

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO

DECISION SCHEDULE



Tuesday, 13 May 2008

at 10.00 am

in Committee Room B

Councillor Tumilty, Cabinet Member responsible for Culture, Leisure and Tourism will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

No items

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

2.1 Burn Valley Beck - River Corridor Enhancement Opportunities - *Director of Adult and Community Services*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

3.1 Local Access Forum - End Of Year Report - *Director of Adult and Community Services*

3.2 Hartlepool Maritime Festival 2008 - *Director of Adult and Community Services*

4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items

**CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM
PORTFOLIO
REPORT TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER
13th May 2008**



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject: BURN VALLEY BECK - RIVER CORRIDOR
ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the portfolio holder of proposals to work in partnership with the Environment Agency and consultants to proceed from “conceptual ideas” to outline design stage for the enhancement of the Burn Valley Beck River Corridor.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report outlines the broad themes and objectives of the proposed enhancements and identifies the proposed membership of the project steering group and process to be followed.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Parks are within the remit of the Portfolio Holder.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Meeting, 13th May 2008.

6. DECISION REQUIRED

The Portfolio Holder is requested to approve the report and provide comment.

Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject: BURN VALLEY BECK - RIVER CORRIDOR
ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the portfolio holder of proposals to work in partnership with the Environment Agency and consultants to proceed from “conceptual ideas” to outline design stage for the enhancement of the Burn Valley Beck River Corridor.

2. BACKGROUND

The Burn Valley Gardens is an eight hectare linear park on either side of the Burn Valley beck extending from the outskirts of Hartlepool to the centre of the town. The gardens are an important public open space providing a green corridor, linking the urban centre to green fields and Summerhill Country Park. The gardens are valued as an important local amenity and are well used by the public. The beck, however, is an artificially modified watercourse lined with a variety of concrete, brick and other artificial materials. This detracts from the visual amenity of the channel and reduces the morphological and ecological value of the channel and river corridor. There is also concern about the steep channel banks and flash flood nature of the watercourse.

Potential exists to make significant changes to the beck, in the context of the surrounding corridor, which would provide significant enhancement to the gardens as a whole. The Burn Valley Beck has recently been en-mained and management of the beck has passed from the local authority to the environment agency. This provides the opportunity to review the current management and identify potential for enhancement.

The environment agency commissioned a report by Royal Haskoning to identify enhancement opportunities for improving the beck. This initial report (**Appendix 1**) was generally conceptual in its approach and the report has been reviewed by both the Environment Agency and relevant staff from the authority (Parks Development Officer, Countryside Wardens, Council Ecologist and Engineers). In addition Ward Members and Friends of Burn Valley have also had the opportunity for some initial involvement in the shaping of the project.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSED SCHEME

Six Key “Opportunity Areas” were identified to achieve a gradual wilding of the Burn Valley. See **Appendix 2** for maps.

Area 1 – Upstream river bank rehabilitation works

Area 2 – Elwick Road: Creation of a new channel, creation of an artificial reedbed, removal of ornamental bed and re-landscaping and removal of walling section of the beck.

Area 3 – Rosebank: Creation of a wetland area, removal of walling section of the beck, creation of a new channel, access creation and enhancement of the rockery section.

Area 4 – Burn Valley – creation of scalps and channel banks.

Area 5 – Colwyn Road: Planting enhancement of channel banks

Area 6 – Lower Burn Valley Area – creation of access into the beck and inline pond.

The appointed consultants (Royal Haskoning) will now work with Hartlepool Borough Council Officers and the Environment Agency to progress to an outline design stage to include technical aspects of the designs (design drawings, flood risk assessments, hydrological modelling and implications for the environment). The final report will also include the recommendations for implementation of the scheme.

To achieve the final report it is envisaged that the following methodology be adopted:

Consultation with the Central Neighbourhood Forum will take place on the 19th June. This will be an opportunity for the Consultants to give an overview of the project and address any concerns from members and public as to the proposed development and enhancement of the Burn Valley. Following this meeting a steering group consisting of key agencies, friends group, Neighbourhood Manager and Resident Representatives will be formed to review the key issues and address any concerns raised at the forum so that these issues, where appropriate, can be worked into a master plan.

The master plan will be an updated version of the master plan produced for the successful Heritage Lottery Bid that saw improvements to the Lower Burn Valley. The revised version of the master plan will incorporate the proposed enhancements as well as integrating other key strategies such as the Tees Valley Green Infrastructure plan.

The final outline design report will cover the technical aspects of the work including all procedures associated with the preparation of outline design drawings, flood risk assessments, hydrological modelling and implications on the environment. In addition recommendations for the next stage of the Burn Valley Beck River Corridor Enhancement Project such as the final design and implementation will be set out.

The final outline design report will be adopted as a master plan for the Burn Valley and funding will be sought to implement the plan.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The report for the proposed enhancement of the beck has been commissioned and funded by the Environment Agency. A capital fund has been established with an expected revenue contribution from the Parks and Countryside Budgets of approximately £10,000 in 2008/2009 to fund some initial improvements. It is anticipated that the remainder of the funding to implement the scheme will be from external funding sources such as the Big Lottery's Access to nature Fund.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Portfolio Holder is requested to approve the report and provide comment.

CONTACT OFFICER: Andrew Pearson, Parks and Countryside Manager

Appendix:

1. Burn Valley Beck River Corridor Enhancement Opportunities – Final Report January 2008
2. Burn Valley: River Corridor Enhancement Opportunities January 2008 (Accompanying Maps)



Burn Valley Beck River Corridor Enhancement Opportunities

January 2008
Final Report
9S4952



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the project

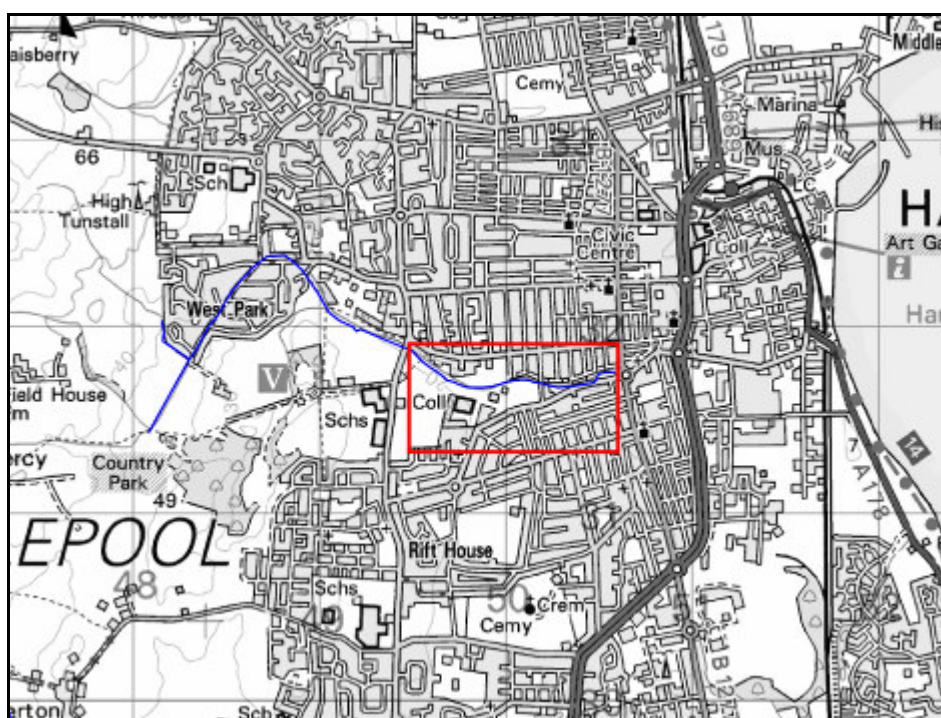
The Burn Valley Gardens is an eight hectare linear park on either side of the Burn Valley Beck extending from the outskirts of Hartlepool to the centre of the town. The Gardens are an important public open space providing a green corridor, linking the urban centre to green fields and the Country Park. The Gardens are valued as an important local amenity and are well used by the local public. However, the Beck is an artificially modified watercourse lined with a variety of concrete, bricks and other artificial materials. This detracts from the visual amenity of the channel and also reduces the morphological and ecological value of the channel and river corridor. There is also concern about the safety of the steep channel banks.

Clear potential exists to make changes to the Beck, in the context of the surrounding corridor, which would provide significant enhancement to the Gardens as whole. The Burn Valley Beck has recently been en-mained and management of the Beck has passed from the Local Authority to the Environment Agency. This provides the opportunity to review the current management and identify potential for enhancement. This report has been prepared by Royal Haskoning to document the findings from a preliminary investigation of opportunities and constraints.

1.2 Study area

Figure 1.1 illustrates the Burn Valley Beck in blue and the area within which enhancement opportunities have been identified (the red box).

Figure 1.1 Burn Valley Beck Study Area



This Enhancement Study has focused on where the river passes through Burn Valley Gardens but has also given consideration to the upstream reaches of the Beck, and how the river connects with the Country Park (upstream) and Hartlepool town centre (downstream).

The Gardens have a long history and were first opened to the public in 1989. Hartlepool Borough Council purchased the land from local Trustees to satisfy the need for allotment provision and part of site was then developed as a small park. Since its opening, further pieces of land have been added to the Gardens by donations, land exchange and purchases. The Beck flows through the Gardens and has been extensively modified as shown in an early photograph of the beck near Rosebank (Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2 Historic Postcard Illustrating the View East from a Bridge of the Beck



The Gardens have an associated “Friends of the Burn Valley Gardens” group who wish to enhance the amenity of the Burn Valley Beck and are supportive of change in the Burn Valley. This support of change is also apparent from the Local Authority who is not wedded to the present configuration of the Burn Valley Beck or features within the Gardens such as trees; they have commented that a number of trees are at the end of their safe life and should be replaced.

There are no UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats within the study area. Five of the Hartlepool Biodiversity Habitat Action Plan habitats are present in the study area (rivers and streams, gardens and allotments, improved grassland/arable, roadside verges and schools and amenity grassland). Summerhill Country Park, located to the west of Hartlepool in the upstream area of the catchment, is designated as a Local Nature Reserve. The Park is a 40.5 hectares site owned and managed by Hartlepool Borough Council. There are no international or national statutory nature conservation sites within the study area.

1.3 Method

To identify opportunities for enhancement along the Burn Valley Beck information from a variety of different sources has been used; desk-based assessment, consultation and field survey.

Initial desk-based assessment

A desk-based assessment has been undertaken to review existing information relating to the Burn Valley Beck and Gardens. This has provided knowledge of past and current conditions along the Beck and surrounding environment.

Consultation

Key stakeholders with an interest in the Burn Valley Beck have been consulted to obtain relevant data and discuss key causes of concern. This has primarily involved meeting with the Environment Agency, Hartlepool Borough Council and the volunteer group "Friends of the Burn Valley Gardens" with subsequent further discussions.

Field Survey

A walkover survey was undertaken in January 2007. This involved a visual assessment of the Beck and the surrounding corridor. Key urban and natural pressures on the system were identified and an understanding of the current form and function of the channel achieved.

Investigation of Services

Service Plans have been requested from the Environment Agency and subsequently from Northumbrian Water to check for possible sub-surface pipes which could influence the design. It was discovered that a combined sewer and surface water main runs approximately north west to south east through Burn Valley Gardens, in some cases adjacent to the channel (Areas 2 and 3). The proximity of the main has been taken into account when developing options in these areas.

Development of opportunities and options

Opportunities for enhancing the Beck have been identified and developed by combining the findings of the desk-based assessment, consultation and field survey. These key opportunity areas can be taken forward for further consultation, particularly to ensure acceptability of outline ideas to the Friends of the Burn Valley Gardens and Hartlepool Borough Council.

2 CURRENT PRESSURES ON THE BURN VALLEY BECK AND GARDENS

The following section discusses the pressures on the Burn Valley Beck and will be used to derive the drivers for change and develop the philosophy for enhancement within the park. These will in turn be used to identify opportunities for enhancing the Beck.

2.1 Channel modification

The entire length of the Beck Burn Valley gardens has been modified in a number of different ways evident from both visual inspection and from the historic mapping (See Figure 2.1). The following physical changes have been imposed on the Beck:

Realignment: Where the course of the Beck has been straightened (often to improve conveyance). Comparison of historic mapping OS from 1899 and 1923 (Figure 2.1) shows considerable development of the land area through the central section of Burn Valley Gardens (east of what is now the access road from Elwick to the bowling greens through to what is now Ellison Street). It is likely that with this development (and encroachment of land area to the south through development of Victoria Park allotments) some realignment of the channel occurred. In the 1899 map the Beck flows through open fields on both sides and it is likely that the overall alignment will have been largely unmodified. Residential development and encroachment into the park are likely to have resulted in removal of local sinuosity (which supports more diverse habitats) to improve conveyance.

Reprofiling: Where the shape of the channel is changed by altering the profile of the banks (in some cases with widening and deepening to increase channel capacity). Visual assessment of sections of the Beck upstream of the Gardens indicates two stage channel and a graded V shaped form (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Upstream section of Burn Valley Beck between the Gardens and Catcote Road



For most of the length of the Beck throughout the Gardens, graded banks have been lost and replaced with vertical bank profiles and a single stage channel designed to cater for higher return period flows (See Figure 2.3). There has been little or no adjustment by the Beck through deposition of sediment within this enlarged channel

as sometimes witnessed in heavily modified channels. The high velocities resulting from the flashy flow regime and the nature of the bed and bank materials are responsible for flushing any available sediment through the system. This is combined with a limited sediment supply reaching the gardens (through limited local supply and trapping sediment sourced from upstream at structures above the road culverts). The channel therefore has little flow diversity with uniform channel shape and flow depths. This minimises both hydromorphological and ecological value.

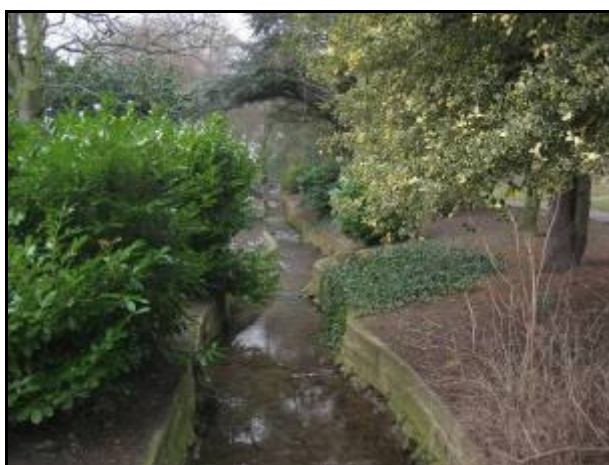
Figure 2.3 Reprofiled vertical banks, widened and deepened channel and uniform flow conditions upstream of the park

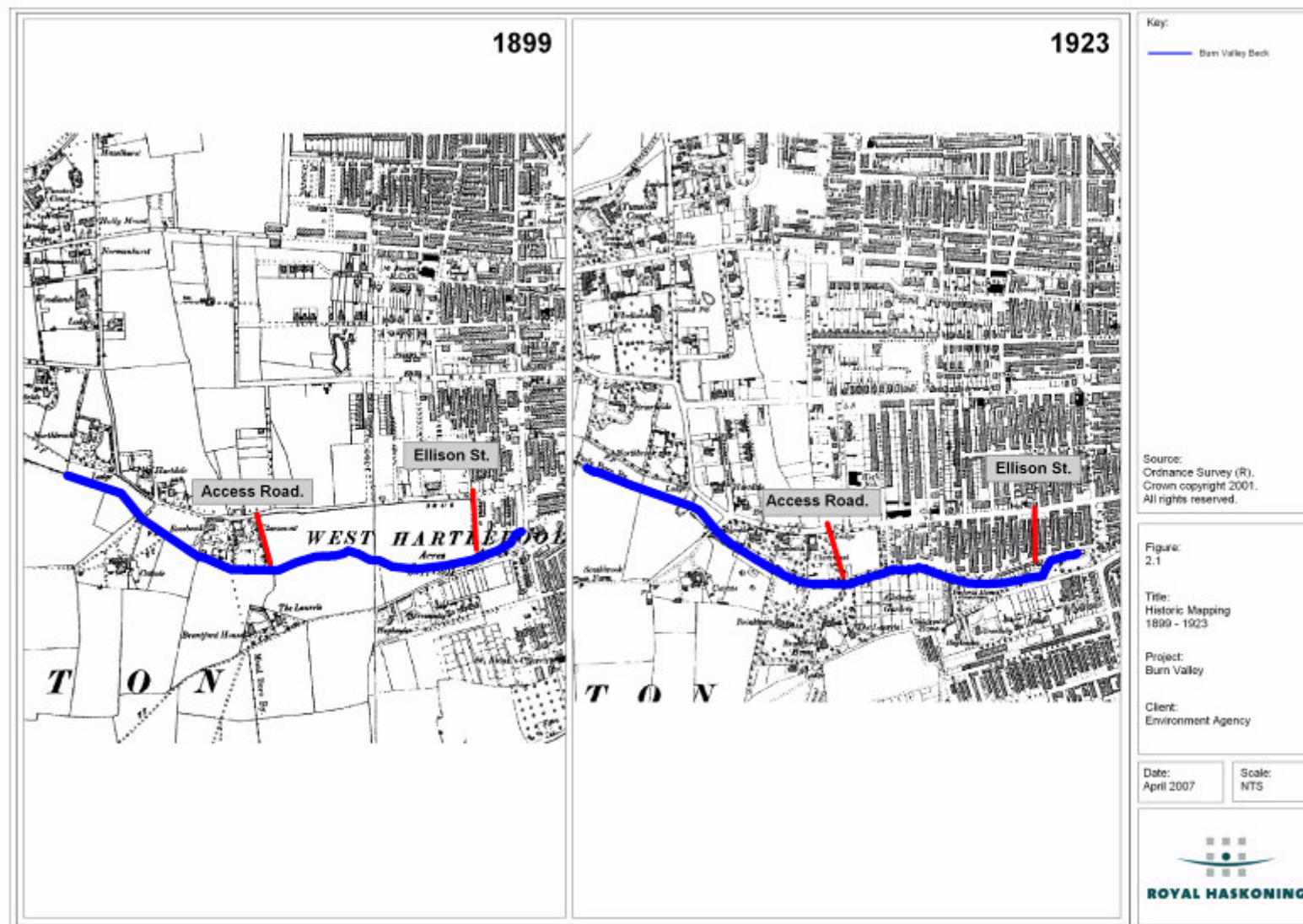


**Bed and
Bank
Protection:**

Where hard materials are placed on bed and banks to prevent any adjustment through erosion or scour.

Figure 2.4 Bed and bank protection





2.2 Sediment supply and maintenance

Sediment supply from upstream is a fundamental consideration when assessing options for physical changes. Reduction in velocities (through increasing channel length or removing bank protection as enhancement measures) can result in increased deposition which will have feedback implications for the enhanced section of channel. The walkover survey included a section upstream of the Burn Valley Gardens to provide a preliminary assessment of the sediment regime in the catchment. Further work would be necessary to support detailed design.

2.2.1 Channel stability upstream of Burn Valley Gardens

There is evidence of fairly significant channel incision upstream of Catcote Road which has destabilised the banks in a number of places (See Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5 Large bank failure on right hand bank facing downstream



The channel has not been modified through bed and bank protection. There is no clear evidence from historic mapping that the channel has been realigned although some agricultural drainage is likely to have formalised the channel and reduced sinuosity. It is proposed that the incision may have resulted from channel regrading through headward incision after the culvert under Catcote road was put in place (reducing bed levels). The destabilised banks are a source of fine sediment entering the channel.

2.2.2 Sediment yield from landuse

Significant sources of fine sediment were identified within the catchment upstream of the main study area. The impacts of cattle and horse grazing in fields close to watercourses draining into the Beck were observed. Fencing has been put in place to reduce access of cattle and horses to the Beck in places but considerable lengths of watercourses without fencing were observed (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6 Sediment sourcing from grazed pasture



Figure 2.7 Example of sediment pathway adjacent to farm access bridge

In addition, there are many eroded channels where it is clear sediment is draining directly into the system from farm access routes, bridges and points where vehicles and or cattle are entering the channel (Figure 2.6 shows a sediment pathway adjacent to a bridge pier). This is providing a direct point source of sediment from a relatively large catchment area.

2.2.3 Debris traps and maintenance



There was evidence of considerable trash build up at culverts under the track adjacent to Elwick road at the upstream limit of the Gardens and upstream of the Catcote road culvert. Blockages can cause impoundment under low flow conditions resulting in fine sediment deposition.

Figure 2.8 Build up of organic and artificial debris upstream

There was evidence that maintenance of the channel at York Road had resulted in dumping of dredged material on the top of the bank adjacent to the channel, this is problematic in terms of the associated public health issues with the park and aesthetics at a key access point to the park.

2.3 Flood risk and low flows

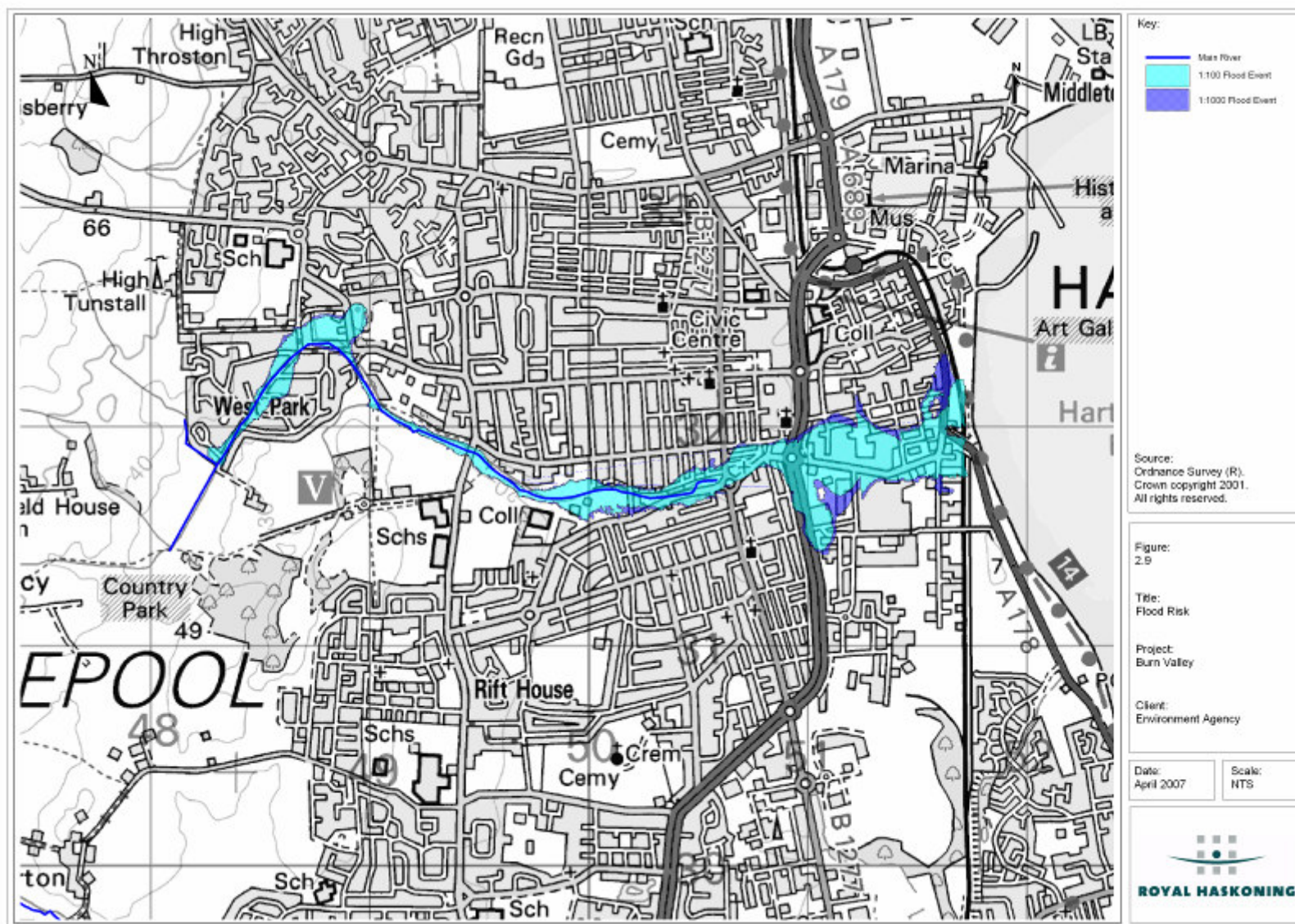
2.3.1 Flood risk

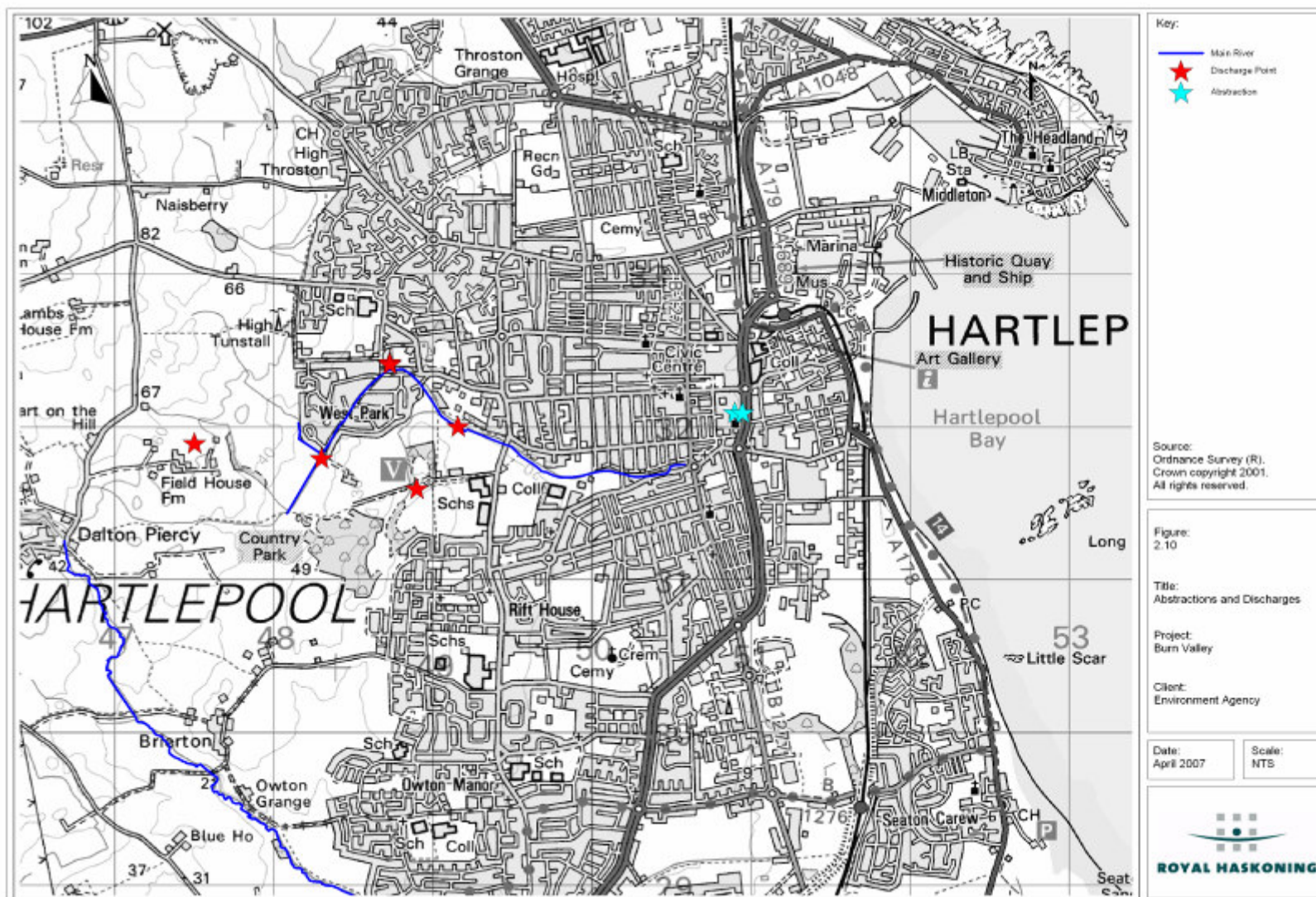
Flood risk is an issue in the Burn Valley catchment. The Environment Agency undertook a pre-feasibility of an upstream section of the watercourse that becomes the Burn Valley Beck (referred to as the Tunstall Farm Beck) to investigate flooding in the West Park area of Hartlepool (flood cell 1) and the Stranton and Bellevue areas (associated to York Culvert and flood cell 2). The report used 1D modelling of the catchment (with overland flow components represented using 2D modelling). The extent to which the influence of culverts in the central part of the system on downstream flooding or have been represented is not clear from the report.

The flooding issue in flood cell 1 (west park) has been attributed to localised lack of capacity of bridge and culverts on the watercourse causing overtopping). Similarly in flood cell 2 overtopping as a result of the capacity of York culvert has been documented as the main cause of flooding. The issue of maintenance is raised in terms of blockage of culverts. There is no assessment of sediment supply or option for reducing conveyance to the culvert with the preferred option to solve both issues being flood storage in the upper catchment. The Environment Agency flood extent outlines for the 1:100 and 1:1000 year events are shown in Figure 2.9. This highlights that there is little difference in the extent of flooding between these return events within Burn Valley Gardens. Clearly the response would therefore be greater flood depth (and flood period) under a 1:1000 event.

2.3.2 Low flows

There have been considerable anecdotal reports of the lack of flow in the Burn Valley Beck particularly during summer months. Figure 2.10 shows the location of abstraction licenses in the catchment which do not show evidence that abstraction is likely to be the issue. There is some evidence to suggest that a culvert from the West Park area of Hartlepool may be diverting flows direct to the coast following modification some decades ago (pers comms Environment Agency). Further investigation is required. It is also possible that localised impoundment (upstream of culverts) and evaporation from shallow flow in the concrete channels may also reduce flows in the Gardens during summer months. The current channel is designed to contain flood flows and hence is oversized for daily discharges. It is therefore likely to be the case that the flows appear minimal given the channel dimensions. However, further investigation is warranted.





3 KEY OPPORTUNITY AREAS

3.1 Drivers for enhancement

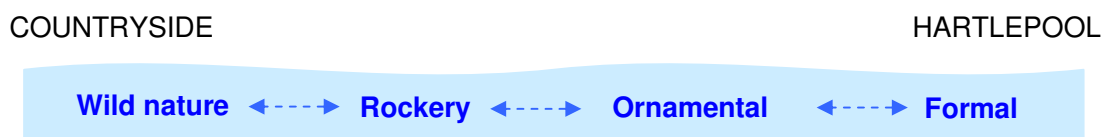
The above sections provide a description of the pressures on the Burn Valley Beck which have arisen from historic management decisions. The investigation of change needed for the Beck, have arisen from the following drivers:

- The opportunity for public engagement by local interest groups to affect local change.
- Improving landscape and visual amenity.
- Providing potential new habitat.
- Reducing risks to public safety.
- Improving landuse and river management.
- Reducing flood risk.

The ability to meet these drivers is not assured. It is important that any approaches are achievable and sustainable.

3.2 Enhancement philosophy

The Burn Valley Gardens already has distinctive characters due to the original landscaping of the Gardens. More recent improvements implemented from the masterplan and from the historic and current management of the Burn Valley Beck have started a process of change. Taking into account all of the influences (See Section 2) and bearing in mind the drivers for enhancement (Section 3.1) a philosophy for a gradual “wilding” of the river moving away from Hartlepool is proposed. This provides a reflection of the human and natural environment by a transition from the formal structure of the urban and built environment through to the informal and natural appearance of the countryside; this is set out in the following schematic:



The philosophy is based on what could be achievable and the concept has gained preliminary support from the Friends of Burn Valley.

To describe the opportunities within Burn Valley Gardens within this overarching philosophy, we have split the Beck into six opportunity areas shown below and outlined in Figure 3.1. Although the reaches have been split up for practical reasons, it must be remembered that any proposed changes should be considered as part of the wider Beck and the implications for the rest of the Beck will need to be taken into account. Thus this should be considered an integrated plan.

KEY OPPORTUNITY AREAS

MAIN OPPORTUNITY FOR ENHANCEMENT

Area 1: Upstream reach

Area 2: Elwick Road

Area 3: Rosebank

Area 4: Burn Valley

Area 5: Colwyn Road

Area 6: Playground

Sediment management

Creating wilder nature area

Linking rockery to upstream

Improving biodiversity

Access and amenity

Information and interaction

Each Area descriptions in the following sections sets out the opportunity for the reach followed by the proposed actions to realise the opportunity. Figures for each opportunity area are in a separate volume for ease of reference. Each opportunity area has an associated figure setting out the options contained in the opportunity area maps. The actions are described first, before the benefits are presented and the considerations for design lay out. Costs are indicative only based on best estimates and apply to the implementation of the actions. Costs allow for unit cost plus 12.5% profit estimate to contractor and the 60% optimism bias suitable for this level of assessment. Professional fees associated to the design and consenting process are not set at this stage as it is likely that these will be variable dependent upon the opportunity areas and actions taken forward and the grouping/sequencing of these. These can be provided as the consultation process and project progresses.

N.B. when referring to left hand and right hand banks this is always when facing in a downstream direction.

3.3 Area 1 Upstream Reach

Opportunity: Sediment management (See Figure 3.2)

Summary of problems affecting reach:

- Diffuse and point sourcing of fine sediments.
- Debris blockage.
- Bank instability and incision.
- Lack of connectivity with floodplain.
- Lack of habitat and ecological diversity.

Managing the sediment and debris in-channel will reduce existing blockages which are causing low flows to be impounded and resulting in excessive deposition of fine material. Sensitive landuse management combined with works to rehabilitate the channel banks will reduce fine sediment supply to the channel. Management of vegetation which has become rank will increase habitat and ecological diversity.

1A Removal of tree and clearance of trash screens



Removal of the tree and clearance of existing debris from upstream of culverts.

Benefits

- Improved conveyance through the culvert into downstream sections and Burn Valley Gardens at low flows.
- Reduction in fine sediment deposition during low flow upstream of blockages.

Considerations

- Health and safety when accessing channels above culverts (and in channel sediments).
- Inspection of the Catcote Road culvert once clearance completed may reveal requirement for works to upgrade culvert (possible leakage to groundwater at low flows).
- There is an active CSO that discharges into this section of the Beck at times of pluvial flooding in the sewer system.

1A Removal of tree and clearance of trash screens

Estimated cost: of removal of tree and clearance of debris - £600-£1200 based on maintenance costs estimated in the Environment Agency report.

1B Family wood improvements – Phase 1 and Phase 3

Family Wood improvements will be incorporated into the enhancement of area 1. The vegetation associated with Phase 1 of Family Wood (between Elwick and Catcote Road) has become rank. Areas of grassland abutting the Beck require a 3m chequerboard cut of alternative banks to improve the habitat for Water Vole. The woodland requires thinning to improve growth of target specimens. A community woodland wildflower planting scheme would enhance the aesthetic value of the woodland and increase biodiversity. Construction and installation habitat piles by the community would increase local awareness, involvement and improve wildlife habitats. Path improvements are required throughout the site to facilitate easy access. Installation of seating to encourage longer visits and interpretation/community information boards for education would also benefit this area. Phase 3 of Family Wood (west of Catcote Road and north of the Beck) is also becoming rank and would benefit from the same management as Phase 1 to improve habitat and floral diversity. Public access to the Beck needs to be improved and the installation of a bench and interpretation board would be highly beneficial.

Benefits

- Improved recreational benefit.
- Enhancement of local biodiversity.
- Increased opportunity for seating areas and educational tools.
- Improved community involvement.
- Improved Water Vole habitat.
- Improved access.
- Increased woodland cover.

Estimated cost:

Phase I: seating, 2 x benches, 1 focal & 1 standard - £3,600

Interpretation, 1 community notice board plus 1 habitat board - £5,500

Access improvements - £3,000

Community planting scheme - £1,000

Phase III: interpretation, 1 habitat board - £2, 500

Seating, 1 x standard - £600

Access improvements - £3,000

1C River bank rehabilitation



Fencing

River bank rehabilitation can be achieved through fencing to remove access to the channel (photograph shows damage to the bank through access and grazing was found to have a significant impact on the banks). It is recommended that fencing is set back from the top of the bank to leave room for adjustment of the bank through erosion (see photograph which shows fencing set back from bank top as existing fence line was eroded). Planting along the fence line may allow plants to

establish further stabilising the bank and creating a buffer zone. Fencing could be placed on both banks of the channel once any channel bank rehabilitation works have been completed.

Bank reprofiling

Banks are over-steepened in several places through the upstream reach (See Figure 2.4). Reprofiling of the banks through earth works would reduce instability and introduce some morphological diversity to the channel to provide a range of habitats. The photograph above illustrates a sinuous low flow channel. This sinuosity could be created through the remainder of the length by using “cut and fill” technique; material redeemed from taking back one bank can be placed on the opposite bank to reprofile through filling. This work would be tailored to reach an objective of restabilising the banks.

Benefits

- Reduction of fine sediment sourcing and deposition.
- Improved morphological and habitat diversity.
- Increase in Water Voles.
- Creation of a riparian zone supporting a wider range of aquatic plants.
- If buffer zone established, improved shading and possible reduction in diffuse pollution.

Considerations

- The works will change conveyance at higher return periods and should be integrated into flood risk management.
- The works will not be a quick fix but rehabilitation process which will take some years to have a full benefit. The works should be phased to reflect this i.e. fencing should not be done until any bank rehabilitation works are completed.
- Water vole surveys should be undertaken prior to any bank reprofiling works.

1C River bank rehabilitation

Estimated costs:

Fencing of both banks: £22,200 assuming 1200 metres length to full stock grade fencing with post and wire mesh with one access point.

Bank rehabilitation: £13,000 as an estimated allowance figure (requires detail selection and design).

1D Landuse management

This can be achieved through working with landowners to inform them about the problems associated with fine sediments (especially if polluted) entering the channel. Small scale bank rehabilitation through soft engineering would reduce sediment transport to the Beck. Under the Water Framework Directive there is an obligation to ensure *no deterioration* of the waterbody so any further engineering works affecting the hydromorphology will need to be carefully considered so negative impacts are mitigated.

Benefits

- Reduction of fine sediment sourcing and deposition.
- Long term sustainable improvements.
- Works as part of Countryside Stewardship schemes could have dual benefits.

Considerations

- Landowners will need to be identified.

Estimated cost: Costs will be associated to time required for liaison with landowners.

3.4 Area 2 Elwick Road

Opportunity: Creating a wilder nature area (See Figure 3.3)

Summary of problems affecting reach:

- Bank protection.
- Limited sediment.
- Lack of morphological and ecological diversity.
- Over shading reducing ground cover.
- Disused ornamental beds with limited visual amenity.

There is an opportunity to re-landscape the ornamental flower bed at the bottom of the entrance path and to either create a new channel or an artificial reedbed to increase morphological diversity. The existing sinuous path from Elwick Road could be extended with an informal trail through a wilder area next to the river. Management of vegetation which has become rank will increase habitat and ecological diversity.

2A Create new channel and backfill existing

A new channel approximately 100m in length could be dug on a meandering alignment on either the southern side of the Beck (Option 2A1) or on the northern side of the Beck (Option 2A2) which would make use of the space where the disused ornamental flower bed is currently located. A combined sewer may run through the proposed new channel on the northern side. The depth of the combined sewer is relatively deep at this location (approximately 4.7 m) with potential risks regarding damage to the sewer during construction phase quite low, although caution should still be required if this option was the preferred location for the creation of a new channel.

Material from the creation of the new channel would be used to backfill the existing channel. The indicative new channel length is longer than the existing straight channel length, meaning that the material released from the new channel cut would exceed the capacity of the old channel. Additional material could be utilised to re-landscape the area around the channel to create some diversity in the local area and increase the feeling that the area is wilder by encouraging a range of vegetation types to establish.

In creating a new channel the banks would be set back to provide both a second stage which would be designed to contain flood flows and a single stage channel which could accommodate daily flows. The exact design of this will depend on the extent to which there is a need and/or desire for allowing flood flows to spill into the park (to act as flood storage – See Section 4.1).

Benefits

- Increase in visual amenity.
- Increase in morphological diversity.
- Introduction of a two-stage channel which will help with appearance of channel during low flows as a smaller channel with aquatic and marginal vegetation will relieve the impression of a dry channel.

Considerations

- The increase in channel length will reduce channel gradients and thus change the physical processes through the reach. This should be taken into account in terms of flood risk management.
- The construction of the new channel will involve realigning the cycle path.

Estimated costs: £ 9,129 for the creation of a new channel. This assumes use of material to fill old channel. The realignment of the cycle path for the full extent of the new channel (Option 2A1) will cost £7,500 (or £50 per linear meter) based on a 1m wide cycle path.

2B Creation of an artificial reedbed

An alternative to the creation of a new channel on the southern side of the Beck would be the creation of an artificial reedbed. The reedbed would use the area immediately downstream of the culvert and would be sized to contain flood flows and to fit within the existing area. The creation of the reedbed will require the removal of the banks (walling) protection works and possibly the channel bed.

Benefits

- Increased habitat area for birds and other wildlife Including insects.
- Increased visual amenity.
- Improved water quality.
- No risk of damage to the combined sewer.

Considerations

- The creation of a large in channel reedbed will capture debris which may need to be removed on occasions.
- Pooling of flood waters may occur upstream of the reedbed and culvert although depending on the types of aquatic plants used for the reedbed and layout design of these plants this may reduce the amount of pooling.

Estimated costs: The creation of the reedbed may vary in costs in response to the type of aquatic plants chosen and if both bed and bank protection works are required to be removed. Based on costs associated with Sustainable Urban Drainage design, the construction of the reedbed (50m in length) would cost £1,000 (or £20 per square metre) and the removal of protection works £7,000 (or £60 per cubic metre). However, It is proposed that this work could be done by park maintenance as it may be possible to re-use the brick/stone elsewhere in the park (or sell on).

2C Removal of ornamental bed and re-landscape wilder area

The ornamental bed is now disused and is grassed over. Initial thoughts from the “Friends of Burn Valley” were that the bed is no longer used and, in keeping with the idea of a wilder area the space, could be better used. It is proposed that the innovative path into the park from Elwick road could be extended as a trail through a re-landscaped zone next to the Beck. The existing footpath to the north of the ornamental bed could be retained as a more accessible path with the trail being wilder.

Benefits

- Recreational benefit.
- Increase in continuity of the sinuous hill path into the park.
- Retention of formal walkway.
- Improved biodiversity from planting.
- Complements Option 2B (if this option is progressed).

Considerations

- The volume of material released from the new cut channel will need to be balanced with material removed. The design could include landscaping to the right of the new channel for either flood risk purposes and/or increasing the feeling of being hidden from the cycle way.
- The existence of a sewer may rule this approach out on cost grounds.

Estimated costs:

Re-landscaping of the ornamental bed will depend on detailed levels and volumes that may need to be moved.
Creation of trail through wilder area: £ 5,693 for a 2.5m wide path of sealed bituminous macadam with sub-base.

2D Remove walling

The section of the Beck upstream of the footbridge has been straightened in the upper reaches and been impacted by both bank and bed protection. It is proposed that the bank and bed protection is removed and the channel left to adjust naturally. It is proposed that the work is phased to remove the left hand walling first as there is more space on this side of the channel and this would allow the opportunity for monitoring if the works were to be phased. Planting in the space between the right hand bank of the channel and the cycle way could improve the stability of the bank prior to removing walling. A short stretch of bank protection has been deliberately left to protect the bridge piers from scour.

Benefits

- Improved visual amenity.
- Retention of cycle way.
- Improved hydro-morphological and habitat diversity.
- Complements Option 2A (if this option is progressed).

Considerations

- It is always necessary to consider the erosive potential of the watercourse when removing bank protection close to assets to be retained (such as the cycle way). An assessment of the likely extent of erosion would need to be made to establish the need for soft bank protection. The transition from bare earth to hard bank protection where the protection is left under the bridge will need to be considered.

Estimated costs:

It is proposed that this work could be done by park maintenance. It may be possible to re-use the brick/stone elsewhere in the park (or sell on). If the work were done by contractors an estimated cost for removing both banks (80m) would be £ 8,918 assuming removal of the wall and excavation of a batter slope and disposal off-site of soil (of 231m³). It is assumed this would not compromise any services such as sewer.

2E Family wood improvements – Phases 2, 4 and 5

Family Wood improvements will be incorporated into the enhancement of area 2. Phases' 2, 4 and 5 associated with Family Wood lie within the area south of the Beck. Phases' 2 and 4 were planted 10 and 6 years ago respectively and like the other phases are a mixture of mixed woodland and grassland. Phase 2 has wider expanses of open grassland and would benefit from habitat improvements including butterfly basking areas, skylark plots and mini-beast habitat piles. An annual conservation cut is required to increase the floral diversity of Phase 2 and to maintain the diversity of Phase 4. Improved path surfacing to allow easy access and the installation of seating would encourage more visits, and visits of a longer duration than currently occur.

Phase 5 is currently managed as amenity grassland. Planting the area with native trees as commemorative woodland will enhance the area for both wildlife and local residents. Laying the hedge along the northern boundary of the Gardens and Family Wood will diminish the physical barrier between both areas and improve the visual aspect for park

users. The addition of seating designed by local schoolchildren will provide resources to enable quiet contemplation. Interpretation/ information boards sited at various locations within each phase will educate users of the ecological importance of the site and how they can become involved in its management.

Benefits

- Improved recreational benefit.
- Enhancement of local biodiversity.
- Increased opportunity for seating areas and educational tools.
- Improved community involvement.
- Improved Water Vole habitat.
- Improved access.
- Increased woodland cover.

Estimated cost:

Phase II: Interpretation, 1 information panel and 1 habitat board - £5,500
Seating, 1 focal picnic seat - £3,000

Phase IV: interpretation, 1 habitat board - £2, 500
Seating, 1 focal picnic bench - £3,000
Access improvements - £3,000

Phase v: Seating, 2 x benches, 1 focal & 1 standard - £3,600
Interpretation, 1 habitat panel - £2, 500
Planting – (Including in costs for Phase 1)
Hedge management - £1,100

3.5 Area 3 Rosebank

Opportunity: Linking the Rockery to the wilder area (See Figure 3.4)

Summary of problems affecting reach:

- Reduced visual amenity through lack of maintenance.
- Over-engineered channel.
- Lack of ecological diversity.

Surface drainage patterns have resulted in a naturally wet area next to the footpath which presents the opportunity for creating a wetland. This would provide real benefits for wildlife but also the potential for park users to learn more about wetland areas.

The rockery formed a key part of the development of Burn Valley Gardens in the past (See Figure 1.2) and is the one part of the Beck which remains less modified than other sections. The islands in the centre of the channel add to the value of the reach and the secondary flow channels provide a great opportunity for creation of back waters.

3A Wetland creation

The wetted area next to the footpath (reported by the Friends and Hartlepool Borough Council to be often wet and muddy) could be turned into a wetland area. If the channel were to be realigned (see option 3B) then the wetland could fringe the channel bank and the area could potentially provide some limited flood storage in extreme events and run off detention.

Benefits

- Increase wetland area for birds and other wildlife.
- Sustainable drainage.
- Quiet areas for recreational use off the beaten track.

Considerations

- The size of the wetland will need to be balanced with the functional design requirements and connectivity with the river will need to be considered carefully.

Estimated costs:

The proposed wetland area of 1000m² has a wide range of potential cost. If it is assumed a shallow scrape was made and some planting and informal path this may be in the region of £ 2-6,000. If we assumed excavation to a metre depth below the present surface then costs would be in the region of £ 18-20,000 and if we assumed a full wetland with excavated pond to 10m depth, butyl lined with 300mm of topsoil, and the whole perimeter of the wetland planted with aquatic plants to 5m deep with a 2.5m wide path around would range between £ 40 -60,000.

3B Option 1 Removal of walling

It is proposed that the walling on the right hand side of the channel (looking downstream) is removed and the bank reprofiled to create an artificial sinuosity and more natural channel cross-sectional profile. Sections of walling will be left under the bridges to prevent scour.

Benefits

- Increased visual amenity.
- Improved hydro-morphological and habitat diversity.
- Improved river-floodplain connectivity.

Considerations

An assessment of the likely extent of erosion would need to be made to establish the need for soft bank protection to minimise erosion and excess deposition into the channel. It will also be necessary to consider the linkage of hard channel banks with bare earth sections.

Estimated costs:

The cost for the removal of the southern bank wall (100m) by contractors would be £5,000 assuming removal of the wall and excavation of a batter slope and disposal off-site of soil. However, this work could be done by park maintenance and it may be possible to re-use the brick/stone elsewhere in the park (or sell on).

3B Option 2 Creation of new channel and backfill of existing
<p>An alternative to option 3B1 and an easy way to improve the river whilst maintaining capacity for flood flows would be to cut a new channel and backfill the existing. This would allow a more sinuous planform. It is proposed that the channel course would be to the left of the existing alignment (northern side of the Beck).</p>
<p><i>Benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of the existing modified channel and re-landscaping of the area to improve visual amenity (in particular within the footpath / garden bedding area). • New channel providing diverse habitats and catering for low summer flows.
<p><i>Considerations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design will need to be integrated with flood risk management as channel length and hydraulic properties will be changed with the new design.
<p><i>Estimated costs:</i> Construction costs of the new channel: £ 10,044 assuming back filling.</p>

3C Access routes

Removal of the southern channel wall to allow the Beck to maintain its alignment and vary its channel form to a natural state and the creation of a wetland complex may mean the cycle path needs re routing. The path could be upgraded in line with other sections through the park and there is an opportunity to connect the path in to the bridges and new wetland footpath (Option 3C1).

Option 3C1 A circular footpath could be taken around the wetland if 3A were to be implemented. This would take visitors to the park around the wetland to quiet areas away from the cycle way and seating could be provided. The path could include a boardwalk into the fringe of the wetland (not included in cost estimate).

Option 3C2 This option would upgrade and reroute the cycle way to the south of the river. This could be combined with the circular wetland footpath (Option 3C.1).

Benefits

- Innovative access routes which provide maximum interest and value to different park users.
- Increased opportunity for seating areas off the beaten track.
- Potential for wetland creation for BAP.

Considerations

- The options selected will depend on whether the wetland is progressed. The views of the Friends and wider park users will be paramount on deciding what is desirable and what will work for this relatively busy access way into the heart of Hartlepool.

Estimated costs:

The proposed wetland area: See 3A (above)

Option 3C1: Circular footpath creation (190m):£ 12,192

Option 3C2: Use of existing path or upgrade: £0 - 2,795

3D Enhancement of the rockery section

The rockery section was a key feature of the park when it was first designed (See Figure 1.2). The reach has been left over time and there are large patches of bare earth open to scour and which are visually unappealing. It is proposed that stones from the main rockery area be transported to the banks to fill the gaps in certain places particularly around the bridge. The islands in the centre of the channel are over protected. A more natural transition between the islands and the channel would be beneficial and could be achieved through removing the walling around both islands. It is clear that there is currently a preferential channel taking low flows and secondary channel which probably conveys flow during peak flow events. It is proposed that the secondary channels are blocked off at both ends to create backwaters which will allow a range of niche species to colonise. Boulders would be used to allow overtopping during peak flow events and retention/slow seepage of water from the backwater after a flood event thus providing detention. The walls of both sides downstream of the first island could be removed where space allows and additional planting would improve the riparian zone.

3D Enhancement of the rockery section
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of visual amenity. • Opportunity for greater habitat diversity and more natural channel functioning. • Improved safety through improved sight between cycle route and vehicular access route. • Reinstatement of rocky appearance to channel.
<p>Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rockery is a historic feature within the park so public engagement will be vital to ensure the changes are viewed positively. • The placement of boulders should be directed by a geomorphologist on site to ensure effective functioning of the channel.
<p>Estimated costs:</p> <p>Removal of walling: £ 11,120</p> <p>Placement of boulders: £ 33,638, assuming along 100m section of channel</p> <p>Planting: An allowance required, say £ 1,500.</p>

3.6 Area 4 Burn Valley

<p>Opportunity: Improving biodiversity (See Figure 3.5)</p> <p>Summary of problems affecting reach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification through realignment, reprofiling and bank protection reducing visual amenity and diversity. • Constrained space from access routes both sides of the channel. • Low level weirs controlling bed levels. <p>There is less opportunity to full restore this section of the Beck due to constraints but there is opportunity to improve planting and reprofile the top part of the banks to achieve some improved visual diversity and bank top refuge. Alternating between the channel banks will help to create the impression of diversity. In-stream deflectors (using large boulders could also help to create a low flow meandering flow within the concrete channel and additional channel width for flood flows.</p>

4A Creation of scalps on channel banks
<p>The bank top could be lowered over short sections creating elliptical shapes or scalps. This would be achieved through earth works. The shallow excavated areas could then be planted up with a range of vegetation types (perhaps themed according to the wishes of the Friends). Introducing some riverine tree species may also help to increase shading in the channel, which if supplemented with some boulder placement adjacent to the scalps could help to create a more diverse substrate with cover to reduce water temperature encouraging aquatic species to colonise.</p>
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aesthetic improvements whilst maintaining ornamental structure of the park. • Improved microhabitats in-channel. • Maintenance of access ways both side of the channel.
<p>Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planting regime will need to be considered to ensure the plants take and do not fail disappointing park users.
<p>Estimated costs: Cost of earthworks: £2,502. Planting: An allowance required, say £ 1,500.</p>

3.7 **Area 5 Colwyn Road**

<p>Opportunity: Access and amenity (See Figure 3.6)</p> <p>Summary of problems affecting reach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavily modified channel bed and banks. • Lack of visual amenity and diversity. <p>There is limited opportunity to do works to the channel here as space is limited and the channel is heavily regulated. The key focus for this reach is to maintain access and amenity value as there is high use of this section by cyclists and other park users to get to the playground. The main opportunity is planting to improve the bank tops. A longer term plan could be to monitor the success of scalps in Area 4 to see if they could be applied in Area 5. Planting should be costed according to species selected. Key benefits will be to maintain access.</p>

3.8 Area 6 Playground

Opportunity: Information and interaction (See Figure 3.7)

Summary of problems affecting reach:

- Channel modification.
- Japanese Knotweed.
- Public health issues associated to culvert.
- Lack of visual amenity associated to culvert.

Work has already been done in this area to create a new playground and improve the park through landscaping. There is an opportunity to continue this work by engaging park users more with the Beck at this stage before they progress west to the wider areas to explain the importance of the Beck and how it can be of benefit. This can be achieved through interaction: leaflets for schools, river access area, information board and artwork on the culvert surrounding railing.

6A Creation of an access area into the Beck and widening to an online pond

The bank could be re-profiled on the inside of the meander bend (where erosion will be limited) to allow a safe boarded area by the river. This will need to be well thought through to ensure that access up and down the channel is not promoted but could be of real benefit in promoting pond-dipping type opportunity. Planting of aquatics in the channel, which would need to be widened out into an on-line pond, would need to be undertaken.

Benefits

- Direct interaction with the Beck.
- Educational resource for dipping and insect spotting.

Considerations

- Health and Safety will be the key, but good design can be achieved through controlled access. This may include landscaped fencing and wooden board walks.
- Effective management of Japanese Knotweed is required during works to prevent it from spreading.

Estimated costs:

Cost of earthworks: £2,967 assuming a 1:4 slope

6B Artistic metal

Metalwork could be designed using a local designer's competition to improve the existing screen metalwork around the culvert. There already is some artwork of this type in the park and so further artwork would remain consistent with that.

6B Artistic metal
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved visual amenity. • Encourages community involvement. • Explanation of works. • Sense of place and identity.
<p>Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of recycled or renewable materials. • Designed to reduce vandalism and maintain health and safety requirements.
<p>Estimated costs: Cost of design and construction: Dependant upon outcome of design.</p>
6C Interpretational material
<p>Leaflets aimed at key stages in the national curriculum which encapsulate river processes and biodiversity and link them to the local environment through the Burn Valley could be developed for use in local schools. This would promote local support for other activities being promoted and engender a sense of ownership. An information board at the parks entrances could explain the overall concept of the park and identify amenities and characteristics.</p>
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational resource. • Increased ownership and interest.
<p>Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with educational advisors would help make leaflets useful. • Involvement of local schools and stakeholders.
<p>Estimated costs: Cost: £ 2 - 5,000 allowing for design, printing and vandal-proof signage.</p>

4 STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Integrated flood risk management

There are proposals, under flood risk management, to take forward flood storage as the preferred option (out of thirteen). If physical changes are to be made to the Beck it is proposed that flood risk management integrates with this as certain of the measures will assist in detention or (potentially) retention of flood flow. There is a possibility that localised changes to the West Park Area could deal with problems at this point (watercourse diversions) and other options such as flood storage in the central part of the catchment or a reduced conveyance through channel enhancement (removing bank protection, reprofiling and realigning to a more natural state) may increase the time for a

flood to peak at the downstream end of the catchment. It is proposed that the enhancement strategy should be integrated with flood risk management initiatives. Further work on sediment issues will need to be undertaken as part of the enhancement design.

4.2 Linkages with other initiatives

There are real opportunities in the catchment to enhance the whole of the walk (or ride) up the Beck to the Country Park. It would be worth investigating whether works relating to flood risk management such as diverting the watercourses combined with the enhancement options could be adopted instead of flood storage. If so there would be a real potential to create some new habitat in new watercourses. The access to the Country Park could be tied into the scheme so that the route is entirely through open space and close to the river rather than going through West Park. This presents a real opportunity to link access and amenity objectives with HAP/BAP targets and flood risk management.

5 REFERENCES

Environment Agency (2006) Tunstall Farm Beck Pre-Feasibility Study, Final Report.

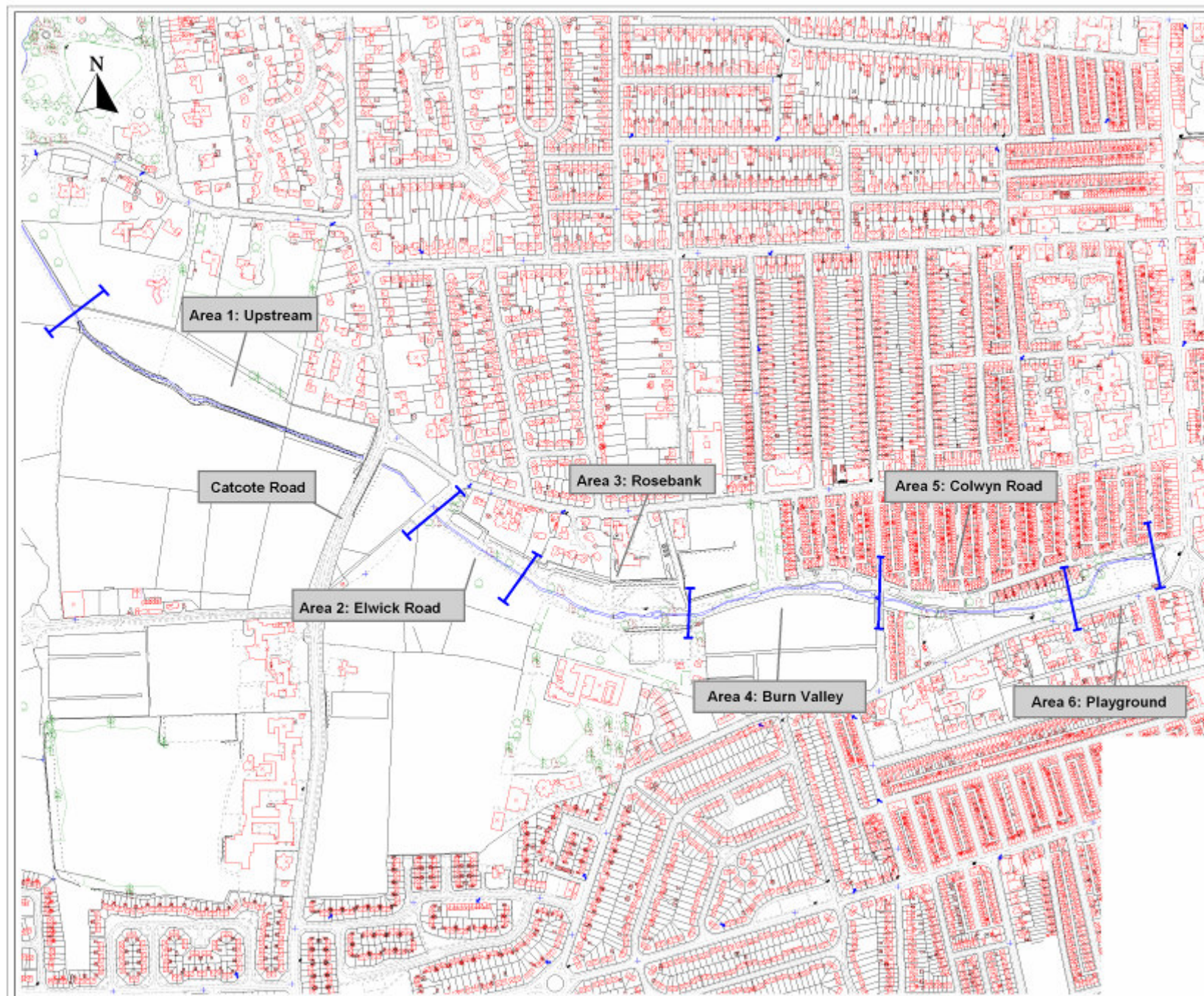
www.hartlepool.gov.uk



Burn Valley: River Corridor Enhancement Opportunities

January 2008





Key:

— Reach Boundary

Source:
Ordnance Survey (R).
Crown copyright 2001.
All rights reserved.

Figure:
3.1

Title:
Reach Locations

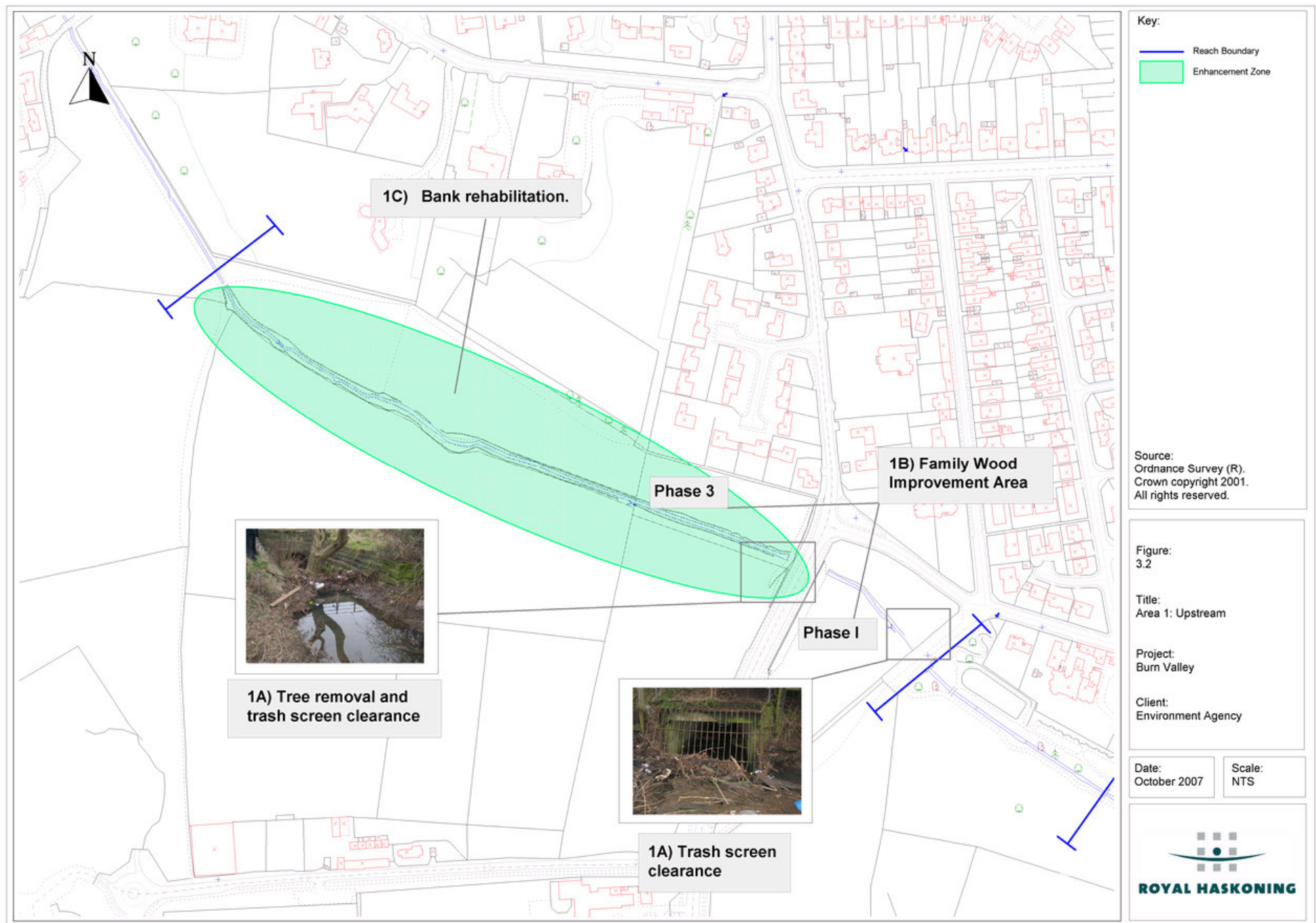
Project:
Burn Valley

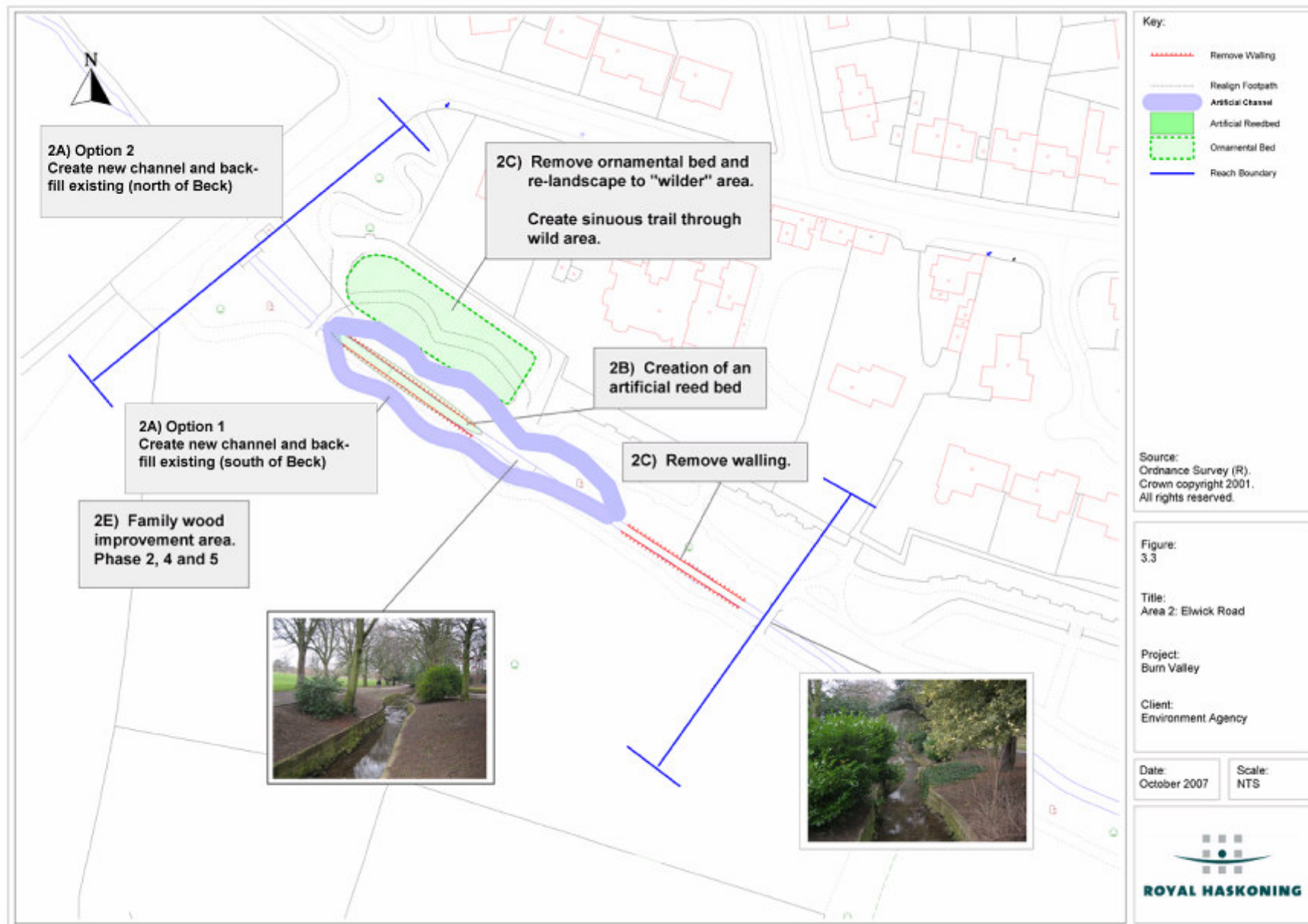
Client:
Environment Agency

Date:
April 2007

Scale:
NTS









Key:

-  Planted Trees/Vegetation
-  Remove Bank Protection
-  Create Backwater
-  Block Channel
-  Bank Rehabilitation
-  Wetland
-  Artificial Channel

Source:
Ordnance Survey (R).
Crown copyright 2001.
All rights reserved.

Figure:
3.4

Title:
Area 3: Rosebank

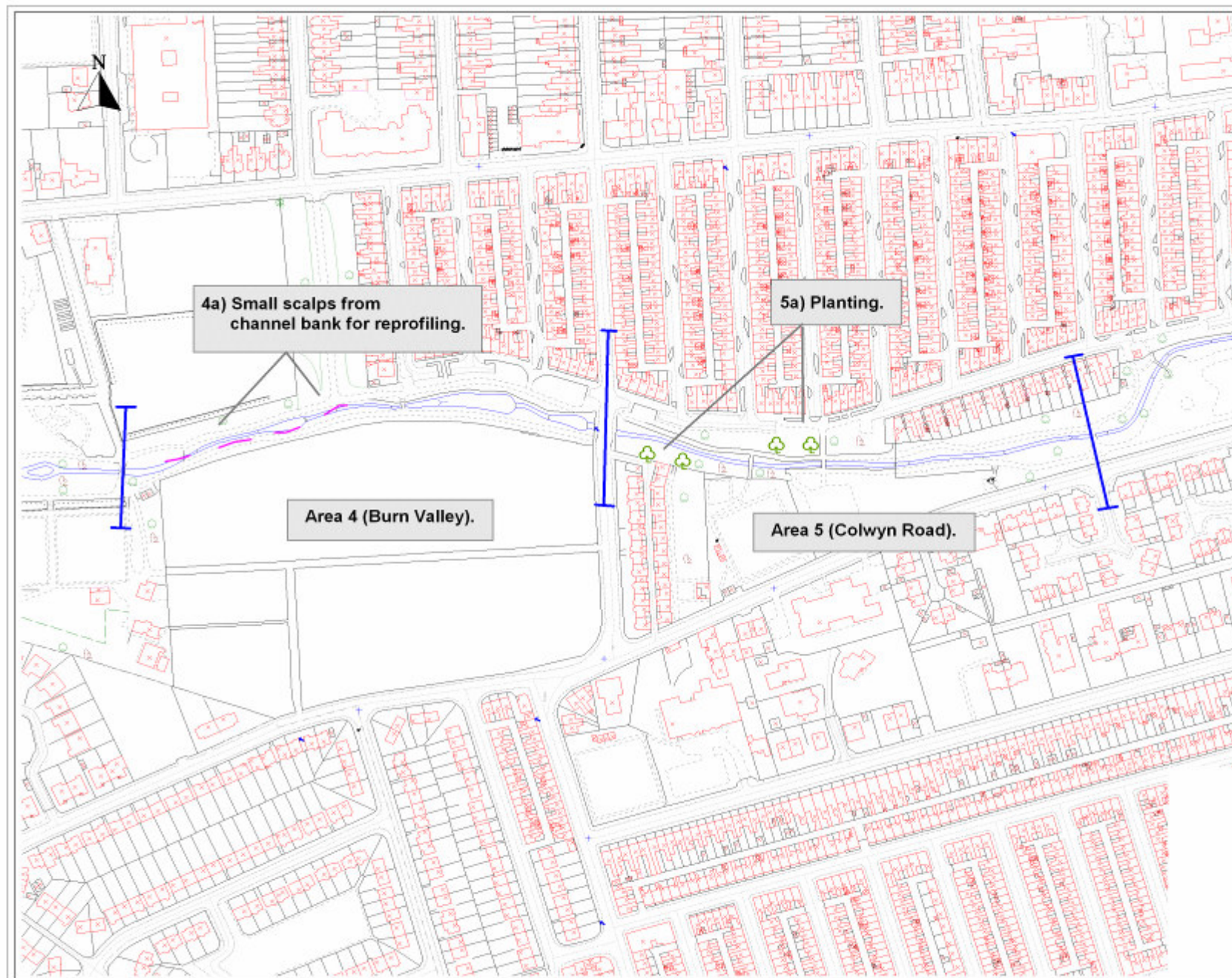
Project:
Burn Valley

Client:
Environment Agency

Date:
October 2007

Scale:
NTS





Key:

- Reach Boundary
- Planting
- Excavated Bank

Source:
Ordnance Survey (R).
Crown copyright 2001.
All rights reserved.

Figure:
3.5

Title:
Area 4: Burn Valley, and
Area 5: Colwyn Road

Project:
Burn Valley

Client:
Environment Agency

Date:
April 2007

Scale:
NTS





**CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM
PORTFOLIO
REPORT TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER
13th May, 2008**



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject: LOCAL ACCESS FORUM - END OF YEAR REPORT

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress of the Local Access Forum within the first year.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The LAF Dev Officer – Beryl Bird was appointed on 2nd June 2007. Beryl acts as the secretariat and administration for Tees Valley Local Access Forum and as the liaison between the Forum and the four Local Authorities (and their respective rights of way officers) that make up the area covered by the Forum (Darlington Borough, Hartlepool Borough, Middlesbrough and Stockton Borough).

Part of the Officers job is to develop the Local Access Forum, and so write a business plan involving the membership of the forum in advancing their interests. Part of this development includes raising the profile of the Forum and actively recruiting new members from the general public.

Throughout the year major improvements have taken place. These are detailed within the report and the attached appendices.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Rights of Way and Countryside Access are within the remit of the Portfolio Holder.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Meeting.

6. DECISION REQUIRED

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress of the Local Access Forum post within the first year.

Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject: LOCAL ACCESS FORUM - END OF YEAR REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress of the Local Access Forum within the first year.

2. BACKGROUND

The Tees Valley Local Access Forum (the Forum) began work in 2003. It is a statutory body, required to give impartial and useful advice on all matters concerning countryside access to the Planning Authorities in each of the Four Boroughs it represents, but also to Government agencies, such as Defra and Natural England who require the Forum's views, on matters such as Coastal Access.

Every local authority was obliged, through the CROW Act 2002, sections 60-62, to establish a Local Access Forum. The local authorities in Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton on Tees and Darlington agreed a joint Forum was the way forward.

Since 2003, the TVLAF had met three times a year; endeavoured to make sure its members were fit for purpose in that training was made available to enable them to evaluate any consultations presented.

The Officers and members recognised that time was needed to establish the Forum as a strong consultative body and agreed to recruit a LAF Development Officer after establishing just how one should operate and the funding required for such a post.

The appointment of Beryl Bird as the LAF Dev Officer has made it possible to forward the Forum's development and to make the public aware of what the Forum is looking to achieve.

The Forum is an independent body with an interest in public rights of way and access to the countryside, towns and coast in our area.

The local authorities represented are Darlington, Stockton-on-Tees, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough

The Forum's responsibility is to examine how the local authorities manage the rights of way, and put forward ideas about how improvements can be made. The Forum also seeks to influence national government proposals.

The Forum must balance the needs of land management and the desirability for recreation, conservation and biodiversity in the region.

3. BUSINESS OF THE FORUM

During the year 2007/08, four meetings have been held and a variety of matters discussed. (See Appendix 1)

Appointment of members and membership period – The Chairman and Vice Chairman, Steve Scoffin and Councillor Bob Cook were each voted in for a further one and two years respectively. Other members have recently been recruited and this has had the benefit of increasing the expertise base of the forum. (See Appendices 4, 5 and 6)

Rights of Way Improvement Plans - regular updates have been given throughout the year, by the four appointing authority rights of way officers. Darlington and Hartlepool Rights of Way Improvement Plans were both approved and published within the prescribed date – 22nd November 2007. Middlesbrough is in the process of approving and adopting their plan. Stockton has still to finish writing their plan.

Consultations during the year – the Tees Valley Local Access Forum met to consult on a number of issues during the year. The North of England Strategy for the Environment was discussed at length and all agreed to request the inclusion of the Local Transport Plans and Local Access Plans for each Local Authority. Coastal Access has been a topic that has been consulted on with responses being sent back to Defra.

Public Awareness

Beryl has attended various events throughout summer 2007 to publicise the Forum as well as raise interest in membership recruitment. These events (four in total) helped towards the increase in general membership. A leaflet was produced for the events and was so successful that a second print run was needed to supply the interest shown. (See Appendices 2 and 3)

A set of webpages within the Hartlepool website have been created for the Local Access Forum. This has proved popular and has become an archive and document database for the public as well as the forum members.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The post is funded by the four authorities. Each pays an equal amount to support the officer's salary as well as small administration budget. Each authority funds £2.5K.

In the light of any job evaluation review changes etc for the LAF Dev Officers post, there may need to be a reassessment of the above mentioned funding sum. That being the case then each authority will be consulted with and upon approval, invoiced accordingly.

If there are no changes then a Local Access Forum budget of £10K will be available for salary and administration costs.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress of the Local Access Forum Development Officer (LAF Dev Officer) post within the first year.

CONTACT OFFICER: Andrew Pearson, Parks and Countryside Manager

Background Papers

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Sections 94 and 95

Local Access Forums Regulations 2007

Local Access Forum Guidance 2007

Appendix 1 - Local Access Forum Development Officer Report

Appendix 2 – Tees Valley Local Access Forum Leaflet

Appendix 3 – Frequently Asked Questions Leaflet

Appendix 4 – Recruitment Application Form

Appendix 5 – Criteria for the selection of members to the Local Access Forum

Appendix 6 – Terms of Reference for Tees Valley Local Access Forum



Local Access Forum Development Officer Report

June 2007 to March 2008

Foreword

'The Tees Valley Local Access Forum, first established in 2003, had at best been criticised for underperforming in the first years of its life, although some of this could be seen as too high an expectancy placed on the Rights of Way Officers and those working in a voluntary capacity on the Forum, but also a lack of clarity as to the role of the Forum.

The appointment of Beryl Bird as the TVLAF's Development Officer has seen a considerable change in the way the Forum works. While this is undoubtedly due to having a dedicated officer to take forward actions between meetings of the LAF, it is in no small part due to her commitment and drive to make the LAF one of the best in England. The range of activities outlined in her report below show just how much her work has contributed towards making this LAF one of the best run in the North East, and clearly strongly vindicate the decision by the four authorities to support this post, and show how important it is that this support continues.'

Chairman, Tees Valley Local Access Forum
Steve Scoffin
20th February 2008



Local Access Forum Development Officer Report

June 2007 to March 2008

1. Background to the Role
2. Introduction
3. Getting into Gear
 - 3.1 Paperwork
 - 3.2 Events
 - 3.3 Recruitment
4. The Way Forward
 - 4.1 Promotion
 - 4.2 Web Site
 - 4.3 Public and Press Relations
 - 4.4 Members
 - 4.5 Local Difficulties
5. Planning for the Future

**Beryl Bird, Development Officer, Tees Valley Local Access Forum
12th February 2008**

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Appendix 1 | TVLAF Recruitment & Induction |
| Appendix 2 | TVLAF Literature |
| Appendix 3 | TVLAF Web page |

3.1 Appendix I



1. Background to the Role

The Tees Valley Local Access Forum (the Forum) began work in 2003. It is a statutory body, required to give impartial and useful advice on all matters concerning access to the Planning Authorities in each of the Four Boroughs it represents, but also to Government agencies, such as Defra and Natural England who require the Forum's views, on matters such as Coastal Access.

Every local authority was obliged, through the CROW Act 2002, sections 60-62, to establish a Local Access Forum. The local authorities in Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton on Tees and Darlington agreed a joint Forum was the way forward.

Since 2003, the TVLAF has met three times a year, endeavoured to make sure its members were fit for purpose in that training was made available to enable them to evaluate any consultations presented.

The Officers and members recognised that time was needed to establish the Forum as a strong consultative body and agreed to recruit a LAF Development Officer after establishing just how one should operate and the funding required for such a post.

2. Introduction

I began work in June 2007, and it was immediately evident there was little or no identity for the Forum and at that time no active promotion of their work or recruitment of members was taking place.

Whilst researching for my interview, there was no literature available; it was possible to find out about the national network of Local Access Forums from the Natural England website; the only other one of relevance was the web site belonging to the Tyne and Wear Local Access Forum.

The TVLAF had one page on each of Darlington and Hartlepool Borough Council's web sites.

But all that has changed, as indeed has everything else.

3.1 Appendix I



3. Getting into Gear

3.1 Paperwork

Firstly, I familiarised myself with the previous documentation, latest Minutes, reports of Training Workshops, Guidance issued by DEFRA and Natural England and then conducted a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats).

This information I presented to the Chairman and the Appointing Officers for the Forum. I constructed the Marketing Plan, a six month document that addressed the issues as I saw them. This was adopted by the Forum members at the meeting in August 2007.

Since June we've barely stopped. We have an identity, a logo, we now have an Induction pack with an Induction procedure, we have produced an Application Form, Criteria for Membership as well as a Terms of Reference document for all new members. (see Appendix 1).

I wrote and produced two in-house leaflets, *Making the Most of your Countryside and Coast* and *FAQ's* and mailed these to every library, country park and councillor in each authority.

To comply with the regulations, I wrote and produced an Annual Report outlining the Forum's activities. This was colour photocopied and I sent a copy to every councillor in each of the Boroughs, as well as to Natural England. (see Appendix 2).

We have produced Mileage Claim Forms for cars, bikes, motorbikes, and one for public transport. This has been set up with the kind assistance of Hartlepool Borough Council's Finance Team, who were happy to accommodate the Forum members within the Finance system.

3.2 Events

We needed to talk to the general public to let them know we existed as well as our own Authorities.

We devised and produced an in-house exhibition stand which I took to 4 events within each local authority last summer.

The public events attended were meant to be countryside ones, but this was made difficult with the outbreak of Foot and Mouth and Blue Tongue which necessitated the cancelling of many events.

All four events targeted were successful, bar one; I learned to promote the access routes in each Borough as a method of introduction to the work of the Forum, and each event was supported by the willing help of the Chair Steve Scoffin - Operations Director of the North East Community Forests - and the Vice Chair, Councillor Bob Cook from Stockton on Tees Borough Council as well as the Appointing Officers.

3.1 Appendix I



3.3 Recruitment

I spent some time actively targeting certain influential groups and building business relationships and finally recruited 5 new members out of a target list of 35 by the winter of 2007.

As an Induction, I organised a Taster Session for the potential new members at the Wynyard Woodland Park. Representatives of the BHS, RSPB, British Waterways, Tees Archaeology, Groundwork, Healthy Walks of Stockton, Stockton International Family Centre, the Dogs Trust, a Councillor from Middlesbrough Council, Girl Guiding, and the NFU were all invited.

The afternoon event was split into 3 short presentations by the Chairman Steve Scoffin, the ROW Officer from Hartlepool, Chris Scaife and from Simon Blenkinsop of the Tees Forest. The ROW Officers were on hand to answer questions about their role. It was a friendly, positive event, and one which we will repeat when necessary.

Recruitment of new members is essential. As the Forum approaches full strength, a strong working relationship with the Planning Teams of each Borough Council is becoming more and more important. It is also vital that an active, well informed and appropriately trained membership is able to guide and inform both local and national authorities.

The ROW Officers have also taken a long hard look at the existing membership and did not invite some of the existing membership to re-join the group as they had been inactive for the whole year.

4. The Way Forward

4.1 Promotion

We will attend a countryside event in each local authority area in 2008, using revised visuals for the exhibition stand. Again, these will be produced in-house in order to keep the costs down.

We have the literature in place that addresses the public, the job of the Forum and its place advising the strategic planning departments of each of the four Appointing Authorities.

Two additional pieces of literature to cover the whole of the Tees Valley are being considered. They include an access map and ROW booklet, but due to the high costs of production, both would require external funding. Both would be an enormous undertaking. Each of the Local Authorities have produced or are producing a ROW map, it just seems sense to be able to have one that covers the whole of the Tees Valley.

By April 2008 I will have taken the exhibition stand and literature to each Local Authority Town Hall Reception area and each Main Library with the aim of continuing to build public awareness of the role of the Forum.

3.1 Appendix I



4.2 Web Site

At the close of December I began work on the construction of the web site. There is not the funding available, nor do I believe it is required, to have a stand alone web site.

The Forum's web site is now live, it is accessible to the public and will shortly be linked to each of the Appointing Authority websites.

It contains all the Agenda, Minutes and Annual Reports of the Forum and provides links to Natural England and Defra. It seeks to recruit new members and the Induction pack is available to download. All the literature is available, and a map illustrating the geographical scope of the TVLAF area is also on the site. It contains the dates of the meetings held throughout the year and the contact details of the neighbouring regional LAFs.

It is a friendly site, you can access on: <http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/TVLAF>.
(see Appendix 3).
I will update it as and when necessary.

4.3 Public and Press Relations

Press release activity has been slow. I gained some coverage within the County Landowners Association magazine requesting new members, and a piece in the Hartlepool Mail about the new path developed by the Countryside Access Team here in Hartlepool.

I wrote to the CLA in December requesting they cover the coastal access story, to include the point of view of the LAFs; this would increase their member's knowledge of the work of the Access Forums so making recruitment of landowners easier, and also give some oxygen to the work of the Forum. The CLA did feature an article about coastal access, in February 2008 but did not contact any LAF to contribute. I wrote again, and asked for the right to reply!

I am promoting the need for positive press coverage within the Forum, and have been asked to build a twice yearly newsletter for the region. All the members across the north east of England will be asked to contribute. The media is the most powerful, free, promotional tool we have.

4.4 Members

We are beginning to see the impact of the new members, and we have certainly brought our role to the attention of the Planning Departments in each of the local authorities. A number of controversial Gating and Diversion Orders from Stockton on Tees and Middlesbrough have been discussed at length; testing the legal knowledge of the membership to its full.

3.1 Appendix I



New courses have been won from Natural England to make sure all the membership is equipped with the most up-to-date legislation information, in order to be able to make informed decisions.

What must be remembered is that the members are all volunteers, and only one has completed a mileage claim. All are willing to attend the now quarterly meetings free of charge. It is an enormous commitment on their behalf.

I have also begun a second recruitment drive, targeting river users, disabled groups, industry leaders and landowners.

4.5 Local Difficulties

It has not been without its difficulties.

At one of the events, the borrowed marquee almost blew away several times.

Seriously, I have been very conscious that funding was extremely tight; the only external work undertaken was the encapsulation of the exhibition visuals, everything else has been produced in house.

Recruitment of new members in particular, has been hard work, but I have had success here also. I need to persuade complete strangers that their expertise is of value to us, in an entirely voluntary capacity.

5. Planning for the Future

It is an exciting time for the Tees Valley Local Access Forum. They have assisted and will continue to assist the four authorities with the development of their ROWIPs. Next on the agenda is implementation, not just for ROWIPs but for coastal access.

The Work programme for 2007-08 was jointly constructed by the Chairman, Steve Scoffin and myself. It seeks to strengthen the relationships between the Local Authorities and the Forum by tightening targets for the year.

Both the Planning Departments and the Rights of Way team in each Authority are quickly coming to rely on the sound advice available from the Forum, which allows me to work as the go-between.

The Tees Valley Local Access Forum, geographically, appears to be incomplete without the inclusion of the Redcar and Cleveland LAF, who in 2003 decided to set up their own Forum.

With a change in the make-up of the Redcar and Cleveland Council, the TVLAF has contacted them with a view to amalgamation.

The future of the TVLAF is looking promising.

Become a Member

Would you like to take part in the future of the countryside and coast in this area? Are you interested in becoming a voluntary member of the Tees Valley Local Access Forum (TVLAF), which gives independent advice to the local authorities on access, including public rights of way in both the countryside and urban areas?



We are seeking applications for membership of the TVLAF, from people of all ages who are enthusiastic about access in the countryside.

You might be interested in nature conservation, heritage, tourism, local business, or recreation and sport, access for disabled users, health, education and transport.

In appointing new members, the local authorities will seek to ensure that a balance of all relevant interests exists in the membership of the LAF.



The TVLAF should be representative of the users of rights of way, the owners and occupiers of land and any other relevant interests.

If you would like to know more about the Tees Valley Local Access Forum, please contact:

Beryl Bird
LAF Development Officer
Hartlepool Borough Council,
Parks and Countryside Business Unit,
Suite 8, Municipal Buildings,
Church Street, Hartlepool.
TS24 7EQ. Tel: (01429) 523472
email: beryl.bird@hartlepool.gov.uk

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*making the
most of your
countryside
and coast*



TEES VALLEY
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Tees Valley Local Access Forum

The Tees Valley Local Access Forum is an independent body with an interest in public rights of way and access to the countryside, towns and coast in our area.

The local authorities represented are Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Stockton.

Our responsibility is to examine how our local authorities manage the rights of way, and put forward ideas about how improvements can be made. We also seek to influence national government proposals.

The Forum must balance the needs of land management and the desirability for recreation, conservation and biodiversity in the region.



Site Visits

Forum members occasionally need to broaden their understanding and experience of issues affecting the Tees Valley. They take part in site visits to gain a broader insight into the issues being discussed, for example, Teesdale Way river crossings.

Missing Links to the Rights of Way network

We have identified a number of missing links and other improvement works including access points and signage within the local rights of way network. These have been raised with local authorities who will undertake the work when funding is available.

Working Groups

Our members have set up three working groups to take on issues raised at the meetings.

Working group members develop proposals and recommendations, and bring them to the Forum for approval. The Forum then informs the local authorities, aiding their decision making.

Rights of Way Improvement Plans

Each authority must establish the use and demand of the rights of way network, undertake to improve the condition and accessibility of it and consider the needs of people with disabilities.

Each plan shows how the rights of way network in the region can be developed, balancing land management and user groups interests.



Frequently Asked Questions.....



What is the Tees Valley Local Access Forum?

Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) each Highway Authority is required to establish a local access forum to give independent advice on the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open air recreation and enjoyment.

The Tees Valley Local Access Forum, established in 2003, covers the whole of Hartlepool, Stockton on Tees, Middlesbrough and Darlington Borough Councils and is financially supported by them.



Who is on the Tees Valley Local Access Forum?

Currently, the TVLAF has 12 members with wide ranging experience and interests: three councillors and 9 members of the public, recruited and appointed by the Rights of Way Officers from each Local Authority.

The members represent landowners and managers; users of the countryside, for example, walkers; and those with other interests, for example tourism, conservation and forestry. Members discuss current issues; these could include the LAF response to DEFRA on Coastal Access and agree the response.



Are members paid?

Those on the Forum give their time on a voluntary basis, but mileage expenses and 'out of pocket' expenses, such as car parking are paid.

What is the role of the Tees Valley Local Access Forum?

The role of the TVLAF is to give independent advice to the four Local Authorities and other national organisations, such as Natural England, on a wide range of issues

3.1 Appendix 3

relating to countryside and water or coastal access.

The Forum's main purpose is to advise on how to make the countryside more accessible and enjoyable for recreation whilst at the same time taking into account environmental, social and economic interests.



Recent and continuing work has concentrated on the Rights of Way Improvement Plans issued by each Local Authority. The TVLAF has, and will continue to advise on the strategic aspects of each plan, their funding and priorities.

The TVLAF provides advice to the Local Authorities on their plans for landscape, recreation, transport, health and tourism all to be found in the Local Development Framework.

What does the Tees Valley Local Access Forum take account of when it makes its comments?

In providing advice, the Forum must take account of a number of considerations, these include:

- land management needs,
- conservation requirements,
- landscape value and public enjoyment,

- social, economic and educational interests and
- the statutory guidance.

The Forum's comments are made within the context of the CROW Act.

When does it meet?

The TVLAF usually holds public meeting three or four times a year. In addition, training days, Working Group meetings and site visits are held for members.

How do I find out about the Tees Valley Local Access Forum?

At present, the main contact is the Development Officer, based in Hartlepool Borough Council. Their details are to be found at the bottom of the page.

The Forum is in the process of updating the website which can be accessed via all the Borough Council's Countryside Teams.

Local Rights of Way Offices

For details about access or ROW in your area, please contact:

Hartlepool (01429) 523524.
Middlesbrough (01642) 728153.
Stockton on Tees (01642) 526721
and Darlington (01325) 388643.

Beryl Bird
TVLAF Development Officer, Hartlepool
Borough Council, Parks and Countryside
Team, Suite 8, Municipal Buildings
Church Square, Hartlepool. TS24 7EQ
Tel: (01429) 523472
Email: beryl.bird@hartlepool.gov.uk



Application Form



3.1 Appendix 4



Application Form

To: Darlington, Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool Borough Councils

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Introduction

The purpose of this Application Form is for you to provide the information necessary for the above councils to select new voluntary members to join the Tees Valley Local Access Forum and to administer the TVLAF. Some questions are included to comply with the Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2002 or to follow government guidance.

Please complete the form so that we know why you want to be a member of the TVLAF, how you intend to contribute to the work of the TVLAF and your aspirations for access to the outdoors. Provide any information you consider relevant to this.

In appointing members the Councils will consider all new applicants and the current membership of the TVLAF to appoint a balanced forum with a broad range of interests, knowledge and experience. Members of the TVLAF are not appointed as technical advisors, or formal representatives of interest groups.

The names of TVLAF members, with a short summary of their aims, interests and experience may be published on the TVLAF website and elsewhere. Other personal details will be published only with your consent.

If you have questions about this application, please contact Beryl Bird, the Development Officer, whose contact details are at the end of this form.

You can apply to join the TVLAF at any time; your application will be considered at the next opportunity.

Would you like to be added as an observer to the TVLAF until your application is considered? We will send you meeting invitations, papers and other information relating to the work of the TVLAF, usually by email.

Please send completed application forms to the address at the end of this form.

This document about applying can be made available to join the Tees Valley Local Access Forum can be made available in a number of different languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats from Beryl Bird Tel: (01429) 523472.

3.1 Appendix 4

Personal Details

Title.....Surname.....

Forenames..... Preferred name (if different).....

Current age (please circle the relevant age band)

24 or under 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75 or over

Postal
address.....
.....

Post code..... e-mail address:.....

Daytime phone number..... Evening phone number.....

May we contact you on these numbers? Yes.....No.....

Disabled people

We welcome applications from disabled people and can assist you in your application and role if you are appointed as a TVLAF member. All information is treated in confidence and is used to help us carry out our duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act?

A person is disabled if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Yes.....No.....

Please specify the support (e.g. hearing loop, Braille documents, ramp or lift) you require.....
.....
.....

After this application

If you were not appointed to the TVLAF, would you like us to retain your information?

As an observer to the TVLAF? Yes.....No.....

To consider you in any future opportunities to become a member of the TVLAF?

Yes.....No.....

Your area of interest

Legislation requires a balance in the membership between the three categories of members shown below:

- a) members representing the users of local rights of way or access land,
- b) members representing the owners or occupiers of access land or land over which local rights of way subsist, or
- c) members representing any other interests especially relevant to the Authorities' areas (Darlington, Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool).

Please give a brief summary of any interest you have in one or more of these categories (for example, in work or for leisure, as a volunteer, professional, academic or involved in a business relevant to the work of the TVLAF):

- a) Representing the users of local rights of way or access land (for example, representing walkers, horse riders, carriage drivers, cyclists or motorists)
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.....
- b) Representing the landowners or occupiers of access land or land over which local rights of way exist (for example, do you own or occupy access land or land over which rights of way subsist, or represent such landowners or occupiers?)
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.....
.....
- c) Representing any other interests (do you have an interest in access not covered above, for example, do you have an interest in tourism, nature conservation or in the provision of access for disabled people?)
.....
.....
.....
.....

Please also tick one area below that you consider most relevant to you in your application to be a member of the TVLAF:

- a) Representing the users of local rights of way or access land,
- b) Representing the owners or occupiers of access land or land over which local rights of way subsist, or
- c) Representing any other interests especially relevant to the authority's area.

Why do you want to be a member of the TVLAF?

Please include anything in the following space that you feel is relevant to your application for membership of the TVLAF. The Council's will also consider the information you have provided elsewhere on the form.

The Council's particularly want to know :

Why you want to join the LAF?

What you can contribute

What you want to achieve

You may also wish to consider including some of the following in your entry:

Your relevant interests, pastimes or leisure activities

Your knowledge of access, including your knowledge of public rights of way and of access land

Any involvement or membership and any position held (previous and current) in any organisations or clubs whose work is relevant to the TVLAF

Any other skills or experience which you may have which are relevant to the TVLAF

Areas where you feel you would be able to give particular advice

Your views on access to the outdoors, in both urban and rural areas, including the potential of access and the impact of access in rural and urban areas

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Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Declaration of interest

Legislation places some limitations on who can be appointed as a member of the TVLAF. For instance, there is a limit to the number of members of the TVLAF who are also Councillors of the four councils involved with the TVLAF. There is no bar on the appointment of local authority employees to the TVLAF but the councils may avoid appointing any officer who has responsibilities for access or rights of way management in a local authority. This is because there may be a potential conflict of interest between their local authority duties and membership of an independent statutory body giving advice on how those duties should be carried out. Please therefore answer the following questions:

Are you an Elected Member or Senior Officer of Hartlepool, Darlington, Stockton-on Tees or Middlesbrough Council? Yes.....No.....

If yes, which council and what is your position?.....

Are you otherwise employed by Darlington, Stockton-on Tees, Middlesbrough or Hartlepool Borough Council? Yes.....No.....

If yes, which council and in which department?.....

Are you related to any Elected Member or Senior Officer of any of the Constituent Councils (Hartlepool, Darlington, Middlesbrough or Stockton-on-Tees Borough Councils)? Yes.....No.....

If yes, name of relative, in which council and in what position?.....

What is the relationship of this person to you?.....

I confirm that the details on this application form are correct.

Signature.....Date.....

Please return your completed application form to:

Beryl Bird, Development Officer, Tees Valley Local Access Forum, Hartlepool Borough Council, Countryside Team, Suite 8, Municipal Buildings Church Street Hartlepool. TS24 7EQ

Tel: (01429) 523472
E-mail: beryl.bird@hartlepool.gov.uk





Criteria for the selection of members of the TVLAF

Key Competencies

1. Ability to communicate with, and listen to representation from landowners and land managers and recreational and utility users of the access network and countryside.
2. Willingness to participate in discussions, present a viewpoint and listen to viewpoints of others, with the intention of making a balanced decision at a public meeting.
3. Willingness to broker or offer a suitable compromise where there may be unresolved differences of opinion between members of the TVLAF.

Work Experience

In the interests of a broad based membership it will be desirable for members to have a range of appropriate interests from the categories listed here.

1. To be a user of local rights of way, or to have been involved in any projects involving the rights of way network, and to be representative of access and rights of way users.
2. To be a landowner, manager or occupier of land that is or has the potential to be affected by public rights of way, open access land or permissive rights of access.
3. To be or have been actively involved in any aspect of land management or recreational use within the Tees Forest, Tees Valley or registered common land.
4. To be representatives of any minority groups, less able users or potential users of the countryside.
5. To be involved in any educational sports or health projects or groups with an interest in the public rights of way network or open access land.
6. To be involved in any business that has an interest in access to the countryside.
7. To be involved in any aspects of nature conservation, heritage or transport which are impacted upon by, or have an impact on the local public rights of way network and access to the countryside.

Criteria for the selection of members of the TVLAF

Knowledge

1. To have an awareness of the wide range of differing interests represented on the TVLAF and the needs and aspirations of these groups with a stake in countryside and access issues.
2. To have an awareness of current countryside issues.

Qualifications

1. No formal or specific qualifications are required.

Personal characteristics

1. To be enthusiastic about the rights of way network and access to the countryside and coast within the area of the constituent councils and be positive about any changes intended to facilitate improved access.
2. To be able to respect local circumstances and different interests while operating within national guidance.
3. To be able to enter into a broad based consideration of issue affecting the future direction and scope of access to the countryside of the constituent councils
4. To be willing to play a full and active part in the work of the TVLAF and to serve for an initial period of between one and three years.

For further information please contact: Beryl Bird Development Officer, Tees Valley Local Access Forum, Hartlepool Borough Council, Parks and Countryside Team, Suite 8, Municipal Buildings, Church Street, Hartlepool. TS24 7EQ
Tel: (01429) 523472 email: beryl.bird@hartlepool.gov.uk



3.1 Appendix 6



Terms of Reference





Terms of Reference

Title

1. The Forum shall be known as the Tees Valley Local Access Forum.
2. The Forum shall be the joint Local Access Forum for the areas of Darlington, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees.

Role and Responsibilities

3. The primary purpose of the TVLAF is to provide relevant advice to the appointing Authorities and the other relevant local organisations as stipulated by the current regulations on how to make the countryside more accessible and enjoyable for open air recreation, in ways that address social, economic and environmental issues. The Forum will assist access provision, giving advice in issues of particular relevance.
4. The TVLAF will give advice on three main topics:
 - a) implementation, management and review of the statutory rights of way and access to the countryside;
 - b) improving the rights of way network;
 - c) the development of recreation and access strategies that cater for a wide range of people
5. The TVLAF will work to:
 - a) develop a constructive and inclusive approach to the improvement of recreational access to the countryside and coast;
 - b) respect local circumstances and different interests while operating within national guidance;
 - c) provide advice on issues of principle and good practice which is consistent with national guidance;
 - d) disseminate information, recommendations and advice to the TVLAF from the members of their own group, organisation or area of interest;

3.1 Appendix 6

- e) engage in constructive debate and seek consensus wherever possible;
 - f) where consensus is not possible, make clear the nature of differing views and suggest how they might be resolved;
 - g) if necessary, each member of the TVLAF present at a meeting shall be entitled to exercise one vote. Voting on any issue, except for the nomination of the Chair, shall be determined using the simple majority method by show of hands. In the event of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.
6. In carrying out the functions in section 5 above, the TVLAF shall have regard to:
- a) the needs of land management;
 - b) the desirability of conserving the natural beauty of the area for which it is established, including the flora, fauna, and geological and physiographical features of the area;
 - c) seeking specialist technical advice when needed and appropriate;
 - d) guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State;
 - e) proper liaison with neighbouring authorities;
 - f) consultation with adjoining Forums.

Annual Report

7. The TVLAF shall produce an Annual Report at the end of each year of its meeting outlining and reviewing its work. The appointing Authorities shall publish the Annual Report.

Membership

8. TVLAF members will be appointed by the appointing Authorities who will assess if applicants have sufficient experience / interest / knowledge to satisfy the requirements outlined in section 9 below. This assessment will be based initially on an application form and selection criteria.
9. The membership will:
- a) act in the best interests of the population of the appointing authorities and not through the interest of individual agendas or as a representative of a particular organisation;

3.1 Appendix 6

- b) be prepared, within reason, to work up ideas or actions outside of the confines of the Forum, reporting back as necessary;
- c) at all times abide by the current legislation and guidance;
- d) take due consideration and care of all current legislation when debating matters for discussion or vote;
- e) respond quickly and efficiently to reasonable requests for information from the Development Officer
- f) be willing to commit the necessary time to attend meetings and training and be willing to actively contribute to produce outputs;
- g) be balanced to avoid dominance by any of the three single interest groups or coalition of like interests; and
- h) include a cross section of interests in the countryside. The membership will consist of up to a maximum of 22 members including:
 - i) four elected members nominated one each by four of the constituent Councils – called Council representatives – on a rotational basis as outlined in section 10 below; and,
 - ii) up to 19 other members

10. Membership of the TVLAF will be for a term of up to 3 years save that:

- a. a member replacing another member who has retired, been replaced or otherwise vacated membership will be a member for the duration of the term left for the person replaced;
- b. at the end of the relevant period any member can be re-appointed, after applying, and at the discretion of the appointing Authorities;
- c. the appointing Authorities will review the membership annually to ascertain balance and equality (please note section 9 above);
- d. the four Council representatives shall be appointed by the TVLAF by the appointing Authorities on a 12 month appointment;
- e. a Council representative may appoint a substitute to attend any meeting on his/her behalf.

11. The appointing Authorities will terminate membership from the TVLAF any member who has been absent from all meetings for a period of one year or fails to comply with the requirements of section 12 over.

3.1 Appendix 6

12. The appointing Authorities will terminate membership from the TVLAF if that member becomes a member of a district, unitary, county council or National Park Authority where this causes the elected members to increase above the number allowed according to the size of the TVLAF.
13. Any member who is directly or indirectly interested in any matter brought up for consideration at a meeting of the TVLAF shall disclose the nature of his/her interest to the meeting. If it is subsequently found that a disclosure has not been made when the opportunity arose, the members appointment may be terminated.
14. The Chair will hold office initially for one year and will be appointed by nomination and election from amongst members at the first meeting of the TVLAF for that year.
15. The TVLAF will appoint, by nomination and election from amongst members at the first meeting of the TVLAF held in that year, a Vice Chair to chair any meeting, or part of any meeting as appropriate, when the Chair is unable to attend or has to leave the meeting for any reason. The Vice Chair will hold office initially for one year.
16. When the term of office has expired or either post becomes vacant for any reason, both posts will be put forward for re-election. Individual members may only be elected to either post for a maximum of three consecutive years.
17. The Chair may suspend any meeting if the meeting falls below a quorum of one third of members currently appointed and/or nominated.
18. No meeting shall conduct business unless the Chair or Vice Chair is present.
19. The TVLAF shall take steps to ensure that the Chair and Vice Chair do not represent similar interest groups.
20. A member of The TVLAF may resign by providing one month's notice in writing to the constituent Council's that appointed him or her.
21. Members will be expected to confirm their support to the positive purpose of the Forum, commit to working within the Terms Of Reference and develop a constructive approach to working with other members.

Administration

22. Meetings will be held at least 4 times a year and more frequently when necessary. The venue may rotate amongst the appointing Authorities and will not necessarily be a municipal building.

3.1 Appendix 6

23. There will be a secretariat who will be a dedicated Officer employed by Hartlepool Council on behalf of the appointing Authorities, who will have responsibility for:
 - a. distribution of papers;
 - b. arranging and publicising meetings
 - c. liaison between the Forum, the appointing Authorities and other relevant organisations as stipulated by the current regulations;
 - d. contact with all adjoining Forums;
 - e. completing the Annual Report
24. Meeting agendas will be agreed between the Secretariat and the Chair. They will be distributed no later than six working days before any proposed meeting (except in the case of emergency) and all papers for inclusion on an agenda will be submitted for the secretariat no later than 8 working days before any proposed meeting (except in the case of emergency).
25. Meetings will be advertised in advance and held in public. Except with the permission of the Chair they shall not be recorded or broadcast
26. Agendas, papers and minutes of the meeting will be made available to the public.
27. The Chairman may invite observers to the meeting when appropriate. The appointing Authorities and Natural England will have a right to send observers to any meetings.
28. Observers will be able to contribute at the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.
29. The public will be able to ask questions at the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.
30. The appointing Authorities will have the right to review the chairing and membership of the Forum if necessary, including to ensure that the requirements of section 8 are being met.
31. The TVLAF may decide to set up such committees, sub-committees and working parties as it considers necessary and they will be subject to the same rules (altered as necessary for the circumstances) as the TVLAF.
32. These Terms of Reference can be amended by the TVLAF from time to time to suit changing circumstances subject to the appointing

3.1 Appendix 6

Authorities all having approved any changes before they come into force.

33. The TVLAF shall comply at all times with requirements of for Regulations 6, 7, 8, & 9 of the Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2002.

Please retain this for future reference

I have read, understood and will abide by the Terms of Reference for membership of the Tees Valley Local Access Forum as supplied to me on

..... by Borough Council Officer.....

Signed..... Date.....

Please return this completed section to the Development Officer, at the following freepost address:

Development Officer, Tees Valley Local Access Forum, FREEPOST RRKX-EAEY-YBZK c/o Hartlepool Borough Council, Parks and Countryside, Suite 8, Municipal Buildings, Church Street, Hartlepool. TS24 7EQ

I have read, understood and will abide by the Terms of Reference for membership of the Tees Valley Local Access Forum as supplied to me

on.....by Borough Council Officer.....

Signed..... Print Signature.....

Date.....

I



CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
13th May 2008



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Services

Subject: Hartlepool Maritime Festival 2008

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the key aspects and plans for this year's Hartlepool Maritime Festival [HMF 2008].

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The following report provides an overview of the main aspects of the plan for the HMF 2008, and gives details of current programme elements, dates and of the Festival site.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Strategic Arts & Events is within the Portfolio Holders remit.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Meeting 13th May 2008.

6. DECISION REQUIRED

The Portfolio Holder is requested to note the plans for the Maritime Festival 2008.

Report of: Assistant Director of Community Services

Subject: HARTLEPOOL MARITIME FESTIVAL 2008

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Portfolio Holder of the key aspect and plans for this years Hartlepool Maritime Festival [HMF 2008].

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Hartlepool Maritime Festival emerged out of the Hartlepool Millennium Festival (2000), which in itself was a recasting of the Hartlepool Town Show. Such was the success of the 2000 Festival that a similar event has been run (with financial and operational support from the Borough Council) ever since on a biennial basis.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Festival is to celebrate aspects of the Town's people and their lives and their connections with the sea, by providing a weekend of family fun that includes arts and cultural performances, water-based activities and other forms of spectacular outdoor entertainment.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSED SCHEME

- 3.1 The 2008 Hartlepool Maritime Festival will be the fifth such biennial Festival. However it also marks the start of the build up to The Tall Ships Races 2010. Consequently current plans have been crafted to offer a Festival that builds on previous successful events by being bigger, longer and even more spectacular in terms of its content.
- 3.2 HMF 2008 will run from 19.00 hrs on Friday 4th July to 17.30 hrs on Sunday 6th July 2008.
- 3.3 The site for this year will be expanded beyond the traditional sites of the Hartlepool Maritime Experience and its car park to include both Navigation Point and the area of land on Maritime Avenue.
- 3.4 Equally among the new highlights to the programme (many of which have been made possible by Single Programme investment) will be:
- A world record attempt for the most people dancing a nautical hornpipe at the same time using specially commissioned music from top North East folk musician Eliza Carthy and dance steps commissioned from regional dance artist Amanda Drago;
 - The Veterans Day Events Area, presenting special service focussed events in association with the National Veterans Day Commemorations;

- The world music stage featuring musical performances from at least four continents
- A Salsa evening on Navigation point featuring the group 'Pink Champagne'
- A break dancing exhibition from Bad Taste Cru
- A full orchestral concert of nautical and fireworks related music from the Tees Valley Cobwebs Orchestra
- An aerial dance comedy 'Get Knotted' performed by aerialists Hang
- The 'A taste of Hartlepool Experience' on Navigation point
- Spectacular street theatre
- A show case for emerging local pop, rock and independent bands and
- various community and volunteer groups performing on the community music stage.

Attached at **Appendix 1** is the current entertainment and performance programme.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The festival will be funded through approved allocations made to the event in concurrent years, in addition to revenue budgets, investment from Single Programme and site fees generated from trader site rentals.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder is requested to note the progress being made for the 2008 Maritime Festival.

CONTACT OFFICER: Stephen Cashman, Strategic Arts Manager

Scheduled performances for HMF 2008

Friday PM – Navigation Point

Pink Champagne – Salsa Evening

Saturday 5th July – Community Stage, HME Car Park

Egyptian Dancing
BME Performances
Carnival
Chinese Ribbon Dancing

Saturday 5th July – World Music Stage

Veterans Badge Parade and Presentation
Hodra
Musicians Unlimited
Trans Global Underground
Max Pashm

Saturday 5th July – Navigation Point

Hang
Bad Taste Cru
The Bishops (headline independent band)
The 'A taste of Hartlepool Experience'

Sunday 6th July – All locations

Hartlepool Hornpipe (world record attempt)

Sunday 6th July – World Music Stage

Alumino Roots
Achanak

Sunday 6th July – PSS Wingfield Castle

Tees Valley Cobwebs Orchestra (with fireworks)

Water and Sports Programme

Berth Holders Parade
Keith Rimmer Jet Skis
Walk the Plank
Drunken Sailor
Raft Race
Dragon Boat
Hawaiian Outrigger (tbc)
Three Peak Challenge
Tug of War
Assault Course (tbc)

