

GREENSAND COUNTRY LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN (LCAP)



Houghton House overlooking the Marston Vale.

FOREWORD

*“There is a strong sense of history throughout the Ridge landscape’.
(NCA Profile 90, Natural England 2013).*

This is the Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) for Greensand Country, a distinctive landscape area consisting of a sandstone ridge and associated river valleys, located principally in Central Bedfordshire (see map on page 3).

The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership has been formed by bringing together a diverse range of local bodies, under the leadership of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and the Greensand Trust, to raise awareness of the heritage value of this landscape and to reverse the gradual decline in its distinctiveness. Not having an official designation, the landscape has not previously had formal partnership working arrangements such as those in place for AONBs.

By working in partnership we hope to take a landscape scale approach to conservation across the area, involving the key land owners and managers, and work towards developing a sustainable future for Greensand Country.

Recognising landscapes as a whole, raising awareness of them, and involving people in using and managing them, are all key principles of the European Landscape Convention. Another key driver for our Partnership is the Lawton Review, ***Making Space for Nature***, with its recommendations for ecological networks under the headings of more, ***bigger, better*** and ***joined-up***.

This LCAP is our ‘manifesto’ for the Greensand Country, and explains in detail how we will deliver our Landscape Partnership scheme between 2017 and 2021. It has been based on the extensive research, consultation and project development activity carried out during our Development Phase.

It consists of three parts:

- Part 1: The Scheme Plan
- Part 2: Project plan summaries
- Part 3: Full project plans

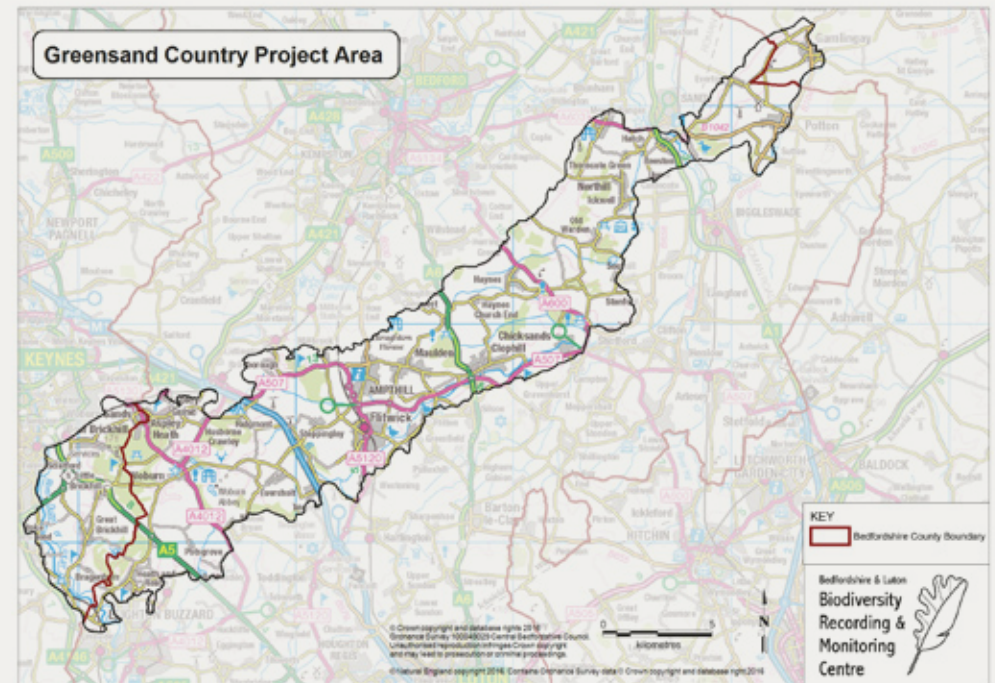
There is also a range of appendices included within this LCAP, which draws on an array of supporting documents, including our Landscape Character Assessment and other commissioned studies.

Part 1 of the LCAP was compiled by an editorial group consisting of Jon Boswell and Lisa King from BRCC; Jon Balaam from the Greensand Trust; and Brian Kerr from Cranfield University. Mapping was provided by the Bedfordshire Records and Monitoring Centre. Parts 2 and 3 were put together by the various lead organisations for the projects. Most of all, particular thanks go to Claire Poulton, our Landscape Partnership Programme Manager, for bringing together the different strands to produce the consolidated document over the course of the Development Phase.

This LCAP document was formally adopted by the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership Board on 20th July 2016. Parts 1 and 2 as adopted will be made available on the Partnership's website. The LCAP will be used by the Board and delivery team to monitor implementation, and reviewed annually by the Partnership Board during the course of the scheme.

Jon Boswell

Jon Boswell
Chair, Greensand Country Landscape Partnership





Greensand Country Lane.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

‘Greensand Country’ is an island of distinctive, beautiful and loved countryside, based on a band of higher ground stretching from Leighton Buzzard to Gamlingay, rising out of the surrounding clay vales. It contains all of Bedfordshire’s remaining heathland, more than half of its woodland, and more surviving historic parkland than any other landscape in the country, often surrounding notable manor houses. This landscape character is a legacy of its underlying Greensand geology, which led to much of it being regarded as ‘marginal land’ not suitable for agriculture, as well as its management over centuries by major estates.

However, the area’s distinctiveness has been weakening over decades due to modern development and the changing economics of land use. Key habitats are becoming fragmented and unsustainable in the longer term; views both of and from the area are being lost or impaired; houses are being built of the wrong vernacular; and traditional heritage skills are dying out. Just as significantly, there is a low level of awareness locally of the significance of the area’s landscape value and heritage.

The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership has been formed by a range of partners in the area to work with landowners and local communities to take a joined up approach to meeting the challenges in the area. Our vision is for the Greensand Country to be a living and working landscape that is cherished by present and future generations. By 2021 we will have reversed the gradual decline in the area’s landscape character, and created a strong, community led partnership and strategic framework to promote the area’s interests and secure the necessary long-term financial and community investment to sustain the area’s distinctive natural and built heritage.

The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership scheme consists of over 40 projects across the following inter-related strands:



Living Heaths and Working Woodlands

strengthening the habitats we already have by carrying out significant restoration projects and improving management infrastructure; and funding small landowners across the area to restore small pieces of heathland, acidic and neutral grassland and provide stepping stones and corridors between habitats. We will also give landowners the skills and funding to bring woodlands into positive management.

Historic Parklands

taking a landscape scale approach to the restoration of our historic parks, we will encourage positive management through management plans and third party grants to restore and enhance features, while creating new trails to connect parklands and engage the community.

Celebrating the Greensand Country

engaging more people in the landscape through a range of creative activities such as storytelling, drama and photography, as well as a schools programme and talks and debates about the landscape and its future, culminating in an annual Greensand Festival.

Revealing the Greensand Country

extending, enhancing and promoting the extensive rights of way network for the benefit of walkers, cyclists and horse riders in and around the area to help engage them in the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape and to bring in economic growth.



Heritage Skills

investing in skills for the landscape through a study programme and apprenticeship scheme provided for school leavers and those not in education, employment and training; and training for the existing paid and volunteer workforce.



Promoting and understanding the Greensand Country

raising the profile and recognition of the area through a range of promotional, marketing and communications and interpretation initiatives.



Community Projects

providing grants, skills and practical support to local communities to help them explore, conserve, celebrate and maintain their local landscape heritage.

The programme will have a significant impact on landscape character, heritage and biodiversity, but will also benefit thousands of local people as audiences, participants, volunteers and trainees. It will leave a legacy of improved conservation and land management, partnership working, skills, volunteers, engaged and aware communities, economic growth and enhanced tourism profile.

The scheme will be managed by a staff team of four based at BRCC, and governed by a Landscape Partnership Board including representatives from partner organisations, local landowners, the business community, the statutory authorities and the voluntary sector.

Image Credits:

Page 5:

*Left to right: Bluebell woodland in Greensand Country
| Traction engine outside The House, Old Warden Park |
Storytelling with Jane Lambourne | New steps and waymarker
on the Greensand Ridge Walk.*

Page 6-7:

*Left to right: Apprentices at Warden Abbey Vineyard, by Jane
Markham, Copyright © 2016 | New interpretation near
Biggleswade, by Cliff Andrews, Copyright © 2016 | Volunteers
installing a new table, by Andy Buckley, Copyright © 2016 |
Ickwell Green May Day Festival.*

Copyright © 2016 Greensand Country Landscape Partnership. All rights reserved.
All photography Copyright © 2016 Lisa King | LJK Photography unless otherwise
stated. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or
by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written
permission of the publisher.



CONTENTS

SECTION I: THE GREENSAND COUNTRY LANDSCAPE, ITS HERITAGE AND ITS PEOPLE

I.1 THE LANDSCAPE OVER TIME

I.1.1 ORIGINS: EARLY PRE-HISTORY

I.1.2 THE FIRST FOOTSTEPS: PRE-HISTORY TO MEDIEVAL PERIOD

I.1.3 CASTLES AND VILLAGES: THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

I.1.4 RISE OF THE ESTATES: POST-MEDIEVAL AND INDUSTRIAL PERIODS (16TH TO 19TH CENTURIES)

I.1.5 CHANGING LAND USE: THE MODERN ERA (LATE 19TH CENTURY TO PRESENT DAY)

I.2 THE LANDSCAPE TODAY

I.2.1 GEOLOGY

I.2.2 TOPOGRAPHY

I.2.3 HISTORIC AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

I.2.4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

I.2.5 CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

I.2.6 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

I.2.7 THE LANDSCAPE AREA BOUNDARIES

I.3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

I.4 THE PEOPLE WITH A STAKE IN THE LANDSCAPE

I.4.1 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

I.4.2 USERS AND AUDIENCES

I.4.3 BARRIERS TO ACCESS

I.4.4 TARGET AUDIENCES

1.5 THE MANAGEMENT OF THE GREENSAND COUNTRY LANDSCAPE

1.5.1 LAND OWNERSHIP

1.5.2 LAND USE

SECTION 2: THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.1 DECLINE IN LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND HABITAT

2.2 LACK OF JOINED UP, LONG TERM MANAGEMENT

2.3 LOSS OF TRADITIONAL BUILDING AND LAND MANAGEMENT SKILLS

2.4 UNSYMPATHETIC DEVELOPMENT

2.5 LACK OF AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE AREA

2.6 RECREATIONAL PRESSURE

2.7 CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

SECTION 3: THE SCHEME

3.1 VISION

3.2 AIMS

3.3 PROGRAMME STRANDS

3.4 PROJECTS

3.5 TIMETABLE

3.6 MAP

3.7 BUDGET SUMMARY

3.8 THE PARTNERSHIP

3.9 RISKS

SECTION 4: THE LEGACY

4.1 A SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE

4.2 A SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP

4.3 THE LEGACY PLAN

SECTION I



SECTION I: THE GREENSAND COUNTRY LANDSCAPE, ITS HERITAGE AND ITS PEOPLE

I.1 THE LANDSCAPE OVER TIME

I.1.1 ORIGINS: EARLY PRE-HISTORY

I.1.2 THE FIRST FOOTSTEPS: PRE-HISTORY TO MEDIEVAL PERIOD

I.1.3 CASTLES AND VILLAGES: THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

I.1.4 RISE OF THE ESTATES: POST-MEDIEVAL AND INDUSTRIAL PERIODS (16TH TO 19TH CENTURIES)

I.1.5 CHANGING LAND USE: THE MODERN ERA (LATE 19TH CENTURY TO PRESENT DAY)

I.2 THE LANDSCAPE TODAY

I.2.1 GEOLOGY

I.2.2 TOPOGRAPHY

I.2.3 HISTORIC AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

I.2.4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

I.2.5 CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

I.2.6 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

I.2.7 THE LANDSCAPE AREA BOUNDARIES

I.3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

I.4 THE PEOPLE WITH A STAKE IN THE LANDSCAPE

I.4.1 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

I.4.2 USERS AND AUDIENCES

I.4.3 BARRIERS TO ACCESS

I.4.4 TARGET AUDIENCES

I.5 THE MANAGEMENT OF THE GREENSAND COUNTRY LANDSCAPE

I.5.1 LAND OWNERSHIP

I.5.2 LAND USE

Copyright © 2016 Greensand Country Landscape Partnership. All rights reserved. All photography Copyright © 2016 Lisa King | LJK Photography unless otherwise stated. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.



I. THE GREENSAND COUNTRY LANDSCAPE, ITS HERITAGE AND ITS PEOPLE

I.1 THE LANDSCAPE OVER TIME

“The Greensand creates an island of distinctive, beautiful and loved countryside.” Over-arching theme for the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

The Greensand Country seen today is the product of millions of years of evolution from its underlying geology through at least two thousand years of settlement and use of the land right up to the present day. This section describes the story of the Greensand Country landscape over time.

I.1.1 Origins: early pre-history

In the early Cretaceous period (approximately 125 million years ago), the area we now know as the Greensand Country was dominated by tropical shallow seas, due to a sudden rise in sea level as the result of global warming. Sediments of sandy minerals were deposited as silt, sand and gravel, which eventually became compressed into the Greensand rocks, known by geologists as the ‘Woburn Sands Formation’.

Tilting of these rock layers (during the formation of the Alps) produced the landform which exists today. Because the Greensand is a more resistant rock, it was not eroded as much as the softer clays surrounding it, leaving a ridge as a prominent feature in the landscape. The ridge has a particularly striking steep scarp along its northern and western edges, while the dip slope is gently undulating.

During the Quaternary Period, fine grained glacial deposits known as Boulder Clay were deposited over parts of the Greensand when the area was covered by the Anglian ice sheet (around 450,000 years ago). Following the warming of the climate and thawing of the ice at the end of the Quaternary (around 15,000 years ago), alluvial sand and gravel were deposited in the Ouzel, Flit and Ivel valleys, forming fertile and easy to work soils.

1.1.2 The first footsteps: Pre-history to medieval period

The light, acidic, sandy soils on the Ridge attracted nomadic hunter-gatherers in the Mesolithic period, as the woodlands were less dense, enabling easier hunting (tool assemblages from this period have been recorded along the sandstone belt). It is likely that a number of the routeways which cross or follow the Greensand Ridge have their origins in the prehistoric period, often because the lighter soils were easier to traverse than the heavier clays.

In the later Neolithic the workability of the soils in the more fertile river valleys may have attracted early agricultural communities (sub-soil cores in the peat deposits of Flitwick Moor show the appearance of grass species and agricultural weeds from 1500BC onwards, suggesting clearance of woodland and planting of crops during this time); although there is still little evidence of permanent human settlement.

The elevation of the Ridge provided a natural defence system, and, during the Iron Age, hill forts were built at Sandy and other locations. During this period agricultural settlements became more established in the area.

The Roman Period saw the construction of two major north-south roads through the area (one which broadly followed the route of the present A1; and Watling Street, now the A5 trunk road), which would have been supplemented by a network of minor roads and trackways; and the development of Roman settlements at Sandy and in the Flit Valley. The infrastructure of small towns and roads was a major innovation, firmly embedding the area into the administrative and political structures of lowland Roman Britain. The two towns in the county (Sandy and Dunstable) were both strategically positioned on the major routes.

Beyond the towns, the Romans (followed by later settlers with improved ploughs) also moved downslope on to the more fertile clay lands, leading to a wider pattern of larger villages, smaller farming settlements and villas, and perpetuating the mixed arable/pastoral economy developed during the preceding Iron Age.

1.1.3 Castles and villages: the medieval period

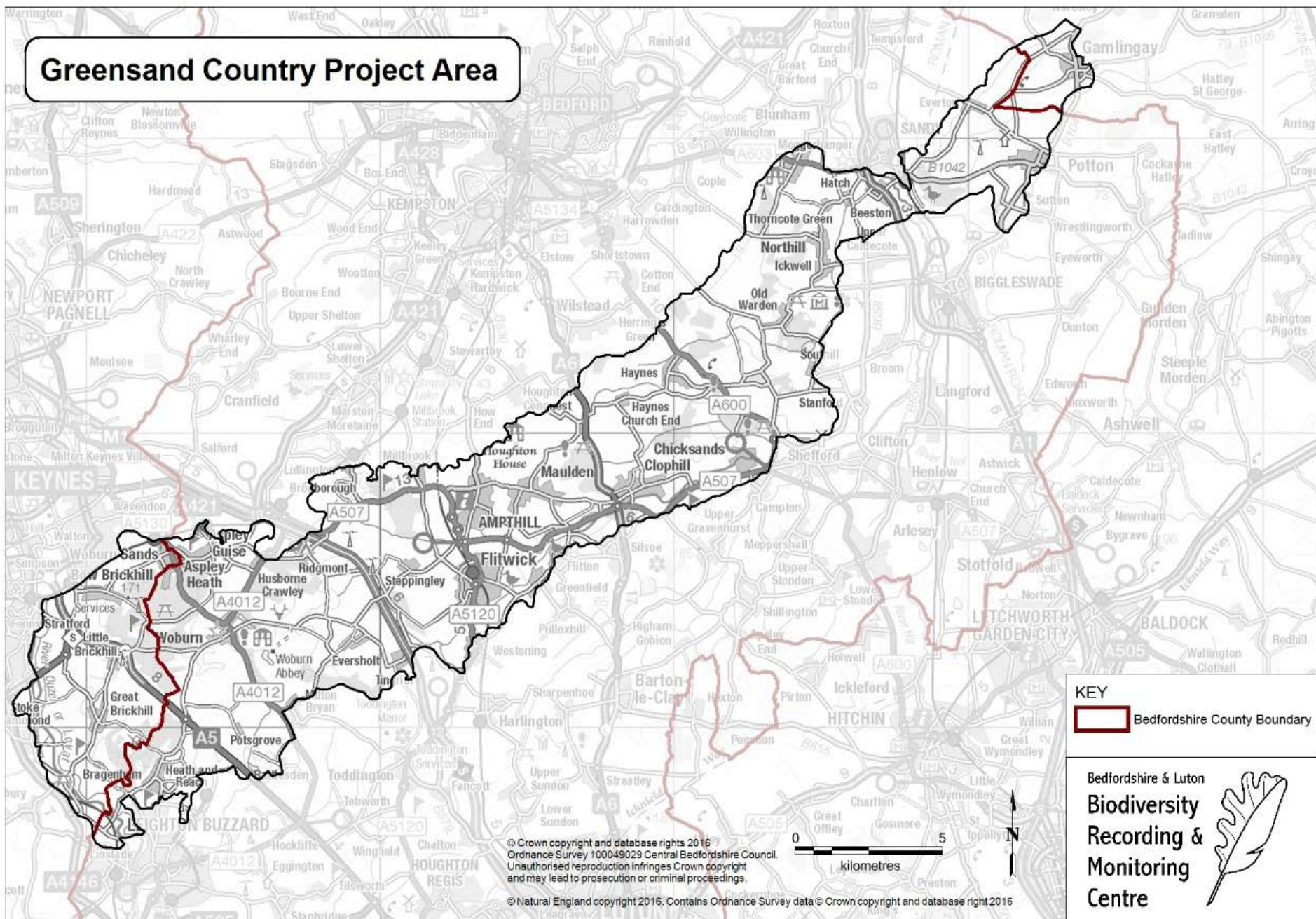
Following the Norman Conquest in 1066, the new Norman barons were given land, and constructed castles from which to control their lands. By this time the sandy soils along the Greensand were regarded as ‘marginal land’ used largely for heathland, woodland and grazing as wood pasture. The sandy soils were also ideal for warrening (the keeping of rabbits), introduced after the Norman Conquest, and limited to the owners of manors.

The Domesday Survey of 1086 shows that many of today’s villages were already established by the late 11th Century. Each village would have had its fields, usually divided into strips which were allocated to families in the village. It would also have had access to less fertile land (often areas of heath or waste) which the villagers would have used for grazing animals, gathering wood and peat for fuel, and gathering bracken for animal bedding. Most villages would also have had a church, (often constructed of stone, and therefore often surviving to the present day) and a manor house.

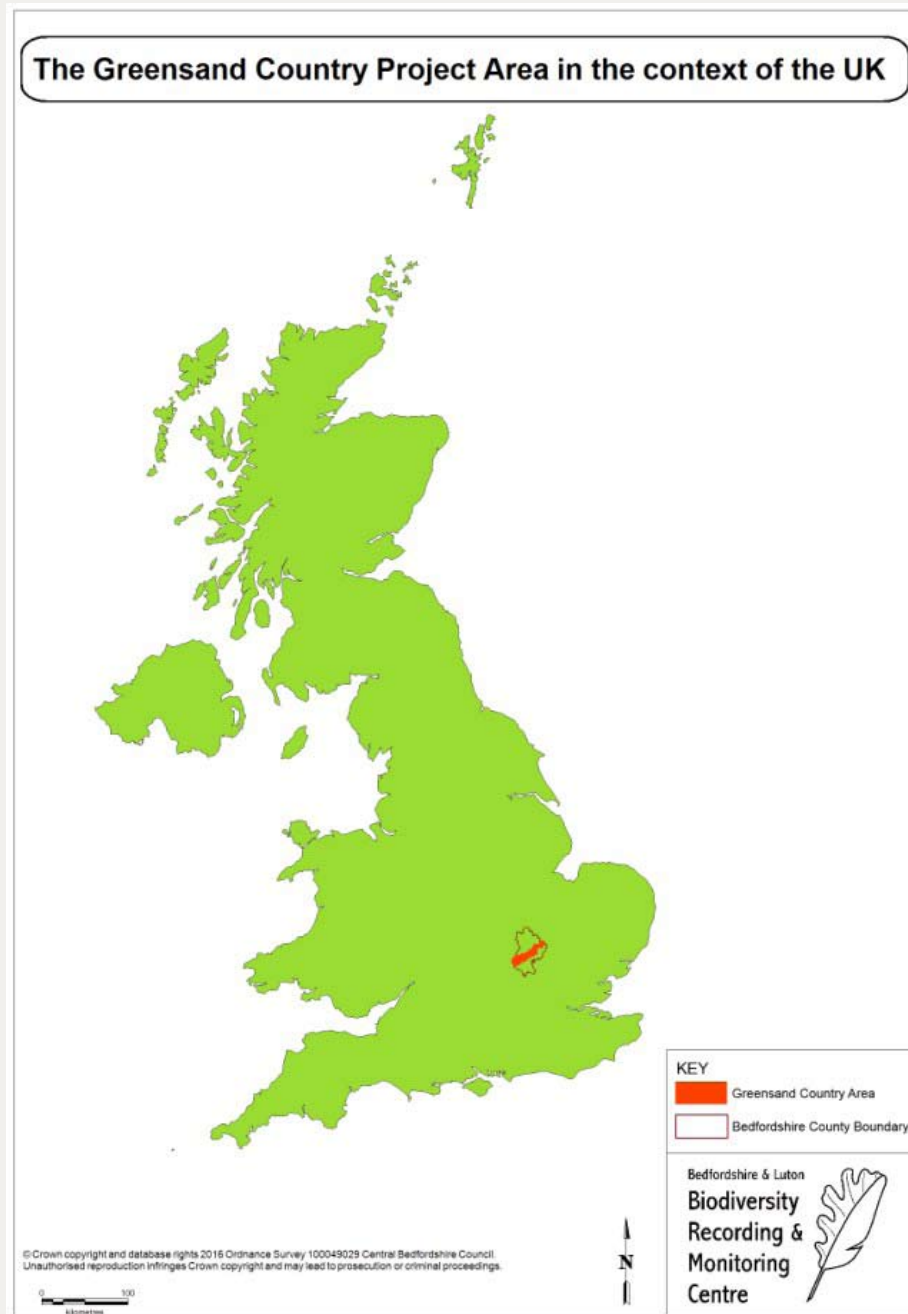
In the 14th Century the population of the Greensand Country began to decline. This was probably due to a series of poor harvests (possibly the result of soil exhaustion and climatic change) combined with the effects of the Black Death. The worst affected



Upper: Small scale agriculture on light sandy soils | Middle: View north to Bedford Clay Plains LCA from scarp | Lower: Medieval earthworks in Flit Valley LCA.



Map: The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership area



Map: The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership area in the context of the UK



settlements were generally on higher ground, for example at Potton ('the land is sandy there in a dry year and of little value') and Ridgmont (the soil was 'sandy for the greater part and produced nothing except rye'). This change in fortunes made way for large scale sheep farming over the next century and a half.

The sandy soils of the Greensand Ridge were ideal for hunting deer, a popular pastime amongst the medieval gentry introduced by the Normans, which required both open land and wooded areas. Deer were enclosed by a wood and timber stockade (known as a park pale), and when it was time for the hunt, the deer would be driven through a narrow valley or clearing, where the huntsmen would be waiting with bows and arrows. Some of the hunting parks were very significant, for example Ampthill Castle was one of Henry VIII's favourites (as well as being Catherine of Aragon's enforced residence for several years while their marriage was annulled).



Woods were also an important element of the rural economy, supplying raw materials and supporting a range of industries and crafts.

1.1.4 Rise of the estates: post-medieval and industrial periods (16th to 19th centuries)

Much of the area's marginal land had been gifted to ecclesiastical houses such as Woburn, Warden (both Cistercian), Chicksands (Gilbertine), and Beadlow (Benedictine), which by now commanded large estates. Following the dissolution of the monasteries at around 1538, these estates were given to (or acquired by) those who were in the king's favour, such as John Gostwick (Old Warden), Richard Osborne (Chicksands), and the Dukes of Bedford (Woburn Abbey).



The area's numerous private estates included significant amounts of parkland, a legacy of the area's popularity for managed deer hunting (see above). This parkland increasingly formed the setting for notable manor houses such as Houghton House (the inspiration for 'The House Beautiful' in John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress).

Estates containing country houses and associated parks continued to be created or extended along the Greensand Ridge during the 17th to 18th centuries, particularly in the least fertile areas. In addition to longstanding local families, the decline of royal patronage had created a new class of owners who wished to take advantage of the Greensand Ridge's landscape, views and proximity to London. This led to the transformation of the parklands by landscape gardeners and architects such as Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton.

Surrounding the parks (generally on the more fertile ground), the estates also owned extensive areas of farmland. Partly as a result of the Enclosure Acts during the 18th century, the open medieval fields and commons were divided and replaced with regularly-shaped fields, with straight boundaries (there would also have been blocks of woodland and plantation, game coverts, and estate cottages for farm workers).

This re-modelling was also undertaken by the estates themselves, most notably the 8th Duke of Bedford, who substantially reorganised the landscape on his estates in order to introduce new farming techniques pioneered during the 'agricultural revolution' in the mid-19th Century. As well as introducing rectangular fields which were the optimal shape for a steam-

Upper: Grazing in Greensand Ridge LCA | Middle: Warden Abbey, Greensand Ridge LCA | Lower: Woburn Abbey, Greensand Ridge LCA.

powered plough, he built 'model farms' designed for optimum efficiency which have a distinctive E-shaped ground plan. The different soil types also made the area suitable for agricultural research: in 1876 the Duke offered to the Rothamsted Research institution a farm in Woburn on which to conduct experiments (some of these experiments involving the Woburn Experimental Station are still going on today, nearly 150 years later).

Together with advances in fertiliser application and irrigation, these developments over the 18th and 19th centuries meant that many of the areas of previously marginal land became productive and economically viable arable land for the first time, leading to the decline of heathlands, grasslands, parkland and wood pasture. Other areas where relief and the less fertile soils restricted ploughing were extensively planted with conifers, often by the Bedford and Southill Estates. Drainage improvements also brought wetland areas into productive agricultural use (here again the Duke of Bedford was in the forefront, at Priestly Farm near Woburn).

Over this time the brick making industry began to develop and expand: by the middle to the 18th century most parishes had at least one kiln in operation, located within and adjacent to areas of clay deposits. Brick was increasingly used by the wealthy classes for their country houses, and, during the 18th and 19th Centuries, by the major land owners to build new estate villages to house their workers, and expand settlements such as Woburn and Ampthill.

Transport through the Greensand Country improved, and thereby connections with the surrounding areas. This was crucial to the development of the county's towns and the growth of several of its industries, for example quarrying, brick making and the transport of many of the goods from its smaller scale industries. The Great North Road was turnpiked in 1662, and other local road improvements followed. The rivers Great Ouse and Ivel were made navigable in the 17th and late 18th century respectively, and the Grand Union Canal through the Ouzel valley was started in 1793. In the mid-19th Century, two railways to London were constructed running north-south through the Greensand Country: the (now) East Coast Main Line through the Ivel Valley, with a station at Sandy, and the (now) Midland Mainline through the Greensand Ridge south of Bedford, with a station at Flitwick. The branch line (the Marston Vale line) from Bedford to Bletchley, skirting the north of the area, was also opened at this time, and another (closed in the 1960s) ran from Sandy to Pottton and on to Cambridge.



Grand Union Canal, Ouzel Valley LCA.



Upper: Chicksands Priory, Flit Valley LCA by Bryan Kerr, Copyright © 2016 | Middle: Decline of market gardening, Ivel Valley LCA | Lower: Sand quarry, Greensand Country.

1.1.5 Changing land use: the modern era (late 19th century to present day)

Horticulture and market gardening, based on the light and fertile soils of the Ivel valley and also along the Flit, developed in the later 19th century and remained a major element of the landscape until the late 20th century. The industry thrived due to the fertile soils and good communications to London (see above). Within the Ivel valley the remains of the once extensive glasshouses can be seen, and within the Flit valley a proliferation of garden centres is still apparent along the A507. Generally, however, this period up to the Second World War saw a depressed agricultural economy, with an associated decline in agricultural outputs and a reduction in the extent of land being cultivated (resulting in an increase in the amount of pasture grazed by sheep). The dairy industry which was at one time a feature of the area also declined in the 20th century.

Greensand Country became a significant area for military use in the 1st and 2nd World Wars. In WWII the area became associated with 'special ops' and was known as the 'spy capital of Britain' with places such as Potsgrove and Milton Bryan connected with black propaganda. This is likely to have been due to the fact that Greensand Country was not heavily settled and yet was in easy reach of London, coupled with

the high concentration of parkland and privately owned estates which could be requisitioned for military use. Chicksands Priory became an RAF base and radio listening station – this now houses the Military Intelligence Museum, 'Britain's most secret museum' – and the surrounding parkland is still used for military purposes today.

In the second half of the 20th Century, a period of agricultural intensification resulted in a number of negative influences on the landscape and biodiversity, including conversion of historic parkland to arable, loss of hedgerows, damage to buried archaeology by ploughing, and a reduction in habitats for farmland birds, insects and mammals. The area's variety of soil types, meanwhile, continued to make it attractive for agricultural research and innovation. After the Second World War the National Institute of Agricultural Engineering (later renamed the Silsoe Research Institute) moved to Wrest Park; and the National College of Agricultural Engineering opened nearby in Silsoe in 1963 (it later became part of Cranfield University, and its Experimental Farm still operates today as a commercial farm used for field scientific and engineering research – the Silsoe Whole Farm Model was developed here).

These economic changes, together with the effects of the World Wars, led to the breakup of many private estates and changes in land ownership. Some land is now owned publicly or by the

voluntary sector, managed principally for conservation and/or recreation (such as Rushmere Country Park, Ampthill Park or Forestry Commission woodland). The associated manor houses have a variety of uses, including hotels (e.g. Flitwick Manor), conference centres, schools/colleges and offices, although many are still private residences.

The Woburn Estate in particular has diversified considerably into the tourism and leisure economy (including Woburn Abbey, the Safari Park, Go Ape and golf courses, as well as estate woodland sold to Center Parcs for a new holiday village).

1.2 THE LANDSCAPE TODAY

“The wildlife and way of life of Greensand Country all stem from the greensand.” Supporting theme 1 for the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership.

This section assesses the Greensand Country landscape heritage as it is today.

1.2.1 GEOLOGY

The south-west to north-east trending “grain” of Bedfordshire is provided by the solid geology. The youngest rocks, Lower, Middle and Upper Chalk, appear on the surface in the south of the county as the Bedfordshire Chilterns. Moving northwards, the Chalk is successively underlain by older Gault Clay, Lower Greensand, Oxford Clay, Cornbrash and Oolitic Limestones, producing a “corrugated” effect. The Greensand Country forms a distinctive band of higher ground stretching from Leighton Buzzard in the south-west to Gamlingay in the north-east, rising out of the surrounding clay vales.

The Lower Greensand actually continues in a south-west to north-eastern band across the entire country, appearing in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Within Bedfordshire the Lower Greensand is known as Woburn Sands Formation and is informally divided into Red Sands, Silver Sands and Brown Sands, the colours being the result of varied inclusions of iron oxide, silt and glauconite. Heavy concentrations of iron oxide give rise to sandstone and ironstones which are interbedded with Fullers Earth (a very fine clay that was historically used for cleaning or “fulling” wool and textiles).

Partially draped over this underlying framework are a variety of superficial deposits. In the Greensand Country there are drift deposits of Boulder Clay in the south-western and central-northern part of the ridge. Oxford Clay intrudes along the edge of the ridge from the Bedfordshire clay vale to its north. Other significant deposits are the alluvial gravels of the valleys of the Rivers Ivel, the Flit and the Ouzel, and peat in the Flit Valley.

Where these deposits outcrop at the surface, they have long been exploited as mineral resources: sand (around Leighton Buzzard to the west and Sandy in the east); Fuller’s Earth (in the Woburn area and Clophill); and clay for brickmaking (particularly in the central part of the ridge). The area’s quarries (whether working or disused) now



Word cloud illustrating the partners' responses when asked to qualify the distinctiveness of Greensand Country landscape, particularly in comparison to the clay vales

provide around half of Bedfordshire's Local Geological Sites. Phosphate pebble beds at the base of the Lower Greensand were exploited for fertiliser production during the late 1800s to early 1900s.

The geology of the Greensand Ridge gives rise to acidic, nutrient poor and free draining soils which have a low fertility compared to the surrounding clay vales and were often used for purposes other than farmland, for example parkland, woodland and heath. In contrast the glacial clays which cover parts of the Ridge result in relatively fertile soils and these areas generally contain a higher proportion of farmland and farmed estates.

The porous nature of the Woburn Sands formation above the impervious Oxford Clay makes it an important aquifer, supplying water for drinking as well as for agriculture and industry.

A diagram showing the area's geology can be found at page 13.

1.2.2 TOPOGRAPHY

Central Southern England is a landscape of scarps and vales, such as the Chalk Downs of the Chilterns and the Cotswolds with impressive steep slopes overlooking clay vales. The Greensand Country, based on one of the few areas of wooded sandstone hills in England, adds a variation to this pattern. (There is also a Greensand Ridge in Surrey).

The Greensand Ridge is a relatively low ridge with the highest point at c.170 AOD on Bow Brickhill heath at its western end. Towards the north it has a pronounced and steep scarp slope which levels off at the top to form the main undulating plateau of the ridge. This falls gently towards the south, forming dip slopes. The Lower Greensand continues eastwards into Cambridgeshire where it disappears under overlaying clay deposits.

The landscape is broken up by river valleys formed during the Ice Age. The River Flit has carved a relatively narrow valley into the Lower Greensand along the southern edge of the ridge, while the River Ivel lies within a wide valley with extensive gravel

banks either side of the watercourse. The River Ouzel loops around the base of the Greensand Country in the west, and the western slopes are also steep and heavily wooded.

A map showing the area's topography can be found at page 14.

1.2.3 HISTORIC AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Archaeological interest

Evidence for early **prehistoric** activity in the Greensand Country is almost exclusively in the form of flint tools. Most of the finds spots are either on the upper slopes of the ridge at good vantage points or from sites within the river valleys. Where flints have been found in the soil they are often not associated with any underlying features of the same date, suggesting an absence of more permanent sites.

It is assumed that the ridge would have been largely wooded in the early prehistoric period and the **Bronze Age**, and the available evidence suggests the presence of seasonal and temporary hunter-gatherer sites used for both flint production and the processing of animal and plant remains. No other evidence of settlements or agriculture in the form of field systems has yet been found (although it is likely that the lack of artefacts reflects the low number of commercial archaeological investigations in the area).

There are several examples in the Greensand Country of Iron Age Hillforts, one of the archetypal features of **Iron Age** Britain. Three are located on the steep ridges to the east overlooking Sandy (Galley Hill, Sandy Lodge and Caesar's Camp), with two to the west (Danesborough Camp and Craddocks Camp). The end of the Iron Age also provides the earliest unequivocal evidence for the existence of farms and increases in settlement density.

Regarding **Roman** heritage, in addition to the existing Roman town of Sandy, there are the remains of Magiovinium a smaller 4th century fortified town, within the Ouzel Valley'; and the large village of Ruxox, on the southern dip slope close to the River Flit. Many of the cropmark complexes recorded within the area are likely to be Roman in date. Several pottery kilns have also been excavated (e.g. Woburn, Ampthill and Hillfoot Farm), all in areas of clay overlying the Lower Greensand bedrock, providing examples of the early industrial exploitation of the ridge.

The Greensand Country has very few heritage assets dating to the **Anglo-Saxon** period. The only evidence for early Saxon occupation (a series of linear features with fragments of domestic pottery vessels dating between the 5th to 7th centuries AD) was uncovered at the site of Ampthill Castle. A hearth and two parallel ditches dating to the Saxo-Norman period (850 – 1150 AD), part of a multi-period settlement with preceding Iron Age and Roman occupation, were excavated at Haynes Park. The scheduled monument of Quince Hill at Old Warden consists of an earthwork forming a central enclosure c. 80m in diameter surrounded by two sets of banks and ditches, dating to between the late Saxon period and the 12th century AD, probably representing either military fortifications or defended manorial or aristocratic settlements.

Medieval castles and villages

The Greensand Country contains a good example of a **Norman** Motte and Bailey castle at Cainhoe, the seat of the powerful D'Albini family for approximately three hundred years (adjacent to it are the earthworks of the associated medieval village). There is also a motte in Exeter Wood on top of the northern scarp slope.

Bedfordshire has one of the densest concentrations of **moated sites** in England, many of which are found in the Greensand Country, mainly farmhouses/manors on the heavier glacial clay soils or river valleys. The origin of many is probably associated with assarting, the creation of new farmland out of the clearance of woodland or heath in the 12th and 13th centuries. Occasionally it is also possible to see the distinctive pattern of irregular shaped fields which resulted (known as 'assarts'), as well as surviving remnants of ridge and furrow.

The **medieval villages** of the Greensand Country take many different forms, suggesting that individual styles of lordship were an important factor in the development of the rural landscape. Some are nucleated (e.g. Great Brickhill); some are centred around a green (e.g. Ickwell); some are linear, often up the scarp (e.g. Bow Brickhill) and some have multiple clusters of small hamlets or 'ends' which have developed in association with different common lands or cleared areas (e.g. Eversholt).

Evidence of the medieval rural economy survives in a range of features such as woodbanks (marking woodland boundaries and preventing animals escaping or entering the wood), fishponds, wildfowl lakes, rabbit warrens and mill sites. These are often associated with manorial and ecclesiastical establishments (the marginal and secluded nature of land in the Greensand Country led to establishment of a relatively

large number of monastic sites, none of which have yet been extensively studied or investigated archaeologically).

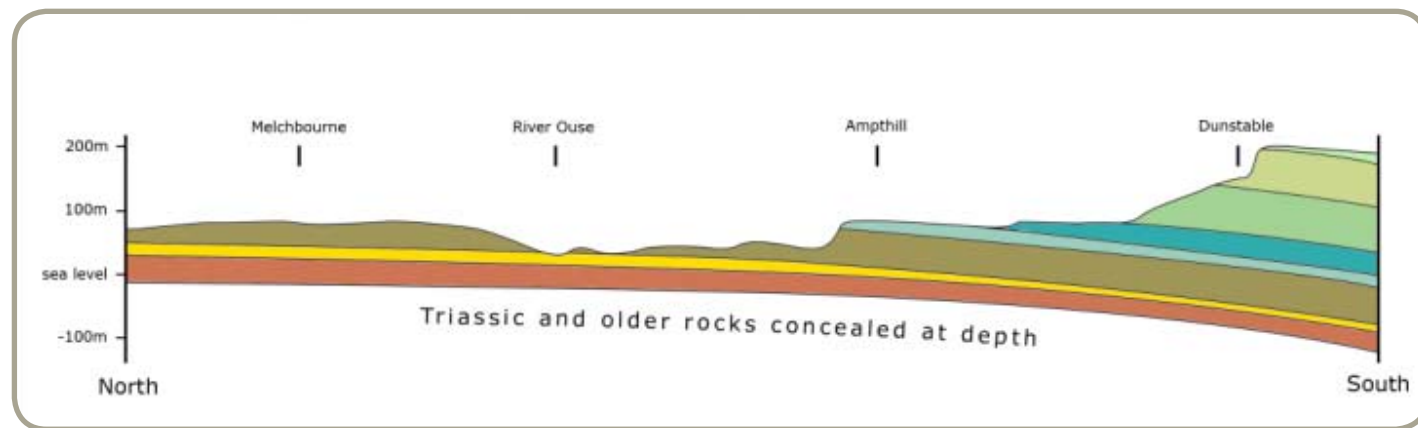
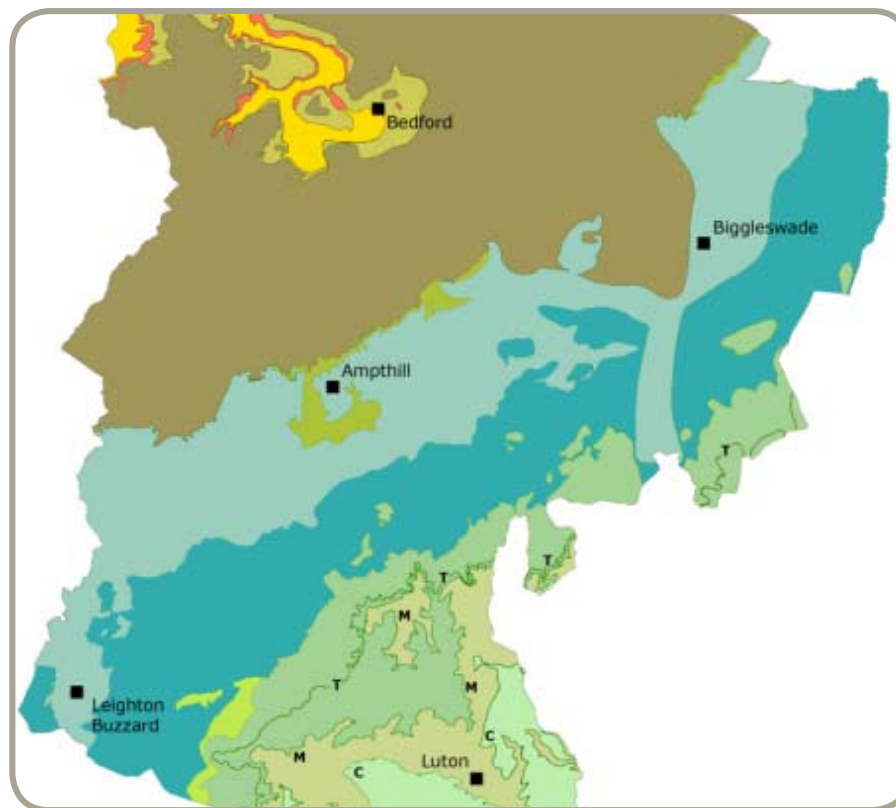
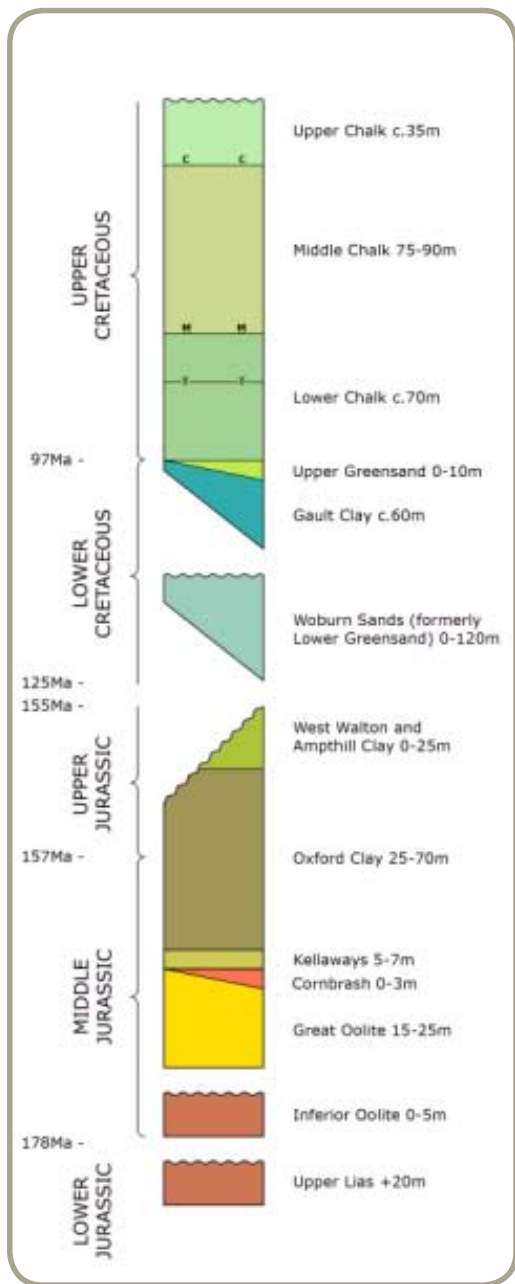
Sandstone structures

Most of the other surviving historic built structures in Greensand Country date from the 17th century onwards, and reflect its underlying geology (i.e. Greensand and boulder clay).

The parish churches in the area (a significant feature of the landscape) were predominantly built of local sandstone quarried from the Greensand bedrock in the medieval period. (The 'green' tinge is due to a high concentration of iron-potassium silicate called glauconite, named Greensand by Victorian geologists; however, usually the greensand has a more rusty ochre-brown colours as a result of its iron content). The majority of churches were later extensively restored in the 19th or early 20th centuries.

However, due to the high variability of sandstone as a building material (being susceptible to weathering and erosion), only a small proportion of it was used for the construction of high status buildings such as parish churches (and bridges). In fact, the extraction of sandstone as a building material was often secondary to the quarrying of sand, gravel and Fullers Earth. The majority of the building stone was used for secondary structures such as boundary walls, modest houses and cottages and occasional farm buildings and estate lodges. Notable concentration of these more minor sandstone structures occur close to historic quarries in the Brickhills area and around Clophill and Potton, making a strong contribution to local landscape character (85% occur within Conservation Areas).

A map showing the distribution of sandstone churches, and another map showing other sandstone structures, can be found at pages 15 & 16.



Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

Landscape Character Assessment - April 2016

Drawing 3: Topography



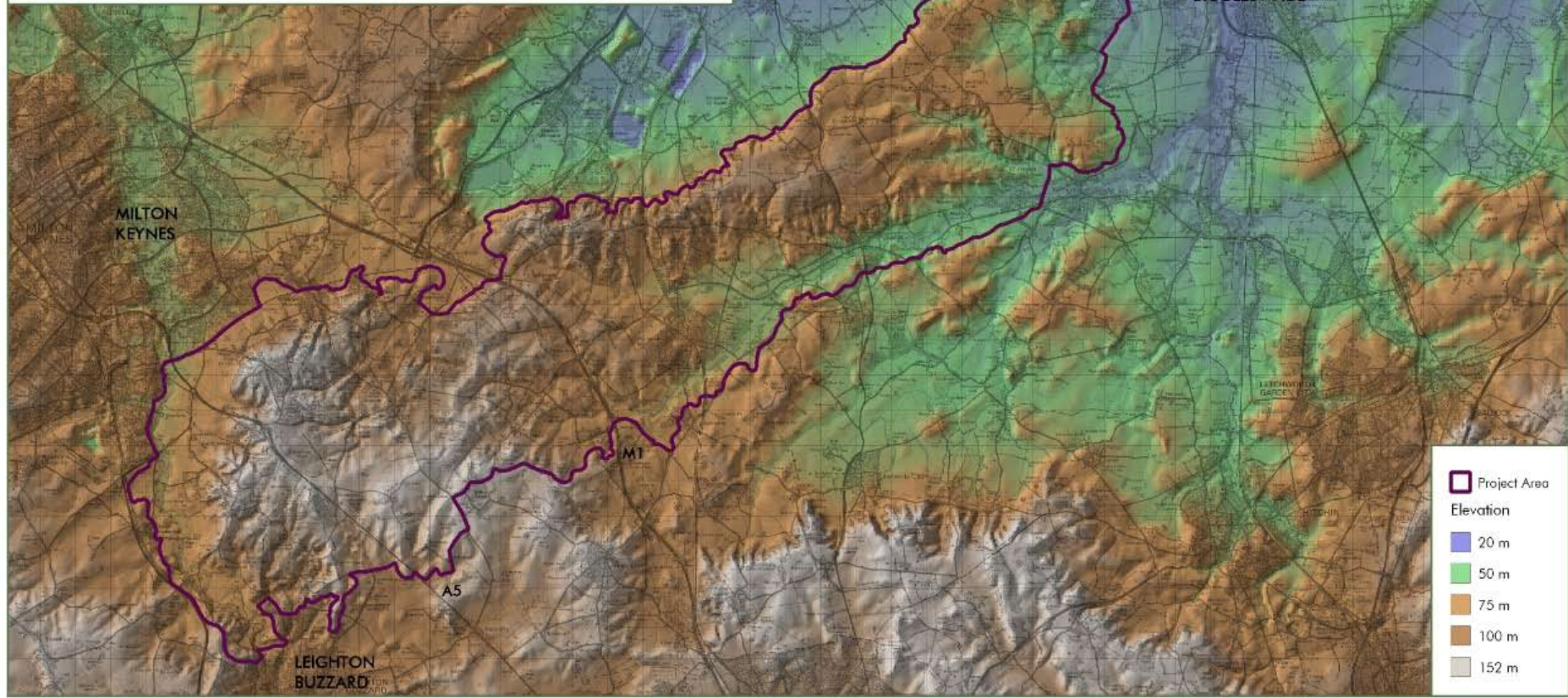
0 2 4 6 8 km

© Crown Copyright and database right
2015. Ordnance Survey 100049029.

GREENSAND COUNTRY
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund

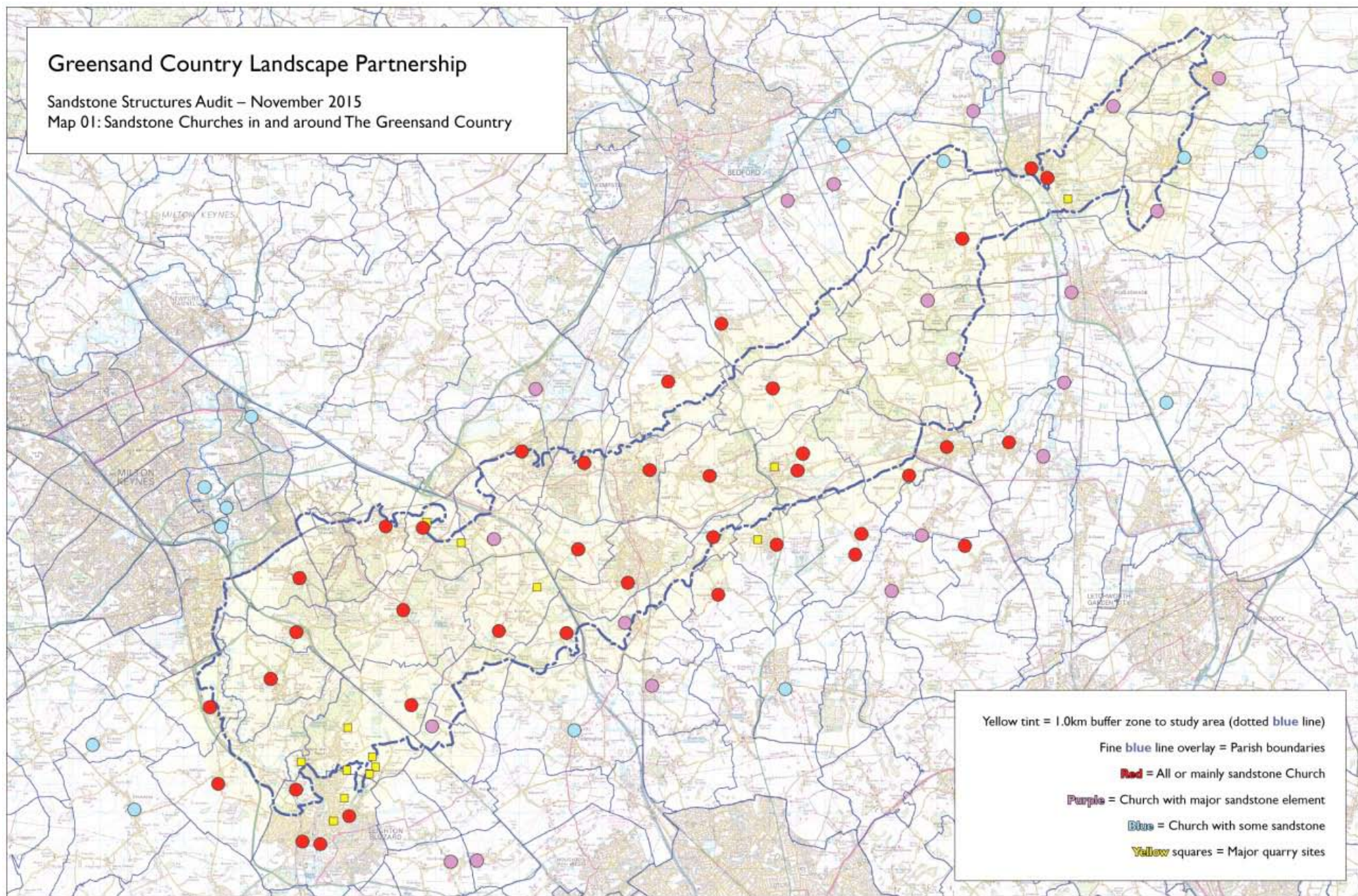


Topography of Greensand Country (taken from Landscape Character Assessment)

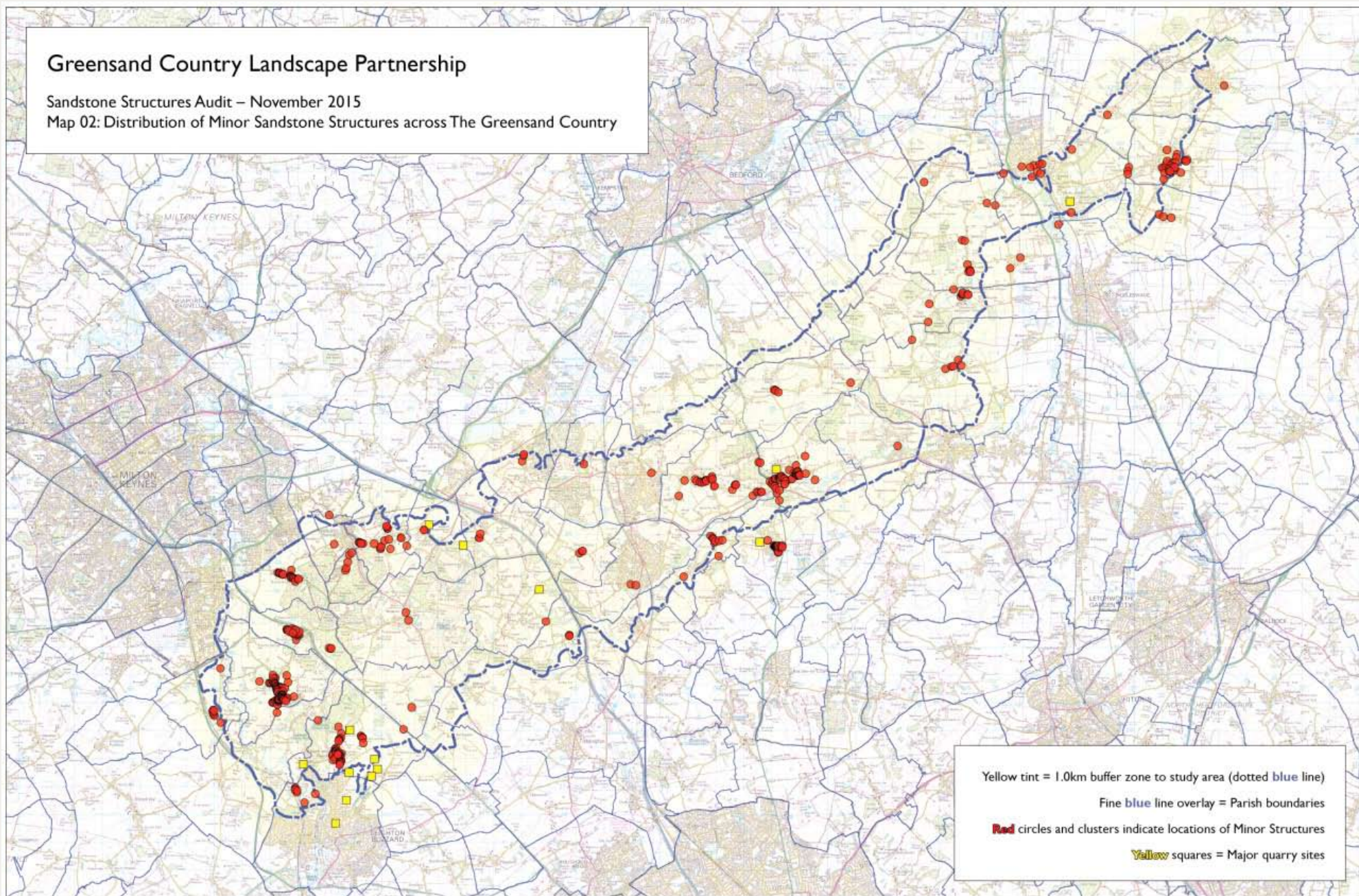
Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

Sandstone Structures Audit – November 2015

Map 01: Sandstone Churches in and around The Greensand Country



Distribution of sandstone churches (taken from Sandstone Audit)



Distribution of other sandstone structures (taken from Sandstone Audit)



Swiss Garden, Old Warden Park.

Brick buildings

Sandstone was rarely used for domestic buildings once **brick** was readily available from the 17th/18th Century onwards, from clays excavated from the deposits within the area as well as the deeper clay lands to the north and south (brick making being a key rural industry in Bedfordshire). Brick was often used to reface older timber-framed buildings once these became unfashionable in the 18th century, meaning that many examples in the area may date back earlier than so far assumed.

Brick was also generally the material for rural buildings used for a range of post-medieval economic activities, including dovecots, lock-ups, animal pounds, smithies, windmills, watermills, horse engine houses, donkey wheel houses, barns and other farm buildings (about 79% of historic farm buildings remain unconverted and most are structurally intact).

Manor houses and estate villages

The numerous manor houses distinctive of the area were built of brick or harder imported stone (such as limestone or Totternhoe clunch). Nearly all of Bedfordshire's Grade 1 listed manor houses are located within Greensand Country, including Woburn Abbey; Haynes Park; Moggerhanger Park (the most complete surviving example of the work of Sir John Soane); Southill Park; Wrest Park (just outside the project area); Warden Abbey (a new house which incorporated the former Abbot's lodging into the gatehouse, now the only part to survive above ground); and the ruins of Houghton House (inspiration for Bunyan's 'House Beautiful', including work attributed to Indigo Jones). Grade II listed manor houses include Ampthill Park; Shuttleworth Mansion House; Segenhoe Manor; Flitwick Manor; Heath Manor; Crawley House; Hazells Hall; and Aspley House. The manor houses are surrounded by estate grounds including historic parkland (see elsewhere).

The **estate villages** (e.g. Woburn, Old Warden) contain distinctive styles of architecture characteristic of Greensand Country. For example, the Duke of Bedford Estate buildings are generally built of brick, with gables and lattice windows; while the cottages of the Southill Park and Old Warden estates are built in a more elaborate 'English Garden' style, with thatched roofs, dormer windows, painted render walls and timber porches.

I.2.4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The nature conservation interest and vegetation patterns seen in the landscape today are borne out of the geology and soils as well as historic land uses which have affected the area over the centuries.

Historically, arable agriculture was restricted due to a complex pattern of sandy soils and sloping land. The nutrient poor soils derived from the sandstone tend to be well drained, and acidic, which together with the sandy texture and proneness to drought and erosion has led to a mosaic of land use across the Greensand Country. Plantation and mixed woodland, and lowland heath add both interesting visual contrasts and important habitats.

While land use for arable has increased, this close textured variation within the countryside remains one of the most recognisable features of the area in contrast to the uniform arable land within the surrounding clay vales. This is particularly true of the larger estates, where, according to Natural England, *“the mosaic of medium- and large-scale woodlands, fields and pasture is still retained and gives the impression of stepping back into an earlier century”*.

A map showing the priority habitats in the area can be found at page 19.

Historic parkland

The Greensand Country contains a nationally important cluster of parkland landscapes with historic connections. The surviving parklands vary considerably in size, but most contain similar features, including grazed grassland with parkland trees planted either in avenues or in a ‘naturalistic’ style. Trees and other features such as lakes, woodland and follies help to create vistas across the park and a sense of ownership up to the horizon. Veteran trees also provide valued habitats supporting important populations of a wide range of invertebrates, fungi and bats.

Some parklands are significant examples of the ‘naturalistic landscape’ or ‘English style’ of parkland design, of which Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown is the key figure. Capability Brown designed the landscape park at Ampthill, utilising the existing great oaks from Henry VIII’s hunting forest, while Humphrey Repton landscaped the grounds of Woburn Abbey. The topography of the Greensand Country provided a wonderful opportunity for these landscape architects, with views away from the imposing ridge, and many changes of elevation within the parklands to create more intimate landscapes.

There are more formal parks and gardens such as the Swiss Gardens at Old Warden Park; Flitwick Manor Park (which has an interesting arboretum and a great example of a relic ha-ha boundary separating the house and the grounds); [more here]. The historic gardens at Wrest Park, managed by English Heritage, fall just outside the LP area although the former parkland associated with the estate does extend on to the sandstone geology.

A map showing historic parklands in the area can be found at page 20.

Heathland and acid grassland

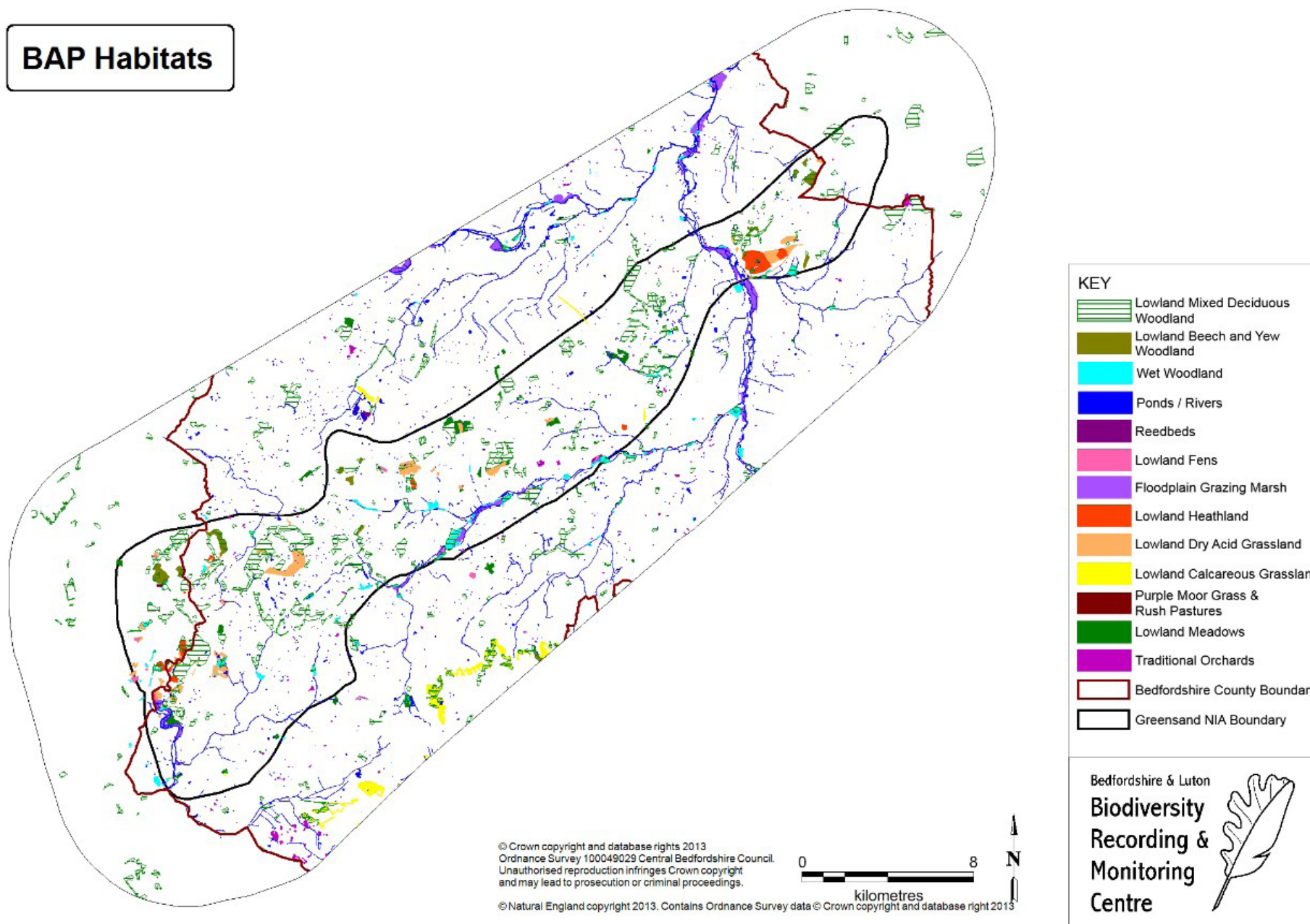
While historically the Greensand Country contained extensive areas of **lowland heathland**, only fragments now remain. These heaths are of great importance both locally and nationally, forming a key link between other lowland heathland clusters such as the Thames Basin and Suffolk Heaths, and many have been given SSSI status (e.g. Cooper’s Hill and Rammamere Heath). The area also retains nearly all of the county’s acid grassland, an increasingly threatened resource in lowland areas.

Now that some of the conifer plantations on former heathland are reaching maturity, heathland habitat is being restored in a few cases where managed by conservation organisations with the resources to do so. However, where in private or public ownership these plantations tend to be re-planted with trees (whether conifers or broadleaves) rather than being restored to heathland or **acid grassland**.

On the heathland and acid grasslands common dodder, bilberry, sheep’s bit and spring vetch are notable plants. A wide range of reptiles can be found on the heaths including adders, slow worms and common lizards and amphibians. Invertebrates associated with sand and heath include sand wasps and digger wasps; areas of bare earth are particularly important for the Green Tiger beetle, while butterflies include the purple emperor.

The area’s historic association with heathland is reflected including the use of heath in many place names e.g. Heath and Reach, Wavendon Heath, Sandy Heath, Potton Heath, Gamlingay Great Heath.

BAP Habitats



Distribution of BAP habitats in National Character Area 90

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

Parklands Audit - April 2016

Drawing 1: Parklands within the Project Area



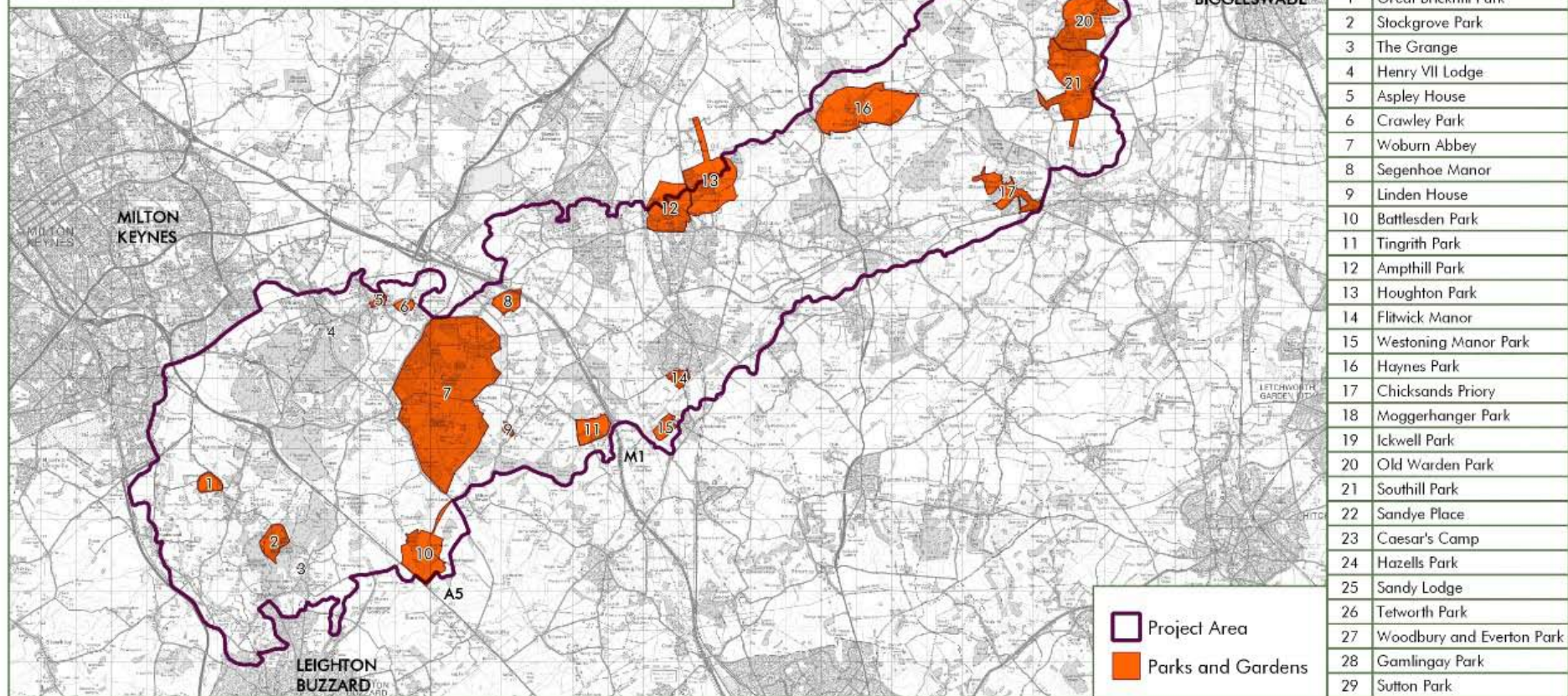
0 2 4 6 8 km

© Crown Copyright and database right
2015. Ordnance Survey 100049029.

GREENSAND COUNTRY
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Map: The historic parklands of the Greensand Country



Woodland

The Greensand Country contains more than half of Bedfordshire's woodland, in much higher density than in the adjacent clay vales. The north-west facing scarp slope has a number of important ancient semi-natural woodlands on patches of clay soils, including the King's Wood National Nature Reserve at Heath and Reach, producing a distinct woodland skyline. The poorer sandy soils and steeper slopes often contain coniferous plantations, one of the only economic land uses, often in areas of former heath (see above).

Ancient semi-natural woodlands (found mainly on clay soils) consist predominately of pedunculate oak and ash with an understory of field maple, hazel and dogwood. On sandy acidic soils, woods are characterised by sessile oak and birch with an understory of holly and rowan, bracken and bluebells. Scots pine is also characteristic of the sandy soils and makes a significant contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place, whereas more recent and extensive plantation woodland includes a mix of conifer types. Amongst some woodlands there are notable populations of lily-of-the-valley, scaly male ferns and wild service trees; and orchids (such as birds nest orchid) as well as broad-leaved helleborine can be found.

The rich woodland habitats also support important **fauna**, such as badgers and a wide range of bat species. Maulden Wood is a dormouse re-introduction site, and in some of the ancient woods a suite of rare species of butterfly specific to ancient woodland can be found such as purple emperor and white admiral.



Wetland

Wetlands are a rare and declining habitat, especially **acidic wetlands**. The acid waters from the Woburn Sands aquifer support **wet woodlands** along the base of the dip slope, along with acid mires on the higher ground such as at Wavendon Heath Ponds SSSI. Along river valley floors there are wet pastures/meadows and where there are naturally occurring springs they too often support acid mire and wet woodland.

Once such is Flitwick Moor SSSI in the Flit Valley, the largest area of wetland in Bedfordshire, and identified by Natural England as one of the most important wet woodland sites in South East England. It comprises a complex matrix of habitats including wet woodland and fen, and patches of acid mire where acidic springs emerge from the porous Greensand rocks.

Wetland sites contain locally rare plants such as marsh fern, marsh violet and star sedge. Along the Flit Valley species of Sphagnum moss can be found along with important populations of lower plants and fungi. The rivers have many beautiful native black poplar trees and ancient pollard willows, and the comeback of otters in increasing numbers has captured public imagination. Nevertheless the small and rapidly declining populations of water vole, which are barely hanging on in the Ivel and its tributaries near Sandy, requires concerted conservation effort to improve suitable habitat, control invasive predators (such as mink) and limit further decline.



Upper: Wooded heath, Greensand Ridge LCA | Middle: Purple emperor (Apatura iris) | Lower: Valley mire, Flit Valley LCA.

I.2.5 CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

The most well-known literary references to the Greensand Country occur in **John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress**, published in 1678. John Bunyan was a non-conformist preacher, and wrote Pilgrim's Progress whilst imprisoned in Bedford. His father had been a travelling tinker in the area, and Bunyan would have known the landscapes and lanes from his childhood.

The pilgrim's name is Christian, and the story is an allegory for the Christian life, but described as a dream. The landscapes of Central Bedfordshire inspired the setting for Christian's journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial city, and Bunyan used the topography and local landmarks as part of the story's vivid imagery. For example, The Hill of Difficulty (taking Christian up and out of the ill drained, Slough of Despond) is the Greensand scarp towards Ampthill; The House Beautiful is Houghton House (newly-built in Bunyan's day) and The Valley of the Shadow of Death is Millbrook Gorge.

Millbrook also has a connection with the poet, **Milton**, who reputedly planted the Mulberry tree in the rectory garden.

The Greensand Country has also been inspirational for a number of **artists**, particularly in the 20th century, who have experimented with different styles of painting to capture its distinctive landscape character, patterns, colours, textures and features. These include Wynford Dewhurst (1864-1941); Henry John Stannard (1870-1951); and John Watson (1923-1992). These paintings reinforced the public view that this landscape is attractive, special and worth conserving.

In terms of historical associations, this landscape has not generally been the site for iconic national events; the dramas tend to be of more local interest, and may in some cases be seen as a microcosm of the national story (see 1.1). Land ownership is an important story here, in terms of the relationship between the landed classes and those who work for them.

The relative lack of cultural and historical associations with this landscape create the opportunity to uncover and promote new stories, and build more of a cultural identity for the Greensand Country.

I.2.6 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Our Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) identified four different Character Areas within our Project Area. As we anticipated, the Greensand Ridge is dominant, followed by the Flit Valley. The two smaller remaining Areas are the other river valleys of the Ouzel (skirting the western boundary) and the Ivel (cutting through the Ridge to the East). There is also a small part of the Bedford Clay Plain forming the setting in the north west.

Much of what makes the area special (as outlined earlier) is encapsulated in the Greensand Ridge, including the interplay of sand and clay; the topography and drainage provided by the northern scarp and southern dip slope; the heathland/acid grassland and woodland habitats; the manor houses with their historic parklands; the sandstone structures and estate villages. The river valleys are generally notable for their wetter grassland and woodland habitats; wooded settings and skylines; and historic sites (Flit Valley).

A map showing the Landscape Character Areas can be found at page 23.

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

Landscape Character Assessment - April 2016
Drawing 7: Landscape Character Areas



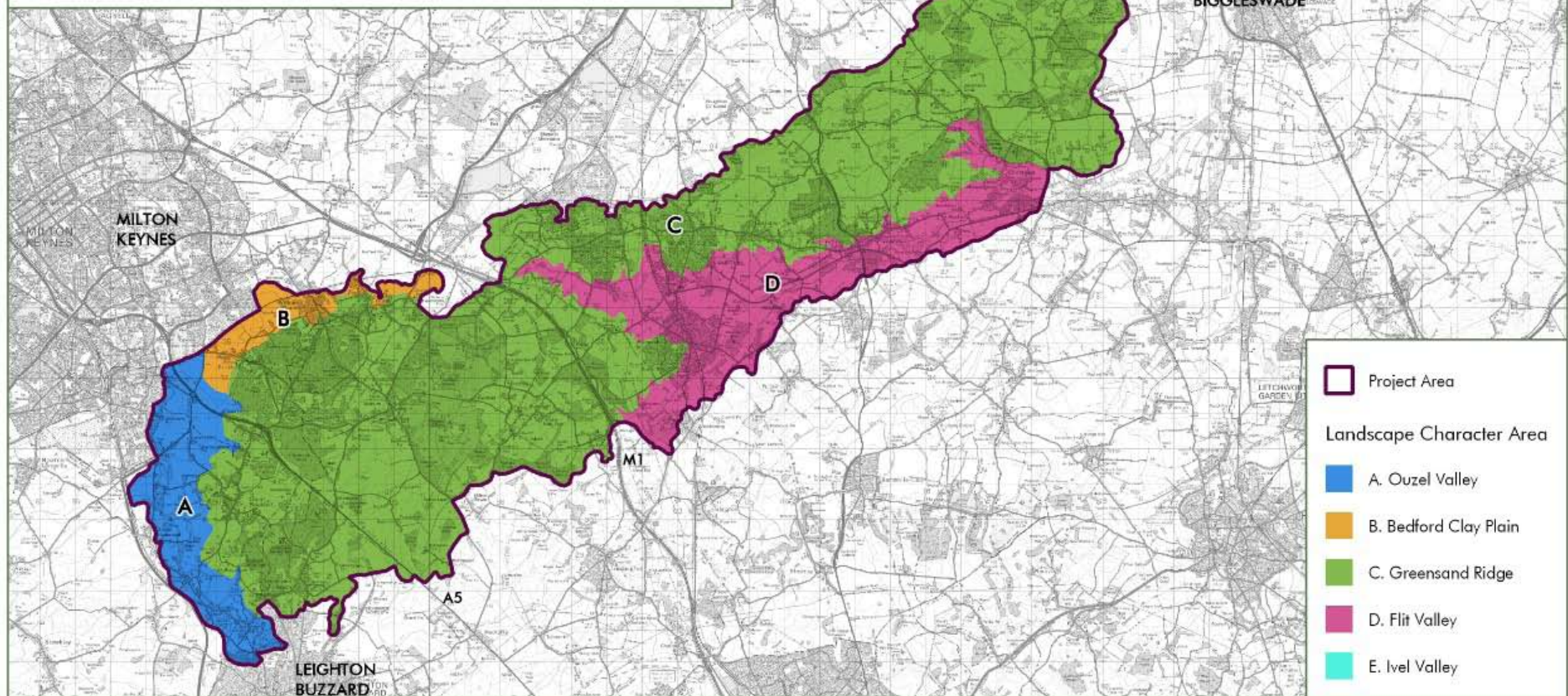
0 2 4 6 8 km

© Crown Copyright and database right
2015, Ordnance Survey 100049029.

GREENSAND COUNTRY
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Greensand Country Landscape Character Areas (from Landscape Character Assessment)

Within these Areas, the LCA identified seven Landscape Character Types (see also map at page 25).

Landscape Character Type	Key characteristics
Sandstone Scarp and Slopes	Lower Greensand geology; elevated views; distinctive skyline; high concentration of woodland; patchwork of pasture, arable, acid grassland and heath; historic defence sites overlooking river valleys; medieval villages with landmark churches; historic parklands with designed vistas; relic and active sandstone quarrying; concentration of greensand as building material
Sandstone Hills	Lower Greensand geology; undulating, elevated topography; strong sense of enclosure and intimate landscape; significant woodland cover; matrix of heath, acid grassland and areas of acid wetland (with some arable on areas of former heath); high concentration of parkland landscapes; sand and gravel quarries; sparsely settled with occasional villages or isolated farms; local building materials (including clay brick and tile, ironstone, thatch and render); accessible landscapes of high recreational value.
Lowland Sandy Farmlands	Lower Greensand geology; shallow valleys and gentle undulations; mixture of arable and pasture with some semi-improved grassland; irregular fields with rectilinear blocks of woodland; remnants of former parkland with in-field trees; strongly wooded skylines; sparsely settled with many village 'ends'; local building materials (including clay brick and tile, ironstone, thatch and render); landmark churches.
Glacial Plateau Estates	Lower Greensand geology overlain with glacial boulder clay deposits; elevated landscape with gently rolling topography; large scale 'blocky' character with empty feel and extensive views; ancient woodland blocks enclosing the landscape and forming a wooded skyline; large rectilinear arable fields; extensive areas of parkland and former ecclesiastical sites; concentration of Medieval moated sites and Medieval villages; sparsely populated with dispersed pattern of farmsteads and small hamlets/villages; 'private' estate character.
Estate Claylands	Lower Greensand geology overlain with glacial boulder clay deposits; elevated landscape with gently rolling topography; large rectilinear arable fields; high concentration of woodland forming a wooded skyline; sparsely populated with dispersed pattern of farmsteads and small estate villages high concentration of grazed parkland with parkland features; landmark churches; concentration of Medieval moated sites; strong influence of historic estates and 'private' estate character.
Valley Meadowlands	Alluvium deposits, peat and river gravels with clayey and loamy soils; lower lying (often flat) landscape; seasonally waterlogged land supporting wetland habitats; mixed woodland and shelterbelts along the riverbanks; past and current gravel, sand and peat extraction (leaving areas of open water); historical communications routes; historic bridges and crossing points; relatively unsettled but with recent development; urban fringe character in places.
Valley Settled Farmlands	Lower Greensand geology overlain with glacial boulder clay deposits with clayey and loamy soils; flat or gently undulating lower valley sides, with views across and down the river valleys; farmland comprising a mix of arable and pasture in rectilinear fields; concentration of Roman archaeology and former settlements; market gardening including glasshouses and garden centres; significant settlement including urban fringes; generally open and expansive character.

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

Landscape Character Assessment - January 2016

Drawing 8: Landscape Character Types



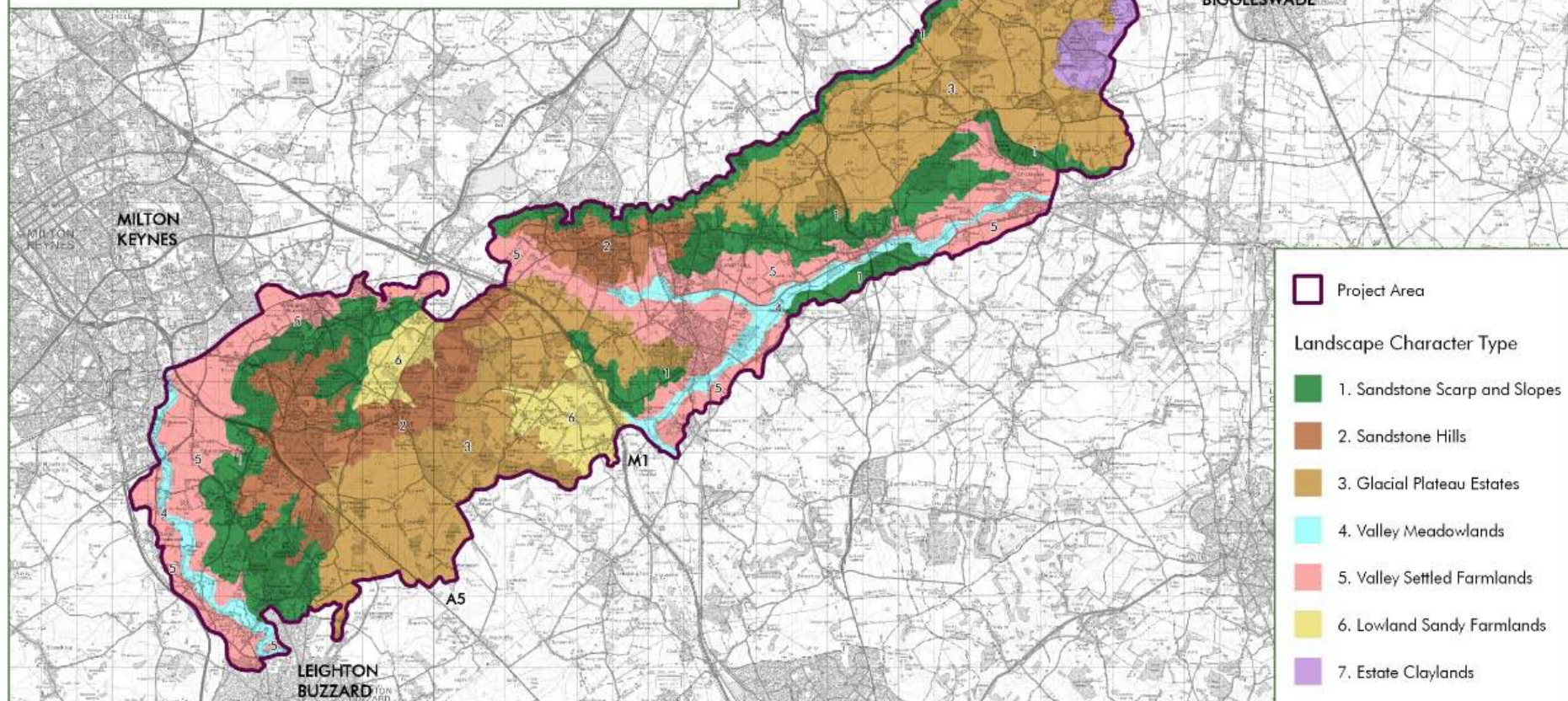
0 2 4 6 8 km

© Crown Copyright and database right
2015. Ordnance Survey 100049029.

GREENSAND COUNTRY
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Greensand Country Landscape Character Types (from Landscape Character Assessment)

I.2.7 THE LANDSCAPE AREA BOUNDARIES

For the Stage 1 application, the Project Area boundary was based largely on National Character Area 90, although with finer grain of detail than is given with NCAs. Specifically excluded were the urban areas of Leighton Buzzard and Sandy, and the western part of the southern dip slope not forming part of the Flit Valley.

This initial boundary was reviewed during the Landscape Character Assessment and small variations made where there was a discernible change in landscape character (i.e. a particular break in slope), and/or where there was a desire to include a settlement, parkland or feature which related strongly to the Greensand Country.

The main changes for each Landscape Character Area can be summarised as follows:

- Greensand Ridge (northern side) – along the northern scarp the boundary was generally redrawn at the main break in slope at the foot of the scarp, with some exceptions to include significant interest (e.g. Moggerhanger, Gamlingay) while excluding less distinct areas (e.g. around A4012 and east of Old Warden Park)
- Greensand Ridge (southern side) – Battlesden Park and its immediate setting included, and land excluded at Heath and Reach to include only the steeper slopes of Greensand
- Flit Valley – boundary refined to include the southern valley sides but not significant land beyond
- Ouzel Valley – western valley sides included as they form part of the Ouzel Valley landscape and afford attractive views to the Greensand Scarp
- Bedford Clay Plain – open slopes extending from the scarp west of Woburn Sands included as they form an important setting to the Greensand Country.



Upper: Sandstone hills in Greensand Ridge LCA | Middle: View south across Flit Valley LCA | Lower: Greensand scarp from Bedford Clay Plain LCA.

1.3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Greensand Country landscape heritage in both national and local terms is summarised below:

	National significance	Local significance
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape recognised by Natural England as National Character Area (NCA) 90 Campaign for the Farmed Environment (CFE) identifies the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge as an important landscape feature 	Elevation, enclosed character and distinctive habitats clearly visible and different from the surrounding clay vales
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 National Nature Reserve: Kings Wood & Rushmere Identified as Wildlife Trust Living Landscape Identified as RSPB Futurescape 14 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooper's Hill Double Arches Pit Flitwick Moor Maulden Church Meadow Maulden Heath Nares Gladley Marsh Nine Acres Pit Sandy Warren Wavendon Heath Ponds Kings and Bakers Wood and Heaths Maulden Wood and Pennyfather's Hills Kings Wood and Glebe Meadows, Houghton Conquest Southill Lake and Woods Weaveley and Sand Woods 15 Habitats of principal importance in England: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowland mixed deciduous woodland Lowland Beech and Yew woodland Wet Woodland Ponds / rivers Reedbeds Lowland fens Floodplain grazing marsh Lowland heathland Lowland dry acid grassland Lowland calcareous grassland Purple Moor Grass & Rush Pastures Lowland meadows Traditional orchards Wood pasture Parkland 142 species of principal importance in England (including 3 amphibians, 34 birds, 77 insects, 11 plants, 11 mammals, 5 reptiles) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognised as a Nature Improvement Area (NIA) by Central Bedfordshire Council, Natural Cambridgeshire and the Bucks and MK Natural Environment Partnership 6 Local Nature Reserves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooper's Hill, Flitton Moor, Flitwick Wood, Flitwick, Maulden Church Meadows SSSI, Kingswood and Glebe Meadows, The Riddy 9 Roadside Nature Reserves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warren Wood, Fox Corner, Cooper's Hill SSSI, Flitwick Moor SSSI, Ireland, Wavendon Heath Ponds SSSI, King's and Baker's Wood SSSI, Deadman's Hill (part Maulden Wood SSSI), Ampthill Corner 2 Wildlife Corridors (Bucks): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> V4 Watling Street, A5 (T) 14 Biological notification sites (Bucks): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downs Covert, Broomhill Wood, Pond near Buttermilk Wood, Back Wood, Bow Brickhill, Kiln Ground, Bow Brickhill Heath, Wavendon and Brown Woods, Little Brickhill and Bell's Copses, Buttermilk Wood, Church Farm, St. Mary's Churchyard, Great Brickhill, Grassland west of Oak Wood, Marsh west of Broomhill, Oak Wood, Stockgrove 128 County Wildlife Sites

	National significance		Local significance
GEOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double Arches Pit • Nine Acres Pit 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 Local Geological Sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamberlain's Barn Quarry • Churchway's Quarry • Deepdale Quarry • Ledburn Quarry • Munday's Hill Quarry • New Trees Quarry • Ouzel Valley • Sandy Pinnacle • Sandy Warren, The Lodge Quarry • Scout Hut Quarry, Potton • Stockgrove Country Park
CULTURAL HERITAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCA 90 contains the highest proportion of both country houses and historic parkland of any National Character Area in England • 11 Registered Parks and Gardens covering 1,936 ha: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amphill Park, Battlesden Park, Chicksands Priory, Flitwick Manor, Ickwell Bury, Moggerhanger Park, Old Warden Park (including the Swiss Garden), Southill Park, The Alameda, The Hazells, Woburn Abbey • 24 Conservation areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amphill, Aspley Guise, Aspley Heath, Clophill, Eversholt, Flitton, Haynes, Heath & Reach, Husborne Crawley, Husbourne Crawley (Church End), Ickwell, Maulden, Millbrook, Milton Bryan, Northill, Old Warden, Potton, Ridgmont, Sandy, Southill, Steppingley, Sutton, Tingrith, Woburn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 Scheduled monuments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> including castles (Amphill, Cainhoe, the Mount); manor houses / former monastic sites (Chicksands Priory, Warden Abbey, Houghton House); churches (Clophill, Segenhoe); moated sites and enclosures; hillforts • 1,099 listed buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 505 identified sandstone structures adding to local character

	National significance	Local significance
COMMUNITY VALUE / 'SPIRIT OF PLACE'		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced as an area of relative peace, quiet, solitude and well-being • Valued by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and naturalists • People feel able to connect to nature • Timeless quality and pervading sense of history • Views from elevated positions of surrounding area
ECONOMIC VALUE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land-based economy (particularly agriculture and forestry) • Tourism and leisure (particularly Woburn, Center Parcs) • Towns and villages support many SMEs across a range of sectors • Quality of the landscape seen as a major positive factor by local business

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

Landscape Character Assessment - April 2016

Drawing 4: Cultural Heritage Interest



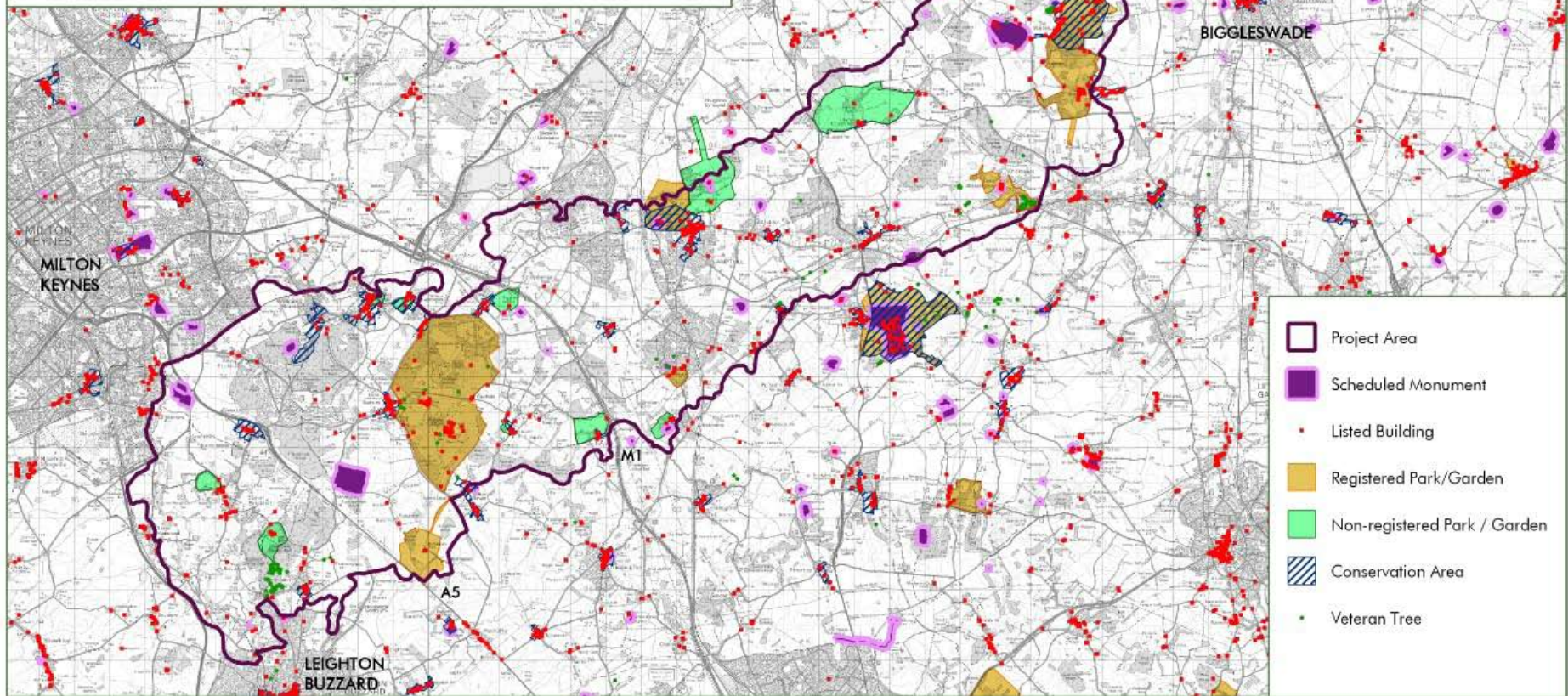
0 2 4 6 8 km

© Crown Copyright and database right
2015. Ordnance Survey 100049029.

GREENSAND COUNTRY
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Drawing 4: Cultural Heritage Interest from LCA

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

Landscape Character Assessment - April 2016

Drawing 5: Natural Heritage Interest



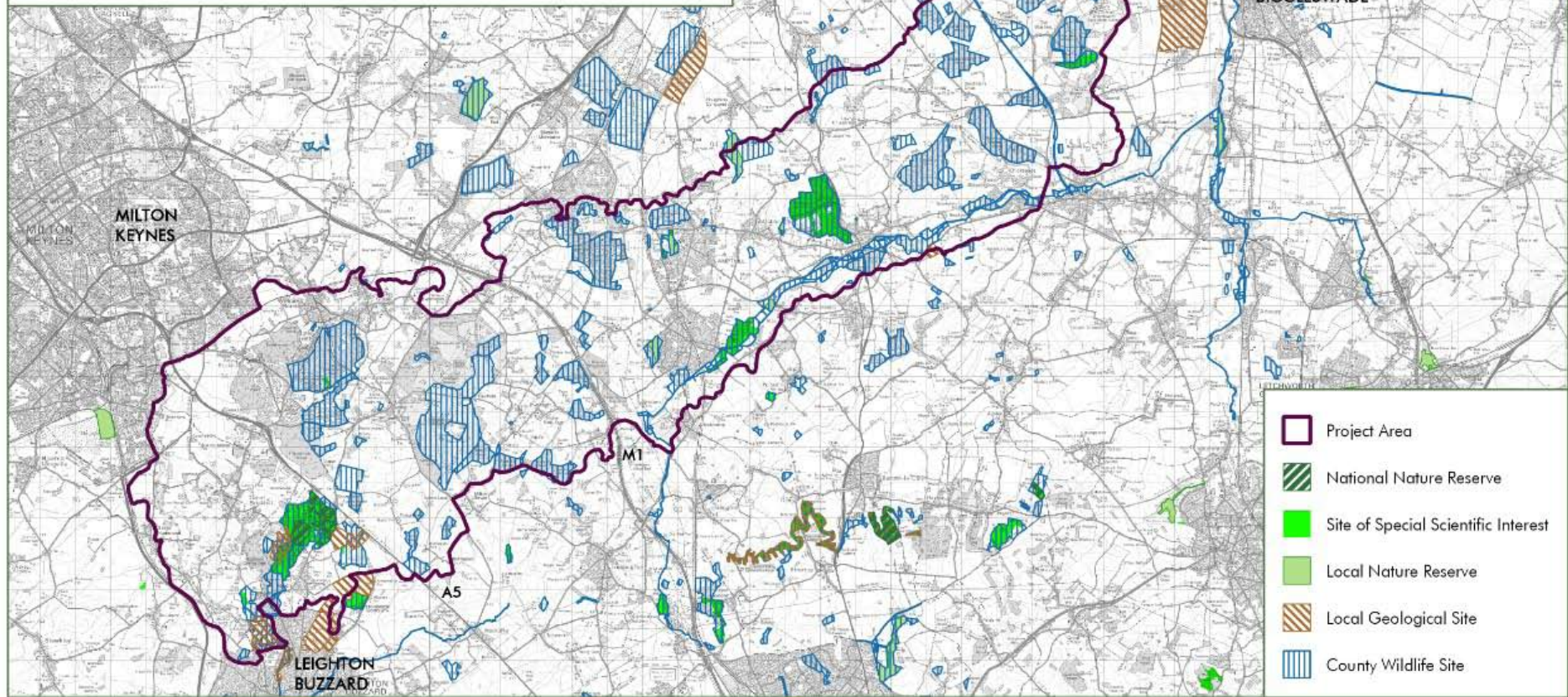
0 2 4 6 8 km

© Crown Copyright and database right
2015. Ordnance Survey 100049029.

GREENSAND COUNTRY
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Map: Sites of natural heritage interest



Walkers on southern slope of Greensand Ridge LCA.

I.4 THE PEOPLE WITH A STAKE IN THE LANDSCAPE

“Greensand Country rewards exploring and we can help you to discover it.” Supporting theme 1 for the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership

I.4.1 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Greensand Country is located in a relatively densely populated area of central England, with around one million people living within 20km of the area. There has been a high level of housing development in and around the Landscape Area in recent years, and this is set to continue with 31,000 new homes planned in Central Bedfordshire alone over the next 20 years.

However, the Landscape Partnership area itself contains a population of just under 50,000, living in a range of settlements from hamlets to small market towns (the largest being Flitwick with around 14,000 people). This is largely due to the influence of the estate owners, who historically restricted the size of settlements, which in turn controlled the amount of housing development for much of the 20th century.

The Greensand Country population is on average reasonably affluent: no neighbourhoods are in the 10% most income deprived nationally, although concentrations of relative deprivation can be found in the urban centres of Leighton Buzzard, Sandy and Flitwick. Central Bedfordshire residents have similar levels of ‘c’ level qualifications compared to the national average, and GCSE results are above the England average. Life expectancy and overall health are both slightly better than the national average, and children are less likely to be obese. Unemployment is lower in the area with a rate of 2.1% compared to the England rate of 3.4%.

However, escalating house prices have put home ownership beyond the means of many residents. In March 2015 the average house price in the Greensand Ridge area was £198,600 (higher than the average for the surrounding area of £178,000). The ratio of lowest quartile house prices to incomes is between 8.1 and 9.3 in parts of the area, among the highest in Central Bedfordshire. Housing Needs Surveys carried out by BRCC in many parishes show a clear picture of local households being unable to get on the housing ladder or even rent privately in the area, contributing to one of the fastest ageing populations in the country. Despite this, the estate villages in particular also conceal some of the highest levels of housing in poor condition in Central Bedfordshire, with correspondingly high levels of fuel poverty due to poor insulation / lack of central heating.

Like many rural areas, while the Greensand Country is a desirable place to live, it does not provide as much local employment as the surrounding urban areas. There is a high level of out-commuting (half of all Central Bedfordshire residents commute outside of the area, mostly to London, Cambridge or Milton Keynes), contributing to road congestion, pollution, and the decline of local services and public transport. Geographical barriers to access to services can be high, with some parishes falling within the 5% most deprived areas nationally for this domain. However, the attractive natural and historic environment does also help to attract business: it was identified by the Central Bedfordshire Business Survey 2012 as one of the best aspects of the area.

The population is less ethnically diverse than the surrounding areas, with 96% being white. Neighbouring towns to the area have a large minority ethnic population with 26% of residents in Milton Keynes and 28% in Bedford being of minority ethnic origin (in Bedford there are over 100 different ethnic groups represented). Luton is one of only four towns and cities in the UK with a non-white British population of over 50% (at 55% it is the same as London and Leicester), although it should be noted that the Greensand Country is a less immediate landscape for Luton in comparison with the Chilterns.

I.4.2 USERS AND AUDIENCES

Current audience profile

Current users of the landscape are predominantly people living in or around the area who are confident countryside users (such as ramblers and cyclists). Most visit the Ridge for specific activities such as dog walking or pursuing an interest such as nature, photography, or riding. A lot of this group are retired, with time to take an interest in heritage.

There are a lot of families visiting those attractions that have facilities for children – those who go beyond those sites can perhaps best be described as ‘walking families’.

Current visitors are predominantly white, although more people from minority ethnic groups are starting to visit sites in the Greensand Country, either as part of a walking group or educational visit or engaged in culturally specific activities such as fungi foraging (Eastern European) or family picnics (Asian).

There are relatively few visitors from the surrounding towns such as Milton Keynes and Bedford, considering the size of their populations. If they do come then it is usually to the well-known sites rather than the wider landscape.

This seems also to be the same for a large proportion of the local population who don't seem to venture beyond the safe and familiar places such as parks. This is certainly the case with respect to families who ‘don't walk’, which means that children are missing from the wider landscape. The whole area can be considered as commuter belt, with lots of people who are ‘time poor’, meaning they live here but don't really have time to get involved.

Parks such as Rushmere Country Park are regularly visited by special needs groups because they have specific facilities. The big attractions (such as Woburn, Shuttleworth and now Center Parcs) attract many visitors from other parts of the UK and internationally, but they are not encouraged to explore the wider landscape and rarely venture further.



*Upper: Jordans Mill, Broom
| Middle: Running in Greensand
Country | Lower: Outdoor workshop at
The Lodge, Sandy by Pete Johnstone,
Copyright © 2016*

Research carried out as part of the preparation of our Audience Development and Interpretation Plan in September 2015 revealed that the favourite places of those surveyed were Woburn Abbey, Ampthill Park, Old Warden, RSPB The Lodge, Rowney Warren and Rushmere Country Park. When people were asked why they picked particular favourite sites their responses were predominantly related to the things that they did when there. When these reasons are collected together and illustrated as a word cloud (below) it is very clear that for many people their favourite place is first and foremost a place to go for a walk. Other key factors as to why people like particular locations include views, golf, cycling and kids play opportunities.

Walking also came out top when people were asked about their favourite activities. For a large number of people, exploring on foot, either with or without a dog, is the primary way that they interact with the landscape, giving a strong sense of an 'active' landscape used for exercise and enjoyment. However, relatively few people (particularly visitors) like 'exploring on their own', suggesting that people tend to walk in a few favoured locations or along well-known routes rather than exploring the wider landscape.

Regarding aspects of the landscape, people (whether local or visitors) are most interested in the natural heritage of the Greensand Country, and to a lesser extent the cultural heritage relating to the built environment, local customs and traditional ways of life, with archaeology and geology being of least interest.

Most of the Greensand Country landscape remains relatively unexplored, whether by locals or visitors.

Our Audience Development research identified three main barriers to accessing the landscape:

Not many people know about the Greensand Country. It is too 'secret' and there is not a strong sense of place. It is not well promoted, particularly for casual users – what



Responses to why people chose their favourite sites as a word cloud

promotion there is seems to be aimed at those with a specific interest, eg. cyclists, keen walkers etc.

People know many of the locations in the area such as Woburn, Ampthill Park or Rushmere Country Park but do not associate them with a particular landscape character, let alone the name Greensand Ridge. There was some recognition of the Greensand Ridge as a walking route but not of it as a place to visit for any other reason, even within the area itself.

In addition, there is relatively little information that helps people find out more about the landscape and its heritage (the research team often heard people say “I would like to do/see more but I don’t know how”). For example, there is a well-maintained, network of trails and footpaths but not many people know about them. Where information is available, it is not always well presented and/or communicated. There is also a relative lack of accurate information on what facilities are available at sites.

Access barriers

Large parts of Greensand Country are inaccessible, belonging as they do to large private estates and golf courses. Lots of ‘keep out’ signs create the sense of an exclusive landscape that is not welcoming or family friendly.

While parts of the area are reasonably served by public transport, there are gaps. The main train lines run through rather than across the area, with Flitwick and Sandy the only two stations; the Marston Vale branch line skirts the north-west border. Rural bus provision has been decreasing, and many key sites (such as Woburn Abbey, Rushmere Country Park and Old Warden Park) are not directly served.

For many disability and ethnic minority groups, physical accessibility is an issue. For some groups both getting there (because of poor public transport, above), and getting about once you are there, are difficult. Information about physical access (see above) is also lacking.

Confidence barriers

Respondents reported that it is often the fear of the unknown which put people off visiting the countryside. The sense of a private landscape, where people are not welcome, presents a particular barrier to new audiences who are not confident countryside users.

Those interviewed from ethnic minority communities identified the biggest barrier as cultural, reporting that people can say “it’s not the norm for my group to undertake this sort of activity”. Quite a lot of ethnic groups reported that they like to do group activities, which need to be organised and led by culturally sensitive people. A number of respondents identified a lack of suitably trained leaders as a barrier to responding to a potential demand for countryside activities.

I.4.4 TARGET AUDIENCES

The Landscape Partnership has decided to target its limited resources on raising awareness among audiences within and immediately around the Greensand Country, i.e. the local communities rather than visitors from further afield. These are the audiences for whom the landscape heritage is particularly relevant, however the profile remains low.

These target audiences are:

- Current audiences
 - Active and Interested regular users
 - Site / Attraction visitors
- New audiences
 - Non-users - residents
 - Non-users – nearby
 - Future residents

The following section describes these target audiences in more detail.

Active and interested regular users

This audience is critically important to delivering the Landscape Partnership goals as they are the one group that currently identifies with the distinctive landscape. As well as regular walkers, cyclists and site visitors, this group includes conservation volunteers and members of community groups such as local history and/or heritage societies. They are likely to be actively involved in their local communities in other ways as well.

They are key stakeholders as they already actively participate in the landscape. They have the potential to be champions or advocates, promoting and explaining the landscape to a wider audience.

While actively involved in Greensand Country in a wide variety of capacities, this group can be very focused on their particular area of work or interest, and may not be aware of the specific interests or concerns of other groups or the ‘bigger picture’. Increasing these sub-groups’ awareness of each other so that they have an understanding and appreciation of each other’s issues could establish a strong and active ‘Greensand community of interest’.

Many of these people are already represented in some way on the wider Landscape Partnership. They will be engaged in planning and organising projects, creating

Greensand Woods development, Ampthill.



a sense of ownership and pride; and in debating the future management of the landscape. This group are the volunteers, the advocates, the local champions and walk leaders that are essential to the successful delivery of landscape scale activity.

Site/Attraction Visitors

This audience identifies with particular locations in the landscape but not the landscape as a whole. They often visit their favoured locations on a regular basis, chosen because of their accessibility, facilities and guaranteed activities such as children's play areas. Key groups within this audience are: families with young children, dog walkers and retired people looking for a 'stroll and tea' opportunity.

This group is the one that most often identified lack of information as a key barrier to exploring further afield; 'we would like to but we don't know how'. They represent a real opportunity for the Landscape Partnership as they are already out in the landscape. The challenge is to help them break out of their comfort zone.

Non-users – residents

This is currently largely a passive group: they like living in the area but for reasons to

do with motivation and/or other barriers such as time do not get involved. This group is largely unaware of the heritage interest and are currently viewed as 'difficult to engage'. Here audience development should focus on building a greater understanding of what is on their doorstep. From this improved understanding may well come, in time, an interest in increased involvement.

The audience research showed that there was a real interest among local people to know more about local folklore, stories and traditions so events that mixed social interaction with cultural history might well attract the greatest interest from this audience. Knowing what to show their visitors might also be an important motivator. 'Visiting with Family and Friends (VFF)' is often an important visitor segment. Highlighting accessible and welcoming local places of interest and providing pre-visit information could stimulate this.

Non-users – nearby

People who live in the surrounding villages, towns and cities don't yet identify with Greensand Country as somewhere to visit and enjoy the countryside. As this audience group is largely unaware of the existence of the Greensand Ridge the Landscape Partnership should consider going to them, developing outreach approaches that starts the engagement where these people are living and then invites them into Greensand Country.

The key informant interview suggested that recently site managers, rangers etc. have witnessed an increase in people from ethnic communities visiting countryside sites, not necessarily in Greensand Country but in the surrounding area. Picnic sites, pick-your-own venues and sites where foraging was permissible seem particularly popular.

New residents

There are plans to build 31,000 new homes in Central Bedfordshire alone between 2011 and 2031 and the population of Milton Keynes is currently growing at 17%. This represents a lot of new people moving into the area, people who are likely to be interested in finding out about the place to which they have moved.

This presents an opportunity to 'strike while the iron is hot', and engage with these people while they are still asking lots of questions including: "where can we walk with the children and their grandparents?" "How can we get involved with the local people?" "What do people do around here?"

1.5 THE MANAGEMENT OF THE GREENSAND COUNTRY LANDSCAPE

Like any landscape, the management of the Greensand Country is affected by a range of sometimes competing factors, including land ownership and what it is used for; the skills available; the interests of all local stakeholders; and the various strategies, policies and management mechanisms that apply to the area. This section explores these factors in detail.

1.5.1 LAND OWNERSHIP

Land ownership is an important factor in the history of the Greensand Country, in terms of the major influence of the private estate owners on both the landscape and the communities of the area, and it continues to be significant in the management of the landscape.

The ownership has fragmented considerably since many of the estates were broken up in the second half of the twentieth century, resulting today in a wide spectrum from the large owners (such as the Bedford Estate) to small holders. This has militated against a joined-up approach to landscape management as well as the management of habitats such as ancient woodland, heathland and historic parkland.

The Greensand Country is still principally owned privately by estates, other rural businesses and individuals. For these owners, the key considerations are generally commercial and/or domestic, although there can also be environmental and/or community benefit (e.g. agri-environment schemes, or restoration of quarrying sites to nature).

During the 20th century the public sector became a more significant landowner: this now includes central government (e.g. Forestry Commission, Ministry of Defence at Chicksands), local authorities (the total asset value of Central Bedfordshire Council's Farm Estate is around £65 million), and Town and Parish Councils (e.g. Ampthill Town Council owns Ampthill Park and Coopers Hill). Only 10% of the woodland is publicly owned, by the Forestry Commission, local authorities and other public bodies – this is much lower than the UK average of around one third.

Substantial amounts of land in the area are now owned (or leased) by voluntary sector conservation organisations, whose interest is in managing land for nature conservation / heritage as well as public access and enjoyment. These include the Greensand Trust (which part-owns Rushmere Country Park and owns other sites including Sandy Smith Nature Reserve); the Wildlife Trust (owns nature reserves including substantial parts of Flitwick Moor SSSI); and the RSPB (owns its nature reserve at the Lodge near Sandy).

Another key 'institutional' owner is the Church of England, still one of the UK's largest property owners and the custodian of churches and churchyards that are significant landscape features. Privacy and security are particularly important to many of these land owners, whether



St Andrew's Church, Ampthill.

because they live on their estate or due to what the land is used for (e.g. military use in the case of the Ministry of Defence) – this contributes to the general sense of a private landscape. However, the number of sites managed for public access, together with a reasonable rights of way network, means that the proportion of publicly accessible land in the NCA at 7.5% (2,004 ha, more than half of which is woodland) is in fact much higher than the surrounding claylands at 2.5%.

1.5.2 LAND USE

Current land use as it affects the Greensand Country landscape will be considered in four broad categories. (NB most of the data for this section applies to National Character Area 90, which broadly corresponds with the project area.)

1.5.2.1 Agriculture

Most of the area today remains a working farming landscape. There are around 200 businesses in the agriculture, hunting and forestry sector in the area, employing around 600 people. 79% of the National Character Area (21,735 ha) is classified as agricultural land: 2% of the area is Grade 1; 20% is Grade 2; 46% is Grade 3; and 11% is Grade 4 (0% is Grade 5).

However, farming is under considerable pressure with farmers continuing to leave the industry. Between 2000 and 2013 the total commercially farmed area decreased by 22%, with most of the reduction occurring since 2010. This means that only 42% of the NCA, just over half the total amount of agricultural land, is currently farmed. The number of farm holdings decreased by nearly 30%, most of which was among farms smaller than 50 ha. Today, while many farms are relatively small (farms below 20 ha comprise 46% of the total number of farms but only 5% of the agricultural land area), most agricultural land (73%) is within large farms over 100 ha. Nearly 40% of farmed land is tenanted.

While almost half the farms in the area (48%) in 2013 were arable, with cereal farms accounting for 29% of all holdings and 36% of the agricultural area, this has been the sector of steepest decline, with a drop in area of nearly 40% since 2000. This may be an opportunity for the Landscape Partnership to promote alternative land management options (potentially through Countryside Stewardship), as arable farming is associated with risks to the area's landscape character, historic environment and soil quality. Commercial arable cropping is generally associated with the better soils on the Ridge's southern dip slope. Oilseed (particularly rape) is increasingly used as a break crop (17% increase in coverage since 2000).

Land under grass or uncropped barely decreased after 2000, and stood in 2013 at 37%. Livestock farming in 2013 accounted for 31% of total holdings, with the most numerous

livestock being the 8,353 sheep (46% drop since 2000). Cattle numbers remained relatively stable at 4,543, while pig numbers declined dramatically from 9,100 to 1,900. The ongoing uncertain economic viability of livestock farming means that under-grazing remains a significant danger for the area's grassland habitats, and the challenge is to increase the commercial return from grazing for both landowners and livestock owners (for example, the Wildlife Trust's "Cut and Chew" website provides brokerage between landowners with grassland sites and animal owners looking for grazing or baled hay). Heritage sheep breeds used for conservation grazing do not tend to be commercially viable for fleece or meat as they are small and slow growing.

1.5.2.2 Woodland and Forestry

Woodland remains a significant land use in the area, with 17.5% coverage of the Greensand Ridge National Character Area (4,786 ha, of which 1,419 ha is ancient woodland). 11% of the NCA (3,120 ha) is broadleaved, and 5% (1,361) is coniferous.

The 10% of woodland in public ownership (see above) is under management, principally by the Forestry Commission. Relative to other areas, a reasonable proportion (nearly 60%) of private woodland is also in management, due principally to the substantial areas of woodland within the large estates (e.g. Woburn, Southill, Shuttleworth). However, the remaining 40% (over 2,000 ha) of private woodland is unmanaged and generally scattered across the area under a wide range of owners such as farms and smaller estates.

In previous years, woodland would have been managed principally for timber and fuel, but also for recreation (particularly the deer parks). While there is still some commercial forestry for timber and woodfuel (particularly by the major estates and the Forestry Commission), there has been a huge reduction in the area's forestry economy over the last 60 years, mainly due to the low market price for both timber and wood. Fragmentation of ownership and lack of management have had a negative longer term impact on both environmental quality and economic viability. Feedback from local woodland owners suggests that there is a lack of woodland enterprises at all points of the supply chain (the resource currently supports around 20 local enterprises), and that the vast majority of timber and woodfuel is sold outside of the area.

Today, woodland management (particularly of semi-natural woodland) is largely for the purposes of conservation and recreation (e.g. Maulden, Chicksands, Wilstead), and there are opportunities to extend and improve the condition of these habitats, bring more woodland into positive management and plant new woodland (for example as part of the Marston Vale Forest Plan, see below). There is also scope now to increase timber and woodfuel production, although it would generally be preferable for conifer plantations to revert to heathland or grassland habitats where these were the former use.

1.5.2.3 Tourism and recreation

Tourism and recreation is a major contributor in economic terms to the management of the Greensand Country landscape, both directly in terms of visitor spend as well as indirectly through the management of land for public access, and there is potential for growth in the future.

In 2009 the total value of tourism in Central Bedfordshire as a whole was £312,280,000, with some 6,035 jobs being supported by the industry. While this appears a high figure, the area is relatively over-looked compared to other parts of England: annual domestic tourism to Central Bedfordshire between 2009 and 2011 averaged 139,000 trips, only around 0.1% of the total for England. The area also experiences low visitor spend per head: average spend by domestic visitors to Central Bedfordshire between 2009 and 2011 was £129 spend per visit (compared to £168 for England as a whole).

The larger visitor attractions in the area (including Woburn Abbey and Safari Park, Shuttleworth Park and now Center Parcs), receiving over 1 million visits per year between them, are generally the result of estate owners capitalising on their manor houses and/or parklands while also diversifying into more commercial wildlife and heritage-based interests. Beyond these and the larger public parks such as Rushmere and Ampthill, the landscape remains relatively unexplored. The tourism sector should therefore have an interest in promoting the wider Greensand Country as a destination, particularly small-scale businesses that may not have public recognition in their own right.

As identified in 1.4, walking is a key activity for current users, and could attract more visitors. There is an extensive network of public footpaths (458km of public rights of way in the NCA), including the 64km Greensand Ridge Walk, which follows the grain of the countryside along the scarp with fine views off the ridge, crosses many of the parklands, heath, and woodlands, and offers opportunities to visit many of the more scenic villages. There is also now a Greensand Cycleway, which mainly follows quiet country lanes with several more challenging off-road sections as alternatives. Mountain biking is popular at places such as Rowney Warren and Aspley Heath, as well as boating on the Grand Union Canal.

The popularity of horse riding has led to a profusion of 'pony paddocks' across parts of the area. This may have brought some economic benefit (according to the British Horse Industry Confederation, the equine industry nationally provides direct and indirect employment to 220-270,000 people, similar to the farming industry) at the expense of some of the area's landscape character. There is a good network of bridleways in the area, but routes are all linear rather than circular, and it is difficult to find parking for a horse box on the narrow roads.

Recreational shooting is a significant contributor to the economic viability of many rural estates; the JAWS suggested that "many landowners have retained their woodlands partly because of the value for game rearing and shooting". Bedfordshire is now internationally famous for its deer, both captive and wild, and this resource is concentrated in the Greensand Country, where in past centuries hunting was a significant economic activity within the large estates – at least 5 companies offer accompanied recreational stalking opportunities in the area. (Professional stalking is also carried out for deer control, supported by the sale of wild venison). A number of larger estates on the Ridge also offer recreational game shooting (generally partridge and pheasant), with large areas of land (largely woodland) being managed specifically for this purpose.

1.5.2.4 Other uses

In places the excavation of sand or aggregates is still active and within the hands of large private companies; while the volume of production has shrunk, the value of these quarries is still significant. Continued small-scale quarrying of locally distinctive stone and sand would help to maintain and enhance the historic built environment. There are also opportunities to agree restoration plans and management agreements between landowners, operators and local authorities for existing and former extraction and quarry sites that demonstrate geological, landscape, biodiversity and public access benefits.

While there are none operational at present, it seems likely that solar farms will come to the area over the coming years: solar is one of the UK's priority renewable energy technologies, and economic viability has increased dramatically in recent years. According to Central Bedfordshire Council, solar farms represent "an excellent opportunity to deliver a biodiversity net gain for the area by providing a largely undisturbed habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna". Solar power could also support the viability of agricultural businesses. Wind power is not generally viewed as being appropriate for the area in planning terms, although the Double Arches wind turbine (at 450ft) is currently the tallest in the country.

1.5.3 SKILLS

Those organisations that are actively managing the area's landscape heritage possess a range of management and practical skills. However, as ownership has fragmented and previous land uses have become less economically viable, there has been a significant decline across the area in the skills required to manage woodland (both commercially and for conservation), heathland/grassland, historic parkland and the historic environment. In order to reverse the decline in landscape character, the Partnership will need to invest in these skills for land managers, paid workers and volunteers (this is covered further in the Threats and Opportunities section).

I.5.4 STRATEGIES AND POLICIES AFFECTING THE AREA

I.5.4.1 National

The Natural Environment White Paper – “The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature” (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)

Published in 2011, this set out the Government’s vision for the natural environment over the next 50 years. The plans within the White Paper act on the recommendations of the “Making Space for Nature” report which was an independent review of England’s wildlife sites, led by Professor John Lawton (see below). Three of the White Paper’s main ambitions link directly to the work of the GCLP:

- protecting and improving our natural environment
- growing a green economy
- reconnecting people with nature

“Making Space For Nature: a Review of England’s Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network” (Professor John Lawton et al for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)

Published in 2009 as an independent review of England’s wildlife sites and ecological networks, this was the first report to focus on the principle of ecological networks operating at a variety of scales including the landscape-scale. The proposed approach focuses on four principles:

- More – creating new wildlife sites;
- Bigger – making wildlife sites larger, and buffering them from external pressures;
- Better – making wildlife sites more robust and diverse through better management;
- Joined-up – enhancing connections between sites by joining up through physical corridors or through ‘stepping stones’

This overall approach to enhancing the resilience and coherence of England’s ecological networks is the main driver behind the approach to the GCLP’s habitat-related threads, ‘Living Heaths’ and ‘Working Woodlands’. Enough habitat ‘fragments’ remain for an initial focus on making core sites ‘better’ because they are the core ‘pool’ from which species will spread.

However, like much of England, the wider ecological networks are fragmented and the ‘more, bigger and joined-up’ approach underpinning wider elements of the thread will seek to re-connect and enhance the wider network.

England Biodiversity Strategy: Biodiversity 2020 – DEFRA

This strategy has the following mission for 2020:

To halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.

The GCLP, and the Living Heaths / Working Woodlands thread in particular, will deliver against three of the outcomes:

- better wildlife habitats with 90% of priority habitats in favourable or recovering condition and securing 50% of SSSIs in favourable condition, while maintaining at least 95% in favourable or recovering condition
- more, bigger and less fragmented areas for wildlife, with no net loss of priority habitat and an increase in the overall extent of priority habitats by at least 200,000 ha
- by 2020, significantly more people will be engaged in biodiversity issues, aware of its value and taking positive action

The GCLP is placing significant emphasis on the need not just to create, enhance and enlarge but also to ensure that longer-term sustainable management mechanisms and processes are in place, with a strong focus on ‘positive conservation management’ principles being established.

Biodiversity Action Plan

Some of the habitats of “principal importance” included in Section 41 of the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act are found along the Greensand Ridge, particularly woodlands, heathlands and grasslands. In addition, 141 species of principal importance from the NERC Act have been recorded from within the Greensand Ridge.

I.5.4.2 Local

Beds & Luton Biodiversity Action Plan

There is a suite of species and habitat action plans, recently revised and updated, of which several are relevant to the GCLP:

Species Action Plans:

- Adder
- Arable plants
- Hazel Dormouse

Habitat Action Plans

- Lowland Heathland
- Lowland Dry Acidic grassland
- Lowland Meadows
- Wood Pasture and Parkland
- Woodland
- Wet Woodland
- Floodplain Grazing Marsh
- Traditional Orchards

All of the projects under the Living Heaths/Working Woodlands thread will be making a contribution to the BAP targets in some way.

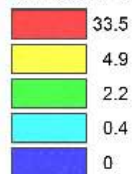
A map showing the biodiversity hotspots can be found at page 43.



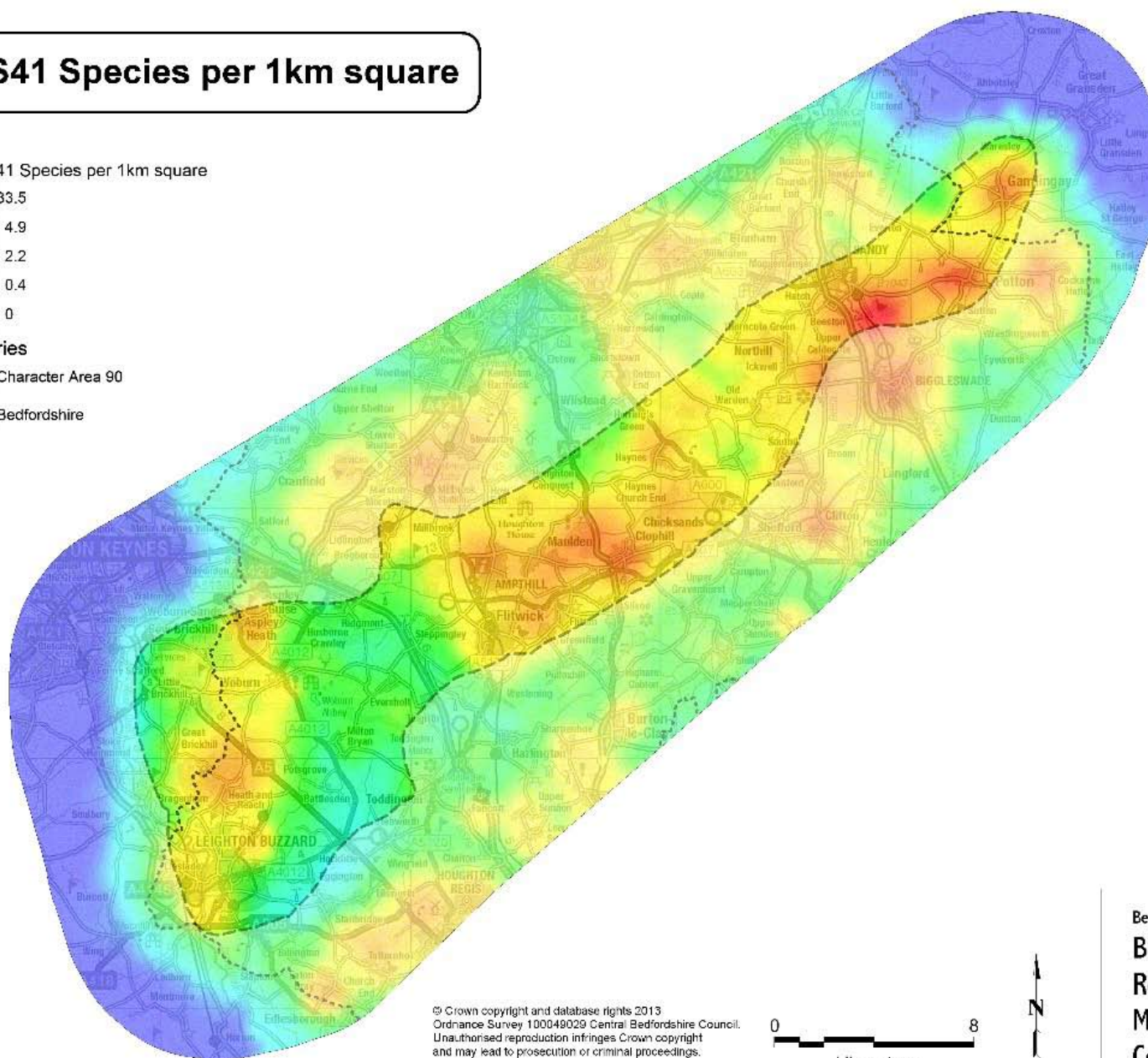
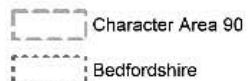
*Upper: Rammamere Heath, Greensand Ridge LCA & Middle: Rammamere Meadow, Greensand Ridge LCA by Greensand Trust, Copyright © 2016
| Lower: Traditional Orchard in Greensand Country.*

NERC S41 Species per 1km square

NERC S41 Species per 1km square



Boundaries



© Crown copyright and database rights 2013
Ordnance Survey 100049029 Central Bedfordshire Council.
Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright
and may lead to prosecution or criminal proceedings.

0 8
kilometres

Bedfordshire & Luton
Biodiversity
Recording &
Monitoring
Centre



Biodiversity hotspots in National Character Area 90

Central Bedfordshire Environmental Framework

This is the umbrella framework for all of CBC's environmental plans and strategies – at the time of writing it had recently been out for public consultation. One area for consultation was whether the Greensand Ridge NIA should be treated differently in planning terms by specifying the types of development that are appropriate within the area, as well as being required to meet different standards of habitat protection / enhancement to the rest of Central Bedfordshire.

Local Plans

The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan is currently in development and is due to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in December 2017. According to the Council, it will “support our ambitions to strengthen our economy through new investment, jobs and better infrastructure while at the same time preserving the varied character of our market towns and villages and our attractive landscape.” One of the four key elements of its approach is “recognising the importance of protecting Central Bedfordshire's historic settlements and unique landscape”.

Greensand Ridge Local Development Strategy

The Greensand Ridge Local Action Group (LAG), managed by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC), has been awarded £1.443m LEADER funding to invest in local projects between 2015 and 2020. LEADER is part of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) and funds ‘bottom up’ approaches to rural development.

The Greensand Ridge LAG is made up of people from the local community and the local public and private sectors, including farmers and landowners. The LAG decides on which projects will be funded in their area, and their specific local priorities are set out in the Greensand Ridge Local Development Strategy (LDS).

The LDS vision remains for the Greensand Ridge LAG area to become a “green oasis” for a part of England that is becoming increasingly urbanised.

Its specific priorities are:

- ‘Stay a little longer’: develop the small-scale visitor economy
- ‘Farm2Plate’: sustainable development of the local food & drink sector
- ‘Buy Local’: developing rural services through micro-enterprise

Local Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategies and Plans

The Bedfordshire & Luton GI strategy (2007) identifies key areas for investment in GI. Its 5 themes are Biodiversity, Landscape, Historic Environment, Access Routes & Accessible Greenspaces. It particularly recognises need to engage people and develop visitor facilities and opportunities. The Greensand Ridge, Ouzel Valley, Flit Valley and Ivel Valley are all identified as part of the priority GI network.

The Mid Bedfordshire GI Plan (2008) and Luton and Southern Bedfordshire GI Plan (2009) explore the GI network in greater detail. There are also parish level GI plans, which have contributed to the evidence base as well as acting as guiding documents.

Forest of Marston Vale Trust – The Forest Plan

The Forest of Marston Vale, one of twelve Community Forests designated by the Government in the late 1990s to demonstrate the contribution of environmental improvement to economic and social regeneration, overlaps the LP area along its northern boundary (it covers 2,178 ha, or 8% of the NCA). It aims to plant over 5 million trees by 2031 to cover 30% of its total area in woodland.

Already it has achieved 10% woodland cover by planting over 1 million trees as well as working with surrounding landowners to promote woodland cover within the landscape formerly dominated by the brick industry.



Upper: Greensand Country tourist infrastructure | Middle: Promoted routes signage | Lower: Silver-washed Fritillary (Argynnis paphia), Pedley Wood.

I.5.5 Landscape Management mechanisms affecting the area

I.5.5.1 Designations

The Greensand Country is affected by a number of different conservation designations.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) cover 2% (5.6km²) of the area of the NCA. While this is higher than the rest of Bedfordshire (only 1%), it is still very low compared to the national average of 8%, despite 40% of Bedfordshire's SSSI being within the NCA. When last assessed by Natural England most of the area's SSSI were in a favourable (65% by area – much higher than the national average of 37%) or unfavourable recovering (30% by area) condition.

County Wildlife Sites (CWS) are assessed differently to SSSI, as they are judged to be in positive conservation management if they are being managed to preserve or enhance their wildlife interest. This could include the site being registered in a Countryside Stewardship Scheme; having an active management plan; or efforts by individual land owners or managers. 72% (73% by area) of the CWS in the NCA are in positive conservation management, compared to only 45% across England (Defra, 2012). There is some variation between habitats, with most woodlands and wetlands being appropriately managed, but only about half of the area covered by heathland and lowland meadow.

A map showing the County Wildlife Sites in Positive Conservation Management Condition can be found at page 46.

Conservation Areas provide some legal protection for areas of special architectural or historic interest which merit preservation. There are 24 within the Landscape Partnership area. **Listed Building** (1099 in the area) and **Scheduled Monument** (36) status also provide protection by requiring specific consent for works to them.

Registered parks and gardens do not have the same legal protection within the planning system as listed buildings, scheduled monuments or conservation areas, although their significance is a “material consideration” for the local planning authority when considering any proposed development affecting these sites or their settings.

I.5.5.2 Agri-environment schemes

The Ecological Evidence Base compiled for the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area showed that at 2013 there had been reasonable take-up (34% in the Bedfordshire section of the NCA) of agri-environment schemes (Environmental Stewardship and Woodland Grant Schemes), although there were some noticeable gaps in coverage.

A primary objective of agri-environment schemes has been the conservation of historic parklands (including targeted support for the conservation and restoration of historic parkland features). However, analysis of the physical extent of parklands in Bedfordshire reveals that parklands have reduced in size by over 50% and their biodiversity has also diminished with 56% of the total area not meeting ‘good’ condition and 29% being allocated to the ‘restore’ Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) category. A similar picture exists for Buckinghamshire and Cambridgeshire.

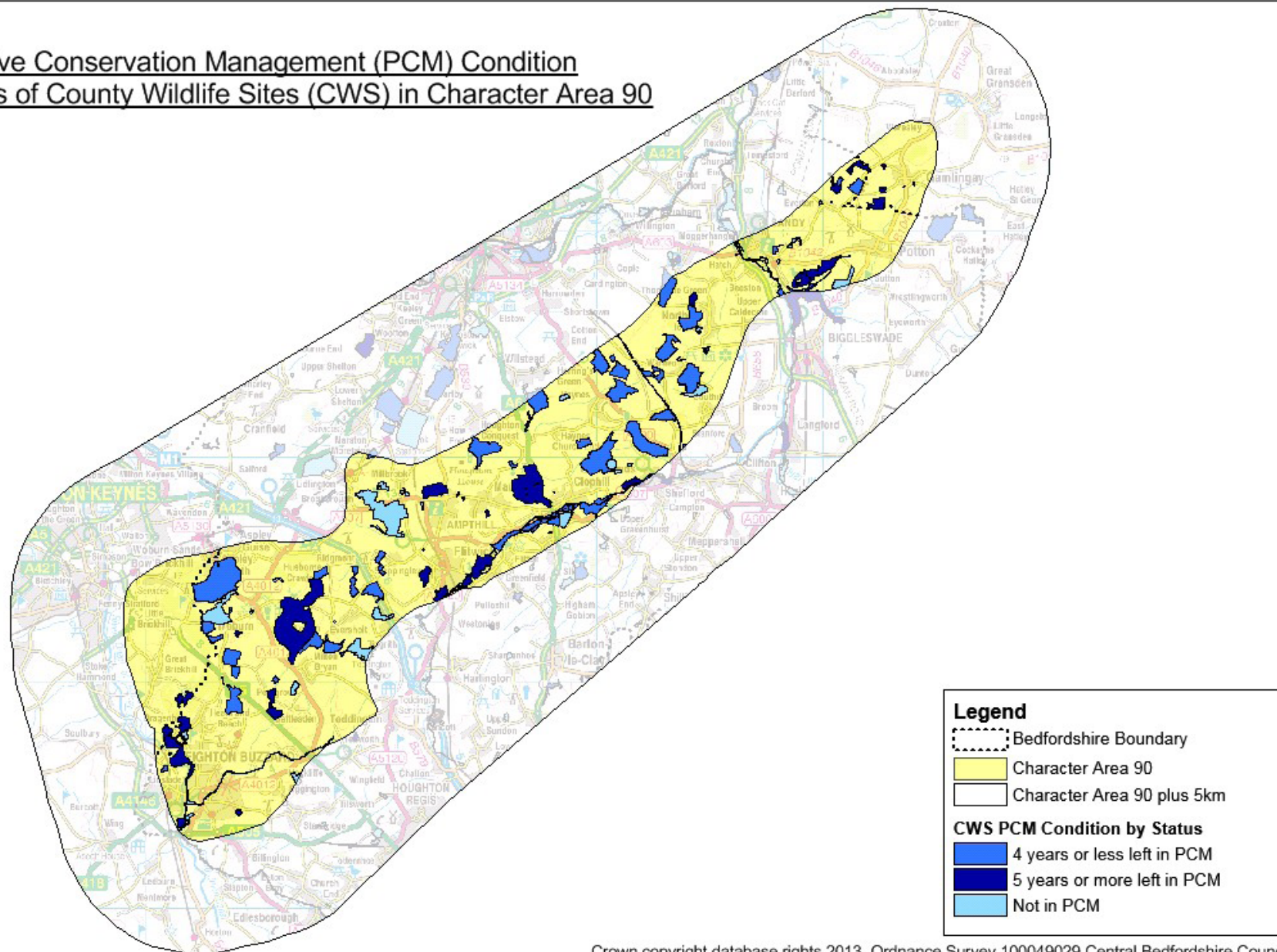
In 2015 Countryside Stewardship (CS) was launched to replace the Environmental Stewardship and Woodland Grant Schemes. Landowners can apply for funding to support land management options and capital works in support of environmental priorities.

The priorities for the Greensand Ridge NCA include:

- Maintaining, restoring and creating priority habitats (particularly to enlarge existing sites or help join up habitat networks) and supporting priority species that depend on these habitats
- Improving water quality and addressing flood risk
- Active management to ensure the long-term survival of historic environment features and protects them against damage and decay (due particularly to arable ploughing, forestry, tree and scrub growth and erosion from livestock)
- Bringing woodland into active management, and planting woodland to address biodiversity, water quality and flood risk
- Maintain and restore landscape features (such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees, small farm woodlands, in-field trees and ponds)

Take-up to date has been lower than for the previous schemes, and the GCLP can play a role in promoting it across the area. It remains to be seen how Britain's exit from the European Union will affect the Countryside Stewardship scheme, however we anticipate that some form of agri-environment scheme will continue to be provided.

Positive Conservation Management (PCM) Condition
Status of County Wildlife Sites (CWS) in Character Area 90



Crown copyright database rights 2013. Ordnance Survey 100049029 Central Bedfordshire Council
 © Natural England copyright 2013



SECTION 2



SECTION 2: THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 DECLINE IN LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND HABITAT
- 2.2 LACK OF JOINED UP, LONG TERM MANAGEMENT
- 2.3 LOSS OF TRADITIONAL BUILDING AND LAND MANAGEMENT SKILLS
- 2.4 UNSYMPATHETIC DEVELOPMENT
- 2.5 LACK OF AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE AREA
- 2.6 RECREATIONAL PRESSURE
- 2.7 CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT



Sandstone hills adjacent to the Flit Valley LCA.

2 THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section considers the ongoing risks to the landscape heritage of Greensand Country as well as the opportunities to address these through the Landscape Partnership scheme.

2.1 DECLINE IN LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND HABITAT

Threat: The distinctive character of the Greensand Country is in decline and particularly vulnerable to change.

Economic forces over the last century, as well as a resultant fragmentation of ownership, have led to significant changes in land use and the decline of traditional land management practices. Agricultural intensification has led to large scale

harvesting and other insensitive changes in management regimes, such as the removal of large old trees and hedgerows; many sites have been ‘improved’ for agricultural purposes, while others have been affected by the addition of nutrients and other chemicals from nearby intensively farmed land. A resurgence in commercial conifer planting has affected the biodiversity of semi-natural woodlands. More recently, leisure uses such as pony paddocks / stabling and golf driving ranges have reduced biodiversity and added visual ‘clutter’ to the landscape.

These changes have led over the last century to the loss of much of the area’s key habitat, as well as the fragmentation, isolation and decline in quality of what remains, with no form of protection for many sites.

In particular:

- The 24 extant parkland sites within the area have declined in coverage by over 50%, with smaller fragments being in danger of being permanently lost; their biodiversity value has also diminished with 56% of the total area not meeting 'good' condition and 29% being allocated to the 'restore' Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) category.
- Just 37ha of lowland heath (one of the most threatened habitats in Great Britain, and internationally important) remains on the Ridge, representing all of Bedfordshire's resource.
- Semi-natural grassland declined by 97% in the 50 years prior to 1984, and losses have continued since.

These isolated fragments of habitat are ecologically vulnerable and not sustainable in the long term (the more isolated and fragmented a habitat is, whether rare or common, the more likely it is to decline in quality and eventually disappear, regardless of efforts to preserve it). Species such as adders and natterjack toads are not able to migrate quickly, and are tied to specific habitats, leaving them prone to localised extinctions.

There has also been a general reduction and deterioration of geology sites, and historic features such as sandstone structures and park railings.

The immediate challenge for the Landscape Partnership is to reverse this decline and fragmentation by restoring and enhancing key sites and features across the area, aiming to create ecological networks at a landscape scale.



Opportunities to address:

- Reinstall heath and acid grassland in identified priority areas, including felling of plantation trees
- Create and manage new heathland and grassland habitat from former arable farmland on low nutrient soils
- Plant new woodland in appropriate locations for biodiversity and recreation as well as to meet a growing demand for woodfuel
- Restore parkland character in areas where it has become fragmented, enhancing the specific features that give character to each parkland and its context within the wider landscape.
- Promote Countryside Stewardship (and any future agri-environment schemes) as a means of creating new wildlife rich areas, or stepping stones and corridors between areas
- Manage other sites for biodiversity such as roadside verges and horse pastures

*Upper: Lowland heath at RSPB,
The Lodge, Sandy | Middle: Damage
to sandstone wall | Lower: Avenue
restoration, Woodbury Hall, Everton by
Alison Farmer Associates,
Copyright © 2016*

2.2 LACK OF JOINED UP, LONG TERM MANAGEMENT

Threat: The distinctive landscape of Greensand Country requires a joined-up, long-term approach to landscape management. However, it has no formal designation and so has missed out on the strategic partnership and investment approach taken to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks. (The western part of the Ridge was considered for AONB status in the 1960's, and was rejected on the basis of being too small rather than on landscape quality grounds.)

Much of the loss of landscape character and habitat identified above is caused or exacerbated by the fragmentation of ownership and management, together with the lack of a common vision, understanding and strategic framework at a landscape scale. Inappropriate land management and neglect are widespread, together with an increasing lack of understanding of the area's landscape character. Where management of the landscape has been undertaken it has been piecemeal, unsystematic, and based on opportunity rather than need.

The lack of a strategic, co-ordinated approach has led to the following:

- Failure to fulfil the economic potential of certain land uses such as forestry
- Failure to find economies of scale and realise value for money
- Lack of joined-up approaches to managing biodiversity (e.g. controlling invasive species), and a lack of connections between key habitats

As a result, invasive species are hampering efforts to conserve and enhance habitats (such as muntjac deer in woodlands and Himalayan Balsam in watercourses). A shortage of graziers and grazing infrastructure is affecting the economic viability of maintaining grasslands. Repairs to historic features, where made, can be inappropriate; or, features may be replaced by cheaper alternatives not in keeping with their surroundings.

Lack of understanding of the historic design intention for historic parkland can result in inappropriate management leading to loss of form and structure. Habitats such as parkland have seen a low take-up of agri-environment schemes, thus furthering neglect.

In the future, increased economic pressures on land-based businesses as well as competition for both public and private funds for conservation and stewardship may push the management of the landscape heritage still further down the agenda.

The challenge for the Landscape Partnership is to develop a consistent approach to managing the landscape that balances the protection of habitat and historic features with the need of land owners and businesses to remain viable and maximise returns from the land.

Opportunities to address:

- Develop new partnerships between conservation organisations, land managers and local communities to take a long-term approach to managing the landscape
- Provide advice to farmers and woodland owners on using Countryside Stewardship to provide the best benefit for biodiversity based on a landscape scale approach
- Provide ‘entry-level’ grants to landowners to bring their land into positive management
- Develop collaborative approaches with historic parkland owners to make a difference at a landscape scale
- Improve the sustainability and resilience of the ecological network by bringing under-managed areas of priority habitat into positive management
- Manage existing woodlands to ensure age diversity and contribution to the identity of the Greensand Country, reinforcing local sense of place
- Build on the establishment of a Working Woodlands Centre at Maulden Wood as a hub for woodland management
- Facilitate grazing at a landscape scale, and provide brokerage between landowners and graziers
- Build up the data held by the Landscape Partnership in order to measure impact on the landscape over time
- Engage key stakeholders in debating the long-term future of the landscape
- Investigate and support innovative ways of improving the economic viability of conservation land management



Upper: Sandy Smith Nature Reserve, grazing management | Middle: GSCLP Consultation Event | Lower: Locally produced charcoal



Sandstone wall erosion.

2.3 LOSS OF TRADITIONAL BUILDING AND LAND MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Threat: Together with the decline in land management practices has come a gradual reduction in the skilled workforce, and therefore a loss of traditional skills for maintaining the area's landscape heritage, at both the management and practical level.

Without the availability of these skills, the Landscape Partnership will be considerably restricted in its ability to restore habitats, features and the management practices on which they will depend in the longer term.

Opportunities to address:

- Train up local people in the practical heritage skills needed for the custodianship of the landscape, expanding the available paid and volunteer workforce
- Provide advice and training for land owners and managers in the management of their holdings for both conservation and contribution to landscape character.
- Use successful restoration projects such as St Mary's Church Clophill and the Swiss Gardens (previously the two significant sites on the Heritage at Risk register) as a showcase for traditional heritage skills
- Seek opportunities for reopening local quarry sites to ensure provision of local building stone in the restoration and conservation of sandstone structures and or negotiate the use of sandstone where it is a waste product from quarrying.

2.4 UNSYMPATHETIC DEVELOPMENT

Threat: Although the Greensand Country was not greatly developed for much of the 19th and 20th centuries, in the decades following World War II development took its toll. Major trunk roads and rail lines cutting through the area have scarred the landscape, reduced tranquillity, disrupted traditional field patterns and increased traffic on rural roads.

This improved connectivity (particularly to London) has contributed to expansion of the larger settlements within and around the Greensand Country (e.g. Milton Keynes, Leighton Buzzard, Flitwick and Sandy) and most of the villages, with a degree of ribbon development. The % of the NCA that is classed by the CPRE as 'disturbed' increased from 24% in the 1960's to 67% in 2007.

Quarrying of the Greensand sands, the digging of peat, the extraction of sand and gravel and the removal of Fuller's Earth resulting in flooded pits has, both historically and more recently, dramatically changed the landscape. Where sites have not been restored with nature conservation or landscape character in mind, there has been a loss of the traditional landscape and the creation of new landscapes of quarry lakes and wetlands, pits and steep slopes.

The lack of any formal designation for the area may make it difficult to prevent insensitive development from further weakening the Greensand Country's landscape character, and threatening ecological networks. There is a trend for infill development in villages (linear settlements such as Maulden and Clophill are particularly vulnerable to this) as well as the conversion of farm buildings to residential or small business units. Meanwhile, much greater housing growth is projected for the surrounding areas, which will affect the views from the Ridge as well as increasing visitor pressure and road congestion.

Opportunities to address:

- Work to influence the planning system so that new development does not adversely affect landscape character and damage the ecological network, at both the local authority and neighbourhood level
- Map the cones of visibility from key viewpoints to protect from future development in adjacent landscapes.
- Plant new woodlands on the ridge in a few appropriate locations to help screen new development beyond it
- Restore quarry sites to key habitats, as at Sandy Heath Quarry where a large area of heathland is being created
- Work with local communities to raise awareness of local design character, to influence planners and developers
- Work with planners, architects, builders and stonemasons to ensure that both new build and the restoration of older buildings reflect the local vernacular architecture and character
- Run courses to ensure people understand the appropriate heritage building skills that are required for the sandstone.
- Work with quarry owners to encourage sympathetic reversion to appropriate habitat after quarrying has ceased.



Upper: M1 cutting through Greensand Country | Middle: Former fullers earth quarry | Lower: Sympathetic development at Old Warden



2.5 LACK OF AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE AREA

Threat: The ‘secret’ nature of this landscape means that there is a low level of understanding and awareness of its distinctiveness and significance. Many parts of the area remain relatively undiscovered; there is a relative lack of promoted recreational walking and cycling routes, despite a reasonable Rights of Way network; and certain key sites lack public access (in some cases for conservation reasons).

This makes it more difficult to engage local people in protecting and conserving it, and reduces the viability of generating income from visitors to replace some of the lost economic value of our priority habitats. It also means that opportunities to use the landscape as a resource for learning, recreation and other benefits are lost.

Even where people are already users of the landscape, there can be a lack of understanding of the management practices required to conserve and enhance its biodiversity and distinctiveness. For example, there can be resistance to the removal of trees in favour of heathland or grassland; or to re-introducing grazing to sites where this affects how they are used recreationally.

Opportunities to address:

- Create new branding, signage and targeted promotional activity to reinforce the identity of the Greensand Country and attract more (and a wider range of) people
- Engage local tourism and leisure businesses in promoting the area further afield
- Enhance people’s appreciation of the Greensand Country’s distinctive landscape by creating stronger ‘gateways’, opening up key viewpoints, and links between the landmarks
- Enable people to feel welcome in this landscape and have the confidence to go out into the countryside
- Raise awareness of the existing infrastructure of footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways, and provide more seating and interpretation along promoted trails
- Raise awareness of the importance of the landscape heritage and the need to conserve it through promotion, interpretation and events (such as guided walks)
- Improve interpretation of local geology through use of sand extraction geological sites and historic pits as features of the landscape.
- Use creative and social activities as a way to engage with audiences who are not immediately interested in landscape, for example by telling the stories of the landscape through music, art or photography.
- Engage local communities in bringing forward small-scale heritage conservation projects, using the evidence base from the studies commissioned in the Development Phase as a catalyst
- Use the school curriculum and the themes in the Partnership to inspire and welcome teachers into the landscape and give them the tools to help their students explore and learn about the multi-faceted heritage.
- Catch people whilst they are young and give them the knowledge that it is a safe place to be through mechanisms such as Forest Schools and working with school groups.
- Involve children and young people in order to attract families, as well as finding local champions who will bring others with them

2.6 RECREATIONAL PRESSURE

Threat: While much of the landscape remains relatively unexplored, the Greensand Country's most popular sites may increasingly struggle to manage the mounting demands of both visitors and residents for the 'outdoor experience', particularly given the considerable housing growth around the area. Some of these sites are fragile in terms of their ecological or historic interest, and recreational pressure, combined with visitors' lack of understanding of their impact, is already causing issues such as trampling (causing erosion and compaction of soil); disturbance of animals; illegal access; and anti-social behaviour. Inconsiderate behaviour may also cause private landowners to resist greater promotion of the rights of way network and allowing greater public access to their land.

The challenge is to prevent any further degradation of the resource which would undermine both livelihoods and public interest, while attracting more people to the landscape. The NIA Access and Engagement Framework (2014) advocates an approach that uses popular visitor 'hubs' with good facilities and visitor management as key 'gateways' to the wider countryside. These hubs provide an initial experience and help raise awareness of the importance of the area and its heritage, and help users explore safely and responsibly.

Opportunities to address:

- Promote sustainable 'hub' sites (such as Rushmere CP and the RSPB Lodge at Sandy), and increase their visitor capacity where necessary, in order to take the pressure off sites that are fragile/important in nature conservation terms
- Encourage people to explore the landscape further by using the well-known sites as 'gateways' into the wider public rights of way network, and promoting trails and interpretation in less vulnerable areas
- Create new accessible green spaces and recreational routes (e.g. along Flit Valley), in order to respond to greater visitor demand in the longer term, particularly in areas of current deficiency (e.g. around Sandy and Potton)
- Aim to gain new designations (or extend existing, e.g. Kings Wood NNR) in order to provide better protection and raise awareness of vulnerable sites

- Consider re-routing rights of way where this would improve overall accessibility while reducing impact
- Engage with local landowners and other stakeholders to promote a welcoming approach (e.g. "Walkers are Welcome") that also encourages considerate use of the countryside
- Explore the feasibility of a Visitor Payback Scheme, through which a voluntary donation to the Landscape Partnership would be included within tourism fees and charges at the point of payment.



Upper: Path erosion at Cooper's Hill, Ampthill | Middle: Chicksands Bike Park & Lower: Signage at Rushmere Park, by Alison Farmer Associates, Copyright © 2016



Flooded path in Maulden Woods.

2.7 CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Threat: Climate change is likely to have an increasing impact on already stretched natural resources in the area, particularly water.

An anticipated fall in summer rainfall of up to 15% of the long term average will require more irrigation and put pressure on water resources, which are already facing increased demand from both housing and industrial development. Over-abstraction of the Greensand (Woburn Sands) aquifer would result in lower water tables, lower base flows in the rivers and the drying out of wetland sites, negatively affecting the species that depend on these habitats. Meanwhile, the fragmented nature of Greensand Country habitats makes them more prone to habitat loss and local species extinctions as a result of climatic and other events.

The winter rainfall may increase by around 10% but this is likely to be in storm events; this could particularly impact the Greensand soils, which are prone to erosion if left uncovered.

More severe flood events will necessitate careful planning of flood defences on local rivers such as the Ouse, Ivel, Ouzel and Flit. Many of the watercourses already have high nutrient levels which can cause significant damage to some of the sensitive wetland sites during and after flood events – the entire Greensand Country area is currently classified as Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.

Overall temperature increase in the area will be in line with European trends and may exceed 2deg C on average by the 2050s. This is unlikely in itself to change cropping patterns, which are more influenced by world prices, although the need to ensure food security may lead to a pressure for more land to be used for arable, despite its relative lack of suitability in many parts of the area. Warmer winters might make acid grassland and heathland prone to invasion by bracken.

Rising temperatures and rainfall declines may increase the difficulty in establishing new tree saplings which are now important in the expansion of woodlands, as conditions for new tree planting become more difficult. There is also a higher risk of some pests and diseases (e.g. ash dieback), fire (particularly on drier soils), and trees suffering stress.

There is a risk that evacuation of lower lying areas due to flooding may eventually result in a higher density of housing in the Greensand Country.

Opportunities to address:

- Protect and improve ecological networks so that species are able to move through the landscape in response to whatever climate changes happen
- Increase species and habitat resilience by encouraging a mosaic of habitats and reducing fragmentation
- Improve the in-channel environment of watercourses such as the Flit, in order to improve the rivers as habitat in their own right but also as corridors linking up the ecological network
- Adopt a more joined up approach to water management through the Upper and Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership
- Create models to show the consequence of climate change and its impact on flooding and housing pressure.

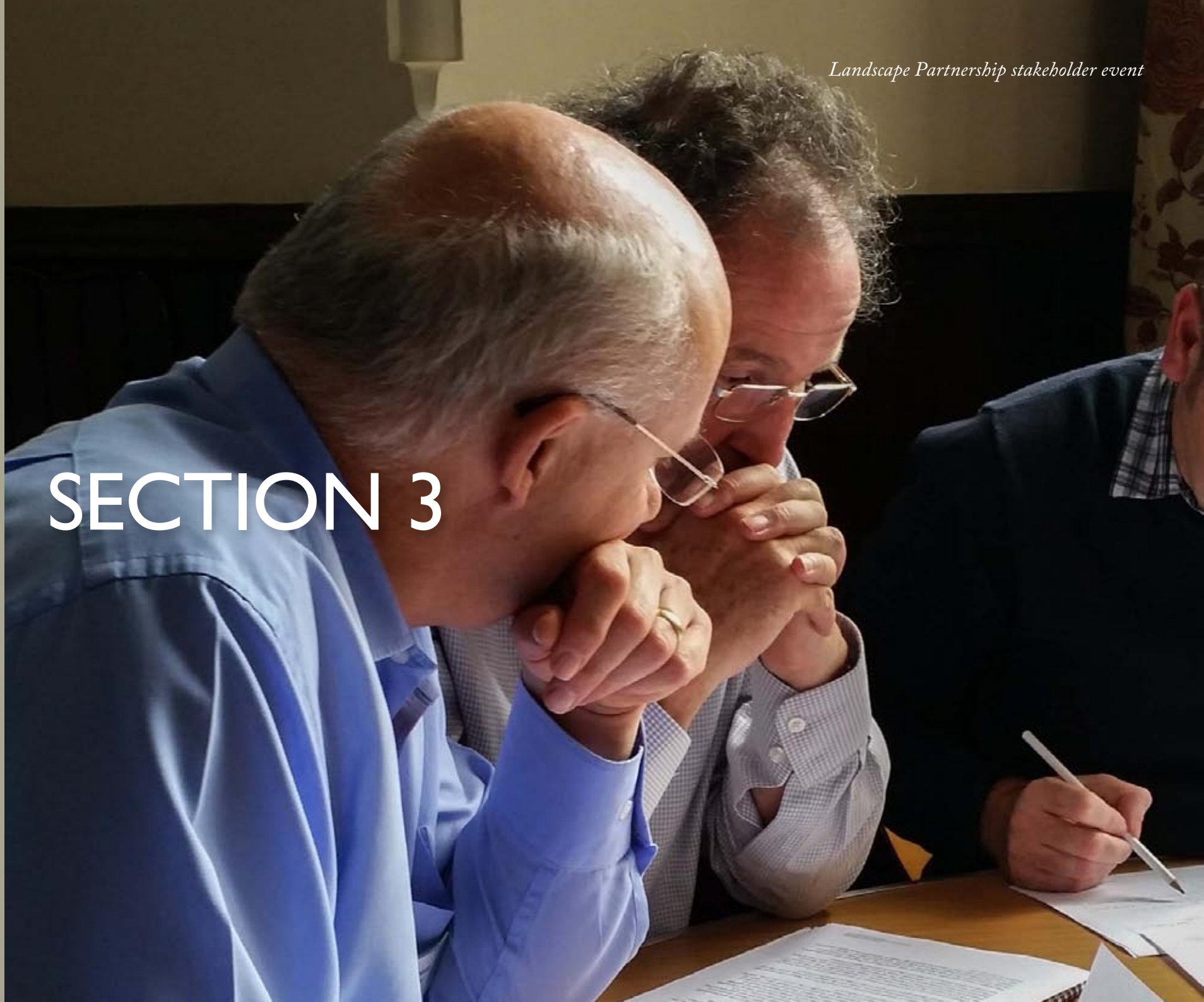


Flooding in Greensand Country Orchard



Flooding at Warden Abbey Vineyard.

SECTION 3



SECTION 3: THE SCHEME

- 3.1 VISION
- 3.2 AIMS
- 3.3 PROGRAMME STRANDS
- 3.4 PROJECTS
- 3.5 TIMETABLE
- 3.6 MAP
- 3.7 BUDGET SUMMARY
- 3.8 THE PARTNERSHIP
- 3.9 RISKS

Copyright © 2016 Greensand Country Landscape Partnership. All rights reserved. All photography Copyright © 2016 Lisa King | LJK Photography unless otherwise stated. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.



3 VISION

Our vision is for the Greensand Country to be a living and working landscape that is cherished by present and future generations.

By 2021 we will have reversed the gradual decline in the area's landscape character, and created a strong, community led partnership and strategic framework to promote the area's interests and secure the necessary long-term financial and community investment to sustain the area's distinctive natural and built heritage.

3.2 AIMS

Our four aims for our Landscape Partnership scheme 2017-21 are outlined below. Our longer-term aims are outlined in chapter 5 The Legacy.

3.2.1 RESTORE AND STRENGTHEN LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

In chapter 2 we saw that the Greensand Country's distinctive landscape character (with its significant yet weakening proportions of heathland/acid grassland, woodland and historic parkland) is in decline, and is not sustainable in the longer-term. Reversing this decline requires a concerted effort across the area to restore and conserve its priority habitats, creating ecological networks at a landscape scale (according to Lawton principles); as well as built environment features intrinsic to the landscape.

Our aim is not to turn the clock back to a previous age before modern development and agricultural intensification, which would not be feasible or desirable. Rather, we want to protect key elements of our landscape heritage at a level that can be

supported in the longer term in the context of a changing climate, through enlightened management practices, higher skills and knowledge levels, improved infrastructure and effective visitor management.

By the end of the programme we will have reversed the decline in the Greensand Country landscape and enabled it to thrive amidst increasing developmental pressure. The physical condition of our priority habitats will have improved, the coverage of these habitats will have increased, and a more robust ecological network will have been created. Historic and built environment features, and geological sites, will have been restored across the area.

3.2.2 RECONNECT LOCAL COMMUNITIES WITH THEIR LANDSCAPE

It is clear from our audience development research that the Greensand Country landscape is not well known or recognised, even among communities within and around the area. Building recognition is a vital first step in helping people understand and value the special and distinctive qualities of the landscape.

Audience development is about moving people along a spectrum of engagement. The specific engagement objectives for each of our five target audiences are:

- Active and interested regular users: encourage to become advocates and guides (“*Greensand Guides*”)
- Site/ attraction users: encourage to explore the landscape outside the key sites (“*Greensand Explorers*”)
- Non-users (resident): encourage to participate in new landscape-related activities (“*Local landscapes*”)
- Urban groups from neighbouring towns: work in partnership with partners outside the area to create bespoke opportunities (“*Go and meet the neighbours*”)
- New Residents: identify Greensand Country and the opportunities to get involved (“*New lives in a new landscape*”)

The programme will create numerous opportunities for people to get actively involved as volunteers, who will benefit by developing new skills and/or knowledge about the area’s heritage; increased confidence; and gaining satisfaction and fulfilment. We will also enable local communities to take action and ownership to conserve and promote their local heritage, for example through supporting the formation of community-led Friends or action groups as well as providing small grants.

3.2.3 CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE RURAL ECONOMIC GROWTH

If (as we have seen) the decline in the Greensand Country landscape has been driven principally by economic forces, then the sustainable development of the area’s land-based economy (particularly tourism/leisure, agriculture and forestry) is critical to the future of the landscape.



*Upper: Walking for Health in
Greensand Country, by Mike Fayers
| Middle: Schoolchildren
learning about medicinal plants,
by Jane Markham, Copyright © 2016
| Lower: Harvesting in
Greensand Country*



We will boost the local tourism and leisure economy by promoting the Greensand Country more effectively, as well as creating new visitor opportunities such as new or enhanced nature reserves, interpretation, events, walking and cycling routes – this will aim to increase both visitor numbers and spend per head. Meanwhile, enhanced access (such as walking and cycling trails) and visitor management will reduce ongoing erosion and deterioration of sites.

Increased skills and partnership working will increase the economic viability of forestry for building, fuel and woodland crafts.

By conserving, restoring and increasing priority habitats, we will provide increased ecosystem services and mitigation of climate change; and the re-introduction of traditional management techniques will enable land owners and managers to decrease their energy and water use.

3.2.4 CREATE A ROBUST, EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP FOR MANAGING THE LANDSCAPE

We saw in chapter 2 that the Greensand Country has never had a formal partnership taking a landscape scale approach to conservation across all key partners, which has contributed to the area's decline. A key aim is to develop the capacity of the Landscape Partnership so that it can provide sustainable governance and management of the landscape both during and beyond the life of the scheme.

By the end of the programme we will have a Partnership that has a common vision for the character of the built and natural environment; manages the landscape on the basis of whole ecosystems and networks rather than individual sites; takes a co-ordinated approach to issues such as controlling invasive species; and brings together different groups of heritage professionals to takes a more joined-up approach to landscape heritage management.

The Partnership will collectively contain the skills, staff and volunteer capacity to enable the stewardship of the landscape for generations to come; and it will enable landowners, managers, farmers, local community representatives and other stakeholders to share good practice and contribute to decisions about the future management of the landscape.

Moggerhanger House



3.3 PROGRAMME STRANDS

Our scheme is separated into seven strands, which collectively address the four aims above.

3.3.1 LIVING HEATHS AND WORKING WOODLANDS

The Living Heaths and Working Woodlands strand particularly focuses on achieving Aim 1: “Restore and strengthen landscape character”.

Heathland, acid and neutral grassland and woodlands are all key habitats within the Greensand Country landscape. This thread will take action to restore and strengthen these habitats in the longer term, including felling of plantation trees; introduction of appropriate grazing or restoration from arable land use on soils which continue to have low nutrient levels; and restoration of heath where it is visually significant and reinforces the change in character.

Four flagship projects across the area (at Rushmere Country Park to the west; Flitwick Moor and Cooper’s Hill near the centre; and the RSPB Lodge to the east) will achieve a step change in heathland restoration using traditional land management methods, while demonstrating and sharing these methods with local land managers.

A third party grant scheme will provide funding for the development of new areas of heather heathland, acidic grassland and neutral grassland creating the stepping stones and corridors to create a larger, more robust ecological network. We will particularly target opportunity sites identified in the NIA evidence base.

Habitat restoration achievements and impacts over time for the Landscape Partnership area as a whole will be measured and reported by mapping and digitising. All restoration projects will also provide opportunities for audience engagement and learning.

The Working Woodlands Centre (WWC) will deliver advice, training, support and the promotion of positive woodland management ‘under one roof’.

3.3.2 HISTORIC PARKLANDS

The Historic Parklands strand particularly focuses on achieving Aim 1: “Restore and strengthen landscape character”.

Historic Parkland is a major contributor to landscape character in the Greensand Country (nowhere else in Britain are there so many parklands concentrated within one landscape character area), yet it is becoming fragmented and under-managed. Parklands were created as a pleasure ground, for sport and as an expression of wealth – over time, they developed a specific biodiversity value due to the presence of permanent grassland, ageing trees and habitats such as ponds, hedges or boundary woodlands. Over 50% of this biodiversity has since been lost.

A third party grants programme will support parkland owners to enhance features in their situation, but will also support them to think at a landscape scale through the production of management plans as well as networking between owners and joint mentoring. New trails will be developed to link and interpret parklands clusters and engage local communities.

3.3.3 CELEBRATING THE GREENSAND COUNTRY

This strand particularly focuses on achieving Aim 2: “Reconnect local communities with their landscape.”

The Greensand Country has great aesthetic and cultural value, the story of which has not been fully told either locally or further afield. Our audience development research showed a real interest in knowing more about these aspects, especially among local people. Part of our challenge is to attract non-users of the landscape by finding new ways to inspire them.

Our projects will engage more people in the landscape through a range of creative activities such as storytelling, drama and photography. The past will be explored through researching and re-interpreting stories; the present by developing people's connection with the landscape today through photography and art; and the future through a series of talks and debates about the management of the landscape, which will feed into our Legacy Plan. A schools programme will ensure that children and young people learn about the area via links to the National Curriculum.

The focal point of all of these activities will be an annual Greensand Festival in 2018, 2019 and 2020. All creative and research outputs will be compiled, digitised and archived, with the best examples published online in video, audio and text format.

3.3.4 REVEALING THE GREENSAND COUNTRY

This strand particularly focuses on achieving Aims 2 (“Reconnect local communities with their landscape”) and 3 (“Contribute to sustainable rural economic growth”).

The Greensand Country sits as an oasis within an area of relatively high population density, with additional housing growth creating increased demand for recreation opportunities. While some well-known sites of high heritage value are relatively fragile and already experience visitor pressure, the wider Greensand Country landscape remains relatively unknown and unexplored. This presents the opportunity to draw more residents and visitors into the area, which will also benefit small-scale tourism and catering businesses, without threatening vulnerable sites and ecosystems.

Under this strand we will extend, enhance and promote the extensive rights of way and cycling networks, based on the ‘spine’ of the existing Greensand Ridge Walk and Greensand Cycleway. Additional new circular walks, cycle and horse riding routes will be created, with some walks targeted particularly at those moving to new housing developments. A new recreational route will be created to open up and tell the stories of the Flit Valley to walkers. All of these will be accompanied by new and improved interpretation and communications.

3.3.5 PROMOTING AND UNDERSTANDING THE GREENSAND COUNTRY

This strand also focuses on achieving Aims 2 (“Reconnect local communities with their landscape”) and 3 (“Contribute to sustainable rural economic growth”).

Our audience development and interpretation planning identified a need for a central scheme-wide communications strand to raise the profile and recognition of the area as a coherent landscape under a common brand, bringing together a range of promotional, marketing and communications and interpretation initiatives.

Specifically this will include a comprehensive Greensand Country website with linked co-ordinated social media and press activity; an interpretative map; and a GPS app and ‘micro-caches’. A single graphic designer will be used for all significant scheme communication in order to ensure consistency of appearance and quality; and a professional photographer commissioned to develop a bank of high quality images throughout the life of the scheme.

3.3.6 COMMUNITY PROJECTS

This strand contributes to all four programme aims.

A key part of reconnecting communities with their landscape is enabling them to explore, conserve and celebrate their local heritage features and maintain them into the future. We will do this through engagement, capacity building, facilitation and a small grant scheme. A proportion of the grant fund will be earmarked to restore individual sandstone structures identified in our audit; and the rest for the broader historic environment.

By giving local communities the inspiration, skills and capacity to plan, project manage, fund and deliver heritage projects, we will promote understanding, interpretation and management of historic environment features within those communities while also developing our own understanding of little known or understood elements of the heritage of the Greensand Country.

To kick off this strand, the Bedfordshire Geology Group will create three new 'geotrails' to reveal the geological history of the Greensand Ridge in order to give people a better understanding of this exciting geological feature.

3.3.7 HERITAGE SKILLS

This strand contributes to all four programme aims.

Building the skills base of the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership will underpin both the restoration of the landscape heritage and the stewardship of the landscape for generations to come. We will develop the skills of land owners and managers, and the paid and volunteer workforce, through a comprehensive training programme provided by specialist instructors. Training programmes will include land management for heritage, practical conservation and heritage skills, communication and visitor management skills, and capacity building for community groups.

We will bring new entrants into the heritage sector through a study programme and apprenticeship scheme provided for school leavers and those not in education, employment and training. This will particularly target young people (aged 16-24) who might not otherwise consider a career in conservation, and develop their employment skills in addition to vocational skills.



Skills training for habitat management

3.4 PROJECTS

3.4.1 LIVING HEATHS AND WORKING WOODLANDS

Project Code	Project Name	Project Summary	Project Lead
LH 1	Rushmere Heathland Restoration Project	Restoration of an area of former heathland (currently conifer plantation) within Rushmere Country Park, one of the 'core' heathland sites in Greensand Country. By increasing the amount of heathland within the project area, and improving the management of existing heath and woodland, lowland heath will become properly established within this part of the site. Desired outcome is to create heathland habitat within a 'woody' context, creating new structural diversity alongside enhancing biodiversity.	Greensand Trust
LH2	A Moor for all Seasons: Protecting Flitwick Moor for Wildlife and People	Restoration work and capital improvements to ensure the long-term sustainability and biodiversity interest of nationally important wildlife habitat at Flitwick Moor SSSI. In some areas, the wet woodland and acidic mire habitats have declined in condition because of their inaccessibility for management, and the cumulative effects of flooding causing a change in the local conditions. This project will improve the condition of these habitats by creating access to these remote parts of the site to allow traditional management practices, such as grazing, to take place. Flood defence and channel repair work will be done to divert flood water from entering onto sensitive habitats.	Wildlife Trust
LH3	Cooper's Hill Heathland Rescue	Restoration of lost heathland at Cooper's Hill SSSI. The site contains the largest remaining fragment of heath in the Greensand Country, but it is under constant threat. In recent years large areas of mature heather have been killed or damaged by outbreaks of heather beetle, and we are in danger of losing open heather habitat to grassland and scrub. This project will restore this lost heathland using traditional management methods; make the site more resilient to future heather beetle outbreaks; and improve the condition of the rest of the heathland by removing invasive trees and scrub. Improved on site interpretation and community engagement will help users better appreciate the uniqueness and fragility of this reserve.	Wildlife Trust
LH4	The Lodge Living Heath	Regeneration of over 30 hectares of former heathland from conifer plantation at The Lodge, Sandy. Heathland restoration began in 2005, but work remains to remove recurrent birch regeneration and bramble, and control bracken. This project will introduce dynamic management of regeneration now, so that it can be sustainably managed later using low intensity grazing. The project will be used to demonstrate and share heathland restoration techniques with local land managers. New interpretation will encourage an appreciation of wildlife in Greensand habitats, understanding the reasons why the land supports the habitats, telling the story of the land, its heritage and people, and encouraging involvement by local people.	RSPB
LH5	Habitat and Species Monitoring Project.	Mapping and digitising work to enable around 26 projects to report on habitat restoration achievements and impacts over time, both for individual sites and for the area as a whole. Mapping will be carried out at the start of each project and at the end of the programme, including up to date aerial photographs from a UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle). This project will manage species and habitat data in a standardised way providing maps to show habitat areas and species records, enabling easier reporting for each project and sharing the information with the wider community.	BMRC

Project Code	Project Name	Project Summary	Project Lead
LH6	Working Woodlands – Training and Advisory Project	Comprehensive programme of advice, training, support and networking opportunities under one ‘roof’ at the Working Woodlands Centre (WWC). Woodland is an integral part of the Greensand Country landscape; however, levels of management are extremely varied, with some woodlands in positive management, but others poorly managed or neglected. By offering small woodland owners advice and training, and supporting applications to the third party scheme (below), the project will provide a platform for sustainable management in the long-term.	Greensand Trust
LH7	Third party Grants Scheme.	Small grants programme reaching out to a wider range of partners (including farmers, other land owners/managers and community groups) to develop new areas of heather heathland, acidic grassland and neutral grassland and to bring woodlands into positive management across the landscape. This will complement the above projects strengthening our prime sites by buffering them, increasing their size and joining them up by creating corridors and stepping stones of habitat across the wider fabric of the Greensand Country landscape.	GSCLP delivery team

3.4.2 HISTORIC PARKLANDS

Project Code	Project Name	Project Summary	Project Lead
HP1	Stewardship of the heritage at the heart of Greensand Country	Small grants and support programme for parkland owners to enhance features within their own parks, while thinking at a landscape scale. The project will engage with parkland owners from across the area and bring them together, using best practice examples to demonstrate what can be achieved and providing ongoing mentoring support. Conservation Management Plans will be produced, leading to third party grants as well as applications to Countryside Stewardship.	Central Bedfordshire Council
HP2	A Story to Tell – Historic Parks in the Aspley Area	Development of a range of circular walks linking three historic parklands within one mile of the nationally renowned Woburn Park (at Aspley House, Crawley Park and Segenhoe), using existing rights of way. Interpretation in leaflet and electronic form will highlight the historic features on route and delve into the social history connected with people and place. The routes will provide easy walking conditions and attractive views of the Greensand Country.	Central Bedfordshire Council
HP3	A Story to Tell – Parklands of the Eastern Ridge	Development of a new trail drawing together the landscape and social history of the three large historic parklands which interconnect on the escarpment between Sandy and Gamlingay, utilising existing rights of way. Interpretation in leaflet and electronic form will highlight the social history, parkland features, biodiversity interest whilst the route provides attractive views of the Greensand Country and over the Ouse valley to the north.	Central Bedfordshire Council

3.4.3 CELEBRATING THE GREENSAND COUNTRY

Project Code	Project Name	Project Summary	Project Lead
CtGSC1	Stories of the Landscape	Unearthing and re-telling of 'hidden' stories about the people of Greensands Country. Volunteers will be recruited to research stories, particularly focused on the historic estates, their owners and the people who worked there. Professional creative practitioners (such as musicians, storytellers, theatre companies, animators, illustrators and writers), will be commissioned to generate engaging cultural products from this research that will reach wider audiences and begin to establish a sense of cultural identity for Greensand Country. The research and creative outputs will be archived for future reference.	GSCLP delivery team
CtGSC2	Your Views	A series of workshops, competitions, and open events using creative skills to celebrate the landscape and the people in it. The project will have a photography focus but will also incorporate writing, drawing, soundscapes and contemporary dance. The aim will be to reflect many voices and many views, and to capture people's emotional connections to the landscape now.	GSCLP delivery team
CtGSC3	Talks and debates	A series of talks and debates exploring challenging topics such as housing development, land management and tree felling in the context of the sustainable management of the Greensand Country landscape. These will take place in community centres, churches, scout huts and libraries and also as walking and talking in the outdoors. In the final year of the project key stakeholders such as local authorities, businesses, parish councils and local communities will be brought together for a conference.	GSCLP delivery team
CtGSC4	Greensand Festival	Annual 10 day festival (in June 2018, 2019 and 2020) showcasing the landscape and the scheme, helping to engage local communities, raise the area's profile and establish its cultural identity. Events will be planned and delivered by all project leads as well as additional partners (e.g. The Landmark Trust), and will include guided walks, talks, exhibitions, displays, pop-up storytelling events at popular sites, folk evenings, ghost stories, sketches and costumed interpretation, family activities, taster sessions for drawing and photography workshops, wildlife activities, local food and drink tasting, dancing and debate.	GSCLP delivery team GSCLP delivery team
CtGSC5	Learning Through Our Landscape	Four-year programme of school visits, each year engaging with different schools and focusing on a different theme of the Landscape Partnership. We will work with teachers and their classes to develop an understanding of the Greensand Country landscape and encourage further engagement with it. There will also be opportunities for more informal groups (e.g. Cubs and Brownies) to become involved.	GSCLP delivery team

3.4.4 REVEALING THE GREENSAND COUNTRY

Project Code	Project Name	Project Summary	Project Lead
RtGSC1	Destination Plus	Creation of a series of circular walks of 1-5 miles (using existing rights of way), starting in new housing estates at the edge of the project area, including signs and interpretation. The aim is to enable the 'Future Resident' audience to feel part of and understand the landscape.	Central Bedfordshire Council
RtGSC2 / RtGSC3	Extending the GSRW	Extension of the Greensand Ridge Walk (GSRW) at both ends (at Leighton Buzzard and into Gamlingay), and installation of gateway features at the new start / finish points. This will provide improved start / finish points for Bedfordshire's premier long distance walk and link walkers to facilities in Gamlingay and Leighton Buzzard.	Greensand Trust/ BRCC
RTGSC5	Connecting Communities to the GSRW	New 2-way signage and waymarking to provide local communities with better access to the GSRW, and walkers with information about the communities they are passing and their amenities.	Greensand Trust/ BRCC
RTGSC6	Making the Greensand Country accessible to all	Publication and promotion of comprehensive accessibility information about the GSRW and its associated routes, including details of terrain (surface/ gradients), pinch points, road crossings, resting places etc, to enable users to decide if routes / sections are suitable for their needs.	Greensand Trust/ BRCC
RtGSC8 / RtGSC9 / RtGSC10 / RtGSC11 / RtGSC12	Extending, signing and promoting the GSR cycleway	Extension, enhancement and promotion of the Greensand Cycleway (GSC). The route will be extended from Sandy to Gamlingay and into the centre of Leighton Buzzard, and new gateway features created (see RtGSC2 and 3). Signage will be installed for seven existing and two new circular routes off the linear Greensand cycleway. The Greensand cycleway will be linked to the national cycle network by creating the Chiltern link cycleway. We will create downloadable maps and interpretation to allow for self-guided exploration of the routes, and organize led rides to encourage and give confidence to leisure riders, future residents and resident non-users.	Sustrans
RtGSC4 / RtGSC13	Enhancing the GSRW and GSC maps	Creation of an integrated, fully updated map showing the GSRW, Greensand Cycleway (GSC) and all other associated routes and links, containing new information to engage people with the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape. Detailed maps for each individual route will also be available for download.	Greensand Trust/ BRCC
RtGSC14	Greensand Country on Horseback.	Creation of at least four circular rides on bridleways and quiet roads, where people can ride safely in the countryside with the minimum amount of risk from road traffic, have choices of places to ride and have the confidence to ride out and explore the countryside on horseback.	British Horse Society
RtGSC15	Flit Valley Walk	Creation of a new recreational route for walkers, runners and families using existing Rights of Way. The route will raise the public profile of the Greensand Country and offer an alternative, interactive trail (complete with interpretation boards and carved animal features) for residents and visitors to the area.	Flitwick Town Council

3.4.5 PROMOTING AND UNDERSTANDING THE GREENSAND COUNTRY

Project Code	Project Name	Project Summary	Project Lead
SWP1	Graphic design	Production of a distinctive Greensand Country graphic identity and style guide in order to ensure consistency of appearance across all media (both printed and on-line). Training and on-going support will be provided to help partners to conform to the guidelines.	GSCLP delivery team
SWP2	Interpretive map	Production of a single map to help increase recognition of the area, to be used as a base to which other information can be added. We will also produce standard maps showing the location of Greensand country within the region and within the UK.	GSCLP delivery team
SWP3	Photographs and illustration	Commissioning of professional photography to create a central bank of high-quality images for use across the Partnership, featuring the distinctive qualities of the Greensand Country as well as all of the projects (particular priority will be given to images of people, representing all our target audiences); and of small pieces of commercial illustration to bring the written word to life and convey the narrative of the Greensand Country in an accessible way.	GSCLP delivery team
SWP4	Website and social media	Creation of comprehensive website promoting both the landscape and the scheme, regularly updated with new content as it becomes available and with links to leading social media platforms. After the scheme, the site will become a principal vehicle for the legacy.	GSCLP delivery team
SWP5	Greensand GPS app	Creation of a GPS trigger app that will alert the user on passing a trigger location (such as project sites or other specific places of interest). The app will contain content from the website relevant to that location (such as stories, research findings, conservation projects, and creative outputs in visual and auditory forms), allowing information to be available on site, but not on panels, thus limiting visual intrusion and clutter.	GSCLP delivery team
SWP6	Greensand micro caches	Series of small 'caches' marking each restoration project, containing information presented in a quirky and witty style, designed to appeal particularly to family and young adult audiences. The caches will be included in the app but could also form treasure hunts and trails.	GSCLP delivery team
SWP7	Interpretation panels	Installation of interpretation boards, promoting the wider Greensand Country, at 5 of the top attractions across the area (proposed sites are Woburn, Rushmere, Ampthill Park, Shuttleworth and RSPB Lodge Sandy), encouraging the site/attraction visitor audience to explore further afield.	GSCLP delivery team
SW8	Welcome pack	Creation of a home-owners' pack delivered to new houses and available through estate agents and property developers (and online), containing a targeted set of leaflets about the area.	GSCLP delivery team
SW9	Revealing the Greensand Country leaflet.	Promotional campaign placing posters and leaflets where non-users will see them, such as libraries, village halls, schools, doctors' surgeries, pubs, railway stations, bus stops and petrol stations.	GSCLP delivery team

3.4.6 COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Project Code	Project Name	Project Summary	Project Lead
CP1	Community Heritage Projects	Small grant scheme to inspire local communities to explore, conserve, celebrate and maintain their local landscape heritage. The themes will be: 1. Sandstone Structures and 2. Community Heritage. Training and support will be provided in managing projects and budgets, accessing funding and the technical skills required.	GSCLP delivery team
CP2	Greensand Country Earth Heritage	Creation of three new 'geotrails' revealing the geological history of the landscape, focusing on the geology and geomorphology of the Greensand Ridge itself.	Bedfordshire Geology Group

3.4.7 HERITAGE SKILLS

Project Code	Project Name	Project Summary	Project Lead
HS1	Skills training	Programme of training in technical skills to look after the natural and built heritage, and communication skills to engage our wider audience.	GSCLP delivery team
HS2	Capacity building	Support and training for community groups to develop skills in project management, managing budgets and accessing funding and technical skills development, enabling them communities to deliver Heritage Projects (see CP1).	GSCLP delivery team
HS3	Employability training – study programme	Entry-level 19-week heritage skills programme targeted at local people who are 'not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET), under-qualified, un-skilled or otherwise under-represented in the landscape. Trainees will receive two days a week tuition at Shuttleworth College and then will be the taught vocational skills relevant to this landscape by the key partners for the other three days a week, leading to achievement of national qualifications to level 1 or 2.	Shuttleworth College
HS4	Employability Training – Apprenticeships	Apprenticeship scheme teaching heritage skills at levels 2 and 3, skilling up young professionals to look after the natural and built environment. Apprentices will receive tuition at Shuttleworth College for one day a week and then will be the taught vocational skills relevant to this landscape by working for the key partners for the other four days.	Shuttleworth College

3.5 TIMETABLE

3.5.1 GANTT CHART PROJECT MANAGEMENT

3.5.1.1 Project Management September 2017 to November 2017

Task	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17
Building a brand															
Programme Manager contract															
Staff appointments															
Staff contracts															
Intern															
Board meetings															
Quarterly progress reports to HLF															
General communications															
Create web site															
Web site and social media															
Legacy planning															
Appointment of legacy consultant															
Monitoring and evaluation- interim evaluation															
Monitoring and evaluation- final evaluation															
Third party grant scheme															

3.5.1.2 Project Management December 2017 to February 2019

Task	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19
Building a brand															
Programme Manager contract															
Staff appointments															
Staff contracts															
Intern															
Board meetings															
Quarterly progress reports to HLF															
General communications															
Create web site															
Web site and social media															
Legacy planning															
Appointment of legacy consultant															
Monitoring and evaluation- interim evaluation															
Monitoring and evaluation- final evaluation															
Third party grant scheme															

3.5.1.3 Project Management March 2019 to May 2020

Task	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20
Building a brand															
Programme Manager contract															
Staff appointments															
Staff contracts															
Intern															
Board meetings															
Quarterly progress reports to HLF															
General communications															
Create web site															
Web site and social media															
Legacy planning															
Appointment of legacy consultant															
Monitoring and evaluation- interim evaluation															
Monitoring and evaluation- final evaluation															
Third party grant scheme															

3.5.1.4 Project Management June 2020 to June 2021

Task	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Building a brand													
Programme Manager contract													
Staff appointments													
Staff contracts													
Intern													
Board meetings													
Quarterly progress reports to HLF													
General communications													
Create web site													
Web site and social media													
Legacy planning													
Appointment of legacy consultant													
Monitoring and evaluation- interim evaluation													
Monitoring and evaluation- final evaluation													
Third party grant scheme													

3.5.1.5 Project Delivery September 2016 to November 2017

Projects	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17
Scheme wide projects															
Promoting and understanding the Greensand Country															
Living Heaths/ Working Woodland															
Rushmere Heathland Restoration Project															
A Moor for all Seasons: Protecting Flitwick Moor for Wildlife and People															
Cooper's Hill Heathland Rescue															
The Lodge Living Heath															
Habitat and Species Monitoring Project															
Working Woodlands Training & Advisory Project															
LH/WW third party grant scheme															
Community projects															
Community heritage third party grant scheme															
Greensand Country Earth Heritage															
Historic parklands															
Historic Parklands – Stewardship of the heritage at the heart of Greensand Country.															
A Story to Tell – Historic Parks in the Aspley Area – a circular walk															
A Story to Tell – Parklands of the Eastern Ridge															
Revealing the GSC															
Destination Plus															
Extending the GSRW to Gamlingay and the installation of a gateway feature															
The Greensand Ridge Walk (GSRW)- enhancing and connecting with communities and the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape.															
"Greensand Cycleways"															
Greensand Country on Horseback.															
Flit Valley Walk															

3.5.1.6 Project Delivery September 2016 to November 2017

Projects	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17
Celebrating the GSC															
Stories of the Landscape															
Your Views															
The Talking Landscape															
Greensand Country Festival															
Learning through our Landscape															
Heritage skills															
Skills training – technical skills to look after the natural and built heritage and communication skills to engage our wider audience. Capacity building- supporting community groups to grow															
Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Study Programme															
Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Apprenticeships															

3.5.1.7 Project Delivery December 2017 to February 2019

Projects	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19
Scheme wide projects															
Promoting and understanding the Greensand Country															
Living Heaths/ Working Woodland															
Rushmere Heathland Restoration Project															
A Moor for all Seasons: Protecting Flitwick Moor for Wildlife and People															
Cooper's Hill Heathland Rescue															
The Lodge Living Heath															
Habitat and Species Monitoring Project															
Working Woodlands Training & Advisory Project															
LH/WW third party grant scheme															
Community projects															
Community heritage third party grant scheme															
Greensand Country Earth Heritage															
Historic parklands															
Historic Parklands – Stewardship of the heritage at the heart of Greensand Country.															
A Story to Tell – Historic Parks in the Aspley Area – a circular walk															
A Story to Tell – Parklands of the Eastern Ridge															
Revealing the GSC															
Destination Plus															
Extending the GSRW to Gamlingay and the installation of a gateway feature															
The Greensand Ridge Walk (GSRW)- enhancing and connecting with communities and the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape.															
"Greensand Cycleways"															
Greensand Country on Horseback.															
Flit Valley Walk															

3.5.1.8 Project Delivery December 2017 to February 2019

Projects	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19
Celebrating the GSC															
Stories of the Landscape															
Your Views															
The Talking Landscape															
Greensand Country Festival															
Learning through our Landscape															
Heritage skills															
Skills training – technical skills to look after the natural and built heritage and communication skills to engage our wider audience. Capacity building- supporting community groups to grow															
Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Study Programme															
Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Apprenticeships															

3.5.1.9 Project Delivery March 2019 to May 2020

Projects	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20
Scheme wide projects															
Promoting and understanding the Greensand Country															
Living Heaths/ Working Woodland															
Rushmere Heathland Restoration Project															
A Moor for all Seasons: Protecting Flitwick Moor for Wildlife and People															
Cooper's Hill Heathland Rescue															
The Lodge Living Heath															
Habitat and Species Monitoring Project															
Working Woodlands Training & Advisory Project															
LH/WW third party grant scheme															
Community projects															
Community heritage third party grant scheme															
Greensand Country Earth Heritage															
Historic parklands															
Historic Parklands – Stewardship of the heritage at the heart of Greensand Country.															
A Story to Tell – Historic Parks in the Aspley Area – a circular walk															
A Story to Tell – Parklands of the Eastern Ridge															
Revealing the GSC															
Destination Plus															
Extending the GSRW to Gamlingay and the installation of a gateway feature															
The Greensand Ridge Walk (GSRW)- enhancing and connecting with communities and the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape.															
"Greensand Cycleways"															
Greensand Country on Horseback.															
Flit Valley Walk															

3.5.1.10 Project Delivery March 2019 to May 2020

Projects	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20
Celebrating the GSC															
Stories of the Landscape															
Your Views															
The Talking Landscape															
Greensand Country Festival															
Learning through our Landscape															
Heritage skills															
Skills training – technical skills to look after the natural and built heritage and communication skills to engage our wider audience. Capacity building- supporting community groups to grow															
Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Study Programme															
Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Apprenticeships															

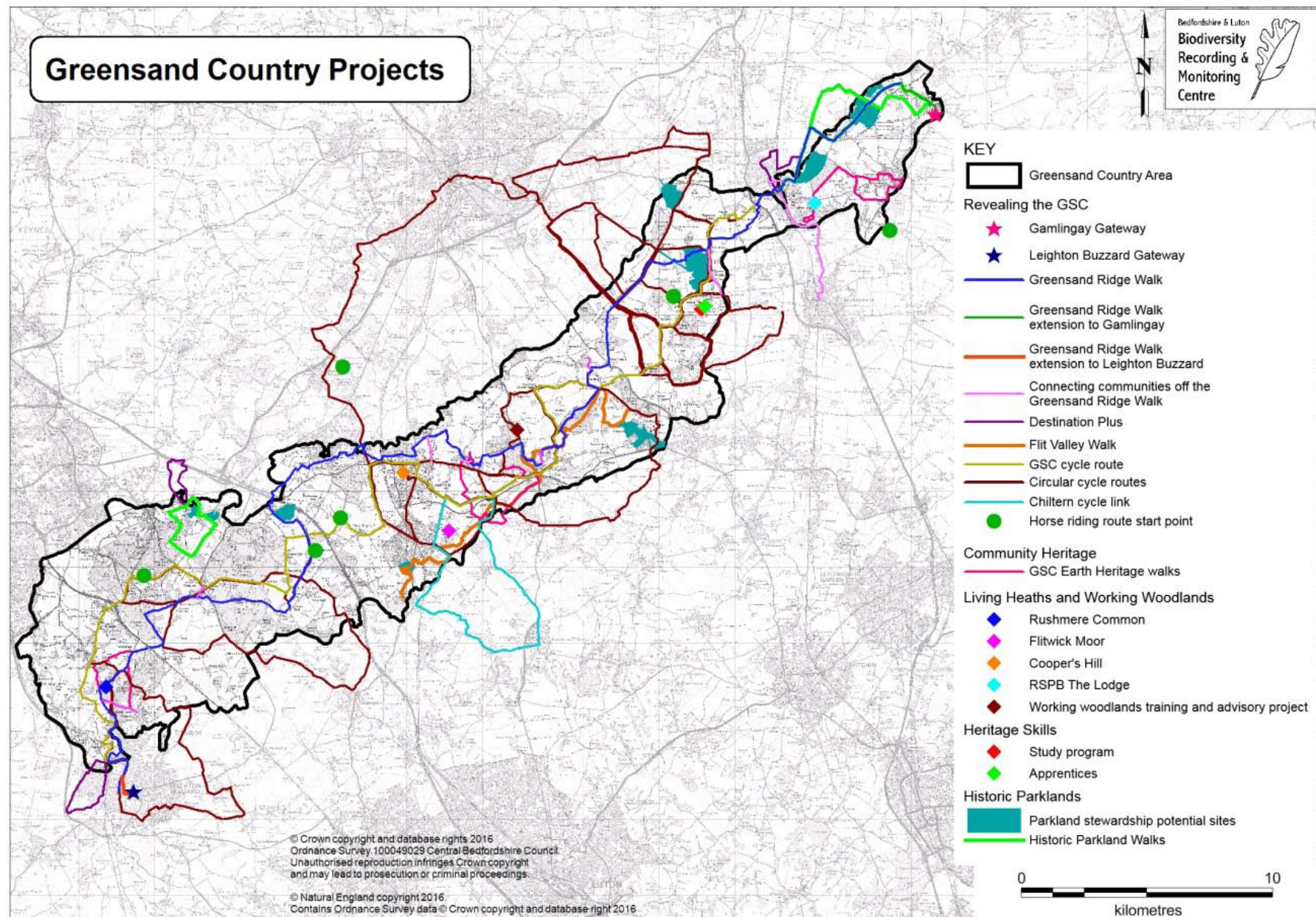
3.5.1.11 Project Delivery June 2020 to June 2021

Projects	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Scheme wide projects													
Promoting and understanding the Greensand Country													
Living Heaths/ Working Woodland													
Rushmere Heathland Restoration Project													
A Moor for all Seasons: Protecting Flitwick Moor for Wildlife and People													
Cooper's Hill Heathland Rescue													
The Lodge Living Heath													
Habitat and Species Monitoring Project													
Working Woodlands Training & Advisory Project													
LH/WW third party grant scheme													
Community projects													
Community heritage third party grant scheme													
Greensand Country Earth Heritage													
Historic parklands													
Historic Parklands – Stewardship of the heritage at the heart of Greensand Country.													
A Story to Tell – Historic Parks in the Aspley Area – a circular walk													
A Story to Tell – Parklands of the Eastern Ridge													
Revealing the GSC													
Destination Plus													
Extending the GSRW to Gamlingay and the installation of a gateway feature													
The Greensand Ridge Walk (GSRW)- enhancing and connecting with communities and the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape.													
"Greensand Cycleways"													
Greensand Country on Horseback.													
Flit Valley Walk													

3.5.1.12 Project Delivery June 2020 to June 2021

Projects	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Celebrating the GSC													
Stories of the Landscape													
Your Views													
The Talking Landscape													
Greensand Country Festival													
Learning through our Landscape													
Heritage skills													
Skills training – technical skills to look after the natural and built heritage and communication skills to engage our wider audience. Capacity building- supporting community groups to grow													
Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Study Programme													
Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Apprenticeships													

3.6 MAP



Map showing the distribution of projects in Greensand Country

3.7 BUDGET SUMMARY

Description	Gross Cash Costs	Non Cash Costs	Non-recoverable VAT	Total Cost
Projects				
Strategic projects	85,566	200	6,132	85,766
Living Heaths	511,876	121,544	27,733	633,420
Community projects	110,981	6,475	2,715	117,456
Historic Parks	203,094	700	845	203,794
Celebrating the Greensand Country	144,465	27,700	10,445	172,165
Revealing the Greensand Country	120,510	19,518	11,369	140,028
Heritage skills	539,943	191,313	8,660	731,256
Subtotal projects	1,716,434	367,450	67,899	2,083,884

Management				
Staff and volunteer costs	497,859	0	2,285	497,859
Evaluation and Legacy planning	57,178	0	9,470	57,178
Full Cost Recovery	129,355	0	0	129,355
Contingency	110,873	0	0	110,873
Inflation	18,479	0	0	18,479
Other	61,320	0	6,370	61,320
Increased management and maintenance costs	0	102,071	0	102,071
Subtotal Management	875,063	102,071	18,125	977,133

Projected spend across years of programme (Cash costs)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
Project delivery	452,356	419,039	494,280	342,083	8,676	1,716,434
Management	184,731	195,542	208,268	206,332	80,189	875,062
Total	637,087	614,582	702,548	548,415	88,865	2,591,496

Projected spend across years of programme (Cash costs)

Projects	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
Strategic projects	33925	22129	8361	12476	8676	85566
Living Heaths	173503	96580	163546	78247	0	511876
Community projects	4672	26422	59219	20669	0	110981
Historic Parks	13194	63300	63300	63300	0	203094
Celebrating the Greensand Country	21955	41710	40855	39945	0	144465
Revealing the Greensand Country	80680	29491	9133	1206	0	120510
Heritage skills	124429	139408	149866	126241	0	539943
Subtotal projects	452356	419039	494280	342083	8676	1716434

Management	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
Staff and volunteer costs	108918	117889	117889	126529	26633	497859
Evaluation and Legacy planning	0	0	12360	0	44818	57178
Full Cost Recovery	30519	30519	30519	30519	7281	129355
Contingency	27718	27718	27718	27718	0	110873
Inflation	0	5261	5626	7411	181	18479
Other	17576	14156	14156	14156	1278	61320
Subtotal Management	184731	195542	208268	206332	80189	875062

Cost comparison

Capital costs	Stage 1	Stage 2	Variance
Purchase price of items or property	0	4250	-4250
Repair and conservation work	663834	104307	559527
New building work	264564	73152	191412
Other capital work	168000	163223	4777
Equipment and materials	12000	25166	-13166
Other	0	495227	-495227
Professional fees	3600	38706	-35106
Total	1111998	904032	207966

Activity costs	Stage 1	Stage 2	Variance
New staff costs	331617	447847	-116230
Training for staff	5000	43100	-38100
Paid training placements	20500	429143	-408643
Training for volunteers	12000	30200	-18200
Travel for staff	4860	83617	-78757
Travel and expenses for volunteers	22500	12722	9778
Equipment and materials	40000	12394	27606
Other	28400	40922	-12522
Professional fees	65000	60105	4895
Total	529877	1160050	-630173

Other costs	Stage 1	Stage 2	Variance
Publicity and promotion	39000	80120	-41120
Evaluation	16800	32830	-16030
Other	4800	42038	-37238
Full Cost Recovery	78947	239477	-160530
Recruitment	2400	3600	-1200
Contingency	32756	110873	-78117
Inflation	67002	18479	48523
Increased management and maintenance costs	98070	102071	-4001
Non-cash contributions	25000	250239	-225239
Volunteer time	284000	117211	166789
Total	648775	996936	-348161

Totals	Stage 1	Stage 2	Variance
Cash costs	1,981,650	2,591,497	-609,847
Non cash costs	309,000	469,521	-160,521
TOTAL BUDGET	2,290,650	3,061,017	-770,367
Partnership funding	631,150	1,401,519	-770,369
HLF funding	1,659,500	1,659,500	0

Comparison of costs stage 1 to 2.

During the development stage, the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership has been well supported by project partners and the local community, resulting in partnership funding increasing from the original forecast of £631,150 in stage 1 to £1,401,519 at stage 2, an increase of £770,369.

This results from:

- Higher than forecast cash match funding raised by the project deliverers during the development stage.
- A commitment from the Central Bedfordshire Together Capital Grant scheme.
- A contribution from a private donor.
- An increase in anticipated in-kind contributions by project leads as a result of more detailed project development and a better understanding of their likely volunteer commitment and other in-kind contributions.

This additional commitment and support from the partnership means that the total budget available has risen from £2,290,650 to £3,061,017, with no increase in requested HLF contribution of £1,659,500. There is some variance to the allocation to capital costs, activity costs and other costs between stages 1 and 2, and there is also some movement of costs between budget lines.

This is due to:

- The influence of the project development process.
- Costs have been moved between headings as we have developed a better understanding of the HLF definitions of the cost headings.
- Costs for marketing and promotion and costs for staff and volunteers were calculated centrally at stage 1, but projects now anticipate having costs in these cost centres too.

Capital costs have decreased between stage 1 and stage 2.

However, despite this reduction we will still deliver the core projects originally anticipated. This will be achieved through:

- Strengthening the habitats we already have by carrying out significant restoration projects and improving management infrastructure.
- Development of a third party grant scheme of £200,000 to fund small landowners across the area to restore small pieces of heathland, acidic and neutral grassland and provide stepping stones and corridors between habitats.
- Administration of a third party grant scheme of £100,000 for Community Heritage projects that will restore sandstone structures and deliver Community Heritage projects. Originally this funding was to be allocated to the restoration of 20 built sandstone structures. However, the Sandstone Structure Audit concluded that sandstone structures are not as relevant to landscape character as was first thought. Consequently, we have decreased the funding allocated to sandstone structures and have allocated the remainder to the delivery of Community Heritage projects.
- Administration of a third party grant scheme of £200,000 for the restoration of historic parkland. It is anticipated that through encouraging historic parkland owners to enter Countryside Stewardship schemes to supplement the third party grant, this strand will ensure a longer plan and legacy for the landscape and a greater funding input to the Greensand Country.

Activity costs have increased between stage 1 and 2. This is because we:

- Have increased the number of staff in the Landscape Partnership central team from 2 ½ to 3 ½. This is because we:
 - Have listened to advice from other Landscape Partnerships.
 - Need to support the increased number of projects that the partnership is able to deliver as a result of the extra match funding.
 - Are delivering a number of projects that are to be managed centrally.
 - The portfolio of projects in Promoting and understanding the Greensand Country.
 - Stories in your Landscape.
 - Your Views.
 - The talking landscape.
 - Festival.
 - Heritage skills.
 - Are planning a high level of people engagement as advised by the Audience Development and Interpretation plan.
 - Are delivering a large third party grant scheme which requires us to carry out:
 - Community engagement.
 - Training.
 - Secretariat for the scheme.
 - Are managing a large heritage skills programme.
 - Are managing the apprenticeship scheme.
- Upon advice from the consultants who delivered the Audience Development and Interpretation plan, we are delivering an exciting and diverse people engagement programme. This will help us to build the profile and the widespread recognition which is needed for the Greensand Country and the Landscape Partnership.
- We have an extensive training programme to ensure that people have heritage skills to ensure the stewardship of the landscape beyond the Landscape Partnership.
- We are delivering skills for employment through a study programme and apprentices.

‘Other costs’ have increased compared with stage 1.

- To help us establish the Greensand Country brand and deliver a solid marketing and communications plan which will help us raise the profile of the area, we have put in a £40,000 marketing and communications budget.
- Evaluation and legacy planning are to be paramount within this programme and so a realistic budget has been put in to support us to set up a future for this landscape.
- Organizations are delivering much of the work through Full Cost Recovery rather than employing new staff.
- The contingency has been increased as it has gone up from 2% which was anticipated at stage 1 to 15% for high risk projects; 10% for medium risk and 5% for low risk at stage 2.

3.8 THE PARTNERSHIP

3.8.1 Membership

The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership has been brought together to address the threats to the area's heritage at the landscape scale. It consists of all of the key organisations with an interest in landscape heritage and local communities across the area:

Organisation	Interest(s)	Role
Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)	Local communities, natural and cultural heritage	<p>Lead partner and Accountable Body; Board representation; Project lead for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic design. • Interpretive map, local, regional and national. • Commissioning high quality photographs and commercial illustration. • Website. • Greensand GPS app. • Greensand micro caches. • Interpretation panels for popular attractions. • Design of welcome pack for future residents. • Revealing the Greensand Country leaflet. • Community Heritage Projects • A Story to Tell – Parklands of the Eastern Ridge • Stories of the Landscape • Your Views • The Talking Landscape • Greensand Country Festival • Learning Through Our Landscape • Extending the GSRW to Gamlingay and the installation of a gateway feature • The Greensand Ridge Walk (GSRW)- enhancing and connecting with communities and the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape. • Skills training – technical skills to look after the natural and built heritage and communication skills to engage our wider audience. • Capacity building- supporting community groups to grow

Organisation	Interest(s)	Role
Greensand Trust	Independent environmental charity that works with local communities and landowners to conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape, wildlife and history of the Greensand Ridge and wider area, improving access, understanding and enjoyment for the benefit of everyone.	Lead partner; Board representation; Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rushmere Heathland Restoration Project • Working Woodlands – Training and Advisory Project • Living Heaths/ Working Woodlands Third party Grants Scheme. • A Story to Tell – Historic Parks in the Aspley Area – a circular walk • The Greensand Ridge Walk (GSRW)- enhancing and connecting with communities and the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape.
Wildlife Trust	Rescue and restore places for wildlife and people, and influence and help others to do the same. Each year they reach millions of people to inspire them about wildlife and the natural world	Board representation; Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Moor for all Seasons: Protecting Flitwick Moor for Wildlife and People • Cooper's Hill Heathland Rescue
Shuttleworth College	Shuttleworth College offers a wide variety of full-time and part-time courses, making full use of the natural resources available, which include parkland, farm land, lakes and woodland.	Board representation; Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability training – study programme • Employability Training: Heritage skills development – Apprenticeships
Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre	The Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre is the first port of call for biodiversity information within Bedfordshire and Luton. They gather verified species records; map and record habitat data from across the county; and maintain definitive information about sites recognized for their natural value.	Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat and Species Monitoring Project.
The Bedfordshire Geology group	Encourage an understanding of the geology and geomorphology of the county. Raise public awareness by promoting Local Geological Sites and organising walks and educational events. Develop a sustainable organisation through an active network of skilled volunteers.	Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greensand Country Earth Heritage

Organisation	Interest(s)	Role
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	Our birds and wildlife are increasingly vulnerable in a rapidly-changing world. Together, we will create bigger, better, more joined-up spaces for nature to save our wildlife, and our shared home.	Board representation; Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lodge Living Heath
Diocese of St Albans	Church of England in Bedfordshire.	Project support.
Flitwick Town Council	Town Council for Flitwick.	Board representation; Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flit Valley Walk
Central Bedfordshire Council	Council for Central Bedfordshire.	Board representation; Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic Parklands – Stewardship of the heritage at the heart of Greensand Country. Destination Plus
Cranfield University	A postgraduate university, offering a professional and mature study environment working with like-minded, talented people who are focused on advancing their careers.	Board representation.
Community & Voluntary Service	Community Voluntary Service (CVS) is a voluntary and community sector support organisation, offering a range of services, enabling local organisations and communities to make a difference.	Board representation. Support with volunteer recruitment.
Sustrans	The charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day.	Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greensand Cycleways
Federation of Small Businesses	As experts in business, they offer members a wide range of vital business services including advice, financial expertise, support and a powerful voice in government. The aim is to help smaller businesses achieve their ambitions.	Board representation.

Organisation	Interest(s)	Role
The Shuttleworth Trust	Supporting the Swiss Garden and the Shuttleworth Collection.	Board representation.
British Horse Society, Bedfordshire	Supporting horse riders in Bedfordshire.	Project lead for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greensand Country on Horseback.
Clophill Heritage Trust	Clophill Heritage Trust aims to create an innovative and inclusive residential and learning facility in a beautiful rural setting to encourage visitors of all ages to enjoy the great outdoors and eliminate significant anti-social behaviour at the ruin of the old St Mary's Church situated in the Bedfordshire Village of Clophill.	Board representation.
Arnold Whites	Estate Management in Leighton Buzzard.	Board representation.

All partners have signed a Partnership Agreement until 30th June 2021 in the first instance, laying out common undertakings such as the accountable body, staffing, and governance and management arrangements (see below).

3.8.2 Governance and Management Structure

The Partnership is governed by a Board consisting of the following representatives:

Board Member	Title	Organisation
Jon Boswell (Chair)	Chief Executive	Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)
Jon Balaam	Director of Development	Greensand Trust
John Comont	Conservation Manager (Beds and Northants)	Wildlife Trust
Caroline Maudlin	Councillor	Central Bedfordshire Council
Alison Myers	Landscape Planner	Central Bedfordshire Council
Martin Oake	Central Bedfordshire archaeologist	Central Bedfordshire Council
David Leverington	Head of Rights of Way team	Central Bedfordshire Council
Martin Johnstone	Director	Shuttleworth College
Lady Errol	Local landowner & farmer	
Brian Kerr	Visiting Fellow	Cranfield University
Caron Kendall	Development Manager	Federation of Small Business
Lisa King	Rural Development Manager	Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)
Corinne Price	Swiss Garden Manager	The Shuttleworth Trust
Ian Foll	Operations Director	Arnold Whites Estates Ltd
Mark Smith	Funding & Development Officer	Community & Voluntary Service
Ali Bradbury		Clophill Heritage Trust
Peter Bradley	Senior Site Manager, The Lodge & Fowlmere	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

The role of the Board is to provide strategic direction, and monitor and scrutinise operational and financial performance. The Board will meet quarterly during the Delivery Phase to review implementation and make strategic decisions on future direction.

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) will act as the Accountable Body, solely responsible for facilitating, developing and administering the Landscape Partnership and the HLF grant. This responsibility will be discharged day to day by the BRCC Rural Development Manager, reporting to the Chief Executive – ultimate responsibility lies with the BRCC Board of Directors.

The scheme will be managed and delivered by a central delivery team employed by BRCC as follows:

Landscape Partnership Programme Manager

- To manage the delivery of the Landscape Partnership programme and projects and to support the partnership.
- To implement strategies, lead on monitoring and evaluation of the programme and to ensure an effective legacy plan is implemented at the end of the programme.
- To oversee management of finances and report on budgets.

Community Engagement Officer

- To work with partners and communities to provide a wide range of communication, interpretation and engagement activities across the breadth of the Landscape Partnership Scheme, including the development and delivery of the high profile annual 'Greensand Country Landscape Partnership Festival Fortnight' events programme and conferences.
- To work with community groups and volunteers and to lead on the Community Heritage third party grant scheme.
- To plan, develop and deliver community engagement projects including a stories project; drama performances; an arts project capturing people's emotional connection with the landscape; a talks and debates programme; a tourism project and archive and oral history projects.
- To plan, develop and facilitate a skills development programme.

Conservation and Project Officer

- To support delivery of the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership programmes and projects.
- To liaise with project delivery partners to ensure effective delivery of projects, effective monitoring and evaluation and a joined up approach to the management and interpretation of the landscape and its natural, cultural, built and historical heritage for the benefit of residents and visitors.

Programme Support Officer

- To support the general operations of the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership Programme.

A diagram showing the governance and management structure is provided as a separate document.

3.8.3 Programme Management

This is a summary only; further information is provided in supporting documents.

Financial and Grant Management

The **Common Fund** will be managed day to day by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) as the Accountable Body (AB) for the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership. The Fund consists of the HLF grant and any other funds secured by the Partnership for the scheme as a whole. Oversight will be provided by a formal budget subcommittee of the Partnership Board, reporting to the Board at every meeting. The Fund will be held as restricted funds within BRCC's accounts and reported on separately in line with the Charities' Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

In most cases, **match funding** will be provided by the lead organisation for each project. This cash element of the match funding will be retained by the lead organisation and will not go through Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity's accounts. Evidence that match funding is secured and ring fenced within the project's lead organisation will be required at the start of the project. It is expected that evidence of match funding and any expenditure against it will be shown in quarterly financial claims to the AB. Any project under spend will result in a proportional reduction in the HLF contribution to total project costs.

Project deliverers will be required to systematically record and evidence any **in-kind** contributions. Evidence will take the form of time recording sheets for volunteers and staff which will need to be signed, and be verified and signed by his/her line manager. Pro forma time sheets will be provided by the GSCLP central team, and examples can be found in the appendices below. For room or equipment use or other in-kind contributions, evidence will be required in the form of invoices or similar. In-kind funding information from partners will be collated onto a central database and then used in support of the AB's quarterly claim to the HLF.

Reports and Claims

Individual **project claims** will be processed on a quarterly basis upon submission and approval of a project progress report. Financial claims must be submitted with supporting evidence in respect of each item of expenditure for which a claim is being made, and evidence of defrayal from the organisation's bank account will also be required. If any invoices include costs which are not part of the eligible costs or where Grant Claims are made for items on a proportional basis, the Grant Recipient will provide itemised records to demonstrate how the amounts that are eligible for grant funding relate to each of the invoices. Claims will be paid up to the point that individual projects reach 90% of their total grant, after which the AB will make no further payment until the project is finished and a Completion and Final Payment Request Form is received and approved by the AB.

Once project claims and supporting evidence for work carried out by project deliverers and the Core LP Delivery Team in the preceding quarter have been received, the AB will prepare a single electronic claim for submission to the HLF. This will be supported by a Quarterly Progress Report detailing progress made to date against agreed targets and outcomes. Upon receipt of the claim payment from HLF in the AB's nominated bank account, the AB will make payments to the individual projects in respect of their approved claims and progress reports (although there may be scope for the AB to make payments to project leads earlier where this is required for cash flow purposes).

Communications

All grantees will be required to acknowledge appropriately The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership and HLF (including use of logos), according to established guidelines, on in all printed and digital communications relating to projects including (but not exclusively) websites, emails, social media, press releases, fliers, brochures, leaflets, posters, signs, interpretation and learning materials.

Any press releases issued by grantees must receive prior approval from The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership Programme Manager.



Common Blue Butterfly (Polyommatus icarus)

3.9 RISKS

3.9.1 Greensand Country Landscape Partnership Risk Register.

The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership Risk Register identifies potential risks or issues and the actions to be taken to mitigate or manage them.

This register will be updated (where necessary) with each quarterly claim. The risk register will be a routine agenda item for Board meetings, enabling the Board to track risk management and note any omissions or additional actions that should be added.

Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Key partners withdraw from the Partnership	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The makeup of the Partnership could change. Strategic projects are not delivered. Joined up strategic thinking not present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the LCAP and Partnership agreement gain commitment from all partners, and that work has been fairly allocated. Ensure broad representation of all partners on the Partnership Board. Reallocate work if required. Programme Manager to maintain good relationships and commitment. Ensure the LP benefits from a strong and diverse membership with a range of skills. Loss of individual partners might not affect the delivery of the scheme as a whole if another suitable body or individual can deliver the same work. 	Programme Manager Chair of board
Partnership organisations face changes that could render them unable to continue to support the LP	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The makeup of the Partnership could change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss alternative ways the organisation could continue to support the LP. Ensure the LP benefits from a strong and diverse membership with a range of skills. Loss of individual partners might not affect the delivery of the scheme as a whole if another suitable body or individual can deliver the same work. 	Programme Manager Chair of board
Shortage of suitably skilled staff in partner organisations available to work on projects	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects not delivered. Outputs and outcomes not achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment of key partners has been gained. Liaise effectively with partners and provide sufficient notice of staff requirements. Discuss alternative ways of delivering. See if appropriately skilled staff in wider partnership. 	Programme Manager

Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
One or more key project staff move on or take maternity or long term sick leave before the project is completed	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional recruitment and gap in employment could delay activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support project team and talk about how risk can be mitigated. Use contingency funds to bring in additional short term support if necessary. Ensure that there is an agreed procedure for staff recruitment and this is put into place as soon as necessary if relevant. 	Partner organization Programme Manager
Non-alignment between the GSCLP partnership's ambitions and those of the key agencies involved in the management of the GSC Landscape	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With ongoing changes in budget, structure and personnel at key partners such as Sustrans and RSPB there is a risk of losing continuity and thus established joint-up approaches for the Greensand Country Landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help reinvigorate a high-level, cross agency, strategic management group for the LP area. All partners to ensure strategic alignment of their own organisations' policies with the GSCLP partnership ambitions and recommendations. 	Partner organization Programme Manager
Funding cuts in statutory bodies lead to staff cuts, which could affect practical support for the GSCLP	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some projects will be affected and at risk of not being delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find alternative project deliverers. Develop new ways of delivering the objectives of the affected projects 	Project deliverers Programme Manager Central GSCLP team
Projects inadequately managed and delivered / fail to meet outputs and outcomes / timetable slippage	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor project management could affect ability to meet key project outputs and outcomes; slippage in delivery against original timetable would risk failure to deliver crucial elements of the GSCLP delivery plan on time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LP Programme Manager keeps track of a programme timetable with clear lines of responsibility for delivery of each project. Projects encouraged to get started as early as possible. Regular reporting to be undertaken to highlight any potential issues. Reporting by delivery partners to GSCLP's central team and by GSCLP's central team to the HLF and the GSCLP Board. The progress of the projects will be closely followed through a regular monitoring scheme, to ensure that the overall programme delivers the intended outputs and outcomes. 	Delivery Partners Programme Manager LP Board

Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Low participation from local people in engagement activities	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement activities are poorly attended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise as widely as possible through various networks and media. Hold at different times of day and weekends as well as weekdays. Run alongside/as part of larger events where a broad cross-section of the community is attending. 	<p>Project deliverers</p> <p>GSCLP central team</p>
Delivery costs exceed final budget agreed at Stage 2	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot deliver all agreed outcomes and outputs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure thorough costing and budgeting in Development Phase. Ensure sufficient contingency is built in. Make savings where possible. Increase match-funding where possible. Notify the LP Board of any potential problems in good time. 	<p>Programme Manager</p>
Budget inadequate to deliver required outcomes	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to deliver all the project elements planned which would impact on the ability to address the programme wide outcomes envisaged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All projects to be fully scoped, costed and sources of match funding identified in the Development Phase. Programme Manager to be supported by partner project delivery organisations in securing match funding, in-kind contributions and financial management of the programme. 	<p>Programme Manager</p> <p>Delivery Partners</p> <p>LP Board</p>
Failure to reach match funding target	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can't deliver all projects and budget cuts would have to be made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all funding agreements must be in place by start of Delivery Phase. Encourage partners to look for alternative sources of funding. Notify the LP Board of any potential problems in good time. 	<p>Programme Manager</p>
Partners unable to deliver pledged match funding and in-kind contributions	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Viability of entire GSCLP scheme at risk if minimum requirement of 5% match funding cannot be achieved. BRCC would lose out financially - last 10% of project grant could be withheld by HLF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other partners would have to deliver more match-funding or in-kind contributions instead. All partners to provide evidence on paper for all match funding and in-kind contributions pledged. All partners to provide this evidence with every financial claim made – schedule to be agreed for this with BRCC from the start. BRCC as well as delivery partners to try and find additional sources of in-kind contributions (extra volunteer help; venue provision; etc) above what already pledged to ensure compensation for shortfalls elsewhere. 	<p>Delivery Partners</p> <p>Programme Manager</p>

Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Funding the project partners' claims before funding has been received from the HLF causes BRCC cash flow problems	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BRCC has cash flow problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision for cash flow planned and made available before claims for funding materialize. 	Jon Boswell
The project partners have cash flow problems as payments are only paid quarterly	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project partners have cash flow problems and are not able to continue to deliver the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make people aware through the Common Fund document and the funding agreement about the timing, process and risks of the fund arrangements. Project partners ensure sufficient funds are available. Consider early payment for small organizations that are having problems. 	Project deliverers GSCLP core team BRCC
Project partners do not hand in quarterly reports in a timely way	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Manager not able to make a full report to the HLF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminders for project partners. 	GSCLP core team
Project partners do not provide all the information required	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Manager not able to make a full report to the HLF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of best practice. Mentoring by GSCLP core team. 	GSCLP Core team
Delay in appointment of project staff	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timing in the GANTT chart is not met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure paperwork is in place in good time. 	Programme Manager
Project staff leave during the programme	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timing in the GANTT chart is not met. Other staff members are put under pressure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test motivation and suitability thoroughly within recruitment. Manage staff effectively. Re-recruit or recruit consultants if required. 	Programme Manager

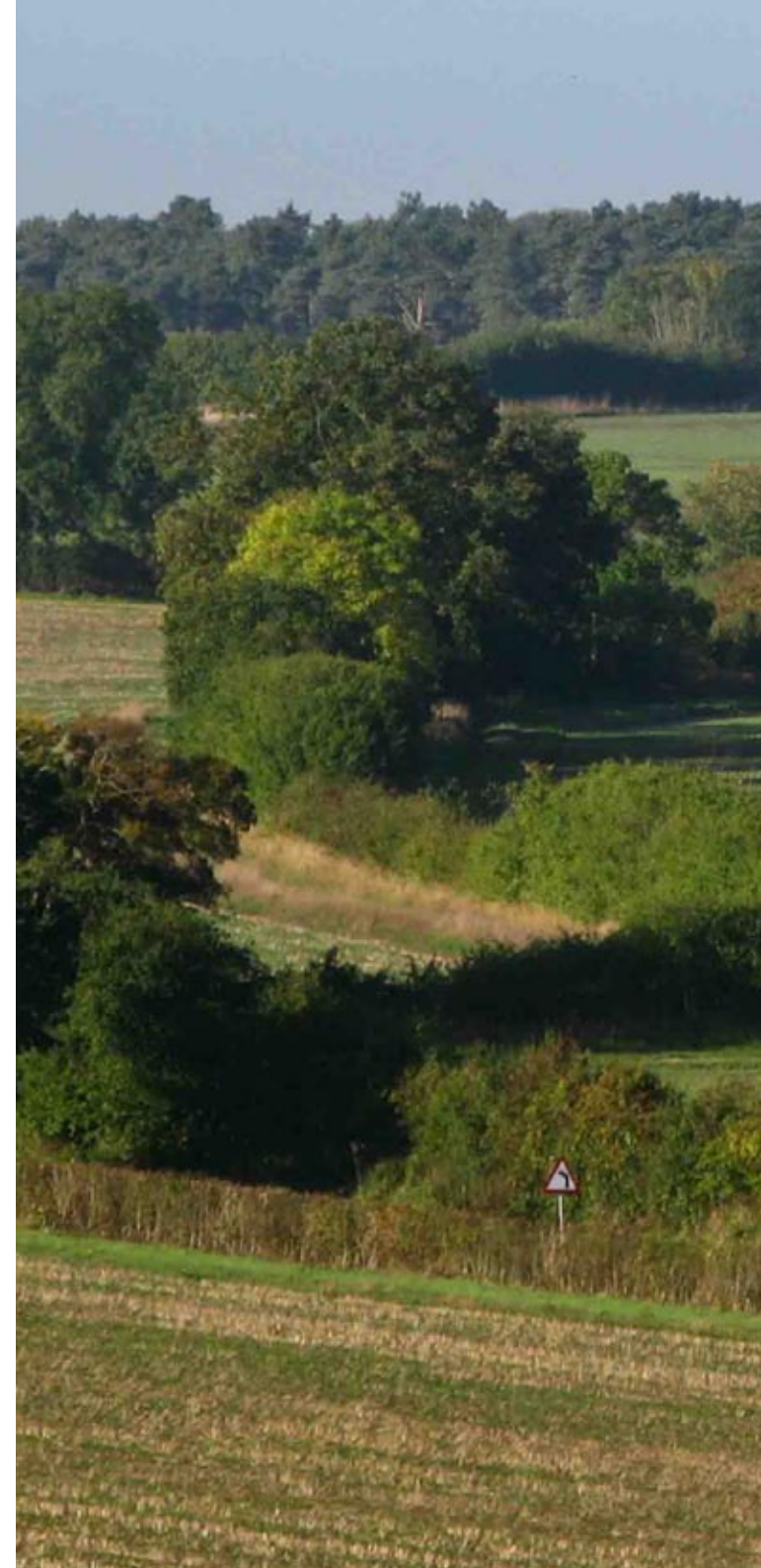
Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Lack of relevant skills within GSCLP core team needed to successfully coordinate the programme	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the programme will not meet the high standards set by the GSCLP Board and Heritage Lottery Fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all recruitment procedures and paperwork are scrutinised by the Board, in order to recruit relevant skilled staff. Ensure that all GSCLP staff are supported to develop new skills, where deemed necessary. 	<p>Programme Manager</p> <p>LP Board</p>
One or more key GSCLP core team staff take maternity or long term sick leave before the project is completed	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional recruitment and gap in employment could delay activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support project team and talk about how risk can be mitigated. Use contingency funds to bring in additional short term support if necessary. Ensure that there is an agreed procedure for staff recruitment and this is put into place as soon as necessary if relevant. 	<p>Programme Manager</p>
Lack of voluntary participation	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would affect successful delivery of project. It could also affect the amount of in-kind funding made available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there is widespread publicity of the volunteering opportunities to a wide range of audiences. Use the Audience Development and Interpretation Plan as a basis for targeting existing and new audiences. Ensure that community empowerment is an important element in everything that happens within the scheme. Ensure that volunteers are supported, motivated and adequately trained for the relevant tasks. Undertake regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure any early warnings of issues are apparent. Provide a variety of opportunities at different times, weekends as well as weekdays. Find out volunteers motivations for volunteering and keep these in mind when working with the volunteer. 	<p>Delivery Partners</p> <p>GSCLP's Core Team</p>

Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Partner organizations do not send the people empowered to make the strategic decisions to the board meetings but send the project deliverers	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board does not work as a unified body thinking about the strategic opportunities for the landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair of board and Programme Manager stress the importance of having the people empowered to make the strategic decisions at the board meetings. 	<p>Chair</p> <p>Programme Manager</p> <p>Board</p>
The board meetings are not well attended	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The right people are not in the room to make the relevant decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSCLP board does not function as a strategic body and does not have the right skills set in the room to make the right decisions. 	<p>Chair</p> <p>Programme Manager</p> <p>Board</p>
Procurement rules are not followed.	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLF cannot pay our grant if we have not followed the correct procedure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures for procurement must follow the procurement policy. Procedures to recruit consultants and contractors must be fair and open and keep to the relevant equality legislation. In all applications regardless of level of funding HLF will ask us to give them details of the procurement (buying), tendering and selection process for all parts of the programme. 	<p>Programme Manager</p> <p>GSCLP core team</p> <p>Project deliverers</p>
Monitoring & Evaluation Framework fails to deliver intended results for individual projects or programme as a whole	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-adherence to monitoring and evaluation framework could result in fewer benefits delivered through projects or programme as a whole than intended originally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement robust Monitoring and Evaluation framework. Project lead partners are required to undertake their own project monitoring and report back to the central programme team on a quarterly basis, via a standardised project report. Each project has set clear activities linked to the delivery of a set of outputs and outcomes. Baseline data will be collected at the start of each project, with their specified indicators, evidence types, measurement tools, monitoring regimes, targets and milestones set. Assist delivery partners further in managing their project's progress and aligning their work to the overall GSCLP programme. 	<p>Delivery Partners</p> <p>Programme Manager</p> <p>LP Board</p> <p>GSCLP central team</p>

Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Monitoring & Evaluation Framework fails to deliver intended results for individual projects or programme as a whole	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-adherence to monitoring and evaluation framework could result in fewer benefits delivered through projects or programme as a whole than intended originally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project lead partners are offered a series of templates to show how the outcomes and outputs they aim to achieve by the end of their project will feed through to the overall programme's outputs and outcomes and strategic aims. Schedule review meetings, where needed, between central programme team and project delivery partners to update outputs, outcomes, indicators, evidence types and monitoring regimes. Central team to focus on baseline data set for programme as a whole, to ensure that aggregation of projects' outputs and outcomes, together with programme-wide activities will result in delivery of programme-wide outputs and outcomes. 	Delivery Partners Programme Manager LP Board GSCLP central team
Major local or national event, such as Foot and Mouth could impact delivery	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricted or no movement around the GSCLP area. Changes or delays in project activities and events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action cannot be taken to prevent this risk, but should it arise delivery can be managed to allow safe working within restrictions. Comply with DEFRA guidelines to ensure there is no spread of any disease. Ensure that there are alternative venues in place and consider moving projects bases outside of the affected area. 	Project deliverers Programme Manager LP Board
Major flooding and rain or bad weather conditions during event days	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to deliver some events which would impact on community engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action cannot be taken to prevent risk. Ensure that outdoors events are held during periods in which climatic and environmental conditions are likely to be good. Have alternatives in place for events organised in outdoor areas. 	GSCLP's Central Team Delivery Partners
Disease, fire or other unforeseen circumstance threatens conservation or restoration of habitat or key species	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to carry out sustainable conservation of habitats and species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase resilience of habitats and species through stronger ecological networks. Eyes and ears on the ground through greater community / volunteer involvement, e.g. fire wardens, surveyors / monitors. 	Delivery Partners

Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Extreme weather threatens conservation or restoration of habitat or key species in a specific season	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to carry out sustainable conservation of habitats and species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay work for a season. Re schedule GANNT chart. Look at risks to programme as a whole. 	Project deliverer
Unwillingness of landowners to engage with the scheme	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects cannot happen at planned location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some landowners already engaged. Ensure landowner representation on Partnership Board. Set up landowner advocates on the LP partnership board. Sell benefits of the scheme to landowners, including access to grants. 	Programme Manager
Unwillingness of landowners to use land for habitat creation	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects cannot happen at planned location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure wide choice of potential sites (NIA work will help target those areas where best opportunity and likely success in securing coincide). Sell benefits to landowners. Work with Natural England to help persuade landowners. 	Programme Manager
Scheme is unable to create greater awareness of the distinctiveness and significance of the landscape area and its diverse heritage, and the issues it faces	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to create much-needed awareness of the significance and uniqueness of the GSC Landscape. Unable to create closer partnership working between different sectors of society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all partners, stakeholders and communities are aware of the vision, aims and objectives set for the whole programme, and understand the needs that the programme aims to address. Through organised events, lectures, workshops and debates ensure that partners, locals and visitors to the GSCLP area are made aware of all (potential) conflicting demands on the landscape e.g., Habitat creation vs. food production; Conservation vs. impact of increased access; Working landscape vs. increased public access and need for more green space and so on. As a result, partners will be better able to understand and communicate competing land uses and decide on sustainable management practices for the future. Involve local Councils to ensure they make use of the benefits the programme brings. Have a variety of community engagement methods to reach a diversity of audiences including those that would not normally engage to create wide ranging understanding of the landscape. 	GSCLP's Central Team LP Board Legacy Planning Working Groups Delivery Partners

Risk or issue	How likely is the event?	How serious would the effect be?	Consequence	Action you will take to help to prevent the risk?	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Scheme does not deliver long-term sustainable benefits for the landscape, its heritage and communities	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to create a lasting legacy for the promotion and management of the GSC Landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a robust Legacy Planning Framework plan that is a shared vision and shows ownership and commitment from the whole partnership, councillors and communities. Talk about legacy from day 1 of delivery. Create a Legacy plan to guide the legacy planning work streams. Set up Working groups formed of relevant partner organisations, to ensure key GSCLP partnership legacy ambitions will be taken forward, and funding will be found to implement the legacy recommendations. Throughout the programme, focus on increasing strategic partnership cooperation and community interaction and participation. Get a momentum within the population that wants to maintain the area's inherent beauty, natural and built heritage assets. Develop skills in landowners, farmers, land managers, professionals, volunteers and local communities so that they have the skills required to ensure the future stewardship of the land. Actively involve the landowners in the GSCLP scheme area and get landowners on the board who will be advocates for our vision. Build in ongoing maintenance and management requirements into projects wherever possible. Work closely with partners who are able to provide continuation of the project's aims beyond the timescales of the GSCLP scheme, to ensure that the benefits of the scheme will be maintained. 	<p>LP Board</p> <p>Legacy Planning Working Groups</p> <p>Delivery Partners</p> <p>Programme Manager</p> <p>GSCLP's Central Team</p>
Inappropriate behaviour towards children or vulnerable adults	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative publicity towards the project and possible prosecution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that sufficient safeguarding procedures are in place. Ensure all project staff, partner staff and volunteers who are in direct contact with children or vulnerable adults and are providing an activity that needs clearance are cleared through the Disclosure and Barring service. 	<p>Delivery Partners</p> <p>GSCLP's Central Team</p> <p>LP Board</p>
Agri environmental schemes such as Countryside Stewardship are affected by an exit from Europe.	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Countryside Stewardship cannot support Parkland projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme cannot deliver outputs over such a long period. The total outputs from the programme will be reduced. 	<p>LP Board</p>



Morning mist in the Flit Valley

SECTION 4



SECTION 4: THE LEGACY

- 4.1 A SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE
- 4.2 A SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP
- 4.3 THE LEGACY PLAN

Copyright © 2016 Greensand Country Landscape Partnership. All rights reserved. All photography Copyright © 2016 Lisa King | LJK Photography unless otherwise stated. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.



4 THE LEGACY

Ensuring a legacy that is sustained for many years into the future has been considered from the beginning of the development of this Landscape Partnership. This chapter outlines our current thinking, which will be tested and reviewed as part of the production of a Legacy Plan from Year 3 onwards (see 5.3).

4.1 A SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE

By the end of the Delivery Phase, our projects will collectively have delivered a solid legacy of a more sustainable landscape, with stronger ecological networks under better conservation management involving a wider range of stakeholders.

Re-establishing Ecological Networks

The ecological networks of the Greensand Country will have been strengthened through habitat restoration, enhancement and conservation, and will thereby have become more sustainable amidst the identified threats such as development, recreational pressures and climate change.

In the future, the Landscape Partnership will continue to work with farmers and landowners/managers to roll out the landscape-scale approach to ecological network development, further linking the stepping stone sites, strengthening ecological corridors and continuing to make core sites bigger and better.

Improved Management and Infrastructure

A key part of our approach is introducing improved conservation management practices, through developing our shared understanding of the heritage, providing training for landowners, and investing in enabling infrastructure. By the end of the Delivery Phase, these practices will be enshrined in management plans for all key

sites. Farmers, landowners and others will be better placed to apply to Countryside Stewardship, which is likely to remain a key funding mechanism for ongoing landscape management.

Grazing is the most cost-effective, sustainable management mechanism for the conservation of Greensand Country habitats such as heathland and acid grassland; however, margins are low. Infrastructure will have been installed to increase the economic viability of grazing, such as 'invisible fencing' at Rushmere, portable fencing at the RSPB Lodge (that can also be used elsewhere in the area) and a span bridge and holding pen at Flitwick Moor. Issues around the availability of the right type of stock for specific scenarios will be addressed to some extent by promoting the Wildlife Trust's existing 'Cut and Chew' grazing network.

Capacity building

Our scheme will have built the capacity of organisations, individuals and the Landscape Partnership itself to manage the landscape better in the future. Our third party grant schemes for Living Heaths/Working Woodlands and Historic Parklands, in addition to delivering our objectives on the ground, will have developed the skills and confidence of people who haven't previously applied for such funding, and provide an entry-level step towards future take-up of agri-environment schemes.

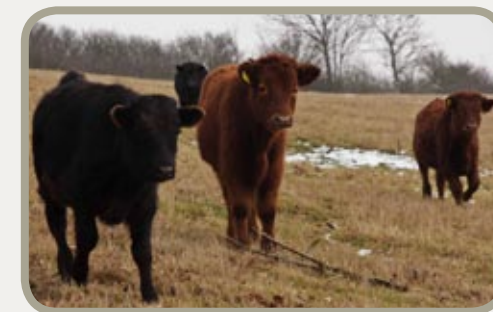
The Community Heritage project will have enabled local communities and groups to take steps to conserve, protect and celebrate their local heritage. Through the application process and training, communities will have gained the skills to take action to conserve and promote their heritage in the long term. In some cases this will have led to the creation of community groups such as Friends groups to support ongoing practical work and/or fundraising for local sites in the future.

Through the Heritage Skills project, local communities, volunteers, partners and delivery staff will have gained a wide range of skills to help them make decisions about and care for the heritage in the long term. Apprenticeships and the study programme will have brought new skilled entrants into the landscape heritage sector.

Ongoing Management and Maintenance

Individual project leads will be responsible for ongoing management and maintenance of scheme outputs into the future. All capital works undertaken will have been protected by agreements to ensure the benefits are maintained for a minimum 10 year period; the aspiration in all cases is for the benefits to endure long beyond this period, partly by ensuring that the local community has been engaged and values the project. They will be supported in this through an enhanced paid and volunteer workforce, and new and existing community groups (see above).

The increased management and maintenance costs resulting from our projects have been calculated as an in-kind contribution and will be incorporated into the longer-term financial planning of the relevant partners. During the scheme we will have established a Management and Maintenance fund out of donations and earned income to help to defray these costs in the years after the scheme's completion.



*Upper: Management through grazing
| Middle: Tree planting event,
by Cliff Andrews, Copyright © 2016
| Lower: Scrub clearance at Sandy
Pinnacle, by Richard Lawrence,
Copyright © 2016*



Bodies such as Natural England will continue to monitor key sites such as SSSIs to ensure that they are appropriately managed and maintained. The monitoring and mapping work, having enabled an evaluation of the programme's impact, will form the basis for longer term monitoring of the legacy. Species data etc will give us a much greater understanding of the natural heritage of the area.

Influence on planning, policy and practice

During the Development Phase we have already greatly improved the evidence base for the Greensand Country, building on existing studies carried out for Central Bedfordshire Council and the Nature Improvement Area, and this will have been further developed by the end of the Delivery Phase. As a result, planning decisions will be better informed, both on a case-by-case basis and more strategically, through the incorporation of this information into specific planning guidance. This in turn will help raise the profile of the area and its importance in future.



In addition to their direct impacts, our projects will act as demonstrators for the wider landscape as well as catalysts for discussion with key stakeholders about the long-term sustainable management of the landscape. For example, we want the Flitwick Moor project to initiate an update of the Water Level Management Plan, essential in order to address the water quality issues affecting the site's sustainability.

The talks and debates programme, culminating in the Conference, will have engaged as wide a group of stakeholders as possible in considering the strategic landscape management issues for the area and how decisions taken at a high level affect these.



Brand identity and resources

Our scheme will have given the Greensand Country landscape a clear identity for the first time. By the end of the scheme, the Greensand Country brand will be recognised within and around the area, and it will be reflected in signage, publicity and interpretation. Partner organisations, community groups, schools and local businesses will have bought into the brand and what it is trying to achieve, and so will use it in their own communications.

The Greensand Country website will be the leading online resource for the area's landscape, containing a rich resource of interpretation and learning resources, and a wealth of creative, documentary and research outputs. All digital outputs will be managed and maintained in line with the terms & conditions of grant.

Profile and awareness

The result of our branding, communications and engagement activities will be that people of all ages will be more aware of what the Greensand Country has to offer in terms of landscape and heritage, and will be more likely to explore the area in future. As well as local people, this will apply to non-users in surrounding areas such as Milton Keynes, Bedford, Luton and Leighton Buzzard.

Upper: Habitat monitoring on the River Ivel and | Middle: Parish Planning workshop, by BRCC, Copyright © 2016 | Lower: Landscape Partnership consultation event

Visitor management

Attracting more visitors to the area, as well as greater usage by local people, will provide lasting benefit to the Greensand Country's rural economy as well as its landscape heritage. This will build on tourism infrastructure projects supported through the LEADER-funded Greensand Ridge Rural Development Programmes in 2007-13 and 2014-20 (a number of these projects have already helped to safeguard the area's heritage through the provision of high quality visitor accommodation or catering outlets, for example, Moggerhanger House and old St Mary's Church, Clophill).

At the same time, recreational pressure on more vulnerable sites will have been reduced by increasing the use of sustainable 'hub' sites and using these as gateways into the wider public rights of way network; and through the creation of new accessible green spaces and recreational routes.

Through our engagement, interpretation and communication work we will have increased awareness and understanding of the need for conservation management approaches and what these involve, and how members of the public can support these approaches and behave considerately in the countryside.



Yurts at The Old Piggery, Haynes



Wind turbine

4.2 A SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP

By the end of the Delivery Phase, our projects will collectively have delivered a solid legacy of a more sustainable landscape, with stronger ecological networks under better conservation management involving a wider range of stakeholders.

The Development Phase has already demonstrably improved local partnership working, bringing people and organisations together at the individual and wider project scale. By the end of the Delivery Phase, the Landscape Partnership will have become a fully integrated but light-touch body bringing together the key partners for the landscape, without creating additional unsustainable partnership infrastructure or bureaucracy.

Shared vision

By the end of the Delivery Phase we will have developed a clear common vision and strategy for the future management of the Greensand Country, based on a shared understanding of assets, priorities and future challenges, as part of our Legacy Plan (see 5.3).

Streamlined Governance and management

The key to sustaining the Landscape Partnership in what is likely to be an unforgiving financial climate for conservation will be to pool resources and find synergies between existing partner organisations and other partnerships.

At this stage, our aspiration is for the Landscape Partnership to continue beyond the Delivery Phase as a formal partnership bringing together the key stakeholders in the landscape. During the course of the scheme, we will aim to build up a fund of at least £10,000 to pay for a basic secretariat function for the Partnership for the first 2-3 years after scheme completion. This will organise and minute meetings, monitor and report on the delivery of the Legacy Plan, and hold legacy funds secured during the course of the Delivery Phase.

Various lead members of the partnership will take on a long term legacy role for particular elements of the scheme – for example, BRCC will maintain the Greensand Country website. Perhaps the most important legacy role, that of habitat conservation, will be taken by the existing Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area partnership (led by the Greensand Trust, Wildlife Trust and RSPB), which will already have been acting as the Natural Environment working group for the Landscape Partnership during delivery. This group will also provide the main link to the Local Nature Partnerships for Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Cambridgeshire.

Community engagement

The programme of talks and debates in particular will have engaged local people in discussions about the future management of the landscape. The Partnership will maintain some form of community engagement mechanism into the future, possibly through an Annual General Meeting and/or some form of wider stakeholder forum.

Fundraising and income generation

We will develop joint approaches to fundraising and income generation as a key element of the partnership legacy and ongoing sustainability. The Legacy Plan will identify opportunities for further projects as part of our long-term vision for the

landscape, together with potential funders and/or income streams, and our robust partnership and evidence base will position us well for future funding sources. We will also explore sustainable revenue generation models such as a Visitor Payback scheme.

Partnership delivery

The Legacy Plan will contain a Delivery Plan for the Partnership, including maintaining sites and project outputs; establishing the Greensand Festival as a regular fixture; and developing and delivering new projects. Working groups and/or individual organisations will take responsibility for specific elements of the plan.

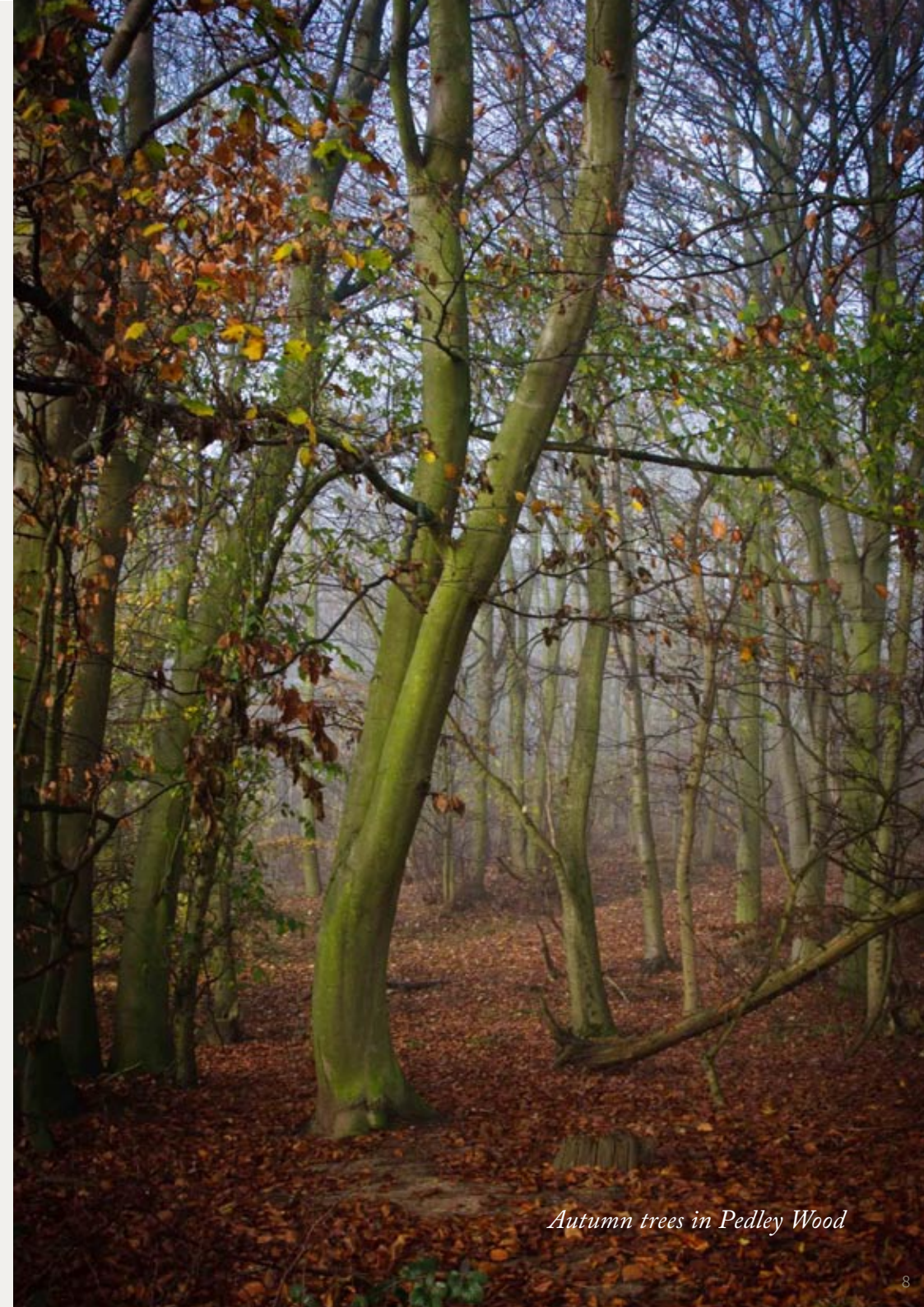
Project leads such as the Greensand Trust, the Wildlife Trust and the RSPB will develop deeper and closer partnership working, through sharing materials, equipment and know-how as well as bringing together staff within joint operational teams where appropriate.

This partnership working over the life of the scheme and beyond will bring about changes in culture, behaviour and understanding between partner organisations, particularly in terms of working across different heritage disciplines, and developing a 'pro-heritage' culture.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The final evaluation report will include a set of 'lessons learnt' that can inform the future working of the Partnership as well as adding to the sum of knowledge from across the country for the benefit of future Landscape Partnerships.

The Landscape Partnership (including its subgroups, e.g. Natural Environment) will retain an ongoing responsibility for monitoring the implementation of management and maintenance works agreed as part of the scheme, as well as the general condition of the landscape heritage.



Autumn trees in Pedley Wood



Sowing seeds on Henlow Meadow

4.3 THE LEGACY PLAN

Formal legacy planning will begin during Year 3 with our formal mid-scheme review, which will revisit these initial legacy aspirations in the light of scheme delivery and achievements up to that point, as well as the experiences of other Landscape Partnerships. Later in Year 3, a scheme-wide conference will capture the views, energy and enthusiasm of partnership members, and identify shared objectives and commitments for the future.

This will feed into the creation of a 'Legacy Plan' based on a fully revised and updated LCAP. This work will be driven by a Legacy Plan task & finish group within the Partnership, working with the evaluation consultant (and potentially a business development consultant), and further input will be gained from the wider partnership through a series of workshops.

The Legacy Plan will include the following:

- Overall legacy strategy for the Landscape Partnership
- Detailed legacy plans for all of our individual projects, based where relevant on an ongoing management plan
- Detailed, costed plans for the continuation of the Landscape Partnership
- A work programme including opportunities for future project delivery, with identified funders and/or income streams
- Plans for long term monitoring systems for both heritage condition and the implementation of the plan itself

A 'Celebration Event' marking the achievements of the partnership in Year 4 will launch the Legacy Plan and embed it into the activity of all partners involved. The Programme Manager will be employed for 6 months after the completion of all projects to complete and publish the final evaluation and establish the legacy plan within the Partnership.

The Landscape Partnership will then use the Legacy Plan to help guide future activity, continuing to develop the partnership and its activities; and as a basis for monitoring the ongoing condition of the landscape heritage and other outputs from the Delivery Phase.

*Right: Family volunteering opportunity,
by A Anderson, Copyright © 2016*





Horse riding in Greensand Country