

Charnwood Forest Regional Park Stakeholder Event

12th October 2016

Council Chamber, Leicestershire County Hall

See Appendix 1 for attendance list.

The presentation slides from the meeting are available on request.

1. Purpose of the event

The main purpose of the event was to engage stakeholders in the development of a new bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnerships scheme for Charnwood Forest.

It also provided the opportunity to update people on the work of the regional park partnership's steering group and delivery boards since the last stakeholder event on 26th November 2015.

2. Welcome and introduction

Anna Low, Team Manager - Strategic Partnering, Environment and Waste Management, opened proceedings by outlining housekeeping, the key themes for the day, encouraging participation and engagement during the planned workshop tasks, before handing over to Cllr Vardy.

3. Progress Update - Cllr Vardy

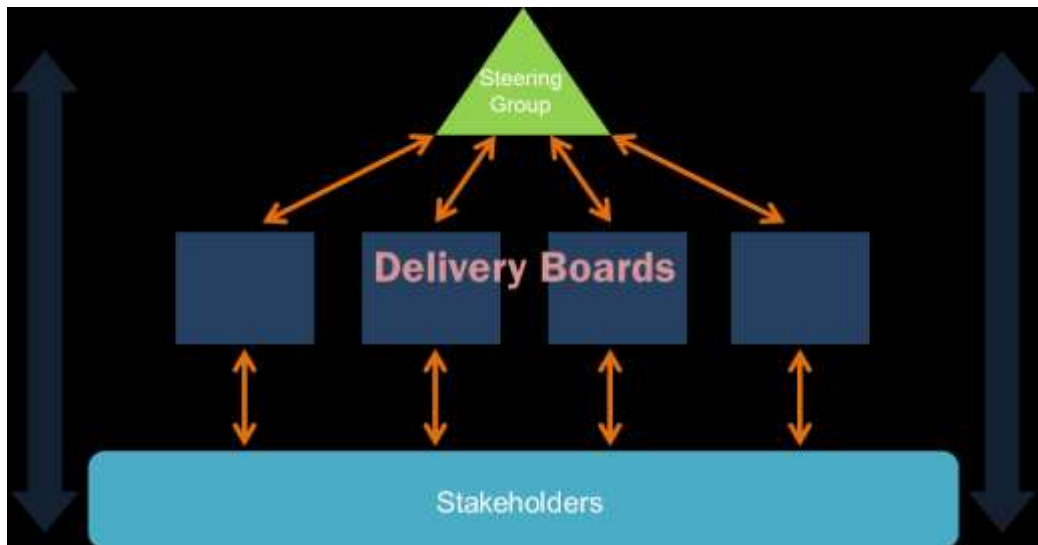
Cllr Eric Vardy, the chair of the Charnwood Forest Regional Park Steering Group, welcomed all to the 2016 Stakeholder Forum. The forum is very important and has met since 2007. Since then it has worked to an agreed vision:

“The unique natural and cultural heritage features of Charnwood Forest will be managed and promoted through the Charnwood Forest Regional Park. The Regional Park will be recognised as an essential part of the growing communities in the Derby, Leicester and Nottingham area, now and in the future.”

It has also developed an action plan, which has been agreed and endorsed by partners and is a central document to steer the Charnwood Forest Regional Park Partnership. This forum is a mechanism for stakeholders to meet up, network and reconnect, supported by the new structure.

At the 2015 stakeholder event the group endorsed the new model shown below, emphasising the use and importance of delivery boards.

These individual boards will look at specific tasks and focus on delivering outcomes. The intention of the delivery boards is for them to act as a conduit between the steering group and stakeholders and in the past 12 months there has been great progress setting up the delivery boards and coordinating project ideas, in addition to holding a steering group meeting on the 8th July.



Charnwood Forest Regional Park Partnership Structure

It was agreed that the best way of delivering many of the things we want to achieve was to develop a new Landscape Partnership bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The National Forest Company agreed to lead the bid and the local authority partners all contributed funds towards creating a Development Officer post. Matt Croney started in that post at the end of June and the Development Delivery Board is helping Matt to develop the bid.

Matt will be leading the main part of the meeting, but first there was an update from each delivery board.

4. Delivery Boards Progress Updates

a) Social and Historic - Dr Julie Attard (University of Leicester, Charnwood Roots Project):

- Their remit is to “support the development and running of education and community engagement programmes to increase and improve the appreciation, enhancement and management of the area’s culture and heritage”

Key activities so far have included:

- Discussed the Landscape Partnership bid and tried to identify how we can best support it
- Discussed current threats to heritage in the Charnwood Forest area
- Reviewed current initiatives and active heritage projects
- Began to think about project ideas in broad terms
- Began to think about the resources and infrastructure needed

Further, the board has been considering many questions and exploring new avenues such as how they can build upon the existing positive work, engaging a broader range of people and highlighting the USP’s of the Charnwood Forest.

b) Tourism and Economy- Peter Tyldesley (Bradgate Park Trust):

The board is still information gathering at this stage and is actively working with the other boards. The key themes from this board are:

- How to market the social and heritage aspects of Charnwood Forest including the building of the Charnwood 'brand'.
- A desire to develop tourism infrastructure within Charnwood Forest, identifying any existing gaps and spreading demand away from honey pot sites (maintaining honey pots but developing surrounding, less renowned sites)
- Plans to develop a new strategy to diversify the audience of the Charnwood Forest to include all demographics
- Highlighting Charnwood's geology as a potential USP and the wish to emphasise this going forward

c) Environment - Claire Install (Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust):

Key progress to date:

- 2 meetings to date including representation from Charnwood Forest, National Forest, LCC, Natural England and Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust amongst others
- Review of the previous bid, identification of positives and further development points
- Key outcomes so far: geology a theme, timeline to pin events to show history of the Forest and project ideas including geology/heritage/species specific

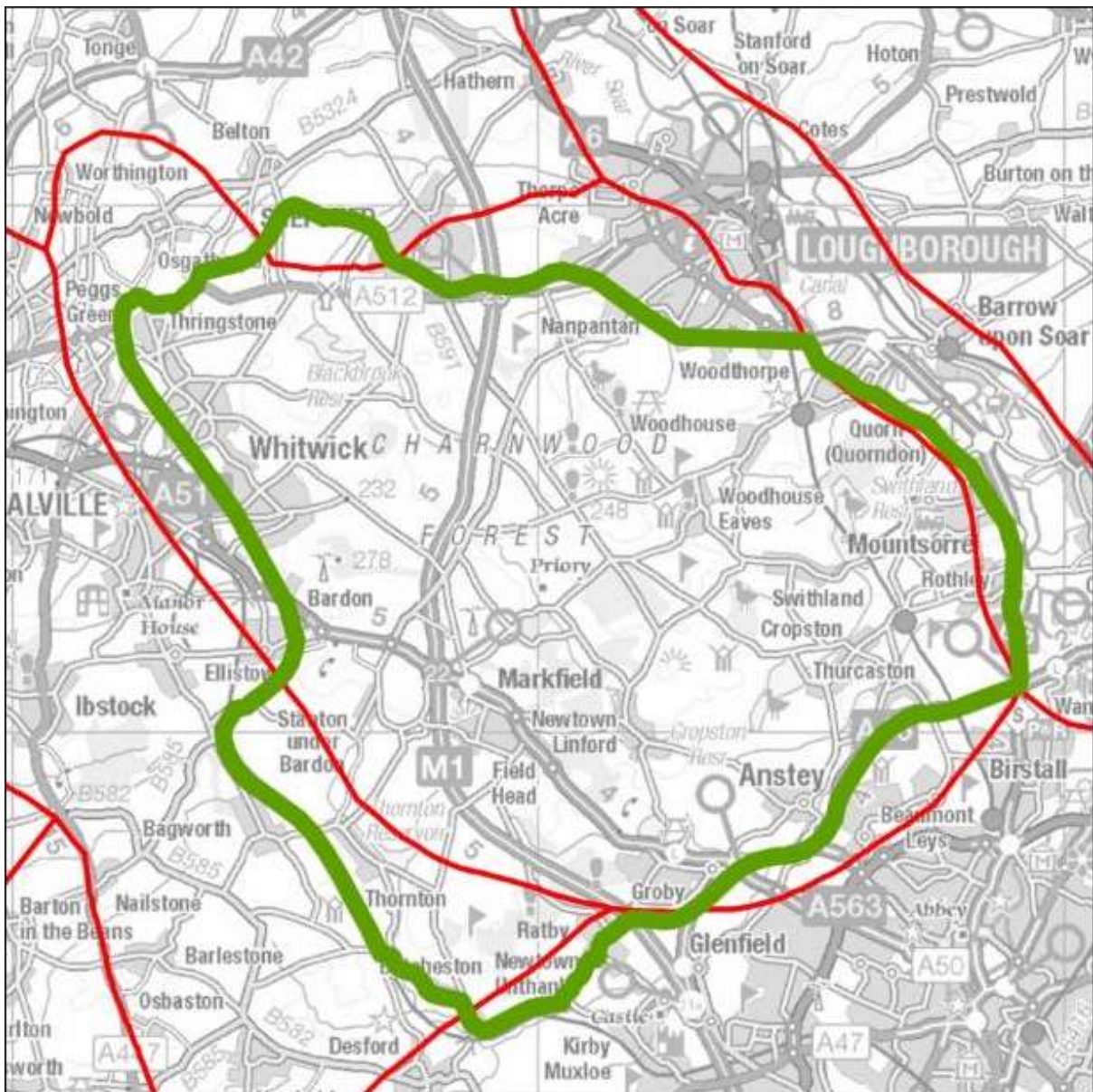
5. HLF Landscape Partnership Presentation - Matt Croney – Development Officer

Key Charnwood Forest Info

Matt briefly introduced the Landscape Partnership Bid before outlining the key heritage features of Charnwood Forest:

- Wildlife: Charnwood covers 8% of Leicestershire but contains 55% of its SSSI area
- Archaeology: Bronze age fort at Beacon Hill & evidence of England's first settlement at Bradgate Park
- Social history: Norman priories, Lady Jane Grey and Beaumanor Hall
- Industry: Charnwood granite built much of London
- Transport: The Great Central Railway, Mountsorrel
- Geology: Charnia fossils are first evidence of multicellular life

The area covered by the application (the regional park boundary)



About HLF Landscape Partnerships

Key aspects:

- £100k to £3million. We anticipate bidding for around £3million.
- They typically fund about 75%. The 25% match funding can be a mixture of cash; in-kind time and services; and volunteer time (usually roughly one third each)
- Need a unifying idea/theme
- A genuine partnership, strategically enhancing at a landscape scale
- 5 years

Timescale

1st round application	Now – 1st June 2017
Development Phase	Late 2017 – Late 2019
DELIVERY PHASE	1 April 2020 – 31 March 2025

HLF Outcomes

Matt outlined the outcomes set by HLF for Landscape Partnerships. There are 9 outcomes across three key themes: heritage, people and communities. The scheme must meet all 9 of the outcomes but they are not weighted and can be achieved to differing degrees, depending on the particular needs and opportunities of your landscape:

Outcomes for heritage:

1. better managed
2. in better condition
3. identified/recorded

Outcomes for people:

4. developed skills
5. learnt about heritage
6. volunteered time

Outcomes for communities:

7. negative environmental impacts will be reduced
8. more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage
9. your local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit

What is 'Heritage'?

HLF defines what it means by heritage as follows:

“Heritage includes many different things from the past that we value and want to pass on to future generations, for example:

- natural heritage including habitats, species and geology;
- surviving or lost historic features and buildings;
- archaeological sites, earthworks, features and deposits;
- cultural traditions such as stories, festivals, crafts, music, dance and costumes;
- histories of people and communities (including people who have migrated to the UK);
- histories of places and events and features created to commemorate them;
- traditional and local heritage skills and industries;
- the heritage of languages and dialects;
- semi-natural and designed landscapes and gardens;
- people's memories and experiences (often recorded as 'oral history' or spoken history);
- collections of objects, books or documents in museums, libraries or archives; and
- places and objects linked to our industrial, maritime and transport history”

Process for developing the first round bid

Matt quickly outlined the process for developing the bid by 1 June 2017, which is attached at Appendix 2.

Central theme/idea for the bid

Matt reported that the development delivery board, who are leading on the co-ordination of the HLF bid, had done some initial work about the central idea/theme of the bid. They have the working strapline:

“Made by volcanoes, shaped by people”

The wording may change but this reflects two key themes:

- geology: the volcanic past and 600 million year old rock is the most obvious unique feature of this landscape and everything else can be directly traced back to it: the fact that it was not easy to cultivate leading to its rule by 4 priories, the number of historic parks, the abundance of wildlife habitats and undisturbed archaeological features, the quarries and related settlements etc.

- people: what is believed to be the first settlement in England, which has recently been discovered in the grounds of Bradgate Park, the manor houses, Lady Jane Grey, the late enclosure of fields, the communities in the past and the fact that people now have the opportunity to shape its future

HLF love projects which focus on people and engaging them with heritage. Geology is suggested as a hook to gain people's interest and on the back of that to explain all the many reasons why Charnwood Forest is so special. We want to interest people in Charnwood's wonderful heritage so that they will care about and help to protect it. Matt referred to the quote by Sir David Attenborough, which is particularly relevant:

“No-one will protect what they don't care about, and no-one will care about what they have never experienced”

Sir David supported the previous bid and it is hoped that he might support this one as it develops as well.

6. Workshop 1: Needs and Opportunities Analysis

HLF guidance suggests that a landscape partnership bid should address the local needs and opportunities for heritage in the Charnwood Forest area. The attendees were asked to engage in a workshop designed to identify the key needs and opportunities of Charnwood Forest as it is now and to pick out what they felt were the most important ones. All of the needs and opportunities identified are attached in Appendix 3. The facilitators then picked out and summarised the top three in each category:

Needs:

1. improvement of recreational access in the forest: strengthening diversity of transport, opening hours, activities, as well as development of currently closed areas of the forest
2. better branding and marketing: development of existing marketing to touch a wider audience with specific messages to increase visitors' knowledge of the forest and what it can offer
3. habitat connectivity and protection of the natural environment

Opportunities:

1. co-ordination of sites: maintaining the attraction of honey pot sites whilst emphasising others and improving linkages between all attractions
2. to address habitat fragmentation
3. training and education: becoming more involved with stakeholders to train and educate and thus stimulate interest

Question- stimulating discussion:

A question was asked regarding the boundaries of the Charnwood Forest bid and whether they should be expanded to include a much wider area and linkages to other attractions such as the Space Centre.

Responses:

That the boundary must be drawn somewhere and is designed to reflect a distinct landscape character area plus the communities immediately adjoining. It is the same as the regional park boundary. However, activities are by no means confined to only the inner Charnwood area and it will be important to engage surrounding communities including Loughborough, Coalville, Shepshed and Leicester.

A suggestion was made that a fuzzy boundary might be used but this would still have to end somewhere! Matt is happy to receive suggestions for minor boundary changes where there is good justification.

7. Workshop 2: Generating Project Ideas

Attendees were required to think of and write down project ideas for each of the three key themes: heritage, people and communities. Coloured dots were then used to indicate the popularity of the project ideas. All of the project ideas suggested and details about them are attached in Appendix 4. The most popular projects under each theme were presented as follows:

Heritage:

1. Heritage led walks and cycle rides: a series of led walks or cycle rides incorporating heritage sites with all informed guides, funding would be required for a co-ordinator post and volunteer expenses and marketing material (5 dots) [*This was missed out by mistake in the summary presented on the day, although it is actually a people or a communities project rather than a heritage one*]
2. Watercourse Projects: focusing upon the key issues of pollution and natural flood management, through using the Soar Catchment Partnership and the EA (4 dots)
3. Interpretation of Heritage: key themes linked to walks in the forest are geology, wildlife, people, buildings and important architecture working alongside consultant designers (4 dots)
4. Reconnecting Fragmented Habitats: bigger, better and more joined up habitats involving the EA/LRWT/TNF/LROS as well as all other stakeholders (4 dots)

People:

1. Rural Heritage Centre: a training and research centre to demonstrate to and train the local population with further knowledge of the land management profession and include students/graduates/members of the public linked to other universities, conservation specialists and local authorities (8 dots)

2. Outdoor Activity Centre: engaging the younger generation through activities based around quarries (abseiling and rock-climbing), Nanpantan (water sports) and Outwoods (orienteeing) and walking and cycling (perhaps Swithland Woods), maybe working alongside private organisations (5 dots)
3. Skills Workshops: providing a service specifically to the young, old and unemployed to learn new skills around the areas of dry stone walling, tree work and wildlife (3 dots)

Communities:

1. Make the Outwoods another hub within Charnwood: improve infrastructure; orientation/signage; link to neighbouring sites; improve car park; develop visitor centre/ranger base; improve access for all; maps/signage; traffic flow (6 dots) [*This was missed out by mistake in the summary presented on the day*]
2. Charnwood Access Tour Bus: perhaps from Wanlip Park and Ride and dropping visitors at various Charnwood sites with a pop on and off idea, with routes and times varying dependant on demand, led by LCC (6 dots for but 7 dots against)
3. Charnwood Community Links: creating suitable links between communities in the area not only with transport but also retail and communication. Involving the Rural Community Council as well as John Storer, Charnwood (3 dots)
4. Identify Charnwood: provision of identical signage throughout public sites in the forest to better identify brand Charnwood, utilise to be informative and send educational message (3 dots) [*This was missed out by mistake in the summary presented on the day*]
5. Heritage Trails: building on current research by Charnwood Roots to create Heritage Trails, including elements such as economic, social, geological, industrial and cultural history of the area. The aim is to utilise the links with local universities such as University of Leicester and also other local partners (2 dots)

Further ideas will next be sought from the general public. All ideas will then be considered by the development delivery board to assess how well they meet the needs and opportunities expressed earlier today; their feasibility, legality, practicality and potential contribution to the main theme and desired outcomes for the landscape partnership. Their deliberations will be reported back to stakeholders for comment.

Question:

A question was focused on the need to work alongside the farming population and not alienate by imposing further regulation. It was said that 80% of land within the forest is managed by farmers and working with them is imperative to the success of all the ideas/development boards.

In response it was stated that the intention is to fully engage farmers and landowners as it is recognised that they are critical to protecting and restoring the landscape of Charnwood. Matt agreed to contact Rad Thomas and Paul Tame to discuss how this can best be achieved. He also confirmed that representation can be found on the Steering Group from the National Farmers Union and the CLA.

8. Project Name Ideas

Attendees came up with a number of potential names for the ongoing project, shown in Appendix 5. The two favourites were:

- The Chronicles of Charnia (9 votes)
- Charnwood Rocks (8 votes)

There were also 8 votes for “none of the above!” so it may be that we haven’t found the ideal name yet.....

There was a comment that perhaps the name should have both Charnwood and Leicester/Leicestershire to put it in geographical context for those that don’t know the area.

Matt asked people to keep sending him their ideas for a project name. It may be that we have a public vote but the delivery board will have to make a decision at some stage.

9. Next steps:

- Write up and circulate today’s meeting report
- Wider consultation to add project ideas
- Decide on name and strapline
- Set up web page and Facebook
- Delivery boards to consider and prioritise projects
- Check back with all stakeholders
- Identify lead partners and match funding
- Write the bid

Attendance List

Andrew Shaw - Leicestershire County Council

Andy Travis - Charnwood Forest Mountain Biking Vision Group

Anna Low - Leicestershire County Council

Carolyn Holmes - Bradgate Park Trust

Chris Peat - The Open Spaces Society

Chris Traill - Charnwood Borough Council

Mrs Christine Radford - Leicestershire County Council Member for Shepshed

Claire Install - Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust

Clive Fennell - Leicestershire Footpath Association

Cllr Trevor Pendleton - North West Leicestershire District Council

Corrine Meakins - Forestry Commission

David Carter - Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

David Newborough - Environment Agency

Dick Howard - Friends of Charnwood Forest

Emma Trilk - North West Leicestershire District Council

Eric Cllr Vardy - Charnwood Borough Council

Fiona Walker- Leicestershire County Council

Hannah Rigden - Natural England

Cllr Huw Williams - Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Ian Porter - Panda Eyes Publishers Ltd

James Lee - Charnwood Borough Council

John Howells - Ramblers Association / Leicestershire Local Access Forum

John Law - Leicestershire Local Access Forum

John Martin - Heritage, Museums & Interpretation Consultant

Julie Attard - University of Leicester

Kate Hiseman - Sustainable Land Trust

Kate Moore - Woodhouse and Woodhouse Eaves Heritage

Malcolm Law - Mountsorrel & Rothley Community Heritage Centre

Martin Holt

Mike Handford - Charnwood Canal

Nick Wakefield - Environment Agency

Paul Day - Friends of Charnwood Forest

Paul Tame - National Farmers Union

Mr Peter Lewis - Leicestershire County Council, Member for Loughborough South West

Peter Tyldesley - Bradgate Park Trust

Peter Williams - Ramblers' Association/LROS/ LRWT

Rad Thomas - Farmer

Roger Edwards - Leicestershire Orienteering Club

Roy Denney - Leicestershire Local Access Forum

Sally Slade - Leicester City Council

Sam Lattaway - National Forest

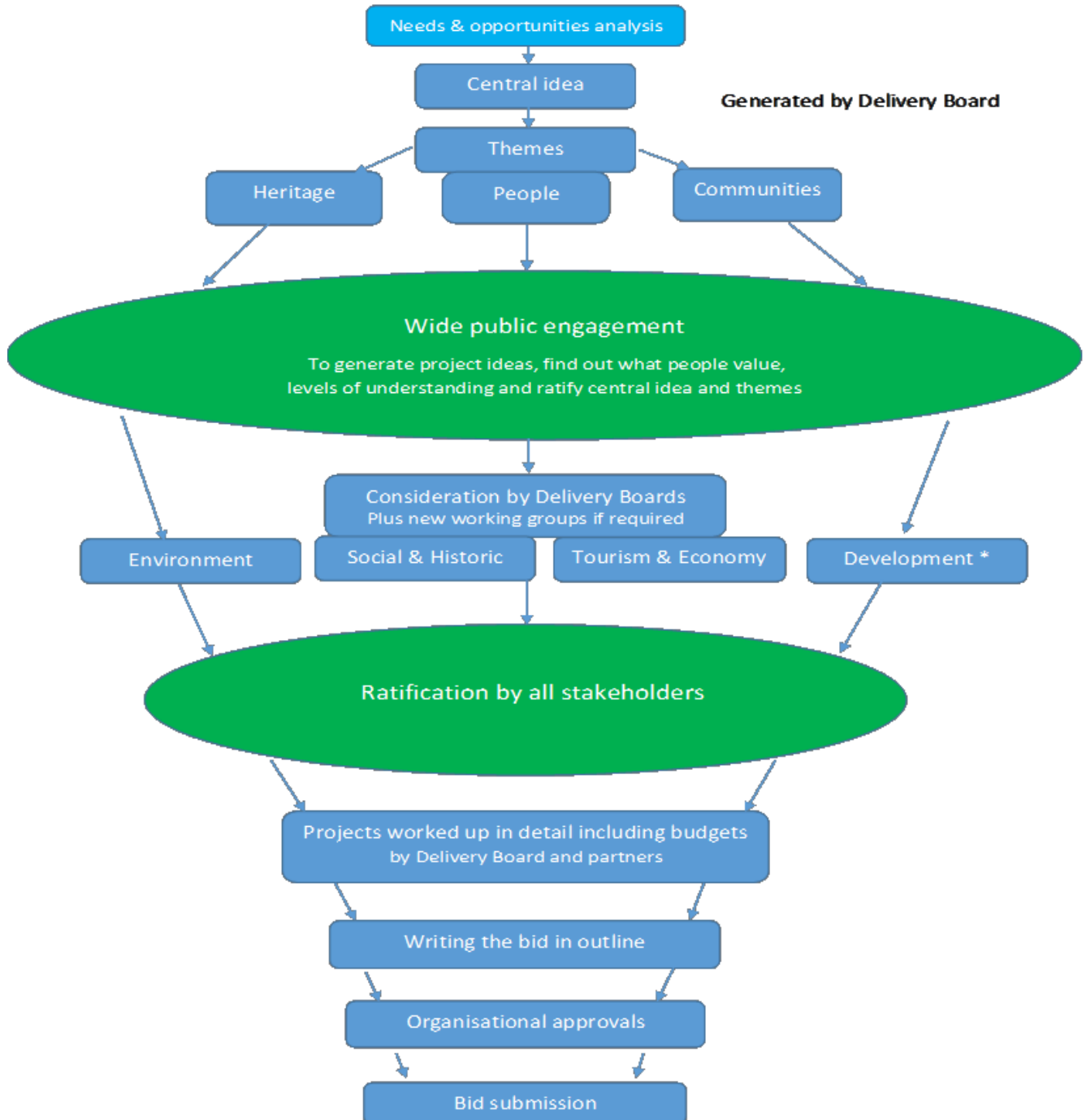
Sam Village - Leicestershire County Council

Stefan Cabaniuk - Leicester City Council

Terry Kirby - Leicestershire Local Access Forum

Vicky Allen - Leicestershire & Rutland Bridleways Association

Process for developing the HLF bid



Needs & Opportunities for heritage in Charnwood Forest

People were asked to list all the needs and opportunities they could think of, then to group like ones together, then to indicate which ones they felt were most important by putting a sticky dot next to it, with the following results:

NEEDS

Access (9 dots in total)

- Improved recreational access around the Forest
- Better access and circular routes essential. There are very few good circular walks of about 5 miles (6 dots)
- Accessibility for disabled and young families with children (2 dots)
- Tracks/paths network linking key areas – these need working on, promoting and extending. Access to many areas very poor (1 dot)
- More access needs agreement with landowners and occupiers
- Infrastructure and facilities to allow people to feel comfortable visiting other areas of the Forest e.g. gateways or hubs with parking, toilet facilities
- A lot more bridleways for all the horses kept in or visiting the area. All footpaths to be bridleways.
- Local nature trails – signage

Brand/Marketing/unifying theme/interpretation (6 dots)

- Better marketing – Charnwood almost unknown outside Leicestershire. Suggestion: use Charnwood Forest in address, i.e. XX Main Street, Newtown Linford, Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire (3 dots)
- Brand and programme; consistent style; interpretation (3 dots)
- Good publicity
- Funds, sign boards, a history of the geology

Habitat connectivity/ natural environment (5 dots)

- Restoration → resilience to future change: grasslands (trad); woodlands; wet grass/heathlands (4 dots)
- Protect the natural environment (1 dot)
- Invest resources in the long-term protection of the natural environment. E.g. climate change; controlling development pressures
- Tree replacement where felled
- Thorough analysis of landscapes and layers to ensure projects don't do damage by inappropriate tree planting, but allowing for planting programme where needed to provide replacement for veteran trees

Sustainable transport (3 dots)

- Transport and project links to city. E.g. with cycling and walking groups in city (2 dots)
- Sustainable transport: electric bikes; weekend bus service; P & R facilities (1 dot)
- Good transport links by all modes: car, public transport, cycle, on foot etc.
- Cycleway from Leicester
- Investment in public transport (Charnwood Forest shuttle/non car access)
- "Transport" between locations: Instructions/guide to features; online sales; family "offer"/friendly

Local accommodation (2 dots)

- B & Bs; campsites; quality touring sites for camping and caravans (2 dots)

Leadership/champion (1 dot)

- Dynamic leadership and oomph! (1 dot)
- Champion to drive this at a higher political level (great influencer)

More crags exposed to public view (1 dot)**Good support for and from local businesses (1 dot)**

- Need to make those aware – who have a business interest... what is going on with this bid and engage with them.

Engage people, including new / urban audiences

- Improved public understanding of why Charnwood Forest is special
- To address diversity amongst users/visitors. A study to find out what prevents people visiting other than 'honey pot sites' and what would support them?
- Good public support
- Tools/resource to engage communities and wider audiences
- Engage people of all ages and abilities – why Charnwood matters to them

Education

- Better engagement with schools: Training; vocational development; rural crafts and skills; create the workforce of tomorrow; promote ecosystem services approach across all communities
- Link the support for CFRP to education at all ages and levels

Farming

- A thriving agriculture
- Post Brexit agri-environment schemes should provide opportunities for permissive access and environmental enhancement.

Misc

- Fossil museum: Sites all scattered and subject to damage. BGS has replica of ??; replicate all other Ediacaran fossils and locate in one place
- A project which is sustainable in its own right
- The need to evaluate all project ideas to deliver multiple benefits
- Awareness of potential of Charnwood Forest canal for heritage walks etc
- To bring in outside investment
- Motive (economy or education?)
- Money, time, expertise
- Co-ordinated approach to budget pressures
- To have co-ordinated approach to land management - land scale approach
- Unifying map of area – user friendly (but a little more detailed than existing map)
- Strategy and unison so partners know how to play their part
- Understanding the activities that are already happening in the area
- More use of Charnwood Forest materials – stone walls, Swithland slate
- Need partnership with visionary business

OPPORTUNITIES

Improving access to more sites/co-ordination/ linking of sites/interpretation (4 dots for theme plus 6 specific = 10 total)

- Open up less discovered areas (2 dots)
- Monastic sites e.g. Ulverscroft, Grace Dieu
- To include areas not already listed such as the Outwoods
- Move people from the honey pot sites on into the wider Charnwood
- Have a more joined up approach (2 dots)
- Co-ordinate attractions in the region e.g. Mountsorrel Railway and Stonehurst Farm
- Co-ordinate transport between different attractions e.g. a bus calling at different sites to give a full day out
- To build and/or use existing building to inform visitors and local residents about the history, etc
- Tell the story of Charnwood across multiple locations to help spread the load and promote local tourism
- Information boards: stimulate interest in local environment (1 dot)
- Inform the local residents of what is available so they do not just use it to walk the dog or entertain the children
- Technology – we could use digital projection to market the area – light shows, virtual dinosaurs
- Tourist friendly map of Charnwood Forest Regional Park (*there is one!*)
- Nature trails and guided walks
- Observation towers
- Provide themed events/ re-enactments to showcase different historical times / events that took place in the Forest – linked to “time machine” idea
- To encourage and foster community cohesion between village and urban and cross-cultural interaction (1 dot)

Wildlife (3 dots against theme plus 4 on specific suggestions below = 7 in total)

- Address the problem of habitat fragmentation to make the wildlife/ habitats more resilient to any future changes – needs habitat mapping (2 dots)
- Provide protection for good wildlife sites not covered by SSSIs (1 dot)
- The River Lin is a special feature and a rich habitat (1 dot)
- Species-led projects e.g. oaks, green hairstreak butterfly, “heath plants”, wet grassland, peregrines, wild flowers
- Woodland creation
- Options around water and waterside heritage
- Natural flood risk management to deliver ecology and other multiple benefits
- Changes in land management to improve water management & flood risk alleviation
- Nature tourism – the economic case

Skills training & education (2 dots on theme plus 4 dots on specifics = 6 dots in total)

- Revive traditional ‘countryside’ skills – managing hay meadows, dry-stone walling training, hedge laying, heritage breeds e.g. Longhorn cows are from Leicestershire (2 dots)
- Forest enterprises utilising wood – lost skills development; new businesses; expansion of forest schools; forest culture (1 dot)
- Opportunity for the Sustainable Land Trust to relocate to Charnwood. The organisation promotes ecosystem services approach to landowners, public and communities. They also run a City & Guilds rural training centre – heritage crafts, etc. They work with vulnerable adults and young people (1 dot)
- Skills development in restoration and heritage – link up with FE organisations

- Education – training; adult education; forest schools; CPD; opportunity to influence (hook?) children via schools/ Guides/ Scouts/ Brownies, etc to camp – walk – cycle to see geology / wildlife
- Rural/water engineering knowledge hub

Access (5 dots on specific suggestions in total)

- Ensure facilities for elderly and disabled, not just in parking but in mobility over terrain (e.g. trampers in the Outwoods) (2 dots)
- People of all ages and abilities engaged with and participating in the natural and cultural heritage of Charnwood (1 dot)
- Offer sustainable transport e.g. electric bikes (1 dot)
- “Mercian Way”: riding route linking Peak, Sherwood, Rutland & National Forest – needs gaps filling! (1 dot)
- Improve accessibility for disabled people and young families with children. Hire of tramper and all-terrain wheelchairs.
- Outdoor activities: walking; cycling; environmental conservation volunteers
- Good rights of way network – could develop heritage trails on a variety of themes
- Volume of visitors?
- Working formula of Bradgate Park, which attracts visitors from all over – could be used to help develop other areas

Heritage Assets (non wildlife/habitats) (3 dots on specific suggestions in total)

- Solve the conundrum of how to promote the Charnia fossil heritage without threatening the remaining fossils (2 dots)
- Further exploration of archaeology of the Forest e.g. LiDAR, excavations (1 dot)
- USP – no-one else has this geology
- Heritage network – e.g. archaeology and heritage wardens, that could be revived with little effort
- Strong unique heritage assets and natural history e.g. Precambrian geology, Charnia fossils, Charnwood Spider, etc
- Model engineering heritage
- Database of research on variety of historical themes (Charnwood Roots) – could be used to develop trails, marketing, exhibitions, new projects
- More about the slate industry
- Lost opportunity: Snibston Mining Museum closure

New development (3 dots on specific suggestions in total)

- Funding from appropriate development (1 dot)
- Some quarries coming to end of extraction – opportunities for recreation/ climbing/ nature/ adventure/ water storage (1 dot)
- Sustainable Land Trust runs a programme – New Landscapes: New Communities. Works with housing developers and new residents to learn skills around natural heritage & new landscape management; creation of ‘traditions’ in newly built large developments & more. (1 dot)
- Sustainable development – the environment & growth
- Consider serving surrounding urban areas
- M1 widening (if it ever goes ahead) could provide land bridges and reduce severance (as mitigation)

Tourism (2 dots on specific suggestions in total)

- Local economy improvement, employment opportunities, accommodation needed (1 dot)
- Basic gateway sites – car park, w.c., surfaced path, 1-2 hour activities, information and intro to other sites/more detailed info
- Blackbrook Reservoir, Severn Trent – potential gateway site (1 dot)
- SW Loughborough gateway site
- Opportunity to be able to plan the provision of tourism accommodation
- Post Brexit – more staycations. Destination surrounding landmarks Bradgate, Beacon, Outwoods, Nanpantan = tourism route
- Funding – rural development – don't forget might be LEADER funding or some follow on from RDPE (post Brexit) to help rural economy

Facilities/ infrastructure (1 dot on specific suggestion in total)

- Public transport – improve network (1 dot)
- Car parking and paths to access land
- Themed road signs with logo. Village signs, road names, etc.
- Improve access to Charnwood Forest by public transport. More car parks?
- Opportunity for regular mini bus service from park & ride Birstall to Bradgate Park all 3 entrances
- Study examples of good practice elsewhere e.g. at Rutland Water, where there is an on site cycle hire etc and a bus service (shoreline), using a bus equipped to carry cycles linking to other bus and rail services operated by Entrebuss

Volunteers/local groups (1 dot on general theme in total)

- Student communities at Leicester, Loughborough, Derby & Nottingham Universities – could run conservation projects with them
- To develop a Charnwood Forest Trust to manage and co-ordinate landscape/land management across the forest – unified approach
- Good experience of volunteering and community schemes we could draw on e.g. Charnwood Borough Council initiatives to involve people from urban communities through original visits to e.g. Outwoods – could tie in pre-existing initiatives
- Volunteer engagement through Soar Catchment Partnership
- Link with existing walking & cycling groups to visit the area

Health (1 dot on specific suggestion in total)

- Link to health agenda via heritage – walks for health – addressing the raising awareness etc element; heritage cycle ways (1 dot)
- Health benefits

Trees not blocking stunning views (1 dot)**Build links/ wider partnerships**

- Links with other bids
- Effective existing partnerships = will to work together

Project Ideas

Note: where there are gaps in information, the section had been left blank by the attendant

1. Heritage

Title: Heritage Led Walks/Cycle Rides

NB This is a people or a communities project

Stickers: 5 green

Details: a series of led walks or cycle rides incorporating heritage sites with all informed guides, funding would be required for a co-ordinator post and volunteer expenses and marketing material

Lead: LCC/British Cycling

Cost: £40,000p.a.

Title: Heritage Themed Walks

(separate suggestion similar to above)

Details: walks based on heritage sites in CF, possible about 10 walks between 2-5 miles

Lead: Clive Fennell

Title: Heritage Cycle Ride

(separate suggestion similar to above)

Details: design and designate heritage cycle trail around Charnwood, signage and creation of new off road foot paths.

Lead: LCC/SUSTRANS

Cost: £20,000

Title: Watercourse Projects

Stickers: 4 green

Details: Buffer strips and other means of addressing diffuse pollution going into reservoirs and watercourses and other water based projects. Undertaking natural flood management on the Wood Brook catchment, including habitat creation, through things such as pond creation, debris dams, wet woodland and rural SUD's (sustainable drainage)

Lead: Soar Catchment Partnership/EA

Cost: £250,000

Title: Heritage Interpretation Boards (linked to walks)

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 4 green

Details: key themes to include geology, wildlife, people, buildings and archaeological

Lead: consultant designers

Cost: board and research £2,000 each and up to £50,000 per theme

Title: Reconnecting/Improving Fragmented Habitats

Stickers: 4 green

Details: bigger, better and more joined up - Lawton

- Traditional grasslands
- Woodlands
- Water courses
- Waterbodies
- Health/wet grasslands

Lead: EA/LRWT/TNF/LROS

Cost: £250,000

Title: Protecting Charnwood Wildlife

Stickers: 4 green

Details: link important wildlife sites throughout Charnwood and offer support to sites that are in need of further protection e.g. LUA's and SSSI's, new dedicated staff needed also

Lead: LRWT/Natural England

Cost: £250,000

Title: Hidden Heritage- LIDAR project

Stickers: 3 green

Details: Charnwood's archaeology is significant but underexplored. A LIDAR project to survey the unmapped areas of the CF would give us a complete map of upstanding earthworks. This could involve volunteers in landscape surveys to verify sites on the ground. Once this has been done, important unmapped heritage assets can be protected from further destruction and will allow a better understanding of the CF's early history

Lead: Leicestershire VCA Trust with University of Leicestershire County Council

Cost: £150,000 approx.

Title: Sculpture/Light/Digital Projection

NB This is a communities project

Stickers: 3 green

Details: digital/light projection of the CF to show the journey from Dinosaurs through the ages to the present day. Emphasis on the sculpture element as a symbol of geology, E.G. Presidents Mount Rushmore.

Lead: Media Company

Cost: £80-100,000

Title: Transport

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 3 green and 1 red

Details: there needs to be joined up thinking regarding transport or heritage transport between sites

Lead: LCC

Title: Quarries for All

Stickers: 2 green

Details: key points below-

- at the end of productive life these can provide wildlife havens climbing opportunities and water sports
- final extraction needs to be careful to avoid fracturing to make final outcome stable
- British Mountaineering Council and Wildlife Trust must be involved and the quarry companies
- Quarries are part of our industrial heritage

Lead: E.G. Whitwick quarry- N.W.L.D.C

Cost: depends on identifying available sites

Title: Reclaiming the Craggs

Stickers: 2 green

Details: aim is to re-establish the CF landscape by opening up the view of the CF craggy landscape. Work would be carried out by a volunteer workforce (skills and training needed) where landowners are in an agreement. Timber could go back to the landowner or to the Forest fuels group, and used as a low cost route to reconnect people and the CF landscape.

Leads: LRWT/Forest Fuels

Cost: £10,000 x 3 years

Title: Habitat Mapping/Opportunity Mapping

Stickers: 1 green

Details: map existing habitats with specific permeability through them, this will show corridors/breaks and suggest where habitat creation/improvement/expansion an occur (as per Lawton review)

Lead: LRWT/Universities/Local Authorities/land landowners

Cost: £25,000

Title: Landscape Analysis

Stickers: 1 green

Details: detailed landscape analysis and research especially of historical/archaeological/geological sites where projects are proposed to ensure works do not damage specific special interests (e.g. plans that Bradgate did before their restoration plans). Focus on identifying key issues and resolving conflicts.

Lead: specialist contractors

Cost: £40-50,000

Title: Ecosystem Service Provision Mapping

Stickers: 1 green

Details: eco-system provision mapping will link to other habitat mapping ambitions (LWT) and enable the partnership to identify where projects would deliver multiple benefits. Any outputs would strongly support any future funding bids explaining benefits clearly to a non-technical audience as in the Leicester Action Plan.

Lead: Soar Catchment Partnership

Cost: £25,000

Title: Natural Capital Audit/Map

Stickers: 1 green and red

Details: identify everything that CF provides-

- Flood defence
- Enjoyment
- Clean over
- Good for mental health
- Beautiful
- Food

Lead: all partners EA/TNF/Councils/LRWT/Universities

Cost: £15,000

Title: Heritage Hubs/Heritage Gateways

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 1 green

Details: development of a hub site/gateway around the edge of the CF to serve local communities, potentially in partnership with existing sites to help subsidise the development of their facilities or to create new visitor gateway with parking, toilets and information- not necessarily large but good enough to want people to use them.

Lead: local borough/district

Cost: £750,000

Title: Virtual Forest

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 1 green

Details: a mobile exhibit which comes and goes near to urban areas to create a virtual Charnwood via lights, projections and sound.

Cost: £50,000

Title: Heritage Skills Training- raising awareness

NB. This is a people project

Stickers: 1 green

Details:

- Dry stone walling
- Traditional grassland management
- Traditional Leicester animal breeds
- Ledge laying

Lead: project officer

Cost: £50,000 but could vary hugely

Title: Charnwood Forest Building Materials

Stickers: 1 green

Details: to explore the most cost effective way of securing a continuous supply of CF granite and Swithland slate to ensure local building traditions are continued within the area. This will help ensure a continuation of local building character in the future.

Lead: Quarries federation/Associations

Cost: £50,000

Title: The Charnwood Forest Canal Walk

Stickers: 1 green

Details: identify, protect and way mark the remaining sections of the Charnwood Forest Canal leading towards a protected canal side walk and connecting sections where the canal has disappeared, particularly cast iron history plates at significant sections of the canal.

Lead: LCC and friends of the canal

Cost: £10,000

Title: Purchase New Wildlife Sites

Stickers: 1 green

Details: land around Charnwood in need of protection from inappropriate use/development.

Purchase at least one new site, e.g. land near to meadows or unimproved land

Lead: LRWT/land owners

Cost: £500,000

Title: Loughborough Charnwood Gateway

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 1 green

Details: area to the SW of Loughborough in ideal site for a gateway visitor site already has bridal way and some other good links to Outwoods. Potential here for a commercial venture such as a garden centre to provide quality visitor facilities at a low cost, but in particular to develop trails and linkages which may be expensive. For example the National Memorial Arboretum- a novel idea that has caught the public imagination and fulfils the requirements of a gateway site. ("Ideas come like this from individuals with an idea and a mission, and it is not realistic to expect the stakeholder group to have this vision!")

Lead: an entrepreneurial landowner

Title: Good Mapping of Charnwood Area

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 1 green and 1 red

Details: points of interest for visitors other than Bradgate Park with good parking facilities

Lead: Paul Day (friends of the forest)

Cost: £25,000

Title: Grace Dieu Gateway

NB. This is a communities project

Details: gateway site at the NW corner of the park to include a car park, toilet, café, surfaced trails and connection for cyclists and bridal

Title: Oldest Tree Project

Details: find oldest trees in Charnwood and have competition to nominate the favourite and link to history of the site.

Title: Geological Walking Trails

NB. This is a communities project

Details: e.g. circular trail around three quarries in Bardon, Cliffe Hill, Hill Hole, different peak formations. Bradgate- Beacon Hill- Charnwood Lodge. Leaflet with maps

Lead: Dick Howard

Cost: £25,000

Title: Ulverscroft Priory

Details: key things to-

- Develop this building/area
- Improve access (car, foot, cycle)]
- Make clear links to nearby attractions (primarily Storeywood/Ulverscroft Grange/Bradgate Park/Beacon Hill)

Lead: National Trust

Cost: £2,000

Title: Geological Heritage

Details: promote, link, geological centre e.g. refer to the British Geological Survey Map of Charnwood- this is excellent:

- Produce simplified version of map
- Include parking, walk/routes cycling/café facilities etc.
- Establish a few more interpretative boards

Leads: CBC and LCC

Cost: £50,000

Title: Rocks Mapping

Details: map the location with detailed information on the age of the all rocks and fossils in the area

Lead: Natural England

Cost: £10,000

Title: Famous People Project

Details: school project, potentially alongside the historical society, with the aim to research famous people from the Charnwood area and them incorporate them into the trail to add to its appeal.

Title: Roving Conversation Volunteers

NB. This is a people project

Details: help landowners improve habitats-

- Cut/rake/remove hay (mini baler for hard to access sites)
- Scrub/bracken control (needs to be well informed)
- Biological recording/monitoring to inform of habitat management

Lead: project staff led- community officer

Cost: £50,000

Title: Ediacaran Heritage Museum

Details: Charnia fossils are scattered, often on private land and vulnerable to damage either from individuals or through theft. Conservation of this area and the creation of world study centre highlighting Newfoundland and Ediacaran fossils
Lead: BGS/New Walk Museum

Title: Beacon Hill Education Centre

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 2 red

Details: an observatory at the top of the hill, which shows how a life unfolds and its relationship with road, rail, river, housing, education and countryside) mainly as an education centre, it should show the past and the present in tandem.

Lead: Charnwood Borough Council/LCC

Cost: £3,000,000

Title: Protecting White Clawed Crayfish

Stickers: 4 red

Details: safeguarding and conserving the remaining white-clawed Crayfish population in the Lin catchment (limited now to 1 pond) Population has been wiped out below Cropston Reservoir. Remaining could be put into special ponds to safeguard and protect from invasion.

Retaining WC crayfish on the Black Break upstream of Black Break reservoir SSSI. Could be a mechanical intervention such as a weir with a lip to halt invasion.

Lead: Environment Agency

Cost: £100,000

2. People

Title: Rural & Heritage Institute

Stickers: 8 green

Details: training and research centre to demonstrate/train local people (including NEETS, disadvantaged, vulnerable), introduction to the land management profession and offer training. Link with institutions e.g. Universities, Local Authorities, and Conservationists and include but not limited to:

- Pre 16
- Post 16
- Undergrad
- Members of the public

SLT has a proven track record

Lead: Sustainable England, Uni of Leicester, Nationwide England, TCV, Wildlife England, Bradgate Park, LCC, Charnwood National Forest

Cost (dependant on facility availability):

£250,000 to create facility

£30-40,000 project mgv

£75,000 equipment and maintenance

£20,000 running costs

Title: Outdoor Activity Centre

NB. Could be a communities project

Stars: 4 green

Details: engage young people and school trips to offer primarily:

- Quarries- abseiling and rock climbing

- Nanpantan reservoir- watersports
- Outdoors- orienteering

Lead: CBC or private organisation

Cost: £250,000

Title: Outdoor Activity Centre

Separate suggestion similar to above

Stars: 1 green

Details:

- Cater for the growing activity of outdoor cycling: focus on development of Swithland Woods
- Examine, maintain and improve external walking, cycling between existing attractions
- Link to Beaumanor Hall centre

Lead: Swithland Woods, LCC/CL B Council, Beaumanor Hall

Cost: £85,000

Title: Skills Workshops

Stickers: 3 green

Details: focusing primarily on younger and older people who are out of work or individuals that want to learn new skills such as:

- Dry stone walling
- Tree work
- Wildlife

Title: Rural Knowledge Hub

Stickers: 2 green

Details: develop a combined educational and low cost work space focusing on rural and water engineering skills, ideally linked to local universities e.g. DMU, Leicester and Loughborough. Potential to access funding or future replacement schemes depending on direction or choice of LEP.

Lead: Soar Catchment Partnership

Cost: £3,000,000

Title: Countryside for all Routes

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 2 green

Details: audit and survey the most accessible routes for the disabled and young families with pushchairs, market this via leaflet distribution and online access to such information

Lead: local access forum

Cost: £500 per route, 10 routes, £5,000

Title: Education

Stickers: 1 green

Details: to 'hook um whilst they're young' to the forest through camping and fires, being under canvas, biking, trees and fossils rewarded through badges

Lead: Scout and Guide movement

Cost: £50,000

Title: Education Centre

Stickers: 1 green

Details: identify a centre whereby young people can be educated on environmental and nature matters within a park setting, such as Beaumanor Hall

Lead: LCC

Cost: £25,000 PA

Title: Certification in Heritage Management

Stickers: 1 green

Details: provide access to accredited courses and modules for adult learners, to include:

- Wildlife and habitat conservation
- Historical heritage
- Mapping and monitoring
- Practical rural skills
- Research project

Lead: university, Wildlife Trust, National England etc.

Title: Volunteering

Stickers: 1 green

Details: to co-ordinate volunteering opportunities across the whole area and attract new volunteers, especially from those sectors not currently involved

Lead: project core team, VAL

Cost: £200,000

Title: Tour Leader Skills Training

Stickers: 1 green and 1 red

Details: walkers, horse riders and cyclists to share knowledge and show the public through events and organised days, designed to improve local knowledge

Lead: leader groups

Cost: minimal depending on structure of training and also participation

Title: Forest Link/Charnwood United

NB. This is a communities project

Details: develop and maintain effective links between affected communities, including transport, education, retail, jobs and health matters etc.

Lead: LCC

Cost: £50,000

Title: Centre for Study of Landscape History

Details: centre to offer MSC, PHD and vocational qualifications, Charnwood ideal location to offer the resource/practise element of the courses

Lead: Leicester University History Unit/Loughborough

Title: Masters Qualification

Details: linked to this and the Charnwood Forest tourism, marketing and environmental awareness

Lead: university

Cost: £50,000

Title: Fitness by Fun

NB. This is a communities project

Details: campaign to promote the benefits of physical and mental health by walking amongst nature, help to reduce stress on NHS, and reduce chance of diabetes, reduce stress and promote by organising organised events

Lead: district councils, sports development officers

Title: Small Bus Tour

NB. This is a communities project

Stickers: 1 green and 2 red

Details: run a tour guide bus for the less mobile around the Charnwood area, potentially ran by volunteers. It could be a mixture of popular routes but also the less seen, harder to park/access

Cost: cost of purchase and operation

3. Communities:

Title: The Outwoods Project

Stickers: 6 green

Details: make the Outwoods another hub within Charnwood:

- Improve infrastructure
- Orientation/signage
- Link to neighbouring sites
- Improve car park
- Develop visitor centre/ranger base
- Improve access for all
- Maps/signage
- Traffic flow

Lead: Charnwood Borough Council

Cost: £500,000

Title: Charnwood Access Tour Bus

Stickers: 4 green and 4 red

Details: from Wanlip park and ride with regular pick up buses to take visitors to and from Charnwood sites. Could change and adapt dependant on demand midweek, weekends, BH etc.

Lead: LCC

Title: Hop on and off Bus

(Separate suggestion similar to above)

Stickers: 2 green and 3 red

Details: buses at visitor centre visiting all sites in the park on circular basis, with fares payable, maybe run by commercial company.

Lead: LCC

Cost: £20,000 plus, scale dependent

Title: Forest Community Links

Stickers: 3 green

Details: create suitable links between communities across the whole of the forest area, leading to:

- Improved transport
- Better retail opportunities
- Improved quality of links and communications between communities

Lead: Leicestershire and Rutland rural communities, Voluntary action Charnwood

Cost: £10-15,000

Title: Identify Charnwood

Stickers: 3 green

Details: provision of identical signage throughout public sites in the forest to better identify brand Charnwood, utilise to be informative and send educational message.

Lead: NFC

Cost: £100,000

Title: Heritage Trails (themed and built on new research)

Stickers: 2 green

Details: the development of heritage trails, organised thematically, which could involve multiple partners e.g. LAHS, LUCHT, and LRWT. Charnwood Roots has a database of new research carried out by volunteers for the project- currently has 4,500 new pieces of research. This could be used to develop thematic walks, information boards on economic, cultural, religious, industrial and transport history

Lead: LUCHT (at Uni of Leicester)

Cost: £150,000 (dependant on scale and complexity)

Title: Neighbourhood Planning

Stickers: 2 green and 1 red

Details: to work with the parish council and NP groups to promote, protect and enhance historic/natural landscape via the NP process. To develop a decision-making toolkit that can be used across all NP groups in Charnwood Forest Area:

- Data sharing
- Evidence provision
- Impact assessment evaluation
- Decision making support
- Promotion of understanding of wider land use issues- fragmentation, flood risk, land and water pollution and the valuation of cultural/natural heritage

Lead: Sustainable Land Trust

Cost: £25,000

Title: Friends Of

Stickers: 1 green

Details: volunteers to help manage and maintain/improve sites, standards and accessibility to enable the disabled and young families with pushchairs and assistance to enjoy the countryside

Lead: local access forum

Title: Room with a View

Stickers: 1 green

Details: provide multi-purpose meeting rooms within the forest:

- School children environment and wildlife appreciation classes
- Base for occasional scout guides meetings etc.
- Base for walking running and orienteering events

Lead: Parish Councils

Cost: promotion and conservation of existing building, renovation costs, £50 k per unit?

Title: Charnwood Discovery Pass

Stickers: 1 green

Details: pay for a pass which allows entry to various historical sites, pass could also contain some sort of discounts to shops that contain a Charnwood sign. Could come in various shapes and forms

Title: Education

NB. This is a people project

Stickers: 1 green

Details: working with local schools to develop a package of tools to inform young people of the history of Charnwood on their doorsteps

Cost: £40,000

Title: Charnwood Forest Faire

Stickers: 1 green

Details: a woodland themed event bringing in people from across the park and communities outside together at the event celebrating rural/forest/craft/heritage which can be used to raise profile of opportunities/activities/environment

Title: Interactive Map

Stickers: 1 green

Details: a virtual; map of Charnwood which can be searched by historical theme, location or activity to assist visitors to explore the area. It could show volunteering opportunities or sites by their suitable for different demographics

Lead: Leicestershire promotions with Partners

Cost: £30,000 (guess)

Title: CF Conservation Volunteers

NB. This is a people project

Stickers: 1 green

Details: community task force to undertake works across the CF on public land or private land (permitted) such as tree removal, Heather plenty, rhododendron base lining, crag exposure, water management etc. Skills training would be required

Lead: TCU/NF

Cost: £30,000 PA

Title: Local Interest

Details: encourage local groups to take on projects with regular meetings and encourage them to aim at one off projects

Cost: nominal

Title: Community Ideas

(Separate suggestion similar to above)

Details: solicit ideas from the community and together on through the parish council

Title: Legacy Fund

Details: create a fund for deprived communities within and around the area to visit/volunteer to do stone walling, abseiling and orienteering

Lead: Charnwood Trust

Cost: £50,000

Title: Market Charnwood

Details: use of Charnwood Forest in all glory, co-ordinated theme/logo for all village names and road signs/street names etc. and create a tourist map with use of inset pictures of the key tourist attractions

Lead: Dick Howard

Cost: £250,000 plus

Title: Sculpture/Digital Media Projection

Details: digital media projection changing the journey from dinosaurs to modern day

Lead: LPL/Uni/Media Company

Cost: £80,000

Title: Visitor Centre

Stickers: 2 red

Details: provide a visitor centre to provide information and a focus point as well as car parking, perhaps Beaumanor Hall

Lead: LCC

Cost: £100,000

APPENDIX 5

Project name ideas

- Charnwood Rocks (9 dots)
- The Chronicles of Charnia (9 dots)
- None of the above! (8 dots)
- Charnwood Lives & Lava (& landscape) (5 dots)
- Charnwood Forest – The English Volcano (3 dots)
- Charnwood Rock & Stroll (3 dots)
- Charnwood: The Old Forest (2 dots)
- Made by Volcanoes, Shaped by People (i.e. use the strapline as the name) (1 dot)
- Charnwood Forest: Volcano of the Midlands (1 dot)
- Charnwood: Get Geo-Physical (1 dot)
- Experience Charnwood Forest (1 dot)
- Charnwood Forest: England's First Uplands
- Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership
- Discover the Charm of Charnwood Forest

I think these were posted after people had voted:

- Chronicles of Charnia or Charnwood Rocks: The Life and Times of a Leicestershire Volcano
- Charnwood: the forest heart of Leicestershire (or ancient heart, or volcanic heart or rocky heart)

Photos from the event



