



The River Weaver at Frodsham.



Winter Update 2016/17



We're three quarters of the way through the life of the Saltscape Landscape Partnership Scheme here in Cheshire now. With 5 projects completed and 1 being redeveloped, there are an incredible 28 projects due to reach completion stage in the next 6 months

Mid Cheshire Students find a new take on Saltscape



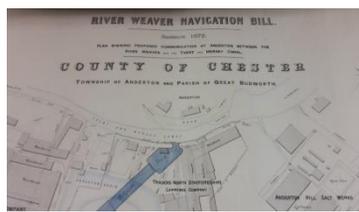
Media students from Mid Cheshire College have now finished their film-making project with [MakoEducation](#) exploring the wide scope of Saltscape's projects across the Weaver valley.

At the outset, it was a real challenge for the students to understand the complexities of a Landscape Partnership Scheme.

But as each group got to grips with their individual brief, they began to understand more about the contribution made by different agencies. The final films show just what potential these young film makers have! [Visit our website to see the films](#)

Medieval deeds brought to life tell the story of Salt

Once again Saltscape teamed up with Cheshire Records Office to mark 'Archives Explored' week. We helped visitors decipher original medieval deeds as well as getting hands on with quill and ink and copies of a huge array of archive documents relating to the history of salt as a commercial commodity.



Salt Way : *“Making the Weaver Valley more accessible for people”*

Where next for Saltscape?

Our conference at Catton Hall in December gave us chance to take stock and look to the challenges ahead

Paul Nolan, Chief Executive of the Mersey Forest kicked off the day with an inspiring talk about the importance of landscape in our everyday lives, and its relevance to public policy in a local and international context.



Andrea Powell explained the practical, day-to-day impact the work of Cheshire Wildlife Trust is having on the management of designated 'Local Wildlife Sites' across the Saltscape, particularly in relation to grassland as an important habitat.



Professor Mike Nevell from the University of Salford discussed industrial heritage of the Saltscape and the success of our community archaeology project. Nicole Morris from Animate! talked about her exciting plans for performance-based projects with local communities in 2017.

“ With over 30 major projects being delivered by no fewer than 15 organisations in 3 years Saltscape can be a complex initiative to get to grips with. ”
Rachael, Project Manager

Rachael Maskill, Saltscape manager said, “Today has given us the opportunity to understand the context of our work, how projects complement each other are having on the landscape and communities of the Weaver Valley. ”

Could Cheshire Salt eventually gain World Heritage Status? Roger White from the Ironbridge Institute argued that in theory, this could be a long-term goal for the organisations involved in managing the area. Shaun Kelleher from the Ironbridge Museums Trust began to point towards synergies with other heritage projects and organisations that have harnessed the power of volunteers and how we might be able to tap into support mechanisms. Andrew Hull, from The Sandstone Ridge Trust, the former Habitats and Hillforts Scheme (our closest neighbouring scheme) talked about their journey from Landscape Partnership to Trust status.

Simon Lees from Countryside Training Partnership ended the day with an overview of his mid-term evaluation of Saltscape and went on to hold a further workshop with partners last week at the Lion Salt Works.

You can download the speakers presentations [here](#)

Salt Legacy : *“Restoring and protecting the natural and built features of the Weaver valley”*



Moving on to pastures (and meadows!) new

Last month we bid a fond farewell to Ruby, our trainee working with Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

Ruby told us, “When I first arrived at Cheshire Wildlife Trust to work on the Saltscape Project I didn’t know what to expect as it was a very broad role that could be adapted for my own development. I came from a reserve management background so working on a conservation project was something completely new to me. The flowering season was in full swing when I started, so I had to train up quickly before the plants went back to their winter guise! Soon I began working on surveys of our Saltscape sites, and working with Hannah and the students on the Digital Media project.

It’s very hard to sum up everything I’ve done as the role has been so diverse- I’ve done everything from children’s craft stalls and

walks to Hilbre Island to completing Phase 1 habitat surveys and dealing with contractors, to using camera traps to find out more about the best place to target out water vole habitat work. It’s been a lot of fun!”



Photos clockwise L to R Marsh Woundwort, Devils Foot Scabious, filming with Mid Cheshire College students, our camera trap to monitor water levels spots a fast footed rabbit!



Salt People : “Supporting the community to conserve the landscape”



Performances in full swing

Our performing arts project, Animate! is flourishing with the the creative talent of Nicole Morris.

Nicole is developing workshops with Cheshire Young Carers, has run poetry workshops with older people through Community Compass, Salt Sessions with Mid Cheshire College and is currently writing a pantomime with students from Pettypool College.



Poetry workshops



Play in a day costumes

Nicole said “It’s so exciting to be working on such a diverse project as Animate! Our series of Play in a Day workshops with schools are now in full swing too. This is when Key Stage 2 children from get to develop, rehearse and perform a play in just one day. The play involves, music, dance, poetry and comedy whilst at the same time teaching children about local history and the unique story of man’s interaction with salt, industry and the impact that’s had on the landscape and environment.”



Feedback from pupils

Nicole is working with Axis Centre for the Arts at Manchester Metropolitan University

See Animate!’s Salt Sessions at Super Salt Saturday at the Lion Salt Works on 18th March. [More info](#)

Salt Skills : “Developing specialist skills in the community”

A New Look for Thorn Wood

Last month saw our Hedgelayers’ Showdown at the Woodland Trust’s Thorn Wood in Weaverham.

Competitors each had five hours to complete their stretch of hedge. The ‘open’ category was won by professional hedge-layer, Richard Lewis from mid Wales. Three women competitors took part on the day and the ‘novice’ category was won by Mary Jones who is a volunteer with Wirral Countryside Volunteers.

Saul, our Project Officer said, “The hedge will now grow strong and flourish, creating an important space for wildlife and giving a new view out over the rest of the woodland and the site of the newly planted community memorial orchard”.



Saul and Fiona our Community Engagement Trainee have been running hedge-laying sessions as part of our programme of volunteer days and we were delighted that some of our volunteers took part themselves. If you’d like to get out and about in the Saltscape, learn some new skills and help to manage important rural habitats then [click here](#) to find out more or ring the Groundwork office on 01606 723 160 and ask to speak to Fiona or Saul.



Top : Richard Williams, ‘Open’ winner, Mary Jones, ‘Novice’ winner. Left Anthony Hammond. Below Left. The serious business of judging. Photos : Nick Jones

STOP PRESS. What Lies Beneath?



Interested in how our salt landscape was formed? Want to know more about how this amazing landscape began life during the triassic period, and the impact of industry on the geology of the area? Come along to our FREE Geology Conferences run by Cheshire RIGS in June. Member of the public? [click here](#). Professionals? [click here](#)

2017 will be a very busy year for Saltscape as the project comes to a close. Check our forthcoming events [here](#) and don’t forget to follow us on social media to see up to date news stories every week.



www.saltscape.co.uk

