

Project Number : C2 Carbon Volunteers



Project Overview: This project will drive forward essential action for a bigger, better more joined up Carbon Landscape that puts volunteers at its forefront by upskilling, supporting, and enabling local action. It will give local people a voice for their landscape, raising awareness of its importance within the wider community by celebrating its heritage, and developing a sense of pride and place.

Project lead organisation and other organisations involved: Carbon Landscape project team

Project Location: Across the Carbon Landscape

Project dates: July 2017 – June 2022

Project Outputs

Measure	Target	Delivered	Notes
500 volunteers registered & benefitting from pack	500	633	
20 volunteers trained as Landscape Champions	20	30	
Number of Landscape Champion workshops?	-	12	
500 people inspired by Landscape Champions	500	526	Very hard to measure, as Landscape Champions didn't record / send through figures of things they'd led on. However, number is an estimate based on size of groups they work with usually and frequency.
1 volunteer promotion campaign	1	2	
500 ha of landscape enhanced as a result of volunteer activity	500ha	500 Ha	

Reflecting on the last 5 years, what's the one thing that you're most proud of that has come from your project being part of the Carbon Landscape?

Greatest achievement is the number of volunteers that signed up and actually helped out. They were from all walks of life and offered very different things. As well as the Lawton Principles (Bigger, Better and More Joined Up) conservation volunteers spear headed reimagining wildlife corridors and stepping stones. Similarly, volunteers were the stalwarts of other aspects of the

Carbon Landscape which included overseeing capital works, leading walks sometimes even school groups, events, litterpicks (and we did a lot!) running zoom session, training, photography, appearing in films and podcasts and public rights of way reccies. It was great to be able to offer them our “Rewards and Recognition package” which included Landscape Champion certificates and trips away to those volunteers who went above and beyond. These skills will live beyond the Heritage Funded period. They are integral to the Friends groups and wider supportive community groups. The fact that there are thirty Landscape Champions shows ongoing reach and influence.

From Volunteer Co-ordinator Steve Ormerod “A massive Thank You to all the intrepid volunteers! They have braved the elements, sacrificed their time and lent us their strength, skill and humour. Essentially the Carbon Landscape could not have achieved what it did without volunteers.”

What difference has this project made to the cultural and natural heritage of Carbon Landscape?

This project has enabled the delivery of many of the other projects within the Programme, including Carbon Restoration, Carbon Connections, Sense of Place, Carbon Skills and Carbon Trail and so very much all the programme strands are inter-connected. Here is a sample of volunteer sessions run post-lockdown.

- Woodland work – clearing trees at Maypole Wood
- Grassland Conservation – removing scrub from Whitehead Hall Meadow
- Wetland and Fen – Fen cuts with the Wigan Flashes Team
- Peat Bog conservation – removing Rosebay Willowherb from New Moss Wood
- Interpretation and signage installation at both Three Sisters and at Woolston Park
- Hedge Laying – this year we’ve concentrated on Whitehead Hall Meadow and Moss Brook Farm
- Tree Planting at Whitehead Hall
- Surveying with Citizen Science
- Event work at Wet Lab (which was perhaps a little too wet!)

What difference has this project made to people?

Volunteering effects everyone differently. For a lot of the Friends groups with retired members it is a way to keep fit, learn new skills and have a social life.

“Everyday is a school day on the Carbon Landscape”.

“I’m constantly learning in this role by physically doing something, shadowing staff members or attending training days. I’m now equipped to help manage habitats and educate others in landscape restoration.” Annie Dixon Volunteer Placement

One volunteer reported that because they were a GP, it was difficult to connect in the community because people would just want to discuss their ailments in the supermarket! However, post-retirement engagement with Flashes has given them purpose and friendships and newfound wildlife knowledge.

This project has provided quite an interesting route for those changing their 'life plans'.

“This gave me a unique level of exposure and access to situations and experiences, which have fundamentally accelerated my development and understanding of the career paths ahead of me. Working with my volunteer co-ordinator I found that my development objectives switched focus regularly. This presented me with the opportunity to try new things and led me to finding what I truly enjoy” Stuart Manning Volunteer Placement (Stu went on to become a trainee).

Useful Links

www.carbonlandscape.org.uk/volunteer-case-studies

Future Plans and Legacy

Volunteers are directed towards the support infrastructure of partners working in their areas as well as across the Carbon Landscape. The website has many resources.

Lessons learned?

Recruitment campaigns worked well – attending careers fairs always resulted in high numbers of sign-ups. The communication also worked well especially around the use of Eventbrite and social media presence. The outputs are likely to be an underestimate of activity across the landscape. As there were GDPR issues the figures really only captures work undertaken by the programme team and does not reflect the work of the wider partners or Friends groups.

Photographic Evidence



Ditch Blocking with Volunteers



2019 Volunteer Conference



Volunteer Balsam Bashing



Volunteers Team Photo

Funding Partners

