



**Heath to Sea Landscape Recovery in the
lower Otter Valley
Stakeholder Engagement Workshop
Output Record
Workshop date: 15th October 2024**

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About the workshop and this report

Purpose of the workshop

Heaths to Sea Landscape Recovery initiative is an exciting nature enhancement opportunity, and of national significance to meet UK nature recovery targets. The aim is to power nature recovery across more than 4,000 hectares of East Devon, through the connection of agricultural hinterlands linking three parts of the Pebblebed Heaths National Nature Reserve (NNR) across the lower Otter Valley. The aim is for this diverse landscape to be nature rich and ecologically healthy whilst also supporting food production, net zero, timber and access needs. The project ethos is that nature recovery and productive agriculture can and must co-exist.

On the 15th of October 2024, 36 people attended a 1-day workshop to help share and influence how the project develops. Participants brought a wide range of different knowledge and expertise including business, community, heritage & education, land users, nature and land managers.

During the workshop people shared their knowledge and understanding of the landscape across the lower Otter Valley, and the wider context for this work. They identified what was already heading in the right direction and what more could be done, followed by a discussion focused on what working well together would look like.

About this workshop report

This is a record of what was said during the workshop. During the workshop, the essence of every point said was either noted by facilitators, or participants wrote their own points down themselves. Following the event, we collated all the outputs into this record and then sorted it out so that similar ideas, from within each conversation, are grouped together.

We sort it like this because conversations don't progress in a linear way, but go off on tangents, circle back and change direction suddenly – all of which makes reading it in that order difficult to understand. By sorting similar points together, the main topics and themes of the conversation become clearer.

When we are sorting the outputs, we let the ideas and then themes emerge, rather than use pre-set topic headings. This avoids bias and missing unique or unexpected points. The ideas could have been grouped differently or different titles chosen, this includes groupings containing only one comment, so no weight should be attached to them.

This report serves as a record of what people said and an *aide memoir* for those who took part in the workshop.

This report follows the same order as the event.

Glossary

| Acronyms/ terminology used in this report | Meaning |
|--|--|
| AONB | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |
| BNG | Biodiversity Net Gain |
| CSO | Combined Sewage Overflows |
| DCC | Devon County Council |
| DWT | Devon Wildlife Trust |
| EDDC | East Devon District Council |
| FWAG | Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group |
| GPS | Global Positioning System |
| GMO | Genetically Modified Organism |
| INNS | Invasive Non-Native Species |
| NFM | Natural Flood Management |
| NL | National Landscape |
| NNR | National Nature Reserve |
| OFWAT | Water Services Regulation Authority |
| OVA | Otter Valley Association |
| PHCT | Primary Health Care Team |
| PRoW | Public Rights of Way |
| RSPB | The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds |
| Spp. | Species |
| WFD | Water Framework Directive |
| WRT | Westcountry Rivers Trust |
| 30x30 | Commitment to protect 30% of land and ocean for nature by 2030 |
| Glover Review | Independent review of National Parks and AONBs opportunity for new focus |
| Lawton principles | Bigger – better – more joined for nature |

Parking Place

Questions

- Q – Is it possible to share emails of people participating today?
- A – Due to GDPR restrictions it's not possible to share participant's email addresses. However, if anyone would like to contact a specific person from the workshop, please email Beth Humphrey or the HeathtoSea mailbox and your message will be passed on.

Statements

- The Definition of 'rewilding' – depends on who's definition and why
- Access needs to be considered for different groups – walkers, disables, cyclists, dog walkers, horse riders etc.
- Shoot all out-of-control dogs

Short term Actions following the workshop

| What | Who | When |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Define landscape Baseline – what do we want to recover? And to what? | Clinton Devon Estates | Spring 2025 |
| Who is monitoring the impacts of LORP? | Clinton Devon Estates | Annually |
| Lacking feedback on whether beavers are positively impacting flooding | DM add into report activity fete Q7 | 6 Weeks |
| Word for word report | DM | 6 Weeks |
| GMO products and solar @ scale | DM add to correct place in the report (4.2.2) | 6 Weeks |
| Wider community engagement | Designed by DM delivered by Clinton Devon Estates | Jan – Mar 2025 |
| Online feedback survey | DM/Clinton Devon Estates | 16 th October |

1 Vision Question

1.1 Imagine it is 2044 and you are at an event celebrating the success of landscape recovery across the lower Otter Valley. What 2 things please you most?

Wildlife and people co-existing

- Wildlife and farming co-existing in an accessible environment which can be engaged by all
- Sustainable farming producing food and environmental benefits
- A more biodiverse valley that's good for people and wildlife
- Nature and humans are thriving
- Rural landscape, healthy environment for wildlife and funding

Productive landscape with nature recovery

- A diverse species rich landscape
- A productive working landscape with high levels of structure and diversity and associated biodiversity and nature recovery
- A productive landscape that supports the rural economy
- Sustainable farming supporting biodiversity

Connect and stable ecosystem space for wildlife

- Connected ecosystem
- Stable ecosystem
- 'Wilder' coastal corridor and Otter corridor
- Protection of sections of the river will need some areas to be limited access for the public but better overall access
- Room for wildlife!
- Wildlife corridors through the area
- Join up the old river channel to the top of the LORP to create a true estuary

Thriving wildlife species

- We hear cuckoos
- New species moving into the area
- The amount and variety of wildlife e.g. beavers, water voles, birds etc.
- Increased woodland cover meeting biodiversity, water, timber, and carbon sequestration requirements of society
- Better habitat for fish particularly salmon
- Increased wildlife populations
- There are a greater number of wetland birds and wildlife in general
- Thriving everything

Full range of insect life – followed up the food chain by birds, hedgehogs etc.

- We still have wildlife on the river/hill
- Species abundance – Birds + fish + Mammals. When you walk through the site you are more likely than not to see something special
- Nesting ospreys
- Otter catchment seen as model for how species declines can be reversed
- Seeing a thriving beaver population in the upper reaches of the Otter catchment, with benefits for wildlife and reducing the risk of sudden flood events downstream through water retention

Improving landscape health

- A healthy river, clean enough to swim in and accessible for all
- Less soil erosion and more sustainable crops
- Soils being well structured and reduced run-off (surface), river having room to meander and braid to increase habitat and NFM potential
- The bedding in and expansion of wildlife using the area

Valued historic environment

- Valued and cared for historic environment, landscape led by nature rather than the targets

Public access

- Improved public access in a managed way
- Freedom to walk throughout the area
- Public access – effective farming and agriculture
- Excellent public access and thriving wildlife
- Good access to the river, including crossing points
- Some areas need to be kept off limit to benefit wildlife

More farming for food

- More farming for food rather than energy
- Dairy herd in meadows
- Lots more organic farming less AD Maize
- More organic farming

Community involvement and impact

- The local community have been able to get involved in landscape recovery
- Project suggested by local community and viewed as enhancement and positive to area
- Local communities believe it has made a difference to their lives and are proud of the local landscape
- The use of the area by local communities of all ages and abilities
- Benefits for the existing local community

A valley resistant to climate change and flood risk

- Flood resistant village
- Sustainable water management incorporating flood mitigation
- A landscape rich in wildlife with a viable economy habitat connected or being connected with the right connections in the right place. Bigger – better – more joined up
- Sustainable water management incorporating flood mitigation
- Flood risk/climate change mitigations
- A valley that is coping well with the changes brought by a changing climate

Not overdeveloped

- Space
- Not overdeveloped

Thriving local economy

- LORP has successfully interpreted into a thriving local economy to which it has contributed

Considered normal

- Considered to be normal

A go to destination for humans and wildlife

- Making the lower Otter a 'Go to' destination, not just for birds and wildlife, but also for birdwatchers and eco-tourists, benefiting local businesses and bringing in valuable revenue

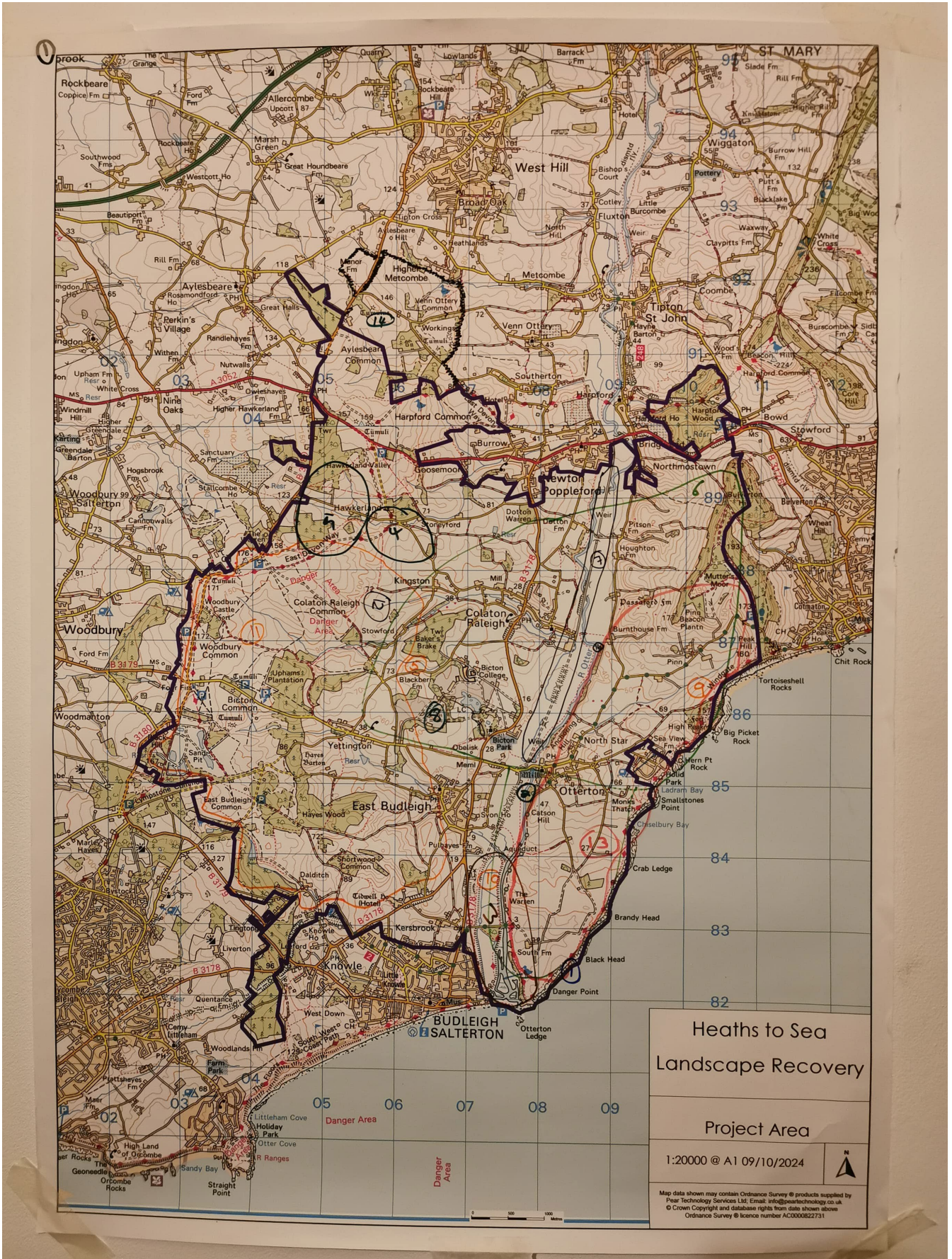
Action to protect environment for future generations

- We have taken action to protect our local environment for future generations

2 Session A: Sharing understanding about the wider context

2.1 What do you value and where around the lower Otter Valley?

Map 1



| Number | Comment |
|-----------|--|
| All | All agricultural land Grade 3 upwards. Food producing areas are key |
| All | Purple boundary already on the map. Whole systems need everything |
| All | Wildlife: The lower Otter Valley |
| 1 | Retention of bus service |
| 1/9,10,11 | Exercise areas including dog walking |
| 1 | Historical features within area including orchards and hedgerows |
| 1 | Difficult as whole should be protected |
| 2 | Watching beavers here |
| 3 | Diversity of wildlife and access to areas makes it very appealing for photography and observation |
| 3 | Seeing so many new species in the L.O.R.P |
| 4 | Watching the changing seasons and wildlife through the year |
| 5 | Enjoy using all of the commons/heath to horse ride on. Lovely to enjoy nature |
| 5 | Local scout groups enjoy walks and training in this area great to have this on our doorstep |
| 6 | Very important area for wildlife management and wildlife |
| 7 | Railway line used as route for main sewer collecting wastewater from Newton Poppleford, Colaton Raleigh, East Budleigh and Otterton. Provides a stable route for protecting environment. |
| 7 | Potential access for cycleway/pedestrian/disabled from Newton Poppleford to lower Otter Restoration Project/Otterton. |
| 8 | Historic value of Bicton Park and gardens |
| 9 | South West coastal path and green tourism |
| 10 | LORP |
| 11 | Whole area diversity |
| 12 | Come on let's just say that the heaths need to be more resilient to all the new additional pressures that are coming. So the bigger block |
| 13 | Recovery of rare farmland, birds and mammals within sustainable farming system and associated improvements in water quality |
| 14 | I would like to see the boundary increased to include Venn Ottery common. This is widely enjoyed by residents of west hill and would benefit from being part of this project – important to have consistent approach across commons in the area |
| 15 | A connection/corridor to connect existing heathland could facilitate more free movement of wildlife. On the introductory map having heathland boundaries it struck me that there is a very small area dissecting existing heathlands. Use of the open fencing/cattle grids could be considered |
| 16 | Lovely swimming spot well used by locals |

Map 2



| Number | Comment |
|--------|---|
| 1 | Rural landscape rural communities |
| 1 | Beavers and other wildlife |
| 1 | Public right of way and river paths. Especially accessibility for all including young and disabled |
| 2 | General comments: Conservation of historical environment in particular working towards good condition for scheduled monuments. Commons: Managed with an understanding of the historical development and use of the commons. Maintaining open heaths with interspersed woodland. No kneed jerk 'fashion' management without clear understanding of impacts and desired outcomes. |
| 2 | We intend to visit Woodbury Fort as part of our curriculum enrichment (Newton Poppleford Primary School) |
| 3 | Pebblebed Heath/commons – area to open access/access to viewpoint e.g. estuary view |
| 3 | We take children on hikes throughout the year and plan to walk from the school down the River Otter (Newton Poppleford Primary School) |
| 4 | We plan to explore routes through Harpford Woods for our termly hikes (Newton Poppleford Primary School) |
| 4, 5 | Path upstream of Otterton Mill. Open footpaths, from accessible on parks |
| 24 | Woodlands and trees, large and small |
| 30 | South West path – wildlife corridor lots of potential to broaden the corridor. Running, walking, bird watching health and wellbeing etc. |
| 30, 32 | Public access – footpaths, bridleways – green lanes, coast path |
| 31 | Adders, Dartford Warblers, Lizards, Newts, Birds |
| 31 | Boundary change to include DWT/RSPB Mr Garnett land on Bystock/Withycombe Raleigh Common & Lypstone Common. Where is the Western Hinterland? |
| 32 | Favourite places for watching bats and other wildlife |
| 32 | Views etc. Park Hill. Opportunities to increase wildlife value of steep fields/woods |
| 33 | Coastal path access – for walking, running, views, health and wellbeing |
| 33 | Swim pool on Otter – needs better water quality, wider wildlife corridor and otter generally |
| 34 | Budleigh! Engage population and their opportunities for nature recovery – birds/hedgehogs etc. and key part of this landscape |
| 35 | Love the beauty of this area |
| 35 | Full landscape; heath plateau, steep slopes, farmland leading to river. Just want better of all of this, more heath, more woods, high quality farming and healthy, meandering river. |
| 36 | Great walking route |
| 37 | Fire Beacon Hill. Wider landscape grazing – nature for all – open access – sustainable agriculture and timber. – good views. Perhaps a boundary change? |
| 37 | Purple boundary already on the map. Whole systems need everything |
| 38 | Cycling |
| 39 | Walking and wildlife: volunteering |

2.2 What benefits does the landscape provide to locals and visitors?

Mental health and wellbeing

- Quiet contemplation
- Mental health
- Exercise and wellbeing education in the wildlife environment
- Mental health benefits and exercise facilities
- Space for mental health

Food production

- Food production

Benefits and opportunities for children

- Natural places for children to play – so important children have opportunity to connect with nature
- Local scout groups walking/training
- Places to inspire children and teach them about wildlife. If they don't value it, they won't care!

Enjoying nature

- Place to enjoy nature
- Wildlife watching opportunities
- Spotting wildlife
- Learning opportunity
- Wildlife photography
- Green space

Connection of place and freedom of movement

- Connections from place to place other than via roads
- Freedom of movement

Economic benefits

- Local economy – e.g. tourism, agriculture
- Economic benefits of green tourism
- Employment
- Business opportunities

Artistic inspiration

- Artistic inspiration

Recreation opportunities

- Horse riding/fun rides/Exeter Equestrian Club
- Quiet cycle opportunities
- Area to cycle/run/train for events or for fun
- Exercise
- Walks and big skies

Time to unwind

- Break from work
- Time to unwind

Connection and understanding of the past

- An understanding of how the present is the result of the past – development, management, transport
- Traditional landscape – a connection to the past

Clean air

- Clean air

Mixed landscape of agricultural land growing food and wildlife areas

- A mixed landscape of agricultural land growing food and wildlife areas

Fishing

- Fishing

Room to explore and find new places

- Room to explore and find new places

2.3 What threats exist to the landscape of the lower Otter Valley?

Over development and housing

- Over-developed
- Development pressure
- New town Exeter and population pressures
- Over development leading to damage
- "Short termism" in planning and development and environmental desires
- Existing infrastructure (utilities) association of housing
- Price of land and housing
- Population imbalances driven by house and rent prices

Dogs and other pets

- Too many uncontrolled dogs: short leads
- Dog poo left on the common
- Cats – dogs
- Uncontrolled dogs on leads
- Too many dog walkers
- Exotic pets and pathogens causing widespread mortality to trees
- People using cars to drive their dogs for a walk?

Water Quality

- Water quality in rivers & streams

Too much public access

- Too much public access – overuse, cyclists, motor bikers

Soil erosion

- Soil erosion/loss – poor water quality
- Soil erosion due to overgrowth of maize for energy schemes

Climate threats

- Changes due to climate crisis e.g. flooding
- Climate driven threats to treescape (e.g. drought, extremes of temperature)

Sewage and pollutants

- Sewage
- Pollutants including sewage
- Sewers

Invasive species

- Invasive species e.g. Himalayan Balsam

Litter

- Litter
- Litter
- Fly tipping

Light pollution

- Light pollution

Inconsistent agricultural practices

- Inconsistent agricultural practices

Uninformed ecological schemes

- Uninformed ecological schemes

Flooding

- Flooding

Overuse/unmanaged access over sensitive areas

- Overuse/unmanaged access over sensitive areas

Demand for over-managed rivers

- Demands for over-management of rivers – e.g. erosion control/removal of dead wood

Localism vs tourism

- Localism vs tourism – old attitudes blame the other faction without recognising benefits both provide – compromise is needed

2.4 If nature around the lower Otter Valley could speak, what would it tell us?

- Let us breathe
- Leave us alone to find our own balance
- Help!
- More help please humans
- We're being put in a prison but without the bars
- Stop growing maize
- Too much people pressure on wildlife spaces
- Make room and include us in farming
- Look upstream, protect and improve our (fish) spawning areas
- It doesn't like disturbance
- Please don't build 5000 new homes in Farringdon. Give us space
- Birds – somewhere to eat and nest safely
- Reduce bureaucracy! Get on with it
- Don't let humans have access everywhere
- Stop growing maize for un-green fuel
- More trees please!
- Join up and protect our hedgerows
- Access by tourists needs to be limited and particularly limit access for dogs off leads
- Stop releasing pheasants
- More heath please, 60% loss alone in East Devon in the past 200 years! 86% nationally
- Protection from cats
- More wetland please
- Why can't I move from A to B? I'm stuck!
- Look after us: food, shelter, peace and quiet
- More connectivity
- Enjoy but respect us
- Help!
- A little bit of bread and no cheese or hopefully just – a little bit of bread.
- More places like these please! Humans and nature can co-exist

2.5 What wider trends and changes need to be factored into landscape recovery work in the lower Otter Valley?

Political

- Changing government/policy over course of project
- Culture change to take long-term view, but with understanding of urgency – e.g. climate emergency
- Incentives to reach 2030 – 2040 how are we going to achieve this – big ideas – ways to fun and make happen.
- Supporting green finance and other way to support the work in the wider landscape
- Land reform

- Attempts to monetise the area
- Incentives/disincentives (political carrot and stick)
- Changes to peripheral policies e.g. Planning proposals and increased development aspirations
- Unpredictable, short public funding cycles impacting LR legacy/impact
- The use of the LORP should be connected to the use of the town – work together to benefit the local economy
- Insecurity of future public spending (env. Not considered a priority)
- World in conflict – instability – impact on food/economy
- Ring fenced to protect from political changes
- Offer incentives to grow food and evaluate the real cost of energy crops i.e. biofuels and their real impact on the environment
- Governments need to value the natural capital benefit and reward delivery. This isn't just the 'green stuff'
- Policy change
- Instability and slow policy development
- Short 5–10-year lifetime
- Op Gov. can lead to changes in policy/budgets
- Potential for effort to be directed at issues not necessarily with benefit for nature
- Public image issues of large landowners/estates
- Government strategy regarding development
- Devolution – from central government
- Political will on the environment – short termism
- Funding preserves resulting in higher tier authorities divesting themselves of responsibilities – increasing role of town and parish councils
- Changes of National Planning Policy
- Changes to the tax system – BPS APR
- Political trends – BNG etc. Being short term

Economic

- Cost of upkeep/maintenance of infrastructure
- Tightening of public budgets
- Extent of futureproofing in original design
- Private finance/green finance
- Changes to rural payments
- Value of matters which cannot easily be costed
- Green tourism and wider value to local towns and businesses – connected/cohesive signage to incorporate local town
- People need to make a living/avoid rural poverty/job creation
- Lack of available public funding – DCC, EDDC etc.
- Make tourism pay for activities etc.
- Smart use of benefits to achieve economic growth
- National/regional requirements for low carbon building materials (timber) (UK 2nd largest importer of timber globally)
- Heritage and history to promote tourism and local jobs
- Agriculture job shortages
- Ensuring there is revenue budget (not just capital one) to ensure post project monitoring maintenance of measure put in
- How local business can benefit – currently very little linkage to Budleigh businesses e.g. B&Bs.../signage to high street! – Promotion of the area outside Devon to bring in tourists to see beavers etc. – But & would more people reduce value of the area?
- Better active travel access to heaths brings in people but not cars

Technology

- Renewables – Biomass, PV, wind, hydro, ground source heat? – Replacing biodigesters?
- No fence grazing technology. Enabling grazing animals over a large landscape without the need for conventional fences
- Social media and virtual access
- Improvements/advances in farming technology – definitely!
- Use of landscape monitoring technology i.e. drones, eDNA etc.
- Continuous monitoring, instead of spot checks
- True accessibility for the disabled
- Perhaps – night activities – star gazing
- Wildlife webcams
- FAB Project – What has happened to it? (FAB = France, Alderney, Budleigh tidal power electrical generation)
- Tidal energy? It is a constant that doesn't change
- Better metrics for nature – carbon, species, biodiversity
- Process automation and better use of data – more working done with less!
- Growth/production in home-based working
- High-tech employment gets sucked in to Exeter
- An app showing where work is being done on the heaths – where you can walk/ride/cycle etc.
- Role of AI in information/misinformation

Social

- The variety of 'needs' on the environment. Active vs Passive use of "the environment" 'use' vs 'enjoyment' and ability to make project self-sustainable and acceptable for all in the longer-term
- Mental health benefits of healthy environment e.g. from walking, fishing
- Increase in (wild) swimming and 'naturally healthy' Otter
- Chance for sporting groups to meet up
- Social events – BBQ
- Local public house
- Increased interest in the environment – community wildlife groups etc. – But not in Budleigh, why? – OVA?
- Remember historic heritage landscape
- What point of history do we restore to?
- More people – especially lower Otter
- People's understanding of how food is produced and how this impacts on land management
- Need for accessible nature
- Better cycle facilities
- Problem of raves causing closures (car parks)
- Bus service retention
- Development pressure/housing availability
- Access tourism/respect for regeneration – nature
- Access management, particularly dogs
- Pollution growth in East Devon
- Aspiration to increase tourism
- Organise events sports, social
- Changing ways of public access e.g. e-bikes, larger mobility scooters and managing conflict that occurs with this
- Take opportunities to involve young people, work with schools in local area
- Health benefits and promotion of them
- More emphasis on nature/food/landscape in primary and secondary education
- Changes in work patterns/more home-based working

- Education
- Social justice e.g. equality of access
- Cycle paths
- Traffic increase and lack of parking
- Inclusivity
- Flood resilience

Legal

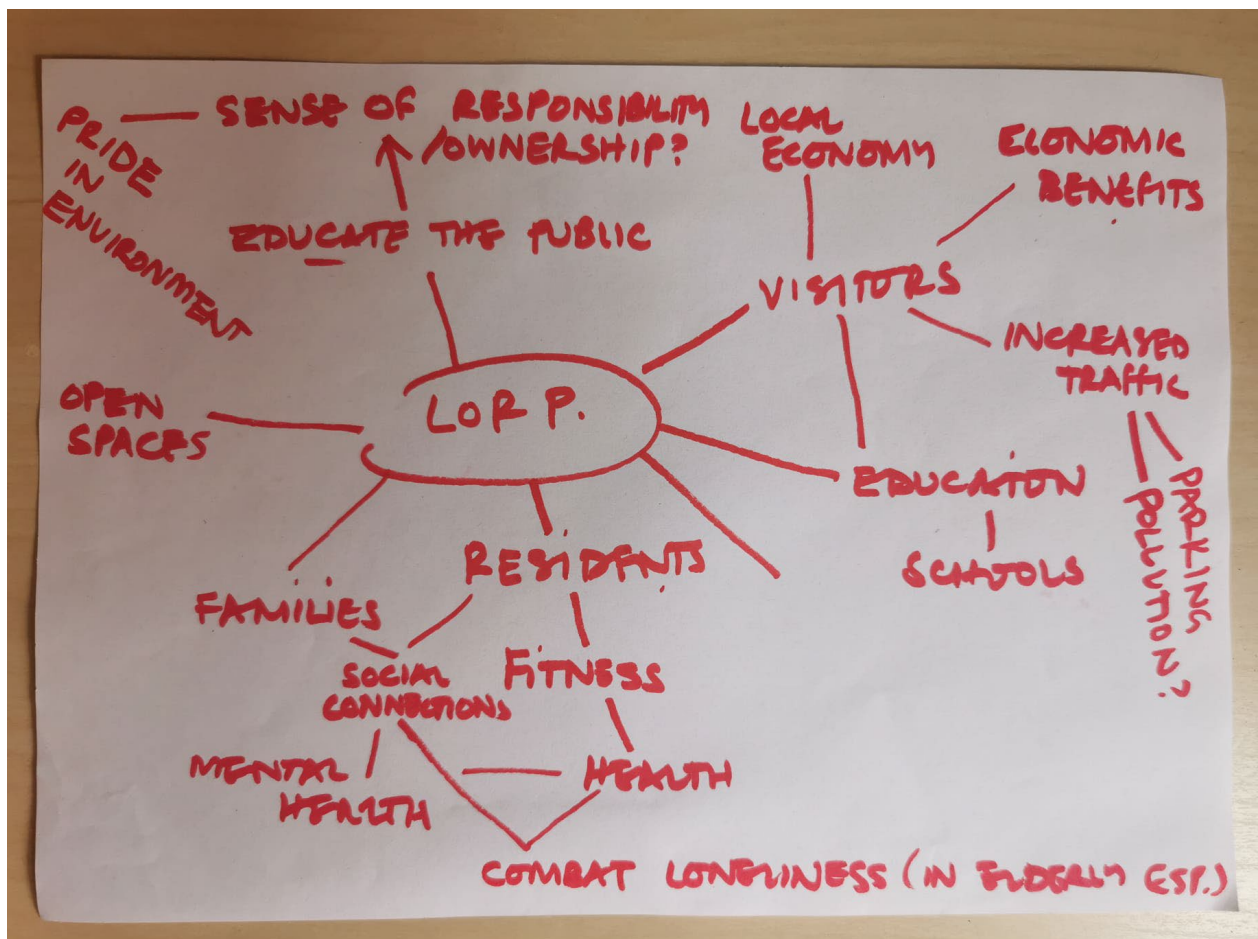
- Better enforcement of existing regulations e.g. farming rules for water
- Meeting duties under Salmon & Freshwater Act. E.g. Ensuring fish passage, removal of barriers
- Tenant rights to the terms of their agreement
- Tenancies
- Monitoring/enforcement of protections, e.g. motorbikes in wrong places, fishing where not allowed etc.
- New rights of way/changes to right of way
- Wayleaves, easements – over and under land
- Privacy
- Quiet enjoyment; control of public access rights
- Trespass issues

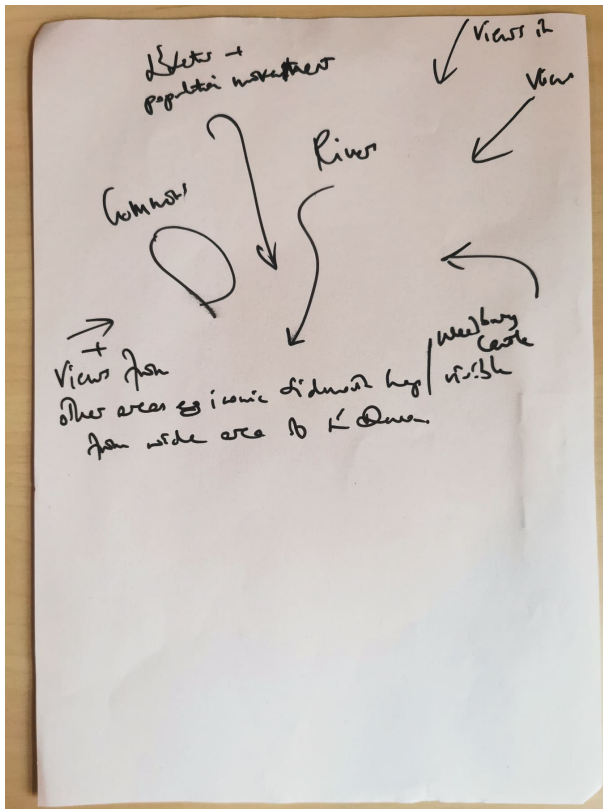
Environmental

- Impact of 'Naturalised' environment on existing/planned infrastructure e.g. more mobile river channels changing course and eroding banks
- Rewilding opportunities
- Planning building further up the valley overload on drainage and water downstream. What is helping this overload?
- Invasive species – Himalayan balsam
- New arrivals
- Encouragement of biodiversity
- Water level management in respect of existing infrastructure (utilities, roads etc.)
- 30x30
- Biodiversity loss
- "Victim of its own success" e.g. Becomes more tightly regulated due to improvements
- Impact of new activities – mountain biking, motorcycles, offroad, etc.
- Summer droughts + increase in fires
- Sea level rise
- Need to store more carbon (soils and trees)
- Need to decrease CO2 emissions
- Expected increase in rainfall
- Impact of dogs on farms/environment
- Catastrophic decline in insects and pollinators
- Warming river temps impacts adult fish but particularly survival of fish eggs. Like to see more shading
- Increased storm intensity leading to more silt run-off
- Pesticide/fertiliser mis/overuse
- Soil run off and leaching of chemicals into waterways
- Adapt!
- Pressure on international food system from climate change – implications for food security (could also go on political, social and economic sheets)
- Extremes of weather – dry and wet
- Grey squirrels

- In general children have far less time in nature than previous generations. We need to find ways to involve children, to help them build a connection with the natural world, if they are going to work hard to protect it in the future.
- Many of the issues effecting lower river e.g. water quality, arise upstream
- Effects of groundwater abstraction
- South West Water pressures on existing infrastructure and their mismanagement
- Don't forget historic landscape
- Pressure on remaining 'wild' areas – too many developments forcing local wildlife into a smaller and smaller area, which presumably already supports optimum populations. Those areas then have more pressure from visitors and locals and force the wildlife further.....
- Increase in wildlife management
- Sympathetic access for cyclists, accessible paths, horse riders etc.
- The huge damage caused by grey squirrels to young broad-leaved trees
- Ability of native and non-native tree spp. To cope with climate changes

2.6 How does the landscape of the lower Otter Valley connect with the wider area and environment?

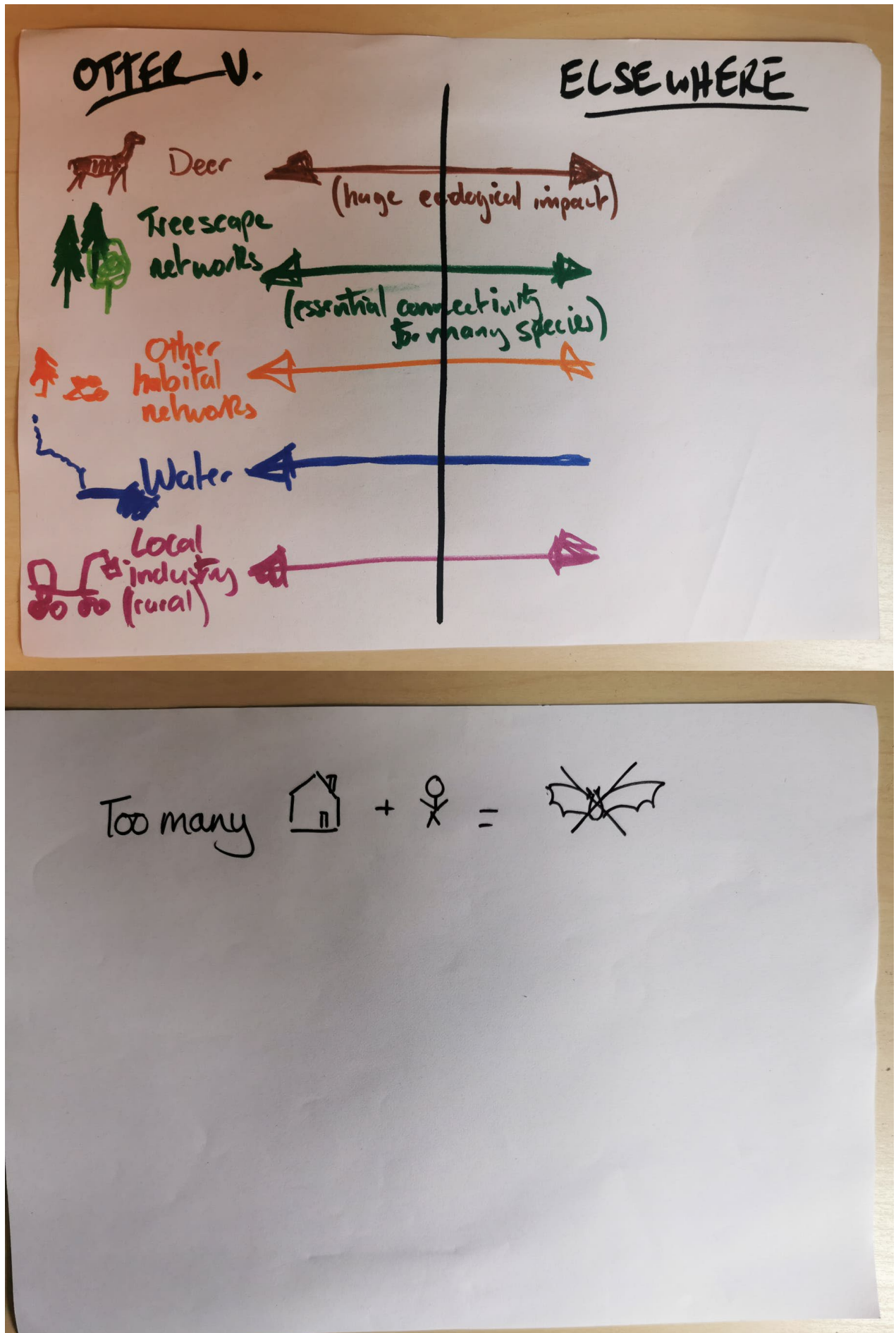







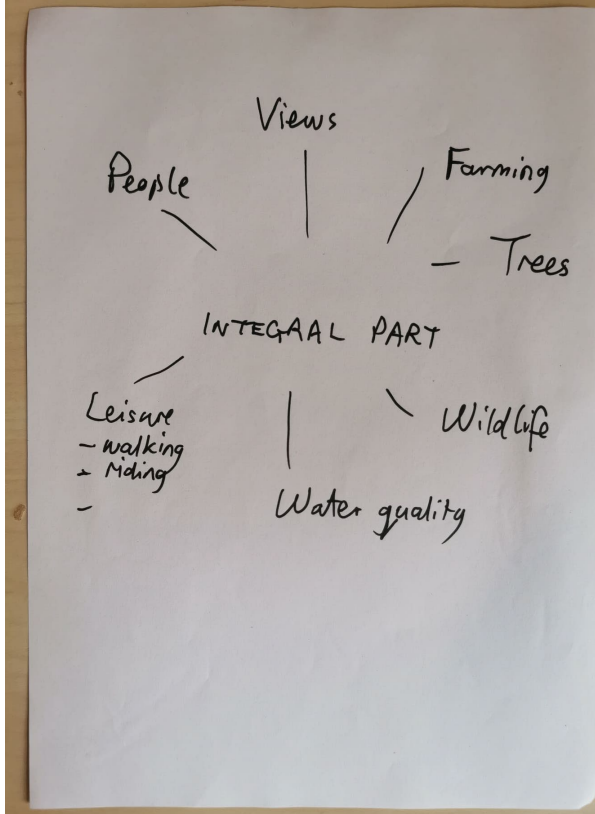
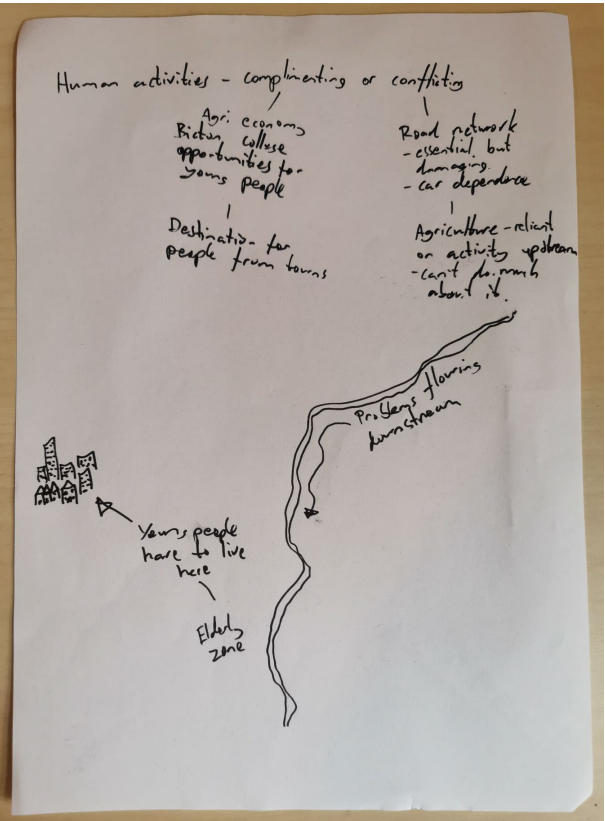
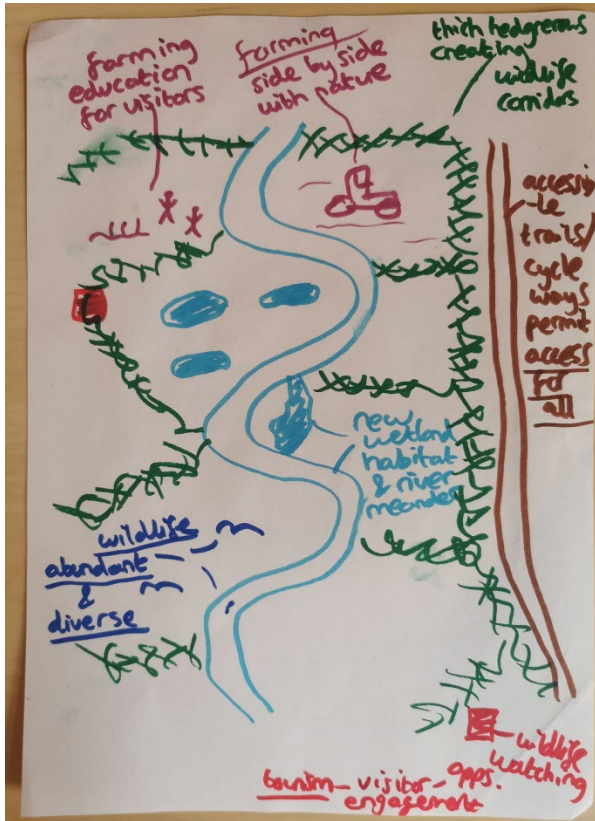
Mainly rural/agricultural area with small villages, 2x towns; Valley provides "recreational" space for ^{visitors} residents; food growing area; accommodation;



THE HEALTH OF THE LOWER OTTER IS DEPENDANT ON WHAT IS HAPPENING UPSTAIRS. SEWERAGE SPILLS HAVE BEEN OCCURRING & FISH STOCKS ARE LOWER DUE TO LAND EROSION. EXTENSIVE MAIZE GRASSING FOR BIO DIGESTERS IS CAUSING EROSION & LEAKING OF NUTRIENTS SHORT SIGHTED ENERGY SOLUTIONS!



Too many  +  = 



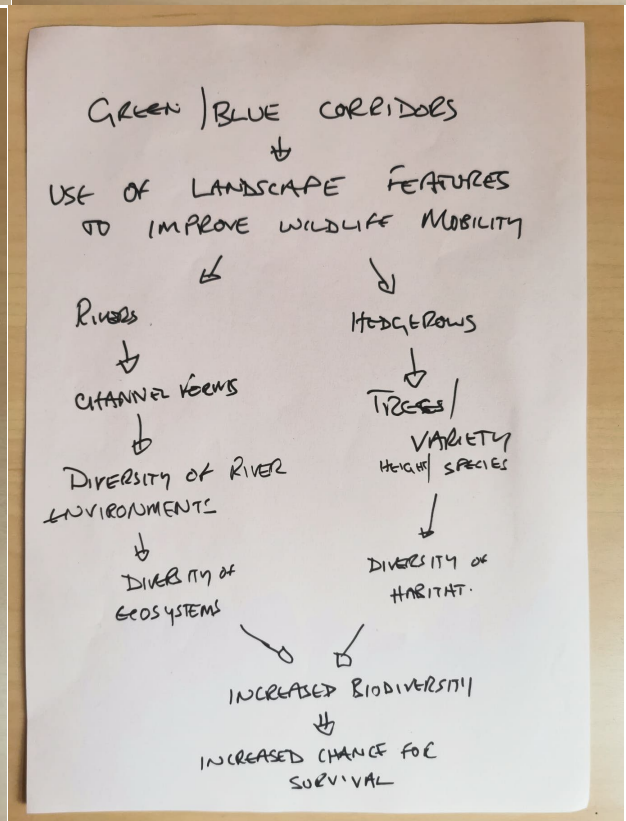
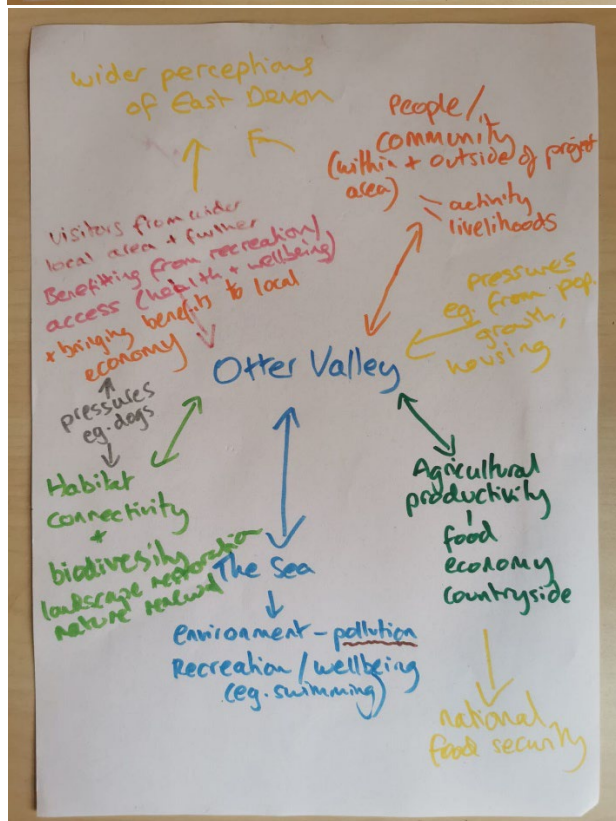
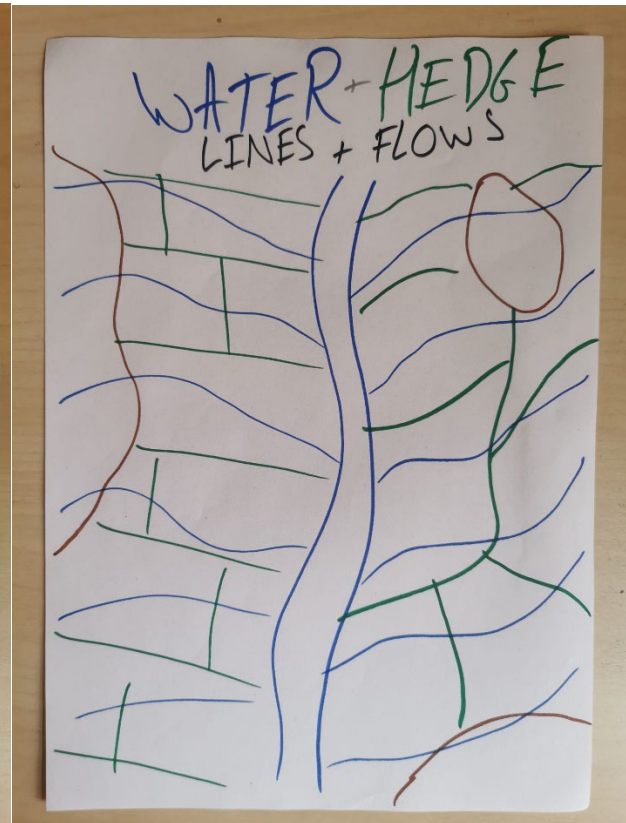
THE HEALTH OF THE LOWER OTTER VALLEY IS INFLUENCED IN PART BY THE HEALTH OF THE UPPER OTTER VALLEY, FROM SOURCE

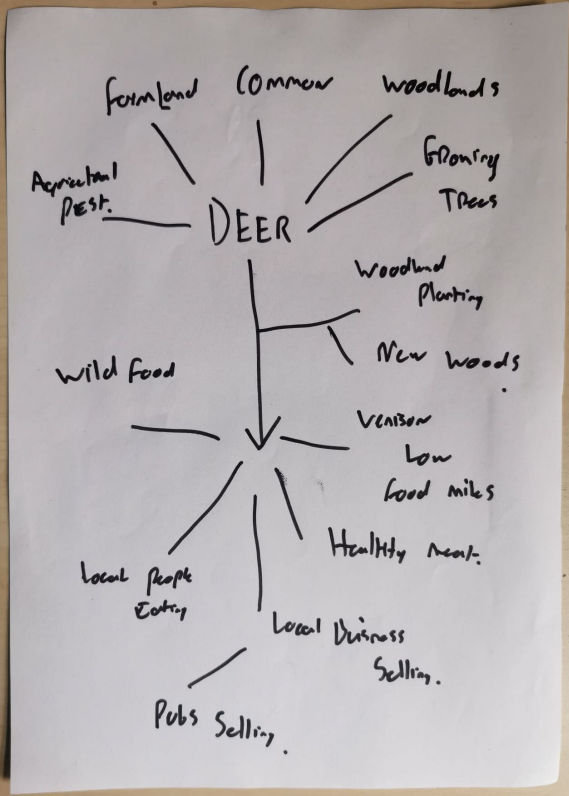
PROBLEMS FROM HUMANS / FARMING PRACTICES

→ Contamination of R. OTTER

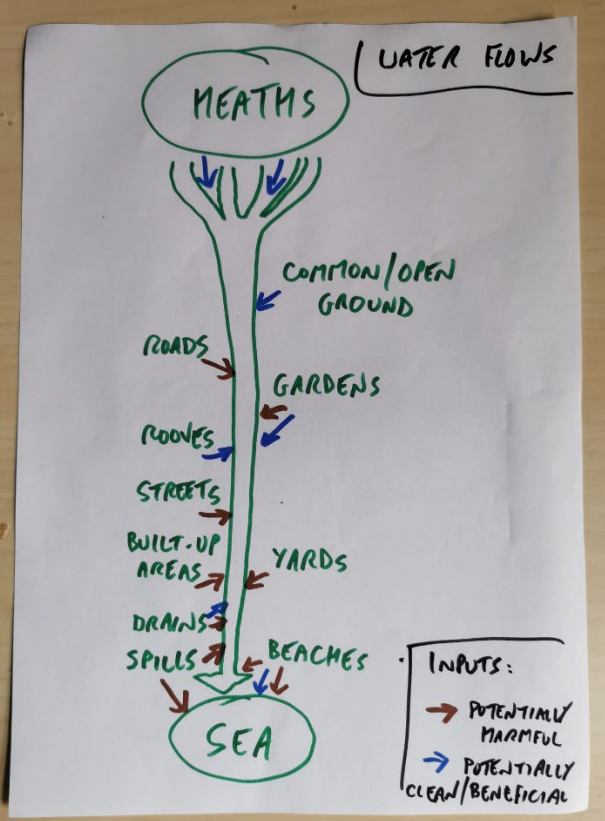
EFFECTS ON ECOSYSTEM.

Probably not well atm.
 Need for wild life corridors.
 Joined up access / green tourism information to facilitate & manage access & expectations.





MAGNET FOR INCREASING POPULATIONS AROUND EXETER & AIRPORT



2.7 What information would be useful to help in future discussions about landscape recovery in the lower Otter Valley? Are there any topics that you feel you do not know enough about?

- Law of unintended consequences – what are the knock-on effects of change
- Carbon capture – soils – woods – heaths – peat. What is the better habitat to aim for to deliver carbon to the best effect?
- BNG – perhaps this should be on the board to my right – BNG stands for Bio-Diversity Net Gain.
- So how does this stack up? – Is the green finance going to help deliver.
- Government strategy regarding farming and food production
- Who is in charge? If I want to know who to go to if an issue is raised: litter/paths/access
- How much 'buy in' is there from landowners across the whole area?
- Understanding of old drainage systems Ministry of food and fisheries (MAFF?) – Now DEFRA
- Can Lidar coverage be extended again? – remote sensing of topography (EA) – Environment Agency
- How to find information which probably exists somewhere? Avoid repeating/investigation of known info
- Impact we have when we use the heaths – walking, horse riding, nature, dog walking
- Greatest flood risk areas
- Pollution hotspots
- Full landscape recovery funding bid details i.e. outputs
- What is current state of organic farming in the protected area?
 - Is it widespread?
 - Scale: small, local; or large-scale?
 - What plans might affect this?
- Current baselines re: biodiversity, agricultural production etc.
- Long term policy re. development/housing. What time periods are generally provided by LA's (Local Authorities)
- Need to look more closely at what are the critical min areas required for sustainable habitats.
 - So that it's big enough to sustain the species
- Government attitude to development in rural areas/natural landscapes
- Inter-relationship between project and planning-authorities, especially in relation to timescales and how much this project can influence housing policy (for example) and whether changes will positively or negatively affect ability to deliver this project
- Lacking feedback on whether beavers are positively impacting flooding

3 Session B: Heading in the right direction

3.1 What is already going in the right direction towards landscape recovery in the lower Otter Valley? (and who is doing it?)

Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4 Group 5

LORP

- Clinton Devon is doing it: LORP – re: LORP: OVA
- Wildlife in LORP – birds particularly
- Clinton Devon Estates planting trees around LORP – 100s of years
- Lower Otter restoration project management – Clinton Devon Estates
- Improved access (LORP) and bring in visitors
- LORP more accessible – birds
- LORP – Lower Otter Restoration Project

EDDC

- Broadly re: recovery: EDDC

National Nature Reserves and other protected areas

- Extension of NNR
- New reserve interpretation, accessible, friendly
- National Nature Reserve
- What is the difference between NNR and National Landscape (AONB)
- SSSI – Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Special Protection Area
- SAC - Special Areas of Conservation
- Part of National Nature Reserves

Wetland plants

- Wetlands plants, infrastructure in right direction

National landscape

- National landscape

Pebblebed Heaths

- Pebblebed heaths
- Pebblebed Heaths work throughout the year i.e. heath week
- Pebblebed Heaths – Beaver management, flood mitigation

Cricket Club

- Budleigh Salterton Cricket Club
- Cricket field new life
- Cricket ground doesn't flood/disabled access

Forest restoration

- Forest Restoration/RSPB

Farming

- (Organic) Farming – bird species
- Regenerative farming – encourage wildlife
- Nature friendly farm payments
- Farming is generally going in the right direction for nature recovery
- General shift in farming. Too much going on to ascribe to one entity
- Estate farming heading in right direction
- Tenant farmers doing more – better knowledge and payments accessible
- Stantway farm – nature friendly farming, farmland birds, species recovery
- Farming engagement – one landowner – Clinton Devon Estates

Otterton Hill

- Planting game cover crops – shooting tenants – Otterton Hill – huge amount of species (birds, butterflies) – quiet, undisturbed not in hedges

Access and footpaths

- Limited footpaths, no open access – top ½ of river
 - Protect species
 - Vs. where paths are many
- Good footpath draw people away from above, draw people in (good paths)
- Good public access to natural areas
 - Has improved from before
- South West Coast Path – good access, well promoted
- River Otter footpath

Water

- Making space for water
- South West Water issue raised awareness interest in river and issues facing them
- Water control for flooding
- More estuarine/saltwater wildlife but less freshwater
- Flood management – moving forwards

- WRT done a lot to educate (upstream thinking)
- Ofwat framework for water companies
 - Five-year plan
 - CROC – Climate Resilience Otter Catchment
 - Impact on water quality/reduce pollution
 - Regular monitoring of river
- Upstream thinking – funded by South West Water run by wildlife trust

Landscape recovery this one and Luppitt

- Landscape recovery this one and Luppitt

Working with stakeholders and in partnership

- Good partnership working between councils, groups and landowners
- This conversation today will have a positive impact (but may not be as big as we want)
- Have an input into nature recovery plans rather than being told what is done

Volunteers and citizens

- Good volunteers/citizen involvement e.g. Balsam control, environmental improvement. But needs more and people to be aware of opportunities. Done a bit piece meal not coordinated
- Volunteers coordinated by Clinton Devon Estates (but not known by all) – focus on Himalayan Balsam
- Volunteers – balsam bashers, maintaining commons
- Citizen science

Balsam bashing

- Balsam bashing (took children to take part)

Educating people

- Educating people, more people aware/getting involved

Cow safari

- Cow safari

Bird life

- More bird life on the estuary
- Different types of birds – pros & cons

Managed heaths

- Heaths – generally well managed RSPB/PHCT
- Mutters Moor (part of Heaths)

Signage

- Some signage (Stantyway) re what's being done for wildlife and why – be good to see more
- Education/signage was heading in right direction (biodiversity/farming) – more could be done

Climate resilient Otter catchment

- Climate Resilient Otter Catchment (NFM)

Quarry restoration

- Quarry restoration – Aggregate industries, DCC, RSPB, Clinton Devon Estates

Increase species and benefits

- Beavers – present, spreading
- Fish population/fry in lower estuary
- Beavers – beneficial impacts, controversial impacts, ecosystem engineers

Clinton Devon Estates

- Clinton Devon Estates factor – they have environmental influence over tenants too
- Clinton Devon Estates

Various projects heading in the right direction

- Various projects heading in the right direction

Saving Devon's Treescapes

- Saving Devon's treescapes (not sure where it covers)

Island

- Island

Who's doing it?

- RSPB
- DWT
- PHCT
- Citizen Science
- WRT – upstream thinking
- Clinton Devon Estates – bringing tenants/stakeholders together environmentally minded?
- Back brook NFM project
- Ranger presence on Otter raises profile – helps people to know what to do

3.2 What more needs to be done?

Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4 Group 5

Regenerative food production

- Increase in regenerative, variety of crops, rotation

Education and engagement

- Education – about the project, why it's important, increase general awareness.
- Engaging with young people and children – getting them involved practically
- Education of all demographics – everybody needs a better understanding not just school kids
- Help people understand how rivers, floodplains work – how should it be naturally? Understand what we see is unnatural/managed – help understanding
- Better understanding of natural processes help dispel negativity around changing use/how river is
- Advice for local people who own land and want to make it more wildlife rich – land/gardens.
 - Where is this available?
 - Want to do right thing but don't know how

Better management and solutions for dog walking

- Re: dogs, waste
- Managing access
- Need appropriate space for dogs and well managed space for dogs
- Commercial dog walking
- Restrict the car parks to restrict dogs
- Big issue of dogs – out of control
 - Pain since COVID
 - Scary for horse riders
- People just want to enjoy it, lots of good dog walkers out there
- Dog training
- Dogs she walks sit on side of path with no leads – it can be done

Funding and government support

- Support from government - ££ after project for future?
- Financial sustainability
- Potential of the local plan – be paid for doing improvements if all negated by development
- Because of government cuts there is a lack of money going into environmental monitoring. Clinton Devon using out of date data as baseline
- Lack of funding in education/engagement
- Managing expectations – trade-offs, timing
- Funding important
- Legacy of project – critical thinking about business model in development phase

Plant more trees

- Plant more trees

Understand our starting point to better track/monitor progress

- Understand our starting point to better track/monitor progress

Farmers outside

- Farmers onsite

Farming solutions

- Secret – new SFI/grants (Sustainable Farming Initiative) – most profitable and de-risked option = organic arable – more profitable than conventional farming
 - Need to educate land manager/farmers/tenants
 - Need to know what's on offer
- De intensify nature of farming in river corridor and along coastal margins

If don't understand, won't value

- If don't understand, won't value

Better knowledge of migrating salmon

- Better knowledge of migrating salmon - low river is very important for salmon spawning and sea trout

Valuing local businesses and more jobs

- Need more jobs (WRT Farm Advisor)
- Get local businesses more valued e.g. companies paid for fish permits before big companies quite keen – corporate sponsorships

Opportunities for children and kids to enjoy the landscape

- Potential for bike paths – way to get young people out and about and connected with nature
- Good to give kids a mission – cycling safe routes
 - So kids can be independent
- Give kids freedom in the countryside
- Get children to choose UK wildlife – disconnect between nature and knowledge – parents aren't getting out
- (The lost words book so good)
- Reach out to local scout groups (e.g. like guides and bat walks)

Not respecting each other on the heath

- Not respecting each other on the heath

River management

- Looking upstream – issues on middle Otter
- Better connection of river with floodplain
- Only a few rivers where we could create water meadows and reconnection with floodplain
- Reconcile need for production (food) and access with allowing river to move
- Flexibility on PROW to allow river to move and paths to move with it
- Flooding
 - Mitigation development
 - Inadequate current drainage

Hard to get a group on the middle Otter

- Hard to get a group on the middle Otter

Control Himalayan Balsam and grey squirrels

- Control Himalayan Balsam and grey squirrels
- It's a menace

More clarity on project aims

- More clarity over the aims of the project and how the success of the project will be measured

Volunteers and citizen science

- More to be done to encourage volunteers and citizen science
- Challenge with mapping citizen science data by Devon Biological Records Centre

Community awareness and engagement

- Lack of community awareness on government strategy around environment and agriculture
- More engagement needed – needs to be visual

Need to be easy and effective

- Needs to be easy and effective

Water quality and pollution

- Water quality in the river
- Water quality – sewage, dogs, agriculture, runoff re: cropping vs pasture

- Sewage issue – especially salmon weir
- Better control of pollution and chemicals – farming, South West Water human, pets wider impacts
- Connectivity of pollution sources and impacts
- Perception of river quality declined – is that real? – Better than 30 years ago – but local people want it to be better still
- Diffuse pollution issues

Project integrated with everything

- The project has to be integrated with everything. River is at the heart of the area – catchment wide

More signage

- More signage/awareness of mutters moor
- More signage generally – daily/weekly bird sightings – car park

More regulation

- More regulation and better planned enforcement of regs

Species richness

- Improvement to species richness especially by East Devon coastal section

Old railway for access

- Potential to use old railway line for access as an embankment

Manage visitor pressure

- How we manage visitor pressure

Data access

- Better data access to it

Volunteer involvement

- Widen volunteer involvement historic rivers trust

Joining up organisations work

- Joining up different organisations work – RSPB, East Devon Council, County Council, DWT
- Landscape recovery brings opportunities for joined up thinking

Walk beyond Clinton Devon's landholding

- Walk beyond Clinton Devon's landholding

Considering impact on places outside recovery area 'anything goes'

- Considering impact on places outside recovery area 'anything goes'

Improve resilience of heaths/size

- Improve resilience of heaths/size to counter increased housing

Consideration of renewable energy

- Consideration of renewable energy

Law of principles

- Law of principles – bigger, better, more joined up

3.3 What ideas do you have, or examples of good practice can you share, that build on existing good work and address what else needs to be done?

Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4 Group 5

Ideas and examples of good practice

Investment from water authorities

- Need investment from water authorities – their infrastructure

Water and flood management

- Drainage and water management plan
- Downstream thinking – flood management

Training and education

- Educating population re: own waste management

- Local council training, engaging.....building local workforce to manage this. I.e. tree surgeons, ecologists – creates culture where this project is normal
- Bicton good place for this training

Farming practice

- Farming practice
- Cover crops – especially when look at outlying areas – connecting wildlife corridors
- Improved methods of farming – minimum tillage. Hedgerow verges around fields, cover crops
- Alternatives to maize/slurry
- Pebblebed beef – great but doesn't make money

Other food production

- Clinton venison, local, low carbon food miles, controlling deer numbers
- Good example of estate venison
 - Totally traceable, low food mileage, species population management
 - Environmental management and financial return
 - Reduces carbon, seasonal, local community

Farming support

- Farm advice – WRT, FWAG
- Elements of DEFRA's payments reward farmer's good practice
- Potential for farming in protected landscape – funding
- EA farm advisory visit – farmer to farmer, financial benefits

Catchment-scale interventions

- Catchment-scale interventions

Learning from peer projects

- Peer projects – learnings

Managing wildlife

- Need realistic management of species (i.e. grey squirrels)
- Seaton Wetlands – increase in wildlife

Active management

- Active management, active resource – designed and run sensibly. – This by Clinton Devon Estates? Wider partnership?

Integration virtuous Cycle

- Integration.... virtuous circle

Circular economy

- Circular economy

Working with communities and different groups

- Emphasis on community
- Increasing understanding of different perspectives and recognition of where different groups (e.g. farmers) have made changes
- One way of recognising good practice
- But must deliver what is promised (manage expectations)
- Community benefit – e.g. community owned renewables
- Partnerships – working together
- Example of this stakeholder workshop
- LORP – good example of engagement
- Community involvement (LORP)

Heath week

- Heath week – meet the marines was really successful marine don't take up any more
- Heath week should be seasonal
 - Codes (horse, dog, cycle)
 - Engaging education
 - Having people out and about
 - Knowing why it's important
- Heath week making sure we have the people who don't know – talk to parents, social media
- I don't know about Heath week

Is there something on the Otter this weekend?

- Is there something on the Otter this weekend?

Minimum management for maximum gain

- Some projects do well by setting up with minimal management in mind – minimum input for max gain if appropriate to the project. What can manage itself?

Meeting up in Colaton Raleigh Village Hall

- Meeting up in Colaton Raleigh Village Hall

Win/win

- Win/win

Have a good visual vision

- Have a good visual vision – what does it look like now vs future hope have some caution over future visual if not consulted on

Funding opportunities

- Government funded opportunities, bang the drum louder
- Better knowledge of and ease of getting funding
- Agri – env schemes – funding, good but it is a challenge for non-expert/small landowners to apply for

Engaging with schools and funding for education visits

- Engaging with schools
 - Going into schools
 - Getting children involved
 - Eco council/school council
- Funding for education visit
 - Tractor and trailer
 - Lovely ideas but hard to finance

Farm visits

- Model farm – farm visits
- Finding a farm to walk to.....

Forestry management

- Changes in forestry management e.g. leaving trunk stacks for wildlife
- Design of track network in woodland more water transfer efficient (natural flood management)
- Forestry commission – learning on people management/access on site (access for nature vs areas for people) – e.g. Haldon e.g. also on Heaths

Understanding water runoff from fields

- Realisation that water runoff from fields isn't good. People taking steps to address this

Projects with early thought into public access design

- Projects with early thought into public access design – more control

Advice from GPS

- Advice from GPS so we understand what is possible/relevant locally

Managing dog walking

- Access where dog walking/access is controlled e.g. paths on heaths
 - Nudging rather than excluding with fences
- Areas where dogs are on lead (NT Parks?) and clear areas where dogs can be off lead
- Dog walking fields – paid for?

Focused/bespoke/flexible agreements

- Focused/bespoke/flexible agreements – will good advice less bureaucratic and local control

Good data and monitoring work

- Good local data – Butterflies – need better access
- Monitoring work
 - fish, butterflies, water quality, LORP, Heaths
 - Not everyone knows what each other has done
 - More joined up working

Volunteers

- Volunteers

Extensive grazing – no fence technology

- Extensive grazing – no fence technology

- RSPB heading up, Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, Sidmouth Town Council, East Devon District Council
- Combining tech with conservation gains
- Walking with others

Other examples of good practice

- Knepp – but this is an 'island' – not as connected
- [Knepp – example](#)
- [Knepp – rewilding](#)
- River Yealm – river action group P.C. funded take a sample every 15 minutes outside existing monitoring
- Erme to Yealm farmers group - CPD for farmers - Raising species profile
- Sid valley ring – new trail, well signed
 - Exeter have one as well
- EDW – linear nice to walk a circle
 - Not high profile
- Exe estuary cycle path
- Seaton wetlands nice example of somewhere to take the children
- [Moor meadow – example of good practice – advice etc.](#)
- [Flood plains meadows partnership](#)
- [Multi agency response to N. pop flooding – good practice \(EA, DCC, EDDC, Clinton Devon Estates\)](#)
- [Leicestershire records centre – good example](#)
- Norfolk, Holcombe Estate. Building relationships 'drinking sherry'
- Designing nature friendly solar farms. RSPB
- Norfolk – wild Ken Hill – good example of diversification of farm business
- Devon Wildlife Trust – making space for water

3.4 Out of everything you have talked about so far today, which 2 things would you like to see prioritised to have the most impact for landscape recovery in the lower Otter Valley?

Each participant was given 2 post it notes to write their responses to this question. Post-its were collected up from every small group. Ross (Dialogue Matters) then sorted all the post its into groups/clusters of similar ideas as seen below.

A. Maintaining food productivity while enhancing nature

- Productive agriculture working with the environment and nature
- Increase in regenerative farming activity
- Cessation of dubious farming practices (e.g. AD Maize, base soil over winter)
- Less 'attractive' farming models
- Farming
- Best balance between farming/food production and nature improvement
- Development of sustainable agriculture that can adapt to change but still be productive, not just lobby farming

B. Greater wildlife diversity and connection/connectivity

- Space for wildlife in an ever-pressured area
- Improved habitat for fish/inverts e.g. woody debris, make river more wiggly
- Prioritise re-introduction of previously common species
- Wildlife diversity – including big to very small
- Nature recovery – increased species diversity and balance, increased habitat
- Protecting and prioritising biodiversity for future
- Greater wildlife diversity

- Wildlife habitat improvement
- Habitat connections
- Connections for nature. Working in partnership delivery more

C. Improved water quality

- Coordinated approach to improve river pollution issues
- Water quality improvement
- Water quality of river
- Clean water/waste management improvement
- Water quality improvement
- Water quality
- Water quality
- Water quality
- Water improved quality from less pollutants
- Water quality/pollution

D. Re-naturalising the river and flood management

- Allow the Otter to return to a more 'pre-industrial' state
- Less intensive management of floodplain
- Otter river flood management
- Consider joining old river channel to LORP to make a true estuary
- Improve "joined up" river management to facilitate flexibility with meandering rivers

E. Soil

- Soil

Participation/engagement/education

- Open engagement, increase communication
- Community involvement and participation. Not solely Clinton Devon and charities and organisations
- Widespread public engagement
- Communication
- Communication engagement and partnership working across all stakeholders/parts of community
- Buy-in from local communities
- Teach people why it's important to follow the Heath codes
- Getting local people (especially children) to love and value the local area/LORP
- Educate young people
- Continued multi agency/inter-disciplinary involvement
- Finding opportunities to increase ways that children can connect with nature and play a part in nature recovery
- Farms education
- Greater information sharing via education and information

F. Tree planting and cover

- Greater tree cover
- Tree planting - new forest design

G. Funding model and financial sustainability

- Shared benefit model (to green finance)
- Flexible locally controlled bespoke ELM schemes with high quality advice
- Defining baselines
- Funding
- A productive and diverse local economy

- Financial sustainability of those managing land and project which enables environment also to be sustained – virtuous circle
- Advice and funding for non-farming landowners/managers. Is Otter floodplain and coast corridor

H. Clear plan for progress

- A coherent plan for progress 'what's next'
- Clear plans
- Monitoring the whole landscape and policing

I. Managing access

- Management of access – area where easily accessible for all (including distribution so can engage/appreciate nature and open for nature – quiet the disturbance
- Releasing of land underutilised for nature and people

3.5 What principles should guide landscape recovery work in the lower Otter Valley over the coming 20+ years?

Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4 Group 5

Economic and financial sustainability

- Economic sustainability
- Long term financial sustainability for farming
 - FBT only 3 years so no point in investing in the long term – long term tenancies are better
 - Soil improvement might take 5-10 years

Environmental sustainability

- Environmental sustainability
- Sustainability: topsoil erosion for example
- Improving environment
 - Targeting considered, well defined outcomes
- Sustainable project environment in terms of revenue

Space for wildlife

- Space for wildlife
- Wildlife garden initiative (DWT) gave out a plaque
- Wildlife first

Maintaining a productive landscape – working with nature

- Maintaining a productive landscape – working with nature

Approach with landowners and farmers

- Principle of maintaining similar (farming landscape)
- Farming best practice
- Commitment of all landowners to agree to manage in same manner
- Key players on board (i.e. tenant farmers/farming in general)

Everything is put on farmers

- Everything is put on farmers!!
 - Everyone is responsible – plastic grass, washing things down drains etc.
 - Even if you rewild 10m2

Neonicotinoids

- Neonicotinoids – flea treatments found in blue tits nests. Shows up in the water and no advice provided by vets.

Climate change considerations

- Flexible in response to climate change
- Climate resilience
- Future proofing – for climate changes
- UK Net Zero target and Clinton Devon's role in contributing

Excellent examples of best practice

- Provide excellent example of best practice such that we demonstrate economic and environmental progress and sustainability

Communication approach

- Communication: between organisations and public
- Educating, make it popular a good thing – something to be proud of
- Awareness of change
- Manage expectations
- Clear explanations, sharing knowledge – say why
- Transparency
- Something in this for everyone – make that clear
- Create and publicise all milestones (public information made available) – even less visible ones

Dog control and access

- Responsible access: engagement so people understand why dog control is important, access here vs. not elsewhere (example – come to LORP to see/learn)
 - Schools involved
- Understanding why they might need to pick up dog poo on heathland – changes habitat

Engage with schools

- Engage with schools/parents
 - Website
 - Live cams

Working with communities

- Sense of community ownership – sets best example, draws people in, sense of belonging.
 - Avoid sense of imposing
- Give opportunities/link into what already interests people and active community groups
- Work with (Needs much better communication/promotion)/driven by and engage with community – step change in how we involve local community
- Accepting change – but can still be productive e.g. heaths grazing

Infrastructure in place to see us through 20 years

- Infrastructure in place to see us through 20 years
 - Example of trees
 - Re: villages – lack of car parks vs walkers/tourists not sufficient now – transport?

Destination management

- Destination management
 - Permits? Example: elsewhere in national parks
 - Parking enforcement?

Flexible and reflective

- Flexible and reflective – take stock, make change, long term objectives, adaptable

Long term approach

- Should be long term not reactionary
- Short term government – thinking within shorter term. Need political changes and a 20-year plan.
- Long-term thinking

Resilience to political change

- Protection from and resilience to political change
- Resilience to these things can help with political change – nature, economy, social, cultural - change

Holistic

- Considered, holistic, joined up in the round going forward
- Holistic management

Maintain initiatives

- Maintain initiatives – very dynamic river

Inclusive involvement of the people

- Put it back to the people
- Small things make big impacts. People don't think they can make a difference
- Inclusive
 - methods and information (how)

- Use professionals to support process (stakeholder engagement)
- Continued process**
- Continue process throughout delivery and implementation
 - Start early
 - Build on previous success
 - Take them on journey
- Continuity: sense of timescale, but flexible as circumstances change
- Win/win with minimum intervention**
- Win win/minimum intervention (nothing over engineered)
- Consistency of vision but allow for flexibility**
- Consistency of vision – don't get sidetracked but other pressures
- But some flexibility. Allowing changes/adaptations if needed
- Education and accessible information**
- Transparency/ability to get information – accessibility
- Education/information availability – Dan demographic
- Balance of public access**
- Balance public access between letting public in and not undermining nature recovery
 - For the good of public and nature
- Lawton principles**
- The Lawton principles – bigger, better, more joined up
- Otter or future nature targets/KPI
- Lawton Principles – better, bigger, more joined up
- Roadmap for landowners – for them to understand future/shared more broadly
- Lobby for change**
- How do we do it all – lobby for change at government level
- Put Budleigh into project area**
- Put Budleigh into project area – perception of inclusion
- Be ambitious**
- Be ambitious
- 30 x 30**
- 30 x 30
- Glover review**
- Glover review

4 Session C: Heading in the right direction – topic groups

4.1 Prioritise which topics to work on in Session C

| | Idea | No. of dots |
|---|--|-------------|
| B | Greater wildlife diversity and connection/connectivity | 15 |
| A | Maintaining food productivity while enhancing nature | 12 |
| F | Participation/engagement/education | 10 |
| J | Managing access | 9 |
| C | Improved water quality | 8 |
| G | Tree planting and cover | 7 |
| D | Re-naturalising the river and flood management | 6 |
| E | Soil | 6 |
| H | Funding models and financial sustainability | 3 |
| I | Clear plan for progress | 2 |

4.2 Maintaining food productivity while enhancing nature

4.2.1 In 20 years' time, what would success for this topic at the lower Otter Valley look like?

More farming businesses, better approach, variation and flexibility

- More farmers with better approach, more flexible
- Greater variety of crops, responsive to changes
- Increased number of farming businesses doing well across the area

Regard for longevity of activity

- Regard for longevity of activity (i.e. tenancies reflecting this.)

All organisms

- Not just birds: worms, fungi, bacteria.....everything

Feeding wildlife not just "food"

- Feeding wildlife, not just "food"

Cleaner water

- Cleaner water

Establish local markets

- More of a local market, change in marketing for better product
- Productivity goes into local markets by establishing markets which sees benefits cycle

People not shopping only for convenience

- People not shopping only for convenience

Better nutrient management

- Better nutrient management across project area

4.2.2 What is already working well to get us there?

Nature Parks

- Nature Park (i.e. Pebblebed Heaths)

Farming subsidies

- New farming subsidies

Improving verges and hedges

- Improving verges and hedges

Better understanding and more awareness

- More awareness in farmers: business, soil, nutrients, carbon – supported by government policy
- Better understanding, tools for assessment, cost of assessment coming down, better technology

Involving stakeholders

- Us sitting here in Colaton Raleigh Village Hall right now.... – conversation is beginning/happening
- Large landowner able to bring together stakeholders – a "directing mind"

Changing regulation

- Broadly – regulation is changing... constructive + advice + guidance approach

Current examples of successful and sustainable farming practice

- Food production already in practice in the lower Otter Valley – seems to already be "successful" examples of "sustainable" practice

We're already doing this work.... far ahead of other regions

- We're already doing this work.... far ahead of other regions

Solar @ scale

- Solar @ scale

GMO products

- GMO products

4.2.3 What more needs to be done?

More knowledge development

- More knowledge development – business management, nutrient management

More help and support

- More help generally
- Government policy – better appreciation with rural affairs. – Concern regarding: housing and infrastructure, food stability considered?
- Investment: slurry storage, **field boundary**, farm buildings, equipment, cattle investment
- Subsidised practice

Change of practices: longer view

- Change of practices: longer view
- Different types of crops: anticipating, future proofing for the area

Clear strategic vision

- Clear strategic vision to get everyone broadly on the same page

Soil management

- Soil management

Tweaks of system: educating landowners

- Tweaks of system: educating landowners

Effort into developing market/route to market

- Effort into developing market/route to market – answer to “everything so cheap in supermarket”

Public procurement – local relationships

- Public procurement – local relationships

4.2.4 Thinking specifically about this topic... What ideas do you have, or examples do you know of, which could provide multiple benefits in and around the Lower Ottery Valley?

Local shops

- Local shops: South Farm, Dalditch

Education

- Education – big importance as it gives case for cost, pays for all we're discussing

Farmer groups

- Farmer led groups, walks, bench marking (anonymised), talks.
- East Devon Farmers Group already set up within East Devon National Landscape
- Farmer – led Community Interest Companies (CIC) – shared economic benefits

Support for new entrants

- Support for new entrants, restructuring as necessary – who is delivering vs what is delivered

Branding exercise builds market

- Branding exercise builds market, identity, education ex: AONB, “Wild East” programme

Allotments to grow understanding

- Allotments to grow understanding

Everyone doing their bit to understand value

- Everyone doing their bit to understand value

Access: positive for building awareness but difficult to provide always

- Access: positive for building awareness but difficult to provide always

4.2.5 Additional comments

- Connection of the old river channel to the top of the new estuary to create a true estuary
- Crops – crop types in sympathy with wildlife and sustainability, and not just for short term profit

4.3 Greater wildlife diversity and connectivity

4.3.1 In 20 years' time, what would success for this topic at the Lower Ottery Valley look like?

Connectivity and distribution of wildlife

- Connectivity i.e. wildlife corridors
- Distribution – if we get connectivity right, some or all species can move out across the area. Currently things are isolated if we make improvements to connectivity easier for species to move around.

Wood pasture connectivity for multiple benefits

- Wood pasture connectivity – everyone gets what they want. Trees for timber, grazing, large herbivore (good payment incentives). Less of a 'hard sell' than heathland multiple benefits, win-win.
- East and West of the valley connected by woodland

Measurable increase of recorded species in the area

- Measurable increase of recorded species in the area. Types of habitats/habitat specific. Number of individuals/number of species
- 20 years a long time. We might expect new iconic species to come in i.e. Ospreys

Measurable decrease in Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

- Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) measurable decrease

20 years goes in the blink of an eye

- 20 years goes in the blink of an eye. The start of something

If we were to plant between heath and river in 20 years only just getting sustainable for dormice

- If we were to plant between heath and river in 20 years only just getting sustainable for dormice

Climate Change. Dartford Warblers may go

- Climate change. Dartford Warblers may go

Public recognition and acceptance

- Public recognition of this stuff more than us seeing its benefit
- Acceptance from the public

4.3.2 What is already working well to get us there?

LORP – Existing monitoring, attracting different species

- Existing monitoring and citizen science – LORP and common – secure baseline
- LORP – attracting different species

Benefit of beavers

- Beavers – benefits – water flow management and wildlife

Changing farming practice

- Changing farming practice – Otterton Hill – differentiation in the landscape

Management of heaths

- Management of heaths is going well

Spatial designation (NNR)

- Spatial designation (NNR)
 - Partnership
 - Receptiveness
 - Neighbours and landowners

Grazing

- Conservation grazing – people get that now – has changes – animals on Hawkerland change of mindset
- Grazing on commons

Controlling invasive species

- Controlling invasive species e.g. Himalayan Balsam in Colaton Brook – tributaries of the Otter

Public appreciation of the landscape and site

- Public appreciation of the landscape and site

Car park strategy

- Car park strategy

Mitigation strategy

- Mitigation strategy

Interpretation on site has/might contribute

- Interpretation on site has/might contribute

4.3.3 What more needs to be done?

More variable agriculture

- More variable agriculture
 - If we are to get better biodiversity, change the way land is managed. Dairy cattle – if we want flood plain diversity look at changing animals grazing

More comms between EDDC and landowners and contractors

- More comms between EDDC and landowners and contractors. Specifically hedge management practices

Mixed farming models

- All the Northmostown Farm were mixed farming models. Naturally going to deliver more. Can it still be financially viable? Is Stantyway a good model?

A local land use strategy

- A local land use strategy – identifies land for nature, woodlands from a baseline of land for food production opportunity analysis

Bat and hedge line protection

- Bats – hedge lines – some have protection ID where they are so those bits of land can be protected

Orchards

- Orchards

Riparian corridor

- Riparian Corridor – better, less managed, demand for access compromises this
 - Expansion made more natural

Tree planting and nature regen big part of connectivity

- Tree planting and natural regen big part of connectivity

Heat map of ecological richness and research from other groups

- Heat map of ecological richness
- Research from other groups – tree plans, information gathering already in existence, use what is already there.

4.3.4 Thinking specifically about this topic... What ideas do you have, or examples do you know of, which could provide multiple benefits in and around the Lower Otter Valley?

Multiple benefits in lower Otter Valley

- Multiple benefits in lower Otter Valley

Woodland corridors and pasture

- Planting of mixed productive woodland managed under a 'close to nature' system – timber and wildlife
- Riparian/woodland corridors connecting heaths across the valley
- Wood pasture approach – multiple benefits

Agroforestry

- Agroforestry – mixing trees and crops – connectivity

Varying scales of corridors

- Smaller scale – corridors – bigger corridors – smaller landowners – contribution e.g. gardens

Techniques of natural flood management in terms of NFM

- Techniques of natural flood management in terms of NFM. – even if small scale – multiple other benefits (biodiversity) – wetter areas

Heaths – herd of grazing animals

- Heaths – herd of grazing animals

- Varied types – across whole areas
- Ambition

Consultation originally had vision for whole heaths

- Consultation originally had vision for whole heaths

Seaton – engaged with local people

- Seaton – engaged with local people

4.3.5 Additional comments

- Monitoring – need greater public access to data being gathered
- Don't overlook less glamorous things such as improved hedgerow management etc. Plenty of scope for wildlife everywhere not just in suggested areas
- Join existing high value areas, think bang for buck
- Connectivity across heathland areas by use of cattle grids on road e.g. Hawkerland

4.4 Improved Water Quality

4.4.1 In 20 years' time, what would success for this topic at the lower Otter Valley look like?

Good ecological quality

- Good ecological quality (if still using Water Framework Directive (WFD))
- Good ecological quality or water quality

Define water quality

- Define water quality

Less runoff

- Problem is sewage. Runoff – what are the sources?
- Reduce runoff would help sewage system to cope
- New developments have soakaways/separate runoff from sewage
- Less land runoff from improved agricultural practice
- Increased tree canopy cover/woodland to reduce runoff

Improvements to the sewage system

- Can we reduce main volume of water through sewage system?
- Combined sewage overflow overflowing with less than 7ml of rain. Needs managing/regulating
- Pipe by river Otter has been realigned to be less leaky
- Improvement/modernisation of sewage system

Pollutants

- What are the top 3 pollutants? – What are we wanting to improve?
 1. Nitrogen/phosphate
 2. Land run off
 3. Sewage treatment
 4. Sewage overflow

How far do we apply the principle?

- How far do we apply the principle? People & pets, just agriculture, hormones & pharmaceuticals

Development at Honiton

- Development at Honiton but less of issue in project area

Actions upstream have impact downstream

- Any action upstream would have impact downstream

Low flow summers the pollution concentration is still low

- Low flow summers the pollution concentration is still low

Lots of fish coming to spawn

- Lots of fish coming to spawn

Swimming in river or sea without health concerns

- Swimming in river or sea without health concerns

Improved invertebrate population

- Improved invertebrate population

People making educated decisions where the economy is supportive of environmental practice

- People making educated decisions where the economy is supportive of environmental practice

4.4.2 What is already working well to get us there?

Some farms performing well to limit runoff. Can they train/support others?

- Some farms performing well to limit runoff. Can they train/support others?

Tailoring education/engagement of groups to the existing knowledge level of group

- Tailoring education/engagement of groups to the existing knowledge level of group

Benefits for good farming environment practice

- Farms with good environmental practice are still making money
- Sustainable Farming Initiative (SFI) elements are rewarding good practice

Political will

- Political will

Recognition of problem with sewage

- Recognition of problem with sewage/Combined Sewage Overflows (CSO)

OFWAT/water company 5-year plans

- OFWAT/water company 5-year plans

Growing public awareness/pressure

- Growing public awareness/pressure

More data available

- More data available

WFD was set up by river catchment

- WFD was set up by river catchment

4.4.3 What more needs to be done?

Risk of loss of financial incentive and changing support

- If financial incentive was removed would farmers still do best for nature or would land management practice revert?
- Risk: government changing support for landscape recovery
- Support declines/plan change for OFWAT/water company 5-year plans

Advice for farmers and improve understanding

- Farm extension education – someone to advice farmers on best practice
- Improving understanding/interpretation of regenerative agriculture amongst farmers
- Change farmers perception from gross yield to quality of yield

Educate the possible

- Educate the population

Understand what is coming from private septic tanks/not main drainage

- Understand what is coming from private septic tanks/not main drainage. Not just blame South West Water

Connect non-main drainage to main sewer

- Connect non-main drainage to main sewer

More EA enforcement of regulation

- More EA enforcement of regulation

Recognition of problem but no real understanding/expertise on sewage engineering

- Recognition of problem but no real understanding/expertise on sewage engineering

Concern: can't do much other than reduce water going into systems as part of project

- Concern: can't do much other than reduce water going into systems as part of project

Tertiary sewage treatment works

- Tertiary sewage treatment works

Sediment and nutrient management

- Sediment and nutrient management

4.4.4 Thinking specifically about this topic... What ideas do you have, or examples do you know of, which could provide multiple benefits in and around the Lower Ottery Valley?

Beavers – take out sediments and phosphates

- Beavers – take out sediments and phosphates

Collective and linked up farm plans

- Collective farm plans - from 2018 project but unfinished
- Deliver a catchment plan through linked farm management plans

More good farm advisors

- More good farm advisors

Soil provides multiple benefits

- Soil provides multiple benefits

Regenerative farming

- Regenerative farming in valley – 2/15

Approach farmers with changes that make economic sense first but environmental improvement as benefit

- Approach farmers with changes that make economic sense first but environmental improvement as benefit

Monitoring – need good knowledge of decision making

- Monitoring – need good knowledge of decision making

Kit Brook on Axe used to be good. Decline in recent years

- Kit Brook on Axe used to be good. Decline in recent years

Apricot foundation

- Apricot foundation

Natural flood management – Furze Brook

- Natural flood management – Furze Brook

Need a national farm accreditation scheme e.g. LEAF farms

- Need a national farm accreditation scheme e.g. LEAF farms

Perfect farm

- Perfect farm – agricultural produce, soil health improving, wildlife thriving, reduce flood risk

Public food choice and willing to pay more

- Members of public to pay more for food – in proportion to their wage – a perspective change
- How food choice of public impacts farming practice and how land is used – where the money goes
- Farmer cluster that has a kit and makes links into supermarkets
 - Consumer choice to pay more
 - Accredited good farm practice
 - Change consumer perspective

4.4.5 Additional comments

- Invest – slurry storage, spreading equipment, nutrient management planning

4.5 Participation/Engagement/Education

4.5.1 In 20 years' time, what would success for this topic at the Lower Ottery Valley look like?

Everyone's heard of Heath Week

- Everyone's heard of Heath Week

Positive feedback and no complaints

- No complaints in Budleigh Town News
- Positive feedback about project/area

Active involvement – volunteer programme and schools

- Active volunteer programme – more than now
- Active involvement for schools over 20 years – generations

Children out in environment more

- Children out in environment more – network of path/cycleways for them to use

Appreciation of environment and wildlife, and sense of ownership

- Sense of ownership/care for natural environment
- People understand and appreciate improved nature within the area
- Sense of pride/local ownership of species present/increased

Appreciation and understanding of different interests

- Improved understanding and appreciation of farming
- Local farmers have greater understanding and appreciation of local community
- Appreciation/knowledge of historic environment and connection/link with nature and landscape
- Heath users do so in harmony/responsible use and consideration of other user groups
- Mitigation of increased visitor/user pressure

Knowledge of species present

- Knowledge of species present

Better access

- Remote access opportunities where physical access is more difficult
- Better accessibility generally

4.5.2 What is already working well to get us there?

Events

- Heath week – good
- Events – wetland weekend (walks etc.)

Stakeholder groups sharing knowledge

- This workshop
- LORP – restoration – attracts new wildlife which attracts new groups of people
- Stakeholder groups sharing knowledge

Codes for using the commons

- Codes for using the commons – guidelines e.g. horse-riding code, dog walking code

Volunteers and volunteer coordinators

- Volunteers and volunteer coordinators

Lower Otter - interpretation/engagement/information/infographics

- Lower Otter – interpretation/engagement/information/infographics

Good social media dialogue/engagement re ‘new’ nature

- Good social media dialogue/engagement re ‘new’ nature

Wildlife and landscape photography

- Wildlife and landscape photography

Good use of existing path – busy/new people

- Good use of existing path – busy/new people

4.5.3 What more needs to be done?

Engaging and connecting with groups

- More opportunities to engage other groups – arts, young people, schools etc.
- More outreach activities – scouts/guides etc.
- Help to make wider connections e.g. this group of people – share contacts

Better information about existing groups

- Better information about existing groups

Multi-agency approach

- Multi-agency approach (more), resource sharing, linking groups/organisations up

Knowledge and education on opportunities and impacts

- Greater engagement – making people aware of opportunities and lack of knowledge
- Not just telling people what to do/how to behave, but tell them why – e.g. picking up dog poo
 - knowledge and education on impact
- Understanding impact of project/nature on local economy

Linking visitors to local areas and making them aware of what's on

- Linking visitors to lower Otter and town – bringing visitors into town – use it as an asset
- Making visitors aware of what's in town – encourage them to visit
- Signage in LORP/beach car park about what's on in town to draw them in and vice versa

Holding event re nature in town

- Holding event re nature in town

Trail which connects the local area

- Trail which includes town – links to wide area – links with heritage as well

Better links between groups

- More links between estate/PHCT and schools – education Otter
- Better links with riding school and local community visitors both ways/education
- PHCT presence in town – display/office/engagement – use of empty shop/pop up opportunity

4.5.4 Thinking specifically about this topic... What ideas do you have, or examples do you know of, which could provide multiple benefits in and around the Lower Ottery Valley?

Sidmouth valley ring

- Sidmouth valley ring – good example of well sign posted and promoted route linking in and around Sidmouth – using existing footpaths
 - Signed 13 mile using existing footpaths – created by Sidmouth Town Council and the Sid Vale Association

Trails and cycle paths

- Nature trail for children in East Budleigh
- Exe Estuary Cycle Path – example of good multi use trail
- Link up existing national cycle network trails
- Bee corridors/trails linked

Farm to fork

- Farm to fork (Tesco?) – school visits to local farms to show young people how food is produced/where it comes from

Knapp re-wilding model

- Knapp re-wilding model – live camera viewing opportunities, remote access – online etc.

'Young Champion' scheme for project area

- 'Young Champion' scheme for project area – giving young people a voice and ownership of the area, able to input to ideas - Ambassador

Sharing knowledge and events

- Linking up with/knowledge sharing with Otter LR projects in area – shared/coordinated programme of events across projects

Events and activities

- Newsletter/Holiday advertisement – activities you can do during holidays – in nature/free!
- More events/activities

Knapp in Sidmouth

- Knapp in Sidmouth – area for children to experience nature – dog free area for play

Community orchard

- Community orchard in Woodbury

Opportunities to experience historic environment

- Opportunities to experience historic environment – link in into trails/Otter activities

4.5.5 Additional comments

- Discrimination of knowledge and opportunity

- Education transcends age
- Different methods of info/education for different demographics

4.6 Managing Access

4.6.1 In 20 years' time, what would success for this topic at the Lower Ottery Valley look like?

Space for nature and space for people

- Space for nature and space for people
- Having access everywhere wouldn't work for either nature or people

Access in the right places

- Not saying access everywhere but where it's most suitable – leaving areas for nature
- Good access in the right places – like LORP

Flexibility to move when the river moves

- Flexibility to move when the river moves – currently public right of way is fixed

Honey pot visitor sites/plus quieter access

- Honey pot visitor sites/plus quieter access

Cycleway

- Cycleway

Disabled access doesn't need to be concrete space

- Disabled access doesn't need to be concrete space, path that doesn't disappear all the time

Educated public on importance/impacts

- Educated public on importance/impacts

4.6.2 What is already working well to get us there?

Improved signage

- LORP signage is much improved messaging/branch and commons
- National landscape good with interpretation board e.g. Berry Head
- Network is really well marked – positive for access but also for nature/farming – e.g. impact of dogs

Landscape in certain places lends itself to viewing/seeing nature

- Landscape in certain places lends itself to viewing/seeing nature

Already linked access in places – encouraging return of wildlife

- Already linked access in places – encouraging return of wildlife

Have a good network, plenty of space

- Have a good network, plenty of space

There is plenty of access

- There is already plenty of access
 - 9 miles of permissive paths
 - Links – lines – helping people get where they want to go
 - Heaths

Good examples of farmers managing walkers well

- Good examples of farmers managing walkers well (welcoming but giving instructions)
 - Stantyway Farm

Otterton to Newton Popleford

- Otterton to Newton Popleford
 - safety a concern
 - Difficult for access
 - But is allowing nature to breathe there

Good county council targeted investment in pathways

- Good county council targeted investment in pathways

4.6.3 What more needs to be done?

More education on country code and where you can and can't go

- People need education to understand more about countryside code, where food comes from farming. People think countryside is the same as when they were young
- Understanding why can't you walk there
- More positive to say where you can go
- Managing expectations of access – what's accessible and to whom

Solution to erosion of riverside footpaths

- Solution to erosion of riverside footpaths. Is there one?

Treat a farm the same as other food production businesses

- A farm is the same as a biscuit factory – should be treated similarly – where food is being produced

Natural barriers to dissuade access

- Natural barriers to dissuade access. Cutting new paths/brambles etc.

Balancing access

- Taking care to managing sites which already have high traffic – balancing
- Other area needs to provide access to balancing out visitors

Flexible approach. Moving as nature moves

- Flexible approach. Moving as nature moves

Targeted investment

- Targeted investment

Encouraging access

- Encouraging access from all groups including LGBTQ+ and minority ethnic groups
 - Consider if the language is right? Is the language inclusive?

Encouraging older people to not assume younger people are up to no good

- Encouraging older people not to assume younger people aren't up to no good!

4.6.4 Thinking specifically about this topic... What ideas do you have, or examples do you know of, which could provide multiple benefits in and around the Lower Ottery Valley?

- LORP
- Woodberry common – long sweeping paths tracks for the more adventurous (a lot of them are line breaks)
- Woodlands in the valley have permissive access/wildlife benefits too

4.6.5 Additional comments

- None

5 Session D: Working well together with you and your interests/groups

5.1 How can we work effectively together going forward? (including what principles should guide us)

Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4

Including everyone

- Define 'we' – and make sure everyone is included
- So many different interests and parties – website updates, social media

LORP

- Learning from LORP
- Where can key info points be? Central location - use LORP car park/commons car parks
- Commons/LORP good for nature – if interested in Heath to Sea change where do you go?

Engage the right people

- Difficult to get the public to engage but really important to do so early on
- Find ways of engaging as many organisations as possible and getting to the right people in organisations

QR codes for accessing information

- QR codes people can access info
- QR code/web address
- Audio information on site vs short video clips online
- If use QR code – can keep up to date more easily
- Ensuring reaches everyone – not everyone uses QR etc. – multiple formats & accessible – still a place for posters

Communicate results of consultation to show feedback has been listened to

- Be responsible – make sure things come back from consultation to show the feedback has been listened to.
 - Regularly
- With timescales action is planned
- Short enough timeframe so people know it's not been forgotten
- Demonstrate stuff has happened
- Integrity (should be a given)
- Once decision have been made communicate rationale with interested parties

Signpost and communicate clearly

- Engagement in the technical detail, a bit more granular – needs to go to the right people and needs to be signposted well e.g. Access info has been lost in big planning document
- Bullet point summary of reports
- Not too much jargon or include glossary
- Acronym overload syndrome
- If project is competing for people's time – balance between available info available to access in your own time (e.g. newsletter/website/direct mail) vs meetings in person
- Info at 2 levels – summary of key points/FAQs to conservative as well as detail
- Simple, clear messages – share widely
 - Use parish magazines – some need to pay for – less accessible?
 - Library info board
 - One magazine
 - Tourist info

Site and farm visits

- We can do visits, look at things people like – farm visits
- Great communication - can use farm tours
- If farm visits offered would other farmers be worried? – Think no – tenants would like it
- Site visits

Understand farming

- General understanding of farming – how it works, show decisions are made – stop 'farmer bashing' - maize good if grown well
- People grow crops of maize
- Crops don't need to be evil

Learn from good and bad practice

- Look at bad practice to compare
- River – good and bad practice examples – looking to address
- Showcasing
- Talk up good practice, don't focus on bad practice – counter productive
- Plenty of experience of bad farming practice – How this project mitigates?
- Link with similar projects (interpretation on that as well) elsewhere e.g. PACCO

Look at impacts of access

- Look at impact of access – this can have negative impacts too

Responsibility of everyone not just farmers

- Responsibility of everyone not just farmers

Soil management

- Soil management South West

Webcams and timelapse

- Webcams of beavers
- Timelapse of crops growing

Surveys

- Surveys – engagement on bat species

Sticking head above parapet

- Sticking head above parapet

Communication approach

- Regular comms
- Respect
- Honesty
- Sharing information
- Understand areas of interest/appropriateness/good fit
- Don't overwhelm with info
- Have information communicates to you according to your interest
- Two-way communication
- Succinct comms
- Change practice according to who you are communicating/working with
- Recognise differences
- Don't rely solely on online for communication spread
- Be aware/inclusive through comms
- Local news channels – e.g. ITV Southwest. Feed positive news stories
- Cross channel communications – produce info once and share widely

Open sessions

- Open Sessions

Sharing info and encouraging feedback

- Responsibility for each group/stakeholder to share info with our respective groups so the wider message goes out
- Encourage feedback – give prompts

Intellectually engage

- Not physically accessing but can still intellectually engage

Timeliness

- Timeliness
- Timely, relevant, up to date information very important

Doodle polls

- Doodle polls for voting on ideas – good for quick way

Perception of Clinton Devon Estates

- perception of Clinton Devon Estates – language – planting trees – squirrels – pine martins

5.2 How would you and the people/organisation/group you represent like to be kept up to date during the project and how often?

Clinton Devon is currently planning to provide updates on the Heaths to Sea website, via social media (Clinton Devon's and others), in parish magazines and other newsletters, by running stalls at local events and presenting at parish council meetings.

Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4

Email newsletter and communication

- Email newsletter – quarterly to monthly depending on pace of change
- Newsletters: pre-empt or answer questions
- Email – easy to spread/share especially for parish councils + email bulletins to clerks
- Email preference (grouping/regularity) tech
- Email – disseminated to interested others
- Type emails e.g. once every two months but they don't always get read
- People responding to LORP via project email address, Clinton Devon need to respond

Using the website for updates

- Push website otherwise people won't look
- Website and social media are too passive
- Website up to date – available all the time
- Website is key and newsletter
- Comments box on website

Social media

- Village Facebook groups
- LinkedIn/X ok although Twitter not much engagement

Direct contact

- Direct contact with involved stakeholders

Events and meetings

- Wider public – local events/social media may help but it's very hard
- At events – county shows/village fetes
- Get together e.g. BBQ
- Get out and look at stuff site visits etc.
- People like to be outside!
- Communication about guided walks, local history to bring more people in
- If you want to focus on local people – public/community meetings

Talks and presentations

- Talks at occasionally intervals – Autumn 2025 – OVA
- Combine exhibition/presentations with something else to increase attendance – target to locality/Parish Council etc. (e.g. nature talk, food, South West Water!)

If you don't do it there may be problems later on

- (if you don't do it there may be problems later on)

Artistic vision

- Artistic vision - engaging

Steering group and workshop

- Steering group
- Once a year workshop like this – benefits – Clinton Devon Estates networking with stakeholders
- Specific interests e.g. fish – stakeholders engage

Approach to communication

- Timeliness: communicate new things effectively
- Clear plan of communication
- Neutral channels

- Monthly/in line with organisation meetings/their own emails/newsletters
- Need to repeat to drive message, help them to remember, see achievements, plans, eventual goal
- How often – when there is something to communicate
- No more than quarterly (if relevant)

Clear benefits for stakeholders

- How do we reach those who don't normally engage? – 2-way street – if stakeholders are getting something out of it as well as putting something into it. There's no economic benefit to visitors and communities e.g. Budleigh Salterton – Towns and local businesses need improved economy.

Word of mouth

- Through word-of-mouth

Television

- Local TV – spotlight/local radio
- Countryfile + devon life etc. (e.g. Stantyway farm) – for big wins/celebrating success

Channelled through other groups

- Tap into EDDC regular mailing/news
- Local community groups social media

Issues with the river

- Exmouth, Southwest Water, Sewage Pipes, issues with the river

5.3 How do you want to be actively involved with the project / project area and what would facilitate that engagement?

Group 1 Group 2 Group 3 Group 4

Simple communication via email, make it easy for people

- Something appearing in my inbox saying I need to do x, y & z
 - Not needing to go elsewhere to find info
 - Put in front of my nose so I prioritise
 - Content within email not too much referencing elsewhere

Easy access engagement

- Easy access engagement – 5 minute online survey
- Days like today are a big commitment

Stakeholder group

- Happy to have had the stakeholder group and be consulted on this
- Main stakeholder group – wide number of people not included in that

Involving engagement professionals

- Getting engagement professionals involved early

Project area walks

- Project area walks – seeing things on the ground – talking through issues on site
- Walks are often well attended – especially not normally available

Volunteer involvement and events

- Volunteers on Heaths/River keep this up/expended
- Tailored to limited volunteer availability
- Volunteer opportunities, events and activities
- Volunteer working parties (good for community cohesion) from Parish Councils e.g. Balsam Control
- Go to local communities with specific ask if needed – draws people out

Events

- Open day approach – on site or elsewhere
- Go to an OVA garden
- Farm tour/social
- Engage with open days, existing events
- Stalls at village fetes, local events

- Monthly coffee mornings – provide information here or more permanently at village halls

School field trips

- Field trips, offering to School, formal package

Moving away from misunderstanding

- Hopefully moving away from misunderstanding

Email mailbox

- Email mailbox for emailing ideas/feedback

Presentations

- Presentation
- Presentation on project work done to help
- Events/presentations (wildlife talks)

Targeted messaging for stakeholder groups

- Understand different stakeholder group and targeted messaging
- Links to local horse-riding community and messages about using the heath

Social media

- Follow on social media

Regular comms for issues on the common

- Regular comms for issues on the common

Depends on direction the project takes

- Depends on direction the project takes

Stakeholders helping with data capture

- Can help with data capture coordination (parish councils) – local expertise
- Citizen science – water quality, species groups monitoring (e.g. Bats) – drawing on expertise from local people
- Specialist groups – linking up/using knowledge – help collect data

5.4 What resources, information, networks, or skills could you/your organisation offer towards successful landscape recovery in the lower Otter Valley?

| Offer | Name or badge number | Definite commitment | In principle | Don't hesitate to ask |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| County Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rights of way - Historic Environment - Transport planning team - Food team - Countryside access forum – particularly good for inclusive access | 33 – Would signpost | | | ✓ |
| Sounding board for technical land management Regulations, taxation, business structures, land management agreements.... | 26 | | | ✓ |
| Experience background of LORP, wetland management, public engagement | 21 | | | ✓ |
| Anglers' newsletter | | ✓ | | |
| Budleigh Salterton Town Council – see notes below [48] | 48 | ✓ | | |
| Farm visits | | | ✓ | |
| Otterton Community Page Facebook | 13 | ✓ | | |
| Shop Budleigh – mailing list of traders | 15 | ✓ | | |
| Photography skills – drone foots/photos | 13 | ✓ | | |
| Local specialist groups – can they help with data? | | | | |
| Monitoring species | | | | |
| Grazing management – no fence collars – working across multiple partners – share knowledge etc. | 34 | | | |
| Fishing people/fisheries – species trends/knowledge ROFA | | ✓ | | |

Additional comments

Group 2

- Exeter equestrian club – fun rides 3 times a year
- Budleigh info centre, town website, love Budleigh promoting events - channels for messages, leaflets, info
- Newsletter quarterly to members [4]
- Local social media – villages + towns + way of getting feedback
 - Stick head above parapet
 - Need someone to make an informed response to feedback (issue with LORP)
 - 2-way communication via social media
- Have choice whether to engage or not can escalate negative messaging
 - Can be time consuming & traumatic
- Town council will help where they can – but need to clarify commitment – e.g. pop up at busy events [48]
- Scepticism about Clinton Devon Estates locally due to LORP - relationship
- Confusion over names – how do projects relate and how will they be marketed? Using separate websites? E.g. LORP, Pebblebeds, Heath to Sea etc.
- Communications needed on what Clinton Devon Estates does, how to make links clearer
- Relationships between parties
- Success stories – reception to project should be positive
- How Clinton Devon Estates presents itself is a challenge
- Is it possible to share emails of people participating today? [Parking Place]

Group 3

- Email to Parish Council and all groups to request info about local events we can attend
- Feedback to groups from Clinton Devon Estates and vice versa
- OVA have experts on lots of things, can cascade out for responses
- Do we know which communities have social media groups/pages
 - NP Post
 - NP com group (as examples)
 - Next Door App (good for people to share opinions)
- Wild East Devon website/socials ability to share content – useful to make aware/understand
- Site visits for EDDC councillors but challenge as can't be seen to be being influenced! 'Not political'
- Presentation to full council (10/year)
- LNP, Neighbourhood plans
- Events
- Timing of engagement/events
- School events, different ages, secondary schools – ECC, Sidmouth, Kings, Colyton
- Apple event is focus, opportunity to discuss other things

Group 4

- Go to local communities with specific ask if needed – draws people out

Annex 1 Agenda

Heath to Sea Landscape Recovery in the Lower Otter Valley

Workshop

Date: 15/10/2024

| | |
|-------|--|
| 09:15 | Getting Started: registration, coffee and tea will be available |
| | Start Up Question Imagine it is 2044 and you are at an event celebrating the success of landscape recovery across the Lower Otter Valley. What 2 things please you most? |
| 9:45 | Welcome and purpose of the project and workshop Dr Sam Bridgewater, Clinton Devon Estates Facilitator's Welcome and Introduction Joel Pound Dialogue Matters |
| 10:15 | Session A: Sharing understanding about the wider context Freely visit different places around the room and add your input in response to questions about the wider context for considering landscape recovery in the Lower Otter Valley. |
| 11:05 | Tea and coffee break |
| 11:25 | Session B: Heading in the right direction Discuss in groups what is already going in the right direction, what more needs to be done and examples of good practice. |
| 12:25 | Lunch |
| 13:10 | Session C: Heading in the right direction – Topic Groups (Return and prioritise topics) Self-select a topic group to work on Discuss in your group what success would look like, what is working well to get us there and what more needs to be done. At the end, circulate around other groups, read and add further comments |
| 14:20 | Tea and coffee break |
| 14:30 | Session D: Working well together Discuss in groups how we can work effectively together, how you would like to be kept up to date, methods of participation and what your group could offer towards successful landscape recovery. Wrapping up |
| 16:30 | Finish no later than this |

Annex 2 List of Attendees Organisations

| Organisation |
|--|
| Active Devon |
| Ashtree Shoot |
| Budleigh Community Workshop Trust |
| Budleigh Information Centre |
| Budleigh Salterton Town Council |
| Central Association for Agricultural Valuers (CAAV) |
| Clinton Devon Estates |
| Colaton Raliegh Parish Council (CRPC) |
| Colaton Raliegh Parish footpath warden |
| Communications Consultancy |
| Devon County Council Public Rights of Way (DCC PRoW) |
| Devon Countryside Access Forum |
| East Budleigh Parish Council (EBPC) |
| East Devon National Landscape (EDNL) |
| East Devon District Council (EDDC) |
| English Heritage |
| Environment Agency (EA) |
| Fairlynch Museum |
| Local Horse Rider |
| Local Nature Partnership |
| Local Residents |
| Local University Student |
| Natural England (NE) |
| Newton Poppleford & Harpford Parish Council (NPHPC) |
| Newton Poppleford Primary School |
| Otter Valley Association (OVA) |
| Otterton Parish Council (OPC) |
| River Otter Fisheries Association (ROFA) |
| RSPB |
| Shop Budleigh |
| South West Water |
| Tenant Farmer |
| University of Exeter |
| Volunteer Archivist |
| Westcountry Rivers Trust |