There is a strong local appetite to be involved in more nature restoration in England’s protected landscapes but lack of resource is cited as a significant hindrance.

Monitoring is essential to track the progress of nature recovery outcomes and restoration interventions. This large-scale survey shows that in England’s protected landscapes local monitoring is limited, ad hoc, and not yet strongly linked to strategic outcomes frameworks.

Where local monitoring activity is evident, for example in thriving Citizen Science projects, the data appears to be infrequently reported back to any nationally co-coordinating body, implying the lack of a suitable feedback channel.

Local projects tend to organise themselves around short-term, fund-seeking activities, and monitoring is rarely a significant component of the project lifespan.

Whilst there is marked traction around the concepts of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, there is less engagement with the more abstract and technical terms of the government’s 25 Year Environment Plan.
Landscape monitoring in England’s protected landscapes

Protected Landscapes (PLs), including the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and National Parks (NPs), cover nearly 25% of England, and have a legal mandate to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Additionally the government has pledged to counter biodiversity loss, \(^a\) by extending wildlife protection to 30% by 2030 (30x30), presenting new opportunities as well as challenges, and requiring new approaches and resources. Plans include the creation of new or improved habitat (nature recovery/restoration)\(^b\,\,c\), enforced by the Environment Act 2021\(^d\) that includes a legally binding target to ‘halt the decline in species abundance by 2030’.

It is envisaged that one key ‘tool’ for monitoring the implementation of these targets will be through an outcomes framework\(^e\,\,f\) with national and locally agreed targets, implemented through the collaborative management plan formulation process. Also the creation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)\(^g\), that together will constitute a national Nature Recovery Network (NRR)\(^h\), will utilise primary economic incentives for landowners delivered through reformed agricultural subsidy (Environmental Land Management Schemes - ELMS)\(^i\,\,j\,\,k\,\,l\).

will be robust national and local monitoring to measure baselines, interventions and outcomes. This monitoring programme should rest upon a manageable indicator set, with clear strategic guidance and consistent aims and objectives; and adequate resourcing, training, data management, and reporting procedures.

Recent results of research by the University of Plymouth Landscape Research Group (UoP LRG)\(^m\), in part funded by Natural England (NE), raised questions about assumptions of extensive strategic local landscape monitoring, even where detailed monitoring plans were publicly available. Consequentially the Landscape Monitoring Survey, the results of which are summarised in this document, was developed and undertaken to:

1. confirm the current state of on-the-ground local landscape monitoring;
2. help to reassess the monitoring resources and expertise that will be required to meet the expectations of the protected landscapes in contributing to nature recovery.

Box 1. Summary findings

The survey:

1. was comprehensive and representative (over 70% of PLs responded);
2. showed that the concept of nature recovery\(^n\) has achieved high local traction;
3. revealed a picture of little systematic local monitoring;
4. clearly illustrated that Citizen Science Investigations (CSI) are active and increasing\(^o\) although results are rarely ‘reported back’ to any national data repository;
5. confirmed that fund seeking\(^p\) is a major driver; leading overall to ad hoc or unreported monitoring - compelling evidence for increased centralised funding for longitudinal environmental monitoring;
6. implied that there is often a local perception of a frustrating array of policy to work within; as clearly indicated in a ‘long tail’\(^q\) response to most of the survey questions.

The survey findings also:

1. are timely given the current emergence of transformed approaches to environmental management, including the 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP)\(^r\), the Glover Landscapes Review\(^s\), the Agricultural Transition Plan\(^t\), Future Farming\(^u\) and ELMS (including the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme - FiPL)\(^v\);
2. implied that the concept of landscape monitoring, as intended to better manage landscape change, may appear confusing, and is often elided with operational management concerns;
3. showed that currently there is virtually no monitoring of some of the concepts that are proposed as underpinning governmental policy around landscape recovery: e.g. Natural Capital\(^w\) and Ecosystem Services\(^x\); biodiversity Net Gain\(^y\); and that surprisingly few mentions were made of Future Farming or FiPL\(^z\);
4. revealed that the use of the Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes framework (MEOPL)\(^aa\) is significant – a strong case for adaptation of this indicator set as the basis for the core of any future monitoring outcomes framework; especially if spatial data representation were to be incorporated;
5. called for much more sharing of resources and data, and requests for improved communication channels (laterally and bottom-up ‘to the centre’) for PLs that want to monitor and contribute more actively;
6. make an implicit call for spatial planning\(^ab\); highlighting strong local support for planning reforms linked to landscape and nature recovery.

This report summarises the rationale and results of the University of Plymouth Landscape Research Group Landscape Monitoring Survey in a format that is accessible to the widest audience, including protected landscape managers, partnership stakeholders, policy makers, academic researchers, and the general public.

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\(^a\) An update to the Biodiversity 2020 strategy is under formulation.  
\(^b\) By January 2021, new ambitious outcomes will be aligned for the role of protected landscapes in delivering on the government’s goals for nature recovery and climate change mitigation, aligned with the revised 25 Year Environment Plan and interim environmental targets under the Environment Act 2021 and the Net Zero Strategy. Natural England will monitor and evaluate progress against the key indicators and outcomes and will also support individual protected landscapes to translate these targets into their management plans. – NE (2022).

\(^c\) ELMS currently include three funding schemes (2022): the Sustainable Farming Initiative, the Landscape Recovery Scheme, and the Local Nature Recovery Scheme.

\(^d\) Unpublished research. However, results of the Landscape Monitoring Survey confirm the results of exploratory interviews with landscape management partnerships in early 2020.

\(^e\) Interestingly the quasi-official terms ‘nature recovery’ or ‘nature restoration’ appeared more frequently in survey answers than the increasingly media-friendly, but poorly characterised term ‘rewilding’.

\(^f\) CSI projects include species abundance counts, heritage feature audits, and water quality monitoring (especially the Riverfly proxy indicator).

\(^g\) Protected landscapes, particularly the AONBs with low staff ratios, are constantly compelled to negotiate competitive funding bids, often with complex groupings of partner organisations, for funding from a limited number of funding bodies. Objectives of these income sources may align with landscape change priorities, but often have a more restricted focus (e.g. heritage asset recording, invasive species clearing, fostering rural skills, etc.).

\(^h\) The ‘long tail’ response is a distribution where multiple items of low incidence make up the cumulative majority. Typically a focus on high-frequency items (the mode), or an average (the mean), will fail to recognise the diversity or multiplicity of items (the long tail). See ‘Survey results’ on Page 4.
Box 2. Research informing the survey: University of Plymouth Landscape Research Group (UoP LRG)

1. UoP LRG research has shown that local understandings of landscape quality are diverse, and that monitoring by communities will require more participatory methods. Research derived a nominal 158-indicator set synthesised from: 25YEP, MELOPL, and AONB Management and State of the Park Plans.

2. UoP LRG performed an analysis of MELOPL data (2013 – 2019). Headline results included indications that quality had declined for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and water bodies; and that while the area under Agri-environmental Subsidy (AES) had not markedly increased, investment (as subsidy payments) had risen. These findings were incorporated in the Glover Landscapes Review.

3. A survey of 30 predominantly ‘open’ questions was formulated to survey monitoring activity across several key dimensions:
   a. Comprehensiveness – to survey all PLs (25% of England by area);
   b. Evidenced-based change – to inquire about data use;
   c. Monitoring activity – local additions to the evidence base;
   d. Reporting of monitoring results – local contributions to the national picture;
   e. Citizen Science activity – engaging local communities in monitoring;
   f. Concerns and aspirations – to ascertain what PLs need/want.

4. Exploratory interviews in several selected case study landscape partnerships with published monitoring plans revealed the finding that active data gathering was ad hoc, was not captured by strategic monitoring frameworks, that reporting was rare, and that monitoring activity, if present, was primarily driven by fund-seeking objectives.

5. The finding of these interviews led to the funding and development of the UoP LRG Landscape Monitoring Survey which this document reports. A questionnaire was formulated to survey monitoring activity across a number of dimensions:

   a. Activities and monitoring that assist the delivery of statutory purposes of conservation and enhancement (e.g. of special qualities that underpin natural beauty, national landscape character/heritage, etc.);
   b. Anticipation of activities and monitoring that will be needed to meet the requirements of emerging legislation and restoration (such as the 25YEP, Nature Recovery Networks, Natural Capital, biodiversity Net Gain, etc.);
   c. Monitoring activity – local contributions to the national picture;
   d. Reporting of monitoring results – local reporting frameworks, that reporting was rare, and that monitoring activity, if present, was primarily driven by fund-seeking objectives.

Survey methods

This report details the findings and implications of an online survey to assess the extent and intensity of landscape change monitoring in the protected landscapes (PLs) of England. For data collection an online format was selected given that the survey was lengthy, and that there were ongoing and unpredictable instances of ‘lockdown’ during the Covid-19 period. Representatives from all the major English protected landscapes, the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and National Parks (NPs), were contacted (35 AONBs and 10 NPs) and asked to complete an online survey of 30 predominantly ‘open’ questions. A survey response rate of 70% (AONBs 65%, NPs 90%) makes this a fully-representative study of environmental monitoring activity within 25% of England’s most valued landscapes.

The survey data was collected between November 2020 and June 2021, and analysed between June 2020 and December 2021. Analysis used mixed qualitative and quantitative methodologies to reveal modal and ‘long tail’ data distributions. An additional objective of the survey was to canvas opinions and enthusiasm amongst the PLs for a Knowledge Exchange Network co-ordinated at national level, convened by Defra/Natural England, and extending the facilitative role of the MELOPL partnership and engaged academics.

Box 3. Landscape monitoring

Landscape monitoring for this project was defined as:

a) Activities and monitoring that assist the delivery of statutory purposes of conservation and enhancement (e.g. of special qualities that underpin natural beauty, national landscape character/heritage, etc.);

b) Anticipation of activities and monitoring that will be needed to meet the requirements of emerging legislation and restoration (such as the 25YEP, Nature Recovery Networks, Natural Capital, biodiversity Net Gain, etc.).

Research results will not form any basis for comparative performance or management assessments.

Survey results

The survey results can be considered highly representative; over 70% of PLs responded – NPs 90%, AONBs 65%. Respondents covered a wide range of job roles/titles, with many landscape managers completing the survey. AONBs are responsible for comparable territories (by area), and share some statutory duties, but with far fewer staff than NPs (AONB = 2.5-12 FTE (Full-time Equivalent), NP = 62-250 FTE). In terms of skills, GIS and mapping were cited as priorities, but there are contradictions in answers between some questions.

Typically each question elicited a ‘long tail’ response with few ITEMS/THEMES cited by multiple PLs, and many ITEMS cited by only one PL. Hence, the overall picture is one of multiple legacy policies, with PLs expected to be aware of an impossibly diverse set of landscape responsibilities, but with inadequate strategic national prioritisation and focus. This was made explicitly clear when some PLs declined to contribute, citing constraints on their time and too many demands from Defra.

References

1. Unpublished data. See also the full report of this Landscape Monitoring Survey for details. (To be circulated - UoP LRG).
2. The University of Plymouth JISC Survey Service provides GDPR compliance and checks for ethics and data management.
3. There are nine NPs, plus The Broads Authority. The Wyre Valley AONB straddles the border between England and Wales.
4. Open questions allow respondents to make free text contributions, avoid the risk of data skew from pre-determined option lists, and produce data amenable to both qualitative and quantitative analysis through thematic coding methodologies.
5. The Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes partnership comprises: Defra, Natural England, the Environment Agency, Heritage England, the Forestry Commission, the PLs and selected Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs).
6. This was the definition of landscape (change) monitoring given to participants in the survey. The references cited in Box 1 are appended for readers of this report. PL managers did not receive these references, but are aware of their details.
7. PLs might have used different wording or terms, but in analysis of the answers to ‘open’ questions an ITEM (or THEME) was taken as a reference to an element in a PL’s answer that was common, or repeated between PLs. This thematic-coding exercise allowed for a semi-quantitative synthesis of patterns and trends across participants’ answers, and between PLs.
8. A legacy of multiple overlapping policies leads to the danger that their objectives cannot be effectively enacted or regulated and they become in effect ‘zombie policies’.
9. For the AONBs, the survey was carried out coincidentally with an extensive consultation to introduce of the FiPL programme.
What level of landscape monitoring?
Landscape change is evidenced by survey respondents, but generally unsystematically through local experience, ‘anecdote’, etc. Change is generally perceived as negative or threatening, but a marked positivity around nature recovery is ubiquitous; and it is ranked as the highest landscape management priority.

There were several instances of PLs stating ‘no monitoring activity’, ‘no direct landscape management remit’, ‘reliance on partners’ etc., usually accompanied by lists of blockers, including low resource, insufficient guidance or monitoring frameworks, low access to (sufficiently localised) datasets, etc.

Hence, the key overall result of limited local landscape monitoring challenges assumptions around PL primary purposes. How can the PLs effectively meet the remit to ‘conserve and enhance natural beauty’ without adequate local data?

What constitutes landscape monitoring?
Throughout answers to the survey there is slippage between understandings of monitoring activity as:

- a) measurement as a reporting tool - for ‘management’ activities, e.g. for compiling Key Performance Indicators (KPI), undertaking planning application oversight, or the cyclical renewal of Management Plans and State of the Park Reports, etc.;
- b) measurement of landscape condition/quality - for assessing the condition and extent of actual features of the landscapes, e.g. biodiversity, habitats, special features, natural beauty, etc.

Around the details of on-the-ground landscape monitoring activity there are multiple instances of contradictory responses between answers from the same PL respondent to different survey questions. Whilst answers to questions about ‘monitoring activity’ sometimes imply active data collection, questions about ‘monitoring data use’ more often reveal a picture of confusions about what constitutes ‘landscape monitoring’; indicating a reliance on ‘passive’ (externally produced) data, or data collection and uses limited to PL operational management (such as visitor surveys, number of planning applications, volunteer hours, etc.). Landscape-change or environmental monitoring, where present, is generally limited to externally-funded ad hoc projects, and is frequently bounded by funding body objectives and timespans.

Answers to questions about bottom-up reporting of monitoring activity are particularly enlightening. The response rate to these questions was markedly low, and reporting appears to be largely limited to (web-mediated) dissemination of reports, or ‘upward reporting’ to the regulator (Defra/Natural England) of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), mainly constructed using third party data.

Conversely, answers to questions about Citizen Science Investigations (CSI) revealed a healthy and growing incidence of small-scale monitoring projects, but with data that are rarely reported or systematically collated. The focus would appear to be more on the activities, than on their ‘science’.

A funded programme of local monitoring
MEOPL is often cited by survey respondents as ‘monitoring activity’. However, whilst the indicators outlined in MEOPL are considered useful and appropriate, this is a centralised top-down stream of landscape change data, and its frequency and reliability, especially in terms of local resolution, are sometimes questioned by respondents.

Therefore, there is a clear opportunity to make a step change in the provision of a top-down evidence-based intervention in landscape change management through the funding and resourcing of a ‘MEOPL-like’ outcomes framework with associated guidance, underpinned by centralised (agency-led) data collation, analysis and distribution. This would be enhanced with bottom-up data contributions from an appropriately funded national programme of local monitoring. Many PLs ask for just such an intervention.

Whilst questions about anticipated landscape change elicited the most responses, notable are the few references made to indicate awareness (or prioritisation) of the emerging policy imperatives that underpin some aspects of the 25 Year Environment Plan (e.g. Natural Capital accounting, Ecosystem Service valuation, biodiversity Net Gain, biodiversity offsetting and banking, etc.). Instead there was a high incidence of concerns around managing statutory purposes (including development pressure, tranquility, visitor pressure, etc.).

Thus, this answer distribution supports an emerging recognition that some of the overly-technical or overly-financialised proposals of neoliberal governance may be practically or pragmatically ‘unfit for purpose’, if not ‘irrelevant’, to those entrusted with actual on-the-ground landscape-change management in the context of conserving and enhancing natural beauty.

Co-ordinated nature recovery actions and interventions
It could be relatively strongly stated that local misunderstandings of such technical abstractions are substituted by the universal enthusiasm for nature recovery, at least in part through agricultural subsidy reform (Future Farming, ELMS, FiPL, etc.), as an easily transmissible and locally ‘graspable’ concept around which to mobilise action for step-change nature and landscape recovery actions and interventions.

Notable are requests for data (sets) that formally are already circulated, and PLs are most vocal in requests for better collective working, and more sharing of data and processes. Data are invariably desired in a legible format, especially as mapped or visual representations, and there is a clear wish for co-ordinated national and local spatial planning, possibly in already proven portal or dashboard formats.

There is enthusiasm for membership of a proposed ‘Knowledge Exchange Network’ (71 % of PLs) but uncertainty as to what this proposal promises in detail, especially in terms of any required contributions from the individual PLs. So again, there is a coded call for centralised leadership in clarifying expectations.

Respondents used the survey as an opportunity to voice openly sometimes controversial frustrations, to outline perceived obstacles to better landscape monitoring, or to request more information about propositions for renewed monitoring guidance in the context of an emerging indicator and outcomes framework.

Survey participants are very keen to be informed of the results and implications of this Landscape Monitoring Survey. Therefore, the researchers will publish the results in a graded set of formats.

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1. Preparing a Nature Recovery Plan was the modal leader amongst responses detailing non-operational management priorities.
2. The devolved nations ‘all have spatial frameworks that play a “key role” in helping to shape their future development. England, though, does not have one. Whilst the UK2070 Commission has proposed that the UK “must […] encourage stronger sub-national strategic planning”, currently there is elision between regionalised spatial planning and the government’s 2022 “levelling up” agenda.”

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Evidence summary for policymakers: The landscapes’ of landscape monitoring

April 2022
Dr John Martin and Adam Guy, University of Plymouth

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Evidence summary for policymakers: The landscapes’ of landscape monitoring

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Box 4. Challenges

1. Hierarchical direction – an implicit shift in emphasis ‘back’ to top-down (target setting) versus bottom-up (capacity building) might result in increasing loads of policy, guidance, standards, etc., for England’s PL management teams to be aware of.
2. Delegated funding – some recommendations for shifts from ‘big government’ to ‘local governance’, such as those inscribed in the 2011 Localism Act47, might incentivise reactive (funding-driven) rather than pro-active (results-driven) behaviours and projects in the PLs.
3. Monitoring – an over-focus on ‘what to monitor’ (indicators), rather than questions around ‘who/how to monitor’ (local monitors), risks failure to engage with ‘local values’48 (the national NRN will comprise people as well as non-humans).
4. High-traction indicators – focus should be on the more ‘concrete’ indicators of ‘environmental crisis’ management, and nature recovery progress49,50, that this study shows are locally meaningful (i.e. biodiversity-species, habitat-catchments, woodland-peat restoration, climate change mitigation, etc.). Also important will be indicators that would help landscape managers in following the recommendations of the 2010 Lawton Report to ‘Make space for nature’ that is ‘bigger, better, more joined up’ (BBMJ)51.
5. Low-traction indicators – there may be a case for questioning the adoption of concepts with unproven utility, and that local landscape managers rarely mentioned in their answers: such as Natural Capital52, Ecosystem Services53, Biodiversity Net Gain54, etc., or the yet to be fully-systematised metrics of ‘well-being’55 (including notions of longer-term ‘restoration’ of individual, community, and societal benefits).

Main recommendations

1. **Feedback** – Communication of results of this survey to PLs. **Recommendation:** Inform PL partners/participants as a graded set of documents (briefing, full report, presentation, workshops etc.).
2. **More data sharing between PLs** - Improvement of communication channels (laterally and to ‘the centre’). **Recommendation:** Make data more accessible (e.g. as an intuitive map-based portal with simple multiple-parameter saveable ‘alert’ queries ‘cut’ to user-definable areas). Make data reporting regular and structured. Provide synopses of successful monitoring and reporting strategies56.
3. **Legacy and emerging policy** – Concentration on finalising a framework for monitoring against all possible outcomes risks adding to the cognitive and resourcing (over)load of PL managers. **Recommendation:** Choose an initial subset of indicators, simply and directly linked to LNRS objectives, thus capitalising upon evidenced local traction around nature recovery.
4. **What Indicators?** – Concentration on ‘what to measure’ risks neglecting the development of monitoring capacity, i.e. ‘how to measure’. **Recommendation:** Initiate a trim longitudinal (starter) survey of a subset of indicators known to be indicative of significant landscape changes; i.e. begin building a baseline and trend system immediately.
5. **How to monitor?** – There is unequivocal agreement that more environmental data is needed – There is unequivocal agreement that policies of over-delegating or privatising of monitoring activity inevitably lead to tactical (or no) monitoring. **Recommendation:** Institute realistic centrally funded capacity building; i.e. regular, skilled, reported, local monitoring (with more training, annual data collection, etc.). Develop centrally co-ordinated data management (more collation, analysis, reporting and sharing, more guidance preparation, and more site visits and ‘ground-truthing’).
6. **How to Fund?** – This survey unequivocally indicates that policies of over-delegating or privatising of monitoring activity inevitably lead to tactical (or no) monitoring. **Recommendation:** Institute realistic centrally funded capacity building; i.e. regular, skilled, reported, local monitoring (with more training, annual data collection, etc.). Develop centrally co-ordinated data management (more collation, analysis, reporting and sharing, more guidance preparation, and more site visits and ‘ground-truthing’).
7. **Introduce an Outcomes Framework** – Natural England is working with Defra and partners to prepare a new Protected Landscapes Outcome Framework57 which meets with the proposal set out in the Government response (Jan 2022) to the Glover Landscapes Review58. **Recommendation:** Ensure that this framework is co-developed in full consultation with protected landscape managers, partners, academics, etc.
8. **Develop a ‘Knowledge Exchange Network’** – More discussion is requested by survey respondents around agency and local expertise, data, experience, etc. **Recommendation:** Consider instituting a national ‘Landscape Observatory’59 as recommended in the European Landscape Convention (ELC)60 with both social science and ecological objectives and practices. Consider also nature restoration and environmental connectivity enhancement in non-PL or PL-fringe landscapes, building on the ELC assertion that ‘all landscapes matter’ to someone.
Box 5. Social survey methodology

1. Longitudinal surveys\(^1\)\(^2\)\(^3\)\(^4\) – There is a need for a simply-communicable (i.e. in motivating CSI\(^5\) volunteers, NGOs, etc.) locally-comprehensible (i.e. not Natural Capital\(^6\), biodiversity offsetting\(^7\), etc.) core indicator set\(^8\) (initially directly linked to ELMS targets\(^9\)), species abundance\(^10\), catchment\(^11\) and moorland restoration\(^12\), etc.).

2. Panel surveys\(^13\) – There should be a ‘designed-in’ capacity for studies of, or workshops around, emerging topics that accompany, rather than replace longitudinal data gathering activity.

Box 6. Additional recommendations

1. Matrix management – Rejuvenate PL lateral and vertical partner links including Wildlife Trusts, Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs), Local Environment Record Centres (LERCs), other NGOs, and Local Authorities.

2. Spatiality (planning) – Enhance national and local data accessibility that is not paywall obscured, that amends current missing data spots\(^13\),\(^14\), and that is more tightly linked to planning decision making\(^15\). Ideally data representation of developing baselines, interventions, and successes should match PL aspirations for graphic/cartographic communicative modes. There will need to be an ‘up-scaling’ in associated GIS training at all organisational levels (especially using Open Source QGIS in preference to expensive proprietary software alternatives\(^16\),\(^17\)).

3. Research focus on people – Prioritise pragmatic and academic investigations into on-the-ground capacity building of PL staff, partners and volunteers rather than on remote or mechanised solutions (e.g. Artificial Intelligence algorithms\(^18\),\(^19\), Big Data\(^20\), satellite imagery\(^21\), etc.).

4. Follow up workshops – Provide an opportunity for PLs to comment on findings, next steps, and national developments.

The survey team

The report was funded by Natural England, and performed by the University of Plymouth, with input in terms of question formulation from representatives of the protected landscapes.

**Principal investigators** - University of Plymouth Landscape Research Group (UoP LRG):

- Dr John Martin, School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Science
- Adam Guy, School of Art, Design & Architecture
- Emily Horswill, formerly of University of Plymouth

Comissioned by:

- Chris Bolton, Chief Scientist Directorate, Natural England

With the support, expertise and encouragement of:

- Roger English, South Devon AONB
- Ian Rees, Dorset AONB
- Pamela Morris, Exmoor National Park (currently Environment Agency)

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Contact us

University of Plymouth, Drake Circus, Plymouth, UK, PL4 8AA

Corresponding author: j.martin-2@plymouth.ac.uk

Researcher biographies

**Dr John Martin**

John’s research focuses specifically on interdisciplinary and co-production approaches to landscape assessment (urban and rural), planning and monitoring. This includes the mapping and valuation of cultural ecosystem services. He has extensive expertise in using apps\(^35\) and participatory methods for surveying and has previously led the development of Landscape Connect\(^36\) with Natural England, further refining it as part of the European Union’s RURITAGE\(^37\) project, which also included the development of ‘My Cultural Rural Toolkit’\(^38\). He is a widely published lead and contributing author in journals, reports and conference papers, sitting on numerous external bodies, including the role of Vice-Chair of the South Devon AONB Partnership Committee. He was recently an external reviewer for the UK parliament POSTnote - Local nature recovery strategies\(^39\). John is also a visiting researcher at the University of the Philippines Open University and the University of Gothenburg.

Contact: j.martin-2@plymouth.ac.uk

Full biography: plymouth.ac.uk/staff/john.martin

Open research profile: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3365-4855

**Adam Guy**

Adam is trained in both natural and social science methodologies (UCL Zoology BSc, and UCL Social Anthropology MSc), worked as a producer in the BBC New Media Department, and has been researching the politics of rivers and landscape, with partners from multiple sectors in the Thames Estuary and South Devon, for many years. He is currently completing a PhD at the University of Plymouth that seeks to advance methods for better-integrating critical social science into capacity building for nature recovery. He has co-authored recent government (Natural England) commissioned reports on the values and valuation associated with UK Protected Landscapes\(^40\) and the National Peat Strategy\(^41\).

Contact: adam.guy@plymouth.ac.uk

Full biography: plymouth.ac.uk/staff/adam-guy

Open research profile: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0974-6853
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