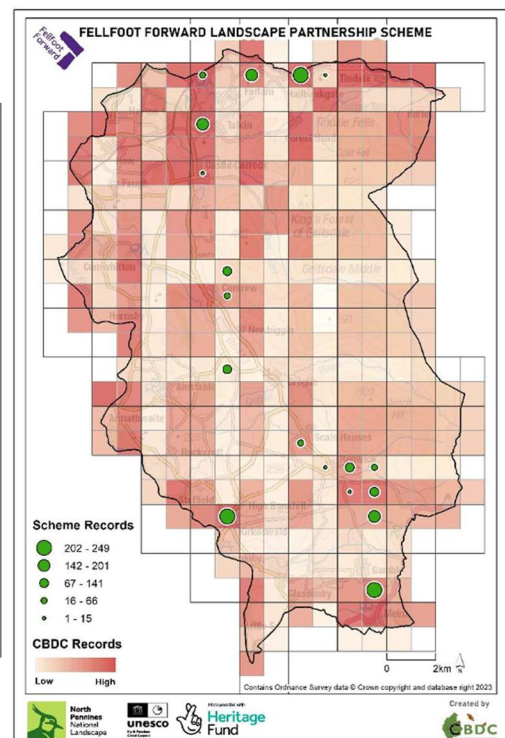
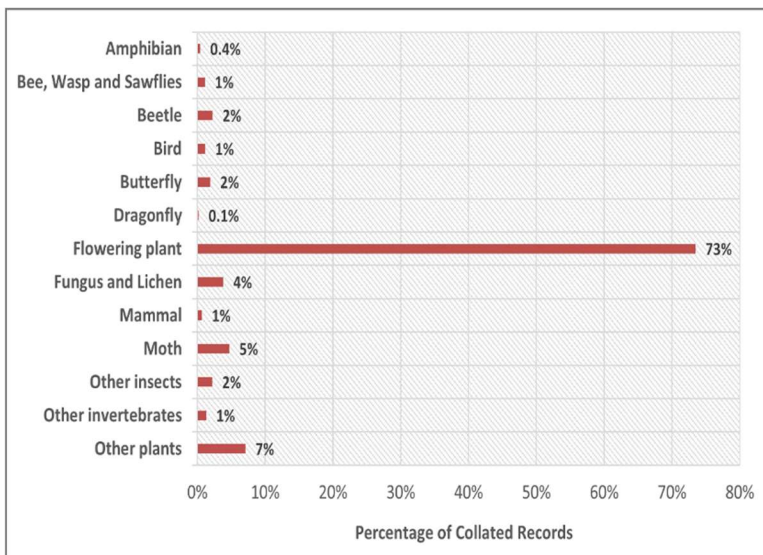
Community Grants ~ We should have worked harder at the start as it would have been great to engage with the local community through a series of community grant drop-in sessions at key locations, to allow people to find out more about the application process, other community grant funded projects funded and options for fundraising. I joined towards the end of the project, and appreciate this may have been considered, but not possible due to Covid/social distancing requirements.

3. Project management ~ having a clear project scope and relevant permissions

Community Buildings ~ To save time and reduce the possibility of raising expectations within the community it would have been best to confirm ownership, land/property agent management agreements and any devolved parish management planning in the Development Phase.

Citizen Science ~ Contacting and communicating with landowners to gain permission for access to survey county wildlife sites was a very time-consuming task. The extent of this was perhaps underestimated at the start. The surveying of County Wildlife Sites we managed was worthwhile and did offer the chance for us to update landowner details and create records. If we were to run other County Wildlife Site projects at a wider scale, we'd suggest finding and contacting landowners during the development phase and increase resources for this line of work. A training programme for volunteers to communicate with landowners would be really valuable if this was built into the project plan.

Slow Trails ~ The Slow trails project underlined the importance of having as clear a brief as possible with regards to contracted work, ensuring that consultation and involvement with local stakeholders remained consistent. The Slow Trails project, by design, wished to co-create the Trails with individuals, community groups, contractors and partners. This coupled with inherent issues around trail creation such as land access, and other practicalities such as the timing of committee meetings, land slippage and inclement weather meant that the project timeline continued to be extended due to a variety of delays.



Citizen Science ~ records covering the landscape partnership area

4. Project management ~ establishing a good information base and communication before project commencement

Wild Connections ~ In large parts of the project area, the habitats and the landscape are not suitable for breeding waders – there was little available survey information before the start of the project (particularly for the areas outside the North Pennines AONB), so we didn't know enough about the species priorities to calculate an accurate need for habitat restoration such as rush management and wetlands. This information gathering is good data to support county-wide nature-recovery plans.

Farm Futures ~ Review budget and outputs at the start of the actual project - rather than the bid development stage. Match funding opportunities had changed. I think the Farmer Network had not appreciated the funding and opportunities available and sounds like they would wish to have developed a larger programme of engagement. An increase in officer capacity would have been needed.

5. Communication ~ partnership working and building local relationships

Monuments at Risk ~ We could have increased the opportunities for public tours on Kirkoswald Castle through better negotiation with the contracted stone masons. Also, earlier conversations were needed to embed a local archaeology project into the work at the Castle.

Uncovering the Past ~ Fostering connections between the disparate groups of learners such as through *Yatters that Matter* and *The Village Atlas* participants might have fuelled more cross over between the outputs, and fed inspiration for interview subjects for the oral history trainees. This was made more challenging with the effects of Covid 19 restrictions. From the outset, we might have sought greater commitment and participation from local history groups.

Farm Futures ~ Plan communications to different groups of people involved in the whole project. Have a separate website and source of information so it's easy to go and see what else is going on in the area, to help develop more of a sense of community in the area. Fellfoot Forward worked in partnership and hoped the Farmer Network would develop appropriate timely partnership information that could reach the right audience through their website.

Next Generation ~ It would have been good to see a relationship developed with young farmers throughout the scheme. However great efforts were made to engage the variety of clubs within the scheme area and in the periphery, working with the *Young Farmers* Chief Officer in year 1 with activities like *Fellfoot Fables* and camera trapping training. None of the invitations to engage were taken up. With hindsight it might have been beneficial to invite a young farmer representative onto the advisory group to draw them in from the outset.

Fellfoot Welcome ~ We never had engagement with the caravan parks across the scheme area, a proportion of the businesses are lifestyle choices. Those that are commercial are busy, many are farm diversification schemes and people are just getting on with it. The slow trails work would have generated outputs early on and this would have been a good hook to engage visitor businesses. This didn't happen (see learning from Slow Trails).

Trainees ~ In the development period we spoke to Cumbria University and Newton College to scope out how the scheme could deliver for a one-year sandwich placement or work placements. Newton Rigg folded early on during the life of the project so this intention never went further than sharing opportunities and presenting on the Wildlife and Media course at Cumbria University.

6. Learning from doing ~ habitat and capital programmes

Monuments at Risk ~ We should not have agreed to new gates for landowner at Long Meg, as a sweetener, as it is a poor use of public funds.

7. Learning from doing ~ people engagement

Better Becks ~ If possible, I would have programmed in more farming/landowner, community events, volunteering and higher education around the work of Eden Rivers Trust and the Better Becks project. The low impact, slow-the-flow work, in the upper reaches of river catchments if done at scale can have a significant impact on downstream flood incidents. With greater awareness, knowledge sharing and momentum there could be more schemes initiated across the catchment working with landowners.

Uncovering the Past ~ Suggest a bi-monthly coffee morning in a touring location of the scheme area so volunteers can meet socially to share learning, develop relationships and fuel new projects. Also, encourage a local history/archaeology champion to connect with and support their nearest school.

Farm Futures ~ I feel that the opportunity for a public/education open day was missed. With an approach to the right landowner, and with funding behind it, this would have been valuable for the local community, visitors, and possibly a spark for local schools to consider farm visits if they don't already.

Citizen Science ~ We would engage more closely with local community groups, offering talks, hands-on sessions, iNaturalist projects and other activities as suggested by the groups. This could involve evening talks, allotment/community garden recording sessions, setting up and running iNaturalist groups, and creating mini-recording events at the community level. Of course, awareness of these groups is only because the project has taken place and identified/supported these groups!

Next Generation ~ We were extremely challenged in building relationships with youth organisations and teenagers in the first year of the scheme due to the pandemic. Some organisations disbanded or stopped meeting, and struggled to re-form following the lockdowns. More use of social media and better understanding of how young people were communicating online, i.e. which platforms they were using may have helped engage teenagers, in particular, in greater numbers.

Stars in the Tarn ~ Demonstration hazel hurdle sessions at an earlier opportunity, both on-site and in surrounding locations, such as colleges, may have elicited even more uptake by residents who didn't already belong to a green woodworking network. Greater consultation with local residents and community groups to promote traditional building techniques and the use of natural materials, and to offering a broader variety of ways to engage i.e. podcasts, may have engendered a more comprehensive range of activities around both the building process, and the promotion of the completed installation.

Arts Connections ~ Launching Fellfoot Radio earlier as it proved so popular as a platform for artist contributions and a way to communicate other outputs from the scheme such as natural history activity, interviews with archaeologists, and stonemasons and oral histories. Capacity bottlenecked with the producer's time to edit and share programmes, as there was a huge amount of potential content.

8. Learning from doing ~ effective skills development

Farm Futures ~ We would consider how to reach more farmers using different methods – film, print, web resources. Time is precious for farmers and workshops are not always well attended. We could also look at other organisations delivering workshops or training on our reserve and ways to make the site more accessible for more users.

Citizen Science ~ The ‘Discover your...’ training days offered a great opportunity to engage a new audience. These workshops were delivered in 2023 having built on learning from the previous survey season. We would encourage a stronger focus on entry-level training and engagement from the start, with more connections to other training across the project, to allow for new people to get involved sooner and to build more skills. This would enable us to train up ‘champion’ recorders as part of an in-built programme for stronger legacy.

Fellfoot Welcome ~ More peer-to-peer learning could have been good, but there didn’t feel like there was a visitor business community of mutual support in the area.

Trainees

“The only drawback to the traineeship was having the bursary payments which meant no allowance for holidays, that has been changed since. I think it would benefit future trainees to have a specific end-goal or something they’re working towards, so that trainees can have a specific example of something they worked on from start to finish when applying for jobs.”

Trainee feedback

Dylan was first non-graduate trainee taken on by the North Pennines National Landscape. Lots of learning for ourselves in respect of introducing a non-graduate trainee to a large organisation’s processes, systems and expectations on work programme management. Dylan has found this element of the traineeship more challenging, but it was what he was seeking when applying. He found maintaining the level and consistency of work challenging and has talked of burn-out.

“Things to improve on (at least for myself) would maybe be a more structured way of getting time with different members of the team, like a mentoring day each month with a different team member. This would allow those learning opportunities to not be lost under other day-to-day tasks. I gained and learned a lot from the time I spent with my teammates, I only wish my traineeship was longer so I could continue learning from everyone.”

Trainee feedback

Bringing the Past Alive ~ It would have been good to have given volunteers a chance to have attended a short interpretive writing course for specific outputs. It’s good to leave skills in the community. The only reason we didn’t, was lack of capacity within staff to make this happen. On reflection, this could possibly have been an online course at the beginning when Covid was restricting opportunities to be on-site and to progress scheme-interpretation. However it takes time to build a known and trusted presence for the scheme and staff to secure community engagement.

Arts Connections ~ More in-depth training for contributors to Fellfoot Radio in editing and packaging programmes might have been better to have taken place before the scheme ends, as no new programmes have been made independently yet.

8. Legacy ~ what next for the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership?

Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership legacy activity

In parallel with the delivery of the Landscape Partnership Scheme, the programme team and partners have considered the legacy of Fellfoot Forward from an individual project and scheme perspective. All the Fellfoot partners are committed to the legacy of the Landscape Partnership Scheme through a programme of continued partnership working, although not through the current partnership mechanism, with the North Pennines National Landscape overseeing the management and maintenance activity that will help protect the physical changes to the natural and cultural heritage in addition to the digital assets that have been created.

Scheme Legacy

The Fellfoot Forward partners met in September 2023 to consider legacy from a partnership perspective, to support the Scheme Manager and identify how best to take many of the best elements and learning from the Fellfoot experience forward on completion of all project delivery.

All partners involved can see the benefits of working in partnership that helps to facilitate and deliver a broad range of heritage activity across the identified landscape area. Given the makeup of the partners involved in Fellfoot Forward there was no clear need identified for maintaining the existing governance structure overseeing delivery within the Fellfoot Forward area. The main driver for this was due to resource and capacity constraints within the different organisations that make up the partnership.

“We can all see the benefits of working in partnership and know that Fellfoot Forward has a positive impact on the heritage of the area but practical resource constraints are acknowledged by many partners around continuing the landscape partnership in the current form.”

Fellfoot Forward legacy discussion summary ~ September 2023

Following completion of landscape partnership activity, the North Pennines National Landscape will ensure that the management and maintenance liabilities are discharged by individual partners as identified in the management and maintenance plan and that the digital assets created will be signposted and made available through the North Pennines website.

In considering the scheme legacy and partnership working, it is clear that Fellfoot Forward has helped to develop new partnerships and strengthen existing working relationships as demonstrated by a number of different partnership projects that have been successful in securing funding that will help embed and build on the achievements delivered through Fellfoot Forward.

Fellfoot Forward legacy project	How this helps to embed the Scheme Legacy?
<p>Access to Eden ~ led by Eden Rivers Trust with Cumbria Wildlife Trust (CWT) and Yorkshire Dales National Park.</p> <p>A four year funded project through the National Lottery Heritage Fund will bring together existing partnerships. All three main partners are currently work in partnership through forums and project work.</p>	<p>Project manager reflections</p> <p>The continuation of a community engagement officer in the scheme area will maintain community relationships for the North Pennines National Landscape and other partners, groups and contractors engaged through the Access to Eden project.</p>

Fellfoot Forward legacy project	How this helps to embed the Scheme Legacy?
<p>The North Pennines National Landscape will have a 3 day week project officer who will work with communities and groups previously engaged through Fellfoot Forward. The focus is to facilitate relationship building between communities of interest and locality to strengthen rural and urban understanding.</p>	<p>Initiatives from Fellfoot Forward’s project work with communities will be taken forward. Access to Eden will maintain the Fellfoot Forward Facebook group which has 1,000 members and will bring new project activity to them.</p> <p>Participation and engagement activity will draw on the Fellfoot Forward walking and cycling trail leaflets and other digital resources including Fellfoot Radio and the improved visitor access to Kirkoswald castle and Long Meg.</p>
<p>County Wildlife Sites ~ led by Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre with The Farmer Network and CWT.</p> <p>Funders: Lake District National Park, Yorkshire Dales National Park, Westmorland & Furness Council, Cumberland Council</p> <p>Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre (CBDC) and Cumbria Wildlife Trust (CWT) delivered a large element of the Citizen Science project, with volunteers surveying County Wildlife sites in the Fellfoot Forward area.</p> <p>This activity helped CBDC to launch a new project using Fellfoot Forward as a case study to secure year 1 funding to survey the 16,000 sites across Cumbria on a 10 year rolling programme. CBDC developed their relationship with The Farmer Network through the landscape partnership. They are working with The Farmer Network to bring farmers and landowners on board to access to sites and become recorders. Synergies exist between this survey programme and the East of Eden project.</p>	<p>Project manager reflections</p> <p>The Citizen Science project built personal relationships between CWT and CBDC that has proved valuable for the new County Wildlife Sites project. The volunteers involved in the Citizen Science project were mainly from CWT but now have a good relationship with CBDC and will expand their volunteering with both organisations.</p> <p>The data base for County Wildlife sites in the Fellfoot Forward area will be developed further with accurate, up to date survey data that can be fed into the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy, North Pennines National Landscape nature recovery strategy and accessed by other partners and organisations as needed.</p>
<p>East of Eden ~ led by Natural England with partners North Pennines National Landscape, Eden Rivers Trust, RSPB, The Farmers Network, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, CBDC and Cumbria Commoners</p> <p>A Natural England Nature Recovery project delivered by an East of Eden partnership with funding from Natural England for work on Natural England sites and research within the Fellfoot Forward area, east Cumbria and across the watershed into South Tyne.</p> <p>The good partnership working and established relations with the farming community supported inclusion of Fellfoot Forward scheme area within the East of Eden project area.</p>	<p>Project manager reflections</p> <p>The involvement of The Farmer Network with the Fellfoot Forward landscape partnership has developed a strong relationship that has facilitated new work by The Farmer Network with scheme farmers to identify research projects to take forward with Natural England and Farming in Protected Landscapes funding.</p> <p>Farmers who have been an integral part of the landscape partnership are better known and as a legacy will be invited to be part of future research.</p>

Individual Project Legacy

Intended project legacies as identified within individual project plans from the LCAP, have been updated within the final project reports ensuring an ongoing legacy of activity from the landscape partnership scheme. From these and to be noted is the individual partner commitment to develop the legacy from Fellfoot Forward around five key themes:

- Maintaining habitat and access improvements
- Continuing volunteer activity
- Community Engagement
- Further partnership working
- Building capacity and sharing resources

The intended individual project legacies have been summarised as follows.

Maintaining habitat and access improvements

Better Becks ~ Eden Rivers Trust (ERT) are continuing to lead on the Facilitation Fund for the scheme area with farmer led knowledge exchange events. The Trust continues to access Farming in Protected Landscapes and other funding to continue improvements to the Eden and its tributaries across the scheme area. ERT are interested to see the progression of the White-Clawed crayfish research and monitoring; further water vole releases and additional work on nutrient enrichment. ERT are a partner in the *East of Eden* Natural England research project, that includes the Fellfoot Forward scheme area.

Species Recovery ~ will continue to work on all four of the key bird species (curlew, black grouse, ring ouzel and hen harrier) and more at Geltsdale. 2024 will see a new management plan for the reserve building on the successes delivered through Fellfoot Forward.

Wild Connections ~ RSPB will continue to offer conservation advice to landowners. This is a core part of the plan for the North Pennines and Dales Priority Landscape area. The *East of Eden* Nature Recovery project encompasses a large part of the Fellfoot area that will carry on much of the work and relationships developed through the landscape partnership.

Monuments at Risk ~ The Long Meg car park is in ownership of Hunsonby Parish Council. The contractor left enough hard core for future maintenance and the management of the hedges was written into the land purchase agreement with Alan Calvert, previous landowner. Signage is in place and the car park will be an asset for the Parish Council with respect to management of a key site within the parish and support for locals and visitors visiting.

Farm Futures ~ are continuing using the *NoFence* collars and will continue to bring farmers and landowners to the site to demonstrate sustainable land use practices.

Next Generation ~ intend to install some on site signage including QR codes and links to the resources online so that visitors who may be aware of them can enjoy experiencing the tarn in new ways and learning more about its natural and cultural heritage, taking away activities that can also be enjoyed elsewhere.

Bringing the Past Alive ~ The maintenance of the interpretation is part of the ongoing maintenance plan. The Friends of Long Meg will take responsibility for the Long Meg information and panel and work with Hunsonby Parish Council regarding car park interpretation and the landowner and grazier about the onsite interpretation. At Kirkoswald Castle the parish council will contact North Pennines National Landscape about maintenance of the panel. We are asking the landowner to keep abreast of the information panels.

Stars in The Tarn ~ the Nest has the capacity to carry a small named and dated memorial plaque, providing an avenue for the structure to generate revenue for its ongoing management and maintenance.

Continuing volunteer activity

“Collaboration through the project has led to the launch of the Friends of Long Meg, with an online platform to help draw together support.”

Uncovering the Past ~ there is potential for further excavations at RSPB Geltsdale, dependent on the outcome of the geophysics survey in autumn 2023. Geltsdale visitor centre is a possible location to present the recorded material.

Andrew Pierce a local archaeologist from Kirkoswald has launched the East Fellside Community Archaeology Group to build on community interest the project has generated. We have linked the group with DigVentures for further initiatives as well as the wider volunteer community to build membership. This is an exciting outcome for the legacy of the project and offers potential for follow-up survey work at the key pre-historic sites and Kirkoswald Moated site.

Citizen Science ~ the project has developed a cohort of volunteers who are registered to continue volunteering at any County Wildlife Site or undertake other habitat and species recording. More opportunities for volunteers are being mapped out for next season within Cumbria Wildlife Trust (CWT) grasslands team’s hay meadow projects which will continue to contribute to records. The training opportunities that were developed can be embedded and taken forward in future project plans across partnerships. Training has already been replicated at CWT to deliver ‘Discover your Wildflower’ events.

Community engagement

Next Generation ~ *Stomping Ground* CIC have developed links with Fellfoot partners like Eden Rivers Trust to continue to offer engagement for Gilford Centre Pupil Referral Unit, and credit the scheme with raising their profile, increasing their work. They have engaged with communities in a part of Cumbria that they did not know well before working on Fellfoot Forward.

Castle Carrock Primary school have engaged with Fellfoot Forward across at least five projects. They are in receipt of Community Grant funding to enhance their school grounds for Forest School engagement that will offer education and outdoor activity for the whole community which will be a lasting legacy for the school. We expect learning and engagement for schools and families visiting Talkin Tarn to continue using the digital education resources.

Arts Connections ~ The project has left a lasting impact on the arts and local communities, supporting creativity, confidence, and connection within the North Pennines region. The Fellfoot Radio license is paid for another 12 months, so the pathway is open and the North Pennines National Landscape is supportive of a transition toward it becoming a community led initiative or being adopted by a partner organisation.

“The collaboration between Fellfoot Forward project workers, creative artists and members of Carlisle Sight Support was a great experience for all concerned, with each of us learning something new and gaining immeasurably from our time together. We created something special together which has left us with great memories and a real desire to continue to work together in the future.”

Carlisle Sight Support

Slow Trails ~ the Trails will be hosted on the North Pennines National Landscape organisation-wide hybrid app. This digital platform will enable videos, photos, audio recordings to be embedded into the Trail maps and could lead to further engagement by groups and individuals wishing to contribute to this, and to additional routes.

Further partnership working

Monuments at Risk ~ at Kirkoswald, we will be setting up community support through local primary school and local archaeologist to support public access on request. Historic England are being supported to develop a management agreement with the landowner for the grazing within the castle site. The site will be on the radar for the new East Fellside Community Archaeology group. The North Pennines National Landscape website and hybrid app will support people's intellectual and physical access to the site.

The Long Meg project will be supported through the newly formed Friends of Long Meg that intend to continue to pursue future research, excavation and sharing of the site to a wide and diverse audience.

Community Buildings ~ will continue to signpost groups to available funds that can fill the gap in Fellfoot Forward funding for community buildings in the area.

Citizen Science ~ Partnerships initiated during the project will be continued in some form going forward. One example is developing biodiversity literacy in schools in the Eden Valley with CDEC.

New connections formed through the project have already started to develop with the University of Cumbria Wildlife and Media society having attended group opportunities at Cumbria Wildlife Trust. Partnerships generated through the project will continue to form through *Access to Eden* and *East of Eden* projects. We have built relationships, have new contacts, networks and a good rapport with landowners in an area where we had little before. Whilst this has been a challenge at times, this has allowed learning across partnerships as something to build on and take into account for future projects.

Next Generation ~ The RSPB Geltsdale reserve team intend to host annual workshops and visits with Carlisle Youth Zone and now has strong links with Cumbria University who use the site for field. They have aspirations for more people engagement work on the reserve as part of future projects.

Community Grants ~ Several community grant projects will continue beyond the Fellfoot Forward LPS. North Pennines National Landscape website will be used to showcase community project achievements and signpost Heritage Fund and other alternative funding sources.

Building capacity and sharing resources created

Citizen Science ~ the 2000 records generated (from training sessions, recording and surveying events, and bioblitz events) have been added to the Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre database, informing decision-making for nature recovery, conservation work, planning proposals and other development. The project has shaped a new way of working through sharing volunteer resource across partners involved. This will act as a useful framework to sustain and promote continued development of volunteers.

Fellfoot Welcome ~ an Access to Eden officer starts in June 2024 for 4 years. We expect them to break down barriers, build bridges between visitors, businesses, landowners and community, to support visitors accessing blue and green spaces, and to deliver important messages around responsible tourism and support for visitors and community to understand each other.

Future Fair ~ this project will:

- Continue to track the development of on-farm renewables in the Fellfoot area and support farmer engagement with Electricity North West.
- Follow up with the Farm Carbon Toolkit to better understand and share the results of the research and feedback findings to Fellfoot communities via a blog report on the website.
- Contact Gloucester University who led on the Eden Rural Climathon, to look at any follow up work planned to look into the actions from participating organisations.

- Offer continued support utilising new decarbonisation funding from the Westmorland and Furness Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Call out to farmers in the Fellfoot area for expressions of interest to get support to set up Vermiculture windrows (worm farm trenches) as part of action on food waste and development of locally sourced peat free compost.
- Call out to farmers to offer 3 more places that are fully funded to work on the Farmhouse Retrofit Planner offer.
- Continue to engage with the Fellfoot area through projects at Cumbria Action for Sustainability, by showcasing farms, growers and businesses through a Low Carbon Food Programme.



Barugh Cottage Produce ~ hedgerow creation to retain stock and improve habitat connectivity

9. Observations and next steps

“A ‘slow’ landscape is one of charm, sustainability and deep understanding. But it’s also very much a living landscape. I’d like this project to enhance curiosity, to excite the next generation, and to quietly educate all who live, work and visit here. And I’d like it to be well managed, carefully considered and fun to deliver. I have every confidence that it will be.”

Tom Speight, Fellfoot Forward Advisory Board Chair , July 2019

9.1 ~ A well rounded scheme that met and exceeded intended outputs

The information collected and presented within this evaluation demonstrates that Fellfoot Forward has been a very successful Landscape Partnership Scheme that has faced many disruptions and challenges, particularly at the outset, yet has delivered some significant natural, cultural and built heritage improvements throughout the programme area within the original intended four year timeframe.

As noted in Section 5, the intended outputs have been achieved and exceeded for all the areas of activity that have been reviewed with any variations agreed and incorporated into a revised programme of delivery. Highlights of the outputs achieved are:

For nature recovery

- The landscape impact over 1,125ha to enhance natural heritage and biodiversity.
- 44km of new or restored hedgerow and 1.9km of electricity cable put underground.
- 23,505 hedgerow and in field trees planted
- Securing £461,000 total additional funding through other nature recovery funding streams
- The success of the wildlife recording activity with 2,000 biological records created.

For local engagement and participation

- 5,542 people participating in the 245 different events and learning activities throughout the scheme,
- The delivery of 82 skills workshops and training opportunities benefitting 1,311 participants
- Recruiting and engaging 610 volunteers contributing 1,530 days or the equivalent of 7 full time working years
- 30 community groups benefiting from grants totalling £90,000 to enhance and raise awareness of the heritage of the Fellfoot area
- The opportunities for 4 trainees to gain experience and move on to further employment within the natural heritage sector

In addition to the work on restoring natural heritage and participation and engagement there has been significant activity on improving built heritage assets and the focus on sustainability with the:

- 21 farms benefitting from sustainable land management best practice advice
- 13 community buildings receiving energy audit, funding advice and/or capital grants to improve energy conservation measures

In building up the picture of what Fellfoot Forward has delivered as a landscape partnership scheme it can be demonstrated that outputs have been exceeded against six of the eight key indicator areas and achieved against the two other indicators as summarised below.



9.2 ~ Demonstrating delivery of significant outcomes

Combined with the delivery of outputs, information collected through the external evaluation process can evidence delivery of significant achievements against the six scheme outcomes, whilst demonstrating a range of improvements against the Heritage Fund outcomes: for heritage; for people and for local communities.

Further observations and strengths identified following a review of all the project documentation and conversations held as part of this final evaluation include:

A well rounded and clear development phase ~ The project documentation produced as part of the Stage 2 submission was very clear and well thought through and should be seen as an exemplar for project planning at a landscape scale. Given that Fellfoot Forward started delivery right at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic in April 2020 and all the uncertainty that was involved, the project planning documentation was a real strength and a foundation to help the Fellfoot team and partners commence delivery even though some activity was delayed and was subject to change due to the restrictions being imposed on society at the time.

A partnership that created the right culture ~ Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership was a genuine community of local partners that wanted to work collaboratively, yet was flexible enough and creative in responding to ambiguity and change as this arose. There was an impressive breadth and depth to the partnership with a wide audience participation and engagement that included, individuals, local organisations, voluntary groups, academic institutions, students as well as built, cultural and natural heritage experts.

Project activity was not separated into different silos but allowed to blend and between the different theme and outcome areas. This created some difficulty in presenting programme achievements within the final evaluation, but as a delivery approach should be commended.

“The Nest is a good example of cross project connections; for example using the hurdles from skills training with volunteers, then using the completed structure for star-gazing events, as well as a providing a more tactile experience for people with limited sight. This demonstrates a nice integration across different aspects of the project.”

Project evaluation notes ~ May 2024

Appropriate scheme governance, management and evaluation ~ the presence of an independent chair for Fellfoot Forward was a strength and particularly effective for partnerships working across administrative boundaries, helping partners to work together rather than being dominated by the host organisation.

The leadership and enthusiasm provided by the core programme team needs to be acknowledged in helping to bring together and achieve the many programme successes.

Having an independent external evaluation process integrated into project delivery at an early phase has helped to identify emerging key strategic issues and adopting a longitudinal evaluation has helped to support the overall risk management of Fellfoot Forward and should be learning applied to further multiyear programmes.

The importance of volunteers ~ the contribution of 1,530 volunteer days to March 2024, translating into **7 full time working years** is a big achievement over four years of project delivery that was initially impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and has helped contribute to many of the natural, cultural and built heritage outputs that have been delivered.

This has been achieved through a comprehensive programme of well-supported volunteer skills development, with the project substantially growing capacity for ecological and archaeological surveying in the Fellfoot area. The supportive approach to volunteering is noted; with celebrating volunteers' contributions through awards events, breakfast gatherings and other social activities being best practice examples that should be continued.

Quality participation and engagement activity ~ the outcomes delivered through the many different participation and awareness raising activities is a particular strength. Fellfoot Forward delivered a well thought-out integrated programme of support for schools, including a range of high-quality professional publications - including the Talking Tarn educational pack - staff support for field visits, including for children with support needs, and a mechanism for supporting schools with travel needs. Together, this was a meaningful package to support the engagement and involvement of schools, increasing awareness of heritage within the Fellfoot area.

Innovation through sustainability ~ Future Fair was a very interesting and novel feature of this particular landscape partnership working across various projects and picking up on opportunities as they arose. The work on a farm carbon footprint pilot using the Farm Carbon Toolkit was not envisaged at the development stage, yet is an excellent example of partnership working, maximising the opportunities and additional funding and developing a useful template and learning that could be scaled up elsewhere. **Having innovation type project budgets and activity** to support planned nature recovery, participation and heritage programmes is something that should be considered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund when assessing future multiyear partnership programmes.

9.3 ~ Fast delivery in a slow landscape

For all the undoubted successes delivered through Fellfoot Forward, this is a programme that has delivered activity right up to scheme completion in March 2024. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic should not be underestimated as this coincided with commencing project activity but given 6% of the total spend being claimed by the end of year one it is not unreasonable to observe that this has resulted in the intended **four years' worth of activity being condensed and delivered in three**. Whilst this focus on completing the scheme within the intended timetable has been achieved, some of the wider benefits as highlighted within the final evaluation have yet to be communicated and disseminated.

9.4 ~ Many lessons learned, going above and beyond

The project completion reports contain a rich source of lessons learned, with signposts and evidence to help support future project activity and funding applications. Information collected from these reports highlighted the many different complex elements that relate to successful project development and delivery and included:

Project management

- Being realistic with resources and timetable
- Managing risk and uncertainty, adopting a flexible approach
- Having a clear project scope and relevant permissions
- Establishing a good information base and communication before project commencement

Communication

- Partnership working and building local relationships

Learning from doing

- Habitat and capital programmes
- People engagement
- Effective skills development

In parallel with the final evaluation, a short film has been produced with a set of reflections to help partnerships with the delivery of future landscape restoration and cultural heritage projects. The lessons learnt from the film and this evaluation report should be used to evidence future funding applications and partnership working beyond completion of the Fellfoot scheme.



Extracts from Fellfoot Forward final evaluation film ~ May 2024

9.6 ~ Strategic Communication and promotion

To celebrate the achievements of the scheme it is recommended that some of the headlines and findings and in particular the headline project outcomes from this evaluation are captured and a dedicated web page of what has actually happened is created leaving an additional legacy.

Examples of best practice communications from other landscape partnerships are infographics that bring together the headline achievements in digital or print form which, when combined together with the case study documents and lessons learned would act as a prospectus to help secure additional legacy funding and future partner support.

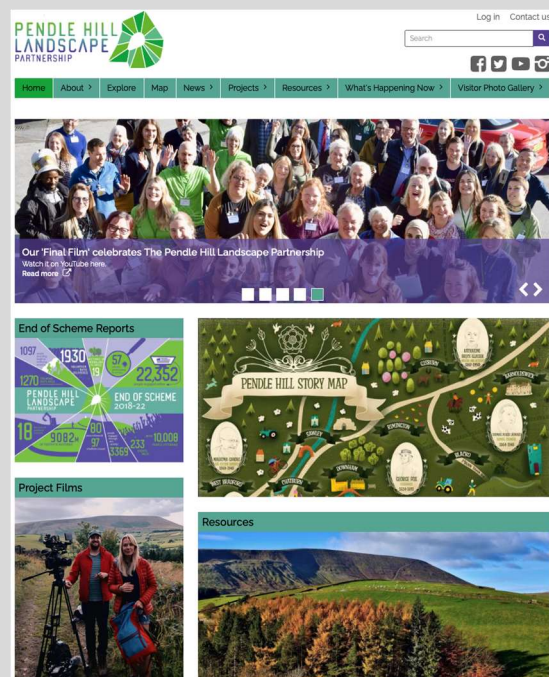
Two case study examples from other landscape partnerships are:

- the digital booklet produced by the Carbon Landscape highlighting partnership achievements and legacy

See: https://www.carbonlandscape.org.uk/sites/default/files/CLPartnership_Achievements_Legacy.pdf

- the final webpage produced by the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership that pivoted away from current activity and helped tell the story of what had been achieved

See: <https://www.pendlehillproject.com>



9.7 Evaluation recommendations

This report attempts to bring together and present the many achievements and impact of all the Fellfoot Forward project activities in one place. The landscape partnership has delivered a wide range of heritage activity that has met the National Lottery Heritage Fund approved purposes and in many instances exceeded what was intended at the outset. It can be demonstrated that significant heritage outcomes have been delivered and that behind the headlines there have been many different internal and external factors that have impacted on the delivery of a complex programme of work.

Legacy planning has been proportionate to the scale of future proposed activity with follow on activities developed and a commitment to future collaboration and partnership working within the Fellfoot Forward area.

Fellfoot Forward has been a very successful scheme that has delivered excellent value for money and that the key recommendations emerging from this evaluation would be:

- That time is taken by staff within the North Pennines National Landscape and project partners to **reflect and appreciate what has actually been achieved** looking at the scheme as a whole, the lessons learnt, the final evaluation observations and how these can be applied to the development of further projects through continued partnership working.
- That as the partnership moves beyond completion of the scheme and as resources allow, the Fellfoot Forward page as part of the North Pennines **website should be amended and edited** so that **the story and achievements** of the Landscape Partnership Scheme are consolidated and elements of good practice as identified within this evaluation, with necessary signposting to other digital media, are found in one place.

Combining these two recommendations along with dissemination of suggested infographics would bring together the headline achievements in digital or print format which would act as an additional prospectus to help secure funding and future partner support for continued heritage activity within the wider Fellfoot landscape area.

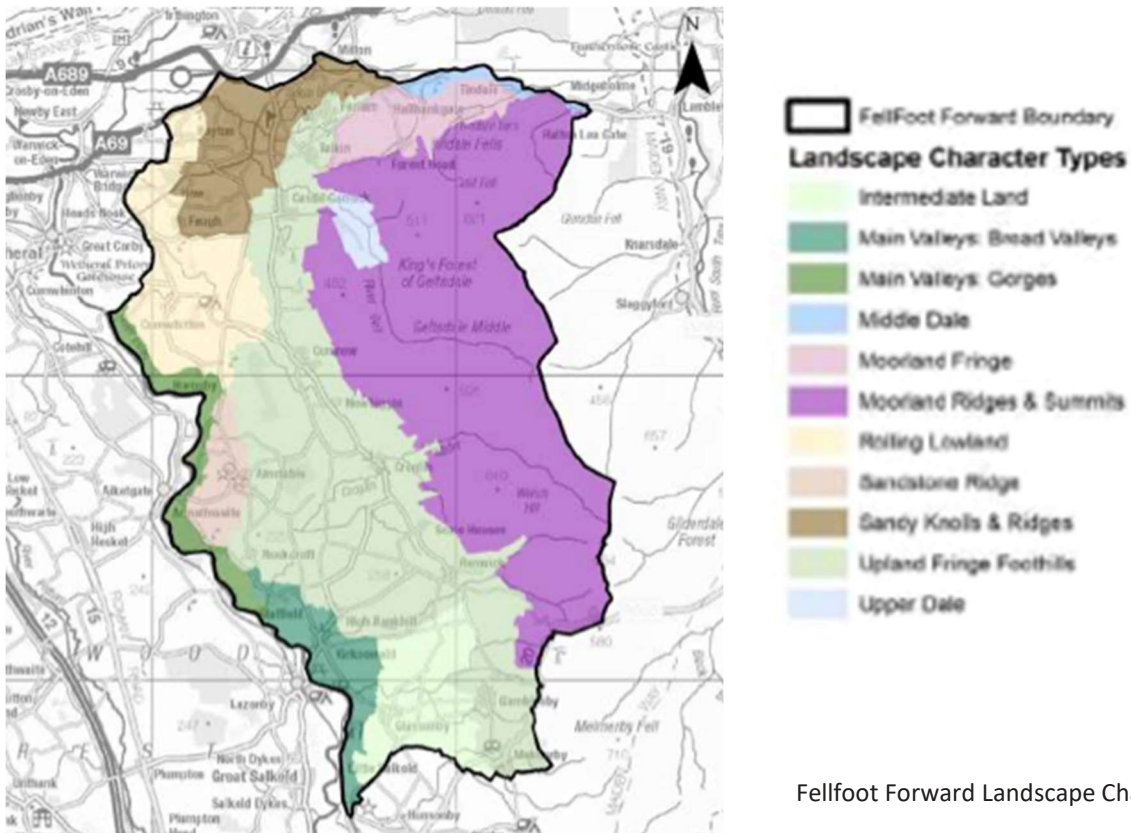
Acknowledgements

I would like to offer my thanks to Fiona Knox and all the other members of the Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership, who I have worked with over the last four years and have provided the information and insight that enabled this evaluation to be completed. Collection of much of the information contained within the report has been conducted remotely between March and May 2024, so any errors and misinterpretations are in good faith and remain my responsibility.

Simon Lees, Countryside Training Partnership, June 2024

Appendix 1 ~ The Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership area and landscape character

From the Landscape Character Assessment commissioned as part of the development phase, the landscape of the Fellfoot Forward area is divided into 11 broad landscape character types:



Fellfoot Forward Landscape Character map

A. Intermediate land

Gently rolling or undulating topography. Intermediate in character between lowland and upland landscapes. Agricultural land use is predominantly pasture.

Varied patterns of hedges or stone walls including regular parliamentary enclosures and less regular field systems around older villages. Hedgerow trees are sparse but locally abundant in older hedges close to villages. A mixture of old lanes and straight enclosure roads



East of Glassonby

B. Main Valleys: Broad valleys

Broad river valley with flat floodplains bordered by rising valley slopes and occasional steeper bluffs. Winding, in places meandering, watercourse of slow pools and faster riffles. Agricultural land use is predominantly pasture

Varied patterns of hedges, with occasional stone walls. A heavily wooded landscape, with historic villages and hamlets – with buildings of local sandstone - strung out along the valley floor.



North of Kirkoswald

C. Main Valleys: Gorges

Linear gorge of steep bluffs, rocky cliffs and narrow floodplains. Meandering river with fast stony riffles and long deep pools. A mosaic of improved and semi-improved pasture, woodland and forestry.

Ancient semi-natural oak-birch woodlands cover the steeper slopes of the gorge, modified in places by the planting of conifers. Sparsely settled with isolated farms and small villages at bridging points. Attractive, picturesque, with commanding views from high ground and sense of wildness and naturalness in places.



Armathwaite

D. Middle Dale

Upland valleys with moderately sloping sides. Rocky fast-flowing meandering streams. A mix of improved and semi-improved pastures and rush pasture, with dry stone walls, wire fences & relict/overgrown hedges. Sparsely wooded. Scattered conifer plantations.

Relics of the lead and coal mining industry including disused workings and abandoned railway lines. Settled tranquil upland landscapes.



Coalfell

E. Moorland Ridges & Summits

Broad upland ridges with high rounded or flat-topped summits divided by deep moorland valleys with a strong horizontal grain to the topography. Grits and limestones outcrop locally in low grey crags and stone bands. Rocky, quick flowing becks in steep sided gills

Extensive tracts of blanket bog. Upland heath or acid grasslands. Extensive grazing by hardy hill sheep. Burning patterns on grouse moors. Panoramic long-distance views out across unbroken moorlands. Remote and elemental - a near wilderness quality.



View north from Hartside Pass

F. Moorland Fringe

Upland landscape of improved moorland, intakes and allotments. Varied topography of valleys, upper dale sides and foot-hills. Wet, rushy pastures, rough grazing and enclosed moorland. Large regular fields bounded by low stone walls and wire fences. Isolated farms.

Scattered conifer plantations and shelterbelts. Relics of the minerals industry – abandoned quarries, waste heaps, etc. Visually open and often broad in scale. A remote and tranquil landscape on the margins of settlement and agriculture



West of Forest Head

G. Rolling Lowland

Gently rolling topography incised by shallow valleys of rivers and becks. Land cover predominantly pasture. Strong patterns of old hedges with locally abundant hedgerow trees. Generally open; heavily wooded in places. Large semi-natural woodlands on raised mires; narrower broadleaved woodlands following becks

A settled landscape of historic green villages and hamlets of medieval origins with some later housing.



Cairnbridge

H. Sandstone Ridge

Gently rolling ground, in the floor of the Eden Vale. Predominantly pasture. Field boundaries a mixture of hedges and stone walls - around sub-regular patterns of older fields associated with older villages and more regular grids of enclosures. An open landscape with woodlands largely restricted to narrow denes.

Sparsely settled with scattered farms hamlets and villages. A remote and tranquil rural landscape.



North of Towngate

I. Sandy Knolls & Ridges

Undulating with prominent knolls and ridges, locally incised by river valleys. Predominantly pastoral. Field boundaries are hedges with scattered, locally abundant hedgerow trees. Heavily wooded in places - coniferous plantations, semi-natural woodlands, parklands and hanging woods

Scattered farms and hamlets, active and abandoned sand pits. Remote and tranquil, often visually enclosed



South of Ring Gate

J. Upland Fringe Foothills

Rolling foothills and foot-slopes of the Pennine ridge dissected by minor river valleys. Predominantly pasture. Field boundaries are a mixture of hedges and walls dating from successive periods of enclosure. Open with occasional large blocky plantations and woodlands.

Sparse settlement - old villages along the foot of the Pennines. A remote and tranquil rural landscape.



Cairnheads

K. Upper Dale

Upper reaches of the Pennine Dales. Rocky, fast-flowing meandering streams. Wet, rushy pastures, upland hay meadows and rough grazing in moorland fringes. Regular field patterns of dry- stone walls and wire fences. Few trees or woodlands. Scattered small farms and hamlets. Relics of extractive industry. Visually open but enclosed by encircling moorland ridgelines. Settled tranquil upland landscapes



Geltsdale