



PRESS RELEASE

Monday 5th September

Dry stone wallers pass the test!

Eight people gained their Level 1 certificates in dry stone walling after undergoing 10 days of training and assessment by the Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain.

The course was held at Ashlar House, lying between Higham and Fence, and was run by the Pendle Hill landscape partnership. The partnership has been working with DSWA over the last four years to restore important walls and hedgerows in the landscape and also to train up people who want to volunteer or gain employment locally.

The wall, which is part of Northwood Farm, had several large gaps and a demolished gateway. Over the 10 days in August, under the expert eye of Phil Dolphin who is a Master Craftsman with DSWA, the trainees rebuilt 60m of wall using random gritstone and no cement!

Keeping the tradition and craft of walling alive is important for many reasons. It conserves our attractive landscape and gives it a distinctive upland feel. Walls are important to the farmers, keeping their stock in the right place and providing shelter from wind, rain and sun. The structures are good for nature too - birds, amphibians, reptiles, spiders and insects all nest and live in the walls, together with small mammals such as stoats and shrews.

At least three of the trainees hope to utilise their new skills in their jobs, and the rest will restore boundaries on their own land or volunteer locally to keep the walls alive!

This was the last of ten free courses run in walling and hedgelaying over the last four years of the Pendle Hill landscape partnership, funded by the National Lottery's Heritage Fund.

Programme Manager Cathy Hopley said " We are delighted to get another 8 people through the test and skilled up to protect our environment. Overall, the project has restored over 7500 metres of walls and hedges; and trained 150 people, including 26 at this level 1. It's a great achievement."

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EDITORS NOTES

- The Pendle Hill landscape partnership is led by the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- The partnership aims to:
 - I. restore, enhance and conserve the heritage and landscape of Pendle Hill
 - II. reconnect people with their past and their landscape
 - III. bring the two sides of the hill together
 - IV. create a sustainable future for the environment, heritage and for visitors' experience of Pendle Hill
- The scheme was awarded a National Lottery grant of £1.8million by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in January 2018. These funds will be delivered from 2018-2022 and will be matched with a further £1m raised locally.
- The scheme is made up of a dozen projects which safeguard the area's wildlife and heritage and improve people's access to this popular countryside area. We will do this by providing opportunities for training and volunteering; by supporting research and devising creative and digital interpretation to inspire a new generation about our heritage; by restoring important landscape features, and by working with communities to re-tell the stories of radical Pendle people. The scheme will increase pride in this special place and raise aspirations amongst communities, and it will bring in new investment to support the environment and the economy.
- The Pendle Hill landscape partnership is supported by National Lottery players through the Heritage Fund and by the Forest of Bowland AONB. Partners include representatives of parish

councils, the landowning and farming community, Pendle and Ribble Valley Borough Councils, Lancashire County Council, statutory bodies, tourism businesses and volunteers.

- The Pendle Hill LP covers 120 square kilometres, stretching from Gisburn down to Whalley, and from Clitheroe across to Nelson and Padiham.
- The Hill is well known as a beauty spot and is heavily visited by residents of the local towns: it is a perfect place for walking and cycling. The area's heritage is dominated by the story of the Pendle Witches, but there are lots more stories to tell including the founding of the Quaker movement, non-conformists and radicals, Roman and Bronze Age settlers, medieval farming systems and early industrial developments. The network of dry stone walls and hedgerows give the area a distinctive feel, and the landscape is also important for its wild moorland, rare birds and woodlands.
- For further information contact the LP Scheme Manager cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk on 07891 537835
- Visit the project website at www.pendlehillproject.com or visit our Facebook page 'Pendle Hill Project' for up to date news and views.

About the National Lottery Heritage Fund

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