



SALTscape Autumn Update 2016

Photo Nick Jones

We're entering the final year of the SaltScape Landscape Partnership scheme in Cheshire led by Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside. And it's going to be a very busy year! Here's a look at some of our recent projects and activities.



It was a busy summer for SaltScape. Saul delivered his ever popular countryside skills courses : Bushcraft, Woodcraft, Green woodworking and Folklore of Trees. Fungalpunk Dave ran a Fungi Foray, ReCORD ran Wildlife Recording, Map and Compass held 'First Steps to Navigation' and Colin Edmondson ran 'History and Hotpot'.

Cheshire RIGS (Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites) lead the Geodiversity aspect of the SaltScape Landscape Partnership. They ran a Northwich town walk and even a talk on volcanoes. Look out for their [talk on dinosaurs](#) (yes, that's right!) coming up and an exciting [conference on Geodiversity and Geoconservation](#).



In September we teamed up with Kerry Fletcher from partner Middlewich Town Council as she demonstrated making salt using the open-pan method at **Winsford's fabulous Salt Fair and Regatta**.





Across the Saltscape, historic sites opened their doors to the public for Heritage Open Day on 11th September. Northwich's heritage sites and town centre were busy and many members of the public were keen to learn more about the town's new 'Townscape' initiative



Visitors to Middlewich saw Murgatroyd's Brine Pump open to the public for the first time in over forty years thanks to a grant from historic England and tireless work from volunteers at Middlewich Heritage Trust.



Winsford saw a new historic Church trail launch hand-drawn by Anne Johnson from the Rock Salt Gallery with support from Saltscape and local history volunteers. Copies are available from Winsford Library.



Schools Canal Art Project

KS2 children across the Saltscape area of Cheshire have been learning all about the traditional art of canalware painting. Jane Marshall from Day Star theatre has been running our heritage skills sessions in schools looking at the traditional art and giving children the chance to learn more about the heritage of our canals.



Community Archaeology with Salford University



Dr Mike Nevell, Head of Archaeology at Salford University tells us about the recent digs his team have undertaken with local people :

“Following training sessions at the Lion Salt Works, 16 volunteers braved English summer weather to explore part of Northwich’s industrial salt-making past. This first dig was designed to explore the archaeological potential of the Adelaide Salt Works off Ollershaw Lane. The mine collapsed in 1928 creating one of the flashes familiar to this part of the Weaver valley.

Five test pits were dug to assess the survival of the industrial archaeology, on the site one of the salt pans and part of the railway network. Brick demolition rubble testified to the presence of the salt pans, whilst part of a railway track bed was located. Surprisingly, given the extensive industrial activity on the site, we located pre-industrial plough soils and a field drain in two test pits, along with some 17th century pottery and a collection of clay pipes.

Our team has had its first industrial archaeology experience: from sun burn to soaking wet in just five days! It’s all part of the field experience for those old and new to British archaeology. Our volunteers will now help process these initial results and we shall be back to undertake more research on this part of the Saltscape.”



There’ll be lots more activity taking place as part of this programme which we hope will link with local history projects. If you’d like to be involved please [email us](#) or call 01606 723160

Cheshire Wildlife Trust Saltscap Trainee



Over the three years of its life, the Saltscap Landscape Partnership will support a number of trainee roles. These traineeships give the post-holder the opportunity to gain additional skills and experience in a range of sectors associated with the varied and complex work of a landscape partnership scheme.

Ruby Merriman (left) is a Saltscap trainee working with Cheshire Wildlife trust on the conservation of important grassland habitat sites across the Weaver valley.

[Click here to read the first in Ruby's series about the species of the Saltscap.](#)

Below: left to right Crested Dogs Tail Devil's Bit Scabious, Marsh Woundwort and Meadow Vetchling with a skipper butterfly. All these plants are common to areas of the Saltscap being supported by Cheshire Wildlife Trust



Celebrating the Saltscap through Performing Art

A warm welcome to Nicole Morris who has been appointed to manage Animate!

Together with lead partner MMU, Nicole will be developing a series of innovative performance pieces based around themes that have emerged from the people and the places of the Saltscap.

From creative writing, music, dance, drama, art and photography we hope there will be something for everyone in this project. If you belong to a group that might like to be involved in a creative project – (we'd especially like to hear from groups of adults : you might be into craft, music, the great outdoors) contact Nicole on animate.saltscap@gmail.com



And finallydon't miss Saltscap's very own hedgelaying competition on Sunday 22nd January 2017 at Thorn Wood in Weaverham. Whether you're a competitor or a spectator beat the winter blues, come along and see what it's all about. Details on our website soon.



www.saltscap.co.uk