

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL STUDY TOUR

Purpose

To endorse the date and outline programme for the Annual National Landscape Partnership Study Tour.

Recommendations

That the JAC

A. Note the date of Friday 25th September 2026 for the Annual Study Tour, with a focus on projects and initiative in the southern and Monmouthshire part of the National Landscape.

B. Encourage a good attendance, and invite representatives from our neighbouring Shropshire Hills, Malvern Hills and Gower National Landscape Partnerships and the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority and other appropriate partners.

Key Issues

- The Wye Valley National Landscape Partnership Annual Tour will be held on Friday 25th September.
- The programme is still being finalised but will focus predominantly on achievements and management issues relating to the Monmouthshire part of the Wye Valley National Landscape.
- Initial invitations for expressions of interest to attend will be sent out shortly.
- Invitations should be extended to representatives from our neighbouring Designated Landscapes and other appropriate partner organisations in the interest of sharing good practice and broadening collaboration.

Reasons

The Annual Wye Valley National Landscape Partnership Tour is hosted by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) and has a good reputation as both an information exchange and networking opportunity, with good attendance from the wider National Landscape Partnership. The invitation to attend the Tour is extended to all members of the JAC, to Senior Officers and County and District Councillors whose wards fall within the Wye Valley National Landscape along with representatives from all the constituent Town/Parish/Community Councils. It is thus a key tool in the transfer of information to the wider partners and interested parties in and around the National Landscape.

Implications

The date of 25th September is proposed for the 2026 Wye Valley National Landscape Partnership Tour. In the interests of wider collaboration invitations will be made to other appropriate partner organisations and neighbouring Designated Landscapes; including the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority, the Malvern Hills, Shropshire Hills and Gower National Landscape Partnerships, the National Landscapes Association, Welsh Government and DEFRA.

The programme for the Tour is still being finalised, but will include visiting Ffermio Bro sites, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places (SLSP) and Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) projects, INNS control and Species Action Plan achievement and Lower Wye Tracks & Trails.

The event reaches a wide audience of National Landscape partners and interested parties and always proves to be very popular and informative for those who attend. Lunch and transport will be included in the modest charge to attendees.

Background

Each year the JAC hosts the Annual Study Tour.

In 2025 the Tour focused on the Goodrich area, between Ross and Monmouth. Sites and issues visited included: Bishopswood Village Hall, and undergrounding of electricity lines; Kerne Bridge Canoe launch site, and canoe hire operations and site management issues; Hen and Dot café, Flanesford Priory, for refreshments and farm diversification in action; Priory Farm, with work planned under the National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI) and Wyescapes project. Ashe Farm, Pencraig, with irrigation reservoirs and Floodplain meadow restoration; finally, further LEI work with creation of ponds, scrapes & leaky dams, meadow restoration and eDNA monitoring at Brelston Green.

In 2024 the tour focused on Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) projects and land management issues in the Herefordshire part of the National Landscape. Visits included looking at a free-range egg production enterprise; maize undersowing & Natural Flood Management (NFM) projects; agroforestry, orchards, solar panels, beef & arable production, an anaerobic digester, barn restoration & glamping; DEFRA Access for All projects including Ross Riverside & Willow Walk with new disabled parking & bridges.