



Warwickshire
Wildlife Trust



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The Sherbourne Valley Project

Area Action Plan Public Version



Note on this Version:

This is the public version of a document that was part of a suite of documents that made up the stage 2 application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) in May 2022. We will find out on 15th September 2022 if that application has been successful. If successful we will be implementing the plan as detailed in this document. Some of the sections from the application version of this document have been omitted from this version, but the headers of those sections remain. Any differences in this version of the document have been highlighted in yellow.

Caz Bailey, Sherbourne Valley Project Manager, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.
July 2022.

Contents

Executive Summary	5
1. The Scheme Area	6
Rationale for Scheme Boundary	7
1.1 Background information to inform design of activities.....	9
2.1 Aims.....	10
2.2 Vision.....	11
2.3 The strategy for delivering the aims and vision via the themes and projects	12
2.4 The project need.....	14
2.4.1 The natural heritage need.....	14
2.4.2 The built heritage need.....	16
2.4.3 The cultural heritage need.....	17
2.5 The links between the Sherbourne Valley Project and local strategies.....	18
2.6 The links between the Sherbourne Valley Project and regional strategies	20
2.7 The links between the Sherbourne Valley Project and national strategies.....	21
2.8 Addressing NLHF Outcomes.....	23
2.8.1 A wider range of people involved in heritage.....	23
2.8.2 The funded organisation will be more resilient	25
2.8.3 People will have greater wellbeing	25
2.8.4 People will have developed skills	26
2.8.5 The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit	28
2.8.6 The local economy will be boosted	28
2.8.7 Heritage will be in better condition	29
2.8.8 Heritage will be identified and better explained	29
2.8.9 People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions	30



3. The Project Partnership and Partnership Agreement	31
3.1 Background	31
3.2 Partners.....	32
3.2.1 Lead Applicant: Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WWT)	33
3.2.2 Coventry City Council (CCC).....	35
3.2.4 Severn Trent (ST)	36
3.2.5 Environment Agency (EA).....	37
3.2.6 Historic Coventry Trust (HCT)	38
3.2.7 Citizen Housing (CH)	39
3.2.8 Sherbourne Valley Churches (SVC).....	39
3.2.10 Coventry University (CU).....	40
3.2.11 Community representative and Chair	41
3.2.12 Partnership Board	41
3.2.13 Non-Board partners.....	41
4. The Sherbourne Valley Project Plan.....	44
4.1 Overview	44
4.2 Changes from Stage 1	46
4.3 Prioritising projects	46
4.3.1 Natural heritage	46
3.2 Cultural heritage.....	48
4.3.3 Built heritage	49
4.4 Communication and Interpretation Plan	50
4.5 Project List.....	51
Project 1: Access.....	53
Project 2: Communication and Interpretation	54
Project 3: Sherbourne Structures.....	55
Project 4: Connect and Reflect (Events)	57
Project 5: Valley Volunteers.....	59
Project 6: Sherbourne Skills	61
Project 7: Creature Count.....	63
Project 8: Wilder Wetlands	64
Project 9: River Restoration.....	66
Project 10: Linking the Landscape.....	68
4.6 Monitoring and Evaluation	69
Community Engagement.....	69
Natural Heritage.....	71
Evaluation Reports.....	72



4.7 Action Plan Table	73
5. Engaging people and communities	73
Team Wilder	73
Health and Wellbeing	74
Cultural Connections and Outdoor Education	75
How We Got Here	75
6. Community Grants	77
7. Managing your area-based scheme	78
7.1 Project management structure	78
Scheme Staff	78
WWT Support Staff	80
7.2 Scheme level risk assessment	81
7.3 Procuring goods, staff and services	81
7.7 Project timetable	82
7.8 Detailed cost breakdown	89
Delivery-phase financial summary	89
7.9 Project cash flow	90
7.10 Calculations for full-cost recovery	90
7.11 Plan Review	90
8. Appendices	91



Executive Summary

The River Sherbourne runs through the heart of Coventry. We will bring it back to life and back into the lives of everyone in the city through this area-based scheme. Coventry owes its location, its wealth, and much of its history to the Sherbourne. We will tell its story from medieval times when the river provided food and water, through the industrial period when it powered economic growth, to the blitz when sluice gates ensured water for firefighters to use as the Luftwaffe targeted Coventry. We will reawaken the river, bringing it back to the hearts and minds of the people. We are working with partners to re-write the future for the River Sherbourne and change the lives of the wildlife and people that live near it. Together we will restore and celebrate its natural, built and cultural heritage for the city's diverse population to enjoy. We will enable people to improve, interpret, share and celebrate all aspects of the river's heritage. We will create new wetlands and change people's impact on and relationship with the river, using innovative engagement techniques. A revitalized River Sherbourne will change communities in Coventry forever.

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has led the Sherbourne Valley Partnership since 2010, bringing likeminded organisations and community groups together to work collaboratively on projects associated with the river and surrounding area. More recently that led to the application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Funding of £253,000 was secured, which supported a 20-month Development Phase that consulted with communities, tested hypotheses and undertook feasibility work. The lessons learnt then culminated in an application for a subsequent 4-year Delivery Phase, which is anticipated to be running from October 2022 – October 2026.

We will engage with and benefit over 25,000 people via one off activities during the scheme's delivery. We expect to work with 3,500 people in a more structured, regular way through volunteering, training, walks and other sessions. These figures are based on the success of our previous NLHF schemes and detailed planning within the action plan table. The significant increase in engagement figures from the stage 1 application are a result of increased staffing, working with more partners and more digital engagement.

There are many under-represented groups who are not accessing either natural or built heritage venues, notably Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, young people (11 – 25), people from socially deprived areas and people with disabilities. Coventry has a high population of BME groups, is a young city (average age of 33) and has some of the most deprived communities in the UK. We want to deliver a scheme that will engage under-represented groups living close to the river and find new ways to enthuse them about the river's heritage.

We have designed the project to have different levels of engagement– from one off events to longer term volunteering. We aim to use innovative techniques such as reality capture and 3D street art to grab people's attention, then raise awareness of the wider opportunities available in the scheme. We have thought about how different audiences might want different things – for example young people may want to gain a qualification, BME groups may want to take part in single gender activities. We have also considered barriers, for example some people may not be able to afford outdoor clothing, families may need activities to be at weekends or during school holidays.



from view in the city centre, as it was culverted (diverted through a pipe) to allow for the city's significant growth in the 1960s. Only a very small, 30 metre, stretch of the river is now visible in the city centre, and it is tucked away behind buildings down the little explored Palmer Lane.

Going back in time, the city really owes its location, and in many ways, its growth to the River Sherbourne. In medieval times the river provided water and food for communities. During the industrial era it helped to power mills and provide a source of water to industry. Indeed, it is said that Coventry blue (the colour which is reflected in so much of the city's culture) was due to the chemical composition of the river's water mixed with the dyeing agents.

Rationale for Scheme Boundary

The vast majority of the planned activities will focus on the River Sherbourne itself, the tributaries of the Sherbourne and the adjoining green spaces, but it is beneficial to take a valley wide approach to ensure we make the project as inclusive as possible.

The River Sherbourne catchment (shown by the red line on the map on the following page) is the area where rainfall and runoff flow into the river. However, the catchment boundary did not include some areas covering other important aspects we want to incorporate into the scheme, so the project area was expanded (shown on the yellow line on the map).

We mapped 1km from the main river with a view that 1km could be viewed as a reasonable distance for a large proportion of the population to travel, in order to get to the river. Using this simple model did mean that the area to the south of the confluence with the River Sowe would be included in the scheme. As that area is already part of our existing Dunsmore Living Landscape Scheme, the Sherbourne boundary was moved back to avoid overlap.

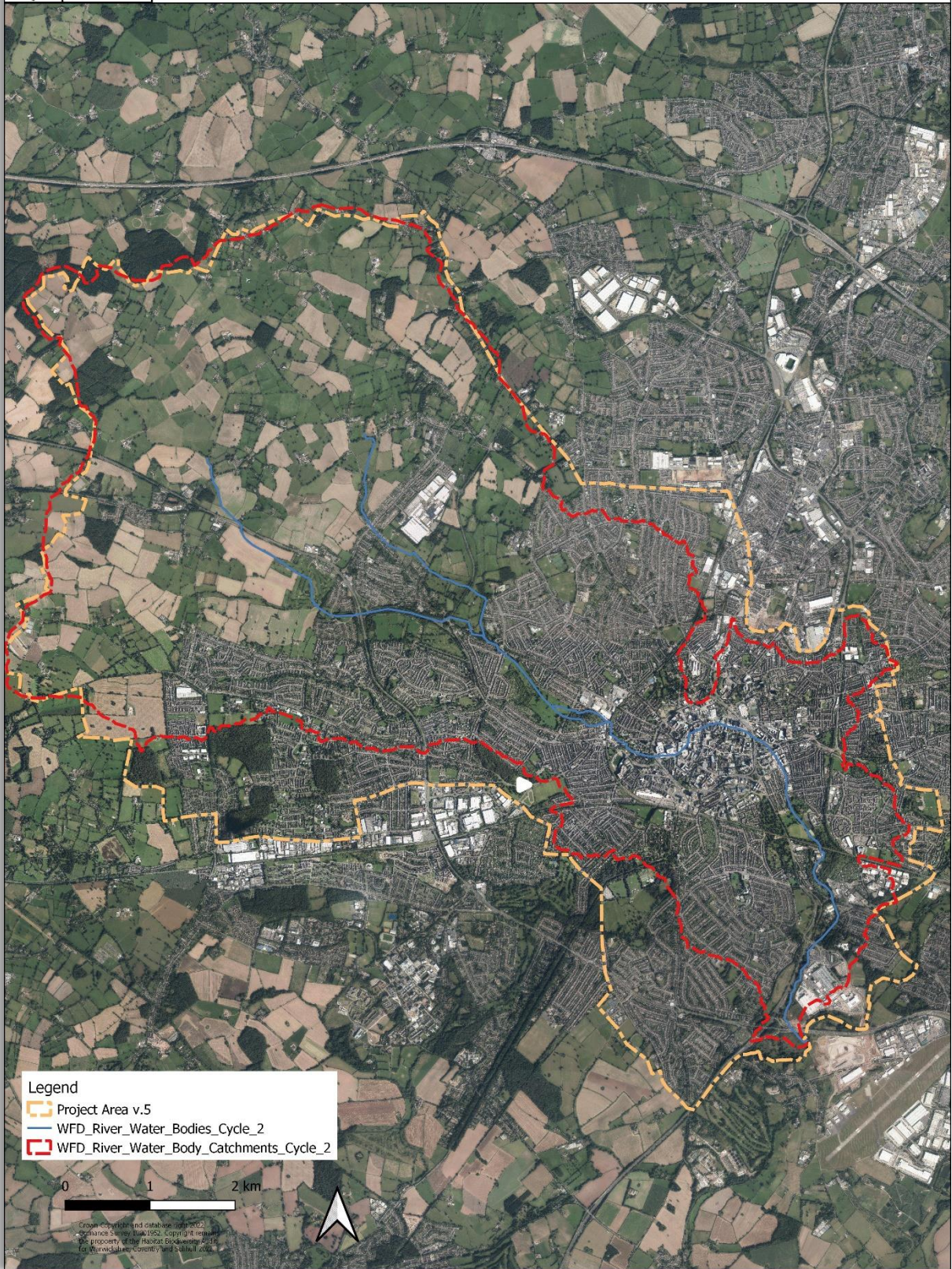
A desk-based exercise was then undertaken to see if locations of potential opportunities for partnership-working, or locations of community groups, could be included, which were just outside the catchment area and the 1km buffer from the river. A number of these were identified including eight additional schools, the Coventry Canal Basin, the War Memorial Park and the Rough Close Scout Campsite and Activity Centre. Finally, the boundary was moved to follow the nearest road or field boundary to make it easier to distinguish the boundary on the ground.





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Sherbourne Valley Living Landscape Project Boundary



Warwickshire Wildlife Trust co-hosts (along with Severn Rivers Trust) the Warwickshire Avon Catchment Partnership which is part of the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) network. The CaBA network is an inclusive, civil society-led initiative that works in partnership with Government, Local Authorities, water companies, businesses and more, to maximise the natural value of our environment. CaBA partnerships are actively working in all 100+ river catchments across England and cross-border with Wales, directly supporting achievement of many of the targets under the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

From the source of our rivers to the sea, across our towns, cities, countryside and coasts – a healthy water environment is essential to all of us. It provides us with the water we need to live and to run our businesses efficiently. It reduces the risk to our homes and livelihoods of flooding. A healthy water environment means better places to live, where people and wildlife flourish. In the past, management of the water environment has fallen to Government, to private companies and to landowners, often operating in isolation.

The CaBA embeds collaborative working at a river catchment scale, delivering a range of environmental, social and economic benefits and protecting our precious water environments for the benefit of us all¹.



Credit <https://catchmentbasedapproach.org/>

1.1 Background information to inform design of activities

As part of the development phase an Area Appraisal (appendix 1), has been undertaken. This has informed the design of our activities. Further details for individual projects can also be found in the project plans (appendix 2).

¹ <https://catchmentbasedapproach.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CaBA-Benefits-Infographic-2019-20-scaled.jpg>

2. The Aims, Vision and Strategy



Our Project

Connect the people of Coventry with the River Sherbourne and its rich and diverse heritage.

2.1 Aims

The Sherbourne Valley Project has 6 key aims

1. The people of Coventry feel connected to the River Sherbourne and the surrounding green spaces
2. The river and its associated habitat are improved for wildlife
3. The river is more accessible to people along its length
4. The built heritage is better preserved and celebrated
5. The local community is empowered to take ownership of their river
6. Local communities are provided with information and learning opportunities about their river

2.3 The strategy for delivering the aims and vision via the themes and projects

The aims and vision of the Sherbourne Valley Project are realised via three themes of natural, built and cultural heritage.



Natural Heritage

Spotlight local wildlife sites and demonstrate how the river and its associated habitats are being improved for nature.

This banner features a blue background with a pattern of white dots. It contains two photographs: on the left, a view of a riverbank with a small stream and green grass; on the right, two people in high-visibility vests working on a riverbank with a ladder.



Built Heritage

Celebrate the historical structures which tell the story of Coventry's history — from medieval times to the Blitz.

This banner has an orange background with a pattern of white dots. It includes three images: a modern arched bridge over a river, a historical painting of a river scene with a bridge, and a photograph of a stone bridge with arches.



Cultural Heritage

Empower people to take ownership of their river and champion community action.

This banner has a green background with a pattern of white dots. It features four photographs: a group of people in high-visibility vests standing outdoors, a man and a child working in a garden, a person playing a stringed instrument, and a group of people sitting around a table with plants.

These themes provide the framework that the 10 project areas fit under. Some project areas deliver outcomes under a specific theme and other projects span all three themes.



the sides of the banks of rivers and spreads its seed vigorously, impacting other rivers downstream. Himalayan balsam also dies back over winter and because it has outcompeted all native aquatic river bankside vegetation it leaves the river bank bare. As the soil is exposed this leads to increased erosion, causing further siltation which contributes to the other challenges the river faces.

As the River Sherbourne is in the headwaters of the Severn Basin any reduction in pollution and the impact of Himalayan balsam as part of this project will benefit rivers further downstream as the seed distribution will be reduced.

In 2016 The Wild Trout Trust undertook an assessment of the river⁵ looking at key greenspaces within the catchment to consider what could be done to address some of the issues. In its report it concluded

“A more extensive river re-naturalisation project could be undertaken, utilising the extensive space available in Lake View Park, upstream of Four Pounds Avenue”.

Coundon Wedge and Lake View Park are adjacent to the Holyhead Road which Friends of the Earth found to have the highest Nitrogen Dioxide levels in the West Midlands in 2019⁶ – making the green spaces more important for residents so they can walk away from the road. There are four Local Biodiversity Action Plan species (otters, water voles, barn owls, bats) which were once common along the Sherbourne but have faced significant decline or have been lost completely. These species would all benefit from the natural heritage projects proposed as part of the Sherbourne Valley Project.



Figure 1: Water vole, population status; Endangered. Image credit The Wildlife Trusts

Beyond the river itself the UK is regarded as one of the most nature depleted countries on Earth⁷. Around 88,000 different species of animals, plants and fungi are known to share the UK with us – its human population⁸ and 15% of those species are now at risk from extinction and more than 40% are in decline⁹. It is now widely acknowledged that we are facing an ecological emergency and the time to act is now. Restoring rivers like the Sherbourne can play a vital role in nature’s recovery as they support such a huge diversity of wildlife. The River Sherbourne’s influence on nature’s recovery is greater than its river

catchment though. It plays a vital role as a ‘corridor’ for species to move and its cleanliness influences the wider Warwickshire Avon and then beyond that the River Severn Basin, which is globally significant for its associated migratory wildlife¹⁰. It is therefore vital that we act now to restore the natural heritage of the River Sherbourne

⁵ <https://www.wildtrout.org/assets/reports/Sherbourne%20Coventry%202016.pdf>

⁶ <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/nearly-two-thousand-locations-across-england-wales-and-northern-ireland-breaching-air>

⁷ <https://www.wwf.org.uk/future-of-UK-nature>

⁸ <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-and-wild-places>

⁹ <https://www.wwf.org.uk/future-of-UK-nature>

¹⁰ <https://severnpartnership.org.uk/the-estuary/physical-natural-environment/>

before we lose species forever and to ensure that this local response not only benefits nature in the local area but right across the UK and from around the world.

Evidence also shows that a thriving, wildlife-rich environment benefits both physical and mental health¹¹. People with nature on their doorstep are more active, mentally resilient and have better all-round health. Daily contact with nature is linked to better health, reduced levels of chronic stress, reductions in obesity and improved concentration. We believe that everyone deserves to live in a healthy, wildlife-rich natural world and experience the joy of wildlife every day: for the wellbeing of people and wildlife¹². The Sherbourne Valley Project can deliver that for the people of Coventry.

2.4.2 The built heritage need

To protect the built heritage along the river so that in 100 years' time these assets still have a value to people and their story is not lost.

The Chapel of St James and St Christopher and Vignoles bridge have been facing increasing antisocial behaviour. Condition reports (Carried out by Coventry City Council in 2018 and as part of the Sherbourne Valley development phase) have highlighted many issues including sandstone erosion, damp patches, pointing loss, vegetation growth and river silting as risks. As the issues are not a structural risk, they have not been rectified by the landowners, which increases the likelihood of further decline in condition.

The locally listed sluice gate at Charterhouse no longer works and has attracted graffiti. It is now a misunderstood and isolated industrial structure, which seems unconnected to the landscape.

None of the built heritage features have any information about them on site to inform people of their significance, and little information is available online. The Sherbourne Valley Project will protect the built heritage along the river, interpreting it so that local communities have a greater understanding of their local heritage.

We will work with Coventry City Council the landowner of the structures to explore funding opportunities that will restore the structures and with Citizen Housing to ensure that the structures are preserved as part of their redevelopment plans for Spon End. We will also highlight the value of these structures by having events focused around them.



Figure 2: Charterhouse Sluice gate, blocked by Japanese Knotweed, covered in graffiti. 2021

¹¹ <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/nature-health-and-wild-wellbeing#evidence>

¹² <https://www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/get-closer-nature/wild-wellbeing>

2.4.3 The cultural heritage need

To bring the river back to life for people through innovative engagement, helping them get a sense of the past, appreciate the value of the natural heritage they have today, and feel empowered to pass that heritage on to the next generation in a better condition.

Coventry is City of Culture in 2021-2022 and the programme of events has acted as a catalyst to re-awaken residents' pride in their city. Coventry City of Culture Trust (CCCT) Green Future's programme, which is funded by complementary funding from NLHF explores Coventry and Warwickshire's wildlife, natural heritage, and landscape, uncovering the story of its 'hidden nature' and increasing local stewardship. Through the Green Futures programme, Coventry will become the greenest and most environmentally conscious UK City of Culture to date¹³.

Coventry City of Culture Trust is a board member of the Sherbourne Valley Project and has been working with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to ignite social activism, connecting and reconnecting communities with nature and heritage, and prioritising issues that most directly affect them. The ambitious City of Culture programme has unearthed stories to inspire a modern, diverse city to reimagine its 'Green Future' for wild and human life.



Figure 3: Local people come together to clean up the river in Spon End. May 2021

A critical element to the City of Culture programme is creating a lasting legacy and the Sherbourne Valley Project will play a leading role in this through its cultural heritage theme. There needs to be a range of opportunities for residents in Coventry to continue to engage and learn about cultural heritage, with active participation key to developing a sense of ownership and sustainability.

Through the Sherbourne Events programme (see project plan ref 4: Connect and Reflect) we will continue the relationships with a number of organisations from the City of Culture Green Future's Working Group, working in collaboration to achieve more. The

¹³ <https://coventry2021.co.uk/explore/green-futures/>

Sherbourne Valley Project provides a unique holistic future focus on cultural heritage in the city and without it projects will operate in isolation and the legacy of the City of Culture will be diminished.

2.5 The links between the Sherbourne Valley Project and local strategies

Coventry City Council are a key partner and major landowner within the Sherbourne Valley Project area. The Coventry City Council Local Plan¹⁴ makes numerous references to the protection and enhancement of the River Sherbourne and directly links to the 3 themes of the project (natural, built and cultural heritage).

- Policy DS4 (Part B) - Whitley Specific Masterplan Principles *“Development should not compromise the presence and ecological value of the River Sowe and River Sherbourne”* (Natural heritage)
- Site allocations for housing; essential site-specific requirements *“Retention of sandstone boundary walls.”* (Built heritage)
- Policy GB1: Green Belt and Local Green Space – *“The following areas will be designated as new areas of Local Green Space; Sherbourne Valley. Any proposal in these locations will be expected to be of an appropriate density to reflect surrounding properties should not impact negatively on the openness and character of the wider Coventry Green Belt and will also need to accord with Policy H3.”* (Natural heritage)
- Policy GB1: Green Belt and Local Green Space – *“This is particularly relevant in the pockets and corridors of Green Belt within Coventry (such as the Sowe and Sherbourne river valleys), which not only make the city a better place to live, but also increase the sustainability credentials of the city, promoting health and wellbeing, biodiversity and resilience to climate change.”* (Natural & cultural heritage)
- Policy HE2: Conservation and Heritage Assets – *“Through the Local Plan and partnership working with Historic England and the Historic Coventry Charitable Trust, the Council are promoting through this Local Plan the creation of a City Heritage Park in the Sherbourne Valley and the grounds of the Charterhouse and London Road Cemetery¹⁵. The designation reflects the historic significance of the two sites as well as their scale and strategic proximity to the city centre. There is also wider connectivity opportunities associated with the River Sherbourne. Proposals to establish the park will be supported along with measures to improve linkages to the area and improve accessibility between the city centre and the Charterhouse grounds. These should include a riverside walkway along the exposed section of the River Sherbourne, connecting Far Gosford Street with Charterhouse along the west side of the river crossing Gulson Road and Humber Avenue. A footpath and cycle route along the former Coventry loop line railway and a new pedestrian crossing on the London Road. These enhancements, in connectivity and green infrastructure, could facilitate comprehensive regeneration opportunities of brownfield land along the River Sherbourne, most notably between Gulson Road and Gosford Street and in Harper Road that will complement this part of the city.”* (Natural & built heritage)

¹⁴ https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/25899/final_local_plan_december_2017

¹⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1001205>



Coventry Green Space Strategy 2019-2024¹⁶ echoes the need by stating

"A project to develop a Living Landscape Scheme for the River Sherbourne, for people and wildlife, and to share its heritage is currently in development and offers such an opportunity.....The Council will continue to work with WWT, strengthening the partnership and seek to develop projects to address priority species and habitats as set out in the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Biodiversity Action Plan."

Coventry has 16 designated Conservation areas¹⁷ across the city. A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historical interest where the character and appearance needs to be protected or improved. A number of these, including Allesley Village, Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges, Spon Street, London Road and Spon End fall within the project area and its built heritage theme and aims help to contribute towards these objectives.

Within Coventry City Council's City Centre Area Action Plan¹⁸ which was adopted in December 2017 it states

"Development shall support meeting the objectives of the Severn River Basin Management Plan through ensuring that no deterioration of the River Sherbourne or its tributaries shall occur that may result in it failing its objectives under the Water Framework Directive."

This ties in with the Sherbourne Valley Projects influence over Citizen Housing's planned proposed redevelopment in Spon End.



Figure 4: Image credit ggmbenefice.uk

Eco Church is a nationally recognised award scheme¹⁹ that encourages churches to focus and deliver ecological enhancement through physical activities and education. In order to win a Bronze, Silver or Gold Eco Church Award, churches must complete their own online Eco Church Survey about how they are caring for God's Earth in different areas of their life and work. The survey focuses on worship and teaching; management of church buildings; management of church land; community and global engagement and lifestyle. The answers a church provides will collect points towards an award - the more the church does, the more points it gets. Churches can indicate what they have done already, such as switching to a green energy company,

which you can do through Parish Buying, or using Fairtrade products, to gain points and build on these by responding to the many other suggestions for further progress towards an award. Sherbourne Valley Churches who are a board partner of the scheme will be aligning our project outcomes with the Eco Church programme to ensure that outcomes delivered through the NLHF funding are sustainable in the long term.

¹⁶ <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/2298/green-space-strategy-2019-2024>

¹⁷ <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/heritage-ecology-trees/conservation-areas/3>

¹⁸ https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/27377/adopted_aap_december_2017

¹⁹ <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/how-eco-church-works/>

2.6 The links between the Sherbourne Valley Project and regional strategies

Severn Trent are a key partner within the Sherbourne Valley Project. Within its business plan (2019-2024)²⁰ it states

“We’ll do our bit to help make where you live greener. Over the next five years, we’ll improve up to 2,100km of rivers, taking the total since 2015 to 3,600km - more than half of the rivers in your region. Working with other organisations like the Wildlife Trusts, we’re going to encourage local communities to help us improve biodiversity in areas covering the equivalent of 1,500 football pitches.” They go on to say *“We’re committed to improving rivers and habitats so that they can support a greater diversity of wildlife and plants, and to creating a better environment for the recreational activities that our customers enjoy.”*

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) sets out a number of outcomes within its West Midlands Natural Environment Plan: 2021 - 2026²¹. These include several that the Sherbourne Valley Project contributes towards.

- Everybody can access high quality green space within a 300m walk of their home.
- Creation /restoration of 6 wildlife corridors along the Rivers Cole, Rea, Sherbourne, Stour and Blythe and HS2 development in line with our key stakeholder’s priorities.

The WMCA goes on to state

“We also need to ensure there are high quality areas of wildlife and biodiversity for the corridors to link together. Achieving nature recovery will need large areas and blocks of land in environmentally sensitive management, and considerable creation of habitat, in addition to having ecologically functioning corridors. We will work with partners to create, protect and enhance wetlands, grasslands and heathlands.”

The Environment Agency leads the River Basin Management Plan²² process and it is currently under consultation. The draft document sets out the position of individual river catchments and the priorities for improvement of the wider Severn basin. Within the document it makes multiple references to priorities and areas of focus in the future.

The Government is developing a series of interdependent initiatives which will play a critical role in achieving the environmental objectives of the river basin management plans. These include:

1. Setting legally binding targets under the Environment Bill. The targets will be used to drive progress to address some of the challenges affecting the waters in the river basin districts. Water quality targets for four of the challenges are being considered:

(a) pollution from agriculture and rural areas, in particular agricultural sources of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment

(b) pollution from water industry wastewater, in particular phosphorus and storm overflows from combined sewerage systems

²⁰ https://www.stwater.co.uk/content/dam/stw/about_us/pr19-documents/sve_full_plan_document.pdf

²¹ <https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/5102/natural-environment-plan.pdf>

²² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summary-of-the-draft-river-basin-management-plans/summary-of-the-draft-river-basin-management-plans>

(c) changes to water levels and flows, in particular reducing water demand, including leakage, household and non-household water consumption

(d) pollution from abandoned metal mines

The draft river basin management plan goes on to state

“Many of the measures listed above are common to all sectors and cover from source to sea, catchment to coast. For instance, all sectors can help implement nature-based solutions, or put in place action to reduce water use. The catchment-based approach has been a key mechanism to help facilitate better join up between sector groups and communities, so the sum of their collective action is more effective than their individual contributions.

One of the key comments many people made on the Challenges and Choices consultation was the need for more effective collaborative working. During this next cycle the Environment Agency wants to continue working with partners to build on the great contributions made by the catchment-based approach, and to deepen and strengthen place-based working. In particular linking more effectively with coastal partnerships and the developing nature recovery network groups.

Looking further forward, government bodies, local authorities, developers, other businesses, and the third sector may need to review and radically reform ways of working, including governance structures if we are to achieve the environmental objectives of the plans.²³”

This clearly endorses the approach of the Sherbourne Valley Project.

2.7 The links between the Sherbourne Valley Project and national strategies

In 2010, Sir Professor John Lawton, published the report ‘Making Space for Nature’²⁴ as part of an independent study of England’s wildlife sites. The headline recommendation from the report was ‘more, bigger, better and joined up’, and since that time that mantra has shaped the work of nature conservation in our country. Despite being written over a decade ago it still forms the foundations for which natural heritage strategies are based. There are multiple recommendations within the ‘Making Space for Nature’ report which are embedded within the Sherbourne Valley Project. They are -

- *Recommendation 3: Ecological restoration zones need to be established that operate over large, discrete areas within which significant enhancements of ecological networks are achieved, improving ecological connections and restoring ecological processes.*
- *Recommendation 4: Public bodies and statutory undertakers planning the management of water resources should: (i) make space for water and wildlife along rivers and around wetlands; (ii) restore natural processes in river catchments, including in ways that support climate change adaptation and*

²³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summary-of-the-draft-river-basin-management-plans/summary-of-the-draft-river-basin-management-plans>

²⁴ https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20130402170324mp_/http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/documents/201009space-for-nature.pdf

mitigation; and (iii) accelerate the programme to reduce nutrient overload, particularly from diffuse pollution.

- Recommendation 5. Authorities responsible for measures to reduce the risks from coastal erosion and flooding should do so in ways that enhance ecological networks where possible. This can be achieved by taking full account of the natural dynamism and functioning of the coast, thereby allowing wildlife and habitats to move and evolve.
- Recommendation 7: Responsible authorities should take greater steps to reconnect people to nature.
- Recommendation 19: Habitat creation by Government and its agencies, grant-giving trusts, businesses and the voluntary sector requires greater focus on the needs of ecological networks, in particular the need to contribute to ecological restoration zones.
- Recommendation 21: Public bodies and other authorities responsible for canals, railways, roads, cycle ways and other linear features in the landscape, should ensure that they better achieve their potential to be wildlife corridors, thereby enhancing the connectivity of ecological networks, and improving opportunities for people to enjoy wildlife.



Figure 5: Heron. Image credit The Wildlife Trusts

As a result of the Lawton report, The Wildlife Trusts recognise the need for landscape-scale approach to conservation - where habitats are bigger, better managed and more joined-up. This now lies at the heart of The Wildlife Trusts' efforts to address the ecological crisis. We call this Living Landscapes²⁵. Living Landscapes stands for working over bigger areas of land (not just the nature reserves we own), and usually in partnership with others, to find and make space for

nature. Often there is a focus on restoring wildlife habitats; examples include working with landowners to restore peat bogs in the uplands, or working in river catchments to 'naturalise' riverside habitats.

The landscape scale approach has now been adopted by all major NGO's, Government agencies and public sector bodies with an environmental focus. More recently the Government has championed the idea through the concept of the Nature Recovery Network (NRN)²⁶, which is a major commitment in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan²⁷ that aims to harness the excellent work already underway, strengthen the approach through increased focus and resource maximise impact through collaboration.

²⁵ <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/about-us/vision-and-mission>

²⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nature-recovery-network>

²⁷ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

The Government believes that

“by bringing together partners, legislation and funding, we can restore and enhance the natural environment.”

It states establishing the Nature Recovery Network will:

- *enhance sites designated for nature conservation and other wildlife-rich places - newly created and restored wildlife-rich habitats, corridors and stepping stones will help wildlife populations to grow and move*
- *improve the landscape’s resilience to climate change, providing natural solutions to reduce carbon and manage flood risk, and sustaining vital ecosystems such as improved soil, clean water and clean air*
- *reinforce the natural and cultural diversity of our landscapes, and protect our historic natural environment*
- *enable us to enjoy and connect with nature where we live, work and play - benefiting our health and wellbeing*

The Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan²⁸ has numerous chapters that link directly to the implementation priorities for the Sherbourne Valley Project. The River Sherbourne Valley will be a key component of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy which will feed into the National Nature Recovery Network.

2.8 Addressing NLHF Outcomes

The Sherbourne Valley Project delivers strongly against the 9 NLHF outcomes. The section below outlines how these outcomes will be achieved through the project.

2.8.1 A wider range of people involved in heritage

The Sherbourne Valley Project will ensure that the range of people benefiting from heritage will be more diverse than before the project started.

During the Development Phase we have identified the main audiences already engaging in heritage, and those who through this evidence gathering, we have identified will be the target audiences for the Delivery Phase.

How we reached our target audience list is summarised in the table, but full details of the consultation and research process are in the Area Appraisal and in each Project Plan document.



Figure 6: New audiences will learn new skills. Image credit The Wildlife Trusts

²⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

Audience	How we knew we needed to reach them	Comments
Local communities (particularly in deprived areas)	Conversations with key community members e.g. the manager of the Rose Community Centre, the Synagogue president, and organisations e.g. Voluntary Action Coventry	We were told that the Spon End area was in particular need of cultural activities and re-connecting with nature. Wider conversations also highlighted the low incomes city-wide and the barriers that created.
Young people	Conversations with Positive Youth Foundation and Wild Earth.	We were told by youth leaders that the young people would welcome a chance to be actively involved in the project.
Children	Taster sessions with scout groups and school pupils.	Positive feedback from young people participating in our taster events who said they'd enjoy coming to more like these. Parents also commented on behalf of the younger children, how much they had liked the activities.
Families	Home School families and families attending our taster events	We were told that having things for them to do in the school holidays was important and that they would like to attend more of the events we trialled.
BME	WWT's own research into the lack of diversity amongst members and volunteers locally, as well as conversations with specialist groups like Steppers UK.	We were told more should be done and could be done, to encourage people of colour to join activities in nature.
People who consider themselves to have a disability	Site visits with disabled community members. Disability in the Outdoors training course. Access Audit report.	We were told that disabled people wanted to have more access to nature and that simple measures could be taken that would have a huge impact on wellbeing.
Older people	Site User Surveys. Community consultation events.	The surveys showed us how few people over 65 were visiting the river. The consultation events gave us the reasons for this.
People experiencing mental ill health	Starfish Collaborative and WWT TEaM project (The Environment and Me)	Both these groups undertook special courses for people with poor mental health and shared their feedback with us about its importance.
Volunteers	Team Wilder is the new strategy for The Wildlife Trusts.	Team Wilder has volunteers taking action for nature at its core as a fundamental way of helping nature to recover in the UK.

2.8.2 The funded organisation will be more resilient

The Sherbourne Valley Project embodies Warwickshire Wildlife Trust's new strategy and all of the sub-projects contribute towards our strategic objectives. That strategy has two pillars:

1. more people on nature's side (1 in 4 people acting for wildlife), which will then contribute to
2. making more space for nature (aiming for 30% of the land area across Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull to be enabling nature's recovery by 2030).



Figure 7: Local Councillors and the Mayor meets community members working on the river to discover how their work makes an impact. Aug 2022

Key to achieving those ambitious goals is the development of a community catalyst approach (Team Wilder), where the Trust will work to inspire others to take independent action alongside its own delivery. This model will be the foundation of our work over the next decade and beyond and the Sherbourne Valley Project will lay the foundations for the Trust's work in Coventry for the foreseeable future.

The Sherbourne Valley Project also presents a unique opportunity for Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to increase its reputation and raise awareness with residents in Coventry that will lead to increased membership and volunteer support for our cause. The project also helps to foster improved collaboration between all board partners, which will lay the foundations for additional fundraising and collaborative working for years to come.

2.8.3 People will have greater wellbeing

Nature connectedness is scientifically proven to benefit wellbeing and the Wildlife Trusts have collaborated with a range of academic institutions to evidence this. Daily contact with nature is linked to better health, reduced levels of chronic stress, reductions in obesity and improved concentration²⁹

Around 9 in 10 people surveyed by Natural England in May 2020 agreed that natural spaces are good for mental health and wellbeing. More than 40% noticed that nature, wildlife, and visiting local green and natural spaces have been even more important to

²⁹ <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/nature-health-and-wild-wellbeing>

their wellbeing since the coronavirus restrictions began. These percentages have remained stable throughout the COVID pandemic³⁰. Enhancing the natural heritage value of greenspaces so close to urban areas of population in Coventry will ensure that people have greater wellbeing.



Figure 8: All ages benefit from greater connection with nature. Image credit Tom Marshall

Project 4.7 Events – 5 Ways to Wellbeing will deliver direct positive outcomes for people’s wellbeing in a measured way. Health and wellbeing will be factored into all elements of delivery (e.g. nature connectedness references in regular volunteering sessions through Project 5. Valley Volunteers). It will also target individuals suffering from mental ill health as part of delivery. The project will deliver at least 45 wellbeing type sessions, engaging with over 350 people.

A wider range of people will be given the opportunity to explore natural heritage, encouraged to incorporate the use of nature for wellbeing into their daily lives through nature connectedness activities and events. The project will build on Warwickshire Wildlife Trust’s very successful The Environment and Me Project (TEaM), which supports people experiencing mental ill health to spend time in nature. It will offer wellbeing walks, mindfulness in nature, photography for wellbeing and will work with existing partners Coventry and Warwickshire Mind to provide

an outdoor wellbeing course for their clients.

The project will record people’s feelings of wellbeing using the Short Warwick and Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale to show improvements. New heritage information along the valley will encourage people to spend more time outdoors, exploring beyond their usual area.

2.8.4 People will have developed skills

Project 6 is Sherbourne Skills, which will ensure individuals will have gained the relevant skills to make sure that heritage is better looked after, managed, understood or shared. We will create a hugely diverse training and skills programme that provides inclusive training activities involving people who are not already well-represented in natural, built and cultural heritage sector jobs.

Through our Development Phase we consulted with the community (please refer to the area action plan for details), tested through events, and listened to what people said regarding training and skills development. That feedback has shaped and ultimately

³⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/the-people-and-nature-survey-for-england-monthly-interim-indicators-for-may-2020-experimental-statistics>

individuals, tailoring the activities and approach to bring together best outcomes for the scheme and the young people. **TARGET: 14 sessions (including training, discussions, practical work parties) and support 5 young people to gain some kind of award.**

2.8.5 The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit

The project will improve the Sherbourne Valley and the wider city of Coventry for people and wildlife. The Sherbourne Valley is a hidden gem, ready to be awakened by this project, which will transform greenspaces and tell the story of Coventry's natural, built and cultural heritage in the heart of the city centre.

Working with Coventry City Council as principle landowner across the area, it will make sites more physically accessible for a wider range of people. Improving paths and removing barriers to access highlighted in the access audit which was commissioned during the Development Phase. Our aim is to improve existing and create 1km of new paths.

The river restoration projects at Coundon Wedge, Lake View Park and Charterhouse Heritage Park will make the sites more naturalised, aesthetically pleasing and more interesting places to explore.

It will offer exciting, interesting and inspiring experiences, some of which will be temporary (for impact) and others which will transform the area forever.

Working in Spon End with Citizen Housing, the project will support the regeneration of the area, which is currently in the top 10% deprived communities in the UK. (See the Deprivation section of the Area Appraisal) Placing the river back at the heart of the community for over 1,500 residents. Within the city centre the river will become more prominent and through creative interpretation such as street art the river will be brought to life.

2.8.6 The local economy will be boosted

The overall value of the Sherbourne Valley Project to date including Development, Delivery Phases and planned legacy is around £3.5million. The collaborative partnership is drawing in significant cash match funding from external organisations who may not have invested in the local economy if it wasn't for the momentum created by this project.

In addition to funding directly incorporated into this Sherbourne Valley Project application, parallel funding from partners such as Severn Trent and Coventry Cultural Consortium are delivering complementary programmes relating to the river and the city. Projects such as the de-culverting of the River Sherbourne at Palmer Lane offer multi-million-pound benefits to the local economy through the creation of a café culture area within the city. However, the success of this project relies on the outcomes of the Sherbourne Valley Project. The water quality flowing past the soon to be created open



section of the river, relies on improvements and pollution reduction up stream, and the Sherbourne Valley Project is the primary mechanism for achieving that.

The project aims to deliver 350 volunteering opportunities and based on the recognised value of £10 per hour, that equates to £138,900 in volunteering activities such as litter picking, habitat management/grounds maintenance and community event delivery that all directly benefit the local economy.

The legacy from the project will establish local volunteer groups and initiatives that will continue to run following the conclusion of the NLHF funding.

2.8.7 Heritage will be in better condition

We will improve the condition of 4 nationally listed and 1 locally listed heritage asset. Working with trained restoration specialists to remove damaging vegetation, graffiti, and restore mortar. This will be supported by trained and supervised volunteers.

The natural heritage of the River Sherbourne will be in better condition by the end of this project. We will create at least 2 new wetlands and enhance others, remove barriers to fish, and tackle non-native species. We will manage river bank vegetation to create a more continuous corridor for wildlife, work with rural landowners and the urban population to reduce their impact on the river. These steps will create a more natural river, reduce human impact, and have a significantly positive influence on the natural, built and cultural heritage. Specialists from within Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency and Coventry City Council will report that the project has improved the condition of the natural heritage of the river and its ability to support native wildlife.

2.8.8 Heritage will be identified and better explained

The heritage story of the Sherbourne will be better interpreted along the valley – telling its story in the words of historians and local people through their oral histories. The built heritage features and key sites will have interpretation and opportunities to access further information online. The website will be based on an interactive map, easy to use and intuitive for the visitor – allowing them to explore the valley geographically or thematically (natural heritage, community interest, built heritage, events, etc.). The website and use of social media will provide an accessible and

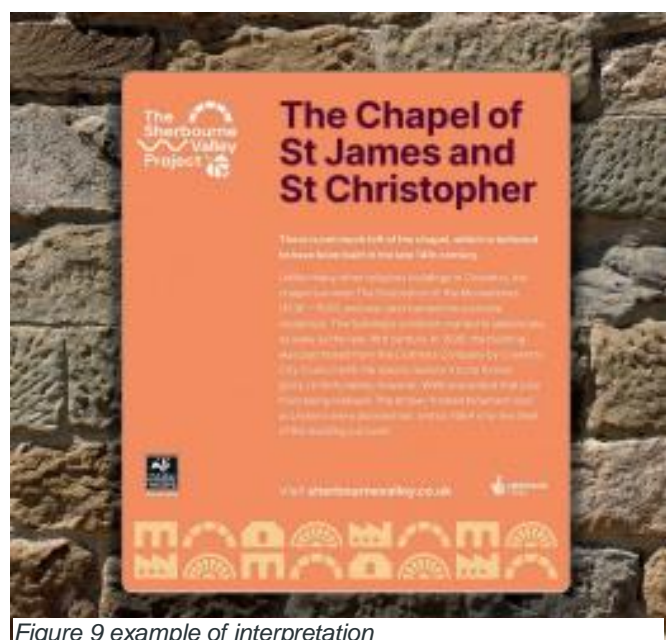


Figure 9 example of interpretation

informative experience for users, helping them to improve their understanding of the river's heritage. The scheme will also deliver over 50 guided walks and talks, enabling attendees to learn something new and develop a better understanding of the valley's heritage. The use of reality capture, chalk street art and clean graffiti will enable us to engage new audiences by telling the story of the river's heritage in an innovative and cutting-edge way.

2.8.9 People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions

Learning and sharing will be at the heart of all project activities.

The Sherbourne Valley Project will deliver a wide range of activities across the whole valley (over 400) to enable as many people (at least 25,000) as possible to engage with and learn about heritage in a way that works for them. Each activity will be delivered to ensure that the heritage message is presented in a way that is meaningful and relevant – e.g. discussing with children how the river used to be used for play or using reality capture to spark a conversation with new audiences that then leads to signups for volunteering at events. People will report discovering something new about their city's or their own heritage and how that has impacted on them.



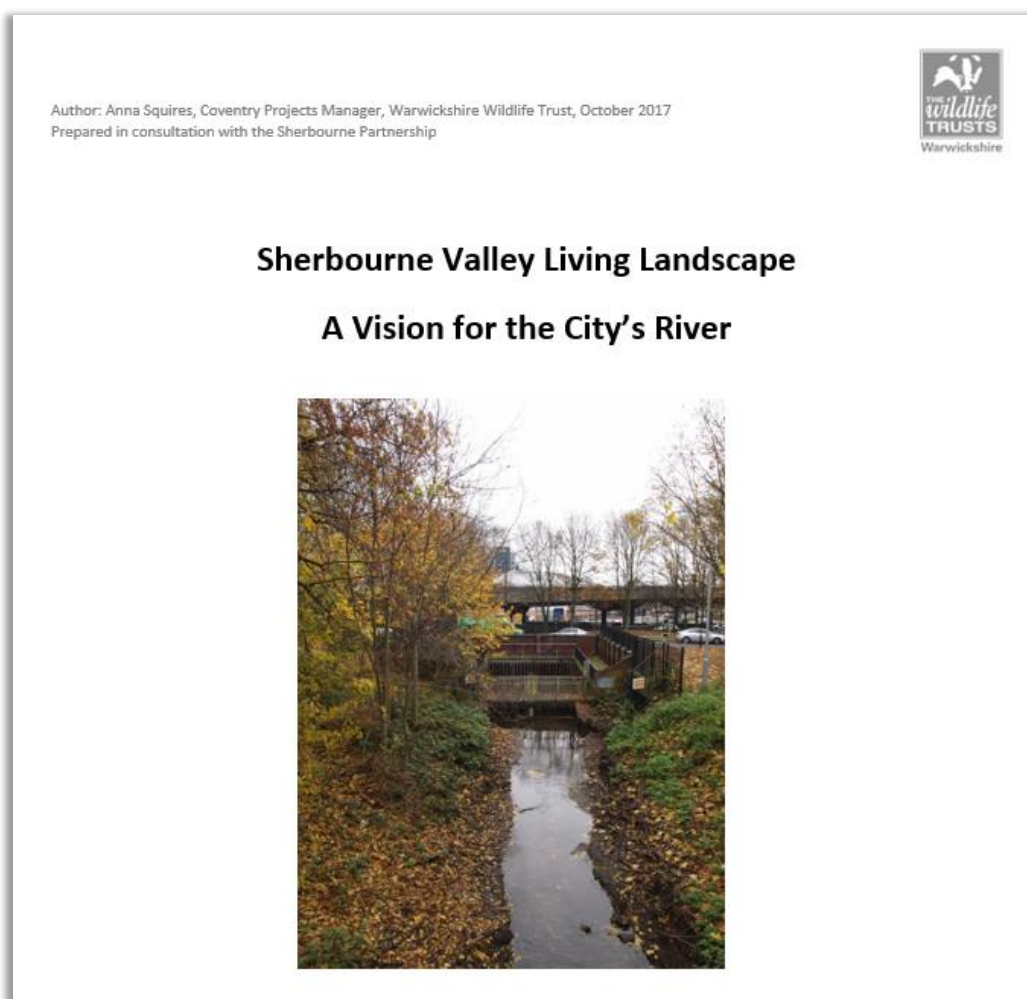
Figure 10 development phase education session

3. The Project Partnership and Partnership Agreement

3.1 Background







In 2012, the Sowe Valley Project, which was led by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust was drawing to a close. A number of local groups associated with areas along the River Sherbourne expressed an interest in coming together to improve that river too, inspired by the Sowe Valley Project, which had delivered significant outcomes in other areas of the city.

As a result of the community interest Warwickshire Wildlife Trust led on the development of the Sherbourne Partnership, which was then set up in 2013. The Partnership spent several years developing ideas, discussing opportunities and challenges for the river. This work was the precursor for the development of the Sherbourne Valley Vision, which was produced in 2018 (Appendix 4). This vision document included the hopes, ideas and aspirations of partners and representatives from the local communities. It highlighted the opportunity for the Sherbourne Valley to be an exciting landscape scale project and provided the framework for our initial Development Phase application.



3.2 Partners

The table below outlines the different project partners that are represented on the Partnership Board, along with examples of the types other organisations we will be working with. The Sherbourne Valley Project is the golden thread that ties individual projects and partnerships together in a holistic landscape scale approach, helping to ensure the natural, built and cultural heritage themes are reflected across all aspects of the project. The Sherbourne Valley Project ensures that no single individual project within the catchment is delivered in isolation, and all the stakeholders considering the collective overall aims of the project with the decisions they make. In the next section further detail is provided on each of the partner organisations involved.

Lead Applicant					
 Warwickshire Wildlife Trust					
Project Board:					
Community Rep. 	Coventry City Council  Coventry City Council	Environment Agency 	Sherbourne Valley Churches 		
Historic Coventry Trust 	Citizen Housing  CITIZEN	Coventry University 	Severn Trent 		
Examples of other partners					
National special interest groups	Specialist Recording Groups	Community Groups	Schools	Local Businesses	Landowners

advocates are already part of a growing movement of individuals standing up for nature: *Team Wilder*. We know though, that for the scales to shift further in the right direction, wildlife needs even more people to be acting in support of nature. While public concern about the environment is at an all-time high, behaviour change is lagging far behind.

Science shows that when 25% of people act this is enough to change the minds and behaviour of the majority. That is what success will look like. It doesn't matter who you are, anyone and everyone has an important role to play.



Every action has ripple effects and adds to a building wave of support for wildlife. Everyone has choices, some more than others but we can all decide to share our space with wildlife whether that's a window box, a garden, a local authority greenspace or a farm. You can talk to your friends, neighbours, teachers, work mates and politicians and pass on your passion encouraging others to do the same.

Our part will be to do what we can to help communities and individuals act for nature. We will work with people of all identities, cultures, backgrounds and abilities, and where we can we will help support them to value, enjoy, speak up and act for wildlife. If barriers exist which prevent anyone doing this as much, or as well, as they would like then we will do what we can to remove them. Where we may have created those barriers ourselves we will eliminate them entirely. In this way we will help to connect everyone with natural spaces and nurture their sense of belonging there, through improved community engagement and organising, creating safe and inclusive wild places close to where people live, work, and play. Team Wilder will be a support community for nature which properly reflects our society.

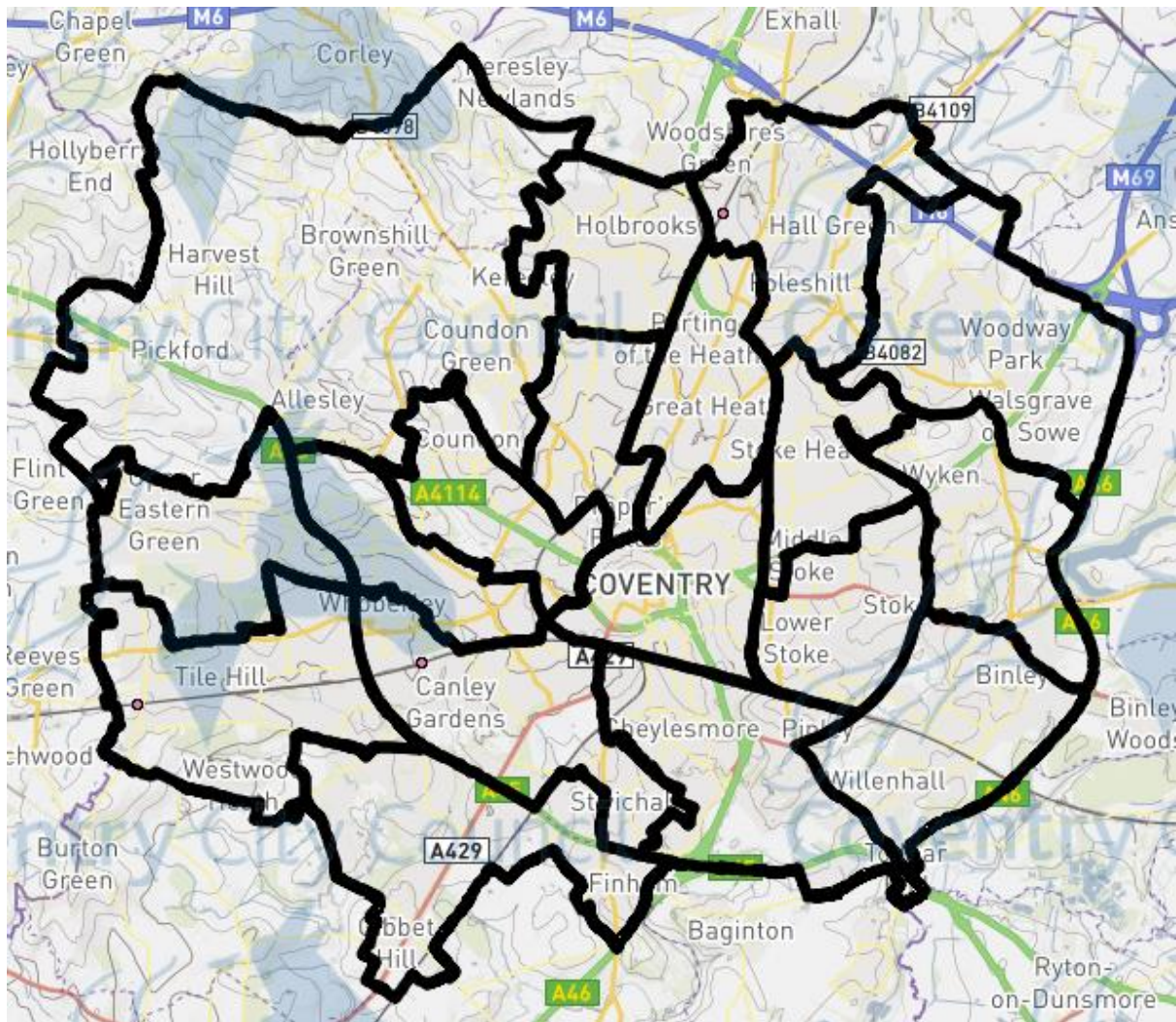
The Sherbourne Valley Project embodies our new strategy in a single project, matching the ambition with a financial investment greater than any project in the organisation's 50-year history.

Please refer appendix 16: Organisational Business Plan for more details.

There are 7 partners who wish to maximise their impact by working together with WWT at a catchment scale through this scheme.

3.2.2 Coventry City Council (CCC)

Coventry City Council is a unitary authority that covers the city of Coventry. It is comprised of 18 sub-areas called 'wards', each of which is represented by 3 elected Councillors.



31

The party with the most elected Councillors nominates one of their Councillors to be the Leader of the party. The Cabinet is made up of the Leader and nine other Councillors

³¹ <https://maps.coventry.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=planning>

committed by Severn Trent as a separate programme of work prior to the outcome of the Delivery Phase to demonstrate their commitment to the partnership. It is also because the scale of outcomes they are looking to deliver needed to start early in 2022 in order to be delivered within their current business plan period. This financial commitment is more than double their original commitment when the Development Phase Application provided outline costs for the Delivery Phase, which recognises the increase in scale and ambition of the project and its partners.

As well as cash match funding Severn Trent are also pledging to support the project in other ways through in-kind support. This includes hosting Board and sub-project meetings within their offices, produce their own comms to promote their involvement in the project and deliver two half day mental health first aid training events per year. Further information on their agreed role within the project can be found in their Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix 5).

3.2.5 Environment Agency (EA)

The Environment Agency is a non-departmental public body, established in 1995 and sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), with responsibilities relating to the protection and enhancement of the environment in England³³.



The EA stated purpose is, "to protect or enhance the environment, taken as a whole" so as to promote "the objective of achieving sustainable development" (taken from the Environment Act 1995, section 4). Protection of the environment relates to threats such as flood and pollution. The vision of the agency is of "a rich, healthy and diverse environment for present and future generations".

The EA has committed £240,000 cash match funding for the Delivery Phase and a minimum of £50,000 as part of the legacy already being planned for post NLHF funding. They are investing in the catchment to help the river reach its highest possible ecological status by 2027 to meet the current Water Framework Directive targets. This aligns with our project, enabling a much greater return on investment and better outcomes for water quality and natural heritage. The EA financial commitment is more than double their original commitment when the Development Phase Application provided outline costs for the Delivery Phase, which recognises the increase in scale and ambition of the project and its partners.

As well as cash match funding the Environment Agency are also pledging to support the project in other ways through in-kind support. This includes hosting Board and sub-project meetings within their offices and not charging for staff time supporting the project. Further information on their agreed role within the project can be found in their Memorandum of Understanding (appendix 5).

³³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency/about>

3.2.6 Historic Coventry Trust (HCT)

Historic Coventry Trust are bringing new life to the city's heritage. They encourage people to explore authentic places, take part in events and stay in historic accommodation. Their vision is to find innovative ways to sustain historic places and to inspire, involve and connect people with the city's history.



HCT together with partners from Coventry Cultural Consortium are working on a project to uncover (de-culvert) the River Sherbourne in Palmer Lane, a street in the city centre.³⁴ This provides a huge opportunity to engage people with the story of the river, the role it played in the past and how it can shape the future. The funding which has been secured for this is separate from the NLHF application and will see Coventry as one of over 60 High Street Heritage Action Zones (HSHAZ) across England. Each will receive substantial grants to create and deliver community-led cultural activities to support regeneration of their high streets over the next three years.³⁵

This is part of a four-year-long High Streets Heritage Action Zones' Cultural Programme, led by Historic England, in partnership with Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The Cultural Programme aims to make high streets more attractive, engaging and vibrant places for people to live, work and spend time.

HCT and the Coventry Cultural Consortium recognise that if the quality of the water upstream is not improved then this new stretch of de-culverted river could smell and look dirty, which would not inspire people to value the newly created area which is due to be regenerated with cafés and restaurants. A polluted river significantly impacts the economic case for this wider project and therefore the HCT and Coventry Cultural Consortium are fully behind the Sherbourne Valley Project as it represents a unique opportunity to tackle issues facing the river at a landscape scale.

Historic Coventry Trust also own and manage Charterhouse and its surrounding Heritage Park. NLHF have already provided significant support to the restoration of the building³⁶ and the Sherbourne Valley Project provides a great opportunity to ensure that the Heritage Park's natural and built heritage features are restored and enhanced to the same level.

Historic Coventry Trust are pledging to support the project through in-kind support. This includes hosting Board and sub-project meetings within their offices and will not charge for staff time associated with the project. Further information on their agreed role within the project can be found in their Memorandum of Understanding (appendix 5)

³⁴ <https://www.historiccoventrytrust.org.uk/news/new-plans-to-open-up-the-river-sherbourne-at-palmer-lane/>

³⁵ <https://www.cwlep.com/news/coventry-cultural-consortium-secures-nearly-£3100000-funding>

³⁶ <https://www.historiccoventrytrust.org.uk/news/work-starts-at-charterhouse/>

3.2.7 Citizen Housing (CH)

Citizen Housing is one of the UK's biggest social housing providers. They own and manage 30,000 homes across the West Midlands³⁷.



During the Development Phase a feasibility study was co-commissioned by Citizen Housing that investigated the options surrounding significant river restoration in Spon End as part of the £12million plans to regenerate the area. The timescales of that regeneration are delayed slightly because of COVID and the need to fully consult with existing residents. This means that they will not be finalised for the start of our Delivery Phase and likely to be agreed either towards the end of the 4 years or as part of the post NLHF legacy. Citizen Housing have invited Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to be a member of the Steering Group for their development plans with the intention of incorporating in the options from the feasibility study and Sherbourne Valley Project outcomes into the emerging designs for redevelopment of Spon End. They have also committed to retaining all of the built heritage assets through the redevelopment.

Citizen Housing will continue to be a Board Partner, hosting Board and sub-project meetings within their offices, supporting events held in Spon End. Further information on their agreed role within the project can be found in their Memorandum of Understanding (appendix 5).

3.2.8 Sherbourne Valley Churches (SVC)

Sherbourne Valley Churches is a group representing multi-faith churches throughout the Sherbourne Valley river catchment. They are represented on the Board by individuals who disseminate information to their network and represent their views and interests. During our Development Phase the Diocese of Coventry was a Board Partner. Having following discussions it was agreed that if their representation was changed to Sherbourne Valley Churches it would mean that churches of any denomination with in the project area could support the project.



As part of the Delivery Phase Sherbourne Valley Churches have raised £500 which they have donated as cash match funding to demonstrate their commitment and support to the Sherbourne Valley Project.

SVC will not charge for any staff time relating to the SVP, with officer time and support (where reasonably practicable to SVC) offered in kind. The SVC will provide venues for meetings and event delivered by the SVP as an in-kind contribution. Also, where appropriate SVC will link SVP delivery into the Eco church programme to ensure that the impact is sustainable beyond the life of the NLHF funding. Further information on their agreed role within the project can be found in their Memorandum of Understanding (appendix 5).

³⁷ <https://www.citizenhousing.org.uk/about-us/>

3.2.10 Coventry University (CU)

Coventry University is a forward-looking, modern university with a proud tradition as a provider of high-quality education and a focus on applied research. Its students benefit from state-of-the-art equipment and facilities in all academic disciplines including health, design and engineering laboratories, performing arts studios and computing centres.



The University's city-centre campus is continually developing and evolving, and they have plans for further investment in it over the next few years. The University has a major presence in Coventry, which contributes to the city's friendly and vibrant atmosphere and also enables the Sherbourne Valley Project communications to be extended to new audiences via their support.

The **Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (CAWR)**³⁸ is a key research centre within the University that is linked to the Sherbourne Valley Project. The CAWR is driving innovative, transdisciplinary research on the understanding and development of resilient food and water systems internationally.

Through its focus on food and water, the Centre's research develops and integrates new knowledge in social, agroecological, hydrological and environmental processes, as well as the pivotal role that communities play in developing resilience. Unique to this Centre is the incorporation of citizen-generated knowledge - the participation of farmers, water users and other citizens in transdisciplinary research, using holistic approaches which cross many disciplinary boundaries. CAWR also aims to advance resilience science through creative work on a new generation of key issues linked to the governance of food systems, hydrological change, urban water, river processes, water quality and emerging pollutants.

Another department we have strong links with is Coventry University's **School of Art and Design**³⁹ This department has long tradition of producing highly employable graduates, making a distinctive contribution to creative industries around the world. This department is lead partner in the Coventry River Cultural Consortium, which Warwickshire Wildlife Trust is also a partner.

We have a good relationship with the **Faculty of Engineering, Environment and Computing**⁴⁰, through the Geography department, both human and physical geography courses. We have worked with the lecturers and students on the development of guided walks along the river, to use it as a case study and resource for learning for both courses.

³⁸ <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/research/areas-of-research/agroecology-water-resilience/about-us/>

³⁹ <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/study-at-coventry/faculties-and-schools/arts-and-humanities/art-and-design/about-us/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/study-at-coventry/faculties-and-schools/engineering-environment-and-computing/>



3.2.11 Community representative and Chair

During the Development Phase the Board elected a Community representative who took up the role of Chair of the Board. During the Delivery Phase it is intended that the Chair will be re-elected on an annual basis. Further information on this can be found in the volunteer role profile for Board Chair, appendix 6.

3.2.12 Partnership Board

All of the Partners are delivering time sensitive work and the Sherbourne Valley Project provides the opportunity to bring everything together under one vision creating a robust Area Action Plan that looks beyond individual projects to take an integrated, holistic and strategic approach to the landscape. NLHF support is vital, as without it the potential to bring together projects under a cohesive natural, built and cultural heritage programme will be lost.

We have significant cash match funding, non-cash and volunteer support from partners, however, their interests lie in specific areas without the capacity to tie things together. With NLHF support we can ensure everyone works together in a coordinated way to deliver greater impact for heritage, people and communities.

The Terms of Reference for the Board can be found in appendix 7

As not all of these partners will be involved in all elements of all projects, we have developed a quick reference table for levels of partner input. This is found in appendix 8. For each sub-project we can see which partner/s need to either be: kept informed, consulted with, consulted and have final sign off.

3.2.13 Non-Board partners

With a project this size and scope there are other groups and organisations who we will be working with during the delivery phase. These are described in the Project plan documents and are briefly listed in the on the following page.

Coventry City of Culture Trust (CCCT) has a flagship programme called Green Futures⁴¹. Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with support



from Garfield Weston Foundation and Severn Trent Community Fund, Green Futures explores Coventry and Warwickshire's wildlife, natural heritage, and landscape, uncovering the story of its 'hidden nature' and increasing local stewardship. Through the Green Futures programme, Coventry will become the greenest and most environmentally conscious UK City of Culture to date.

For the Green Futures programme, the Coventry City of Culture Trust is working with local and global partners, such as Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, to ignite social activism, connecting and reconnecting communities to nature and heritage and prioritising issues

⁴¹ <https://coventry2021.co.uk/explore/green-futures/>



that most directly affect them. The ambitious programme will unearth stories to inspire a modern, diverse city to reimagine its 'Green Future' for wild and human life.

The Sherbourne Valley Project Development Phase has complemented the CCCT programme and the Delivery Phase (2022-2026) looks set to provide a critical component of CCCT's legacy. As the CCCT programme has progressed stronger messaging has developed around a call to action, with local people inspired by the arts and culture productions wanting to connect with nature and take action for wildlife. The next 4 years of this project, and its own legacy will help foster that sense of community activism and help to deliver significant impact against the NLHF outcomes.

CCCT was a partner on the board during the development phase. We will continue to work with them as a stakeholder and have received a letter of support for the project which can be found in Appendix 9. CCCT will be proactive to ensure a collective city visioning and voice for a greener, climate change responsible city and develop further advocacy and toolkits to promote Coventry's nature. CCCT will also share and signpost artists they are working with / commissioning where there is a link to the river; maximising collaborative working

The table below provides a sample of other groups and organisations we will be working with during the delivery phase. It is anticipated that this list will expand during the course of the project.

Organisation/Group	Project/s link	How we are collaborating
Coventry Cultural Education Partnership	Sherbourne Skills	Data sharing and networking
Starfish Collaborative	Sherbourne Skills	They are delivering our Nature Nurture course
Positive Youth Foundation	Sherbourne Skills	Youth engagement
Nine Arches Press	Connect and Reflect	Poetry festival
Wild Earth	Sherbourne Skills	Youth engagement
Warwick University, (Coventry campus), Global Sustainability Dept.	Connect and Reflect	Getting Creative with Sustainability; Green Corridor Walk
Warwick University (Coventry Campus)	Valley Volunteers Sherbourne Skills	Student volunteers
Coventry & Warks Creative Health Alliance	Connect and Reflect	Data sharing and networking
Open Theatre	Connect and Reflect	Activities for people with SEND
The Outdoor Guide and The Outdoor Guide Foundation (the charitable arm of TOG)	Valley Volunteers Connect and Reflect Sherbourne Skills Access	Joint provision of wellies and waterproofs for adults and children so they can join in our various activities. Promotion of the River Rambles
The Rose Community Centre	Valley Volunteers Connect and Reflect Sherbourne Skills	As a proactive venue supporting our activities and being a conduit to the community in Spon End
Coventry Synagogue	Valley Volunteers Connect and Reflect Sherbourne Skills	As a conduit to the Jewish community in Coventry
Warwickshire Amphibian and Reptile Group (WART)	Creature Count	Assistance with planning of small scale habitat projects (hibernacula etc. and with specialist survey (i.e./torchlight surveys)
Warwickshire Flora Group	Creature Count	Assistance with index level recording of key sites

Organisation/Group	Project/s link	How we are collaborating
Warwickshire Butterfly Conservation Group	Creature Count	Advise on monitoring, assistance with training events.
Allesley And Coundon Wedge Conservation Society (ACWCS)	Creature Count Sherbourne Skills Valley Volunteers	Creature Count Event, Citizen Science Recording, Training offer for the group, as strong advocates for the project in their community
Local Litter picking groups (Under the umbrella of 'Coventry Clean Up')	Valley Volunteers	Assisting with local litter picks, offering training in reporting of problem outfalls to group members, coordinated river and bankside clean up events.
Plant life	Creature Count	Piloting the National Plant monitoring scheme in an urban environment
Warwickshire Biological Records Centre	Creature Count	Sharing data
Warwickshire Bat Group	Creature Count	Advise on monitoring, assistance with training events.
Warwickshire Mammal Group	Creature Count	Advise on monitoring, assistance with training events.



4. The Sherbourne Valley Project Plan

4.1 Overview

We will engage with and benefit over 25,000 people via one off activities during the scheme's delivery. We expect to work with 3500 people in a more structured, regular way through volunteering, training, walks and other sessions.

These figures are based on the success of our previous NLHF schemes, and detailed project planning during the development phase.

There are many under-represented groups who are not accessing either natural or built heritage venues, notably Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, young people (11 – 25), people from socially deprived areas and people with disabilities. Coventry has a high population of BME groups, is a young city (average age of 33) and has some of the most deprived communities in the UK. We want to deliver a scheme that will engage under-represented groups and find new ways to enthuse them about the river's heritage.

We expect the main beneficiaries to be:

- Local communities (particularly in deprived areas)
- Young people
- Children
- Families
- BME groups
- People who consider themselves to have a disability
- Older people
- People experiencing mental ill health



Figure 11: Example of group activities, combining socialising and learning with nature.
Credit The Wildlife Trusts

We have designed the scheme to have different levels of engagement– from one off events to longer term volunteering. We aim to use innovative techniques such as reality capture, 3D chalk street art and clean graffiti to grab people’s attention, then raise awareness of the wider opportunities available in the scheme. We have thought about how different audiences might want different things – for example young people may want to gain a qualification, BME groups may want to take part in single gender activities. We have also considered barriers, for example some people may not be able to afford outdoor clothing, families may need activities to be at weekends or during school holidays.

We will build on Warwickshire Wildlife Trust’s successful project with Coventry and Warwickshire Mind (The Environment and Me), which has helped over 200 people experiencing mental ill-health to feel well through spending time in nature, with beneficiaries going on to volunteer, make better lifestyle choices and even return to work.

We won't forget the wider population of Coventry who come into the city centre and walk over the river without knowing it is there. We will use pop up events in the city centre to capture this broader audience.



4.2 Changes from Stage 1

This section has been omitted from public version to reduce the length of the document.

4.3 Prioritising projects

4.3.1 Natural heritage

During the Development Phase we undertook feasibility studies, consulted with the local community, gathered quotes and undertook a range of other desk based and on-site investigations to identify which projects would deliver the biggest impact as part of the Delivery Phase.

This work included a full walk-over and reach level assessment of the whole river (to its confluence with the River Sowe at Baginton) performed by Alexander Jones, Natural Heritage Development Officer, with support offered by colleagues from the Environment Agency, Severn Trent and Coventry City Council Parks Team.

Consultation with scheme partners, landowners and local interest groups has also been undertaken in areas that have been identified as having strong potential for intervention in the form of capital works.

Additionally, mapping of Combined Sewer Outflows (CSO) and surface water outfalls has been made possible with the assistance of Severn Trent Water. The following suite of projects has been split into high, medium and reserve priority projects, based on the background appraisals carried out by the team. These have been prioritised based on need within the catchment and considering the need for the main river Sherbourne to improve towards 'Good' status under the Water Framework Directive.

Task	Task type	Location	Priority
New wetland creation	Works	Charterhouse (North)	HIGH
New wetland creation	Works	Charterhouse (South)	HIGH
Re-naturalist river profile	Works	D/S Allesley -multiple locations	HIGH
Small scale restoration - community focused	Works	Guphill Brook- Multiple locations	HIGH
Weir mitigation	Works	Lake View park-1	HIGH
New wetland creation	Works	Lake View park-2	HIGH
Stage zero restoration/ channel realignment	Works	North brook	HIGH
Small scale restoration	Works	Pickford Brook- Multiple locations	HIGH
New wetland creation	Works	Sherbourne Valley Allotments	HIGH

Task	Task type	Location	Priority
Wetland creation / channel realignment / landscape works	Design	Spon End	HIGH
Consents	Consents	TBC	HIGH
Stage zero restoration/ channel realignment	Works	Coundon Butt Lane Meadows	MEDIUM
Fencing to alleviate issues regarding bank poaching	Works	Coundon Wedge	MEDIUM
Weir removal and in channel improvement	Works	Jacobean Hotel (Pickford Brook)	MEDIUM
Multiple barriers mitigation	Design	Lake View allotments - 2 weirs on southern channel, 3 on Northern Channel	MEDIUM
Riparian Improvements	Works	South of Barr Road Recycling Centre	MEDIUM
New wetland creation	Works	CCC "Sherbourne" site next to Whitley depot	MEDIUM
weir mitigation	Works	upper Spon Street	MEDIUM
full removal of Weir	Design	D/S of Leaf Lane	Reserve
Weir mitigation	Design	Acacia Avenue, Charterhouse	Reserve
weir mitigation	Works	Coundon Wedge (Staircase Lane Bridge)	Reserve
weir mitigation	Works	North Brook Confluence	Reserve



3.2 Cultural heritage

During the Development Phase we undertook lengthy and broad consultation with the local community and carried out some desk-based research to identify which activities and stories would be of most interest to the community. We also looked to identify which activities would broaden the audiences engaged, and which would have a positive impact on quality of life of participants and/or improve community cohesion.



Figure 12: 1934 plane crash into the Sherbourne at Whitley

Despite a slow start amidst the COVID pandemic lockdown, community and stakeholder opinions were gathered in the following ways:

- 16 Heritage walks (with a total of 119 participants)
- Online community meetings
- 450 completed questionnaires
- 78 event and training feedback forms
- Collated dozens of comments that were emailed, left in the comments book, reported to staff verbally
- 96 days of Site User Surveys
- 2 Site Access Assessments
- Numerous conversations and meetings with project partners and professional stakeholders

We looked at external and wider data as well as our own project's consultation, including:

- Natural England's People and Nature survey – for adults and for children⁴²
- Time and Time Again; a National Youth Trends report on how young People of Colour are represented in the UK⁴³
- The Wildlife Trusts' strategies
- Consultation with vol organisations; Voluntary Action Coventry, Coventry Uni's and Warwick Uni's student volunteer coordinators
- Trends in education nationally
- Attended online forums/meetings with "hard to reach" groups – young POC, diversity and disability in the outdoors campaigners
- Watching social media channels and forums about local issues and green spaces

⁴² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/people-and-nature-survey-for-england>

⁴³ <https://beatfreeksyouthtrends.com/reads/time-and-time-again/#:~:text=Time%20and%20Time%20Again%20is,%20Don't%20Settle%20project.>

- Researched the river’s social history and collated a detailed compendium of stories, maps, newspaper articles, photographs, memories and so on, to provide cultural content for the programme.

The result was that certain aspects of the project from the Stage 1 application have been made more of a priority, such as the education offer and others have been scaled back, such as the virtual reality elements.

Access to the river came out very highly in the community consultation, which was not something that was particularly highlighted initially. This focus has become a top priority going forwards, and so a good deal of time and thought has gone into ensuring the cultural heritage of the river is as accessible as possible.

This has meant reviewing the digital approach. By listening to the community, we realised that Virtual Reality did not feature highly on people’s ideas of how they wanted to engage with the river. We therefore looked for alternative ways to allow people to engage with the Sherbourne and found a 3D laser scanning (reality capture) option. This technology has been used to allow visitors to experience spaces like underground mines, where access is either impossible e.g. for those in wheelchairs, or very dangerous.

4.3.3 Built heritage

During the Development Phase we commissioned condition surveys (see appendix of Sherbourne Structures project plan) of the key built heritage assets identified across the Sherbourne Valley. This identified a number of actions required for each structure in order to preserve and restore them. We assessed the details of these reports in the context of the urgency of action required, the budget available and the longer-term maintenance responsibility of each built heritage asset.

As a result of that prioritisation, a number of actions were included within the Delivery Phase, which are outlined in the ‘Sherbourne Structures’ sub-project (see Appendix 2: Project Plans). The remaining actions identified within the condition surveys were passed on to the owners or responsible agencies for the structures in order to support them with ensuring the sustainable future management of the built heritage.



The original Spon End pack horse bridge built in 1616 and replaced in 1767 with the present Spon Gate bridge

4416 Coventry ColinCard 2000

Figure 13: Image shows the Chapel of St James and St Christopher, next to the earlier Spon Gate Bridge.

4.5 Project List

The scheme has been divided into ten broad projects with sub-projects sitting within them as follows. The table below shows the project and the NLHF outcomes associated against each one.

Main Project	Sub Project	a. A wider range of people will be involved in heritage	b. Heritage will be in better condition	c. Heritage will be identified and better explained	d. People will have developed skills	e. People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions	f. People will have greater well-being	g. The funded organisation will be more resilient	h. The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit	i. The local economy will be boosted
1. Access	1.0: Valley wide	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓	•	✓	✓
	1.1: River Rambles	✓	•	✓	•	✓	✓	•	•	✓
	1.2: Key sites	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓	•	✓	✓
	1.3: Equipment/clothing	✓	•	•	•	✓	✓	•	•	•
2: Communication and Interpretation	2 General	✓	•	✓	•	✓	•	•	✓	✓
	2.1 Digital media	✓	•	✓	•	✓	•	•	✓	•
	2.2: Sherbourne Stories - Sites	✓	•	✓	•	✓	•	•	•	•
	2.3: Hidden Heritage - City Centre	✓	•	✓	•	✓	•	•	✓	✓
3: Sherbourne Structures	3.0: Valley Wide	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•	✓	•
	3.1: St Catherine's Well	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•	✓	•
	3.2: Spon End	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•	✓	•
	3.3: Charterhouse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•	✓	•
	3.4: Whitley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•	✓	•
4: Connect and Reflect (Events)	4.0: Valley Wide	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.1: Festival	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.2: Sherbourne Spirit	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.3: Families with young children	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.4: Multi-generational	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.5: Young people	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.6: Nature Nurture	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5: Valley Volunteers	5.0: Valley Wide	✓	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•
6: Sherbourne Skills	6.0: Valley Wide	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.1: Informal training	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.2: Accredited training	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.3: Trainee placements	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.4: Formal Education	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.5: Young people (and informal education)	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.6: 5 ways to wellbeing	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.0: Valley Wide	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓

Main Project	Sub Project	a. A wider range of people will be involved in heritage	b. Heritage will be in better condition	c. Heritage will be identified and better explained	d. People will have developed skills	e. People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions	f. People will have greater well-being	g. The funded organisation will be more resilient	h. The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit	i. The local economy will be boosted
6: Sherbourne Skills	6.1: Informal training	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.2: Accredited training	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.3: Trainee placements	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.4: Formal Education	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.5: Young people (and informal education)	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
	6.6: 5 ways to wellbeing	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
7: Creature Count	7.0: Valley Wide	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•
	7.1: Riverfly	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•
	7.2: Morph	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•
	7.3: Animals	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•
	7.4: Plants	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•
	8.0: Valley Wide	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•
8: Wilder Wetlands	8.1: Lake View Park & Sherbourne Valley Allotments	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•
	8.2: Charterhouse	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•
9: River Restoration	9.0: Valley wide	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓
	9.1: North Brook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓
	9.2: Lake View Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓
	9.3: Guphill Brook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓
	9.4: Coundon Butt Lane Meadows	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓
10: Linking the Landscape	10.0: Valley Wide	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓

A brief summary of each of the projects is outlined within this document. For more details of each of the projects please refer to the detailed Project plan documents in appendix 2.



Project 1: Access

1. Access	1.0: Valley wide
	1.1: River Rambles
	1.2: Key sites
	1.3: Equipment/clothing

The Access project will cover the whole project area, but it will focus most heavily on the sites we are intending to highlight for reasons of particular interest and that are our key sites for activities and events.

We will be working to:

- Improve physical access e.g. path surfaces and gates in Lake View Park and Grayswood, and Charterhouse Heritage Park. Other opportunities might arise and will be considered
- Create new spaces for education and community activities along the river corridor e.g. at Grayswood, or lowering banks for easier access to the water on the river or its tributaries
- Improve way marking and signage along the proposed River Ramble routes
- Use digital methods to widen the access where physical barriers cannot be overcome in certain locations e.g. the culverted section in the city centre
- Add benches and seating for people with reduced ability to walk or stand as well as to increase dwelling opportunities, such as using the river during your lunchbreak.



Figure 14: Improving access for river visitors with a range of needs. Image credit Metro

Project 2: Communication and Interpretation

2: Communication and Interpretation	2 General
	2.1 Digital media
	2.2: Sherbourne Stories - Sites
	2.3: Hidden Heritage - City Centre

We will make use of a range of methods of interpretation along the river valley to explain the natural and cultural aspects. Both traditional and digital will be employed to best effect to ensure the maximum number of people, with different needs, will be able to learn about the river and its history. Each of these is covered in more detail throughout this section, but is summarized here.

Valley wide, we will:

- Create a new website
- Use reality capture to increase access to and understanding of, the river
- Create app content
- Signpost the route of the river and walking routes (further detail on these are in the River Rambles section of the Access Project Plan.)
- Install a series of meaningful, interactive and engaging interpretation on site, including all key built structures (i.e. Spon Gate Bridge, Chapel, Vignoles Bridge, WWII Sluice gate, Viaduct, St Catherine's Well, Whitley Abbey Bridge) and for key habitats (i.e. a wetland, river, wildflower meadow, woodland). Minimum of 12 interpretation features.
- Use the events programme to enhance the interpretation of the river, for example through guided walks.
- Have a project mascot as a narrator and explainer
- Produce a series of short films
- Produce a printed activity booklet or booklets
- Plaques on bridges
- Install listening stations (could contain content from Sherbourne Stories)
- Run a drain marking project with schools to highlight where road drains lead and what not to pour down them.



Figure 15: Illusion pavement art showing a culverted river, by Joe Hill

The city centre specific interpretation is covered in detail in the Hidden Heritage section below. In summary, in addition to the elements above, we will:

- Mark the route of the river underground
- Use murals or artwork to interpret different aspects of the river
- Use the Lower Precinct shopping centre, with its high footfall and central location to highlight the river through floor graphics and panels

Project 3: Sherbourne Structures

The project covers Key built heritage structure and have four sub-projects within it.

3: Sherbourne Structures	3.0: Valley wide
	3.1: St Catherine's well
	3.2: Spon End
	3.3: Charterhouse
	3.4: Whitley

There has been a shift in our proposals regarding works on the built heritage assets as at Stage 1 it was proposed that we would physically restore and maintain the structures. Development work has shown that the costs to do this to the full extent as outlined in the condition reports would be substantially more than anticipated and beyond the scope and need of the scheme. The original outcomes can still be achieved without the full capital investment required to fully restore the assets within the timeframe of the delivery phase.

We have shifted our focus to how the community will interact with the structures, which will in turn increase the cultural value of the assets. Any repair or maintenance works carried out on the assets will be in order for people to gain better access to the assets and make them more appealing locations to visit. They will also be the focal point for events.



upper spon street



Figure 16: Chapel in Spon End, c1926 and present day

All sites

- Addition of interpretation
- Bridges will get a plaque labeling it as crossing the Sherbourne and giving its name
- Included in the Connect and Reflect events programme

St Catherine's Well

To improve visibility of the structure we will make changes to the gate as per recommendations in the condition survey report.

Spon End – Spon Gate Bridge and the Chapel of St James and St Christopher and Vignoles Bridge

Repairs and maintenance will likely include:

- Vegetation management surrounding the structures
- Removal of rubbish
- Pointing as required
- Graffiti removal

Charterhouse Heritage Park – WWII Sluice Gate and Viaduct

Repairs and maintenance of the sluice gate will likely include:

- Graffiti removal
- Repainting

We will open up the vista from Charterhouse to the Sherbourne Viaduct. To improve the visibility of Sherbourne Viaduct we will remove a small number of mature trees on the northern side of the Viaduct.

Whitley Abbey Bridge



Figure 17: Whitley Abbey Bridge

Repair works to the bridge as per the condition report are not considered a priority as part of the scheme, but they will be small scale vegetation management around the structure, which will be carried out by volunteers lead by scheme staff.

Project 4: Connect and Reflect (Events)

4: Connect and Reflect (Events)	4.0: Valley Wide
	4.1: Festival
	4.2: Sherbourne Spirit
	4.3: Families with young children
	4.4: Multi-generational
	4.5: Young people
	4.6: Nature Nurture
	4.7: 5 ways to wellbeing

The Connect and Reflect events programme will provide a varied series of events and activities in the wider valley to engage a broad range of people through different methods. Connecting people to the Sherbourne will run through all of them, be that its natural or cultural history.

Activities will include any or all of the following things:

- Seasonal events (Christmas, Easter, Halloween, Diwali, Ramadan).
- National events or days including National Playday. (Mitzvah Day, Earth Day, World Rivers Day etc.)
- Wellbeing promotion (e.g. running or walking routes, maybe led, or self-guided, Tai chi in the park, supportive activities for those with particular needs such as stroke victims, dementia sufferers and their carers)
- History based (living history demonstrations or workshops e.g. dyes, foraging and medicine, river trades etc., specific activities connected to the built structures on the river)
- 50 Guided walks and talks for a wide audience, led by different people with different river inspired themes.
- Creative activities (landscape painting, short film making, photography, creative writing)
- Traditional and historic crafts linked to the city's past (e.g. basket/willow weaving, leather crafts, woolen textiles work)
- Lunchtime lectures – short talks in various locations that can be walked to in a lunch break and sit somewhere in the sun. Topics to be easily digestible and really fun or engaging. The idea being to bring your sandwich and eat it while listening to something relating to the river, its history, nature or a relevant hot



Figure 18: Quern stone, living history event during development phase 2021

topic. Audience is anyone from young adult upwards, but not with specialist knowledge.

- Events to celebrate diversity in the outdoors, e.g. gender, disability, ethnicity etc.
- Theatrical and performing arts (street theatre, puppets, dance, music)
- Project update events - 2 per year, to update community stakeholders including volunteers and local residents on scheme progress and invite a guest speaker.
- “How to help wildlife” activities (e.g. build a bug hotel, learn to survey your local patch, wildlife friendly gardening advice, wildflower planting, actions to avoid etc.)
- Promotion of and participation in national wildlife surveys e.g. Coventry Creature Count, as part of the national version in April, or the RSPB’s Big Garden Bird Watch.

This list is not exhaustive but is a sample of the style of events that will form Connect and Reflect.

Sherbourne Spirit will focus on the different faiths in Coventry and bringing them together for the river. The festival will be an annual event to celebrate the river. Nature Nurture is a specific course for people suffering from mental ill health and is being delivered by Starfish Collaborative on our behalf. We will be running a small number of our own wellbeing events, too.

The practical work parties and wildlife surveys are covered in more detail through the Valley Volunteers project and Creature Count.



Project 5: Valley Volunteers

5: Valley Volunteers

5.0: Valley Wide



Figure 19: Volunteer at the Mitzvah Day activity in Spon End, Nov 2021

Volunteering will be a vital aspect of the Sherbourne Valley Project if it is to be successful and maintain long term impact. The Sherbourne Valley Project will seek to recruit and engage volunteers from across the communities of Coventry and empower them to make a positive difference in their green and blue spaces and to become advocates for their local natural heritage.

Through training and hands on experience volunteers will gain confidence and competence in performing tasks to maintain their local waterways and wild places and act as champions for their city and its wildlife. The Sherbourne Valley Project will take learning from Warwickshire Wildlife Trust's 'Team Wilder' approach to community empowerment that aims to equip individuals with the skills and inspiration to take action for nature in their local community.

The lessons from this approach will be applied through the Sherbourne Valley Project to create lasting impact for the natural, built and cultural heritage of the river and its surrounding area.

Volunteering will take place at all of the Sherbourne Valley project sites in addition to strategically chosen connecting areas of green and blue space. Volunteer sessions will be held at least twice a month and tackle tasks such as invasive species management, installation of in channel features such as woody debris, clearance days, woodland management, meadow maintenance and other tasks as they arise. Volunteers will be given access to regular training in both practical skills and soft skills such as Health and Safety assessment and safe ways of working.

Activities will include:

- 3 volunteer days a month at project sites
- Taster sessions and shorter days to allow more participation
- Support HCT in the development of their Nature Volunteering scheme at Charterhouse Heritage Park.
- Regular training events will be offered in skills such as woodland management, health and safety assessment, working in water, invasive species management etc. with support to be offered by scheme staff.
- Volunteering opportunities in community engagement and activism, supporting the Team Wilder approach.
- Support and promote litter picking groups
- Annual Valpak litter picking event
- Have volunteers to support the simple built heritage maintenance tasks and events
- Have education and events volunteers
- Encourage volunteers to be advocates of their river and follow proper reporting procedures when pollution events arise (report via EA hotline)

The project will also seek to interact with and support existing volunteering groups.



Project 6: Sherbourne Skills

6: Sherbourne Skills

- 6.1: Informal training
- 6.2: Accredited training
- 6.3: Trainee placements
- 6.4: Formal education
- 6.5: Young people (and informal education)
- 6.6: Five Ways to Wellbeing

We will provide a range of training courses and styles for different audiences:

- Volunteers
- Staff
- Young people
- People with mental health illness
- Trainees
- School pupils and teachers



The table below gives a sample of the types of informal and formal training we will be offering.

Training Offered	"On the job"	In house by project staff	External training provider	Training will be cascaded
Health and Safety - general	✓	✓		✓
Manual lifting		✓		
First Aid			✓	
Safe working with tools	✓	✓		✓
Hand Tool Maintenance			✓	✓
Invasive species control e.g. Himalayan Balsam	✓			✓
Practical woodland management skills	✓	✓		✓
Practical river management skills	✓	✓		✓
Wildflower ID		✓	✓	
Plantlife surveying			✓	
Butterfly surveying		✓	✓	
Bird surveying		✓	✓	
Animal tracks and signs		✓	✓	✓
Riverfly surveying		✓		
Reach Assessments		✓		
MoRPH		✓	✓	✓
Leading guided walks		✓		✓
Leading activities for children		✓		
Site visitor data Surveys		✓		
Willow weaving			✓	
Making a hay rake			✓	
Green woodworking			✓	
Running your own volunteer group		✓	✓	✓

We will also be

- Working with Coventry University to provide support and opportunities for undergraduate and Masters students to enhance their learning to achieve their degree.

For Trainees

- Hosting two trainee placements per year between year 2 and 4 of the project (6 trainees in total).
- Creating an Open College Network (OCN) “Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Life Skills Conservation” Course

For Schools

- Visiting 15 schools to deliver whole school assemblies on water pollution, followed by sessions with two groups per school to do Yellow Fish activities.
- Producing 10 loan boxes with kit for delivering a range of activities.
- Producing a range of session plans and activity resources that can be downloaded from the website.
- Designing and delivering a programme of sessions that link to the curriculum.
- Working with faith schools, through the Sherbourne Spirit project, delivering activities connecting water, beliefs and folklore.
- Training teachers to be able to deliver the sessions themselves after the conclusion of NLHF funding.
- Providing wellies for pupils to borrow.

For Young People

- Run an 8-week bushcraft course and additional bushcraft activities
- Supporting them to take action for nature, e.g. by providing information and advice for their campaigns (utilising WWT’s Team Wilder initiative).
- Running practical conservation work parties with them. This will teach them skills in wildlife surveying, woodland and river management, invasive species control and safe use of hand tools.
- Supporting them to achieve any relevant badges or awards through activities with us e.g. if they are working towards a Duke of Edinburgh Award and need volunteer hours, or if they are a scout group and are trying to get a badge and need a skill or mini project.
- Having two-way dialogue about what activities they would like to do with us and which topics are important to them. This might be around climate change, influencing policy makers, using different media to tell a story, developing skills for their CV, or nature and wellbeing.

For Wellbeing

- Delivering a Five Ways to Wellbeing Course. – a six-week programme to give people the skills they need to deal with mental ill health through connecting with nature.



Project 7: Creature Count

The Creature Count project is split into five sub projects as listed below:

7: Creature Count	7.0: Valley Wide
	7.1: Riverfly
	7.2: MoRPh
	7.3: Animals
	7.4: Plants

We will:

- Train the community in simple biological surveying appropriate to the river valley
- Support and facilitate residents of Coventry to become active participants in recording the natural heritage of their city, through events, toolkits, videos and face to face conversations.
- Encourage and promote participation in the annual Coventry Creature Count event
- Project Staff will receive full training on Biodiversity Net Gain. Biodiversity Net Gain will be used by the project to make full baseline assessments of the current state of habitat on project sites and then again post intervention to calculate the Biodiversity Net Gain on project sites.
- Plant monitoring will be undertaken at least monthly during spring and summer – recording sessions will be led by Project staff to offer support and assist in building skill and confidence in recording. This will be undertaken as part of the trial NPMS+ ⁴⁴scheme supported by Plantlife. Results to be submitted via the NPMS online portal and guidance offered by Plantlife specialist staff.



⁴⁴ <https://www.npms.org.uk/>

Project 8: Wilder Wetlands

8: Wilder Wetlands

8.0: Valley Wide

8.1: Lake View Park & Sherbourne Valley Allotments

8.2: Charterhouse

The Wilder Wetlands project will focus on some key sites within the project area;

Lake View Park and Sherbourne Valley Allotments

The proposed work across the two sites will encompass major floodplain and in-channel improvements. Key to the site will be to address the heavily modified nature of the watercourse and to take steps to re-naturalise the river and reconnect it to its floodplain. As per the feasibility study and detailed designs, there are a number of options on the table including

- Scrapes
- Pools
- Wetland creation
- Bank lowering
- In channel modifications
- Weir removal or mitigation



Following detailed design and further community consultation it is anticipated that works to create wetland features will be implemented as per the designs and subject to Coventry City Councils approval as the landowner.

Figure 20: locations of options proposed for Lake View Park, 2022

This site will have post works monitoring done through the Creature Count citizen science project to assess impact.

Charterhouse Heritage Park

- In-channel features will be installed to encourage the river to generate a more diverse flow regime and improved erosional processes allowing the process of re-naturalisation to begin.
- A pond on an area of the site that is already supporting wetland features will also be created.

- The proposed work will encompass the creation of a pond and river channel improvements designed to improve the watercourse for fish and invertebrate populations and also to kick start the process of re-naturalisation. The addition of a pond to the project will further enhance the wetland character of the site and provide refuge for fish fry.
- In channel structures will be added to the current channel to produce a more heterogeneous flow and the riverbanks will be reprofiled to allow the river greater access to its floodplain.
- The site of works will be covered by a thorough citizen science monitoring effort through the Creature Count Project. Special care will be taken to ensure regular monitoring of priority species of mammal (Otter and Water Vole.)



Project 9: River Restoration

9: River Restoration	9.0: Valley wide
	9.1: North Brook
	9.2: Lake View Park
	9.3: Guphill Brook
	9.4: Coundon Butt Lane Meadows

The nature of the river restoration work across the catchment is wide ranging, including community-led, lighter touch projects such as Guphill Brook and larger capital projects such as Lake View Park, focussed on significant restoration and reconnection within the existing system, and North Brook Stage 0, returning the river channel back to its natural system. This means that we are able to demonstrate a wide breadth of river restoration techniques within urban and semi-urban environments and the impacts each technique/approach can have.

Pre and post surveying and monitoring will be a big focus of the work across the sites, which has a lot of crossover with the Creature Count project (see Creature Count project plan). We want to establish

a baseline for all of the project sites and monitor again post-works, as well as establishing a longer-term monitoring scheme to create an investment from local people in the area and secure the long-term maintenance and management of the sites (the details of what will be included in this and how it will be developed can be found in the delivery and management section of this project plan).

Although not a direct focus of Sherbourne Valley river restoration project, the NFM work being done in the upper catchment will help to achieve better water quality and reduce downstream flooding and so the River Restoration Officer will liaise directly with the member of staff leading that project to work with landowners and influence land management practices to help reduce phosphate and nitrate runoff and livestock poaching of riverbanks.



Figure 21: Local residents at a site meeting about SVP at Guphill brook, May 2022

North Brook

The proposed project will be a stage zero channel realignment returning the North Brook to its natural channel running through the centre of the North Brook field and away from its current course perched above the Brook's natural floodplain (see example of a paleo channel reconnection in figure 20).



Figure 22: Paleo channel backwater reconnection example

The project will functionally remove a weir from the course of the brook, restore fish passage and sediment transport, generate additional wetland habitat and biodiversity and allow the river to reconnect to its floodplain.

Project 10: Linking the Landscape

10: Linking the Landscape

10.0: Valley Wide

An ambitious programme of re-naturalisation and habitat improvement works have been outlined for several key sites along the Sherbourne (see River Restoration Project Plan). This has the potential to address a number of the significant barriers to connectivity within the catchment. In addition to this, the project will continue to identify opportunities within the wider catchment to improve the connectivity between these sites based on desk-based assessments made. This will include working with the local Council, community groups and businesses where possible to improve, both habitat connectivity across the Sherbourne, and awareness of the river and its importance in the landscape.



Figure 23: CCC ranger gives a briefing on Himalayan Balsam pulling. Spon End, 2021

Invasive Non-native Species

The project will aim to develop a catchment-wide strategy for managing invasive non-native species on the Sherbourne in line with the GB non-native species secretariat⁴⁵. In order to achieve this the project will:

- Work with stakeholders (e.g. landowners, any relevant local action groups) and members of the public to improve mapping of non-native species in the catchment e.g. through the use of the INNS mapper tool⁴⁶.
- Work with stakeholders to investigate options for treatment and funding requirements e.g. Canal and Rivers Trust 'Invasive Species Eradication Project 2021-2025', funded by Severn Trent and working on eradicating four priority species within the Severn Trent supply area including Japanese knotweed
- Actively carry out biosecurity measures on all relevant volunteer activities and events with the public e.g. when carrying out riverfly monitoring using the check, clean, dry system⁴⁷.
- Increase public awareness of invasive species present on the Sherbourne and nationally (to highlight the need for preventative measures) and the importance of biosecurity for preventing the spread.

⁴⁵ <https://www.nonnativespecies.org/assets/Document-repository/gb-non-native-species-strategy-pb14324-5.pdf>

⁴⁶ <https://ywt-data.org/inns-mapper/home>

⁴⁷ <https://www.nonnativespecies.org/what-can-i-do/check-clean-dry/>

4.6 Monitoring and Evaluation



Our evaluation plan has been developed through discussions with experienced evaluators, reviewing methods used both during the development phase and during previous successful projects. One of these projects was the Dunsmore Living Landscape project, which ran from 2018 and is finishing now.

The NLHF Evaluation Guide has been used in developing our process, and sculpting our methods choices.

Methods were trialled during the development phase to collect feedback from participants of varying ages and backgrounds.

The outputs to be measured during the scheme delivery have been linked to the Conservation Plan and Activity Plan to ensure that all key elements are referenced in the evaluation. For examples of forms that will be used please refer to appendix 10.

Community Engagement

Methods to be used

During the delivery phase, we will be collecting both quantitative and qualitative data and looking at the scheme management, partnership work and the difference made by community.

We will collect and analyse information about the people who engage with heritage - and those who don't - and we will track how this changes over time during the project.

Each individual activity has a specific breakdown of the methods of monitoring and evaluation that will be used, listed in the Activity Plan table in section 4.6. The table below summarises our overall approach, by category.

Activity	Method of monitoring and evaluation
Public event – drop in	Attendance record sheet. Comments captured.
Public event - bookable	Event register, feedback forms.
Activity for children	Event register. Parents/group leaders to fill in comments/feedback forms on behalf of child.
Online/self led activity	No. of downloads/page hits. Post event online survey.
Volunteer work party	Volunteer attendance register. Feedback forms. Case studies.
Corporate work party	Event register, feedback forms.
Training session	Event register, feedback forms.

Delivery

We will note and assess any changes that have to be made to the delivery of the scheme, for example, inclement weather, issues with contractors, volunteers, staffing, that in turn have an impact on the timetable and deliverables.

Quantitative assessment of scheme deliverables

We will collect quantitative data on project site and training outputs, people and groups involved. All such data will be kept securely following data protection requirements. All volunteers and participants will be informed of the secure and digital storage of personal data.

Data collection

For each historic feature project:

- Number of: volunteers engaged, volunteer hours worked, practical days held on site

For each access project:

- Numbers of way markers and signposts installed, River Rambles promoted, self-led heritage trails created, volunteers engaged
- Number and type of access improvements made, e.g. installation of accessible gates

For each interpretation project:

- Number of interpretation features installed, interpretation materials created, website visits, downloads of information from website, social media followers, articles in local press and newsletters, volunteers engaged, volunteer hours worked, practical days held on site

For each education project:

- Number of children involved, sessions delivered, loan boxes lent out, those who would return for another session, returners, who have learnt new skills
- Year groups engaged
- Type of session: outreach or in school, or loan box
- Postcode/location of school
- Satisfaction and enjoyment level per session

For each young people project:

- Number of youth groups involved, young people engaged, activities delivered, those who would return for another session, who have learnt new skills
- Postcode of residence
- Satisfaction and enjoyment level per session

For each event:

- Number of activities delivered, people and families engaged, who would return, who did return, who have learnt new skills
- Type of event: guided walk/tour/ temporary exhibitions
- Postcode of residence



- Satisfaction and enjoyment level per session

For each training project:

- Number of training sessions delivered, people engaged, those who would return for another session, returners, those who have learnt new skills, those attending first training, those gaining certificates/ units of certificate
- Demographic details re age, gender, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic group
- Postcode of residence
- Satisfaction and enjoyment level per session

For each volunteer:

- Demographic details re age, gender, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic group
- Postcode of residence
- Satisfaction and enjoyment level of involvement

We will also be undertaking annual site surveys to monitor visitor numbers, demographics and activities.

Natural Heritage

As part of the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) network (described earlier), Warwickshire Wildlife Trust completes the CaBA evaluation and monitoring form⁴⁸ on an annual basis. We will continue to do this and report on the Sherbourne Valley project specifically. The table below is a selection of what is reported.

Output/Outcome	Measure
Kilometres of Waterbody Protected/Enhanced	Protected or enhanced?
	How many kilometres? (<i>km - numeric response required</i>)
	Description
Engagement	How many volunteers or citizen scientists engaged? (<i>numeric</i>)
	How many farmers or landowners engaged? (<i>numeric</i>)
	How many other people engaged? (<i>numeric</i>)
	Description
Habitat Creation	How much habitat created? (<i>ha - numeric</i>)
	Description *
Barriers	How many barriers to fish migration eased/mitigated/removed? (<i>numeric</i>)
	How many km of river opened up to migratory fish? (<i>km - numeric</i>)
	Description *
Water Quality	Have water quality issues been tackled?
	Description *
Ecological Quality	Have ecological quality issues been tackled?
	Description *
Water Resources: Flooding & Water Scarcity	Have water resource issues been tackled?
	Description *

⁴⁸ [CaBA-Monitoring-Form-2020-21.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)



Output/Outcome	Measure
Farm Management	How did your project/activity tackle farm management issues? *
Invasive Species	How much habitat has been cleared or managed for invasive species, and for which species? (<i>km or ha - please specify</i>)
Social & Economic Outcomes *	Social outcomes (including health & well-being)
	Economic Outcomes
	Does the project work with deprived communities?
Other outcomes	<i>Please provide any relevant further quantification of your outcomes, in as much detail as possible.</i>

Please also refer to activities within the Creature Count project as this project is focused on surveying and monitoring, recording changes in flora, fauna and habitats. This data will be used as part of the evaluation process.

Evaluation Reports

The project will be evaluated using a combination of own experienced evaluation team and using an external consultant.

The internal evaluation team will:

- 1) Produce all evaluation methods to be used by the project team to gather both qualitative and quantitative data.
- 2) Lead on ensuring all project staff understand and use the evaluation methods provided.
- 3) Set up internal databases, with the Sherbourne Valley Project Manager, for recording all data collated.
- 4) Conduct some evaluation for the project, for example leading focus groups, doing some face-to-face evaluation at events, conducting interviews.
- 5) Collating all raw evaluation data into a central location under the themes of the project.
- 6) Ensuring data is collected in a timely fashion and is complete and robust.

Set up a basic report structure for the external consultants to use for their reporting.

The role of the External Evaluation Consultant will be to:

- 1) Meet with the project team and internal consultants to understand the Sherbourne Valley Project, its outcomes and outputs and how these will be evaluated (how the data will be collected by the team).
- 2) Receive raw qualitative and quantitative consultation data in many formats – survey monkey, paper questionnaires, maps, focus group recordings and others.
- 3) Analyse the data provided looking at evidence to demonstrate impact against the key project outcomes.
- 4) Produce a mid-term and end of project evaluation report for the funder, using data provided by the project team and based around a report format provided by the team (which will ensure reporting is against all the project outcomes and outputs).



We have built this approach into the heart of this project. We have included:

- A wide range of training opportunities
- Staff time to support and nurture new and existing volunteer groups
- Events to inform and inspire people about nature's challenges and what can be done
- Taster and easy-to-access, short, practical volunteering sessions
- Regular, full day volunteer work parties
- Volunteer sessions with a translator for people who don't speak English
- Events and activities along the full length of the river and its tributaries, so there is always something nearby, usually within walking distance.
- Outdoor clothing and equipment for people to borrow so that they can come out and join an activity.
- A variety of types of activity and event, with flexibility built in, so that people with different physical or psychological needs can participate in a way that works for them.
- A dedicated community engagement officer role, whose main purpose will be to build relationships with the community and bring in those on the periphery.

These are just some of the ways in which we have designed the project to be as welcoming and inclusive as possible. (Full details of these are in the respective Project Plan documents). This set of actions will foster a desire to support nature and Coventry's heritage. With careful nurturing by the project team, the people we engage will be motivated, confident and enabled to step into the role of a pro-active nature supporter.

Team Wilder is about sustained action for the environment. It is about a continuing journey for life. By rooting our project in the Team Wilder ethos, we will be building strong foundations in the city which will last for many years, well beyond the four-year funded scheme. The knowledge, skills and desire will be embedded in the community and shared from group to group, and neighbour to neighbour.

Health and Wellbeing

Social prescribing is a growing health and social care approach, which means people can be 'prescribed'/referred to activities in the community to help improve their wellbeing. These can range from arts groups to walking groups, bushcraft sessions to cooking classes.

WWT, are already actively engaged with the organisations that have been appointed to do social prescribing in Coventry – namely Age UK, GP's and



*Figure 24: People improving their wellbeing through shared social connections with nature and the outdoors.
Credit Adrian Clarke*

community mental health teams. We work closely with Mind who also refer people. We see this as a great opportunity to promote our activities and encourage people to access the project and the river to help improve their wellbeing.

We will continue our relationship with the Recovery and Wellbeing Academy, who we already work with, to promote the specific health and wellbeing activities included in the project. This partnership and collaborative approach means that we can engage with members of the community most in need of the wellbeing opportunities offered by connecting with the river through SVP.

Cultural Connections and Outdoor Education

Along a similar vein, we will also be working with the Coventry Cultural Education Partnership and Coventry City Council's Outdoor Education team. CCEP have a database of the groups of people in Coventry who are not currently taking part in any cultural offers available in the city. The data set is comprehensive and will allow us to dig into it, to identify specific barriers to sub-groups and be really targeted with what we create and how, when and to whom we offer it.



Figure 25: Outdoor learning for urban children. Image Credit GreenTV

The Outdoor Education have just undertaken a survey with all schools in Coventry to understand the uptake and barriers to outdoor learning. When this has been analysed, we will again be able to work to remove barriers and increase uptake.

How We Got Here

In order to put together the set of actions and approaches outlined above, we undertook a comprehensive range of community and stakeholder consultation. This was taken in conjunction with detailed desk-based study to uncover the demographic picture, and trends or patterns in behaviours.

Despite a slow start amidst the pandemic lockdown, community and stakeholder opinions were gathered in the following ways:

- 16 Heritage walks, with 119 attendees
- 3 online community meetings
- 450 completed questionnaires
- 78 event and training feedback forms
- Collated dozens of comments that were emailed, left in the comments book, reported to staff verbally
- 96 days of Site User Surveys
- 2 site Access Assessments
- 2 days of Access Priority assessment with the public
- Numerous conversations and meetings with project partners and professional stakeholders
- 1 survey through letterboxes to targeted households on a key site

6. Community Grants

Community grants are not administered as part of the Sherbourne Valley project; however, they will be as part of other development more broadly across WWT.

Learning from and using the community grants model from the NLHF funded Transforming the Trent project and as working in partnership with Coventry City of Culture, WWT have developed a #TeamWilder Community Grants Scheme⁵⁰

Running in Summer 2022, The scheme is funded by Coventry City of Culture Trust and is being administered by WWT. Its aims to enable communities of Coventry to become part of #TeamWilder, acting for nature in a creative way.

The #TeamWilder Community Grants Scheme offers grants of £500 - £2,000 to cover 100% of project costs. Projects must meet at least one of the following:

1. Conserving, protecting and / or enhancing local green spaces
 2. Helping people to act for nature, either at home or in local green spaces
 3. Increasing people's awareness and enjoyment of green spaces in Coventry for residents and / or those working in or visiting the area
- And all projects must demonstrate how they will integrate creativity and culture into their project.

This will act as a pilot scheme and WWT will explore further options for community grant funding after summer 2022.

The Sherbourne Valley Project will then support and signpost community groups to any WWT community grants available.



⁵⁰ <https://www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/teamwilder-community-grants>

7. Managing your area-based scheme

7.1 Project management structure

The staff structure is shown on the following page. The Sherbourne Valley Project Manager will report to the Sherbourne Valley Project Board, who will help make decisions and approve any changes. The board will meet quarterly. The Sherbourne Valley Project Manager will provide a monthly report to the Director of Landscape Recovery at WWT, who in turn will update WWT of any key items.

Scheme Staff

Project Manager: Providing leadership to the staff team and overseeing the delivery of all sub-projects, ensuring that high quality outcomes are delivered, and the project is effectively managed on time and to budget.

Communication & Interpretation Officer: Leading on the communication and interpretation projects and supporting colleagues to ensure consistent communications across all project delivery. Ensuring that high quality outcomes are delivered, and the project is effectively managed on time and to budget.

Cultural Heritage Officer: Working collaboratively with colleagues, lead on the cultural heritage themed projects. Ensuring that high quality outcomes are delivered, and the project is effectively managed on time and to budget.

Education & Training Officer: Working collaboratively with colleagues and leading on the education and training elements of the project. Ensuring that high quality outcomes are delivered, and the project is effectively managed on time and to budget.

Finance & Admin Officer: To provide a high quality, professional support service to the Sherbourne Valley Project team. Supporting with administration, financial evidence gathering and reporting to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other funders supporting the project.

Natural Heritage Officer: Working collaboratively to ensure that high quality natural heritage outcomes are delivered, and the project is effectively managed on time and to budget.

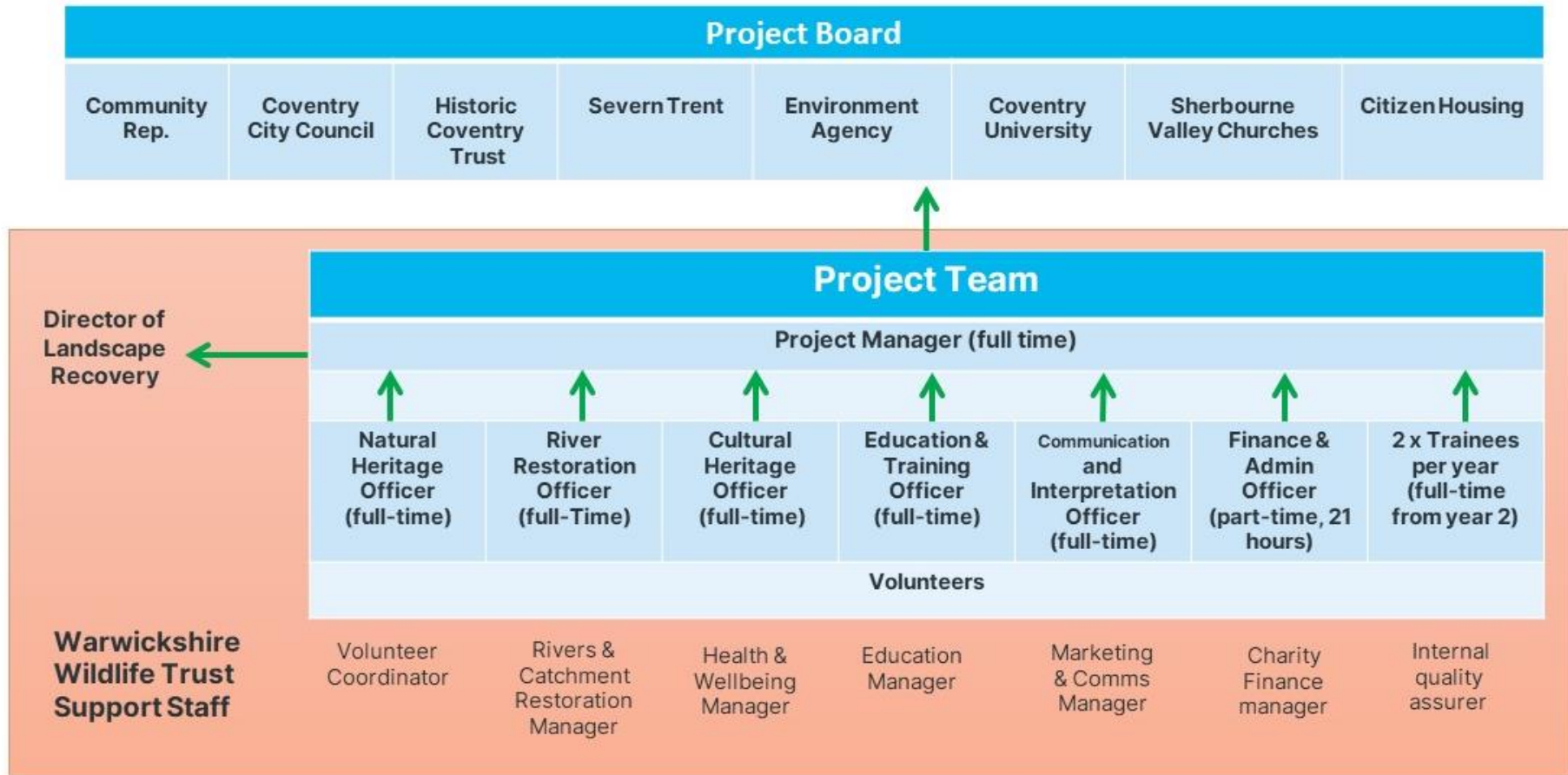
River Restoration Officer: Working with partner organisations, contractors and local community volunteers this role will deliver transformational enhancements to the river Sherbourne and its associated greenspaces in Coventry.

Trainees: To learn hands-on skills and gain work-based experience that could lead to a role within the environmental sector. To work with the SVP team, with partner organisations such as Coventry City Council, Severn Trent or Historic Coventry Trust and with volunteers to help deliver practical projects. To complete the City & Guilds Level 2 Diploma in Work-Based Environmental Conservation⁵¹.

⁵¹ https://www.cityandguilds.com/-/media/productdocuments/land_based_services/environment_countryside_and_conservation/0070/0070_level_2/assessment_materials/0070_I2_assessor_guide_v5-pdf.ashx



Project Management Structure



Each project will have a lead officer but will be supported by the rest of the team due to the number of overlaps with other projects.

Main Project	Staff lead
1. Access	Cultural Heritage Officer
2: Interpretation	Communication and Interp Officer
3: Sherbourne Structures	Cultural Heritage Officer
4: Connect and Reflect (Events)	Cultural Heritage Officer
5: Valley Volunteers	Natural Heritage Officer
6: Sherbourne Skills	Training and Education Officer
7: Creature Count	Natural Heritage Officer
8: Wilder Wetlands	Natural Heritage Officer
9: River Restoration	River Restoration Officer
10: Linking the Landscape	Natural Heritage Officer

WWT Support Staff

A number of Warwickshire Wildlife Trust support staff will provide additional support and links to the key members of the Sherbourne Valley Project Team.

Director of Landscape Recovery leads the Landscape Recovery department within which the Sherbourne Valley Project Team sit. Their role in this project will be to support the Sherbourne Valley Project Manager with strategic oversight, pastoral support and performance management of the wider SVP team where required. It adds crucial strategic support the SVP, enabling the Sherbourne Valley Project Manager to spend more time leading the staff team and managing the overall impact of the project. This role maintains strategic relationships with each of the Board Partners, whilst also linking the Sherbourne Valley Project into wider relationships that sit outside of the primary contacts of the project (e.g., the Catchment Based Approach – CaBA, River Severn Partnership and West Midlands Combined Authority). This will help the SVP deliver more holistic outcomes aligned to wider working, increase the reach of the project by connecting it with other strategic partners and initiatives, and help to develop the legacy of the project, ensuring it moves towards a sustainable future that is supported by multiple stakeholders who have been engaged with its impact throughout the Delivery Phase.

The Marketing and Communications Manager oversees all Warwickshire Wildlife Trust marketing and communications. Their role in this project will be to support the Communications & Interpretation Officer to implement the Communications & Interpretation Plan in a way that complements the wider WWT strategy. This will help to create synergy between the SVP and the wider WWT work, including key elements like Team Wilder and its 30by30 ambitions. This will help to develop a line of sight between participation and impact delivered by the Sherbourne Valley Project and the wider regional and national priorities that WWT contribute to. In addition, the Marketing and Communications Manager will ensure that the SVP brand links back into the wider approach of WWT. This will help to with the long-term legacy and sustainability of the Project and support its transition post NLHF funding.



Task	Sub project	Y1				Y2				Y3				Y4			
		Q1 (Oct 22-Dec 22)	Q2 (Jan 23-Mar 23)	Q3 (Apr 23 - Jun 23)	Q4 (July 23 - Sept 23)	Q1 (Oct 23-Dec 23)	Q2 (Jan 24-Mar 24)	Q3 (Apr 24 - Jun 24)	Q4 (July 24 - Sept 24)	Q1 (Oct 24-Dec 24)	Q2 (Jan 25-Mar 25)	Q3 (Apr 25 - Jun 25)	Q4 (July 25 - Sept 25)	Q1 (Oct 25-Dec 25)	Q2 (Jan 26-Mar 26)	Q3 (Apr 26 - Jun 26)	Q4 (July 26 - Sept 26)
Mental Health First Aid training	6.6: 5 Ways to Well-being		✓			✓				✓				✓			
Volunteer celebration events	4: Connect and Reflect - Valley Wide		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		
interpretation for St Catherine's Well	2.2: Communication & Interpretation: Sherbourne Stories - Sites			✓	✓												
Improvement works to St Catherine's Well	3.1: Sherbourne Structures- St Catherine's Well			✓	✓												
Feasibility study for weir mitigation on Coundon, Butt Lane meadows	9.4: River Restoration - Coundon Butt Lane Meadows			✓	✓												
Develop and set up Quest App routes	2.1 Communication and Interpretation: Digital media			✓	✓	✓	✓										
Mark the course of the river under the city -physical means	2.3: Communication & Interpretation: Hidden Heritage - City Centre			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Creation and promotion of a series of walks	1.1: River Rambles - Valley Wide			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Path improvements and creation	1.2 Access - Key sites			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Improved way marking signage at key sites - Charterhouse, Lake View Park and Coundon Wedge	1.2 Access - Key sites			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
design and Install interpretation for Natural Heritage features.	2.2: Communication & Interpretation: Sherbourne Stories - Sites			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Annual competitions	4.4: Connect and Reflect - multi generational			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Annual Big City Nature Count event	7: Creature Count			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Reality Capture Training	6.1: Sherbourne Skills - Informal training			✓			✓				✓				✓		
Site user and visitor surveys	1. ACCESS - Valley wide			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	



Task	Sub project	Y1				Y2				Y3				Y4			
		Q1 (Oct 22-Dec 22)	Q2 (Jan 23-Mar 23)	Q3 (Apr 23 - Jun 23)	Q4 (July 23 - Sept 23)	Q1 (Oct 23-Dec 23)	Q2 (Jan 24-Mar 24)	Q3 (Apr 24 - Jun 24)	Q4 (July 24 - Sept 24)	Q1 (Oct 24-Dec 24)	Q2 (Jan 25-Mar 25)	Q3 (Apr 25 - Jun 25)	Q4 (July 25 - Sept 25)	Q1 (Oct 25-Dec 25)	Q2 (Jan 26-Mar 26)	Q3 (Apr 26 - Jun 26)	Q4 (July 26 - Sept 26)
trainee placements with the scheme, offering a one-year paid training placement and City and Guilds Qualification in Work Based Conservation	6.3: Sherbourne Skills - Trainee placements					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Provide CPD training on river activities for teachers	6.4: Sherbourne Skills - Formal Education					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Detailed design for weir mitigation on Coundon, Butt Lane meadows	9.4: River Restoration - Coundon Butt Lane Meadows					✓	✓	✓									
Blue Sheep trail	4.4: Connect and Reflect - multi generational					✓	✓	✓	✓								
Community consultation for wetland creation at Charterhouse	8.2: Wilder Wetlands - Charterhouse					✓	✓	✓	✓								
Practical River Restoration Course	6.1: Sherbourne Skills - Informal training						✓							✓			
Develop Fundraising plan for Legacy Phase	0: Across All/Core						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Wetland creation at Lake View Park and Sherbourne Valley allotments	8.1: Wilder Wetlands - Lake View Park						✓	✓	✓								
Consultation about weir mitigation on Coundon, Butt lane meadows	9.4: River Restoration - Coundon Butt Lane Meadows						✓	✓									
Weir mitigation on Coundon, Butt lane meadows	9.4: River Restoration - Coundon Butt Lane Meadows								✓	✓							
Event - Built Heritage of Spon End	4: Connect and Reflect - Valley Wide								✓	✓							
Riparian Habitat Management Course	6.1: Sherbourne Skills - Informal training							✓								✓	
Mid-term evaluation report	0: Across All/Core									✓							
Open up the vista to the Sherbourne Viaduct.	3.3: Sherbourne Structures - Charterhouse									✓	✓						



Task	Sub project	Y1				Y2				Y3				Y4			
		Q1 (Oct 22-Dec 22)	Q2 (Jan 23-Mar 23)	Q3 (Apr 23 - Jun 23)	Q4 (July 23 - Sept 23)	Q1 (Oct 23-Dec 23)	Q2 (Jan 24-Mar 24)	Q3 (Apr 24 - Jun 24)	Q4 (July 24 - Sept 24)	Q1 (Oct 24-Dec 24)	Q2 (Jan 25-Mar 25)	Q3 (Apr 25 - Jun 25)	Q4 (July 25 - Sept 25)	Q1 (Oct 25-Dec 25)	Q2 (Jan 26-Mar 26)	Q3 (Apr 26 - Jun 26)	Q4 (July 26 - Sept 26)
Protect and restore the Chapel of St James and St Christopher	3.2: Sherbourne Structures-Spon End													✓	✓	✓	
Protect and restore Vignoles Bridge	3.2: Sherbourne Structures-Spon End													✓	✓	✓	
Monitoring and maintenance plan created for all main project sites	10: Linking the Landscape													✓	✓	✓	✓
Final evaluation report	0: Across All/Core																✓
Anticipated practical completion date	0: Across All/Core																✓

7.8 Detailed cost breakdown

This section has been omitted from public version to reduce the length of the document.

Delivery-phase financial summary.

Total delivery costs	£3,000,348
Total delivery income	£1,183,788
Delivery grant request	£1,815,600
Delivery grant %	61



7.9 Project cash flow

This section has been omitted from public version to reduce the length of the document.

7.10 Calculations for full-cost recovery

This section has been omitted from public version to reduce the length of the document.

7.11 Plan Review

This section has been omitted from public version to reduce the length of the document.



8. Appendices

This section has been omitted from public version to reduce the length of the document.

listed here:

1. Area Appraisal and Conservation Plan
2. Project Plans
3. Land Ownership
4. Sherbourne Valley Vision
5. Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs)
6. Volunteer Role Profile – Board Chair
7. Board Terms of Reference
8. Project partner input list
9. Delivery Phase Letter of support CCCT
10. Sample evaluation forms
11. Budget Delivery Phase
12. Risk register
13. Job descriptions
14. Brief for work
15. FCR and staff costs
16. Organisational Business Plan
17. Communication and Interpretation plan

