Were you Part of the Heart?

On Saturday 21\textsuperscript{st} September, the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service hosted the ‘Part of the Heart’ event as part of the National Moment…..one of many across England, Wales and Northern Ireland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The National Moment was in celebration of the 70\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act of 1949, the legislation that created protected landscapes that we know and love – and the Lincolnshire Wolds is one!

Residents from across the Lincolnshire Wolds attended the event at Welton le Wold disused quarry, held by kind permission by the landowners on private land. The day started a little misty but the sun soon shone through, enabling a day with full sun and not a cloud in the sky!
Once the longer, morning walk through the protected landscape set off, partners Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Love Lincolnshire Wolds set their stalls alongside the AONB information, with Nice 'n' Toastie providing freshly made bacon butties, toasties and drinks.

People started arriving, reading the literature and crafting until the start of the shorter walk, looking at the ways that the ice advances have formed the landscape, left remnants of straight tusked elephant and rocks from Scotland, through to the Cold War use of the gravels which were so extensively quarried here.

After both walks were finished, time for more crafting, photos with the selfie frame and maybe one more toastie before we all gathered to create the heart in the landscape. 80 good people of Lincolnshire formed a heart, listening to the reasons why they were all stood in a reclaimed quarry whilst Links2Lincs took video and drone footage! At the end, everyone was presented a copy of 'Fugitives', a poem by Simon Armitage, Poet Laureate, specially written for the celebration (see overleaf).

Thanks go to Phil, Malcolm, Gary & Neil for helping on the day, to Clare, Rachel & Jade for organising the craft activities, Karen & Kay for their display and Nice 'n' Toastie for providing excellent refreshments.

Special thanks to the landowners, Mr & Mrs Brook for allowing us to take over the site to hold the event, including all the preparation work undertaken by them.

And lastly, to Tony Cranwell of Links2Lincs for stepping up and offering to undertake the drone & video aspect without having any idea of what we wanted – to be fair, neither did we! The weather was challenging – too much sun? - but we got there in the end. Link here https://youtu.be/laweulWKBjw

For further information please contact the LWCS office (01522) 555780 email: aonb@lincswolds.org.uk Full details are available on our website: www.lincswolds.org.uk
Fugitives

Then we woke and were hurtling headlong
for wealds and wolds,
blood coursing, the Dee and the Nidd in full spate
through the spinning waterwheels in the wrists
and over the heart’s weir,
the nightingale hip-hopping ten to the dozen
under the morning’s fringe.

It was no easy leap, to exit the engine house of the head
and vault the electric fence
of commonplace things,
to open the door of the century’s driverless hearse,
roll from the long cortège
then dust down and follow
the twisting ribbon of polecats wriggling free from extinction
or slipstream the red kite’s triumphant flypast out of oblivion
or trail the catnip of spraint and scat tingeing the morning breeze.

On we journeyed at full tilt
through traffic-light orchards,
the brain’s compass dialling for fell, moor,
escarpment and shore, the skull’s sextant
plotting for free states coloured green on the map,
using hedgerows as handrails,
barrows and crags as trig points and cats’ eyes.

We stuck to the switchbacks and scenic routes,
steered by the earth’s contours and natural lines of desire,
feet firm on solid footings of bedrock and soil
fracked only by moles.
We skimmed across mudflat and saltmarsh,
clambered to stony pulpits on high hills
Then arrived in safe havens, entered the zones, 
stood in the grandstands of bluffs and ghylls, spectators 
to flying ponies grazing wild grass to carpeted lawns, 
oaks flaunting turtle doves on their ring-fingers, 
Ospreys fishing the lakes from invisible pulleys and hoists, 
the falcon back on its see-through pivot, lured from its gyre.

Here was nature as future, 
the satellite dishes of blue convolvulus 
tuned to the cosmos, tracking the chatter of stars, 
the micro-gadgets of complex insects 
working the fields, heaths tracted by beetles, 
rainbowed hay meadows tipsy with rain and light, 
golden gravel hoarded in eskers and streams.

And we vowed not to slumber again 
but claimed sanctuary 
under the kittiwake’s siren 
and corncrake’s alarm, 
in realms patrolled by sleepwalking becks and creeks 
where beauty employs its own border police.

And witnessed ancient trees 
affirming their citizenship of the land, 
and hunkered and swore oaths, made laws 
in hidden parliaments of bays and coves, 
then gathered on commons and capes 
waving passports of open palms, medalled by dog rose and teasel 
and raising the flag of air.

by Simon Armitage

Landscapes for life week
21-29 Sept 2019
New Sense of Purpose and New Name for our AONB?

In the summer of 2018 the Glover Review began gathering evidence for the Designated Landscapes Review, which the government commissioned in response to the 25 Year Environment Plan.

Since then members of the panel of six have been to every English National Park and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) as well as to National Parks in Scotland and unprotected landscapes for which people have hopes, from the canal sides of Digbeth in Birmingham to the moors above Halifax.

The recommendations have now been published. "We need to reignite the fire and vision which brought this system into being in 1949. We need our finest landscapes to be places of natural beauty which look up and outwards to the nation they serve. In essence, we’ve asked not ‘what do national landscapes need?’, but ‘what does the nation need from them today?’"

In summary the key recommendations for AONBs are;

"AONBs should be strengthened, with increased funding, governance reform, new shared purposes with National Parks, and a greater voice on development. We think the current cumbersome title ‘AONB’ should be replaced. Our suggestion is that they should be called National Landscapes."

- A strengthened place for national landscapes in the planning system with AONBs given statutory consultee status, encouragement to develop local plans and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework
- A stronger mission to connect all people with our national landscapes, supported and held to account by the new National Landscapes Service
- AONBs strengthened with new purposes, powers and resources, renamed as National Landscapes
- A new financial model – more money, more secure, more enterprising
- National landscapes should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks –
The best view of Lincolnshire in my opinion is that looking west from Risby Manor, north east of Market Rasen and just inside the AONB. You can see Lincoln from there on a clear day, despite it being over 20 miles away.

To get there, it's a good idea to walk from Market Rasen using the LWCS leaflet, 'Following Woods and Mills'. There's ample parking in John Street or at the Festival Hall. There's also ample opportunity for pre walk nourishment in the town in the form of a sit down meal or a ready-made pack up to carry with you.

The route will take you out of the suburbs, through cropped fields and into Willingham Woods. There are numerous trails through the woods, so it's easy to get disorientated. Especially so if like me, you are more interested in the soaring Scots Pines, Larch and Birch trees that make up the woodland canopy. As long as you continue to head north you will eventually find the Rasen Road, which you cross to go up a bridleway.

This track will take you up the scarp and on towards Risby Manor and the home of the Risby flock of Lincolnshire Long Wools. You can pause here and turn round to admire the magnificent sweeping views west out towards the Lincoln cliff edge. This truly is a view from the Wolds.

Continue north on the path and then east towards the pretty village of Tealby, where further provisions can be obtained at the village shop, tea rooms or two pubs (both of which serve good food). Meandering back through ancient fields bordered by cracked and bent hawthorn hedges, you come back full circle to Willingham Woods and then Market Rasen. It's nine miles all told, so a stop along the way is recommended. But slightly sore feet is a small price to pay for the vista across this great County.

Richard Littlewood, Arboricultural Officer, Lincolnshire County Council
Farmstead Volunteers – Buildings Surveys

This is a project that aims to inspire volunteers to take an active part in recording and protecting historic farm buildings in the Lincolnshire Wolds. On site surveys help us to build up a picture of the condition of these heritage assets and this information can aid future management planning.

Manor Farm, South Ormsby was one of the venues for our survey training day recently. We were really able to brush up on our architecture detective skills; looking at a wash house, out buildings, pig stys and cattle pens. The Estate even gave us permission to have a sneaky peek inside the 17th Century listed farm house too. After lunch we moved on to Hardens Gap Farm and spent an interesting afternoon trying to unravel the history of this multi period site. The results will be fed back to South Ormsby Estate for their historic records.

Volunteers have also visited Ashby Puerorum to look at farm buildings from different periods and further their investigation technique. If you have a farm building that is pre WWII, we’d love to visit you to help discover the history of the building and its locality. Help us build a case for conserving these buildings at risk!

We have regular meetings of the group and new people are always welcome. Please contact the office to find out more or e mail: david.rodger@lincolnshire.gov.uk
Heritage Open Days 2019

In September LWCS organised a guided walk around Snipe Dales and Hagworthingham to tie in with this year's Heritage Open Days theme - Lincolnshire: Learning Wisdom and Folklore

The Magic and Folklore of Trees

17 people set out from Snipe Dales Country Park with David Rodger of LWCS, to walk 4 ½ miles from there to Hagworthingham and back. Along the way, David told stories of faeries and devils and the gods and goddesses of the trees. He gave out many useful snippets of information including 'facts' such as, 'A yew sprig held by the seeker of lost things would see the item jump when it was nearby' and, 'You will find faeries under an elder tree on Midsummer's Eve.'

David also told of the medicinal uses of trees. For example the chemical salicin is found in Willow trees and this is an ingredient in aspirin. Willow based concoctions have been used for thousands of years to relieve the pain of colds and fevers, long before we had pharmaceuticals.

Other tree truths included the news that beech nuts although edible, contain potash that could render one 'giddy' if overeaten.

The walk wound its way through the pretty village of Hagworthingham and then on to Shire Farm. This farm is based on the principles of biodynamic farming as advocated by philosopher Rudolf Steiner. Walkers were told about the organic methods employed on site, and shown the chakra path, a landscape scale representation of the 7 energy centres of the body.

The group cut through the path between the sacral and solar plexus chakra (round about stomach level) and made their way back to the Country Park and end of their mystical journey.
Three Parishes Hedgerow Survey Project – Update

A project that will inspire the communities of Binbrook, Brookenby and Swinhope to value their hedges as an environmental and cultural resource.

On the evening of 6th August, LWCS gave 8 volunteers a talk on the ‘Magic and Folklore of Trees’. For example, did you know that the Poplar tree shakes in the wind because of all the naughty secrets it has heard? The evening also included an opportunity for volunteers to take part in the historic research aspect of the project.

Four people have signed up to do baseline research; looking into hedgerows of historic significance.

This will help us focus our initial surveys on hedges that have cultural value as well as those which may have increased biodiversity due to their age.

On August 16th the group took part in a tree identification and survey training exercise in Binbrook. Six volunteers braved the rain to learn about native trees that had fared well (or not) on the local chalk soil. We also surveyed a 30 m section of hedgerow to practice filling in the survey sheet (from the DEFRA hedgerow handbook). Thanks to Lee Holmes of Binbrook for showing us around his fields and hedges.

We currently have 14 people signed up to the hedgerow project, but we’re always looking for new members to share in our appreciation of the hedgerows of the Wolds.

So if you’re interested and would like to find out more, please get in touch at the LWCS office and we’ll send you details.

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