

EAST DEVON AONB PARTNERSHIP WITH FUNDING FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE

Historic Environment Action Plan Toolkit

East Devon AONB

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This toolkit is aimed at parishes in East Devon who might like to undertake their own Historic Environment Action Plan and provides guidance on how to start and ideas on what to do

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Background

Between January 2013 and January 2015 the East Devon AONB was funded by English Heritage to create an AONB wide and two community-led Historic Environment Action Plans.

We worked with Branscombe and Woodbury Parish to help them each create their own Historic Environment Action Plans, this activity then spilled into Lypstone Parish who also got involved.

We helped them:

- Discover and explore the key archaeological and historic features of their parish
- Identify the most important heritage features in their landscape
- Think about what issues are affecting these features
- Identify future actions they would like to take to learn more, share information or to look after their heritage

What is the Historic Environment?

The past is all around you. The Historic Environment is all the aspects of your parish which have come about through the interaction between people and places through time. It therefore includes, not just archaeological sites, earthworks and monuments and historic buildings, but the historic aspects of fields, lanes, waterways and woodlands.

About this Toolkit

This toolkit is aimed at other parishes in East Devon who might like to undertake their own Historic Environment Action Plan and provides guidance on how to start and ideas on what to look at.

Why might you choose to complete a HEAP?

A HEAP is one way to gather evidence about the historic features in your landscape. Lots of people will already have information either as their own memories of the past through old photographs, maps and documents, through family history research, or through local history research. This toolkit provides a way of gathering this information together so it is not lost and of sharing it with others, of undertaking new research by asking questions about the landscape, and of identifying what is special to local people, what is under threat and what further work you would like to do .

It will also provide a very useful evidence base which could help inform parish/neighbourhood plans and village design statements. But it is not about telling people what to do with their property or land but celebrates what makes that special sense of place in your parish.

Your village and parish are unique. All local character including the layout of the village, the material that buildings have been built from, the shape of the fields, the makeup of the woodlands, the direction of the tracks and lanes look the way they do because of choices that your ancestors and predecessors made in the past. Your parish will continue to change and evolve but in order to help shape this future evolution effectively and celebrate what makes your parish special you need to understand how it has come to look the way it does. The HEAP framework is one way which will help you gain this understanding. It is a voyage of discovery which will shed new light on your parish.

What Woodbury and Branscombe had to say:

“The HEAP Project introduced a fresh impetus into ways of viewing and understanding the parish landscape, in a style that was new to many people. We hope this pioneering process will continue to enhance awareness and reach further into our community – questioning and responding to the history of our environment, changes within it, and what we value. We are grateful to everyone who took part or assisted and especially to the AONB Partnership and English Heritage for being the catalyst. The support and encouragement of all of these parties has been invaluable. HEAP has been an important and creative project for Woodbury Parish. It has helped to re-imagine and amplify existing knowledge of the historic dimensions of the contemporary landscape, approaching and bringing it into public awareness in innovative ways. We hope it will continue to bear fruit into the future.” Roger S, Woodbury HEAP Project December 2014

“The HEAP project galvanised the Branscombe Project and took it in ways that were new and inspiring. New people joined in, and the HEAP project is by no means over: it’s been decided that the workshop maps need to be checked; that the footpath map needs to be added to by examining an eighteenth century map that marks gate-posts, and by considering the post-war disappearance of footpaths. Other maps that Emma created from Project material and with additional help from Phil, bring up questions about how to distinguish between shutes, springs and wells, about updating the loss of working farms, and further annotating a map of disappeared houses. A HEAP-encouraged project on peoples’ favourite places and landscapes is only just getting underway, it will permit us to create our own version of a Parish Map. It’ll involve artists and photographers and we’ll create an interactive map which includes pictures, text and video clips.” Barbara F. Branscombe HEAP Project January 2015

How to create your own Historic Environment Action Plan

This is not a formal prescriptive planning document which stops or prevents the future development of the parish or holds back land management. It is a positive statement of what the parish values and why and what further steps people would like to take in the future to explore their own heritage further and how this might be achieved.



There are four elements in a Historic Environment Action Plan – which can be undertaken in any order. For example:

Branscombe started in the CHARACTER section by organising a community walk

Woodbury started with the ACTION section by thinking about what had already been undertaken.

The ACTION element is key as it is about reflecting on what has been achieved so far and stating what you want to do next and how this will be achieved. We suggest that a

core group keeps a record of these actions and reflects on what has been done.

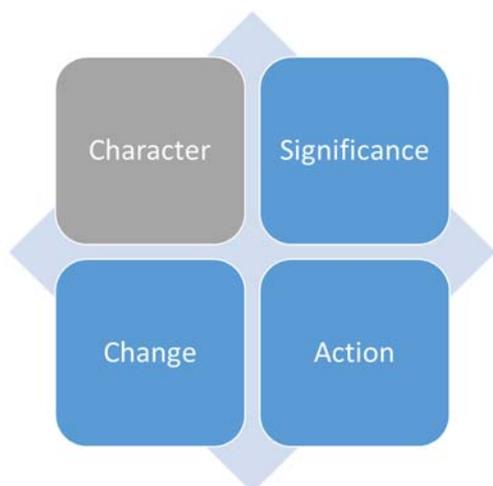
For examples of ongoing Historic Environment Action Plans see:

- **Branscombe HEAP**
- **Woodbury HEAP**

<http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/index.php?page=historic-environment-action-plan>

A community Historic Environment Action Plan should be a living process and a living document which engages with each of the four elements and is periodically reviewed and updated

We have provided a skeleton pro forma HEAP which you could fill in or you can design your own, or even maintain a page on your website



Thinking about Character

What are the key historic environment features in your parish? You could choose to draw together information both new and/or existing on the archaeological and historic features present in your parish.

Your parish will have its own unique features but below are some ideas to get you started with more detail provided as an appendix.

Create interest in the heritage in your parish by organising a community walk.

This could look at an aspect of your parish's history that someone has already researched. The 'walk followed by tea' formula can be highly effective. The formula allows the impressions and information absorbed during the walk to be distilled and discussed over tea in the parish hall after the walk, both in smaller groups and in a plenary session – all to the rattle of tea cups; 'emotion recollected in tranquillity'. This is a good way of bringing people together to share information, to identify people who might be interested in undertaking new or further work and to bring forward new stories about the parish's history. There are a myriad of ways you could choose to do this:

- **Look at the core of your village.** For example, Branscombe undertook a walk between the Church and the mill. The walk was oversubscribed (c 70 participants) and required careful marshalling on the lane sections. Hitherto unknown aspects of Branscombe emerged in the course of the walk: an eye-witness description of the farmhouse that occupied the present site of the National Trust office. This was also a chance to recruit new volunteers and generated ideas for future HEAP work. See Case Study One for more information



- **Trace a story across your parish.** For example in Branscombe the postman in the post-war years often carried either of two young sisters on his shoulders on his daily round. The postman's route and the memories of the two sisters provided the vehicle for putting the clock back over a half century and retracing the postman's steps over part of the round. A route was chosen which included three 'disappeared houses', as revealed by early maps. The focus on two time periods: the post-war postman's landscape and the earlier Victorian period, as represented by the disappeared houses, prompted reflection on both changing land use (culture) and biodiversity (nature). See Case Study Five for more information.

- **Explore the landscapes of your parish.** For example, Woodbury History Society organised a walk which started in the village and went down to the estuary and back – a longish walk. Because of the interest along the way it lasted a full 3.5 hours. A two – sided laminated colour coded route map was produced with short paragraphs elegantly arranged around the map with arrows pointing to the features they described. The undoubted success of the walk immediately produced requests for a second one on a different route and on a different day (a Saturday) to include people of working age. There have been no formal outputs of the walk but the increased understanding of the local landscape and the modern pressures on it will have a knock-on effect. See Case Study Six for more information.

Hold a Community Historic Mapping Workshop

This provides an opportunity for local people to pore over Historic Maps of the parish and to ask a central question, for example: *what elements of the landscape today date from the 20th century, which date from the 19th century, and which are older than the 19th century?*

- We have created a methodology for this work based on splitting a parish into 1km squares. More guidance can be given by the East Devon AONB but the methodology consisted of marking with different coloured pens onto a modern map sheet all boundary and land use changes, using two or more historic maps including the c1840 tithe map and the 1st series 1888 OS map. At its simplest, the activity is a straightforward and detailed ‘compare and contrast’ exercise, but in the course of two hours of absorbing work clear patterns of change emerge. Each table of four work on the same 1km square, one pair working on orchards and houses, the other on fields and woods. Preliminary feedback would indicate that this workshop is an excellent way for non-specialists to understand time depth in the landscape and the importance such understanding can play in empowering local people to assist in planning future change in the landscape.



“Since last November we have had three ‘map detective workshops’ in the village hall and have now covered the whole parish. The results, we think, look very interesting. We probably had about forty-five/fifty people in all. To our surprise, people came in, not just from Woodbury and Woodbury Salterton, but also Lypstone and Beer, and it looks as though it may well roll out.”
Branscombe Project

Focus on one or several aspects of your parishes history

This allows a small group of people to come together and research one aspect of your parish history which is particularly important or even under threat. This can then be shared with others and used as a way of kick-starting future work. For example you could focus on:

- **Historic Orchards** — Locating and mapping the location of former orchards in the parish and seeing if any trees remain at these locations. See Case Study Three.
- **Disappeared Houses** – Locating and mapping where houses have disappeared in the landscape, undertaking documentary research followed by archaeological survey and even excavation. See Case Study Four
- **Your Churchyard** - Church historians have long pondered on the fabric of the church, but the churchyard has, until recently, been neglected. Apart from what it tells us about the community, the deciphering of tombstone epitaphs has become urgent because the process of erosion has accelerated. A churchyard study requires a meticulous approach. One of the first steps is to survey the churchyard and plot the position and orientation of each tombstone. See Case study Seven.
- **Hydraulic features** – map the location of springs, wells and pumps, and see what evidence remains on the ground

Disappeared Houses in Branscombe



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Thinking about Change



with more detail provided as an appendix.

Use historic mapping

Historic mapping workshops can be used to identify how your parish or village has changed over the last 200 years. They are a great catalyst to get more people involved.

Start a Fixed point Photography Project

At its most basic it is about taking photographs at the same spot over fixed intervals of time to see how a view changes through time. This spot could be one featured in an historic postcard or view.

- In Branscombe, for example, five sites were selected at which to install fixed points. The points were selected on the basis of landscape position and vistas but also, where possible, at locations from which historic photographs of Branscombe, including post cards, had already been taken, in order to regress the sequence of landscape change images as far back as possible. Permission was sought from the landowners concerned. See Case Study Ten

Focus on a particular element or feature in your parish

- For example, Branscombe focused on how the beach and surrounding cliffs are changing – in particular local peoples response to this were captured at the Branscombe exhibition and the challenges presented by the Natural England and National Trust approach discussed. See Case Study Eleven

Thinking about Action



What do you want to do next?
Capturing what has already been done and what to do next

Your parish will have its own unique features but below are some ideas to get you started with more detail provided as an appendix:

Create an Audit or List of Work already undertaken

You could start by creating an audit of work already undertaken in your parish.

- For example The Branscombe Project has been working within the community for over twenty years. It's about trying to understand the local landscape, how it has been created by people's activities over time, and the interplay between topography, geology and people's engagement with the land. It started as a project in oral history, but has fanned out to include archival work, archaeology and studies of material culture. The Project puts on regular exhibitions, publishes small books and booklets under its own imprint, and has a very active website. The Branscombe HEAP included a list of all work and studies undertaken so far with links to more information

Create a plan of action with your group

For example Branscombe keeps a short record of what it plans to do over the next year and updates it regularly

The Woodbury HEAP identified potential future actions including research areas, local history walks, oral history and plans to presents the results to the village.

Think about how you could participate in county-wide/regional/national projects as part of their actions. For example local listing, Conservation Area appraisals and Heritage at Risk Initiative e.g. the Grade II Listed Buildings at Risk survey project (see <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/help/historicbuildings/get-involved/>).

Useful Advice and Resources

How to engage with people in your community

- Make sure you leave sufficient time to develop and think about the work you want to complete
- Think about existing groups in your parish you could involve for example Local History Society, the Woman's Institute, or Local Camera Club
- Talk to your parish council they can help support you and you may be able to dovetail with other work such as the development of Neighbourhood Plans
- Organise a walk to look at an aspect of your parish's history this is a great way to draw in new people
- Find out what existing work has been done which could be enhanced or built on

How to promote your project

- Use existing communication networks such as parish newsletter, parish notice board or parish website
- Document each element of work you undertake – for example if you organise a walk ask someone to write up what you discovered and the discussions you had
- You could have a small exhibition of existing information to get going for example of old photographs

Useful Resources

Devon Historic Environment Record - The Devon Historic Environment Record (HER) is a comprehensive and dynamic resource of the historic environment of Devon. It provides information about archaeological sites, historic buildings, historic landscape and other heritage features within Devon. The baseline historic environment data contained in the HER underpins a wide range of work undertaken by the Historic Environment Team and its partners.

The HER is available for public benefit and use. The text and location of each monument record is available through [Heritage Gateway](#). However, maps, aerial photographs, reports and other background information is available to view by visiting the HER office (by appointment).

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/the-devon-historic-environment-record/>

National Heritage List for England - The National Heritage List for England is the only official and up to date database of all nationally designated heritage assets including: Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, World Heritage Sites, Applications for Certificates of Immunity (COIs), Current Building Preservation Notices (BPNs). It can be searched by Building or Place Name or a postcode using the Map Search Facility

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

Devon Archive and Local Studies – The county archives contains historic maps, historical documents and local history books and parish studies relevant to your parish

http://www.devon.gov.uk/record_office

East Devon AONB – The East Devon AONB Historic Environment Action Plan webpage contains lots of useful documents and advice including the Woodbury and Branscombe Historic Environment Action Plans.

<http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/index.php?page=historic-environment-action-plan>

East Devon Tithe Maps - Tithe maps act as a historical record of land use in about 1840, in that they can be read along with apportionment tables which describe land use, type and tenure. These can be viewed online

<http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/index.php?page=tithe-maps>

Case Studies

Case Study One: Branscombe Heap - Church to Mill Walk

Background

The East Devon AONB Parishscapes Project, working in conjunction with the Branscombe Project, has already used the 'walk followed by tea' formula to good effect in the past. The formula allows the impressions and information absorbed during the walk to be distilled and discussed over tea in the parish hall after the walk, both in smaller groups and in a plenary session – all to the rattle of tea cups; 'emotion recollected in tranquillity'.

Church to Mill Walk

The church to mill walk was the first in a series of walks planned in Branscombe and Woodbury during the East Devon HEAP project. The walk covered the essential core of the village, from the churchyard, where literally thousands of those who shaped the Branscombe landscape and gained their sustenance from it are buried, to the mill (National Trust) where one of the richest resources of the landscape – corn, was ground. The choice of route represented both continuity and change: both the church and the mill are still iconic places in the village, still in use after hundreds of years, yet neither is used in quite the same way as they were in the past.

The walk was oversubscribed (c 70 participants) and required careful marshalling on the lane sections. The participants included a number of people from outside the parish and, within the parish, some older people from the parish who had stories to tell.

Outcomes

Hitherto unknown aspects of Branscombe emerged in the course of the walk: an eye-witness description of the farmhouse that occupied the present site of the National Trust office. This was also a chance to recruit new volunteers and generated ideas for future HEAP work. Older participants with failing memories had no trouble recalling their work in the landscape (allotments for example) when actually back in the places which inspired the memories.

Dissemination

Photos on Branscombe website.

Costs

Village hall hire, teas £100.00

Volunteer time

Many hours by core Branscombe Project members – from research on the church yard to liaising with National Trust, booking the hall and advertising the walk.

Case Study Two: Woodbury Salterton Map Workshop

Background

Historic map workshops had previously been trialled in Branscombe and the methodology refined, with improvements ranging from finer pens and larger map sheets to a simplification of the notation.

The Branscombe experience (they started slightly earlier than Woodbury) established that, with a clear historical introduction and set of instructions, volunteers with no mapping or other specialist skills were able not only to understand changes in the landscape over time but also to enjoy the process.

Woodbury Salterton Workshop

Woodbury Salterton (WS) is a large hamlet within Woodbury parish. The challenge here was that the WS Resident's Association is not a history society (unlike Branscombe, Woodbury and Lypstone map workshops). The WS group had a spatial interest in the contemporary landscape due to the threat of development. The workshop gave the group an understanding of time depth in the local landscape, thus combining diachronic and synchronic dimensions.

What they did

The methodology consisted of marking with different coloured pens onto a modern map sheet all boundary and land use changes, using three historic maps: 18TH century Rolle estate map, c1840 tithe map, 1st series 1888 OS map. At its simplest, the activity is a straightforward and detailed 'compare and contrast' exercise, but in the course of two hours of absorbing work clear patterns of change emerge. Each table of four work on the same 1km square, one pair working on orchards and houses, the other on fields and woods.

NB. Tithe map land use is often not depicted on the map but can be extracted from the apportionments and can be added at a later stage. All East Devon AONB tithe maps and transcribed apportionments are on the AONB website.

Outcomes

The main outcome was a request for a second seminar to finish off the job. Preliminary feedback would indicate that this workshop is an excellent way for non-specialists to understand time depth in the landscape and the importance such understanding can play in empowering local people to assist in planning future change in the landscape.

Resources

A3 print outs of historic maps, A2 Modern maps to annotate, fine line pens, magnifying glasses and other sight aids

Dissemination

Two observers from the adjoining parish of Lypstone requested a similar workshop for their parish history society.

Costs - Hall hire: £35.00

Volunteer time

6 hour X 2 local volunteers in setting up the workshop and liaising with person running the session

Case Study Three: East Devon Local History Societies Forum - Orchards

Background

Working with local history societies over the years has revealed that it is very rare for members of these societies to attend each other's events or in many cases to even know what the research interests of nearby parishes may be. Over the last few years the annual Historic Environment Conference organised by the East Devon AONB had already made inroads into this problem on an individual and personal level. The next step seemed to be to provide links at an organisational level. The AONB kindly agreed to provide a venue for a yearly meeting and John Torrance agreed to be the convenor.

The three year orchards project

The first meeting only attracted half a dozen local societies, a figure that had doubled by the fourth year. Most of the first meeting was devoted to information exchange and it became clear that the sheer diversity of approach was in itself stimulating, irrespective of the content of the work. Different approaches included: theatre, exhibitions, walks, talks, books, virtual presentations and oral history. The meeting decided to choose a joint theme for the next meeting. A number were considered: mills and hydraulic arrangements for example, but orchards were settled on as a suitably wide, well resourced, subject allowing for a number of different approaches.

Outputs

Over the next three years over a dozen presentations were given on orchards by the local history societies, indeed it was difficult to keep within the half day format which had been adopted. In keeping with the diversity referred to above, the presentations ranged from a personal story of the rise and fall and rise again of a Whimple cider orchard family, through a presentation of the orchard year from family documents (Woodbury) to very detailed regressive map analysis charting the disappearance of orchards (Ottery St Mary) and presentations on restoring and curating old apple orchards (Chardstock), and on the history of apple varieties (Pip and Stone).

Dissemination

Dissemination is hard to quantify. Certainly, many participants felt empowered to do their own research and learnt how easy some sources are to consult, and that record offices are actually there for the public. However, none of the presentations were published and this is a source of regret. Publication, however, is a major enterprise and could not be undertaken within the remit of the focus group, especially in bringing perfectly good presentations up to the standard of referencing, etc. required for publication. There may be a solution to this problem in some form of web publication of talk summaries. But it would be difficult to convey the freshness and immediacy of the research and presentation in this form. Camcording might be an avenue to follow in the future.

Costs

Nominal only. Room provided free (cost to AONB of £60.00). All correspondence through email.

Volunteer time

15 to 100 hours. Some of the presentations were the fruit of years of cumulative research.

Case Study Four: Disappeared Houses – the Lees Cottage Story

Background

One of the outputs of the East Devon AONB Parishscapes Project was to digitise the tithe maps for the area and make them available to local councils and local history societies on disk, and to the community on-line. The feature which attracted the most interest was the existence of several houses and farms in each parish which had completely disappeared from the landscape. In conjunction with Devon Historic Environment Service, a recording form was developed to begin recording the sites and remains of these houses.

The Lees Cottage Excavation

Efforts were concentrated in Northleigh Parish where there was a cluster of disappeared farms and houses. The landowner was willing to allow work to proceed and a study area was defined. Volunteers carried out historical research and attempted to marry the census data with the tithe apportionment data. It turned out that all the houses were abandoned by the end of the 19th century. Lees cottage was identified as the smallest of the houses and was selected for partial excavation by volunteer labour under professional supervision.



Getting started at Lees Cottage

Outcomes

Excavation revealed that tiny and ‘primitive’ as it was, the occupants of Lees Cottage were able to afford a reasonable standard of living, as revealed by the small finds. A fragment of an inscription on the hearth, reading *Lee*, established that this was indeed Lees Cottage (the name appears in the census data but not on the map). The discovery of poignant artefacts such as kettle handle, chain, etc., also on the hearth, brought a human element into the narrative and raised questions about the circumstances under which this and the other families had left the valley – probably because of the late 19th century agricultural depression and the loss of communal grazing and enclosure of the Summerdown above the valley.

Dissemination

The report was put on the AONB website and immediately attracted attention from the descendants of the Dunning family, the last occupants of Lees Cottage, who were tracing their origins prior to their migration from East Devon to the industrial centres of South Wales.

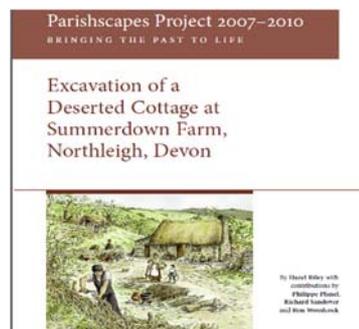
Lees Cottage report cover with artist’s reconstruction drawing

Costs

Professional archaeological supervision and reports: £5000.

Volunteer time

Around 300 hours of surveying and excavation time.



Case Study Five: Postman's Round – Guided Walk



Background

The Branscombe postman in the post-war years often carried either of two young sisters on his shoulders on his daily round. The postman's route and the memories of the two sisters provided the vehicle for putting the clock back over a half century and retracing the postman's steps over part of the round. A route was chosen which included three 'disappeared houses', as revealed by early maps.

The guided Walk

The 40 or so walkers were given a map of the route – not a modern one, but a copy of the 1st edition 1888 Ordnance Survey which showed the houses which have since disappeared. As well as the two sisters who had been carried by the postman there were older members of the community present, including a relative of one of the last occupants of one of the disappeared houses. The walk was interpreted by John Torrance (historical research) and by house owners, as at Hole Mill, along the way. The walk was rounded off by tea and further discussion at the house at the furthest point in the walk.



The 'chequer' wall at Hole House. John Torrance commented: *I proposed the theory that perhaps the flint was a by-product of lime-burning at Hole Pits under the Bartletts - Questions about whether this was a local C17 fashion (Cadhay, Colyton) or a more general fashion.*

Outcomes

The focus on two time periods: the post-war postman's landscape and the earlier Victorian period, as represented by the disappeared houses, prompted reflection on both changing land use (culture) and biodiversity (nature). For example, no one could guess that the spontaneously regenerated woodland around one of the disappeared house sites had once been a well-tended orchard - had the tithe map had not provided evidence to the contrary. The age-range of the walkers, from 10 to 80 allowed an exchange of information and cultural transmission to take place which would otherwise have proved difficult to achieve. As on other walks, the older participants, worried about memory loss and their inability to contribute, found that a return to the places where their memories had been generated unlocked forgotten memories.

Dissemination

Principally through the Branscombe Project website, but the information which emerged through the walk, including a more exact location of one of the disappeared house platforms, will be shared with a variety of audiences, including that of the forthcoming 2015 AONB conference, and will also inform future community work on tracks and paths, disappeared houses and farmsteads.

Costs

Incidental only. Walk risk assessment by HEAP community worker

Volunteer time Around 20 hours by the core members of the Branscombe Project: research, route planning and map reproduction.

Case Study Six: Woodbury History Society Woodbury Walk

Background

As a large parish Woodbury includes a considerable variety of landscapes, from the heights of Woodbury Common to the marine influence of the Exe estuary, with rolling farmland and the village centre in between. Woodbury History Society members had participated in one of Branscombe's walks, had seen how much information and knowledge were exchanged and decided to try and do the same in Woodbury.

The Village to Exe Estuary walk

The walk started in the village and went down to the estuary and back – a longish walk. Because of the interest along the way it lasted a full 3.5 hours. Roger Stokes produced a two – sided laminated colour coded route map with short paragraphs elegantly arranged around the map with arrows pointing to the features they described. There was even a string holder so that walkers could hang the map around their necks. Older participants pointed out an unsuspected richness in landscape history, from an 'unofficial' cider drinking establishment to lost leats and mill ponds. The influence of the Rolle Clinton estate – with its harmonious Victorian farms and farm workers' housing, was a constant thread during the walk. The estuary and the shoreline provided a complete contrast to the rest of the walk: main road, railway line, site of lime kilns, salt marsh, etc.



Outputs - The undoubted success of the walk immediately produced requests for a second one on a different route and on a different day (a Saturday) to include people of working age. There have been no formal outputs of the walk but the increased understanding of the local landscape and the modern pressures on it will have a knock-on effect.

What things used to be like? Roger brought a collection of historic photographs with him. Note the route maps attached to each walker

Dissemination

Dissemination of the laminated route map for self-service walks (no guide) is a possibility for the future.

Costs

Nominal only.

Volunteer time

Route planning, map preparation, publicity – at least 20 hrs.



Case Study Seven: Branscombe Project – The churchyard

Background

Branscombe's church enjoys a particularly long history and from the Saxon period onwards, the churchyard was the resting place of literally thousands of villagers, most of whose names are unknown. Church historians have long pondered over the fabric of the church, but the churchyard has, until recently, been neglected. Apart from what it tells us about the community, the decipherment of tombstone epitaphs has become urgent because the process of erosion has accelerated.

The churchyard

A churchyard study requires a meticulous approach. One of the first steps is to survey the churchyard and plot the position and orientation of each tombstone. Individual grave inscriptions then have to be recorded. The names and dates on tombstones can then be cross-checked against Parish Burial Registers. There will probably be churchyard plans (at least for the late nineteenth century onwards) which show all the burial plots, including ones without tombstones, and give the names of people interred. These plans may also show 'set aside' areas.



Outputs

A study of tombstones, where they are placed, their shapes and fabric, and what is inscribed on them, allows an understanding of stages in churchyard expansion, social and familial grouping of graves, and distinctions between Anglican and Nonconformist burials. It offers insights into the changing social order, religious practice and rates of mortality as well as expressions of sentiment and aesthetics. Epitaphs may tell dramatic stories – a Revenue Officer pushed over a cliff, or a parishioner shot on the way home from harvesting. It is worth pondering the huge number of people who don't get tombstones or those who are not allowed to be buried in sacred ground.

Dissemination

The Branscombe Project outputs are on its website (www.branscombeproject.org.uk) and the data, going back to the 16th century, is accessible to everyone - local or otherwise. It complements other data, for example, information on suicide burials at cross-roads on the Parish boundary, or on war graves, or on emigration and deaths elsewhere of those born in the village. All this goes towards recreating a wider landscape of death, inclusion or exclusion over the centuries. The Project work on the churchyard was presented in an exhibition, at a talk, and in a churchyard performance. There was also a HEAP walk, which led from the churchyard and the landscape of the dead, to the mill, for centuries a cornerstone of the village economy.

Costs

Nominal.

Volunteer time – 5 to 20 days map-making, deciphering inscriptions, archival work etc.

Case Study Eight: Significance in Branscombe

Background

The European Landscape Convention sums up landscape as being that which is 'perceived by people' and the Branscombe Project have always favoured this subjective approach, where local people and landscape history professionals are both part of the mix. The subjective element has also been central to the Branscombe HEAP and has perhaps found its most concentrated expression in memory places and memory mapping.



Memory Places



At the 2014 Branscombe exhibition and at subsequent events local people were asked to stick on dots onto their favourite 'memory place or landscape on a map of Branscombe. They were also asked to give their names and the reasons for their choice. In this way, over a hundred memory places were fixed on the map, producing both 'memory' hotspots and also very interesting and discrete (in all senses of the word) outliers, which in many cases

referenced a very personal memory rather than a particular view or special place in the landscape. For some, the final approach to home was their important, for others it was the view out to sea or the view inland, or even the unobstructed view upwards to the stars.

Outputs

Most of the outputs will be 'Après HEAP', but an initial meeting had already taken place to bring together several artists and two local IT specialists, to see how their combined talents could be used to produce a Google map-based living archive of point data which, when clicked on, will open up the full memory of the place – using photographs, art, and talking-head video experts to construct a human dimension of the physical and historical landscape.

Dissemination

Using the AONB and Branscombe websites, the memory map can be expanded to include, for example, the places which visitors to Branscombe regard as important – using the precedent of the South Devon AONB's 'Rate my View' project:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.co.threeequals.ratemyview&hl=en>

Costs

Nominal only.

Volunteer time

2-5 days preparing resource and analysing the results

Case Study Nine – Subjective geographies @ Woodbury Salterton

Background

Woodbury Salterton is a hamlet within Woodbury parish, though a visitor could be excused for thinking that it was a village in its own right – there is a school, church, pub and village hall. Following two very successful mapping workshops in Woodbury Salterton, as an extension of the HEAP work with Woodbury, in which participants added an understanding of time depth to their spatial understanding of the area, it was decided to ask and investigate, in the words of the local organisers: “what aspects of the village do residents value and which parts of the village fabric do they engage with?”

Subjective geographies

Using a methodology already employed elsewhere (a strand of cultural ecology), a variety of means were used to capture how residents engaged with their surroundings: memories; word and colour associations; photographs of day to day activities. In keeping with the HEAP emphasis on mapping, participants were asked to map their favourite places, their associations with such places and their favourite walks and rides. The inquiry was conducted with as wide a selection of audiences as possible including school children, the WI and participants in the mapping workshops. Photographic surveys were conducted with horse riders, dog walkers, leisure walkers and cyclists. Also examined were cultural events such as a fund-raising ‘scarecrow trail’ (mapped linear and point data) and informal institutions such as the telephone box/book exchange (equipped with a camera).

Outputs and dissemination.

The results of the subjective geographies were mapped and collated in a variety of very visual ways: colour association pictograms and photomontages, for example. As might be expected, cyclists and horse riders enjoyed a wider geographical range of movement than those on foot. The results highlighted the problems attendant on this kind of community work: technical problems with cameras, varying levels of map literacy and expression – the latter more of a problem with adults than school children.

Despite the above problems, interesting results emerged. Woodbury Salterton was not perceived, by its residents, as the ‘ribbon hamlet’ it is sometimes portrayed. Residents feel it does have an actual and historic core. Yet increasing traffic in the core has to some extent driven people out to the quieter lanes and footpaths, resulting in two well-trodden circular routes around the village – with occasional sallies up to the wider views and liminal experience of Woodbury Common. Children were, sadly, less likely to walk to their preferred places, but be driven in cars.

In addition to a full report, the outputs of the subjective geographies will form the basis of an exhibition in one of the public spaces in the village. The exhibition will also be displayed at the 2015 East Devon AONB conference, where a presentation will be given.

Costs – Printing costs for maps, hire cost potentially for village hall

Volunteer time – 2 to 3 days gathering information and 5 to 6 days analysing the results

Case Study Ten: Branscombe HEAP Fixed point photography

Background

Fixed point photography as a means of recording landscape change has been successfully installed in South West England in the North Devon AONB and has been used more extensively in protected landscapes on the other side of the channel in the PNRs (Parc Naturel Regional), where subjective and selective memory of landscape change has been checked against the evidence of fixed point images in decision-making processes (see the Cordiale Project – 2013).

Finding the photographer, finding the sites

Chris Bass, a keen amateur photographer, born in Branscombe and also possessing IT skills, came forward to lead the initiative. Working together with John Torrance (Branscombe Project) and Phil Planel (Associate consultant with Wyvern consultants), five sites were selected at which to install fixed points. The points were selected on the basis of landscape position and vistas but also, where possible, at locations from which historic photographs of Branscombe, including post cards, had already been taken, in order to regress the sequence of landscape change images as far back as possible. Chris Bass sought permission from the private landowners concerned and Phil from the National Trust.

Installing the fixed points

Other examples elsewhere, such as those cited above, used concrete footings or even plinths to mount a threaded base plate to receive the standard camera pole and fitting. In Branscombe it was decided to use the innovative and less obtrusive method of driving a conventional fence post spike into the ground. Instead of a fence post, the square section post holder can receive a square section of fence post to which the camera pole and camera is attached each time a picture is taken.

The photography

Chris has gone to considerable lengths to replicate the focal length of older cameras to produce the same views as the older photographs of Branscombe. Using advanced camera software he has also been able to stitch panoramas together. In addition to the quarterly sets of photographs, the fixed points can also foreground local residents, school children, etc. to produce photographic memories of people in the landscape. The images are kept by Chris, with back up images held by the Branscombe Project.

Dissemination

The photographs will appear on the Branscombe Project Website and may be used, with the usual consents by the East Devon AONB and other bodies.

Costs

Chris submitted a bill for £73.00 for materials.

Volunteer time

Prospection – 3hrs, Permissions -2hrs, Purchasing and adaptation of equipment – 3hrs. Installation – 5hrs, Photography – 3hrs, processing and presentation (Branscombe Exhibition) – 3hrs. TOTAL: 19hrs NB. 3 additional hours every quarter going forward.

Case Study Eleven – Our Changing Coastline

Background

Following on from the winter storms we decided to look at how the beach and surrounding cliffs are changing – in particular Barbara captured local peoples response to this at the Branscombe exhibition and the challenges presented by the Natural England and National Trust approach

What they did

Barbara Farquharson and Sue Dymond were coming to the end of writing their book *on Working the Cliffs*, when the great storms of early 2014 wreaked havoc along the Branscombe Shoreline. When a stand-off occurred between people with property on the beach and Natural England, it seemed important to discover what was happening. Many of the local stake-holders were interviewed, and during an exhibition put up in April 2014, local people were asked their opinion of what should happen. About 30 people responded:

Make do and mend – it might never happen again.

The sea will always win, let it.

Preservation? Conservation? Sustainability? Branscombe has unique qualities, natural and otherwise. We should do what we can to maintain it.

When they [the chalets] are gone, they are gone, but while they are here, I'll rent one!

Without a doubt the damage should be repaired. It is essential to the livelihood of the village.

Can we ask Natural England to 'manage' the retreat until the point when we really must 'retreat'. Let's not give up yet, let's enjoy it as long as possible. Let us manage it!

Natural England is run by bean counters and admin people who all live in London. What do they know about what is 'natural' at the seaside!

Dessimination

This work was included in the Working the Cliffs Book

Project Links

The strategic HEAP (Historic Environment Action Plan) has come an opportune moment since it offers a way of understanding the coastal landscape as an interweaving of nature and historical culture. The description is:

LCT 4H Coastal Cliffs -- Ensure historic features particularly sensitive to coastal erosion and relating to the historic exploitation of coastal area, including prehistoric features, historic boundaries, plats, kilns, quarries and military site have been identified and recorded

Volunteer time

5 to 6 days

Case Study Twelve: Historic Environment Conference

Background

For a number of years the East Devon AONB has hosted an annual spring historic environment conference which aims to consolidate and report back on the year's work in this field to the public, stakeholders and fellow professionals. The speakers each year include academic historians and archaeologists, and active local historians and archaeologists. The participants are for the most part local residents who have been involved in the work of AONB projects or take a lively interest in their local historic environment.

The 2014 Conference

Although the 2014 conference was not branded as a HEAP conference, even a cursory look at the programme introduction, speakers and subjects (see appendix) reveals that the East Devon HEAP was the central theme, from the first presentation onwards. Indeed all but one of the speakers is involved in either the Branscombe or Woodbury HEAP. If the morning was more to do with theory and methodology, the afternoon was given over to work in the field. There is little doubt that the participants had absorbed the HEAP message by the end of the day, even if they may have had little idea what was involved in the beginning.

Dissemination

The participants were invited to visit the Branscombe exhibition, which was running concurrently, over the following few days and where the entire stage of the Parish hall was given over to a HEAP exhibition featuring 4 separate displays, ranging from art work and photography to HEAP delivery in Branscombe and an overview of HEAP. A number of people availed themselves of this opportunity to find out more about HEAP. Conference participants were asked to look out for future HEAP walks, talks and workshops on the AONB website HEAP page, and ideas were immediately mooted on a continuing HEAP theme for next year's conference, with paths, tracks and farmsteads perhaps the firmest contender at this stage.

Costs

Nil. The conference was advertised through contacts lists and free advertising. The £12.00 conference fee paid by the 70 participants (£840.00 – the 10 speakers and organisers did not pay) covered the conference facility hire and the catering.

Volunteer time

5 to 6 days, ranges from IT help on the day to the preparation time put in by the speakers.

Case Study Thirteen: Different Community Action Plans

Background

Between 2013 and 2015 the parishes of Woodbury and Branscombe created their own Historic Environment Action Plans

Two different ways of presenting Historic Environment Action plans

The Branscombe HEAP consisted of a short summary statement which signposted to the existing Branscombe Project website it consisted of:

Character – What are the key historic environment features in Branscombe?

- Audit of work already undertaken
- Mapping Historic Branscombe
- Work in progress
- Walking Branscombe

Significance – What Heritage matters to us most?

- Looking at important views in the Landscape

Change – How has Branscombe parish changed? How might it change in the future?

- Our changing coastline
- Fixed point photography

Action – What do we want to do next?

- Summary Action Plan

Woodbury opted to create a much fuller standalone report. This included a Potential Future Action Section which *“looks ahead to some possible intentions and activities – to continue research into the historical landscape and changes within it; to explore more fully the significance of heritage features in the landscape and issues that are affecting them; to disseminate information; and to encourage further research”*

Dissemination – Each is placed on the parish websites

Costs - Printing Costs and Room Hire

Volunteer Time – A simple audit of work already undertaken and a meeting to decide on next actions could take 1 or 2 days or a full report could take 40-50 days to generate

Pro forma HEAP

What is the Historic Environment?

The past is all around us. The Historic Environment is all the aspects of our parish which have come about through the interaction between people and places through time. It therefore includes, not just archaeological sites, earthworks and monuments and historic buildings, but the historic aspects of our orchards, fields and woodlands.

Why does the Historic Environment in Branscombe matter?

Our parish is unique. All of its character including the layout of the buildings, the material that buildings have been built from, the shape of the fields, the make-up of the woodlands, the direction of the tracks and lanes, look the way they do because of choices that our ancestors, relatives and predecessors made in the past. The parish will continue to change and evolve but in order to help shape this future evolution effectively and celebrate what makes our parish so special we need to understand how it has come to look the way it does. The HEAP framework is one way which will help us gain this understanding. It is a voyage of discovery which will shed new light on the parish and look at well-known stories and information in different ways.

Why our parish or community have chosen to complete a HEAP?

.....

.....

Thinking about Character

What are the key historic environment features in your parish?

We plan to draw together information both new and/or existing on the archaeological and historic features present in the parish by.....



Thinking about Significance

What are the Special historic features in your parish?

We plan to capture what archaeological and heritage features matter to us

by.....



Thinking about Change

How is our heritage changing?

How is our parish changing? How might it change in the future?

We plan to capture change in our parish

by.....



Thinking about Action

What would we like to do in the future?

This is the part where we have thought about our next steps and how we might share our findings?

The actions we will take over the next year are.....

