River Wensum Strategy
Delivery Plan

2021

RWSP
River Wensum
strategy partnership

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River Wensum Strategy Delivery Plan

1.Introduction

1.1. In 2018, the River Wensum Strategy Partnership produced the River Wensum Strategy[1] with the overall vision of breathing new life into the river by enhancing it for the benefit of all and increasing access to, and greater use of this important asset. An enhanced river corridor, with its unique natural and historic environment, will once again play an important part in the growth and vitality of the city, strengthening the visitor economy and helping to give the city a competitive advantage in attracting in-ward investment. The strategy document was adopted by Norwich City Council in June 2018.

1.2. The River Wensum Strategy sets out a number of objectives to help deliver the vision. These are set out in section 2 of the strategy document. The strategy also includes an action plan with projects capable of being delivered in the short to medium term to fulfil the objectives and vision. The action plan identifies future projects and is intended to be a living document requiring updates as necessary.

1.3. The purpose of this delivery plan is to provide an update on projects that are underway or have been completed so far; set out the delivery priorities for the strategy over the next approximately 2 years; and identify projects to be delivered over the longer term. The delivery plan is also an opportunity to identify any new projects or initiatives that the River Wensum Strategy can deliver or collaborate on to deliver the vision and objectives.

1.4. This delivery plan should be read in conjunction with the River Wensum Strategy document.

2. Monitoring the Action Plan

2.1 The strategy document contains an action plan (Appendix 1) setting out the projects that, through extensive consultation, have been agreed to deliver the vision and objectives. The action plan outlines each of the projects, a forecasted delivery timescale and the organisation responsible for bringing this forward.

2.2 Over three years have passed since the creation of the action plan. Projects have progressed and resources and priorities have changed. To reflect the circumstances of the last three years, table 1 provides a summary of each of

[1] https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20346/river_wensum_strategy

the projects identified in the strategy document and its status. Further information on the status of these projects is set out in paragraphs 2.3-2.19.

Reference	Project	Status
A1	Missing Link in Riverside Walk – between Duke Palace and St George's Street Bridges	Underway (funding bid stages)
A2	Riverside walk accessibility improvements including signage and interpretation	Underway – funding secured
A3	Marriott's Way Barn Road gateway – entrance improvements	Complete
W1	Friar's Quay slipway enhancement	Project reviewed by BA– options for active slipway use are limited at this location and will not come forward given cost and wider infrastructure requirements.
W2	Yacht station expansion	Project reviewed – not a current priority.
W3	New Mills canoe portage	Complete
W4	Quayside short stay visitor moorings	Project reviewed by BA – short-stay moorings no longer feasible. Possibility to explore for residential moorings.
W5	Boom towers repiling and mooring	Complete - New waling and capping installed as part of nearby development.
W6	Short stay mooring between Carrow Bridge and Lady Julian Bridge	Moorings to be explored as part of Wensum Lodge project (see below).
W7	Short stay visitor and de-masting mooring at NR1 development	Installation complete. Awaiting solicitors to finalise agreements before opening as visitor moorings.
W8	Hydrographic survey for dredging	Complete 2017. To be repeated every 5 years.
W9	River Festival	Partners will explore the potential for river based events going forwards.
E1	FOG (Fats, Oils and Grease) project	Longer term priority for Environment Agency
E2	Biodiversity enhancement plan including management of non-native species	Partially complete – eel pass. Further biodiversity focus to be identified.
E3	Floating vegetation platforms	Project in development lead by EA.

E4	Boom towers – enhancement to Devil's tower	Not a current priority.

Table 1: River Wensum Strategy 2018 Action Plan

Completed projects

2.3 **A3 – Marriott's Way/Barn Road Gateway**: This was completed in March 2019 using CIL and Heritage Lottery funding. Norwich City Council lead on this project and the works undertaken by Norfolk County Council and Tarmac. The project proposed improving access to the Marriott's Way route by improving legibility from the Barn Road roundabout entrance. This involved removing overgrown vegetation, upgrading fencing and improving the public realm space surrounding the entrance to encourage increased use of the route.

Figure 1: The completed project A3 Barn Road Gateway improvements.

2.4 **W3 - New Mills Canoe Portage**: This project was completed over the summer/autumn of 2020 by the Broads Authority. The aim of this project was to improve access to the river, particularly for activities such as canoeing. The project included the provision of two low freeboard pontoons, along with associated piling and bank works. The access points are located either side of the New Mills sluice gate, linking the tidal Wensum to the non-tidal reach upstream. The completion of this project now means users of the river can safely enter and exit the river at New Mills. There was some delay to the full completion of this project as alterations needed to be made to the initial

installation. The alterations to the installation have now been completed in full. Rangers will monitor the usage of the platforms but early indications are positive.

Figure 2: The completed canoe portages upstream (top) and downstream (bottom) of New Mills.

2.5 **E2 - New Mills Eel Pass**: This project was partially completed in 2018 by the Environment Agency. The project resulted in the installation of an up-and-over pump to allow eels to pass the New Mills sluice gate and have access to a further 4.6km of water, and then onto the rivers Wensum and Tud. It should be noted that project E2 is not considered to be delivered in full as other biodiversity enhancement and management opportunities could be realised as part of the strategy associated with the information in paragraph 2.12 below. The eels that utilise the pass are collected and counted every two days during the eel run in spring/summer. The numbers vary between seasons but can reach up to 300 individuals per day, indicating the importance of the eel pass. These eels would otherwise by stuck downstream

of the structure with no hope of progressing upstream to complete their life cycle.

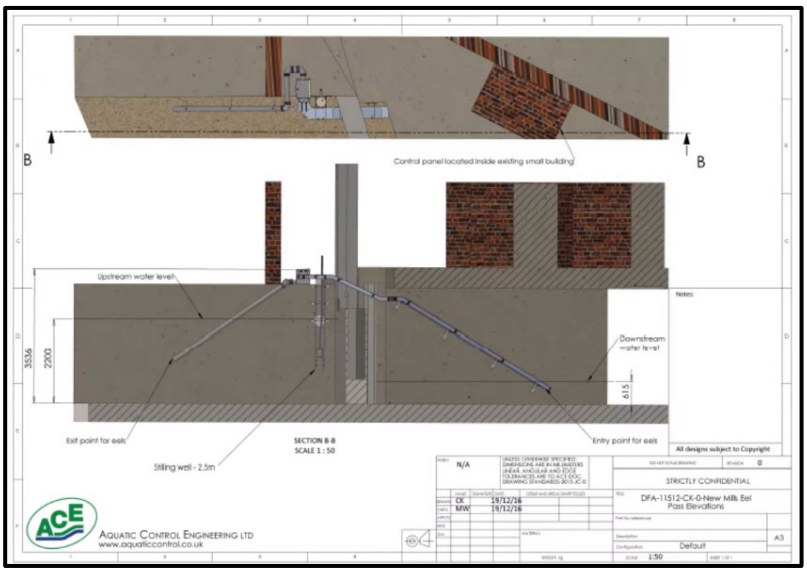

Figure 3: Elevation drawings showing the installed eel pass at New Mills (obtained from planning permission submission[2])

Figure 4: Photograph taken of eels during counting.

[2] https://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/ REF: 17/00014/F

2.6 **W5 – Boom Towers re-piling and moorings**: As part of a nearby development, waling and capping of the Boom Towers was completed in 2020 in fulfilment of S106 obligations. However, moorings are yet to be installed and the re-piling has not yet been undertaken.

2.7 **W7 – Short stay visitor and de-masting mooring at NR1 development.** Short-stay and de-masting moorings have been delivered as part of a nearby development which includes Brennan Bank, Lockhead Bank, Robinson Bank, Nethercott Bank and Gavin Bank. The Broads Authority are in the process of taking these moorings on for management and solicitors are finalising agreements.

Figure 5: Moorings installed as part of the NR1 housing development opposite Carrow Works.

2.8 **W8 - Hydrographic survey for dredging**: This project was complete in 2017 with Broads Authority funding. The survey was required to assess current dredging requirements and to inform future dredging operations. The data collected from the hydrographic survey is entered into a model to assess the waterways compliance score, which compares the desired riverbed profile to the measured profile. The data from this survey showed that the Wensum scored highly and therefore was not the highest priority for dredging. A river section up to Trowse bridge was however dredged in 2020.

Progressing projects

2.9 **A1 – Missing link in Riverside Walk:** This project aims to complete a section of Riverside Walk between Duke's Palace and St George's Street Bridges, adjacent to NUA. Norfolk County Council have commissioned architects and structural engineers to scope out possible designs and costing. Initial consultation with some relevant bodies has been undertaken but further pre-application consultation is planned. Sustrans funding has been acquired and it is hoped that further CIL funding can also be obtained. The next stages of the project are to progress pre-application discussions, secure the remaining funding, and progress with more detailed designs and costing before making any formal applications and undertaking consultations.

Figure 6: Indicative image of the proposed Missing Link project between Duke Street and St George's Street bridges.

2.10 **A2 – Riverside Walk accessibility improvements and signage**: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been delays to the progression of this project due to changing priorities and implications from staff resourcing issues. CIL funding has been secured for this project. This project will now be picked up again with design and tender preparation due at the start of 2022, with an anticipated completion date of 2022/23.

2.11 **E3 – Floating vegetation platforms:** This project is a pilot project to install floating vegetation platforms in the section of river between Fye Bridge and St George's Bridge. It is intended to improve certain sections of river that have little or no bank-side vegetation due to the vertical piled walls, which cannot support healthy populations of fish and other biology. The Environment Agency has assigned additional resource dedicated to the delivery of biodiversity enhancement projects including those identified as part of the River Wensum Strategy.

2.12 **New Mills Draw Down:** In February 2020, the Environment Agency undertook a trial at New Mills Pumping Station to see what effect the staged lowering of the water level at the Mill sluices has on the upstream reaches of the river. The trial was intended to investigate whether lowering the water level will have major ecological benefits and make the river function in a more natural state. The trial was important to understand the benefits and risks of making any changes to historic management. The trial resulted in a reduction in water level immediately upstream of 1.2m at New Mills, and 0.1m at Hellesdon Mill. This left silt banks evident either side of the narrower channel.

Figure 7: Photographs showing the effects of the New Mills draw down on water level before (top) and after with the exposed silt banks (bottom).

Other projects

2.13 Not all projects have made progress and updates on these projects are set out below.

2.14 **W1 – Friar's Quay slipway enhancement:** Following review by the Broads Authority, this project is no longer going to be delivered as there are significant cost and wider infrastructure requirements essential to its delivery.

2.15 **W2 – Yacht station expansion**: This project is not currently a priority but may be reviewed in due course.

2.16 **W4 – Quayside short stay visitor moorings**: This project is not considered a priority. It would require willingness from a riverbank landowner to develop such a use along the river, as well as the resources to police and enforce the activity taking place at the moorings. There is the opportunity to explore the provision of residential moorings in this location in the future if landowners were willing to develop such a scheme and sufficient management resources are available. In 2019, the Broads Authority adopted a policy in its latest Local Plan with a general presumption in support of residential moorings in Norwich[3].

2.17 **W9 – River Festival**: There have been opportunities in the past for river-based events which have not yet come to fruition, partly due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Partners will work together to explore the potential for other river events going forward.

2.18 **E1 – Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)**: Initial meetings have taken place with drainage engineers for possible works around Tombland. It is understood that this project is no longer a short-term priority for Anglian Water and is more likely to come forward in 2-3 years' time. The project will be kept under review.

2.19 **Devil's Tower enhancement of open space**: This project is not currently a priority.

Newly identified projects

2.20 **Wensum Lodge moorings and slipway**: The possible future redevelopment of Wensum Lodge by Norfolk County Council has the potential to include improvements to the river frontage, improve accessibility and provide moorings. Project W6, for the provision of short stay moorings between Carrow Bridge and Lady Julian Bridge is likely to be delivered as part of the overall Wensum Lodge project. A CIL funding bid has recently been submitted and is pending an allocation decision.

2.21 **Access improvements upstream of New Mills:** This project aims to significantly increase leisure usage of the existing Riverside Walk upstream of New Mills by enhancing this key piece of green infrastructure, which will help to support planned growth in Norwich.

2.22 **Residential moorings:**
Several of the projects identified above for short-stay visitor moorings are no longer a priority, however there is the possibility of exploring these locations for residential moorings. Further consideration needs to be given to this

[3] Policy DM37: New Residential Moorings: https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0036/259596/Local-Plan-for-the-Broads.pdf

option, including within the East Norwich Redevelopment plan and is therefore not anticipated to be delivered in the short term.

2.23 **Pathways to History river walks:**
Norfolk County Council have been working with UEA on the Pathways to History project which includes walks in the Wensum corridor promoting historical elements and promoting activity along the river. This project was launched through Heritage Open Days and has proved popular. There is the potential to link this project with the River Wensum Strategy given the shared objectives. Currently this project is being promoted by leaflet only, so there is the opportunity to use a River Wensum Strategy social media campaign as well as infrastructure and signage on the ground. These potential linkages will be explored by Norwich City Council.

2.24 **Lion Wood drainage scheme:** There is a key overland flow path through Lion Wood and down Wellesley Avenue on to Thorpe Road. Properties have flooded in the past and could flood again without intervention. This project involves reducing this flow path through Lion Wood and taking measures to slow the flow down Wellesley Avenue. This is a good opportunity for the River Wensum Strategy to get involved in a project showing the local impacts of wider catchment issues as well as linking up with proposed green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancements. Funding is in place for the development stage and a CIL funding bid for the delivery of a natural flood management scheme has been submitted (outcome pending).

2.25 **River Wensum Biodiversity Action Document:** It has become apparent since the publication of the Strategy that projects within the river corridor should have an increased focus on biodiversity enhancement. This reflects views presented as part of the strategy public consultation and reflects the Government's increased emphasis on the protection and enhancement of the environment. The Strategy initially included the provision of an eel pass at New Mills as one example of biodiversity protection, which is now complete. However, the Delivery Board consider that there are many other opportunities to include biodiversity enhancements in other projects and will look to investigate these along with additional resource from the Environment Agency.

Wider opportunities

2.26 **East Norwich redevelopment:** The three sites that form East Norwich (the Deal Ground, Utilities site and Carrow Works) present a transformational opportunity to create a highly sustainable new quarter that will regenerate these riverside sites and deliver major new housing and employment development to support the future growth of the city. A new public private sector partnership has been established - the East Norwich Partnership – led

by Norwich City Council, to commission a masterplan to deliver comprehensive development of the sites. Given the East Norwich sites' proximity to the Yare and Wensum this project has the opportunity to add more life and activity to the river as well as offering improvements to walking and cycling, including connecting the city centre with Whitlingham Country Park. The masterplan is currently underway and full details of masterplan process and timescale can be found on Norwich City Council's website[4].

3. Project Priorities

3.1 In order to ensure the delivery plan is focused on delivering as many benefits as possible the strategy document action plan needs updating to reflect the changes discussed in Section 2. In addition, the projects need to be prioritised so that the appropriate resources can be provided.

3.2 Appendix 3 contains the background information on prioritisation of projects. Matrix 1 outlines each of the projects discussed in section 2 (not including those completed or de-prioritised projects), including those projects identified as new opportunities since the adoption of the strategy document. Each project has been assessed against the strategy objectives to determine which of the projects will deliver the greatest number of benefits.

3.3 In addition to the assessment in matrix 1, the delivery of projects is dependent on resourcing, feasibility and funding etc. Matrix 2 (appendix 3) undertakes a deliverability assessment of each of the projects from section 2 considering the practicalities of delivering the project and determining which of those can be delivered in the near future, and those which may require resourcing in the long term.

3.4 Table 2 is an updated action plan reflecting all of the changes discussed in section 2 and following the prioritisation assessment in appendix 2. This includes projects either underway or with some certainty of being delivered. It should be noted that this Delivery Plan proposes adopting new project references going forwards. In the original strategy, projects were grouped and referenced based on which objectives they helped to meet. It is now clear that projects often help to meet multiple objectives therefore new references will be used for clarity. Other projects are included in Table 2 subject to discussion at the November Strategy Board meeting. It should be noted that Table 2 should be considered in the delivery of the River Wensum Strategy for the next approximately 2 years.

3.5 The projects that have not been prioritised for delivery over the next approximately 2 years will form part of the longer-term delivery plan for the River Wensum Strategy. These projects will be kept under review and their priority updated accordingly. Furthermore, the Delivery Board will ensure that

[4] East Norwich regeneration | Norwich City Council

any new opportunities to deliver the vision and objectives of the strategy document are included within any future updates of this delivery plan.

Strategy Reference	New Reference	Project	Status Update
A1	RWS1	Missing Link in Riverside Walk	Underway – design and feasibility stage. Funding bid submitted.
A2	RWS2	Riverside walk accessibility improvements including signage and interpretation	Underway – funding secured. Completion date delayed.
E3	RWS3	Floating vegetation platforms	Project in development led by EA
E1	RWS4	FOG	Delayed – changing priorities for Anglian Water
E2	RWS5	Biodiversity enhancements including management of non-native species	Partially complete (eel pass). Review of biodiversity enhancements in projects due to commence
W9	RWS6	River Festival	Postponed due to Covid-19.
-	RWS7	Wensum Lodge	Initial work underway. Funding bid has been submitted – awaiting decision.
-	RWS8	Access improvements upstream of New Mills	Potential opportunity to be explored
-	RWS9	Lion Wood drainage	Underway. Initial modelling and design completed. Funding bid submitted – awaiting decision.

Table 2: River Wensum Strategy Updated Action Plan 2021. Green indicates where a project is underway, yellow indicates where a project is in development and amber indicates potential project opportunities.

4. Reporting and Delivery Review Process

4.1 It is important to continually monitor the progress of the projects to ensure the delivery of the River Wensum Strategy in the long term. Updates on all projects in the revised action plan (Table 2) will be provided at each Delivery Board meeting. Any major project updates, including project completions and any issues which require escalation, will be reported to the Strategy Board as necessary.

4.2 This Delivery Plan document will be available to view publicly on Norwich City Council's website and should be read alongside the River Wensum Strategy document.

4.3 It is important to note that the updated action plan shown in Table 2 is based on information available at the time of writing and that priorities and resources can change over time. The Delivery Plan document will be updated in approximately 18 months/2 years time, to reflect on changing circumstances and to look forward at the next stage of project delivery.

5. Communications

5.1 A cohesive approach to the communications work on the successful completion of projects and encouraging public engagement in the strategy is required. As part of this Delivery Plan, the following communications work has been identified for delivery in the short term:

- Creation of new webpages on the Norwich City Council website to provide updates on completed projects. This will likely include project case studies, including information such as who was involved, the project benefits, before and after photographs and post-project reflection. These webpages can be linked to on partner websites and are intended to be digestible and accessible information for the public on the progress and achievements of the strategy. Norwich City Council will lead on this and will ensure the partner organisations are kept up to date.

- Work is ongoing and will continue in exploring making better use of social media. This could be to highlight completed projects, to get residents involved in project consultations, to promote events etc. Norwich City Council will lead on this and will ensure the partner organisations are kept up to date.

5.2 The Delivery Board are also considering an update to the Strategy map which is published on the Strategy webpages. The map currently shows a summary of all the projects and opportunities as outlined in the Strategy action plan. However, this map will need to be updated to reflect changing priorities and completed projects, and also to simplify how the projects are represented.

Appendix 1: River Wensum Strategy Action Plan 2018

Theme	Reference	Project	Anticipated delivery	Lead authority
Walking and Cycling Access	A1	Missing link in Riverside Walk between Duke St and St George's Bridge	2019/20	Norwich City Council (NCC)
	A2	Riverside walk accessibility improvements including signage and interpretation	Ongoing (2017/18 – 2018/19)	NCC
	A3	Marriott's Way - Barn Road gateway	Ongoing (2017/18 – 2019/20)	Norfolk County Council
Waterways Access and Leisure	W1	Friar's Quay slipway enhancement	2021/22	Broads Authority (BA)/NCC
	W2	Yacht station expansion	2020/21	BA/NCC
	W3	New Mills Canoe portage	2020/21	BA/NCC
	W4	Quayside short stay moorings	2021/22	BA/NCC
	W5	Boom towers repiling and mooring	2019/20	BA/NCC
	W6	New short-stay moorings between Carrow Bridge and Lady Julian Bridge	2019/20	BA/NCC

Theme	Reference	Project	Anticipated delivery	Lead authority
	W7	New short stay visitor and demasting mooring at the NR1 Development	2019/20	BA/NCC
	W8	Hydrographic survey for dredging	2019/20	BA
	W9	River festival	2019/20 (at earliest)	NCC
Environment	E1	FOG (Fats Oils and Grease) project	2019/20	Environment Agency (lead) and Anglian Water
	E2	Biodiversity enhancement plan including management of non-native species	Ongoing (2018/19)	EA / NWT
	E3	Floating vegetation platforms in key locations (and as part of new development)	Pilot – 2018/19	Environment Agency
	E4	Boom Towers - enhancement scheme to Devil's Tower	2019/20	NCC
Project assessment		Assess all proposed projects against assessment matrix	2018/19	RWSP

Appendix 2: Project Prioritisation Matrices

Matrix 1 – Strategy Objective Assessment – Projects

Project	Improves Management of River Corridor	Increases walking and cycling access	Increases waterway access	Increases leisure opportunities	Enhances the natural environment, biodiversity or GI	Enhances cultural offer	Enhances historic offer	Provides business opportunity	Reduces inequality and social deprivation	Represents value for money	Likely deliverable (risks/funding/ feasibility /maintenance)
A1 – Missing Link Riverside Walk	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
W9 – River Festival				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
E1 – FOG project	✓				✓					✓	✓
E2 – Biodiversity enhancement including mgt. of non-native species	✓	✓			✓					✓	✓
E3 – Floating vegetation platforms	✓				✓					✓	✓
Other Potential Projects											
F – Wensum Lodge moorings and slipway	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
G – Access improvements upstream of New Mills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Residential Moorings			✓	✓				✓			
H – Lion Wood Drainage	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓

Matrix 2 – Project Deliverability Assessment

Project	Lead Body/Officer	Timescale	Funding	Feasibility	Deliverability	Comments
A1 Missing Link Riverside Walk	Norfolk County Council	Funding decision due Winter 2021	Sustrans funding acquired. CIL funding bid submitted and awaiting decision.	RIBA stage 1 report complete.	Further design work underway.	Further work required on detailed design.
W9 – River Festival	Norwich BID/Broads Authority	Possibly 2022	Unknown at this time	BID Love Light festival has already happened. Further discussion on future plans with BA/BID required.	Dependent on BA/BID priorities and resource	Events have been impacted by Covid-19 pandemic.
E1 – FOG project	Environment Agency	Likely 2-3 years	Environment Agency	Feasibility work required.	Unknown at this time.	Further discussions and planning required with Anglian Water
E2 – Biodiversity enhancement including mgt. of non-native species	Environment Agency/Broads Authority	Ongoing	Unknown at this time – project dependent	Project dependent	Project dependent	
E3 – Floating vegetation platforms	Environment Agency/Broads Authority	Underway	Environment Agency	Platforms purchased	Platforms purchased to be installed following maintenance discussions	
Other Potential Projects						
Wensum Lodge moorings and slipway	Norfolk County Council		Norfolk County Council	Feasibility and development options stage underway.		
Access improvements upstream of New Mills	Norwich City Council	2021/22 financial year	CIL funding secured.	Feasibility work undertaken as part of funding bid.	Delivery anticipated for 2021/22 financial year.	
Residential Moorings	Norwich City Council/Broads Authority	Unknown at this time	None yet acquired	Unknown at this time	Unknown at this time	Deliverability largely dependent on landowners coming forward with proposals.
Lion Wood Drainage	Norfolk County Council/Norwich City Council/Environment Agency	Briefs/survey work in 2022Briefs/survey work in 2022 Completion Oct 2024	Norwich City Council Norfolk County Council CIL funding	Development stage underway. Funding bid submitted.	Modelling and design work undertaken. Maintenance arrangements in place.	