

## 4 Threats and Opportunities

### 4.1 Introduction

Previous chapters of the LCAP have highlighted the special nature of the heritage of the Elan Links partnership area. The importance of this heritage is illustrated by the sheer number of scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings in the area; the high percentage of the area recognised for its nature conservation value at a UK and European level; its landscape designations; and its International Dark Sky Park status.

In this chapter, the **threats** to the Elan landscape are identified and summarised. These threats have been identified through extensive consultation with partners and stakeholders. While some of the threats are specific to a particular component of Elan Links' heritage (natural, built and cultural), for others the threat is cross-cutting.

The chapter then goes on to explore **opportunities** to address, mitigate and adapt to the identified threats. The Elan Links Partnership is very keen to ensure that the benefits of the Elan Links programme of work are sustained over the long term. In examining the available opportunities we have therefore particularly focused on those opportunities that will ensure a long legacy of the programme for the future.

In the subsequent chapter, an overview of the Elan Links Scheme, we go on to examine in more detail how our scheme's projects address the threats and opportunities identified here with a clearly defined vision, aims and set of clearly defined objectives and associated projects.

### 4.2 An overview of the current threats to Elan's distinct heritage

#### 4.2.1 Damage to Elan's distinct habitats

As discussed in earlier chapters, Elan's natural heritage is distinctive and important across nearly the whole of the programme area. However, three particular habitat types have been identified as being particularly threatened. These are:

1. Elan's blanket bogs;
2. Elan's dry heath; and
3. Elan's ancient deciduous woodlands.

##### 4.2.1.1 Elan's blanket bog

Elan's blanket bog and deep peat areas are extensive and under threat from *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) and drying out. The over-dominance of *Molinia* across large areas of this habitat in the catchment has serious negative impacts on the functionality of the landscape. The tussock-forming habit of this deciduous grass species reduces the diversity of these habitats and has had negative impacts on breeding success of important and characteristic bird species such as the golden plover. Importantly, the grass has limited palatability for sheep, so the current grazing regimes and stocking densities are failing to halt this invasion. Further to the habitat problems, the invasion reduces accessibility for recreation and increases fire-risk (through an increased amount of dry matter/vegetation). The drying out of Elan's bogs is partially linked to the

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spread of *Molinia* but is also a consequence of historic management issues leading to peat erosion in some relatively discrete areas. In the future, climate change threatens to put further pressure on our bog resource (see 4.2.6, below).

### 4.2.1.2 Elan's dry heath

Elan's dry heath is relatively limited in area, principally found in Landscape Character Areas 12, *Elan Reservoirs* and 13, *Mynydd Dolfolau*. However, it is important for its nature and landscape value and supports a range of bird species including red grouse and breeding hen harriers.

The dry heath is under threat from lack of management over the recent past. This has led to a restricted age profile of the heather, conifer invasion and spread of bracken. Invasion by both conifers (principally sitka spruce) and bracken reduces the integrity of the dry heath habitat and the value of the habitat for a range of species including birds. A limited age profile makes the heather more vulnerable to attack by heather beetle and reduces the diversity of species within the heath. In recent years, our farmers report there has been an upsurge of ticks in the area threatening continued grazing management, red grouse, workers, and recreational users alike.

### 4.2.1.3 Elan's ancient deciduous woodlands

Elan's deciduous ancient woodlands are focused on the valley sides in Landscape Character Area 12, *Elan Reservoirs*. Over the last few decades there has been a reduction in intervention management of this habitat particularly a reduction in grazing, driven by conservation measures to increase regeneration of new trees, diversify woodland structure and allow recovery of ground flora. These conservation objectives have largely been achieved in many areas. However, it is now recognised that there is a threat posed by this young and crowded regeneration, with dense stands of bracken, rhododendron and bramble reducing the open conditions that are so important for much of our priority woodland wildlife (including rare mosses and lichens and our characteristic woodland bird species such as pied flycatcher). In some cases, the veteran trees are threatened by over-crowding, causing crown die-back.

## 4.2.2 The threat from changing land management practices

Nearly all of Elan's entire natural heritage has been managed by people using farming and woodland practices that can be traced back for centuries. This management has played a key role in creating the landscape and changes to these practices therefore represent a real threat to the nature that lives here.

Unlike in so many other areas of the UK there is little evidence that agricultural intensification is a significant threat – indeed, extensive farming systems are maintained because they are valued for their benefits for water quality. However, this does not mean that our land management practices and farming systems are not changing. In fact, there is good evidence that they are – and the threat comes from a simplification of the management systems used. This simplification takes the form of a reduction in the use of a range of traditional management activities such as rhos hay production, small-scale cattle keeping, production of wethers, the summer movement of cattle onto the hills from the lowlands, liming and manuring hay meadows, heathland management, woodland grazing and bracken cutting.

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Inevitably, this simplification of management has gone hand-in-hand with a reduction in habitat diversity and deleterious impacts for a range of species including the upland and woodland breeding bird assemblages for which Elan is so well known.

### 4.2.3 Threats from neglect, abandonment and lack of use

Elan is home to over 1500 recorded historic and archaeological assets including more than 40 scheduled ancient monuments. The range of sites is diverse and their age reflects the long period of human habitation and use from the bronze-age into the recent past. Their stories include the cultural history of how people have moved across and inhabited the Elan Valley during the last 5 millennia. For many, indeed most of these assets, abandonment and lack of use should be seen as the inevitable consequence of changes in human society and technology. As such these sites are threatened by neglect but otherwise their lack of use should not be viewed as negative. For these sites the focus needs to be on maintenance, conservation or simply recording. For a few key heritage sites however the assets are of such value or are so suited to alternative uses that abandonment is seen as a considerable threat that will inevitably lead to an unacceptable decline or deterioration. A number of buildings from the dam-construction era fit into this category, as does an historic farmstead and its associated agricultural buildings. These assets of Elan are ripe for converting into opportunities under careful management as part of the Elan Links scheme.

### 4.2.4 Problems associated with over-use and inappropriate use

Over 150,000 people a year visit the Elan Valley visitor centre and it is estimated by Elan Links partners that at least the same number again come to Elan without passing through the visitor centre. Inevitably, if not properly managed such high usage carries the risk of negative impacts on the landscape, the natural environment and historic and archaeological sites. These risks are most acute in the 'honeypot' areas where footfall, motor traffic and recreational activity is highest. However, in some more sensitive areas, for example on blanket bog, near bird nesting sites and in the remote upland plateau even low levels of use can have deleterious impacts if not managed with care.

Evidence-gathering to inform the Elan Links projects and the Access and Recreation Plan has clearly indicated that a number of routes and paths are suffering from over-use and inappropriate use impacting on habitats. The threat arises from the erosion and habitat damage that over-use and inappropriate-use causes, and the reduction in the quality of the experience gained by users resulting in fewer return visits.

### 4.2.5 Threats resulting from inadequate evidence-gathering, recording and understanding

The ability to make informed decisions, to develop and implement strategic plans and to work in an integrated way for the benefit of heritage, is dependent upon good evidence, information-gathering and timely recording. Failure to keep adequate records represents a real threat to the heritage because it will lead to poor quality decision-making through ill-informed choices, even resulting in the loss of our heritage before recording can take place.

The Elan Links 'heritage at risk audit' undertaken during the development year is a case-in-point. This audit has identified around 80 sites where some form of conservation activity is required to

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secure the sites for the future. However, the audit has also highlighted that past survey work relating to the locations of historic sites is inaccurate in certain sectors. Without accurate records there is the risk that ongoing protection through careful management will not happen. The threat is particularly high in the situation where interventions or developments are being suggested (for example to benefit nature or recreation) which should take account of ‘hidden’, typically archaeological, heritage.

Memories and histories of the dam-building era are a particularly acute example of the need for timely recording since as time goes by these memories are being lost forever. This is not just important locally. The cultural links between Elan, Rhayader and Birmingham are key to strengthening the story that runs alongside the wonderful landscape and its traditions. That ‘story’ and history of this relationship has not been fully recorded/archived. Not acting now risks the loss of this rich and diverse story through the loss of vital documents, maps and memories.

Our natural heritage is also under threat from inadequate understanding and evidence gathering. For example, we know from RSPB records that there has been a decline in many of our breeding bird populations (for example, golden plover, ring ouzel, curlew and dunlin) and we need to evaluate the measures we put in place through Elan Links to improve breeding success. Similarly, we know there is a need to better understand the management of key habitats such as on deep peat, where there is a problem with the ingress of *Molinia* and in our in-bye fields where floristic diversity of hay meadows and other neutral pastures is declining in places but surveys of the full resource are needed to fully understand this.

### 4.2.6 External impacts and the threat to Elan’s heritage

The scale, functional coherence and management of the Elan Links area in many ways limit the impact of external drivers of change. However, Elan is not immune from the effects of non-sustainable lifestyles and resource use across wider society. A major threat is the high level of deposition of atmospheric pollution, particularly nitrogen. The initial pollution into the atmosphere results from modern industrial processes and other sources across the UK and more widely. However, the deposition of this atmospheric pollution is felt particularly severely in Elan because of the high rainfall of the area and the sensitivity of our habitats. The level of deposition – from 12 to 27kg N per hectare per year (source: Air Pollution Information Service), is sufficient to cause habitat change in Elan’s key habitats as species such as *Molinia* that are able to utilise the additional nutrients out-compete plants that prefer low nutrient environments. In our ancient woodland, atmospheric pollution has a particularly deleterious impact on lower plants and lichens.

The other major threat from pollution is climate change arising from greenhouse gases released by human activity. The impact of this is difficult to quantify because of the uncertainty over how changes will play out over the long-term. However, Elan has many habitats and species at the peripheries of their viable areas, such as blanket bog and many of the upland breeding bird assemblage. Therefore the threat of further climate change endangers the future viability of these habitats and species which currently form a vital part of this location.

Another problematic external impact is that of invasive non-native species. In the Elan context there are two species that are of particular concern: rhododendron and sitka spruce. As is so often the case with invasive species, managing the problem at an early stage is by far the most cost-

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effective solution. Currently on Elan we are lucky that only pockets of these species currently exist, both in the woodlands and on the dry heath. The threat if these are not prioritised now is that the problem will become exponentially worse in the coming years as found, for example, in Snowdonia National Park with rhododendron.

### 4.2.7 A challenging economic and policy environment for Elan and the surrounding area

Economics is one of the three pillars of sustainability. Since in the Elan Links area and surrounding communities the main economic drivers are farming and tourism threats to these two industries require a particular focus.

#### 4.2.7.1 Threats to upland farming

The traditional upland family farm lies at the economic and cultural heart of Elan and the style of farming practiced by them, as noted in 4.2.2 above, plays a large part in supporting the natural heritage that is so highly valued in the area.

With a high dependence upon support payments from the Common Agricultural Policy our farmers face challenging times. At the time of writing, the future of these payments is far from certain as we exit from the European Union. A further threat from Brexit lies in the future nature of trade tariffs. Hill lamb and beef from Wales has for many years enjoyed a tariff-free export market to the continent and this has helped maintain prices. The introduction of trade tariffs to the EU could reduce prices at a time when the UK may be seeking freer trade agreements with other large meat exporting nations – for example New Zealand and Australia. All-in-all there is therefore currently considerable uncertainty and a high degree of risk surrounding the future economic and policy environment for Elan Links farmers.

#### 4.2.7.2 Threats to tourism

Of course, economic challenges are not just felt by our farmers. The other major economic driver of the local towns and villages is tourism – in large part dependent upon Elan for its 'offer'. This dependency means that threats to the Elan Links area that reduce its attractiveness to visitors, such as a poor quality recreational experience, lack of coherence in interpretation or a reduction in wildlife abundance are also threats to the economy of the surrounding area.

## 4.3 Opportunities

The Elan Links Partnership have identified a range of opportunities to address, mitigate and adapt to the threats outlined above. As part of the process of identifying these threats and better understanding our area it has also become evident that there are many wider opportunities available to the Elan Links Partnership to promote improved outcomes for people, heritage and communities. To reflect this, the analysis of the available opportunities detailed below has been split into two sections:

- Opportunities to address, mitigate and adapt to threats; and
- Wider opportunities to improve outcomes for people, heritage and communities from the Elan Links area.

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### 4.3.1 Opportunities to address, mitigate and adapt to threats

#### 4.3.1.1 Reinvigorating farming practices

While we know there has been a decline in the diversity and resilience of farm management practices in recent years this does not mean that a continued decline is inevitable or that greater diversity and resilience cannot be re-established. In fact, based upon the development work we have undertaken with Elan Links farmers and nature conservationists we believe there a number of reasons for optimism.

Firstly, Elan Links farmers are passionate about their traditional farming systems and have a strong regard for the cultural value of the ‘living legacy’ that is embodied in their farming activities. They are proud of the unique farming systems that have been employed in the area for generations. At the same time, the farmers are well aware of a decline in nature and lament, for example, a reduction in the upland breeding bird population. They understand the links between what they do to manage their farms and the nature that is to be found there. For these reasons, there is considerable enthusiasm for protecting the farming traditions they still maintain and for reinvigorating those that have weakened over time with support and guidance.

Secondly, Elan Links farmers are aware that once farming traditions have been re-established there will be benefits for their farming businesses. It is well recognised that keeping cattle benefits the pasture for the sheep; that liming and muck-spreading on hay meadows will increase crop yields; that using locally bred and tested rams will improve the performance of their sheep flocks; that making rhos hay will reduce the need for bought-in feed and bedding, and that keeping wethers can benefit the whole flock in hard winters. However, there are currently barriers to each of these things happening. For example, with hay meadow management there are bureaucratic hurdles to overcome (SSSI consent; Glastir regulations); with cattle there are issues such as TB, loss of skills and expertise and manure management issues; with rhos hay the traditional sites are now overgrown and tussocky and there are issues with machinery and access; and with wethers the loss of a premium market has made the practice unsustainable. In each of these cases, the opportunity is provided by the fact that removing or reducing the level of the initial barriers to uptake will unlock farmer’s ability to re-establish and reinvigorate these practices for the future.

Thirdly, Elan Links farmers know that they need to adapt their farming businesses to face future economic and other challenges. For this reason there is considerable interest in learning how, for example, to manage blanket bogs to sequester carbon and store water on the understanding that such management may in the future mean they can access ‘payment for ecosystem services’ schemes. Similarly, there is interest in the concept of farming for nature and new ways of doing agri-environment schemes such as through outcomes-based approaches. There is therefore an opportunity to trial and test such approaches to understand the benefit for their businesses, develop markets and inform policy in ways that will improve the sustainability of their farm businesses in the future and hence provide a legacy for the Elan Links programme.

#### 4.3.1.2 Developing new uses

Built heritage which is no longer used and inaccessible does not fulfil its potential and is at an increased risk of deterioration. Much of Elan’s built heritage is highly functional and hence well

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maintained - for example, the dams and associated infrastructure, the residential properties in the village and elsewhere and the numerous farmsteads which are used for agriculture. Some of the built heritage is now used and maintained for other purposes. Examples include the old railway track which is now the Elan Valley Trail; the old sawmill which is used for events and as a venue and a number of old farmhouses which now function as holiday accommodation and bothies. However, there are currently three priority built heritage sites which have been identified as having no function and at risk of further deterioration unless intervention occurs. These properties (Cwm Clyd Farmstead, the Chief Engineers House and the Dam Builder's Hut) have an opportunity to fill gaps in Elan's recreational and access provision by offering group accommodation while also telling the story of people at Elan over time. We also know from our consultation work that people are interested in engaging more with the diverse heritage strands and there is an opportunity to fulfil this by opening up access to underused and under-promoted sites at Elan.

### 4.3.1.3 Sustainable usage

The partnership approach developed as part of Elan Links provides a real opportunity to tackle problems of over-use and inappropriate use, in a strategic and holistic way. Key to this is the development of a comprehensive Access and Recreation Plan by partners and stakeholders, an agreed series of actions to tackle issues identified and an ongoing forum in the Access and Recreation Sub-group to monitor and evaluate success and adapt accordingly. Opportunities to protect against over-use and inappropriate use include improved waymarking for trails; better trail maintenance in sensitive areas; provision of alternative routes; improved interpretation so that everybody values Elan's heritage and wants to protect it; improved guidance on how to limit potentially damaging activity and increased enforcement to reduce illegal activity.

### 4.3.1.4 Development of a strategic approach to evidence gathering, monitoring and archiving

The opportunity here is to deploy the skills of our partners and stakeholders, experts and trained volunteers, in an expanded programme of evidence gathering, monitoring and recording based upon need and priority. By working strategically and in a co-ordinated way, records and evidence can then be gathered, collated, archived and made available in a way that is fit-for-purpose rather than ad-hoc. This process also has the added benefit of informing new interpretation measures and will improve access to allow more heritage to be available to the public.

In terms of our natural heritage, there is the opportunity through improved evidence gathering to ensure that actions are targeted and effective. Examples include undertaking surveys of Elan's in-by fields to identify and understand the species and plant communities within the resource, enabling this information to inform farm management plans. Similarly monitoring of nest sites for species such as curlew will enable targeted action to be taken to reduce predation and thereby increase breeding success.

In some cases there remains uncertainty as to the best management option to take to benefit nature and in these cases the opportunity is to trial approaches on a limited scale in order to identify future management options that will be both effective and practical enough to be used at the required scale. An example of this latter situation is with *Molinia* ingress into blanket bogs and deep peat. The scale of this challenge is significant but the first step is to take the opportunity to undertake scientific work and practical trials to establish the best approaches to tackling the problem before scaling this work up.

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### 4.3.1.5 Promoting sustainable living and reducing external impacts

By their very nature external impacts are best tackled at source and it is unrealistic to expect that this can be achieved solely through Elan Links. However, this is not to say that we cannot make a difference. Indeed, the fact that Elan has so many visitors and has an intimate link with the lives of many millions more through their water supply, means that we are well positioned to promote more sustainable lifestyles in wider society. This can be done through generating a better understanding of the negative impacts of not doing so and through a positive message about the benefits of what a well-functioning natural environment delivers for people.

At the same time, the severity of the effect of external impacts can be moderated / mitigated by actions to improve the resilience of Elan's habitats and species. The Elan Links natural heritage projects collectively provide an opportunity to improve the resilience of Elan's species and habitats in response to the threats posed by external impacts. This is done by improving the condition of these habitats through favourable management with a particular focus on issues such as the spread of *Molinia* that are exacerbated by external pollution.

### 4.3.1.6 Mitigating and adapting to a challenging economic and policy environment

The Elan Links programme has the opportunity to mitigate and adapt to a challenging economic and policy environment through the works it completes across Elan with land managers, tourism providers and in enhancing the economic links between Elan and its surrounds.

Opportunities for farming are centred upon reinvigorating traditional farming practices in ways that will improve farm profitability by reducing costs (less bought-in feed and bedding) while increasing outputs or from alternative income sources. The opportunity to further generate long-term sustainability will come through exploring payment for ecosystem service approaches on deep peat soils and by influencing the future development of agri-environment schemes by testing more effective and farmer-friendly approaches such as through the outcomes-based model.

Opportunities for improving the visitor experience and benefits from tourism are considerable. Improved recreational facilities; better interpretation; more and better events, a flourishing natural environment and improved engagement with our family of linked communities are key areas where beneficial impacts will be felt from a strategic programme of investment.

The Elan Links programme is an opportunity to demonstrate Elan's strengths and be an exemplar for sustainable management of natural resources in accordance with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. This act positions Wales as a low carbon, green economy, ready to adapt to the impacts of climate change through the sustainable management of natural resources – enabling Wales' resources to be managed in a more proactive, sustainable and joined-up way.

## 4.3.2 Wider Opportunities:

### 4.3.2.1 To work in partnership for mutual benefit:

Through our project development phase and associated community engagement many opportunities have emerged that will be best achieved by working in partnership: with landowners, with communities, with a range of organisations with expertise in heritage (natural, ancient, built & cultural) and with the arts. The process has highlighted the benefit to be gained from partnership

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working - where organisations bringing their own expertise and resources together with others achieve more than ‘the sum of their parts’.

### 4.3.2.2 To engage with Birmingham and the gateway communities

A key ambition of this project has been to re-build the close relationship Elan used to share with Birmingham. During the development year the Partnership has strived to build these links and evaluate their potential in a modern context. Evidence has shown that there is an opportunity to engage in Birmingham with individuals, groups and harder-to-reach individuals, as well as with the civic life of the city, for example through our reinvigorated links with the Lord Mayor of Birmingham.

We also have the local opportunity to better link with other service providers around Rhayader, the Elan surrounds and along the pipeline to Birmingham.

### 4.3.2.3 Opportunity to become an exemplar for public access, recreation and enjoyment

Elan has a long record of providing public access to the open countryside from the time of the original Birmingham Water Corporation Act (1894) through to the present day. Early on, the Elan Links Partnership identified the opportunity to build on this heritage by setting ourselves the challenge of Elan becoming an exemplar for public access, recreation and enjoyment. The Partnership working with a range of stakeholders have therefore developed an access and recreation plan (appendix LCAP2) informed by a set of strategic principles with the aim of enabling this vision to be achieved. Opportunities identified through this work and a comprehensive consultation programme include the development of a much improved suite of promoted activities and trails for a range of user types, skill levels and interests; better interpretation – fixed, electronic and face-to-face; supported access opportunities for people with particular needs and challenges; and a system for ensuring stakeholders and partners work together to implement and keep up-to-date the shared plan.

Importantly, the opportunities to improve recreational use of the area, are strongly linked to the opportunities to promote a flourishing natural environment and landscape and the opportunities for people to engage with and learn in Elan’s natural environment. At the same time, the opportunities will promote not just physical health benefits but mental health and wellbeing benefits as well.

In terms of developing Elan’s relationship with Birmingham, our consultation work has shown a huge demand for the provision of retreats in Elan with great interest from a wide number of organisations because of the opportunity to enable people to experience, enjoy and learn in the natural environment and landscape of Elan. This statement of support explains why the enthusiasm from these organisations is so high:

*“The impact of a retreat like this, for our young people would have a range of outcomes. Young people would learn a range of new skills, access to the outdoors would positively benefit their mental and physical health by connecting better with nature and rural areas, it would provide the opportunity to move outside the perimeter’s of the inner city, widening their horizons and building aspirations for the future.”* -**Stephanie Patrick YMCA Sutton Colefield**

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### 4.3.3

#### 4.3.3.1 Elan as a centre for creativity

Elan has a long history as a place that inspires the creativity and the arts; from the early connections with poet Percy Shelley to more recent developments stimulated by local leadership from CARAD and national leadership through Arts Council Wales and the AptElan project. Through our consultations we have seen that around 1 in every 8 people now visit Elan principally to undertake artistic or creative activities full results see the audience development plan in appendix LCAP3. This demonstrates the ability for Elan to inspire people's creativity and the opportunity for the area to be further developed as centre of artistic vibrancy and excellence, not only in the production of art but also in using the arts to better understand, explore and engage with nature, water, sustainability and the rural / urban dynamic.

With Elan's distinguished heritage with Birmingham there is also the opportunity to reach further out into our linked communities by developing relationships with creative institutions such as the IKON gallery in Birmingham. Developing Elan as a centre for creativity and the arts will provide synergistic benefits across the Elan Links programme through engagement and exploration of the range of issues associated with current and future management and use of the 'quasi-public' landscape of Elan. Importantly, creativity and the arts have great potential to be an economic driver in the locality supporting jobs and quality of life.

#### 4.3.3.2 The opportunity to develop Elan as a resource for training and education

This opportunity has a particular focus on people from hard-to-reach sectors or those that have otherwise found it difficult to engage with the formal learning system. We have consulted widely during our development year, speaking with over 65 local (Mid-Wales) referral organisations and with 57 organisations in Birmingham including in the ten most deprived pockets. The consultation work highlighted that these referral organisations see a real role for the Elan Links area in providing training and education in the outdoors. The particular opportunity this work highlighted is to provide educational and training experiences for people who have previously struggled in indoor classrooms and formalised educational settings. Referral organisations emphasise the positive impact of first-hand engagement with the natural environment for people in these groups and the paucity of provision currently available.

#### 4.3.3.3 Opportunities to develop diverse volunteering opportunities across all strands of Elan's heritage

Within Elan Links there is the opportunity to develop a wide range of volunteering opportunities with an emphasis on encouraging people to engage with nature, heritage and the landscape. Furthermore, by sharing expertise in volunteering and by developing a centralised support structure the Partnership will be able to work strategically and efficiently while ensuring the best outcomes for heritage and experience for volunteers

#### 4.3.3.4 Opportunities to use the Welsh language

The Elan Valley and Rhayader is not a predominantly Welsh speaking area. The extreme western fringes of the Elan Links area in Ceredigion are where visitors will hear Welsh used most. The history behind this has links, to some extent, to the construction of the dams and the influx of people who came to work on them. The Elan Links programme creates an opportunity to bring that

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story to life as well as serving as mechanism to use Welsh language across the area.

### 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has identified threats and opportunities to the Elan area and the Elan Links project. From these, the partnership has established a clear vision two overarching aims and a suite of 12 objectives and associated project. The following chapter, Overview of the Elan Links Scheme explains this in detail.