

Envisioning and Accessing New Landscapes.

Accessing landscape is enriching, and is for many people essential to a sustainable future and a 'good life' (Natural England et al, 2011)¹. Our project will explore three interconnected aspects of access to landscape; physical, experiential and access to shaping the future. It is argued that visions for these future landscapes are based on 18th Century landscape paintings (Liggins, 2005)². Is theirs an aesthetic that reflects 21st Century needs and aspirations?

As an inquiring community of photographers, educationalists, writers and artists, stimulated by a recent exhibition in Bath of Gainsborough's landscapes, we propose journeying on foot and by wheelchair, between the rural idyll of the Cotswolds and the Conference to present the findings from our *performed* (Spry, 2011)³ access, and from facilitated conversations with others.

Gainsborough's landscapes were imagined; how might we imagine future landscapes? His landscapes showed the rural poor with access to common land; what does access to landscape mean in the contemporary context of community resilience?

We will arrange to meet with people along the way, particularly wanting to understand 'Transition Towns' aspirations for and relationship with landscapes, and asking how inclusive this is? In pre-industrialised societies there was more place/space for people with impairments, who were not necessarily constructed as abnormal and 'non-productive' by an ableist society (Davis, 1995)⁴. We will explore exclusion from a 'good life', and the potential for thinking about inclusivity, by asking 'who is here?', generating new relationships between people, landscape and art.

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¹Natural England and other parties(2011) *Experiencing Landscapes: Towards a judgement-making framework for 'cultural services' and 'experiential qualities'* Sheffield: Natural England [NECR045 - Experiencing Landscapes: Towards a judgement-making framework for 'cultural services' and 'experiential qualities'](#)

²Liggins, A (2005) *Towards an understanding of the role of photography in the preservation and destruction of the rural environment*. University of Wales: Unpublished

³ Spry, T. (2011) *Body, Paper, Stage: Writing and Performing Autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press.

⁴ Davis, L (1995) *Enforcing Normalcy: disability, deafness and the body*. London: Verso.