

# DRAFT Discussion Paper - Headlands to Headspace (H2H)

## A proposed Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme for Morecambe Bay.



### The special character of Morecambe Bay's landscape

Morecambe Bay straddles the counties of Lancashire and Cumbria. It is a vast intertidal landscape and the largest intertidal area in the UK. The shining sandbanks, mudflats and constantly changing channels are flanked by saltmarshes, hidden beaches, headlands and low cliffs. Behind these lie wooded escarpments, undulating farmland, and low-lying drained mooses.

The headlands and promenades offer spectacular, elemental views; the hardy and adventurous can take a guided walk across the sands; each and everyone can look up across the intertidal sand and mud flats towards the majesty of the Lake District or the Bowland Fells. The five spectacular estuaries are backed by fells and moors and fronted by wild open sands, stretching out to sea.

Morecambe Bay is the most elemental of places and yet it lies just a few miles from some of the region's most populated urban centres. It is a kaleidoscope of water and light; sea and sky; texture and colour. Building on these elements and creating a setting for their celebration would be a powerful proposition for this scheme.

Morecambe Bay is a unique and awe-inspiring place with a scale and grandeur unlike other parts of the North West coast or other estuarine areas. Looking across the Bay from either side, the view is of shining, intertidal sands, poetic with renewal from the constant change and rhythm of the tides and behind - the fells and moors. The Bay is a constantly changing backdrop to our lives that both, strengthens our ties to the past, and, helps us face the future. It is an elemental, wild place that evokes an emotional response.

### The opportunity of this scheme

Yet although the Bay is valued by local people for its land and seascape, it not widely appreciated in the region and beyond. Its special qualities, special places and spaces are often overlooked and there is very little, patchy quality interpretation. Some parts of the Bay have a melancholy tired look, and there are places that need love and restoration to polish facets that could shine.

This is the brilliant opportunity of this scheme... Headlands to Headspace offers the chance to make the Bay **more distinctive** and **better connected**, more accessible to all, better appreciated and better understood.

The scheme will support communities to restore, enhance and celebrate the natural and built heritage of Morecambe Bay.

## Aims of this scheme

Working with partners and the community we wish to

- explore new ways to celebrate and sell the Morecambe Bay area and understand, interpret and appreciate the coastal landscapes.
- involve local communities throughout; support and encourage local people in conserving, enhancing and interpreting the Bay's natural and cultural heritage
- within the broad context of a integrated spatial plan for the area, conserve, enhance, manage and restore a network of wildlife habitats, thus creating a continuum of high quality habitats from estuary, through wetland up the limestone scars, to the hill top pavements creating a landscape which can adapt to and help mitigate against climate change.
- make the natural and built cultural heritage of the Bay
  - more distinctive
  - more accessible to all
  - better appreciated and
  - better understood.
- overcome the challenges of
  - the poor image and appreciation of the Bay
  - patchy interpretation and access to the Bay's unique coastal landscapes.
- promote access around the Bay, through sustainable transport, improved infrastructure and green routes.
- interpret the contribution of the urban and industrial heritage to the Bay's environment
- build a strengthened and more sustainable tourism offer and other socio-economic benefits from much of the programme, through joined up activity, training and engagement with rural businesses.
- contribute to skills training as well as understanding of the heritage, through 'on the ground' projects involving a wide range of stakeholders.

## Landscape Partnership Schemes

The Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS) is a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant programme for the conservation and enjoyment of areas of distinctive landscape character. The guidance for Landscape Partnership Schemes emphasises

- broad partnership
- community participation and
- an understanding of the distinct local landscape character.

A Landscape Partnership Scheme must include a portfolio of projects that meet the following objectives:

- A. Conserving or restoring the built and natural features that create the historic landscape character.
- B. Increasing community participation in local heritage.

- C. Increasing access to and learning about the landscape area and its heritage.
- D. Increasing training opportunities in local heritage skills.

Sub-projects are expected to deliver against all four themes.

## Geographic Scope

The guideline limit from the Heritage Lottery Fund for Landscape Partnership Schemes is that the area must not exceed 200 sq km - "to ensure effective delivery". This is too small for the whole of the Bay, which, including all the inter-tidal areas, would reach well over 600 sq km.

The boundaries have not yet been fixed. We anticipate that area will include the whole coastal strip of the Lune, Kent and Leven estuaries, the coastal settlements, rural coastal lands, some of the coastal mosses, headlands, coastal hills and viewpoints. Parts of Grange, Ulverston, and Morecambe are likely to lie within the geographical boundary.

We have not yet defined a final inland, north or south boundary. We consider the urban areas of Fleetwood, Lancaster, Morecambe, and Barrow to be part of the 'social catchment' for the scheme.

We will define a fixed area through discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund and our partners. This will be influenced by the landscape character and by the proposed projects which relate to this distinct local landscape character.

## Examples activities that could be taken forward:

The development of this scheme is in its early stages and much more work is needed to collate ideas and develop projects. However, the following types of work and activity might be considered and put forward. All the proposed projects should relate to Morecambe Bay's distinct local landscape character. Part of the purpose of the seminar on 30 June is to bring new ideas forwards.

Heritage Lottery Fund guidance on what they do, and do not fund is on pages 8-10 of their [Guidance Document](#).

## a) Conserve and enhance the built and natural features of the area

### Morecambe Bay Wildlife Network

Site based restoration, access and information.

- Deliver and implement habitat management at key sites working within a strategic framework for a network of wildlife sites.
- Developing site management plans for individual key sites to include investment and improved facilities. These will be sensitive to the nature of the site - some are hidden gems.

### Morecambe Bay Way

A linked programme of investment to create new access points for walkers across the network and investment in tourism and interpretation facilities

- Arnside viaduct - a key element of this is to secure progress in a destination walkway along the railway viaduct over the Kent.
- Improvements around infrastructure and coordination/liaison around the unique and historic walks including over the Duddon, Leven and Kent estuaries, including more sustainable transport options.

### Morecambe Bay Landscape and Seascape

A programme of projects intended to conserve and enhance the Bay's seascape and landscape character.

- seascape character assessment
- creation of a network of linked viewpoints
- creation of landscape buffer zones to protect key landscape features
- conservation of historic sea defences
- planting of locally native black poplar

## b) Increase community participation

Working in partnership with many local groups finding ways to capture and celebrate

- intertidal fishing, coastal related farming stories and oral histories including of the land reclamation works in 1700s and 1800s
- stories of journeys across the sands, Bay crossings
- Industrial links from landscape into fishing and farming heritage.

Working with artists/ enablers on walking drawings linking to the deep sense of place around the cross-bay journeys.

Seek to find a sensitive and creative way to produce a lasting memorial to the Chinese cockle pickers.

## c) Increase access and learning

Deliver an Interpretation Strategy including work with new media to reach new audiences, location sensitive technologies and much more.

Work with tourism partners, museums and artist to improve intellectual access.

- help rural businesses benefit from an enhanced natural tourism offer. Work with other natural and heritage attractions in the area.
- sell the wider benefits (eg. ecosystem services) of a wildlife network approach.

Work with the Natural England and the County Council on coastal access development to improve physical access. We have a strong desire to promote access to and around the Bay, through sustainable transport and green routes.

Development of a Discovery Centre, virtual and/or real, that acts as a starting point that could lead on visitor interpretation, pulling together efforts and resources of existing visitor information centres around the Bay, maybe built around an expanded facility in Morecambe/Leighton Moss /other.

A programme of strong, unified branding, promotion and marketing of the Bay.

#### d) Increase training in traditional skills

Establish and train volunteer groups to carry out programmes of conservation, enhancement and research at key sites and special places.

Education - thinking skills and traditional crafts.

Training and recording traditional methods of intertidal fishing - the fishing heritage tools of trade e.g. half nets, swill baskets, jumbo etc.

Training in heritage recording techniques.

Consider reconstruction of a fish trap, such as the mediaeval one discovered in 2004 on Cartmel Wharf, plus associated interpretative materials.

#### Partners:

The core group developing this scheme at present includes Lancashire County Council, Cumbria County Council, Natural England, RSPB, Morecambe Bay Partnership, Lancaster Museums Service, Art Gene, Arnside Silverdale AONB and Morecambe Bay Wildlife Network. This is not yet fixed or formalised.

The lead applicant for the first stage is expected to be Morecambe Bay Partnership.

We welcome the involvement and support of more partners and part of the purpose of the 30 June seminar is to identify who else is excited by this proposal and wishes to be involved.

#### Timetable:

Initially we are seeking to make a first stage application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their deadline of end February 2011. However, even if we were successful, there would be a further application - it is not a short process. For this programme we would expect project development to run into 2012 and project delivery from 2013 to 2018.

First Stage Application: ..... end Feb 2011  
Decision on First Stage: ..... Aug/Sept 2011  
If successful  
12-18 months dvpt to Second Stage: ..... Aug 2012 or Feb 2013  
4 months for decision on Second Stage: ... Dec 2012 - June 2013  
If successful  
Programme launch is not likely before: .. mid or late 2013  
Scheme delivery ..... Max 5 years, i.e. into 2018 or 2019.

We're determined that the impact of the scheme should last long beyond the delivery phase.

### Process for the next months:

Headland to Headspace was discussed at the Morecambe Bay Partnership's Annual Conference on 24 May 2010. The participants at our conference endorsed the proposal and agreed we should develop this scheme.

The outline process for the next few months is shown in the five steps below. Steps 1 and 2 will take pace over the summer.

The Seminar on 30 June 2010 is part of step 1 - to explain and explore the proposal, and begin to capture project ideas.

**Step 1** - key stakeholder session - agreeing the vision, exploring sub-projects, explaining the opportunity and challenges, long time scale, selection criteria for sub-projects.

Consider communications needs.

Consider shape of the partnership, and the composition of the core group and Steering Group.

**Step 2** - Capture and collate potential sub-projects ideas, using internet and paper proformas and map them so a decision on the final area can be made in an informed way.

Deliver communications.

Review the shape of the partnership and set up a Steering Group.

During the early autumn, we start step 3

**Step 3** - Core Group and project team will select the optimum area and the sub projects for that area, and agree how the impacts/learning etc will reach wider catchment area.

**Step 4** - Project team agree elements needed to turn this into the material and evidence needed for the submission.

In the late autumn we will start step 5

**Step 5** - Lead partner/project team writes the submission with support of sub project partners.

Susannah Bleakley, 29 June 2010