

The Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme.

Vision

It's 2020. The Stiperstones and Corndon are recognised as a centre of industrial heritage, with local people and visitors understanding the impact of lead, copper and barytes mining and quarrying on the communities, the villages and the land.

More mining relics are now restored and explained and local people appreciate the hardships of life for miners and their families. The story of mining and quarrying from the Bronze Age to the 1950s is commonly known and discussed and the importance of Minsterley and Pontesbury in the smelting and transportation of ore is recognised.

From the top of Corndon there is a softening of the margins between heath and farmland; we can see the purple heather moorland of the Stiperstones Ridge and Stapeley Common gently merge through restored ffridd and rough pasture to a patchwork of better connected and conserved ancient and new woodlands and wildflower meadows. The mosaic of habitats benefits many species. Stone banks, walls, verges and ancient hedgerows have been restored and are now actively managed for conservation. Healthy, coppiced alders and willows line the East and West Onny rivers. Due to better management of their habitats, populations of lesser horseshoe bat, snipe, curlew, lapwing, red grouse, dormice and butterflies thrive, along with more abundant patches of spreading bellflower, maiden pink and mountain pansy. The wildlife gardening club has taken off with many local people enjoying looking after their gardens and larger holdings for the benefit of wildlife. Farmers and land owners enjoy being more involved in conservation management.

Volunteer groups research, investigate and promote a wide range of built and natural heritage, driven by new found knowledge and enthusiasm. As well as mining, this heritage includes living with our ancestors; the Bronze Age connections between Corndon, Stapeley and Stiperstones, being at the frontier of border conflict for over 700 years, Drovers routes and farming and local myths and legends, including Mad Jack Mytton, Wild Edric and the Devil!

School children talk to elderly relatives and neighbours about growing up in the area in the 1950s-70s and these conversations, photos and cine film clips are available on the web to share with others. The schools have built relationships with local farmers and use the countryside as a major source of inspiration for learning.

There are some more opportunities for young people to stay in the area after school because they are employed in heritage trades such as traditional building, nature conservation and veteran tree management, and professionals have more specialist knowledge to conserve special heritage.

There is a thriving market for local products, especially beef, lamb and wood, which is helping support local shops and pubs as well as the wider economy. Residents pride themselves in providing local sourced goods and understanding the positive impact they have on the landscape. Visitors to the area appreciate this strong sense of place and stay longer; enjoying the well described and themed walks, the history and the local welcome. Pontesbury and Minsterley are popular starting points for visitors and the range of services offered reflects this, with more people using public transport and enjoying cycling and walking.

This vision will be achieved by working closely with local people and visitors to deliver projects they are interested in. They will be delivered by dedicated, knowledgeable staff that listen and act on local concerns and supported by a partnership with specialist skills.

Objectives:

By the end of the scheme, the Stiperstones and Corndon hill country LP will aim to have met the following objectives:

HLF Outcome: Conserving or restoring the built and natural features that create the historic landscape character.

key

Act- To conserve and enhance 50 heritage sites including:

- a) Conserving 20 mining and quarrying relics, including community buildings and 250m of laburnum hedges, that help interpret the story of mining through the centuries;
- b) Better management of 10 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other heritage sites through Management Agreements or other funding.
- c) Improved condition and extent of 200 ha heather moorland along the entire Stiperstones Ridge, Stapeley Common and Corndon Hill;
- d) Better conservation management of 250 ha private land that complements and extends habitats over a larger area, creating 'stepping stones' between nature reserves and softening the margins between conservation sites and the farmed landscape, including wet flushes, wildflower meadows, ancient trees and woodland, river bank management and ex industrial sites;
- e) Restoration and management of 3km of stone banks and walls and 5km hedgerows for priority species.
- f) Distribution of 1,000 bat and nest boxes.

HLF Outcome: increasing community participation in local heritage

Join- To have 250 people of all ages actively participating in researching, recording and, where appropriate, conserving local cultural and natural heritage. The activity will be derived from the community but may include:

- a) The development of a wildlife gardening club;
- b) A Community Time Team;
- c) A reminiscence project, with digitisation of findings;
- d) Volunteering in heritage skills such as hedge laying and stone bank restoration;
- e) Development of a community woodfuel project to help conserve sessile oak coppice on the Stiperstones and other ancient woodlands.

HLF Outcome: increasing access to and learning about the landscape and its heritage

Explore- To interpret and improve sustainable access to a range of natural and built heritage for 2,000 people of all ages and abilities provide rural skills training for 200 people and that the following are vividly interpreted through a variety of means:

- a) Living with the mines- centuries of hardship and strife
- b) From rock to pipe- the complex process of mining metals and the importance of Minsterley and Pontesbury in smelting and transportation
- c) Barytes mining and the two World Wars
- d) What the rocks tell us- the importance of the Pontesford- Linley Fault and associated geology
- e) Living with our ancestors- the hill country 4,000 years ago.
- f) Living on the frontier- 700 years of border strife
- g) Drovers, drovers roads and farming
- h) Myths and mysteries- Wild Edric, Mad Jack Mytton, Mitchell's Fold and the Devils Chair.

HLF Outcome: increasing training opportunities in local heritage skills

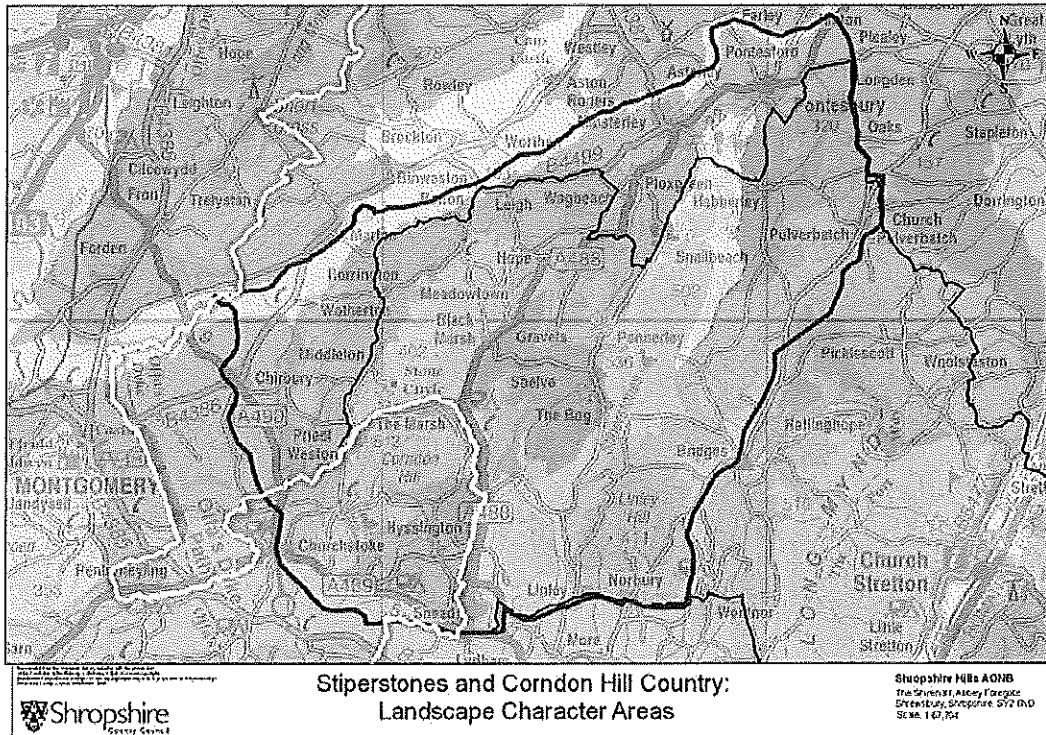
Learn- Enabled six new apprenticeships, 150 young people involved in "Skills in the Hills" taster days, 50 people trained in vocational skills, work placements for 60 people, 30 professionals with better skills to conserve local heritage and 20 tourism and hospitality businesses trained in heritage, interpretation and marketing. Skills will include:

- a) Surveying, analysis, recording and monitoring
- b) Conservation and habitat management, traditional breeds, animal husbandry and bee keeping
- c) Woodland management for conservation, tree planting and using wood for profit
- d) Hedge planting and laying, river bank management, stone walling, stone bank restoration

- e) Installation of renewable energy in conservation buildings
- f) Blacksmithing and conservation metal working
- g) Heritage interpretation, new media, project management and heritage tourism.

Scheme area:

The scheme area is shown in blue on the map below, with the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) shown in black and the Welsh- English border in white.



Timetable:

- Development Phase application submitted end February 2011. Approval July 2011.
- Development Phase September 2011 until September 2012.
- Delivery Stage submission of Landscape Conservation Action Plan September 2012.
- Approval February 2013.
- Delivery Phase April 2013 for 5 years until March 2018.

Funding

Total scheme cost=	£2,102,000
Heritage Lottery Funding=	£1,380,000
Natural England agri environment funding=	£200,000
English Heritage Management Agreement funding=	£100,000

Staff

There will be a team of staff based locally within the area.

- ▶ LP Coordinator- Employed full time with overall responsibility for the delivery of the scheme and management of other members of the team.
- ▶ LP Community Officer- Employed full time and responsible for running the Down to Earth community consultation initiative, managing volunteers, working with primary schools, and liaising with existing community groups and organising the volunteer and community skills programme.

- ▶ LP Natural Heritage Officer - Employed 3 days per week and responsible for delivery of conservation and restoration of natural heritage, including working with landowners on agri-environment scheme applications.
- ▶ LP Cultural Heritage Officer - Employed 3 days per week and responsible for delivery of repair and reinstatement of natural heritage, working with owners to deliver management plans and grant funding.
- ▶ LP Training Officer- a three day per week post focused entirely on training.
- ▶ Administration Officer- administrative support will be employed for two days per week to ensure the smooth running of the scheme and enable other staff to concentrate on delivery.

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