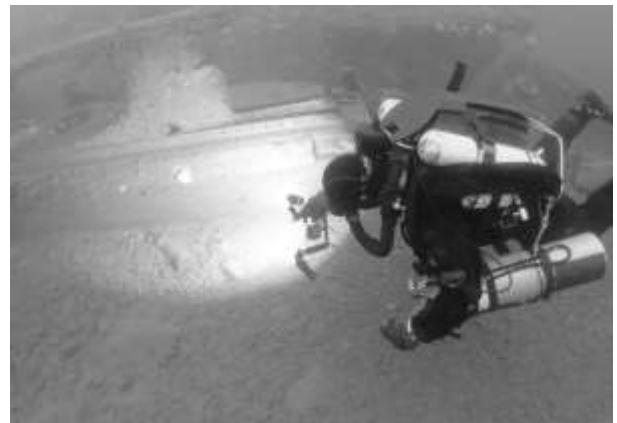


SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme

End of Scheme Evaluation



Selected Social Media images from project delivery during 2024

Final version ~ December 2024

Simon Lees
Countryside Training Partnership
www.countrysidettraining.co.uk

Draft version ~ November 2024

Contents

Summary ~ SeaScapes Landscape Partnership at a glance	3
1. What is a Landscape Partnership?	5
2. What did the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership set out to achieve?	7
3. The purpose and approach taken to this evaluation	18
4. How the resources were spent.....	19
6. Programme achievements and outcomes	30
6a. Increasing awareness and participation in the natural and cultural heritage.....	31
6a. Increasing awareness and participation ~ Community Grant Scheme	42
6b. Deepening engagement and volunteering.....	48
6c. Gaining skills, training and recording	57
6d. Improving built and natural heritage	61
6e. Improved access and interpretation.....	65
7. Programme learning: some key ingredients for future activity	67
8. Legacy ~ what next for SeaScapes?	74
9. Evaluation observations and recommendations	78

“SeaScapes would not be possible without the passion, commitment and expertise of our partners”



Key partners acknowledgement from Benefits of Engagement presentation ~ September 2024

Summary ~ SeaScapes Landscape Partnership at a glance

SeaScapes is a Landscape Partnership Scheme funded by the National Lottery's Heritage Fund delivered in 4¾ years between April 2020 and December 2024. The project delivery period has been extended by 9 months from the intended finish in March 2024 due in part to the restrictions faced by society from the coronavirus pandemic from March 2020 onwards.

From information collected throughout the project period and presented in this evaluation the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership can celebrate the following:

24 projects delivering a **£4 million cash investment** within the Tyne to Tees Seascape area plus:

- **£757,800 total volunteering** contributions

For connecting people with heritage and the marine environment:

- **20,497 participants** engaged through **1,165 activities, talks, walks and events**
- **11,774 days or 53 full working years** from **1,163 volunteers**
- **3,343 school children** involved in **education and learning activity**
- **1,396 people** attending and benefitting from **210 training and skills workshops**
- **273 community groups, businesses and schools** engaged
- Creating **88 new interpretation features** and **108 digital products to increase understanding and awareness**
- **18 community grants** distributed to **increase awareness and engagement of local heritage**
- **8 new routes** established within the area **increasing access to heritage**





For nature conservation and heritage restoration

- **6,203 bags of beach litter** and **87 bags of recycled material removed** to improve the marine heritage environment
- **280 survey records** submitted to the Local Records Centre
- **50 beach litter surveys** conducted
- **21 reports** adding to the **knowledge of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the SeaScapes area**
- **16 community heritage projects** including 6 archaeological investigations
- **12 projects** improving **15 km of local streams**
- **9 shipwrecks investigated** and adopted



Images from the SeaScapes website

1. What is a Landscape Partnership?

Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership programme

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), renamed in January 2019 as the National Lottery Heritage Fund (or Heritage Fund), distributes money raised by the National Lottery to support projects involving the national, regional and local heritage of the United Kingdom. Landscape Partnerships grew out of 14 Area Schemes that were introduced in 1999.

In 2004 HLF's second Strategic Plan (SP2) saw the replacement of Area Schemes by Landscape Partnerships. From 2008 to 2012, Landscape Partnerships were part of HLF's third Strategic Plan (SP3) while HLF's last Strategic Framework (SP4), covering the period 2013 to 2018, was launched in October 2012. Landscape Partnerships were the only HLF programme to focus primarily on rural areas, and offer grants of between £250,000 and £2 million. Schemes aim to conserve the heritage within areas of distinctive landscape character.

Landscape Partnerships are complex grant programmes. They are delivered through a partnership of bodies, normally including statutory agencies, local authorities, voluntary and community organisations. One of the goals of the programme is that schemes should actively engage local communities, while also meeting local social, environmental and economic needs.

Landscape Partnership Schemes need to address the conservation of the natural, built and cultural heritage. They are comprised of a number of discrete projects that include heritage conservation and restoration, access, education and training delivering evenly across all of the following of the nine programme outcomes:

Heritage will be:	People will have:	For communities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better managed• In better condition• Identified and recorded	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed skills• Volunteered time• Learnt about heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The local area will be better to work, live or visit• Negative environmental impacts will be reduced• More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage

Durham Heritage Coast, on behalf of Durham County Council, submitted and gained a Stage 1 approval from HLF in October 2017. Following an 18 month development period a Stage 2 application, supported by the Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) was submitted to the Heritage Fund in November 2019 with confirmation of a successful award and permission to start being received in March 2020. The date of the initial application in 2017 meant that the scheme was subject to the Heritage Fund's application and implementation process during SP4.

Landscape

Landscape Partnerships contribute significantly to the UK's commitment to implementation of the European Landscape Convention. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) sees 'landscape' as multifaceted, multipurpose and multifunctional, the product of the action and interaction of humans and nature over time. Landscape is the place where people live and work and which people visit. Landscape provides vital benefits such as food, water and other 'ecosystem services'. Landscape is valued by people for many different reasons and is 'used' in many different ways.

The ELC's definition of 'Landscape' as '*an area as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and /or human factors*' is a rich concept that encompasses but goes beyond the traditional (geomorphological, ecological, archaeological, or aesthetic) approaches. The ELC makes it clear that people are at the heart of all landscapes (the commonplace and 'degraded' as well as the well-known) each of which has its distinctive character and meaning to those who inhabit or visit it. The ELC approach defines landscape as:

- The result of the complex interaction of natural (e.g. geology, soils, biodiversity), cultural (settlement, land use), the perceptual and aesthetic (experience, associations, tranquillity, colour);
- Linking past, present and future as the dynamic manifestation of physical processes and human intervention (has always changed and will continue to do so)
- Important to people, multiple and sometimes contested values, including tangible and intangible dimensions;
- Existing at any scale from large tracts of land such as mountain ranges, to small locally important spaces such as parks and streetscapes.

There is a considerable overlap between the provisions of the ELC and the objectives of HLF's landscape partnership programme, which is the only national grant programme whose objectives largely coincide with the ELC philosophy, with **SeaScapes being the first Landscape Partnership Scheme within the national programme to be focussed on the coast.**



Map showing the location of Landscape Partnerships that were awarded funds by the Heritage Fund from 2004 to 2018

2. What did the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership set out to achieve?

Background and strategic context

The SeaScapes Landscape Partnership focusses on an area of the North East Coast covering the Magnesian Limestone seascape between the River Tyne and the River Tees, from the England Coast Path (renamed in May 2023 as the King Charles III England Coast Path) out to 6 nautical miles. The total scheme area is 359 km² and encompasses four local authorities: South Tyneside, Sunderland, Durham and Hartlepool. The map below shows the boundary of the scheme area, the Magnesian Limestone escarpment, the proposed target audience area and the King Charles III England Coast Path.

Many of the SeaScapes coastal communities live within the 10% most deprived areas nationally, including significant areas of Hartlepool, the Durham Coast and Hendon in Sunderland, Seaham, Whitburn and Marsden plus areas of South Shields feature within the 20% most deprived. Significant areas covered by SeaScapes lie within the 10% most deprived for “health”, “education, skills and training” and “employment”.



Location map from Landscape Conservation Action Plan

The 359 km² covered by SeaScapes is defined by seascape characters and “*is an area united by shared geological, natural and cultural heritage*”. The SeaScapes area is much larger than the recommended 200 km² within Heritage Fund guidance for Landscape Partnership schemes and was chosen for the following reasons:

- **The Magnesian Limestone is the foundation of the seascape, both above and below water**, forming the characteristic yellow cliffs and rocky seafloor. Following community and stakeholder consultation, the scheme area was extended beyond the Magnesian Limestone escarpment in order to include communities with shared cultural heritage, notably South Shields to the north. Conversations revealed that the Rivers Tyne and Tees frame the seascape, with a change in cultural and aesthetic character visible beyond these natural barriers.
- **The seaward limit of the scheme matches the inshore zone from 0 to 6 nautical miles**, as delineated for marine management purposes in English seas, including the jurisdictions of the North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) and Natural England. The area sits within Marine Character Area (MCA) 22 as developed within the North East Marine Plan. This boundary mirrors the underwater extent of the characteristic geology that forms the seabed.
- In order to ensure the SeaScapes scheme maintained a maritime focus, the decision was made to use the King Charles III England Coast Path the landward limit for all scheme activity. **This helped define a 219km² audience area**, covering the coastal communities that have grown from this seascape.

The key component of the development phase was the production of a Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) that formed the basis of the second round application and subsequent project delivery. Key extracts taken from the LCAP describing some of the heritage features of the area includes the following headline descriptions:

Local relationships with heritage and the sea

The SeaScapes Landscape Partnership area bears the physical impact of people’s relationship with the sea, taking many forms between the Tyne and Tees over the centuries, and leaving features of great cultural heritage. Harbour works and piers extend out from the coast at the mouths of the Tees, Wear and Tyne, and at Seaham, overlooked by buildings on headlands such as Hartlepool and Tynemouth, conveying strong relationships with the sea dating back to Medieval times. Seaton Tower and Beacon Tower, recall the vital importance of safe navigation on a difficult coast, helping vessels ranging from fishing boats to huge cargo ships. The Wave Basin Battery at Sunderland was built in 1869 to defend the port against attack, highlighting another important theme of the SeaScapes area. Now Grade II listed, the Wave Basin Battery is only surviving example of a Rifled Muzzle-Loading Battery between the Humber and Tweed.

Historic wrecks

Historic wrecks, in large numbers from all periods, lie on the seabed, concentrated close to the mouths of the Rivers Wear and Tyne, reflecting the dangers of accessing these harbours; wartime wrecks mark an era when harbour entrances were targets for mines and torpedoes. **The coastal waters between the Tyne and Tees were the most dangerous in the British Isles – with 43.8 shipwrecks per mile.** Navigation lights were constructed, including the now Grade II listed Seaton High Light (1838), and lighthouses at Seaham, Seaburn, Roker and Souter.

Over 600 wrecks lie off the coast, many unexplored and of unknown condition or history. A 19th Century collier brig lies exposed on the Seaton foreshore, and is designated a Protected Wreck for its archaeological importance. From steamers to U-Boats, these shipwrecks are now artificial reefs, colonised by marine creatures and creating new habitats.

Significant natural heritage assets

The natural heritage of the Tyne to Tees Coast is of international and national importance. The King Charles III England Coast Path runs alongside the only example of vegetated sea cliffs on Magnesian Limestone exposures in the UK. These cliffs extend for over 20 km, and the clifftop meadows and slopes support all of the UK's paramaritime Magnesian Limestone vegetation with unique invertebrate life. The grasslands are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), with much of the coast designated a National Nature Reserve (NNR).

Towards the southern end of the scheme area, the Magnesian Limestone cliffs drop to a coastal fringe of botanically important sand dunes and areas of shingle. This area becomes a raucous seabird colony in the summer months, as hundreds of Little Terns arrive to breed. To safeguard this internationally important population, it is designated a Ramsar site and Special Protection Area (SPA).



Raising awareness of Little Terns

Sections of the coast were once the most polluted in Europe, the beaches and seabed thick with colliery spoil. Significant restorative work undertaken in the 1990s that resulted in considerable improvements in the quality of the coastal landscape and the restored Magnesian Limestone grasslands, dunes, cliffs and stacks. Following designation of the Heritage Coast in March 2001, the Heritage Coast Partnership was awarded the UK Landscape Award in 2010. Much of the coast is now designated as Special Area of Conservation (SAC), covering the cliffs, sand dunes and shores down to the high water mark.

Beyond the high tide line, the intertidal zone is of international importance, home to Purple Sandpipers and Turnstones, which spend their winters feeding on the invertebrates of the rocky shore. Parts of the foreshore are designated as Special Protection Area for over-wintering birds.

Beneath low water, habitats include dense beds of kelp, and a mosaic of seabed habitats: sand, muddy sand, rock and reefs. Dive surveys in 1991 found a seabed smothered in colliery spoil, devoid of life, more recent surveys have documented lobsters, soft corals and abundant fish; survey dives since 2009 continue to record species previously unknown to the area. Sightings of porpoises, dolphins and whales continue to increase year-on-year, demonstrating natural recovery following positive restoration works.

The high-quality geological evidence preserved in the coastline has resulted in designation of six Geological Conservation Review (GCR) sites.

Landscape Conservation Action Plan built, cultural and natural heritage descriptions

The scheme vision and aims

The SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme is the coming together of a number of different organisations and communities along the “Tyne to Tees, Shores and Seas” with the intention of working towards a vision to:

“Reveal and better manage the hidden heritage of our unique seascape and create opportunities for learning, access and enjoyment in order to ignite stewardship of this special place for generations to come”

SeaScapes Landscape Conservation Action Plan vision

Taken from the Landscape Conservation Action Plan:

This vision builds on the special characteristics of our shared seascape, its natural, built and cultural heritage, the threats to which that heritage is exposed (and the opportunities they present), and our ambition to ensure our scheme has legacy through community stewardship.

The vision changed during the development phase. The updated vision makes greater focus on the creation of opportunities for learning, access and enjoyment in line with community input and consideration of the new Heritage Fund outcomes, particularly around wellbeing and involving a wider range of people with heritage.

Over the 18 month development period, the partnership worked closely to better improve its understanding of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the SeaScapes area. The partnership engaged with communities along the coast, spoke to people and encouraged ideas and opinions, to better understand local need. Through this process, a series of audits and development documents were produced that identified 23 different yet interrelated projects around five strategic aims that would help to work towards the vision for the SeaScapes area.

1. Bring our hidden heritage to life using innovative methods and participative approaches, ensuring that we reach beyond our usual audiences.
2. Work with coastal communities, sea users, landowners, managers and other partners to ensure our seascape heritage, whether natural, built or cultural, is better recorded, managed and in better condition.
3. Tell the stories of our dynamic seascape, from geological, industrial, wartime and cultural perspectives, revealing how it has shaped our coastal communities and set the scene for the next exciting chapter.
4. Improve access gateways and opportunities, breaking down barriers and allowing local communities to make full use of the seascape’s coastal and marine assets.
5. Provide opportunities for learning, training and enjoyment, so that the heritage of the area is better appreciated; engendering a stewardship of our unique seascape for generations to come.

These five strategic aims aligned with many of the outcomes of the Heritage Fund’s Landscape Partnership Programme namely:

Heritage will be; better managed; in better condition; identified and recorded

People will have; developed skills; volunteered time; learnt about heritage

For communities; the local area will be better to work, live or visit; more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage; negative environmental impacts will be reduced.

Programme themes and project delivery

From the work undertaken in identifying the vision and aims during the development phase, four interlinking core themes emerged, to help bring together all of the identified project delivery. These were:

<p>SeaScapes over Time</p> <p>Telling the story of the Tyne to Tees seascape from Zechstein Sea, through ice ages, wars and significant industrial history up to the present day.</p>
<p>Revealing Hidden Heritage</p> <p>Using innovative methods and participative approaches to ensure our heritage is better recorded, in better condition and better understood, engaging beyond our usual audiences.</p>
<p>Accessing the Sea</p> <p>Improving access gateways and opportunities, breaking down barriers and allowing local communities to make full use of the seascape's coastal and marine assets.</p>
<p>Blue Future</p> <p>Providing opportunities for learning, training and enjoyment so that the heritage of the area is better appreciated; engendering a stewardship of this unique seascape for generations to come.</p>

SeaScapes ~ Themes from the LCAP

At the outset, the Partnership intended to deliver the identified programme of 23 discrete yet inter-related projects taking place within the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership area, as demonstrated in the following mix of project activity:

Theme A ~ SEASCAPES OVER TIME	
7 projects contributed to this theme made up of:	
Project	Lead partner
A1: Hartlepool Lights	Hartlepool Borough Council
A2: Coast at War	Hartlepool Borough Council
A3: Sea to Shore: Exploring the Sounds of the past through the community voices	Living History North East
A4: Sea to Shore	SeaScapes Delivery Team
A5: Changing Coastline	Hartlepool Borough Council and Tees Archaeology
A6: Red Acre Point	Seaham Harbour Community Interest Company
A7: Reading the Rocks	Durham University



Reading the Rocks ~ public engagement events

Theme B ~ REVEALING HIDDEN HERITAGE

5 projects contributed to this theme made up of:

Project	Lead partner
B1: Our Coast, Our Wildlife	National Trust
B2: Intertidal Interactive	Durham Wildlife Trust
B3: Beneath the Waves	Newcastle University
B4: Wave Basin Battery	Sunderland City Council
B5: Foodscapes	Newcastle University



Community archaeology at Roker Battery ~ investigating the role of sea defences

Theme C ~ ACCESSING THE SEA

8 projects contributed to this theme made up of:

Project	Lead Partner
C1: Access to the Beach	SeaScapes Delivery Team
C2: Marsden Bay Accessing our Heritage	South Tyneside Council
C4: Brus to Headland Circular Cycle Route	Hartlepool Borough Council
C5: SeaScapes Stations	SeaScapes Delivery Team
C6: BlueScapes	National Trust (Officer within SeaScapes team)
C7: Coast to Clavering Circular Walk	Hartlepool Borough Council
C8: King Charles III England Coast Path Identity	England Coast Path Partnership and SeaScapes
C9: Whitburn Coastal Centre	National Trust

An additional project within this theme, **C3: Secret Naming Place** was removed during the development phase due to insufficient match funding being guaranteed and available to support delivery of the proposed activity.

Theme D ~ BLUE FUTURE

3 projects contributed to this theme made up of:

Project	Lead partner
D1: Beach Care and Aware	Northumbrian Water Group
D2: Events, Engage and Activity	SeaScapes Delivery Team
D3: SeaScapes Community Grants	SeaScapes Delivery team via external provider



SeaScapes beach clean event

Project changes and additions

As with any complex multi-year programme, changes and opportunities emerged during the implementation phase of the Landscape Partnership Scheme that led to additional activities being delivered. In addition to the 23 original projects as submitted with the Stage 2 application, one cross cutting project **SeaScapes Co/Lab was led and delivered through Sunderland University.**

From the outset, SeaScapes Co/Lab did not have a specific project plan to work to and was designed as creative enquiry delivering **“a three year public engagement programme that uses art and creativity to explore how people can better connect with the world and co-develop sustainable ways to care for the marine environment.”**

Taking account of the one project **(C3: Secret Naming Place)** that did not progress during the development phase and the addition of SeaScapes Co/Lab as cross cutting activity, **a total of 24 projects were delivered through the duration of the Landscape Partnership Scheme.**

As delivery has moved towards completion, the outputs and outcomes from all 24 projects have been captured by the SeaScapes delivery team and partners and it is this information that has been included in the overall totals and evidence contained within this report to give a picture of what the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership has delivered “as a whole”.

Who has been involved?

In order to deliver the programme of activity, the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership set up a Partnership Board that included **an Independent Chair** and nominated representatives of the following Delivery and Collaborative Partners, with additional members co-opted for their expertise or community links. Some of the collaborative partners were more involved than others and had very little to do with delivery, they were available to call on as necessary and needs arise.

Delivery Partners

- Durham County Council (lead partner)
- Durham University
- Durham Wildlife Trust
- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Living History North East
- Northumbrian Water Group
- National Trust
- Seaham Marina CIC
- South Tyneside Council
- Sunderland City Council
- Sunderland University
- Newcastle University

Collaborative Partners

- East Durham Heritage Group
- Environment Agency
- Groundwork North East & Cumbria
- Heugh Battery Museum
- Marine Management Organisation
- Natural England
- North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Project governance

The **Seascapes Landscape Partnership Board** evolved during the development phase, and this has continued during the delivery phase. The Partnership Board met quarterly, taking a strategic overview, and overseeing the successful implementation of the scheme: monitoring progress in delivery, resolving issues that arose and making decisions, as necessary.

The lead partner and accountable body for the project was Durham County Council. It is through the accountable body that the **SeaScapes Delivery Team** were appointed to be hosted and deliver the scheme and support the Landscape Partnership Board. Durham County Council were responsible for overseeing all financial, administration and procurement processes in line with their own internal procedures and follow those advised by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

In addition to the SeaScapes Delivery Team, **Three “Task and Finish” advisory groups** were established to advise the Partnership Board on: Historic Environment, Natural Heritage and Interpretation. The relevant SeaScapes officer led each group, bringing partners and other together to provide advice for the Board as needed. SeaScapes project leads attended other Task and Finish Groups, to ensure groups did not work in isolation.

Project Delivery

To deliver the SeaScapes programme of work, across the 24 projects, the partnership developed a delivery team and management structure. The **SeaScapes Delivery Team** worked together, from the Durham County Council offices based near Seaham at the heart of the scheme area. Some staff members were employed by Delivery Partners, to draw on relevant expertise, resources, contacts and volunteers. They were embedded within their host organisation, using a host email address and attending host team meetings both virtually and in person.

The **SeaScapes Delivery Team**, employed by Durham County Council consisted of:

- A full-time Delivery **Manager** ~ responsible to the SeaScapes Partnership Board with day-to-day line management by Durham County Council. Responsible for the delivery of SeaScapes, setting the strategic direction, leading on the day-to-day operation, managing staff, consultants and contractors, working with partners, reporting to funders and leading where needed on the delivery of key projects. The Delivery Manager had direct line management for the Project Officer (Access & Volunteering) and the Finance & Grant Administrator.
- A full-time **Project Officer (Access & Volunteering)** ~ supported the volunteering activity across the SeaScapes area, whilst linking into the volunteer support carried out by partner organisations. Responsible for delivering the access-related projects.
- Part-time (3 days per week) **Finance and Grant Administrator** ~ providing finance, administrative and project support to the rest of the team. Assisting with the delivery of projects, assembling information needed for grant returns, servicing meetings, raising orders and managing the office.
- A full time **Beach Care Advisor** ~ funded by Northumbrian Water.

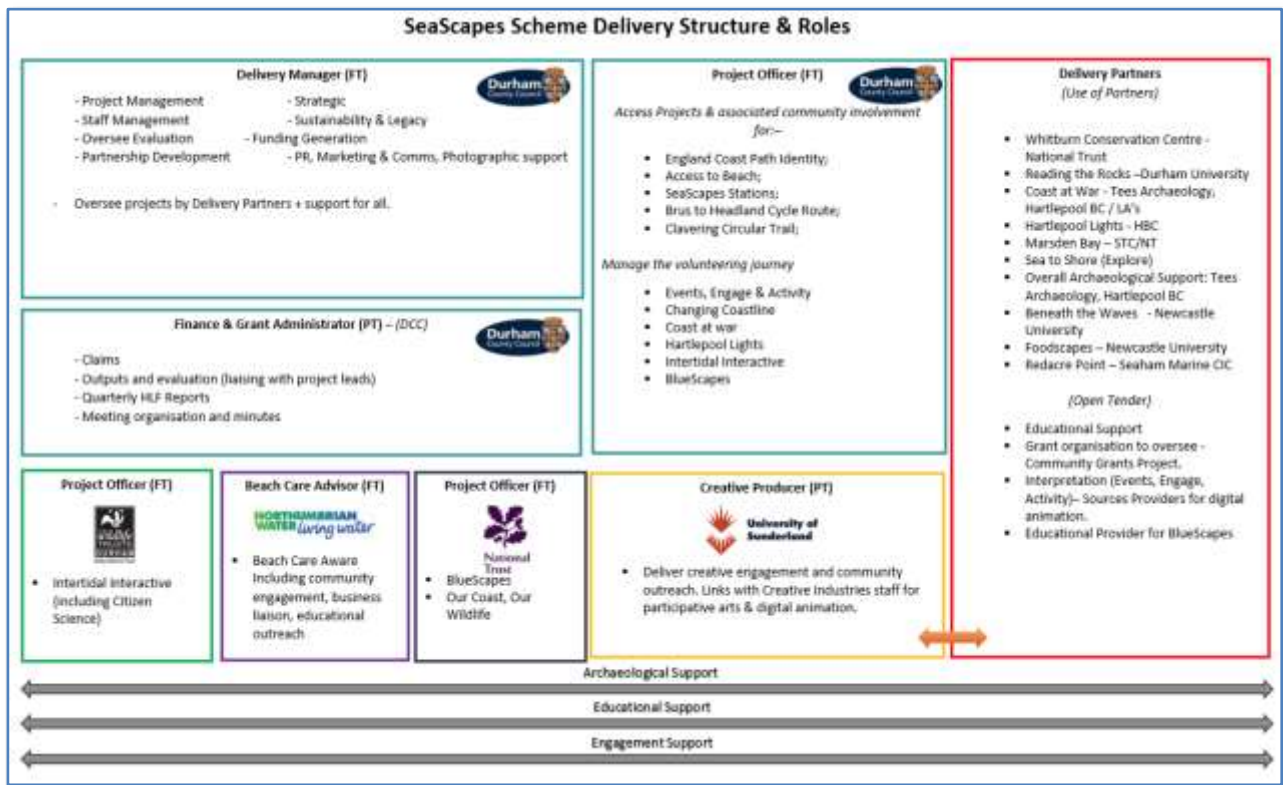
Other members in the delivery team, employed by partner organisations but were based with other members of the SeaScapes Team for part of the week were:

- A full time **Natural Heritage Project Officer** ~ employed by Durham Wildlife Trust.
- A full time **BlueScapes Officer** ~ employed by the National Trust.
- Part-time (1 day per week) **Creative Producer** ~ employed by the University of Sunderland.



SeaScapes Delivery team staff structure from LCAP

In addition to those activities delivered directly by the staff team, a number of projects have been delivered through delivery partner organisations using their staff, researchers or volunteers. The contracted educational support was provided by OASES.



SeaScapes delivery structure and core team roles from the LCAP

In reality the project staffing for SeaScapes was subject to significant churn and personnel change with **6 out of 10 roles subject to personnel change in 2023**. During the course of year three of project delivery the core staff team was been subject to significant personnel change that needs to be acknowledged in the evaluation not just in terms of loss of capacity to deliver activity when posts are vacant but also the loss of relationships, knowledge and “project memory” that would be built up within previous staff members. As part of this change in personnel the part time Finance and Grant administrator role was changed to a full time Finance and Administration Officer to reflect the different needs of the programme at this particular time.

To help give context for the many project delivery changes and to best depict personnel turnover, a project staffing GANTT chart was produced as part of the Year Three annual evaluation report and can be seen on the next page.

SeaScapes project delivery staffing overview ~ April 2020 to November 2023

Staff	Role	Hours	2020												2021												2022												2023																																																																																			
			A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec																																																																											
Karen	Delivery Manager	Full time	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">National lockdown 1</div> <div style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">Staff delays across the partnership</div> <div style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">National lockdown 2</div> <div style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">National lockdown 3</div> </div>												From 14th September 2020												From 30th November 2020												From 1st April 2021												From 6th April 2021												From 19th April 2021												From April 2021												From April 2021												From October 2021												From December 2020											
Peter	Finance and Grants	3 days													Alex												Jenny from March 20th												Finance and admin gap ~ 3 rounds of recruitment												Sana f/t																																																																							
Louise	Beach Care	Full time													Access and volunteering gap												Michael from 17th April												Charlotte from 3rd July												Amanda ~ 3 days beach tots, little terns												John ~ 2 days, walks/strategic																																																											
Vicky	Access and Volunteering	Full time													Maggie												Maria																																																																																															
Sarah	Bluescapes (National Trust)	Full time																																																																																																																								
Dee	Intertidal Interactive (DWT)	Full time																																																																																																																								
Rachael	Beneath the Waves (Newcastle Uni)																																																																																																																									
Peter	Beneath the Waves (Newcastle Uni)																																																																																																																									
Suzanne	Foodscapes (Newcastle Uni)																																																																																																																									
Suzy	Creative Producer (Sunderland Uni)	1 day																																																																																																																								

3. The purpose and approach taken to this evaluation

It is a condition of National Lottery Heritage Fund grant awards that recipients carry out an end-of-scheme evaluation. The Heritage Fund have published specific guidance on evaluation for Landscape Partnerships which advises on how best to approach the evaluation of a complex, multi-project scheme, with an emphasis on the need to look across the whole range of activity, to identify how these have complemented one another, hopefully demonstrating that the scheme as a whole has delivered more than the sum of the individual projects.

While there is inevitably an element of judgement and criticism in any evaluation process, for those involved in a scheme it can provide a lot of positive feedback. The guidance states the aims of an evaluation as being able to “prove” (that resources have been well spent, ambitions achieved) and “improve” (capturing lessons learnt through experience of programme delivery).

With this recommended approach in mind, SeaScapes sought to make the most of the process by implementing a longitudinal approach to monitoring and evaluation, with an ethos of constructive reflection, aiming to draw out the learning from this project for the core team and partners to share with the Heritage Fund and other similar grant schemes. In order to achieve this, the following methodology was adopted.

- **Inception and development** ~ working with the project team and partners to develop the monitoring and evaluation framework building on work completed in the development phase, to help guide the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data and specifically help with bringing together all the known outputs, outcomes and indicators into one place.
- **Annual reporting** ~ key elements of the evaluation process included producing three annual reports to capture significant achievements and learning to cover the first three full years of programme delivery. Each report included project update meetings with the Delivery Manager, facilitated reflections at meetings with the SeaScapes team, a review of the scheme documentation, plus reporting and presentation of findings to the Board.
- **Ongoing coaching and project completion templates** ~ meetings with the project team members to give an overview of the evaluation approach and information needed to populate a final report. Producing individual project completion templates to help guide collection of evaluation data, information and learning.
- **Evaluation films** ~ producing two short films to complement the year two and end of scheme evaluation findings.
- **End of scheme evaluation** ~ the information collected from the project completion reports by the project team and partners throughout the duration of the project has helped to feed into and shape this end-of-scheme evaluation.



Extracts from SeaScapes year two evaluation film ~ July 2022

4. How the resources were spent

24 projects delivering a £4.1 million cash investment to improve and increase awareness of the heritage of the SeaScapes area.

Financial summary

By September 2024, SeaScapes had evidenced a cash spend totalling £3,825,186 or 92% of the anticipated total cash value of £4,167,446 from 16 financial claims. Information from the project team in November 2024 shows outstanding project activity to total £166K by Scheme completion in December 2024. This leaves a balance of expenditure totalling £176K to make up the original cash investment of £4,167,446. From the LCAP, the total value of in kind activity to reflect volunteer time and other non-cash contributions was £692,541 **to give an overall estimated Scheme value of £4,859,992.**

Overall cash expenditure profile

The following table summarises the figures presented in the quarterly financial claims to NLHF. Yearly totals have been included to help give a sense of how project claims have unfolded over the duration of Scheme delivery.

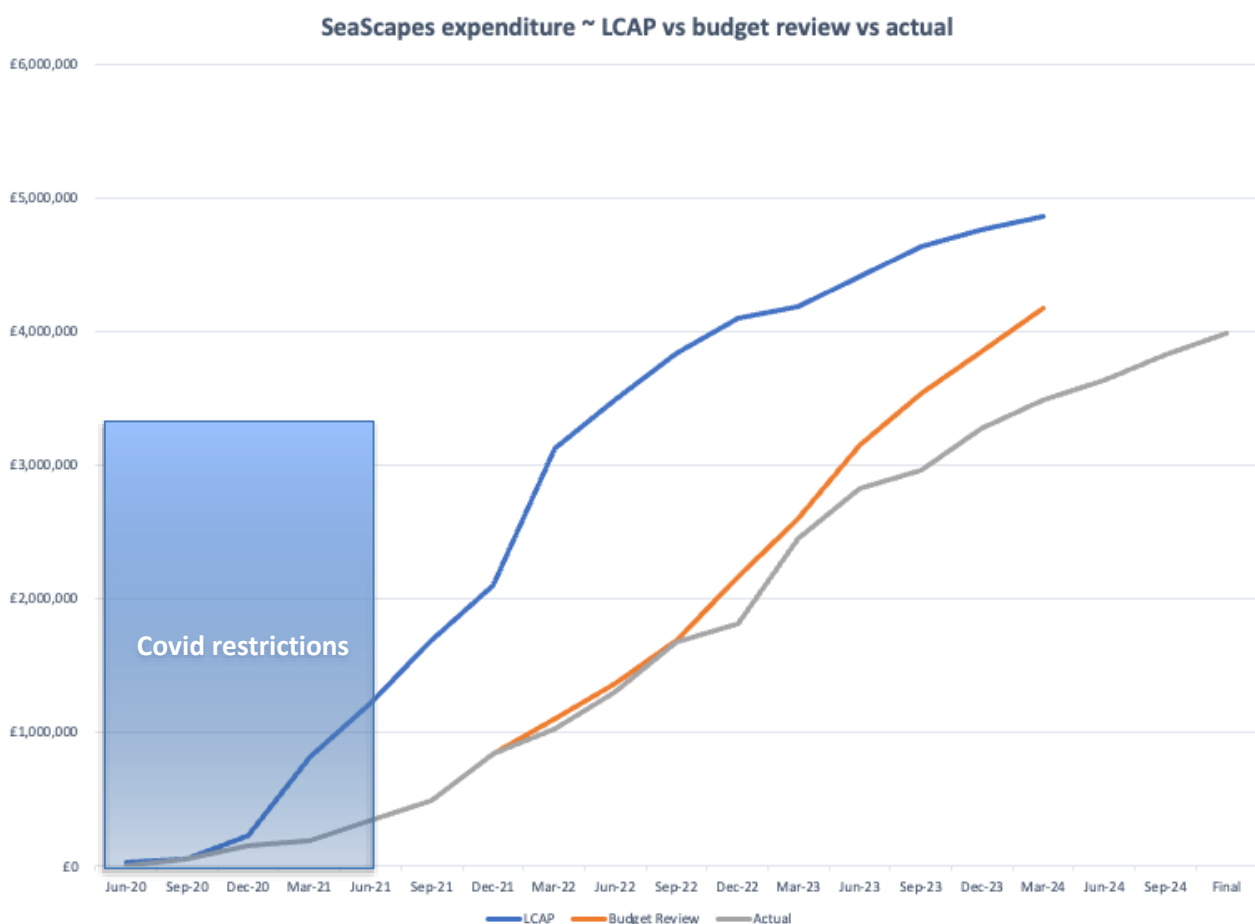
Scheme Delivery						
Claim	Date	LCAP	2022 review	Actual claims	Cumulative	Yearly
Interim	Jun 20	£24,809	£0			£192,602
	Oct 20	£50,075	£51,567	£51,567	£51,567	
1.	Dec 20	£226,372	£158,146	£106,579	£158,146	
2.	Mar 21	£814,314	£192,602	£34,456	£192,602	£833,185
3.	Jun 21	£1,221,791	£341,390	£148,788	£341,390	
4.	Sep 21	£1,690,308	£486,296	£144,906	£486,296	
5.	Dec 21	£2,096,806	£838,040	£351,744	£838,040	£1,430,359
6.	Mar 22	£3,128,740	£1,102,412	£187,747	£1,025,787	
7.	Jun 22	£3,483,091	£1,359,621	£274,533	£1,300,320	
8.	Sep 22	£3,837,598	£1,688,937	£380,434	£1,680,754	£1,028,041
9.	Dec 22	£4,091,841	£2,167,162	£135,860	£1,816,614	
10.	Mar 23	£4,186,413	£2,596,302	£639,532	£2,456,146	
11.	Jun 23	£4,407,163	£3,144,908	£372,186	£2,828,332	£506,817
12.	Sep 23	£4,631,167	£3,536,753	£136,160	£2,964,492	
13.	Dec 23	£4,762,422	£3,848,679	£311,582	£3,276,074	
14.	Mar 24	£4,859,990	£4,167,446	£208,113	£3,484,187	£506,817
15.	Jun 24	9 month programme extension ~ delivery to Sept 24, completion by Dec 24		£145,918	£3,630,105	
16.	Sep 24			£195,031	£3,825,136	
17.	Dec 24			£165,868	£3,991,004	

Key points to note are:

- The slow start for Year One with £192,602 or just 5% of total cash expenditure by March 2021, wholly attributable to project commencement coinciding with the start of the coronavirus pandemic and the level of disruption caused for 12 to 18 months through following the necessary national government guidelines. It took a full 12 months for the programme delivery team to get in place and led to the following year one evaluation observation that:

“Three years remain to deliver a four year planned programme of activity.”

- The large level of programme activity with a figure of £1.43 million being claimed in year three, showing the amount of background preparatory work undertaken in years one and year two reflecting the presence and activity of the full delivery team.
- The final remaining claim estimated to be £165,868 to bring total expenditure to £3,991,004 leaving a balance of £176,442 or a 4% variance on the original cash budget.



SeaScapes expenditure profile to November 2024

Information collected for all the evaluation reports can demonstrate that SeaScapes was financially well managed with clear presentation of figures and reporting to the partnership board, with very prompt contractor payments and quarterly claims to the National Lottery Heritage Fund that helped manage reputational risk on behalf of Durham County Council as the lead partner and accountable body.

5. Principal achievements: what was delivered on the ground

In order to develop the headline achievements for the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership “as a whole”, the outputs from each individual project have been sorted, aggregated and presented according to headline output categories developed by the Heritage Lottery Fund to support early monitoring of their Landscape Partnership programme.

Following the transition to the National Lottery Heritage Fund it is no longer a requirement for Landscape Partnerships Schemes to report against these headings, yet from an evaluation perspective they are a very useful starting point and an opportunity to look at collective achievements and a mechanism to present data “in the round” rather than on a project by project basis. To get a picture of the overall achievements ofc, the anticipated aggregated outputs from the LCAP have been presented along with actual outputs achieved.

The outputs have been gathered from three main sources; the individual project completion reports; two spreadsheets compiled by the SeaScapes team that captured the total of volunteer hours contributed; conversations with the Project Manager confirming outputs delivered, in particular for the access work. This information is presented with observations giving the main headlines of actual outputs achieved.

Access

Access promoting local heritage totalling 16 km has been created

What we said to the Heritage Fund in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to September 2024
<p>16 km of walking and cycling trails created within the SeaScapes area</p> <p>744 fingerposts, signs and way markers to improve access along the coast</p> <p>5 routes with associated signage and 2 snorkelling trails created</p> <p>0.6km of surface improvements and 70 steps to increase access to the sea shore</p>	<p>16 km of walking and cycling trails created within the SeaScapes area</p> <p>744 fingerposts, signs and way markers to improve access along the coast</p> <p>5 routes with associated signage created</p>



Walking in the footsteps of Romans ~ exploring the coastal heritage of South Tyneside

Final evaluation ~ Access outputs have been achieved

SeaScapes has achieved the original intentions for promoting access to local heritage with two new walking and cycling trails created totalling 16 km in length.

Some intended access work has changed since the project development phase with the work proposed at Marsden Bay improving access through surface improvements and steps to the beach moving outside the scope of the landscape partnership scheme.



Community Grant Scheme launch and Great British Beach Clean 2022

Advice

What we said to the Heritage Fund in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to September 2024
<p>136 survey records submitted to Local Records Centre</p> <p>90 beach litter surveys conducted</p> <p>20 community grants distributed</p> <p>10 reports adding to the knowledge of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the SeaScapes area</p>	<p>280 survey records submitted to Local Records Centre</p> <p>50 beach litter surveys conducted</p> <p>18 community grants distributed</p> <p>21 reports adding to the knowledge of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the SeaScapes area</p> <p>£84,179 additional funding raised for participatory and socially engaged art events</p>

Final evaluation ~ Advice outputs have been exceeded

Some advice outputs have changed and altered over the duration of landscape partnership project delivery with a reduction in the number of beach litter surveys due to losing one year of project delivery at the outset due to the coronavirus pandemic and getting the project team in place.

Those activities contributing to exceeding the intended outputs include:

- 144 additional survey records submitted through Our Coast Our Wildlife and Intertidal Interactive
- The additional academic papers and research presentations delivered through Foodscapes
- £84,179 in additional external funding from the SeaScapes Co/Lab: University of Sunderland programme to help deliver extra participatory and socially engaged art events, performances and exhibitions



Intertidal Survey Volunteers and a Royal Ramble, discovering six different bumblebee species

Biodiversity and Landscape

What we said to the Heritage Fund in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to September 2024
<p>2,500 units of beach litter removed improve the marine heritage environment</p> <p>255 bags of recycled material removed improve the marine heritage environment</p> <p>12 projects improving 15km of coastal streams</p> <p>3+ha total area improved</p>	<p>6,203 rubbish bags of beach litter removed improve the marine heritage environment</p> <p>87 bags of recycled material removed improve the marine heritage environment</p> <p>12 projects improving 15km of coastal streams</p> <p>3.5 ha total area improved</p>



449 beach cleans delivered

Final evaluation ~ Biodiversity and landscape outputs have been exceeded

The removal of **6,203 bags of beach litter and 87 bags of recycled material from 449 beach cleans** to improve the marine heritage environment has been one of the highlights of SeaScapes with this activity being delivered along the coastline and engaging a wide cross section of the local community.

Actual “on the ground” improvements to increase biodiversity and landscape have been a small feature of the programme and have been achieved as intended.



Field Names Survey ~ exploring all 16 townships along the Tyne to Tees coastline

Cultural, built and maritime heritage

“By working with divers who experience underwater worlds, teaching them to capture these to share with friends, families, their local communities and beyond, we really enhanced local understanding of cultural and natural heritage along the Tyne to Tees coast.”

Beneath the Waves project officer reflections

What we said to the Heritage Fund in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to September 2024
<p>3 heritage features conserved</p> <p>12 community heritage projects</p> <p>1 archaeological investigation</p> <p>6 wrecks adopted and 3 3D wreck models created</p>	<p>2 heritage features conserved</p> <p>16 community heritage projects</p> <p>6 archaeological investigations</p> <p>9 wrecks adopted and 10 3D wreck models created</p>

Final evaluation ~ Cultural, built and maritime outputs have been achieved

Whilst there has been some inevitable variation in the type of cultural, built and maritime heritage activity it has been evidenced that the outputs have been achieved.



Tees Archaeology Social Media Video ~ geophysical survey in Seaton Carew

Employment

What we said to the Heritage Fund in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to September 2024
<p>4 staff making up the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership core team</p> <p>3 people employed through partner organisations</p>	<p>4 staff making up the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership core team:</p> <p>Scheme Manager, Finance and Grants Officer, Access and Volunteering Officer and Beach Care Officer (funded by Northumbrian Water)</p> <p>Project partners employ 5 staff:</p> <p>BlueScapes Officer (National Trust), Intertidal Interactive Officer (Durham Wildlife Trust), Beneath the Waves Research Assistants x2 (Newcastle University) Creative Engagement Producer (University of Sunderland)</p>



The SeaScapes team at programme launch

Final evaluation ~ Employment outputs have been exceeded

Direct employment outputs have been exceeded although the makeup of the SeaScapes delivery team been subject to significant change in personnel over the course of project delivery, particularly during 2023.

A change to the project plan for Beneath the Waves to substitute a 2-year data manager position with two 4-year postgraduate researcher posts, contributed to the increase in employment outputs and was recognised as **“one of the strongest improvements in delivery we could have envisaged,”** with project delivery benefitting from the additional resources and experience gained.



Some of the SeaScapes team at events during summer 2023

Participation and Learning

What we said to the Heritage Fund in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to September 2024
<p>c.11,000+ people participating and engaged through 520 activities, talks, walks and events</p> <p>3,491 school children from 111 schools engaged through education activity</p> <p>37 community groups engaged</p> <p>45 businesses engaged</p> <p>72 new interpretation features and digital products created to improve awareness</p> <p>600 unique download of Seascapes digital material</p> <p>312 students gaining a youth sailing certificate</p>	<p>c.20,497+ people participating and engaged through 1,165 activities, talks, walks and events</p> <p>3,343 school children from 121 schools engaged through education activity</p> <p>45 community groups engaged</p> <p>107 different businesses engaged</p> <p>88 new interpretation features and 108 digital products created to improve awareness</p> <p>3,500 unique downloads of digital material</p> <p>127 students gaining a water safety award or youth sailing certificate</p>



SeaScapes beach cleans ~ November 2024

Final evaluation ~ Participation and learning outputs have been exceeded with double the amount of engagement activity

Participation and engagement activity has been the outstanding success of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme. Activities, walks, talks and events have been held with great success despite the initial restrictions faced by the COVID 19 pandemic and getting the full project team in place. The success of the participation and learning programme was helped by:

- **Beach Care and Aware** ~ 7,247 people participating in Beach Cleans
- **Sunderland Co/Lab** ~ 6,762 people engaged in events and artistic collaborations
- **BlueScapes** ~ 2,136 people participating in taster events providing access to the coastline

The small grants programme has been an effective tool to offer support to local communities and organisations with their own project ideas to improve engagement and awareness of natural and cultural heritage of the SeaScapes area.

Interpretation has improved awareness and promotion of the area although not all outputs were fully quantified at the development stage.

“Amazing experience. Being in the sea did my mental health the world of good also trying something new built up my confidence. My motivation has been increased to do things for me that I enjoy. Met new people who I will keep in touch with. Thank you very so much. Staff were so helpful and kind and put my mind at ease and I felt safe.”

BlueScapes participant feedback

Volunteers

What we said to the Heritage Fund in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to September 2024
<p>1,425 volunteers engaged in activity across the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership area.</p> <p>1,866 volunteer days anticipated to be delivered.</p>	<p>1,163 volunteers engaged in activity across the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership area.</p> <p>11,774 volunteer days anticipated to be delivered.</p>



Field Names Survey Volunteer

In partnership with Tees Archaeology, the SeaScapes scheme seeks to explore the 'Changing Coastline' on the Tyne to Tees through collaborative local community heritage projects where local people will be introduced to the range of sources that are available for them to find out about their local heritage.

[READ MORE](#)



BlueScapes Active Outdoors Assistant

The BlueScapes project is recruiting volunteer Active Outdoors Assistants to help us run exciting and engaging activities in, on and beside the water for a range of audiences.

[READ MORE](#)



Volunteer Beach Clean Leader

Our Beach Care and Aware project is supported by Northumbrian Water and aims to improve the water environment along the coast for the benefit of its high-status national heritage and for our local communities.

[READ MORE](#)

Promoting volunteering opportunities on the SeaScapes website

Final evaluation ~ Volunteer outputs have been exceeded

Total volunteering effort is worth an additional contribution over £750,000, with the 11,774 volunteer days recorded, equivalent to a total in kind contribution of £757,800 using the latest value of volunteering figures from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. **This figure is £81,259 greater than the offer letter target of £676,541.**

The success of engaging local business is noted with 107 different businesses engaged and a total of 139 different corporate volunteering days delivered: Those organisations to engage with Seascales more than once included:

4 times ~ at least annually	ATOM Bank, Believe Housing, Durham University (staff and students), Northumbrian Water
3 times	Barclays, Capita, EE
2 times	Barrat Homes, Climate Action north, CoNavigate, ENGIE Equans, FW Capital, Gentoo Equans, Greenham Trading, Home Group, IQVIA, Jacobs, Newcastle Building Society, Playology, Premier Tech, Safe Call, Wave Utilities

Training and Skills

“A few years ago I never saw myself doing something like this. Every day is a school day, there is always something new to learn. As part of my lifelong learning this was an opportunity to try new things, learn new skills and meet new people.”

Changing Coastlines volunteer feedback

What we said to the Heritage Fund in the LCAP	Actual outputs achieved to September 2024
A programme of 100 heritage skills training, workshops and courses 1,119 people involved in heritage skills training	A programme of 210 training and skills workshops facilitated and delivered 1,396 people attending and benefitting from training and skills workshops

Final evaluation ~ Training and skills outputs have been exceeded with double the number of workshops facilitated and delivered

The number of training courses and workshops exceeded the outputs envisaged from the figures contained within the LCAP with 110 more courses delivered.



Beneath the Waves 3D modelling and Marine Conservation Society Marine Litter Survey training

“It is more than just digging holes, I enjoyed having the opportunity to draw a plan of the trench I had been excavating, fill in context sheets, and learn more about the processes of an excavation.”

Changing Coastlines volunteer feedback

Overall picture

From the information collected and presented for the final evaluation, SeaScapes can demonstrate that it has achieved and surpassed the original ambitions as anticipated within the LCAP and stage 2 submission with inevitable changes to individual projects as problems and difficulties arose at a local level during the implementation period, along with the restrictions faced with the delivery of certain activity due to the coronavirus pandemic between March 2020 and July 2021.

The overall story and picture presented is about significant delivery of a participation and learning programme connecting people with the marine environment and the success of engagement activity at a local community level along the Tyne to Tees coastline.

The biggest achievements to note and celebrate are:

- 20,497 people participating in 1,165 different activities, talks, walks and events throughout the Scheme
- Recruiting and engaging 1,163 volunteers contributing 11,774 days or the equivalent of an additional 53 full working years and a value of over £757,800
- Engaging 3,343 children and young people in education and learning activity
- 1,396 people attending and benefitting from 210 training and skills workshops
- 273 community groups, businesses and schools engaged

This extensive engagement and participation activity has helped to deliver:

- 6,203 bags of beach litter and 87 bags of recycled material removed to improve the marine heritage environment
- 280 survey records submitted to the Local Records Centre
- 50 beach litter surveys conducted
- 21 reports adding to the knowledge of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the SeaScapes area
- 16 community heritage projects including 6 archaeological investigations
- 12 projects improving 15 km of local streams

6. Programme achievements and outcomes

What has been collectively achieved

Collecting qualitative evidence relates to the change and outcomes that have been delivered by a project or scheme. This is important in relation to ‘people’ goals such as engagement, learning and skills training, where numbers often miss the main story about how people’s perceptions of their heritage, and their aspirations, have been changed.

Measuring outcomes are often more difficult to measure than quantitative outputs due to a number of complex factors such as:

- landscape change taking place over a longer period of time than delivery of the scheme and/or
- attributing individual change within people to one particular moment or activity...

SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme Outcomes

As part of developing the approach to monitoring and evaluation, five strategic “Scheme Outcomes” were identified and agreed with project partners. These five programme outcomes were linked to the 24 delivered projects, with evidence collected accordingly, recognising that some projects will deliver against more than one outcome and across a number of theme areas.

SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme Outcomes
6a. ~ Increasing awareness and participation in the natural and cultural heritage Increased awareness and understanding amongst the individuals, groups and local communities engaged of what makes the SeaScapes area special and the threats to the unique heritage.
6b. ~ Deepening engagement and volunteering People will have a deeper engagement with their marine heritage and will have volunteered time and developed skills and will have contributed to improving their natural and cultural heritage.
6c. ~ Gaining skills, training and recording People will have gained new skills in researching, restoring, conserving and understanding their SeaScape heritage. This work will be accessible and where appropriate in the public domain located on websites and data records.
6d. ~ Improving built and natural heritage Vulnerable built and natural heritage features will be enhanced and conserved.
6e. ~ Improved access and interpretation Increased access and interpretation at key strategic locations to improve orientation and access routes to improve beach safety enabling people to enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the SeaScapes area. There will be increased opportunities for informal recreation that promotes health and well-being benefits.

The source material for the programme achievements and outcomes came from information collected by the project team and the individual project reports that were produced on conclusion of programme delivery that provided many of the rich examples of project achievements, outputs, outcomes and legacy plans. The following sections illustrate some of the project activity (but not all) providing evidence of qualitative information that delivered against the scheme outcomes.

6a. Increasing awareness and participation in the natural and cultural heritage

Outcome A ~ Increasing awareness and participation in the natural and cultural heritage

Increased awareness and understanding amongst the individuals, groups and local communities engaged of what makes the SeaScapes area special and the threats to the unique heritage.

How has SeaScapes evidenced working towards or achieving this outcome?

Use of digital technology by SeaScapes to boost and diversify engagement

SeaScapes has developed and promoted a range of digital tools that have transformed the opportunities for people to engage with the restoration, science, data-gathering and stories associated with SeaScapes.

The **SeaScapes Coastal App** is a FREE download, which ‘pings’ when the user is at key locations along Tyne to Tees coast. At each location, the initial screen describes the place and its point of interest, from which there is an option for a deeper dive into the information, e.g. the locations of wrecks, and the hidden heritage beneath the waves. Launched in March 2024, the app has had 3,500 downloads.



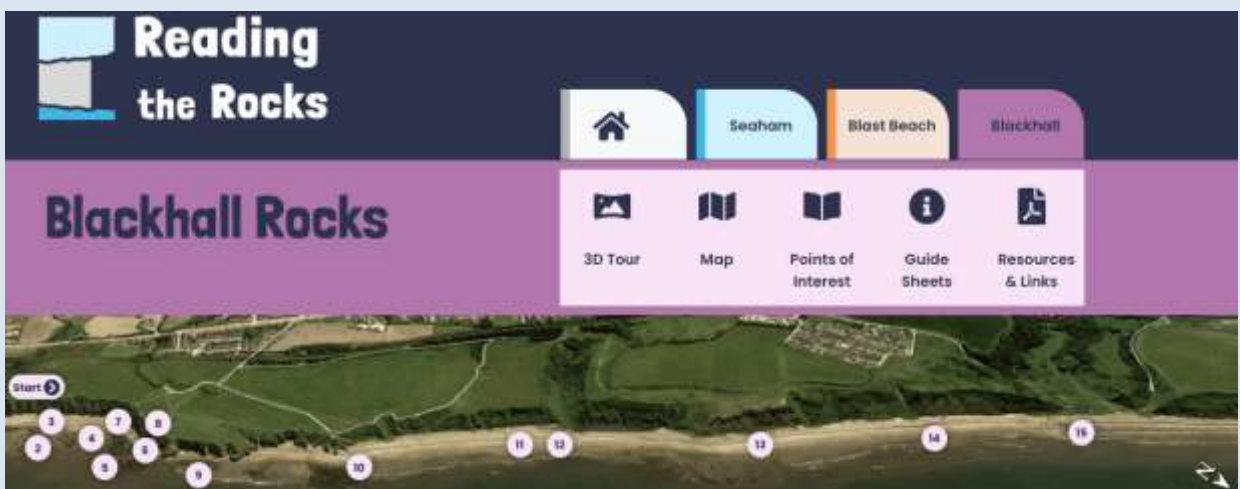
SeaScapes Coastal App

The **Foodscaapes Food Atlas** uses Google Earth as a platform to display a location-based Food Story relevant to that location. The atlas is a digital, shareable, map with slideshow and text, presenting spatially-referenced stories of food in the Tyne-Tees seascape. Diverse stories such as; Allotments and coastal growing; fishing; drink and salt provide an interesting insight into the food-related history along the Tyne to Tees coast.

To enable exploration of a rich and internationally important geological heritage, the **Reading the Rocks website** includes virtual visits to three sites between the Tyne and the Tees: Seaham, Blast Beach and Blackhall. Through 3D tours, videos, diagrams, and online resources, you can take a walk on the coast and delve deep into the geological secrets of the beach.



Foodscares Atlas extract



Reading the Rocks ~ Blackhall Rocks 3D tour

Intertidal Interactive

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme?

“Our greatest achievements were the *Beach Tot* sessions, they changed people’s views of the coastal environment. It was not just the toddlers who benefited but also their older siblings, parents, carers, friends and grandparents that accompanied them. ***Many of the adults and children were apprehensive at first, on the beach, and were not too keen to explore. One child did not like sand on his hands and another was terrified of seaweed.*** As the weeks passed, their nervousness vanished; their curiosity about their surroundings grew - seaweed, crabs, starfish were handled and examined using magnifying glasses; their creativity was unleashed - sand was sculptured, story boards made, rainbow fish were created and hung on willow fishing rods. Slowly both the children and the adults began to build a deeper connection to the coast and appreciate it.”



Beach Tots ~ a simple and effective way to engage across generations

The structure of Beach Tots was simple: **an activity, a shared snack, art and craft and then the session was finished with a story.** Each weekly activity was dictated by the tide - seaweed and snails on low tide; pebbles at high tide, in which the **children and adults went on a journey of discovery.**

The adults were just as keen to explore the intertidal zone as the toddlers, asking questions about the marine creatures, the rocks on the beach, the strandline, and wanted to know all about the tides. **By the end of six sessions, both adults and children could name or point out various seaweeds and marine creatures found along the intertidal zone. The sessions have given those participating confidence, ideas and a range of activities that they could do themselves.**

They learnt all about the Seashore Code and viewed the coast as a place of discovery and a place to have fun. One parent told me how she had started to visit the beach weekly as attending the Beach Tot sessions had given her more confidence. Now, when her children her asked what something was, she could name them!

Beach tots Project Officer reflections

What difference has this project made to people?

“The SeaScapes project has had a huge impact on people’s perception of the Intertidal area. Before SeaScapes, the intertidal zone viewed as an unexciting area of sand or pebbles that you could walk along, if the tide was out and the sun was shining. The sea - cold and empty of life.”

Some of the many differences made to people include:

- ***“I loved learning about the Seaweed- it has changed my thinking. I used to think Seaweed was just Seaweed. I now can see that there are so many different types and that it plays a crucial role in the habitat of sea life.”***

Janette

- ***“I love the Seascapes walks, everything about them. I have learnt so much about the wildlife around us. I struggle with my mobility sometimes and I found many times, with the difference in terrain and my confidence growing, I wasn’t as dependant on my***

walking stick, I was still safely getting around, with my mind being on the environment it allowed me to trust my body more. Getting out and socialising with others more.”

Dave- Let's Connect

- *“I have learnt so much today as I had to slow down and turn over seaweed. I have found whelk shells, mussel shells, a green sea urchin, starfish, a shore-crab and an egg case. I did not know what anything was - I do now.”*

Elaine

“Many have had, as one person described it – “a tingling up the spine” sensation when a large group of dolphins ‘performed’ in the sea in front of them and then realised that the dolphins were resident all year round and that they could do a Sea watch whenever they wanted.

21 people attended a family Cetacean talk and watch the Whitburn Coastal Centre. The talk was interrupted twice by the appearance of large groups of bottlenose dolphins that decided to feed and ‘perform’ just off the cliff tops- binoculars were grabbed and we all stood in front of that amazing window, mesmerised. It was a memorable morning for us all.”



Public engagement session in the Whitburn Coastal Conservation Centre

“At Seaton Carew, the arrival of the little Terns from Africa in April are eagerly awaited each year. A large team of local people support the wardens in protecting the site, talking to visitors and monitoring the colony. **Through engagement, people are much more aware of the impact of human activity on coastal wildlife and become more willing to take action to protect our oceans.”**

Seascapes Beach Rangers ~ building skills for new careers

Engagement and Participation in SeaScapes helped to change young people’s minds. ***Beach Rangers***, gave young people aged between 14 and 18 an opportunity to get hands on practical experience, learning new skills, introducing them to new interests and hobbies. When they visited Seal Sands and explored the Durham coastline, they saw first-hand the effects of industry on wildlife and the coastline. They saw how wildlife and people could co-exist and flourish.

They learnt how to identify coastal birds, seals, marine life, took part in a range of citizen science surveys understanding the important role of data in conservation.



Beach Rangers ~ Great British Beach Clean September 2021

For some, the experiences they had through Rangers, helped those participating to decide what they wanted to do in the future, such as a career in wildlife for Georgia. Alex’s experiences with Beach Rangers helped him choose which subjects he wanted to specialise in at school. Alex applied to do work experience with Seascapes, trying to gain as much understanding of the profession as he could so that when the time came, he could make a positive career choice.

Project Officer reflections

Positively engaging young people

“I’ve never seen a seal before in my life, this is so cool!”

“Sessions with KS2 schoolchildren saw an obvious increase in confidence engaging with the shore environment. Almost all sessions included instances of pupils afraid to engage with (for example) a crab at the start of a session. But by the end, they were holding the creature and having new interactions with the flora and fauna. Many of the pupils we worked with said that they had not explored the rock pools on the site, despite living close by. **Almost all the children said that they would return to the coast following the sessions.**”



North Sea science workshop ~ September 2023

Linda ~ Reflections of a SeaScapes Champion

The opportunity to join the Little Tern Steward Team, gave me the chance to chat with locals and visitors and share our pride in these special visitors to our shores.

"I love to be outside and these activities gave me the motivation to come out whatever the weather and the positive lift from talking to group members who feel the same way.

SeaScapes has made me more aware of human waste and litter, the plastics on our beaches, the need to protect and cherish our special areas where scarce flowers and insects may thrive. The sense of community ownership and pride has increased through spending time with people who share these values.

It inspires me to keep these areas beautiful for others to enjoy, picking up litter (as well as natural finds) when beachcombing or rambling and trying to reduce my own use of disposable man-made packaging and items wherever possible."

"Just to say thank you for a great walk today, seeing the little owl was such a treat, I didn't even realise you found them on the coast. I have attended several of the SeaScapes walks and found them all excellent and informative. I've lived in the north-east all my life and, until the SeaScapes walks, I had never visited the Durham coast. I am surprised to find it such a beautiful place and such an amazing habitat for birds."

Intertidal Interactive participant feedback

Beneath the Waves

"There are beautiful, fascinating and exciting things to experience, even under the often-grey surface of the North Sea. We hope we have inspired some future explorers to wreck-hunt for themselves."

Project team reflections

*"Through workshops, public exhibitions, and outreach events, we were able to share the significance of the underwater heritage that lies just off the North-East coast. **By involving local divers, clubs, and various stakeholders, we created a sense of shared responsibility for the preservation of these marine assets.** The project brought heritage to life for many who may not have had previous exposure to marine history, connecting the community with its coastal roots. The *Coastal Explorer* app has had over 3,500 downloads."*

What difference has this project made to people?

*"Divers who may have previously been disconnected from one another now share a common goal in preserving the region's marine heritage, leading to the formation of lasting partnerships that extend beyond the project. **This has given diving a deeper meaning for many clubs, with heritage preservation becoming a central part of their activities.** Many divers who participated in Beneath the Waves found themselves exploring their underwater environments with a renewed focus—no longer diving just for recreation, but as part of a larger initiative to protect and document historically significant shipwrecks."*



Additional screenshots from the Coastal Explorer App



Beneath the Waves ~ end of project report

BlueScapes

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme?

“Providing access to the coastline, either through water sports or non-water based recreational activity is an area of the project which I am most proud of. Witnessing the level of connectivity and openness being in a BlueScape environment, in addition to the gain in confidence.

Through providing access, there is the additional benefit of education: whether that is about their surroundings and how to identify species, or how to utilise and access the space. The realisation that nature is free and that they can bring their children down for rock pooling or a new area to explore.”

Some of the positive feedback and differences made to people, and highlighting their wellbeing include:

- ***“I would like to thank you for the course. I’ve been attending with my daughter who has suffered the loss of her child this year. I can’t begin to tell you how beneficial this class has been for her and what a sense of peace and stillness of mind it has brought. We look forward to hearing from you about any further classes.”***

Mary ~ Chi Chung participant delivered by The Little Company of Calm

- ***“I benefit greatly from the surf sessions both physically and mentally. I feel happier in myself since going along to the Sea Company Sunday sessions. Matt pitches the lessons at exactly the right level for each individual and creates a positive community that encourages healthy chat both during and after each surf. People often hang around for a brew after the lessons and are beginning to meet up during the week to surf with each other.”***

James ~ Veteran Surfing

- ***“I am a busy mum of 3 young girls, and a nurse, so my time and money has always been used for helping others and providing for my family before myself. Through Covid this began to have an impact on me. I gained weight after having Covid, only now making full recovery with my breathing.***

When I first heard about Adventure Access I was low in mood, nervous and even going out of the house was/still is a struggle. Adventure Access has helped me be a bit more confident, meet new people, and pushed me out of my comfort zone to try something new, to get out on the sea, and has encouraged me to go out of the house more.

I have had an amazing few weeks, the instructors were informative, friendly and welcoming!! I have learnt a lot on the course, and it has made such a difference to me and my mental wellbeing!! I hope you can offer more courses like this in the future as I feel it has benefited me so much and is just what I needed for a peaceful/tranquil distraction and escape!!

BlueGym Session participant

- ***“Amazing experience. Being in the sea did my mental health the world of good also trying something new built up my confidence. My motivation has been increased to do things for me that I enjoy. Met new people who I will keep in touch with. Thank you very so much. Staff were so helpful; and kind and put my mind at ease and I felt safe.”***


Education and upskilling have been a key areas of the BlueScapes Project. This included education about marine wildlife disturbance, with **65% strongly agreeing and 31% agreeing that they have a better understanding after the WiSe course**; and 65% strongly agreeing and 27% agreeing that they will apply the mitigation techniques learnt in their work/activities.

“Very informative. Learned a lot and reflecting on my past behaviours.”

“WiSe training has been really informative and although I am not directly involved in practical marine space activities, I would definitely pass on my knowledge and recommend to those who are. Thank you!”

Feedback on WiSe Course


The power of the activities and range of opportunities offered through BlueScapes is best summed up by the following Facebook post with public comment from the National Trust.

 **Souter Lighthouse and the Leas** · Follow
21 November at 10:28 · 🌐

As a wheelchair user, Melissa rarely has the opportunity to spend time on the beach with the rest of her family; and an activity for them all in the water together was unimaginable.

But an 'adaptive surfing for families' session in South Shields changed everything. Melissa was able to take to the waves alongside her parents and siblings, making their long-held dream come true.


These family surf lessons were funded by the National Trust BlueScapes project, which is part of [Explore SeaScapes](#).




👍❤️ 52 3 comments 8 shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment 📧 Send ➦ Share

Most relevant ▾

 **Sheila Brookes**
Her lovely smile says it all! ❤️
1w Like Reply

 **Gill Helps**
What a brilliant story! Well done everyone for making this happen for Melissa and her family. That smile 😊
1w Like Reply Edited

To add impact to this experience a podcast is available to hear from Melissa's Mum, on how this freeing activity has changed the family's outlook about spending time with the people they love in places filled with nature. <https://bit.ly/NTPod146>

BlueScapes ~ end of project report

Other project examples and evidence of activities delivered through SeaScapes that will help with increasing participation and awareness of the natural and cultural heritage include:

Hartlepool Lights ~ a conservation project undertaking works to protect and restore a 19th Century Navigation Markers, Seaton High Light located in Hartlepool. A Grade II listed structure in a state of disrepair.

What difference has this project made to the cultural and natural heritage of the SeaScapes programme area?

“Seaton High Light is adjacent to a site for a new leisure centre. Restoration, and installation of an interpretation board, mean that the area around the site is in a better condition for people visiting providing an opportunity to learn about the history and purpose of the structure which wasn’t previously available. Being located next to a high-profile development will raise the profile of the structure for people who would not have previously engaged with this heritage.”

Coast at War ~ looking at defence structures and coastal bombardments through community recording, excavation and heritage-skills training whilst building links to the past and bringing together different generations to share an appreciation of fascinating and significant local history.

What difference has this project made to the cultural and natural heritage of the SeaScapes programme area?

“It has focussed interest in the coastal region of our area. The digital trails will encourage people to walk, cycle and drive around our region, visiting Coast at War sites, war memorials and reflecting on the huge changes to the coastline since the Cold War.”

“It was really thrilling to watch the progression of the dig and exciting to watch the beautifully worked stones of the lighthouse appear out of the ground.”



Heugh Lighthouse Battery excavation ~ July 2024

“The Lighthouse excavation uncovered an arc of the original foundations of the lighthouse which stood on the cliff at the Headland, Hartlepool from 1846-1915. Our volunteers were really excited by the lighthouse excavation. This discovery instilled huge pride in the impoverished area of the Headland. **The Headlanders’ are now working on plans to open up the entire base of the lighthouse and leave it exposed for future generations to enjoy.**”

Reading the Rocks ~ telling the story of the physical seascape over time and interpreting our geology through a range of media and engagement with schools and the wider public.

“Reading the Rocks has provided several platforms and outputs specifically designed to deliver greater understanding of the cultural and natural heritage of the Durham coast.”

The walks and talks directly engaged the public and physically guided people through the natural evolution of the landscape. Explaining the interaction, and exploring the interface, between the natural and human processes and landscapes along the coast.”



Reading the Rocks ~ awareness and engagement activities

Our Coast, Our Wildlife

What difference has this project made to people?

*“The project has reduced barriers and increased the chance to see, interact, and learn about, nature and species. This has increased understanding in local communities about the species in their area, and where to walk. This has increased knowledge and confidence, and has led to new ideas. **There feels to be increased ownership, ease with Rangers, and links to nature.**”*

6a. Increasing awareness and participation ~ Community Grant Scheme

SeaScapes awarded a total of eighteen Community Grants to local organisations. Applicants had to demonstrate their project tied in with one of the SeaScapes four main themes: 'Blue Future,' 'Access to Sea,' 'Revealing Hidden Heritage,' and 'SeaScapes Over Time.' **This was an excellent investment and use of a £40,000 budget, with a diverse range of recipients and participants.** To give an idea of the impacts and benefits delivered the following is a list of all the grants awarded along with a brief description of the type of participation and engagement activity undertaken:

1. *Tidal Shift* - Organisation: EDAN (East Durham Artist's Network)

A photography competition for residents from the Seaham and Easington area. Residents were invited to submit an electronic image of a local coastal feature which had inspired them. Four walks with experienced photographers were offered to learn photography skills by going out and capturing images of the coast. Twenty winning entrees were mounted and displayed at the EDAN Gallery in July 2023. A final fourteen were chosen to create a 2024 calendar to celebrate and promote local hidden heritage.



Seascapes Calendar 2024

2. *Seeing Blue* - ICOS (International Community Organisation of Sunderland)

Creative activities and workshops focused on marine life and environmental issues, for BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) women from the Sunderland area. A local artist taught participants how to create pendants and framed pictures using sea glass and driftwood collected during a beach visit.

The group visited a local Wild Oyster Project, had a beach clean and learned about the impacts of plastics to the marine environment, and visited an Aquarium to have a better understanding of marine wildlife and the types of habitats that can be found along the coast.



3. Story Nets - Coral Gardens for Wintertide Festival - Jack of Hearts.



Members of the community did a beach clean then worked with artists to create an UV installation of a coral garden, with soundscape, using UV wool and reclaimed materials from the beach clean.

It was displayed for three nights in the Regents Square Gardens, Hartlepool as part of the Wintertide Festival 2023.

“Really love how this community can really work together to create art ... we’re not even arty!”

4. The Seaside is our Garden - Southwick REACH

Members of Southwick REACH, aged 60 to 90 years old had a tour of the Sunderland Maritime Heritage Centre, and learnt about how the industrial heritage such as shipbuilding has changed over the years.

The project looked at the natural heritage, the changing ecology, and the importance of activities like dolphin watching and swimming for wellbeing.

A sound recording artist produced a soundscape from conversations and storytelling initiated by focusing on coastal sounds.



5. Wellbeing by the Sea - The Little Company of Calm



Focused on supporting communities to access local seascapes to improve mental health and well-being by engaging the senses to appreciate nature.

Qualified mindfulness teachers and volunteers delivered six guided mindful walks which included guided meditations, inspirational quotes / poems linked to the sea and mindful movement similar to gentle yoga and tai chi.

A strong message that came from participants was their appreciation for the natural beauty we have on ‘our doorsteps’ and how the sea and outdoors can support good mental health.

6. *Beneath the Waves Coastal Clean-up* - East Durham Divers

The East Durham Divers (EDD) conducted five days of diving to collect unseen rubbish/ghost fishing line from the seabed around the north pier at Seaham.

A growing number of local communities have been involved in beach cleans and EDD wanted to use this opportunity to raise awareness of how litter can end up in the sea and impact hidden marine habitats and wildlife.

The rubbish collected was photographed and shown to members of the public as it was brought to shore.



7. *Creative Sea Change: Beyond the Horizon* - Curious Arts



Curious Arts brought young LGBTQIA+ people from Sunderland, Newcastle, Middlesborough, and Durham, together for a day at Seaham beach. Activities helped bridge young people from urban areas to engage with their neighbouring coastline by looking at marine heritage and discussing the future of the coast. The day included a litter picking session, sea glass collecting, and making temporary pride flags using only found materials.

Watching the sea inspired discussions to reflect on personal experiences and how the waves can represent the rhythms and struggles of growing up as young LGBTQIA+ people in the Northeast.

8. *Coastal Awareness and Access Project* - Play Out Hartlepool

Play Out Hartlepool arranged two visits to the Headland beach for families from Victoria Ward Hartlepool. The group met and travelled together using local transport which gave some children the first opportunity to go and play on the beach. Families built sandcastles, played ball games, and went paddling in the sea. They learnt about natural objects, litter, and wildlife as they completed a 'beach spotting' sheet. A highlight for the children was watching how long the cormorants remained under water after diving for fish. With the help of a local artist everyone worked together to create beach art which was later shared at the Central Hub in Hartlepool.



9. *Safe Haven* - Banyan Arts



Banyan Arts brought together fifteen stroke survivors, family members/carers to explore the South Shields coastline through a series of photography walks, social get-togethers, and story-sharing. The group learnt new photography and editing skills whilst capturing images of the surrounding natural beauty and cultural heritage they found along the coast.

The group showcased the coastline in a pop-up photography exhibition. The experience led to discussions of stewardship of the coast and the part they can play.

10. *Sonic Stories of the Sea* - We Make Sound

We Make Sound ran a 3-day creative project for young people (11 to 18yrs) from the Hartlepool area. During a beach visit, participants recorded 'found' sounds and compared the different sounds produced by organic, natural material, and litter.

The group attended a studio and, with music leaders, created four music/sound pieces based on maritime history, the fishing industry and coastal environment. One track inspired by the natural landscape was called 'The Calm Before the Storm.' The pieces were broadcast on BBC Radio Tees which attracts over 151,000 weekly listeners.



11. *Be the Sea* - The WHiST (Women's Health in South Tyneside)

The WHiST project brought together members to create a community choir. Sound artists collaborated with participants to collect recordings of non-human life from the coastal intertidal zone. Inspired by these sounds, members were encouraged to write their own lyrics and graphic scores for sound-making. This led to the development of unique compositions, including soundscape improvisations, which were new to the group. The choir worked together to develop a co-created 'storm' soundscape, which they performed twice



The WHiST choir rehearsing their coastal inspired compositions

12. *Our Coast* - Sangini



Sangini delivered a community arts project for members of the Srijoni Women's Group (1st & 2nd generation Bangladeshi women of Islamic Heritage) to engage with local marine heritage. Bringing together local artists, participants took part in workshops which delivered both social and artistic outcomes inspired by coastal walks and beach cleans.

The community has a rich history of coastal heritage and memories from their childhood in Bangladesh but had previously felt they could not share this or engage with the local coast and marine environment.

13. *It is up to all of us to RESPECT our community* - Seaham Trinity Primary School

Pupils from Seaham Trinity Primary School took part in activities to raise awareness on how to care and protect their local coast learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum. Using equipment such as binoculars, magnifying glasses, observation trays, and books, the pupils were able to record wildlife they found and create a sense of stewardship and optimism about their future.

14. *Blue Wave* - Moving Art Management

Moving Art Management delivered creative workshops to celebrate and connect people to the sights, sounds and smells of the Tyne to Tees Seascape.

Participants from 'left behind' communities in County Durham visited Souter Lighthouse and took part in field recordings, mindfulness, and movement. They then crafted a personal response to the coastal environment using visual arts, dance, and sustainable costume-making.



15. *The SeaWeSee* The SeaWeSee

The SeaWeSee with the support of [Durham Wildlife Trust](#) created a community of Coastal Rangers aged 8 to 14 years from Seaham as guardians for Seaham's coastline with a commitment to explore and protect its precious tidal habitats. Activities using identification cards included walk over rock pool surveys, coastal bird spotting, seaweed workshops, and cetacean spotting. The Coastal Rangers performed litter picks and shared their results with the Marine Conservation Society. They also learnt the importance of beach safety. Their work was shared on social media to shine a spotlight on the Seaham coast to inspire and help tackle the increasing amount of litter and anti-social behaviour and help protect the amazing wildlife in the local area.

16. Girls Who Walk Sunderland - Girls Who Walk Sunderland



Girls Who Walk Sunderland provided coastal walks for their community-based group of women. The group uses social activities to inspire, combat isolation and create a safe place for women. The project supported transport and refreshment costs to help tackle socioeconomic problems which had previously acted as a barrier. Taking part in an open water swim at Roker, reinforced how nature helps healthy mental well-being and has **inspired the planning of swimming lessons and coastal swims.**

Combined with observing dolphins for the first time on another walk, **the group have become more aware of water pollution and want to get involved in local beach cleans.**

17. Whitburn Sound Studios - Friends of Whitburn Library

A series of workshops delivered by *Friends of Whitburn Library* facilitated local sound recording and listening activities, of local voices engaged in interviews and storytelling.

18. Tern the Tide - Tern the Tide

A group of volunteers passionate about protecting the rare ground nesting Little Terns on the beaches of Seaton Carew.

Volunteers conduct 24hr patrols of the fenced area to keep the birds safe from disturbance.

The grant enabled the volunteers to continue meeting throughout the year to be better prepared for the next season. The group are in the process of creating a brochure for the public with information about their work and how to age a chick. The purchase of new binoculars not only improved watching efficiency but allowed members of the public to observe the chicks from a safe distance.



6b. Deepening engagement and volunteering

Outcome B ~ Deepening engagement and volunteering

People will have a deeper engagement with their marine heritage and will have volunteered time and developed skills and will have contributed to improving their natural and cultural heritage.

How has SeaScapes evidenced working towards or achieving this outcome?

SeaScapes Co/Lab

Overview: SeaScapes Co/Lab led a three year programme that used art and creativity to explore how to better connect people with their local landscape and co-develop sustainable ways to care for the marine environment. The focus was the delivery of collaborative and participatory art projects bringing together artists, makers, researchers, communities and project partners living within the SeaScapes coastline. The following reflections and outcomes delivered are from a final project completion report completed in September 2023.

In 2022 work focused on our cultural heritage with projects such as; **Sea Change Lab** exploring the relationship between young people living in coastal areas of deprivation and their coastal identity through photography, film and animation, **Queer Shores and Seas**, a creative writing and illustration project exploring the relationship between our region's marine heritage and queer culture by amplifying and safeguarding the oral 'living histories' of the voices of LGBTQIA+ communities living within the SeaScapes area for future generations, and **Coastal Cuisine**, a ceramic making initiative which celebrates the ongoing role of cultural diversity in the evolution of coastal food heritage with international communities based in Sunderland.

During 2023 the work has considered the challenges we are facing around climate change and the natural environment. **soundmirror** is a participatory digital artwork that that enables participants to become attentive to their coastal environment through the sites of First World War sound mirrors in the North East of England today. **Renewable Blue** makes connections between South Tyneside's history of coal mining and pioneering engineers who are leading the renewable energy revolution by using our waterways and historic environment to power our local buildings. The **Blue Futures** exhibition at The Word helps us better understand the climate crises by bringing together three SeaScapes Co/Lab projects, **BE THE SEA, Renewable Blue, and Sound Dig (Whitburn Resonance)**. Together the projects explore our past, present and future relationship with our marine environment and waterways in a public exhibition format.

Key highlights identified through the programme include:

- Having an open brief and embedded perspective allowed for rich cross project collaboration.
- Emergent and responsive models of collaboration offer meaningful opportunities for socio-economic and culturally diverse communities to engage with our seascapes and participate in meaning-making activities in response to our marine environment and heritage.
- Diverse artistic knowledge, tools and processes create rich routes through complex and sometimes challenging issues to offer authentic contexts for connection, self-discovery and understanding for coastal communities.

Some of the many and varied impacts on participants delivered through SeaScapes Co/Lab programme included:

Coastal Cuisine



“You need this kind of project to make all the different backgrounds and communities to come together and make friendships. It makes Sunderland a more open place, that’s why I really appreciate it, I enjoy it a lot”

Coastal Cuisine participant, Life Kitchen, Mowbray Park

Celebrating the positive role that diverse international communities make to our marine heritage supported social integration between communities and their local geographic environment, this was a collaboration with the *Foodscapes project* and working with international communities in Sunderland made up of members from ICOS (*International Community Organisation of Sunderland*), FODI (a drop-in service for refugees and asylum seekers), *City of Sanctuary*, *Back on the Map* (a community space in Hendon) and *Sangini* (a wellbeing support group for Bangladeshi women).

The **Project Final Celebration with Life Kitchen**, a not-for-profit cookery school, in February 2023, was a fusion menu of seascape inspired recipes, combining ingredients that represent participants' food culture and traditional cooking techniques (including Russian, Iraq, Afghanistan, Taiwanese and Chinese) with local ingredients from Sunderland’s shores and inshore waters such as herring and shellfish, as well as using plant-based produce like seaweed and samphire.

Sea Beats

Through a series of collaborative music making workshops, Sea Beats helped foster new connections with the coastline through rhythm and percussion, storytelling, and music making with traditional instruments and objects found on the beach, changing perceptions about the value of our ocean within young people.



“Sea beats is a really fun thing because you get to learn new things about lots of different people and the sea and the ocean. You get to play lots of musical instruments. Its changed how I feel because a lot of people have been talking about the waves and they are just really beautiful now.”

Child participant, Sea Beats Family fun day



soundmirror digital art

Sound Mirror

“It was a walk with art, which I found really good. Then there was the whole history side of it which I found really interesting. I only probably about live two miles away and I had never known about it, we had never talked about it in school or talked about it. It was amazing.”

soundmirror participant, Fulwell Sound Mirror

Offering local communities born within our project area the opportunity to discover their local heritage, sometimes for the first time, through creative and engaging activities.



soundmirror activities

Queer Shores and Seas

“Time and time again we seem to be drawn back to the sea and we want to get involved in these conversations about heritage. Marine heritage is one that queer people relate to innately, where as other ones might feel exclusionary at the start. Lots of queer people are alienated from their family or don’t know much about their history But if you start with the sea, something that mostly everyone can relate to, well it’s a conversation starter.”

Queer Shores and Seas participant, Customs House, South Shields

Gaining insights into how best to support underserved voices and exploring ways to connect with marginalised communities by resourcing queer focused organisations and artists. Words and conversations were translated into images that culminated in an exhibition and performances celebrating Curious Coastal Conversations.



“That point where the sea meets the shore is so core to my being, it’s in my blood”



From the exhibition in Hartlepool at the Library and Community Hub

Bluewave

"Fostering a self-belief and confidence within displaced communities with lived experience of asylum and refugee status."



"I'm so proud of myself. I'm so happy, I connect with the beach, I connect with the people, the audience, I connect with everyone, I have no words to explain this thing, you know."

Blue Wave participant



SeaScapes Explore ~ Living History North East

The educational programme Seascapes Explore, although delayed initially, was able to deliver face to face engagement alongside site visits which were intrinsic to its success and having a greater impact on both the children and volunteers who engaged.

The programme used a teaching tool to support the children's learning, known as Storyline, to build knowledge and understanding of how the coastline was used and experienced by past generations. The children explored the past through a thematic approach using archive materials: footage from across the coastline, photographs, other documents and artefacts. Each class created a history photographic timeline for their own locality. SeaScapes Explore connected with community volunteers who shared personal stories and experiences of their own coastline.



Creating the Storyline display

"I never thought I could come down to the beach and just be creative like this. I come here with my dog a lot but never thought to use some of the natural things on the beach to make art. It's just brilliant. I'll definitely come back and do more like this."

There five key benefits identified from the programme evaluation included:

1. 193 children accessing the coastline and other heritage sites. 30% of those children who participated had never been to the beach. More than 70% had never visited any of the additional heritage sites.
2. Developing relationships and learning with older adults in a safe environment, 52 volunteers engaged with SeaScapes Explore.

“The children really enjoyed talking to older volunteers. They were very knowledgeable and good with children. It was excellent for the children to be able to share knowledge with people they wouldn't normally speak to.”

3. An intergenerational exchange that has a mutual benefit.

“These boys never speak up or participate in school. I am amazed how they have conquered their inhibitions and are fully embracing this experience. I do think that Michael, the volunteer who has been working with these boys has had a significant impact in them.”

4. Accessing specialist creative activities not normally available within schools or the community.
5. Develop new knowledge and understanding of the local coastline and its past.

SeaScapes Explore ~ Evaluation Headlines

Coast at War

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme?

“The interest in the community volunteers; their desire to be fully involved; their keenness to return event after event to learn new skills; their research into finds and artefacts uncovered on site; their loyalty to the different projects. One volunteer, whose wife had died three years ago, commented that, ***‘These events have literally saved my life. Thank you to Tees Archaeology for arranging all this.’***”

The opportunities that SeaScapes and the National Lottery Heritage Fund have provided to the Tyne-Tees area have actually changed lives for the better.”

“I had a brilliant time at the dig and would be happy to join in any more if the opportunity arises.”



Volunteer at Springwell sound mirror excavation

During and after Covid, when so many people were shut away from one another, these projects have provided outdoor spaces where people could meet at safe distances and work together: sharing tales, improving their mental health and enjoying the coastal locations.

Changing Coastlines ~ improving volunteers mental health

What difference has this project made to people?

“The SeaScapes project has brought lots of community volunteers together. They have made friends, renewed ties and previous acquaintances, learnt huge amounts about their local area and have gained new skills and abilities.

“To anyone who hasn't tried it, give it a go, you never know where it might lead.”

One gentleman who came to the Seaton Carew Common excavation had travelled there from the north of County Durham. His doctor had suggested this as the man had lost his wife suddenly, and unexpectedly the year before and had barely left the house since. The excavation renewed his confidence...

“I really enjoyed this week and was surprised how much I learned in a short time, but that only happens when you have good people showing you how to do things”

...he has now started volunteering with Tees Archaeology on a weekly basis.”



Changing Coastlines ~ end of project report

Our Coast, Our Wildlife

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme?

“Volunteer development is the highlight of the *Our Coast, Our Wildlife* Project. 48 volunteers have attended volunteer conservation task days throughout the length of project with a core number team of 6 volunteers continuing the work. The volunteers have been provided training in practical conservation skills and wildlife surveying techniques. The volunteers feel that they can see the work achieved, either through footpath repair and maintenance or gorse and scrub clearing.

“The volunteers have taken the lead on seed collecting and translocation, with the insulation of the polytunnel and are starting to generate their own ideas, leading to ownership and guardianship of the Durham East Coast.”

Beach Care and Aware

“It’s great physical exercise and definitely improves our sense of mental wellbeing. To anyone thinking about getting involved ~ do It!!”



Some responses and highlights from the Volunteer Beach Clean Leaders includes:

- **The teamwork amongst SeaScapes volunteers is fabulous and by working together we achieve great results. It’s also heartwarming to work alongside enthusiastic volunteers from local schools, businesses, community groups and the general public, passionate to improve the area they live and work in. This acts as a great tool to raise awareness of the environmental issues along the North East coast.**
- We now get more people asking to join in, or offering words of encouragement and thanks. It’s great to see people joining a clean on the spur of the moment, especially if they have strong arms, great for moving bags to the collection point which is quite often at the top of some steep stairs.
- **Volunteering with Seascapes has really enriched my life. I’ve met so many like-minded lovely people who care passionately about the same things, and had so many experiences ~ learned how to survey microplastics, visited a sewage plant, planted trees and reeds, attended an Environmental Awards ceremony and World Ocean Day conference, joined in with other litter picking and beach cleaning groups, become more aware of wildlife on our shores, hosted a Great British Beach Clean, and joined another volunteer in regular sea swimming ~ all things I probably would never have done until I started to volunteer. Thank you, Explore Seascapes.**



Beach Care and Aware ~ end of project report

One of the best examples of the impact, benefit and change that these types of programmes can have on individuals is the following story and reflections from Caitlin who began with SeaScapes as a volunteer, building skills and experience before becoming the Beach Care Officer in 2024.

My Journey with SeaScapes, a Living Legacy ~ Caitlin Elwin

“My journey with the SeaScapes project began shortly after graduating from university in 2022, with a goal of pursuing a career in conservation and the environment sector. With a passion for all things conservation, wildlife and the environment, I really connected with the SeaScapes vision and its projects to improve our heritage spaces. Engaging in citizen science activities such as shore search surveys and guided bird walks, deepened my understanding of my local coastline. **I began volunteering as a Volunteer Beach Clean Leader with SeaScapes**, facilitating beach cleans and raising awareness about the importance of protecting our coastline.

This volunteer role allowed me **to develop key leadership and communication skills**. Conducting microplastics surveys and litter surveys provided technical experience in data collection and environmental monitoring. A highlight of this period was participating in the Marine Conservation Society’s Great British Beach Clean, contributing valuable data to inform national conservation efforts.

Building on the skills and experience gained as a SeaScapes volunteer, **I secured a role at Durham Wildlife Trust as a Volunteer Support Assistant** through the *New to Nature* scheme, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This role allowed me to apply my experience while gaining new skills in volunteer management and coordination; it has facilitated my career growth in a sector I am passionate about. **In a full-circle moment, I had the chance to join the SeaScapes project team, where I stepped into the Beach Care Officer role.**

A key part of my role has been engaging with, educating, and empowering diverse communities, to take action preserving our coastline. One of the most inspiring parts has been the overwhelming support and engagement from the local community, to keep our beautiful coast safe for both visitors and wildlife to enjoy.”



Caitlin ~ conducting a litter survey for the Great British Beach Clean and briefing volunteers before a beach clean

“From my early days as a SeaScapes volunteer, to leading as part of the project team, my journey reflects the lasting impact of SeaScapes and I’m proud to be part of its living legacy; a testament to the monumental effects of its work on both people and the environment.”

6c. Gaining skills, training and recording

Outcome C ~ Gaining skills, training and recording

People will have gained new skills in researching, restoring, conserving and understanding their SeaScape heritage. This work will be accessible and where appropriate in the public domain located on websites and data records.

How has SeaScapes evidenced working towards or achieving this outcome?

Changing Coastlines

“We achieved a greater understanding and appreciation of the archaeological heritage of the area by local residents. This was especially true in Seaton Carew. One of our volunteers spent 58 hours researching the location of the bomb crater and the former fountain. He used numerous old photographs and managed to triangulate them to find both. In the case of the fountain base, he chose a location which contradicted the results of the geophysical survey. ***We opened the trench and the 1.6m base was perfectly centred within our 2m opening...that was a very proud and exciting moment for everyone on site!***”

The Seaton Carew Common geophysical survey and excavation, despite really challenging windy conditions, led to some of the most thoughtful comments of the whole project:

“The dig was informative and fun. I learned a lot from yourself and dusted the cobwebs off my knowledge of Geophysics. Finding that medieval green glaze ware was an amazing feeling.”



Seaton Carew Green ~ geophysical survey and excavation revealing the fountain base

Intertidal Interactive

What difference has this project made to the cultural and natural heritage of the SeaScapes programme area? “Some participants went on to volunteer and were trained in species identification and monitoring becoming our *SeaScape Champions*.”

“I found the wildflower identification course incredibly enjoyable, and I learnt so much from it. I now take greater notice of the wildflowers around me when I am out walking ...where before I would just admire their colours, now I see their beauty and recognise them by name, which is wonderful for me. I can’t wait to learn more.”

Intertidal Interactive ~ end of project report

Beneath the Waves

“Particularly memorable were the individual stories, such as the privilege we had of speaking with the group of divers who discovered a German U-boat off Sunderland in the 1980s. Their firsthand accounts and deep knowledge of the wreck added a rich, personal layer to the project.”

Project team reflections

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme?

*“Beneath the Waves forged a connection between coastal and underwater heritage. By working with divers who experience underwater worlds, teaching them to capture these to share with friends, families, their local communities and beyond, we enhanced local understanding of cultural and natural heritage along the Tyne to Tees coast. **The key success was bringing together the local dive community, which formed a group of more committed experts and enthusiasts than we could ever have envisaged.**”*

“This project created a collaborative environment where divers from different backgrounds could gain new skills, share knowledge, and work together towards a common goal. By offering workshops in underwater photogrammetry and heritage documentation, we empowered divers to contribute actively to the preservation of their local marine heritage, fostering a sense of shared purpose and community among themselves. This carried the message far beyond as they were conduits for this knowledge into their friends, families and communities.”



Volunteer divers receiving historical archive training and 3D printed shipwreck artefacts, achieved using underwater photogrammetry.

“One of our personal highlights has been the opportunity to unearth and preserve the historically significant stories surrounding these shipwrecks. Many of the wrecks we worked on are not just remnants of the past but carry with them powerful narratives about maritime history, wartime efforts, and coastal trade. Through detailed 3D modelling and engagement with local historians and archives, we were able to uncover and bring to light previously forgotten or little-known stories tied to these wrecks.

[The divers helped] us understand the significance of the U-boat and the broader wartime history it represented. Their involvement reinvigorated interest in the wreck and demonstrated the important role local people play in preserving marine heritage. The wreck of the UC-32 is

one of the flagship locations from Beneath the Waves and the story reached thousands of people across the region at major outreach events.”

A major accomplishment was the development and publication of a PADI specialty course focused on underwater photogrammetry. The course ensures that divers trained through PADI can **now apply advanced techniques to document marine heritage**, contributing to protection and preservation of assets.

This bridges the gap between recreational diving and professional heritage conservation, leaving a sustainable legacy that extends beyond the scope of the project.



Putting underwater photogrammetry skills into practice

Beneath the Waves ~ end of project report

Foodscapes

Looking back, what is the one thing that you are most proud of that has come from your project being part of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership Scheme?

“Exploration and development of innovative methods to examine the relationships between land and sea, including people’s perceptions, identities and heritage that often lies hidden or apparently forgotten, but has had a fundamental impact on the development and character of the landscape.”



Development of an innovative ‘Food Atlas of the Seascape’. The format of this output is flexible and accessible. <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/landscape/news/item/foodscapes-atlas/>

It provides a way of pulling together many different forms of data and learning from the wider Seascape project that is also informative and has been shown to have potential for educational objectives. Showing how research can be an important part of collaborative projects that aim to bring new learning to all involved – partners as well as communities.”

What difference has this project made to the cultural and natural heritage of the SeaScapes programme area?

“Our research has produced and enhanced understanding of the role of food in shaping lives and landscapes in this seascape. While it is difficult to identify at this stage the extent of this learning on local communities, it has been important in partnership learning and, through our academic dissemination activities, through knowledge of this seascape and our methods in the wider academic community in the UK and internationally.”

A rich source of information was from the examination of local and historical recipe books, some found in the Robinson Library at Newcastle University.

Early recipes for onboard cooking can be found in Hannah Glasse’s book from 1747. She recorded recipes specifically for captains of ships for food that was intended to last on long voyages, including ketchups and sauces, potted meat and fish.



“We have developed innovative methods (cooking with often-excluded communities, developing their own cultural identity awareness through the discussion of recipes, creative and learning activities) and outputs (Food Atlas of the Seascape) which have been of considerable interest to professional and partner communities as well as academics and local people. Developing novel ways of representing food cultures past, present and future has provided a platform for thinking about heritage of the seascape in a completely different way.”

Academic Outputs from the Foodscapes Project ~ research from Foodscapes has been rich and extensive, used within outputs and feeding into collaborative projects with Seascape Partners and activities. Some of this research has been presented in formal academic forums:

Narrating Seaweed Stories for Seascape Futures Workshop presentation, November 2023 by Maggie Roe and Charlotte Veal, Newcastle University.

Food stories: Revealing the interactions between people and species in urban river landscapes presentation given at launch of Food and Landscape MSc, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Alnarp. October 2021.

Thinking about communities and water values, presentation by Maggie Roe at 3rd (Virtual) Hub Assembly 2–12 November, 2020. GCRF Water Security & Sustainability Hub.

Seascapes: Food and the Marine Landscape Presentation by Maggie Roe at ‘Food & the City: Urban Foodscapes in planning, design & governance of cities’, SLU. Alnarp, Sweden. 2019.

Ostrea Edulis presentation by Suzanne Hocknell at ‘Becoming Climavore’, an evening of talks and flavours with Cooking Sections and guests which took place on Wednesday 24th November, 2021 at the Baltic in Gateshead. Initiated by Cooking Sections, CLIMAVORE is a new form of eating that responds to human alterations of the planet's climate.

Devising a Food Atlas of the Seascape: Connecting with local identities through heritage stories Academic Paper in process.

Foodscapes ~ end of project report

6d. Improving built and natural heritage

Outcome D ~ Improving built and natural heritage

Vulnerable built and natural heritage features will be enhanced and conserved.

How has SeaScapes evidenced working towards or achieving this outcome?

Hartlepool Lights

“This has consolidated a Seaton High Light, which secured a new life after it was relocated in the 1990s, from its original position in Seaton Carew. The High Light has been a memorial to those who lost their lives at sea. The opportunity to carry out repairs and interpretation means it will now be celebrated as part of this new development and chapter in the regeneration of Hartlepool.”



Before and after works photos including interpretation board and new steps within the tower

Our Coast, Our Wildlife

What difference has this project made to the cultural and natural heritage of the SeaScapes programme area?

There has been visible habitat change, there is less scrub and gorse and increased hectares of meadow. ***“Locals are becoming inquisitive and stopping to ask about the conservation work and species attached to the habitat restoration.”***

“Outside communities have attended survey and training sessions and have learnt about the coastal habitat and environment, including the significance and importance of the area. Volunteers are starting to generate their own ideas, leading to ownership and guardianship of the Durham East Coast. Everyone seems to have a great time and are enjoying themselves.”

Out Coast, Our Wildlife ~ end of project report

Intertidal Interactive

What difference has this project made to the cultural and natural heritage of the SeaScapes programme area?

Local people are a lot more aware of the wildlife on their doorstep and more willing to stand up for their natural heritage. Members of the public are now seeing the cetaceans on their 'door step' and sharing their sightings with others. They are more aware of the threats to cetaceans and reporting incidences of bad behaviour for example when paddle boarders or boats get too close to dolphins.

In Whitburn, some of the locals helped 'police' the Ringed Plover nesting site, ensuring that dog walkers put dogs on the lead and kept away from the nest site.

Families are more aware of the *Seashore Code* and follow it, taking their litter home with them, handling creatures with care, using hands and buckets not nets to catch creatures.



Little Tern nesting area

"The Litter Terns have had a very successful season, despite the colony being targeted by a kestrel and a very determined fox. The fenced site offered protection to nesting Ringed Plovers with 28 fledged. 16 volunteers were recruited from the local area to help look after the nest site."

Project officer reflections

Beach Care and Aware ~ improving the environment and increasing awareness

Beach Care and Aware made a significant impact with 6,203 bags of beach litter and 87 bags of recycled material removed to improve the marine heritage environment.



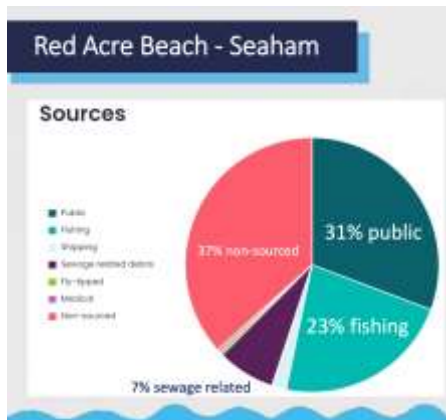
30+ bags collected by college students during a beach clean at Blast Beach/Nose's Point, Seaham

Sustained beach clean activity for the duration of SeaScapes led to the following Project Officer reflections and media recognition.

“Following a busy and successful season of beach clean events during summer 2024, the project and the outstanding volunteer impact received significant media attention, including a featured article on BBC News. **The article became a major trending story and was the best local performing story on the regional website for the day.** The project also received a mention on the BBC Look North Programme. This media coverage was instrumental in amplifying the project’s mission and engaging a wider audience.”



The project compiled data on quantities, sources and types of marine rubbish that had been collected and remove by volunteers.



Extracts from presentation by **Caitlin Elwin** Beach Care Officer.

Some reflections collected from volunteers improving the natural environment included:

- Reducing litter pollution and its effect on marine life and the wider environment is hugely rewarding. The teamwork amongst SeaScapes volunteers is fabulous and by working together we achieve great results.
- **At the end of every clean we have made a difference. We recently spotted a large pod of Dolphins swimming down the coast past Seaham, I like to think they approved of our efforts.**
- It’s frustrating sometimes, to see the state that beaches are left in by humans or by recent storms and high tides, but a great feeling of satisfaction at the end of a beach clean when we know we have made a difference.

Beach Care and Aware ~ end of project report

Wave Basin Battery

The urgent repair works have consolidated a deteriorating and most vulnerable corner of the Wave Basin Battery and helped secured the conservation of the listed building.



Condition prior to repairs



Lifting and removal of stones for re-bedding and repointing.



Completed repairs prior to scaffolding being removed



Project on completion

6e. Improved access and interpretation

Outcome E ~ Improved access and interpretation

Increased access and interpretation at key strategic locations to improve orientation and access routes to improve beach safety enabling people to enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the SeaScapes area. There will be increased opportunities for informal recreation that promotes health and well-being benefits.

How has SeaScapes evidenced working towards or achieving this outcome?

Coastal active and access

Examples of increasing and making it easier to access the Tyne to Tees coast have included:

- **Access to the beach via the King Charles III England Coast Path**
- Provision of new interpretation signs
- **Seaham Red Acre Steps**
- Brus to Headland Cycle Route and Coast to Clavering Walk in Hartlepool
- **Interpretation and orientation at the National Trust, Whitburn Coastal Centre**



Whitburn Coastal Conservation Centre



Seaham Red Acre Steps and Wave Basin Battery interpretation

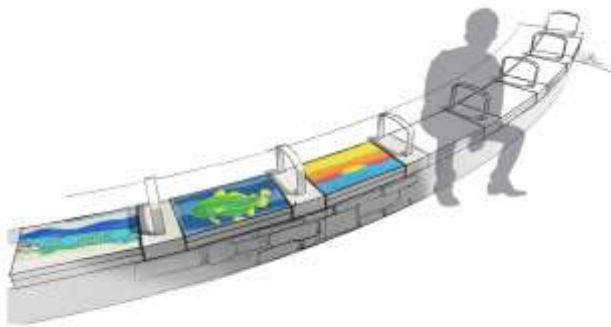


Fulwell Sound Mirror and Seaham SeaScapes hub ~ interpretation and orientation

Crimdon Seat

Local Primary school children went to the coast and learnt about the issues and felt very strongly they wanted to help the coast in terms of both wildlife and improving human behaviour. They drew some pictures and, along with some local teenagers, made mosaic panels for the base of each seat.

The young children stressed that there needed to have arm rests so that the older people could get up easily!



Crimdon seat concept and in situ

7. Programme learning: some key ingredients for future activity

As part of the final evaluation of the Landscape Partnership Scheme, many of the projects supported through SeaScapes produced individual project completion reports. In addition to capturing the output and outcome information, the report format provided an opportunity for individual reflection, the chance to capture some lessons learnt and **think about how to improve** on the wide range of activities delivered.

Many of the lessons learnt from the completion reports reflect the different complex elements of successful project management and delivery and have been grouped into eight areas as follows:

<p>Project management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being realistic with resources and timetable• Managing risk and uncertainty, adopting a flexible approach• Clear project planning, scope and relevant permissions• Establishing a good information base and project communications <p>Building partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership working and building local relationships <p>Learning from doing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building effective systems and processes• People engagement• Volunteer involvement and effective skills development

By far the biggest learning relates to different elements of project management combined with managing uncertainty and risk with the need to be flexible a factor due to the major societal and environmental impacts experienced by everyone during the delivery of the Scheme.

The eight areas identified are **based on the personal opinions and reflections of those people involved in delivery** and should serve as reference points and **list of key ingredients** for all partners to integrate into thinking and planning the development of future project activity.

1. Project management ~ being realistic with resources and timetable

As evidenced through the following project feedback:

- A project highlight was the creation of digital tools (an app and an interactive game), that explored the shipwrecks and the rich history beneath the waves. Starting these collaborations sooner would have provided more time to integrate feedback, and to refine these digital products. This would have further enhanced the project's ability to engage a wider audience, especially younger generations.
- The original targets set in the LCAP did not appreciate that the Battery was on Port land with no public access. Hence when Whitburn centre needed extra funding – most of this project's funding was removed. Meaning that very little of the work originally envisaged could be done. Hence there has been no volunteer, pupil or other learning, attributable to the project.
- The scale and ambition of the programme, coupled with limited capacity curtailed time available for reflection and write up during delivery. The approach would benefit from (a) a more integrated approach that explicitly connects project funding with academic

research time and (b) the option to bring in additional research via a PhD studentship and professional production support.

- 23 sub-projects made this programme too big. The fact most outcomes were achieved was more a facet of the dedication of the partners to the project and not the content of the sub-projects themselves.

A project length of 4 years even 4.5 years is not sufficient to really make the best use of NLHF funding. It takes 2 years to get the project up and running; it can be done sooner and quicker, but that takes determination and skill.

2. Project management ~ managing risk and uncertainty, adopting a flexible approach

- The project re-started due to a change in lead staff. Understanding the full extent of the resources available and staff/SeaScapes team representative, from the beginning, would have improved communication.
- Our biggest change to the original project plan was early-on to substitute a 2-year data manager position with two postgraduate researcher posts. This was also one of the strongest improvements in delivery we could have envisaged. The project benefitted from significant extra effort and experience and supported enhanced training.
- The SeaScapes Co/Lab model for cross-sector public engagement built in capacity for failure as well as success, providing room for learning and further iteration. Building more time in for knowledge sharing is a core ambition for future work.
- The staffing and personnel changes throughout 2023 was a major blow, losing much expertise in a short time, requiring a project re-build. The problem was exacerbated by a project directory structure and handover notes that were not intuitive. The new team undertook a total evaluation of all financial aspects of the project, and submitted a revised project profile to the Heritage Fund monitor.
- Covid-19 could have led to a more on-line focus, but that did not happen. Communities could have been engaged and training done to build an on-line training resources, as a project legacy.
- Activities were severely impacted by Covid, so engagement activities were very much partnership-based arrangements.

3. Project management ~ clear project planning, scope and relevant permissions

- We would have had a clearer project outline so that changes to staffing did not affect delivery of the project.
- Original aims and plans focused very much on seafood and fishing, while what emerged from the research were many stories that were clearly land-based . It proved much more difficult to access fishing stories and was more political. The stories reflected in the Atlas are a balance between the land and sea influences than in the original aims.

The original aims and plans focused on the number of activities rather than the depth achieved during activities where we aimed to gather research information.

- With the Development phase having taken so long there was an inevitable churn in the staff involved. This did not help in the final delivery and did not add to the clarity of why decisions to include or exclude aspects were taken either. The original idea was for 33 projects reduced to 23. Given that 23 was probably overly ambitious then 33 certainly was – however **many of the wildlife aspects were dropped and that was unfortunate.**

Reports were commissioned particularly on the wildlife side which were not fully utilised or taken forward within the project. Currently, there is nothing evident on beach species monitoring which would help to understand coastal conditions and coastal species habitats with any clarity. Producing a project in a much shorter timescale with few staff changes would have helped the overall clarity.

- The need for planning permission for some of the interpretation signage was a problem, and should have been investigated as part of the development phase, rather than delivery phase.



4. Project management ~ establishing a good information base and project communications

- There was a long gap between initial surveys being carried out on the structures and the work itself, and second surveys were carried out by contractors who specialised in restoring historic buildings. This produced detailed information on the works that were required and therefore more accurate cost estimates. Such surveys would be carried out earlier in the process to better inform the works and manage the budget.
- **There was no website/social media officer appointed.** This became a job for a variety of people and no-one owned it or was an expert which for a project of this size was an issue. It needed to be someone on the project and not external expertise from PR companies which actually then becomes an on-going expense.
- Recommend some sort of on-line training be created by the National Lottery Heritage Fund which would cover their requirements in detail such as: how a grant funded project needs to operate, and how it needs to protect the legacy. The terms document does not do this and guidance on Creative Commons could be clarified.

5. Building Partnerships ~ partnership working and building local relationships

- The Apps that host our 3-D models and wreck research are excellent, have reached many people in the area and beyond, and the designers were amazing, but we nearly lost these in translation with an intermediary interpretation company. It would have been better to collaborate more closely with a local interpretation company from the very beginning. This would have strengthened local community connection, supporting regional businesses, and ensuring heritage stories resonated more deeply, locally.
- The research lead benefitted greatly from being a core member of the SeaScapes project delivery team. This enabled strong relationships and trust to grow between and across consortium partners and provided an insider's insight into partner priorities.
- The dive teams decided which wrecks they would work on. A problem became evident late in the project when all the wrecks were in the northern end of the project area and caused an issue with the Coastal App when it had no wrecks in the southern half of the coast. Funding should have ensured wrecks across the coast were captured and not just in the north. Similarly, dive-boats need to be found across the coastal zone and not just the one dive-boat owner every time.
- **The Board worked extremely well** ~ the membership removed any political sides to discussions, with schools, community groups and partner-led discussions being the main point of contact other than via partners. **Two independent board members brought their own external expertise which was also useful.**

6. Learning from doing ~ building effective systems and processes

- Have a way to gather information on the long-term impact/change/feedback. For example, are communities recording species on walks or have they changed the way they use the outdoor space? How has the use of space and awareness or nature and the environment changed/developed?
- There were no proper Gantt charts created for this project. One of this complexity should have established these in the development phase and ready to roll from day 1. This would have required each partner to have an MS Project licence with the overall cost covered.
- Staff and roles: Job titles, whilst making sense within a project do not necessarily help recruitment. *Project Accountant*, for example gives a better feel for the job and makes job searches easier for candidates rather than *Finance Officer* – which does not give a real feel for the job. Similarly, *Access Officer* - the word access has multiple meanings, it makes sense in a local authority but even disability access has a very different meaning.

Finance management: Match-funding from partners needed to be allocated into a central fund – say quarterly or annually. The only partner this happened with was Northumbrian Water – but it did mean managing input of match funding from the other partners was difficult. Rather than DCC take on all the main contracts, it would have been better to allocate different responsibilities to each partner; giving more ownership and responsibility to the individual partners to manage the budget, cover shortfalls and would have helped spread the administration load.

- Information management: There was not a clear document recording decisions; if the decisions were made outside Board meetings there was no method of tracking those decisions. An action log in the minutes was not a suitable replacement for a Project Decision Log, or a clear Project Deliverables document - a living document detailing all the changes, and what was to be delivered by whom, by when and at what cost.
- Retained rights: The Creative Commons (CC) requirements changed in September 2020. Public domain availability and copyright aspects are hard to grasp when looking at overall product structure.

The Seascapes Coastal App was created by a sub-contractor to a main contractor. The project has no direct management of either the development or on-going maintenance and hence no control over the contractual arrangements. This included the inability to fully know the download numbers of the app. Without accurate figures the project is unable to understand the scope of uptake of the App. These factors need to be built into the project and any subcontracts or ideally to work directly with the main contractors.

The website was not created by the DCC website team and hence was outside their control and their sphere of influence, making managing the site long-term more difficult.

- Lead partner: DCC was the lead partner on SeaScapes. However, the project was never really embedded within DCC except on a financial and procurement basis. There was some use of the volunteer system, but volunteers were not steered towards SeaScapes. The IT systems were not integrated other than for laptop and disk space usage. Building projects into the council requires some sort of easy mechanism to build on the wider council network. Use of website and communications teams would have really helped.



7. Learning from doing ~ people engagement

- Access to the Durham East Coast has always been a challenge. Where public transport is difficult or non-existent, the use of a minibus to pick up community groups would have been useful.

Understand and map audiences, and plan how to publicise and connect with schools, community groups and corporate. We cannot rely on social media, website and internal communications alone.

- The snorkelling taster sessions were a huge success as they were accessible to all - even those who were non-swimmers. Finding a suitable pool and booking a slot was very difficult and time-consuming. The pool had to be shallow enough for children to be able to stand up. Many schools' pools had no available time slots. A lifeguard is also required for liability insurance.

Rather than focusing on schools, maybe the focus should be family snorkelling. Approach local dive centres and partner with them to offer snorkelling sessions during the winter months. Open water snorkelling sessions, supported by the dive clubs could then be offered in the summer months, at 'safe' sites.



St Oswald's CE VA Primary School

November 30, 2023 · 🌟

...

Y6 loved their snorkelling session today with Mr Hayton! It was a really rich experience that helped us with our water confidence along with our understanding of the environment. Well done, Y6!

- **Schools appreciate the opportunities for children to experience creative learning.** There is a need to develop more opportunities for children to engage regularly with older community volunteers. Schools have limited access community experts and the resources that programmes like SeaScapes can provide. It will be helpful to develop longer term links with those resources and networks in the community.
- Clearer definitions before games are compiled would have saved consultancy resources and enable games to be really widely used and easily.



8. Learning from doing ~ volunteer involvement and effective skills development

- Timing of events: *Volunteer Conservation Task Days*, originally, were during the week, which did not suit the local community due to work obligations, and therefore sessions were moved to every other Sunday. *Cliff Top Wildlife Sessions* were originally in the middle of the week and every week. They were moved to every other Friday due to low attendance. Removing the species (i.e. butterflies and moths) specificity of some activities may have encouraged more to attendees.
- Engaging volunteers and maintaining their involvement has been a challenge, particularly with on-water activities. This is due to (a) health and safety requirements of the Watersports Centres and (b) ensuring that volunteers are not taking up a session being used by someone from the community group/schools.
- Each major partner has its own volunteering system and hence recruited its own volunteers. A policy needed to be put in place of how volunteers would be managed and how their safety was going to be covered, but otherwise a Volunteer Officer was not a necessity on this project.
- We would introduce Archaeology Skills Passports at the start of the process. The volunteers have been buying these for themselves (£8 plus £3 postage from CiFA). They are a great resource; a useful way of tracking what each volunteer has done, and they lead to highly skilled and competent community volunteers who can be trusted to train others, and take on independent projects in their local community.

The importance of continuity between the development and delivery phases

In developing the draft evaluation report feedback from project staff highlighted the lack of continuity between the development phase and the delivery phase combined with the turnover in the Project Management role. This change in personnel is always a risk for projects of this nature given the grant application and award process. The timetable means that there is often a gap of up to six months between submission and permission to start. If staff are employed on short term contracts as part of any development phase there is always the risk of personnel leaving, with the risk that part of the project identity (or memory) is also lost. There is no easy way around this except for lead organisations to be aware of any grant submission and award timetables and where possible, to budget for staff to be retained in their roles in some capacity to ensure that the thinking from project inception is carried through to delivery.

8. Legacy ~ what next for SeaScapes?

SeaScapes Landscape Partnership legacy activity

In parallel with the delivery of the Landscape Partnership Scheme, the programme team and partners have considered the legacy of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership from an individual project and scheme perspective. Legacy planning has been appropriate to local need with discussions help between partners by the Board to consider Scheme Legacy and the completion of project reporting documents that helps identify specific project legacy .

As demonstrated at various points throughout previous sections the delivery of SeaScapes has not been straightforward or easy, given the slow start in getting the core team in place and the significant change in personnel from 2023 onwards. In spite of this, all partners have remained committed with an acknowledgement that as delivery reaches conclusion, partners continue to work together and on things that they wouldn't have before. All the partners involved are keen to explore future opportunities and have committed to the legacy of the Landscape Partnership Scheme through:

- A management and maintenance matrix identifying the physical and digital assets that have been developed and how they will be maintained, with the assets becoming the responsibility of each individual partner.
- Continuing to meet as a partnership two times per year with a standing agenda. This will allow for continued partnership working and the identification of further opportunities to develop activities along the Tyne to Tees coastline.



Individual Project Legacies

Intended project legacies as identified within individual project plans from the LCAP, have been updated within the final project reports ensuring an ongoing legacy from the Landscape Partnership Scheme. From these and to be noted is the individual partner commitment to develop the legacy from SeaScapes around five key themes:

- Maintaining heritage and access improvements
- Continuing volunteer activity
- Participation and community engagement
- Further partnership working
- Building capacity and sharing resources

The intended individual project legacies have been summarised as follows:

Maintaining heritage and access improvements

Hartlepool Lights ~ Building work will start on the *Highlight* in January - a centre to support people's wellbeing and provide opportunities for them to be active. Seaton High Light is a key structure within the public realm providing the setting of this project and people will be able to enjoy these spaces along with the new building when it opens in August 2025.

Coast at War ~ The opening up of the lighthouse base is under discussion. Hartlepool Borough Council's senior landscape officer is very keen on the project. Tees Archaeology will support the Headland Parish Council and the local MP to apply for further funding to complete this project. This would also add a seating area and a signboard describing the excavation, the results and the changes to the Headland over the last 200 years.

Beneath the Waves ~ Considerable research impact is anticipated from the postgraduate researchers that delivered so comprehensively as project officers. Work will continue with dive clubs to expand their capabilities in underwater heritage conservation, ensuring that the training provided through the project becomes a permanent part of their educational programs.

The PADI specialty course in underwater photogrammetry will remain a key tool in teaching divers to document and protect marine cultural assets, fostering ongoing engagement with heritage preservation efforts.

Four scientific publications are initially planned, to document the rigour of the work undertaken, and highlight the importance of engaging communities with local heritage.

Continuing volunteer activity

Coast at War ~ The volunteers will continue to support Tees Archaeology and will continue to be trained and upskilled by future projects. This will help them to fill in more of their *Archaeology Skills Passports*. They have completed presentations to other local groups about their involvement in SeaScapes, which continues the legacy.

Changing Coastlines ~ There is definitely an appetite for further investigation into the salt mound at Seaton Carew.

Our Coast, Our Wildlife ~ The Volunteer Conservation Task Days will continue at weekends. This will be supported by the ranger team. Volunteers will continue with skills development, including machinery tickets (brush-cutter and hedge-trimmer). Cliff Top Wildlife Sessions will continue in the next season; there will be work in the off-season to increase attendance.

Intertidal Interactive

- Tern the Tide ~ The group has appointed a chairperson and secretary, recruited members, held meetings and begun planning monthly walks and talks. There are plans to produce a brochure about Seaton Carew's Heritage. The group will help combat social isolation/void that some of the volunteers/supporters experience during the winter months after the Little Terns leave in August.
- Citizen Science Training and surveys - Shore search ~ will continue next year, (May to October), supported by Stronger Shores, co-ordinated by volunteers from DWT. Survey results submitted to the North Sea Wildlife Trust, will help build up a picture of the health of the ocean.
- Citizen Science Training and surveys – Seawatch ~ volunteers are keen to continue to survey monthly for cetaceans along the coastline, submitting their data through a nominated volunteer or through the Seawatch portal.

Participation and community engagement

Intertidal Interactive

- Beach Tots - Parents are keen for Durham Wildlife Trust to continue the sessions. At the request of parents, a resource pack has been produced to support parents with children under the age of 10 on the beach. The pack includes beach activities, games, simplified identification charts, art and craft activities and useful information for parents. The pack will be available to download on the DWT web site.
- Schools- Rocky shore Explorers - Durham Wildlife Trust will continue to work with schools to provide bespoke rocky shore explorer workshops from March to October. An interactive educational pack, aimed at KS2 has been produced. It includes teachers notes, worksheets, and PowerPoint presentations to support classroom-based learning. This will be available to download from the DWT website.
- Coastal wildlife walks and talks - Due to popularity of the wildlife walks, particularly coastal birds, they will continue to be run throughout the year by DWT and volunteers.
- Seaham Coastal Group - will continue to meet monthly.
- Let's Connect - The monthly walks and talks programme started in Hartlepool will be rolled out in other areas where Let's Connect is operating, supported by other Wildlife Trusts.

Beneath the Waves ~ The development of apps and interactive tools has opened the door for people to explore and appreciate underwater heritage in ways that were previously impossible. We plan to further enhance these, incorporating new features and content that will keep the public connected to the maritime history of the region.

Foodscapes ~ We are actively working on follow-up projects in various ways including applying to the National Lottery. There is considerable potential for this, particularly in relation to seaweed, wild oysters and thinking about how understanding food resources provides a way to consider behaviour, identity, landscape change and attitudes to the sea.

BlueScapes ~ Guided walks and led cycle-rides will continue, led by volunteers and supported by National Trust staff. Relationships and partnerships developed with community groups, during BlueScapes Project, will continue to work together, finding new opportunities to access the coastline recreationally and educationally.



Further partnership working

Beneath the Waves ~ The relationships established with organisations such as Historic England will be further developed, using documented footage of historically significant wrecks that have been collected, as evidence to get legislative protections applied to some of these wrecks. Currently, only one wreck in the project area is afforded any special protections. Expanding this to other important sites along the coast would be a significant legacy.

Building capacity and sharing resources

Beneath the Waves ~ Newcastle University are contributing a further £53k to retain two postgraduate researcher posts until May and November 2025 respectively. This ensures a solid project legacy, as strong volunteer divers' groups can be maintained, data can be processed from summer 2024 dives (which continued up to end of September 2024) with technical support for volunteers provided, and popular publications produced to add value to the project. The researchers will produce PhD theses and scientific papers from their work with the divers, creating an enduring impact for the technical achievements of the project.

Reading the Rocks ~ The web site will be hosted online at Durham University as part of the legacy planning of the project. It will be an open access resource and available for at least the next 10 years.

SeaScapes Co/Lab ~ For the final phase of SeaScapes, University of Sunderland will

- **Reflect and Share:** Exchange insights and learning about creative engagement, with national peers and diverse communities of practice.
- **Connect and Engage:** Develop cross-sector models of collaboration and methods of hybrid (online and physical) creative engagement with coastal communities.
- **Promote, Distribute and Impact:** Maximize value of the suite of film and photography.



SeaScapes celebration event, Whitburn Coastal Conservation Centre ~ October 2024

9. Evaluation observations and recommendations

LOOKING OUTWARDS

9.1 ~ A scheme that met and exceeded intended outputs

The information collected and presented within this evaluation can demonstrate that SeaScapes has been a successful Landscape Partnership Scheme in terms of delivery with significant natural and cultural heritage improvements in the programme area.

As noted in Section 5, the intended outputs have been achieved for all the areas of activity that have been reviewed with any variations agreed and incorporated into a revised programme of delivery. Highlights of the outputs achieved are:

- **For local engagement and participation** ~ the considerable number of people outputs and goals achieved through the participation, training and volunteer programmes. The delivery of an awareness and engagement programme at a community level has been the most effective part of SeaScapes as demonstrated by the **20,497 people participating in the 1,165 different events** and learning activities throughout the scheme, along with the engagement and retention of the volunteers **to contribute 11,774 days or 53 full time working years.**
- Engaging 3,343 children and young people in education and learning activity is another significant achievement and in many cases introducing people to the coast for the first time.

This extensive engagement and participation activity has helped to deliver:

- 6,203 bags of beach litter and 87 bags of recycled material removed to improve the marine heritage environment.

In building up the picture of what SeaScapes has delivered as a Scheme it can be demonstrated that outputs have been exceeded against six of the key evaluation indicator areas and achieved against the two other indicators as derived from the LCAP as summarised below.



9.2 ~ Demonstrating delivery of significant outcomes

Combined with the delivery of outputs, information collected through the external evaluation process can evidence delivery of significant achievements against the five scheme outcomes, whilst demonstrating a range of improvements against the National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes: for heritage; for people and for local communities.

The process of picking out highlights and best practice examples to evidence the evaluation has not been straightforward, in a positive way. There has been much project information to sift and sort with rich examples both big and small of the impact, benefit and change delivered, in particular for **the quality participation and engagement activities**. To help summarise the significant project activity, the following table identifies some the “stand out moments” and programme achievements following a review of all the project documentation collected as part of this final evaluation.

Notable programme achievements
<p>Quality digital products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Coastal Explorer app has a highly professional appearance, is geo-located, so ‘pings’ when near to one of the interpretation points. The app has had over 3,500 thousand downloads, is a great engagement tool, and an impressive legacy element following SeaScapes completion.• The FoodScapes Atlas is an ingenious digital, shareable, map with slideshow and text, presenting spatially-referenced stories of food in the Tyne-Tees seascape. It provides an excellent way for an on-line audience to get a sense of one aspect of the SeaScapes landscape.
<p>Diverse community engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beach Tots ~ the programme of regular activities, building confidence about coastal wildlife, from toddlers through to grandparents. Genuinely growing generational connection with the sea.• The strong testimonials from many people whose mental and physical wellbeing have benefitted significantly from the BlueScapes programme, as well as many of the other engagement activities.• The community heritage and archaeological digs were an effective way of engaging local communities to help increase awareness of significant built and cultural heritage features.• The impressive Beach Care and Aware project went beyond simply collecting huge quantities of marine rubbish; recording the origins of the rubbish (fishing, public, shipping, sewage, etc) and rubbish type (plastic, rubber, metal, etc). Beach Cleans proved to be an effective way of engaging children, schools, communities as well as corporate volunteers, with a large active engagement and show of public appreciation on social media.
<p>Innovation and seeing where something goes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For an investment of £40,000 the Seascapes Community Grants demonstrated how effectively a project can engage local heritage specialists with art and activity groups, to benefit a wide range of local people, the small groups themselves, and the overall SeaScapes programme. This is a genuine example of working with groups and people who were “not just the usual suspects”.• SeaScapes Co/Lab ~ having a creative engagement producer with an open brief to engage with the SeaScapes communities and landscape was a risk that paid off for this programme. A rich

Notable programme achievements

and varied programme of engagement activity was delivered that can demonstrate reaching a large diverse audience that helped to develop and deepen participants' connection with the coast and local heritage.

- **The cross project working was a strength of SeaScapes Co/Lab.** As an example, collaborating with Foodscapes to create *Coastal Cuisine*, which explored the cuisines of the international communities living in Sunderland and the positive impact that has had on the local foodscape, was a brilliant way to engage wide local cultural interests in heritage.
- A major accomplishment was **the development and publication of a PADI specialty course focused on underwater photogrammetry.** The course ensures that divers trained through PADI can now apply advanced techniques to document marine heritage, contributing to protection and preservation of assets. Another impressive legacy element of the project.

Other observations and strengths identified following a review of all the project documentation and conversations held as part of this final evaluation include:

Appropriate scheme governance, management and evaluation ~ the presence of an independent chair for SeaScapes was a strength and particularly effective for partnerships working across administrative boundaries, helping partners to work together rather than being dominated by the host organisation.

The leadership and enthusiasm provided by the core programme team needs to be acknowledged, in spite of the many personnel changes, in helping to bring together and achieve the many programme successes.

Having an independent external evaluation process integrated into project delivery at an early phase has helped to identify emerging key strategic issues. Adopting a longitudinal evaluation with the provision of annual progress reports and Board updates has helped to support the overall risk management of SeaScapes, and should be learning applied to further multiyear programmes.

The importance of volunteers ~ the contribution of 11,774 volunteer days to September 2024, translating into **53 full time working years** is a big achievement over four years of project delivery that was initially impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and has helped contribute to many of the natural, cultural and built heritage outputs that have been delivered.

This has been achieved through a comprehensive programme of well-supported volunteer skills development through partners, with the project substantially growing capacity for volunteering in the Tyne to Tees SeaScapes area. The supportive approach to volunteering is noted; with celebrating volunteers' contributions through attending awards events and other social activities being best practice examples that should be continued.

REFLECTING INWARDS

9.3 ~ Bringing everything together

Despite the many successes delivered by SeaScapes, project delivery throughout the scheme has not been straight forward with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic from March 2020 delaying project commencement and the significant change in staff personnel from 2023 onwards. For much of SeaScapes there has been an obvious focus on “doing” with projects getting on with delivery and the various external and internal challenges as identified through this evaluation have impacted on being able to tell the overall story of the scheme and getting a “sense check” on overall project delivery.

Some further observations to emerge from this evaluation and considerations for future partnership projects would be:

Quality of the development phase ~ In addition to the lack of continuity between development and delivery, the evaluation has highlighted some issues with the quality of work undertaken during the development phase such as:

- The provision of the Audio Seat that would have meant digging up a Site of Special Scientific Interest
- The intended engagement work at the Wave Basin Battery that is located on Port Land, a site with no public access
- The intended mobile SeaScapes exhibition with no suitable storage facility identified
- Dropping some of the intended natural heritage activity that would have made the whole programme more rounded in terms of output delivery

Having the necessary “checks and balances” in place to ensure that intended project delivery activity is actually realistic and achievable is an important element of any development work and saves any delivery team having to work through avoidable issues and further development work when it is important get activity underway.

Not everything has to be developed and anticipated in advance ~ The success of the SeaScapes Co/Lab and Community Grants programme demonstrates to funders that not everything has to be developed in advance. For creative and engagement projects in particular, having a degree of flex is appreciated by the grantee and for SeaScapes has delivered some of the largest impacts whilst demonstrating a diverse level of participation.

Learning when to say no ~ There has been considerable success in the numbers and type of engagement being delivered through SeaScapes, yet with a more integrated approach to delivery management it may have been possible to refocus resources into other areas when it became apparent that certain outputs were going to be exceeded. The list of learning around **building effective systems and processes from page 71** gives a good checklist of principles to follow to help support project management and delivery activity.

Was the composition of the project team correct? ~ For all the strengths of having a Landscape Partnership team with officers employed by partner organisations that helped to encourage cross theme working, the capacity of the Delivery Manager to bring everything together was limited and given the strong focus on people engagement, a weakness is having no communications support. More could have been made of the SeaScapes website as a communications tool to help bring together the many different personal stories and experience that have been evidence through this final evaluation report. There is a lot of excellent material that has been produced by SeaScapes that is available through partner communication channels with the danger that this is not brought together as a “cohesive whole”.

9.4 ~ Many lessons learned

The project completion reports contain a rich source of lessons learned, with signposts and evidence to help support future project activity and funding applications. Information collected from these reports highlighted the many different complex elements that relate to successful project management and delivery and included:

Project management

- Being realistic with resources and timetable
- Managing risk and uncertainty, adopting a flexible approach
- Clear project planning, scope and relevant permissions
- Establishing a good information base and project communications

Building partnerships

- Partnership working and building local relationships

Learning from doing

- Building effective systems and processes
- People engagement
- Effective skills development

In parallel with the final evaluation, a short film has been produced with a set of reflections from project participants to help partnerships with the delivery of future natural and cultural heritage projects. The observations from the film and lessons learnt from this evaluation report should be used as evidence to support future funding applications and partnership working beyond completion of the SeaScapes scheme.

“I’ve been more involved with nature and the coast since starting with SeaScapes”



Extracts from SeaScapes final evaluation film ~ November 2024

9.5 ~ Strategic Communication and promotion

To celebrate the achievements of the scheme it is recommended that some of the headlines and findings and in particular the headline project outcomes from this evaluation are captured and a dedicated web page of what has actually happened is created leaving an additional legacy.

Examples of best practice communications from other landscape partnerships are infographics that bring together the headline achievements in digital or print form which, when combined together with the case study documents and lessons learned would act as a prospectus to help secure additional legacy funding and future partner support.

Two case study examples from other landscape partnerships are:

- the digital booklet produced by the Carbon Landscape highlighting partnership achievements and legacy
See: https://www.carbonlandscape.org.uk/sites/default/files/CLPartnership_Achievements_Legacy.pdf
- the final webpage produced by the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership that pivoted away from current activity and helped tell the story of what had been achieved

See: <https://www.pendlehillproject.com>



9.6 Evaluation recommendations

This report attempts to bring together and present the many achievements and impact of all the SeaScapes project activities in one place. The landscape partnership has delivered a wide range of heritage activity that has met the National Lottery Heritage Fund approved purposes and in many instances exceeded what was intended at the outset. It can be demonstrated that significant heritage outcomes have been delivered for people and communities and that behind the headlines there have been many different internal and external factors that have impacted on the delivery of a complex programme of work.

Legacy planning has been proportionate to the scale of future proposed activity with follow on activities developed and a commitment to maintaining partnership working within the SeaScapes area.

SeaScapes has been a very successful scheme with some excellent examples of participation and engagement activity that should be disseminated and communicated wider. The key recommendations emerging from this evaluation would be:

- That time is taken by staff within Durham County Council and project partners to **reflect and appreciate what has actually been achieved** looking at the scheme as a whole, the lessons learnt, the final evaluation observations and how these can be applied to the development of further projects through continued partnership working.
- That as the partnership moves beyond completion of the scheme and as resources allow, the SeaScapes **website should be amended and edited** so that **the story and achievements, including the evaluation film** of the Landscape Partnership Scheme are consolidated and elements of good practice as identified within this evaluation, with necessary signposting to other digital media, are found in one place.

Combining these two recommendations along with dissemination of suggested infographics would bring together the headline achievements in digital or print format which would act as an additional prospectus to help secure funding and future partner support for continued heritage activity within the wider Tyne to Tees, SeaScapes area.

Acknowledgements

I would like to offer my thanks to Jenny Swainston in particular and all the other members of the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership, who I have worked with over the last four years and have provided the information and insight that enabled this evaluation to be completed. Collection of much of the information contained within the report has been conducted during October and November 2024, so any errors and misinterpretations are in good faith and remain my responsibility.

Simon Lees, Countryside Training Partnership, November 2024