

Experiencing Landscapes: capturing the *cultural services* and *experiential qualities* of landscape

Annex C

First published 09 October 2009

www.naturalengland.org.uk



Annex C:

Pen Portraits of the Post-experience In-depth Interviews

Depth 1: Yorkshire Wolds

A married couple working on a large farm next to an Historic House.

The husband was the farmer (3rd generation) and the wife ran the dogs for the local hunt plus various charitable activities for children on the farm. Although they have no children between them, she takes children from deprived areas on organised activities on the farm.

Although they lead rather chaotic lives, the countryside and the land was considered vital to them. Everyday they spend many hours in it and working with it so it was impossible to underestimate its importance or separate it from them.



Lanes

- **negative:** Can be used as 'cut-through by cars
- **positive:** Cedric, the horse always get excited and she says he enjoys it as much as she does

When horseriding, Sarah enjoys the freedom and relaxation, whilst Alex works very hard and tries to keep to the rules from various EU regulations. They have a bit of a joke



Burton Agnes

- **historic house, she admits to knowing nothing about history but she values the look of it**

about having to leave the hedges to go wild and having to overwinter the fields for the birds until they are allowed to plough in February (she likes it, he begrudges it).

They love the views from the Wolds right over to the coast and the industry of Hull.

There appears to be some concern about people from the cities coming to poach and do hare coursing, an increase they say they have observed since the hunting ban. Also, they mention a rise in the number of travelling communities affecting the landscape.

Sarah did her normal 'ride' from the farm for an hour and explained the features she likes and dislikes. She has names for special trees and knows where her horse likes to stop. There was a comment made about flooding which was apparently due to the lack of dredging further upstream. She likes the hedges to be well-maintained and preferred set aside as it was more pleasurable (although husband, the farmer does not agree). Husband joked about wanting larger fields but actually liked the field system as it stood.



Flooding

- started to happen more and more in this place

Depth 2. Yorkshire Wolds

A large C2DE family, six children, living in a village in the middle of the Wolds.

The parents had a number of jobs, a cleaner and running a mobile village shop. The eldest



View towards Langtoft

- classic Wolds
- openness

son was living at home and works on the roads for the Highways Agency. The other children were still at school. Their teenage daughter was not 'into' the countryside at all. She had a part-time restaurant job in Bridlington and was soon to go to college in Manchester.

The family said they didn't appreciate the countryside enough because they live with it all the time, but their garden backed onto it and they enjoy watching the cows and sheep walking past the back fence.

They like the views from the top, but on the whole thought that looking down on the village was the most important thing. Also, monuments and playground, swings etc were considered important. They think the local parkland, Sledmere, is particularly beautiful.



Rolling farmland

- typically Wolds

On the whole, the teenage children would not participate in the walking activity all together. The eldest probably would still go with his parents, whilst the teenage daughter would not because she had inadequate footwear. The next son down spent a lot of time in the countryside locally and in the village with a gang of mates doing 'whatever'. This represented important time away from his parents and was a key part of his social life.

The two youngest would be taken by their parents to parks and other recreational areas.

They had a concern for the lifeblood of the village and whether local people would be able to carry on living there.



Badly-cut hedge

- annoyance at the flailing practise

Depth 3. Eden Valley

A married couple who have lived in the Eden Valley all their lives and brought up their family there. They are now grandparents and enjoy taking the grandchildren out in the open. They are now retired and living in a bungalow in a village near Shap. He used to work for United Utilities driving around in his van, which he enjoyed until they went public and everything changed.

The view from their sitting room is spectacular and they love the tranquillity and the constantly changing mood of that view as the weather changes.

The view has ploughed fields with a feature oak tree in the foreground and the high Pennines to one side and the Lake District to the other. The contrast between the flat land and the mountain (covered in snow) is what they like.

They see the Eden Valley as a fertile productive piece of land where forestry and farming are important. She grows her own vegetables and knows a lot about horticulture.



Railway viaduct

- learning for the grandchildren
- important historical feature in Eden

They went for a walk with their small grandchildren in Skenrith Park, Kirby Stephen. Because of having the children and the fact that she is not as mobile nowadays, they chose a walk in the south of the area with a well-defined path. She thinks there should be more benches generally. The walk received Millennium funding and part of the project restored some railway land and introduced a walk over the bridge. The walk was particular informative and varied for the kids. They were very proud of the walk as it displays the heritage of the area. They were very interested in the varied trees around and rock formations in the river where the rock had been worn away by the eddies.



Up the beck

- loves the marks the water has made on the stone

Although they like to live in a remote area, they would not choose to go for a walk in a



Footpath

- a Millennium project
- a good path to walk, considering her mobility

remote area because of the difficulty of the terrain for her. They like open landscapes

“To be out of the trees looking at the open landscape. Seeing good well bred sheep, swaledales.”

“The river was very brown. peaty and frothy, snow broth, swirling under the bridge and down the falls, very dramatic. I like to hear the running water and see all the rivers at full tilt.”

“I love the silver birch and the alder winter purple and silvery trunks.”

Depth 4: Single lady in the Southern section of the Eden Valley

Respondents moved to the Eden Valley from Devon because she thought she still had room for another chapter in her life. She had spent many years caring for her disabled son who then passed away. She also got divorced around the same time and wanted a fresh start. Coming from farming stock originally, she wanted to be close to the land. She bought a modern bungalow on the edge of Appleby, overlooking farmland. Having downsized, she is aiming not to have to work anymore so her time is her own.



Dry beck

- an attractive area
- the spring runs at times when the weather is wet

She did her favourite local walk from her house with her dog. Her main interests were the hedgerows, the field and a stream with a new bridge that was built to replace an old one that washed away.

She sees things like ‘slurry’ and farm machinery in a positive light because this is part of



Silage bales

- signs of a healthy farming community
- smells beautiful

the heritage of the area. She doesn't feel like an onlooker with the land, but that it is part of her being. She looks out for signs of trees budding and generally knows the names of the wildlife.

Whilst she clearly finds much solace from her relationship with the countryside around here, she does not get emotional or romantic about it because she feels she is quite a practical woman at heart. She is very pro-farming and thinks that people romanticize the countryside too much without actually using it. However, it is clear that she derives an immense sense of freedom from being in the landscape.

She thinks the Eden Valley is a special place because it is not too popular, unlike its neighbours and so she can continue to enjoy the peace and quiet.

When she is in need of more 'wildness' she just drives up on to the Pennines to find a bleak piece of moorland. She doesn't find it alienating, but life-affirming.



The river

- a peaceful place to sit and think

Depth Interview 5: SINGLE ABC1 DURHAM MLP

This lady is a widow who walks daily for pleasure / health / to help her sleep. It gives her a sense of peace (and I suspect gives some structure to her day too). Historically, she and her husband have owned businesses (pub and shop), and she continued to work in a shop whilst nursing her husband. She no longer works but spends a lot of time travelling now.



The Pier

- a sense of space
- the rhythm of life
- home
- peace

She likes the coast best – it is reminiscent of where she was brought up – she likes the openness, the lack of people. She is less inclined to walk in the ‘countryside’ – she doesn’t get the same sense of ‘centring’.

She essentially did two parts to her walk. In the morning she walked alone down a stretch of coast, then met up with a friend and walked with her in the afternoon after lunch. She and this friend try to meet up for walks once a week or so. She particularly enjoyed the National Trust areas and the areas that reminded her of her childhood: the pier, the harbour, the old ice-cream stall, the lighthouse, the marina. She dislikes the areas where development is unsympathetic – flats which could be improved aesthetically and a building on an old fun fair ground. The fun fair itself she accepts and areas for children to play – she would like to see more (structured) areas for kids on the beach itself. She dislikes the plethora of pubs that have been built along the coast and the associated behaviour – it becomes a ‘no go zone’ to her after dusk. She likes the new road that has been built – it allows you to walk in peace near the coast and provides many sympathetic parking areas that are invisible from the coast.

She describes the landscape as the same – coastal beach and bluffs – but it has many different parts, both natural and man-made. Part of the pleasure for her is due to the beauty, part of it is due to personal associations. Some of the old buildings for example

are not beautiful, but the strong reminders of her childhood give them immeasurable value e.g. the old ice-cream parlour.



The Ice-cream Parlour

- a sense of place, nostalgia, 'home'
- used to come here with her father
- unchanged

She likes the way in which the lighthouse has been opened up to the public now that it is no longer used. The coast itself is a mixture of wildlife (particularly birds) and nature – the sound and power of the sea, the beach and cliffs. But this particular respondent takes as much pleasure from the marina, the pier and the more carefully done developments.

Improvements would be to reduce the number of pubs along the coast. She feels sad that much of the local heritage is disappearing – the fish quay is a good example. The lighthouse might be one example where that heritage is being preserved.



The Fish Quay

- a sense of history, community and way of life
- sadness at the decline

Depth Interview 6: OLDER C2DE LINCS

This respondent was a married lady, now aged 65 – living with her disabled husband and son. She and her husband moved into the area 30+ years ago from London – literally stuck a pin in the map to move out of the town.

She used to walk 3-4 times a day when they had a dog and before her husband was wheelchair-bound – now finds it difficult to get away for very long, so she very much enjoyed her walk. Nowadays, she and her husband like to go occasionally in the car to accessible places – there are one or two places on the coast where he can sit in the car, can see the beach and watch the birds whilst she walks. Alternatively, they go where there is a nice view and they can perhaps have an ice-cream. It is mainly the coast or a nature reserve that has a car park and accessibility. She also goes to the coast with her grandchildren occasionally to enjoy the dunes and the beach.



A walk on the beach

- fun
- space and freedom
- peace, sounds
- home (the pier)

She walked alone and took a route that she could walk from the house to the local disused airfield. This is a route she used to take regularly with her dog, so had lots of nostalgia.



A walk in a dene

- accessible, easy walking, good for dogs
- peaceful, but with others around
- the changing seasons

The main feelings were peace and serenity, but also a kind of hope that came from one or two signs of spring. She particularly liked the fact that she saw almost no-one yet it is within walking distance of her house. She also gets a sense of history and local feel from the ex-RAF buildings and the church and churchyard. Her preference would be to walk in the hills, so she enjoys the aspects which give her views across to the Wolds, but in the main this walk provides openness, peace and nostalgia. The area has deteriorated – the gardens of the buildings and the paths are no longer tended, but there is still beautiful blossom in late spring and spring bulbs. There are lots of rabbits too and she heard a woodpecker. Lots of activities go on at the airfield itself – motocross (which makes it very muddy), kids on bikes, car boot sales, horse show, dog training – and she likes and accepts the fact that it is being used and is valuable for local recreation, although almost subconsciously there is perhaps a little resentment of the intrusion!

On balance, she feels lucky to have this area so close to home. She had few suggested improvements for the area as a whole, although she did refer to one area of coast where it is impossible for her husband to see the views from his chair. She also referred obliquely to the ex-RAF buildings which were now disused – she commented positively on a big



Old industrial buildings

- being allowed to deteriorate
- sense of anger and disappointment
- tries to avoid

ex-RAF house which has recently been sold and the gardens restored beautifully. The value of the landscape is a mixture of accessibility, local history and nature – and again importantly, that sense of personal history and nostalgia.

Depth Interview 7: FAMILY ABC1 LINCS

These respondents have two young daughters aged 7 & 9. Husband is in the fire service; wife is Swiss. Family are ‘into’ the outdoors – kids have cats and are working towards rabbits; they live on a small private estate with large gardens – kids spend a lot of time out of doors. They walk most weekends, and also on evenings during the summer – and like to picnic / cycle too. Dad has a big kite and a kite buggy which they use on the beach; eldest daughter also has a kite. Mum is very green – organic farming important to her and she appreciates conservation. Both kids are members of the RSPB, and the whole family like to bird spot when the land floods and generally. Near neighbours feed badgers and they like to go and see them too.

Mum and the two girls went on walk which lasted about 1½ hours. They walked from their house around paths and also across private farmland where they are allowed access. There is one large landowner in the area who seems very conservation-minded – he has dug ponds and planted reedbeds and woodland areas; he farms organically and encourages people to utilise the area for walking and bird watching. Their walk took them out to the edge of the old RAF airfield that is really a central outdoor recreation area for the village.



Waterway and ponds

- an area being taken care of
- wildlife, birds and nature
- not many people
- education, learning and fun for the kids

Things most appreciated from the walk were the wildlife (birds, rabbits, ducks, a frog) and the entertainment provided by natural features e.g. trees shapes; trees to climb; mud! The girls also like to spot flora – snow drops were the only thing at the current time, but a row of cherry trees are beautiful in spring. Mum appreciates the openness and the peace it provides as well as being very interested in nature. Although she didn’t say as much,

she seems to be constantly teaching the girls about nature and farming whilst they are out as well as encouraging them to appreciate things like the shape of trees etc.



Art in nature

- amazing, inspirational
- opportunity to climb and play in trees

They also like to walk across fields with livestock – horses at the moment and sheep in the summer. A highlight of the walk is to take apples for the horses. Historical aspects and things which characterise the area come more from the RAF heritage – the disused building which was once the officers ball room; the village church and gravestones which feature airmen killed whilst training at the base! In the summer, they take the bikes across to cycle around the airfield (which is about 2-3 miles around) and will picnic at the far side. She commented that it's a bit boring for the girls to walk around and it's probable they don't go too often – but it's the only place to cycle safely. One improvement to the area would be more cycle paths.

Things that they are less happy with about the walk are farm machinery left rusting in the fields, and dog mess not picked up, or worse – put into bags and abandoned! Litter is also an issue in some areas, and seeing a farmer spraying his crop was against the organic ethos.

One of the key aspects of the local landscape seems to be the openness – the extent of views to the Wolds and the coast. The sense of freedom that gives is important. The old airforce buildings are part of the history, and whilst appreciated as they are, an improvement would be to see them 'done up'. Ideally, there would also be less mud! Accepted the walk was done just after the snow in Feb, but the amount and extent of mud did mar the experience to an extent (and these weren't the sort of people to want very neat and tended walkways – just something less like a quagmire!).

ADDITIONAL DEPTH; COUPLE, LINCOLNSHIRE MARSHES

This couple are in their 50s and the kids have left home. The husband had just had brain surgery and was recovering at home for 12 months. Normally he is a captain of a freight vessel. The wife works full time for a housing association. They were born and bred in the area. They love the area and would not consider moving – the sea and boats are ‘in the blood’.

Walking for them is something they do regularly on Tues and Wed evenings all year around. In the winter when it’s dark they walk around the town centre and down the sea front where there are street lights. In summer, they follow a route around the boating lake and caravan park which is beside the beach. Mostly they follow the same route, although occasionally they go elsewhere – notably a woodland which has set routes to follow of one, three and five miles.

The walk they did for the research was the boating lake. For the wife, it is primarily about getting exercise and keeping fit. For the husband, it is more about ‘me time’, having time together with his wife. They enjoy seeing rabbits, and birds on the lake, and walking between the beach and the lake. They are less happy when the Canada Geese are in residence due to the mess that they make! The key experience for them is watching boats coming in and out of the estuary – this has the link to their childhood and local area and it gives them a huge sense of peace and tranquillity. They have mixed views about the dunes on one part of their walk that have been allowed to re-colonise. She dislikes the fact that you can no longer see the sea due to the vegetation, and that litter is thrown in that area and not picked up; he is more pragmatic and accepts that it will be good for wildlife. Both refer nostalgically to the golden sand dunes of their youth, and the fact that the beach huts, which used to be on the edge of the beach with sea views, cannot even see the ocean now.

They do not walk on to the beach or amongst the dunes now – they see both as areas for activity. The beach is for activities with children; the dunes for dog walkers.

They see a few people on their walk and like to see them. They don’t mind it when it is very busy in the summer as it represents income for the local area. The low spots on the walk are few – really only the litter lying amongst the dunes. The high spots are watching the ships and the fact that the boating lake has changed little since their childhood – a great sense of continuity.

They feel very lucky to live in the area. They feel a great connection to the sea as a way of life, and much of the man-made features of the area represent an important part of the experience – the boating lake, the Pleasure Beach. They feel they have a variety of landscapes within easy reach, and having easy access to these is an important part of their lifestyle.

Depth interview 9:North Thames Basin
ABC1 Younger female: Nazeing

A linear walk, partly along waterside, from the respondent's home in Nazeing. The walk is familiar to her. She sometimes does the walk with family and with her children, but was unaccompanied on this occasion.

Calmness and relaxation: The landscape and being outdoors gives her a strong sense of calmness and relaxation,

Health benefits: The general health benefits of being outdoors and of walking are perceived very strongly by her.

A routine in life: Being outdoors and walking and experiencing the landscape are all part of her weekly and almost daily activity – she regards it as an important need for her and her family's well-being. She does not express this view passionately but it is evident from her lifestyle.

Open views strongly appreciated: She relates strongly to open views and undeveloped landscape, which she regards as important to safeguard in this edge-of-city situation.



Views into open fields

- **main benefit of the walk**
- **openness, naturalness and restfulness**

Safety: The perception of safety influences where she walks and experiences the landscape when she is on her own. Such considerations may be common to many females and may be far less common amongst males.



Tatty fencing

- a small irritation on the walk
- slight danger to her children when they come past that way

Play and discovery for children: She sees getting outdoors as an important part of her children's well-being, learning and development.



The old mill

- a place for a rest on the walk
- provides a link with the area's past functions
- provides a sense of calm

Depth Interview 10: North Thames Basin
C2D Older: Female and children
Cold Norton, Essex

Respondent and children present at interview.

A walk through local farmland immediately from their home. They are familiar with the walk. The walk involved husband and wife, their two children and their two dogs.

“Getting outdoors is important to us – a big part of our lives.

We go out for walks both as a family and as individuals. It changes season to season and depending on whether we’re walking the dogs or walking to get to school or whatever.”

“Everyone’s so much happier if we’ve all been outside for a while.”

Health benefits: The general health benefits of being outdoors and of walking are strongly perceived by the family. It is regarded as both a physical exercise and part of their well-being.



Typical view of the landscape

- appreciated by the family
- open agricultural fields with uncultivated field margins and long views

Calming experience: They find that walking and getting outdoors gives them a sense of relaxation and makes them feel calmer.

Sense of discovery and learning: The ability to observe and study the outdoor environment and the natural world is seen by them as an important role of walks and experiencing the landscape.

Sense of identity and community: They feel a belonging to the area partly through their walking and being out in the landscape, understanding it better and meeting other people.

Quality family time: family togetherness is regarded as an important aspect of walking and experiencing the landscape, including the opportunity to share thoughts that don't get expressed in other situations, especially by the children.



Rosy-cheeked children

- the sense of family togetherness
- children discovering the natural world

Sense of ownership and belonging: The family have established a strong emotional link with and a symbolic ownership of the area's in which they walk and cycle.

Appreciation of views and landmarks: Being on a ridge, the area affords long views and has some modest landmarks such as the church and the water tower. These views and landmarks are appreciated by them and seen as part of the area's identity and character.

Sustainable land management: they notice the way the land is managed. They appreciate wildlife and they praise environmental improvements in the land. They express disappointed at insensitive land management.



Messy litter

- not much, but it detracts from the enjoyment of the landscape
- whatever the landscape character, practical reality can effect experience

Depth 11: Couple of Friends in North Downs, Surrey.

The walk was conducted on the North Downs Way from Farnham by two female friends in their middle age. One has a teenage daughter. It was cold crisp day with light snow still remaining. They wanted us to see two sections of the North Downs Way, so did a morning walk in the Farnham area and an afternoon walk in the Puttenham area.



Historic house

- **Nice example of historic architecture**
- **they chatted to the owner and felt sociable**

They consider themselves very lucky with the landscape locally. If they are going out with children they tended to choose more parkland style areas, such as at Farnham Castle or Loseley Park. They both live in Farnham town.



Information sign

- **provided some learning about the wildlife on the Lake**

This walk was considered to be quite remote and not one they would do on their own because they were a little frightened of the woodland. The beginning section, they thought was quite built-up and over the years the North Downs Way has been spoilt by

the building of bypasses. In general the sounds of trains and traffic were not helping with relaxation in this area.

“Part of the walk is off the beaten track and therefore quite a lonely walk for a lady on her own.”

Otherwise they were pleased to have seen some wildlife, including ducks, deer and horses. Seeing other people had also added to the experience because it felt very sociable, dog walkers, joggers and a lady who lived on route and wanted to know why they were taking photographs!

They found the experience particularly good for ‘blowing away the cobwebs’ and learned a lot from the nature trail noticeboard around the lake at the end. The lake was a particular highlight.

“I liked the lake at Puttenham – quite tranquil and a relaxing atmosphere. There were lots of spring flowers ie. snowdrops coming through. Spring is on it’s way.”

The woodland (Farnham area) was a bit enclosed for them and they would have liked more views en route. They took some pictures of the path going through very dark sections of the woodland with ivy growing up the trees to represented a ‘scary’ section of the walk. The talked about passing beautiful old houses and that this gave them ‘a sense of history’ and of rural life.

The language used about the overall experience was ‘freedom’, ‘open space’, fresh air and carefree.

“The fresh air blew away the cobwebs and I felt refreshed as a consequence. The openness of the countryside made me feel this way.”

The negative aspects to the walk were some fly tipping, trees being chopped down and a planning application notice they saw for housing.



Fly tipping

- provoked a negative response
- reminded them they were too close to built-up areas

Depth 12: Male in North Downs Kent

Respondent likes to escape out of the town where he lives and often goes looking for butterflies and moths and likes moth trapping. He is interested in the landscape as a Geography teacher and although he has a family he stills likes to get some time on his own of a week-end. He is quite clued up about ‘habitats’ all over the North Downs and knows were to go.

He chose a short walk not too far away with plenty of variety. The walk started in the village of Eastling which he regarded as being very pretty with an historic church. He thought it was originally an Estate village as there was an historic house nearby. He was interested in how the estate had managed the farmland and thought it was quite pretty and well done, although there were a few artificial touches, like a hedged walkway across a



The village church tower

- a focal point for the walk
- a sense of history

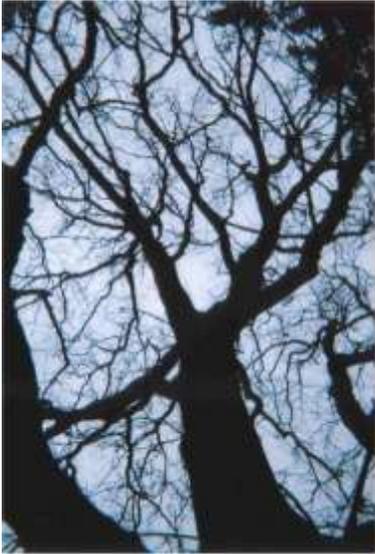
field to stop people going elsewhere in the field.

In the middle of the walk was a small copse that needed better management and he took a picture of this because he thought it was too dense and needed coppicing.

“I had excitement because I saw some landscape being managed in a positive way for the environment”.

He was quite interested in the history of the area but also gained an immense amount from the solitude saying that it helped him to calm down from the stress of his working life.

The walk was in Eastling with Belmont Park. Normally like to find somewhere where he is alone.



Individual trees

- **Looking up into the special ancient tree was exciting**

He was excited to see hares in the fields but got most inspiration when looking up into large trees. He took a picture of a fallen tree, which he imagined had gone in the 1987 hurricane. Attractive things for him were a horse and some old man's beard in the hedgerow.



Estate Land

- **Example of an estate managed walkway**
- **Land perceived to be quite well managed**

There was a small piece of litter which was considered negative as was an old quarry full of rusting bits and piece. He also took a picture of a 'no footpath' sign put up by the Belmont Estate to stop people walking that way (this annoyed him).

“The church was the central theme of the walk because you walked in a big circle around it. It was the anchor of the walk, calming and relaxing. It was an unchanging feature.”

Depth 13: Family with Dogs in mid Devon Redlands, village of Whimble

The family lives on the edge of a village and did a very regular two-hour walk from their house. They all enjoy being outdoors, especially seeing animals. Eddie is a lorry driver and so loves to get out at week-ends rather than getting into a car. The family knows the farmer quite well and know individual fields particularly where certain flowers grow etc. All the family grew up here and there are various stories to tell about this walk, especially an old bus shelter half way around.



Distant views

- the combination of the fence and hedge was very Devon
- like seeing field in the foreground

The teenage daughter still enjoys going on this walk.

The fields were the best part of the walk but they are also quite impressed with the way



Heritage building

- well-renovated station is good to see
- a good sense of history

the Railway Station has been done up with heritage values in mind. They are also happy with a new housing development which took the place of an old factory, which used to give a lot of employment. The development appears to be very sensitive to the surrounding fields.

In contrast, they are annoyed at a house which has been built on their road because it is much higher than all the other houses and not 'in keeping' they can't believe planning permission was given because it is an 'eyesore' in their view.

They only really do walks from home rather than travel to walk, unless it was a visit to the coast or Dartmoor. The family is a working family who are very proud of their village.



Open fields

- it feels like you are miles away from anything
- 'happy' because they have climbed up a big hill

Depth 14/ Married couple in Devon Redlands North

This couple work very hard in a private public school as deputy headmaster and teacher. They enjoy walking holidays together particularly coastal path walks. Locally they have very little time to get into the landscape but partly chose to move here because of good access to the Countryside. He moved from Kent for this job about 8 years ago.



Distant views

- a varied patchwork
- conifers give good definition to the landscape
- high view represents the culmination of the walk and inspiration

They professed to not being very drawn to ‘moorland’, such as nearby Dartmoor but love the local field patterns, undulating hills, hedges and villages in Devon generally. They chose a walk they have done before and love because it starts of in a Stately Home (Knightshayes), encompasses some woodland, and some good height with a view in the



Sunken lane

- very ‘Devon’
- comforting ancient lane

middle.

They enjoy the element of discovery, going through field, trees, stream with different views opening up all the time. They enjoy seeing old, ancient man-made features, such as stone stiles, old drover's roads, an old barn and a row of estate workers cottages. The wife was particularly drawn to a row of single oak trees planted by the estate, saying they had great magnitude and presence.



The oak trees

- **inspired poetry**
- **sense of history**
- **majesty and awe**

The most important part of the walk was the middle section when they had gained some height enabling far reaching views over the hills. This gave them a sense of inspiration. The countryside was important to them as a couple from when they got married and continues to be a joint communing activity.

They drew attention to a housing estate which had been built up the side of one of the hills and they thought it was very insensitively done. They were also concerned at the end of the walk to see that the estate cottages were not being very well maintained and also that an old railway bridge was in disrepair.

Exmoor depth interview 15: Winsford, Exmoor 3/3/09

Female respondent and children (children not present at interview)

A circular walk across to the head of a valley which is a 'Devil's Punchbowl' formation. All the land is managed by the respondent's family on behalf of their employer, a local Estate. They are familiar with the walk and the land. The walk involved the respondent and the three children, and their two dogs.

The insider's view: She inevitably offers an 'insider's' view of this landscape as she is directly engaged in managing it and she faces the practical reality of its use and management. She is immersed in the place every day.

Ability to switch off: She is able to switch off from the practical needs of the farmland at times when out walking and experiencing the landscape. Key views offer this situation and can give her this momentary relaxation.

Children's discovery and play: Despite living in the working environment of the farm, the children are able to learn and discover and play when out walking and experiencing the landscape and they do not take it all for granted as they are still discovering and sensing it all.



Old quarry

- valued by the children for a local niche in the landscape they can relate to and investigate

Appreciation of wildlife: With wildlife all around them the family still can appreciate it and strive to learn more about it, especially birds, and the red deer. Other wildlife, such as the Exmoor ponies, is recognised as part of the local identity but also regarded as a practical nuisance at times.

The functional landscape: The landscape, especially in this area, is perceived by her as predominantly something requiring functional management. It's ability to stir emotions amongst visitors, and to bring income into the locality by visitors is recognised, but the visitors themselves bring practical management needs which impact on the family's time and activities.



Footpath and bridleway waymarks

- signs of people's use of the area
- have practical consequences for family's activities on and around the farm

New perception of the landscape because of nearby research: The Devil's Punchbowl is a striking feature of the immediate landscape but the family are now even more attuned to it because of the glacial research studies currently being undertaken by Southampton University, to learn about the Punchbowl's formation.



View towards the Devil's Punchbowl

- being studied by Southampton University geologists, so the family are thinking more about its formation and history, rather than just seeing it as an abstract part of the land around them.

Depth 16: Exmoor, Younger C2D couple

A linear half-day walk along and through fields and woodland back towards his tied cottage. He is generally familiar with the area but did not know this particular route. They were accompanied on the walk by two of his gundogs.

General attitudes to landscape

Him: “We mostly take Exmoor for granted until we go away and realise what we come back to.” “We often walk on Dunkery Beacon [local high moorland] and enjoy the views and notice how wildlife, livestock, trees are changing.”

Her: “We’re always out in the countryside. Every year is different and you still discover aspects of the countryside.

Sense of knowledge and discovery: Respondents express both an insider’s working view of the landscape, because of his occupation as a gamekeeper, but they are also still wanting to learn and discover more about the landscape.



Open view across Exmoor

- taken for granted but still appreciated by [male], who works in the area
- strongly valued by [female] for the sense of freedom

Historical continuity: Respondents see themselves as making their own mark on the landscape, and feel a desire to understand the functional relevance of the landscape in its recent past, so they can better understand the skills and occupations of people who shaped the landscape in recent generations before them.



Derelict farmhouse

- being reclaimed by nature
- contemplation of past farming activity in the area

Health benefits: Respondents both regard being active outdoors, especially walking, as important for healthy exercise. The need to walk and train David's gun dogs means this is a regular need for them anyway.

Sense of freedom: She in particular feels a strong need to be outside and away from the enclosure of being indoors. She also feels a calming influence in being outdoors and relating to features of the landscape such as stream, water and open views.



Stream

- calming and restful for her
- he enjoys its dynamic nature and the fact that it can change suddenly and change through the year with different flows of water

Understanding wildlife: Respondents strive to see and learn about wildlife and the interactions of the natural world. Again this relates to his gamekeeper occupation but they

see it in a fuller sense and regard wildlife and the right balance of land management as an integral part of the landscape.

What would they most like protected?

She values the old buildings, “to keep the history going.” He values “the iron-ore workings so people know about past functions of the area.” “The iron ore workings were fascinating to see - makes you feel what hard toil it would have been. It gives you a sense of history and we enjoy seeing photos of the place in the nearby pub.”

Both of them feel the area’s woodland is essential for its landscape and its wildlife value.

What would they most like to see changed?

Respondents both feel there is too much barbed wire along field boundaries in the general area. They realise its function but feel it is overdone and creates a harsh feeling and they are concerned when wildlife gets snagged on it.