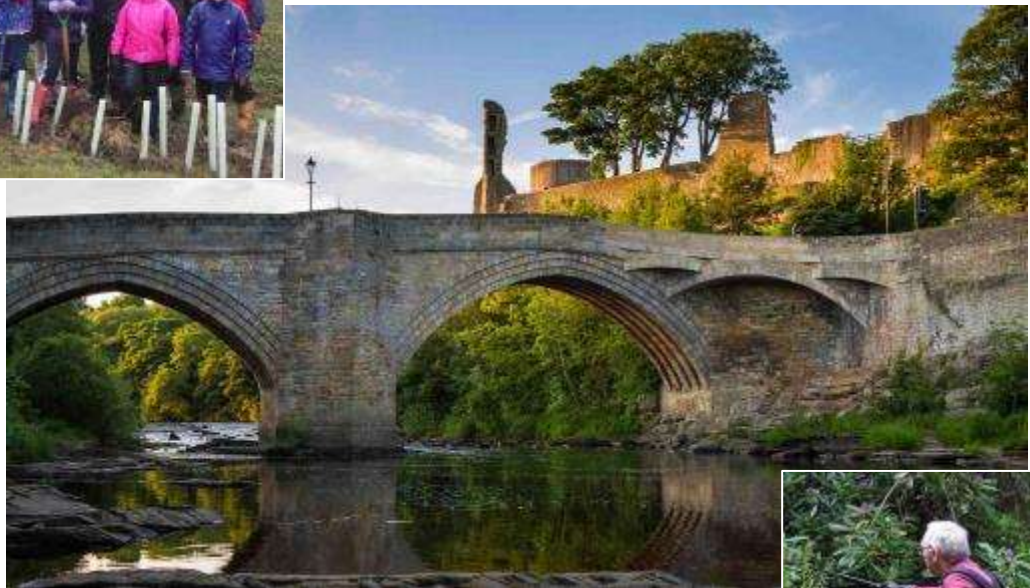




Final Evaluation



**Report to the Heritage Lottery Fund
prepared by Richard Clarke for the
Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership
October 2016**



**Countryside
Training
Partnership**



Acronyms used in text

AG	<i>HoT</i> LP Advisory Group
BCTC	Barnard Castle Town Council
CTP	Countryside Training Partnership
DCC	Durham County Council
DWT	Durham Wildlife Trust
ELC	European Landscape Convention
<i>HoT</i>	Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
IE	Independent Evaluator
INNS	Invasive non-native species (plant and animal)
LP	Landscape Partnership/ Scheme
NE	Natural England
PDG	<i>HoT</i> LP Programme Delivery Group
TAP	Teesdale Action Partnership
TRT	Tees River Trust
UTASS	Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services

Codes used to identify respondents to survey & interviews

PR = Partner representative

PL = Project lead

V = Volunteer

PA = Participant in one or more events or activities

NP = Aware of *HoT* but not involved in activities

NA = Unaware of the *HoT* until approached as part of this evaluation.

(Cover) The River Tees and County Bridge in Barnard Castle (centre, © Paul DaSilva) with (top left) hedge planting by the Guides and Explorer Scouts and (bottom right) clearing invasive rhododendron from the banks of the River Tees

Foreword

By Graham Young, Chair of the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership



The Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership has had a significant impact on Teesdale's landscape and people over the last five years. It has been good to be part of a project that has been so well received. The clue is in the title, I guess. It has been a partnership; a partnership of authorities, organisations and people.

We have delivered and enabled others to deliver about 75 projects of amazing diversity (a huge number for a Landscape Partnership). They have ranged from planting bulbs to major enhancements of public areas; from youth projects to work in Care Homes; from archaeological research projects to significant footpath improvements.

Hundreds of dedicated volunteers have battled with invasive species, conducted wildlife surveys and enhanced rights of way.

Over a thousand participants have been trained in heritage crafts and skills, learnt about being creative with media and engaged with outdoor activities. We have encouraged local people to get out and get to know their environment and gain a new 'sense of place', to explore the rivers, create better habitats and express themselves in art. We have encouraged people to think and we've made a significant contribution to public policy review at a national and European level. Community groups, parish councils, farmers, artists and local businesses have all got involved and been inspired to make a difference and hopefully stay engaged in this dynamic landscape we call home.

All this work has been co-ordinated and enabled by the Heart of Teesdale team, a small but dedicated group who have worked beyond the call of duty. We are proud of them and they should be proud of the work they have done and the impact it has had. This report, by an independent evaluator, gives testimony to that fact: *'Heart of Teesdale can be counted a significant success'*.

Durham County Council has been the 'responsible body' who held the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the many match-funders we have had. They have been very good at allowing the partnership to be directed by all its members and independent individuals. They should be commended for that. On the ground the work has been guided by the invaluable contributions of an Advisory Group who have put in many hours of work. Thanks to you too.

The legacy for the Heart of Teesdale is in each one of the projects supported, it is in the changed perceptions and new understandings, it is in the development of new ways to manage the landscape and most of all, it is in the heart of each individual involved and their hope for the future.

The Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership as we know it has ended, but people's commitment to the dale will not and there will be new initiatives and different ways to ensure the enjoyment and development of this, our home.

I hope to be there to join in, I hope you will too.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Young". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Final Evaluation of the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership October 2016

Summary

Introduction: the Heart of Teesdale and its Landscape Partnership

Heart of Teesdale (HoT) is a £2.7m Landscape Partnership (LP) Scheme supported with £1.6m of Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant. Its Vision as embodied in the Project's Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) is to

'inspire people to re-discover the lost landscapes of Teesdale, celebrate its unique beauty and character, and benefit from its rich cultural heritage and potential.'^{i, ii}

The Accountable Body for the scheme is Durham County Council (DCC). Strategic leadership is provided by an Advisory Group (AG) of 15 individuals including representatives of all major project partners and with an independent Chair and Vice-Chair. The scheme is delivered through a programme of some 75 separate projects (including 28 project grants under a Community Initiatives Fund) costing from under £500 to over £300,000, designed to generate outcomes across the four HLF LP programme areas of: natural and cultural heritage conservation; community participation; access and learning; training and skills. Coordination and administration is provided through a full-time LP Manager and four part-time programme staff, with significant inputs in kind from DCC officers. Following a successful application for HLF grant in late 2009 the scheme was developed between April 2010 and June 2011. The delivery phase was launched in November 2011. HLF grant formally ends in October 2016.

The *HoT* Partnership was originally conceived in part as a response to a perception that the area has perhaps been overlooked or 'lost' in comparison to neighbouring areas (such as the North Pennines AONB to the north and the Yorkshire Dales to the south) and regeneration initiatives around Bishop Auckland that attract more obvious interest from media, visitors, businesses and government, and to a recognition that the area has special qualities of national significance which are themselves a significant but sometimes undervalued resource for local residents.

The evaluation context and purpose of this Report

This Report fulfils the requirement of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for *HoT* to conduct a Final Evaluation of its work. But it is intended to be much more than enable HLF to 'sign off' its grant. It is a document for the Partnership as a whole, for participants and volunteers and for a wider public.

The Report provides an independent assessment of what the *HoT* LP scheme has delivered (its outputs), what the benefits (outcomes) have been for heritage and people and what lasting impact *HoT* will have made (its legacy). It celebrates *HoT*'s successes and pays tribute to the hard work of volunteers, project



leads, partners and the LP team. It also considers what may not have worked so well and the lessons that may be drawn for the future.

In line with HLF's policy that evaluation should be about 'improving' as well as 'proving', a continuous process integrated with scheme delivery, we were commissioned in late 2013 as Independent Evaluator (IE) to work with the *HoT* Partnership and LP team to help conduct an ongoing assessment of the Scheme's progress.

Methods have included the following elements:

- **Desk research:** including examination of a wide range of documents relating to *HoT* its area and the Partnership.
- **Liaison** with the LP team, Partners and Advisory Group members who have provided information and assistance.
- **Key Informant Interviews** with partner representatives, project leads, volunteers and beneficiaries, both face-to-face and by telephone.
- **Site visits** to a wide range of project locations over eight visits (18 days in total) to the *HoT* area, together with participation in six *HoT* AG meetings, the 2015 Annual Forum and the September 2016 Symposium.
- **An evaluation and legacy workshop** held at Boldron on 4 June 2014 involving 35 partner representatives and project leads.
- **Annual Reports** to *HoT* AG and a **Mid-Term Evaluation Report** presented to the *HoT* AG in June 2016.
- **An on-line survey** with an e-invitation via the *HoT* Newsletter and contacts list, resulting in 109 valid returns.

Quantitative data in this Report is based largely on information supplied by the LP team and partners and our evaluation has focused primarily on outcomes and legacy.

Projects, outputs and outcomes

Some key indicators of activity (outputs) include:

- 9 amenity sites with significantly enhanced quality; 547ha of holdings entered in ELS; 43ha planted with wild bird seed; 17ha of invasive species cleared; 35ha improved through environmental volunteering; 12,334 trees planted; 6,464m hedge and 942m of other boundaries established or restored
- 280 landowners or farmers (managing over 10,000ha) engaged, resulting in 18 project grants worth a total of £72,000 plus 6 successful agri-environmental grant applications covering 550 ha and worth £82,146 overall plus an additional 14 other grant applications worth over £24,000
- 16 significant structures repaired/ restored or with enhanced setting including 4 bridges, 2 lime kilns and 2 ancient wells. In addition 175 field barns and other vernacular structures were recorded and documented
- 48 community-led projects have engaged an estimated 23,113 participants in *HoT* events and activities over the life of the LP scheme
- 814 individual volunteers in *HoT* funded projects have contributed a total of 16,077 volunteer-hours, worth £350,927 in match funding
- 13 youth groups and 2,117 young people engaged in *HoT* activities as volunteers or participants
- Work with 13 non-traditional or disadvantaged groups has involved 95 individuals in *HoT* projects including 4 care homes and Blind Life Durham. Efforts were made to increase access in *HoT* projects for people with visual impairment or other disability

- 12 businesses were engaged including 9 creative media workshops and 3 corporate volunteering sessions
- 5km of new public rights of way were created and 91 km of paths improved, with 75 new hand gates, 44 new signposts and 7 improved stiles installed
- 18 new walking trails were created with 11 new interpretation boards and associated site-based interpretation and/or leaflets or on-line information
- 14 public exhibitions were held and 13 significant booklets produced together with 15 digital publications and 4 websites
- 26 school visits involving 450 pupils to sites and 8 outreach visits to schools, 53 adult learning activities engaging 648 individuals, plus family and vocational learning activities, cultural and oral history projects, a total of 127 learning activities involving over 1,500 beneficiaries overall
- 1,524 individuals have new or enhanced skills through non-accredited training provided as part of project delivery including 45 individuals involved in ecological monitoring programmes and 10 trained farm building surveyors.

In each of *HoT*'s (and HLF's) programme areas our evaluation has found that *HoT* has 'made a difference'. This is equally the case in regard to its work with the local community as to its physical works to the area's natural and cultural heritage.

- Physical works involving the area's historic and cultural heritage have been broadly successful. An early bias of capital works towards the townscape of Barnard Castle has been compensated by a larger number of smaller projects in the surrounding countryside and villages. An overspend on major capital work has been managed well and has not significantly impacted on funding for other projects.
- Public access has featured prominently in *HoT* including improvements to paths and signage around Barnard Castle and several surrounding areas.
- Projects involving natural heritage have been many and varied though locations have been (inevitably) opportunistic. Habitat works (including the control of non-native species) although limited in extent, have significantly improved key locations. Work with local farmers focusing on birds and farm landscapes has improved areas for wildlife. Schools projects on freshwater ecology have worked well and engaged pupils both at primary and secondary level.
- Arts-based projects have also worked well, as have those involving archive or other research and oral history, in all of which relatively small amounts of grant have yielded significant benefits, reflected in the enthusiasm and testimony of those involved.
- Most conservation works have also contributed to physical and/or intellectual access and most have also involved volunteers. These have complemented projects focused on community participation and engagement which has been a significant feature of the scheme.
- A prominent element of the *HoT* scheme has been the Community Initiatives Fund which has supported 28 projects across the *HoT* area. Whilst some of these have involved only a few individuals, in aggregate they have served to promote *HoT* as a community based scheme.
- Some 'people' activities (such as those linking young people with care home residents in exploring their landscape) appear to have been particularly valuable although outcome evidence (in the form of anecdotal reports or case studies) is lacking in some areas.
- The failure of the Teesdale Apprentices programme is disappointing. However following the success of early Stone Festivals a revised Stone Academy programme has delivered trainees with Level 2 and Level 3 accreditation. A number of other projects include training components which have contributed to 'training and skills' targets.

Administration, delivery and governance

Working at a landscape scale, in partnership, presents significant challenges to management and delivery and these have been magnified in *HoT* by the large number and variety of individual projects. It is to the credit of all concerned that the challenges have been successfully met. The LP team, working to the *HoT* Advisory Group and to the DCC Regeneration project managers have applied good oversight, and they have done this in a way which has been open and accommodating. This perception is supported by the responses to our on-line surveys and in our interviews including those of most project leads, volunteers and participants.

Legacy

All project outcomes may count as 'legacy' to the extent that they endure beyond the end of the LP scheme. Arrangements for post-project maintenance of physical works to habitats and built features (management plans, maintenance agreements/ responsibility &c) across the whole *HoT* programme are variable. Safeguards do not necessarily require institutional obligations or formal legal commitments. For example the engagement of volunteers in the INNS programme as well as in smaller community projects is likely to lead to ongoing informal monitoring; tree planting on private land is likely to secure a commitment to maintenance beyond the period specified in the Birds and Farm Landscapes grant letters. *De facto* ownership by DCC or BCTC should help to ensure maintenance of paths and signage.

Volunteering and community engagement have been significant and successful elements of many of the *HoT* projects. While it seems likely that the commitment of many of those involved is to their specific interest or organisation there is an awareness of the way in which this contributes to a wider landscape framework. Ongoing legacy discussions, including some held at a local level, will hopefully maintain interest and commitment, including identifying future projects and the resources that may be needed to implement these.

Legacy might, but need not necessarily, involve a successor body or initiative focused primarily on the *HoT* area. A wider aspect of legacy is the place of *HoT* within the regional landscape context, in particular its potential as a 'hub' linking the designated landscapes to the north and south with the more developed reaches of the river Tees (now covered by the adjacent new River Tees Rediscovered Landscape Partnership) downstream to the east. Discussions are still ongoing with a view to a clearer focus on social and economic development in a wider area (roughly corresponding with the old Teesdale District Council boundary) through a body which could seek LEADER and Local Enterprise Partnership funding.

Conclusions

Heart of Teesdale can be counted a significant success in relation to its aims as laid down in the LCAP. This can be attributed in no small measure to three factors. The first is the motivation and enthusiasm of project leads and volunteers who have delivered much of the work. Another is the commitment and focus of the LP team, the support provided by DCC and the leadership of the Advisory Group (in particular its two Chairs) who have steered the project during delivery. Finally the openness of all Partners to working together over a set of common aims which have guided the *HoT* programme since its inception has meant that HLF grant has been seen as much more than another funding stream to progress institutional priorities or support activities that were proposed before the Partnership came into being.

With relatively modest HLF funding over a diverse range of projects and significant match contribution from partners, *HoT* has achieved much over a relatively short timescale. A particular feature of *HoT* is its focus on the area as a *cultural* landscape. This has helped generate unity of purpose across all elements of the LCAP (not merely those projects involving the arts and creative media) and it has helped foster grassroots engagement. In this regard, *HoT* has been to the fore in exploring a cultural landscape approach to vernacular landscapes and it is fitting that the end of the LP scheme was celebrated with a highly successful Symposium on ‘Artists, Farmers and Philosophers’ in September 2016.

HLF, *HoT* partners, project leads and the LP team can take satisfaction in that public money has been well spent and that the tremendous amount of effort and commitment contributed to the scheme has made a difference, both to the area’s natural and cultural heritage and to its communities.

The challenge now is to build on this success to ensure that the improvements to the area’s natural and cultural heritage are maintained, that the enthusiasm and awareness which has been generated does not dissipate, and that the distinctive identity of the *Heart of Teesdale* remains valued and cherished in the future.

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October 2016

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If not supplied with this Summary, the full report can be accessed on the *Heart of Teesdale* website;
<http://heartofteesdale.net/> .

Final Evaluation of the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership October 2016

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Acknowledgements


Significant input to this report has been made by many individuals who have contributed to or commented on its contents.

Quantitative data (including financial information) has been provided by the *Heart of Teesdale* Landscape Partnership team and/or by Durham County Council as lead partner.

Our own assessment has focused principally on outcomes and qualitative data. In this regard the authors would particularly like to thank all those partner representatives, project leads, volunteers and participants and of course the *Heart of Teesdale* team and Steering Group members as well as individuals from the local community who responded to our questionnaire, took part in interviews, and/ or welcomed us on site during our visits.

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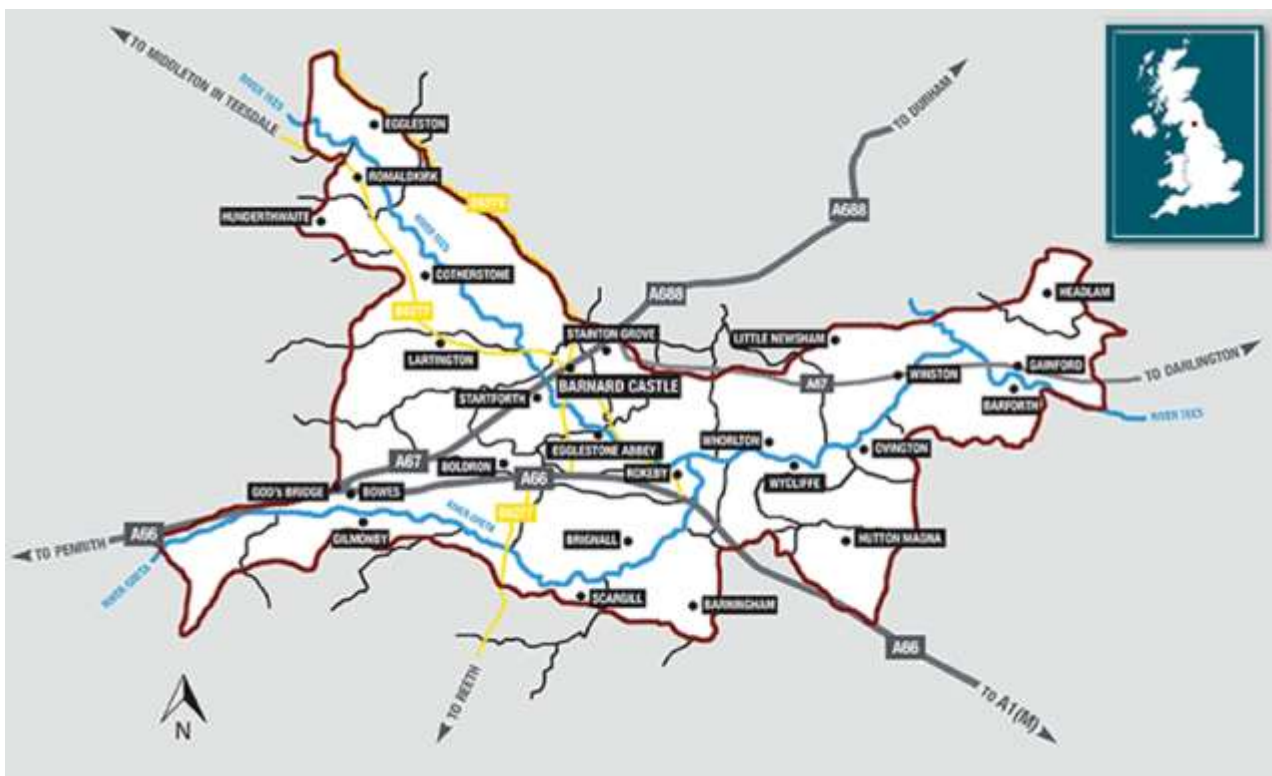


Figure 1 Location (inset) and primary area of benefit of the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership

1 Introduction

Heart of Teesdale (HoT) is a £2.7m Landscape Partnership (LP) Scheme supported with £1.6m of Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant. Its Vision as embodied in the Scheme's Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) is to

'inspire people to re-discover the lost landscapes of Teesdale, celebrate its unique beauty and character, and benefit from its rich cultural heritage and potential.'^{1: ii}

The LCAP elaborates this vision in a set of seven principal aims:

1. To re-discover the particular visual qualities of Teesdale drawing on the historic and cultural legacy of artists, scientists and others who have explored the area and foster creativity and imagination through art, crafts and other media
2. To understand the historic value of the local landscape and how it has been shaped over time.
3. To conserve or restore the built and natural features that characterise the area
4. To take action to protect the local environment and wildlife, and increase biodiversity
5. To enhance the quality and amenity value of public and community spaces, key views and settings for enjoyment and learning
6. To engage individuals and communities in learning, training, skills and new technology to understand and interpret the local landscape, traditions and heritage and improve access, especially by those who might be disadvantaged or excluded from activities
7. To promote opportunities for cooperation, mutual support and volunteering within the community to develop strategies and action so that the benefits of partnership can be sustained long term.^{1: ii}

All of these aims fit well with the multidisciplinary, multifunctional concept of landscape encapsulated in the European Landscape Convention (ELC), adopted by the Council of Europe in 2000 and applicable to the UK since March 2007. ELC promotes a definition of landscape which usefully underpins the landscape partnership philosophy: '*An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*' — a rich concept that encompasses but goes beyond sectoral (geomorphological, ecological, archaeological, historical or aesthetic) approaches. ELC makes it clear that people are at the heart of all landscapes (commonplace and 'degraded' as well as eminent), each of which has its own distinctive character and meaning to those who inhabit or visit it.²

The Accountable Body for the *HoT* scheme is Durham County Council (DCC) and strategic leadership is provided by an Advisory Group (AG) of c. 15 individuals including representatives of all major project partners and with an independent Chair and Vice-Chair.

The scheme is delivered through a programme of some 75 separate projects costing from under £500 to over £300,000, designed to deliver outcomes across the four HLF LP programme areas of: natural and cultural heritage conservation; community participation; access and learning; and training and skills. Coordination and administration is provided through a full-time LP Manager and four part-time programme staff, with significant inputs in kind from DCC officers.

The scheme was developed between April 2010 and June 2011 following a successful application for HLF funding in 2009. The delivery phase was launched in November 2011 and ends in October 2016.

Purpose and structure of this Report

This Report fulfils the requirement of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for *HoT* to conduct a Final Evaluation of its work. But it is not merely intended to enable HLF to 'sign off' its grant. It is effectively the 'CV' of the *HoT* scheme, a document for the Partnership as a whole, for participants and volunteers and for a wider public.

The evaluation has been designed to provide an independent assessment of what *HoT* projects have delivered (their outputs), what the benefits (outcomes) have been for heritage and people and what lasting impact *HoT* will have made (its legacy).

Subsequent sections of this Report:

- Provide further information regarding *HoT*, its origins, aims and objectives, and on its partners and projects (Section 2: The Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership)
- Consider the HLF evaluation and reporting process and the methodology that has been adopted in producing this report (Section 3: The evaluation context)
- Examine the component elements of *HoT* – what was actually done, and what was achieved and what its benefits have been for heritage and people (Section 4: Projects, outputs and outcomes)
- Consider the management of *HoT* (Section 5: Governance, administration and delivery)
- Assess the enduring benefits of *HoT* beyond the end of HLF funding and review some of the things which worked less well or are still outstanding and the lessons that may be drawn (Section 6: Legacy)
- Briefly summarise this Evaluation and the contents of the Report and (Section 7: Conclusions).

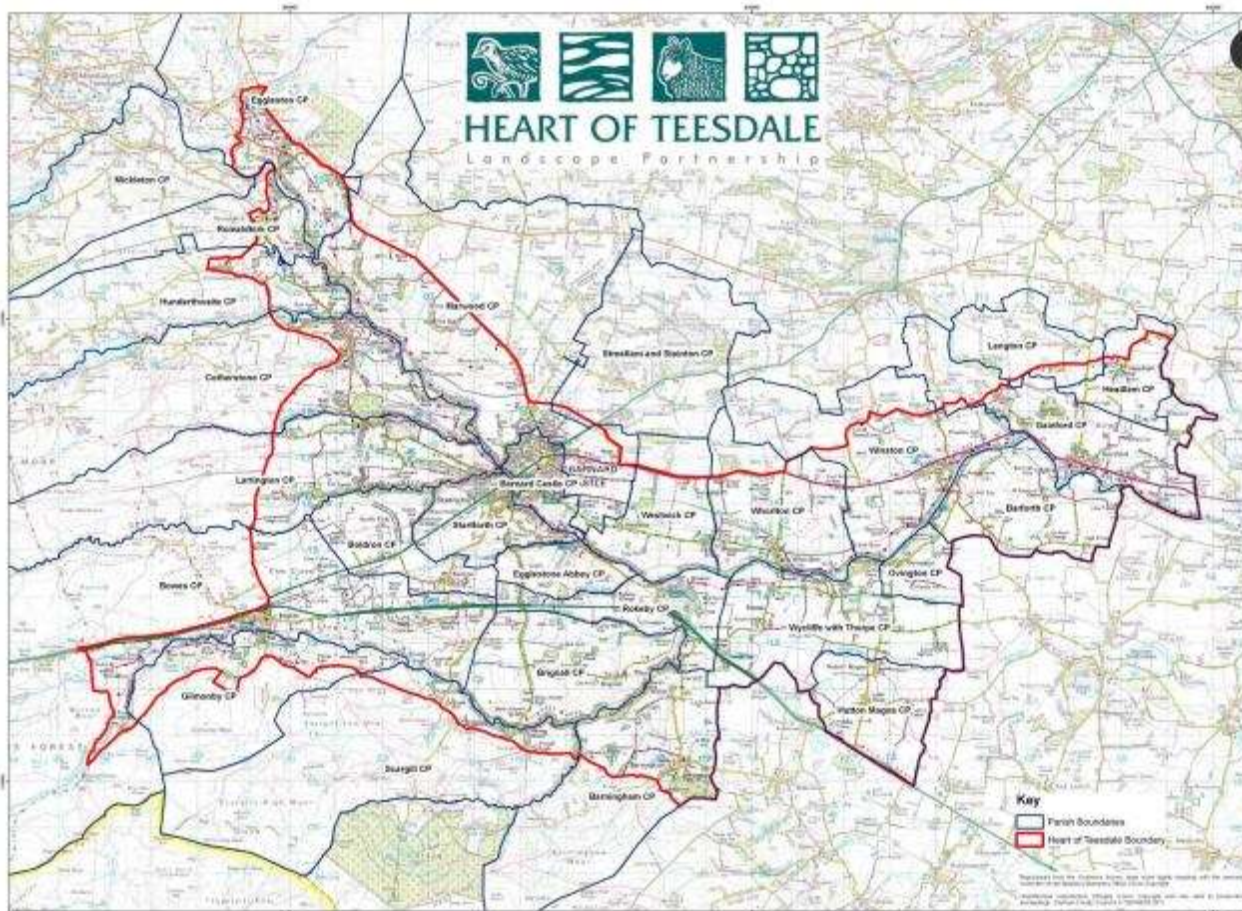


Figure 2 The Heart of Teesdale LP area showing parish boundaries

2 The Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership

The *HoT* Partnership was originally conceived in part as a response to a recognition that for local residents the landscape and its heritage is a sometimes undervalued resource and that the area has special qualities of national significance which have perhaps been overlooked or ‘lost’ in comparison to neighbouring areas that attract more obvious interest from media, visitors, businesses and government such as the North Pennines AONB to the north, the Yorkshire Dales to the south, and the major regeneration focused on Bishop Auckland Castle (itself the recipient of £10m HLF funding).

Table 1 Timeline and key stages for Heart of Teesdale LP

<i>When</i>	<i>What</i>
1889	‘Forward Barney’ publishes letter in the <i>Teesdale Mercury</i> asking ‘Is Barnard Castle to be the fashionable watering-place of the North?’ Improvements advocated include public works later to be implemented by the <i>HoT</i> Landscape Partnership (Figure 3).
2003	Countryside Agency Market Towns Initiative. One North-East (Regional Development Agency, abolished 2012) identifies Barnard Castle as a ‘Beacon Town’ (together with Middleton in Teesdale), and key to the area’s development.
2006	Barnard Castle Vision (BCV) established to promote development in the town; in nine years to 2015 BCV attracts £9m of funding to the town.
2007	Michael Rudd ‘Discovery of Teesdale’ ³ published.
2008	BCV commissions Chris Burnett Associates to prepare a Landscape Appraisal of Barnard Castle and its surrounding area. (Produced April 2009).
2009	Local government reorganisation; Teesdale District Council absorbed in Durham County Council as unitary authority.
Sept	Barnard Castle Vision in conjunction with Durham County Council submit a Stage 1 application for the ‘Tees Vale and Barnard Castle Landscape Partnership’ to HLF.
2010	Stage 1 (development)
April	Round 1 approval received from HLF with £87,200 development funding towards a total of £139,900. <i>HoT</i> Steering Group established.
May	Charlotte Hursey appointed LP Programme Development Officer. Sarah Smith appointed Community Development Officer.
	Community consultations lead to 3 Strategy documents: Community Engagement; Volunteering; Learning and Training ⁴ as input to the LCAP. Wider <i>HoT</i> Forum established in parallel with Steering Group.
	LP name changed to the ‘Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership’. LP area (and Landscape Appraisal) ⁵ extended. Biodiversity ⁶ and Heritage Audits ⁷ and Digital Media Strategy ⁸ commissioned.
	Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) ¹ agreed by SG.

2011	
June	Round 2 application submitted with LCAP to HLF.
Sept	Round 2 Pass received from HLF with funding of £1,895,700.
Nov	Formal launch of the <i>HoT</i> Landscape Partnership.
2012	
Sept	<i>HoT</i> LP Steering Group reconstituted as the LP Advisory Group.
Oct	Honia Devlin appointed as Volunteer Officer (Culture and Heritage) p/t Kath Marshall-Ivens app't as (Groundwork) Volunteer Officer (Green and Env Issues) p/t
Nov	First <i>HoT</i> Annual Forum and Open Day.
2013	
Mar - Apr	Emma Ashton-Wickett appointed as 'Paths for all' project officer. Karen Collins appointed as Volunteer Officer (p/t maternity cover for Kath Marshall-Ivens).
Dec	Countryside Training Partnership appointed as Independent Evaluator.
Oct	Susie Lane appointed as Community Officer (p/t, maternity cover for Sarah Smith). Alex Sijpesteijn replaces Charlotte Hursey as <i>HoT</i> LP Manager.
2014	
Jan	Graham Young replaces Will Weston as Chair of the <i>HoT</i> Advisory Group. Sue Berresford retires as DCC Regeneration Manager (but returns as a member of the <i>HoT</i> Advisory Group); Chris Myers, DCC Principal Regeneration Manager becomes the DCC link and Alex's manager.
June	'Taking stock and Looking Ahead' Evaluation and Legacy workshop in Boldron Village Hall.
Oct	Sarah returns p/t as Community Officer; Susie stays on also as a Community Officer p/t.
2015	
March	CTP Interim Evaluation Report submitted to Partnership and Advisory Group.
June	WoodFest event attended by over 300 people.
July	Susie leaves.
Sept	Barnard Castle Vision ends.
Nov	<i>HoT</i> Annual Forum attended by 76 people.
2016	
March	Volunteer thank you event attended by over 70 people.

Karen, Sarah, Honia's contracts end.

June Draft Final Evaluation Report to *HoT* PDG and AG.

Sept End-of-scheme Symposium (7-9 September).

Oct Emma's contract ends.

Submission of Final Evaluation Report to HLF and final HLF grant payment.

HoT HLF LP funding ends; Alex's & Emma's contracts end.



Figure 3 Some of the improvements to Barnard Castle undertaken by *HoT* were advocated in 1889 by 'Forward Barney' a correspondent in the Teesdale Mercury.

3 The evaluation context

This section starts with a summary of HLF's requirements and guidance in respect of evaluation. It then introduces the purposes of this Interim Report and presents the approach and methods adopted in our work with *HoT*.

3.1 HLF evaluation guidance

HLF requires that every Landscape Partnership should conduct a Final Evaluation towards the end of its Scheme and submit a satisfactory Report (embodying the results of the Final Evaluation) before it can 'sign off' the Scheme and release the final 10% of grant money.⁹ The Final Report must be an objective evaluation of what has been achieved. Common practice is for independent consultants to be engaged in the process, to a greater or lesser degree.

But this report is also a testimony to the work of all those involved with *HoT*. It celebrates the Scheme's successes and considers what difference it has made to the area. It also considers what may not have worked so well and the lessons that may be drawn. It is a document for the Partnership as a whole, for participants and volunteers and for a wider public, and should feed in to plans for the future.

HoT was conceived and developed as a Landscape Partnership under HLF's third (2008-13) Strategic Plan, during which HLF developed its approach to (and placed increasing emphasis on) effective monitoring and evaluation. Some of these changes include:

- Looking beyond outputs (as measures of activity) to outcomes (longer term benefits to heritage and for people) in particular those which endure beyond the end of HLF funding (legacy).
- Working with partnerships and project partners, seeing evaluation as a participative process which enhances delivery rather than primarily an external assessment of achievement.
- Utilising a wide variety of evidence including qualitative as well as quantitative indicators.

HLF evaluation guidanceⁱ makes a distinction between **outputs** (as measures of project activity supported by HLF grant) and **outcomes** (their longer-term benefits - to heritage and for people). **Legacy** comprises those outcomes that endure beyond the end of HLF grant and includes any benefits (beyond those generated by individual projects) from working in partnership at a landscape scale. Whilst outputs can usually be captured by quantitative measures, many 'people' outcomes can be expressed only in qualitative terms. 'Evidence' may need to include baseline information if the results are to be attributed to Partnership activity and HLF grant. This changing approach is embodied in HLF's current (20013-18) generic guidance published in October 2012¹⁰. HLF have also published subsequent evaluation guidance⁹ following our own national evaluation of the Landscape Partnership programme in 2011¹¹. The emphasis on outcomes is also contained in informal advice that HLF provides in regard to legacy planning¹² as well as in its concern that working at a landscape level should deliver benefits which are more than the sum of the outcomes of individual projects. Our evaluation takes this more recent guidance into account whilst recognising HLF's evaluation advice as it existed at the time of submission of *HoT*'s Stage 2 application in 2010 as a reference point.

ⁱ HLF's current evaluation guidance for LPs can be found on HLF's website at www.hlf.org.uk/landscape-partnerships-evaluation-guidance. The advice on legacy planning at www.hlf.org.uk/legacy-planning-landscape-partnerships.

3.2 The *HoT* Evaluation

The Countryside Training Partnership (CTP) was contracted in September 2013 as Independent Evaluator (IE) to provide

‘analysis of progress towards and achievement of the Landscape Partnership in respect of its effectiveness and overall aim to fulfil the objectives of the Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) which formed the essence of the submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2011’ⁱ

The evaluation as a whole comprised four stages starting in January 2014, each with a nominal (i.e. costed) allocation of 12 days. Each of Stages 1-3 concluded with a brief interim report summarising the outputs of the work from that stage and containing proposals for the next stage. Each stage involved working with project leads, partners and the LP team and a total of 11 visits were made to the *HoT* area, each of between 1 and 3 days. Stage 2 included a workshop for all project leads and partners focusing on outcomes and evidence. Stage 3 included an Interim Evaluation report presented to the AG in March 2015. Submission of this Report constitutes the final stage of our evaluation of the scheme.

This aims of this Report are to:

- Offer an independent assessment of what the *HoT* LP scheme has delivered (its outputs), what the benefits (outcomes) have been for heritage and people and what lasting impact *HoT* will have made (its legacy) for heritage and for people in the *HoT* area.
- Celebrate *HoT*’s successes and pay tribute to the hard work of volunteers, project leads, partners and the LP team.
- Consider what has worked particularly well and what may not have worked so well and the lessons that may be drawn for the future.

3.3 Methods

Quantitative data in this Report is based primarily on information supplied by the LP team and the Report focuses primarily on outcomes and legacy. The approach has comprised the following elements all of which have been conducted in liaison with the LP team, Partnership members, project leads and participants who have provided invaluable information, advice and assistance.

Desk research

This has included a wide range of other material feeding in to, related to or produced by *HoT* and partner organisations. A key focus has been the *HoT* LCAP and supporting documents, monitoring spreadsheets produced by the LP team, minutes of AG meetings and other sources including material relating to the *HoT* area more generally.

Key Informant Interviews

A programme of (telephone and on-site) interviews with individuals who might reasonably be considered to have expert or ‘inside’ knowledge of *HoT* and its achievements, including the following categories:

- *HoT* team members and project leads
- ‘Experts’ including those involved in local cultural and natural heritage works
- Volunteers and project participants

ⁱ Durham County Council RFQ Schedule 2: Contract Agreement August 2013.

- Programme beneficiaries including local businesses
- Representatives of funding and partner bodies including the HLF Monitor and Regional Grants Officer.

Site visits

Site visits to a wide range of project locations over eleven visits (18 days in total) to the *HoT* area has provided valuable supplementary information to the above and enabled us to 'ground truth' information secured from other sources.

In addition we have participated in six *HoT* AG meetings and in the 2015 Annual Forum.

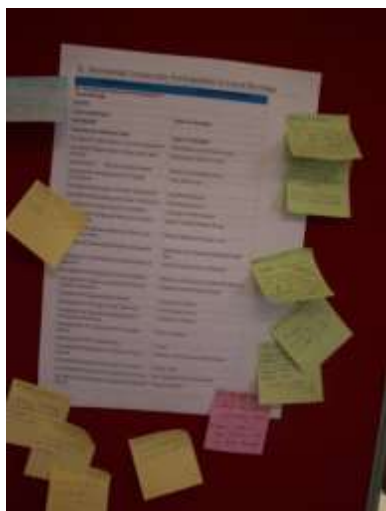


Figure 4 35 partner representatives and project leads attended the May 2014 evaluation workshop in Boldron to identify project outcomes, their interactions and to start discussions on legacy

Workshop

An Evaluation and Legacy workshop 'Taking stock and Looking Ahead' was held on 4 June 2014 in Boldron Village Hall. 35 partner representatives and project leads took part and a report of that workshop was submitted to the AG in July 2014.

Participant survey

An on-line questionnaire (with hard copies available from the *HoT* Office) was launched in mid-2015. It resulted in a total (April 2016) of 109 valid responses. The questionnaire was designed in sections, each commencing with a closed question designed to elicit perceptions of or attitudes to aspects of *HoT*'s objectives and projects, but which importantly then provides the opportunity for (what were sometimes extended) open, narrative responses on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of *HoT* in regard to each

area. No questions were mandatory and 'skipped' questions mean that responses to individual questions are generally less than the number of questionnaire respondents overall.

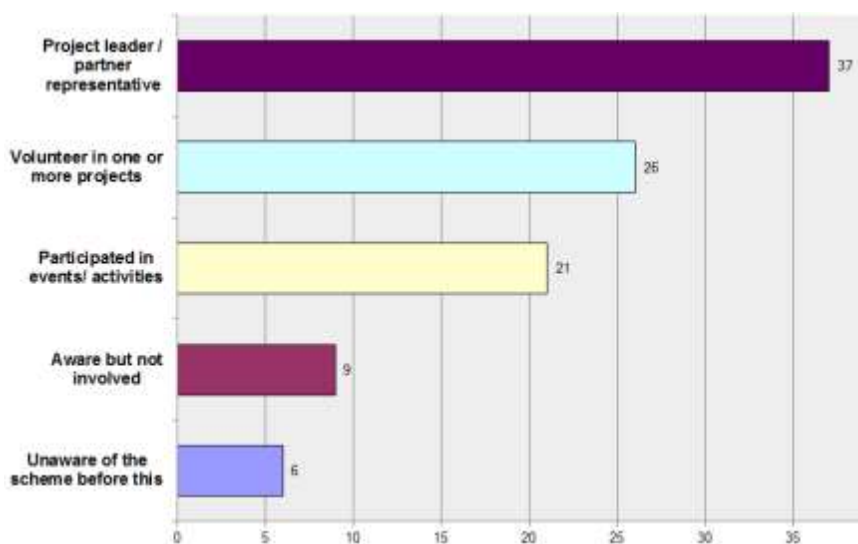


Figure 5 Engagement of questionnaire respondents with *HoT*.

It is important to note that the survey is not a representative (and much less a statistically significant) sample of the community of the *HoT* area.

Project leads comprised almost one-third of all respondents – a figure inflated by responses from leaders of Community Initiative Projects (see Section 4.2); some half of all respondents were either volunteers or project participants. Just 10 % of respondents stated that they knew of *HoT*'s existence but

haven't really been involved and 7 % said that they hadn't been aware of *HoT* before receiving the questionnaire (presumably forwarded by those who did).

However while the sample is biased to those who have been most closely connected with the *HoT* scheme and quantitative returns must be treated with caution, the narrative responses received (including those of individuals who had limited engagement with it the scheme, as well as the presence of some critical or hostile comments) suggests that these are likely to be reasonably representative of a wider spread of opinion.

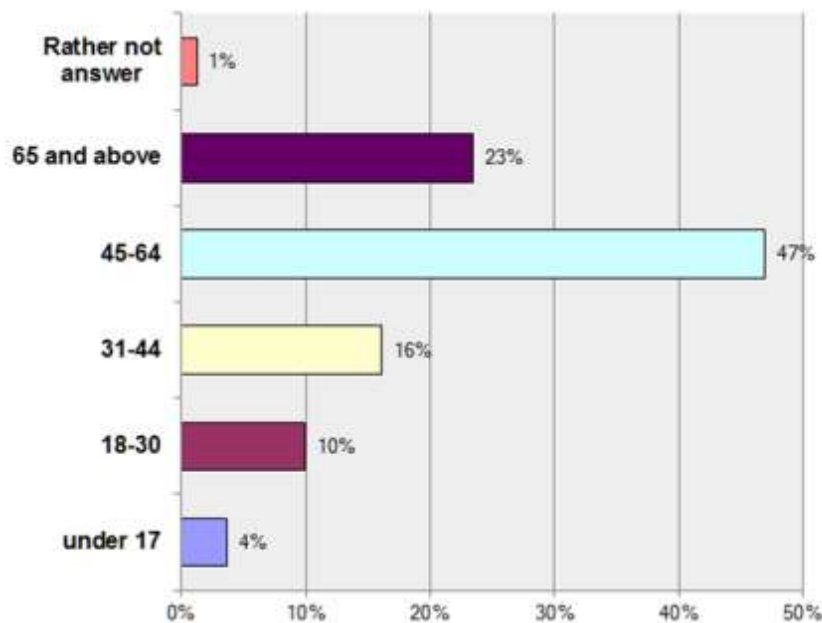


Figure 6 Age distribution of respondents to the on-line survey.

- Almost half of all respondents were aged between 45-64 with a quarter aged 65 or over; only 3 respondents were under 17.
- Respondents were equally balanced 50:50 men and women.
- None of those who offered further personal information stated they were from ethnic minority groups.
- Only one respondent reported having a disability that limited participation in *HoT* activities or projects.

- 83% of survey returns were from individuals who live or work in or adjacent to the *HoT* area; 16% of respondents lived outside the area.

The questionnaire concluded with an invitation to respondents to indicate if they were prepared for us to follow up with a short telephone interview. Remarkably, over half of those who responded to this question (55% or 44 individuals) were willing to do this, and provided their names and contact details for us to do so.

Reports to the *HoT* Advisory Group and Partnership

Annual reports of the evaluation work were submitted at the end of each stage of the evaluation. In addition a Mid-Term Evaluation with recommendations for the final 18 months of the LP Scheme was submitted to the *HoT* AG in June 2016; it secured important feedback from the Partnership and fed into plans for the final phase of its work.



Figure 7 *Above*: locations of survey respondents who provided postcodes. A majority came from within the HoT area (with a cluster around Barnard Castle) but several from outside. Collection of postcodes from all volunteers and project participants would have enabled the ‘reach’ of the *HoT* scheme to be estimated.

Below: A Wordle analysis of responses to 'give three words which sum up the HoT scheme for you' in the on-line questionnaire. The prominence of each word in the word-cloud reflects the frequency of its use.



4 Projects, outputs and outcomes

This section considers the achievements of the projects comprising the *HoT* scheme. Some 26 projects or project groups outlined in the *HoT* LCAP have resulted in some 75 separately funded projects in the *HoT* delivery programme (including 28 project grants under the Community Initiatives Fund), monitored by the LP team under the four thematic HLF programme aims as follows:

- A. Conserving or restoring the built and natural features that create the historic landscape character.
- B. Increasing community participation in local heritage.
- C. Increasing access to, and learning about, the landscape area and its heritage.
- D. Increasing training opportunities in local heritage skills.

The remainder of this section focuses on *HoT* project delivery, outputs and outcomes and follows HLF's (and *HoT*'s) four thematic programme aims of natural and cultural heritage conservation; community participation and engagement; , access and learning; training and skills. Projected final project cost in each area Figure 8ⁱ is close to allocation.

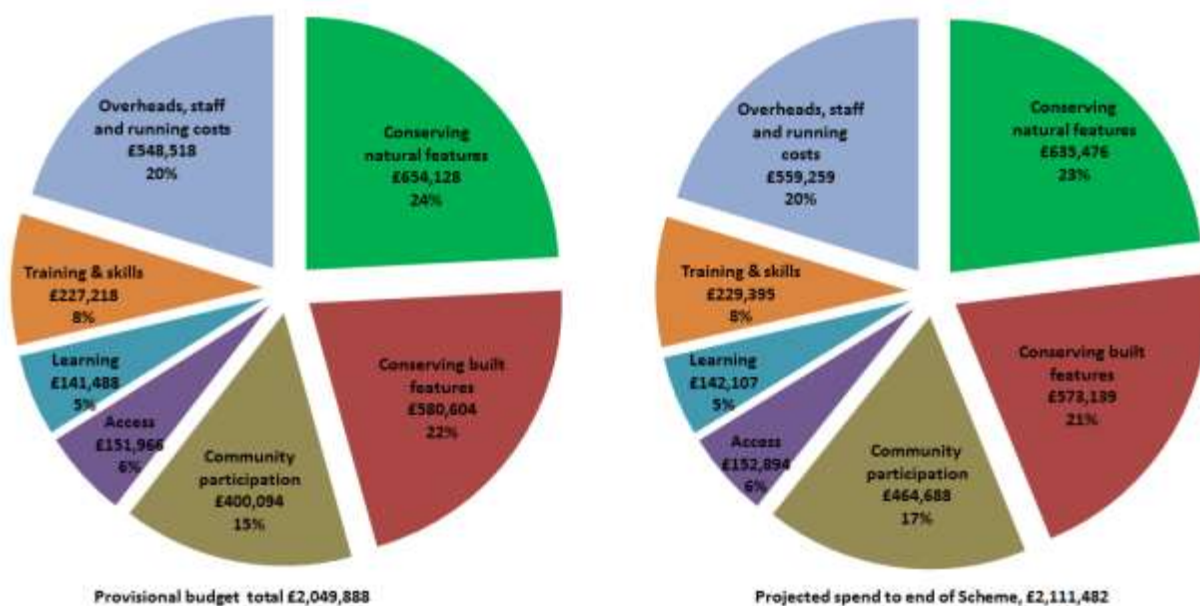


Figure 8 *HoT* project cost (including match funding) allocations (left) and projected to end 2016 (right) by programme area.

It is important to note however that besides their primary objectives most projects deliver outputs outcomes in several (and sometimes all) programme areas. For example physical conservation projects undertaken by volunteers may enhance access and understanding and improve local skills. Many also included public participation events. The allocation of project to programme areas is therefore somewhat arbitrary; for example B3 Riverbanks Restoration and the Tees Invasive Species Initiative are

ⁱ Data from *HoT* Finance Report to AG 22 January 2016

both allocated to Programme B (Community) but could easily have been placed in Programme A (Physical Conservation); conversely several projects in Programme A involve volunteers and training and A5, Paths for All People contributes significantly to outcomes in (and could easily have been placed in) Programme C (Access). Assessment of achievement in relation to LCAP targets is complicated by the large number of projects in the scheme and by significant overlap between them.

Each of sections 3.1 to 3.4 below begins with a brief outline of projects grouped under that section in the LCAP but discussion then focuses on relevant outputs and outcomes across *all* HoT project activity, irrespective of the programme area under which projects are grouped. Key outputs are identified from the most recent (March 2016) HLF Output Data return, supplemented by additional data from the LP team. Outcomes are based on our own assessment of what has been achieved in each programme area, supplemented by the views expressed by interviewees and on-line survey responses.

Codes used to identify respondents are as follows: **PL** = project lead or partner representative; **V** = volunteer; **PA** = participant in one or more events or activities; **NP** = aware of HoT but non participant; **NA** = unaware of HoT until approached as part of this evaluation.



Figure 9 INNS volunteers (clockwise from top left) spraying rhododendron, bashing balsam, hacking hogweed - and some corporate volunteers about to leave their cleared site as the day draws to a close

4.1 Natural and built heritage conservation

Projects

More than half of all *HoT* projects – including seven project groups amounting to 46% of project cost placed under Programme A - involve some form of direct physical conservation or recording of the area's natural and/or built heritage. Major improvements to a neglected area around the Castle entrance, with green landscaping, improved seating, and re-installation of a mini-golf course (A4. Castle and Scar Top Setting/ A Journey through Teesdale) have provided a new amenity focus for the town. Other works to Barnard Castle open spaces (A2) include revived access and parking with plantings and floodlights in the forecourt of St Mary's Church (Amen Corner), restoration of a Garden of Remembrance and war memorial adjacent to Galgate (the main eastern access to town), and the scarification and reseedling of Upper Demesnes Hay Meadow, a popular public open space. These projects were completed early in the scheme, leading to initial perceptions (redressed by many later projects located in the surrounding countryside) that *HoT* was overly town-focused. At the same time however they provided momentum and visible evidence of achievement. One project (Scar Top) also went significantly over budget, (emphasising the significance of the built in the financial profile in Figure 5 above).

Paths for All People (A5) has comprised a number of schemes promoting foot paths not just around Barnard Castle but in surrounding villages. Inevitably access projects have been modified as the scheme has progressed. An extension to the Tees Railway Path proved impractical as did a separate (not HLF funded) proposal to create a new steel rope bridge at the site of an old railway viaduct over the Tees north of Barnard Castle. This would have allowed *HoT* to establish a circular walk along each side of the river. At the same time new opportunities have led to project extensions such as improvements to paths, bridges, benches in Flatts Wood (A1) and environmental volunteering and habitat works in Tees Banks Woods (B3 and D6). These have revived a green amenity area for the town including an area on the banks of the Tees known as the Bandstand or Town Beach.

Three project groups in Programme A are directly focused on heritage conservation. Historic Landscapes (A6), delayed by late commissioning an historic landscape study initially planned for the development phase, has included a traditional farm building survey involving ten volunteers in locating, surveying and recording over 175 key structures in the area under the guidance of a historic buildings consultant. Teesdale Views (A3), involving the identification and restoration of views painted by local artists and installation of marker posts with sculpture, has faced a number of challenges including the selection of sites since views have not only changed since painting but that artists sometimes took liberties with landscape features. Issues to do with the long-term 'ownership' of sculptures (principally in respect of public liability insurance) remain to be resolved.

A programme of farmer engagement, Birds and Farm Landscapes (A7), has been particularly successful with over 100 farms visited and more than 20 farmers actively involved in habitat improvements. Achievements have included almost 2,500 trees planted, over 200 bird boxes installed and three ponds re-established. The project has



had wide community engagement with 115 volunteers involved both as individuals and as members of other organisations. Volunteer activities have included tree planting, breeding and winter bird surveys, nest box making and monitoring and subsequent ringing of chicks under the national BTO scheme. Visits have been made to local schools where children dissected Barn owl pellets to determine prey species. A number of events have been held for the general public, including a Haymeadows visit, farmer-led farm walks, an Open Farm Sunday, bird watching sessions and talks to local groups, attracting some 750 people in total. The project has produced its own final report (incorporating the results of an end of project questionnaire issued to farmers and helpers which attracted over 40 responses) and its own legacy plan.

Several of the projects in this section are as much to do with improving physical access and visual amenity as with heritage conservation. Several have also delivered significantly in terms of community engagement and training. Conversely a number of projects grouped under programmes B (Community engagement) and C (Access and learning) have delivered significant outputs in terms of physical conservation of the natural and cultural heritage.

Outputs

Outputs below relate to physical works to the area's natural and built heritage by projects across the whole of the *HoT* LP scheme.

- 9 amenity sites with significantly enhanced quality - Flatts Wood, Scar Top, Garden of Remembrance, Demesnes, Cotherstone play area, Amen Corner, Eggleston Abbey, Whorlton Village Garden, Bowes Castle)
- 17ha of invasive species cleared (Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed, Giant hogweed, Rhododendron)
- 72 wildlife surveys undertaken
- 267 landowners or farmers engaged with 280 advisory visits made, covering over 10,000ha
- 18 project grants worth a total of £72,000 awarded, plus 6 successful agri-environmental grant applications covering 550 ha worth £82,146 overall plus an additional 14 other grant applications over worth £24,000
- 12,334 trees planted (2,451 within Birds and Farm Landscapes), 43 ha of wild bird seed mix planted (excluding ELS requirements)
- 6.5km hedge and 942m of other boundary established or restored
- 16 significant structures repaired/ restored or with enhanced setting including 4 bridges, 2 lime kilns, 2 ancient wells
- 175 field barns and other vernacular structures recorded and documented.

Outcomes

This section considers impacts or benefits to natural and cultural heritage across the *HoT* programme, beyond those projects listed above (whose wider outcomes, for example in relation to community engagement or access are dealt with in sections 4.2 to 4.4).

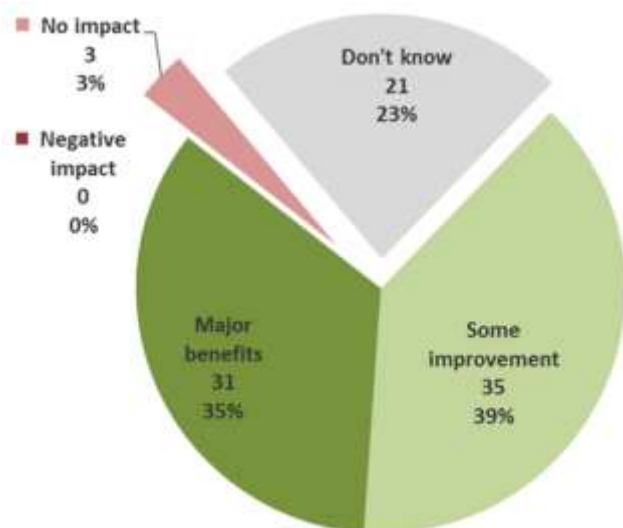


Figure 10 To what extent do you think Heart of Teesdale has contributed to the conservation of habitats, wildlife and natural features?

More than a third of respondents to the survey (Figure 10) felt that *HoT* had secured major improvement to natural features with a further third noting some improvement.

Long term benefits depend on continued monitoring and maintenance. Probably the single most important factor in ensuring that this takes place is the interest and commitment of a large body of volunteers who are likely to continue to monitor sites working with the relevant agencies.

'monitoring of the otters on the Tees is essential work for helping to understand and try and help the growth of the population of these animals.' (V)

'Invasive species control. Worked well so far, but it must be followed up!' (V)

In the case of INNS control TRT have already equipped a small number of trained volunteers with knapsack sprayers and herbicides.

'The Tees Invasive Non-Native Species project has had a massive impact on the local environment through removing invasive species and allowing the regeneration of the natural vegetation. It has also raised awareness amongst the general public about invasive species and how to tackle them.' (PL)

The Demesnes Hay Meadow similarly has a body of volunteers committed to continue management with equipment (scythes, rakes) lodged with BCTC.

'The Demesne hay meadow appears to be showing encouraging signs of improvements after our input (e.g. spreading 'green hay') and changes in management.' (PL)

In the case of works to private land, much of the woodland and other habitat improvement is not associated with any formal management agreement beyond those associated with Stewardship conditions, although the Birds and Farm Landscapes project has instituted its own management agreement with farmers and monitoring during the period of the agreement is being undertaken by the Durham Hedgerow Partnership and Landscape Department of DCC. However the commitment of local farmers to improvements (to which in many cases they had themselves contributed) is likely to secure maintenance beyond any formal agreement and the 'ownership' of such works by those on whose land the work has been carried out will be the best guarantee that long-term benefits will be secured.

'Links with farmers on conservation matters, regularly forming on-going contact and increased awareness by farmers of the importance of wildlife on their land [...] at least some of the information passed to farmers will stay with them and develop.' (PL)

Again, volunteer engagement (such as that of the Durham Bird Club which has been monitoring bird populations) and the enthusiasm of local groups (such as Trees for Cotherstone) is likely to encourage such after-care.

One limitation of habitat works in particular was that their locations were of necessity opportunistic, depending on landowner cooperation and support:

'Habitat restoration projects, probably with the exception of birds and farm landscapes, have been dispersed and not delivered to create a strategic network. Unfortunately, land ownership and attitudes of owners often make this unavoidable.' (PL)

'Missed opportunities for long term permanent rough grassland habitats for a range of farmland birds.' (V)

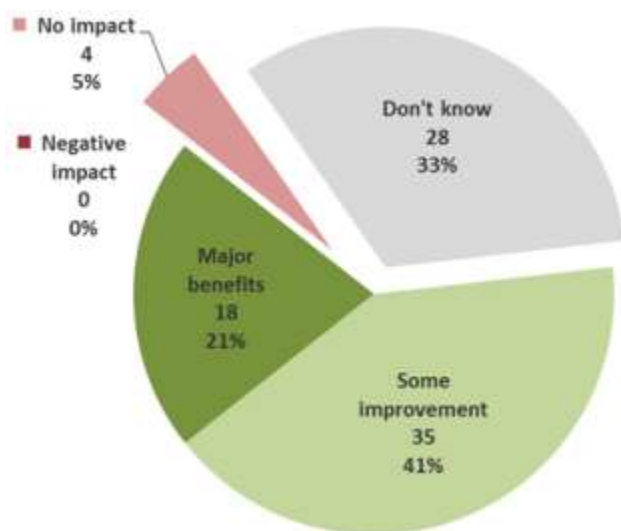


Figure 11 To what extent do you think Heart of Teesdale has contributed to the conservation of archaeological, historic or built features in the area?

Similar considerations apply to the conservation of archaeological, historic or built features, a similar proportion noted some improvement but the number of individuals noting major improvement was somewhat less, with a significant number uncertain.

Views expressed regarding historic and built heritage were broadly positive:

'Scar Top and Castle setting: improvement to an area which needs to be a focal point in the town for locals and visitors.' (PL)

'Amen Corner - Has made a real difference to the setting of St Mary's Church and far more accessible for users.' (PL)

'The old Lime Kiln at Barningham has been brought back to its former glory securing a good link back to our past.' (PA)

'Restoration of lime kilns - important from a heritage point of view. Increasing knowledge about rock art unique to this area, and making it easier to find.' (PL)

'The geo-physical survey of the Roman settlements was a great idea, as it was a non-invasive way of finding out where and how our current land use came to be and the impact the Roman occupation had on our land and therefore can help us to understand the impacts our actions can possibly make on future generations.' (PL)

'The project enabled the actual site of the (presumed Roman) well [St Farmin's] to be discovered, and although agreement to leave the site exposed could not unfortunately be obtained from the landowner, future workers do at least know where it is, and some day permission to complete the project will undoubtedly be granted.' (PL)

However there some qualified or critical comment, particularly in regard to community archaeology:

'My personal contacts with local farmers indicate that some are very disappointed that no funds were available for conservation restoration of redundant farm buildings through this scheme. A missed opportunity? Did anyone approach farmers directly to see what they would like to get out of a landscape partnership scheme when it was being set up, or explain what was and was not potentially possible?' (PL)

A maintenance failure for Scar Top and uncertainties regarding ownership and upkeep of the Memorial Gardens have been addressed but an audit of post-project maintenance across the whole *HoT* programme would have been valuable to identify problem areas and the steps that need to be taken to ensure that the benefits of physical works are not dissipated.

Community archaeology, potentially one of the most significant programmes in terms of developing engagement with the area's historic heritage suffered from significant delays but produced some

interesting results as at Brignall where evidence was found of prehistoric farming and its open days were well attended. However the programme also received some criticism:

'While this area offers lots of rich pickings for archaeology, [it] has never quite come to life, partly it seems by being handled by DCC's archaeology team rather than being outsourced.' (PL)

Many of the archaeological and historic projects I feel were taken out of the hands of those who had initially thought of them and there seems little involvement with local people who work or have an understanding of the area. This includes getting people from outside the area to deliver training and work when there are many local groups and experts. The archaeology programme has been very poorly executed and has had little or no local input.' (PA)



Figure 12 Barningham Lime Kiln (one of the CIF projects) before (left) and after stabilisation and removal of encroaching scrub (right) with (inset) interpretive plaque



Figure 13 The Scar Top mini-golf course in 2012 (left) and (right) after reconstruction. Each 'hole' tells a story relating to a location or landscape feature within the *HoT* area (inset)



Figure 15 Guides and explorers take a rest from tree planting in the Birds and Farm Landscapes project



Figure 14 Lost Landscapes: YMCA volunteers (left) tend a wild flower garden with Charles Dickens care home residents. (Top right) excavations for sand martin habitat (below) and creating an otter holt

4.2 Community engagement and participation

Projects

Five project groups (comprising a total of 37 individual projects) are listed under this programme area as directly contributing to community awareness, engagement and participation. Of these the Community Initiatives Fund (CIF, B2) has perhaps been one of the most successful (and certainly the most varied) in the *HoT* programme. With an allocated £101,000, and offering grants of up to £10,000, a total of 28 projects have been funded with an average grant of £5,000. Completed projects have included: stabilisation of the Barningham Lime Kiln; uncovering St Farmin's Well in Bowes; habitat management of Kennedy's Ponds and rhododendron clearance around the 'Fairy Cupboards' (eroded riverbank sandstone) in Romaldkirk; restoration of Whorlton Village Garden; a wildlife pond in Green Lane School; a geophysics survey of Boldron village green; publication of a history of Gainford parish, another of Winston and a CD arising from restoration of historic features in Romaldkirk; digitisation of Teesdale Heritage Archives, children writing up Bible stories from stained glass in St Mary's Church; and bulb planting in Barningham Village Green (at £250 the smallest CIF grant) and around Barnard Castle walls (subsequently part strimmed in error by English Heritage gardeners and replaced by bulbs left over from works to the Memorial Gardens(A2, above).

Riverbanks Restoration and in particular the Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) eradication programme (B3) has had significant input from volunteers. Four species; Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed and rhododendron all have their most upstream presence within the *HoT* area and the project is the start of a programme to eradicate them from the highest point and work downstream, using a variety of techniques including cutting, spraying and stem injection. 'Add-ons' include improved public access and platforms for disabled anglers using match funding from the Environment Agency.

Another river-focused programme, InvesTEESgate (B4) has focused on local community engagement in historical research, habitat management, survey and recording). 13 volunteers have been trained in the use of backpack electrofishing and nine in invertebrate sampling and surveys have provided data on seven becks in the region. The project provides a community complement to RiverLab (C8, below).

Lost Landscapes (B1), launched in mid-2014 has a target of some 10 sites. Although placed in *HoT*'s 'Community' programme, contractors have been used for works to the larger habitat restoration projects, with volunteers on the smaller ones.

Arts in the Landscape (B5) comprised four projects. Of these, the Groundwork-led VIVA (the Village Identify Village Attractions project) initially struggled to secure engagement from rural communities, then ran well with good participant feedback. A programme of Landscape Painting and Photography Workshops (in the Bowes Museum) received praise from those involved. Two projects in particular have received acclaim in the on-line survey. ArtScapes – a programme of workshops including some for children with disabilities concluded with a well-received exhibition in March 2014. Music at the Heart of Teesdale included a number of public performances involving orchestra and sword dances, retains a group of enthusiasts keen to continue their activities (including its own website).

Several of the projects in Section 4.1 above have involved significant community engagement as have almost all of those in *HoT*'s Programme C (Access and Learning) below. Some have focused on particular locations or target groups as with Birds and Farm Landscapes (A7) which has succeeded in engaging local farmers – and the public - with the *HoT* scheme. A number of projects have involved public events; for example a 'Festival of the Views' held in August 2015 as part of the Teesdale Views project (A3 above)

attracted over 50 participants. Volunteering has also been a particular feature of many projects with the total number of volunteers in the programme overall topping 800.

Outputs

Measures of activity relating to community awareness and behaviour from these and other projects include:

- 48 community-led projects funded including 29 through the Community Initiatives Fund
- 13 youth groups and 2,117 young people engaged in HoT activities as volunteers or participants
- 40 community groups worked with including 3 village/ parish research projects, 7 cultural tradition, 2 oral history and 1 language project and 14 exhibitions/ displays
- An estimated 23,113 participants in HoT events and activities over the life of the LP scheme
- 814 individual volunteers in HoT funded projects, contributing a total of 16,077 volunteer-hours' worth £350,927 in match funding
- Work with 13 non-traditional or disadvantaged groups involving 95 individuals in HoT projects including 4 care homes, Blind Life Durham, TODYS (autism) as well as efforts to increase access in HoT projects for people with visual impairment or other disability
- 12 businesses engaged including 9 creative media workshops and 3 corporate volunteering sessions
- HoT website with 246 users, features profiles of all projects, regular news updates, downloads including newsletters, events, information on volunteering and the Partnership composition and aims; HoT mailing list of 400 contacts; 31 newsletters produced; over 300 'likes' on Facebook (69% women, 29% men); 763 followers on Twitter with over 1,000 tweets posted.

Outcomes

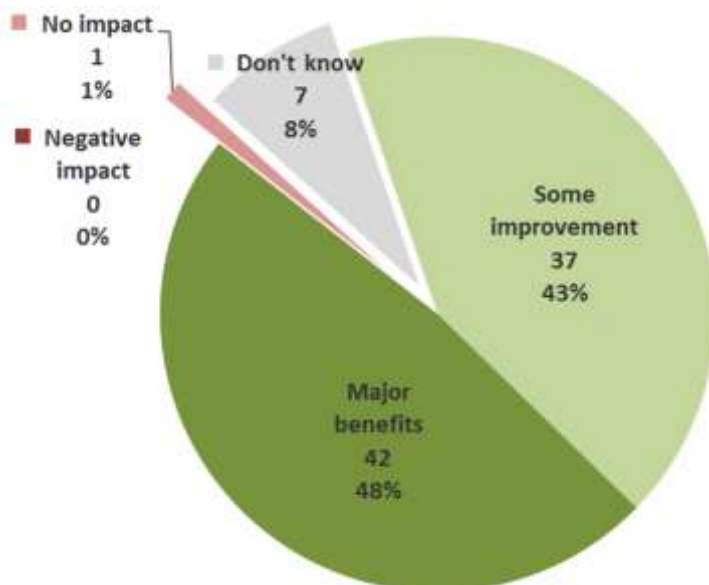


Figure 16 To what extent do you think *Heart of Teesdale* has increased community participation and engagement related to the area's natural or cultural heritage?

Of all the 'programme' questions in the on-line questionnaire community engagement scored the highest numbers of positive responses —over 90% with 48% entering an opinion that *HoT* has delivered major benefits, the lowest proportion of 'don't knows' and only one respondent returning no impact.

Our interviews and the survey results support our own perception that community participation and engagement is one of the strongest aspects of the LP programme.

'In celebrating the living heritage of rural industry, from food to stone, local people, local organisations and the local press, have all engaged with the Heart of Teesdale on a constant basis.

I'd say the overall impact is to have instilled real pride in the quality of the landscapes in which we live and work.' (PL)

[Memorial Gardens] *'a great improvement – area was looking a bit run down before. Now people bring their chips at lunchtime. The benches are great to sit out on.'* (V, landlady of our B&B in Galgate, whose volunteer bulb planting had introduced her to neighbours she had not previously met).

[Stone Festivals] *'helped convince local people that Heart of Teesdale was for them and introduced waves of eager primary schoolkids to the joys of stone carving and also to the horizon of sculpture, masonry and skills.* (PL)

There has been extensive and positive feedback on a number of individual projects; perhaps most of all from Music at the Heart of Teesdale: *'my children would no longer be playing their instruments if not for the project'* (PA) is a typical comment from the parent of a participant. In this and other cases the absence of participant profiles, particularly on previous engagement ('is this the first time you have been involved in anything like this?', 'what volunteering have you done before?') makes it difficult objectively to gauge the overall impact of *HoT* or how inclusive many of these projects are. The impacts on engagement and participation of 'people' focused projects and of community participation more generally can only be fully assessed by follow-up surveys or (better) by evidence of subsequent activity – difficult in particular for small projects (such as many of the CIF initiatives) which are not necessarily good at keeping participants' records or reporting back.



Figure 17 'Addicted to Sheep', produced as part of the 'Focus on Farming' project provides an insight into the life of a tenant hill farming family and has been shown on BBC4 and cinemas nationwide.



Figure 18 The Cream Teas Orchestra (above) perform the premiere of 'Rooted - A Teesdale Suite' at The Witham, November 2014. The Music@HeartOfTeesdale project was acclaimed by participants and there is determination to continue beyond the end of HLF funding.

(Below) Geology in the Park. The pyramid at Cotherstone, built from local stone (and with a 'time capsule' in the peak) has provided a feature for imaginative games. Installations elsewhere (inset at Winston Green) add interest for local residents and visitors.



4.3 Access and learning

Projects

Nine *HoT* project groups (a total of 16 projects overall) are grouped under this head in the *HoT* LCAP as having physical and/or intellectual access as their main focus.

Trails through Teesdale (C2) links with the Paths programme (A5) and Teesdale Views (A3) and is based on 12 historic and artistic trails (with guided walks) to celebrating the area's association with (lesser as well as better-known) artists, writers, scientists and explorers. One concern has been the need to avoid duplication of many trails and guides (developed by several different agencies) that already exist.

An Increasing Access Programme (C9) supplemented the physical access focus of other *HoT* projects by focusing on individuals who may be disadvantaged by background or disability. Examples of activities include a Blind Life Durham guided walk held at Bowes Museum (with a training DVD for museum staff) and monthly craft workshops held for Manor House (YMCA) and Charles Dickens Lodge (assisted living) residents.

Both projects in Teesdale Landscapes Legacy (C3) are hosted by the Bowes Museum. One, the Rokeby: Poetry and Landscape (Scott and Turner) exhibition was professionally curated and well received, providing good promotion for the Bowes (although no visitor numbers or feedback appear to have been collected); however links with other projects and the *HoT* scheme overall are less clear. The other, a proposed Local Studies Centre, did not materialise, although the Bowes retains plans for a separately funded (and more ambitious) project along these lines for the future.

Heart of Teesdale Creative Media (C4) builds on a Digital Strategy commissioned in *HoT*'s development phase and included three projects. One, Interpreting the Landscape aimed at developing digital media to support community engagement has been a non-starter, its budget transferred to the Scar Top overspend; however a film 'Teesdale through the Seasons' intended as educational resource for schools and groups, is complete. A God's Bridge Mentoring Project was directed at aspiring professional artists under tutelage from established figures. Crafts and Skills in the Community (C5) focused on traditional crafts including rag rugs, felt jewellery and knitting. Stone Festivals held in 2013 and 2014 in the grounds of The Bowes Museum were particularly successful, attracting good audiences and local interest.

A Community Archaeology Programme (C7) intended to 'engage new audiences and volunteers in understanding and carrying out archaeology' included three projects: Prehistoric Settlements and Prehistoric Rock Art; Deserted and Shrunken Medieval Settlements; and Roman Forts and Civilian Communities. Potentially one of the most valuable programmes linking community engagement to understanding and conservation of the area's historic heritage, one significant 'find' was evidence of prehistoric occupation at a known deserted mediaeval village settlement.

Watch Out For Wildlife (C1) includes two projects led by Durham Wildlife Trust aiming to deliver participation and learning. One, Wildlife Past and Present is focused on monitoring of four species – (otter, water vole, dormouse, and birds-eye primrose) has had good engagement from Darlington and Teesdale Naturalists Field Club but otherwise the volunteering response has been disappointing. The other, Wild Tees, is based on remote capture cameras placed in 18 different locations, capturing the activities of foxes, deer and birds which can be seen on the DWT website. Camera security has proved a problem.

Riverlab (C8) is aimed at national curriculum KS1&2 (primary) schoolchildren, using art to emphasise the importance of water to Teesdale's heritage and communities. At secondary level, KS3 children had a more practical programme based on classroom aquaria which were seeded with trout or salmon eggs to enable the children to study the hatching and development of fry before they are released back into the river.

Focus on Farming (C6) is aimed at linking the area's farming economy to community awareness and activity. In addition to village picnics and raising awareness of local food through the Love Food project, it included production of a film 'Addicted to Sheep' (fig 17) which has been shown nationally in cinemas (and on BBC4) to critical acclaim. Another project, run by UTASS engaged primary school children with farming seasonality and local food production through farm visits and a variety of learning activities.

As in other areas many of these projects contribute also to outputs under heritage conservation, community engagement and training. Conversely projects allocated to these areas have also contributed to intellectual or physical access, for example A5 Paths for All People has included installation of 45 new gates, eight of them through *HoT's* Donate-a-Gate scheme and 30m of new boardwalk near Fairy Cupboards, installed by volunteers.

Outputs

Assessment of the outputs under this head is complicated by sheer diversity of projects and of the related activities. Some achievements against targets relating to access and learning across the whole of the *HoT* scheme include:

- 5 km of new public rights of way created and 91 km of paths improved, with 55 new hand gates, 44 new signposts and 7 improved stiles
- 18 new walking trails with associated site-based interpretation including 11 new interpretation boards plus leaflets and/or on-line information
- 14 public exhibitions including a showcase of ArtScapes work, VIVA exhibitions and the finalists in a photography competition
- 13 significant booklets (e.g. Sweet Winston, with 366 copies sold) plus 15 digital publications and 4 websites
- 156 school visits to sites involving 450 pupils and 8 outreach visits to schools (11 primary and 3 secondary schools in all) plus 6 teacher training activities
- 64 adult learning activities engaging 648 individuals, plus 16 family learning activities, cultural and oral history projects, a total of 127 learning activities involving over 1,500 beneficiaries overall.

Outcomes

As with other 'people' outcomes monitoring data is relatively sparse. Some exists, for example users of the mini-golf course on Scar Top increased following completion from 3,540 in 2012 to 6,118 in 2013 over a shorter (81 against 90 day) opening – a near doubling from 39 to 76 per day;ⁱ unfortunately more recent figures are not available. Other visitor information is also lacking and views of interviewees and of respondents to the on-line survey provide the principal source of outcome evidence.

ⁱ Information from Helen Plant, Town Clerk.

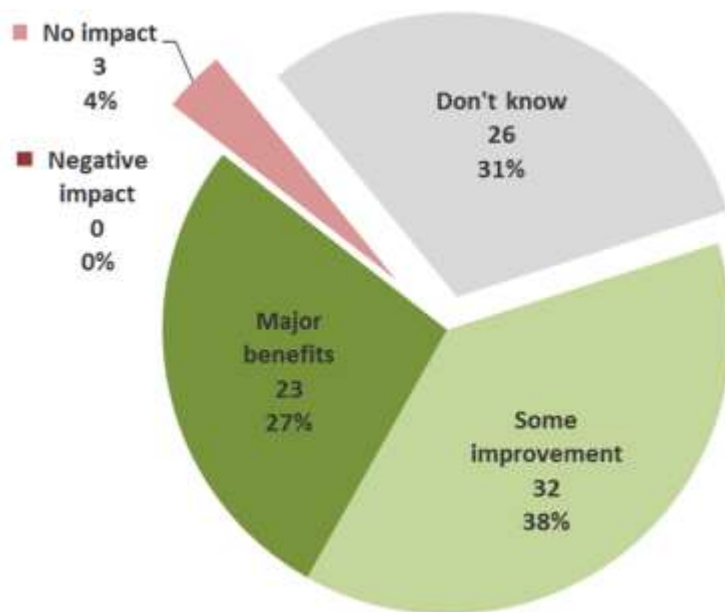


Figure 19 To what extent do you think HoT has improved people's physical access to and enjoyment of the area's heritage and landscape?

Most respondents (55%) considered that HoT had secured significant improvements to physical access and enjoyment. Works to the castle area and Flatts Wood received particular praise:

'The conversion of stiles to gates across the HoT area and the TLC given to Flatts Wood have opened up a lot of glorious countryside to those who might not otherwise have had access to it.' (PL)

'Good quality access improvements to the Scar Top site- enabling greater levels of use of the site and encouraging more people to use the space.' (PL).

The significance of arts based projects and exhibition support was also emphasised by several respondents:

'The exhibition at The Bowes Museum on the visits of Turner, Scott, Cotman and others to the area, plus the array of projects from the Stone Festivals to the variety of Artworks in Teesdale projects have all alerted the local community to why artists are drawn to this place and enhanced people's appetite to explore and learn about the landscapes around them.' (PL) and

'In terms of improving people's understanding the Landscape Discovery has provided a large range of training courses and public events where people have been able to learn about their environment and heritage.' (PL)

However 30% of respondents returned a 'don't know' suggesting either that they may have been unaware of HoT's access projects (intellectual as well as physical) or perhaps that they perceive access primarily in terms of HoT's paths programme much of which was delivered towards the end of the HoT scheme:

'I believe there have been improvements made to some paths and woodland walks, although I'm not totally sure which ones.' (PA)

'Personally, I have yet to experience anything in the way of significant physical [access] improvements - but hope with the 'Teesdale Views' project more will become apparent, other than a new bridge in Flatts Wood.' (PL)

'Some nice pictures but nothing increased the use of or understanding of what was there [Greta Bridge]. Just collected some old data and presented it.' (NP)

HoT access projects exist within a relatively extensive existing provision in the area. As with other projects it is difficult to assess the specific contribution that they have made. However the Partnership has done well to focus production on materials which relate specifically to changing objectives of the programme. For example C2, Trails Through Teesdale is identified in the LCAP as a programme to produce area guides and other materials, but the existence of much other material in this area required a change of emphasis to a programme of guided walks and community engagement.

Similar considerations apply to intellectual access. Several *HoT* projects stand out in this regard. The early Stone Festivals, mentioned above, combined community engagement with increased understanding of local heritage-related skills and fed in to later projects. Music at the Heart of Teesdale (above) is another.

Particularly successful have been some locally innovative school-based projects, such as Riverlab:

'It's nice to see living things to illustrate stuff we've done in class' – especially now coming up to exams, everything is oriented to exams, but this is 'real'. (Year 6 Riverlab PA, at Teesdale School)



Figure 20 Learning takes place in a variety of contexts. Above: Teesdale School before and after erection of benches, tables and landscape-themed separators (designed by pupils) to make what was previously a 'dead' area a more congenial environment for learning and leisure.

Below: a discussion on woodland ecology during a break and (inset) identifying freshwater 'minibeasts' - part of the RiverLab project.





Figure 21 Old and new; access improvements - reinstated footpaths, benches, bridges and signage in Flatts Wood

4.4 Training and skills

Projects

Six projects are included in the *HoT* LCAP under Section D, Training and Skills. One, Teesdale Apprentices (D5) was conceived as an element across several projects, seeking to identify opportunities for recruiting and placing apprentices, and to locate people who could act as trainers or mentors. In practice it proved difficult to do either and with HLF's agreement has been dropped from the programme.

Stone Academy (D4) is intended to provide training opportunities in local stone-related heritage skills. Starting with public events, workshops and discovery days it was intended that this would lead to a local apprenticeship scheme leading in the long term to an 'Academy of national reputation' which would attract students and visitors into the area, and extend the range of local employment opportunities. Two early Stone Festivals held in 2012 and 2103, both in the grounds of The Bowes Museum proved successful in engaging the local community. However the ambition to create a foundation course for schoolchildren and school-leavers that would build upon local skillsets linked to market opportunities beyond the Dale has proved exceptionally hard to deliver. However a revised Stone Academy programme has provided 20 college trainees with Level 2 Heritage Construction and a further 20 individuals with Level 3 pre-1919 Building Maintenance & Repair awards (and other local people with informal stone masonry skills) and one apprentice with experience in a local masonry company.

Other projects focused directly on training include the Field Boundary Programme (D1). Working with local landowners and farmers to identify areas where field boundary features need restoration or maintenance, this has included hedge-laying training and public competitions. Landscape Discovery (D2) is a parallel programme of workshops and training events, ranging from woodland management, scything, bat survey and identification and otter holt construction – to afterschool minibeast-home construction and a workshop on How To Apply for Funding.

Much training provided has complemented provision in other programmes such as Lost Landscapes. A Future for Heritage Crafts (D3) has complemented Crafts & Skills in the Community (C5, above) with sheep-shearing training. Many of the projects listed under other heads have included an element of training; for example the Upper Demesnes Hay Meadow project (A2, above) included a scything course to train volunteers and BCTC has now purchased a scythe for them to use. The final project in this section, *HoT*'s Environmental Volunteering Programme (D6) has co-ordinated volunteer opportunities and provided training and other support across the *HoT* programme.

Outputs

- 5 tailored land or habitat management training courses (over 2 days involving 45 individuals) plus 4 rural skills and heritage conservation training (22 days, 46 individuals) and 5 tourism and business development training (2 days, 46 individuals)
- 57 rural skills and conservation courses over 52 days to 906 volunteers plus 10 trained farm building surveyors
- 5 teachers trained in outdoor education and 207 trained in arts and music projects
- Significant informal training in habitat management and vernacular building surveys through volunteer conservation days which are likely to continue after *HoT* as are the skill enhancements through ongoing folk music and art activities
- Internal staff training includes career counselling, first aid, procurement, project management and social media
- Overall 1,524 individuals with new or enhanced skills through non-accredited training provided as part of project delivery.

Outcomes

The failure of Teesdale Apprentices – an aspirational and potentially impressive programme (D5) but with no allocated budget or co-ordinator, is disappointing. This represents an overoptimistic estimate in the development phase of partner capacity to take on apprentices. Similar problems have occurred with accredited training or apprenticeships proposed for other programmes such as Crafts and Skills in the Community:

‘Though improving the physical environment; no new jobs were created [though] existing craftspeople got a bit of work. No-one was enthused to take on an apprentice.’ (NP)

The relaunched programme of accredited training for Stone Academy however has succeeded in meeting targets. It is hoped that beyond the benefits to individual participants, the programme will contribute to the eventual realisation of aspirations for the establishment of permanent training in stone-related skills in the area.

Beyond projects directly focused on the provision of accredited training and apprenticeships, projects allocated to other programme areas have included a significant element of (off- as well as on-site) formal or informal training. The INNS programme has resulted in five individuals now qualified in herbicide application, all of whom seem likely to continue their (voluntary) activity in this area, and InvestEESgate (B4) has trained seven volunteers in the safe use of backpack electrofishing equipment who will be qualified to conduct surveys beyond the lifetime of the project. A number of other projects have included a significant component of formal or informal volunteer training (Figure 24). Also important have been the non-accredited skills including ‘leisure interest’ and soft skills delivered by projects in other programmes, ranging from local and oral history recording through craft skills such as the ‘Fleece to Fabric’ CIF programme promoted by the YMCA.

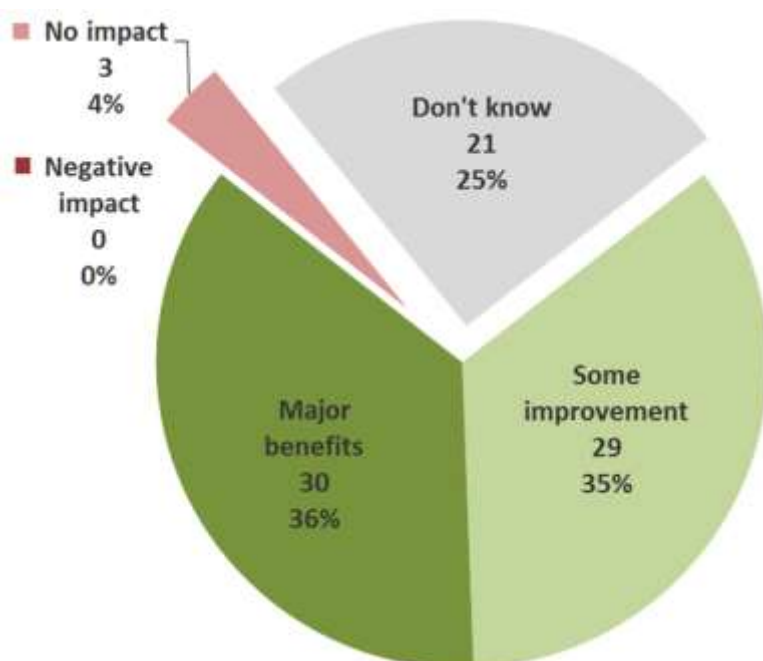


Figure 22 To what extent do you think *Heart of Teesdale* has increased people's understanding of or enabled them to acquire skills and competence relating to the area's natural and cultural heritage?

Whilst participants have broadly reported positively on these activities there has also been some criticism, both on their organisation and from some who saw some arts-based activities as an indulgence or who felt that training needed to be tied more to employment opportunity:

‘Some of the arts programmes appear to have focused on professional artists rather than involving a wider range of people. In some cases there were people brought in [and] money was spent when there were qualified local people/ groups who could have done the same and in some cases a better job. It would also have been good to see more training opportunities that actually delivered accredited qualifications for some.’ (PA)

‘Future for Heritage Crafts - needs more focus on work based skills’ (PL)

Overall, *HoT*'s contribution to understanding, skills and competence has been significant. Over a third of questionnaire respondents felt that *HoT* has led to some improvements in heritage-related training and skills and a similar proportion felt that it has secured major benefits.

'The practical courses I have attended have been informative and inspiring and provided me with skills and insights which I can use in my own work.' (PA)

'dry-stone walling and hedge laying etc. - good skills and they have been well received and hopefully some younger folk who have done it will be able to make a bit of work from it.' (PL)

'Saving the Past for the Future [...] "roadshow" events for locals in several villages [...] resulted in a much greater awareness of the importance of family records and in some significant donations or loans to the Record Office, (PL)

'The young people have had training from tutors and from final year degree students that has made a vast improvement to their musical skills and specifically in folk music. Other young people have been given the chance to learn a type of dancing that is part of the cultural heritage of this area.' (V)

In all of the above some form of follow-up would be valuable in order to supplement anecdotal evidence of the longer-term benefits of training to those involved. In all LP schemes it is important that contact details of participants are retained in order to make it possible in any future legacy review to collect retrospective assessments from participants of the benefits they perceive from involvement.



Figure 23 Recording field barns and other vernacular farm buildings has created a team of trained recorders and an archive of structures adding to awareness of the area's built heritage.



Figure 24 Training incorporated in *HoT* projects included (clockwise from top left): scything, hedging, dry stone walling, hurdle making, freshwater invertebrate sampling, digitising archives, stone carving and sheep shearing

5 Governance, administration and delivery

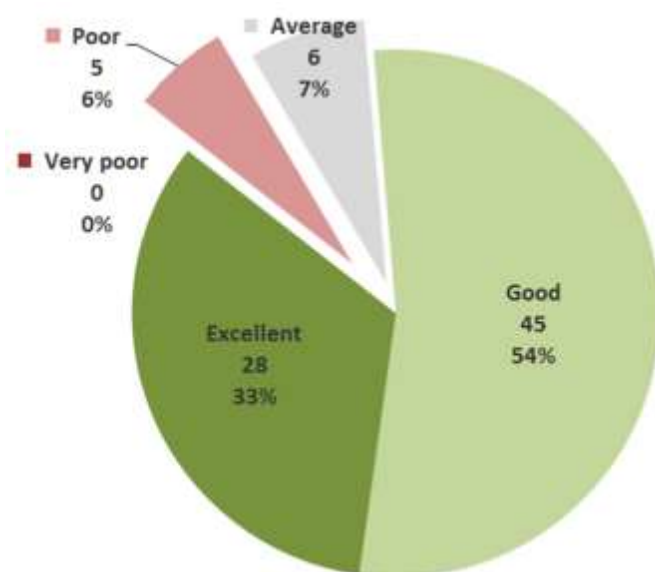


Figure 25 Please give a rating for how well you think the Heart of Teesdale scheme has been run.

Our own assessment of the management and administration of the programme corresponds to the views of the majority of both questionnaire respondents (Figure 25) and interviewees, that delivery has been competent and efficient.

Whilst there has been significant adjustment in individual project budgets during the life of the scheme, overall spend in major programme areas has been close to anticipated (Figure 8)

Typical comments from project leads include: *'The current administration is good to deal with, cheerful and efficient, with staff generally very happy to help with anything that is within their power'* (PL) and *'Delivery team are friendly and genuinely seem to care about the programme'*(PL).

Likewise from volunteers and from event participants:

'All employees have been very friendly and helpful' (V); *'The organisation and standard of all aspects I have been involved with have been excellent'* (V); *'I have experienced good communication with office staff over course bookings.'* (PA); *'I have attended a few workshops and activity days with my children and have found them very well run and organised'* (PA).

Critical comments (including those from two questionnaire respondents who returned a 'poor') have related primarily to procedures (particularly regarding claims) rather than staff: *'Sometimes the bureaucratic systems imposed by HLF felt too burdensome, and the retrospective payments system for small organisations does create problems'* (PL); *'The process around administration of claims could have been more robust - seems very ad hoc in the way that this is managed'* (PL). DCC procurement procedures may have caused some delay in commissioning works. Lead body support to the scheme (in particular from the Regeneration Project Managers and Finance Officer who have gone beyond the call of duty in this regard) has been excellent despite variations in the time allocation of staff. Accommodation first in offices in Calgate, and subsequently in the Witham, has been adequate as have IT and other facilities. The support to the LP team from the two DCC project managers and the leadership provided by the AG (particularly through its two Chairs) has been excellent.

Governance

The HoT Partnership has done well to establish and maintain an identity distinct both from its progenitors (including Barnard Castle Vision with its focus on physical and economic regeneration of the town) and from DCC as its Accountable Body. The governance structure of the scheme based on line management of the LP team through the DCC and strategic leadership from an Advisory Group offered a source of potential conflict. In practice the dangers have been averted though a clear demarcation between procedural accountability through DCC and strategic guidance via the AG which in practice has acted as a Steering Group-cum-Board for the scheme. Practicalities of management necessitated the creation of a Programme Delivery Group (assimilating an earlier Paths Group and Finance Group) as a

sub-group of the AG and this has worked well. Leadership of the AG by an independent Chair (not a universal feature of LP schemes) has been important in emphasising the autonomy of the project and thanks are due both to the current AG Chair and to his predecessor for their commitment, energy and competence.

Funding

HoT has faced two challenges in relation to financial management. The first has been an overspend on Scar Top (A4). This overspend has been met though a further contribution of £40k from DCC and through viring of funds from contingency and from other projects including C4 Creative Media.

A second challenge has been to secure match funding, made more difficult (for all LPs) by the tightening of public-sector budgets. This has been exacerbated by a change in HLF policy whereby contributions in kind by public bodies (in particular staff time) can no longer be counted as match funding. This was applied retrospectively in the case of *HoT* where an element of such funding was accepted by HLF in the initial bid. An accommodation with HLF enabled the time of one DCC staff member allocated to *HoT* to be accepted as in-kind contribution. Nevertheless budget restrictions have put pressure on project delivery in the final phase of the *HoT* LP.

Delivery arrangements

The large number of projects has placed a significant administrative burden on the LP team particularly in the early stages of delivery where capital projects had to be managed in parallel with community outreach. There is always a difficult balance to be struck between delivery in house, by local community organisations who may lack key management skills, and ‘outsourcing’ to organisations who have a proven track record in project delivery but who may lack local awareness or roots. This last has not been the case with the Groundwork employed co-ordinators who have worked from the *HoT* office as part of the team (rather than being employed on specific projects) and who have established good local links; however their fractional contracts could have been larger if overheads had been applied to employment in-house.

Leadership of some other projects have been a source of negative comment, for example:

‘Some of the projects that have been run by partner organisations, particularly those that do not have representation within the area have had poor contact with the local people and it feels as if they have done projects for themselves rather than the community or area.’ (PA)

Other feedback has concerned the relationship between activities focused on Barnard Castle and those located in the surrounding area:

‘Because of the way the [Barnard Castle] project was set up opportunities have been missed to encourage others in the HoT area to follow our - and our neighbours in the AONB’s - practical example, and potential educational and interpretive opportunities completely overlooked’ (PL).

In relation to both location of and responsibility for delivery the large number of Community Fund projects (approaching half the total by number) have been important in balancing both the early ‘town’ focus of work and the projects led by larger delivery partners.

Project reporting and central record-keeping.

Internal project monitoring has been largely by direct contact between team and project leads/ partners supplemented by periodic (quarterly or less frequent) financial claims. Each claim is generally

accompanied by a brief progress report which generally focuses on key outputs although wider outcomes are often mentioned.

Final claims likewise are supplemented by an end of project report and the LP team have solicited additional material including photographs where these exist. However final project reports are generally submitted in narrative form (by email or as a text file); a template for reporting was only introduced mid-way through the LP scheme for some projects. One of the consequences is that partner evaluation of project outcomes has been variable and somewhat haphazard.

'Our project for the [] was very difficult as there was no standard form to complete and we had to rely on help to make one up.' (V)

Quarterly and final project reports together with other project-related materials are archived by the LP team in digital or physical form in project folders. The principal mechanism for oversight monitoring is via periodic reports to the Advisory Group, in preparation for which the LP team transfer data from these reports to an A3 progress spreadsheet ('Key Activities Summary') which is printed out for the information of AG members. This has generally worked well.

'People on the team always available and ready to give support and advice. Very good communication opportunities and events to bring projects together so we felt part of a whole. Really good, creative range of projects touching many aspects and groups.' (NA)

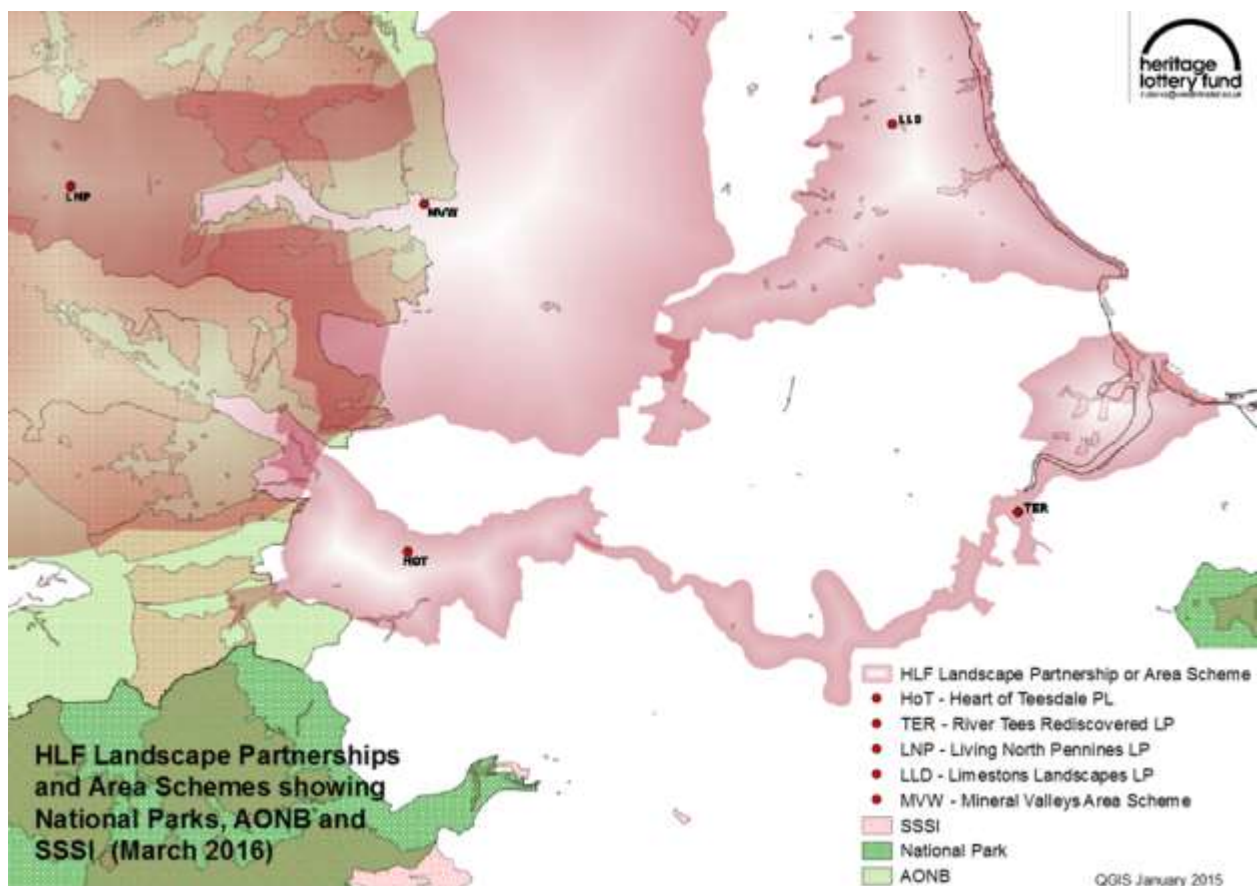


Figure 26 Location of the Heart of Teesdale LP in relation to other LP (including Area) schemes and statutory landscape designations (SSSI, National Park and AONB) in mid-Teesdale. Outcomes and legacy need to be assessed in the context of the surrounding area.

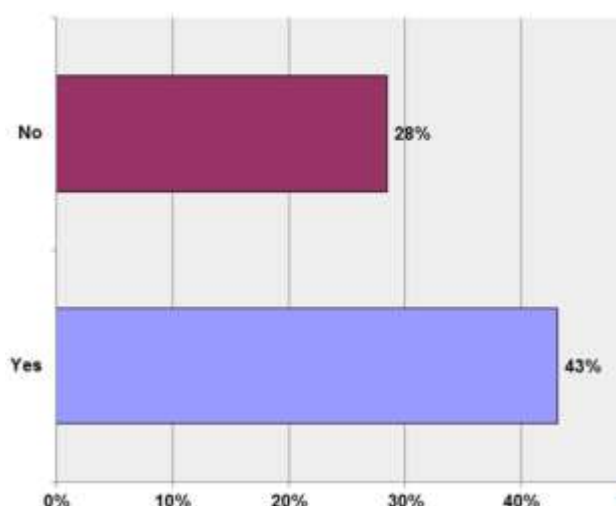
6 Legacy, landscape and lessons learnt

This section considers the legacy of the *HoT* scheme – the enduring benefits delivered by the scheme, lessons learnt and plans for building on the experience of *HoT* following the end of HLF funding.

Legacy arising from individual projects

All project outcomes may count as ‘legacy’ to the extent that they endure beyond the end of the LP scheme. One of the features of *HoT* is the number and diversity of projects undertaken and also the fact that the majority of them have delivered benefits in several areas. Most of the ‘Legacies’ identified in Table IV of the *HoT* LCAP are outputs; their outcomes are the wider benefits for heritage and for people. It seems clear from the discussion in S 4 above that these are likely to be significant.

In relation to physical works to built heritage (including the major capital projects) expert testimony as well as responses to interviews and to the on-line survey has been overwhelmingly positive. Long-term benefits however will depend on ongoing monitoring and maintenance. The same applies to habitat works such as the INNS programme.



‘People’ benefits particularly in relation to ‘intangibles’ (such as community engagement beyond the end of funding) are more difficult to assess. Prospects for legacy depend ultimately on the enthusiasm and engagement of individuals.

Over 40% of respondents to the on-line survey stated that they were likely to participate in *HoT* legacy activities. This is an encouraging response. However it is perhaps also not unexpected given the composition of those who responded. It would have been good to have had more feedback from volunteers and participants in *HoT* events and activities.

Figure 27 Are you or do you plan to be involved in any legacy activities relating to *HoT*?

More than the sum of the parts - working in partnership at a landscape scale

The *HoT* LCAP The *HoT* LCAP aspires to be more than a bidding document for HLF funding, but a ‘potential starting point for the development of a wider strategy for the landscape and heritage of the area.’^{1:2} It specifies ‘Successor Trust(s) to continue Partnership aims’ as a key legacy of the scheme.^{1:55} Legacy might, but need not necessarily, involve a successor body or initiative focused primarily on the *HoT* area. Discussions are still ongoing with a view to a clearer focus on social and economic development in a wider area (roughly corresponding with the old Teesdale District Council boundary) through a body which could seek LEADER and Local Enterprise Partnership funding. It is to be hoped that any such body will build on the aspirations of *HoT* as embodied in the LCAP and continue its work, including and emphasis on natural and cultural heritage and wide community engagement.

A formal successor body is not the only arbiter of success however and scheme legacy can be manifest in different ways. The underlying premise of LP work is that working at a landscape scale can deliver benefits above and beyond those that would accrue from funding a series of disparate projects (and that it avoids ‘make-weight’ projects to satisfy HLF criteria or provide a paper ‘balance’ over the four HLF programme priorities).

The *HoT* LCAP¹[appendix i b](#) presents several legacy indicators alongside the formation of successor trust(s) to continue Partnership aims: an on-going Teesdale Festival, the establishment of a heritage network trail, the revival of traditional craft skills and products. A wider aspect of legacy is the place of *HoT* within the regional landscape context in particular its location between the North Pennines AONB to the north, the Yorkshire Dales to the south, and the downstream reaches of the Tees to the east. The last is now the location of the adjacent new River Tees Rediscovered Landscape Partnership (Figure 26) which means that HLF LP work has now covered the whole of the Tees from its middle reaches to the North Sea.

The *HoT* AG in December 2015 advanced a set of six legacy outcomes by which the success of the LP scheme might be judged. Table 2 below presents the existing and potential evidence for each of these which should assist any future assessment of the lasting benefits of the LP scheme.

Table 2 Legacy outcomes, evidence and indicators for the *Heart of Teesdale* Landscape Partnership

Legacy outcome	Evidence
The beauty and character of Teesdale has been rediscovered, and is celebrated and explored	Evidence of increased interest by tourists and visitors. Heart of Teesdale becomes recognised as a valued landscape in its own right.
Volunteers of many different interests and ages are engaged in new activities	Many volunteers engaged with <i>HoT</i> express an intention to continue; new volunteers come forward to continue at least some of the activities initiated by <i>HoT</i> .
Many local people are now upskilled and trained in heritage crafts, fostering creativity and imagination, and providing lifelong skills	Testimony from trainees indicates both a reservoir of skills and competencies of value to the areas heritage as well as benefits to confidence or career prospects of individuals involved. At least some continuing training activity (e.g. Stone Academy) planned beyond the end of the scheme.
There is raised awareness, increased understanding and conservation of Teesdale's natural and built heritage	INNS volunteers will continue their programme of eradication and control. Local farmers and landowners maintain improved habitats. Community volunteers and other activities (e.g. field barn recording) continue.
The cultural heritage of music, dance, theatre and art is now celebrated	Music@Heart of Teesdale continues its programme of engaging local people in performance. Teesdale Festival and other events continue, making use of improved facilities on Scar Top and in surrounding villages.
Young people are more reconnected with their heritage and the outdoors	Continued interest from school children, parents and teachers in landscape-related activity. Some young people at least retain contact with care home residents.

Lessons learnt

Some of the lessons learnt from the development and delivery of *HoT* include:

- **Extensive consultation and partner engagement during the development phase** has secured wide ownership of the **HoT LCAP**, as a strategic document for the area as well as in the programme of projects which has been used as a reference point for delivery. The strategic elements should continue to inform legacy planning
- **The large number and diversity of projects** in the *HoT* programme has ensured that the LP programme addresses multiple needs across a large area and secured significant community ‘buy in’. At the same time it has increased the administrative load on the *HoT* delivery team and also prevented some from reaching their full potential. Overlap in some areas has been considerable; some projects might usefully have been amalgamated in the planning stage, providing flexibility and facilitating delivery.
- **Governance** of the *HoT* LP based on line management of the LP team through the Accountable Body project officer in parallel with a broader Advisory Group representing all Partners and with an independent Chair has worked well. A key feature has been a clear *de facto* demarcation between procedural accountability through DCC and strategic guidance via the AG which in practice has acted as a Steering Group via a smaller Programme Development Group –effectively the Partnership Board.
- Launched in 2010, before the publication of HLF’s current guidance *HoT* has done well to pay attention to **monitoring and evaluation**, including the early appointment of an external independent evaluator. With hindsight, the early development of an M & E framework, ‘owned’ by the Partnership as a whole, would have facilitated a more structured process of reporting and end-of-project evaluation.
- Consideration of **legacy** started early, well before the mid-point of delivery. A major problem for *HoT* – as for other LP schemes where there is no pre-existing institutional infrastructure (as in an AONB or National Park) is continuity. HLF grant for capital works and ‘activities’ provides no ongoing core funding and raises expectations without making provision for legacy. It is important to be realistic about what can and cannot be achieved, and about the potential for possible sources of subsequent funding.



Figure 28. Justifiably proud of their achievements, the *HoT* partnership produced a ‘glossy’ A5 pamphlet to celebrate the end of the LP scheme. It can be downloaded from the *HoT* legacy website, <http://heartofteesdale.net/>

Figure 29. The HoT Symposium 'Artists, Farmers and Philosophers' went beyond showcasing the achievements of the Landscape Partnership; it also raised some critical issues concerning the role of art and artists in the landscape (and in LP schemes in particular). (a) Symposium flier from the McCord Centre, University of Newcastle; (b) Symposium participants at the launch of the 'Teesdale Viewpoints'; (c) with local residents and (d) the panel at a public debate in Mickleton Village Hall and (e) the evening Ceilidh with the Cream Tees in the Bowes Museum



7 Conclusions

HoT is a well-conceived LP scheme, based on a sound understanding of the area's natural and cultural heritage. It embodies aims appropriate to the needs and potential of the landscape, its residents and visitors, and the local economy. It has been led by a working Partnership with a clear shared vision. Durham County Council as lead body has provided good financial control. A strong LP team working within a robust administrative structure has provided effective day to day management. Early glitches, including the incorporation of Teesdale District Council in the Durham Unitary Authority during the development phase and the appointment during delivery, first of a new LP Manager in late 2013 and then a new Chair of the Advisory Group the following year, have been achieved without loss of momentum. The Partnership has done well to secure community participation and 'buy-in', resulting in a good number of small and/or innovative community projects to accompany the larger capital works and major projects delivered by established partners. Along with other HLF LP schemes *HoT* has had some difficulties securing match funding (HLF have revised its national requirements in this respect) and has done well to deliver the projects in the LCAP to budget at the same time as meeting or exceeding the majority of its LCAP targets.

The *HoT* LCAP has considerable strengths, not least a strong assessment of the area's landscape heritage and its potential. The LP scheme itself features an impressive programme of projects delivering in a balanced way across the four HLF programme priorities (Conservation, Participation, Access/Learning and Training/Skills). Some development work which might normally have figured in the development phase was conducted during the delivery phase. This included the draft *HoT* Heritage Audit and Project Programmeⁱ which compensated for a thin treatment of built heritage submitted with the LCAP. Some of the larger projects addressed widely recognised or long-standing needs. Others are innovative. The Community Initiatives Fund has proved particularly successful in generating a wide variety of locally-based initiatives engaging local communities across the *HoT* area.

One of the features of *HoT* is a relatively small number of large (capital) projects accompanied by a large number of smaller ones particularly those generated by CIF. These include small projects (many in surrounding villages and countryside) and larger capital works, mainly within Barnard Castle. Whilst the latter may initially have generated initial impressions of *HoT* as more of a 'townscape' initiative they also demonstrated achievement giving the scheme as a whole momentum and enhancing its profile particularly in Barnard Castle itself. Other projects have been well distributed across the *HoT* area serving to link activities within Barnard Castle to the wider countryside and potentially secure the synergy and value added which can accompany work at a landscape scale. The location of AG and other meetings and events in surrounding villages has also been symbolically important. It is greatly to the credit of the Partnership as a whole – as well as to the LP team and AG - that the LP has retained its integrity, that none of the smaller projects can be seen as having been make-weights, and that the scheme as a whole has retained a 'landscape' focus on the whole of the *HoT* area.

A particular feature of *HoT* is its focus on the area as a *cultural* landscape. This has helped generate unity of purpose across all elements of the LCAP (not merely those projects involving the arts and creative media) and it has helped foster grassroots engagement. In this regard, *HoT* has been to the fore in exploring a cultural landscape approach to vernacular landscapes and it is fitting that the end of the LP

ⁱ *HoT*-Heritage Audit & Project Programme (North of England Civic Trust May 2012)

scheme was celebrated with a highly successful Symposium on 'Artists, Farmers and Philosophers' which took place over three days in September 2016, involving more than 100 participants.

The challenge for *HoT* and its partners is to build on this success to ensure that the improvements on the ground are maintained and that the enthusiasm and awareness which has been generated does not dissipate. This will present a number of significant challenges to *HoT* Partners following the end of HLF funding, in particular to ensure that:

- the legacy of completed projects is secured, including monitoring and maintenance of physical works to natural and cultural heritage and that the commitment and enthusiasm volunteers and local organisations is maintained
- efforts continue to develop new proposals and secure appropriate funding to address new needs revealed by the *HoT* scheme during delivery.
- a focus of working in partnership at a landscape scale is maintained, building on the work of Heart of Teesdale LP and protecting and promoting the special qualities of the area to residents and visitors alike.

The key stakeholders in the scheme such as Durham County Council, Groundwork, Durham Wildlife Trust, Tees River Trust, etc. have all embraced the idea of cultural landscape through working together on HoT and keeping this cultural element as part of their working horizons is a key legacy goal for me personally.' (PL).

'Maintaining some form of 'partnership' of groups within Teesdale that can mutually benefit, support and inspire one another for the benefit of all.' (PL)

'Continue the involvement of the local people and to bring to the attention of the wider world - the beautiful area in which we are so lucky to live.' (PA)

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