

Irwell Catchment Pilot

OUTPUTS FROM THE IRWELL PILOT STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP



River Irwell Lower Kersal

Friday 29th July 2011

Attendees and contact details

Contact name	Organisation	Contact no	E-mail
Ann Bates	Moston Brook Project	0162 624 1444	Ann.Bates@oldham.gov.uk
David Dutton	Bury Council	0161 253 7667	D.P.Dutton@bury.gov.uk
Gary Piggott	BTCV		g.piggott@btcv.org.uk
James Dalglish	Rossendale Council	01706 252586	jamesdalglish@rossendalebc.gov.uk
James Hall	Lancashire, Manchester & North Merseyside Wildlife Trust	07725434266	jhall@lancswt.org.uk
Jo Fraser	Irk and Medlock Valley Programme (Groundwork Manchester)	0161 220 1085	JFraser@groundwork.org.uk
Katherine Causer	Environment Agency	01925 543315	Katherine.causer@environment-agency.gov.uk
Matt Schofield	Irwell River Trust	07879 833046	matthew@irwellriverstrust.com
Mike Duddy	Salford Friendly Angling Society	07985 733969	admin@salfordfriendlyanglers.co.uk
Mike Killelea	Salford Friendly Angling Society		admin@salfordfriendlyanglers.co.uk
Pete Stringer	Red Rose Forest -		pete@redroseforest.co.uk
Richard Hadfield	Oldham Council	0161 308 3909	richard.hadfield@oldham.gov.uk
Simon Pappriill	Oldham Council	0161 770 5163	simon.pappriill@oldham.gov.uk
Tony Poole	Environment Agency		tony.poole@environment-agency.gov.uk

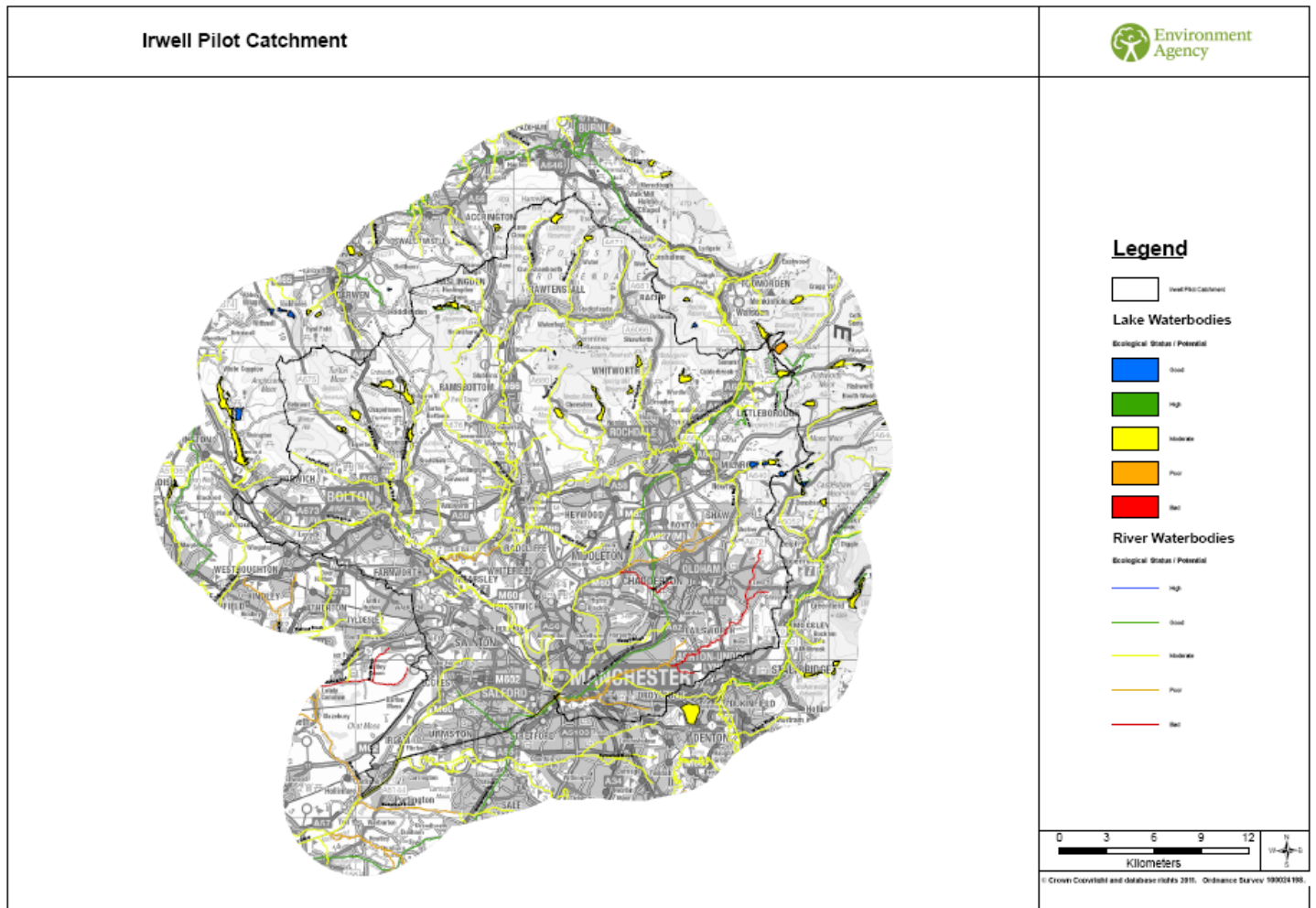
Thank you to Lanc's Wildlife Trust at Bolton for hosting the event

Session One - the good, the bad, the ugly

The Good - what's occurring?

Your opportunity to tell us what's going on in your patch

The results from this exercise will be digitally mapped onto ArcGIS and made available at a later date.



The Bad – what's not occurring?

What's stopping you doing more for the environment?

What are the barriers?

Organisational (EA do we help or hinder?), legal, financial, resources, skills/knowledge, technical solutions, H&S, physical

Barriers to activity

Organisational
Lack of joined up working within and between key organisations (E.g. Local Authorities, Natural England and EA)
Lack of understanding of who is responsible for rivers makes it difficult for public/third sector to find answers/solutions
Lack of protection for existing green infrastructure
Lack of multi-disciplinary approach
Fragmented approach and issues with community cohesion
EA - little emphasis on access and recreational use of waterways
United Utilities
Local Authority Planning
Legal
Simplifying the planning process will make things worse.
Financial
Limited funding available for environmental improvements (budget cuts)
Increasingly more competition for available funding
More difficult to get initial (seed corn) funding in order to draw down match funding
Applying for funding is time consuming and can be complicated
Difficult to obtain funding for post-project management and on-going maintenance
Loss of the Regional Development Agency as a co-funder
Time constraints on funding application submissions (can only apply at specific times of year, don't match with financial accounting periods for LA's, EA)
Lack of senior management commitment in LA's to funding environmental work
Restricted to the number of times you can apply for some funding streams
Resources
Limited staff capacity and an erosion of skills and knowledge
Staff numbers continuing to diminish throughout all organisations involved in environmental improvement work and fewer staff with a specific environmental remit
Skills/knowledge
Planners/highways engineers do not understand the importance of GI from a water quality perspective
Lack of case studies
Lack of awareness of environmental issues relating to water quality & WFD
Physical
Pilot area too big – need for smaller groups
Fragmented ownership/responsibility throughout river corridor
Public perception of the state of our rivers discourages active participation
Rivers/environment are often not a priority for communities with other pressing issues
Historical infrastructure

The Ugly – the big issues

What are your big issues?

What concerns local communities?

Big Issues

Organisational
General lack of land management
Lack of integrated thinking/working by service providers
Blue green algae – more cooperation on sampling
Identifying pollution sources (EA/UU). Priorities/enforcement requirements may not be sufficient.
Restriction of WFD to river corridors – impact on wider biodiversity
Physical
Pollution from point source/storm overflows/CSO's
Pollution from cross connections into surface water drains
Run-off from golf courses (fertilisers & pesticides)
Contaminated land leachate
Litter in and out of the water- aesthetics
Invasive species – makes access difficult, H&S issue from giant hogweed, reduces biodiversity potential of river corridor
General access, disabled access & signage
In-river barriers (weirs)
Deterioration of physical infrastructure – gabions, sheet piling
Risk of flooding from canal breaches
H&S (staff and volunteers)
Steep banks can be dangerous and restrict access/activities
WQ (Weils disease)
Lots of hazards like discarded syringes, glass, sharp metal, possibly chemicals
Physical assault
Giant hogweed
Behavioural
Anti-social behaviour/crime – fly-tipping, dogs, fires, BBQ's
Engaging and involving local communities
Poor perception of local river environments
Perception of safety

Session Two - What's the Big Idea?

Case study - Moston Brook Project – Ann Bates Project Manager

More information on this project can be found at:-

<http://www.oldham.gov.uk/community/improving-moston-brook.htm>

What's the big Idea?

Thinking about the barriers to progress and the big issues come up with possible ways we could overcome them.

Who could help to deliver the solutions?

How do we get them involved?

	Big idea	Who	How
Barriers			
Funding	Fines for polluters being directed to projects/posts Make funding easier to apply for	EA Funders	To channel money similar to landfill tax Fewer hoops to jump through
Fragmentation:- -pilot area too big -lack of resources/time -lack of leadership -lack of awareness	Strategic umbrella group required with:- -geographical working groups with a river systems approach -coordinated working - partnerships, work shared - leader/champion for different priorities -use pilots and case studies	Multi agency approach including:- EA, LA's, voluntary sector, local businesses, community groups	Coordinated across the Irwell by a strategy group & including working parties Pilot different working practises in certain geographical areas - e.g. Croal tackles JKW and other catchments watch & learn - Case studies - SUDS - litter traps
Lack of joint authority working and political support	Introduce pilot at GM level to AGMA/Environment Commission/Planning & Housing Commission (link to GI)	EA & AGMA – GM Commissions and Chief Executives	Get support & steer to ensure WFD aims are picked up by all officers
Finding commitment from decision makers (e.g. invasives)	- Connecting with politicians - Finding a champion - Taking a strategic approach - EA using regulatory role with private landowners - Using volunteers to deliver	EA, politicians, LA's, Wildlife Trust, landowners, volunteers	Volunteer training programme externally funded
Big Issues			
Planners/highways engineers do not understand the importance of GI from a water quality perspective	Training for decision makers and influencers	EA	Training workshop, DVD, site visits etc.
Invasive species	Invasive species catchment coordination officer	EA to appoint officer	Funded by multiple organisations (EA, LA's, UU) or Landfill tax

In-river barriers to fish migration (weirs)	Use back filling with hard core	Local demolition companies	
Communications gap between regulatory authorities (LA's, EA, NE) and local communities	Use groups who have good relationships with local communities for engagement, encouraging communities to be the drivers for change from consultation to delivery.	Third sector groups/Rivers Trusts	Make environmental data more accessible to communities
Diffuse urban pollution	Yellow fish – drains to river	Schools, volunteer groups	Packs & info provided by EA, coordinated by volunteer/Trust groups.
Good things to do			
Education	More physical engagement on regeneration projects. Demonstration projects to educate about dynamics of water course in terms of water quality & biodiversity	Schools, youth groups, scouts, guides, etc. Golf courses, Allotments, Anglers	Demonstration site, visitor centre, DVD, literature
Partnerships	Better/more partnership working	All involved in environmental activities	Formalise partnership groups under the pilot scheme
Communication	Get local media to promote regeneration and river restoration Adopt a reach	Communities, businesses, individuals	Coordinated division of river reaches. Individuals request actions through coordinator
Opportunities			
Natural Improvement Areas	Irwell Natural Improvement Area	LA's with support from other stakeholders, e.g. EA , IRT,	Incorporate Greater Manchester Ecological Framework & GI infrastructure plan
Opening –up culverted watercourses	Daylight & re-naturalise River Medlock at Sport City	Manchester City FC	As part of Sport City development