

Landscape Scale Conservation (LSC) Practitioners Event

Summary Report

Purpose of this Event

The LSC Practitioners Event was a dual location workshop, held in Glen Finglas and Tomintoul on 1st November 2017. Over 40 LSC Practitioners from around Scotland attended.

The purpose of this event was to;

- facilitate networking amongst landscape-scale conservation practitioners;
- provide case studies/site visits of successful LSC projects;
- develop the scope of the Practitioner's Network and plan future activities

Site Visits

Site visits were held in the Glen Finglas and Tomintoul areas to provide LSC practitioners with a case study of a successful landscape scale conservation projects. On return from each site visit a discussion was held to reflect on the findings of the projects. Subsequent themes and issues were captured, to be fed into afternoon workshops later.

Workshops

The purpose of the workshop session was to capture and synthesise ideas from LSC Practitioners. The findings from both sessions would be amalgamated and used as a guide for future actions and activities that could be conducted by the network.

The workshops were divided into sessions based on three overarching questions:

Session 1 - What are the topics you would like to explore through the network?

Attendees were prompted to think about the challenges they face with LSC work, focusing on themes instead of individual areas. Members were asked to consider: Policy and Funding, Awareness Raising, Central Resources and Events.

Session 2 - What activities would help you explore these topics?

Topics raised within Session 1 were discussed with members focussing on the best mechanisms to further explore them. Mechanisms included: Site Visits, Workshops and Meetings, Online Case Studies and Other Ideas.

Session 3 - What actions would you take the lead on?

The final question focussed on the popular activities discussed within Session 2 and allowed the network to understand the scope of their future actions and activities. Practitioners were asked which activities they could lead for other members.

Workshop Outputs

Session 1 – A broad overview of the topics, and activities that LSC Practitioners would like to explore:

Overarching Theme	Points of Interest
Information Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Case Studies, Site Visits and Events• Invite/ connect to other networks and organisations e.g. Oxfam• Face to face networking and knowledge sharing• Central information source for funding opportunities and updates• Face to Face is as important as online.• Review Case studies and create report from findings.
Partnership Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relationships between public and private sector e.g. Sponsorship/ support from businesses.• Reduce competition between conservation bodies for same resources- Co-ordination of a strategic approach.• Facilitate working partnerships with communities and different projects.• Involve land ownership bodies and land owners at events.• Bring different voices together (cultural heritage)
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding/ Financial Models – Case studies are key.• Best Practice• Website to become a wider resource: signposting point, funding, practice, projects• Create a Site Visit Guide – a resource with information on good locations, topics and contacts.• Clear objectives and Principles of Success
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liaising with academic sector: Teaching programmes, Research, Placements.• Community Land Ownership/ Management - jobs• Supporting and guiding opportunities for communities to influence land management• Widen pool of groups with capacity to lead• Coordinate training and skills opportunities• Build 'LSC Champion' role or project.• Target known gaps for recruitment of members and approach key individuals.
Policy and Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reporting to Government on LSC development and partnership activity.• Potential changes to land management post-BREXIT• Informing Government about SRDP facilitating joint working
Land Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Herbivore management• The relevance of the Lawton Principles• Designation of Land eg. New National Parks

Session 2 - Activities that may help the network explore prominent topics:

Topic	Suggested Activities
Workshops/ Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and Brand • Project Planning – balancing aspirations, maintaining energy, selecting projects, the need for development consultants • Monitoring and Evaluation- lessons learned. • Legacy – Planning and Management • Engaging and Partnering with different groups– (Landowners, Businesses, Communities) – how to reach people, how to engage/communicate, how to work together, stakeholder analysis, partnership/ management agreements, joint advocacy. • Funding – where is it, how to meet requirements, long term/ sustainable funding • Habitat and species connectivity case studies and delivery • More social and networking events.
Site Visits/ Demonstration Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events that engage government – meeting members and explaining benefits of LSC • Learning Exchange and Best Practice Delivery events. • Working with landowners - small vs. large, how to engage when there is no financial gain? • Land management experience – what works? How to maximise ecological benefits? • Community Engagement – how to reach them, how to maintain energy around partners and communities, how to bring them along with the project.
Online Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Case Studies - Funding coordination and management. Budget templates and management tools. • Contractor experiences – positive and negative and how to overcome issues. • Promotion and branding - Demonstrating and Selling benefits of LSC projects • Community Engagement - engaging deprived communities. • Contacts and “Sources of Help” as part of website, put people in Video Case Studies and Clips- practitioners talking about their own successes and challenges. • Monitoring and evaluation – practitioners discussing their successes and challenges • Legacy Planning • Procurement frameworks- contractors/advice, machine rings, specialist equipment.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sell” Scottish Media sector a new narrative regarding landscape, habitat restoration and connectivity. • Coordinated liaison with key funding bodies (Government, HLF, Business sector etc.) • Working group to communicate with major funders to get list of projects in area. • Revitalise staff structure to reduce overburdening employees. Staff leaving towards end of large project with x months to go. • Encourage projects with multiple outcomes e.g. biodiversity benefits, conservation vs income generation. Resilience.

Session 3 - Actions LSC Practitioners will lead on:

Who	What
Workshops and Meetings	
Emilie at CSGNT	- Organisation and support tasks
Inner Forth Landscape Initiative (IFLI)	- Host an end of programme event
Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust	- Facilitate visit to Dun Coilich with a focus on community engagement.
LSC Working Group	- Facilitate Project Development Workshop
LSC Working Group	- Facilitate workshops on legacy/monitoring and evaluation reporting.
Sue Walker at IFLI	- Help develop communications and organise and site visit or social event
Tomintoul and Glenlivet LP (TGLP)	- Support communications
Site Visits and Demonstration Days	
IFLI	- Host a site visit and seminar of a chosen topic in 2018 and will ask their partners to contribute.
East Ayrshire Coalfield Environment Initiative (EACEI)	- Facilitate a visit to view peatland restoration in East Ayrshire.
Heart of Scotland Forest Partnership	- Facilitate a site visit.
Clyde Valley Woodlands	- Provide a case study/ host a site visit focusing on selling landscape scale interventions to communities.
RSPB	- Host a visit to Clyde Valley Wader Initiative
SNH	- Facilitate a Sharing Good Practice Event
Plantlife Cairngorms Group	- Training and demonstration on montane and alpine flora
Plantlife Cairngorms Group	- Training and demonstration on Caledonian pinewood flora
RSPB	- Site visit of peatland restoration at Muirkirk
RSPB	- Site Visit – Forsinard
TGLP	- Site visit exploring river restoration project and delivery
TGLP	- Demonstration of conserving natural and cultural heritage simultaneously
RSPB	- Demonstration of RSPB Curlew Trial Management Project
Online Case Studies	
IFLI	- Provide case studies for their project work and suggest to other LPs
IFLI	- Provide an example of problematic budget management
IFLI + Gargunnoch	- Share project lead agreements
TGLP	- Provide case studies.
Coigach Assynt Living LP (CALLP)	- Share contract details and a case study
HOSFP	- Provide a case study
CALLP	- Share partnership and management agreements
Other	
Ian Mackenzie (SWT)	- Volunteered to investigate the Landscape Scale Nature Exchange
Toby Wilson (RSPB)	- Will provide templates for procurement frameworks and provide further advice on this topic.
TGLP	- Assist with project and contract management
CALLP	- Provide advice on building in redundancy packages for staff who continue a project until it is complete.

Evaluation

Members were asked to complete an evaluation from with reference to their expectations for the event. The 29 responses received provided the following results:

Question	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Unsure	Fell Short	Significantly Short	Total
In terms of my expectations, overall the event:	5 17%	23 79%	1 3%	0 0%	0 0%	29
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The project site visit helped me understand and discuss LSC delivery:	11 39%	14 50%	2 7%	1 4%	0 0%	28
The workshop session helped me contribute to the development of the Practitioners Network:	8 28%	17 59%	3 10%	1 3%	0 0%	29
I made useful contacts and/or had useful discussions with other practitioners:	15 52%	13 45%	0 0%	1 3%	0 0%	29
I would like to be involved in future LSC Practitioners Network events:	15 52%	11 38%	3 10%	0 0%	0 0%	29

When asked which aspects of the day people found most useful, responses focussed on the benefits of networking with new people and group discussions. Other useful aspects of the day included the site visits – for starting conservation and visual aids, and the general introduction to the LSC Practitioners Network. Overall, LSC Practitioners were pleased that the event was held in two locations, as this aided their ability to attend and minimised group sizes.

When asked to suggest improvements, attendees felt that the site visit could have been longer, and the workshop sessions shorter. Other suggestions showed a desire for workshops to be themed around a particular topic or issue and to include land owners in the discussions. There was a desire to keep small group sizes in future workshops.

Of those in attendance, nine found out about this event by email, seven through a colleague, and four through Scottish Natural Heritage.