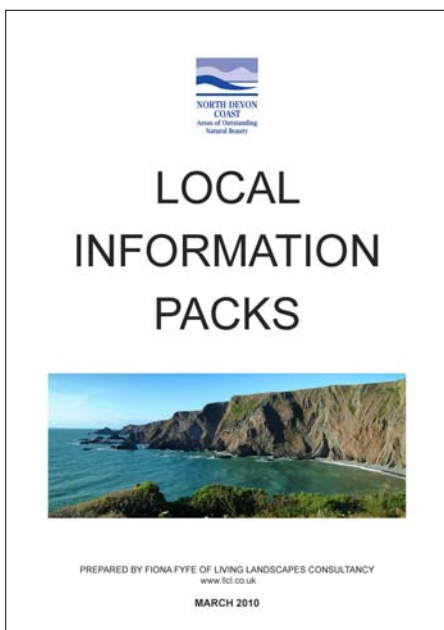


IN THE SPOTLIGHT: FIONA FYFE



Fiona Fyfe established Living Landscapes Consultancy in 2006. She specialises in landscape assessment, landscape archaeology and environmental planning projects throughout the UK. Fiona is a chartered Landscape Architect and has successfully delivered numerous projects for Local Authorities, National Park Authorities, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and private developers.

In January 2010, Fiona won a tender to prepare a number of Local Landscape Information Packs for North Devon Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). One pack was to be prepared for each of the 5 parishes in the area. Each pack included the production of a number of GIS maps in hard and digital form and also the descriptive text explaining natural and cultural designations in relation to the different Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). The timescale for delivery was tight as the project was to be completed in only 3 months



“The project involved taking a large array of GIS data and putting it into a usable format which local people, AONB staff and land managers could understand. It could then be used in future management of the areas landscapes to fulfil the aims of the AONB management plan,” explains Fiona.

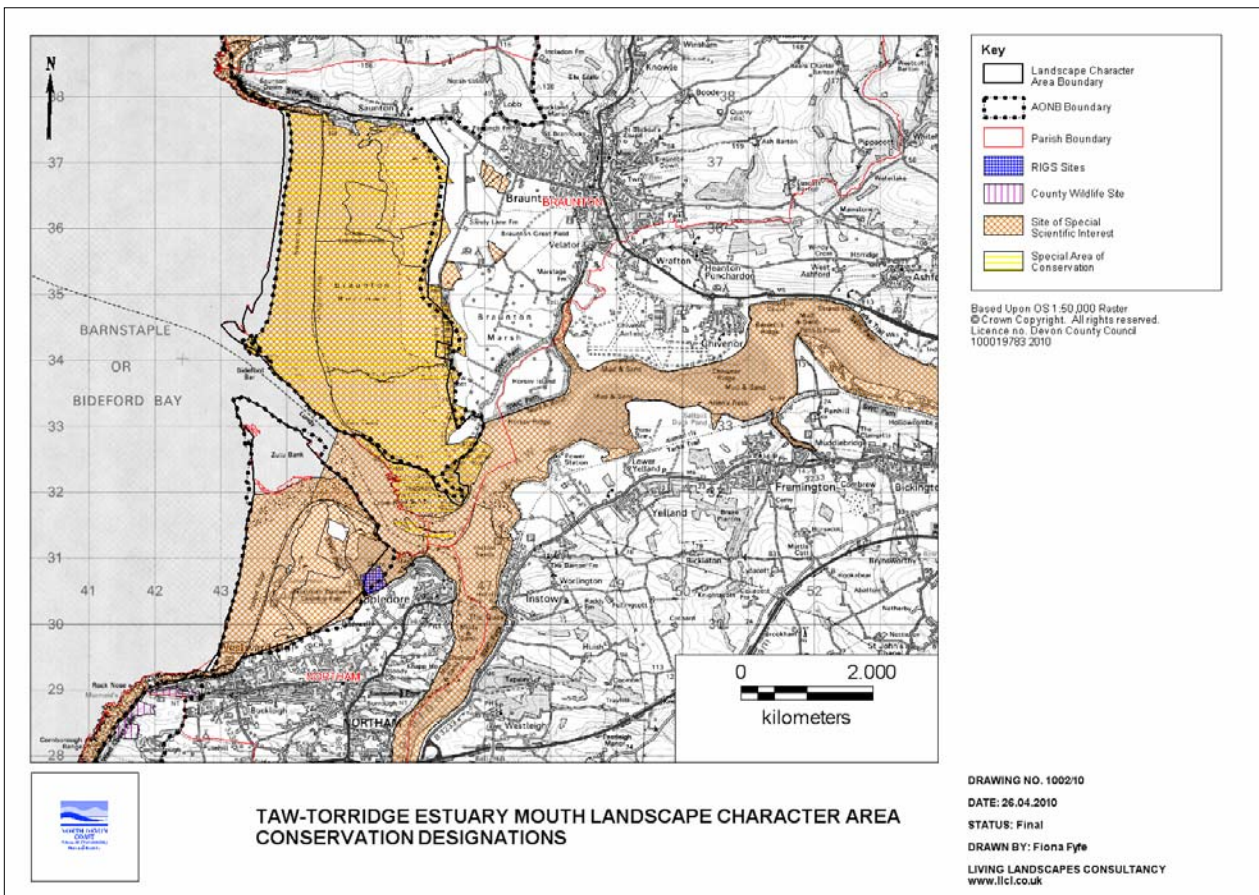
Previous to undertaking the project to prepare Local Landscape Information packs, Fiona had some GIS experience and has worked with GIS technicians in the preparation and production of maps. Nevertheless Fiona felt that she needed to improve her own skills in being able to undertake the full process herself. She decided that she needed training in using MapInfo Professional as she was new to this GIS software. She wanted to be able to collate and load data (dealing with different formats) to symbolise and produce visually attractive maps. In order to streamline this process Fiona thought that getting some formal training to improve her skills would be beneficial.



Local Information Packs cover, courtesy of North Devon Coast AONB.

“I looked at different options such as traditional courses but preferred the GIS247 e-learning option as I could access the training and technical material at a convenient time and at a convenient timescale”, Fiona explains. “If I had something specific to do I could look that up. Also there was no lead in time waiting for a place for a specific course. Once I had my 12 month GIS247 licence I could log-in and get going.”

Fiona had to undertake a number of technical processes in the preparation of the data such as dealing with different formats, managing projections, registering images, clipping layers, creating thematics, creating layered PDF maps and preparing portable workspaces. Fiona says that she started working through the courses in a logical order but then if she needed to know something specific, found that it was straightforward to look up and access specific technical information from a section on a course or find it in a mini or super module. For example at the presentation stage of the project she specifically used the technical modules to assist her in creating layered PDF map output and also for creating portable workspaces to provide a digital copy to the client.



One of the many maps produced by Fiona Fyfe for the Landscape Information Packs for North Devon Coast AONB

Fiona outlines that the specific benefits of using GIS247 for her are that the training and technical support is available anytime. Also that she can fit learning into when she has the time or the need to do something specific. “It is like having a whole shelf of text books but on-line!” says Fiona. “GIS247 is easy to use. Once I had read the instructions on how things were structured I got going and it all worked perfectly. The different sections in the training courses flow naturally from one to the next. The range of material is good and the datasets all work. I found the exercises relevant and useful.”

With the on-demand MapInfo training from GIS247, Fiona developed the skills she needed to deliver the Local Landscape Information Packs on time and to an extremely high standard. In addition she was able to provide the customised MapInfo workspaces to the client so that they could continue to be used in the management of the AONB and its individual parishes.

As a licence to GIS247 provides access to the on-line training for 12 months Fiona is now able to continue to use the training support offered by GIS247 for a number of other projects.