

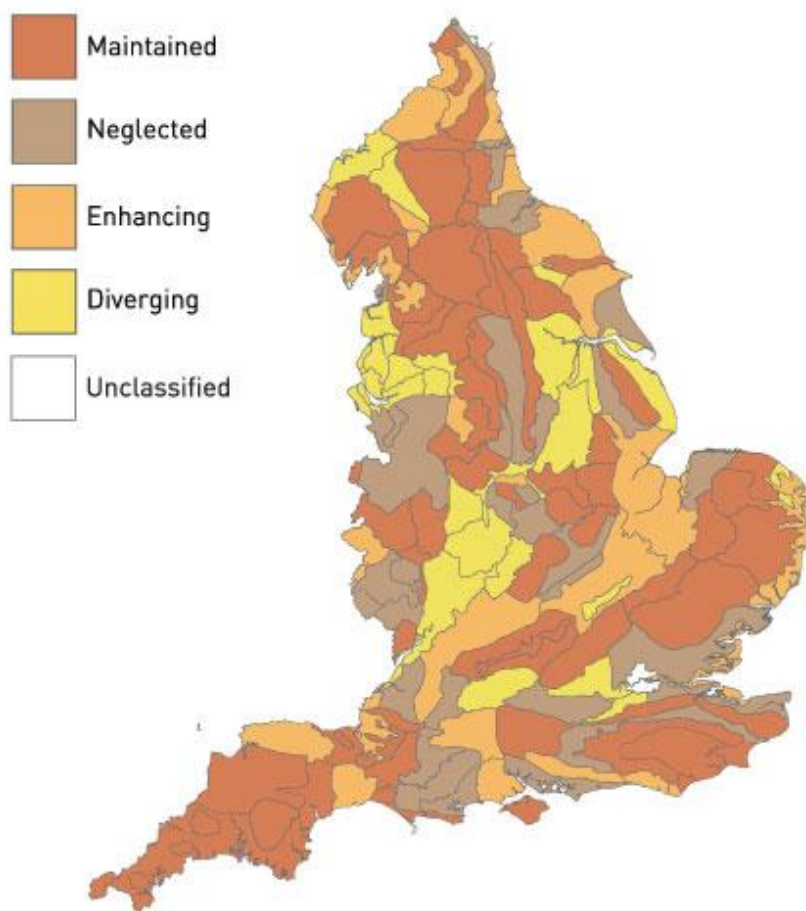
# Observatory monitoring framework – indicator data sheet

## Environmental impact: Landscape

### Indicator DF3: Landscape change

Landscape quality is key to the public enjoyment of the countryside. Information on landscape allows assessment of the impact of agricultural change on the landscape. This could affect the use of the countryside for leisure and tourism activities, with associated impacts on the local economies of rural areas. The Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) study provided evidence about the way the English countryside is changing. The CQC study made the first assessment of change for the period 1990 to 1998 which was published in 2004. The second and current assessment published in 2007, looked at changes between 1999 and 2003. The CQC will be replaced in the future by Character and Quality of England's Landscapes (CQuEL), an enhanced and updated assessment of landscape quality.

#### Map DF3a



#### Agricultural landscape change

Map DF3a shows the effect of agricultural changes to the landscape between 1999 and 2003.

Maintained: The mix of cover and holding types were consistent with the profile and had not changed substantially since 1990.

Neglected: Trends since 1999 had not reversed past losses and the JCA remained in a condition that was at variance with the desired character of the area.

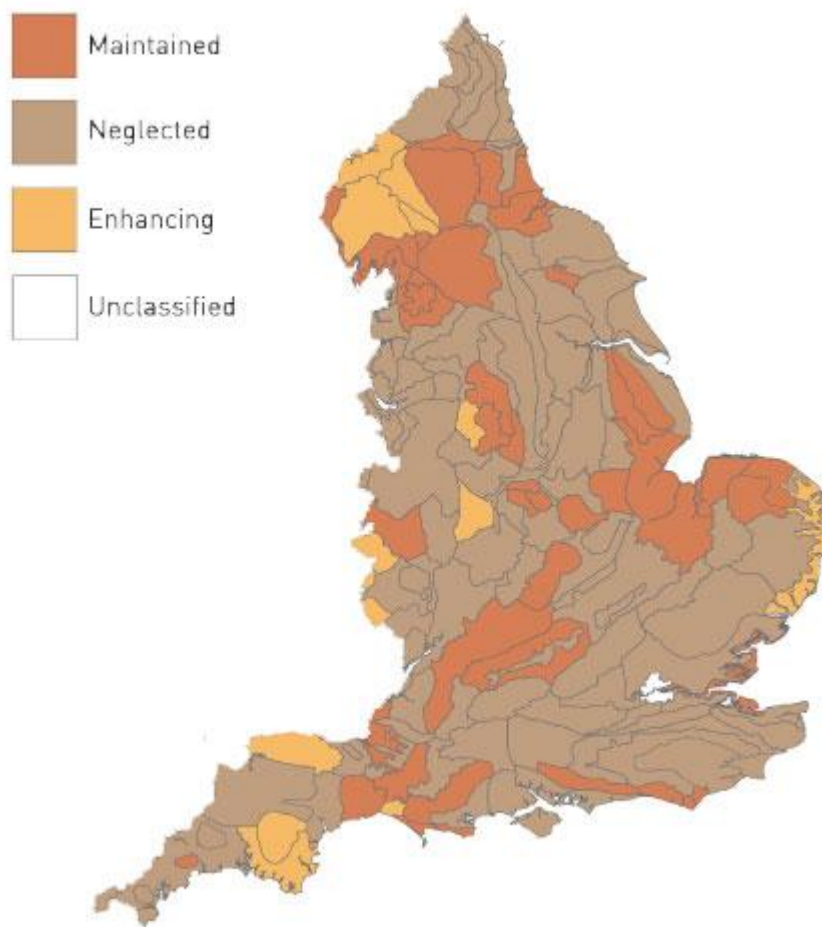
Enhancing: The trends in cover and holding types were re-establishing a pattern that had previously been lost or eroded.

Diverging: Trends since 1999 continued to transform the character of the area.

Source: Countryside Quality Counts

In 2003, 64% of Joint Character Areas (JCAs) showed patterns of change consistent with maintaining or enhancing landscape character. In addition a substantial number of JCAs were classified as neglected or diverging, either showing no signs of reversal of past losses or where change continued to transform the character of the area. The areas classified as neglected or diverging tended to be concentrated in central and southern England.

Map DF3b



Boundary feature change  
Map DF3b shows the effect of boundary feature changes to the landscape between 1999 and 2003.

Maintained: The stock of boundaries was intact and coverage of the CS and/or ESA agreements was high.

Neglected: Boundary loss had occurred or poor boundary management was an issue, and coverage of CS and/or ESA agreements was low.

Enhancing: Boundary loss had occurred or poor boundary management was an issue, and coverage of CS and/or ESA agreements was high.

Diverging: Boundary loss had occurred or poor boundary management was an issue, and coverage of CS and/or ESA agreements was lacking or inconsistent with the visions implied by the profile.

Source: Countryside Quality Counts

In 2003, 64% of JCAs were assigned to the “neglected” category because the evidence suggested that the character of boundary features had been eroded in the past and that uptake of agreements to restore or manage features was limited in comparison to the total stock of features within the area. There were some JCAs where the character of boundaries appeared to have been maintained or enhanced; the North West and the areas of Eastern England around the Wash stand out as a major block of JCAs where the quality of the resource appears to have been sustained.

This indicator was last published in August 2007. It will next be updated when information becomes available.

#### *Further information and contact*

Background information can be found in the accompanying fact sheet.

For further queries or information on this indicator contact Defra's Observatory team on +44 (0) 1904 455229 or email [Observatory@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Observatory@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

# Observatory monitoring framework – indicator fact sheet

## Environmental impact: Landscape

### Indicator DF3: Landscape change

<i>Indicator</i>	Landscape change
<i>Data</i>	Changes in countryside character Map DF3a agricultural changes Map DF3b boundary changes
<i>Geographic coverage</i>	England
<i>Years</i>	Changes between 1999 and 2003.
<i>Source</i>	Natural England in partnership with Defra and English Heritage
<i>Origin of data</i>	Countryside Quality Counts indicator
<i>Updates</i>	This indicator was last published in August 2007. It will next be updated when information becomes available.
<i>Background</i>	<p>The Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) Indicator was devised by the Countryside Agency and was a composite assessment of landscape quality measured over time against descriptions of countryside character. For this, seven elements were identified to track changes in the English countryside: woodland, boundary features, agriculture, settlement pattern, semi-natural habitats, historic features, and river and coastal features. This indicator showed where changes in agriculture and boundary features have been consistent or inconsistent with the landscape character in joint character areas in England. The 159 Joint Character Areas were broad tracts of countryside which exhibited a cohesive character. These areas were identified through an analysis of key landscape elements such as: the underlying geology; boundary features; settlement patterns; woodlands; semi-natural habitats; agricultural use and historical features.</p> <p>Two CQC assessments have been carried out. The first, published in 2004, looked at changes in the period 1990 to 1998, and the second, published in 2007, looked at changes in the period 1999 to 2003. The CQC study is to be replaced by the Character and Quality of England's Landscapes (CQuEL) assessment, Natural England's principal integrated monitoring project. Results from CQuEL will be published once they are available.</p> <p>Joint Character Areas (JCAs) have now been updated and renamed as National Character Areas (NCAs).</p>
<i>Statistical &amp; methodological information</i>	The CQC Indicator was developed by the Countryside Agency using data from: Countryside Survey 2000 (CS2000); Defra's June Agricultural Census and Agri-Environment schemes, the Forestry Commission and Woodland Grant and National Inventory of Woodlands and Trees data; ODPM's Land Use Change Statistics; Land Cover Map 2000; English Nature's Sites of Special Scientific Interest condition; Ancient Monuments at Risk Register (East Midlands only) and National Water Quality Monitoring data. The data were brought together in the National Countryside Character

Areas Database (NCCADB).

Information was collected for 156 of the 159 Joint Character Areas in England, and changes in the extent and condition of seven elements, identified to track changes in the English countryside, were measured. The changes were used to make an assessment (expert and stakeholder judgement supported by quantitative data) of whether they contributed or detracted from the key character of that landscape area, and then the resulting trends (positive or negative, with a measure of relative strength of impact) in relation to character were reported for each JCA. The agriculture element was based on the Defra June Survey of Agricultural Holdings and ESA Schemes. The boundary element was based on information from CS2000 and agri-environment schemes.

*Further  
information*

Further information on the Countryside Quality Counts can be found at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/cqc/default.aspx>

Further information on the Character and Quality of England's Landscapes (CQuEL) can be found at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/cquel.aspx>

Further information on National Character Areas (NCAs) can be found at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/nca/default.aspx>

Information on the National Database of Landscape Character Assessments can be found at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/lcn/nationaldatabase/default.aspx>

Defra June Agricultural Survey information and data can be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/foodfarm/landuselivestock/farmstats/>