

Where are we now?

Note on format: some topics appear in one or more sections. Through out these are shown in the same alphabetical order and colour coded.

Conflict

- Conflict of use waters
- Conflicting of aims of people/groups

Data and evidence

- Responsibilities/causes for failure not shared or clear
- Information being gathered by many but lacking coordination, verification, consideration, specifics e.g. species
- Data poorly understood
- Science needs to be applied

Finance and funding

Are the benefits of water truly recognised i.e. economic value?
Don't consider sustainable solutions enough.

Opportunities:

- Huge opportunities
- Joint funding bids
- New funding for flood projects
- New funding for WFD
- Funding not co-ordinated

Flooding and drought

Lots of interest and activity but there are concerns around the size and type of solutions e.g. land management and very large schemes, people/business versus sustainability.

- More extreme events expected
- Public fears of flooding
- Lack of resources and knowledge in local flood authorities

Leadership

Lack of coordination

Some sections of society not involved e.g. business

- Leadership lacking
- Action uncoordinated
- Lacking the legal 'teeth' required
- Joined-up thinking by organisations versus just enthusiastic individuals

Management of the river is

- Fragmented
- Lacking vision
- Involves duplication

Continued

Where are we now? continued one

People

- Low public awareness of watercourses
- Low use of the river
- Constraint of vested interest
- Ownership and identity
- Public alienation from the river environment
- Negative perception of rivers due to threat of flooding
- Value placed on river varies with location and community
- Heritage assets not celebrated
- Involvement of young people is low
- Concentration of community groups in Sheffield
- Volunteers active in practical work in Sheffield

Pollution issues

- Some pollution problems remain
- Pollution from current activity and industrial legacy
- Fly-tipping is a problem in rivers too!
- Is the current regulation adequate?

Projects

Rivers are already a fantastic resource!
Wildlife even returning to the city centres

There are a large number of projects planned or being delivered.
Some on a small scale.

- Some good examples of joint working emerging
- Extent of current activity isn't known
- Need to see the big picture

Lots of organisations delivering different things. Good delivery.
Lots of good intentions but requires joining up.

Vision

- There isn't one – no agreement

WFD

- Clarity needed – how to understand what is needed to comply with the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and so understand the best way to fund and deliver it
- There is a lack of clarity about WFD objectives

Constraints on development

- Flood risk
- Red tape
- Economic blight
- Despoiled by previous use

Communities

- Need to engage more with communities.
- Involve a broad range of people
- Some organisations are already involving communities
- Some of us are better at this than others

Habitats and species

- Largely in decline
- Threat of invasive species
- Public lack of awareness of what's out there

Continued

Where are we now? continued two

Opportunities

Lots of opportunities:

- Hydropower on weirs
- Removal of weirs
- Improved access
- Recreation / tourism
- Commercial gain

Physical condition

Many water bodies heavily modified

- Flood defences
- Water resources
- Waste water
- Riverside floodplain development
- Legacy of heavy industry
- Barriers to fish movement
- Urbanisation
- Water courses often physically hidden in culverts or at the back of buildings so little public awareness or interest.
- Footpaths etc are not maintained

Public Perception

- People not aware of improvements in water quality in the River Don
- People believe it is dirtier than it is
- Cleared up waters are underused for recreation
- Safety concerns lead to lack of use
- Identify media opportunities to change perceptions

End of section

What could the future be like?

Conflict

Conflict between different users of water and watercourses is resolved

Data and evidence

- Accessible
- Available
- Integrated
- Simple

Finance and funding

Adequate funding is available
No 'feast and famine' of funding

Flooding and drought

- People are more resilient
- Flood defences are well maintained
- The risk of flooding is understood
- The risk of flooding is reduced
- More natural solutions to flood risk are considered

Leadership

- Joined up
- One body manages resources, effort and money
- Political consensus achieved, political backing obtained
- A body has been established to manage the river network – a board
- A monitoring and evaluation process is established

Legal

- Better legislation
- Pollution prevention and enforcement strengthened
- Ownership of river / banks
- Better development control powers

People

Reaching a variety of audiences

- Farming community
- Business
- General public
- 'Friends of ...' groups formed

Plan

There is a strategic plan in place including

- Land management
- Agriculture
- Invasive species
- Urban drainage
- Flooding and drought
- Bio/geodiversity
- Forestry and woodlands

Pollution

Better awareness of it leading to better control

Zero pollution!

No fly-tipping in rivers

Continued

What could the future be like? continued one

Projects

- There is still lots to do
- Effort will be needed to maintain good status of waterbodies and the gains that have been made

Vision

- A healthy thriving Don
- Watercourses both look attractive and are ecologically sound

Water as a resource

- Water resources are protected in terms of quality and quantity
- Water used sustainably
- Adequate water supplies
- Hydropower – rivers will contribute to renewable energy supply

WFD

- Waterbodies returned to as natural a state as possible
- WFD is part of the national curriculum

Better land management practices

- Soil
- Agriculture and forestry
- Model of expertise to share or sell

Biodiversity/geodiversity

Public understand and value it

- Diverse and flourishing wildlife and habitats
- A joined up ecological network

Decline reversed and invasive species controlled

Capital investment

- In to urban drainage
- Culverts – removal of
- Other infrastructure

Civic Pride

- Don catchment viewed as one of the best in the country
- People are aware of and utilise their water environment
- Waterways central to the community
- £££ benefits realised including using rivers for transport

Fish

As a recreation resource (angling) as well as of ecological value

New ways of working

Consider the whole cost of intervention

Cost for maintenance will be built in to new works

Partnership working is the norm

Network of shared interests

Burden of action is spread

Recreation

Better access to the river and river banks

Recreational network and routes

Tourism and Heritage

Waterways festivals in many towns

Cultural events around water

River-based tourism contributes to the local economy

Value of riverside heritage - assets restored and maintained

End of section

Important milestones to get to the future

Data and evidence

- A shared understanding is developed
- Gaps in knowledge identified and filled
- Agreement on issues and solutions

Finance and funding

- Money is spent on shared priorities
- Available funding sources are understood and the process required to access funds is understood and utilised.

Leadership

Leadership for coordination of action to build a catchment plan
A group is established to coordinate effort and resources

Legal

Legislative changes support environmental improvements

People

Annual River Don conference and celebration

Plan

- A plan for the catchment exists, including for invasive species.
- The plan is based on sharing knowledge and data. It is linked to and integrated with other relevant plans in the area.
- The plans is supported by resources – funding and trained staff

Water as resource

- Impact of reservoirs on whole of the Don system is understood
- Reservoir management practices changed where necessary

WFD

- Embracing other peoples objectives - not just about WFD
- Understanding needs of others
- Building the capacity of others to take action for them selves
- Causes of failure under WFD are understood

Quick wins

- Quick wins are identified and delivered
- Hard to fix problems are also explored and a way forward agreed.

Urban versus rural

- Stronger relationships with various communities and businesses developed leading to closer working practices
- Closer working between NGOs

End of table