

North West Landscape Matters: new perspectives on people, places and nature, Wigan, 26 March 2009 - conference report



The conference aim was to bring together a wide range of people to discuss landscape issues, to launch a regional landscape partnership, and to explore links between landscape and other disciplines. There was a particular focus on the European Landscape Convention and the introduction of some current regional projects which may set the scene for how landscape as a subject might be taken forward in the future, and which may help to inform decision-making and strategy development on other issues. These notes report back on the content of the day and also subsequent follow-up action to date.

Chair (morning): Pam Warhurst, Natural England Board Member

Pam welcomed everyone and emphasised that all landscapes matter, and that the designated landscapes provide inspirational examples of what can be done. She explored the links between biodiversity and landscape, suggesting that we need to think about the 'children of all species'; and urged us not to get hung up about the definitions of Green Infrastructure. She concluded by encouraging everyone to engage in their conference, give feedback on the idea of the regional partnership, and make landscape make a difference to all.

Morning session 1 - EUROPEAN & NATIONAL CONTEXT

Powerpoint presentations are available¹ for information for:

- *An introduction to Natural England policy and the European Landscape Convention - Val Kirby (Natural England)*
- *European Landscape Convention guidelines & action plans - Gary Charlton (Natural England)*

Points from the presentations and discussion:

- Val outlined what Natural England's role was in landscape: as the government's statutory advisor, with special responsibilities for protected landscapes. She covered Natural England's landscape policies, how the success of these would be measured, and introduced the European Landscape Convention and how that would be put into practice.
- Natural England launched at the conference new checklist guidance to help incorporate the European Landscape Convention (ELC) into strategies and policies. Gary Charlton discussed the development of these guidelines, their intended use, and next steps.

Morning session 2 - NORTH WEST PERSPECTIVE

Powerpoint presentations are available for:

- *A quick introduction to regional strategy work - Andy Yuille (CPRE / NW Environment Link)*

¹ Presentations are available as pdf handouts on the Natural England North West regional landscape partnership web page www.naturalengland.org.uk/

- *A regional landscape "strategy" refresh: some personal thoughts - Sue Kidd (University of Liverpool)*
- *Developing the North West Landscape Character Framework - Jonathan Porter (Countryside) & Alison Farmer (Alison Farmer Associates)*

Points from the presentations:

- Andy Yuille put into context the importance of the North West's Integrated Regional Strategy as the proposed replacement for the Regional Economic, Spatial and Housing Strategies. He set out the timetable and intentions for its development and the place of landscape in the current consultation. The presentation set the scene for the second workshop to take place in the afternoon session, in terms of how regional strategy could best promote the protection, management and planning of landscapes.
- Sue Kidd outlined how the 1996 regional landscape strategy had come into being: its objectives, commissioning parties and the approach taken to developing the strategy. She set out how the strategy had been applied and what it had achieved, as well as its possible limitations now in the present circumstances and the need perhaps for a different type of response in 2009 with some thoughts about what this response might look like.
- Jonathan Porter and Alison Farmer introduced the North West Landscape Character Framework project which will create a region-wide framework and map to show landscape character types. They explained the background work done to date, showed what the regional map looked like at the moment, some of the differences they have found in the way in which landscape characterisation has been done across the region and what that has meant for the mapping. They also explained the next steps for the project and how the framework would ultimately be available.

From the Q and A session:

- There is a need to reconcile landscape discussions with work on economic development: the economic components should not be forgotten from the social and environmental language of landscape. Landscape's contribution to economic development is important. The presentations had not picked up language of "sustainable development" yet that was what we were all striving for. How do we make landscape more relevant to people's lives?
- The interactions between biodiversity and landscape agendas were discussed: to what extent was the language of landscape useful for biodiversity work? (This was explored further in the afternoon session.)
- Discussion about landscape quality - how do we address this in future? NE has deliberately shied away from these discussions so far to talk about character rather than quality, but for green infrastructure and functional purposes, there is a need to know where we want to go and what to achieve.
- Although the regional landscape partnership has been launched by Natural England, it is hoped that it will be very much a partnership shaped by a wide array of partners. Ideas on what would be useful and how to take it forward were encouraged during the day.

Afternoon session 1 - TASTER WORKSHOPS

Five parallel workshops on: (1) Biodiversity & Landscape, (2) Landscape & Green Infrastructure, (3) Trees, Woods & Forests in the Landscape, (4) Public Perceptions of Landscape, and (5) Future Landscapes. The workshops, facilitated mainly on behalf of other partnerships and forums, were designed to be essentially taster sessions, to explore some issues that might usefully be taken forward and discussed more in the future. Full notes from the workshops are available in Annex 2 (page 10).

Afternoon session 2 - WORKSHOP ON REGIONAL STRATEGY REQUIREMENTS

Workshop groups explored the following question: how can regional strategy best contribute to the European Landscape Convention's stated aim to promote the protection, management and planning of landscapes? The discussions were not constrained to discussions of strategy alone, if the group thought that other types of regional action - such as reviewing structures or funding mechanisms - was necessary.

The notes from the five workshops have been used by Andy Yuille to feed in to the Integrated Regional Strategy (RS) development process, via the NW Environment Link response to the Issues & Principles consultation. The notes will continue to inform the development of the RS through the RS Advisory Group, in considering where the evidence base needs to be further strengthened for landscape and the place of landscape with the new Strategy.

Sue Kidd also used the notes to inform the report for Natural England on mechanisms to embed landscape into North West policy and strategy. The following table sets out these thoughts.

Assessment of priorities for implementation of European Landscape Convention:

Thematic Issue	Knowledge and understanding	Institutional roles and responsibilities	Methodological tools and techniques	Policies, plans and programmes
Priorities	<p>Landscape means different things to different people. There is a need for a common conceptual understanding of landscape coupled with clearer use of associated terminology.</p> <p>Need for up to date evidence base which highlights current landscape threats. Particular emphasis should be given to emerging climate change related pressures.</p> <p>Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of existing or earlier initiatives (particularly the 1996 Regional Landscape Strategy).</p> <p>Landscape exists as a multifunctional entity. As such links to economic sector need to be more clearly understood and communicated.</p> <p>The 1996 Regional Landscape Strategy asserts the importance of 'domains'. The value of these needs to be revisited and greater recognition needs to be given to the variation which exists within the urban landscape. Concern that the term 'domain' is confusing to the public.</p>	<p>Landscape has a relatively low profile amongst with the key agencies of government. There is a clear need for a landscape champion within the region. The role of the natural Economy North West team in promoting GI offers a good example.</p> <p>A variety of landscape planning processes exist but currently these are undertaken in isolation. Greater lines of cooperation and communication need to be established between stakeholders.</p> <p>LA officers are a valuable part of landscape protection and enforcement. Yet, further training and expertise is required in order to promote effectiveness.</p> <p>A greater role for communities in landscape planning needs to be considered.</p>	<p>Biodiversity mapping and landscape Character Assessment need to be undertaken with cross reference to one another.</p> <p>Methods need to be developed which can account for the perceptual values afforded by landscape to the public.</p> <p>There is a need for consistency in approach to landscape characterisation. Tools are required to help identify those areas that require protection and those that require enhancement.</p> <p>Greater methodological understanding of how to evaluate urban landscape character.</p>	<p>Planned responses should operate at the regional, sub-regional and local scale. Whilst regional strategic provisions will serve to achieve integration with other initiatives (including the Integrated Regional Strategy), local level planning should target interventions.</p> <p>An independent regional landscape strategy could prove effective but would need to be part of a plural planning process with other plans. Links with GI planning will be crucial</p> <p>Key role identified for IRS and LDF framework in working toward a finer grained appreciation of urban landscape character.</p> <p>PPP making needs to be supported by clearer guidance.</p>

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS FROM THE CONFERENCE

Some common themes and areas of agreement emerging from the day were (in no particular order):

- An interest in, and a welcome for, the North West Regional Landscape Character Framework.
- Agreement on the need for common understanding of key terms and consistent use of terminology.
- We need to be able to work coherently at different scales, from local to international.
- There is considerable interest in communicating with and engaging the public.
- The urban and urban fringe agenda is particularly important for the NW region, highlighting the importance of finer-grained townscape analysis.
- We need to integrate different interests: biodiversity, historic environment, green infrastructure, geodiversity, landscape etc.
- The NW needs a strategic approach to landscape planning and management – within the context of the forthcoming Regional Strategy (RS2010)
- Resources need to be targeted at agreed regional priorities.

Generally there was very good feedback from participants' evaluation sheets about the event itself, although little direct feedback on the desired form and activities of a regional landscape partnership overall. For the moment Natural England will continue with regular newsletters to those on the partnership mailing list, and will discuss with stakeholders about any more formal structure.

ANNEX 1 - NOTES FROM AFTERNOON SESSION 1 WORKSHOPS

1. LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY

Facilitator - Sarah Peet (Environment Agency, for NW Biodiversity Forum) with Tim Mitcham (Lancashire Wildlife Trust) and Michelle Young (Natural England)

Issues:

- Landscape and Biodiversity are seen as different things.
- We need to be clear on what we want from Landscape, in context of where we want change from Biodiversity.
- How does Regional Landscape framework capture the detail of Biodiversity.

Needs:

- Holistic Approach to understand what the vision is for LCA.
- Connectivity of ecological networks need to be viewed at a Landscape scale.
- Biodiversity can be used as a tool to include people in Landscape where visible.

Recommendations:

- Descriptions need to reflect characteristic biodiversity features.
- Need to use the same language.
- Dialogue between biodiversity and landscape forums to ensure common language which is understood.
- We need not to lose sight of how to communicate to the public.
- Strategy needs to reflect biodiversity targets.
- Work to one framework (Landscape, Biodiversity and Geo-Diversity).

2. LANDSCAPE & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (GI)

Facilitator - Paul Nolan (Mersey Forest, for NW Green Infrastructure Think Tank) with Mike Savage (Red Rose Forest)

General discussion in order the points came up:

- Difference between Landscape as a resource and Landscape character
- DCLG guidance on sustainable economic growth (especially Environmental Limits) very useful – GI is relevant here – when looking at interventions
- GI is useful to see as a process
- Government wants a ‘single conversation’ with environmental sector (including GI) – Difficult at Regional level, very useful at sub-region, easier at district. Fewer functions apply the broader the scale – lots at district, few at region
- Landscape Framework needs to be able to relate to change
- Value of bottom-up approach to GI planning, in which landscape is very useful tool for engaging public/communities
- GI interventions often protect or enhance Landscape
- Ground truthing will be important – using case studies, can we protect Landscape (eg National Parks) or improve it (eg Newlands, Regeneration bodies)
- Need to develop the value placed on GI at the local level
- Need to stress/promote/champion importance of landscape & GI planning in change – local change, economic change, climate change....

Three key points:

- Need to develop an agreed and consistent terminology, inc differentiating between Landscape as a resource and Landscape character

- Need to develop qualitative data on Landscape to plan and manage (as part of GI plans?) – Framework plus more?
- Develop a set of case studies and costings/valuation of benefits

3. TREES, WOODLANDS & FORESTRY IN THE LANDSCAPE

Facilitator - Steve Connor (Chair, Regional Forestry Framework) with Keith Jones (Forestry Commission)

The group discussed the question of top priorities for work in this area. Discussion points:

- queried what is relevance of trees, woods and forests (TWF) to landscape - Lancashire as a *v. unwooded* landscape. Perhaps this increases landscape important of TWF as individual components.
- Hedgerow trees & street trees important for setting and sense of place. Forestry Commission is going through something of a culture change on this at moment: national Government strategy on England's TWF now includes individual trees.
- We have distinctive woodland habitat types, eg black poplar, woodland carr. We have to think about living landscapes. Species eg willow tit are tied to a particular habitat.
- Ancient trees provoke an emotional response. (Some habitats/landscapes do this better than others?) We can use this for community engagement
- This morning's presentations had much rhetoric, but not much specific about what next. How, for instance, would emotional responses be built into the work?
- What regional decision-makers may require is some critical analysis, how to use the data presented this morning. Eg net deforestation in region - how could the LCF maps help to look at this?
- Scale of LCF project is high-level and so can't be used to look at urban landscape level. Lumping together of urban areas, and high distinction in rural areas - seems like there's something missing. Could there be a democratic approach - eg by population density? There are urban typologies. A holistic approach needed which combines social, environmental and economic.
- How much is continued support for landscapes needed and important to NE? ie funding support to partners for land management. Partnerships need to add grist to the mill for this: keep projects *going* (in Bowland, Community Forests, etc)
- Funding regimes are targeting the *best* at the moment, to protect and keep best landscapes going. Where is intervention needed to support other objectives? May be in right places currently - eg to support tourism - but is a necessary question to check.
- Lip service being paid to community engagement at moment. Quality of life needs to be central to the debate.

The group also discussed the Forestry Commission's national consultation on open habitats restoration and produced a response to the consultation which Keith would submit. Key points: no net loss of woodland through the landscape is important but that mitigation and regional flexibility in relation to targets is important; community engagement is not an optional extra but should be taken for granted.

4. PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF LANDSCAPE

Facilitator - Susannah England (Natural England) with Hugh Inwood (Research Box consultants)

Research Box presentation was entitled 'How to incorporate perception work into landscape character frameworks' and described the work being carried out by them on behalf of Natural England. Perception was described as 'experiencing landscapes'.

We were asked to close our eyes and imagine our favourite landscape. This can evoke powerful emotions in many people. The study also used photographs of local landscapes and landscape features and asked people to identify positive and negative perceptions from them. People were also asked to take their own photos of landscapes, and initial results are indicating that real perceptions are very different from what might be thought of as idealised landscapes, and 'favourite' landscapes were often mundane, or contained features such as silage bales which may be thought of as negative, but provided a positive experience of, for example, a well-managed farmed landscape to the viewer.

The study is looking at whether these 'real' perceptions are linked to particular landscape character types, or whether they are common to all landscapes, and also whether particular perceptions are linked with, for example, age or gender. Another part of the study is examining whether practicalities associated with perception of particular landscapes, such as litter or safety, are more influential than the actual character of the landscape. This work is still in progress.

A key issue in landscape perception work is use of terminology, and the interpretation of what is actually being described by the words used.

Discussion of question about top priorities:

Hugh asked delegates if they take people's perceptions of landscape into consideration in their landscape work.

In landscape architecture this is particularly important as you are designing for people.

It is difficult to include perception at a regional scale.

Local distinctiveness is critically important.

Concern about impact of 'new' landscapes on people's perceptions (for example reclamation schemes on former colliery sites). This will have significant impact for current generations, but not for future generations.

Terminology very important – doesn't really matter what it's called, as long as everyone has same understanding. Need to link with definition in ELC though.

Landscape can be an influential experience on people's lives.

Can we assume that 'everyone' values landscapes?

Many aspects of the 'outdoor' environment are not recognised as having anything to do with landscape. 'Quality' landscapes are looked after, but other landscapes are not even considered as being 'landscape'. As an example, Liverpool is often perceived as having no 'landscape', yet 40% of the city is rural.

Links with landscape and health were recognised.

Recognition that this study didn't consider the urban environment, and that urban environments are of particular importance in the NW.

There is a need for monitoring of any previous (and future) landscape initiatives to inform future plans and projects.

There was a discussion on 'value' and what this means. The value of a particular initiative is not the investment in it, but the difference that it's made. Recognition of the 'value' of landscape needs to be communicated by people to policy makers. If you don't value it you lose it.

A 'strategy' is not necessarily the best way forward. Need to assess success of previous strategies before doing another one.

Summary:

1. Perception is an important element
2. The urban landscape is particularly important for the NW Region
3. The 1996 Strategy is too narrow and is inappropriate for today's needs

5. FUTURE LANDSCAPES

Facilitators - Alison Farmer (Alison Farmer Associates) & Jonathan Porter (Countryside)

The workshop considered the ELC's aim of promoting a forward-looking approach to managing inherited landscapes and shaping new landscapes with a focus on how Historic Landscape Characterisation and the NW Landscape Character Framework could help. The workshop also identified some priorities for action for the NW.

Alison Farmer gave an introduction to Historic Landscape Characterisation and its use, emphasising the ever-changing nature of landscape. Two people in the workshop were directly involved with HLC, and several more used it, out of a total of about 24 people. There was a strong feeling that HLC should be integrated into other areas of work but guidelines were needed on how it could be used in planning, and by non-specialists. The very detailed nature of HLC made it a very valuable resource but also presented difficulties for using it on a larger scale. HLCs had been adopted by two authorities in Greater Manchester and several more were at final draft stage. HLC and LCA in Cumbria were mentioned, with the forthcoming Cumbria landscape character toolkit and guidance aimed at helping with County use of LCA. The regional scale of the NW Landscape Character Framework meant that while it could give greater consistency overall it could not pick up on local differences. However existing detailed local landscape character assessments could provide that information. There would soon be complete coverage of local assessments in rural areas.

Discussion about HLC and LCF project:

The group felt that there should also be a requirement for local authorities to complete townscape character assessments in connection with Local Development Frameworks. It was generally felt that landscape was not being prioritised sufficiently in local authorities at present.

Changing perceptions and functions of landscape were discussed, with hedgerow trees mentioned as an example – once functional, now increasingly remnant. As well as classifying landscapes, their condition and trend needed to be assessed and monitored. The Countryside Quality Counts initiative was doing this on a National Character Area basis, but the group felt that because of the speed of change, more landscape monitoring was needed, including at finer scales than CQC. This could help to identify priority areas (priority for what exactly not discussed) within the NW.

Education was seen as being needed to help understand landscape

Biodiversity was seen as important, but also agricultural production, and provision of ecosystem services – landscape wasn't the same for everyone but did it matter? All aspects needed to be integrated.

Further issues which came up in discussion:

- the balance between food production and biodiversity, and protection of Best and Most Versatile Land
- Land ownership – who makes the decisions?
- The future of remnant countryside in the urban fringe
- Management of mineral resources
- Need for recognition of urban diversity
- Need for better strategic urban planning, management and guidance for rapidly changing urban landscapes
- Effects of climate change on urban areas
- Energy generation and the landscape
- Managing recreation
- Effects on landscape of changing economic climate

The priorities for the NW were seen as:

- Urban areas and settlement, where a finer-grained approach was needed than has been the case to date, with greater use of HLC and townscape characterisation
- Monitoring and managing effects of development, food production, and energy generation
- Resolution of tensions between urban and rural pressures
- Widening stakeholder representation and input into landscape decision-making, considering the different values for landscape held by different groups
- Integration of landscape, biodiversity and the historic environment, with better analysis, development of strategic aspects and guidance
- Consideration of global, national and local contexts in decision-making, particularly with reference to climatic change and ecosystem services.

Conclusions:

Whilst the group did not manage to formally decide on the three top priorities, it was clear from the discussions that a) a greater focus on the landscape of urban areas and areas where people lived, was needed, for which HLC would be extremely valuable once available, b) the scope of landscape was perceived as becoming broader as well as more integrated with other aspects of the environment, with the consequent need to widen the groups of stakeholders, develop the NWLCF accordingly and raise awareness of landscape by decision-makers c) there was a need to manage and monitor the changes which were likely to be imposed by climatic and economic factors.

ANNEX 2 - NOTES FROM AFTERNOON SESSION 2 WORKSHOP

How can regional strategy best contribute to the European Landscape Convention's stated aim to promote the protection, management and planning of landscapes?

WORKSHOP A

Facilitator - Gary Charlton, notes - Pin Dhillon-Downey

- Confusion in terminology – need better clarity of definitions and consistent use of language
- Use of imagery in communicating messages – need a wider diversity of images (including degraded and derelict landscapes, marine & seascapes) and include people in landscape imagery
- Landscapes hold different values to different people e.g. a Brownfield site could be perceived as a biodiversity rich habitat, a playground or an eyesore.
- Should all landscapes be retained as that are? ('all landscapes matter')
- Landscapes vary in size to different people (size of back yard – open moorland)
- Where do we need to go from here – which landscapes need to change, what do local communities want to see from local landscapes
- Potential value of landscapes – link between existing and future landscapes
- ELC staged process
 - What is in existing landscape
 - What is valued in the existing landscape
 - What is the vision for future of the landscape (biodiversity?)
- Integrated role of landscape strategies to include – climate change, social, economic, environmental
- Contradictory strategies from local land management schemes – need to be approached at landscape scale / context
- Need to strengthen partnerships, internal & external – develop better integration (recognise all other drivers)
- ELC – given the opportunity to reflect on what has already been done, can go further to develop a framework/ strategy through partnerships
- Possible requirement to learn from what's happening elsewhere in Europe – beyond policy level
- Regional biodiversity forum & regional landscape forum need better communication
- Biodiversity opportunities mapping and landscape character strategy need to be looked at simultaneously
- Need to develop guidelines on what landscape characters need to look like in the future
- Need for practical guidance
- Regional landscape priorities should be developed by integration of Biodiversity, landscape, geodiversity, social, economic... issues
- Considered that the current approach to landscape is very incoherent, need a more holistic view of landscape influenced by bio, geo etc....focuses
- Need an evidence base for perception of landscape character
- Landscape character assessment needs to be more objective – not a single individual's perception (public survey?)
- Need consistency with landscape character assessment
- Implement community led approach to landscape planning – determine value of landscape (local/regional community) – avoid reactive approach to developments within valued landscapes
- Landscape character assessment – proactive planning should include sustainability, prioritise areas for renewable energy developments

WORKSHOP B

Facilitator - David Vose, notes - Mandy North

Delegates are not convinced that another 'strategy' is the best idea, following discussion as detailed below. One solution would be the co-ordination of ideas, facilitated by the NW Landscape Partnership, resulting in a 'product' with hooks and links to enable 'buy-in'

The need for an 'ecosystem services' approach

The need for an all-inclusive evidence base

'Everyone' needs to be able to be engaged in discussions about landscape, and there is a need for a common language.

The need for an audit of current activity

The recognition of the importance of the urban environment for the NW

Discussion points:

Need to look at 1996 strategy and build on strengths and weaknesses. Concern that it wasn't actually used enough to provide a meaningful analysis.

Need for an evidence base, to include what has changed since 1996, and also what has already been achieved, together with any lessons learned.

Need to consider new issues such as climate change.

Need to focus on who is going to use a new strategy.

Need to have local, sub-regional and regional elements. Regional scale will be more widely recognised and will have more status and can feed into other documents, for example, the new Integrated Regional Strategy, but a local 'strategy' is needed to focus on local delivery. There needs to be a link between all levels.

Landscape is a 'Cinderella'. There needs to be wider recognition of Landscape and links to other areas such as food production and other economic issues.

There is a view that Landscape is not taken seriously enough by National Government, and CLG Guidance is poor.

Terminology needs to be consistent, with clear definitions.

Identification of need of some kind of 'product' which can influence and bring about change, but which is also a working document to enable action at a local level.

The NW Landscape Partnership was identified as being able to take forward this 'product', particularly as it represents statutory bodies, NGOs and voluntary and community groups.

There then followed a discussion about what was the NWLP, and who was involved/should be involved etc. There needs to be good terms of reference which are all-encompassing. The word Landscape was seen by some delegates as being too narrow, and might deter some people from getting involved – thinking it's not for them.

The way that the Natural Economy North West works was used as an example of good practice. Communication was seen to be very important. Need to be having one conversation about 'the environment', to include all aspects of landscape, geodiversity, biodiversity, historic environment, and related socio-economic issues across urban, rural and maritime.

An observation that in tough economic times, the environment is the first to lose out – need better links between economics and environment?

WORKSHOP C

Facilitator - Christoph Kratz, notes - Clare Mumford

- would be good to see Districts doing LCAs.
- Different situations exist across region. Some Districts do. Will be good to reinforce at regional level. A matter of filling in the gaps.
- City landscapes are done. More clarity of urban assessments needed.
- City-region / county level works well for spatial planning. Urban grain can then be brought out via SPD etc. Maybe no need to do LCA under Gtr Manchester level?

- May be more useful cross-boundary.
- Phase 1 habitat survey: tools similar to this could be used to standardise approaches
- Need to be careful what you map. RSS mapping for biodiversity: scale may be wrong, not useful?
- GI seen as investment in the landscape for a series of functions.
- To feed into Regional Strategy, need not just a description but how landscapes (need?) to change. The need is to integrate, and to be an active package. GI as looking into the future. LCF project as a tool to do this looking into the future.
- Climate change. How can LCF be used to run a series of questions against, e.g. renewable energy locations. LCF as a tool for guiding people to accepting change. LCF as evidence base is given. Would then want best features to be protected, and others enhanced.
- We don't need to do some things at regional level: national guidance will be given. Renewable energy may be one of them.
- CLG paper problematic in absence of natural environment refs. Re. places - R.S. may probably write high-level guidance on specific places.
- R.S. could get a handle on urban areas: get LDFs to get a handle on these. Maybe also: priorities for landscape restoration; also planned change in protected areas (eg regeneration zones in Lake District National Park); agricultural landscapes e.g. in Cheshire where change may be huge (cf South East - development pressures).
- But how do we write policies for the latter? Ancient Hedgerows Act already exists BUT depends on officers to enforce. This *enforcement* is a problem.
- Training & engagement needed for local authority officers to do enforcement, to understand landscape protection requirements. NE checklist will be useful.
- LAs only as good as their politicians. Members need educating. Need a high-level policy about landscape's character and distinctiveness to make people take notice and not be able to airbrush out these issues.
- In regional landscape work, have to make case for economics. Provide understanding why All Landscapes Matter, both rural and urban.
- Also useful will be GI plans (Gtr Mcr pilot) that connect to planning policy and other strands of LA work.
- Research on public perceptions of landscape should be used: everyday landscapes make a difference.
- Change - people not averse but needs to be done in a better way. Members need to be treated "gently" and educated. Urban landscapes are v.dynamic. Much of the rationale for change is purely political.

WORKSHOP D

Facilitator - Stuart Pasley, notes - Susannah England

Top five priorities identified:

1. The need to co-ordinate across administrative boundaries
2. The need for co-ordination amongst regional players
3. The need to know what success would look like – how do we know what we are seeking and when we've achieved it? The importance of linking to 'functional landscapes' and ecosystem services was recognised here.
4. The importance of the urban/urban fringe agenda.
5. The need to align money and grant regimes to deliver agreed priorities.

(awaiting full notes from post-its)

WORKSHOP E

Facilitator: Sue Kidd, notes - Ruth Benson

The workshop focused on the way in which a regional landscape strategy could be taken forward. It was quickly agreed that there was a need for a regional strategy, and it became apparent that the group felt that it needed to be closely linked with Regional Strategy generally. Discussion covered scope, links with regional strategy generally, terminology, the concept of 'domains', and the possible mechanisms and models for creating and updating a regional landscape strategy.

The issues which emerged included:

- The need to respect and facilitate local decision-making
- How to take local issues into account in a regional landscape strategy
- The need for a framework including context, methodology and guidance
- The need to consider wider issues as well as those relating to specific landscape types
- The economic importance of landscape
- The need to include urban areas and marine areas in a meaningful way
- The need for continuity of support, management and updating

Scope:

The current strategy uses the concept of 'domains' but it was agreed that if carried forward, clarification of 'urban landscape' was needed as this included a wide range of landscape types and issues. Urban-rural divisions, or 'natural'-man-made divisions were also seen as too simplistic, while overlaps between domains also existed. The marine domain was seen as an active area which needed to be included. With reference to earlier mention of 'mosslands' in the proposed regional landscape character framework, it was pointed out that 'mosslands' are in fact mostly intensively farmed, and more consideration needed to be given to agriculture in the landscape, and changing land uses.

Separation or integration with a regional strategy? It was agreed that they needed to be capable of integration e.g. using similar categories.

Terminology was discussed, particularly the word 'landscape'. It was felt by the group that any use of jargon should be avoided as it could be offputting, and that 'landscape' was a 'friendly' term which was understood by most people. Whether people saw 'landscape' as including the built as well as the non-built landscape was not explored, but it was agreed that it could be qualified e.g. 'physical landscape', 'cultural landscape' etc. 'Environment' was seen as too wide. It was agreed that if landscape was used it needed to be seen to include townscape, seascape etc.

The group was asked if 'domain' was a useful concept. There was a strong view that, in order to relate to people, ideas need to be applicable at a local scale, and there was some doubt about whether 'domains' would be recognised. In particular, the 'urban domain' would not capture any sense of place, and could encompass a whole variety of settlement sizes, functions, urban character etc. How issues which were important at local scale could be translated into regional was discussed, but inconclusively.

Transitional areas and how they might fare with the 'domain' concept was discussed, as it was felt that the NW landscape did include significant transitional areas such as the settled edges of uplands. Coastal areas also experienced similar issues.

It was felt that the strategy would need to categorise landscapes by relevant issues as well as by pure landscape type.

A further question explored by the group was whether an Integrated Regional Strategy could do the job, or whether a separate document was needed. It was felt that a regional overview was certainly needed. However Local Authorities needed to have their own assessments and strategies, and delivery is at the local scale. There was a strong view that a regional strategy should facilitate local scale strategy-making and delivery, and that both tiers should dovetail. It was felt that local ownership was needed for strategies to be effective, and that guidance and support rather than prescription was the way forward.

It was recognised that there are common issues across the region, and that there are regional priorities. Both could be addressed through a regional landscape strategy. The strategy should be linked to regional expenditure.

How links could be made with green infrastructure was discussed. For GI, National Character Areas are too broad, and a regional scale framework (as in the NW Landscape Character Framework) would be more useful. GI needs to be joined-up across administrative boundaries to be most effective. A regional strategy could provide a methodology to ensure join-up.

The mechanisms for creating a regional landscape strategy were discussed. Possible models were put forward:

- The Coastal Forum - but it was agreed that it has much more focus than a regional strategy would have. It has financial support, and a project officer.
- Natural Economy North West - has an effective small team which however is to be disbanded.
- The Regional Forestry Framework – a team with a project officer, and working groups contributing to it.
- The Mersey Basin Campaign was also mentioned??

A pertinent question was what status a regional landscape strategy would have. Who would 'own' it? How would it be updated? The previous strategy was sponsored by Sustainability NW but this proved not to be long-term.

It was felt that long-term continuity needed to be ensured if there was a new strategy. A regional landscape strategy needed to be strongly linked to the economy and regional planning. It was also felt that landscape was an important aspect of regional strategy which had real economic value, and that landscape quality was therefore an important aspect.

ANNEX 3 - DELEGATE LIST

First Name	Position	Organisation
David Alexander	Freelance Planning Specialist	Freelance
Matthew Armstrong	Assistant Landscape Officer	Cumbria County Council
Martin Band	Director	Environmental Associates
Lucy Barron	AONB Manager	Arnside & Silverdale AONB
Paul Beckmann	Director	Agathoclis Beckmann
Janet Belfield	Specialist - Planning & Advocacy	Natural England
Penny Bennett	Principal	Penny Bennett Landscape Architects
Ruth Benson	Landscape Adviser	Natural England
Chris Binney	Principal Environment Officer	Pendle BC
Trevor Bithell	ESU Manager	Macclesfield BC
Natalie Blackston	Regional Planning Assistant	4NW
Alison Boden	Senior Manager	Wyre BC
Steven Brereton	Specialist Adviser (Landscape)	Lancashire County Council
Vanessa Brook	Landscape Development Manager	Stockport MBC
Cynthia Burek	Professor of Geoconservation	Chester Centre for Science Communication
John Burgess	Senior Associate	Environmental Associates
David Butler	Senior Planning Officer	Ellesmere Port & Neston BC
Mark Champion	LNR Officer	Lancashire Wildlife Trust
Gary Charlton	Senior Specialist Landscape & Nature	Natural England
Neil Clark	Area Manager	Natural England
Jill Collens	Project Leader	Cheshire County Council
Francis Comyn	Landscape Officer	Rochdale MBC
John Connelly	General Manager North	Youth Hostel Association
Steve Connor	Regional Forestry Framework Chair	Creative Concern
Richard Crofts	District Geologist	British Geological Survey
Faith Crompton	Assistant Landscape Architect	Sefton MBC
Andrew Davidson	Inspector of Ancient Monuments	English Heritage
Pin Dhillon-Downey	Morecambe Bay Team	Natural England
Michelle Donoghue	Landscape Partnership -Bassenthwaite	Environment Agency
Simon Dowse	Technical Director	Scott Wilson Ltd
Lee Dudley	Director	ConFor Consult
Dave Dunlop	Policy Officer	Lancashire Wildlife Trust
Susannah England	Cumbria High Fells Team	Natural England
Alun Evans	Project Leader	Cheshire County Council
Alison Farmer	Director	Alison Farmer Associates

First Name	Position	Organisation
Kay Foster	Landscape Officer	Chester City Council
Susan Frost	Regional Fundraising Officer	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Peter Gommon	Director	Ainsley Gommon Architects
Jan Gomulski	Principal Landscape Architect	Cheshire County Council
Pauline Goodhall	Senior Planning Officer	Oldham MBC
Peter Goulder	Landscape Architect	Peter Goulder Limited
Chris Greenwood	Landscape Architect	Lake District National Park
Dr David Hackett	Director	Solum Environmental
Euan Hall	Chief Executive	Land Restoration Trust
Neil Harnott	Senior Conservation Officer	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Gary Harold	Chief Assistant Planning Officer	Wigan Council
Val Hepworth	Vice President	Association of Garden Trusts (Yorkshire)
Sara Hilton	Regional Director	Heritage Lottery Fund
David Hodcroft	Senior Planning Officer	Bury MBC
Debra Holroyd	Regional Planning Officer	4NW
Hugh Inwood	Director	Research Box Consultants
Sarah Jeffery	Mersey Forest in Vale Royal Officer	Mersey Forest
Peter Jepson Specialist	Advisor (Ecology)	Lancashire County Council
Keith Jones	Regional Director	Forestry Commission
Brian Jones	Member	Ramblers Association
Roland Jones	Tree & Landscape Officer	West Lancashire
Sue Kidd	Senior Lecturer	University of Liverpool
Val Kirby	Head of Landscape & Geodiversity	Natural England
Roger Kirk-Smith	Landscape Architect	Prescott Associates
Anne Knape	Principal Landscape Architect	Atkins
Ian Lifford	Parks & Street Scene Manager	Ellesmere Port & Neston BC
Lucinda Long	Landscape Team	Cheshire County Council
Dick Longdin	Partner	Randall Thorp
Colin Maddison	Regional Advocacy & Partnerships Mgr	Natural England
Bob Massingham	Environment Team Leader	St Helens MBC
Peter McCrone	Historic Environment Adviser	Natural England
Barbara Mellor	Landscape Architect	Groundwork Lancashire West and Wigan
Tim Mitcham	Head of Conservation	Lancashire Wildlife Trust
Lesley Mitchell	Historic Environment Record Officer	Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit
Fiona Moss	Planning Officer	Salford City Council
Anne Moyers	Senior Planner	Halton BC
Clare Mumford	Advocacy & Partnerships Specialist	Natural England

First Name	Position	Organisation
Judith Nelson	Regional Planner	English Heritage
Paul Nolan	Project Director	Mersey Forest
Mandy North	Planning & Conservation Adviser	Natural England
Shea O'Neill	Weaver Valley Project Manager	Cheshire County Council
Stuart Pasley	Landscape Target Delivery Leader	Natural England
Colin Peacock	Chair	Arnside & Silverdale AONB
Sarah Peet	Principal Strategic Planning Officer	Environment Agency
David Perry	Coastal Trail Development Officer	4NW
Jonathon Porter	Technical Director	Countryside
Joanna Pugh	Regional External Affairs Manager	National Trust
Lindsey Ralston	Landscape Architect	Chorley BC
Pauline Randall	Partner	Randall Thorp
Dr Helen Rawlinson	Market Development Manager	REVIVE
Kirsty Rhind	Forum Manager	Greenspace North West
Rick Rogers	Countryside Development Officer	St Helens MBC
Heather Rowley	Specialist Regional Communications	Natural England
Sarah Rycroft	Director	Rycroft Associates - Landscape Architects
Mike Savage	Operations Manager	Red Rose Forest
Helen Sweeney	Senior Rural and Natural Environment	GONW
David Vose	Land Use Planning Senior Specialist	Natural England
Anna Waddilove	Project Officer Biodiversity	Sustrans
Jenny Wain	Principal Planning Officer - Landscape	Cumbria County Council
Pam Warhurst	Board Member	Natural England
Chris Waterfield	Newlands Regional Project Officer	Forestry Commission
Andrew Watson	Consultant	EDAW Plc
Ruth Wearing	Biodiversity Target Delivery Leader	Natural England
Adrian Welsh	Associate Director	EDAW Plc
Keith Williams	Secretary/Chairman	GeoLancashire/NW Geodiversity Partnership
Will Williams	Programme Director	Natural Economy North West
Kate Willshaw	Planning & Policy Officer	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
John Woodman	Arts & Landscape Consultant	Consultant
Graham Workman	Wildlife & Countryside Manager	Wigan Leisure & Culture Trust
Ian Wray	Planning Team	NWDA
Michelle Young	Senior Specialist Planning & Biodiversity	Natural England
Andy Yuille	Regional Policy Officer	CPRE