



Sandstone Structure Audit.

Bedfordshire Rural Community Charity and the Greensand Trust are leading the **Secrets of the Sands Heritage Lottery Funded Landscape Partnership Programme** for the Greensand Ridge.

The vision is that by 2020 the Greensand Ridge will become a living and working landscape that is cherished by present and future generations and we will have reversed the gradual decline in the area's landscape character.

Ironstone, a type of sandstone, plays an important part in defining the character and local distinctiveness of the Greensand Ridge. The built environment was influenced by the geology of the ridge, since many of its buildings were built from locally quarried stone, particularly sandstone and brown ironstone. Clay deposits are also numerous, and brick and clay tile became the main materials used in settlements from the 17th century onwards. These largely replaced timber-framed and earth-walled structures, although some of these still survive.

A lack of awareness has sometimes contributed to a gradual loss of traditional management practices, leading to neglect or inappropriate management of ironstone historic features.

The Secrets of the Sands Landscape Partnership therefore aims to make funding available to restore historic features made from local materials, using appropriate skills and methods. It also aims to make geological sites accessible to the public.

At this stage in the programme we are doing a Sandstone Structure Audit.

The use of the local sandstone is most evident in the churches of the area, but it has also been used for houses, walls, bridges, wells, village gateways and other features. It is the smaller features (excluding churches and houses) that the Landscape Partnership will focus on. The built features can be in private or public ownership.

If you have any structures in your locality that you would like to add to the Sandstone Structure Audit, please could you contact Claire Poulton, the Secrets of the Sands Landscape Partnership Programme Manager on clairep@bedsrcc.org.uk

