

## Project Number : C3 Mosslands Gateway



**Project Overview:** To improve pedestrian and cyclist accessibility to Chat Moss and the wider landscape. The ambition of the plan is to establish cycle routes from the A57 (Cadishead Way) via Irlam Station to New Moss Road (access to Chat Moss). It is widely recognised that the Chat Moss area is poorly connected to the surrounding communities and areas.

**Project lead organisation and other organisations involved:** Carbon Landscape Programme Team

**Project Location:** New Moss Wood, Cadishead, Salford

**Project dates:** Jan 2020 – June 2022

## Project Outputs

Measure	Target	Delivered	Notes
1 Feasibility study completed and funding secured	1	1	Conducted with Woodland Trust and in parallel with schools consultation
Length of access improvements in km	-	1.5	
No of signs and interpretation to improve access	-	3	Plus smaller signs for AR / Poetry Trail
No. of events and activities to promote new access	-	5	
Number of people engaged through project delivery	-	120	
<b>Additional outputs delivered</b>			

## 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?

The start project revealed the difficulty of getting visitor experiences onto mosslands when roads are in a poor state, are private to cyclists and walking access is poor. However, the Mosslands gateway has been brought about through the grit and determination of Salford City Council, the programme team, Lancashire Wildlife Trust Mosslands Team and thanks to our relationships principally landowner partner Woodland Trust and support from Hamilton Davies Trust (HDT). It is all about creating mini mosses, new wet woodland habitats and interactive trails. The visitor experience is helped massively by the magnificent Irlam Station (brainchild of HDT) which provides

a refreshment hub and place to start on any Chat Moss complex adventure sometimes termed the “peatlands safari”.

The biggest achievement of the new Mosslands gateway has been its ability to become an enabler for newfound creativity in local young people. With the site New Moss Wood, previously it was only really used by professional dog walkers and barely even acknowledged by surrounding communities within a ten-minute walking distance. That all changed with the involvement of four local primary schools, especially Cadishead Primary. They were given the opportunity to become designers of a Nature Trail (or “dengineers” as one child put it) with Carbon Landscape trainees Jade and Hanifah leading the workshops.

Post pandemic young people in their teens and twenties (with support from the Manchester Universities, Leeds University and Manchester Literature Festival) have led sublime poetry and songwriting.

The cumulative effort is a brand new community asset at New Moss Wood which embodies everything we would want from a Mossland gateway. It comprises of a physical metal gateway, Nature Play Trail, original music video, and inspiring soundscape audio trails about the “ghost wolf” and a literary trail to encourage creative thinking.

Finally, and adjacent to New Moss Wood is the bridleway that leads to Little Woolden Moss with an Augmented Reality (AR) trail where bog wildlife “pops out” before your very eyes and scripts written by Friends of Chat Moss link to family friendly cycling funded by British Cycling. To our knowledge this is a world first where cutting edge AR digital technology meets community co-creation.

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

The Mosslands gateway is a story of four local primary schools (Cadishead, Fiddlers Lane, St Teresa’s and Irlam Primary) led by two young trainees Hanifah and Jade who came together to see how they could raise awareness around biodiversity loss.

David Attenborough quotes were a starting point and a “call to action”.

"It's surely our responsibility to do everything within our power to create a planet that provides a home not just for us, but for all life on Earth."

As we know the statistics about biodiversity loss are scary to say the least. However, the Mosslands Gateway is the story of hope and restoration. The play equipment represents a Lawtoneque nature corridor and stepping stones both metaphorically and physically. The Bog Set (discussed in Carbon Connections) was taken into schools to bring the wildlife on the brink idea to the pupils. The story of the large heath butterfly resonated. From that the children and trainees co-designed a 3D model of how the playpark could work with imaginatively named play pieces like “slithering adder balance beam”, “steady squirrel” and “rocks for a basking lizard”. This has now been brought to glorious fruition with the installation of a physical gateway and play trail (see the photos).

Post lockdowns the young people audience moved to those in their teens and twenties. The stories of biodiversity loss of Chat Moss were brought to life by another trainee Lorna Smither who researched and brought the “ghost wolf” to life. Little Woolden is derived from the viking for “wolf”

and he would have roamed up until medieval times. (As an aside alongside bog bodies 2000 year old wolves have been found preserved [Remains of 'ancient wolf' found in Highland peat bog | The Scotsman](#) in peat bogs and this was a source of inspiration). This led to Lorna, who is a poet and history enthusiast, going into the recording studio to capture her poems for an audio trail.

Other poets joined to create a trail including Clare Shaw (discussed in the Wanderland report) writing an audio trail to inspire writers to be inspired by their senses and promoted by the Manchester Literature Festival. The trails use the geolocated *izi travel app* for the mobile phone which has the benefit of being free and available into perpetuity.

## What difference has this project made to people?

The Mossland gateway equates to young people reimagining peat bogs and wet woodlands. Not an obvious mix. For example, with the early primary school engagement children from Cadishead Primary walked to the site to do some engagement activities with Nomad Rangers CIC. One child did not know the site was there although they live within easy walking distance. She also said

“This is the best day ever”.

The children designed the “art gate” on paper and then the programme team’s Bernie Dalrymple (who is also a professional artist) got the CAD-Design ready for a metal worker. The gateway has all the wildlife of New Moss Wood hidden within including willow tit, hare, lizard, sundew, sphagnum, large heath butterfly, cotton grass, cranberry, fox, dragonfly, owl, hedgehog.

The idea of a Natural Play Trail and gateway however, is just the starting pointing and local people are encouraged to travel up Moss Road to Little Woolden Moss Nature Reserve. By happy coincidence New Moss Wood is on a bridleway so it is possible to recommend cycling, although it is not possible to cycle on other parts of Chat Moss. The Mosslands Gateway is a key point for family friendly cycling for the British Cycling (discussed in Carbon Trails). The site has a large AO Interpretation board with the Timewalk and information about the site. There is also a wooden oak monolith with an Augmented Reality Sign for cotton grass (see photo below). Each AR experience has a soundbite with a professional voice over. The script was written by Anna Keighley and Dave Steel of Friends of Chat Moss with support from the professional interpretation company Minerva:

Cotton grass is not cotton nor a grass. Very confusing. In early summer thousands of fluffy white seed heads take to the skies around the peatbogs. They settle on the ground like snow. This plant is very good for insects and spiders. It stands tall over other bog plants protecting them whilst they grow.

‘Songs of Resilience’ examines how writing songs and making music videos might help us to bring the voices of young people into debates on climate change and to imagine the future of the changing landscape. Drawing on activities around COP 26 in Glasgow, the Songs of Resilience project engaged with young people in Greater Manchester to explore their perceptions of climate change through ‘the Carbon Landscape’. The young people co-created song lyrics and the accompanying music videos through two different workshops underpinned by ‘The Roundview’ - a toolkit to educate people about ecology and sustainability. The project has been led by Angela Connelly (Manchester School of Architecture), Joanne Tippett (The University of Manchester), Jo Collinson Scott (University of the West of Scotland), and Matt Brennan (The University of Glasgow),

with the Carbon Landscape Programme. The musicians are Louis Abbott (Admiral Fallow) and Jo Mango with Beth Chalmers (Vox Liminis) leading on video production.

The end product is special: [Undoing - Song from 'Songs of Resilience' project - mmutube](#) and here are some of the lyrics co-created with the young people:

Cotton grass shelters  
Our refracted actions  
Returning trees undoing our inaction  
You've got to let us glitter  
And I wish butterflies  
Glimmers of hope  
Coming violent skies  
We are green light entangled  
Colours we can't break down, unravelled

Several family friendly events have been run at New Moss Wood with parking being a limiting factor. So there has had to be an emphasis of quality of experience as opposed to bums on seats. Many of the events are covered within Carbon Connections.

The Deep Cabaret deserves a special mention. They created the “beWILDer world as kin - Songs of Attention and Reciprocity” Deep Cabaret came out of the need to rehearse outdoors during the pandemic. Passers-by, enjoying their evening greenspace stroll, inevitably came to listen to the socially distanced musicians. It then evolved into an experience:

“a thing of riffs and drones: hurdies, bagpipes, bass clarinets, cellos and... beguilingly singing. With mashed-up lyrics lifted from neuroscience, slavery, fiction and Cole Porter covers pickled in the juices of the peat.”

The reaction of audiences is always magical

"Gorgeous and stirring" and "Wonderful and invigorating."

## Useful Links

Links need updating

## Future Plans and Legacy

The works at New Moss Wood for the Gateway Project will improve visitor experience and peatland awareness. Whilst reported in Restoration there is a new Mini-Moss demonstration site which showed virtually overnight restoration success. Alongside that families can enjoy the new physical trails, interpretation furniture and digital (soundscapes and augmented reality) trails. The legacy is that this site is to be adopted by Hamilton Davies Trust, Cadishead Community Library and for the literary community Manchester Literature Festival who will heavily promote the peatlands for generations to come.



## Lessons learned?

We have had multiple setbacks with this project, especially around the Cadishead Viaduct to connect to New Moss Wood owned by Network Rail. Salford City Council have difficulty influencing the visitors experience in Irlam and Cadishead because of private landownership of principally Chat Moss. Some of this will be addressed with the Legacy Landowner groups and new land purchases by Natural England. However, we have gained new relationships principally with Woodland Trust owners of New Moss Wood and with Hamilton Davies and Cadishead Library “adopting” the site. Similarly, Manchester Literature Festival will continue to promote the trails.

## Photographic Evidence



Deep Cabaret in the Cotton Grass of the Mini Moss at the Launch





3D Design of adventure trail by local primary children



Dragonfly balance beam co-designed with local primary school





Gateway co-designed with local primary school and designed by Arts and Events Coordinator Bernie Dalrymple

**1.** Download the CL-AR app to get started

SCAN QR  
or search Carbon Landscape in App Store

SCAN QR  
or search CL-AR in Google Play

**2.** Explore AR. Scroll to find the icon

**3.** Cotton Grass will appear in landscape where you tap your screen

Device not enabled for Augmented Reality?  
Listen online: [carbonlandscape.org.uk/soundbites](http://carbonlandscape.org.uk/soundbites)  
Find more: [carbonlandscape.org.uk/explore](http://carbonlandscape.org.uk/explore)

HERITAGE FUND, #OWN THE WIDE, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, SPORT ENGLAND, BRITISH CYCLING, WOOLLEN, Salford City Council

Augmented Reality Sign on the Oak Monument to let people know about family friendly cycling on the nearby bridleway so they can travel to Little Woollen Moss (no cycling on the actual nature reserve).

Also there is a voice over soundbite on CL-AR app which was written by Friends of Chat Moss with local birder Dave Steel reciting poetry.

This is to encourage people to enjoy the Mosslands Gateway and seek out the cotton grass on the new mini moss (described in Carbon Restoration)

## Funding Partners

