

## **SWLG Response to SNH and HES Consultation on LLAs**

SWLG supports SNH and HES in this work.

In particular, we feel that wider recognition of the contribution that the historical and cultural environment makes to the Scottish landscape is overdue.

LLAs are an important tool in landscape management and should be a key consideration in Development Plans where they should be fully listed and their special qualities described in relevant documents and policies attached to such plans. Appraisal of development proposals should include consideration of possible impacts on the integrity of local LLAs. They should not be seen as an obstacle to development, but a tool in helping to achieve more appropriate development locations and designs integrated with valuable local features and assets.

They are, unlike NSAs, not statutory, but few areas are fortunate to have NSAs on their doorsteps. LLAs enable communities to establish the need to protect [and enhance] their finest features, via a policy route that describes their special qualities. They help to foster a sense of place and identity.

It should be recognised that local communities have a role in recognising features of value to them in their surroundings together with their special qualities and this helps to enhance landscape awareness and appreciation; in fact this is a central tenet of the ELC.

There are community benefits to be gained, relevant to health, social, educational, cultural and economic matters, from defining the special qualities of local landscape areas of merit. Such landscapes, including increasingly interest in historical and cultural features, are of particular value to local tourism industries in promoting the attractions of their localities in the same way that nearby Munros, Corbetts, biking trails and walking routes are.

Beryl Leatherland, Convenor

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