

Report to: Cabinet



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## Proposed National Lottery Heritage Fund Bid

Naturally Connected - Connecting Communities with the Heritage of the Clyst Valley

### Report summary:

Following the successful delivery of two National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) projects ('Great Trees in the Clyst Valley' and 'Routes for Roots', in the Clyst Valley the Delivery Team have been developing proposals for a third NLHF project 'Naturally Connected - Connecting Communities with the Heritage of the Clyst Valley', focused around nature and community connections in Cranbrook and Mosshayne/Tithebarn – the new communities in the west of East Devon. (A summary of the previous NLHF Projects is provided at Appendix C.)

With support from NLHF enabler Phil Collins we have undertaken a Stakeholder Workshop (including Cranbrook Town Council, Broadclyst Parish Council, National Trust Killerton, Devon Wildlife Trust and others) to develop the scope of the potential project. We have also had initial meetings with the NLHF to ensure that the proposed project aligns with the Lottery's Investment Principles and is likely to be supported. Following submission of a Project Enquiry in December 2024 we have received positive feedback from the NLHF, who support the principle of the proposed lottery funding project (subject to submission of a detailed bid) and provided with guidance on development of our proposed bid.

This project aims to enable new residents within these new communities to explore, understand and value their heritage (including the recent heritage of the development of the new communities themselves) and connect with the landscape and natural heritage of the Clyst Valley; whilst creating space and opportunities for residents to strengthen connections with each other.

The proposed project would run from Autumn 2025 to Autumn/Winter 2027, and work with partners to engage with hard to reach groups including Young People (teenagers/young adults) and residents born outside the UK, including Ukrainian refugees, to develop opportunities for them to develop a connection to the landscape of Clyst Valley through art and access projects, and develop opportunities to share this and increase engagement with the wider community. The project will also refresh the Clyst Valley Regional Park website and utilise information to make it more accessible to all users and incorporate outputs from the previous NLHF projects, and new information generated by the project.

Our estimated budget for the project is £315,000 of which £195,000 would be funded by NLHF and the remainder funded through officer time (Green Infrastructure Project Manager 1 day/week, and Wild East Devon Community Ranger ½ day/week), without additional budgetary commitments, and c£40,000 from s106 contributions. We will also seek additional arts funding to support this element of the project. A breakdown of the proposed costs and funding (subject to further development) is at Appendix A.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

## Recommendation:

That Cabinet:

1. Supports the submission of a bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund NLHF in relation to the Naturally Connected - Connecting Communities with the Heritage of the Clyst Valley project.
2. Delegates authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Finance and Portfolio Holder – Coast, Country and Environment to approve the bid for submission to the NLHF
3. Subject to securing NLF funding; delegates authority to the Director of Place to enter into a legal agreement with the NLHF and Partner Organisations (summer 2025) allocate resources to progress the project, and advertise and appoint a Project Officer with the aim of the project commencing in autumn 2025

## Reason for recommendation:

The proposed lottery project will support access to nature & health and wellbeing in our new communities in the western part of the district, and aligns with a number of themes in the Council Plan 2024-28, including:

- Supporting the Council's Vision to promote wellbeing and a fairer/equal society,
- Alignment with and delivery of the Climate Change Strategy, Nature Recovery Plan, Tourism and Cultural Strategies,
- Achieving objectives to increase grant funding to support projects across the district and collaboration/engagement with Town/Parish Councils.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☒ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☒ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☒ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☒ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☒ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

## Equalities impact Low Impact

The proposed lottery project will be focused on engaging with young people and residents born outside the UK (including the refugee community) in Cranbrook, Mosshayne/Tithebarn and West Clyst with the landscape, nature and heritage of the Clyst Valley – providing opportunities for these groups (and the wider community) to benefit from connecting with nature and greenspace and the health, wellbeing and opportunities for social connectivity.

## Climate change Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; Contingency required as part of cost plan to meet NLHF requirements, and to ensure that expenditure doesn't exceed agreed funding.

**Links to background information** NLHF Heritage Grants (£10,000 - £250,000) - [National Lottery Heritage Grants £10,000 to £250,000 | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#), Clyst Valley Regional Park Website - [Home | Clyst Valley Regional Park \(clystvalleypark.org.uk\)](#)

### **Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ A supported and engaged community
  - ☒ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
  - ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
  - ☐ Financially secure and improving quality of services
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### **Report in full**

Following the successful delivery of two National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) projects ('Great Trees in the Clyst Valley' and 'Routes for Roots', in the Clyst Valley the Delivery Team have been developing proposals for a third NLHF project 'Naturally Connected - Connecting Communities with the Heritage of the Clyst Valley', which focuses on nature and community connections in Cranbrook and Mosshayne/Tithebarn. (A summary of the previous NLHF Projects is provided at Appendix C.)

### **The Need for the Naturally Connected Project**

Cranbrook, Mosshayne & Tithebarn and West Clyst are new, rapidly growing communities bordering the Clyst Valley in East Devon. New residents are all recent arrivals; both from within Devon, elsewhere in the UK, and from overseas.

The resident population in the area is increasing rapidly, with over 12,000 new residents since 2011 and a further 16,000 residents when Cranbrook is completed. The demographic mix is also different to most of East Devon, with many more young families, a predicted significant growth in number of teenagers over the next 5-10 years, and a number of residents born outside the UK – notably from Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Africa and Hong Kong (all of whom bring their own cultural perspectives).

With such rapid change and a new, dynamically changing community, there is a risk that much of the recent heritage of the formation of these communities will be lost, especially the experiences of the first residents, as well as a lack of a sense of belonging and connection to their unique heritage and landscape of the Clyst Valley.

This project aims to enable the new residents within these communities to explore, understand and value their heritage (including the recent heritage of the development of the new communities themselves) and connect with the landscape heritage of the Clyst Valley; whilst creating opportunities for residents to strengthen connections with each other.

### **Scope of the Project**

With support from NLHF enabler Phil Collins we have undertaken a Stakeholder Workshop to develop the scope of the potential project, and held conversations with the NLHF to ensure that the proposed project aligns with the Lottery's Investment Principles and is likely to be supported.

The project will explore the heritage of these new communities; capturing memories, life experiences and connections of people to each other and to the heritage of the Clyst Valley. Approaches to this are proposed to include:

- Working with identified groups using a range of media (through co-creation - potentially including photography, maps, art/sculpture, music, dance and theatre). Building on Youth Arts and Health Trust's 'Frame of Mind' project and including input from arts therapists to support development of confidence and relationships.

- Development of physical artworks and shelters which relate to the heritage of the Clyst Valley within Cranbrook, Station Road and Minerva Country Parks which run through the communities
- Outputs will be collated into a community exhibition (travelling) and web-exhibition which will engage with the whole community.
- Curate a community led 'Digital Museum' and Gazetteer which captures the heritage of the Clyst Valley Landscape (focus on 3 settlements including Cranbrook and Mosshayne/Tithebarn & West Clyst). This will build upon information collected in Clyst Great Trees and Routes for Roots projects – drawing out the heritage aspects of these, and focus on new communities' lived heritage and experiences, and connections with their landscape heritage (including experiential connections to the landscape through walking, cycling etc.)
- Provide a greater community focus in relation to other projects in the Clyst Valley – and response to the significant change in the landscape and climate change.

The project will include scoping and enabling work to investigate potential for a larger heritage focused project which supports nature recovery, connecting Clyst Valley communities with their natural, landscape and built heritage and opportunities for enhanced social connectivity.

The proposed project would run from Autumn 2025 to Autumn/Winter 2027, and work with partners to engage with hard to reach groups including young people (teenagers/young adults) and residents born outside the UK, including Ukrainian, Afghan and Syrian refugees, to develop opportunities for them to develop a connection to the landscape of Clyst Valley through art and access projects, and develop opportunities to share this and increase engagement with the wider community. The project will also refresh the Clyst Valley Regional Park website to make it more accessible to users and incorporate outputs from the previous NLHF projects, and new information generated by the project.

## Proposed Project Timeline

### 2025

March-April	Preparation of Lottery Bid
May-July	Submission Review by NLHF
August	NLHF Decision, if successful the project would then comprise:
Sept-Oct	Project Inception Liaison with Partnership Organisations, Advertise for Project Officer
Nov-Dec	Public Launch Initial engagement with partners and community groups Refresh Website (enable community interface)

### 2026

Jan-March	Community Group Meetings and Workshops Publicise website and invite community inputs
April-Oct	Outdoor activities and Events within Clyst Valley Regional Park
Nov-Dec	Exhibition Review and Reporting to NLHF Planning for 2027.

### 2027

Jan-March	Community Group Meetings and Workshops
April-Sept	Outdoor activities and Events within Clyst Valley Regional Park
Oct-Dec	Final Exhibition and Review and reporting to NLHF

Following submission of a Project Enquiry in December 2024 we have received positive feedback from the NLHF, who support the principle of the proposed lottery funding project (subject to submission of a detailed bid) and provided with guidance on development of our proposed bid.

### **Partnership Working**

We would seek to partner with Youth Arts & Health Trust and EX5 Alive, who are already working in the area, to deliver the arts and engagement elements of the project. We will identify opportunities to work with existing organisations and projects in the area.

- Local Community Groups
- Cranbrook Town Council & Broadclyst Parish Council
- National Trust
- Devon Biodiversity Records Centre
- Devon Wildlife Trust – Saving Devon's Treescapes
- Bat Conservation Trust – Connecting People and Landscapes

### **Budget**

Our estimated budget for the project is £315,000 of which £195,000 would be funded by NLHF and the remainder funded through officer time (from existing posts, notably the Green Infrastructure Project Manager 1 day/week, and Wild East Devon Community Ranger ½ day/week) and £40,000 from s106 contributions. A summary breakdown of the proposed budget is provided at Appendix A.

We also seek additional arts funding to support this element of the project, as well as contributions from local businesses, notably housing developers in the new communities. (LiveWest have already made an in principle commitment to contribute £5,000 to the project).

### **Natural Lottery Heritage Grants**

The National Lottery Heritage Fund funds projects that connect people and communities to the national, regional and local heritage of the UK. Project bids must demonstrate how they accord with one or more of the NLHF's four [investment principles](#), which are set out in their 10-year strategy, Heritage 2033:

- saving heritage
- protecting the environment
- inclusion, access and participation
- organisational sustainability

A summary of how the project would align with the NLHF Investment principles is provided at Appendix B (links below).

### **Alignment with Council Plan 2024-28**

The project would align with a number of themes in the Council Plan 2024-28, including:

- Supporting the Council's Vision to promote wellbeing and a fairer/equal society,
- Alignment with and delivery of the Climate Change Strategy, Nature Recovery Plan, Tourism and Cultural Strategies,
- Achieving objectives to increase grant funding to support projects across the district and collaboration/engagement with Town/Parish Councils.

### **Next stage**

Subject to Cabinet approval Officers will finalise and submit the NLHF Bid asap.

If we are successful we can then proceed with the delivery of the project, working with the Thelma Hubert Gallery and Countryside Team to ensure our bid aligns with other projects and objectives.

At this stage we are also likely to need to prepare a Partnership Agreement with other bodies which may include:

- Youth Arts & Health Trust
  - EX5 Alive
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### **Financial implications:**

If successful the NLHF funding will support the appointment of a Project Officer (2 year fixed term) and a number of consultant roles (interpreter, artists, NLHF enabler).

Match funding for the bid is proposed to be met by time allocation from existing officers (Green Infrastructure Project Manager – 1 day/week and input from Clyst Meadows Countryside Ranger).

The maintenance of any artworks located in Clyst Meadows will be part of the future management of the site by our Countryside Services team and funded through the in perpetuity management of the site. Any artworks or shelters located in Cranbrook Country Park would need to be agreed with and maintained by Cranbrook Town Council.

### **Legal implications:**

If we are successful in securing lottery funding we will need to enter into a legal agreement with NLHF, and a Partnership Agreement will be required (to accompany the final funding application) with project partners.

## Appendix A – Summary Budget Breakdown

Staff Costs	NLHF Funded	Match Funding	Other Contributions	Notes
Lead Project Officer (1.5 days/week)		£40,000		GI Project Manager
Project/Community Enabling Officer (FT)	£70,000		£20,000	Developer Contributions
Community Facilitator/Interpreter (1 day/week)	£10,000	£2,000		
Ranger/Ecologist (av 1 day/week)	£6,000	£6,000		Countryside Ranger
Lead Artist (1-2 days/week - 80 days)	£20,000			
Artists (Photographers, Sculptors, Musician/Sound, Theatre - 150 days)	£30,000			
Art Therapist (Youth Sessions) - sound therapy?	£6,000			
NLHF Enabler	£12,000			
Videographer	£6,000			
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£160,000</b>	<b>£48,000</b>	<b>£20,000</b>	
<b>Other Project Costs/Disbursements</b>				
Website Update (Mapping, Community Interface)	£10,000			
Consolidation and Update of Existing Data (Intern)		£2,000		Exeter Uni Intern?
Community Events Set up and Venue Hire (inc refreshments)	£6,000			
Translation	£2,000			
Exhibition (Younghayes, EX5 Alive, THG, RAMM)	£2,000			
Celebratory Event	£1,000			
Transport (for groups/attendees) - train, mini-bus, bike hire	£3,000			
Printing Costs	£1,000			
Artworks/Furniture - art trail, shelters? (Clyst Meadows)	£10,000	£40,000	£10,000	(CIL/s106)
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£35,000</b>	<b>£42,000</b>	<b>£10,000</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£195,000</b>	<b>£90,000</b>	<b>£30,000</b>	
% contribution	62%	29%	10%	
<b>Project Total</b>			<b>£315,000</b>	

## Appendix B – Alignment with NLHF Investment Principles

- **Saving heritage:** conserving and valuing heritage, for now and the future.
  - Collect, share and value heritage of Cranbrook, Mosshayne/Tithebarn and West Clyst – new communities in the Clyst Valley
  - Support residents and groups to explore, understand and value the heritage of the natural environment, built environment, social history, art of Country Parks and the Clyst Valley
  - Support residents and groups to create heritage projects that help community to explore and understand the heritage of the Clyst Valley
  - Website resource to map and record heritage through a range of media – community led maps, photography, art, performance, oral history (first residents), stories (fables/myth), nature
  - Exhibition (physical, and web based) – Younghayes Centre/EX5 Alive, and then tour venues
  - Creation of a series of artworks/shelters that are a focus in each of the Country Parks (Pinn Brook, Station Road and Cranbrook) and provide a place of shelter and meeting
- **Protecting the environment:** supporting nature recovery and environmental sustainability.
  - Work with groups to support access to nature - making connections and increasing understanding and appreciation of value of their natural environment and landscape heritage
  - Encourage understanding and value of natural environment of the Clyst Valley and connect communities with nature recovery projects (work with partners that are focusing on nature recovery and biodiversity (Cranbrook Country Park Ranger, Wild East Devon, National Trust Killerton, Devon Wildlife Trust, Bat Conservation Trust) to link to and enhance input to their projects)
  - Support community engagement work to develop a larger project to support direct connections with the heritage of the Clyst Valley – through active transport, water quality and/or nature recovery and art
- **Inclusion, access and participation:** supporting greater inclusion, diversity, access and participation in heritage.
  - Bring together different groups within community through engagement with their heritage
  - Young People – work together to build confidence, connections and support to access natural environment and the heritage of the Clyst Valley
  - Residents not born in UK – work to develop connections with landscape heritage and understand their cultural responses, and share these with wider community through stories, artworks, events and exhibition
  - Through website, artworks and events support connection with and integration of people born outside UK
  - Create meeting points (artworks/shelters) within Country Parks – for all, but focused on teenagers. A place for them that encourages a sense of ownership and pride in their environment – value landscape heritage
  - Project will support creation of a legacy for the community – website, art, shelters – which will provide long-term community benefits.
- **Organisational sustainability:** strengthening heritage to be adaptive and financially resilient, contributing to communities and economies.
  - Support the development of community and sense of place in Cranbrook, Mosshayne/Tithebarn and West Clyst, which is connected to and values the heritage of the Clyst Valley
  - Change in demographics – lots of teenagers, making sure they are engaged and value heritage



## Appendix C – Summary of Clyst Great Trees and Routes for Roots

### Great Trees in the Clyst Valley

The Great Trees in the Clyst Valley project, supported by a £52,000 'Our Heritage' Lottery grant, encouraged local people to explore, record and restore the heritage landscape of trees in fields, hedges, parks and orchards across the Clyst Valley.

The project involved 52 public events and restored 4.6 hectares of historic parkland, delivered a new woodland, with 2,200 trees planted, 234m of new hedgerow, 2 new orchards and recorded 325 ancient veteran and notable trees within the Clyst Valley. The ancient trees have been recorded on the [Woodland Trusts' Ancient Tree Inventory](#). The project also **supported** 27 local businesses ranging from web designers, ecologists, nurseries, food & drink suppliers, farm shops, artists and arboriculturalists.



*Tree Planting Volunteers – Broadclyst Primary School*

### Routes for Roots

Building on the success of 'Great Trees' a larger lottery funded project - 'Routes for Roots' – was developed to encourage people to walk and cycle in the Clyst Valley and explore its nature, history and folklore.

The project secured funding of £98,800 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and partners. It aimed to encourage local communities and organisations to better understand their environment and to take action to protect, conserve and enhance its wildlife. The project aimed to enhance peoples' wellbeing by encouraging people to walk and cycle to enjoy their local environment and heritage – utilising the network of green lanes, hollow-ways, footpaths, bridleways, byways, carriageways and the physical boundaries that often define these: hedgerows, hedgebanks, leats, and streams and their associated trees.

Outcomes saw the planting of 600 trees (including locally distinctive Black Poplar trees) by 130 volunteers at West Clyst Farm, with school groups from Broadclyst and West Clyst Primary School.

Improvements have been made to more than 5km of trails and permissive footpaths have been enhanced with the replacement of stiles with gates, enabling people with health conditions or impairments to enjoy more of the countryside.

The team supported guided walks and rides encouraging people to use active transport modes to visit key destinations in the Clyst Valley. A series of short films were produced including three 'virtual guides' to



walks in the Clyst Valley, each of which includes commentary on history, archaeology and natural heritage. These are available at [www.clystvalleypark.org.uk/trails](http://www.clystvalleypark.org.uk/trails).

Activities included talks, art activities, family fun days and sound walks, which despite pandemic restrictions reached a wide variety of audiences – including harder to reach and new groups. These included the 'Cranbrook Archer' project that brought to life the story of a prehistoric archer whose remains were found during the archaeological investigations at Cranbrook.

We are currently working with partners and stakeholders to develop a brief for a further lottery bid to delivery the next stage of engagement with the local community – and hope to include funding to develop a more significant project to deliver landscape and nature recovery within the Clyst Valley.



*Routes for Roots Community Tree Planting, Clyst Valley Regional Park*