



Isle of Wight
National
Landscape

Isle of Wight National Landscape

Annual Report 2025



Isle of Wight NL



Primary purpose of the AONB designation

To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape:

Also – as long as they do not compromise the ability to achieve the primary purpose :

- meet the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside; and,
- have regard for the interests of those who live and work there.

In 2023 AONBs were rebranded as ‘National Landscapes’ although the designation in legislation remains AONB.

[Website: https://isleofwight-nl.org.uk](https://isleofwight-nl.org.uk)



Statutory requirements

Formulate, publish and review 5-year Management Plan

- The current Plan runs from 2025 – 2030 and is available on the website – it is not available in print form
- The current plan was adopted by Isle of Wight Council in November 2024
- Duty on all public bodies **to further the purposes** of the AONB designation when carrying out their function
- The Plan includes a Delivery Plan which conforms with DEFRA Protected Landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF) and aligns with the IW Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)



Further the Purposes

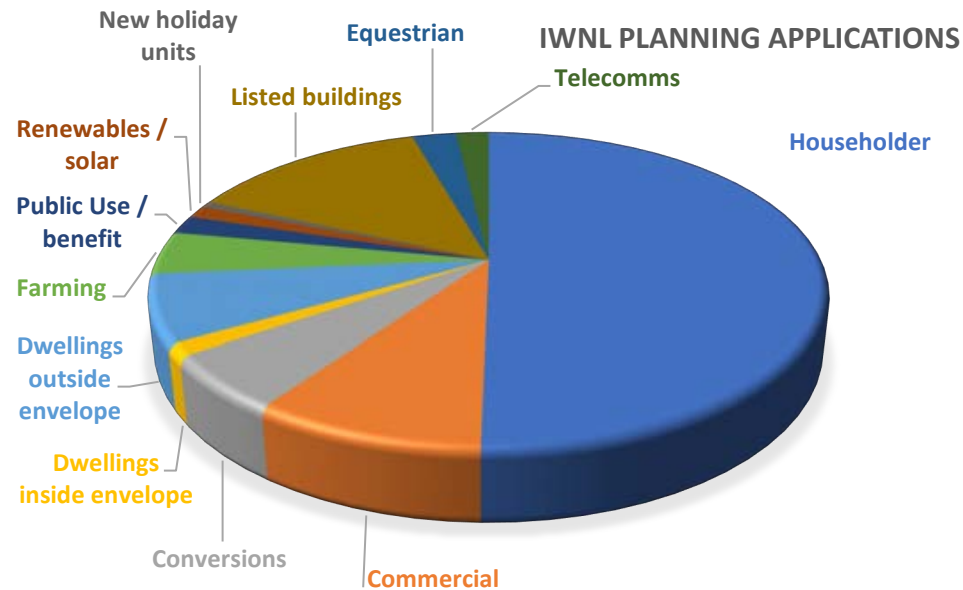
Planning applications within or affecting Isle of Wight NL in 2025/26

- 161 applications received for review
- 87 (54%) requiring formal comment
- 19 applications asked for pre-app advice
- 41 other enquiries and site visits were made



Further the Purposes

As development in the Isle of Wight National Landscape can be acceptable, we strive to enable development where appropriate but continue to resist development when we consider it harmful to the landscape of the AONB. We continue to have significant success with applications that are refused based on our objections and which get subsequently dismissed at appeal.



Working with Arts and Culture

Nature Calling

A national arts project with other National Landscapes was delivered by artists at Bouldnor Forest. It included events at Bouldnor and at the IW Story Festival

School to Museum Walks

Sustainable museum visits walking project with the production of an independent walking resource for teachers and an increase in nature connection for children.

- Brading Primary school Y3 walked to Brading Roman Villa,
- Freshwater and Yarmouth School Y5 walked to Dimbola Museum and Galleries



People

Working with Community

Events and activities celebrating community involvement in the Isle of Wight National Landscape:

- **Wolverton Garden Fair** : Annual sponsorship of the Conservation tent with Wolverton Manor
- **Learning Zone** : Sponsorship of outdoor education activities with the (home educated) students. **Nine** sessions attracted **248** parents and students.
- **Wild Wednesdays: Eight** sessions (am and pm) of outdoor activities were delivered at our offices at Branstone. Morning sessions were most popular with **39** children attending these sessions. This was a pilot that we hope to expand the project next year.



Access Projects

Welcome Walks Programme

Twenty walks were held between 17th May and 31st July with five partners / group leaders. **206** people participated including Wroxall School, Isle of Wight College and Young Farmers

Access for All

Seven access projects were funded (£ 85,803) by IWNL with partners including IW Rights of Way, National Trust and Gift to Nature. Projects included improvements for access at Gat Cliff, Chale Green, Alverstone and Brading Down



Working with Farmers and Landowners

Farming in Protected Landscapes

This scheme is in its fifth year of an eight-year programme.

A Local Assessment Panel is drawn from the farming community on the Island and **31** grants were awarded totalling over **£ 191,300**. We would like to thank these volunteers for their help with this grant

Projects in 2025-26 included hedge planting, hedge-laying, fencing, restoration of **12** ponds, woods and grasslands. Around **3,100** hedge plants / trees have been planted; over **350m** hedgerow and **2 ha** of grassland have been restored.

IW Farming Conference

IWNL was pleased to sponsor the conference held at Barton Manor in February with Natural Enterprise



Working with Farmers and Landowners

Farmer Clusters

We have worked closely with the Back of the Wight Farmer Cluster, helping with a water quality monitoring project and a farmland birds project. The latter included the restoration and planting of new hedgerows, establishing buffer strips and winter bird food crops. Volunteers from British Trust for Ornithology are looking at these sites for wintering and breeding farmland birds to measure the success of this project.

Environmental Farmers Group

We continue to support this initiative which seeks to help farmers diversify income through environmentally-friendly farming that brings positive gains for wildlife, water quality and reduction of emissions.

Isle of Wight Hedgelaying Competition

IWNL sponsored the competition held at Atherfield Farm in February



Working for Nature Recovery

Reddish Buff Moth

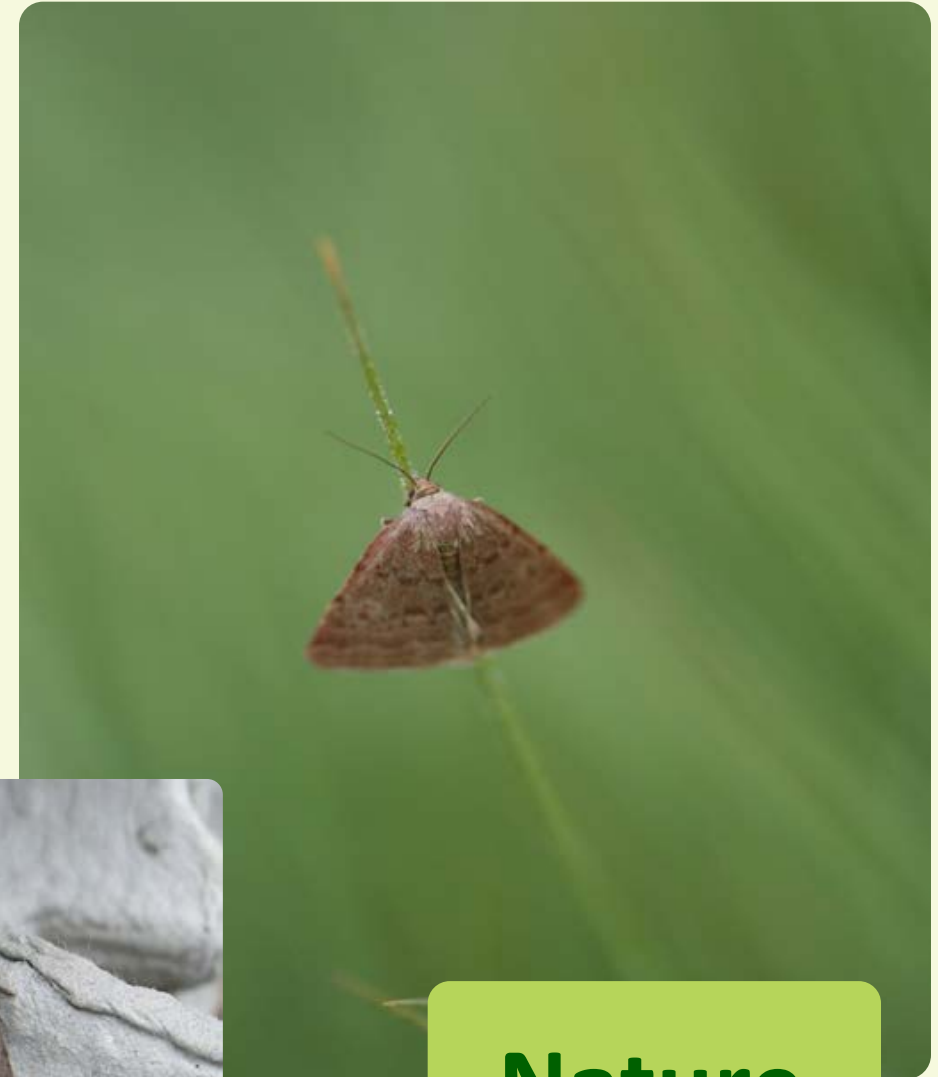
In partnership with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Butterfly Conservation, local experts and volunteers, the IWNL continues to sponsor management and survey work on a species found only in the IWNL in Britain.

Wood Calamint

A FiPL grant was awarded to the IWNHAS for tools to help with the conservation of Wood Calamint, a plant species found in IWNL and nowhere else in the UK

Water voles

In 2024/25 and 2025/26 the IWNL commissioned surveys for water voles in SW Wight, Eastern Yar and Medina



Nature

Working for Nature Recovery

IW Local Records Centre (IWLRC)

The IWNL co-ordinates the Local Records Centre in partnership with the IWNHAS, providing 110 responses to enquiries from developers, planners, landowners and interested businesses.

The IWLRC has also been working to review the Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation database following surveys and monitoring of sites

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (IWLNRS)

The IWLRC continues to work with the local authority and Natural England on their Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Development of the Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership continues with a wide range of experts, landowners and decision-makers to discuss the aims and priorities of the work towards the conservation of species and habitats on the Island – a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.



Working for Nature Recovery

iWatchWildlife

The IWNL supports the Isle of Wight Natural History and Archaeological Society's iWatchWildlife initiative which encourages volunteers and the general public to become more engaged with species recording and thus heighten awareness of the natural world.

This includes the sponsorship of the annual **IW Recorders Conference** held in November with **70** local experts and wider audience attending a series of talks as well as taking the opportunity to network.



Nature

Working for Climate

Climate Change Adaptation Plan

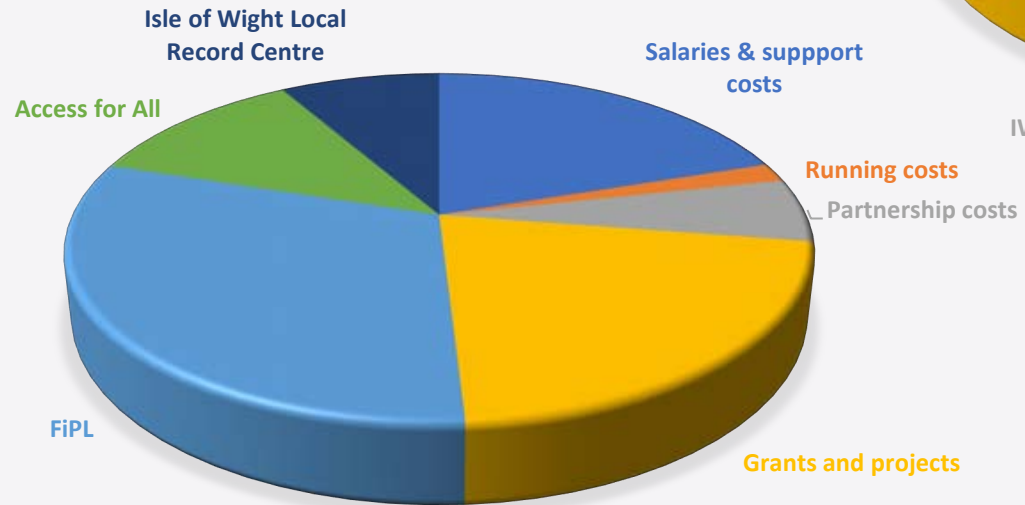
As part of our obligation to the UK Govt's 'Third National Adaptation Programme', IWNL have just finished a wide consultation for our CCA Plan and we aim to publish it shortly on our website.

The Plan shows how the IWNL contributes to carbon storage and sequestration as well as emissions from various activities undertaken in the landscape. With its wide range of habitats, we will work with partners to explore how positive factors can be improved and negative ones reduced across the designation.

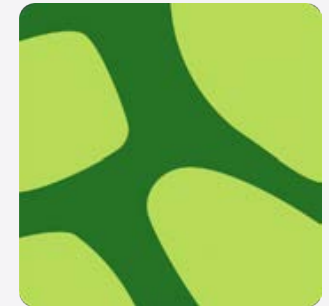
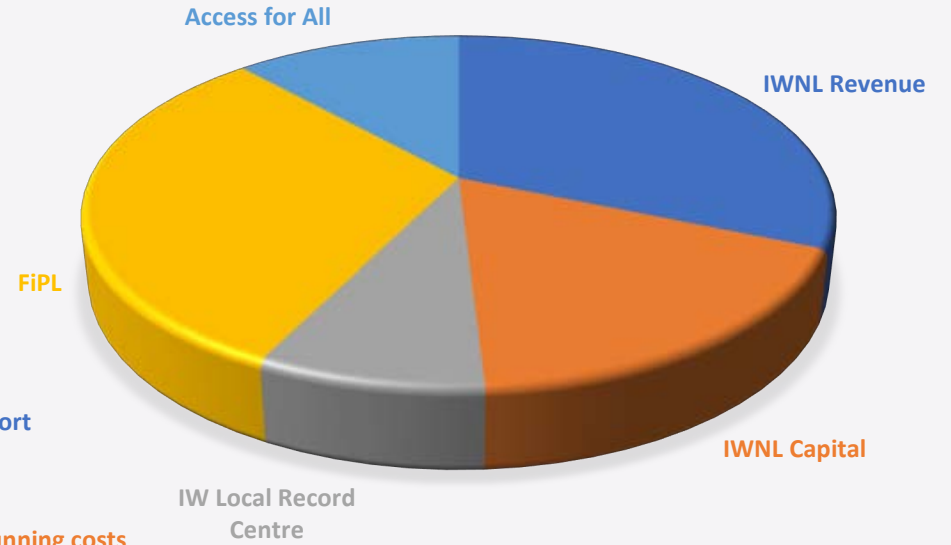


Isle of Wight NL Budget 2025/26

ISLE OF WIGHT NL INCOME 2025-2026



ISLE OF WIGHT NL : EXPENDITURE 2025-2026 BUDGET £ 733,839



Communications and Project Update



Communications and Project Update

- Overview of communications approach and audiences
- Engagement stats
- National Landscapes Conference
- Example projects
 - 2025 Summer walks
 - Infographic and pocket map
 - Pilot project schools to museums walks
 - Nature Calling
 - CAN YOU HEAR US?
- Feedback



Communications Approach

How we connect with audiences:

- Digital and printed media
- Press
- Radio
- Events
- Partner projects
- Projects devised by Isle of Wight NL team
- Youth Committee – underserved audiences



Free Summer Walks
23rd May – 15th August 2026

Isle of Wight National Landscape

Come and explore the Isle of Wight National Landscape with us. 15 walks with 5 walk leaders. Visit [Eventbrite](#) to book, scan QR code or go to [isleofwight-nl.org.uk](#) for more information.



Storytelling: Sue Bailey
Nature: Kathy Grogan
Heritage: Kelly Wetherick
Art: Lucia Para
Commemorative Trails: Chris and Frankie

Month	Date	Walk Name	Time	Leader
NEW IN 2026				
May	23 rd	Arty Walk, Freshwater Bay	10.30-1pm	LP
	25 th	Golden Tales, Golden Hill Fort, Freshwater	11-1pm	SB
	26 th	Historic Landscape at Chilerton	2.30-4.30pm	KW
	27 th	Twilight Woodland Wander, Newchurch	6-8pm	KG
June	30 th	In the Footsteps of: The Niton Smugglers	10.30-1pm	CF
	14 th	Thorness Bay Low-tide, Thorness	2.30-4.30pm	SB
	27 th	In the Footsteps of: Lady Ann Worsley	10.30-1pm	CF
	28 th	Full Moon Walk, Culver Down	7.30-9.30pm	SB
July	30 th	Archaeology of Brading Marsh	10.30-12.30pm	KW
	4 th	Byways and Bird Song, Wroxall	2-4pm	KG
	4 th	Arty walk along Shalfleet Creek	3-5.30pm	LP
August	11 th	In the Footsteps of: Warrior the War Horse	10.30-1.30pm	CF
	17 th	A Wild Night Out, Brighstone	6-8pm	KG
	11 th	Ancient Landscape of Bowcombe Valley	10.30-12.30pm	KW
	15 th	Coastal Plants Safari, Medina Estuary	10-12pm	LP

Walks may change at short notice due to weather or ground conditions. Follow on socials @isleofwight

Isle of Wight National Landscape

Discover new countryside walks with experienced walk leaders:

- Lucia Para: Art
- Sue Bailey: Storytelling
- Kelly Wetherick: Heritage
- Kathy Grogan: Nature
- Chris & Frankie: Commemorative Trails

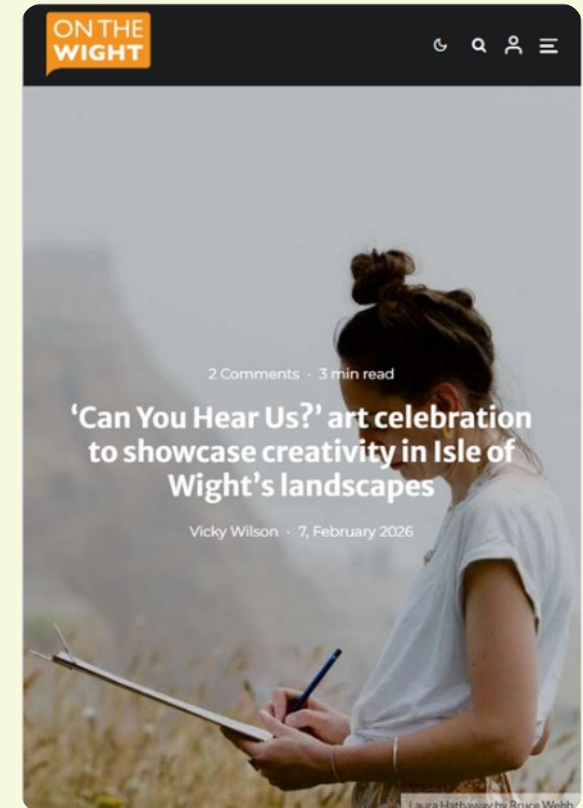
NEW IN 2026

Come along and try a walk in May - no need to book, just turn up!

All walks are FREE. Please book June, July and August walks on [Eventbrite](#).

For meeting points and more information scan the QR code or visit [isleofwight-nl.org.uk](#)

Partnering with [Wight's Biosphere Festival](#)



ON THE WIGHT

2 Comments · 3 min read

'Can You Hear Us?' art celebration to showcase creativity in Isle of Wight's landscapes

Vicky Wilson · 7, February 2026

Laura Hathaway by Bruce Webb

Engagement – Digital Statistics

Social media audience

- A total of **161** posts published on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube
- A total of **2,116** following on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube
- **82,900** pieces of content viewed
- **2,800** content interactions

Website

- **14,000** website users
- Viewing a total of **25,734** pages
- **12** new pages added, and **2** newsletters sent out



Engagement - Events

- Discovering Landscapes at the Walking Festival
- Wolverton Garden Fair
- Headline sponsor Farming Conference
- Isle of Wight Hedgelaying Competition sponsor
- IW Story Festival workshop

IW Story Festival Organising Committee

Thank you very much on behalf of everyone at the IWSF for your National Landscape Nature Inspired Filmmaking & Poetry Workshop last week. I was very grateful for the chance to observe and take part. The images and short films certainly made me appreciate how lucky we are to live on this beautiful island.



National Landscapes Conference

A day experiencing the unique **Heritage Coasts** and pressures that climate change brings to these special parts of the Isle of Wight. **Land management, access and biodiversity:** Just a few of the topics covered on the field trip hosted by the Isle of Wight National Landscape team, part of the annual National Landscapes conference, this year in Winchester. National Landscapes teams from across the UK came together to share knowledge, expertise and ideas.

Thank you to our partners for highlighting projects and initiatives they are working on to improve outcomes for nature: **Sue Hawley, Estuaries Officer at Isle of Wight Estuaries Partnership, Mike Greenslade National Trust Manager and rangers Ian and Sean at National Trust.**



Summer Walks 2025

Overview of project

- **5** walk leaders: Frankie Goldspink, Kelly Wetherick, Lucia Para, Sue Bailey and Kathy Grogan
- **15** Walks for the general public - **206** participants
- **5** walks for organisations (Wroxall primary school, Grow and Learn, Young Farmers Club, Godshill families and IW College)
- A total reach on social media: **8,910**
- Views of content on social media **30,000**



Infographic and pocket map

The re-design of IWNL pocket map with a focus on conservation and nature: Infographic side A, map side B.

Part 1 – Graphic design students from Island VI Form college have designed priority habitat icons inspired by a walk up Brading Down and workshop at Brading Roman Villa with designer Michelle Lott

Part 2 – The designer is bringing together the stats, icons and illustrations in an infographic style layout.

Part 3 – Redesign of side B, the map.

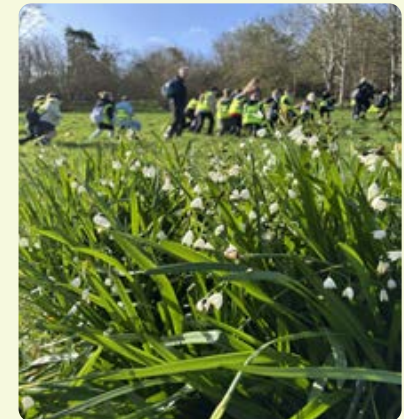
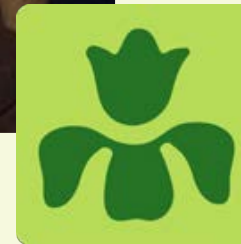
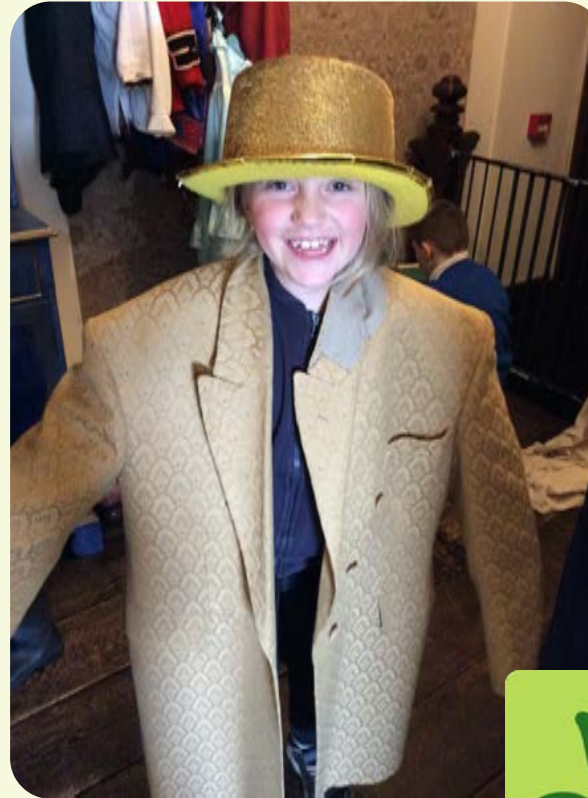
Excellent feedback on the project from teachers at Island V1 Form College - [The Island VI Form - Students Gain Real-World Design Experience Through Isle of Wight Landscape Project](#)



Pilot project – Schools to Museums

Sustainable museum visits walking project with the production of an independent **walking resource** for teachers and an increase in nature connection for children.

- **Brading Primary school** Y3 walked to **Brading Roman Villa**, led by Storyteller Sue Bailey, supported by Museum educator Sarah Girling.
- **Freshwater and Yarmouth School** Y5 walked to **Dimbola Museum and Galleries** led by artist Lucia Para, supported by Museum Educator Kelly Wetherick.



Nature Calling - Bouldnor Forest

- A **national project** involving 34 National Landscapes in England and funded by DEFRA (Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs) and Arts Council England.
- A call out for **new perspectives of nature from writers and artists** who don't normally work with or in nature. The newly formed Isle of Wight National Landscape **youth committee selected the successful writer**, awarded £2,000 and filmmaker awarded £3,000 to create a response to a location within the landscape.
- Nature inspired **poetry and filmmaking workshop**, wrapping up the Nature Calling project. Delivered at **the IW Story Festival with performances by young people** from Jeni Law Speech and Drama. The 2-hour session was inspired by the commissioned poetry collection



CAN YOU HEAR US? - update

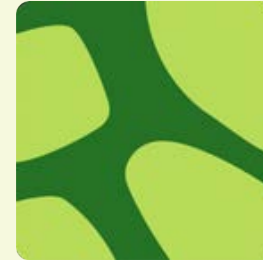
CAN YOU HEAR US? an Arts Council (and partner) funded island-wide programme. The IWNL project strand **Landed** is one of 20 projects within the programme, culminating in a celebration creativity and culture taking place in in October.

Isle of Wight National Landscape **Youth Committee selected artists** from a shortlist of six. The Youth Committee will be involved in the development of all three commissions along with other young people on the island.

Commissioned Artists:

- **Hector MacInnes – St Catherine’s Oratory**
- **Trudie Wilson - Appuldurcombe**
- **Laura Hathaway – Compton Bay**

*Working in partnership with local landowners and organisations
National Trust and English Heritage.*



Feedback

Island VI Form College: The project began with a field trip to Brading Down, where students explored the surrounding landscape and discussed its unique features, habitats, and wildlife. These observations were essential to inspire and inform the infographic designs that will eventually appear on the finished map. Although the weather was less than ideal, the experience proved to be both engaging and rewarding. Students spent time sketching and photographing elements of the landscape, carefully recording details that could influence their design ideas when returning to the studio.

Wroxall School: One parent said *"my daughter came home and talked all evening about the nature walk. She loved it. There should be more of this outdoor learning. It's so important for kids"*

Another parent helper said *"I've lived in this area for a while. I've never done that walk before. I'll now do it again with my children and dog. Great experience"*

Wroxall school children

"I liked the nature walk. I found lots of wildflowers"

"I liked looking for butterflies"

"I didn't know there were so many different grasses"

"I liked seeing the insects and catching grasshoppers"

"I liked making the bookmarks"

