South Pennines Watershed Landscape wins



Framing the Watershed Landscape

Pennine Prospects has been awarded just under £1.9million by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to bring the story of the Watershed Landscape to life. The project, funded under the HLF's Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS), will support landscape restoration, access and heritage projects in the area. The South Pennines Watershed Landscape is the upland habitat where rainwater is divided east from west; North Sea from Irish Sea; Lancashire from Yorkshire.

Pam Warhurst, Chair of Pennine Prospects, said: "This is great news for the South Pennines; alongside our successful South Pennines LEADER Programme, Pennine Prospects working with its partners has secured over £4.5m for heritage, environmental and access projects in the area."

More than a million people live in or around the South Pennines yet the uplands feel remote, wild and exhilarating; inspiring artists and writers over generations from the Brontës to Ted Hughes; from Henry Moore to Barbara Hepworth.

The Watershed Landscape marks the stories of two great watersheds in history where the impact of people changed the landscape; the arrival of agriculture and the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is a landscape that is written deep into it the story of how people live from the land and are inspired by landscape. Now, this hard-worked landscape has a pivotal role to play in rising to the contemporary challenge of climate change.

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Yorkshire and the Humber region, said: “We are extremely lucky to have this beautiful countryside on our doorstep. People love this area and have been enthralled by it for centuries. Its restoration, which will now be made possible by the hard work of Pennine Prospects and the partnership funding they have generated, will see that history come to life. We are thrilled to be able to play a part in sustaining this valuable part of the regions heritage.”

The South Pennines is unique. Its heritage and biodiversity are recognised as being of national importance. Pennine Prospects, (the Southern Pennines Regeneration Company) was formed in 2005, to act as a champion for the area and co-ordinate regeneration activity that will conserve the landscape and heritage.

Project highlights include:

- The appointment of both a Community Archaeologist and Interpretation Officer for the Watershed Landscape Pennines to bring the story of the Watershed Landscape to life.
- The creation of improved paths in the Upper Colne Valley, on Ilkley Moor, Scammonden and Cant Clough reservoirs.
- Mapping and interpreting the unique Bronze Age landscape including the nationally important ‘cup and ring’ stones on Rombalds Moor.
- Supporting the RSPB initiatives to save the rare Twite; known locally as the Pennine Finch (including hay meadow restoration).
- Restoring traditional features in the landscape including boundary walls, sheepfolds or shooting lodges (the focus for training in skills such as drystone walling).
- Our project will research the history of coal in the Pennines from medieval times to the present day.
- We will commission six artists and writers to work with residents and visitors on new writing and visual arts. Archaeology and geology workshops will also be open to residents and visitors.

Why are our uplands important?

- The majority of our drinking water is gathered in the uplands.
- The uplands' vast peat reserves are a major carbon store.
- Access to nature is strongly linked to improvements in physical and mental health. Walking is one of the few increasing leisure activities and access to the natural environment is the main motivator.
- Most of the moorland is designated a Special Protection Area to protect the internationally important upland birds breeding there. These include Merlin, Peregrine, Short-eared Owl, Golden Plover, Curlew, Lapwing, Dunlin, Snipe, Redshank, Skylark and Twite.

The Watershed Landscape Project is a partnership managed by Pennine Prospects with the following partners:

Yorkshire Water, United Utilities, Rochdale Council, Oldham Council, RSPB, Calderdale MBC, Kirklees MBC, Bradford MBC, Natural England, Lancashire County Council, National Trust, Groundwork, west Yorkshire Geology Trust, Friends of Ilkley Moor.

The Project is financially supported by LEADER and Heritage Lottery Fund and our individual partners.

Notes to editors

The South Pennines area is the only upland landscape in England not to have the benefit of an official ‘Protected Landscape’ designation - such as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - with the protection and

resources that this brings.

Pennine Prospects was set up in 2005 to act as a champion for the South Pennines and coordinate regeneration activity that will conserve and enhance the landscape and heritage of the area - whilst improving access for the communities of the nearby towns and cities. It consists of a partnership between the local authorities of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Lancashire, Rochdale, Rossendale and Oldham, plus representatives of the Environment Agency, Natural England, Yorkshire Water and United Utilities, the NFU, Northern Rail, the National Trust, Pennine Heritage, and the South Pennines Association. To find out more about Pennine Prospects.

Further information

Vicky Wilford, HLF Press Office on 0207 591 6046 or vicky.wilford@hlf.org.uk

Robin Gray, South Pennines LPS on 07775 411921.