

Ochils Landscape Partnership



Landscape Partnerships

The Ochils Landscape Partnership is part of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership programme. Landscape Partnerships seek the safeguarding of our landscapes by bringing about effective protection, management and planning measures, ultimately striving for rural regeneration through the conservation of our historic landscapes.

The scheme, which is led by the Council has been earmarked for by the The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for an award. It is currently at Stage 2 development phase and the full bid to the HLF will be made by March 2010.

The Ochils Landscape Partnership aims to manage the landscape heritage by way of delivering three programmes of action to ensure the distinctive landscape character is preserved whilst delivering outcomes that will make a difference:

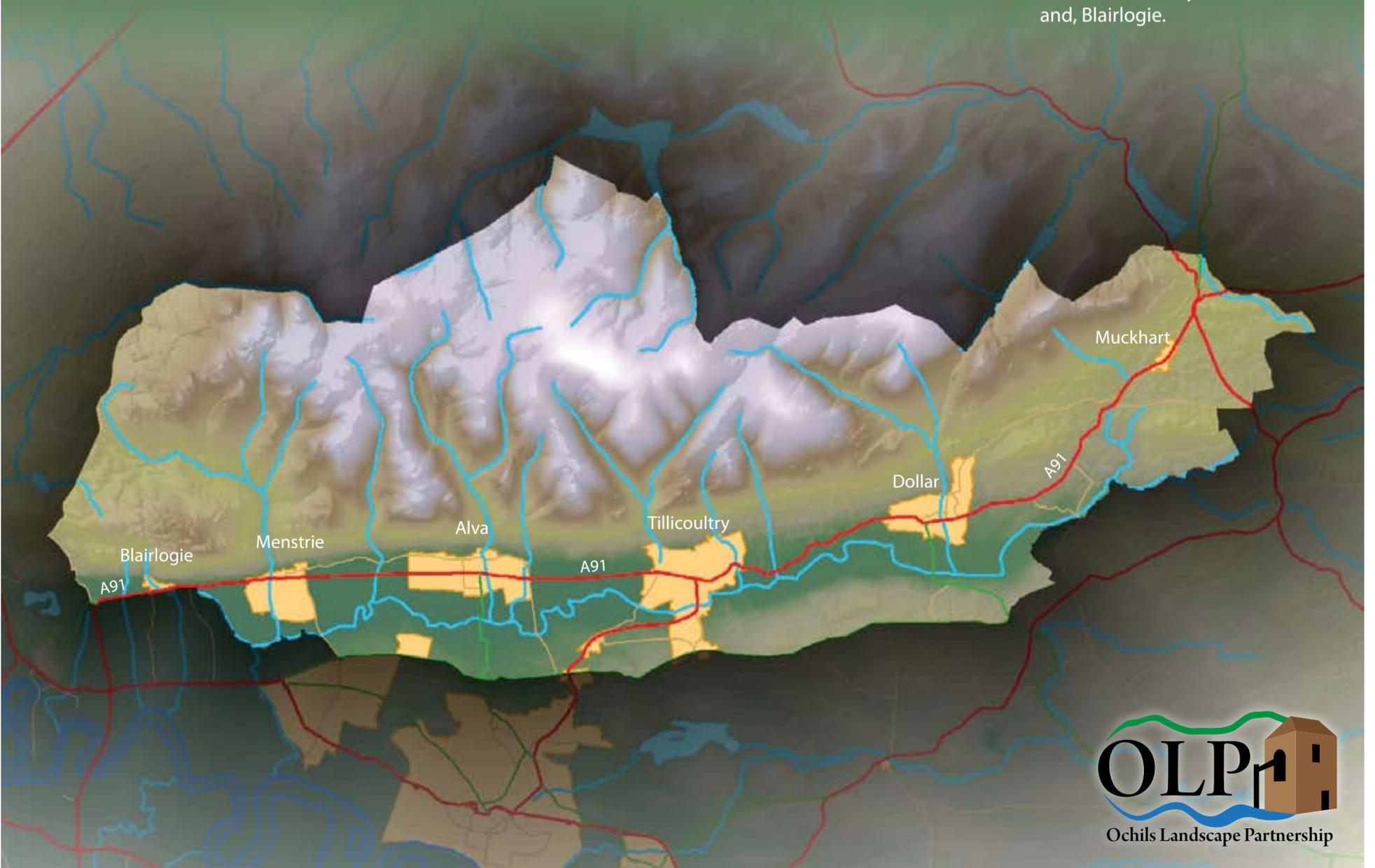
- Conserving the historic landscape character, both built, cultural and natural features.
- Increasing community participation in local heritage while providing access, learning and training opportunities.

The three programmes are:

- Your Wee Bit Hill and Glen**
- By the Banks of the River Devon**
- The Hills of Time**

OLP Boundary Area

The Ochils Landscape Partnership area covers the northern section of Clackmannanshire, including the Ochil Hills and Hillfoot settlements, extending into a small part of the Stirling area around Blairlogie and Dumyat. The focus will be on the seven main entrances to the Ochil Hills: Dumyat Car Park, Blairlogie; Menstrie Glen; Silver Glen; Alva Glen; Woodland Park; Tillicoultry; Muckhart Nature Park; and, the hillfoot villages: Pool of Muckhart; Dollar; Tillicoultry; Alva; Menstrie; and, Blairlogie.



Plans for the Ochil Hills and Hillfoot Villages

Your Wee Bit Hill and Glen

The Ochil Glens act as the main point of access onto the Ochil Hills and offer great views across the Forth Valley. It is essential to develop these to provide a more attractive and welcoming entrance to entice people to benefit from what they have to offer.

The scheme will preserve and promote access onto the Ochil Hills and into the Hillfoot Villages through a number of projects: by creating information hubs at each of the seven entrances to the hills to display information on walking routes for various abilities and on the natural, built and cultural heritage to be found within that particular area; any overhanging or overgrown bracken and scrub will be cleared; paths that have been highlighted as in need of repair will be upgraded; species and habitat surveys will be carried out within the glens and rivers; and, non-native species will be removed to encourage native species regeneration.

By the Banks of the Devon

The OLP area contains many rivers, streams and wetlands, which, over time, have been a catalyst for the development of the landscape. Focus will be on the River Devon and its network of streams and burns linking together projects to improve their quality while also benefiting their habitats and recreational appeal.

The scheme will preserve and promote the rivers, streams and wetlands through several key projects: river restoration and riverbank stabilisation; wetland conservation; the installation of wildlife hides; the control of alien plant species; creating habitat exclosures along the riverbanks; and, creating a dipping platform to aid access for educational and participatory initiatives.

The Hills of Time

With castles in Dollar and Menstrie, Sauchie Tower, historic kirks and kirkyards, to symbolic gravestone carving retelling the past lives of those that once worked and inhabited the area, the area contains a wealth of built and cultural heritage. In addition this the area boasts many remnants of many once thriving industries. The textile industry is present in the water lade and mill remains found within many of the glens and hillfoot villages, the quarrying industry can be seen in Dollar and Tillicultry Glen, small mine shafts are scattered through some of the glens and a beam engine house by Fishcross stands as a reminder of the Devon Colliery.

The scheme will preserve and promote the heritage of the area through a range of projects, such as: creating a visitor centre; a Hillfoot town trail; a historic kirkyard trail and gravestone recording; various education, volunteer and community participation initiatives, among many other projects.

Look After

It is prudent to safeguard the valuable resource that we have in the historic landscape, identifying why it is significant and what needs to be done to look after it appropriately. Strategies for best managing this resource will need to take into account the interests of all concerned. Each project will promote conservation that can be maintained and managed in the long term.

Learn About

The environment has tremendous value for all of us. Encouraging a positive and responsible attitude towards our environment helps foster respect towards it, benefiting us all. The project will promote responsible access to the countryside and increase opportunities for learning, participation and volunteering.

Access

Get involved: An important aspect of the Partnership is to encourage everyone to get involved in helping look after the area and improve their appreciation of it. Community-inspired regeneration will ensure that the scheme has wider and more enduring benefits.

Councillor Eddie Carrick, Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Clackmannanshire Council

Comment on the Ochils Landscape Partnership and Sustainability

Clackmannanshire Council is proudly working together as lead partner with the Ochils Landscape Partnership, a Heritage Lottery funded scheme which will bring about positive change to our historic landscape of benefit to our communities.

Community involvement is key to each of these projects and I hope that many people will take the opportunity to find out more about what is going on in the area. It is exciting to be working in partnership with the likes of BBC Breathing Places and Clackmannanshire's Council for Voluntary Services as these bodies ensure the community at large is involved which is paramount to ensure that all the good work we do is sustainable.

Built Heritage

The conservation of our built heritage is an important way to preserve traditional methods of construction and ways of living as a record of our past but in addition its reuse can provide a sustainable way of ensuring that it is conserved in the long term. Many of the projects will focus on the repair and enhancement of features such as the category B Listed Alva Ice House within Woodland Park, mill remains at both Menstrie and Alva Glens and the re-use of the B Listed Beam Engine House in Sauchie, for which it is hoped an OLP visitor centre will be created. The Beam Engine House would bring about a focal point for OLP activity providing a visitor centre and making good use of a notable building that represents well the distinct historic character to be found within the area, set against the Ochil Hills amidst the Hillfoot Villages.



Cultural Heritage

The OLP proposes to conserve and enhance some of the area's historic kirkyards, with the preserving and recording of gravestones. This will follow on from the work being done by the Museum and Heritage service to promote the area through Homecoming Scotland 2009. Meet Your Ancestors in Clackmannanshire aims to encourage people to visit Clackmannanshire to trace their ancestors and see relatives and friends. We want those who live here already to find out more about their county. To showcase the outstanding contributions of Clackmannanshire-born people to the world, live theatre performances in the historic kirkyards of Alloa, Alva and Tullibody will 'bring back to life' to tell their stories some of the people who are buried there.

The OLP proposes to complete the recording of gravestones and burials in some of the older kirkyards, making it easier for people to locate the graves of ancestors that they are researching. The project will provide opportunity for volunteer training and culminate in a publication of a historic kirkyard trail promoting tourism.

For further information see programme and booking details or please contact 01259 216913.

Homecoming Scotland is a Scottish Government initiative managed by EventScotland in partnership with VisitScotland.



Changing Times for Biodiversity

Each programme of the OLP contains measures to safeguard biodiversity within the glens, woodland and nature parks, kirkyards and within the Ochils hills and hillfoot villages themselves. Much work has been and is currently being done to safeguard biodiversity.

Climate change is likely to have significant impacts in Clackmannanshire. Rivers will be more likely to flood, and as temperatures increase, plant and animal species are likely to move further north: we are already seeing species, such as the orange-tip butterfly, that previously

would not have been able to survive in Clackmannanshire; conversely, there is likely to be some loss of other habitats and species that are unable to adapt to the changing climate.

To allow nature and wildlife to adapt as required in response to our changing climate, a more holistic approach to biodiversity conservation is needed. The ecosystem approach, as described in the Convention for Biological Diversity, is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources.

With a focus on the River Devon, its associated wetlands and the wider project area many of the OLP projects will take this holistic approach and will work with the natural processes of the river to establish functioning ecosystems. The projects will incorporate elements of Natural Flood Management and Integrated Habitat Networks to ensure that they achieve the maximum benefits possible.

<http://biodiversity.clacksweb.org.uk/>



Flooding

Waterways and wetlands run through the heart of the Ochil Hills and the Hillfoot Villages. Climate change is the biggest challenge which faces our communities. Weather patterns are becoming less predictable with greater risk of flooding. The Council has long recognised this threat and has undertaken work to address the issue on its own account and in partnership with others.

For example, In the late 1990's the Devon was threatening to wash away a small section of the Devonway, endangering this important countryside route between Dollar and Tillicoultry. The Council with SNH support created a willow wall which has halted the erosion and consolidated the river bank. The Council has also worked with WWF-Scotland for a number of years to develop innovative approaches to controlling flooding by natural means.

WWF-Scotland have been engaged with the Council for a number of years looking at the role that natural flood management measures can play in alleviating floods and also catchment approaches to flooding. Works undertaken on the Devon

catchment include willow walling, riparian woodland and wetland drain blocking. These approaches to flood management are included in the recent Flood Bill and have influenced the Council's response to the recent flooding in Tillicoultry, as well as water course maintenance. The Council are also in the process of developing a Devon flood warning scheme with SEPA.

The "By the Banks of the Devon" OLP Programme will be an important means of further developing and improving the Council's strategy for natural flood management and will help us to adapt to the unpredictable effects of climate change as effectively as possible.

Access

Accessing the Ochil Hills and Hillfoot Villages is a key theme in each of the OLP programmes. The OLP boundary area contains many paths which are known as Core Paths. A Core Paths Plan has been created by the Council.

Core Paths do not have to have any sort of previous designation and should provide for a range of recreational access, for example walking, cycling, horse riding and canoeing. While Core Paths should cater for people with disabilities not all individual core paths are required to cater for every type of user. The OLP proposes to increase access to the area by creating welcoming and attractive entrances to the Ochil Hills, providing information on various routes through the glens.

Maps showing the Final Core Paths Draft Plan can be viewed at <http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/site/documents/countryside/finaldraftcorepathsplan/>

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code

Know the Code before you go Enjoy Scotland's outdoors - responsibly!

Everyone has the right to be on most land and inland water providing they act responsibly. Your access rights and responsibilities are explained fully in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

- Take responsibility for your own actions
- Respect the interests of other people
- Care for the environment

Find out more by visiting: www.outdooraccess-scotland.com or call your local Scottish Natural Heritage Office.

Woods In Around Towns Clackmannanshire

The OLP recognises the value of the woodlands in its area. Woodland Park at Alva demonstrates various links with the cultural heritage of the area. Once part of the Alva House estate, the ruins of which are still visible alongside its stable block. The Woodland Park is currently included in the Forestry Commission's Woods In and Around Towns initiative.

Clackmannanshire Council has been successful in securing grants from the Forestry Commission Scotland, under their WIAT initiative, to bring several woods in and close to towns and villages around Clackmannanshire back into management and also to improve public access to these areas. Further grants were also approved from Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust, which together with funds from the Council's Housing Services and the Ranger

Service, have enabled work to be carried out in two woods within the Ochils Landscape Partnership area - Woodland Park, Alva and Quarrel Dean, Dollar together with Woodlea Park Wood, Headwall Wood and Cowpark Wood at Sauchie.

The OLP will contribute to the restoration and promotion of the ice house to be found within the Woodland Park at Alva, it will also ensure that the wetland area is enhanced and maintained and that the regeneration of native species is encouraged.

Countryside Ranger Service

The OLP will work in partnership with the Council's Countryside Ranger Service to develop and deliver its programmes of activity with a focus on participation and education.

The Rangers organise activities and events within the area and work closely with schools and community groups and have launched their programme of events for 2009, open to people of all ages and running between April and October, from a doggy ramble and pond dipping to a mini-beast hunt and a walk on the wild side are just some of the exciting events on offer this year.

For the first time RSPB Scotland in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council Ranger Service will have an Information Officer based at Gartmorn Dam from September this year to January 2010. They will be out an about around the Dam meeting people and showing them the birdlife. They will also be running events in the Gartmorn area.

Partnership working is key to the success of the OLP scheme. Many of the OLP projects will rely on Countryside Ranger support for their delivery; helping volunteers, at events and providing work days. The Council's current Ranger events offer Work Day activities range from cutting back overgrown plants and rhody bashing to tree planting and nest/bat box building. It is hoped that many keen volunteers will sign up to helping deliver many of the OLP's nature, built and cultural heritage conservation projects.

Further information and the event leaflets are available at Council offices and Libraries or by contacting the Ranger Service Tel: 01259 450000 email rangers@clacks.gov.uk

Community Involvement



For the OLP to be a success the programmes of action must not only conserve and enhance the area's valuable heritage appropriately but, importantly, it must encourage participation and learning.

Carbon management and climate change

Climate change is a big issue that we are taking seriously in Clackmannanshire: the Council has confirmed its commitment to take action by signing Scotland's Climate Change Declaration. We are determined to reduce Clackmannanshire's contribution to climate change by reducing the amount of greenhouse gases that we emit, and ensure that Clackmannanshire's people and wildlife can adapt to the pressures that a changing climate is expected to bring.

The Council is leading the way in reducing emissions through its Carbon Management Plan, which has targets and actions to make sure we use energy and fuel in an efficient way, and that we reduce, reuse and recycle our waste.

For more information about how the Council is addressing climate change, and to find out what you can do, visit www.clacksweb.org.uk/sustainability



Do you know how big your footprint is?



Every aspect of our lives has an impact on the environment: we rely on nature to provide us with materials, food and fuel, and to absorb the pollution that we cause.

Our ecological footprint is the total area of land and sea that we each need to support our lifestyles: the more wasteful the lifestyle, the bigger the footprint. If everyone lived as we do in Scotland then we would need three planets to support us: this means that our current way of living can only be maintained as long as much of the world lives in poverty.

This is an unfair situation, and we all need to take steps to reduce the pressure we put on the Earth's resources, so that everyone

on the planet can have the opportunity to flourish.

Clackmannanshire Council is doing its bit to contribute to the national goal of reducing Scotland's ecological footprint. We have embarked on a project to find ways to shrink the county's footprint, by tackling the areas of our consumption which have the greatest impact: food, electricity, gas and car fuel. We will try to help people reduce their impact, through raising more awareness of the alternatives and through policies that support more environmentally-friendly lifestyles.

To find out more about the size of your ecological footprint, and what you can do to reduce it, visit

<http://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>

Climate Challenge Fund

The Climate Challenge Fund was launched in June 2008 by the Scottish Government and to date grants totalling £8.4million have been awarded to successful applicants in 120 communities.

The Climate Challenge Fund gives communities the ability to implement projects which will significantly reduce their carbon emissions. Applicant organisations should be community-based with decision-making kept at the heart of the community. Projects should take a long-term view and should improve the quality of life for current and future generations.

Focusing on carbon emission reduction, projects could, for example, include

helping communities to use less energy, walk and cycle more, or focus on local sustainable food production. They can also have an environmental, social and economic dimension that gives people new skills, improved health and helps them to work together or provide better community facilities. Areas of activity may include energy, waste, food, transport, behaviour change, feasibility studies and capacity building.

For more information about the Climate Challenge Fund please either look at the website www.infoscotland.com/climatechallengefund or contact the Climate Challenge Fund Administration Team on 01786 468779.

