

Headlands to Headspace:

Morecambe Bay's Landscape Partnership Scheme

Executive Summary

Headlands to Headspace (H2H) is a major new initiative motivated by a community desire to protect and celebrate the Bay's rich heritage. This exciting Scheme will deliver training, improve access, and present the Bay's heritage in fresh, new ways. It will bring local people and new audiences together by delivering engaging activities, high quality events and meaningful volunteering opportunities. All in all, it will significantly improve understanding of the natural and cultural heritage and help conserve that heritage for future generations.

In so doing, it will bring new visitors, increase pride, and raise aspiration among the community. It will achieve a wide range of benefits - for heritage, for the Bay's communities, and economic benefits too.

We intend it to be a catalyst for community renewal and sustainable heritage management into the future.

Headlands to Headspace will transform the way people think about Morecambe Bay. Its lasting legacy will be to deliver much greater profile and appreciation of the Bay's unique heritage.

The Bay's Landscape

Morecambe Bay is the largest intertidal area in the UK where four estuaries join in a horseshoe-shaped Bay of a spectacular scale and grandeur. The Bay itself is the key unifying feature of the landscape with vast, shining sands alternating with seascapes in the constant rhythm of the tide. The surrounding landscapes reveal a narrative of man's work, shaping the land and tied to the coastline from one millennium to the next. For centuries humans have earned livelihoods from fishing, seafaring, trade and farming the coastal fringes, shaping the coastal landscape and carving out a unique history and tremendous cultural richness.

The coastal communities look towards one another across the Bay. The railway adds a physical link that echoes deep economic and social connections with the Bay.

Headlands, cliffs and promenades offer spectacular vistas over the elemental landscape. The scale of these views lifts the spirits and has made the Bay a place of contemplation and religious significance through the ages. This emotional response to the Bay prompted the Scheme title – Headlands to Headspace.

Aims of Headlands to Headspace

Headlands to Headspace will put local people at the heart of managing and looking after the heritage assets of the Bay for the long term, especially the very features that local people value most.

Headlands to Headspace offers the chance to celebrate and explore what is distinctive about the Bay and make this better connected, more accessible to all, better appreciated and better understood. The scheme will help communities to restore, enhance and celebrate the cultural and natural heritage of Morecambe Bay.

The Scheme's main priorities are

1. Securing landscape-scale management of the coastal marshes, grasslands, headlands and islands to re-connect a fragmented network of coastal habitats.
2. Restoring important habitats for ground-nesting birds such as terns, eiders, lapwing and curlew and securing improved management for these and other rare and sensitive species and habitats, to reverse recent declines.
3. Providing significantly improved access for diverse audiences to the key natural and cultural heritage sites. Support and promote sustainable transport via the Bay Cycle Way and using the railway and its stations, and the opportunities these provide to link communities.
4. Stimulating and coordinating Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) applications to ensure that available funding is used to best effect to secure positive changes for the next decade, at least.
5. Engaging the communities around the Bay in innovative projects about their shared cultural heritage, from the first human habitation (through archaeology) to the memories of veteran fishermen (through oral history recording and celebration).
6. Creating training and volunteering opportunities for community members for archaeological, cultural and natural heritage restoration and conservation.
7. Providing enjoyable and memorable learning opportunities for all ages that will increase a sense of community pride and ownership of this unique environment and heritage.
8. Taking this unique cultural and natural heritage and bringing it to life through imaginative, innovative and creative interpretation that will be a model of best practice.

Themes and Projects

The 28 projects in Headlands to Headspace will be delivered as a suite of linked activity. They are presented under 4 outcomes and themes: (i) conservation - built and natural heritage; (ii) community participation; (iii) access and (iv) training.

Conservation, Participation, Access, Training

The Scheme will

- Research and improve the management of 12 heritage buildings
- Connect 330 ha of priority habitat, joining up, restoring and managing coastal habitats at a landscape scale
- Improve and safeguard roost sites and nesting sites for terns and eiders
- Research 20+ community stories
- Connect 200 Km of cycleway
- Promote sustainable transport via the railway and the Bay Cycle Way and the stations as local transport hubs
- Provide 4 Trampers to improve access for disabled people
- Promote 3+ multisensory special routes
- Produce 4 innovative new interpretative maps developing a rich sense of place
- Improve and add new importance to 6 headland viewpoints and their views
- Explore the little understood prehistory of sites with a view-shed of the Bay through a community archaeology programme
- Support well over 250 days of high quality engaging volunteer experiences

- Deliver community exhibitions bringing pride to small local communities
- Start to record and archive the rich oral history of the traditional fishing
- Develop 2 new training courses for Innocent Guides¹
- Deliver 180 training places and >500 training days
- Support >20 businesses, improve the skills of >5 local heritage workers
- Deliver >30 events including heritage open days at sites not before open and
- Bring a world-class outdoor exhibition to 2 sites around the Bay, shining a national spotlight on the richness of our local heritage
- Reach several thousand people through the activities of the Scheme.

H2H Scheme Partnership and Board

Morecambe Bay Partnership will lead the Scheme. The Partnership has an impressive track record of collaborative work.

The Headlands to Headspace Board will oversee delivery. This committed partnership comprises local authorities, community bodies, and conservation, heritage and arts organisations. All have signed up to work together to deliver a high quality Scheme with a lasting legacy.

The H2H Board is chaired by Professor Mark E. Smith, Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University.

Budget and timetable

The Scheme's total budget is £2,956,009 comprising a grant request of £1.9million² from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the delivery phase and £840,000 match funding, largely already secured. The timetable is 5 years from the start date, anticipated to be January 2014 - 2019.

Resources and Delivery

Much of the Scheme will be delivered by 5 specially recruited Headlands to Headspace staff: (i) H2H Manager, (ii) H2H Officer, (iii) Cultural Heritage Officer, (iv) Natural Heritage Officer, (v) Community and Training Officer. Specific projects will be delivered by partners, including Art Gene, Sustrans, Marketing Lancashire, Cumbria Wildlife Trust and external contractors.

Significant match funding has been secured from the Coastal Communities Fund and WREN Biodiversity Action Fund. Partner organisations will contribute in-kind and cash contributions.

£5 million new investment

Morecambe Bay is now a place where great things are happening. Headlands to Headspace is being delivered alongside other significant new programmes which together will bring £5 million new investment to the Bay³. These include the Nature Improvement Area and the 700 Days Scheme - a bold programme to kick-start growth in the visitor economy. Headlands to Headspace will undertake

¹ Innocent Guides is the name we have given to the process of turning members of community or business people into effective ambassadors of the heritage of the Bay. This is based on understanding their critical importance – not least from a body of tourism evidence that shows that people's enjoyment of a destination is massively affected by the quality of the welcome they receive from professionals like taxi drivers and hotel receptionists.

² A development grant of £100,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund supported the development phase for H2H between January 2012 and July 2013.

³ Section 9.3 summarises these other Schemes and initiatives running in parallel.

the heritage-focused elements of this activity, but has been carefully designed to complement and dovetail with parallel activities for mutual benefit.

Integrating delivery of Headlands to Headspace with 700 Days and the other schemes makes the Bay's heritage central to activity that will transform the Bay. This

- Makes the Bay's rich cultural and natural heritage a key driver in boosting the Bay's economy
- Secures better long term management for the heritage assets into the future
- Brings maximum added value: building capacity, engagement and skills; improving the image, and quality of place for the communities of the Bay
- Secures lasting economic benefits by making the Bay a more attractive place to live, invest, and visit
- Gives genuine sustainability and ownership to the heritage by making it actively produce socio-economic benefit for the communities.

Headlands to Headspace will transform the Bay

The Scheme is the culmination of many years' work by the Morecambe Bay Partnership. It includes a strong 10-year legacy plan with significant funding attached to ensure that the work undertaken is protected and made accessible in the future.

Headlands to Headspace can help to bring about transformational change for Morecambe Bay by putting the heritage assets of the Bay centre-stage in a major programme of activity. This is a once-in-a-lifetime moment for Morecambe Bay, and Headlands to Headspace is the right Scheme at the right time to seize that moment.

