



THE EAST MIDLANDS LANDSCAPE

Making it Matter

the East Midlands LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

The East Midlands Landscape Partnership (EMLP) comprises members from a wide range of organisations who are working together to act as a champion for the East Midlands landscape. Members of the Steering Group include Natural England, English Heritage, East Midlands Councils, Forestry Commission, The National Forest, CPRE, Regional Biodiversity Partnership, Regional Geodiversity Partnership, the British Geological Survey and the landscape leads from the region's county councils and the Peak District National Park Authority, Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, River Nene Regional Park and other landscape professionals. The Steering Group works within the context of a wider group of members, the advice of which it draws upon as its agenda requires. The Partnership was formally established in March 2009.

A key aim of the EMLP is to support the implementation of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) at the regional level. In doing so it will ensure that landscape is considered as a vital and diverse asset in its own right. The Partnership is united in its commitment to providing a strong voice to raise awareness of the East Midlands landscape, and to promote, encourage and co-ordinate a consistency of approach between national, regional and local partners in landscape policy, delivery and research. The Partnership has an action plan that is focused on raising the bar in terms of overall performance for landscape as an asset in its own right and in doing so we aim to help organisations and stakeholders understand why **all landscape matters** and to make the right decisions in support of this guiding principle.

We want to ensure that landscape is fully considered from the outset in shaping policy, decision making, projects and initiatives. Our work and guidance will help organisations and others embark on the right course of action to help protect, enhance and manage the landscape. We want to see benefits for the landscape achieved through positive planning. In particular, by using landscape as a spatial framework, this will help integrate decision making that will deliver beneficial outcomes for a range of regional themes such as biodiversity, climate change adaptation and green infrastructure strategies.

This leaflet tells you more about the important benefits that the varied and distinct East Midlands landscape provides for us all and gives further information about the work and products of the Partnership.

Mission Statement

*The East Midlands Landscape Partnership will advocate the use of landscape as a framework to deliver combined environmental, economic and social outcomes. The Partnership will **make landscape matter** in regional policy, strategy, decision making and project initiatives.*

Vision for the East Midlands Landscape

The East Midlands will be a region that understands and appreciates all of its characteristically distinct landscapes, from the Peak District moorlands to the coastal fens and the variety of landscapes in between and seascapes beyond. Regional stakeholders will know how to sensitively plan, protect and manage landscape as a rich and resilient asset for present and future generations.



For further information about the East Midlands Landscape Partnership and to view the EMRLCA and Phase 1 Woodland Opportunity Guidance please refer to: http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/east_midlands/ourwork/characterassessment.aspx

For further information regarding the national landscape positions, guidance and work of Natural England look at: <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/importance/default.aspx>

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Shaping the Region's Future Landscape

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WHATS SO Special ABOUT THE EAST MIDLANDS LANDSCAPE

The East Midlands has a rich and diverse landscape ranging from the upland grandeur of Derbyshire's Peak District in the north-west, with its expansive gritstone moorland and hidden limestone dales, to the flat and open landscape of the Lincolnshire Fens. Elsewhere, prominent escarpments, such as the Lincolnshire Edge and the chalk Wolds in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, are memorable features within the region. To the east of the Wolds and fenland areas is the varied landscape of the Lincolnshire Coast with its intricate mosaic of beaches, saltmarshes, mudflats, dunes and intertidal sand flats. Beyond this are the offshore waters of the North Sea. As well as the broad river valleys and floodplain landscapes associated with major rivers, such as the Trent and Nene, there are also numerous wooded landscapes, some of which are remnants of former hunting forests. The famed Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire, and Rockingham Forest in the south-east within Northamptonshire, are both particularly notable, as is Charnwood Forest in Leicestershire, whose rugged and wooded landscapes are associated with outcrops of the oldest rocks in England. The East Midlands is renowned for the extensive areas of agricultural land, many parts of which have a deeply rural character. The region is also one of landscape change with regeneration of many areas, notably within the Coalfield area, and including the establishment of extensive woodlands. This is particularly so within The National Forest, most of which is located within the region.

THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) sets out the first comprehensive strategic agreement for the consideration of landscape matters within all relevant decision making across the Community. It came into effect in the UK in March 2007. To demonstrate its conviction and commitment to 'raising the bar' in terms of landscape performance the UK Government recognises its importance as a key driver for future landscape planning and management approaches in the UK. As a consequence it has the potential for significant influence within the UK's spatial planning processes and land management activities as well as other cultural, social and economic policy areas.

The fundamental aim of the ELC is to **promote the management, protection and planning of all landscape** and in doing so achieve aims of **maintaining and improving landscape quality**. It applies to all rural, urban, peri urban and includes seascape, coastal and marine areas. The ELC confirms that the **protection, management and planning** of all landscapes in Europe is a task not just for governments but for all sectors of civil society, entailing 'rights and responsibilities for everyone.'

The ELC definition of landscape is:
'..... an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'.

Natural England has prepared an ELC Action Plan that sets out the process and targets for achieving the ELC objectives, and has invited others to prepare their own Action Plans. English Heritage, The Peak District National Park and The National Forest were among the first organisations in the country to prepare their own plan and it is hoped that other organisations in the region will follow their lead.

the East Midlands REGIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

The East Midlands Landscape Partnership has been pioneering regional landscape activity to help ensure the region plays its part in helping to implement the aims and objectives of the European Landscape Convention. A priority action has been the undertaking of the East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment (EMRLCA) that was published in April 2010.

The EMRLCA presents non technical descriptions of each of the region's 31 Regional Landscape Character Types (RLCTs) and a review of what forces are currently acting to change the landscape and the implications of these changes and includes guidance to help counter adverse impacts and promote positive change for all our region's landscapes.

These different types of landscape represent the combination and interaction of natural and cultural forces that have shaped and moulded the landscape of the East Midlands resulting in the rich and diverse landscape that we see today.

The EMRLCA is a new tier in the landscape character assessment hierarchy in England and is the first regional assessment to include seascape as well as landscape character types. It is designed to add a comprehensive regional layer to the National Character Areas identified at a broader national level by Natural England and provide a strategic context and framework for more detailed landscape character assessments at the county, district and local scales which sit within a nested hierarchy.

The EMRLCA will assist in achieving the aims of the ELC by helping to:

- Inform and underpin the strategic spatial planning policy framework;
- Inform and integrate with other regional strategies and initiatives such as Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping and Woodland Opportunity Mapping;
- Guide sustainable development decisions;
- Guide the design of multifunctional Green Infrastructure networks and the preparation of associated strategies;
- Inform renewable energy and environmental capacity studies and climate change adaptation strategies;
- Inform ecosystem services studies that assess the interaction of organisms, habitats, the natural and historic environment and the supporting services they provide;
- Bring about greater integration with other key environmental themes such as geodiversity, biodiversity and the historic landscape; and
- Promote the qualities and diversity of the region's landscape.

the Woodland OPPORTUNITY MAPPING PROJECT

The Regional Landscape Character Types (RLCTs) identified in the EMRLCA provide an appropriate framework for the development of a more informed approach to woodland management and creation within the East Midlands and for identifying a regional scale of opportunity. The RLCTs provide a spatial framework on which to base the mapping component for Woodland Opportunity Mapping (WOM).

The EMRLCA has identified a range of data for each RLCT that provides a useful baseline to guide the WOM, comprising:

- Woodland and Tree Key Characteristics
- Forestry and Woodland 'Forces for Change'
- Forestry and Woodland Guidance on 'Shaping the Future Landscape'

In addition to the EMRLCA data, appropriate lower tier county and district landscape character assessments, historic landscape character assessments, biodiversity data and other regional strategies provided further sources of information.



The WOM project has developed regional scale priorities for woodland creation informed by a landscape character led approach. It also provides a broad level framework and future direction for steering woodland planting to those landscape types where woodland is considered to be an intrinsic characteristic and away from more open landscape types. The process has also considered the cultural component of the landscape.

The first phase of the WOM provides a focus for establishing meaningful strategic guidance and demonstrates the value of the EMRLCA as a tool that can be used to inform other activities

which have the potential to bring about positive landscape management and change. It is an exemplar of its value as a framework for informing landscape scale decision-making that will help shape the future landscape of the East Midlands Region and a starting point for future phases of WOM and other related initiatives that can build upon this work.