

## Volunteer Information

### Local Landscape Character Assessment Guidance (LLCA)

#### What is a Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA)?

Through landscape character assessment we can gain an understanding of what makes up the rich and diverse character of Cornwall, and which elements are important or have particular value.



A Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) takes the overarching Cornwall wide Landscape Character Assessment<sup>1</sup> as a template, and adds a much greater level of detail, describing the local landscape character at a parish scale.

If we don't understand what makes our landscape special and why, then we have no way to protect or enhance the special qualities and features that come together to make up the diverse and locally distinctive landscapes of Cornwall. If you value your environment and the character of the place where you live, then you need to be able to objectively record what makes that place uniquely special, to be able to enhance and protect these positive qualities in the future. Recording the evidence of this character is the role of a LLCA.

LLCA as part of your Neighbourhood Plan will provide you with

- a framework to understand what makes your landscape special, and its unique relationship with the local community
- a factual evidence base to inform policy within your Neighbourhood Plan;
- a document prepared by the local community for the local community, where young people too young to vote at the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum can also be involved in the future shaping of the places in which they live.

#### What is the benefit of an LLCA as part of a Neighbourhood Plan?

All landscapes change over time through the influence of nature and man, and change should not always be seen as negative. If we understand which elements give us the character we all value so greatly, we can positively plan for future development which will conserve and enhance, add value, and even create new landscapes.

An LLCA will

- be a record of the character of the area prepared by the local community
- create a detailed bespoke evidence base describing the character and value of the local landscape, its historic, ecological, and cultural qualities
- describe the character of settlements and how they have developed over time

<sup>1</sup> 2007 Landscape Character Assessment which divides Cornwall into 40 Landscape Character Areas details of which can be found at [www.cornwalllandscapes.org.uk](http://www.cornwalllandscapes.org.uk)

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- identify features and landscape issues of key importance to the local community
- highlight designated and protected landscape, natural and built features
- provide detail of the historic expansion of settlements to inform future decisions, regarding massing scale and density
- inform Neighbourhood Plan policies as an integral evidence base
- objectively inform opinions on the environmental implications of development proposals
- provide an evidence base to assess the impact of development and inform future land management decisions.

### What is the process of creating an LLCA?

The LLCA must be a factual evidence base of landscape character prepared by the local community. It is not a quick process to create an LLCA, but the length of time it will take to complete will largely depend upon the scale of your Neighbourhood Plan area, and the number of volunteers who come forward to carry out surveys. The LLCA Stage 1 methodology has 8 steps as shown in the table below

<b>NDP Toolkit Stages</b>	<b>LLCA Development</b>	<b>Who gets involved?</b>
Stage 1 & 2a	<b>Step 1 - Initiating an LLCA</b> <i>Establish the area to be included within the LLCA. Plan the development of the LLCA to tie in with the overall programme for the Neighbourhood Plan</i>	Parish Council, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Stage 2a	<b>Step 2 – Creating an LLCA core group</b> <i>Identify and brief individuals to coordinate the development of the LLCA. Establish programmes and lines of communication</i>	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, local community
Stage 2a	<b>Step 3 – Initial information gathering</b> <i>Research to establish existing environmental details/records</i>	LLCA Core Group
Stage 2a	<b>Step 4 - Briefing the Volunteers</b> <i>Provide training to volunteers to enable them to carry out field work assessments</i>	LLCA Core Group and community volunteers
Stage 2a	<b>Step 5 – Field survey to record local character</b> <i>Getting out into the landscape to record the character of the area</i>	LLCA Core Group and community volunteers
Stage 2b	<b>Step 6 - Preparing the draft LLCA</b> <i>Bringing together all of the existing environmental information and the field assessments to create a draft document</i>	LLCA Core Group and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Stage 2b	<b>Step 7 - Presenting the draft LLCA to the community</b> <i>Community consultation to add important detail of how and what the community values about their landscape, and opportunity to present the draft for comment</i>	LLCA Core Group and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, local community
Stage 2c	<b>Step 8 - Finalise the LLCA</b> <i>Bringing together a document which is a factual record of the character of the landscape, and which reflects the value of the landscape to the local community</i>	LLCA Core Group and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group