



Landscape Character Network Workshop



The European Landscape Convention and its relevance to land use and landscape planning

29th January 2008
Austin Court, Birmingham





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Landscape Character Network Workshop

The European Landscape Convention and its relevance to land use and landscape planning

Programme

- 9.30 Registration and Refreshments
- 10.00 Adrian Phillips CBE: World Commission on Protected Areas of IUCN; board member of the National Trust and Woodland Trust; adviser to the Heritage Lottery Fund
Welcome and chair's address
- 10.15 Michael Dower CBE: Visiting Professor at the University of Gloucestershire; member of organising group, PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe; member of organising group, CURE - Convention for a sustainable Urban and Rural Europe
'The European Landscape Convention - its origins, focus and relevance at European level to land use and landscape planning'
- 10.40 Richard Partington: European Landscape Convention Project Manager, Natural England
'The ELC Framework for Implementation, and Natural England's Action Plan'
- 11.05 Refreshments
- 11.25 Riccardo Priore: Director of the European Network of Local
- and Regional Authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (ENECL – RECEP)
'The contribution of local and regional authorities to the implementation of the European Landscape Convention'
- 11.50 John Gittins: Executive Director, Cheshire Landscape Trust
'Community Involvement and Planning in relation to the in the European Landscape Convention'
- 12.15 Chaired discussion
- 12.45 Lunch
- 14.00 Maggie Roe: Senior Lecturer in Landscape Architecture, Newcastle University
'How are we doing? Research to support the implementation of the ELC in England'
- 14.25 Doug Harman: Dorset AONB Landscape Planning Officer, Dorset AONB Partnership
'A challenging change? The implications of the European Landscape Convention for landscape planning in the Dorset AONB'
- 14.50 Chaired discussion
- 15.30 Refreshments and close

Contacts

Rachael Mills
Natural England
coordinator@landscapecharacter.org.uk

Jonathan Porter and Gavin MacDonald
Countryside
support@landscapecharacter.org.uk

The Landscape Character Network (LCN) is an informal network with a dual focus on Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and the European Landscape Convention (ELC). The Landscape Character Network is funded and co-ordinated by Natural England. This workshop was facilitated by Countryside. For further information about the LCN visit www.landscapecharacter.org.uk

Continue discussion arising from the workshop at the Landscape Character Network discussion forum:
www.landscapecharacter.org.uk



Biographies Speakers:

Adrian Phillips CBE (Chair),

World Commission on Protected Areas of IUCN; board member of the National Trust and Woodland Trust; adviser to the Heritage Lottery Fund
adrianp@wcpa.demon.co.uk

Adrian Phillips trained as a planner and geographer. He has worked in London, Kenya and Switzerland for the government, the United Nations Environment Programme and IUCN - the World Conservation Union. He was Director General of the Countryside Commission (1981-1992), and then professor at Cardiff University until 2000. He chaired the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (1994-2000), and has worked closely with the World Heritage Convention and European Landscape Convention. He has written and lectured on landscape and served on the boards of RSPB, WWF and CPRE. He is currently a trustee of the National Trust and the Woodland Trust, a Ministerial appointee on the Cotswolds Conservation Board, chairs the Gloucestershire Environmental Trust and is an advisor to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Michael Dower CBE

Visiting Professor at the University of Gloucestershire; member of organising group, PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe; member of organising group, CURE - Convention for a sustainable Urban and Rural Europe
mdower@waitrose.com

Michael Dower was Director General of the Countryside Commission 1992 to 1996, and before that National Park Officer of the Peak District. He was Expert Adviser 1995 to 1998 to the Working Group of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe which drafted the European Landscape Convention: in that capacity, he was co-author of the first draft of the Convention and author of the Explanatory Memorandum. Currently, he is Visiting Professor at the University of Gloucestershire; member of organising group, PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe; member of organising group, CURE - Convention for a sustainable Urban and Rural Europe.

Richard Partington

European Landscape Convention Project Manager, Natural England
richard.partington@naturalengland.org.uk

An environmentalist specialising in protecting, as well as encouraging enjoyment of, the natural world with experience at a local, regional, national and international level - particularly landscape and nature conservation, outdoor recreation management, sustainable living, visitor service and environmental learning provision as well as an occasional author and speaker. Professional Member of the Countryside Management Association and Member of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas including its Protected Landscapes Task Force. Also Member of the EUROPARC Atlantic Isles executive board and the ICOMOS -UK/IUCN -UK Landscape Working Group.

Past roles include New Zealand's National Park Service, the Broads and Exmoor national parks and the Countryside Agency in England as well as consultancy advice across a range of international assignments achieving practical solutions in linking the environment to wider economic, social & health outcomes. Currently Senior Specialist with Natural England and have responsibilities for Landscape/Protected landscapes and, specifically, leading the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in England.



Biographies continued

Riccardo Priore

Director of the European Network of Local and Regional Authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (ENECLC - RECEP)
riccardo.priore@recep-enelc.net

Riccardo Priore is a lawyer and official with the Council of Europe, where he oversaw: the drafting committee for the European Landscape Convention (ELC) (1994-1998); the intergovernmental negotiation process relating to the draft ELC (1999 – 2000); the organisation of the Ministerial Conference for the Opening for Signature of the ELC (Florence, 20 October 2000); and the setting up of a structured continent-wide co-operation between local and regional authorities towards the ELC implementation (Resolution 178/2004) (2000 – 2005). Currently he is on leave of absence from the Council.

Since May 2006 he has been Director of the *European Network of Local and Regional Authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (ENECLC-RECEP)*, created under the aegis of the Council of Europe's Congress of local and regional authorities. He is also Director of the provisional Executive Board of UNISCAPE - *European Network of Universities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention* (since May 2007).

He is member of the Scientific Board of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia, Spain (since 2005) and the *Biennale del Paesaggio* of the Reggio Emilia Province, Italy (since 2005). He is also a member of the Committee for the orientation and evaluation of research projects within the Italian Ministry for University and Research, with reference to environmental and landscape law (since 2003). He has lectured in Landscape law and Local / Regional Self-government Law at the Polytechnic University of Turin, Italy (2005 – 2007) and the University Robert Schuman of Strasbourg, France (2004).

John Gittins

Executive Director, Cheshire Landscape Trust
john@landscapetrust.wanadoo.co.uk

John Gittins is a geographer with over 30 experience in land use planning, community development and education. He has worked in the public, statutory, local government, academic and voluntary sectors. Currently he is Chief Executive of the Cheshire Landscape Trust. He is a Trustee of the National Library of Wales, Keep Wales Tidy Campaign and the Landscape Research Group and a member of the Royal Society of Arts Sustainability Awards Panel. He is still learning.

Maggie Roe

Senior Lecturer in Landscape Architecture, Newcastle University
m.h.roe@ncl.ac.uk

My research interests are based on large scale landscape planning and sustainability issues, particularly in relation to people's perception of and relationship with the landscape. I believe the ratification of the European Landscape Convention by the UK has provided a new vigour for all of us working in the field of landscape planning and policy. In addition to work related to the ELC, some of my recent research has focused on the development of Green Infrastructure (GI) theory and methods, the relationship between children and the landscape, and participatory landscape planning. In the last few years I have also taught, carried out research and published papers in Bangladesh and China. I am Deputy Editor of Landscape Research and a Board Member of the national Landscape Research Group (LRG). A second edition of the book *Landscape & Sustainability* that I co-edited with John Benson has just been published by Routledge.



Biographies continued

Doug Harman

Dorset AONB Landscape Planning Officer, Dorset AONB Partnership

d.harman@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Doug Harman is a Landscape Planner with a keen interest in landscape sustainability and the integration of landscape within the planning system. After graduating with a Master of Landscape Planning and Management from the University of Manchester, he took up a position as landscape architect working on a range of large scale landscape planning projects across the North West. On becoming the Landscape Planning Officer for the newly formed Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership in 2002, he had a central role in producing the first ever Management Plan for the AONB. During the ongoing implementation of the Plan, key areas of work have included the production of a Landscape Character Assessment and Management Guidance along with other planning related work. In addition to the providing the Partnership with a clear landscape focus, Doug is involved in a host of diverse project based work that underpins the holistic nature of AONB management.



List of Attendees

Delegate Name	Organisation
Kay Adams	Entec UK Ltd
Janet Askey	Staffordshire County Council
James Atkin	Atkins
Julia Banbury	Staffordshire County Council
Edward Paul Beckmann	Agathoclis Beckmann
Neil Blackmore	East Devon District Council
Tina Blandford	Defra
Chris Bolton	Natural England
Chris Bray	Worcestershire County Council
Sarah Bryan	Exmoor National Park Authority
Gary Charlton	Natural England
June Crossland	Cornwall AONB Unit
Gavin David	RPS Group Plc
Stephen Dobson	The University of Sheffield
Michael Dower	Visiting Professor, University of Gloucestershire
Tim Dyer	Eastleigh Borough Council
Neil Featherstone	Norfolk Coast AONB Partnership
Ivan Gajos	Countryside
John Gittins	Cheshire Landscape Trust
Andy Goode	Staffordshire County Council
Sarah Green	English Heritage
Geoffrey Griffiths	University of Reading
Euan Hall	Land Restoration Trust
Doug Harman	Dorset AONB
Judith Hawke	Cornwall County Council
Katie Hegmann	The University of Sheffield
Colette Holden	Cornwall AONB Partnership
Phil Holden	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership
Dave Hooley	English Heritage
Nigel Jones	Natural England
Carys Jones	University of Manchester
Jenny Kamp	Countryside Council for Wales
Val Kirby	Natural England
Rebecca Knight	Land Use Consultants



List of Attendees continued

Michele Lavelle	4DLD
Suzanne Leckie	Sheffield Hallam University
Rupert Lovell	Jacobs UK Ltd
Gavin MacDonald	Countryside
Julie Martin	Julie Martin Associates
Bob McNeill	The Scottish Government
Rachael Mills	Natural England
Mel Nicholls	Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership
Richard Partington	Natural England
Adrian Phillips	IUCN and National Trust
Robert Pile	LDA Design
Jonathan Porter	Countryside
Riccardo Priore	ENECL-RECEP
Caroline Read	Scottish Natural Heritage
Maggie Roe	Newcastle University
Amanda Smith	English Heritage
Kathryn	StathamCornwall County Council
Jeff Stevenson	JSA
Carys Swanwick	University of Sheffield
Linda Tartaglia-Kershaw	Hampshire County Council
Sally Thomas	The Scottish Government
Andy Tickle	Friends of the Peak District/CPRE
Christine Tudor	Natural England
Marta Vetier	Wardell Armstrong LLP
Jonathan Wager	
Kate Ward	Entec UK Ltd
Andy Wharton	Natural England
Juliet Wheatley	Herefordshire Council
Faye Wilkins	Plymouth University
Tarja Wilson	Lancashire County Council
Corinna Woodall	Heritage Lottery Fund
Chris Woodley - Stewart	North Pennines AONB Partnership
Ian Woodhurst	CPRE
Steve Wright	Entec UK Ltd
Nick Young	Natural England

Michael Dower CBE

Visiting Professor at the University of Gloucestershire; member of organising group, PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe; member of organising group, CURE - Convention for a sustainable Urban and Rural Europe

mdower@waitrose.com

Michael Dower was Director General of the Countryside Commission 1992 to 1996, and before that National Park Officer of the Peak District. He was Expert Adviser 1995 to 1998 to the Working Group of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe which drafted the European Landscape Convention: in that capacity, he was co-author of the first draft of the Convention and author of the Explanatory Memorandum. Currently, he is Visiting Professor at the University of Gloucestershire; member of organising group, PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe; member of organising group, CURE - Convention for a sustainable Urban and Rural Europe.

The European Landscape Convention - its origins, focus and relevance at European level to land use and landscape planning

Origins of the Convention

The European Landscape Convention sprang from two distinct initiatives, in the north and the south of Europe, in the period 1990 to 1992.

The northern initiative was sparked by the National Trust's seminal Conference 'Europe Preserved for Europe', held in 1990. On that occasion, people from four bodies – the Countryside Commission, the Landscape Research Group, the European Federation of National and Nature Parks (now called Europarc), and ECOVAST (European Council for the Village and Small Town) – began to discuss the idea of a Convention for the Protection of Europe's Rural Landscapes.

That led to the Conference on 'Landscapes in a New Europe: Unity and Diversity', held at Blois in October 1992, on the joint initiative of the Landscape Research Group and the French organisation Paysage et Aménagement, where Adrian Phillips set out the reasons for, and the possible scope of, such a Convention. Adrian (in his IUCN capacity) and I (having succeeded him at the Countryside Commission) then pressed the Council of Europe to take up this cause.

Our approach to the Council of Europe coincided with the separate southern initiative by the Regions of Andalusia, Languedoc-Roussillon and Veneto to draw up a Mediterranean Landscape Charter, of which a draft was presented at a conference in Sevilla in June 1992. A final version of the Charter was approved at the First International Congress on the Mediterranean Landscape, held in Montpellier in June 1993.

The outcome of these two approaches was the setting up in 1995, by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, of a Working Group to prepare a European Landscape Charter or Convention. I had the privilege to be an Expert Adviser to the Group; and, with Yves Luginbuhl, to prepare the first non-legal draft of the Convention. I salute the Working Group, and particularly my good friend Riccardo Priore, Secretary of the Group, who is with us at this Workshop.

In preparing that first draft, I drew directly on the experience in this country, notably:

- our commitment through National Parks and AONBs to protecting not only wild but man-made landscapes;
- our (by then) well-established practice of countryside management, pioneered by Reg Hookway as Director of the Countryside Commission by reference to coasts, uplands and urban fringes – this management being seen as the essential complement to town and country planning;
- our agri-environment schemes, which had by then become a mainstream activity based on the pioneering in New Agricultural Landscapes, the Wildlife and Countryside Act, Countryside Stewardship and much else;
- our commitment to redemption of despoiled or incoherent landscapes, through the Derelict Land Act, the urban fringe experiments, the Groundwork family, the Community Forests, the National Forests and their equivalents in Scotland and Wales;
- The New Map of England, followed (at the time that we were writing the draft Convention) by the Countryside Character programme and the parallel work on Natural Areas by English Nature, which established the idea of landscape units or areas and which drew upon earlier professional thinking about landscape analysis and assessment.

From these sources came the definition of landscapes that Adrian has restated; the principles of identification and assessment of landscapes, and statement of landscape objectives; and the central trilogy of landscape protection, management and planning. The Working Group agreed three further crucial points — that it should be a Convention, not a weaker Charter; that it should apply to all landscapes; and that the action should spring from the people as well as from governments.

The outcome, after much debate, was the Convention, signed in Florence in October 2000, and the subsequent events — the build-up of signatures and ratifications to the point at which the Convention came into operation in 2004; the steady growth in number of the states who are signed up; and the Conferences and Workshops organised by the Secretariat. The next of these Workshops, to be held in

The European Landscape Convention - its origins, focus and relevance at European level to land use and landscape planning (continued)

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mdower@waitrose.com

Slovakia in April this year, is on the same theme as this Workshop, namely “Landscape in planning policies and governance: towards integrated spatial management”. We here in Birmingham can make a useful input to that event.

The focus of the Convention

The stated aim of the Convention is to promote the protection, management and planning of Europe's landscape, and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues.

The Convention relates to all landscapes — urban, peri-urban and rural; the ordinary and even the despoiled, as well as the exceptional. Landscapes are perceived as the setting of people's lives, crucial to the quality of those lives: so, the general public should be encouraged to take an active interest part in caring for them. Moreover, Europe's landscapes are of value to all Europeans, being cherished outside the locality and beyond national borders: therefore, public authorities at all levels should take action to protect, manage and plan landscapes so as to maintain and improve landscape quality, as part of the process of sustainable development.

The parties to the Convention are the member states who sign and ratify it. They commit themselves:

- to recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity;
- to establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning;
- to establish procedures for the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties to participate in defining and implementing landscape policies;
- to integrate landscape into regional and town planning policies and into cultural, environmental, agricultural, social, economic and other policies which may have direct or indirect impact on landscape (this fourth commitment is central to this Workshop's purpose).

Each member state is expected to implement the Convention according to its own legal system and division of powers, respecting the principle of subsidiarity. Thus much of the action may lie with regional or local authorities – who are the prime guardians of the planning system.

The Convention's focus is on 12 active verbs, which I will briefly rehearse (See also figure 1 – 12 things to do that will make a reality of the ELC);

1. to recognise landscapes in law
2. to integrate landscape into all relevant policies

These are jobs for government, and very demanding ones. It is relatively easy to persuade Ministers of Agriculture or Forestry to introduce landscapes into their policies, for example (for EU member states) in Axis 2 of the Rural Development programmes. But the challenge is to get landscapes also into the policies for such fields as transport, water supply, energy, coastal defence, and (crucially) spatial planning: indeed, this is the focal issue for this workshop.

My next seven verbs define the action that is needed everywhere, for every landscape. The action on them lies mainly with public bodies, but working closely with all stakeholders.

The key verbs are:

3. to identify landscapes, that is to describe their character and the key elements in that character
4. to assess the landscapes, that is to analyse what contributes to, and what detracts from, their quality and distinctiveness
5. to define objectives for landscape quality, after public consultation: these objectives should form the frame for the main process of physical action, embodied in the next three verbs
6. to protect what should be protected
7. to manage what needs management in order to be sustained
8. to plan, in the sense stated in the Convention, namely to take strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore and create landscapes
9. to monitor what is happening to the landscapes, in terms of change and the impact of that change upon the character of the landscapes and upon the achievement or not of the stated objectives.

These seven verbs are, for me, the heart of the matter. They are an integral package, in that:

- the objectives for landscape quality must be based upon the sound identification and assessment of landscapes, and of external needs which may need to be met within the landscapes: I will return in a moment to this crucial issue

The European Landscape Convention - its origins, focus and relevance at European level to land use and landscape planning (continued)

Michael Dower CBE

Visiting Professor at the University of Gloucestershire; member of organising group, PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe; member of organising group, CURE - Convention for a sustainable Urban and Rural Europe

mdower@waitrose.com

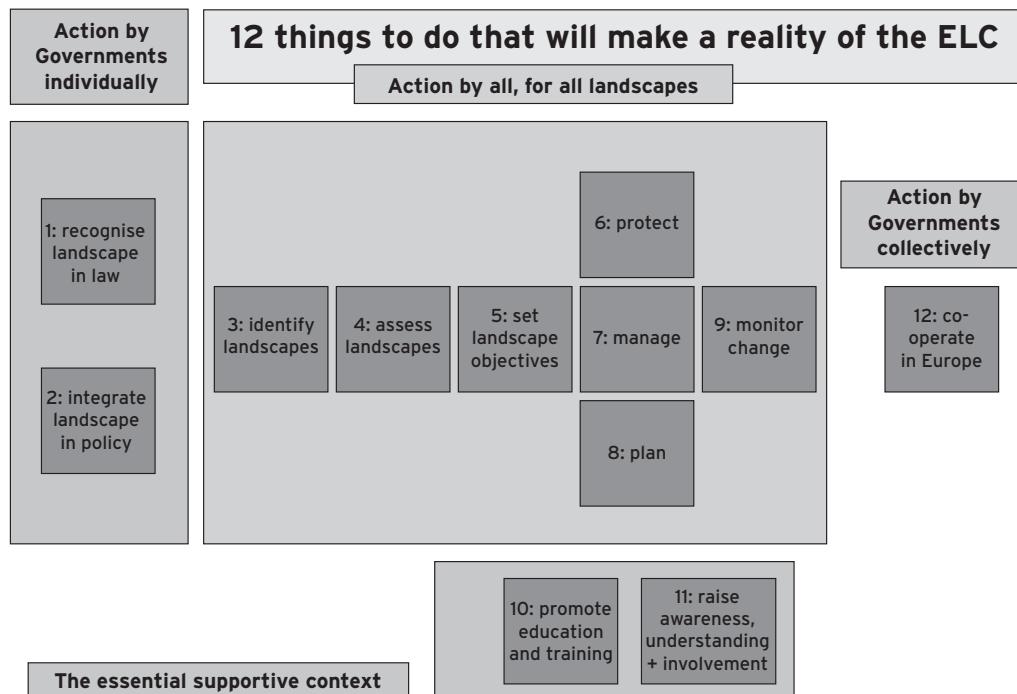


Figure 1: 12 things to do that will make a reality of the ELC

- in turn, the objectives form the base for the action to protect, manage and plan: most landscapes in Europe need some action within all three of these verbs
- monitoring is vital, in order to judge the results of action within all the preceding verbs and to provide a basis for sharpening policy and action wherever that is needed. I regret the lack of emphasis in the Convention upon monitoring within the member states, and I believe that we are only at the beginning of the monitoring process in most countries. I regret also what I perceive as the inadequacy of the mechanisms for monitoring at the European level.

The next two verbs provide an essential supportive context.

10. To promote education and training

The tasks which are set by the earlier verbs are indeed demanding. Landscapes, and the processes that affect them, are so diverse and complex, so linked to the cycles of nature and the demands of people, so subject to change as policies and human actions evolve, that the understanding of them is a major interdisciplinary challenge. It is a great opportunity for the universities, professions and schools of Europe.

11. to raise public awareness and participation

This is a great task for both public bodies

– at all geographic levels – and for NGOs and the world of education. It is a vital task for three main reasons – democracy, in the sense that landscapes belong to everyone; co-responsibility, in that every citizen, every property owner, every user of land, can influence the look of the landscape for good or ill; and governance, in that concern within the population can lead to a commitment in government. We have a long way to go in raising not only public awareness of the landscape, but active public involvement in the action related to landscape which I described earlier.

The final verb is ...

12. To cooperate at European level, through exchange of experience, of information and of specialists.

There is much to be gained through such cooperation, notably between governments; between regional and local authorities; between Universities; and between non-government organisations. I hope that we will hear from Riccardo Priore and others about how this cooperation is shaping up. The Landscape Character Network can contribute much to, and may gain much from, these exchanges.

The link to spatial planning

I mentioned that the statement of objectives for landscape quality is a crucial step in the process (see figure 2 – External needs: the link

The European Landscape Convention - its origins, focus and relevance at European level to land use and landscape planning (continued)

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mdower@waitrose.com

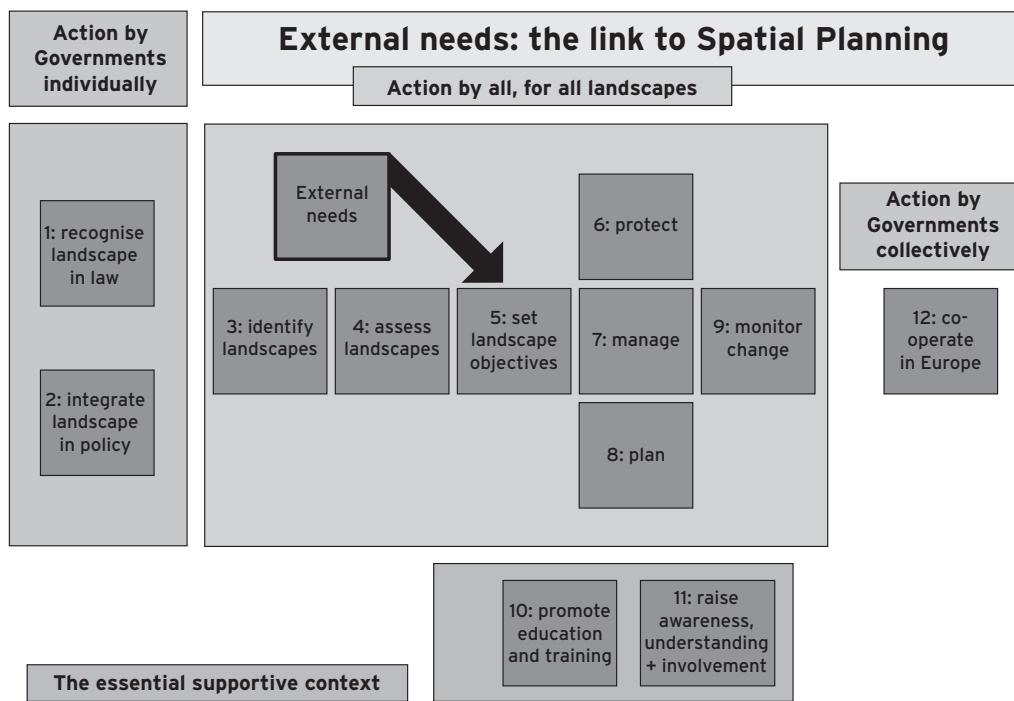


Figure 2: External needs: the link to Spatial Planning

to Spatial Planning). These objectives must be based upon the sound identification and assessment of landscapes, which is the heart of the landscape character idea. We might call this an internal process, in that one could identify within a landscape the features that need protection, management or planning, and state objectives accordingly. This is indeed the prime process in say a National Park or a National Trust estate. But most landscapes are affected also by external needs, such as demands for expansion of towns or production of renewable energy, or (more subtly perhaps) by external forces such as climate change.

The statement of objectives must take account of these external needs and forces as well as the internal logic of landscape character, and must strive to reconcile the two, so that change to the landscape leads to enhancement, not diminution, of its distinctive character. This is the crucial meeting-point between landscape care and spatial planning. It is the politicians and the spatial planners, not the landscape specialists, who decide where external needs are to be met. If landscape concerns and landscape character are to be reflected in the hard choices that have to be made, they must become integral to, rather than afterthoughts and victims of, the spatial planning process and of the policies which drive external needs, such as those related to energy, transport, water, agriculture and rural development.

The European perspective

For the final part of this talk, I am asked to offer a European perspective on this link between the Convention (and what it represents) and spatial planning. I do so by reference first to the Council of Europe, and then to the European Union.

Council of Europe.

The Convention is an instrument of the Council of Europe. This Council, with 47 member states, covers a wider area than the European Union. Its primary focus is on ideas, not on hard-nosed policies or massively-funded programmes. The formal agreements between its member states take the form of Conventions or Charters, which have no binding legal force, unlike the Directives of the European Union. A state which ratifies a Convention cannot be taken to court if it fails to honour the commitments thereby made.

Nevertheless, the Convention has attracted, so far, formal commitments by 28 of the Council's member states to do the things that I mentioned earlier, namely to recognise landscapes in law; to establish and implement landscape policies; to enable the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties to take part in shaping and pursuing these policies; and (crucial to our purpose today) to integrate landscape into regional and town planning policies and a wide range of other policies.

The European Landscape Convention - its origins, focus and relevance at European level to land use and landscape planning (continued)

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mdower@waitrose.com

The implementation of Council of Europe Conventions is overseen by inter-governmental Committees. The European Landscape Convention has no Committee of its own, which I and some others regard as a serious weakness. Responsibility for its oversight is vested in three Committees – those for Cultural Heritage (CDPAT), Biological and Landscape Diversity (CO-DBP) and (most relevant to our purpose today) Regional Planning (CEMAT). Each of these Committees has a central focus on its own main concern. Each of them has brought landscapes into its debates and concerns, for example some CEMAT workshops have included a focus on how landscape concerns can be integrated into regional and spatial planning. But my strong impression from these events, and from the series of “Workshops for the Implementation of the European Landscape Convention” organised by the Council of Europe staff, is that they lack the cutting edge that would really impel landscape concerns into the heart of spatial planning and other policies at national, regional or local levels. The willingness and ability of governments to achieve that ‘centralising’ of landscape is driven more by their own commitment to the subject (pre-dating the Convention), and will be increasingly influenced – for good or ill - by the activities of the European Union.

European Union

Landscape does not figure among the Directives of the EU. There is no equivalent for landscape of the Birds and Habitats Directives or of the Natura 2000 programme, under which some 30% of the EU territory is recognised as meriting protection of its ecological value (though with inadequate funding attached to that recognition). Nature conservation has for long been recognised as a major joint concern of the EU member states. Recognition of landscape is still relatively weak, although it has risen over the years since Adrian Phillips first achieved the insertion of a Landscape chapter into the Dobris Assessment of 1995.

To put this into perspective, one should recall the three driving concerns of the leading politicians in the European Union. These are:

- to make the EU “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy” in the world (the ‘Lisbon agenda’ agreed in March 2000)
- to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion by reducing the grave disparities

in income, living conditions, infrastructure etc between the rich and successful and the poor and declining regions of the enlarged Union

- to protect the environment and achieve a more sustainable pattern of development (the Gothenburg agenda of June 2001): in this the priorities are to combat climate change, to ensure sustainable transport, to address threats to public health and to manage natural resources more responsibly.

Landscape does not figure among even the sub-objectives of these major policies. If considered at all at high political levels, it may be seen as a factor in how development is carried out, rather than what development should take place. Moreover, the strong trend to subsidiarity, and delegation of policy implementation to the levels of member states and regions, means that landscape concerns must be picked up mainly at those levels.

Nevertheless, there are pressure points at European level which offer possible entry for landscape concerns I cite three of these:

- The national rural development programmes 2007 to 2013, now coming into operation in all the EU member states, which offer significant funding for agri-environment schemes (Axis2) and for such tasks as village renewal or heritage conservation (axis 3): it is vital that landscape character and landscape quality objectives are taken into account in this activity
- The process of Environmental Impact Assessment, which is increasingly being applied – an obligation under EU law - not only to projects, but also to policies and programmes: we need to ensure that the impact on landscape character is integral to this process
- The European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON), funded by the European Commission, has launched an ESPON 2013 Programme which will “support policy development in relation to the aim of territorial cohesion and a harmonious development of the European territory”. This could be used to bring landscape character within the criteria for assessing harmonious development.

But I end by saying that the greatest opportunity for the collective forces of Europe to be applied to the planning of landscape lies with the massive expenditure under the European Regional Development Fund, which operates in all Member States, and the Cohesion Fund which co-finances

**The European Landscape
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(continued)**

Michael Dower CBE

Visiting Professor
at the University of
Gloucestershire; member
of organising group,
PREPARE Partnership for
Rural Europe; member
of organising group,
CURE - Convention for
a sustainable Urban and
Rural Europe

mdower@waitrose.com

mainly transport and environment projects in Member States whose GNP is less than 90% of the EU average. That is partly why I am currently working with others in the CURE project – Convention for a Sustainable Urban and Rural Europe – of which the aim is to offer, at the time of the Mid-Term Reviews of EU programmes in 2009-10, recommendation on policy frameworks and measures which will assist a sustainable approach to the future of urban and rural areas in Europe, achieved through effective partnership between governments and civil society. Landscape, with its power to link urban and rural areas and interests, is one of the ten main themes that we intend to pursue within this project.

Richard Partington

European Landscape
Convention Project
Manager, Natural England

richard.partington@
naturalengland.org.uk

An environmentalist specialising in protecting, as well as encouraging enjoyment of, the natural world with experience at a local, regional, national and international level - particularly landscape and nature conservation, outdoor recreation management, sustainable living, visitor service and environmental learning provision as well as an occasional author and speaker. Professional Member of the Countryside Management Association and Member of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas including its Protected Landscapes Task Force. Also Member of the EUROPARC Atlantic Isles executive board and the ICOMOS -UK/IUCN -UK Landscape Working Group.

Past roles include New Zealand's National Park Service, the Broads and Exmoor national parks and the Countryside Agency in England as well as consultancy advice across a range of international assignments achieving practical solutions in linking the environment to wider economic, social & health outcomes.

Currently Senior Specialist with Natural England and have responsibilities for Landscape/Protected landscapes and, specifically, leading the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in England.

The ELC Framework for Implementation, and Natural England's Action Plan

The European Landscape Convention Framework for Implementation in England was developed by Natural England in partnership with Defra and English Heritage in October 2007.

Defra has asked Natural England to take the lead on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in England, working closely with English Heritage, the Forestry Commission, NGO's, Local Authorities, professions and the public. Natural England is pleased to undertake this challenging, yet complementary role alongside its broader responsibilities as the Government's statutory adviser on landscapes.

The ELC definition is short, yet comprehensive: 'landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'. The definition applies to the whole territory of states including all urban and peri-urban landscapes, towns, villages and rural areas, the coast and inland areas. It applies to ordinary or even degraded landscape as well as those areas that are outstanding or protected.

Detailed information about the Council of Europe, the official text and further explanatory material can be found at:
<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=176&CM=7&DF=5/8/2007&CL=ENG>

The Framework for Implementation seeks to further strengthen the protection, management and planning of landscape in England by providing a structure for Action Plans of partners and stakeholders. It underpins a wide range of activities which, through public engagement and stakeholder involvement, will lead to wider understanding and appreciation, improved knowledge and care as well as a sense of inspiration, well-being and connection between people and place.

The Framework for Implementation in England aims to:

- Improve performance within the current legal and regulatory frame
- Influence future legislation, regulation and advice, including contributing to gap analysis
- Improve the understanding of landscape character and dynamics, and the monitoring of change and trends
- Engage people through comprehensive and accessible awareness and understanding activities as well as through, promotion, education & training.
- Share experiences and best practice

Natural England is currently developing its own Action Plan for inclusion within the England Framework and it will feature activities that will improve, promote and raise awareness of landscape. Within the past twelve months Natural England has supported external partners such as EUROPARC Atlantic Isles and the Landscape Research Group to host seminars on the ELC which draws on experience as well as sharing good implementation practice. In January 2008 a Landscape Character Network workshop, again supported by Natural England, is discussing how the ELC is relevant to land use planning. A series of internal learning opportunities is being developed with regional staff to maximise landscape influence as well as national research being undertaken to provide evidence of how landscape policies, strategies and mechanisms deliver.

Throughout 2008 Natural England is looking to work with key partners to strengthen implementation of the ELC. The Framework for Implementation in England is available to view on the LCN website at:

www.landscapecharacter.org.uk

Riccardo Priore

Director of the European Network of Local and Regional Authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (ENECL - RECEP)

riccardo.priore@recep-enelc.net

Riccardo Priore is a lawyer and official with the Council of Europe, where he oversaw: the drafting committee for the European Landscape Convention (ELC) (1994-1998); the intergovernmental negotiation process relating to the draft ELC (1999 – 2000); the organisation of the Ministerial Conference for the Opening for Signature of the ELC (Florence, 20 October 2000); and the setting up of a structured continent-wide co-operation between local and regional authorities towards the ELC implementation (Resolution 178/2004) (2000 – 2005). Currently he is on leave of absence from the Council.

Since May 2006 he has been Director of the European Network of Local and Regional Authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (ENECL- RECEP), created under the aegis of the Council of Europe's Congress of local and regional authorities. He is also Director of the provisional Executive Board of UNISCAPE - European Network of Universities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (since May 2007).

He is member of the Scientific Board of the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia, Spain (since 2005) and the Biennale del

Continued overleaf . . .

The contribution of local and regional authorities to the implementation of the European Landscape Convention

This text is a personal elaboration and does not represent the opinion of any person or institution.

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is an international legal framework for a political project aimed at sharing and consolidating a new approach to landscape issues continent-wide.

It sets forth principles committing the Contracting States to adopt policies and measures aimed at enhancing the quality of landscapes throughout the entire national territory, involving the people concerned in the relevant public decision-making processes.

With this in mind, the ELC explicitly refers to the principles of subsidiarity and local self-government, undertaking Contracting States to involve local and regional authorities in:

- the elaboration of landscape policies, landscape identification / assessment procedures;
- the definition of quality objectives;
- interventions in the areas concerned.

In most European countries direct responsibility for everyday landscape matters lies with regions or local authorities, in the latter case sometimes as a regionally delegated responsibility. With this in mind, everything should be done in order to alert local and regional authorities to the importance of their role.

Bearing in mind Article 4 of the ELC, the time has come for local and regional authorities to assume their responsibilities in accordance with the subsidiarity principle.

In some cases, this is already a reality. At national level, the entry into force of the ELC provisions prompted a growing number of local and regional authorities to strengthen their institutional commitment with regard to landscape. This process went through a gradual but substantial adaptation of their technical, administrative, legal and/or statutory framework.

However, given the difficulty of the task, territorial authorities should be supported by central governments and European

institutions, and be able to exchange information in a spirit of co-operation and to their mutual benefit.

Aware of these needs, in 2004 the *Congress of Local and Regional Authorities* (Congress) – the Council of Europe's institution at the origins of the ELC – invited municipalities, provinces and regions throughout Europe to reinforce their co-operation for a better implementation of the ELC principles within their territories (see Congress' Resolution 178/2004).

In reply to this recommendation, on 30 May 2006, further to the initiative of the *Campania Region* (Italy) 22 European decentralised authorities constituted in Strasbourg, at the Council of Europe's premises, the European Network of Local and Regional Authorities for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (ENECL).

Following most recent adhesions, ENECL is composed of 37 Members (situation on 01.01.08). Other local and regional authorities have applied for membership or expressed their interest in co-operating with ENECL. ENECL permanent headquarters are in Florence (Italy), at the Medicean Villa of Careggi.

ENECL is therefore a:

- a European body of public authorities, constituted under the aegis of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities;
- an international association supporting municipalities, counties, regions and any other local / regional authority in the implementation of the ELC principles;
- an independent organisation acting at political and technical/administrative level, interlinking with international organisations, EU institutions, States, universities, NGO's.

This European network offers local and regional authorities co-ordination, assistance and technical support in carrying out their landscape responsibilities in accordance with the ELC principles. It helps them to improve their decision-making capacities in their

Paesaggio of the Reggio Emilia Province, Italy (since 2005). He is also a member of the Committee for the orientation and evaluation of research projects within the Italian Ministry for University and Research, with reference to environmental and landscape law (since 2003). He has lectured in Landscape law and Local / Regional Self-government Law at the Polytechnic University of Turin, Italy (2005 – 2007) and the University Robert Schuman of Strasbourg, France (2004).

respective spheres and in conjunction with central government, particularly in the areas of planning and authorisation procedures.

ENELC also assists local and regional authorities in preparing documents on the identification and assessment of landscape units, setting landscape quality objectives and decisions concerning landscape protection/planning.

These activities are supplemented by programmes and projects for informing, educating and training local and regional officials. In addition, ENELC represents a political forum for dialogue between the politicians concerned, helping them to co-ordinate their landscape policies. Within the Network, local and regional authorities are also able to establish a more harmonious dialogue with central governments.

ENELC authorities are currently:

- the President - Mrs Gabriella Cundari, Minister for Spatial and Town Planning of the Campania Region (Italy);
- the Vice-Presidents - Mr Joaquim Nadal i Farreras, Minister for Spatial and Town planning of the Catatonia Region (Spain); Mrs Giuliana Motti, Minister for Culture and Landscape of the Reggio Emilia Province (Italy); Mr Etienne Van Varenbergh, Municipal Councillor of Lennik (Belgium);
- the Director - Mr Riccardo Priore, Council of Europe's official (authorised by the Council of Europe's Secretary General). For any further information:
info@recep-enelc.net - www.recep-enelc.net

John Gittins

Executive Director,
Cheshire Landscape Trust

john@landscapetrust.wanadoo.co.uk

John Gittins is a geographer with over 30 experience in land use planning, community development and education. He has worked in the public, statutory, local government, academic and voluntary sectors. Currently he is Chief Executive of the Cheshire Landscape Trust. He is a Trustee of the National Library of Wales, Keep Wales Tidy Campaign and the Landscape Research Group and a member of the Royal Society of Arts Sustainability Awards Panel. He is still learning.

Community Involvement and Planning in relation to the European Landscape Convention

Landscapes everywhere are changing and will continue to do so. It is important for lay people to help steer the process of change. Fortunately the European Landscape Convention specifically provides a key role for participation by the general public. Based on our experience at the Cheshire Landscape Trust, we have evidence that if people are given an active role in landscape decision making they are more likely to identify with the areas where they live, work or spend their leisure time.

With landscape being a key component of community well-being we found that communities and stakeholders can engage with the landscape in two ways: 1. Landscape Planning and 2. Landscape Management linked to which is the whole area of Landscape Protection.

From our standpoint the three major challenges in involving the community are to: 1. Attract and sustain as wide a range of residents as possible in the Working Group, 2. Identify leaders from the group and 3. See how the approach can be replicated.

With funding and help from the Natural England (Countryside Agency), the Cheshire Landscape Trust tested and developed the use of the Landscape Character Assessment Guideline produced by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency initially in two contrasting parishes in landscape terms and size of population in Cheshire and have subsequently extended this to a further 10 communities. Based on a dual focus of 'product and process' the two communities produced documents in the form of combined Parish Landscape Character Assessments and Village Design Statements which have been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. Since the implementation of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 we have worked with two communities to get their combined statements adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents.

Lessons from our experience indicate that landscape character can be assessed by lay persons, that the process takes time and that using the documents which have been adopted as an SPD can help to deliver action. Certainly a Landscape Character Assessment can be a valuable tool for promoting community development, well-being and ownership.

The Burwardsley, Weaverham and Kelsall documents link local to district, county, regional and national levels of Landscape Character Assessment and there are clear links to the European Landscape Convention and the role of public participation. A combined Village Design and Parish Landscape Statement adds value to a Parish Plan and can help a parish to obtain 'Quality Parish Council' status.

Initially we found the post 2004 Planning Legislation and the public consultation process a challenge this has been overcome with help and advice from Local Authority staff and officers from Government Office (North West), English Heritage and the Natural England.

Looking at the 'Bigger Picture' that of working within the principles of the European Landscape Convention we see people from all cultures and communities across the UK having the opportunity to play key roles in spatial planning and sustainable development. Our work has certainly increased awareness and understanding of landscapes, their value and how they work and with luck will help to promote a more accessible and integrated approach to understanding, shaping and managing future landscape change.

In the final analysis the work undertaken and still ongoing in Cheshire has been worthwhile in helping to promote, develop and sustain the European Landscape Convention at grassroots level.

John W. Gittins
Cheshire Landscape Trust

Maggie Roe

Senior Lecturer and
Convenor of the Landscape
Research Group,
School of Architecture,
Planning & Landscape,
Newcastle University

m.h.roe@ncl.ac.uk

My research interests are based on large scale landscape planning and sustainability issues, particularly in relation to people's perception of and relationship with the landscape. I believe the ratification of the European Landscape Convention by the UK has provided a new vigour for all of us working in the field of landscape planning and policy. In addition to work related to the ELC, some of my recent research has focussed on the development of Green Infrastructure (GI) theory and methods, the relationship between children and the landscape, and participatory landscape planning. In the last few years I have also taught, carried out research and published papers in Bangladesh and China. I am Deputy Editor of Landscape Research and a Board Member of the national Landscape Research Group (LRG). A second edition of the book Landscape & Sustainability that I co-edited with John Benson has just been published by Routledge.

How are we doing? Research to support the implementation of the ELC in England

Abstract

The ratification of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) by the UK in November 2006 has encouraged various initiatives based on a need to examine how the Convention is being or should be implemented. This project, commissioned by Natural England, was set up in support of implementation of the Convention in England. It is being carried out as a collaborative project by researchers in the Universities of Newcastle and Manchester. The project commenced in November 2007 and is due to report by mid-March 2008. The idea behind the commission was to gain a much better understanding of how England is doing in relation to incorporating Articles 5 & 6 into guidance at a number of different levels and over a variety of sectors. In particular the objective is to identify mechanisms that guide regional authorities on how to incorporate, connect and respect landscape in spatial planning strategies and sectors. This is not meant as a comprehensive survey, but aims to provide the basis for Natural England to identify the need for further policy advice and devise programmes to help focus further on the aims of the Convention. A point we have to keep in mind is that much guidance was published prior to the UK signing (Feb 21.2.2006), and ratifying (21.11.2007) the Convention. However the UK has been involved in the development of the Convention from its earliest stages and the expectation might be that this should be reflected in the mechanisms we are examining. The methodology is qualitative, based on a content analysis of sample documents focussed primarily at the national and regional levels. In particular we are looking for integration in intent - in relation to flows of thinking relating to the Convention - between the national and regional levels (vertical integration) across sectors (horizontal integration). This presentation describes the basis for the methodology and discusses the issues raised in the theoretical development behind the methodology. The emerging issues are also discussed bearing in mind that this is research in progress.

1. Introduction: Project Context and Understanding the Basis for the Research

The European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention is seen as a landmark in the recognition that all landscapes should be considered as valuable, and that landscape is '*a key element of individual and social well-being and quality of life*' (CoE, 2007a, preamble). The Convention emphasises that landscape cannot be protected by drawing lines around what are considered 'outstanding' areas at the expense of others. Specifically, the European Landscape Convention aims '*to promote landscape protection, management and planning and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues*' (Article 3). It applies to all areas including '*natural, rural, urban and peri-urban*' areas, and also includes land and water (both inland and marine). In addition it is concerned with all landscape, whether 'outstanding', 'everyday' or even 'degraded'. All landscapes have the potential to hold some kind of meaning, provide identity and benefit to the community, and landscape '*must be recognised and protected independently from its value*' (Priore, 2001, p.32). Thus the European Landscape Convention has set out a much more holistic understanding of landscape than was previously the case throughout Europe.

The European Landscape Convention therefore provides the key starting point for a Europe-wide initiative to understand the evolution, present state and potential future of European landscapes. In particular what constitutes 'cultural' landscapes, how we regard and protect landscape heritage, the importance of social and economic driving forces, the understanding of the participation of ordinary people in the evolution of landscapes and the role of 'ordinary' landscapes in our cultural heritage and future health, wealth and happiness. It provides a holistic approach to the management of landscape change.

**How are we doing?
Research to support the implementation of the ELC in England (continued)**

Maggie Roe

Senior Lecturer and Convenor of the Landscape Research Group, School of Architecture, Planning & Landscape, Newcastle University

m.h.roe@ncl.ac.uk

Implementation Experience in Europe

The Council of Europe is now focussing on the implementation of the Convention and has provided Draft Guidelines for Implementation (CoE, 2007b). Graham Fairclough (UK Government Representative, English Heritage and England Project Group) has been involved in the working group's meetings to develop these Guidelines and the UK is recognised as having important experience in a number of areas related to the implementation of the Convention. The basis for implementation is set out in ELC Articles 5 and 6. The Council of Europe promotes and monitors implementation through its seminars, meetings and other activities. However it has very little money to do other than this and it therefore relies on States to develop their own implementation strategies, emphasising the need for creativity in the way authorities should '*draw up legal, operational, administrative and technical landscape-related instruments*' (CoE, 2007b, p.4). The Convention's objectives are now beginning to be reflected in the work of governments, environmental agencies and a wide range of interested parties within the landscape field in Europe. However there is much debate on suitable tools, scales, and scientific models that are appropriate in the implementation of the Convention. In particular it is evident from documentation and from the Council of Europe meetings that there is considerable unevenness in the pattern of implementation. This is because the member States have very different political outlooks, domestic environmental legislation and policy, as well as varying professional and scientific expertise, knowledge and financial resources for this kind of work. Some countries believe they have achieved many of the objectives of the Convention already within their policy, but this may not necessarily be borne out by an examination of what is going on at ground level.

Potentially useful tools in the implementation process have been identified such as Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Landscape Character Analysis and the use of models to understand the driving forces of change. The Council of Europe (2007b) identifies the main categories of instruments for implementation as general and sectoral instruments at varying administrative, programming and spatial-planning levels. The Guidelines for Implementation (CoE, 2007b) provide information that can be used as the

starting point for implementation assessment.

Implementation in England

Although there appears to be an understanding in Europe that the UK can provide good examples where the spirit of the Convention is already embodied within policy and practice, further cross-sectoral evaluation is needed. As identified by Natural England in relation to the present study, good baseline information on the effectiveness of existing implementation tools and strategies must be the starting point for further action in order for a gap analysis to be carried out and the focus of further action and research identified. The first step is to understand the existing policies and their related instruments aimed at protecting, managing and/or planning the landscape.

Key landscape issues for England already identified by Defra (Coleman, 2006) in relation to practical opportunities to implement the ELC are:

Policy development:

- Climate change mitigation – Energy White Paper; review of Forestry Strategy
- Climate change adaptation
- Ecosystem services and the landscape scale approach
- Marine Bill
- Barker and Housing
- Eddington and major infrastructure

Policy implementation:

- Growth areas
- Rural development programme targeting – finance constrained
- Mid-term review of CAP
- Manifesto for Learning Outdoors
- Creation of natural England, with close working with the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency
- Role of Natural England at regional level and statutory guidance

In terms of implementation processes a number of other areas have been highlighted:

- Public and stakeholder involvement, awareness and participation
- Integrated or 'joining-up' of policies, strategies and action
- Cross-sectoral working, sharing of experience, identification of best practice
- Use and interpretation of language
- Defining landscape quality objectives
- Sustaining the processes

**How are we doing?
Research to support the
implementation of the ELC
in England (continued)**

Maggie Roe

Senior Lecturer and
Convenor of the Landscape
Research Group,
School of Architecture,
Planning & Landscape,
Newcastle University

m.h.roe@ncl.ac.uk

2. Methodology

The present study commenced in November 2007 and is due to report in March 2008.

The study objectives are to:

- (i) Gain an understanding of the current performance against ELC objectives
- (ii) Gather evidence of poor/good/mediocre performance
- (iii) Identify especially effective actions to raise performance
- (iv) Identify mechanisms that guide regional authorities on how to incorporate, connect and respect landscape in spatial planning strategies and sectors
- (v) Identify where performance could be improved
- (vi) Understanding the opportunities that SEA and EIA regulations and processes could bring to further support and implement ELC objectives

Our methodology development was informed by a number of useful background documents (e.g. Bruns, 2007; Depoorter, 2003; CoE, 2007c&d; Lucas, 2006; Swanwick 2006). In one of these Oliver Lucas (2006) suggests that the success in developing policy related to the ELC is to:

- concentrate on what is practically attainable within the tolerance of the business;
- ensure there is consistency across the country (i.e. there is a need to look countrywide);
- develop a common understanding of landscape terminology (i.e. language matters);
- examine best practice;
- look for quality in landscape;
- make landscape an 'explicit and detailed objective in policy'

As the brief demanded that this was primarily a desk-based study, the project was devised as a literature review and analysis of policy and other documents. This would reveal information that could allow us to provide some answers to the research questions set out in Figure 1. The present study covers the national and regional level policies and strategies (A & B in Figure 1).

The methodology is based on an iterative feedback process of review, discussion with Natural England officers, analysis and synthesis. It is a qualitative content analysis of advice and guidance documents using sample documents based particularly on objective (iv) to identify mechanisms that guide regional

authorities on how to incorporate, connect and respect landscape in spatial planning strategies and sectors.

On the basis that we cannot look at every guidance document we have to be selective, we also have to keep in mind that the UK signed the ELC on Feb 21.2.2006, it was ratified it on 21.11.2006 and it came into force 1.3.2007, i.e. decisive action has been taken very recently by the UK government and we are looking at a number of policies and documents dated prior to this. The documents that are being examined are selected from three main areas:

1. **National** - National level policies/ schemes/agendas/programmes include those developed by nationally recognised organisations such as government offices (DCLG/ODPM) that have a role in national policy and guideline development. Particular sectors are also examined to see how national-level guidance is being given.
2. **Regional Strategies** – Examples of cross-sectoral strategies (RSS & RES) that outline how nationally developed policy can be delivered or planned for a regional level.
3. **Regional Case Studies** (North-East and East Midlands) - Documents include regionally specific strategies developed by the RDAs, and other strategies developed by regional delivery organisations and sectors that use national policy and regional strategies to develop programmes or work to deliver the national/regional goals relating to particular sectors at the regional scale. The North East was selected as a good example of a region with nationally important landscape features located within a smaller urban/economic region. The North East strategies, policies and programmes reflect the diversity of the landscape (coastal, rural plain, rural upland, urban, riparian and estuarine) and land uses (urban, urban fringe, agriculture, commercial and community forestry, tourism) and natural and manmade features (heritage/historic; reservoirs, ancient woodland, rivers). This case study will allow us to examine a range of important sectors. The East Midlands Region provides opportunities to examine an area identified as a national growth region with a number of interactions between policy and place, particularly ideas of the integration of policy focussing on spatial growth and its

**How are we doing?
Research to support the implementation of the ELC in England (continued)**

Maggie Roe

Senior Lecturer and Convenor of the Landscape Research Group, School of Architecture, Planning & Landscape, Newcastle University

m.h.roe@ncl.ac.uk

role in urban/urban-fringe development. The area includes the National Forest, Lincolnshire Marshes and considerable pressures for development and urban growth. Housing, regeneration and regional transport are seen as key issues within the Regional Spatial Strategy. This case will allow us to focus on sectors that complement those in the North East.

These case studies have shown different articulations of national policies as a result of their context, the landscape character, political priorities and scale. While extrapolations from and comparisons between one area to another are often dangerous, the examination should provide us with a means of understanding more clearly how the aims of the ELC are being interpreted and articulated at the regional level by key organisations and agencies in a meaningful way. In addition, these case study areas will draw on the different types of areas indicated in the ELC - natural, rural, urban and peri-urban – as well as landscapes of different quality.

Part of the study is to examine the role of EIA and SEA legislation and guidance in implementation of the ELC in England. Both the EIA and SEA Directives require the assessment of direct and indirect effects of a project, programme or plan on landscape, together with interactions between landscape and other environmental components, such as flora, fauna, water, cultural heritage, etc. These effects need to be addressed in the EIA report/Environmental Statement submitted. In addition, landscape plays a role in the processes of EIA and SEA, as a determining factor in the screening of proposals for assessment. The understanding of the concept of landscape by those carrying out assessments will be important in determining the approach to landscape policy, protection, management and planning. Existing literature and studies will be analysed to draw conclusions on current practice in the coverage of landscape issues in EIA and SEA both in the screening process and in submitted reports.

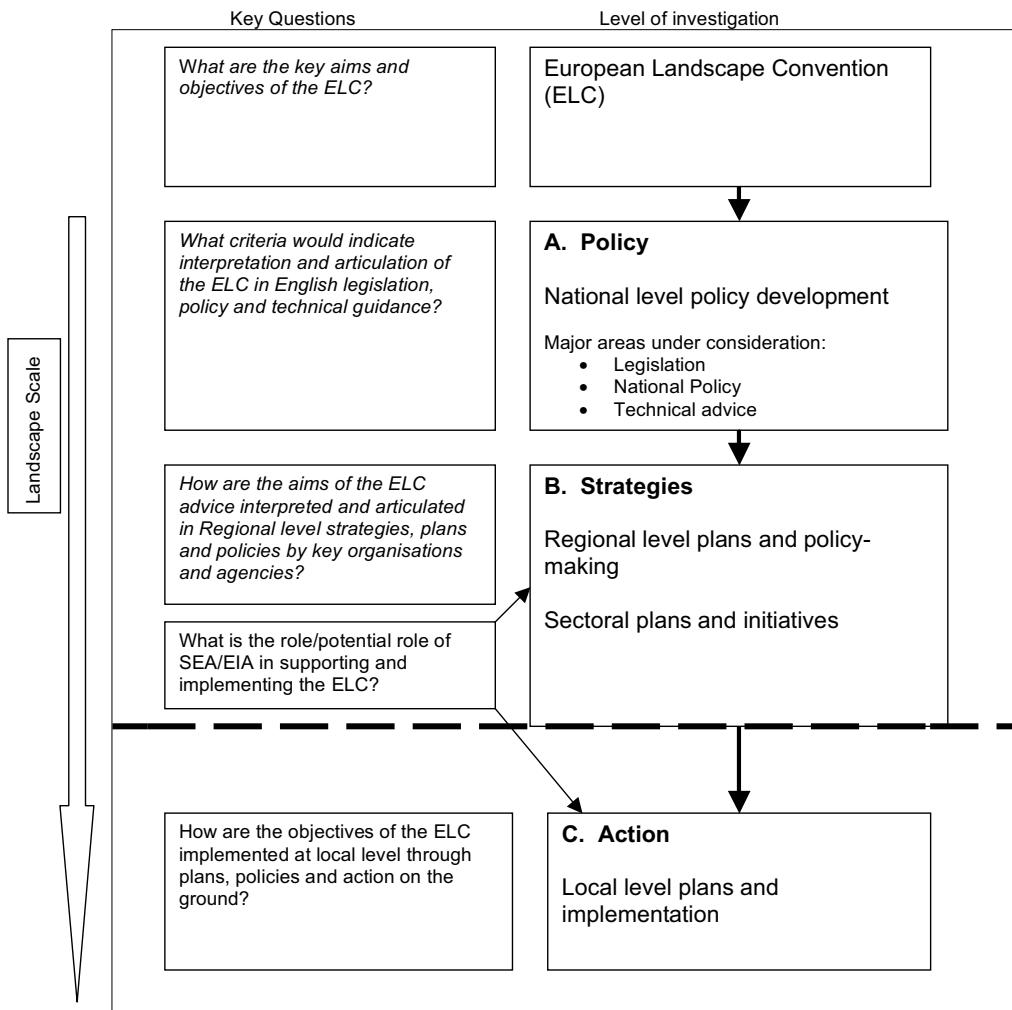


Figure 1: Conceptual basis for Study

**How are we doing?
Research to support the implementation of the ELC in England (continued)**

Maggie Roe

Senior Lecturer and Convenor of the Landscape Research Group, School of Architecture, Planning & Landscape, Newcastle University

m.h.roe@ncl.ac.uk

	Tacit knowledge	Explicit knowledge
(i)	Implicit	Expressed in language
(ii)	Personally bound	Not bound to an individual
(iii)	Not accessible for others	Accessible to others, tangible, available on a medium
(iv)	Not put in context of other knowledge	Seen in the context of existing knowledge

(Source: Tress et al. 2006:22).

3. What are looking for?

Language of landscape

There is much discussion in the literature relating to the use of landscape ‘language’. As my former colleague John Benson wrote in a LCN paper for a workshop in 2004 ‘*Words and their definitions and uses matter*’ (Benson, 2004). It is perhaps useful to think in our study in terms of the links between *tacit* or *explicit* knowledge and its expression in language:

We are looking for explicit knowledge and understanding of the ELC in these documents. Explicit knowledge is accessible to others (the public/stakeholders) through clear expression in language, is available in the medium of the document and is therefore possible to be assessed and seen in the context of existing knowledge, beliefs and commonly held attitudes (*Ibid*).

Landscape has complex and multiple meanings that change depending on the context used. There is an extensive literature on this. It is also important to remember the countless associations that the term ‘landscape’ has which are difficult to establish in language. Scott *et al.* (2006) use landscape experience concepts to help define ‘landscape’:

- Landscape as a physical place
- Landscape as emotional territory
- Landscape as part of identity
- Landscape as a place for social interaction
- Landscape as a setting for action
- Landscape as a sensory experience

Terms relate to the way landscape is defined as a spatial entity, in natural and/or cultural terms, in historic terms, perceptual, legal, etc. Antrop (2006) summarises that the ELC definition sees landscape as ‘*a unique synthesis between the natural and cultural characteristics of a region*’ (p.34). We are therefore looking in the language for terms that reflect this complexity. This is not likely to occur where one term (e.g. ‘scenery’ or ‘environment’ is used). Therefore we are looking specifically for ‘landscape’, then for words/terms that *partially* explain aspects of what is understood by this word (e.g. spatial

pattern, urban greenspace). These terms may be used as proxies for the holistic sense of landscape, or to indicate partial function/understandings of landscape. Antrop also suggests that defining landscape qualities are important rather than defining a single concept or language because each context may influence the terms used, particularly the context of change and future functioning. He suggests that new landscapes emerge with changing lifestyles.

Key possible concepts/terms might be:

- Landscape quality/environmental quality (may suggest landscape assessment/monitoring)
- Landscape capacity (may suggest landscape assessment/monitoring)
- Landscape awareness-building (may suggest landscape planning)
- Public involvement/participation – but only where the objectives of public engagement are specifically related to landscape issues (suggests public participation)
- landscape value (may suggest landscape awareness/policy etc)
- natural beauty (may suggest landscape awareness)
- environmental protection (may suggest landscape policy/management)
- degraded land enhancement (suggests landscape planning)

Intent of the Convention

The ELC Articles and Explanatory Notes (Coe, 2007a) set out the conceptual basis for intent, this is:

- holistic sense of landscape:
- natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas
- land, inland water and marine areas
- outstanding, ordinary, degraded
- Need for promotion of landscape protection, management and planning

Council of Europe document T-FLOR (2007) 8 (CoE, 2007b) suggests that the new approach in policy must view the territory as a whole’ and must ‘*include and combine several approaches simultaneously, linking the ecological, historical, cultural, perceptive*

**How are we doing?
Research to support the implementation of the ELC in England (continued)**

Maggie Roe

Senior Lecturer and Convenor of the Landscape Research Group, School of Architecture, Planning & Landscape, Newcastle University

m.h.roe@ncl.ac.uk

and economic approaches' plus 'incorporate social and economic aspects'. The objectives are to help achieve sustainable development and by doing so help balance between social needs, economic activity and environment and provide for landscape protection, management and planning. In addition policy should acknowledge landscape contribution in the formation of local cultures and identity, health & well-being, quality of life and the importance of quality and diversity in landscape as a common resource

In all this, quality and quality objectives are clearly important in both the Articles and in the draft guidelines for implementation. The value of all landscape needs to be reflected as do landscape values. The role of landscapes in local distinctiveness needs to be recognised and the link between quality of landscape and economic and social success. In particular there needs to be public involvement in landscape decision-making and acknowledgement of the integrated nature of cultural and natural landscape as the basis for forward (visionary) approaches in protection, management and planning of landscapes as well as the need for legal, administrative and fiscal arrangements for protection, management and planning landscape.

Our analysis looks for the articulation and interpretation of the intent of the ELC at every level, in particular whether intent of the ELC is reflected in the document/source and whether guidance on this intent is flowing through and between levels i.e. from Central Government to regions, from regions to sub-regional level (vertical integration) and between sectors (horizontal integration). We are looking to see whether rights and responsibilities in relation to landscape are recognised on the parts of institutions and whether there are opportunities for strengthening intent and language. Where there are good examples of where all this is already happening these are also identified.

4. Summary

Findings so far provide us with a picture that is patchy with unclear patterns. However there seems to be little possible identification of 'good practice' and considerable variation and confusion in the language used. Overall there appears to be little uptake of ELC ideas. In doing this research we need to remember that there are things we can do, and others that this research cannot reveal. We can for example identify where the language and intent do not reflect the thinking, objectives

and principles of the ELC. We can also identify where vertical and horizontal flows of thinking in relation to the ELC do not exist in the guidance we have examined and we can indicate recommendations as to what is needed in relation to particular documents we have looked at. We cannot specifically identify *why* these things are or are not in the guidance or make real assumptions about how vertical and horizontal flows work.

Our research is not yet complete and perhaps we will not find anything earth-shattering; much of it may simply confirm information that Natural England already suspect or know. However the work will add to the evidence and I hope indicate a little more clearly where recommendations need to be made and where NE should be concentrating its resources.

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**How are we doing?
Research to support the
implementation of the ELC
in England (continued)**

Maggie Roe

Senior Lecturer and
Convenor of the Landscape
Research Group,
School of Architecture,
Planning & Landscape,
Newcastle University

m.h.roe@ncl.ac.uk

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Doug Harman

Dorset AONB Landscape Planning Officer, Dorset AONB Partnership

d.harman@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Doug Harman is a Landscape Planner with a keen interest in landscape sustainability and the integration of landscape within the planning system. After graduating with a Master of Landscape Planning and Management from the University of Manchester, he took up a position as landscape architect working on a range of large scale landscape planning projects across the North West. On becoming the Landscape Planning Officer for the newly formed Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership in 2002, he had a central role in producing the first ever Management Plan for the AONB. During the ongoing implementation of the Plan, key areas of work have included the production of a Landscape Character Assessment and Management Guidance along with other planning related work. In addition to the providing the Partnership with a clear landscape focus, Doug is involved in a host of diverse project based work that underpins the holistic nature of AONB management.

A challenging change? The implications of the European Landscape Convention for landscape planning in the Dorset AONB

Abstract

Along with 48 other Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in the UK, the Dorset AONB Partnership is currently reviewing its five year Management Plan. With the ratification of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) and the recent publication of Natural England's Framework for Implementation, this provides an ideal opportunity to question and shape the future direction of AONB work. Firstly, do the key themes stemming from the ELC require a change in direction for local planning and management and secondly, what are the challenges in ensuring effective implementation?

Landscape Character Assessment as a tool to shape a whole host of landscape changes has been well embedded in our collective approach over the last fifteen to twenty years. However, it is suggested that to ensure the continued evolution of holistic landscape planning and management, there are some fundamental areas that require continued development and focus at the local and national level. Some of the main challenges in Dorset include the better communication of landscape character and change across all sectors and the forward planning and delivery of integrated projects where major changes will be taking place. Although the ELC may not mark a strong departure from the recent approach to landscape planning in the AONB and across the UK, this is an important time to fully embrace the challenges that lie ahead.

A challenging change? The implications of the European Landscape Convention for landscape planning in the Dorset AONB

As our nation's finest landscapes, AONBs and National Parks have always aspired to set the highest standards in landscape planning and management. It therefore follows that the ELC should act as the overarching framework in which to guide the future work of the Dorset AONB Partnership, other

protected landscapes and the wider landscape community.

Under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CroW) Act 2000, local authorities have a statutory duty to prepare and publish 5-yearly Management Plans. With the implications for delivery of the ELC becoming clearer through the publication of Natural England's Framework for Implementation, the Management Plan provides an appropriate mechanism to help ensure effective local delivery of the ELC aims and articles.

Along with other AONBs across the country, the Dorset AONB Management Plan is currently being reviewed and this provides an ideal opportunity to address two key issues: does the direction and work of the Partnership need to change in light of the implications of the ELC, and what are the challenges for the Dorset AONB Partnership and other protected landscapes in ensuring the effective implementation at the local level? With significant and accelerating changes taking place in the AONB, the need to shape the sustainable function and form of landscape has never been so urgent.

It is suggested that the implementations of the ELC should not mark a significant departure from current policy and activity. In 2006, Barry Gardiner MP announced:

"I believe the UK is already fulfilling the requirements of the Convention. It shows not only how serious we take these issues but how seriously you have been taking these issues for a long time. As a result, I do not believe that ratification will require any immediate change to legislation, or existing policy, to secure UK compliance"

Although this provides some reassurance that the ELC may not require a significant shift in AONB approach to planning and management, Natural England's recently published Framework for Implementation provides a good guide to review our current work and address particular areas that may require additional focus during the next Plan period.

**A challenging change?
The implications of the
European Landscape
Convention for landscape
planning in the Dorset
AONB (continued)**

Doug Harman

Dorset AONB Landscape
Planning Officer, Dorset
AONB Partnership

d.harman@dorsetcc.gov.uk

LCA (Landscape Character Assessment) has been an important tool in planning and management over the last fifteen or so years and has a central role in helping to implement the commitments of the ELC. The holistic nature of LCA ties in well with the definition of landscape under the ELC and cuts across many of the Convention's themes.

The ongoing development of LCA to describe and inform change has been well embedded in recent AONB work. A priority action within the first Delivery Plan was the production of an updated Landscape Character Assessment with Management and Planning Guidance. Produced in-house, this has been an organic process developed through numerous conferences, workshops and training sessions for the key users and audiences of the work.

It is hoped that this level of engagement will result in a product with greater ownership and willingness to use the work to inform a host of planning and management related activity. With LCA a vital tool in delivering many of the articles of the Convention, this provides some encouragement that our current activity is at least, going in the right direction.

Another important element of landscape assessment based work centres around ensuring landscape character and other landscape issues are effectively integrated into other plan and project based work. Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment are key mechanisms which require the incorporation of clear landscape objectives. Working through the AONB Planning Protocol and the Management Plan process, these are important areas where the AONB Team is actively implementing the Convention at the local level.

Raising the profile of landscape policy is another fundamental aim of the ELC. In addition to the detailed landscape policy framework within the current Management Plan, the recently produced LCA sets out clear quality objectives relevant to specific landscape character areas and features. Although this work is yet to be embedded within elements of the LDFs (Local Development Frameworks), ensuring appropriate weight is given to this work remains a challenge.

Furthermore, the draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), presents a positive policy on Landscape Character. This should provide a sound basis on which to develop

more locally-focused quality objectives within local plans and emphasises the need to survey landscape condition as part of the LCA process.

"The distinctive qualities and features of the South West's landscape character areas will be sustained and enhanced by Local Planning Authorities undertaking assessments of landscape character at a strategic level and in partnership with adjoining authorities (where landscape character areas cross administrative boundaries) in order to identify priority areas for the maintenance, enhancement and/or restoration of that character and provide an appropriate policy framework in LDDs for each area."

In addition to providing and promoting core landscape assessment and a policy framework, the AONB Team leads on the delivery of holistic landscape scale projects. The key to the success of these projects to date has been the integrated nature of the project scope, designed to deliver multiple outcomes for place and communities.

The development of these projects brings together a wide range of stakeholders, which although often challenging, helps to ensure the long term sustainability of project work. The recent provision of the AONB Sustainable Development Fund provides another mechanism on which to deliver the ELC principles through local community involvement.

Training and education are also important areas of AONB work. In addition to promoting educational programmes in practical project work, regional training through the South West Protected Landscape Forum is delivered across the 13 AONBs and 2 National Parks in the region. Through joint working, a whole host of benefits are provided in promoting and furthering the aims of protected landscapes. Current work is looking at a joint Interreg bid which clearly demonstrates the commitment to European cooperation.

It appears that the implications of ELC do not require a marked shift in approach for the work of the Dorset AONB and other protected landscapes. However, there remains some core areas of work that require further development to ensure that the aspirations and approach to European landscape planning are fully translated to local delivery of the ELC. This sentiment was echoed by Barry Gardiner in 2006:

**A challenging change?
The implications of the
European Landscape
Convention for landscape
planning in the Dorset
AONB (continued)**

Doug Harman

Dorset AONB Landscape
Planning Officer, Dorset
AONB Partnership

d.harman@dorsetcc.gov.uk

“However, Government is looking forward to talking to the many individuals and organisations that have an interest in landscape policy, about how we can raise our game in this area when relevant policies come up for review in the normal course of business”

LCA and its effective application are central for the implementation of the ELC at the local level. Although LCA is a technical process and should retain this important structured approach, the often complex nature of the work results in a need to promote the work to a wider audience. This is a key area of work to be developed during the current Management Plan review. Utilising LCA to inform the wider change agenda and defining stakeholder roles must take priority.

As with most other AONBs, significant changes will be taking place over the next Plan period. For example, the need to further understand the impacts of climate change and develop appropriate mitigation and adaptation strategies will be a key challenge. Current pilot work looking at the impacts on the Dorset Downs Joint Character Area (JCA) will provide a good foundation to develop appropriate policy.

Refinement of landscape monitoring both at local and national levels remains another challenge of the ELC. The requirement to incorporate meaningful indicators into the review of the Management Plan process remains difficult due to the often intangible qualities of landscape. The national Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) programme has made significant progress in this difficult field and Natural England's plan to refine this work further must take priority.

Although the implementation of the ELC within the Dorset AONB does not require a radical shift in approach, there are some key areas of work which must be translated into the current review of the Management Plan. Future delivery of policy and activity will ultimately require a more informed understanding of landscape change scenarios and the full commitment of a wide range of partners in delivering the aims of the ELC. Ultimately, the continued evolution of LCA must remain central to our work in best addressing the important challenges that lie ahead.

**Minutes of the discussion
session**

Minutes of the discussion sessions

Lunchtime

A delegate, Nick Young of Natural England, commented that locality authority planners are more likely to take notice of policy in the form of government guidance, and that landscape may be a suitable topic for a Planning Policy Statement such as those relating to biodiversity and the built environment. Nick asked if Natural England are considering including the development of a Planning Policy Statement on landscape within their action plan for promoting the European Landscape Convention's definition of landscape.

Richard Partington replied that Natural England are still in the early stages of preparing their action plan for landscape, and that there are still opportunities to capture opinions about what should be included in it.

A delegate, Gary Charlton of Natural England, commented that part of the research that would be covered in Maggie Roe's presentation in the afternoon session involves looking at national guidance on landscape and considerations of landscape in relevant policy areas. Gary agreed that the question of whether or not a landscape PPS is necessary needs to be posed, but argued that it is important to first establish where the concept of landscape, or its proxies, are already being used in national guidance. Only by establishing this will it be possible to see if a landscape PPS is necessary.

A delegate, Michelle Lavelle of 4D Landscape Design, raised the issue of urban trees. Michelle argued that it is impossible for the planning system in England to adequately protect or enhance the urban treescapes, which is under threat due to pressure from insurance companies and the activities of highways engineers. The European Landscape Convention's inclusive definition of landscape means that it applies to everyday, urban landscapes: urban trees are a significant feature and amenity within such landscapes, with a part to play in improving health and quality of life, and in mitigating the effects of climate change, amongst other benefits. Michelle argued in favour of bottom-up approaches to protecting and enhancing the urban treescapes, and of developing calculations that can indicate the appropriate

amount of biomass necessary to mitigate the effects of new development.

Adrian Phillips asked Richard Partington to respond on behalf of Natural England.

Richard Partington responded that he shared the delegate's concern for urban trees, and confirmed that Natural England has responsibility for matters like this in relation to urban landscapes. He invited one of his colleagues to respond in more detail.

Val Kirby of Natural England responded that Natural England is currently assessing the evidence gaps in the areas of landscape and geodiversity. This task is still in its early stages. Natural England is also embarking on an integrated research programme, and so is required to create links between different agendas such as climate change, landscape, urban areas and planning: urban treescapes is one such topic that cuts across these agendas. Natural England is grateful for any suggestions that can feed into their integrated research programme.

Maggie Roe commented that the Green Infrastructure agenda is something that relates directly to the management of the urban treescapes. She and other researchers around the country have been working with Green Infrastructure, gathering evidence to show that things like quality of life, quality of health and quality of air can be given an economic value. This work creates links from planning and biodiversity to medical and health agendas. She made a particular reference to research on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems being carried out at the Centre for Urban and Regional Ecology at the University of Manchester as an example of interesting research in this area. She emphasised the importance of integrated research of this sort.

John Gittins told the meeting that Cheshire has a successful voluntary tree warden scheme that predates the national scheme, with 175 voluntary tree wardens in parishes and towns across the county and a unique trees guardian group for primary school children. For the last 16 years, Cheshire has involved volunteers in a survey of tree health in parishes across the county, producing a wealth of data of sufficient enough quality for the Forestry Commission to use it.

Minutes of the discussion session

A delegate, Chris Woodley-Stewart of North Pennines AONB, commented that local authorities need practical guidance on what will be expected from them as a consequence of the European Landscape Convention. The delegate asked the panel if they could tell the meeting what successful implementation of the European Landscape Convention would actually look like, and how it would differ from current practice.

Michael Dower responded that the successful implementation of the European Landscape Convention's implementation will involve working with the existing framework of Joint Character Areas and landscape character assessments at other scales, using this existing work as a basis for producing new assessments that nest at a local or regional level. He asked Val Kirby and Richard Partington of Natural England why Richard's presentation on the European Landscape Convention Framework for Implementation in England had not mentioned the Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Initiative, English Nature's Natural Areas programme, or the ongoing Countryside Quality Counts project that tracks and assesses change in the character of the English landscape. He addressed a question asked by Richard Partington in his presentation, namely "How do we judge success?", stating that the success and failure of landscape policies can be judged by ensuring there is a programme for regularly assessing landscape change, using a landscape character framework to establish how change affects the identity of particular landscape character areas and to discern if those changes are in line with the objectives set for the management of those areas, as established as part of the initial assessment. He expressed concern that fifteen years worth of research and work in the area of landscape by Natural England's predecessor organisations should not be lost.

Val Kirby replied that the legacy of research Michael Dower referred to is safe and is the basis of ongoing work under Natural England, and that Natural England are currently constructing high level policy messages that draw on it. She added that Countryside Quality Counts is going to be restructured and enlarged over the next year.

Michael Dower stated that as character areas are now being used in urban contexts it is clear that character is applicable as a concept and framework across both rural and urban areas. It is important that all parties should take responsibility for identifying and

assessing the character of an administrative area, and ensuring that spatial planning policies are suited to that assessment of character. Furthermore, character should be considered in all other relevant policies, such as those for trees, roads and public space.

Richard Partington responded to Michael Dower's earlier point about how the success of landscape policies should be judged, stating that although his presentation had not specified particular methods for judging such success, he had indicated the broad areas in which success would be visible. He added that tools and initiatives such as the ones Michael Dower mentioned mean that England is well served and governed in terms of landscape, hence the government's belief that England is compliant with the obligations of the European Landscape Convention: however, the important task facing Natural England now is to synthesise these separate pieces in such a way that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. He asked Christine Tudor of Natural England to expand on this.

Christine Tudor of Natural England stated that as that organisation's lead on landscape character, she supported Val Kirby's assertion that Natural England is pressing forward with the work on landscape character that it has inherited from its predecessor organisations. The continued support of the Landscape Character Network to disseminate landscape character information is evidence of that. Christine added that urban characterisation is equally important to Natural England: she cited the 2002 study 'A Character Assessment of Oxford City in its Landscape Setting', carried out by the Countryside Agency with Land Use Consultants and Oxford City Council, as a study which she believes is an influential example of best practice in this area, based on the continued demand for copies of the publication. She added that Natural England's expertise on Landscape Character Assessment is currently being taken forward into the area of seascapes characterisation, where Natural England will be working with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform. A seascapes characterisation project covering the whole of the English Coastline is shortly to go out to tender. Christine added that as well as the creation of dedicated landscape policies, objectives and mechanisms, the successful implementation of the European Landscape Convention will require the integration of landscape into other areas of policy, such as energy, transport and development.

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Michael Dower agreed with Christine Tudor's comments about the need to integrate landscape into other areas of policy. He felt that while Defra and the Department of Communities and Local Government should be producing guidance documents from a landscape and land-use planning perspective, possibly to the extent of having a Planning Policy Statement on Landscape, it is also important that other ministries with specific responsibilities for areas like transport, energy, water supply, and flood control should themselves produce clear guidelines showing how landscape and other environmental considerations can be integrated within development that relates to those areas.

Christine Tudor agreed with Michael Dower, and commented that policy documents authored by the Department of Communities and Local Government will perhaps have more weight than those authored by Natural England.

Val Kirby returned to Chris Woodley-Stewart's original question regarding what successful implementation will mean for him and organisations in his area. She stated that while Natural England has a key role in facilitating the debate about what that success might practically mean, and there are many examples of good practice, there is no complete national picture. Natural England therefore is working to join up the existing evidence in this area, to produce a coherent and comprehensive account of best practice, but there are gaps that need to be filled.

Chris Woodley-Stewart reiterated that planners and other officers must work with many different statutory functions, which all need to be considered but which often conflict with each other. There is a need amongst these officers for practical, positive guidance on landscape.

Riccardo Priore stated that the European Landscape Convention obliges states to adopt two different approaches: firstly, to adopt a dedicated landscape policy which will then be implemented through the specific measures as outlined in the convention; secondly, to integrate the concept and importance of landscape throughout all other relevant areas of policy. This integration of landscape in other areas of policy is a requirement, not an option. He told the meeting that he had heard a great deal about work in the area of assessing landscapes, which he considered to be part of the specific measures detailed in the European Landscape Convention;

however, he wanted to know if England has a dedicated landscape policy, defining the principles of landscape at the national level, or if such specific measures are being carried out without a general landscape policy framework?

Richard Partington replied that while some areas of landscape were subject to strong and specific landscape legislation, such as nationally designated landscapes and Conservation Areas in urban contexts, there is no general policy definition of landscape. He added that Natural England is currently working towards just such a general policy definition.

Maggie Roe stated that this issue would be covered by her presentation later that afternoon, but the current answer is that there is no general policy definition of landscape.

A delegate, Jeff Stevenson of Jeff Stevenson Associates, responded to Val Kirby's statement that Natural England do not yet have a complete picture of best practice in landscape, by commenting that Natural England, as the successor to the Countryside Agency, should have inherited that organisation's knowledge in this area. He asked how many qualified landscape architects are employed within Natural England.

Christine Tudor replied that there are no figures available for the number of landscape architects employed within Natural England, but Natural England does employ several landscape architects, landscape planners and people qualified in landscape management. However, she disagreed with the idea that Natural England does not know about landscape best practice.

Val Kirby clarified her earlier comment about Natural England not having a complete picture of landscape best practice. She stated that while many Natural England employees know, either personally or anecdotally, of examples of good practice, it is necessary for Natural England to produce evidence that is comprehensive, robust and analysable, to report back to central government. This comprehensive picture is not yet complete. Natural England know the questions that need to be asked, but although the local area and regional teams have contacts and networks from which to source information about best practice, those networks are not as developed as they will be. The responsibility for monitoring the successful implementation is one that Natural England needs to take very seriously, and it will need the help of

Minutes of the discussion session

all the sectors and individuals present at the workshop in order to do it.

Richard Partington stressed that although Natural England is made up of elements of other organisations such as the Countryside Agency, it is a new organisation which has had to formulate its own views and its own policies, and it is only now in the position of creating and announcing its own landscape policy.

A delegate, Carys Swanwick of the University of Sheffield, commented that Scotland has a very useful, national policy statement about landscape, and that it may be worthwhile considering an overarching national statement of this sort as an alternative to a Planning Policy Statement on landscape, if the latter is not possible. She then asked a question about language, directed at Michael and Adrian and relating to the diagram of Adrian's that Michael had used in his presentation¹. She argued that one of the positive achievements of the programme of landscape character work in England and Scotland has been to achieve a consensus about the meanings of particular words, and that Michael's diagram and the European Landscape Convention itself use the same words in very different ways: for example, 'assessment' is used in a very specific way within the European Landscape Convention's text on the specific measures expected of signatory nations, as opposed to the broad sense of 'assessment' in the context of Landscape Character Assessment. She expressed concern, that having worked to achieve consensus over definitions, we may be in danger about taking a backward step by trying to reinvent an approach to landscape under the banner of the European Landscape Convention. She asked the meeting if anyone else shared her concerns.

Michael Dower replied that one of the most important inputs from UK experience that fed into the ELC working party, was a clear distinction between identification of landscapes on the one hand, and evaluation or assessment on the other. There had been a great deal of debate about the distinction between evaluation and assessment, and what exactly those terms signified. The sense of evaluation moved from being a judgement of relative value of different landscapes, whether at local, regional, national or international scale, towards being a judgement of the significance and condition of the particular

character of a landscape and how that should influence the decisions made about them: particularly what to protect, manage or plan in the landscape.

Carys Swanwick reiterated that she is concerned that assessment is used generically in England and Scotland, to address the whole process, as opposed to the more specific meaning of the term as it is used in the European Landscape Convention. She added that there are other terms with contested meanings when used in the context of landscape, such as quality. The European Landscape Convention, as an important piece of international legislation, may strongly influence the way these words are used in future, and this may be counter-productive in England and Scotland where the debates about their meanings have been settled and consensus achieved.

Michael Dower replied that the principle of subsidiarity is key to the European Landscape Convention, and that no-one in Strasbourg has the capacity or the will to influence the way signatory states use particular vocabulary in relation to landscape. It falls to each state to develop their own approach to landscape within the broad framework outlined by the European Landscape Convention, and it will not be damaging to the European Landscape Convention if the United Kingdom chooses to use particular terms in a way that it wishes.

A delegate, Andy Tickle of Friends of the Peak District (CPRE), commented on Richard Partington's last presentation slide. Richard had proposed, as a future action, that Natural England consider community Landscape Character Assessment. Andy stated that from his perspective, there are clearly pockets of excellence in this activity: he cited the work of John Gittins' and the Cheshire Landscape Trust, a parish landscape character assessment in Denby Dale, and the community landscape characterisation toolkit prepared by CPRE. He stressed the importance of making Landscape Character Assessment accessible to communities in this way, and pressed Natural England to take steps to do this. He asked what Natural England's plans were in this area.

Richard Partington agreed with Andy Tickle about the importance of democratising Landscape Character Assessment, engaging communities and making it accessible. He agreed that there are examples of good

¹This diagram is included in the Michael Dower's paper in these proceedings, as Figure 1 '12 Things to do that will make a reality of the ELC'.

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practice in this area, and reiterated Val Kirby's comments about the need to capture the sum of this good practice in a coherent and comprehensive way, so that it can be reported back to central government, and from central government reported back to the Council of Europe. He stated that Natural England has not yet captured this complete picture of good practice, and that this workshop is part of that process and dialogue.

Andy Tickle responded that to develop community Landscape Character Assessments, it will be necessary for national government to invest money and resources in them, and that this will be essential if the United Kingdom is to fulfil the obligations they have agreed to as a consequence of signing the European Landscape Convention.

Afternoon

A delegate, Geoff Griffiths of the University of Reading, commented that Doug Harman had included quotes from Barry Gardiner in his presentation, who clearly believes that the United Kingdom is complying with the European Landscape Convention: however, Doug's presentation has also showed several examples which illustrated areas in which the United Kingdom is clearly not complying. He asked Doug to comment on this.

Doug Harman replied that the fundamental structures of policy are in place for the United Kingdom to comply with the ELC, but there is a need to improve national performance in many areas of work: the United Kingdom has well established methods of landscape assessment, but there is a need to further develop applications.

Geoff Griffiths responded that he agreed with Doug's response, and cited landscape sensitivity and capacity and the monitoring of the landscape as particular areas where there is significant development needed.

Carys Swanwick commented that while she is not familiar with the brief for the Natural England research project described by Maggie Roe, she is concerned that that project's initial observation that the uptake of landscape in policy is 'disappointing and patchy' is a result of the focus being placed at a regional level where landscape work is least developed, having had the least time to develop. Carys suggested that this regional emphasis may give a skewed picture, and that there is a need to look at the uptake of landscape in policy at the local government level as well.

Maggie Roe responded that she believed that

Natural England's original intention was that the research would include the local level, but that this was not possible within the time frame available. To extend the study to include the local level would require both more time and a different approach, involving direct contact and discussion. She added that she believed that this project to support the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in England is seen by Natural England as the first part of an ongoing project which will be extended to look at the local level, and she invited Gary Charlton of Natural England to respond to that suggestion. She defended the study's regional and national focus by stating that it is necessary to ensure that national and regional policies consider and respect landscape if it is to be adequately picked up at the local level.

Carys Swanwick asked for assurance that the outputs of this research will qualify the research's findings and make it clear where its emphasis lay, and what it omitted.

Maggie Roe reassured Carys that the outputs of the research, which Maggie stressed is still unfinished, would make the scope of the study clear. She expressed hope that by the time that the project reports, Natural England will have announced another research project to cover the local level. She stated that it is necessary to look at policy all the way from the local to national level to understand how policies at these different levels relate to each other. She added that in her opinion a Planning Policy Statement on landscape would undoubtedly affect policy and practice at regional and local levels. She advised against assuming that landscape practice at the local level is sufficiently compliant with the terms of the European Landscape Convention, but added that as this is not in the scope of her research that she is working in, she can't comment on whether or not this is the case.

Riccardo Priore stated that implementation of the European Landscape Convention at every level of policy should be taken into account, including the United Kingdom level. He stated that he believes the first step in successful implementation would be for the United Kingdom government to put forward a constitutional message, explaining the definition of landscape and the political project that the United Kingdom has accepted by ratifying the European Landscape Convention, and clarifying the nature of the United Kingdom's new obligations.

Riccardo stated that he did not believe that

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the United Kingdom is fully compliant with article 5b of the convention (which commits signatory states to establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning through the adoption of the specific measures set out in Article 6 of the European Landscape Convention), in that it has not adopted a dedicated landscape policy which refers to all landscapes. The research described by Maggie indicates to him that considerations of landscape in national and regional policy are generally either in relation to other areas of policy, therefore relating to the requirement to integrate landscape in all relevant policy areas rather than the requirement to have a dedicated landscape policy, or in relation to nationally designated landscapes, therefore not relating to all landscapes. He stated that the lack of compliance in not having a dedicated national landscape policy contrasts with the fact that England has several significant initiatives that comply with the specific measures described in Article 6 of the European Landscape Convention, particularly in the area of identification, assessment, the establishment of landscape quality objectives and the different types of intervention: the protection of landscapes, the management of landscapes, and the planning of new landscapes. However, without a dedicated landscape policy these initiatives lack coordination and coherence.

Regarding the regional and local level, Riccardo stated that he believed local elected representatives would benefit from hearing coherent policy messages about the European Landscape Convention from the national level, and also from having the Convention's distinctive concept of landscape and political project explained to them, perhaps in the context of a hearing. Riccardo felt that effort should be made to communicate, with local officers and elected representatives, the idea that landscape is a framework which can underpin policy and projects that will answer citizens' demands in the areas of well-being, local identity and economic development. He reminded the meeting that European funds are available for activities to implement the European Landscape Convention, such as funds for rural development and funds for regional cohesion, and that one of ENELC's roles is to assist local and regional authorities in accessing such funds.

Maggie Roe stated that in her opinion there is political complacency at the highest level that the United Kingdom is compliant with

the obligations of the European Landscape Convention, while this is not the case. She expressed hope that work such as the research she had described in her presentation will contribute to a move towards compliance, but added that it needs political will to make that change.

Richard Partington responded saying that Defra considered that the United Kingdom complied with the principles of the European Landscape Convention and now that the government had ratified the convention there are opportunities to work within its framework to advance the landscape agenda.

Michael Dower built on Riccardo's points about the need to implement the European Landscape Convention at different levels of government. He drew on a reference Doug Harman made in his presentation to scale, stating that it is crucial that each level of government identifies the appropriate scale for decisions that affect the landscape. At the national level, he cited the new demand for renewable energy and the massive growth in onshore and offshore wind turbines: this is an area in which the national government ought to be making explicit where and under what conditions development will be permitted. He added this pressure on the landscape was not anticipated at the time of signing the European Landscape Convention, when the United Kingdom government believed it was compliant with the Convention's requirements: because we believed we were compliant at the time of signing does not mean that it will always be the case.

At the regional level, he cited the broad allocation of housing delivery, major industrial development and major roads as areas in which regional authorities will need to consider landscape. At the local level, he cited issues like the application of agri-environment schemes in a particular sub-region: at this level the distinction between landscape character areas and landscape character types becomes very significant, as it is landscape character types to which agri-environment schemes are typically applied. Landscape character types will also be the generic base for making decisions relating to climate change adaptation. Summarising, he stated that the United Kingdom needs an effective, cascade of decision making, from the national level through regional and local authority levels, and down to the development control and countryside management levels. He stated that he supports Riccardo's observation that the

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European Landscape Convention needs to be implemented at different levels of government, and he challenged the assumption that perceived compliance with the terms of the European Landscape Convention at a given moment means that the United Kingdom will remain compliant. He agreed with Richard Partington's point that there had been a political need to emphasise the areas in which the United Kingdom was compliant with the terms of the European Landscape Convention, and added that he believed that in a significant sense the United Kingdom had been compliant at the time of signing; however, landscape is subject to changing drivers and pressures, and ongoing work is needed to keep up with them. However, these are opportunities as well as challenges, and as Riccardo had told the meeting, there are funds available at the European level for landscape projects. He concluded by stating that there is a need to develop spatial planning and related policy systems that are capable of dealing with a range of opportunities, challenges and threats facing our landscapes.

A delegate, Mel Nicholls of Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership, stated that he was heartened to hear Riccardo's and Michael's comments: he stated that whilst he did not want to detract from the achievement of getting the European Landscape Convention onto the government's agenda, he was concerned that Barry Gardiner's statement that the United Kingdom is compliant with the Convention does not reflect general opinion in the landscape community. He added that he thought there may be more obligation on the state to consider and respect landscape in decision making if there was a European directive on landscape, rather than a convention, and asked the panel for their opinions on that suggestion.

Adrian Phillips replied that he believed that there would not have been the political will among European states to produce a landscape directive: he added that, in his personal opinion, landscape is not a proper subject for a directive, as it is too flexible a concept for such a rigid type of policy instrument.

Jeff Stevenson asked Maggie Roe about the initial findings and observations of her research project. She had stated in her presentation that there were places where the convention's objectives might have been expected to be embedded, but were not: could she provide examples?

Maggie Roe replied that she could not provide

examples prior to the final report in March 2008.

A delegate, Collette Holden of Cornwall AONB, asked Maggie Roe if the research project she had described looked at the practical implementation of policies as well as the existence of policies that refer to the European Landscape Convention. She described how the recent Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West has very strong policies on landscape and landscape character areas, but those policies are discrete within the Regional Spatial Strategy and have not influenced other policy areas: she cited the example of the decisions about housing allocations in the south west as one area where landscape and landscape character had not been considerations.

Maggie Roe replied that the project will not be looking in detail at the integration of landscape across related policy areas in the South West, though that level of attention will be extended to the two detailed case study areas: the North East and East Midlands region. The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West will be studied in terms of the presence or absence of policies relating to landscape, and comments will be made on the document as a whole.

Val Kirby responded to Riccardo Priore's comments about the lack of a statement from the government defining the concept of landscape that the nation has subscribed to by signing and ratifying the European Landscape Convention. She stated that Natural England, as the government's statutory advisor on landscape, is very close to having a high level, overarching policy on landscape, which will be phrased in basic, simple language and will make it clear that Natural England believes that all England's landscapes matter: the draft policy document quotes directly from the European Landscape Convention. She added that the timing of the ratification and enactment of the European Landscape Convention was superb for Natural England: although a young organisation, it has been asked, by Defra, to speak for England on landscape. Defra will soon be consulting with Natural England on a more detailed landscape policy, which will need to be discussed with all stakeholders, and that more detailed policy will make it clear what the government means when they say that all landscapes matter.

Michelle Lavelle asked Maggie Roe if in her research she had come across Myerscough College's Trees in Towns II study, as she

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felt that this study clearly demonstrated the United Kingdom's non-compliance with the terms of the European Landscape Convention in respect to urban trees.

Maggie Roe replied that the research project had not looked at that particular study. The research has had to be selective.

Michelle Lavelle stressed that she believed the study is significant, due to its extensive coverage and its duration, and relevant to the topic of the European Landscape Convention as it related to urban landscapes.

Adrian Phillips made some closing remarks as Chair. He stated that there were three strands emerging from the presentation and discussion which he thought could usefully be conveyed as messages to Natural England for their consideration: some, he felt, were already being considered. The first was an idea that Riccardo had touched on, that there is a need for a guide or statements to interpret and explain the European Landscape Convention, spelling out the implications of the European Landscape Convention to an English audience. This guide, or interpretation, could also provide clarification where specialist terminology is used in a different way in the context of the European Landscape Convention from the established and agreed sense in this country. Secondly, there is a need for a series of messages tailored for specific audiences about the significance of the European Landscape Convention. These messages may take the form of short papers, leaflets, events or any other form of communication, and the audiences may include Regional Development Agencies, local

authorities, academic institutions, and key sectors such as transport, housing and energy. These messages should ensure that the people who have responsibility in these fields are confronted with the specific obligations that face them as a result of the United Kingdom signing and ratifying the European Landscape Convention. The third message for Natural England is to do with the ongoing role they have in capturing and communicating information about good practice that is compliant with the terms of the European Landscape Convention: the meeting has heard a lot about Landscape Character Assessment, and to that can be added: work on landscape sensitivity and capacity; the development of tools for public engagement and the capturing of people's perceptions of landscape; tools for defining landscape quality objectives; the development of planning and management guidelines that consider landscape; the role of Environmental Impact Assessments; training, education and awareness-raising of landscape; and landscape monitoring. These are areas in which Natural England has considerable knowledge, from its networks of contacts, local authorities and the Landscape Character Network, and the wider landscape community needs this knowledge to be continually represented to them and updated, to show them what can be achieved. It is important, however, that good practice examples are not only drawn from the United Kingdom, but also from Europe: the point of signing the European Landscape Convention is that it is not just a statement of national intent, but of international cooperation.